

**Dotsie Bregel,
Founder and CEO of
The National Association of Baby Boomer Women
(NABBW)**



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Presents

**Successful Marriages:
Find the Bliss ... *and keep it!***

With

Joanie Winberg

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**Successful Marriages:
Find the Bliss ... and keep it!**

With
Joanie Winberg

Dotsie: Hello and welcome to the call.

This is **Dotsie Bregel**, and for those of you who don't know me, I am the founder of the **National Association of Baby Boomer Women** which can be located at www.NABBW.com and also, www.boomerwomenspeak.com, which are the number one sites on major search engines for baby boomer women. Since launching www.boomerwomenspeak.com over six years ago, I've been connecting, encouraging, and supporting baby boomer women on a daily basis. I dedicate a great portion of my time to creating opportunities to inspire women to explore their passions and live them to the fullest. By the grace of God, I've become the "go-to" person for journalist who are interested in learning more about our generation of women.

Our sites are proudly sponsored by **Me Again** products, which are tried and true products for women at midlife. They can be located at www.meagainonline.com. We're also sponsored by **Sunsweet** for those interested in natural digestive health solutions. They can be located online at www.plumsmart.net. And I just thought I would just mention that we did a recent teleseminar about digestive health. So if you are a member of the association, you can locate that on the member benefit page. And last, but certainly not least, by **Elations** the daily drink supplement that contains Glucosamine and Chondroitin and that offers relief from joint aches and pains. It's an alternative to taking the big pills. This is a daily drink. You can find them at www.elations.com.

If you're on the call and you're not a member of the [NABBW](http://www.NABBW.com), I hope you'll feel free to join us. It's typically \$75.00, but we like to offer a \$25.00 discount to those listening in on our teleseminars. So if anyone is interested in joining, you can email me at dots@nabbw.com, and I'll send you the link to join for \$50.00.

One of the benefits of being a member is that we have an archive of over 50 of these teleseminars and they pertain to all things boomer women. So whether you are interested in being a midlife entrepreneur, or if you are interested in finance at midlife; especially now with this market, or anything that pertains to boomer women, I'm sure we have a teleseminar for it.

So this is one of our free educational opportunities, once a member of the association. Let's get started. I'd like to introduce, Joanie Winberg, who is going to be our guest today. Joanie, are you there?

Joanie: Yes I am, hi.

Dotsie: Good, good. I'll ask if you can speak up just a little bit because we have all of these calls recorded, and then they are transcribed. So for people who can't be on the call, they can listen in at a later date, or they can read the transcription by either reading it on the computer screen or printing it and reading it at their convenience.

So anyway we have Joanie today who is the founder of the National Association of Divorce for Women and Children. Her passion is to help women during and after divorce to be the best they can be, as well as, become role models for their children and community. The 24/7 resource center that she has at www.freshstartafterdivorce.com was created not only because of the lack of support and guidance that she experienced after her divorce, but also for the many women who experience the same challenges. Joanie is the divorce specialist for the [National Association of Baby Boomer Women](http://www.nationalassociationofbabyboomerwomen.com). She became a successful business owner of a *Tru-Value Hardware* store at the age of 25. After eighteen years in the retail arena, she embarked on a professional career as a speaker, an author, and business personal coach specializing in divorce. She's a Certified Behavioral Specialist and a Certified Laughter Leader.

She speaks around the country and her diverse clientele is in the retail, healthcare, nonprofit sector, and education industries. She's also the author of "**Rising to the Top; A Guide to Self Development.**" To continue to help provide a healthy lifestyle for women and children, Joanie is also the founder of a nonprofit which is called "**Happy Wednesday Foundation,**" www.happywednesday.com, and that provides funding for women's educational mentoring program during and after divorce. She is the proud mother of two children, Kristy, who is 27 and a Doctor of Audiology, and Michael, who is 24 and a graduate of Bentley College.

So welcome to the call. We can tell by hearing your bio the things that you're passionate about.

Joanie: Thank you. Definitely.

Dotsie: I guess because you worked with people who are in the middle of divorce, and after divorce, especially women; you, I guess, have learned a lot about what doesn't make a happy marriage and therefore, you can also kind of sift through and figure out what does make a happy marriage. I can relate to that because my father-in-law was a very successful divorce lawyer many moons ago. And when my husband and I were getting married, he gave us some of the

best advice for like keeping a healthy marriage, because he had seen the reverse. And he knew what didn't work, so he could figure out what did work. I'm kind of figuring that's how you've come to this topic, also.

Joanie: Well, I also, from my own personal experience have learned a lot. But also because I coach women all over the world, and work with them. And also, men. I always like to say that I certainly don't want to work with men but women, after divorce, or during the divorce, are the first one to raise their hands and say, "Help!" or I need support, and men might not be as prone to do that. But that's exactly it. Because I see so much of the relationships after they have gone through a divorce, and I have learned so much about what could possibly help couples stay together and I have worked with couples *to* stay together...and that's really my mission because I prefer not to see them after divorce, if possible. And I also see that if you can stay married, because divorce is so devastating for the family, the couple, but especially the children. So for me, if it can work out, and in some cases it can't if there is domestic violence, or something that's not safe, something like that; you don't have a choice, usually. But if it can be worked out, gosh, I really try hard to make it happen.

Dotsie: Yeah because you know it really does simplify things if you can stay in a marriage and be happy, for gosh sakes, because divorce really does complicate a lot of the relationships and family gatherings, etc, as many of us know. Joanie, we know that more than 50% of all marriages end in divorce. You shared a statistic that 70% of all women polled in a national survey said that they felt like something was missing in their marriage. And I have to say that being at this stage in life, a baby boomer with—well, I had an empty nest. But now, one of them has come back, which absolutely happens. You know, we really need to make sure our marriages are healthy because you find yourself back one on one with the person that you married many years ago without all of the goings on of the children.

So it's really important and it's also something that we've talked about in the forum communities at www.boomerwomenspeak.com. And that is, what kinds of things do you do together in your marriage? What makes you happy in your marriage? What do you like? What do you not like? That type of thing. So that's why this topic was of interest to me because I think, especially in this economy, some people can't afford to divorce, and that's really a sad thought. But they have to find ways to make it work.

Joanie: I was going to say it's kind of a good or a bad thing. It's a bad thing if its not a healthy relationship where I always think of someone in a domestic violent type relationship; that's not healthy. But I think on the other hand, if it's a couple that have to stay together because they can't afford a divorce, maybe it will actually help them say, you know what, maybe we should take a look at this again and see what we can possibly do and maybe prevent divorce overall. So it

can be a good or bad thing, and for me, like we said before, it would always be, hopefully, they can work it out.

Dotsie: A lot of women think back to what it was like when they first started dating their spouses. And you have some ideas on how to get that feeling back. Can you share those with us?

Joanie: Definitely. In fact, there's five tips on how to enjoy a happy marriage and keep it that way. I would love to go through that and then as you said earlier, we can certainly open the lines up and if people have questions or want to share because people learn so much also from hearing from others.

But the first tip that I want to share is for us as women, or even for men, not that they are going to be listening here, but for both sides of the couples there, so to speak, to be aware of what do you focus on about your spouse or your partner? Are you focusing on their weaknesses, or their quirks? I hear so many times people say, oh that drives me crazy when they do that. But I don't hear a lot about, wow, you know that person is just so helpful with that, or I really appreciate that person's value that they bring to the table. Or this is their great strength, and thank goodness they do that. You know, I don't usually hear that as much. I usually hear people complaining. So I say always be aware and focus on the strengths and the value that each of you bring to the table, because we are all different; we are all unique; and we each have something to bring to that relationship.

So a great example—you mention about when we are dating. We generally are attracted to our opposites when we date. So for example, if you tend to be more analytical, you are attracted to someone who is more carefree and likes to have fun, because they're helping you out of your comfort zone, and they're creating fun for you. A person who is more on the fun side usually likes to be connected to someone who maybe is a little bit more organized and can help them be organized. And these are great when you are dating, but talking to couples, what happens is that those exact same things bug us about that person after we get married.

For example, the person that was analytical maybe doesn't really care about going out that much anymore. While the person who is the fun person says wait a minute, you loved going out when we were dating, now you're kind of stuck in the muck here and don't want to go out. I still want to go out and have fun. What's wrong with you? So they just tend to go back to who they really are and they just might not want to do that anymore. So that becomes annoying to each other.

So you really need to say, thank goodness you love to have fun, and thank goodness you help me be organized. Really what I'm saying here is you need to focus on the strengths and the value that your partner brings to the table and to

be aware of that. And then even another great thing is for each of you to make a list of what you see are their strengths and values they bring to the table and then honor them. And let that person know. We love to hear about something good about ourselves. Don't we all love compliments? I don't hear couples very often giving each other a lot of compliments.

Dotsie: Right, well you know it's interesting because what you're talking about reminds of, you know, it can become a very negative world; especially as we continue to mature, and more people are getting sick, or having heart problems, you know, whatever it is, and just with the news on the television. When you, and I started this many moons ago, counting blessings, just writing down what I was thankful for. In the beginning—and I did it one whole summer, day after day, when my kids were younger—in the beginning, I didn't have a whole lot to write. It's ridiculous, I had the same life, you know, that I had a month later when I could get to like sixty things, but unless you focus on the positive, you just don't even realize what you are missing out on.

And then Joanie, what you are saying about, you know, saying these things to the other person reminds me of something that I had learned a long time ago in this class at church and it was about affirming one another. So like what you're saying is I like the way you do this, or thank you for taking out the trash, or I'm so glad that; whatever it is. But just be appreciative and pointing out positive things, and trying not to say anything that's negative. And that can really make a difference. Now do you have anything else to say about that because what I thought I might do is see if anybody has an example or something that they're stuck with in a negative mode with a spouse, or something they could share.

Joanie: Sure, I say open it up, sure.

Dotsie: Okay, does anybody have something they would like to share and tell us what you're thinking? [pause] Okay, maybe no one wants to speak up at this point.

Joanie: That's okay. And I think the biggest thing here is to be aware of how you are complimenting, or lack of complimenting, your spouse. I think part of it is just for people to be aware because sometimes people are just being critical of their partners and they don't even realize it. So part of it is to really be aware of your language and how you're treating that other person, and to say, you know what, granted that does bug me, but you and I are not the same person, so that's your quirk, but this is my quirk, but I want to really focus on your strength. So that's the big key. But why don't we move on to number two?

Dotsie: Okay, sure.

Joanie: It's talking about to be, to master the art of true listening. The big word here is "true." Now I have worked with a couple in particular that I'm thinking of,

that felt that, especially the wife felt that she wasn't being listened to, or not heard. But as human beings, one of our basic needs is that we all want to be heard and we all want to feel understood. So she said I just don't feel as though he ever listens to me. In fact, most women are going, oh boy, I'm clueing into this one because this is so much what is going on for us. And the woman gave me the vision of her sitting next to her husband on the couch, and she's trying to share something and he's saying, "I'm listening hon," but he's got the remote in his hand and he's clicking away. And it got to the point where she was really frustrated and it was affecting their marriage. And I said, okay, if you guys are ready to play and are game for it, this is what I would like for you to do.

For three times each week, I want you to take 15 minutes for just the two of you. I want you to unplug. No computer, no cell phone, no TV, nothing. So they felt what would work for them is to take a walk together because that way they couldn't be tempted with anything; if the phone rang, or anything. What happened at first by taking these walks, they felt a little awkward and like okay, Joanie said we are suppose to do this, but what are we suppose to be doing? But I gave the assignment that what you want to be doing is sharing something with the other person. But the key is that after that person is done, you need to repeat it back to that person so that number one, you have to listen; and number two, that person feels heard and feels and knows that you have listened. And this is a skill you need to learn. And then you want to ask the question, "Did I get that right?" or "Is there anything else you want to add, or anything you want to share more of?" and what that does is then opens up the conversation even more.

A person could say you did hear that correctly but I want to tell you more, a little bit more, and it just keeps that conversation going back and forth. What happened with this couple which was wonderful, was that once they get into this as a habit, a good habit, they couldn't imagine those times that they wouldn't have with each other. They just always look forward to them, plus they learned so much about each other that they didn't even know because they never stopped to listen and really talk with the other person, really listening. So it's such a win-win; they were shocked about what they learned about each other and how the other person really felt. And it was a beautiful thing and it really helped their relationship. So that's a good example of mastering the art of true listening.

Dotsie: Okay and good Joanie, and you know it's funny because this reminds of information that I learned in a parenting class. Actually, I use to teach a parenting class; and so much of this is about communicating, and being good listeners. And it sounds kind of corny to do some of these things but you know what? To make a marriage or a relationship work, you have to do it; because this is what makes a relationship good. And I think—let me ask a question of you—what if you're married to someone who just throws up a red flag every time you say, I would like us to try this, or can we please just try this for fifteen minutes a week? And they are negative, and they say no. What do you recommend? Because I

know women who are in marriages, and it's upsetting to me that their husband won't even cooperate or do anything to help the marriage.

Joanie: Well then at that point there, you probably need to go to a third party who can be the referee, or who can hold each one accountable; and do that. Because this woman came to me and the husband was game to play, or wanting to play, or would be willing to play. But it really gets down to basics and this is what I explain to both the men and the women. We're not talking about any new earth-shattering information here. People today need to get back to basics. And this is where we get lost; we have so much going on in our life, we forget. And so if you don't have a partner that's wanting to play with you or at least willing to try, then it is frustrating, and they probably need to be held more accountable by a third party who could be a counselor, or ... especially in this couple here. She really felt it was becoming a problem. And I think at that point there when I talked with both of them, and it was fortunate because it was able to be in person, then I think he was almost too embarrassed to say no and so he went along with it and to his surprise, it really worked out well.

Dotsie: Well you know, I have a question that's really kind of broad and I know there's not one answer, but if you're in a marriage with someone who isn't willing to work with you and isn't willing to go to therapy, and thinks that they're right, etc, and I know women in these situations, I mean, is that enough to say, I'm leaving...or just kind of do something dramatic to wake them up?

Joanie: For me it's an individual situation, but if it's to a point where you have tried everything and if the person won't go to a counselor and feels as though everything is fine, then you really have to listen to your gut. And you really have to be honest with yourself and say you know what, if is this the way I want to spend the rest of my life? Don't I deserve to either be listened to, or have a person who feels I'm important enough, or respects me enough to say I want to hear what you have to say. Because you know, that's what true love is all about. So if a person won't even give you the time, or treat you with that respect that what you have to say is important, then to me, it's some really big issues there.

Dotsie: Right, right...okay.

Joanie: Okay so that's number two; to really practice that. The key is not to just listen, but the key is to repeat back what you heard because that really makes sure that person is listening. The most important part.

Dotsie: Okay so let's go to number three then we'll see if anybody has a question.

Joanie: Number three is to treat your spouse as you would a stranger. You think about it. I am amazed when I see people and the first time they meet somebody, oh my goodness, they can't do enough for that person, they're kind,

they're respectful, they're patient, and I think this is really what bugs some women when they can't get their husband to communicate with them, but then they meet somebody who is a business partner, or someone at a party, or whatever. And all of a sudden they are understanding, and they are patient, and they're listening, respectful, and it's like what gives here? What's going on?

So I look at it as like your spouse is someone that you married, that you say you love, and you've built probably a home together, or maybe have a business together, or you have children together. Why do you not treat that spouse, or the other person like you would someone you totally have no connection with, or just met? So I'm always baffled with that whole thing. But really, if both parties can say, you know what, I honor you, and that's the whole thing about marriage. Just say I honor you, I love you, and I respect you, and I want to treat you like, better than a stranger whom I might not ever see again. I always get baffled on that one myself, but I think that's great advice for a couple to work on. Pretty obvious but yet it's something that is back to basics.

Dotsie: If anyone wants to ask a question or comment about anything Joanie has talked about so far, go ahead and let us hear from you.

Caller 1: Hi, my name is Peggy. Just coming back to what Dotsie was just saying about if your partner doesn't want to cooperate, doesn't want to get involved in the situation, and you get to the point you want to call it quits. What happens if your husband starts accusing you of being selfish then? I mean can you just sit there and say, yes, it's about time I become selfish because you haven't been giving me any respect, etc?

Joanie: Well, personally I just had a vision as I went back to my—because I was married for twenty years and I had heard that. And it was when I finally got the guts to speak up and take care of me, and take care of my boundaries, and I heard you're being selfish or you're being too sensitive, and I just thought, you know what, before I understood that I would think, oh man, I must be, what's wrong with me? Then I would go back into my old behavior until it would surface again and just bother me to that point where I would get enough guts to speak up again. And then when I really found out through my own counseling, through that whole process, and then even more and more when I would work with couples, is that that person was just passive aggressive. And that passive aggressive stuff is so controlling and really made me feel so awful that I had no right to expect any of this which no one should ever feel that way. And you have a right to feel good and you have a right to be heard and be respected. The person who is passive aggressive is a very difficult person or a very difficult situation to live with. But once again, that's my personal experience. I still say; I always advise people to go and get counseling, or talk to a family counselor, because if you want to save the marriage, then that person, to me, has to come along and want to help to make it better and if they don't, sometimes it doesn't leave you much of another choice. Does that answer it a little bit?

Caller 1: Yes, I think I am definitely in the same position that you were in.

Dotsie: Well let me add this Peggy. If you don't look out for yourself, and your spouse isn't, who will? So you do have to put yourself first. I mean, in a marriage, we're supposed to outdo one another with kindness. That's something I always go back to. And if we aren't putting one another first and looking out for each other's best interest, then who will look out for ours? If our spouse isn't doing it, we need to do it for ourselves. So I would say that you just need to stand up for yourself and say, you know, if you want to call me selfish, call me selfish, but everybody has needs. And my needs aren't being met. You know, that type of thing. But I think that Joanie is so right in mentioning this whole passive aggressive thing going on.

Joanie: And it's very hard; very controlling, and when you doubt yourself to that degree and you don't believe in yourself, and my self-esteem was so low at that time, you know, I would immediately just go back into the old self like, wow, I better stop thinking about that, those kinds of things, or maybe I am being selfish, and then my gut would tell me; maybe a month later, and I would come back to the same conclusion that you know what, this still doesn't feel right. And so part of it is to listen to your gut, but it is scary. It's like, am I right, or I'm questioning myself. And that's when it's good to go and get some kind of support to really help you sort it out and to know that it is not wrong to want to have respect, to be heard, and not to be treated that way.

Dotsie: Yeah, and also, for anyone listening on the call, if your spouse won't go with you, go for yourself. I mean, you know, the bottom line is if we think there is something happening in the marriage, or they're not willing to work at it, and they're not willing to go with you, you still need to take care of yourself. And just going and dumping on a therapist or something, can give you more strength, I think. You become more confident and better able to make whatever decision you decide to make about a marriage.

Joanie: And you'll get more clarity. And part of it too is I've learned to listen to my gut; to be aware of those red flags. Because I just thought is this the way I'm supposed to be living? Is this normal? Is this how other couples are? And then I came to the conclusion and it was like no, I want better for me and I want to be in a situation where I feel that I am honored. I want to honor them, I want to be kind to them, but I also feel as though I deserve it myself. And Dotsie I think you made a great point. It's like, if they don't go, go for yourself.

Dotsie: Right. And you know what? I just received an email from someone else who's on our call, one of our members. And they said to ask Peggy simply if the statement is true. Are you selfish? If you are not selfish and you know you are not selfish, move on. And that came from somebody else that's on the call and

they didn't want to interrupt. But you know, really, if you ask yourself that question, and you know you're not selfish, it doesn't have any value.

Caller 1: And Joanie, you're right, it's the gut feeling. I'm the one right, and things like that.

Dotsie: Okay Peggy, feel free to ask another question, but we're going to see does anybody else have a question or comment to this point, and then we're going to move on to number four.

Caller 1: Okay.

Dotsie: Okay, anyone else? Okay, you want to move on to number four, Joanie?

Joanie: Definitely. Number four is to never stop spoiling each other. And I have heard even just from other couples and they've made the same comments to what I had said here. They say you know what, when we stopped spoiling each other something happened to the marriage. And it's not that you have to plan a big weekend away, or whole week vacation, or course we'll take that. But it doesn't have to be that. I always think that when the spoiling stops, the marriage is in trouble. But the whole key is to keep it simple. It doesn't have to be a big ordeal. If you know that person is running late and they are coming home, well what would be something that they would love to have at the door? You know, maybe it is a cup of tea, or a glass of wine, or a cup of coffee, or something. That type of thing. My daughter and her husband, they've only been married about two and a half years, and you know, if she's running late she'll call, and for her, it's a great thing if he gets the dinner started. Maybe they're having rice or something, or whatever, or he puts the grill on and starts grilling. That is just the spoiling. And it can be any little thing; any little thing you can think of that person; it would mean a lot to that person. It would instantly bring them some joy and bring a smile to their face, and they would just be so honored to think that you think not only enough of them to do it, but that you knew enough to do it.

Dotsie: Right and you know Joanie, with today's technology, I think it's great the way you can text one another in the middle of a work day, or email one another, leave voice mails, whatever. There are just so many ways to communicate these days. And I think that's really helpful. In fact, I was reading this article about the benefits of text messaging which I thought was kind of funny. And this therapist was saying that he had a couple in his office who were going through a really hard time. And they found that when one of them—and I think it's kind of pathetic, but if it works—one of them would be upstairs and the other one was downstairs; and they would text message each other whatever their argument was. They were doing it by text messaging. And they could work it out because they weren't yelling and screaming, and getting sidetracked. And I just thought,

oh my gosh, that is like way too funny for me, but after reading it I thought, well, I guess that makes sense. You have to do whatever works, I guess.

Joanie: Well it almost reminds me of “twitter;” you only have 140 characters, too.

Dotsie: Right and so you get the main point across, and then, you know, you sit, and you read, and then you have to respond. So you’re listening, you’ve got to be reading and hearing them in order to respond. So anyway, I just thought I would throw that in there.

Joanie: I want you to hold that thought because after we do number five, I’m going to actually talk about more communicating with each other. So kind of hold that thought as far as why they are even arguing to begin with, and what usually causes a lot of the arguing. Just kind of hold that thought.

Dotsie: Okay.

Joanie: But you know, be creative of how you can spoil each other. And once again, I always say go back to—it’s twenty years later, and I know it’s twenty years later and people get bored, whatever, but be creative and have some fun. And by spoiling each other, to me it just kind of recharges the marriage, and now all of a sudden people are just trying to outdo each other and they say, wow they just really spoiled me and it was so much fun. And then the other person is just as happy because they see how much it meant to that person and then the other person tries to outdo the other one, and you can get caught up in that. It’s just a wonderful thing. So once again, it is focusing on simple little things but can really make a difference.

Dotsie: Right. Now do you want to see if anybody else has anything to say at this point?

Joanie: Yeah, sure.

Dotsie: Okay why don’t we and it can be about just about anything on the topic and even if it’s a comment or something that you’ve heard that would be helpful on this topic, that’s fine too. If we don’t hear anything, we’ll move on to number five [pause]. Okay, why don’t we move on.

Joanie: Okay, number five is talking a little bit about what you said before about kindness, you know, it’s along with the spoiling, but of course doing an act of kindness. I’m always so impressed of how people do acts of kindness for strangers and I say keep it going and never stop because that’s a wonderful thing. But don’t forget your spouse. Think about how you feel when you do an act of kindness for a stranger, or your spouse, and how that other person feels. And that’s so important to continue with the act of kindness; to do something. And

what does that really say to that person, you know? I care enough to think about doing it, and I love you, and I want to show my love. So a simple little thing such as doing an act of kindness.

Dotsie: And do you have any good examples of like an act of kindness, or something like that, that you would want to share? Just simple little things?

Joanie: Well even with my former marriage when we both ran the hardware store together, and I was running busy with the kids that day, and he was manning the store, and I would just stop and get a cup of coffee and bring it in. And to tell you the truth, I still do that today even though we're divorced, and it's been twelve years later. And sometimes he will—because I don't own the hardware store anymore—but he might allow me to have a piece of equipment to help me in the yard, or something. And just to show my appreciation. I mean, he was shocked the first time that I did this. And I brought him a cup of coffee and I said, you know, you didn't have to do that but I so appreciate it, and here's a cup of coffee to show my appreciation. And of course he hadn't charge me for it either. So for me it was just...but that was even when we were married. That was just a little thing. All it was, was a cup of coffee. He did, one time I remember, I was taking a course, and in my book, he had written little notes with just a smiley face on it so when I would open up the chapter, there would be a little note in there, or it was "see you later," or "have fun," or just that little silly thing that he took the time, found my book, and inserted little notes inside.

Dotsie: Right. And that reminds me of something that we do. I just love this. If we are coming and going, and we're not here at the same time, we always leave notes to one another on the counter. You know, just put the time on it, and where we're going, and what we're doing, and see you soon; or catch you later; meet you here; whatever. And that, I just think that—I've taught my kids to do that because I think it's just a thoughtful thing to do for the people you are living with. So everybody knows where everybody is and that type of thing. You know, another thing that my husband and I often do for one another is we put toothpaste on the other's toothbrush. If like I'm going to bed, and I'm brushing my teeth first, I'll get his out and I'll put toothpaste on his because he's probably coming in right behind me. Or just starting the shower...gosh, there are so many simple, little things!

Joanie: So many. It doesn't even have to cost any money, at all. A lot of these things that we are talking about, it doesn't matter what the economy is doing, because these are basic things we should be doing for our marriage all the time. So when you start to think about it; when you put it all together, just imagine the different energy of this relationship. If you're focusing on their strengths and you're truly listening, and you're treating them better than a stranger by being respectful and all that, and you're spoiling them like—I love the toothbrush and all that—but also continuing with the same idea with an act of kindness, that you literally thought of that. So can you imagine—in fact I would question myself in

that how could a marriage fail if people were doing this unless it was a serious situation.

Dotsie: Well you know what, Joanie, I think what happens is; I just refer to them as a rut. People just get in ruts. And maybe after hearing what you have to say today, it can just put a whole different spin on it and kind of get you back to where you were when you were happier in your marriage by just focusing on the positive, affirming one another, doing nice things for one another, putting one another first. I think it's the right way to think about marriage. But in this day and age, when everybody is so busy running here and there, you kind of forget your biggest advocate in life if you're married; and that should be your spouse.

Joanie: Absolutely. And think about when you were dating. I mean, did you not go out of your way for each other? Did you not do those little spoiling things? I remember even someone else, not necessarily my husband at the time, but he'd just show up and have a rose in his hand. I mean, gosh almighty, those are such a simple little things but you know it just feels like you could talk for hours on the phone and that person was really listening, and what the heck happened? So for me it's like back to basics. In today's economy, you hear about going back to basics. If a sport's team isn't doing well they say well we better get back to the basic skills and practice. Everything is back to basics and I really think that has to apply to our marriage. And so if people can just be aware of these things and if you can have someone you can be working with to say you know what, I just heard some great tips; they're simple and they're not going to cost us anything. How can we put these things into our lives, into our marriage and have them be part of our life everyday.

Dotsie: Right. Okay, let's see if anybody has a question because we do have a couple of resources that we'd like to mention before the call is over. If anyone has a question, please speak up now, and we'll see if Joanie can help you here. [pause]

Caller 2: Hello, Joanie, I'm enjoying this so much!

Joanie: Oh thanks!

Caller 2: You are really good. I just wanted to make a comment on what you were saying about trying all of these things. To me, it would be even more fun and maybe even put a little more mystery or spark back into it, if you didn't tell that you were doing these things.

Joanie: Oh no, that's even better.

Caller 2: What happens is that I think you might get really excited when you see a positive reaction.

Joanie: Oh yeah, that's part of the whole thing. If you're going to do an act of kindness or spoil them, I wouldn't even say anything; just do it. Because you're really doing it without expecting anything in return. That's the key here.

Caller 2: Right, you're hoping, but you're not expecting.

Joanie: Good point. Good point! You're hoping that he is going to amp it up and try to outdo you.

Caller 2: Yeah, I think it might make you want to do even more, and then they're going to think, hey, that was kind of neat, and they might try something of their own. Anyway, I just wanted to make that comment.

Joanie: Oh thanks. And the thing of it is, the receiver and the giver both get so much out of it.

Caller 2: It's a win-win.

Joanie: It's a win-win. You know, sometimes you wonder if your children are listening but as you get older, you find out that they have listened somewhat and now my daughter is married and in her twenties, and I've always talked about doing an act of kindness for strangers. And I remember giving her an example, we've all heard it, where if you're in a coffee line, or a drive up in a coffee drive up lane and you just decide to pay for the person behind you; a cup of coffee. And so she called me one morning and said, "Mom, this really works." I said why, what happened, and she said, "Well, I was so stressed out that morning and I was waiting for the person to hand me my coffee, so I decided, you know what, I've got to help myself a little bit here and kind of distress." So she said, "I decided to try this and I said to the lady at the window, you know what? I don't know what the person behind me is getting, but here is a couple of bucks. Put it toward their coffee." And she said I never knew who it was, she never knew what their reaction was, but she said all I knew was that I drove away and I felt great because maybe I helped their day, and maybe they have a whole different outlook on their day because they get a free cup of coffee. So that to me was just a wonderful thing to hear of something like that. So it's like you said, it's not planned, just go do it and have fun.

Dotsie: Yeah, and you know what, we have—when we've gone on trips and had to take two cars; we've done that. You know, like when you have to pay a toll? And if my husband is ahead of me, he'll sometimes pay for me. Now we have speed-pass, so we don't do it anymore. But it's just such a pleasant surprise to pull off and think, oh my gosh, that was so nice. I mean, you know, just something little. So I think it's important for us to all to just think, what nice little things can we do for one another? Whatever it is that we are already doing on a regular basis, just kick it up a notch. If you already fed your husband dinner every

night, just put a placemat down, and a napkin, and set the table a little differently, or light a candle, or whatever.

Joanie: Well part of it too is once again just to be aware because I think we get so caught up in our everyday stuff that we're almost like robots. And we do our deal, we do what we gotta do, but we don't consciously be present in the moment and just say, you know what, let's just all do something good here for each other. And that's part of it. We've got to be conscious.

Dotsie: Right, well that's a good point. There's something else I wanted to throw in this teleseminar because just like women go through menopause and it does affect our moods, etc, men also go through, of course, a similar midlife crisis. And we've done a teleseminar before with Jed Diamond, and we're going to be doing another one with him. But Jed has two Web sites. He wrote the book, ***The Irritable Male Syndrome***. And the reason I mention this is because we interviewed him, and we have one of his teleseminars archived in our Member Benefits area and it's excellent. Because what he does is he points out what men are going through and why men are often in the funk that they're in, and how to help them get out of these funks. And I just think it is a huge part of this because it's really not only about us; it's about them and what they're going through, too. And being able to understand a midlife man, and what they're going through, can help us. So I just want to share his Web address.

It's the www.theirritablemale.com and he also has another site called, www.menalive.com. And he's written several books and his name is Jed Diamond, and we're going to be interviewing him again this year. So I just thought I'd mention that because I think that's a big piece of the puzzle. We have to consider what men are going through at midlife, too. And then let's see. There's something Joanie that you have on your Happy Wednesday site. It's an assessment. Do you want to tell us about that?

Joanie: It's actually called a ***Self Discovery Report***. So ask yourself these questions, or maybe you have asked yourself these questions concerning your spouse or partner. Why did they do that? What were they thinking? Or what were they not thinking? And sometimes we might even ask ourselves, what is the matter with that person; why can't they be more normal, like me? So what this is really saying is to communicate with each other and try to understand each other, we don't have a manual, but to try to understand each other, sometimes it feels like you have a blindfold on, in a dark room, and you're trying to find the light switch. It's frustrating, it's stressful, but there is hope. And this ***Self Discovery Report*** that I'm telling you about, I've used it a million times with women and men individually, and as couples, and it's actually Certified Behavior Specialist with Dr. Robert Rohm, out of Georgia, and this program is now, ah, the Governor of Georgia has passed it to be in the schools, and Texas is bringing it into their schools so it also for kids and teachers and every human being. If you go to www.happywednesday.com and you will see on the left-hand side there are

several links. And you just click on assessments. And it will open up to a page and it will have a big white box that says **Discover Yourself Report**. And just so that you'll understand what this is all about, you want to look for number 3002. Once you open up that page, you scroll down, number 3002, it's like \$12.95 and they take 10% off. It changes people's lives because what at first, you learn this formula. First you learn to understand why *you* do what you do. Most people aren't even quite clued into that. And then you understand why the other person does what they do. And then you put it all together and you create a better relationship. And as Dr. Robert Rohm always says, that if I understand you, and you understand me, chances are that we will have a better relationship. So what you learn here about this here, first of all, is how you interpret things. Because you hear things differently, every human being does. There's nobody else like us, we are definitely all unique. So I hear things differently than you do. I have a different perspective than you do. But we all forget that. We all think that everyone thinks the same way that we do.

And if people do something that they feel as though someone did it on purpose, it's generally because we take it personally. But that person hasn't done it on purpose, they're doing basically something from who they are. So if people can understand that, and I always say to parents, because I work a lot with parents too, I always say, you know what, what you're saying is not necessarily what your kids are hearing. Same thing for your spouse. What you're saying is not necessarily what they're hearing. They're hearing the information based on their style, on their personality. When people understand this and get it, oh my goodness, it's like the doors are open and the awareness and people are getting along unbelievably.

Dotsie: That's good. Now let me just ask you about the assessment. You go there, and you can pay for it online, and you take it. Is it something that you take online, and you, Joanie Winberg, get the results?

Joanie: If someone puts in their email, it puts my email in there. They will send the results back to me. And if someone does do that, then what I can do is then send them, because I have a wonderful recording of where I was talking with a group of parents working with their children, but it's also the same idea that you would be applying to spouse, or children, or boss. And I will be very happy to send that to you as a gift. So if you go on there and you get the assessment, and then my phone number is there too so if you want any explanation, but this recording that I have really will walk you through the whole process and give you some great information about what that whole report means. It's only 24, simple little—it's not even little questions. It's basically deciding what you like most, I mean what you like least, and what you like most. And it will spit out letters that will actually describe you. And every person that has taken this has said, oh my goodness, this is right on. It just narrows me, it nails me exactly who I am and why I do what I do. It's such an eye-opener.

Dotsie: Okay now Joanie, so it's not the kind of thing that you can print and do on your own. Because if you do that, then you don't get any response.

Joanie: What do you mean?

Dotsie: Like can you actually get the assessment, and print it, and do it, and do it that way?

Joanie: Oh yes. You do it online, and then what happens, then you have a four-page report that you can print out that's all about you. It will ask you, do you want this to be sent anywhere else? And so I'll make sure that everyone has my email so that they can plop my email in there and then I can send them that link to hear that whole program to help them understand the assessment a little more.

Dotsie: Okay, good. I just want to mention that you were talking about how everyone hears something differently. I have to tell you. We have this forum community at www.boomerwomenspeak.com. There are over 60 forums, and every forum is a topic that pertains to all things boomer women. So there are things in there about eldercare, and retirement, and grandchildren, whatever. It is so true that everyone comes to that forum with their own perspective and everything they've lived in their life before them. And it's funny because my assistant, Georgia Richardson and I, I think we have a lot in common; we do think a lot alike in many ways, and sometimes in the forums, we interpret a post completely differently. It's just interesting because we have to moderate these forums. And sometimes it's like, oh my gosh, what do you think of this? And I'm like, nope, don't think anything of it. Or I'm like what do you think of this...nope, don't think anything of it. It's just interesting because I honestly believe that everything that we've lived prior to this moment has something to do with how we respond to life, period.

Joanie: Plus our personalities is basically—and this is what is great about this assessment, this ***Self Discovery Report***—it shows you two charts. One is how you adapt to your environment, and the other one is your DNA, how you're born. And it really amazing because that is how we're born. And I've done this ***Self Discovery Report*** I don't know how many times thinking, ah, I can fool this thing, and I still spit out the same old, I'm still the same person. Because it just nails it, it just tells you who you are. That's the most important thing. Let me make sure that everyone has my email because if they go on there, this information will be really good; it will walk them through, and they'll understand the report even more. It's a very simple email. It's jw@joanwinberg.com. And just include that when you are taking your report. There is a spot where you can have it sent somewhere else besides your own email. I would get the response, I would know it, and then I would email you back that recording so that will give you even more information on how to understand the report even more.

Dotsie: Okay great. Do you have anything else you'd like to add? Why don't you give us your Web addresses one more time.

Joanie: Okay, I have two of them www.happywednesday.com is where you'll find the *Self Discovery Report*, and also as far as the *National Association of Divorce for Women and Children*, that's www.NADWC.org, and also a great resource, but it's a resource if you know someone who is going through a divorce, or after divorce, then that was actually created for them. Or someone who is single again through the loss of a loved one, once again, gives some great information for them, too.

Dotsie: Now let's just see if anyone has a question or comment before we close this call. [pause]. Okay, I think that about ties things up.

Joanie: Great call, Dotsie, I really enjoyed being here.

Dotsie: Oh gosh, thanks so much for doing it. I'm hoping and praying that it makes a difference in couple's lives everywhere. It's so much better to be happy in a marriage than miserable, isn't it?

Joanie: Absolutely!

Dotsie: Okay, well thanks so much for all of your valuable information. We appreciate it. And thanks everyone for being on the call. Have a great day.