



GROWING YOUR MARRIAGE

THE MARRIAGE ALMANAC
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Fruitful Words by Toni Rose



“Joe, I have to tell you something,” I said from the kitchen. He approached me with dread, bracing for the next words. Although he didn’t respond aloud, his body language screamed, “NOOOOOO – I can’t take criticism, nagging, correcting, or complaining right now.” He had worked a full day at his computer and then joined me for an additional two hours of weeding the garden and harvesting blackberries.



I continued, “You do a really good job picking the berries. I noticed your bucket is way better than mine. Your berries are always ripe and there are very few leaves. That makes it so much easier for me when I clean and freeze them. Thank you”. Again, Joe had no words, but his face relaxed, and he walked a little taller as he left to take a shower.

In the days that followed, Joe volunteered several times to harvest blackberries. He was really taking pride in his efforts and wanted to help me in a practical way. He mentioned that he was starting to enjoy listening to music and picking berries. He was finding purpose in this work, not just imposition.

WOW – How many times have I crushed his spirit when I could have offered encouragement? How often have I chastised my husband for not doing things the right way, when a little gratitude and encouragement could have blessed him, and ultimately blessed me? I truly want my words to be fruitful and honoring to Joe. This was a sweet reminder to do better.

Proverbs 18:21 NLT

The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences.



**** **Announcement** ****

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