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ARE YOU a Pet Person?



Some people can't imagine life without them, while others would rather admire them from afar. The truth is, almost everybody has at least one pet—even if they are unaware of it.

Most of these pets have strange names like “**cut me off in traffic**,” “**leave the cabinet doors and drawers open**,” or “**interrupt me while I’m talking**.” Ah, yes, pet peeves. These are the pets you love to hate. When these little peeves show up, you can't control how you react or how you feel. They instantly zap your joy and can leave you feeling irritated for hours.

Usually, your pet peeve is related to some injustice or something you believe is inconsiderate. Most times, you can make a pretty sound case for why you feel the way you do, but I just wonder ... Do you really want a peeve for a pet?

When you have a pet, you have to feed it, protect it, look after it, and do an excellent job caring for it so that it stays alive. Typically, the pet gives you some kind of companionship or enjoyment in return. When was the last time your pet peeve brought you any kind of joy?

What if the peeve exists, not to bring you joy but to invite you into a new level of freedom? What if it's

not meant to be a lifelong companion but a guide? Getting curious about the things that bother us can often lead us into a conversation with God that shows us how He can work all things together for good. He can take something that irritates you and turn it into something that generates more love, gratitude, and compassion in your life.

You don't have to take my word for it. Try it for yourself. The next time someone activates that pet peeve, instead of marinating in the injustice or trying to control your response, ask God, “Is my reaction really about [fill in the blank] or is there something deeper you want to heal/reveal in me?” Wait for an answer. Chances are He's been waiting to commune with you about this very topic for quite some time. Be still and let His healing presence release you from the obligation to keep a pet that brings no joy.

It's funny how life works,

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<https://funnyhowmarriageworks.com>



John and Bev Cooper
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The Burden That Sparked a Movement

This year marks FamilyLife's 50th anniversary, and it's a good moment to remember the foundation God laid long before any of us were involved. For the next seven months, we will be sharing short stories that trace our beginnings and highlight the lessons that still guide us today. My hope is that these snapshots deepen your

sense of where we've come from and where we're headed.

Back in the early 1970s, Campus Crusade for Christ was growing quickly, and from the outside it looked like everything was moving in the right direction. But as leaders traveled to visit campus teams, they kept running into the same quiet reality: couples who loved Jesus and were pouring themselves into ministry were struggling at home. They weren't lazy or uncommitted — they simply didn't have the tools to build oneness in their marriage. That gap created a real burden. It wasn't dramatic, but it was persistent. Ministry was advancing, but marriages were limping, and the tension between those two things couldn't be ignored.

As that burden grew, it became clear that something deeper was happening. These couples weren't failing because they lacked desire; they were failing because no one had ever shown them how to build a biblical marriage. There was a missing piece — a practical, Scripture-rooted understanding of how to love, communicate, forgive, and pursue oneness. And in that space of need, God began stirring something new. It wasn't a program or a strategy at first. It was simply a growing conviction that if we were going to reach the world, we had to start by strengthening the homes of the people doing the reaching.

Looking back, it's easy to see how God was laying the foundation long before anyone realized it. The burden wasn't a distraction from ministry — it *was* the ministry. It was the first sign that God was about to build something that would outlast trends, leadership changes, and cultural shifts. Before there were conferences, resources, or a national footprint, there was just a group of leaders who cared enough to pay attention to the quiet cracks forming in marriages. And that simple willingness to see the need became the seed of what would eventually grow into FamilyLife.

Grateful to be in this with you.
John & Bev



This month is Cruise Month for the FamilyLife ***Love Like You Mean It®*** Cruise, a full seven-day experience where thousands of couples are out on the water investing in their marriage in a really unique way. Bev and I love what this cruise offers because it feels more like a vacation than a conference, yet it still gives couples space to reconnect and grow. It's also a great option when one spouse isn't quite ready for a traditional marriage getaway — the cruise gives you time together, room to breathe, and a gentle on-ramp to conversations that matter. Next year's cruise sails out of Miami, Florida, and if you're looking ahead to 2027, we'd encourage you to consider it. You can find more information at: FamilyLife.com/LoveLikeYouMeanIt.



 We are very excited about Kristin moving back to the U.S. this month. She leaves behind some great friends and wonderful memories of her students. She is looking to teach somewhere on the Olympic Peninsula in northwest Washington—just across the Puget Sound from Seattle.

 This month, Bev and I will be serving the Napa *Weekend to Remember*. It will be a fun time working with our volunteer team, including one of our long-time ministry partners from Silverdale, WA.