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“The Best Marriage I Know”

The best marriage I know was between my oma, Hildegard Maeser, and my opa, Ottomar Maeser. They were never divorced in the more than fifty years they spent in wedded bliss, and they were only parted by the decease of my opa a year and a half ago. My oma and opa were wedded in a time when marriage meant something to people, when the recovery from World War II caused those who had survived it to cherish and appreciate how fortunate they were to still be able to be with their spouses. What was amazing was how they stayed together, despite the fact they were nearly complete polar opposites. The two of them had so many differences, yet they were absolutely perfect for each other.

Oma and Opa had their differences like all married couples, but they did know how to work them out. Most of today’s married couples are not able to reconcile their differences, which is what I believe what kills most young marriages. Both spouses try to maintain their old habits, and will refuse to compromise with their partner on was to keep these differences from clashing. My oma and opa knew their differences, and were able to deal with them while making multiple moves. They moved from Germany to Canada, Canada to Ohio, and Ohio to Arizona. Not only did they keep it together through all of that, but also through raising two children. Several young marriages are terminated by the introduction of one child, or even by the debate of having a child, on occasion.

Humor was another major component of my oma and opa's strong relationship. They made a collection of home movies in the first years of their marriage. Even though the films were free of sound, my oma and opa's actions and facial expressions told it all.

Also, my oma and opa exhibited what is probably one of the most important parts of a healthy marriage: team work. When they lived in Ohio, Oma and Opa built their own house from the ground up. Oma and Opa did hire some people to help with the job. I mean, two people can not build a proper house in a reasonable amount of time. However, they acted as their own contractors, and helped out with such tasks as wiring, putting up the drywall, and doing the trim. They also displayed ironclad cooperation when it came raising their two children, my mom and Uncle Norman. Unlike with some young couples, Oma and Opa did not allow their kids to pin them against each other. They made sure to be firm and just with their punishments, and would both take their turn when delivering it. I have my mom as witness to the fact that when she had ever gotten in trouble, she would first get punished by Oma, and then by Opa.

Oma and Opa displayed extreme supplies of loyalty and unity towards each other during their many years of matrimony. Their relationship survived through multiple moves, which took them across three countries. They supported each other, and this, among the numerous other important qualities that held their marriage firm, causing the strong love they had forged when they first met in Hamburg, Germany, over half a century ago, to burn just as brightly as they watched their grandchildren grow. As my Opa neared his passing, Oma stayed by his side, and loved him just as much as he ever had. They were one of today's couples who loved each other so much that only death could separate them.