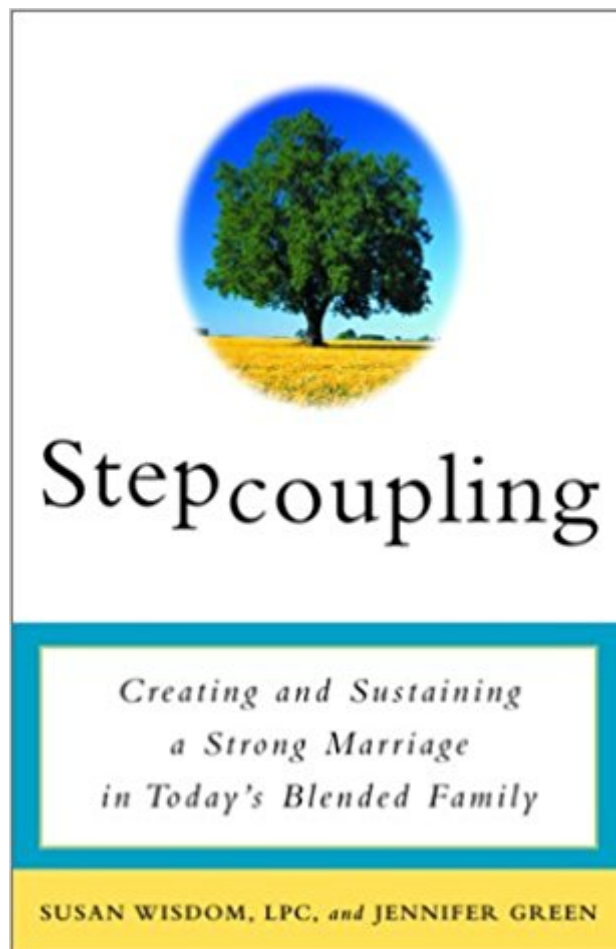




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Stepcoupling: Creating And Sustaining A Strong Marriage In Today's Blended Family



Synopsis

Love may be sweeter the second time around, but once the bliss of a newfound relationship wears off a little, the reality of being part of a stepfamily sets in. If you are one of the millions of remarried Americans facing the challenge of blending two existing families into one cohesive whole, you are part of a stepcouple—and you know all too well how hard it can be to make your marriage work in sometimes tough terrain. Different parenting styles, finances, relationships with ex-spouses, legal matters, and even seemingly simple issues such as the kinds of chores assigned to children can chisel away at your union if you don't always make your marriage a priority. Stepcoupling offers advice for stepcouples on how to do just that—all the while strengthening their blended family with a healthy marriage. Susan Wisdom and Jennifer Green provide tips and strategies on dealing with the issues remarried couples face, with a wealth of advice from real-life stepcouples, such as:

- * Learning to tailor your expectations of your spouse or children and remembering that no family is perfect
- * Knowing where your boundaries are, whether involving a hostile ex-spouse or a stepchild who demands too much attention
- * Realizing that traits like flexibility, tolerance, forgiveness, and openness are especially essential in a stepfamily situation
- * Making time for talking, problem-solving, weekends away, and enjoying your marriage to constantly renew and strengthen your bond as a couple

Let this invaluable remarriage manual help you make your stepcouple the foundation of a strong, happy, and successful stepfamily.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am a clinical social worker in private therapy practice. I purchased this book three years ago to help a family with whom I was working in therapy. Since then, I have quoted the highlighted passages from my own copy numerous times in sessions, and have loaned the book out so many times that a client finally bought me a newer copy, as a gift for helping her family so much. The best thing about this book is how it highlights the couple relationship. Blended family couples finally have support in creating the foundation for success. Many texts about blending families and helping children deal with divorce focus on how the "children should come first", to the exclusion of what is necessary to keep the adults healthy. Children's needs are certainly paramount, but often that belief feeds a system wherein parents are almost forced to create a triangulated situation between their biological children and their new spouse. This book clearly explains how to avoid that triangulation, and to keep the power where it belongs: with the two adults in the home, as a team. As a structural family therapist, this book helps me to show parents what we mean when we talk about the "executive power system" in the family. In order to have healthy blended families, it is absolutely essential to have a strong parent couple in each family. This book helps the reader with the myths and misconceptions of "step-families", which are really better termed "blended families". It gives good suggestions on how to deal with "the exes" -- the other parents of the children in your home. It addresses the "yours, mine and ours" issues that come up when blended families add more kids to the family. It also addresses special considerations that need to be made when one parent has died.

I enjoyed the real-life stories in the book. It is nice to hear what other families are going through; although I wouldn't wish some of this mess on an enemy, it is nice to know you aren't alone. What I didn't like is that it seemed to have a "learn to just live with it" attitude. No, I don't think that children coming in and throwing their stuff all over the floor is "their way of making their mark on the house", I think it is disrespectful to do in anyone's home. If my step-children want to make a mark on our home, they can pick out pictures to hang on the walls or even draw pictures - I don't see how having to step over their stuff adds their mark. I surely don't see myself just learning to over-look such acts of disrespect for the rest of my married life. I enjoyed the reassurance that feelings are normal - such as not immediately falling in love with someone else's children, but I also think that if you are a rational adult, you already know you can't love anyone's kids the way you love your own. Most of the arguments described in this book could have been avoided had the step-couple discussed them BEFORE getting married. This book describes a world where you were so much in love that you ran into marriage (which not many divorced people do) and when the "love bubble" affect wears off you

are stuck with disputes about money and disciplining children rather than building a life together; simply unrealistic to me. It also seems to encourage building separate families within a family - I often feel like I expect more from my children than my step-children simply because my kids are here more; however, I think striving to make every child feel as if they are in the family, not just as temporary guests, is important.

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