

## Building Intimacy with God and Growing Closer Together

If we want to love our spouse with God's love, we have to be connected to Him and joined spiritually to one another. We can call this "spiritual bonding", which means consistently placing God at the center of our marital relationship and growing closer to Him as a couple. How can our relationship with God affect our marriage? What are some of practical ways we can bond together? Marriage first and foremost is a *spiritual relationship*. It works best when two people are connected individually to God, walking with Him, obeying Him in the Scripture, and praying as individuals and as a couple.

**Jelena Sivulka** was born and raised in Serbia, where she got her master's degree in psychology and a master's degree in theology. She became a Christian 25 years ago and a few years later got involved in ministry with her husband Greg, planting churches, distributing humanitarian aid, and partnering with Joni and Friends, serving people with disabilities. Jelena has also worked as a counsellor in Serbia's schools and a social worker, and she is currently working as therapist in a medical clinic. She is the founder and director of the non-profit organization Hana's Hope. She has been blessed with three children: Benjamin, Sara, and Hana, who has autism.

### I. Introduction

#### A. A love story by Bowlby

- Becoming attached
- A Primal Panic, when attachment alarm goes off

#### B. Celebrating moments of connection

- Regular small gestures that convey the message "You matter to me" go a long way in keeping a relationship safe and sound  
Study of clinically depressed monks, Alfred Tomatis

### II. From Polka to Tango

*"We waste time looking for the perfect lover, instead of creating the perfect love."*

#### A. Being OPEN

#### B. Being ATTUNED

#### C. Being RESPONSIVE

### III. Divine love

#### A. The Maker

B. The Lover

C. The Keeper

**“Nor may we ever cease willing or loving, until we have Him in fullness of joy. And then we may no more will.” Julian of Norwich**

IV. Different kind of love making

- a. Solitude and inner silence
- b. Praying
- c. Listening
- d. Communion
- e. Worship
- f. Confession
- g. Celebration

V. Higher calling

Faithful Christian marriages serve as living icons of the faithful, Covenant-keeping God happily united with his faithful and adoring Bride (Ephesians 5).

***Suggested Readings:***

Karen, Robert, *Becoming Attached*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Johnson, Sue, *Hold Me Tight*, New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company, 2008.

Norwich, Lulian, *Revelations of Divine Love*, Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, INC., 2006.

Thomas, Gary L., *Sacred Marriage*, Grand Rapid: Zondervan, 2000.