

My Marriage Lasted Longer Than My Ring

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My husband took the band to the jeweler to get it fixed because it wore so thin that it cracked all the way through.

I remember the day we picked it out. We went to a jewelry store on Miracle Mile in Coral Gables, FL. I was 19 and he was 24. I had said – out loud, many times - I would never get married because what I had seen in my short life didn't hold great recommendations for marriage. I wasn't in love with the idea of marriage; I was in love with Michael. From our first date I loved that I could talk to him about anything. We dated for a year and knew we were both thinking of marriage when we sat at Mary Christmas Park and discussed weddings in general and then realized we were really talking about what our wedding would be like.

The day we picked out my engagement ring was bright and sunny. I tried it on and we asked the sales person if we could walk outside to see how it sparkled in the sun. Of course, she walked outside with us and the sun caught the brilliant cut of the diamond. It was stunning. The clerk explained that this was called a Love Diamond. It was a new brand and, if we purchased it, the jeweler guaranteed that he would buy it back if we ever wanted to exchange it for a larger stone. The sales girl looked me in the eye and said, "I don't think you are the type who will trade it in." And she was right. I've worn that ½ carat stone for 48 years.

I've thought about the myriad of things I've done while wearing that ring. I've taken care of our children from babies to adults and then held and played with my grandchildren. I've cooked and cleaned; typed on every kind of office typewriter and computer; answered phones and tried to help the people on the other end. I've taken care of my husband through minor illnesses and major heart surgery. I've driven or flown all over the country and out of the country to where ever my children lived so we could celebrate holidays, marriage, graduations or help with babies being born.

The most important thing I've done while wearing that ring is pray. At first, I prayed that God would change my husband. But God showed me through very hard times that I needed to change and become a woman who loves God with my whole heart. I prayed and read His Word so that I would be drawn to love my God that way. The result was a ton of brokenness – broken

dreams, broken expectations, broken illusions and, ultimately, broken hearts. The gold and stone of my ring went through heat, pressure and cutting to become what it is. So have I and so has our marriage. My love for God and for my husband has grown by leaps and I'm not the same girl who received that ring on a beautiful September night at Crest Lake Park in Clearwater, FL, and went on to receive its companion band on December 20, 1969 at a ceremony in Tampa.

We chose our ring at a jewelry shop on Miracle Mile, but we turned out to be the miracle.