

Immeasurably More



Mike and I celebrated our 35th anniversary in November and what a journey it has been! We have been abundantly blessed with two daughters and a son, all married to some pretty special people. Last year, in a matter of four months, we were gifted with four absolutely precious grandsons and our hearts are expanding by the day! We are originally from the Chicagoland area but recently relocated to Spokane after traveling for 10 years and falling in love with the culture and beauty here.

We were very much in love and after dating for 3 years, we were married. At 20 and 18, we had so much to learn but knew we belonged together.

Because we each had our own wounds and insecurities from our past, we hurt each other and carried that heavy burden around with us for many years. We misunderstood, accused, and reacted to each other and sadly, it became our normal. We began having children but with the great joys of growing our family, we experienced new challenges and suffered great losses. Some days, life just felt almost too hard and hope became like a shadow instead of a bright light. We were stuck in the patterns we had learned like driving in deep ruts and sometimes just bottoming out in a pothole where you think this is the time that you won't be able to get back out because too much damage had been done. I described this tiring existence "rewind, repeat" because it was like reliving the same nightmare over and over and over. We just didn't know how or if we could make things better. Not only were we struggling, but now our children were and that just broke my heart.

I promised myself at a very young and tender age that when I had a family our home would be filled with peace and safety, not like the one I had grown up in. My greatest fear was reality. I had failed myself and my children, and eventually just tried to settle in the fact that this was how our family would be and just try to cope, making the best of it. We all loved each other and that would have to be enough. Until one day, while in the midst of yet one more battle, it was like God put a new pair of glasses on me and I saw clearly the destruction and then the fear in our children's faces and this courage like I've never had before rushed through me, praise God! I knew it was time! We either committed to doing the healing work or we'd be done. God would have to provide, we NEEDED him to.

A friend had given me a business card awhile before that for a Christian counselor at an office much like Genesis. Mike called and we made our first appointment not knowing where the time or money would come from. We dragged ourselves there for months praying it would get easier. The battle was HARD! Unpacking our past was painful. We often wanted to quit but we knew God was able so we worked very hard through the process, being so vulnerable with each other and with our counselor. He led us in the truth of God's word. He prayed with us. He loved and cared for our family, and we trusted him. God provided so much more than we could have ever imagined. Somehow, there was always money to pay for the sessions. We had courage to go each week and our children's needs were met. We gained knowledge and insight and learned new patterns. We were given tools to help us navigate and function in a Godly marriage. 3 years after we began, we graduated and joyfully renewed our vows as a family on our 20th wedding anniversary. Rejoicing together in what God had done, we had





renewed hope that he would continue to do good work in us! Praise God for his healing power and faithfulness. We are forever grateful and honored to be financial partners with Genesis Institute as they help so many heal as we were. We believe in their mission of soul care through counseling because we are living proof that it changes lives!

~ Kathy and Mike Swanson