



REFLECTIONS ON BEING INTENTIONAL

Buy a Couch!

by Paul and Tracy Satterfield

As COVID-19 and the lockdown drags on, it brings with it new anxieties, new fears and a heightened sense of instability. It also forces us spend more time at home with our spouse (which presents a whole new set of anxieties!).

Tracy and I used to bid each other well in the mornings, go to work, then greet each other at the end of the day. Rinse, wash, repeat. Our lives were compartmentalized, and predictable, and we liked it like that. When the pandemic hit, we both started

working from home, blurring the difference between work and home, and even turning our little kitchen into the “employee lunchroom”. As much as we enjoy each other’s company, this was a bit much. We all love chocolate cake, but can’t eat an entire one... every night. Which brings us to the couch.

As Tracy and I discussed our new normal (ironically while eating chocolate cake), we discovered that it wasn’t the AMOUNT of time we were spending with each other, it was the TYPE of time we were spending with each other. We noticed that our ever so frequent exposure to each other deadened some our closeness, and that our time together wasn’t as special as it was in the Pre-COVID days. We made an intentional decision to use a new sofa as a mechanism to bring us closer together.

A few years ago we bought a beautiful leather couch for our living room. It matched the room, and looked stunning, but because it was so tall and narrow (funny how you never you notice that type of thing on the showroom floor) was terribly uncomfortable for 2 people to sit in, for long. The unforeseen result of this subtle back bending and leg numbing was that one of us usually went upstairs to watch “their” shows, while the other remained to watch something else. This forced an intimacy wedge between us, as we were now in other rooms during couple prime time.

After realizing that time spent together is an intimacy driver and is her love language, and that we weren’t escaping the lockdown anytime soon, we made an intentional decision to part ways with our perfectly matching and fairly new couch. Though it was not a wise financial move, it was priceless when measuring the value to our marriage. The new couch is big, fluffy, difficult to leave from, cuddly, and fits two middle agers, perfectly. When you sit down, it feels like you’re getting a hug from your grandma. The brain science of oxytocin combined with physical closeness is paramount to building a loving bond. Though we still squabble over viewing decisions (Hallmark vs History channels), we make it a point to have at least an hour a day, together, on our couch.

Paul and Tracy Satterfield have been married for 31 years and have 2 children in college (finally!). Parishioners at Holy Spirit, they live in Overland Park. They enjoy competitive BBQ’ing, traveling, and they serve as Regional Coordinators of the Retrouvaille marriage ministry.

