FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS

After the Baby: Making Sense of Marriage After Childbirth

Rhonda Kruse Nordin
Taylor Publishing (Apr 25, 2000)
Unknown $14.95 (256pp)
978-0-87833-168-0

“Nothing makes a marriage more vulnerable than having a child,” Nordin writes. Basing her book upon ten years of research with medical professionals, scholars and first-time parents, Nordin, who works with children and their families, may well have a classic on her hands. Her book provides a first-of-its-kind manual for couples who wish to learn beforehand what changes to expect in their marriage after the birth of a child.

What Dr. Spock once did to enlighten new moms about colic and diaper rash, Nordin does for laying out the challenges and changes that parenthood brings. Nordin assures her readers that change is not bad, only stressful. In fact, it is the book’s central theme that “changes and conflicts are a natural and predictable part” of parenthood, so the marital relationship must adjust accordingly. Knowing what to expect beforehand increases a couple’s chances of weathering the storm.

The book sets forth guidelines and facts for “green parents” about what changes to expect and how to deal with them. Topics range from physical and emotional problems that arise after birth to restoring sex and intimacy between exhausted parents. The book’s six sections include chapters that end with helpful “points to consider” as well as contingency and action plans parents may use as guidelines. That Nordin writes in clear, short sentences that interweave anecdotes, research and first-hand experiences in a earnest and readable manner makes it especially useful for the busy, stressed-out audience she’s targeting.

In a world where couples seek “magical solutions, instantaneous results, and concrete assurances,” Nordin looks to the simple and practical. Stating that women still do 75% of the feeding, diapering and bathing of a child, Nordin suggests that parents draw up an agreed-upon plan that divides childcare and household tasks. By highlighting the differences in intimacy needs, she shows couples how they can be more responsive to each other now that the “baby becomes the prism through which most new parents see the world.”

Running throughout the book is Nordin’s belief, substantiated by research and statistics, that parenthood unleashes the essence of adulthood. In a poignant chapter on the effects of divorce on children, she asks that couples rededicate themselves to the “fire-in-the-belly” conviction of their vows needed to brave the parental and marital challenges now facing them. It is real love, not romantic love, that will enable parents “to adjust their elegant vision of parenthood to awkward reality.” She convinces the reader that the effort is well worth it since the rewards of parenthood “go to the core of what it means to be alive.”
JUDY HOPKINS (April 15, 2000)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The author provided free copies of his/her book to have his/her book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the author for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission’s 16 CFR, Part 255.