



# Marriage Rules<sup>©</sup>

## “THREE LITTLE PIGS”

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The fairy tale fails to tell the rest of the story of the “three little pigs”.

As you may recall, the first little pig built his house of straw, the second of wood and the third of brick.

When the big bad wolf came to visit, each house collapsed, save the one home built brick-by-brick.

The first little pig wanted what he wanted when he wanted it.

Immediate gratification was his plan.

Gimme, gimme, gimme!

“Trick or treat, smell my feet, gimme something good to eat...now!”

Once the threat of the big bad wolf was gone, the first little pig quickly re-built his house of straw.

He was in a hurry to get on with his life.

For him, there was no time like the present.

And not a single moment to lose.

He met a female pig, just like himself, and they got married after a whirlwind courtship.

Shortly, thereafter, the big bad wolf returned in the guise of day-to-day marital and life challenges and stressors.

The first little pig and his wife struggled a bit before calling it quits.

Their divorce was as certain as their romance.

Sizzle followed by fizzle.

The second little pig also wanted what he wanted when he wanted it, but he was more patient.

Continued...

Moderate delay of gratification was his plan.

Trick or treat, smell my feet, give me something very good to eat...and I'll just wait for a while was his approach.

So when the big bad wolf threatened him no more, the second little pig re-built his house of wood in typical workmanlike fashion.

Not too fast and not too slow.

He met a female pig, just like himself and they got married after dating an acceptable length of time.

Then the big bad wolf returned in the guise of day-to-day marital and life challenges and stressors.

The second little pig and his wife struggled considerably but, instead of calling it quits, they managed to go into an indefinite holding pattern and then hung on for dear life.

The third little pig, like both of his brothers, wanted what he wanted when he wanted it, but he knew that some things take more time and effort than others.

Long-term delay of gratification was an important value for him which he always lived.

He dreamed of building a grand castle in the sky and knew in order to succeed he must start from the ground up.

Brick-by-brick.

One brick at a time.

Start with a dream.

Concretize it.

Set specific goals.

Identify subgoals.

Specify criteria and measures to let you know where you are in relation to where you want to be.

Ask often how you are doing.

Continued...

Recalibrate, as needed.

Stick with the plan.

Plan your work.

Work your plan.

No tricks. Eventual treats.

Some treats better than others.

Some treats lots better.

So when he met a female pig, just like himself, they eventually married, but only after rigorously testing out their relationship and sharing their innermost dreams and secrets and feelings and thoughts.

You see, the third little pig and his wife understood the priceless value of developing relational infra-structure without which, no house can endure, let alone, a home can be built.

The big bad wolf returned with a vengeance and yet was no match for the third little pig and his wife.

Each time, the wolf's fate was the same and each time the third little pig and his wife prevailed.

Finally, the wolf had no choice but to sheepishly retreat into the forest, never to be seen or heard from again.

The third little pig and his wife lived happily ever after.

They both wanted me to send you their regards and very best wishes.

You see, “hog heaven” really does exist for those couples who invest in their relational infra-structure.

For all others, “beware of the big bad wolf”!

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