

How Couples Can Work Together to Run a Home-Based Business

*The*  
*New* **In**  
**Business**  
*and* **In Love**

**Chuck and Aprill Jones**

A ***Possibility Press*** Book

# The *New* In Business *and* In Love

**Chuck and Aprill Jones**

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# Dedication



To God, our Father, who has blessed our life together in ways we never could have imagined.

To you, our readers, we sincerely hope your lives will be enriched by what we have shared.

# Acknowledgment



Thanks to our parents for the love and discipline in which we were raised, and the encouragement to develop our talents and gifts in a safe, secure environment.

Thanks to Cindy, Jason, and Ran for all the fun times, laughs, and lessons of life. And thanks to all our friends who have been our cheerleaders, sources of encouragement, and best buddies.

**Aprill:** Thanks to my English teachers at Warren County Senior High, particularly Douglas Reed and Elizabeth Womack. You saw in me a gift, and your recognition of that has been a source of inspiration my entire life.

**Chuck:** Thanks to Professor Richard Joel who helped set my career in the direction it is still going to this day. Thanks to Dr. Donald Hileman who encouraged me to “Go far, do much, and never be afraid of adventure.”

# Contents

Introduction	<b>Our Dream Came True</b>	7
Chapter 1	<b>What if This Is as Good as It Gets?</b>	9
Chapter 2	<b>Countering the “Why-Not-Tos”</b>	16
Chapter 3	<b>It Was the Best of Times and... the Most Challenging of Times!</b>	25
Chapter 4	<b>Whose Responsibility Is It?</b>	36
Chapter 5	<b>Money Matters</b>	46
Chapter 6	<b>It’s Already 7 a.m.—Why Aren’t You Up Yet?</b>	62
Chapter 7	<b>Mixing Business with Pleasure</b>	70
Chapter 8	<b>You’re Doing <i>What?</i></b>	77
Chapter 9	<b>Sorry Honey—I’ve Grown Quite Fond of Eating</b>	86
Chapter 10	<b>Little Karen’s Quite a Salesperson!</b>	94
Chapter 11	<b>Home Sweet Office, Office Sweet Home</b>	107
Chapter 12	<b>More Benefits of Working Together</b>	116
Chapter 13	<b>The Exciting Journey...Home</b>	119
The Authors	<b>Who Are Chuck and Aprill Jones?</b>	132

**“T**he tremendous level of happiness and joy we now experience is a direct result of deciding to start, build, sustain, and nurture our own home-based business. As other couples do, we got married to be together, and running a full-time home-based business together is the only way we know of doing this to the maximum.”

—Chuck and Aprill Jones

*Introduction*



## **Our Dream Came True**

*After All—We Got Married  
to Be Together!*

**W**hen we first got the idea of writing a book about how a husband and wife team can start, build, and successfully operate a business together we asked each other this question...

How can our experiences help other couples who are running or considering running a business together?

Reflecting on the past, we considered the following:

- ♥ We've been married for more than 25 years, and this is the one and only marriage for both of us.
- ♥ We enjoy a full and total commitment to each other, and hold it sacred—not to be compromised at any time, in any way, for any purpose.
- ♥ We wanted our relationship to be more comprehensive and engaging than any other relationship we have. We wanted more than the evenings-and-between-errands-on-weekends relationships most working couples have.

- ♥ Finally, and above all else, we have a strong faith and believe in the institution of marriage as the best way for us to live.

In short, we're happily married and have always been so. However, the tremendous level of happiness we now enjoy is a direct result of deciding to start, build, sustain, and nurture our own home-based business. As other couples do, we got married to be together, and running a full-time home-based business together is the only way we know of doing this to the maximum.

Along the way, we've learned a thing or two, had a lot of successes, and some failures too. After stepping back and looking at them all, we decided that there were some nuggets of information that would apply to any couple either considering or already working together as a husband-and-wife team.

When you decide to build your own home-based business, or become more active in the one you already have, we believe you'll be richly rewarded—as long as you persist. In growing a business together you'll develop a closeness that couples who don't will never understand. They'll never experience the special joys you will. They'll never realize how much it could enhance their marriage.

May your dream come true as it has for us. Together you can make it happen. Go for it. You'll be glad you did.

Much success and happiness,

*Chuck and Aprill*



*Chapter 1*



## **What if This Is as Good as It Gets?**

*Your Marriage Could Be  
Happier than Ever*

**S**ooner or later you and your spouse may wake up one morning, look at each other, and ask, “When we got married, did you think it was going to be like this?” Or, as an actor in a hit movie once put it, “What if this is as good as it gets?”

Unfortunately, that’s not the worst of it. Today, most families are two-income, which can be double trouble. Many couples spend the time they aren’t each working one or two jobs shuttling children to and from band, sports, or other activities. Or perhaps they ask friends and relatives to do so.

They prepare and eat quick dinners or grab high-calorie, high-cholesterol fast food from the nearest corner outlet. They rush from—homework to lawn work, washing clothes to bathing the children, making lunches to making three dozen cupcakes for a Girl Scout meeting, and cleaning the house to cleaning the garage. You can make your own list.

At what should be the end of their working day, they often

get back into action, checking and responding to emails one last time, before finally collapsing in bed—too tired to be intimate, read, or even talk. Their reward? They get to do it all over again tomorrow. It's a standard scenario. Just think about it for a minute. How is it for you?

The average person who works for the typical corporation spends between 45 and 60 hours a week working and commuting. Factoring in a liberal four weeks of vacation, which most people don't get, that translates into 12 weeks of work for every week off—at best.

During a 48-week yearly working period, if the same person spends six hours each weekday and 16 hours each weekend day with his or her spouse and children, they'll be able to enjoy only four months of family time out of every 12. The average person works at least twice as much time as they spend with their spouse and family, a maximum of only a third of their time!

### **For Better or for Worse in Presence or in Absence?**

That's not the way most of us had it planned when we said, "I do." We just wanted to be together and for our lives to get better. We didn't want to spend most of our time apart, like the average married couples we knew did but, sadly, that's exactly what happened.

Twelve years ago, we got tired of being average. For Chuck, there was a single moment that defined his search for a new direction. Some might say it was a flash of brilliance, while others may call it crazy. We know what it really was—a glaring realization of the truth.

### **Chuck**

It happened one evening while driving home from yet another long day at the office. Who knows why, but I started doing a quick life assessment:

♥ I'm 30 years old.

- ♥ I have a beautiful and charming wife who I love with all my heart.
- ♥ I have a nice home in a climate we love.
- ♥ I live two hours from the southern Appalachian Mountains and three hours from the Atlantic coast.
- ♥ I have a really funny dog named Elmo who is always ready to play.
- ♥ I have four guitars and a piano.
- ♥ I belong to an active church involved in more good works than I can list.
- ♥ And... I have virtually no time to enjoy any of it.

I was home before I knew it after having one of those frightening driving experiences when you don't remember anything about the trip! You're just suddenly there. That's how hard I was thinking about the state of my life.

Aprill and I would soon celebrate our 9th anniversary, and it had become common for us to spend only one or two hours a day together. They were the leftover hours—the ones with a lot of yawning, sighing, and glassy-eyed stares. It was about all I had left after a 14- to 16-hour day. Some weeks were even worse with two to three nights of overnight travel.

Because Aprill's job was more 8:30 to 5:30, she had hours and hours alone. Most days she woke up after I'd already left for work, and she got home before me every day. Dinnertime was never a constant. Predicting when I would arrive home was impossible. Some nights it was 7 p.m., others 9. Sometimes I would call at 7 and say I was on my way, only to be snagged at the office door for an impromptu one-hour discussion. Late again.

For Aprill, her biggest frustration was that she had lost control of her day-to-day life.

## **Aprill**

Even though it wasn't perfect, I had a decent job. It was enough to motivate me to get up every morning, shower, get dressed, squeeze my feet into those pumps, endure lower back pain from the commute, and smile on payday.

But things could have been better—a lot better. It would have been nice to have had more flexible hours, the freedom to make my own schedule. Then I could go grocery shopping at some time other than when the store was packed with others like me who were momentarily out of their “cages.”

Even though my boss was a nice guy, I didn't want him in charge of so much of my life. But he was. When I agreed to take the job, I gave up control of the hours of my day when I was most energetic and productive. All I had left for Chuck or myself was the remnants of spent energy.

As the pace seemed to get more and more chaotic, I couldn't help but feel there surely must be more to life than working and saving for retirement.

I found myself envious at times of my stay-at-home mom friends, until I realized it wasn't much better for them. They didn't have a perfect situation either. But from my point of view, at least they could wear sneakers during the day, every day of the week, and didn't have to pay for daycare.

Of course, many complained that they hardly ever got to interact with adults, never had a reason to stop eating between meals, and never had any extra money. But how would they ever find a job situation that would allow them to build a schedule around “Mother's Mornings Out” and pediatrician appointments? The pull of the real world was strong for these moms, and several of my friends didn't know how much longer they could wait for that “perfect” situation.

Regardless, I had come to agree with Chuck. This wasn't how it was supposed to be. It wasn't our definition of “happily ever after”!

We married for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health. We didn't marry for present or absent. In essence, we married to spend our lives together, not to be apart. We simply hadn't realized that our separate divergent pursuits of individual careers would keep us away from each other so much.

Don't misunderstand—we already had nine years of a marriage filled with love. We were well-traveled and had bonded with some common interests. We laughed a lot, had a good network of friends, and liked our positions as up-and-comers in our respective companies. The future looked bright, yet something seemed wrong. We started feeling we were wasting our lives, spending too much time away from our best friend—each other.

After some time alone with our thoughts a pivotal moment came. Chuck hadn't told me about his revelation during his drive home that one evening, and I hadn't told him about my frustrations either. This was about to change. As I walked by the sofa one night and casually said, "Listen to this—no one on his deathbed ever says, 'I wish I had spent more time at work.'"

### **The Start of Something BIG**

That did it! From then on our priorities shifted immediately and dramatically. We decided it was important and about time to fulfill our marriage vows as we had originally intended them. Our desire to spend our lives together was so strong that it enabled us to overcome the fear of giving up our regular paychecks.

While some may think a job income represents security, that's simply not true anymore. We call it "the myth of the paycheck," which we'll discuss in Chapter 2.

We had the what and the why covered. All we had to figure out was the how....

We weren't anywhere near wealthy. We had a mortgage,

two car payments, credit card bills, and all the other trappings of middle-class success. Quitting work and retiring at 30 was totally out of the question. We had to work, so why not do so together? Since both spouses working for the same company was frowned upon, that meant starting and building our own business. It wasn't just a minor shift for us; it was a major social and economic overhaul of our way of life.

Fifteen years later, we're certain of one thing—besides getting married, it was the best decision we've ever made. We now spend our mornings, afternoons, and evenings together. As a bonus, we also have time every day to pursue our own individual interests, without the disadvantages of always being apart.

We tell our friends there are three types of married people:

- 1) Those who don't work with their spouse, nor do they want to.
- 2) Those who work with their spouses and love it.
- 3) Those who realize they've lost a lot of control over their lives. They haven't yet taken the action to make it happen, and wonder if they could work with their spouse. They're good candidates for group two as they'd like to spend more time with each other and their family.

Which group are you in? Here's an exercise to help you find out. To how many of the following questions would you answer YES to?

- ♥ Do you love your spouse?
- ♥ Do you ever wish your lifestyle allowed you to spend more time with your spouse and children?
- ♥ Do things like meals, your children's preparation for school and their extracurricular activities take more than 25% of your time outside of work?

- ♥ Would you like to have the time for yourself that you now spend on getting ready for work and the commute to and from it?
- ♥ Do you ever thinking life would be easier if you had more control over its necessities, such as going to the grocery store, cutting the lawn, and getting the cars serviced?
- ♥ Do you go to sleep every night with something personal you consider important left undone?
- ♥ Do you frequently give up what could be personal time for things you feel forced to declare as urgent?

If you answered yes to even one of these questions you're a prime candidate for a happier life working at home with your spouse. But don't just take our word for it...read on.