



*"Just discovering that others have shared our road of pain and made it through gave us courage. Retrouvaille has helped me to save the most valuable thing in my life."*

## THE RETROUVAILLE WEEKEND

The programme consists of a weekend experience and a number of post-weekend meetings. A team of experienced married couples and a priest present the programme. The presenting couples have known disillusionment, pain, anger and conflict. They have sat where you will sit. They have found a new peace and harmony not previously imagined. They offer hope as they share their personal stories of struggle, reconciliation and healing. They are in a position to light up a path through the rough terrain of disillusionment. Many aspects of marriage are dealt with as the presenting couples tell their story.

It is **not** a spiritual retreat. It is **not** a sensitivity group. It is **not** a seminar, **nor** is it counselling. You will **not** be asked to share your problems with anyone other than your spouse. Couples participate together in a supportive and helpful atmosphere. You **will** be encouraged to put the past behind you, to look beyond the hurt and pain in order to rediscover each other in a new way.

During the post weekend meetings, themes like: **love is a decision, family of origin, forgiveness, effective listening, sexual intimacy, values and conflict management will be explored.**

### Retrouvaille Ireland

49 Grange Wood, Rathfarnham,  
Dublin 16.

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Website: [www.retrouvaille.ie](http://www.retrouvaille.ie)

For information please text  
your name, address and email to:  
087 792 0101

To speak to a Retrouvaille couple in  
confidence please telephone:  
Tony & Anne (01) 495 3536,  
Mike & Anne (01) 450 0922

Retrouvaille Ireland is a Government  
Registered Charity, No. CHY12909.

## a new sense of worth

Eighteen months ago, Sean and Patricia Doyle were living on the thin edge of desperation, about to break up their marriage. Each day separation loomed a little closer. It seemed inevitable. "I saw no future for us," remarked Sean, "I was on the point of suicide, in fact, I had made an attempt and just pulled back from the brink."

Patricia was devastated when Sean told her that he didn't love her. "He told me that he didn't think he had ever loved me," said Patricia ruefully, "we were proud, stubborn and scared to death."

Sean and Patricia had drifted into a "married singles" existence with little or no communication between them. There were no major blow-ups, no violence, just quiet misery and shattered hopes.

But Sean and Patricia's story did not end in separation. They, along with ten other couples, attended a Retrouvaille weekend. "I was apprehensive and nervous before I arrived, not sure what to expect or what was expected of us," said Sean. "Over the weekend as we listened to the stories of the presenting couples we felt encouraged by their honesty and openness," he added "they had been in the same mess as us, maybe even worse."

Patricia explained that the weekend consisted of presentations, writing and dialoguing, one to one, with Sean. "We didn't have to share in small groups, nor did we have to bare our souls, or wash our dirty linen with the participants. Sean stressed, "This is not a weekend to change anyone but yourself."

"Over the weekend and in the weeks that followed we encouraged each other to continue dialogue," added Patricia, "and a new sense of worth came into our lives. Retrouvaille put our marriage back on track in a way I never could have hoped for," beamed Sean, "it has given us the gift of being real to each other, I cannot recommend it enough!"

**Does your marriage  
bring you joy...**

**... or is it breaking  
your heart?**



# life's journey

## FALLING IN LOVE

In the words of an old, popular song, "falling in love is wonderful". It is a time when a great sense of joy and comfort blinds us to faults in our relationship or in our partner. We seem to know each other better than any one else in the world. We feel warm and happy when we are together. We don't ever want to be separated. We look forward to marriage and spending our lives together. This time is necessary and gives us a glimpse of the joy that is possible on the other side of any disillusionment that may follow.

## DISILLUSIONMENT

Disillusionment begins with the slow and dreadful realisation that our partner is not perfect. This is painful. We may become angry and end up in conflict, arguing with each other, and ill at ease with ourselves. At this time we are faced with a different side of our partner's personality – a side we ignored in the bliss of first love. But now our love begins to see and is challenged.

Our own woundedness and selfishness is paraded before us. As the relationship begins to deteriorate we may seek comfort in alcohol, in new illicit relationships or in addictive work habits. We may

"I attended Retrouvaille hoping that my spouse would see the light. She did see the light, but I was blinded by it. Retrouvaille has really illuminated our marriage."

try to change our partner through manipulation or even violence. We can go through the motions of a relationship for the sake of the children or for appearances sake. It doesn't dawn on us that the discovery of wounded humanity in our partner and in ourselves can be the richest discovery of our lives. It can be the making of a marriage. Facing the disillusionment alone, without understanding, can be the destruction of the relationship. It is sad to see people giving up after many years of difficulty and missing the deep joy that can follow.

"Retrouvaille hasn't solved our problems or concerns but it has given us tools to work with. It has given us a better understanding of each other and the maturity to talk things out without fighting."

## THEN LOVE TRULY SEES

There is a wonderful place on the other side of disillusionment. This is a place where acceptance and supportive love between hurt and broken people can be deeper and immeasurably more beautiful than even the early feelings of being in love. This place is ours for the taking. Give your marriage one last chance! Having come through the pain of a marriage in trouble, couples can enter into a new and enhanced relationship where acceptance, gentleness, kindness, forgiveness, generosity and commitment are very much a part.

## A VERY DIFFERENT MESSAGE

The Retrouvaille programme offers a very different message from the current secular themes of self-gratification and self-reliance. You will discover how listening, forgiveness and, above all, dialogue can

fan the ember of a troubled marriage into life again. Retrouvaille can renew the grace of the sacrament on a daily basis in your lives. The programme is rooted in the Catholic tradition but couples of all faiths or none are more than welcome to participate in a weekend. Since Retrouvaille started couples with and without religious affiliation, couples already separated and couples who simply wanted to put new life into a flagging marriage have benefited from the Programme.

The post weekend follow-up meetings are an important part of the Retrouvaille healing process. These meetings provide time and a place to continue to work on your relationship after the weekend. They offer a more relaxed setting to explore other subjects relating to marriage and love, to renew your commitment.

If you would like to talk to someone, if you would like more information, if you want to register for a weekend programme, please get in touch with us.

The cost of the weekend and follow-up sessions has been kept to a minimum and includes meals, accommodation and all the materials you will need for the weekend. In order to reserve space in the programme please fill in the form and send it with your deposit to:

**Retrouvaille Ireland**  
**49 Grange Wood,**  
**Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.**

"We had drifted apart, living like strangers. Our love was buried under bitterness and anger. We rarely talked and mostly tolerated one another. Thanks to Retrouvaille we were able to begin again and forget past mistakes we had both made."

# application form

Wife's name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Are you seeing a counsellor  Yes  No

Have you been married before  Yes  No

Husband's name \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Are you seeing a counsellor  Yes  No

Have you been married before  Yes  No

**When we receive your application form and payment (to check amount please phone any of the numbers on this form or look on the website),**

**We will contact you with directions to the Conference Centre for the Retrouvaille Programme.**

