

January 2014

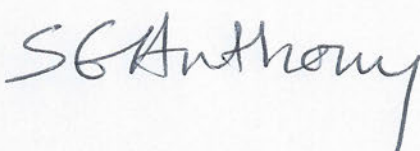
To whom it may concern:

Tony and I will have been married for 19 years this July and when I think of that fact I can't really believe it! I was 21 when we met which means we have been together for half of our lives. We are neither one of us the same people we were when we met on that November Sunday in 1992 – older, definitely – wiser? I would like to think so! Our marriage has probably not taken the path either of us may have imagined when we made those vows in the summer of 1995. The experience of marriage, as I'm sure all couples would corroborate, is one of constant evolution – as we negotiate the challenges of life, whether it's the arrival of children, bereavement, changes in employment, moving home etc, etc – each situation teaches us new things about ourselves and each other – and some of the most challenging situations change us in ways we could never imagine.

Tony and I have faced tough times – I certainly never planned on having to visit my husband in prison or to hear a very vocal minority brand him a fraud and a liar. But these are the challenges we have endured – things which may have destroyed some couples! But God knew what He was doing when He put us together and facing adversity together has just served to make our relationship stronger! In our wedding service we were given the verse from Ecclesiastes 4:12 "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." Keeping God at the centre is certainly why our marriage has not faltered despite some incredibly hard times and why our relationship now is more secure than it has ever been. We know that we are in a spiritual battle and that the enemy would love to see a marriage destroyed by his machinations – but we keep well armoured and move forward with the Lord at our back!

Tony and I are about as different as a couple can be, but we complement each other perfectly. He would be the first to admit that he is not the most patient of people and that he never helps with the gardening! But he is loyal, consistent, fiercely devoted, passionate, romantic, funny, incredibly hardworking and at times a little insecure but above all he is my best friend! I could give you a list of the things about him that drive me nuts – what wife couldn't? And, of course it is a combination of all those qualities that make him the man that he is and together make us the couple we are!

We have a happy marriage and I still look forward to seeing his smiling face at the end of a long, hard day even after nearly 20 years. We committed our lives to each other – complete with our insecurities and peculiarities – and there's a lot of life left and we will be spending those years together!



Sara Anthony