

Chapter 19: You can't have one without the other

Ann and I don't exactly look like this now.... but these two infants seemed to have been destined to stay together. We've studied together, loved together, worked together, traveled together and only had fun together, for 42 years non-stop.



Ann



Gideon



Isometric muscular effort under study in the Motor Integration Laboratory



First of all, she's smart and beautiful. And can keep up with me no matter how fast, wild or inventive I get. If I have a dream or idea, she knows how to make it reality. Whatever transpired in the chapters you've read so far, she was an integral and driving part of it. There is nothing in my life that I have done since meeting Ann that Ann did not have a great influence over. When I got in trouble, she would find a way to get me out of trouble. When I did not know what to do, she told me what to do.

One of the most amazing facts in our 42 years together is that we never had a fight. We never argue about anything and, with an Israeli, you know that is a feat! We discuss every detail of our lives but do so calmly. As an example, when it comes to voting for our government, I can be very outspoken

in my opinions on how to run this country. Our discussion, however, usually ends as follows: “Ann please do me a favor and go vote for me.”

“Who do you want me to vote for you?”

“The same person you choose for yourself,” I’d say. This was my answer. I trusted her so much. I had my opinion, but, in the end, I usually deferred to Ann. It reminds me of the famous joke where a man said, “In 50 years, I made the big decisions and my wife made the small decisions. The funny thing is that in 50 years, there has never been a big decision.”

Like all couples, we’ve had our ups and downs. We did not marry, but were committed partners, fully trusting each other. But I went through the proverbial mid life crisis and had a love affair with Merry, the woman I met at NASA. I was 51 years old and she was 21 years old.

I never kept it a secret. I never lied to Ann, and anyway I couldn’t if I wanted to. She would catch the lie in a few minutes. I was in this unbelievable situation of having spent so many wonderful years with Ann, but then finding myself being pursued by a very young, beautiful blonde Texan, who was one quarter American Indian.

One evening, after working hard at NASA, this tall, slender young girl asked me if I knew how to dance the “Two Step.” I told her I had no idea what it was. She offered to teach me the dance in one of the Cowboy clubs. I learned the dance and the “teaching” lasted 13 years and produced 3 beautiful daughters.



Tova



Nomi



Ilana

I told Merry from day one that I had a girlfriend and would never leave her.

“So what do we do? What’s our future?” Merry asked me many times and my answer was always the same, “I don’t know. If I knew I would be a Hollywood producer and not a Biomechanist.”



Merry

This relationship was difficult for Merry (who loved me) and difficult for Ann but Ann never left me. I do not know why. She had a steadfastness. I was the man for her and she would not deviate.

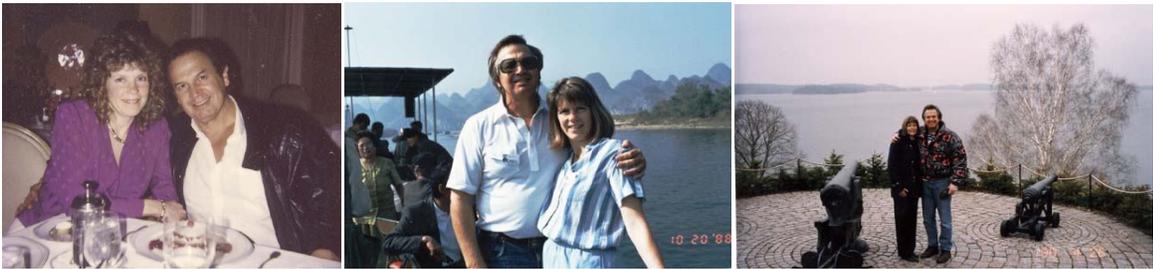
Ann was close to Geffen and close to my three other daughters. She taught them how to dress, how to read, how to behave. We would go to all the parks in California together. Disney, Animal Park, Adventure, Universal Studio, Lego Land, and any park you can think of. It was exhausting!

How Ann could do all this is beyond me. I was worried that if I went to a psychologist to ask for advice, the psychologist would end up going to a psychiatrist. (Just a joke). It was strange, but life kept going and nothing –women, stress at work or with partners -- affected my love for Ann or Ann's love for me. We kept traveling around the world and doing what we like to do. After all, we had always worked together and it wasn't always pain, as you can see in the following photos:





Traveling everywhere:





And always in love:



And then of course, her wonderful way with my children. Feeding them. Washing their clothes. Taking care of them when they came on holidays to be with us. Even taking them to the Olympics in Beijing:





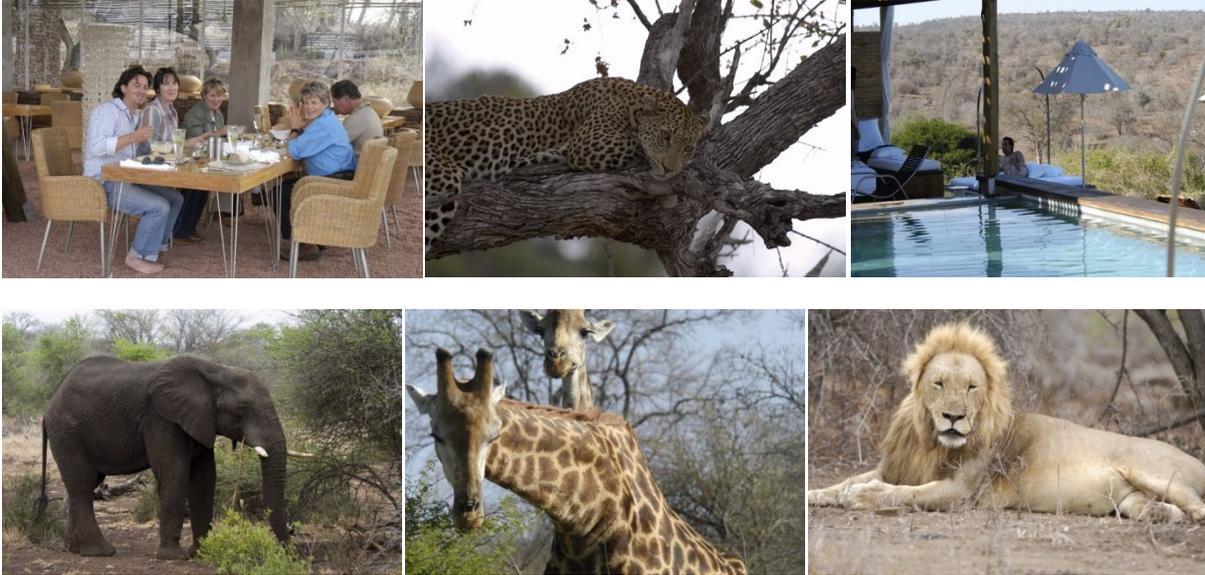
So in what seemed a few minutes, it was 35 years from the time Ann and I met. She was still my girlfriend, having watched a parade of other women in my life, but somehow knowing she was the mainstay and the other women would end up going. She saw the other women as my need for validation in some way, but knew the heart connection and the soul connection was between she and me. She paid all the bills, stood behind me, and was a rock. Her focus was always me. As this all became clearer and clearer to me, I began to feel like one of the biggest idiots in the world.

What could I do about it? I was thinking for years, months, days, hours.

Ann particularly loved South Africa since she loves animals so. We have been to South Africa many times throughout the years. We both love it and have one of our best friends in Johannesburg.



Among the wonderful locations in South Africa, Ann loves a particular place called Singita:



In Singita, there are no fences and the animals are totally free.

While we were in South Africa for probably the 10th time, I met with my good friend Tony who is also the distributor of my technology in South Africa. He has sold a number of exercise machines and motion analysis systems of mine to various Universities and Olympic Training Centers.

At one of our meetings over a large glass of South African beer, I suddenly, out of the blue, said to him, "What if I ask Ann to marry me in Singita?" Tony thought it a fabulous idea and we decided to keep it a secret. I even did not tell my good friend Bob Wainwright who was with us on this trip.



Tony and Ann – Cookout in Mabaliguae

Tony introduced me to his jeweler, Salomon. I wanted to design a special ring for Ann. I created a ring consisting of 3 rings with each ring having 12 diamonds on it, with one ring only having 11, totaling

35 diamonds, each representing one year of waiting for this event. In the middle of the ring I inserted a 4 karat tanzanite stone which is very special and unique to only one mine on the globe.

Mr. Salomon did a fantastic job and I got the ring. Now I needed to arrange the proposal event. Singita was the perfect place for it. There was a great restaurant in the field where all the animals, elephants, giraffes, lions, zebras, cheetahs and others walked free outside.



Singita

I had arranged that the restaurant play the ABBA song "I do I do" when I gave them the signal. We were all there. Bob and Tony and other friends. The music started and we had a few drinks while watching the beautiful animals saunter by. Particularly, the giraffes were interested in this proposal event, perhaps picking up a few cues.



They were so close you could touch them. Also, two cheetahs decide to join us.



The ABBA music was playing. Bob was sleeping on the side with terrible jetlag. I asked Ann to dance with me.

“Dance? We haven’t danced for years,” she replied.

“Ann please, one dance. Look at the animals. They would love to see us dance.”

That did it. She could never say no to animals and walked slowly toward me. There were many people in the restaurant-bar outside and they all were very happy to see us dancing. People get very moved seeing an older couple be romantic. I was hiding the ring in its box in my pocket. God forbid if Ann would find it prematurely.



Bob watching us dance but not knowing what is coming

Suddenly, the part of “I Do I Do I Do” came on, and I dropped onto my knee and said:

“Ann, will you marry me?”

“What are you doing?” she said, turning around looking at the people sitting nearby. “You are embarrassing me, stop it!”

“Ann, I mean it. Will you marry me?” I insisted. We know I am good at that.

“Gideon please stop embarrassing me.” Now people were really watching this scene.

“Ann, my knees are killing me...” I said.

“Okay I will marry you. Get up.”

I got up and kissed her on the cheek. Tony was photographing the story. When Bob finally understood what was going on, he said in loud voice: “Holy Shit!!!”



In a few seconds our life will change



Now some of the guests were crying and some ran to congratulate us. Bob had a few more amarulas, a strong South African liquored drink. Ann was in shock for a whole week. But, we had a great time. Now we needed to plan the wedding.

We decided that we were way too fat at the time. These travels made us eat like pigs and we both gained about 20 Lb. (9 Kg.). We needed a few months to get rid of that.

Upon our return we started our diet, basically refraining from carbohydrates. We both tend to lose 1 Lb a day if we just stop consuming those. Ann checked for a date and place. We decided to get married at the Ritz Carlton in Laguna Beach, one of the most beautiful hotels we had ever seen.



Views from the Ritz in Laguna Beach

Ann started planning the wedding. We checked on Google when the weather was most promising and the least chance for rain. The date was set for October 17th 2004. No rain on this date for 30 consecutive years. We thought, always apply science to a situation.

When you get married at the Ritz, you're forced to hire a wedding coordinator. You cannot just plan your own wedding. Our coordinator was Barbara. At our first meeting with Barbara, she showed us all the locations where the wedding could be held. Of course, I selected a beautiful setting and we

planned the special meal and entertainment. At the end of the meeting, Barbara asked me if I had any more questions. So, I said, "I have one request. Could we change the glorious view with the Pacific ocean in the background to a cemetery instead?"

For a moment she was quiet, how was she going to handle this, and then we all burst out laughing.

At that time Microsoft had introduced the Multimedia Version 10. I knew that now you could stream video directly to the net if you had an IP address. All I needed was a T1 line and I could program the video to a specific IP. So I requested a T1 line from the Ritz. They did not know why I needed it; hotels are usually notoriously backwards technology wise, but they let me have it.

We had 8 months before the wedding date. And we both lost 30 LB each. We invited 35 of our best friends, people from South Africa, Japan, Brazil, Peru, Israel, the rest from the US East and West Coast.

Ann selected a book for each of our 35 guests, according to each one's character which we knew so well. Also, we made each couple separate and sit among "new friends," around a huge square table made of many tables.

We had our old time Rabbi come to marry us (Ann, on her own, had decided to become Jewish. Now she is more Jewish than me. Israelis are the ones who stay secular.) The wedding was scheduled to start outside with the Chupah.

And, what happened? It began to pour with rain. For the first time in 30 years. Barbara suggested that we move into the restaurant. I resisted. I told her, if God wants to make us wet, we will all be wet. I think God was listening to me because ten minutes before the ceremony, the sky opened up as if we were in biblical times.



Sky opened up and the rain that fell all day long stopped for our wedding

Now it was for the Rabbi to make it official. First the Rabbi had requested that we answer, Why do you love each other so much? And here is what Ann wrote and said:



My Gideon

Adorable, loveable, funny, intelligent, fantastic, and charming. This is Gideon. This is the man I love. Why do I love you? I won't count all the ways, but there are two important ones: you make me laugh and you make me think.

You are always thinking, which is admirable, but it's the way that you consider things that makes you special. It's not just the obvious method or the way everyone else approaches a problem; you consider many different alternatives and then conclude that logic always prevails. You're intuitive, reasonable, and creative. Remember when you were flying on the KC 135, or the Vomit Comet as it's frequently called? You concluded that the expensive device which NASA had purchased to determine when the plane speed equaled that of gravity was subject to extreme vibration problems. So you held a pencil until it floated and used that to begin the zero gravity experiments. Logic prevailed and the simplest technique worked. If you don't know the mathematical solution to a problem, your intuition and experience will suggest a rationale. Invariably, there's a mathematician or physicist who derives formulas that verify your idea as accurate. You always say that you are a talented integrator, but for that, you must be smart enough to know what you want integrated and who has the right talent.

You have always loved to study: biomechanics led you to computers which directed your thinking to software; physiology developed into the study of how the body moves; film cameras became digital cameras and that led to the complex integration of cameras, computers, printers, scanners, and finally digital photography. You have always been a student with depth. Now, you're stretching your mind by adding history and the theater! After three years at Christ Church, Oxford University, you're beginning to love history (I'm so excited about that!!). In addition, you've added London theater to your learning list!

Travel doesn't necessarily require thinking, but we always study and learn where ever we go. Originally, we were working and added the fun, leisure parts to the business. In recent years, we have historical and geographical overlays to each place we go and expand our minds while we're there.

There's never a dull moment with you. I read that a person laughs at something that is unexpected. You are always doing and/or saying the unexpected! You make silly jokes, funny faces, tell stories about experiences, and say outrageous things. Your smile and the twinkle in your eyes are infectious. I never know what funny thing you're going to do next or say so I'm surprised and amused every day. Just walking through the airport will be a trip of humor for you. You have that funny little walk that cracks me up every time. You have such a clever mind and a quick wit so that you can always make a joke any time, place or circumstance.

They say that a Sabra, a native Israeli, is hard on the outside and soft on the inside and this description fits you perfectly. You can be firm, confident, and determined. We started our biomechanical business when we were graduate students with only \$5.00 and a great idea! With charm and charisma, you convinced many large, well-known companies to hire us to do their R&D testing. For example, in a study on sound, we had a world-renowned violinist playing his instrument in front of our office wearing only his concert shoes and underwear. During an experiment to ascertain if there was a product defect by the manufacturer, we had gymnastic teams doing stunts on force platforms to measure the landing forces. We even had an extensive project to test feminine hygiene products. Somehow you convinced even the most skeptical company executives that we could help them improve their products.

On the soft side, you are a very sensitive, emotional individual. You can cry at movies, events, places, and for people. You also have a special capacity to know the best thing to do in a difficult situation. I remember the time we were waiting in line at John Wayne Airport for a flight to the East Coast. In line ahead of us were a young Marine and his wife. When it was their turn to buy his ticket, the airline counter agent refused to accept the young soldier's check. The Marine and his wife plead their case but the airlines assured them his check would not be accepted with his military ID. He was on his way home to see his mother before being deployed overseas. The plane was scheduled to depart before he could go to the bank for a cashiers check. We listened to the discussion, until you turned to me and we knew exactly what to do. You told the airline agent that we would pay for the Marines ticket. The Marine, his wife, the airline agent, and the people in line behind us were astonished at your offer. The Marine was so thankful and appreciative and gave us the check for the ticket price. Then you purchased your own ticket and left for your trip. Subsequently, we called the bank, verified that the check was good, and then we tore it up.

Thirty-five years ago, I was surprised after being your graduate school friend for two years, when the proverbial light bulb came on over my head and I discovered that I loved my best friend and fellow student. Since then, I've loved you with all my heart, my mind, and my being. Each and every day I tell you that I love you more than yesterday. I don't know how it's possible to love you more each day, but I do. You make me a better person than I am without you, you give my world vast dimensions of joy, creativity, and happiness, and you let me love you. You are my love and my life.

And here's what I wrote and said:

To my Darling and Life Partner: Ann

I wish words could be seen three dimensionally. The third dimension is the unseen feeling that I wish I could express and do not have enough words in that dimension to say it.

*From the first time I saw you working in the Motor Integration laboratory at the University of Massachusetts, I knew that there was something in your soul which was unexplainable. I was in awe when you were able to answer all the difficult questions by our Statistical Professor when the rest of the class looked at you with surprise. I remember approaching you, without ever knowing your name, and asked you how you knew the answers, and what did you do to know them. You answered me with an expression like Go to the library and find out for yourself. Wow, I thought! Who is that girl? The beautiful blonde with the great body, wearing a mini skirt, **who** blew me off like that?*

I was so lucky to be officially introduced to you later at the University by our dear mutual friend, Jim Sallidas. I remember he told you: THIS is crazy Gideon. You responded with: Oh, this is the crazy Gideon that you have been telling me about for such a long time? I was so lucky to be crazy then and I continue to be crazy about you.

*So, 35 years have passed and what a life we have had together. We studied together, we traveled together, we created together, we invented together, **we** laughed and cried together. So, in 35 years there is nothing that we haven't done together. It would take books to describe all our experiences and we haven't reached the end yet. We are just starting now.*

Now 35 years later, I love you more than ever for all the reasons that made me fall in love with you in the first place and all the other fantastic qualities you had and still have. As I said before, I love you more than words can say because there are no words to describe all the wonderful things about you and the marvelous life we have together.

My darling, I am so lucky to have you and thank God that He blessed me with you to share my life.

I love you

Gideon



The Chupah



The commitment – finally after 35 years together



Our Friends



Our contract for life – Signing the Ketubah



Beautiful Ann, always was and always will be

And now we all were going to the dining hall for the great meal. Ann organized everything, as usual. For a minute I did not know if I married Ann or married Barbara since I was following so many instructions. The “Tail was wagging the dog”....



Before



During



So, this is the story of our marriage. It could be a whole book by itself. But, I had to include it in my book because there would be no book at all without Ann. To have a partner that you share every part of your life with, the good and the bad, your strengths and weaknesses, and to have love be so strong throughout -- that, that is a blessing and miracle that outshines all else.



