



John and John

## “Good Timing or Bad Timing... Timing is Everything”

Good timing is important in a relationship. John and I each had years and years of therapy before we met. That is good timing. We simply weren't grown-up enough for a relationship before we met.

I was in the last month of Graduate School. That is good timing. We didn't have to balance our relationship with schoolbooks.

I was already in the process of moving to John's city before we met. That is good timing. We would not have done well with a long distance romance.

With the important events of John's and my life together, we have been very lucky and we have had good timing!

Timing in our day-to-day life is not always so smooth. My life operates on my time and John's life operates on his time, and the two times are not always the same. I am the cook in our house. Preparing dinner for me means setting the table, cooking the meal, getting it all prepared and then calling John to dinner. In veritably that is the very instant that John becomes engrossed in a computer game and can't come to the table. Or I will be sitting at the dinner table waiting for John, and he will be in the kitchen soaking the pots and pans. Why should that bother me? It is John who will be eating a cold dinner, not me! It is just bad timing.

I don't see myself as a compulsive person, but John points out to me that I am compulsive about things that really matter to me. And he is right! I am compulsive when we are going to have guests over. I want the house to look good, for the food to be delicious and flowers to be on the table. I want the dishes to match and the silver to be polished. I want to spend my time getting



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ready for the guests. John wants all of the same things too. But those are the moments he chooses to discuss the 2001 budget...or suggests that we clean out my closet...or asks me to hold a flashlight for him while he hammers a nail. Nothing is really wrong with him or me, it is just that the timing does not match. It is bad timing.

John is not a telephone person. When he is on the phone talking, he can't handle other stimuli. I know that well. However that is the precise moment when I remember all of the things to tell John that are

important? There I am waving my arm and my hand trying to get his attention when he is on the phone, or saying, “John, I need to tell you about...” or writing a note to him and putting it on the desk in front of him. Knowing full well all the time that the timing is bad, I attempt contact anyway.

John gets calls about the apartment complex that we own! A stopped up toilet... washing machine overflow...air-conditioning not working! Events that any property owner knows require immediate attention. I really do understand that! When

such a call comes, John responds. That is what makes him such a good and appreciated landlord. Why does such a call always come as we are preparing to sit down for a meal, or I want to make love, or have something terribly important to talk about? And why when he returns home and I am ready to continue with dinner, or am still ready to make love, or still have something terribly important to say, does John have to record the entire apartment episode on the computer? Now? The whole event is just bad timing.

Timing is important. We have no control over the timing of outside events that affect our lives. What we do have control over, is the timing of what goes on between us. When we pay attention, our timing is good. When we put our personal agendas and wants selfishly ahead of everything else, our timing is bad. Learning to regulate my time with John's time is not always easy. When my time is just my time, and John's time is just his, it is bad time.

Our time is good when we take time to stay in-tune with the wants and needs of the other. Our time is good when we walk that delicate balance between what is right for me, and what is right for John and discovering what is right for us. Good timing is one of the great challenges of any relationship. Sometime we have it. Sometime we don't. But timing is important.

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