

## Realizations from a Broken Oven

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Recently, I was needed to help my husband with the replacement of our kitchen oven. It turns out that an oven purchased from Home Depot is delivered to our home and for a fee, they will take the old one away. But the installation of the new oven into the gaping is not part of the deal.

Being a very capable engineer, my husband knew how to accomplish this task but raising the oven to the correct height in order to slide it into its location was the tricky part. With some 4 x 4 pieces of wood and a sturdy car jack, the task was accomplished. My role in this adventure was stabilizing the oven as it was lifted on the jack. Everything went smoothly without any incidents or injuries.

A few days later, I was reflecting on this task and was amazed at our teamwork. I also realized something about me.

I have a history of getting upset, even angry, with my husband when we have tried to accomplish things together. It usually involved me:

accusing him of not explaining what he wanted me to do

blaming him for being impatient

telling him he was incompetent, a jerk, or worse

Granted, our approaches to life are often polar opposites. I usually consider options and make decisions fairly quickly. He puts a lot more thought and research into his decisions. He uses scientific evidence and logical reasoning to arrive at his life views whereas I rely much more on intuition and experience.

Upon my reflection, I realized that I have changed in how I hear my husband and respond him. And the biggest reason why is because I feel more loved. Probably he has learned how to express his love in ways that I am better able to receive. But the greatest difference is that I am learning how to fill up my own love tank and accept his suggestions and ideas as support instead of accusations.

In his book, "Real Love," author Greg Baer states that we 'act badly' because we are drowning. Without enough Real Love -- the single most important ingredient required for happiness -- people feel like they're drowning all the time. Then we use the Getting and Protecting Behaviors that allow us to temporarily keep our heads above water.

The reality is that my husband or my children are not the source of my unhappiness. I came to this family with baggage -- feeling unworthy and lonely, full of anger and afraid that others would discover this. As I have learned to be honest with them about these emotions and to listen to how this has impacted our family dynamic, we are learning a new way of relating and loving.

If you are not familiar with Real Love, check out the website [www.reallove.com/](http://www.reallove.com/) and stay tuned for more on my experience.