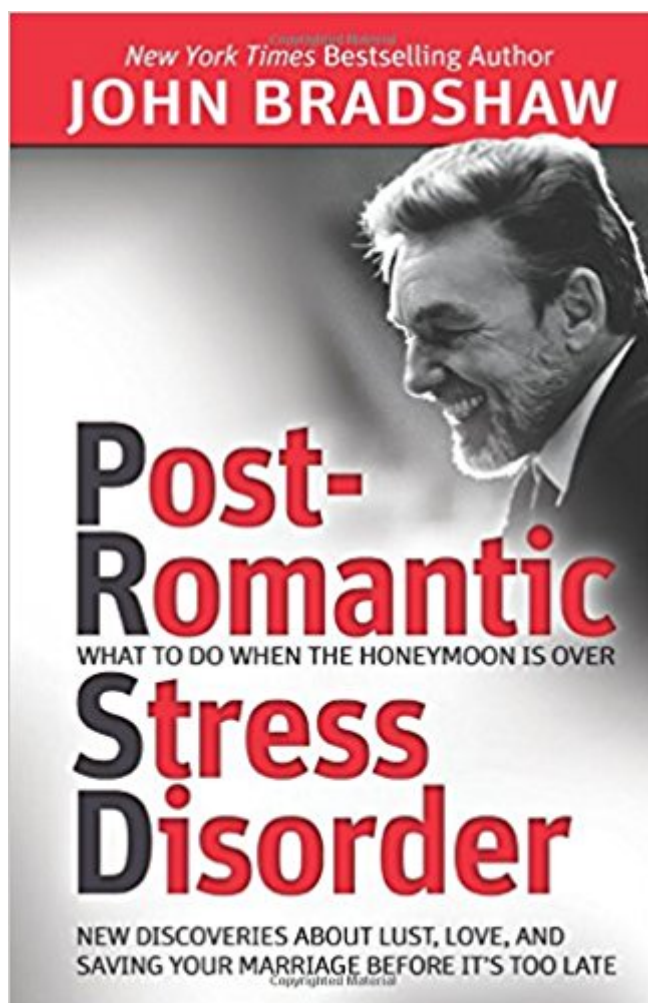


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# Post-Romantic Stress Disorder: What To Do When The Honeymoon Is Over



## Synopsis

John Bradshaw is arguably the most accomplished and well-known leader alive today in the addictions field. He taught us about functional and dysfunctional families, showed us how shame could become toxic and poisonous to our core selves, and helped us understand and heal the wounded, vulnerable "inner child" conceived by, and thriving in, that environment. In *Post-Romantic Stress Disorder (PRSD)*, Bradshaw gives readers a clear explanation of the difference between falling in love, lust, and true love. Based on his research, PRSD is a deeply serious psychological disorder and the cause of 40% of all divorces â "divorces that could have been prevented. Every day people throw away perfectly good relationships because they just don't know how to navigate the tides, but if they could learn and understand the concepts Bradshaw presents in this book, the portrait of the family unit could have a whole new landscape.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

John Bradshaw has been called "America's leading personal growth expert." The author of five New York Times bestsellers, *Bradshaw On: The Family, Healing the Shame That Binds You, Homecoming, Creating Love, and Family Secrets*. He created and hosted four nationally broadcast PBS television series based on his best-selling books. John pioneered the concept of the "Inner Child" and brought the term "dysfunctional family" into the mainstream. He has touched and changed millions of lives through his books, television series, and his lectures and workshops around the country. During the past twenty-five years he has worked as a counselor, theologian, management consultant, and public speaker, becoming one of the primary figures in the

contemporary self-help movement.

Richard Burton, on first seeing Elizabeth Taylor: 'She was famine, fire, destruction and plague . . . the only true begetter. Her breasts were apocalyptic, they would topple empires before they withered . . . her body was a miracle of construction . . . she was unquestionably gorgeous. She was lavish . . . she was in short, too bloody much . . . those huge violet blue eyes had an odd glint . . . Aeons passed, civilizations came and went while these cosmic headlights examined my flawed personality. Every pockmark on my face became a crater of the moon.'

•As quoted in Meeting Mrs. Jenkins Prologue

As they got into bed, Paul snuggled up to his wife Shirley's back and then reached over to touch her breast. He had done this countless times during the year-and-a-half sexual phase of their courtship. It was the first ritual move that Paul used to initiate the foreplay they engaged in prior to their sexual interchange. Shirley had a clear and predictable response: she'd turn toward Paul, a signal that gave him 'permission' to touch her other breast. This interactive foreplay had become more or less unconscious, a fairly automatic exchange between them that had a predictable but nonetheless enjoyable ending. Paul and Shirley had been married a little over a month, still in the newlywed stage of their marriage. They had a robust sex life, and had mutually agreed that they'd only refrain from sexual activity if they were completely exhausted after a long day at work, or some form of physical exercise. So what happened next was a major departure from their routine, and took their relationship down an unexpected path. Instead of turning toward Paul as she always did, Shirley tilted her head back and said, 'Let's just cuddle tonight.' Paul was certainly not prepared for this. All day, he had looked forward to having sex. Shirley's response gave him a strong adrenaline rush and left him feeling like he had been punched in the gut. He felt like yelling, 'You've been different since we got married!' Instead, he held his tongue and shut down, saying nothing. He abruptly moved back to his side of the bed. He lay there motionless, his muscles tight and his breathing shallow. He thought about how vigorously sexual he and Shirley had been throughout their courtship. In the early days, they made love at least once a day. They couldn't get enough of each other. The sex Paul had with Shirley was truly 'amazing,' and she was often the initiator of their sexual routine, often suggesting new, experiential behavior. One day, she bought a porno DVD on her way home from work, which launched them into a wild night of passionate lovemaking and made them miss dinner altogether. Paul felt lucky he'd found a woman like Shirley. And now, thisâ

•just cuddling? Glaring at the ceiling, Paul blurted out, 'What's the matter? Have I done something wrong?' 'There's absolutely nothing wrong, I'm just not in the mood,' Shirley replied matter-of-factly. 'Can we discuss this in the morning?' It was prudent of Shirley to want to avoid a

discussion about their sex life or any other relationship issue at 12:30 am, but it just made Paul angrier. He lay there feeling paralyzed, and Shirley's rhythmic breathing let him know she had fallen asleep. Paul was still aroused and he began what can be a divisive practice in marriage: he relieved himself by masturbating. Even though Shirley said she'd talk about what had happened the next day, neither of them brought it up. They just avoided it as though nothing had happened. But that single incident started a divisive pattern, and this scenario was repeated many times over the next two years. Three years later, they divorced at Paul's initiation. Shirley was deeply wounded by the divorce. Paul told his friends that Shirley had fallen out of love with him. He turned his energy to fantasy self-sex and two affairs. With his sexual desire directed elsewhere, he felt that he, in turn, had fallen out of love with Shirley. Paul and Shirley are an example of a phenomena I call Post-Romantic Stress Disorder (PRSD). Almost every couple experiences some degree of Post-Romantic Stress. Those with a 'good enough' attachment program, and with good enough self-esteem with relatively little baggage from the past, are generally able to work through this unexpected challenge without any scars. Some with poor levels of selfhood do stay together, living with varying degrees of satisfaction. But only 50 percent of all marriages actually stay together, and of this 50 percent, 17 percent claim to be disappointed, unfulfilled, and unhappy. After counseling over 700 couples over a twenty-year span, it is my observation that only 15 percent are truly incompatible and the remaining 85 percent can achieve a 'good enough,' fulfilling marriage. The 50 percent divorced and those who are unhappily married are in the swoon of Post-Romantic Stress Disorder. I've seen an alarming number of people throw away perfectly decent marriage partners. My major goal in this book is to offer you a compelling argument that will stop you from throwing away what may well be your perfectly good marriage partner or from ending a perfectly good relationship that seems stuck. A secondary goal of this book is to offer you the latest biological and anthropological data relating to 'being in-love,' the experience of lust and being solidly attached to a love partner, a state that is the foundation for long-term, lasting love. A final feature of this book is to present six new discoveries relating to falling 'in-love' and staying in an ever-growing and deepening love. ©2014 JOHN BRADSHAW. All rights reserved. Reprinted from Post-Romantic Stress Disorder: What to Do When the Honeymoon Is Over. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the written permission of the publisher. Publisher: Health Communications, Inc., 3201 SW 15th Street, Deerfield Beach, FL 33442.

Reading this book is Helping me through the PRSD right now as we speak. The honeymoon in love

phase is clearly over and the work has begun. I feel that this book helps me understand that what I'm feeling as my relationship with the man of my dreams evolves. I feel understood and knowing that what I'm going through is very common and expected in healthy relationships is comforting in itself. I've found that my closest relationships force me to come to terms with myself. It is a tool to know myself better and perhaps that is the greatest gift that close relationships have to offer.

Good summary about the topic but I really expected to get more "tools" out of the book. More exercises...

Would recommend this book to anyone dating or married. I can relate to a lot of these stories and he really puts things into a realistic healthy perspective

GREAT TO HAVE IN THE LIBRARY

Insightful information re the origins and effects of romantic love. A useful guide.

I didn't feel it was up to John Bradshaw's excellent ability to connect.

Made sense of things that intuitively I knew to be true. Good book to explain what happens as relationships mature.

John Bradshaw has written many helpful things in recovery. His book on Shame is a classic. This was helpful to many of my clients.

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