

STRENGTHENING OUR MARRIAGES

The marriage institution is under great threats. To survive a marriage is not as easy nowadays. There are internal and external pressures pushing marriages to the brink. There is still hope that marriage in this century will work. Let us seek for ways to strengthen our marriages.



He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men. Ecc. 3:11

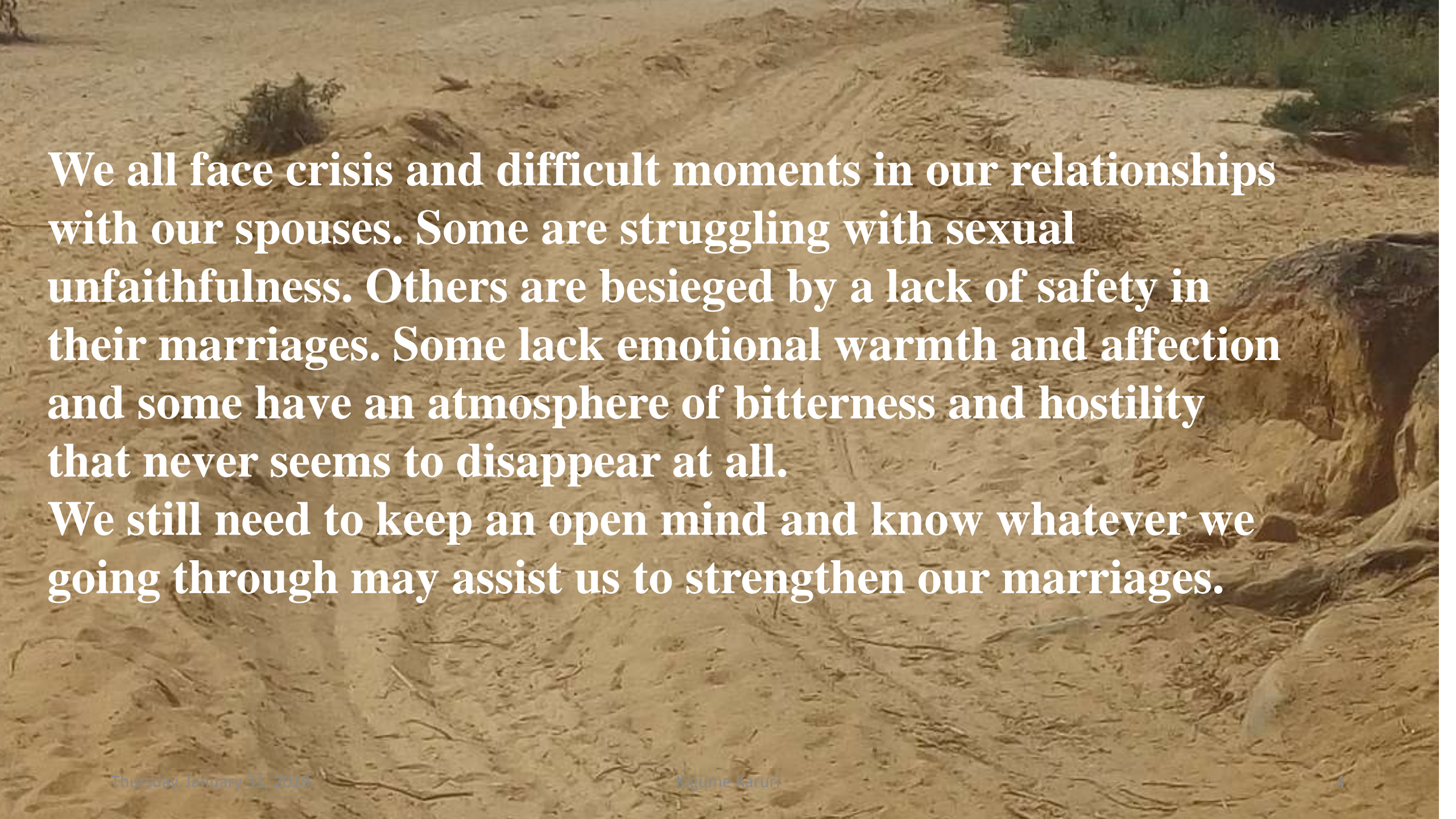
Finding anything good to focus on is difficult when you're in the midst of a marriage crisis. Waves of emotion create a gulf between you and your mate. With your emotional bridge in shambles, seeing the other side can be tough.

Keeping an Open Mind

To keep an open mind is nearly impossible when your relationship is held together by a thread, when you feel angry, hurt, and misunderstood. With emotions running rampant, insight and wisdom are in short supply.

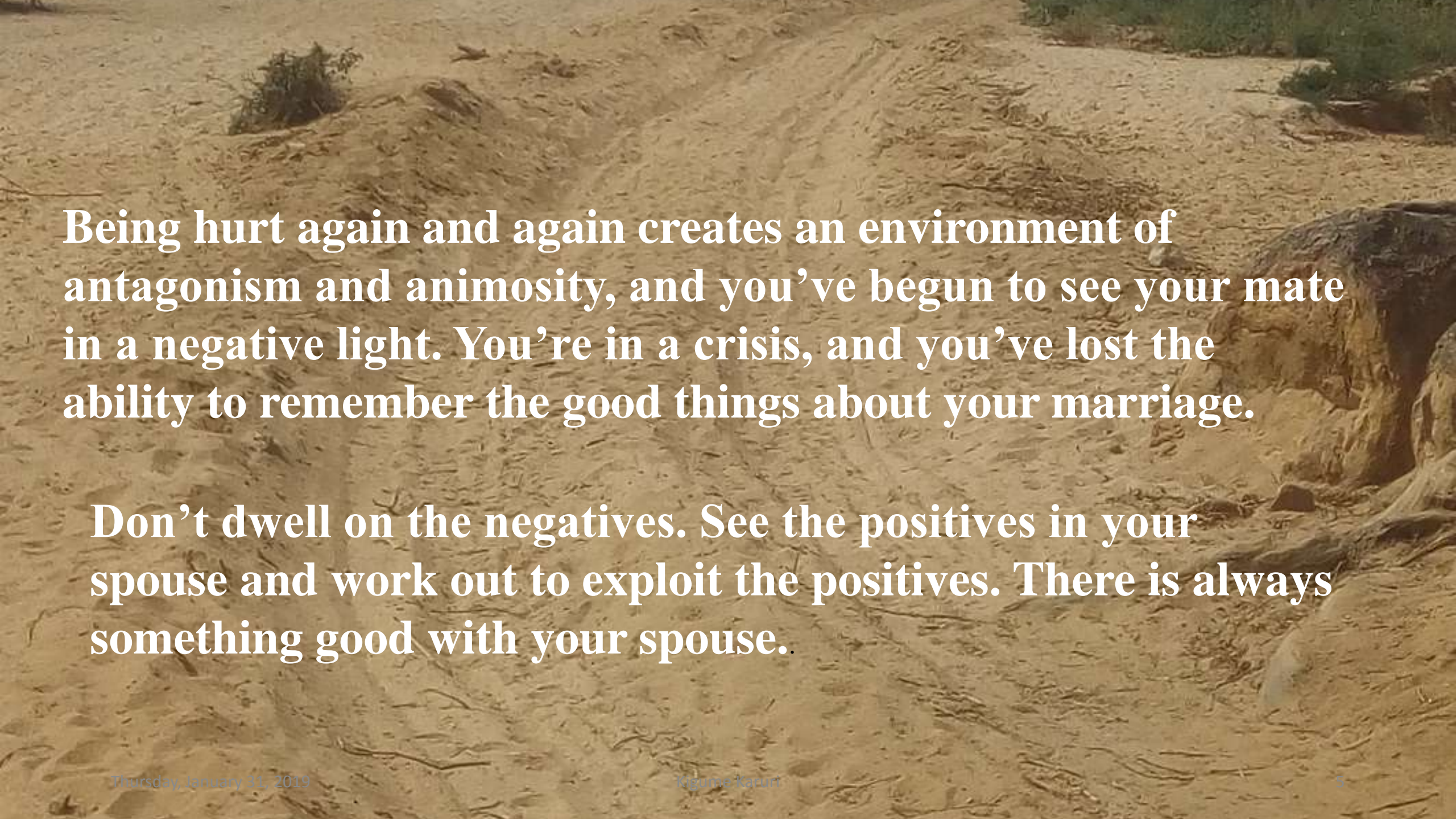
A young lady is committed to a marriage at the age of 22. After a while she cohabitates with her lover and after a while she gets a baby and the lover decides that he no longer needs her and the baby. The emotions are wounded.

The rate at which these issues are taking place is so high. We have many hurting couples who are frustrated in marriage.




We all face crisis and difficult moments in our relationships with our spouses. Some are struggling with sexual unfaithfulness. Others are besieged by a lack of safety in their marriages. Some lack emotional warmth and affection and some have an atmosphere of bitterness and hostility that never seems to disappear at all.

We still need to keep an open mind and know whatever we going through may assist us to strengthen our marriages.

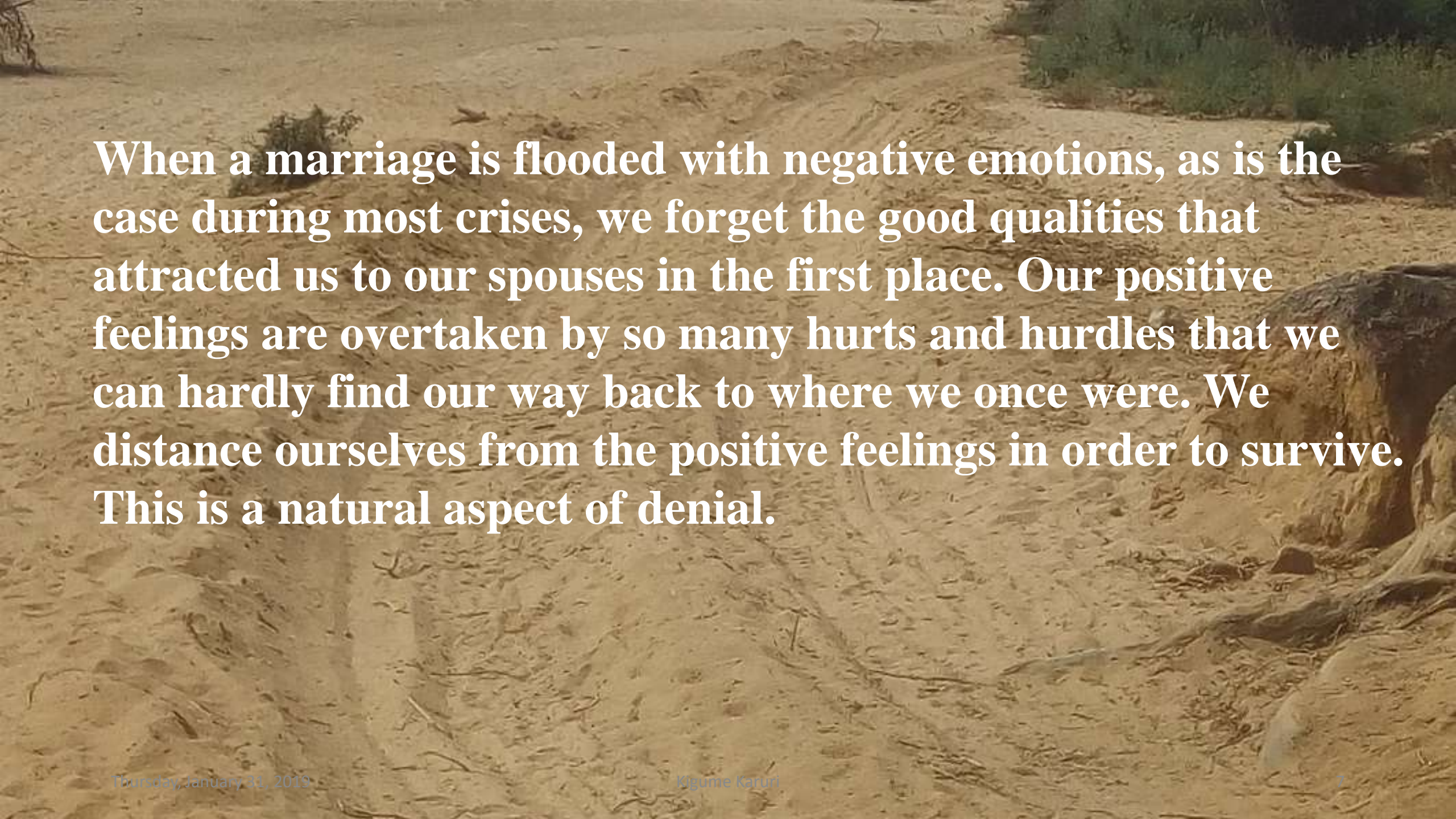


Being hurt again and again creates an environment of antagonism and animosity, and you've begun to see your mate in a negative light. You're in a crisis, and you've lost the ability to remember the good things about your marriage.

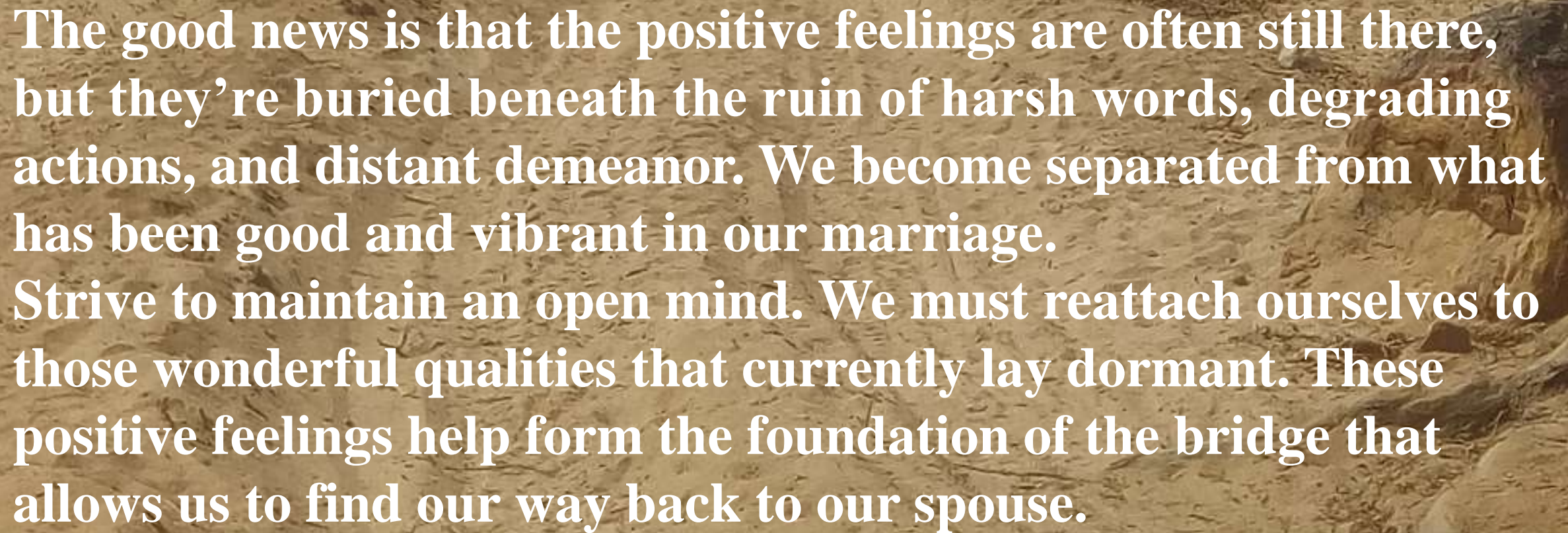
Don't dwell on the negatives. See the positives in your spouse and work out to exploit the positives. There is always something good with your spouse.



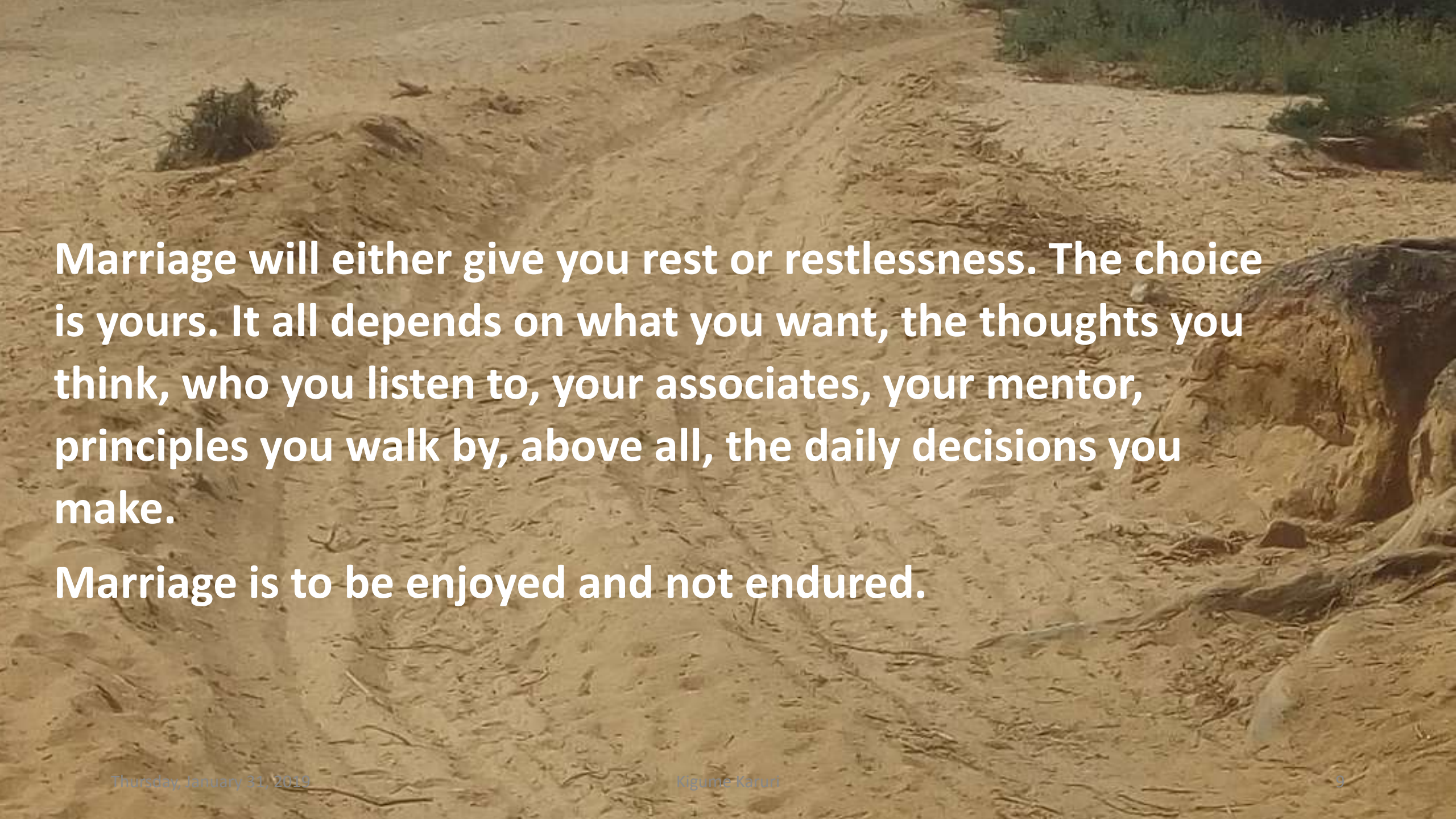
Many times we dwell on the negatives. It is very easy to criticize than to give credit. In order for us to strengthen our marriages, we need to have a heart of appreciation. Look back at where you started some 10, 20 or 30 years ago and appreciate all the good that your spouse has done. I always advise on the “**Sandwich Principle**”. Sandwich the bad with the good and you will never be seeing the bad.



When a marriage is flooded with negative emotions, as is the case during most crises, we forget the good qualities that attracted us to our spouses in the first place. Our positive feelings are overtaken by so many hurts and hurdles that we can hardly find our way back to where we once were. We distance ourselves from the positive feelings in order to survive. This is a natural aspect of denial.



The good news is that the positive feelings are often still there, but they're buried beneath the ruin of harsh words, degrading actions, and distant demeanor. We become separated from what has been good and vibrant in our marriage. Strive to maintain an open mind. We must reattach ourselves to those wonderful qualities that currently lay dormant. These positive feelings help form the foundation of the bridge that allows us to find our way back to our spouse.



Marriage will either give you rest or restlessness. The choice is yours. It all depends on what you want, the thoughts you think, who you listen to, your associates, your mentor, principles you walk by, above all, the daily decisions you make.

Marriage is to be enjoyed and not endured.

Qualities of a strengthened marriage

1. Being kind, gentle, and sympathetic to each other.
2. Having a great sense of humor and being there for each other.
3. Having genuine conversations.
4. Being determined and pursue your marriage and life dreams.
5. Being a responsible father and husband or being a responsible mother and wife, caring for each other and caring and providing for the needs of the children.
6. Take responsibility for your failures.
7. Be there for each other in good and bad times.

8. Never look out for short cuts. You have the solution. Deal with all that comes in the marriage.

9. Avoid what I call long distance marriages. You can't be away from your wife/husband and children for 10 years and assume that you are still married to the same person.

10. Seek ways of solving any conflicts or misunderstanding as soon as possible.

11. Always seek for the good in your spouse.

12. Celebrate together. It brings newness and refreshment in your marriage.

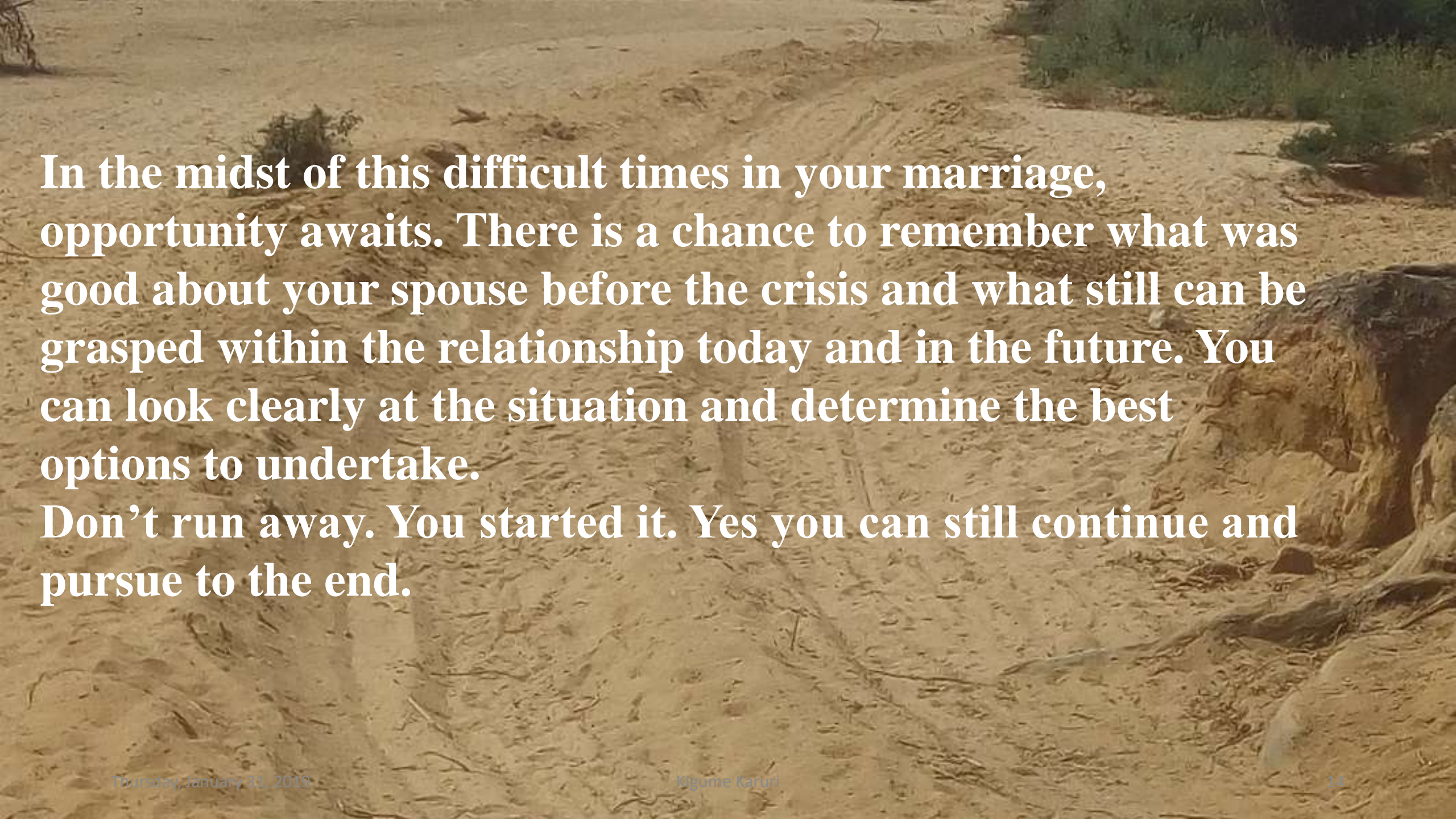
Reaching for the positive in your spouse

Remembering anything positive is challenging in the midst of broken trust, violated safety and stability, and painful emotions. Everything can appear bleak. That's the nature of crisis. Perceptions are skewed, and the outlook appears dismal.

Do all that you can to maintain love and trust. These are the major keys in strengthening your marriage.

Ephesians 5:31-33 (NIV)

³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”^[a] ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.



In the midst of this difficult times in your marriage, opportunity awaits. There is a chance to remember what was good about your spouse before the crisis and what still can be grasped within the relationship today and in the future. You can look clearly at the situation and determine the best options to undertake. Don't run away. You started it. Yes you can still continue and pursue to the end.

Couples in crisis lose sight of the positive elements in their marriage. Because they feel so much pain and because they dwell on that pain, they can't enjoy the positive aspects of the relationship that still exist.

- Remembering those good moments in your life can strengthen your marriage.**
- Look at how you started , the children being born and growing.**
- Thank God for every moment and allow Him to take over the preeminence in your marriage. HE IS THE AUTHOR OF MARRIAGE.**



Many times our situation is not as terrible as it feels at the moment.

Many of us allow our emotions to take over and cloud our judgment. As a result, the problems escalate to the point where they seem insurmountable. Avoid taking a normal, troubling situation and blowing it out of proportion to the point where it is much worse. The result is that we will continue hurting each. Emotional hurt takes time to heal. It is the duty of both of you to work to minimize it and bring healing to your marriage.

Ideas to help strengthen your marriage

Instead of rehearsing all the things that aren't going our way, obsessing on the aspects of our marriage that trouble us, how about trying :

- Identify things about your spouse that you still appreciate.
- Refuse to spend hours arguing and bickering.
- Agree to share with your spouse the traits you still appreciate about each other.
- Stop rehearsing marital problems.
- Seek and discuss solutions to the problems.

Bad days are part of life. But they don't need to become a way of life. Severe marriage crisis happen, but there are often ways to get past them. Maximizing the positive and minimizing the negative will help you to that end.

Marriage doesn't have to be as bad as you make it. When you focus on the prizes you're *not* getting, you lose sight of the ones you *are* getting. When you count all the things you've lost, you miss out on all the things you've gained. It's time to get on with your marriage..”

- In the mature, Christian marriage, you are willing to forego being the center of the world and strive to meet your spouse's needs. In fact, you frequently stop to consider his or her immediate need, and if possible, you do your best to meet it. If you can nurture a spirit of **“we're in this together and must find our solutions together”** as you navigate this crisis, you'll be greatly strengthened for the journey. If you can view your spouse as vulnerable, fragile, and in need of your love, you'll grow in empathy toward each other, creating a powerful bridge.

And if you empathize with each other, rather than fighting, you'll be available to assist each other in the healing process.

Marriage needs:

Both of you must work to ensure that you strengthen your marriage. No one party can succeed on its own. Look at the bigger picture and work on strengthening areas that have been thorny in your marriage.