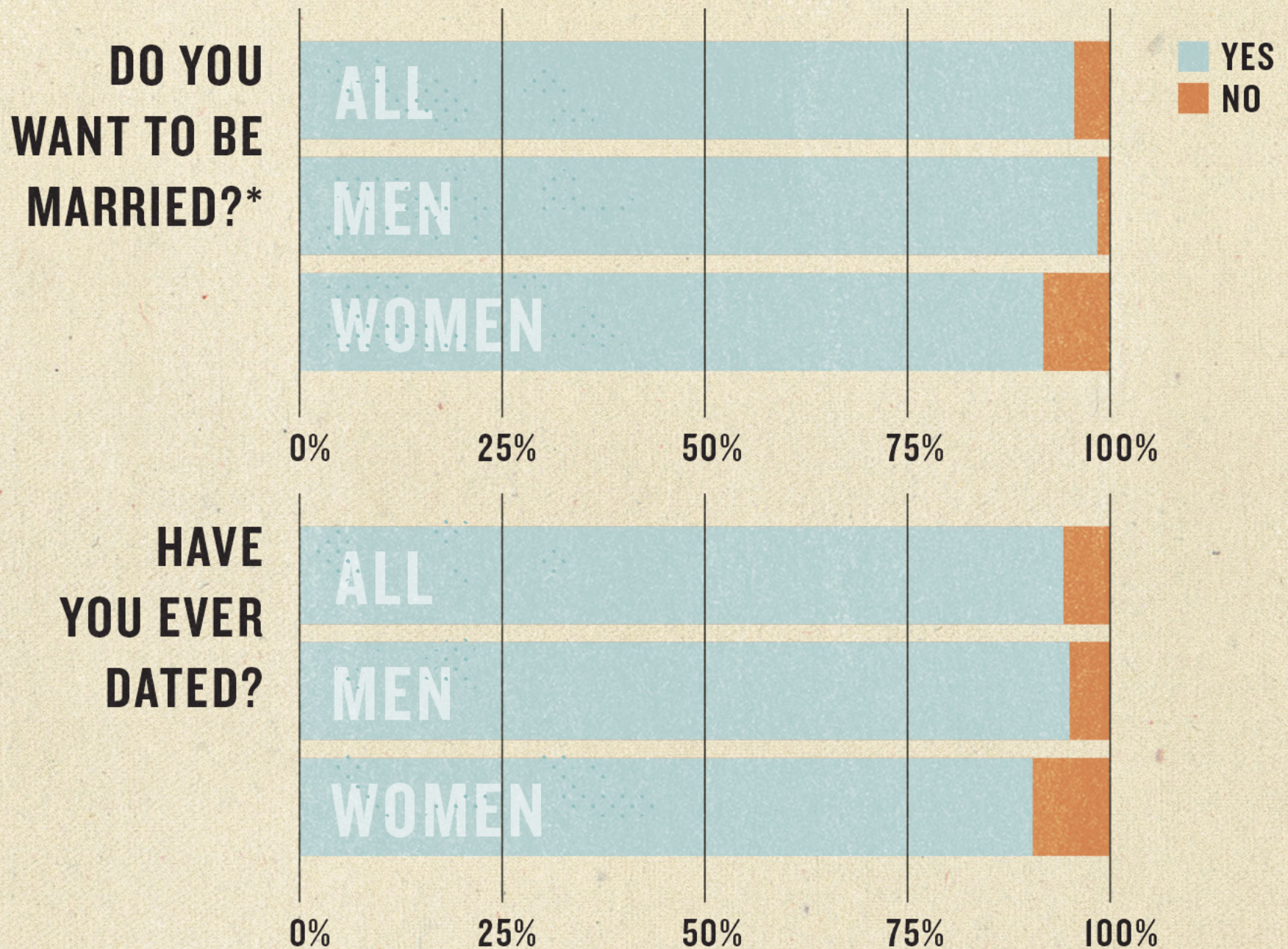


NOT YET MARRIED

God designed singleness and dating to be unique seasons for devotion and usefulness to the Lord. Yet these seasons are often viewed as life stages that must simply be endured on the road to marriage. But life was never meant to be mainly about love and marriage. Our call is to learn to live and date for more.

In May 2017, we asked nearly 7,000 readers questions about their experiences with regard to dating and marriage. Some of the results from that survey are presented below.

Most People Want to Be Married






TAKEAWAY

Whether already married or not yet married, the desire for marriage exists in the hearts of nearly all people. This does not necessarily mean that all will marry, but simply that the God-given longing for marriage is common to many.

**Includes people who are already married.*

Our Relationship Histories Are Diverse

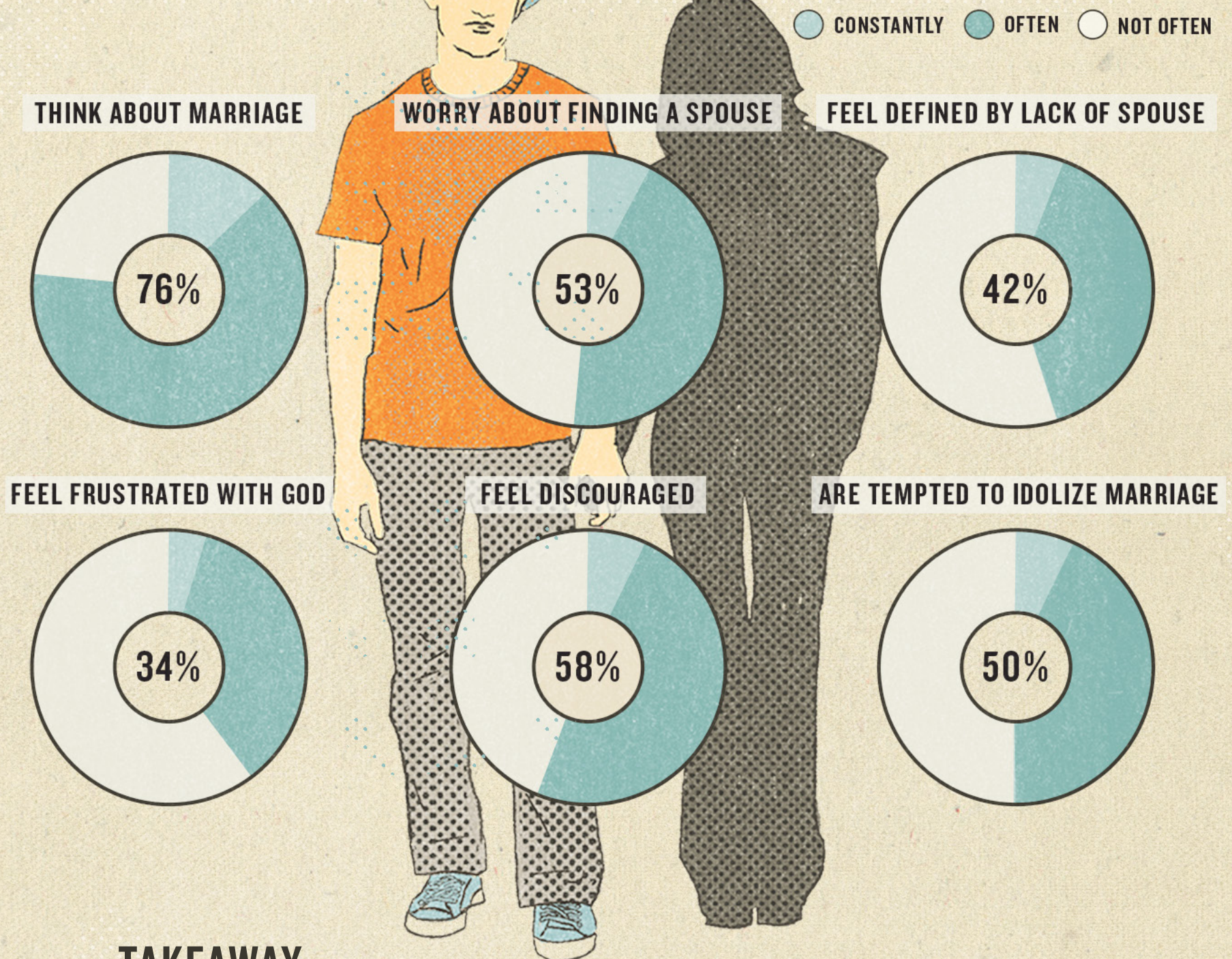


	AVERAGE # of dating relationships	REGRET a past dating relationship	SATISFIED with relationship status
ALL	4.1	55%	88%
DATING HISTORY			
NEVER DATED	0	0%	78%
HAVE DATED BEFORE BUT CURRENTLY SINGLE	3.3	62%	68%
CURRENTLY DATING	3.3	51%	92%
CURRENTLY MARRIED	4.3	58%	93%
GENDER			
MEN	4.1	55%	90%
WOMEN	3.9	56%	84%
GENERATION			
GENERATION Z	2.0	31%	86%
MILLENNIALS	3.0	49%	85%
GENERATION X	4.3	60%	89%
BABY BOOMERS	4.6	54%	90%
SILENT GENERATION	4.9	45%	91%

TAKEAWAY

While most people are satisfied with their current relationship status, over half say they regret a past dating relationship. It is important to be present in our season of singleness, not constantly searching for the next significant other. It's also vital to give prayerful thought when choosing whom and when to date.

% of People Who Often (OR CONSTANTLY) . . .



TAKEAWAY

The sobering reality is that large numbers of not-yet-married people not only think persistently about marriage, but often worry about finding a spouse, feel defined by the lack of a spouse, and are tempted to idolize marriage. The beautiful alternative is living fully and joyfully for God now, right where he has you.

Thinking Too Much about Marriage Can Be Harmful

NOT-YET-MARRIED PEOPLE WHO THINK ABOUT MARRIAGE OFTEN
(or constantly) ARE . . .

3X

*more likely to say they
feel discouraged*

OVER 3X

*more likely to say they feel
frustrated with God*

OVER 5X

*more likely to say they feel defined
by the lack of a spouse*

OVER 5X

*more likely to say they feel worried
about finding a spouse*

ALMOST 2X

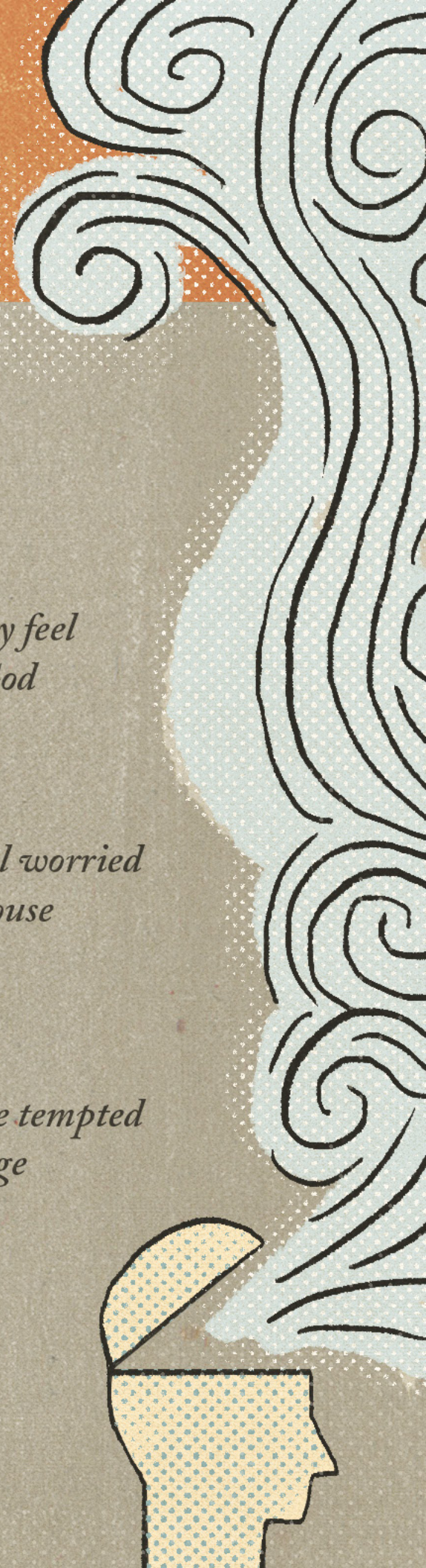
*more likely to say they feel unable to do
what God wants them to do*

OVER 5X

*more likely to say they are tempted
to idolize marriage*

TAKEAWAY

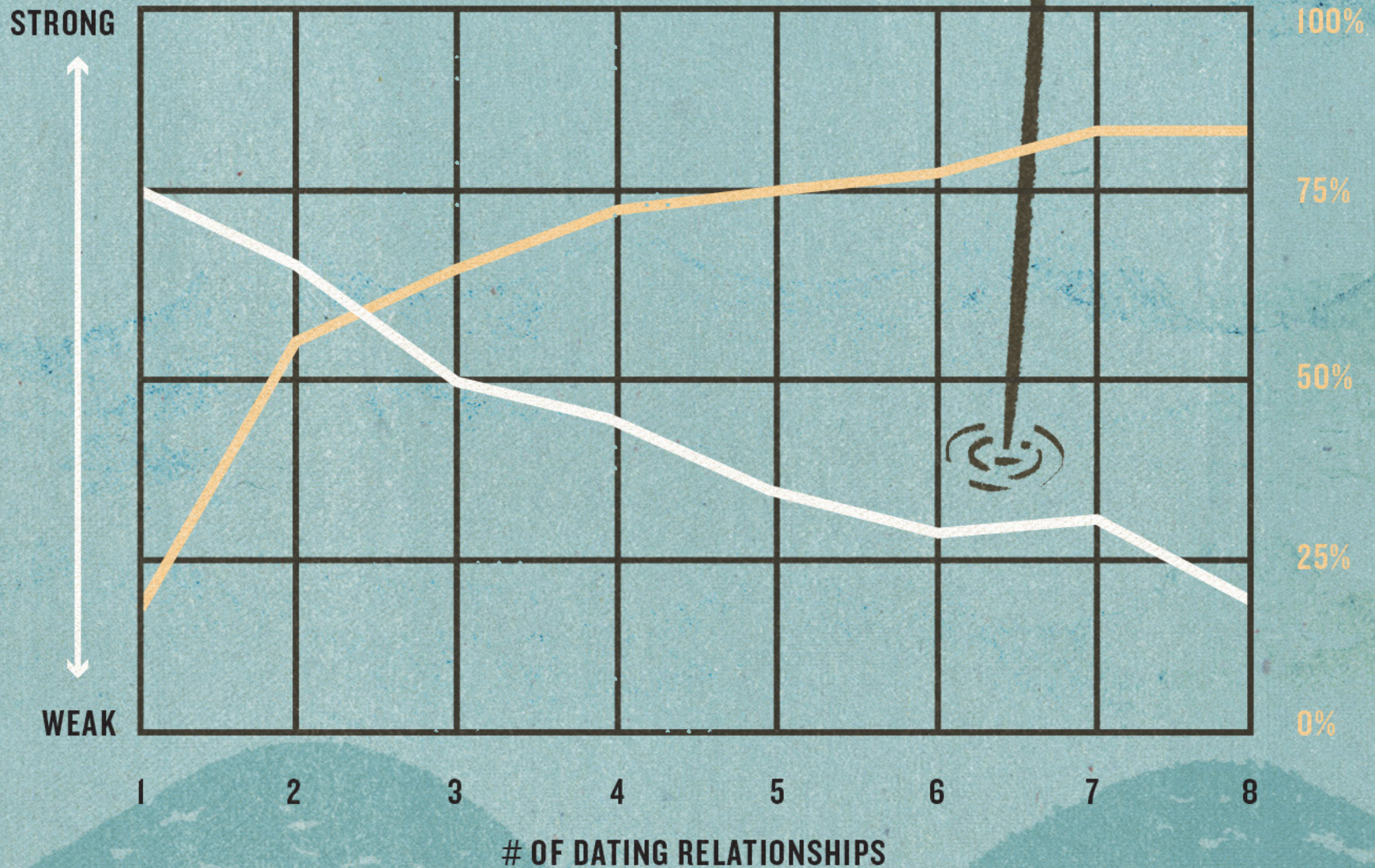
The results of focusing too much of our attention on marriage are not what we intend. What ends up happening is that things like worry, frustration, idolatry, and discouragement are multiplied in our lives. The better way is to cultivate joy by looking for opportunities to serve and glorify God in the present.



Date with Caution



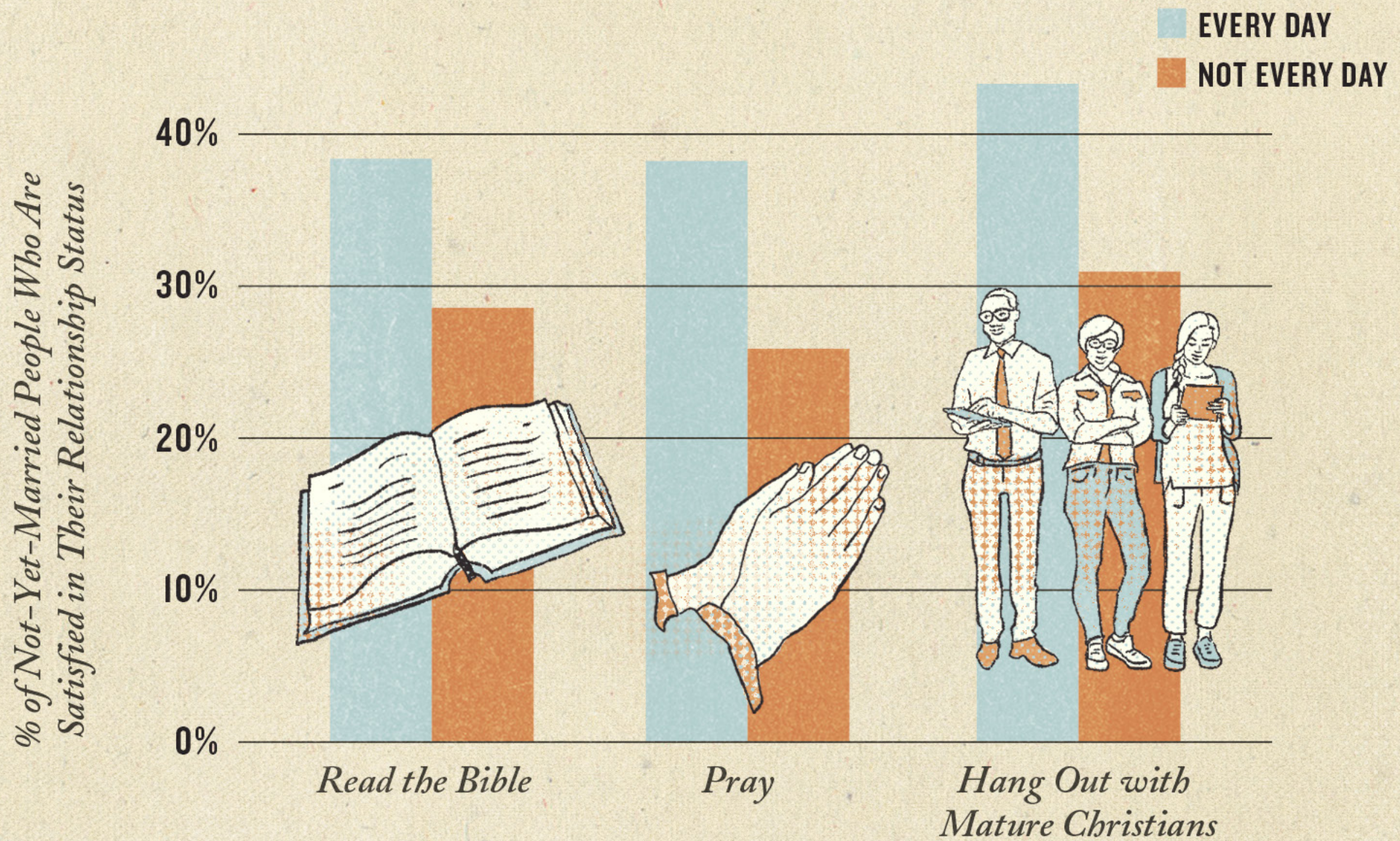
— % of people who regret a past relationship
— Strength of spiritual life while dating



TAKEAWAY

The trends clearly indicate that the more dating relationships we are involved in, the greater the chance that we will regret a relationship and suffer from a weaker spiritual life. While multiple dating relationships aren't inherently wrong, we should think carefully about our motives and seek contentment in whatever stage of life God has placed us.

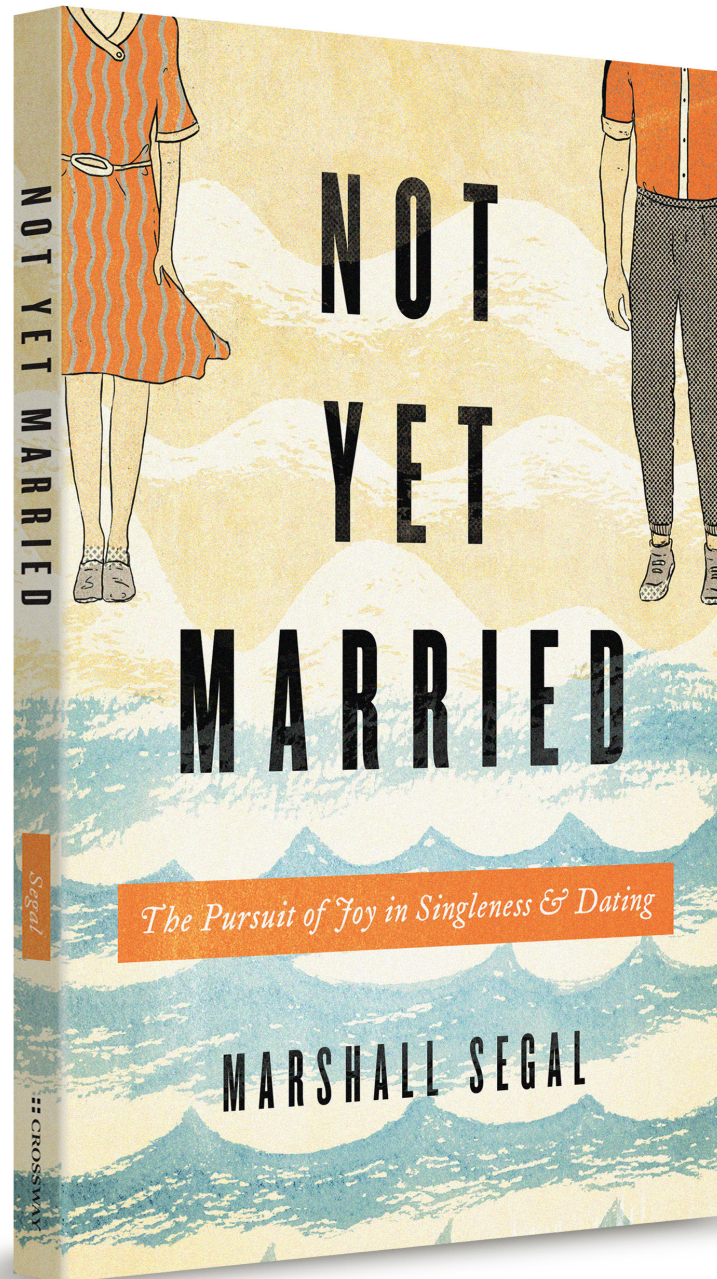
Spiritual Disciplines Foster Contentment in Our Relationship Status



TAKEAWAY

Simple practices like reading the Bible, praying, and spending time with fellow Christians help us cultivate a spirit of contentment when it comes to our relationship status. The Lord directs us toward these disciplines for our joy!

*Life Is Never Mainly about Love and Marriage.
So Learn to Live and Date for More.*



NOT YET MARRIED: THE PURSUIT OF JOY IN SINGLENES AND DATING

Marshall Segal

Many of you grew up assuming that marriage would meet all of your needs and unlock God's purposes for you. But God has far more planned for you than your future marriage. *Not Yet Married* is not about waiting quietly in the corner of the world for God to bring you "the one," but about inspiring you to live and date for more now.

If you follow Jesus, the search for a spouse is no longer a pursuit of the perfect person, but a pursuit of more of God. He will likely write a love story for you different than the one you would write for yourself, but that's because he loves you and knows how to write a better story. This book was written to help you find real hope, happiness, and purpose in your not-yet-married life.

CROSSWAY.ORG/NOTYETMARRIED