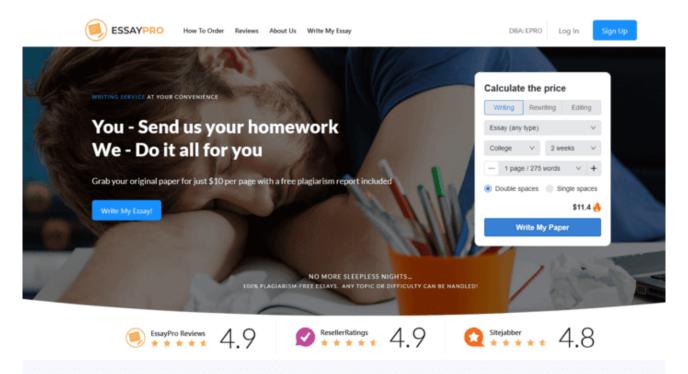
Old Man and Old Woman as Marital Guide



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"Old Man and Old Woman," a retelling of a Native American myth by Chewing Blackbones, a Blackfoot Indian, should serve as a lesson to all couples in how a good relationship works. In today's society there is a great need for people to understand how to make their relationships successful. As the divorce rate gets higher every year; small children have begun to think that getting a divorce is something that is normal and to be expected. This story shows how to work through problems with a give-and-take approach where you make compromises, yet still stand up for yourself when you believe your convictions cannot be compromised.
The Old Man and Old Woman agree on certain rules from the beginning. It is important for couples to agree on certain points when they begin a relationship. Problems might arise later if certain ideals and standards for behavior are not established from the <u>onset</u> . The

man and woman in the story agree that the man will have the first say in all decisions and the woman the second. For couples in today's society the ideals that are established are more likely have something to do with religion, the number of children a couple <u>wishes</u> to have, or who should work in the family. The establishment of these principles will help

couples to stay together longer and also be happier.

While the Old Man and Old Woman agreed, from the beginning, that the man should have first say and the woman the second, they both had equal input into decisions. When they were discussing the duty of tanning the hides, the man said "the women will have the duty . . . they will rub the animals' brains on the hides to make them soft and scrape them with scraping tools. All this they will do very quickly, for it will not be hard work" (539). The woman did not completely agree with the man's ideas about how this should be done. The woman suggested, "they must tan hides in the way you say; but it must be very hard work, so that good workers may be found out" (539). The Old Man and Old Woman used compromise in making this decision. While the woman had the final say, she did agree to part of the man's original idea, while also adding some input of her own.

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