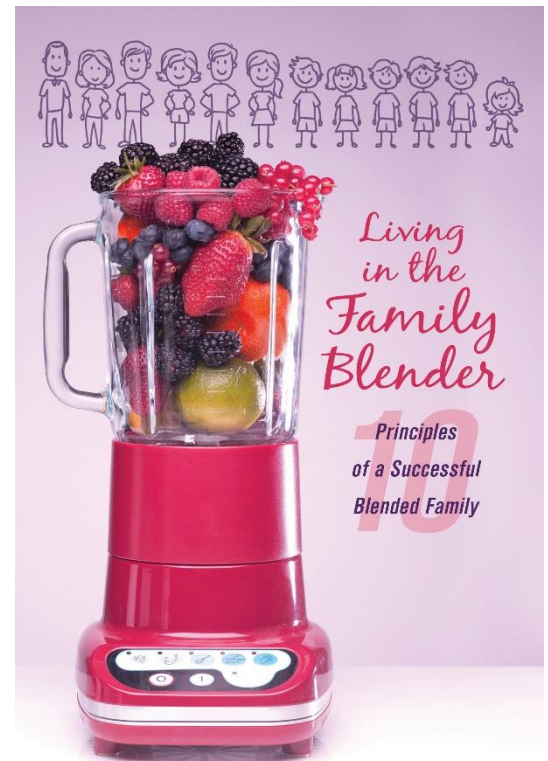


- **Release Date:** July 4, 2019
- **ISBN:** 9781632695055
- **Retail:** \$14.99
- **Pages:** 224
- **Category 1:** Family & Relationships
- **Category 2:** Parenting
- **BISAC:** FAM042000 FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS / Parenting / Stepparenting
- **Format:** Paperback

LIVING IN THE FAMILY BLENDER

10 PRINCIPLES OF A SUCCESSFUL BLENDED FAMILY
CLARK RICH BURBIDGE AND LEAH DEE BURBIDGE



Clark Rich Burbidge and Leah Dee Burbidge

Blended family issues impact the vast majority of Americans. Yet even so, society often sidesteps the topic, while literature leaves a bleak landscape nearly void of practical advice from those who have lived in the trenches.

With over 68 combined years of direct blended family experience, including 14 years with their own family of 10 children, authors Clark and Leah Burbidge are uniquely qualified to fill this void. Their combined autobiographical/how-to guidebook weaves a humorous, tender, uplifting, and critically insightful fabric of 10 foundational principles upon which any family may confidently build. Every blended family can have happier, more fulfilling lives where disruption, disorientation, and contention are replaced by teamwork, progress, and overcoming-oriented achievement.

Living in the Family Blender provides practical guidance upon which any family may build better relationships and a life filled with joy and purpose. Join them on their personal journey and discover glorious possibilities in your own family.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

Deep River
BOOKS

About the Authors

CLARK AND LEAH BURBIDGE



Clark and Leah live in the high mountain valleys of the Rockies where they enjoy their ever-expanding blended family of ten children and six grandchildren. They enjoy travel, hiking, road and mountain biking, and serving in their community and church.

Clark received a BS in Finance from the University of Utah and an MBA from the University of Southern California and spent 35 years traveling the world as an investment banker, banker, and Chief Financial Officer. Leah earned an Associate Degree from Ricks College and what arguably could be considered a doctoral-level experience in blended families. Clark and Leah treasure their blended wild ride of 14 years together, firmly believing that any challenge is manageable when you have someone you love to walk beside.

Connect with the Authors:
www.facebook.com/Blendedfamilyproject

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

Deep River
B O O K S

What Others Are Saying About
Living in the Family Blender

I wish you had written this book . . . years ago before my husband and I were married. We might not have struggled as much in parenting our blended family. . . . THIS IS AN IMPORTANT BOOK! . . . Your book is so inspiring and should be read by every member of a blended family.

—**Barbara J. Scott, Life-educated blended family spouse and parent**

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



Suggested Interview Questions

For Clark and Leah Burbidge, authors of
Living in the Family Blender
10 Principles of a Successful Blended Family

Q: What was the motivation behind writing a book on blended family principles of success?

A: Two reasons really. First, there is a tremendous increase in the number and frequency of blended families in our society. It is largely unacknowledged and therefore overlooked by those who might otherwise provide resources. We found this as we prepared for our leap into the blender. There was little information available to give us the guidance we dearly could have used as we started out and along the way. The resources available on the subject were heavily diluted by third-party opinion and misinformation or overshadowed by other more politically popular social focuses. This is illustrated by the nearly continuous cries for help in social media posts by blended family members. Second, we felt an in depth look at a real-life blended family written by those in the trenches could be insightful and uplifting. By emphasizing the 10 principles of success, our focus on the subject provides that positive, hopeful, you-can-do-it focus we found lacking.

Q: Describe your greatest frustration during this project.

A: The near denial in society of the existence of blended families and the resulting downplaying of their needs and impact on society. We have often been confronted by responses from government, community, religious and education authorities whose first reaction is to express the mistaken opinion that the blended family is a relatively small percentage of society. They are generally shocked and surprised that most Americans are impacted by blended family issues.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



Q: What do you hope to accomplish with this book?

A: We hope to raise awareness of the needs and challenges of blended families and individuals all around us. We also want to give these families hope and practical guidance so they can become happier and avoid or overcome their unique challenges.

Q: What was your greatest initial challenge as a newly blended family?

A: Creating an environment for our children that was credible and stable. A blended family faces two challenges immediately. First, both the adults and children have gone through a complete disruption of everything that brought them stability and security. Divorce or death disrupts the primary support structure in every affected person's life. Remarriage involves further disruption often through moves, changes in sharing personal space, and having to re-establish stabilizing connections. Not only did we need to re-establish, mostly from scratch, new connections and support structure, but we had to be personally credible and believable as parents in the process. Children are perceptive and, having been through complete disruption, will test the new construct before they buy in. The last thing they want is to open themselves up to another train wreck. We discovered we had to be all-in and the home life we were creating needed to be credible and secure or our children would not have bought in.

Q: Were there any other challenges to parenting a blended family?

A: Finding a healthy balance in communicating with, disciplining, and interacting with non-bio children. This works both ways and we have an entire chapter on this in our book. A non-bio parent must earn the right over time to step into the life of a child. This is developed through unconditional love, dependability, and working together with the bio-parent to develop safe and healthy relationships. This means submerging pride, respecting the bio relationship, and often allowing the bio-parent to take the lead. Even

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

after 14 years there are frequent instances where we must be sensitive to such interactions. Blended families often have emotions and sensitivities closer to the surface making relationships more fragile.

Q: Describe one of your most enlightening realizations.

A: That married children and children not living in the home are every bit as impacted as those who live full time in your home. There are some differences in parenting and getting adult children to buy in, but it is no less important. It is one of our society's greatest blind spots that our government has chosen not to include children 18 and over and those not living in the home as being part of a blended family.

Q: What will readers get from your book that sets it apart from other literature out there?

A: This is not an academic treatise or third-party observation. It is a look at how to be successful from the inside. This makes it a practical and usable guide with principles that can work for every family. Because it is both an autobiographical and how-to book, the reader will find a delicate balance of tenderness, humor, and frankness necessary to make it transferrable to their own situation. This book will change their lives.

Q: What qualifies you both to instruct others on how to be successful with a blended family?

A: Nothing. We are regular people with no special training except in the trenches of reality. If we can do it from where we started, building on the limited knowledge we had, anyone can. That's the secret sauce of our book. It is relatable for the very reason that we are unextraordinary, regular people.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



Q: Will your principles be difficult to apply to other family situations?

A: It depends on the parents and family's level of commitment, humility, and willingness to work consistently as well as their personal priorities. Family blending is not business as usual. We make overcoming challenges in our lives harder or easier depending on whether we are committed to working at it and whether it really is more important than our own interests. Every blended family will have a happier, lower-risk experience by attempting to apply our principles. Ultimate success often depends on whether they are willing to build the family infrastructure and levels of patience and communication necessary to endure in the long term. Employing our blended family approach can be critical to cleaning up the short term and initial obstacles but it really is all about long term solidarity.

Q: What is the biggest pitfall you see built into the social media cries for help with blended family situations?

A: So much of the difficulty that blended families are dealing with arise from unfortunate decisions made by a couple at the very beginning. Casual or careless commitment rarely endures the blender and certainly does not inspire affected children to buy in. Red flags in dating cannot be ignored. Selfishness, priorities that divide, anger issues, impatience, inability or unwillingness to engage, and certainly any kind of abuse or abandonment cycle are reliable signs that a train wreck is in the future. A couple must have a deep commitment to work together and stay together. Too often relationship development is stunted by the early and overwhelming disruption of physical intimacy. A single parent with children is not the same as someone without children. The reality is that there is a higher bar.

Q: What do you think of other terms like “broken family”, “step-“, “half-“ etc.?

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

A: The term “broken family” is a derogatory and damaging generalization. One cannot escape its implications that the individuals involved are somehow broken also. Labels in society can be destructive and they are particularly negative for children. We have known many wonderful, healthy, and fantastic people who have found themselves suddenly and unexpectedly single. They are certainly not broken. Of course, members of families are statistically at-risk, but this can be addressed by applying the principles in our book. When something previously unimaginable happens in a person’s or family’s life, looking forward and moving forward can help heal. As far as the qualifiers like step- and half- we find these divisive in family life. Certainly, there are times when in describing relations qualifiers are necessary, but we prefer the term bio in such situations. However, in our family we do not think in terms of last names or the path our children traveled to arrive in our family circle. They are all our children without qualification.

Q: Has your blended family experience been a rosy walk in the park or have you faced real challenges?

A: Our blended family has faced extraordinary challenges along the way and will continue to deal with many going forward. Parenting never stops and blended parenting often faces additional outside obstacles. These have and continue to include children who have chosen not to engage in our family circle, those struggling with past disruption that are still attempting to find a healthy and secure path, illness, death, struggles in school and socially, third-party campaigning and manipulation, and a host of emotional and psychological hurdles to achieve a healthy and stable existence. Yet through it all we have been able to create a safe home environment where our children feel comfort, love, and a calmness that draws them back often. Our commitment to consistently live a basic set of values and beliefs, and the relationship we have developed as parents together on the same page has allowed us to face our storms on solid ground, creating a safe harbor that our children feel and strive to re-create in their own lives.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com



Q: Given your 14 years together and everything you have gone through, would you do it again?

A: Absolutely, yes. Even if we knew that we couldn't change anything and that some of our severe trials could not be avoided. We would not trade a single moment for the love we have found together and the opportunity we have had to share that with each one of our children, their spouses, and our grandchildren to the extent we have been allowed. It has been glorious.

Q: What would you say is your primary goal going forward?

A: To welcome every one of our children and their families into our blended family circle without condition or explanation. Blended family parents must be bridge builders rather than wall builders. We stand on the bridge with open arms, no questions and no conditions. One day we are confident that those children who have chosen not to be fully involved will step onto that bridge and they will discover a warm, loving embrace absent of judgement and full of acceptance and joy. Each must take those steps in their own time and by their own choice. It is important that parents are able to start with their children where they are and move forward from there.

For more info please contact media@deeperiverbooks.com

