INTRODUCTION

"We Have Your Back"

Today, in our society, many people feel alone or disconnected to one another. Even if they don't admit it, many people feel helpless and powerless with regard to the direction of their lives and the quality of their relationships. They simply do not know what to do.

We wrote *Shall We Dance? A Guide to Happiness* because we believe sharing our personal and professional experiences could influence others to lead a healthy and successful life. We wrote this book as we were raising our children, nurturing our marriages, and working hard to provide for our families. During that time, we noticed that we weren't the only families trying to hold it all together! Our discussion began and we agreed that popular ideas, theories or tools for achieving a happy and successful life seemed to fade quickly in our changing and diverse culture.

We wished that when we were young men someone had taught us how to *apply* character strengths such as honesty, integrity and courage to our relationships. No one showed us the connection between choosing these character strengths and our self-confidence. Self-confidence is having the belief in ourselves that no matter what situation we encounter, we have the tools, resources and people in our lives to get us through anything. Having self-confidence will get us through our most challenging times and help us to live a happy life.

We are motivated by the idea that:

- Happiness is achievable for all of us.
- Happiness is determined more by our minds than by our circumstances.
- Happiness is the by-product of lifting others up.
- Happiness can only be experienced in the present.
- The principles in this book, when learned, practiced and mastered, will always have an outcome of happiness.

The quality of our life is contingent on the quality of our relationships – we need connections with each other. Ultimately, the quality of our happiness is dependent on the healthy connections we make with one another. We learned that we cannot do it alone. Over the years, and through many difficult

challenges and transitions, we have declared, "I have your back," to demonstrate our love and support for one another.

"We have your back" is not just a catchy slogan but also a philosophy we live by every day.

"THE GOOSE STORY"

A Lesson in Relationships

"Next fall, when you see Geese heading south for the winter, flying along in a 'V' formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way: as each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in 'V' formation the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way we are.

When the Head Goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point. It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs with people or with geese flying south.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. What do we say when we honk from behind?

Finally, and this is important, when a goose gets sick, or is wounded by gunshots and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly, or until it dies. Only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group. If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that."

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN OUR JOURNEY TOWARD HAPPINESS!

Our book, ***Shall We Dance? A Guide to Happiness*** is a blue print for achieving peace, contentment and satisfaction for yourself and the people around you. The ideas and principles we present to you have been tested and applied over the past 30 years in our professions (as a marriage and family therapist and as a salesman) and in our personal lives. These principles work all of the time, with everyone in our lives.

We wrote this book to create a resource and a culture to support, influence and inspire one another.

We have your back!

