

HOW TO BE THE HAPPIEST YOU HAVE EVER BEEN IN **YOUR MARRIAGE**



The Pain Centre



RETURN TO THE LORD, YOUR GOD

This is a call from the Lord our God, who loves you, to return to Him. To seek Him out and decide to be with Him. He has seen how much you are suffering and wants to save you. He wants to guide you away from the evil you found yourself in.

He wants what is good for you. He has infinite blessings and grace to give you if only you turn away from your path and turn towards him.

Your path has led you into the wickedness and evil of this world, away from his presence and grace.

You are now truly in Hell. Hell is not the pit of fire we were taught but rather, it is to be without God's presence in your life.

Turn away from your path and turn towards the Lord, who loves you.

The Devil, who hates you, has influenced you into a life filled with suffering, surrounded by evil.

God has tried to place obstacles in your path to stop you, but when you continued down it, he didn't force you back onto the good path.

He will never go against your will, even if you choose to hurt yourself and those you love with it.

He loves you.

He wants you to be with him in his wonderful grace and fill your life with blessings.

Only if you choose him.

Don't be influenced by the wicked people that you have seen, who call themselves Christians, but who are hypocrites and do what's evil in the Lord's sight.

They are not a reflection of his love.

All you must do is call to God, pray to Him and ask Him to guide you back into His grace. Go back to church. Read His holy scriptures.

So that you may discover how much God loves you and how many blessings He wants to fill your life with. Find out how to walk out of the Hell your life has become.

Call to Him and see how much your life will change in an instant.

Become His child once more.



HELLO!

We were inspired to develop this course because after years of listening to our clients complain about their relationships and how unhappy they were, we decided to do something about it.

We have realised that the reason why they are so unhappy is that they were never taught how to succeed in a relationship, how to resolve conflict or how to communicate so that the other person feels heard, what the other person needs and how to determine what that is.

We realised that it was not because they didn't want to be happy but they honestly did not know what to do.

If they knew what to do, they would have done it.

This course is all about teaching you what those basics are.

It is designed to work ONLY if you BOTH do it. It will never work if only one person is working on the relationship. You both need to do this together at the same time.

I have designed this course to be a basic tool kit and to teach everyone who is in a committed relationship the basic tools they need to fix most things, resolve almost everything and be happy almost all of the time.

However, like any basic tool kit, if the problem cannot be solved using this tool kit, it is time to stop trying to fix it yourself and get professional help.

It's all fun and DIY trying to fix a toilet until there is SH*T all over the floor that came out of the toilet you "tried" to fix.

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THE GOAL OF THE RELATIONSHIP

The way to accomplish anything is to first know where it is that you want to go.

Without knowing which destination you want to reach, you will not get to it.

The first thing I want you and your spouse to do is to sit separate from each other and write down what you want from your marriage.

What do you want it to be like?
What do you want it to feel like?
What do you want from it?

Write down all the details and specifics you want. Write it to explain your goal to someone who doesn't know you at all. Don't assume that they know anything about you.

Once you have written it all down, read it out loud and edit it so that it makes sense when you hear it.

Example: "I want to be in a marriage where I feel loved and respected. Where we grow closer together and more in love every day and invest time and effort into our relationship. We do things together and have and raise a family of 4 children who make us proud to be their parents. Grow old and in love together until I die 5 minutes before she does."

Be honest with yourself and what you want. Write down what you want clearly, without any vague comments that you will need to explain for them to understand.

Now set it aside for now and do the next section.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Let us start with the most important section of this course as this skill will enable you to succeed in all the other aspects of this course that are still coming up, and your relationship.

Many fights, arguments and disappointments could have been avoided if we just understood what the other is telling us.

The lack of effective communication will lead to unending miscommunications and misunderstandings.

It may start off with getting the wrong type of white bread that you asked for and progress to substantial, relationship-ending conflicts.

Without the ability to understand what the other person is saying, in its entirety, as well as being able to express

yourself so that the other person understands, or them having to assume anything, there is no possibility of a successful relationship.

1. No needs can be effectively met.
2. No desires can be fulfilled
3. No conflicts can be resolved.

You will never be able to plan a life that both of you want.

It is the key, which will open all the doors of a successful, happy and fulfilling relationship.



Successful communication is simple.

1. Understanding completely and exactly what the other person is saying from their perspective
2. Explaining yourself so that the other person understands it completely

This may be a simple concept but to accomplish that is what is difficult. It will take time and practice to do well.

Let us start with the most important of the two.

That's right, the most important part to effective communication is to listen effectively. Not talking but listening.

You want to understand completely what the other person is saying.

The skill that will enable you to do that is called Active & Reflective Listening.

Where most misunderstandings

come from is when you assume to understand what your spouse is saying without knowing what they are saying.

You have heard but not listened to them.

There are three skills that you must learn to master this skill.

They are

1. Empathic listening
2. Clarification to improve understanding
3. Not interrupting

All of the following are skills a branch off the first.

Empathic listening is the practical expression of empathy.

Empathy is putting yourself in their shoes.

By doing this you are understanding their world through their eyes, not yours.



Empathic listening is the skill of showing the other person that you have listened to them and understand what they are saying by confirming with them that what you heard and understood is what they meant.

It has nothing to do with seeing it from the other person's side. If you show the person that you understand what they have said and are experiencing, you will understand their side and they would feel validated for it.

There is very little more frustrating than feeling like someone isn't listening. This skill will eliminate that completely.

They will feel you showed you care enough to understand, listen to them and care for their stresses and concerns.

This is a powerful way to bring you two closer together. It is a vital skill to have in order to build a joyous marriage.

How do you do it?

Easy.

When your spouse is talking, listen to what they are saying. Focus on being present and concentrating on what they say. By listen I mean concentrate on remembering what they are saying so well that you can repeat to them a summary of what they have told you and what you understand by what was said.

When they are done, relay that summary and check if what you understood is what they have said.

Your spouse will then respond instinctively whether you have understood them or not. If not, they will likely correct what you misunderstood.

This is an active skill that requires full attention on your spouse to work. Make sure when they are speaking to you that you are giving them your full attention.



When your spouse is talking to you, focus on listening to them. Intently. You want to try and understand everything that they are saying to understand their perspective. Not interpret what they are saying through your own life and experiences.

We tend to understand what they are saying in relation to what we know and how we grew up. We understand things from our perspective, not theirs.

By doing that we won't understand what they are trying to tell us at all.

When you know for sure your spouse is finished talking, then start with your Reflective Summary.

Remember some people take long pauses while they are speaking because they are giving themselves time to think.

If we are used to the pause meaning someone is done,

then we start to talk and they will constantly feel like they are being interrupted as they weren't done but we thought they were.

Always start your Reflective Summary of what you understand from what they have said with "It sounds like..."

Or

"It feels like..."

Then tell them what you understand by what they said. If they are speaking about their boss being unreasonable by adding his work to their own, it would sound like this: "It sounds like your boss is being very unreasonable for dumping all of his work in your lap."

By using the opening "It sounds like..." or "it feels like..." you are opening the Reflective Summary to them to make corrections where they feel it is needed.



These corrections are of your statement. Where you understood one thing, but they meant another.

By doing this effectively, your spouse feels like you have heard and understood them completely as you took the time to focus on what was said, understand it, and reflect to them what you understood.

To feel heard and understood is what every person wants. By doing this you will show and tell your spouse that you understand what they are going through, even if you have not been through that event yourself.

If your spouse spoke about many things at once it is better to break down what they said into individual themes.

A theme in this context means a grouping of ideas about a specific topic.

Let us look at an example.

If your spouse told you "One of my colleagues was about 30 minutes late this morning because of a bad accident."

What do you understand by what was said?

Once you have grasped what they are trying to tell you, you repeat that summery back to them.

Always start the sentence with "It sounds like" or "it feels like", then repeat to them what you understood by what they said.

Wait for them to respond to you.

If you hear "Yes. That's right" or "that is exactly right", they are telling you that you understood them perfectly. This is how you will know that you understood it correctly.

If you didn't, they would correct your statement. Once they have properly clarified then you follow it up again with "it sounds like..." or "it feels like..."



Then you should get the stamp of approval response of “Yes, that is right.”

People will correct you or affirm what you understood instinctively.

Let us look back to my example.

A good example of a reflective summary would be “It sounds like your colleague was stuck in traffic because of an accident.”

A terrible response would be “They mustn’t have been hurt too bad if they made it to work.”

An even worse response would be “There was no traffic on my way to work, I wonder why they were stuck?”

The reason it is terrible is because you haven’t listened to understand what they are trying to tell you. You listened to respond to what they have said from your own personal views or made what they said about you.

This will make your spouse feel like you are interested in what they have to say and that you aren’t listening. This will lead to a misunderstanding. Misunderstandings will lead to conflict.

Effective communication is all about showing your spouse how well you have understood what they have told you.

If your spouse doesn’t know that you understand them because you show them that you do understand, you will be on two different pages.

Misunderstandings and miscommunications will cause conflicts.

You will never be able to change your spouse but if you understand them, show them that you understand and you won’t have to.



You should never interrupt while your spouse is talking. It is very annoying and disrespectful, and shows them that you aren't interested in what they have to say.

You are only interested in being the one that is talking.

If God gave you two ears and one mouth, he likely did so in the hopes that you would listen twice as much as you speak.

Don't interrupt them while they are speaking. You might not realise that you are doing it or how often, but once you notice it, it is important that you work on preventing yourself from continuing to do so.

If your spouse is explaining or telling you something in such a way that you don't understand, ask clarifying questions.

Ask those clarifying questions about the thing or details that you didn't understand. When there is an opportunity, ask your clarification question.

If nothing that they said makes sense, just tell them "I don't understand what you are trying to say. Please explain it again for me."

However, if you choose to instead use the empathic summary instead of asking clarification questions and your summary isn't a reflection of what they meant, they will naturally and gladly correct your summary with the true meaning without you needing to ask.

This skill takes practice to develop.

I suggest you use it not only with your spouse but with everyone you meet and work with. They will like you more for it.

One thing that you must not do, especially the husband, is while your spouse is talking is to offer a solution to their problem instead of showing them you have listened to and understood them.

There is nothing that screams more loudly that you aren't listening than trying to provide a solution they didn't ask for.



They likely already know what they want to do to solve it.

Your spouse is talking to you to vent about the frustration this issue is causing them, not because they want you to solve it.

The second part of Effective Communication is to explain yourself well so that the other person can understand you.

Some of us have a wonderful expectation to think that our spouse can read our minds. They cannot. If you have not said it, explained it so they can understand it, or ensured that you didn't assume they knew anything, they won't know what you want them to know.

Remember they are living their lives with you; they are not living your life. They do not know what is happening. You must explain it so that they can understand.

This is my suggestion. Always explain or speak to your spouse as if you were trying to explain something that they know nothing about it.

Do not make any assumptions that they know, remember what you said a long time ago or even experienced the same moment the same way you would.

Think of it as if you were writing a story that will be read by someone who knows nothing about you or has never met you.

If you wanted that person to understand the story totally, you cannot leave out any detail or assume that the connections you have made on your own have been made by them too.

If they do not know, it is your job to lovingly and patiently tell them everything. This will help to no end in keeping you both on the same line of the same page.



Even if you must do so thousands of times.

Go and practice these skills with everyone. I want you to become so good at it from all the practice, that you do it without thinking.

My first challenge for the both of you is to share what you want from your marriage - everything that you wrote down earlier.

Tell them, explain your goals to them and allow them the opportunity to show them you understand what you want from your marriage.

Once you have done so, combine both your goals and create a new one. Write it down and save it so that you can refer back to it.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Every couple has arguments and passionate discussions. What separates successful relationships from those that end are how they fight.

When you argue or fight over something it should always be to try and permanently resolve the issue that caused the fight. By permanently resolve I mean to fix the cause of the conflict so that it is never the cause of conflict again.

I have found that almost every conflict starts with a misunderstanding.

We think we understand the other person or where they are coming from, but we don't. Not understanding as well as unfulfilled expectations is what leads to the misunderstanding that leads to conflict.

Now you can see why learning how to effectively listen to the other person so that they know you understand them and by communicating things in a way that they understand and trying your best not to be vague, will prevent many of these small squabbles. It will also help to resolve the big ones.

However, when the issue that needs to be resolved is a much bigger issue that is not a small misunderstanding, or the emotions surrounding the issue are high, learning how to fight fairly during the time is what will allow you to resolve, kiss and make up as quickly as possible.

Go back to being in love fast.



I feel the first place to start is understanding what the most common conflict styles are.

A Conflict Style is the way your spouse most commonly reacts to being faced with a conflict. Whether it be in a relationship or otherwise.

It is what they will do when put under the stress of a conflict and is most likely how they have always reacted to it.

It is an ingrained, automatic response. It is not logical or pre-planned. It is a shooting from the hip reaction.

As far as I know, these are the most common styles.

- **The Accommodating People Pleaser**
- **The Avoider**
- **The Competitor**
- **The Kettle**
- **The Forcer**
- **The Compromiser**
- **The Team Player**

The accommodating People Pleaser will always try to give in and accommodate the other person in an argument to keep the peace, even if they are the ones who get harmed by their accommodating. They will likely agree to things to keep the peace, even if they do not want that at all.

They tend to bottle everything up and explode later, trying to overturn all the previous accommodations they agreed to when they wanted to keep the peace, instead of finding a win-win scenario.

Their style leads to a win for the peace and a loss for them.

The Avoider is someone who will do everything they can to avoid any sort of conflict. From leaving the argument midway to completely ignoring the conflict and pretending as if it doesn't exist.



They are the “let’s sweep it under the rug” type of people. To them “It is only a problem if I think about it”. If everything is swept under and forgotten about, it won’t be resolved.

They will choose to avoid any conflict at all to protect themselves from the stress of a conflict.

The Competitor is all about winning the argument. They see conflict as a game to win even if everyone but themselves lose. They will tend to focus on getting a resolution that benefits them at the expense of everyone else. They will want to take charge and lead. Be very assertive. They will also tend to try to force their solution on everyone else. Again, leading to a win for them and a loss for everyone else.

They are the win at all costs type, even if it means everyone else must lose to achieve that.

The Kettle is someone who needs to express what they are feeling, and get out all the emotions and hateful words before they can even move onto discussion and resolution.

They tend to behave like a kettle that is over filled. Once they boil over a little bit, then they can work properly again.

However, the act of boiling over covers everyone around them with blistering hot water.

Their words and anger tend to hurt everyone around them in the act of expressing themselves. After that they expect everyone to want to resolve the issue when they caused a different one altogether.



The Forcer is someone who must always have things their way. Their way is "best," and they will force whoever to do as they say. They often do whatever it takes to force the other to do as they wish.

They might start out asking and the more they are ignored or are not given what they want, the more aggressive and forceful they become to those that rebel against their will.

They are perfectly happy to force everyone to do things their way especially if everyone else must change to do it. They are very similar to the Competitor; they want to have things their way. It doesn't matter to them if the other loses to get it.

The Compromiser is about everyone in the conflict giving up something important to them, so that everyone gets something. They are the ones who see every problem as a cake that needs to be cut.

They feel that for someone to have, it must be given up by someone else. So to them, the question is not how to get more cake so everyone can have their own, but rather how can we cut up the cake so everyone can have.

This may work in the short term, but it will never work long term. To compromise often means giving up something important to you so someone else can have something.

You can see this approach as "everyone loses so that everyone can have a small win."

The Team Player is the collaborator who is looking to work as a team with everyone so that everyone can win.



They are the person who wants everyone to be on the same side, hear everyone's ideas and decide together which one is best. They are all about creating an environment where we huddle together, discuss the solution, and decide together what to do.

It is extremely useful when everyone is on the same side trying to achieve the same goal. It doesn't work when someone else doesn't want to work as a team.

Look at yourself and decide which one of these bests describes you?

Do you want to be the Collaborator but the People Pleaser?

Are you the Kettle that is pretending to be the Competitor?

Which one are you?
Which one is your spouse?

This is a brilliant opportunity to stop and discuss with your spouse why you manage conflict like that and listen to why they do it their way.

It will be very important in implementing the next part.

Conflict is almost always the result of misunderstanding or miscommunication. When we are talking about the conflict, do not purposefully and maliciously attack the another, especially during the argument.

This is a truly evil act that destroys the relationship. It is not possible to build a relationship where this is a common behaviour. As it is like burning down your house in the heat of the moment then expecting your spouse to help you rebuild everything that was burnt down.

The aggressor will alienate their spouse and their spouse will withdraw, counter attack or react in such a way that will escalate the conflict further. It will make having a healthy, happy relationship impossible.

Not fully understanding your spouse's viewpoint and why they do what they do, will lead to conflict.

If you are the type of person who wants to resolve a conflict immediately, but need time to process, you pushing to resolve it will drive them away, escalating the conflict further. Give them time to process what has happened.

By understanding your spouse's needs and how their mind works during conflict, you will be able to kindly give them what they need so that the conflict can be resolved.

ADVICE FOR THE SPOUSES

If your spouse tells you or confirms that they are one of the conflict styles above, this is what you need to do.

The first three things that should be done for any conflict are

Pause the conflict while the emotions are high

So many terrible things have been done in the heat of the moment. Take a break and allow emotions to calm down and for rational thought to return.

Apologise for what you did wrong

The fastest way to end a conflict is to apologise for what you did to hurt the other or how it made them feel. Apologise for what you are actually sorry for and mean it. You might not be sorry for what you said or did, but you are sorry for how it happened. Just be sure to be sincere when you do apologise.

Hug it out

Once you have apologised you need to reconnect through touch. Just a simple hug will start to break the anger and allow healing to return.

Once the heated emotions subside it is then possible to try and resolve the conflict so that everyone wins, and it is never an issue again.

THE ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE PLEASER

The best thing to do for this type of spouse is not to assert your needs or go along with their need to people please.

They will just submit to this need at the expense of themselves and their needs.

What I feel needs to be done is to take a break from the conflict. Allow time for the heated emotions to calm down.

Then ask your people pleasing spouse what they really want, sincerely. Do not make suggestions or step in. Allow them to take charge and speak their minds without worry of reprisal.

Do not agree to any suggestion that will require them to lose so that others will be happy.

Have the strength to listen without taking over and to allow them to assert their needs.

For the Accommodator, if you could keep the peace and avoid the stress of the conflict, what would you want? Choose to be brave and tell them what you want so that you can actually get it.

THE AVOIDER

This is advice directed to you, the Avoider. Your spouse cannot resolve conflicts that you want to avoid. You will never solve anything that is avoided.

It is hurting the relationship by just sweeping things under the rug. It might work for you alone but will only lead to resentment. A relationship is about working together so that everyone wins. If you get what you want, and they don't, they will resent you for it.

Resentment leads to divorce.

You need to have the courage to do what makes you feel anxious or stressed.



To be brave and solve the conflict by facing it head on. It will not go away by ignoring it.

A conflict unresolved is like food that is going off in the fridge. Closing the door will not stop it from rotting. Ignoring it won't stop it from smelling. Unless you deal with it, it will spread to other food in your fridge. Before long, everything will be rotting in your fridge.

This conflict, being unresolved will lead to everything else rotting.

Choose to be brave and face the fear of the conflict to resolve it.

FOR THE SPOUSE

At some point it may be necessary to stand your ground and not to allow them to avoid it any longer. Please try to do that gently. They avoided conflict growing up and avoiding it meant protecting themselves from harm and stress.

THE COMPETITOR

Advice for the Competitor. Winning is not "I beat you and won the argument."

Loving and building relationships is a selfless act of love. Winning at the expense of your spouse is not love but hate for your spouse.

You need to change your view of winning to a win is when we both get what we want and need. It is not all about you winning at the expense of everyone else.

Your need to win must not come before your need for the relationship to thrive. Harness your competitive edge to get a win for everyone, including yourself. Your spouse is on your side, not against you. Remember that when you want to beat them in the argument.



You will win the argument and lose the relationship and your spouse by showing them you love winning more than you love them. They will see it as you hate them and will become resentful.

Resent is the poison that kills all relationships.

ADVICE TO THE SPOUSE OF A COMPETITOR

Please do not challenge your spouse or try to bring out their competitiveness against you. Hold your tongue in the heat of the moment. Do not repay their competitiveness with your own. It will only escalate the conflict.

Once the emotions have calmed down, try to gently remind them that you two are on the same team. We need to win as a team.

THE KETTLE

Advice to the Kettle. It is no longer OK to explode to feel better. You cannot spill boiling water all over your spouse every time you need to release the pent-up emotion.

You need to learn how to release those emotions without spewing fire onto everyone around you. You are only burning every bridge.

It is not helping. It is making everything worse. You will spread fire and burn someone so utterly that there is no reconciliation possible. I am sure you have already done that many times in the past.

You only get one wife. They can never be the one that you pour your fiery emotions onto.

Control yourself. Hold your vengeful tongue and rid yourself of these emotions another way.



Try writing them all down and burning the letter once it is done.

Try praying to Your Lord and burden Him with those emotions.

Go to the gym.

Do what you think is best.
Do not throw fire out of your mouth at others or your wife.
Control yourself.

FOR THE SPOUSE

Firstly, I know what I said just a moment ago will seem different from this, but heed the advice.

If you are the cause of the need for a conflict, you did wrong. You are the cause of your spouse's anger and they lash out at you.

It is right and fair for them to do so. It is right and fair for them to express that what you did was wrong.

You must be courageous and accept the correction and feel their anger directed towards you. It is fair and understandable since you caused this.

Allow them to express how you made them feel without interrupting them. Let them get it out so that once they have calmed down you can come together and talk about it.

Once everything has calmed down then correct them for what they said to you. If what they said wasn't fair or malicious retaliation, tell them so. Help them realise that what they are doing is hurting you and the relationship. If what they said hurt because they were right, do not try and fight it. Accept it because you did wrong.

Choose to forgive them and not to hold onto the resentment that you have for what was said.



THE FORCER

For the Forcer... Why do you think your way is best? Do you know everything about everyone and every situation?

Why is it so important to you that you must be in control of everyone and everything?

Spending some time finding out why you are this way will be extremely valuable for you, so that you know the cause and then figure out how to address it.

Once you know why you need to control everything, I want you to change your view of life from your role of being the dictator who forces everyone to do as you want, to the leader, the one who listens to everyone and finds out why they like doing it their way. Help lead and make the best decision.

Become the decider rather than the Forcer.

Your spouse is incredible and has grown up in a completely different environment to you. They have knowledge, ideas, and solutions that are better than yours if you would just listen to understand.

You need to decide to take other viewpoints, solutions and ideas into account before you force your way onto them.

Your way isn't always the best way.

FOR THE SPOUSE

If you know your spouse likes to be in control and likes to have things their way, it is best that you pick your battles.

Pick areas where you won't be forced into conforming or where you do not mind doing things their way. In those areas, set strict boundaries and enforce them in others. Allow them to lead you.



Choose to be submissive.
Submissive means to allow
and choose to let yourself
be led by your partner.

It doesn't mean putting chains
on yourself so that they can do
as they please with you.

You decide to let yourself be
led by them. Decide to do
as they decide. Do not fight
against them if they have
made their decision.

Decide not to be stubborn
and rebellious against their
decisions, as to do so will
just galvanise their will to
force you more.

This will just make everyone
more resentful and then
everyone loses.

THE COMPROMISER

For the Compromiser, why
must everyone lose? Why must
someone give up something so
that you can have something?

Compromise is the worst
way to resolve anything as
everyone loses. This isn't a way
to be happy. Why should you or
your spouse give up anything
you love so that the other
can get something?

Any conflict or problem must
be solved by a win for everyone
without them giving up
anything that "THEY" do
not want to.

Asking them to give up
something for you or the other
way round is extremely selfish.
If they like it and it doesn't harm
them or you, why do you want
to take it from them?

Why try and take away things
they like? So that the other may
have something?

I cannot steal from you a little
bit, just so that I can be happy,
and you must be OK with it
because I feel you already
have too much.



A relationship isn't all about you and what you want.

Relationships only work when everyone gets what they want and need.

For the spouse, do not allow them to take from you or to give up anything you want because "a relationship is a give and take."

Relationships are all about selfless giving. All about everyone wins. If one gets what they want at the expense of the other, they become resentful and everyone loses.

THE TEAM PLAYER

This is how every relationship should be and how conflicts should be resolved.

Everyone is on the same team and is trying to accomplish the same goal.

The only way to know if everyone is on the same team and has the same goal is to ask them.

This only works if everyone is on the same team and wants the same thing.

If you or your spouse want to accomplish or get an outcome completely different from what you want, you aren't playing on the same team.

If not, you will be fighting against each other trying to get what you want.

If you were both tied together with rope, the only way to go anywhere is to head in the same direction. You won't be able to pull them to your side to travel north if they want to go south. If you aren't perfectly aligned, you will get lost and land up where you do not want to be.

HOW TO RESOLVE ANY CONFLICT

These steps are easy on paper but doing them is the hard part.

1. Allow time to calm down before trying to resolve

You won't be able to speak and solve anything if you are both angry and filled with emotions. You will just say things you wished you hadn't, aggravating the conflict. You cannot put out a fire by pouring more petrol onto it.

You must wait for the emotions to die down, then snuff it out completely before it turns into a roaring fire.

2. Find out what and why the other feels the way they do.

All conflicts arise from misunderstandings, miscommunications, and a mismatch of expectations.

An example is if the fight started because you have an expectation that the man must lock the house and be responsible for the safety of the home, but the other feels it is the responsibility of everyone to look out for the safety of everyone. If you do not understand that, you will not be able to resolve anything

3. Look for a permanent solution that is 'win-win' for everyone

Otherwise, the conflict will only ever be unresolved, everyone will feel cheated and the conflict will never end.

The solution must try to fix this issue forever so that it will never be a problem again.

Anything short of that will lead to this conflict returning again and again, making everyone unhappy, resentful, and stressed.



4. Once it is over it is over

Once the problem is solved, you may never bring up the past mistakes again. Everyone hates to be reminded of things they did wrong. It only goes to prove the other is not over it.

You must choose to forgive the other for anything that they did.

You can still remember what they did, but I suggest you drop that resentment and hate for the other like a bag of hot rocks.

You will be the only one angry for choosing to pick up and carry the rocks of resentment when you do not need to.

5. Kiss and make up

There is nothing like kisses and hugs to smooth everything over.

The sooner you choose to return to being happy, in love, holding hands and giving hugs, the sooner the emotions from that event will be gone.

Sooner is always better when you are trying to restore the love after a big fight.

I suggest you do this for every conflict. Follow these steps. It will require practice in the beginning, as you get more skilled at it, the easier and more natural it will become.

Last passing word of advice. Don't agree to or negotiate for anything you are not happy with.

Changing the terms of the agreement after both of you have agreed to it will lead to another conflict.

If you need time to think through it all and process what you need to do, ask for it, and as your spouse, give it to them.

FORGIVENESS IN A RELATIONSHIP

Let us both be honest with each other - you and your spouse will make many, many mistakes throughout your relationship.

Some of them will be minor and some will end the relationship if you do not forgive them.

Forgiveness is not what a lot of people say it is. It is not acting like what they did was OK. That you must move on and forgive. That everything is fine.

Forgiveness is all about choosing not to hate and resent the other person for what they did to you.

It is about dropping the bag of rocks you decided to pick up for the hatred you feel towards them.

To forgive means choosing to put down the bag of rocks of resentment and hate that you have for the other person for what they did and how they made you feel.

It has nothing to do with the other person. It is about YOU deciding not to hate them. Whether they are sorry or not.

To forgive someone is very hard. It is harder the more painful the harm they caused you is.

It is an active decision you make. Every time they do something to remind you of the hurt they caused you, you might decide to pick up that bag of rocks of hate you have towards them.

You will then have to decide to forgive them again. And again.



Until you finally do not pick up the bag anymore.

What I highly recommend you do is follow the Advice of Paul, our brother in Christ, the God of eternal forgiveness and mercy, when he taught us what love is in the Letter to the Corinthian church.

“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.”

Love keeps no record of being wronged.

If you want to truly forgive and never want to pick up that bag of resentment and hatred when you choose to forgive, choose to forget what they did.

It will bring you endless joy and save you from misery to forget the wrongs and focus on the love.

My advice to you is that if you hurt your spouse, whether intentionally or not, apologise immediately.

It is important that you structure your apology to show them you understand how you hurt them and how you made them feel.

I suggest the format. “I am so sorry for... (behavior). It feels like what I did (how you think what you did made them feel).”

I suggest you make a sincere commitment to try your best not to do the same thing again.

I also suggest you only apologize for things that you are actually sorry for. If you are not sorry for being harshly honest but are sorry for hurting them with it, say that.



This sincerity and apology will go a long way to helping them choose to forgive you quicker. The sooner you decide to go back to being in love and building the relationship, the happier everyone will be.



GENDER BASED NEEDS IN A RELATIONSHIP

We must not forget that marriage has been around for thousands of years. It is likely that marriage has been around longer than people have been recording history.

As people have been around for a long time, so have their basic needs as male and a female in a relationship.

The current popular culture will not change the way men and women think and feel, or how their brains are wired.

If you want your relationship to thrive you must understand the fundamental needs the wife and the husband have in the marriage.

You will also find them widespread in all religious texts and pre-marital counseling courses.

Men need unconditional respect from their wife.

Women need unconditional love and support from their husbands.

The husband must be respected and be the leader of his family. He must lead his family and care for and take responsibility for the family's success.

As the husband you must show leadership.

Women must choose to let themselves be led by their husbands. They cannot lead as the husband leads. Their role is to support, assist and guide the man in their lives to help them lead better.



There can be only one leader and wives need strong men who are leaders. If you, as the wife, want to take over his role, it will lead to more and more conflict.

As the leader you must listen to and consider your wife's view on a situation. Let her help you. The final decision rests with you. You must decide. You must take her by the hand and lead her and your family.

Never betray that trust by leading them into disaster. That is an act of hate that breaks the unconditional love your wife needs.

In return you, as the wife, must show your husband unconditional respect for taking on this responsibly. He must never be disrespected, belittled, and quarreled with. Be it in public or private, for doing so undermines his role in the marriage and will lead to deep problems and resentment in the relationship.

Treating him like you are better than him or that others are better than him, will lead to the complete destruction of the relationship and it will end.

To try to undermine his authority and take over his leadership role is the worst kind of disrespect.

A wife needs unconditional love.

They need to constantly be told that they are loved and shown that they are loved. They need constant reassurance and support.

A wife is constantly second guessing if they are loved. It is not enough for you as the husband, to say it once. Women are not like men who if they say it once, it is true forever. The love they need must be constant. Constant reassurance and reminding her of what she already knows.



To be shown and told that she is appreciated constantly is the kind of love she needs.

It needs to be shown and proved every day. If it isn't, she doesn't know if you really love her.

To us men, if I said it yesterday, it will be true today. Women need to be shown it is true every day.

That is what unconditional love is for your wife.

If you give that to you wife, she will become the crowning jewel. The most wonderful thing that could ever have happened in your life.

She will show you the unconditional respect that you as the husband need.

LOVE RITUALS

One of the best ways to build and maintain a strong bond with your spouse is to constantly do things to make them feel loved.

I call these Love Rituals.

These are conscious expressions of love towards your spouse.

They should be done every day and multiple times a day.

Firstly, you should learn what you need to do to make your spouse feel loved.

Often, we do not put ourselves in their shoes or think from their perspective. We do things for and to them that would make us feel loved. Those same gestures for your spouse will have a neutral response or make them not feel loved at all, as we love and feel love differently.

Those types of expressions of love were well explained in the book called the 5 Love Languages.

The love languages are:

1. Physical touch

Things like hugs, kisses, and cuddles. Not including sex.

2. Words of affirmation

Giving your spouse sincere compliments.

3. Acts of service

Doing things for your spouse to make their lives easier such as the dishes, laundry, filling up their car with petrol.



4. Gifts

Finding and giving to your spouse thoughtful gifts that shows how much you love them and thought about them.

5. Quality time

Setting aside time where your spouse gets your full undivided attention.

In practice every person has one "main" love language that needs to be fulfilled, most followed by one secondary type.

The best way you can find out which one of the 5 makes your spouse feel the most loved is to ask them:

When do you feel the most loved and appreciated?

When have I set aside time to be with you?

When I kiss, hug, and cuddle you?

When I tell you how fantastic you are?

When I find and give you a gift that I knew you would love?

Or when I go out of my way to do things for you?

You can only pick one, so which one makes you feel the most loved? Some people might say all because they want all these expressions of love. They "want" all but they "need" one.

This grouping of questions will help you to find out which Love Language you must use to show your spouse that you love them.

Then ask them the best way they can think of to make them feel loved. Then all you do is do that. They gave you the answer and now you must just do it.

Easy... Well easier than trying and failing for a long time to figure it all out.



Once you know, I want you to make them feel loved every day at least twice. You must go out of your way and make it a habit to make them feel loved by loving them in their own Love Language.

If they feel loved by you spending quality time with them, a good idea will be to set aside time with them in the morning before you all get up as well as some time in the evening, just being with them. This time is set aside just for them.

If it is physical touch that makes them feel loved, giving them as many hugs, kisses, and cuddles as you can when you see them will work. Even if it is 5 minutes of cuddles before you both get ready for the day.

Words of affirmations can be as easy as telling them sincerely how awesome they are. They may like compliments on what they do rather than how much you appreciate them. Just ask them for what the best format is to make them feel loved.

Be on the lookout and find them small gifts that made you think of them, a small flower, old picture, or biltong will always win the affection of someone who loves gifts.

Acts of service is another easy one to do, just ask them what you could do for them to make them feel loved. Is it washing the dishes? Getting their car washed?

As you can see, the theme throughout this course is finding out, understanding, and knowing exactly what the other wants and needs, then giving it to them the way they want it.

Not what you think they want.

By doing so you are tending to and investing in your marriage to ensure it succeeds.

If your marriage is like a garden, in the beginning it may have looked beautiful and wonderful to be in, but if you do not constantly, every day, invest in it, it will become overgrown.



It will look awful, full of weeds and bugs of the wrong kind. Everything except what you want will grow in it.

Anything that you planted in the past may have long since died.

Just look at any abandoned ground to see an example of what I mean. That is what will happen to your marriage if you do not constantly invest in it to ensure that it thrives.

These Love Rituals are the basic form of that investment.



THE OPERATIONAL MANUAL

This is an idea of my own.

This Operational Manual will be attached alongside this e Book and will need to be completed by both you and your spouse.

It is a comprehensive list of questions on everything that you should have discussed together prior to getting married. In it is questions about your religious beliefs, how you want to raise your kids, what you want to nurture with in-laws and how the previous traumas you have experienced have made you who you are today.

It will require a lot of consistent time and effort to complete. I suggest you take the time to do it well. Explain and elaborate on everything. Leave nothing out for the other person to assume.

Once you have completed all of it and added some sections of you own that you felt were important, give it to your spouse and spend time going through it, discussing everything within it and helping each other understand why you are the way you are and how you decide what you decide.

This will then become a guide for the other person. What to do and what not to do.

You can then use this information to build a wonderful relationship with all the cheat codes and shortcuts directly from the person who knows them.



This is the power behind it. You will also get to keep a copy of it so that you can refer to it, remind yourself of what you should already know and refine your actions towards your spouse.

It will be a wonderful tool for you to build even more intimacy and closeness in your relationship.

Start now.

READ THE LAST CHAPTER ONCE THAT IS COMPLETED

When you need professional help.

I hope that you both never need to get professional help because you are on the cusp of divorce.

We are not talking about a difficult patch where you both are stressed. We are talking about where you are constantly fighting and the arguments are getting more vicious and vindictive. There seems to be no resolution and neither of you (yes, you are included) are trying to resolve this.

Divorce is the most painful and harmful thing that could ever happen to a family, or a person. It is not a high school breakup.

It is not something that should be celebrated or encouraged.

It is a horrific self-inflicted wound that is unlikely to ever heal, especially for the children in the relationship.

Why our current culture celebrates the widespread destruction of relationships and actively encourages it is completely lost on me.



It is always caused by a thousand cuts and a continuous lack of effort or investment into the relationship.

The relationship will die if it is not tended to or invested in. If conflicts aren't resolved, they will just lead to more conflicts.

More stress. More words that cannot be taken back. More wrongs that cannot be easily forgotten.

You need to go get professional help from a psychologist or pastor who specialises in repairing relationships, when:

1. There has been adultery/ cheating in the relationship
2. When an argument has escalated to a full-blown conflict without any resolution in sight
3. The threat of divorce was used
4. You or your partner have become Indifferent towards each other - roommates instead of husband and wife

5. Almost all communication is negative or leads to fights
6. There has been a continued lack of physical intimacy
7. You or your spouse have been lying continuously, including about financial decisions

These are the few major issues that need immediate intervention. These are the kinds of things that will lead to divorce.

You both will need to go and take it seriously. Do not let your emotions, not willing to or wanting to try lead to the death of the relationship by indifference.

If you do nothing, like not caring for a puppy or plant, it will die.

So will a massive piece of you. Do not wait to get help.

Get it now

Operational manual

Instructions

This manual is designed to help you reflect on yourself and how you became who you are. To allow you to write down everything about yourself, to learn and answer the important relationship questions that everyone should know.

It is also something you will share with your spouse so that they can learn all these things that won't come up in normal conversation.

It will help bring you both together and be on the same page on the very important issues.

For this to work you must answer and write about every section in this manual in a lot of detail. DO not let the reader have to assume anything.

Write the answers to this as if you were telling someone about yourself who has never met you before and knows nothing about you. Leave nothing that they must assume or imagine.

Both you and your spouse must complete their own copy.

It will take time to do this well. Take the time to ensure it is done well as this will be the blue print for you to use to ensure a truly successful relationship.

Once you have completed everything within this manual can you then add topics or issues that you feel are important that were missed or left out.

Anything you add or your spouse adds must also be added to your unique copy. They must be all have the same sections and questions in them, but different answers.

Once you have completed this, go over it a few times and make sure nothing you wanted to say was left out.

As you work on this you may find inspiration hits you too add more details you would like to add. Do so.

After all that is done, give your spouse your copy and receive theirs and read through it, talk, and discuss all the points with them so you both understand each other's manuals

Learn things that you both didn't know.

Enjoy

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