

MAKING YOUR MARRIAGE WORK

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Disagreements in ALL marriages; importance in how you HANDLE it!

Communication, communication, communication

Find a way to say even the most delicate things. THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK.

Active Listening

SPEAKING:

- I. The “I” as opposed to the “YOU” reduces defensiveness
- II. Focus on FEELINGS
- III. Be aware of your nonverbal communication: decibel tone, eye contact, posture, finger pointing
- IV. Be specific, not vague EX: I feel we should be careful in sharing our business with other members of our families and/or our friends.....
- V. Don’t generalize. Avoid ALWAYS and NEVER
- VI. Encourage questions after you’ve finished your piece to assess the impact of your words on your spouse

LISTENING

- I. Suspend Judgment Initially
- II. Empathize
- III. Show Interest in Understanding and Accepting the Feelings. This is NOT the same as agreeing.
- IV. Convey you are listening by responding in some way. Mirror, but don’t infantilize.
- V. Apologize for that which is your responsibility

It may seem contrived at first, but successful and productive communication will encourage you to do more of the same.

Why is this so difficult?

Self Esteem Issues – INDIVIDUALLY HAPPY PEOPLE MAKE HAPPY COUPLES!!!!!!

Unconscious Repetition

Family Legacies

Discuss GOOD things, too. Express gratitude to one another and engage in kindnesses on a regular basis. This becomes \$ in the bank, balances the tough times. “I really like it when you call me during the day”, etc.....

GOALS:

To get to know each other better, i.e. \$, family, religion, work, etc.

NOT to become the same person

Not about being RIGHT, about being a couple.

Attributes that attract you to each other can also be the very source of friction.

Getting the balance right.

To understand that our expectations of our spouses comes from our early life's experiences and relationships.

Self-restraint and thoughtfulness!

Remember: You are on the same side!!!!!!!!!!