

Week 2:

ACTION STEPS

SAVE MY MARRIAGE ONLINE COURSE



MarriageHelper

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Now, let me give you five action items to do. Yes, it'll take you a little bit of time, you'll have to think, you'll have to do some writing but please don't skip this. This is where it actually becomes reality for you. By going back through and doing the things that we've talked about earlier but now we're going to tell you to do it step by step by step so that this segment, this chapter really has power for you and what is to come.

And if you're sitting, you're thinking, "Well, you got me some things to do but I don't think those things are exactly going to fix my marriage". You're right. They are important for resolving your problems and salvaging your marriage but they aren't the "be all end all", they aren't the final answers. Those come later as we go to the series. But for those to work, you need to do these action steps now.

FIRST ACTION STEP

Well, here's the first one. Using the information we covered in this section, write on your workbook that we gave you that PDF that you downloaded. The reason that your marriage is in trouble, is it an affair? Is it a control issue? Is it depression? Is it addiction? If it's something else that you already know what it is, then write that down specifically. If it's something you still don't know what it is, then write that down as well. Alright, that's step one, to write those things down. Yes, write them down. People can talk without thinking but they can't write without thinking so it's important that you write it down. What are the factors affecting our marriage that we discussed so far?

SECOND ACTION STEP

Here's the second. Write what emotions are being felt by your spouse and why in his or her mind he or she feels that way whether you think it's reasonable or not. Now be honest even if it hurts. So you write down "okay, based on what we said so far, if my spouse feels unloved, why?" "What is it that I've said, what is it that I've done? What is it that I haven't said? What is it that I haven't done? What's occurred in our marriage in general? I'm going to try to understand why he or she feels that way even if I think they shouldn't, even if I think the reason they do doesn't make sense". Write down why your spouse feels unloved based on your understanding of what he or she says or has said so far. Now, do the same thing with disrespected. If my spouse feels disrespect, feels like I put him or her down, that I haven't treated him or her like an equal maybe even as a child or somehow that I'm the parent. What have I done or said that has affected that? Now, you've heard many things that he or she has said, and even if you think it's not reasonable that he or she should feel disrespected, you write down the reason why he or she probably does. Even if you don't think they're good, you write them down because it's important here to understand what's happening in your spouse's mind. Then you do the same thing with like.

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“Why does my spouse feel disliked by me?” Again, I’m not justifying what he or she thinks. I’m trying to understand how my behavior, my words, all the things that come from me, lead him or her to feel that way. Or at least become a factor in him or her feeling that way.

THIRD ACTION STEP

Now, here’s the third action step from the “whys” in the action step two. In other words, why he feels unloved, why she feels disrespected, from the whys, write down the things that you should stop doing because of the effect they’re having on your spouse. Even if you think they shouldn’t have that effect. Write down those things. “Okay, my spouse feels disrespected when I correct his or her grammar.” Write it down. “I should stop correcting his or her grammar”. Now, if you’re thinking, “But I really need to help them”, you need to treat them as an equal. Write down anything that you listed in two. That’s the “why”, from the “why” you write down, “here’s what I should stop to remove or at least make smaller that ‘why’”. Now, what things do you do that he or she claims make them feel unloved. Write that down, that’s what I do and this is what I should stop. What things do you do that he or she claims makes him or her feel disrespected? Write them down and then write down what you’re going to stop. What things do you do that he or she claims makes him or her disliked? Write them down, specifically what you’re going to stop.

FOURTH ACTION STEP

Action step four. What things can you start doing right now that can lead him or her to feel loved or liked or respected? So are you getting it so far? Action number 1, so this is what we’re facing. Action item 2, “what emotions is my spouse feeling in terms of love, respect and liking, and why?” Number 3 is “What do I need to stop doing to quit evoking those negative emotions?” And number four is “What things should I start doing that will evoke those emotions on a positive way”.

FIFTH ACTION STEP

And now, number 5, if there’s an external problem, in other words, not a relationship problem but something going on outside such as depression, that’s an outside thing because you didn’t cause that. Addiction that’s an outside thing, or stress from work or whatever it might be. What needs to be done to help that situation. So write down what resources that you’ll need. Should I contact a doctor, should I contact the counselor, should we do one of those online profiles? Write all of that down specifically and as you do, if you need other people in your family or in church to help you then do that. So you got all 5? Write down what the problem is, figure out the “whys”, figure out what to stop to change the “whys”, figure out what to start to make better “whys” and then the word for what you feel, love, liked or respected.

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Now, do whatever you need to do such as good thing intervention document that we talked about or take a depression screening or whatever to deal with those outside forces. Now, these are important, they set you up for what's going to come next. They and though themselves are not going to solve the problem but they're part of the path that you need to do right now.