

Week 2:

IF THERE IS AN ADDICTION

SAVE MY MARRIAGE ONLINE COURSE



MarriageHelper

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So, what if the primary problem or at least, a big problem in your marriage is an addiction? An addiction your spouse has or maybe an addiction that you have or maybe both. Now, understand that addictions can be things like alcohol and drugs, those things definitely exist. But an addiction can be to other things such as work or fame or prestige. They can be an addiction to making money. There can be an addiction to actually spending money. There are all kinds of addictions out there. We provide for you a link in your workbook to a link called "Cage Aid". That particular tool is designed for frontline physicians like family docs and internists to help you understand the possibility that you're likely addicted either to alcohol or to a drug. Now, you can substitute other things in there such as work or fame or money. But this particular estimate was designed to help people screen for the possibility of drug addiction or alcohol addiction. The CAGE is actually an acronym. Now the old version when it was just for alcohol went something like this, "Have you ever (notice that word ever) felt that you should cut back on your drinking?" that's the C-cut back. The second question was, "Have you ever felt annoyed but what other people said about your drinking?", annoyed being the A. So in the way of C and A, and notice that both of those are have you ever. The third one is, "Have you ever felt guilty about your drinking?" the fourth one is, "Have you ever needed a drink for an eye-opener, for when you get started in the morning?"

Now that's just four questions and I just gave you the simpler version. You'll find a little more complex version when you go online. But that one was used on me many years ago by my wife and my medical doctor who did an intervention because I had started having a problem with my drinking of alcohol. And so, when a physician, Daniel Boon, believe it or not, a descendant of the real Daniel Boon. When Daniel Boon, my physician doctor Boon said, "Have you ever felt like you should cut back on your drinking?" I said, "yes". When he said, "Have you ever felt annoyed about what people say about your drinking?" "yes", "Have you ever felt guilty about your drinking?" "yes" "Have you ever needed to drink for an eye opener" "no", the reason why? My stomach's too sensitive, I can't drink in the morning.

So I had three "yes" answers. Believe it or not, statistically speaking, if you have two "yes" answers, you have a 75% chance of being an alcoholic. Now the version you'll see there online is not just for alcohol but also for drugs. And as I pointed out, you can actually use it if you're addicted to other things such as work by replacing that in that model. I even made a version you can use to see if perhaps you're addicted to a person. Just a little different, I call it the "Cage Beam". It goes like this, "Have you ever felt you should cut back on the time you spend with that person or the things you talk to that person about?" "Have you ever felt annoyed about what others say about your relationship with that person?" "Have you ever felt guilty about the amount of time you spend with that person or the things you talk to that person about?" and I changed the 'e' from eye-opener to elevator. "Is this person your elevator? Is this the person that you want to be with when you're really up or really down? The person you want to talk to about those things."

Now, this one doesn't have statistical study of the "Cage Aid" but I'm convinced that 2 "Yes" answers, just two, indicate a 3 or 4 chance that you crossed boundaries of this person and that you may even be addicted to this person. You say, "Well, when will that be a matter?" If your spouse is addicted or if you think he or she is addicted, then that's what you do. You ask the cage questions. Just run through them with him or her. They obviously can lie, there's no doubt about that. Yet, some of those things you can actually answer just by observation. You can tell for example whether or not, here she gets annoyed about what's said about her drinking and you can tell whether or not they need a drink for an eye-opener if in the morning you see them drinking and that's 2 "yes" answers and that's a 3 out of 4 chance they're an alcoholic.

Addictions will destroy every relationship because the addictions will supersede the other person in the relationship. What are addictions? It's running from our own pain. It could be pain from my childhood, it could be pain from the stress I'm facing right now, it could be pain from my lack of self-esteem. There are all kinds of things but by doing my addiction, I can escape my pain. Whatever that pain may be and that's why my addiction becomes more powerful and stronger as time goes on because as pain builds in life, I run up to my addiction. So if you go to AA and you ask someone there who has been there long enough to really understand, "Why do you drink?" they're going to answer something like, "I like the way it makes me feel..." "Does it mean they like being high?" "Probably. But it's much more than that, it's when I'm drinking, I don't hurt. When I'm drinking, I don't have to deal with reality that I don't like."

A few years ago they actually surveyed a bunch of businessmen that would regularly surf the internet and asked them, "What's the number one emotion you feel when you look at porn on the internet?" These guys were looking at porn a whole lot. If you're an addict, you'd understand the answer. They said, "peace". "Why?" Because when I'm looking at that, I don't have to deal with the real world. I'm actually living in a world of fantasy.

So if there's an addiction, whatever it might be. An addiction to money or making money, an addiction to drugs or alcohol, an addiction to porn or strip clubs or whatever it might be. Addiction to another person, if you're going to solve your problems in your marriage, you're going to have to deal with that. Therefore, try to get your spouse to take the cage aid or the cage beam if you think that he or she is addicted.

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If you think it's a sexual addiction, you might even go to sexhelp.com and have them take the test from Patrick Carnes there. If it's you that's struggling with the addiction and even if that addiction is like food. Then go to the cage aid replacing those words replacing those words with food rather than drugs or alcohol. And if that addiction is there, if it's yours, you need to get into a 12-step program. If you can't or if that's not enough for you then you need to find a professional who can help you with that. And if your spouse is addicted you can ask him or her to get into a 12-step program. Or if necessary, to get professional help even to the point of going to a clinic. Trying to heal your marriage without working on the addiction is a likely recipe for failure. If your spouse has an addiction or you're strongly convinced that he or she has an addiction, then there is a process of doing an intervention to get him or her to stop the addiction and get the help that they need.

It's absolutely free and it's on our website. You can find it there. It's bit.ly/stoptheproblem, you'll find there an e-book that's thirty or forty pages long and it will take you step by step by step how to do an intervention with the person who is addicted to something. As a matter of fact, there's also two forty-five minute audios there that will guide you through it as well. Understand that's if intervention is needed. You cannot do it. It requires some people that your husband or wife respect and love. It can be your grown children, it can even be your adolescent children, it can be people from church, it can be other family members, it has to be somebody that they respect. But it can't be you. So if addiction is the problem, you're not going to be able to solve the problem even if it's your addiction or your spouse's addiction or both until you deal with the addiction.