Week 2:

IF YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE IS CLINICALLY DEPRESSED

SAVE MY MARRIAGE ONLINE COURSE

MarriageHelper

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So, what if you or your spouse is clinically depressed? I don't mean just feeling blue, or feeling down, you know, life's tough when you're having marriage problems and you should expect feeling down. I'm talking about clinical depression. In your workbook and in your screen, you'll see a link to a thing called a 'PHQ9'. It's online in many places, we're giving you a link to one of those places because in there they also show you how to score it and understand what the score means.

PHQ9 stands for Public Health Questionnaire, the 9 question of it. It measures the likelihood of being clinically depressed. Now, understand, it is not a diagnostic tool. It is a screening tool. You cannot take it and then diagnose yourself as being clinically depressed. It is not for you to do. Professionals make the diagnosis, but as a screening tool, if you take it, you'll see the way they score it and it will tell you if you have this score, it means this. If you have this score, it means that. Now, if you have a high score, then we urge you to take a print out of that PHQ9 and go see your medical doctor or your counselor or your therapist. And say look, 'According to this, it appears that I'm clinically depressed. Now, front-line medical doctors like internists and family docs, they can write you a prescription for those things. And if you have a good relationship with them or with your gynecologist, obstetrician or whomever, then you can definitely get those kinds of medicines from that doctor.

We suggest you consider the possibility of you talking to a psychiatrist. No, I don't think you're crazy. I don't even know you, but because of the fact that those are the doctors, those are the physicians who deal with the chemicals of the brain, and if you're being clinically depressed, I guarantee you that some of the chemicals in your brain are altered. Therefore, they tend to spend a lot more time with you, analyzing what medicines you need, if any, and prescribing those medicines for you.

Now, the other doctors can prescribe them and I know they care and if you got relationship with them, that's great. But there are often much more rushed than other psychiatrist. And the psychiatrists are the ones who specialize in the medicines to do that. Of course, depression can also be helped by such things as exercise and by the right kind of diet. But if either you or your spouse is depressed, I mean clinically depressed, it's going to be very, very difficult to help save your marriage until you deal with that depression. So please don't think of yourself as 'well, I'm a good enough person. I can pull myself up my bone bootstraps and get past this.' Or 'because I'm a good Christian, I'll just pray and it'll go away.' I'm a good Christian too, but I still take medicine for my blood pressure because of what I inherited from my dad. Thank God that medicines are there. And if you need this along with the right kind of diet and the right kind of exercise, please do. Because everything else we tell you is going to be difficult to do if either you or your spouse is clinically depressed. And we'll do something about it.