



MarriageHelper

Save My Marriage
Program Workbook

Welcome to the Save My Marriage Program

We are excited to have you as part of this program.

During these 10 weeks, you will learn about yourself, your relationships, and focus on how to change your future for the better...no matter what happens.

Each week, you will have weekly Action Steps where you will be instructed to answer questions, write things down, and take certain steps that go hand-in-hand with the week's teaching.

Completing the Action Steps in this workbook will help you achieve the most out of this course.

Please print out this entire workbook. You may even want to punch holes in it and put it in its own folder.

Following these instructions is extremely important to your success in the course.

(Be sure not to skip ahead, as everything works together in a specific flow of information!)

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook gives a detailed guideline of each week of the course.

All of the segments of the Save My Marriage series are divided into weeks. Each week is a new chapter of the workbook.

Each chapter of the workbook is labeled with the same name as the title of the corresponding week's topic.

For example, the topic for week one of the course is "There is help, and there is hope." Therefore, the title of the first chapter of this workbook is "Week 1: There is Help, and There Is Hope."

In the first part of each chapter, you will find an "aha moments" section of that chapter. In this 2 page section, you are encouraged to write down any "aha" moments that you experience while watching the videos.

Following the "aha moments" section, is an outline of the points discussed in each week's video series. These points are divided among the multiples videos presented per week, but they are presented in one bullet point list under each week's segment in the workbook.

Finally, the last section in each week's chapter is the Action Steps. This is the "homework" part of the series. In this section, you will notice lists of questions, exercises, and assignments that will personally guide you through the material taught in each week's lesson.

Print out this workbook. Keep it in a safe place. If you need more pages to insert into an "aha" moment section or in a homework section, you can download the "extra blank pages" under the downloads section of each week's course module.

Treat this workbook with the utmost care. Follow all instructions carefully. These topics and questions are specifically formulated to ensure that you receive the most out of this course that you can. It is important to track your growth throughout the entire course. You may be surprised at the changes that occur.

Week 1: There is Help. There is Hope.

No matter what has happened in your marriage, there is help and there is hope for your future.

AHA MOMENTS

Use this space to write the parts of the teaching videos that speak to you the most, give you lightbulbs, and help you realize what is important.

Aha Moments Continued

I.THERE IS HELP AND THERE IS HOPE

A.Introduction

1. Don't panic; life is not over and your future can be very good
2. It's time to think positive
 - a) Worrying yourself into a frenzy – or worse, into lethargy – won't help
 - b) Feeling sorry for yourself won't get you what you want
 - c) Neither will beating yourself up for the things you did imperfectly
 - d) If you want positive results, you need to focus on positive things
3. In this series, we'll help you:
 - a) Understand basic principles that are extremely important for you to know AND to keep in mind
 - b) Learn specific tools that can help restore your marriage
 - c) Find hope – not just for the restoration of your marriage (which is our goal) but if for some reason that doesn't happen, to have hope for a great life in spite of what happened to your marriage

B. How you can get the most from this series – action steps

1. Quit focusing on the negatives and start focusing on the positives
2. As you watch each segment, stop the video any time you have an “aha” moment and write down:
 - a) The “aha” in your own words
 - b) How it applies to your situation
 - c) How you feel you can use it – specifically – in working to restore your marriage
3. Make notes as to which part of each video you may wish to come back to later
4. Complete the exercises in the workbook you downloaded along with these videos
5. It is **IMPORTANT** to continue to the end
 - a) The information in the first few segments gives you an understanding of what and why
 - b) At the end, we tell you the how
 - c) The how won't be nearly as effective if you don't understand the what and why

Week 1 Action Steps:

One of the best things you can start doing right now for you and your marriage is to stop focusing on the negatives and start focusing on the positives.

List 3 ways that you can stop yourself from focusing on negative things and replace those thoughts with positive things.

(Examples include writing uplifting Bible verses on notecards and posting them around your house, starting a “three good things” journal where you list 3 positive things that happened at the end of each day).

1.

2.

3.

-
- It is important to make a plan to watch all of the videos in this course, as well as completing all of the exercises in this workbook.

Pick a time now that you will work on this course each week. Put it in your calendar and mark the time off. Commit to it just like you would commit to attending every week of a college course. Write down the day and time that you picked below (as well as blocking the time out on your calendar or on your phone).

Day of the week:

Time of day:

Week 2: What is the real problem?

If you are like most people, then you are probably confused about how your marriage ended up where it is now. There have been so many different accusations thrown around, that you may not be sure what is the real core issue. This week, you will get a better idea of what the real problem is in your marriage.

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

II. WHAT IS THE REAL PROBLEM?

A. Introduction – the underlying reasons for most divorces

1. Unloved
2. Disliked
3. Disrespected

B. Whatever the situation, what is your spouse's perspective?

1. What does your spouse say the problem is?
2. Is there an RBS – a reason behind the statement that you need to know and understand?
3. From this point on, we address several situations; if a particular one doesn't apply to you, fast-forward to the one that does

C. If your spouse is having an affair

1. Should you try to catch them, get proof?
 - a) If you wish to divorce, by all means do so
 - b) If you wish to save the marriage, anything you do surreptitiously likely will backfire
 - c) It is better to bide your time
2. Understand different kinds of affairs
 - a) If short-lived, may have a sexual compulsive problem / try this test online if spouse is willing – www.sexhelp.com
 - b) If relationship affair understand limerence – <http://bit.ly/marriagerecovery>
 - c) If allowed affair, are you ready to stop that lifestyle? If so, here's how you tell your spouse
 - (i) I am aware that I agreed to the lifestyle, but my heart now tells me I cannot do this any longer
 - (ii) I love you and want only you.
 - (iii) Can you love me enough to stop the lifestyle and be with me only?
3. How do you respond to spouse when you suspect?
 - a) Accusation rarely helps
 - b) Sharing your concern from YOUR point of view (speak from your heart) may help
4. How do you respond to your spouse when you know?
 - a) Try not to attack, even if your emotions are intense
 - b) Tell what you know, how you know it (unless revealing a source causes more problems – names of people who told you that don't want him/her to know, you did it by sneaking around, etc.)

- c) Ask him/her to stop the affair and save the marriage
- d) Offer a definitive path forward that s/he could commit to on the spot

D. If you had the affair

1. Are you done? If not, please consider <http://bit.ly/affairdecision>
2. Are you ready to end all contact for any reason whatsoever?
3. Have you confessed and asked forgiveness?
 - a) If your spouse knows or strongly suspects but doesn't know who, s/he deserves to know who
 - (i) So that all others can be "set free"
 - (ii) Get agreement that s/he will not contact nor attack the other person before telling
 - b) If your spouse doesn't know
 - (i) Is there any other way s/he can find out?
 - (ii) Have you lied?
 - (iii) Is there anything you hold back that you won't get past if you don't tell?

E. If your spouse feels controlled

1. Do you know why your spouse feels controlled?
2. Are you willing to truly listen, or do you try to defend yourself?
3. Are you committed to learning how to give respect?
4. Be aware that two things have to happen to repair this
 - a) You get it
 - b) Spouse risks it again

F. If you feel controlled

1. Does your spouse know why you feel controlled?
2. Is your spouse willing to truly listen, or does s/he try to defend self?
3. Are you committed to learning how to demand respect?
4. Be aware that two things have to happen to repair this
 - a) Your spouse gets it
 - b) You risk it again

G. If there is an addiction – spouse / you / both

1. Is the addiction recognized and admitted to?
2. Try the CAGE-AID to see what it tells you.

3. Trying to heal the marriage without working on the addiction is likely a recipe for failure

H. If spouse is depressed

1. PHQ9
2. Medicine, diet, exercise

I. If unknown

1. We advise against playing detective
2. Is there someone s/he trusts who can engage in conversation – someone that they are not afraid to be transparent with?

Week 2 Action Steps:

Using the information we covered in this section, write the reason your marriage is in trouble. (Affair, control, depression, addiction, or other – be specific)

Write which emotions are being felt by your spouse and why in his/her mind s/he feels that way (whether you think it reasonable or not). Be honest, even if it hurts. Unloved? If so, why? Disrespected? If so, why? Disliked? If so, why?

From the why's in action step two, write here things you should stop doing because of the effect they are having on your spouse (even if you think they shouldn't.)

a) What things do you do that s/he claims makes him/her feel unloved?

b) What things do you do that s/he claims makes him/her feel disrespected?

c) What things do you do that s/he claims makes him/her feel disliked?

What things can you start doing right now that could lead him/ her to feel:

d) Loved

e) Respected

f) Liked

If there is an external problem (not a relationship problem, per se, but something else affecting the relationship such as depression, addiction, etc.) what needs to be done to help that situation?

1. Professional resources – doctor, counselor, etc.

(i) Who are they?

(ii) How do you find them if you don't already know?

(iii) How do you get your spouse to get that help? <http://bit.ly/stoptheproblem>

2. Friends, family, church

3. Other?

Week 3: What Do You Truly Want?

This week focuses on crafting a detailed plan to ensure that you pinpoint what you truly want and figure out the best way to attain that goal.

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

III. WHAT DO YOU TRULY WANT?

A. Introduction

1. When you are the only one trying (at this point) to save your marriage, it will be tough, sometimes discouraging, and will lead you on several occasions to wonder if you should continue
2. Therefore, it is best you think through a few important questions now and decide if you will go through the process

B. Why do you want to save this marriage?

1. Love? Be aware that emotion might change during the process. Therefore, look for more reasons
2. Do you know that s/he at heart is a good person doing a bad thing?
3. History together
4. Children
5. Beliefs and values

C. Are you willing to take spouse back only under certain conditions

1. What are the conditions (end affair? Change job? Move? Change friends? Change certain behaviors?)
2. What are the deal breakers?
3. What is acceptable even if not desirable?
4. Are you setting conditions that aren't reasonable at this time? (Lady who wants husband to pursue her)

D. If you are ready to work on saving your marriage, then you start with yourself, as we explain in the next section

1. This is crucial because you can change no one but yourself
2. If you aren't willing to change or improve, then whatever problems existed before may continue to exist if your spouse comes back
3. ...even if your spouse's problems aren't because of your actions (such as addiction)

Week 3 Action Steps

Now it's time to write your answer to these questions. Take your time and think it through carefully. You'll come back to it when things get tough and you ask yourself why you don't give up.

1. Why do you want to save the marriage? Write everything that is important to you.

2. Now, beside each of those reasons you listed, write why that is important to you. Be as specific as you can.

3. Go back over your answers and give each one a 1 to 10 rating about how important it is. List them here in order of their importance. Put a star by the ones you mark highest.

Keep a copy of this sheet where you can review it regularly, especially if at times you become discouraged

4. List the things that absolutely must be a condition of his/her coming back. Be courageous, but please don't overreach

**For any behaviors that have to stop if you are to save the marriage, you will later write boundaries.*

**Be very sparse and careful about any behaviors that have to begin. Your goal is to restore the marriage, not make it perfect from the moment s/he returns.*

5. Evaluate that list again. Remove anything that isn't reasonable to ask, either negatively or positively.

**After your marriage is strong again, you can begin working on those together*

**NOT as a demand, but as a way to deepen your love*

Week 4: What Do You Need to Know About Yourself?

Understanding your self is the only thing you have control over right now. Amazingly, learning about yourself will not only change the way that you feel about you, but it will change the way you interact with everyone around you. This is a very important week!

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

IV. WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOURSELF?

A. Introduction

1. It can be easy to focus on the faults in your spouse
2. Do you recognize your own less-than-perfect behavior?

B. Understand how your own emotions and behaviors are affecting you

1. Anger

- a) It is okay to hurt – all anger arises from hurt
- b) Uncontrolled anger will cause you more pain
- c) How to deal with anger in a healthy way
 - (i) Physically – work it out in healthy ways such as exercising
 - (ii) Mentally – learn good meditation techniques called mindfulness
 - (iii) Emotionally
 - (a) Vent on paper in detail, then burn it
 - (b) Be very careful with whom you share your anger because:
- d) If your spouse finds out it can derail any efforts at reconciliation
- e) If after you are back together s/he finds out, it can cause major problems

2. Desire to hurt back

- a) Desire for vengeance is human
- b) Ultimately it harms you more than the other person
- c) It can negatively affect others you love, such as your children
- d) How to deal with the desire to hurt back in a healthy way:
 - (i) Write how taking vengeance will hurt you or others you love, even if it takes a toll on your spouse or others you wish to hurt back. Be as specific as you can.
 - (ii) Make a decision that the person(s) who hurt you are flawed humans, not the devil or a demon
 - (iii) Make a decision NOT to repay the hurt even if you have a right to – not so that they don't pay, but so that you don't create more negative consequences for yourself or others
 - (iv) Ask God to intervene in the plans your spouse has made

3. Potential addictions – things you do / take / etc. to keep you from feeling the pain

- a) Alcohol
- b) Prescription drugs
- c) Food

- d) Porn
 - e) Work
 - f) How to deal with addictions
 - (i) Admit it and that you cannot heal yourself of it
 - (ii) Seek the proper help – AA, NA, SA, CR, or, if it is having terrible toll on you or loved ones, a center
4. Relationships that aren't healthy
- a) People who feed your hurt and / or give bad advice
 - b) People who will prey on your pain (friends can become affair partners)
 - c) How to deal with unhealthy relationships
 - (i) Acknowledge the ultimate result of the relationship, even if you like how it feels at the moment
 - (a) Negative friends will poison your mind
 - (b) Partying friends will dull your pain by moving you away from what is good for you to something that gives temporary relief
 - (c) Emotionally close friends who have the potential to be a new partner have strong potential for replacing your mate
 - (ii) Find new friends who understand and are healthy
 - (a) Pick from existing friends
 - (b) If none are available, find a self-help group that understands such as AIAnon, or CR
 - (c) You can find friends in our FB group, SMM
5. Frustration with people who are supposed to help
- a) It's okay to be frustrated; they should be helping you
 - b) How to deal with people who are supposed to help but don't
 - (i) Specifically ask them to help by telling them what you need
 - (ii) Stop expecting what isn't going to happen
 - (iii) You may need to find different friends
 - (iv) Or a different church
 - (v) Join SMM
6. Frustration with God
- a) Our frustrations with God typically come from having been told a theology that sounds good but isn't exactly the way God operates
 - (i) Why doesn't He do something?

- (ii) Story of sisters angry with Jesus because he didn't save Lazarus' life
- b) How to deal with frustration with God
 - (i) Tell God of your anger; He can take it
 - (ii) Read the Psalms to see how others who hurt poured out their heart to Him
 - (iii) Ask Him to open your eyes to the blessings that come
 - (iv) Check out the section in the bonus material where I explain a passage that can guide you in this.
 - (v) Trust that He knows what He is doing

C. Go back through what your spouse has said about your flaws

1. Don't focus on the anger / exaggerations
2. Do look for RBS
 - a) Is s/he rewriting history?
 - b) Is s/he vilifying you to justify him- herself?
3. Honestly evaluate and acknowledge anything you have done incorrectly before now
4. Honestly evaluate and acknowledge anything you are now doing incorrectly

D. Ask people that you trust and who will be honest with you

1. Share what you think about your actions based on your evaluation in the step above
2. Acknowledge these in humble, non-defensive way so that your friend sees your sincerity
3. Ask the friend which of these you actually do
4. Ask your friend to contribute more information about your behavior that s/he has witnessed
5. Never defend yourself, argue, or try to explain. If you do, the person will likely stop being honest

E. Evaluate all the above and acknowledge what you need to change

1. In behavior
2. In environment – what should you change about:
 - a) Where you work
 - b) Who you socialize with
 - c) Where you live
3. In body / health / appearance

Week 4 Action Steps: Putting Things In Motion

Go back through the section on how your emotions may be affecting you.

For each emotion that is negatively affecting you, write a specific plan – doesn't have to be in too much detail – of how to deal with that emotion. Use the "how to deal with" section to guide you.

Think through your possible flaws as explained in that section. Write them down in enough detail that you can give it to a friend to read and s/he will understand what you are trying to communicate.

Choose a friend – if you choose more than one, it may be better to meet with them separately – to share your evaluation of your flaws and ask him/her to help you understand more about what s/he sees.

Write here who that friend will be:

Week 5: Make a Plan to Improve You

How can you become a more attractive person? Believe it or not, it is possible. Not only will you learn how this week, but you will learn how to create a detailed, laser-focused plan on making you the absolute best you can be in ALL areas of life.

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

V. MAKE A PLAN TO IMPROVE YOU (NOT THE MARRIAGE AT THIS TIME)

A. Understand the PIES

1. What they are
2. How they work – positive, neutral, negative

B. Make a detailed list from your evaluation in the previous section

1. At the end of the previous section, you wrote specific things you are willing to change
 - a) Behavior
 - b) Environment
 - c) Other items such as your health, body, or appearance.
2. Go through that list and choose ONE that you think will benefit YOU most if you change it. Make that priority one.
 - a) Use the PIES concept to help you choose what is most important to you.
 - b) Do you need to help your own self-image by working on the physical?
 - c) Get your emotions under control by focusing on that?
 - d) Go back to better beliefs and values than you are living by at the moment?
3. Then go through the list and choose ONE that you think has the most potential for bringing your spouse back. Make that priority two.
 - a) Use the PIES concept to help you choose what is most important to your spouse.
 - b) Also think through any complaints s/he has made about you that you think may be valid from his/her point of view, even if not from yours
 - c) Don't get stuck here by trying to decide what is the absolute best thing to work on
 - (i) You may work on more than one at a time
 - (ii) However, choose ONE to focus on above the others

C. Writing down a strategy is the best way to deal with these – TASR

1. Target – identify a specific behavior, environment, etc. that you wish to work on
 - a) What environment you need to be in
 - b) What behavior you need to change
 - c) What you need to do about your appearance, etc.
2. Achieve – what is your objective? What do you wish to accomplish? Make it something that you can actually do. Be specific.
 - a) "I want to make him love me again" isn't something over which you have control.
 - (i) Nebulous goals such as that will only frustrate you

- (ii) Whatever you choose should be both doable and measurable in some way
 - b) I want to lose 20 lbs
 - c) I want to find friends who will stand with me and encourage me rather than discouraging me
 - (i) Write a brief description of what it means that they stand with you, the things they will do for you
 - (ii) Write a brief description of what discourages you that you don't want them to do
 - d) I want to be calm and in control of my emotions when I interact with my spouse
 - (i) Write a brief description of what calm and in control means to you
 - (ii) Paint a good enough "picture" of what that looks like that you will know when you are doing it – and when you are not doing it
3. Strategy – what is your plan to accomplish this objective?
- a) Be specific
 - (i) Don't bog down though; you aren't planning the invasion of Normandy
 - (ii) It can be as simple as:
 - (a) See a doctor if it is something such as depression or anxiety
 - (b) Join a 12-step group for addiction
 - (c) Asking those very close to you to hold you accountable for a negative behavior
 - b) If you can't think of a strategy, research
 - (i) Look for information on www.MarriageHelper.com
 - (ii) Talk with experts or professionals
 - (iii) Use the Internet
 - (iv) Ask specific questions in Save My Marriage Group on Facebook
 - c) IMPORTANT: Designate a time to begin and a goal date for accomplishment
 - (i) Make each reasonable and doable
 - (ii) Check your progress by the goal date
4. Resources – what resources do you need to accomplish your objective?
- a) Do you need to join a gym? Get a workout buddy?
 - b) Do you need to find the right doctor to help you with medicines for anxiety or depression?
 - c) If you need help, get the RIGHT help!
 - d) Mentor?
 - e) Counselor?

f) Accountability partner?

D. Realize that you are doing these for YOU. It might bring your spouse back but even if it doesn't it's the best thing for yourself

Week 5 Action Steps: Doing What We Talked About

Write down the number one focus for what you need to work on that will best benefit you.

*Pick just one. It doesn't matter if you decide later that it should have been second or third. It is important to begin.

*Use the concept of PIES to help you choose

*Use the TASR system to flesh that out

Strategy (S) – what is your plan to accomplish this objective?
Be specific in every step.

Feel free to ask for help in the Facebook group.

IMPORTANT: Designate a time to begin and a goal date for accomplishment

Make each reasonable and doable

Check your progress by the goal date

Resources (R) – what resources do you need to accomplish your objective? How will you obtain those resources?

Now write down the number one focus that MIGHT bring back your spouse.

You've already analyzed what s/he has said about you that they claim moved them away from you emotionally

Choose the one that you can work on with the greatest likelihood of success

Use the TASR system to flesh that out.

Target - Identify the specific behavior you wish to work on

Achieve - What is your objective? What do you wish to accomplish at the end?

Strategy - Write a specific plan to accomplish this objective.

Resources - What resources do you need to achieve this goal?

Now, build belief that you can do it

Pray

Ask your friends / family to encourage you

Keep some type of record (journaling, timeline, something) that shows you how much success you've had as you go along

Every day repeat to yourself you goals

Avoid or ignore anyone who says it isn't working or can't be done

What things do you need to change about your environment to surround yourself with positivity?

Week 6: How to Understand Your Spouse

What is going on in your spouse's mind? How did your marriage get to the place it is in now? How can you start understanding your spouse better (even if he or she is no longer engaged in the marriage?) You will learn how to become a "spouse whisperer" in this week's lesson.

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

VI. HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOUR SPOUSE

A. Don't expect to understand everything

1. Understanding basic principles will help, but if you try to know / understand everything, it will drive you nuts
2. Don't try to figure out every motivation behind what s/he says / does
 - a) S/he likely doesn't understand or even acknowledge his/her motivation for some things
 - b) Motivations are rarely purely one; they usually come in bunches
 - c) Even if you think you know "why", you still may be wrong
3. Don't try to find the message in everything s/he does or says
 - a) There may be no underlying message
 - b) Just as you sometimes do things and then later wonder why you did it, so will your spouse
 - c) Deal with the action / behavior

B. Accept that what your spouse feels is true for him/her

1. You may not like what s/he feels, but rejecting it as valid for him/her will move spouse away from you – "You don't understand me"
2. Carl Rogers statement about acceptance
 - a) People who change to feel accepted by you either reject or resent the change
 - b) If you want to save your marriage, you must start where it is now, not where you wish it were

C. Become the safest place in his / her world

1. Why don't they build fences in the outback of Australia to keep the cattle close?
 - a) Trying to make your spouse love you by "fencing" him / her in only makes them that much more desirous of getting away from you
 - b) When s/he first fell in love with you it was because s/he felt accepted by you
2. Don't expect him / her to quickly open up and share things with you
 - a) Quick explanation of The Wall
 - b) Your spouse probably has wall built up against you
3. You cannot tear down the wall; you can only make it safe enough that s/he will remove a brick
 - a) First stop every behavior that has caused the bricks to be there
 - b) Then make yourself vulnerable – remove your bricks
 - c) Anytime that s/he demonstrates any vulnerability, treat it with care – cherish and protect

4. With time, you can be the person s/he trusts to remove most bricks with
 - a) You MUST be consistent
 - b) You MUST be patient

D. Your spouse may tell you things you haven't "heard" before

1. Doesn't mean that s/he hasn't tried to communicate it before; you may not have "heard" how important it is
2. Hear it now; make sure you understand
 - a) Ask questions for clarification
 - (i) Do NOT push or pry
 - (ii) Crucial that s/he "hears" you sincerely trying to understand, not gathering information for potentially bad purposes
 - b) Patience is crucial
3. Do NOT try to defend yourself or explain yourself if you feel attacked
 - a) If you do, transparency will stop and argument will begin – OR s/he will just shut up
 - b) If you can be strong here, be very open and transparent.
 - (i) "Help me understand how I did that"
 - (ii) "Help me understand how I came across"
4. When your spouse begins to tell you what s/he wants, listen very carefully
 - a) For example, if s/he says something such as, "I just want to be happy,"
 - (i) Gently and sincerely ask if s/he can help you understand what that means
 - (ii) Quickly back away if s/he shows any aggravation in response to the question
 - (a) "I didn't mean to upset you"
 - (b) "Forgive me if I sometimes don't know how to ask things or if I don't understand"
 - (iii) Negative reactions here may not be aggravation at you, but frustration that s/he doesn't know the answer to the question because of their own emotional confusion
 - b) Listen for patterns
 - (i) If, for example, if something such as "I want to be loved for who I am" shows up in various ways during the conversation, make note of it in your mind
 - (ii) Later, when s/he is quiet and reflective, ask gentle questions such as:
 - (a) "What are some times in your life when you felt loved for who you are?"
 - (b) "Would you help me by telling me things I've done or said that made it feel like I didn't love you for who you are?"

(iii) Do NOT ask questions such as these if you cannot be strong enough to be calm and continue truly listening if the answers hurt

(a) For example, s/he may say that the only time s/he felt loved for who s/he really is has been during this affair

(b) Or when they tell you things that you did / said that made him / her feel you didn't love them as they truly are

(iv) This is another crucial time not to defend yourself or to try to explain why you did what you did

E. If you listen carefully, your spouse may move to being more transparent with you than ever before

1. Even if you don't like what you hear, accept it as reality TODAY
2. That doesn't mean it will be reality later when you put your marriage back together
3. The key here is to UNDERSTAND, not to correct or chastise

F. We feel close kinship to those with whom we have been frighteningly transparent and they accept us anyway

Week 6 Action Steps:

Make a decision that you will not get caught up in trying to figure out your spouse's motivations about any specific behavior

- i. Write that decision in your own hand and put it where you can see it regularly "I will not allow myself to be drawn into trying to understand every motivation my spouse has. I will not spend time analyzing or worrying about why he does a certain thing or phrases things a certain way."

1. When you find yourself trying to guess why s/he does something, read that statement aloud

Make a decision to accept what your spouse feels as true for him or her.

You may think that s/he has no reason to feel that way, and you may not like it. But rejecting the feeling rejects your spouse.

Write this decision in your own hand and keep it where you can see it "I accept that what my spouse feels is true for my spouse, whether it makes sense to me or not, whether I like it or not."

Become his / her safe place

1. Arguing, interrogating, attacking will keep him / her heading away from you
 - ii. Listen without judgment
 - iii. It may take a while to get a great opportunity, but no matter how small the opportunity, be safe
 - a) When you transfer the children, be calm, understanding, and listen
 - b) When you talk about paying bills, do the same
 - c) Make yourself pleasant to be around in a way that offers him / her what they may not be getting anywhere else, a caring person who is not judging them
 - iv. Remember, this doesn't mean you approve of behavior, but that you accept that it is happening and you aren't making a war to change that
- 2. Write this statement so that you can review it before every encounter with your spouse (that you know is going to happen) "I am a safe place for _____. S/he can talk to me about anything without fearing a negative emotional reaction from me."**

Neither attack nor defend

1. Even when you have to make demands for things you need – alimony, bills paid, etc. – be calm and caring
 - v. Do not repay anger with anger, sarcasm with sarcasm, etc.
 - vi. Now write this in your own hand "I am in control of myself. I know who I am. I rise above all the drama and do what is best for all."

Be quick to apologize for any negative reactions you cause – even when you don't apologize for what you say or do

1. Sometimes you will need to do things that anger your spouse
 - vii. Don't hesitate to do them when they need to be done
 - viii. Again, do them calmly
 - ix. If your spouse gets angry or hurt, say something to the effect "I'm sorry that hurt you. Please forgive me for the hurt."
 - x. Notice that you didn't say "forgive me for what I did" but "forgive me that it hurt you"
2. **The final thing to write is another part of the document you will read regularly – nearly every day if not every day. Write "I am big enough to apologize for negative feelings ____ has from what I say or do. However, I will do what needs to be done."**

Week 7: Things Not To Do If You Want to Rescue Your Marriage

Many times people do not realize that the things they are doing to try to save the marriage are actually pushing their spouse further away. This week, you will learn all the things not to do when trying to save your marriage (and what to do if you have already done those things).

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

VII. THINGS NOT TO DO IF YOU WANT TO RESCUE YOUR MARRIAGE

A. Do NOT whine, cry, plead, or beg

1. Will discuss the PIES later; for now hear this “no one is attractive when they do these things”
2. In most cases it drives the other person from you even more rapidly

B. Do NOT try to control

1. You cannot make your spouse love you by trying to make him / her stop loving someone else
2. There are reasons to set boundaries that we will discuss later, but there is never a good reason to try to control the other person
3. Examples:
 - a) Guy who put GPS in wife’s car without her knowing
 - b) Guy who tapped his wife’s phone
 - c) Gal who followed husband and punched out the other woman

C. Do NOT try to destroy his / her reputation

1. One former minister told me he would never again live with her after she spread the news of his affair so far and wide that he feels he cannot ever get over the negative reputation
 - a) Part of her motivation was that she wanted someone to intervene and stop his affair
 - b) Part of her motivation was to punish him for what he did
2. Be very careful what you tell your family and close friends
 - a) Getting support is a good thing
 - b) Creating images in their minds so that they feel great anger toward him / her is not
 - c) If ever you reconcile, do you want the well poisoned with your family and friends against your spouse?
3. The 10-10-10 concept

D. Do NOT harm his / her relationship with your children

1. They will have enough hurt of their own; don’t add yours to theirs
2. Do not confide in your children about the situation
 - a) Your spouse will continue to be their parent; don’t poison that relationship
 - b) It will be important for your kids’ sakes to be able to have a relationship with your spouse, even if your spouse has hurt you by leaving
3. Do not keep the children from him / her

- a) That will be hard for you to do when you know the other man / woman will be there
- b) While you can control environment, it will work against you to try to prevent scenarios where the other person is present

E. Do NOT take advice from prejudiced people

- 1. Your family and friends love you; it is natural for them to advise you to leave, divorce, punish, etc. but that can be the worst advice you will ever receive
- 2. Your friends who have been hurt by their spouses and still carry pain will typically give advice based on their hurt, not your need
- 3. Your friends who divorced their spouses may even be unconsciously seeking validation for their decision by getting you to divorce your spouse

F. Do not allow him / her to do destructive things to you or your children

- 1. There have to be boundaries – explain
- 2. You need financial support - explain

G. Do NOT give up too easily

- 1. There is a time to move on; we'll discuss that later
- 2. However, many people give up too soon
 - a) It's understandable because of the feelings of rejection, hurt, etc.
 - b) Yet, many marriages can be rescued if you have the patience to wait out your spouse's current bad behavior

Week 7 Action Steps

Today, do what it takes for you to stand up and be strong

- No more whining, begging, pleading
- Stop making contact with your spouse that s/he isn't responding to well
- Instead work on the PIES – BE STRONG and CALM
- **Get a calendar and mark this as the time and place where you stop the weakness**

Accept the fact that things are as they are

- You cannot make your spouse love you again by trying to remove, disparage, etc. other people – even a paramour
- You don't have a time machine to go back and start over from a previous date; however, you can start over now
- You cannot undo the things you've done before; but you can start doing the right things now
- When you accept the situation as it is, you will begin to have a peace that will work to your advantage
- This doesn't mean you don't want things to change, but that rather than scurrying about for the right words, the magic wand, the miraculous experience, you start from where you need to start with a calm strength that will lead you through it

Repeat the serenity prayer

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your Will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Think long-term before you do anything

How does 10-10-10 change the way you think about your marriage?

Have the strength to stop any destructive behavior through proper boundaries

1. If you come home drunk, this is the consequence
 - xi. If you don't send the child support...
 - xii. Etc.

Write Your Reflection of This Week's Lesson

Week 8: Things To Do To Save Your Marriage

This week you will learn the things that you should do when trying to save your marriage. While this is not a comprehensive list, this is the best of the best from what we have seen with working with thousands of couples.

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

VIII. THINGS TO DO

A. Focus on Self

1. Go back to the PIES.
2. Look back through the goal you set for yourself in the TASR section.
 - a. Does anything need to be modified?
 - b. Did you accomplish that goal and need to set a new one?

B. Focus on Friendship

1. Go back to focusing and acting in ways that will create a friendship with your spouse.
2. When in doubt, think “how can I react that would further a friendship?”

C. Focus on Others

1. Don't spend time in self-pity or worrying about your situation.
2. Get out of your house and spend time helping others
3. WWII victims in concentration camps: those who felt a sense of purpose outside of their current situations were most likely to survive.
4. Think about what drives you, what you are passionate about, and ways that you can give back to the community around you.

D. Create Boundaries

1. You don't have to be a doormat.
2. Standing up for yourself will not push your spouse away. It will help you gain confidence and strength, which will not only help you to be a stronger person, but if anything works to attract your spouse back to you, this will.

E. Create Consequences

1. If your spouse is involved in activities that are detrimental to your family or your marriage, then don't shy away from instilling consequences.
2. Continue to respectfully demand support (especially financially) from a straying spouse
3. Do not try and protect your spouse from any consequences he or she might have to encounter, but also don't unnecessarily or manipulatively instill consequences/
4. It's an art - be sure to ask for outside guidance.

F. Embrace Obstacles

1. This is not going to be easy. Surround yourself with a good social support group.
2. Don't listen to people telling you to give up.
3. When obstacles arise, figure out how to be creative and overcome the obstacles.

4. Obstacles will continue to make you a stronger person.

G. Seek Professional Help

1. You may need to seek professional legal or mental health help.
2. This course is in no way a substitute for professional legal advice or the professional help of a licensed counselor.

Week 8 Action Steps

Go back and look at the goal you created in Week 5. How are you doing with that goal?

1. Have you achieved the goal? If so, go back through the TASR system and create a new goal.
2. Have you not made any progress on the goal? If so, go back through and modify the goal.
3. Are you on track with the goal you set? Great! Keep yourself on track.

Complete the following exercise to help you find a way to Focus on Others.

What things are you passionate about in life?

What activities do you enjoy doing, that you feel time passes by quickly when you engage in them?

What kind of difference would you like to make in the world?

Write down what you can do starting this week to set a plan in motion to help others.

Make arrangements to being volunteering or giving back. Write the date and time that you will start here.

Week 9: How to Know When to Move On

One of the most common questions that people ask is, “How do I know when my marriage is over and I should move on?” We will answer that in this week’s lesson.

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

HOW TO KNOW WHEN TO MOVE ON

1. Death
2. Remarriage
3. Unsafe
4. Spouse will not stop living in sin
5. Over time/through healing

Week 9 Action Steps

What hope did you find from this week's lesson on how to know when to move on?

Week 10: Bonus Materials - How to Handle Children, How to Grow Closer to God, and more

In this week's lesson, we culminate the course by covering topics including how to handle children, how to grow closer to God, and other final questions you may have.

AHA MOMENTS

AHA MOMENTS

Week 10 Action Steps

Looking back through the course, how have you grown in the past 10 weeks?

What changes have occurred in your life in the past 10 weeks?

What was the most important thing you learned in this course?

What was the most important thing you learned about yourself?

What was the most important thing you learned about your marriage?

Moving forward, how do you feel about your future, no matter what happens?