



Questions for Deeper Discussion:

Chapter 1:

1. This chapter states that one of the keys to a healthy relationship is allowing it the opportunity to fail. How do you feel about that statement? Do agree or disagree? Why?
2. This chapter states, “We often default to the patterns of living we learned in childhood. This is true even if we have intellectually rejected them.” What patterns of living from your childhood that you’ve rejected intellectually do you find yourself repeating?
3. What screw-ups sit in the back of your head taunting you? How are you trying to soothe them?
4. What if you could learn a new way to approach those shames? What are you hoping to learn from this book?
5. What do you want the most for your relationship?
6. What are you most afraid of in regard to your relationship?

Chapter 2:

1. How emotionally secure do you feel with your partner today? On a scale from one to ten where one is bad and ten is terrific, what number would you give it?
2. What does your spouse do that you feel the most heard, valued and safe?
3. How do you think you are currently hiding in your relationship?
4. How much emotional equity do you think is in your relationship?

Chapter 3:

1. In what ways, do you try to manipulate your spouse.
2. If you’re daring, ask your partner how they feel you try to manipulate them.
3. What is a difference between you and your spouse that celebrated before you were married and lament now?
4. Set some time aside to sit down with your partner and ask these questions, “What can I do to build equity into our relationship? What are the things I could do that help you know I love you and value our relationship?”

Chapter 4:

1. Write out your belief system. If they are willing, ask your partner to do the same.
2. Think about the last time there was friction in your relationship. What expectations did you have that were not met?
3. Now write out your expectations. Try to organize them in order of importance.
4. Ask your spouse to write out their expectations.
5. Lastly, compile a list of shared expectations.



Chapter 5:

1. What is something you do in order to “motivate” your spouse that typically works in the exact opposite manner?
2. Write out your values. Try to prioritize them in order of importance to you.
3. Ask your spouse to do the same.
4. Now, compile a shared values list.
5. Now compile a list of competing values based on an examination of your life.

Chapter 6:

1. What do you think about this statement, “if we are going to see true lasting change in our life, we must take total ownership of the fact that we are 100% responsible for our life.” ?
2. Grab your list of values from the previous chapters questions. If you were to take the reality TV test mentioned in this chapter, would the voters agree with you regarding your stated values?
3. What do you excuse in your own life because of something your spouse does? “I wouldn’t call her a name if she didn’t.....” etc.
4. What consequences do you have in your life that you don’t currently like? What actions have you done that created those consequences?

Chapter 7:

1. Of the four lenses, which one do you tend to focus on the most?
2. Of the four lenses, which one does your spouse tend to focus on the most?
3. What kind of expectations do you have about other people? Are they typically good or bad expectations?
4. What kind of culture did your family and community have when you were growing up?
5. What kind of culture are you aspiring toward?
6. What event or experiences have you and your spouse lived through that you interpret differently? How has that effected your relationship?

Chapter 8:

1. How do you feel about conflict?
2. How does your spouse feel about conflict?
3. How do you feel about the statement that conflict is necessary for a healthy relationship?
4. What actions do you need to take in order to improve your conflict skills?

Chapter 9:

1. Ask yourself the following questions from the chapter:
 - a. What am I most afraid of in my relationship?
 - b. What is my spouse most afraid of in our relationship?
 - c. What do I want most out of my relationship with my spouse?



- d. What does my spouse want the most out of our relationship?
2. How do you feel about the statement that trust has to be given, it is not earned?
3. How much do you think Guilt, Shame and Fear play a role in your relationship?
4. How much do you see Love, Trust and Respect playing a role in your relationship?
5. What is the biggest driver out of the six for you, personally?

Chapter 10:

1. What was the story you thought you would be telling at this point in your life?
2. What was the story you thought you would be telling with your relationship?
3. What story are you telling with your life and your gap? Is there a gap?
4. What do you think about the gap?
5. Did you recognize any part of your story in the example of the babbling brook?

Chapter 11 (Heard Section)

1. When was the last time you found yourself in a verbal ping-pong match?
2. How much of your time is your partner currently getting?
3. This chapter talks about committing to the idea of hearing your partner before you offer any declarative statements. Would you consider writing down a promise to your spouse that you will commit to hearing her no matter what?
4. Have you ever been in a conversation where the other person employed one of the three D's on you? How did you feel? Where you able to point this out to them and find resolution?
5. Have you employed the three D's against someone you love?
6. What does it mean to you to be heard?
7. When do you feel most heard by your spouse?

Chapter 11 (Valued Section)

1. What does it mean for you to feel valued?
2. In what ways does your partner feel most valued?
3. What are the common ways your and spouse argue over valuing each other?
4. What activities get the majority of your discretionary time? Kids sports programs? Hobbies? Work activities? Spouse?

Chapter 11 (Safe Section)

1. What secrets do you keep completely to yourself, including not sharing them with your spouse?
2. If you knew for certain that your spouse would not judge you or use that story against you, what would that mean for you?
3. What do you dream about that you don't share with anyone?

Chapter 12



1. Do you recognize these hazards in your relationship? Do you think that your relationship has a distinct pattern?
2. Are you a hunter or a rabbit or both? What about your spouse?
3. What are things that you do to feel safe that actually create problems for your relationship causing you to feel less safe as an end result?
4. Do you or your spouse give ultimatums? Do you think those are helpful? What do you think is the cost?
5. Do you see entitlement and grandiosity in your relationship?

Chapter 13

1. How good are you at de-escalating yourself?
2. How well do you tolerate stress?
3. Do you agree that too many people try to problem solve before they do the first two important steps?
4. Do you think it's a problem if someone is mad or the problems only arise based on what they do with their anger? Discuss with your partner.

Chapter 14

1. How often do you think you and your spouse hear the same words but understand them differently?
2. Have you ever had a fight where you both could not remember what started it? Do you think this could be because of the different stories running in each person's head?
3. What do you think about the author's assertion that for most men there is a constant voice telling them that they are screwing up and failing?
4. What do you think about the author's assertion that for most women the constant voice is telling them that they are not desirable?
5. Do you think there are bad emotions?

Chapter 15

1. One of the most commonly used destructive phrases is, "you make me," or, "you made me," etc. In order to be good at this method of communication, you need to commit to not use that phrase, do you think that will be hard or easy for you and your partner?
2. To really get good at this, pick one day where you attempt it all day long every week. Practice with people at work. You'll know you're getting good at it when no one notices what you are doing.
3. You can also practice this as a date night. Pick a movie or show from your favorite streaming service. Take turns pausing the show and stating what you think happened and how the character felt. For instance, if the show is about a couple dating and the man cheats on the woman believing it was Ok because they were on a break you might state that "when he cheated on her, she felt deep pain."



Chapter 16

1. In order to be truly good at this skill, you will need to commit to hearing the other person as though you were their attorney and you were going to argue their case in court. How do you think you will do at listening to that level before speaking?
2. What do you think will be your hardest challenge to this skill?
3. Take some time to create strategies on how you will overcome those strategies. For instance, if you are afraid that you'll forget what you wanted to say, you might consider stashing notebooks around your house so that you could write down your thoughts in short notes while your spouse is talking.
4. To really get good at this, pick one day where you attempt it all day long every week. Practice with people at work. You'll know you're getting good at it when no one notices what you are doing.

Chapter 17

1. How intentional do you think you can be in the moment of a fight/argument? What strategies might you employ to be better?
2. Do you or your spouse struggle with universal language? What strategies might you employ to be better?
3. The third rule, while one of the simplest, can also be one of the most difficult for couples to navigate. How will you and your partner decide on what has to be a problem?

Chapter 18

1. How often does exaggeration creep into your arguments with your spouse? Can the **two** of you develop a plan to call them out?
2. Of these three rules, which do you think will come most naturally to you?
3. Which do you think you will struggle with the most?
4. How do you feel about the statement that words are actions in a relationship?

Chapter 19

1. How good are you at expressing what you want vs. not saying what you don't want?
2. If you didn't already, take a moment and write out what you want for your relationship. How many things on your list are things that you don't want versus things that you do want?
3. Do the things that you want meet the three criteria listed above?



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