

I Can!

Empowerment for A Focused Relationship (Flip This House- Part 3)

In this series called, *Flip This House*, I desire to:

Everyday in every kind of relationship we are in, we are challenged to make CHOICES that will either cause a positive response or a negative one that will eventually flow back to you. If it were possible for you to actually see the choices that you make on a daily basis that causes the negative responses, hopefully—you would eliminate them. Also, if you knew what these negative choices were costing you—personally and professionally—you would want to eliminate them, or at least I would hope so.

As we learned last two weeks, many of the negatives, bad choices, were invested in us, they are part of the sin nature. Satan loves to steal, kill and destroy you from having the results you want and the success you can actually have in your life. If you allow these negative choices to remain unchecked, you will continue to be disappointed at the failure to reach your expectations of a great marriage and family for the rest of your life. If you make it a point to eliminate choices that cause negative responses you will open a door for a relationship that will go beyond what you thought was possible.

I believe that where ever you are in life- engaged, newly wed, married, divorced, or widowed, these messages are for you. I also believe that you will be pleasantly pleased with the direction that God will take you and yours over the next few weeks.

“I Do!”- February 25th

“I See!”- March 4th

“I Can!”- March 11th

“I Will!”- March 18

“I Have!”- March 25

Here are **six priorities** that I would like you to commit to for the next five weeks:

1. To come and listen to each of these **five sermons**.
2. Be involved in at least one of our **Life Groups** throughout the week or **equipping classes**.
3. Involve your **children** in youth, AWANA's, equipping classes and children's church.
4. Commit to a **family night** with a family meeting to give direction and input.
5. **Date** your mate! Once a week you will spend time together...in a healthy way!
6. **Pray** with your family in the morning or evening.

Can't Never Could

“Where [there is] no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy [is] he.”

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

- Some of you are struggling today with the idea that things will never change.

- Some of you are actually convinced that you “deserve” where you are at in your relationships, marriage and family. You are miserable, frustrated and defeated because you made bad decisions way back when and this is your penitence. My Bible does not tell me that Jesus came to set the captive *captive*. My Bible tells me that Jesus came to set the captive *free*!
- Some of you may wonder what you would be like if your Dad had been in the picture or at least active, if your mom didn't work, if there was no alcohol in the the home, if there were no drugs or more money, the imagination will go on and on...if you had only gotten that pony for Christmas! Listen, **many futures are limited by too many pasts**. The only thing that can change is now. You cannot change yesterday, but you are given a few hours today that you can change and work on some things that will make a life time of change!
- Statistically, if your Parents are divorced then the probability for you to experience divorce for yourself is twice as high. Why? Greater expectations
- In 1981, Ted Huston, a professor of human ecology and psychology at the University of Texas at Austin had done a long-term study of married couples which boasted of the ability to forecast whether a husband and wife, two years after taking their vows, will stay together and whether they will be happy. He followed 168 couples -- drawn from marriage license records in four counties in a rural and working-class area of Pennsylvania -- from their wedding day through 13 years of marriage. Through multiple interviews, Huston looked at the way partners related to one another during courtship, as newlyweds and through the early years of marriage. Here are his four main findings:
 1. Contrary to popular belief, Huston found that many newlyweds are far from blissfully in love.
 2. Couples whose marriages begin in romantic bliss are particularly divorce-prone because such intensity is too hard to maintain. Believe it or not, marriages that start out with less "Hollywood romance" usually have more promising futures.
 3. Accordingly, and this is the third major finding, spouses in lasting but lackluster marriages are not prone to divorce, as one might suspect; their marriages are less fulfilling to begin with, so there is no erosion of a Western-style romantic ideal.
 4. Lastly, and perhaps most important, it is **the loss of love and affection, not the emergence of interpersonal issues, that sends couples journeying toward divorce**.
(Aviva Patz, Psychology Today. Aviva Patz is the executive editor of Psychology Today. April 23, 2000)
- Cohabiting before entering into a marital relationship is also thought to be a leading factor for divorce, according to the statistics. I've had couples who have come into my office and say, “You know, our life was not very pure before we got married. We became physical and did a lot of things we shouldn't have done and I believe that our marriage started on the wrong foot.” But I have also heard, “You know, we were both virgins when we got married. We hadn't fooled around and we really didn't know much about who we were and where we were going in life. It makes us wonder if we made the right decision to get married.” This doesn't happen too often but I want you to understand, questions about your marriage come up because of present situations and in trying to find a reason for the difficulties we look in the past. Satan take something

pure in your past just as much as he can the problems of your past and muddy the water of confusion in your present condition.

Covenant Relationship

- I was shocked the other day as I turned on one of the only Christian television program on cable. A well known artist had just finished singing and was applauded as he was brought to the main stage. The first words of discussion were, "I hear you are recently divorced." His quick response was, "Yes I am and I'm am available." The crowd applauded and individual leading the interview asked this singer about his ex-wife. He responded, "Oh we are still really good friends and probably will be until I die. We just decided to go our separate ways and I hope the best for her." Again the crowd applauded as they continued on their conversation of how some make it and some just not make it.
- It used to be against the law to get a divorce. The divorce rate in the United States has been traveling upwards for more than a century. In fact between 1960 and 1980 the rate of divorce surged nearly 250%. Around 1960 it was recognized that in marriage relationships where both spouses wanted to end the relationship, they would find a means somehow to legally end their marriage. Around this time as well there was seen to be an increase in the number of divorce petitions being filed and subsequently thrown out of court when it was found that the fault grounds for filing the divorce petition were established to be untrue.

Therefore in order to prevent people having to lie under oath in court to end their marriage and to prevent others from living in a relationship they didn't want, numerous people argued that it would be better to change the law and introduce the no-fault divorce.

- The state of California became the first U.S. state to introduce this type of divorce back in 1969. It was subsequently followed by other states over the years who also changed their Divorce Laws so that the No Fault Divorce was recognized. (www.calpoly.edu/~smwong/Divorce/No-Fault-Divorce.html)
- There are some counselors you can pay 100 dollars and hour to tell you in a kind voice, "Just do what you feel like you should do."
- There is
- There are churches that teach that the only reason Jesus Christ died on the cross is to make you happy and if you are not happy your marriage must not be God's will.

¹³This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand."

Malachi 2:13

¹⁴Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant."

Malachi 2:14

“¹⁵But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth.”

Malachi 2:15

“¹⁶For I hate divorce,” says the Lord, the God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong,” says the Lord of hosts. “So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.”

Malachi 2:16

Treacherously- bagad {baw-gad'} to deal covertly, fraudulently, deceitfully- covering, hiding.

The original covenant that God has placed between you and your spouse only ends upon death. Many people believe that it can end at divorce, but the truth is that it will carry on until you die. It's important to understand what God does not like and what God absolutely hates. It's also important to hate what God hates. It's important to know and that when a marriage breaks up for the wrong reasons, God places a curse on that divorce.

“The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blessed the home of the righteous.”

Proverbs 3:33

“If you love me you will obey what I command.”

John 14:15

“If anyone does not love the Lord- a curse be on him...”

I Corinthians 16:22

I Can- Through Biblical Values

You can both agree on the same values and still fight against God. You can have key values for life that are based upon God's Word then all the needed items for success in any relationship can be reached:

“So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul— then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and oil.”

Deuteronomy 11:13-14

- **Heart-** lebab {lay-bawb'} 3824- **inner man**, mind, will, heart, soul, understanding
- **Soul-** nephesh {neh'-fesh} 5315- **soul, self, life**, creature, person, appetite, mind, living being, desire, emotion, passion **a)** that which breathes, the breathing substance or being, soul, the inner being of man

Pharisee Lawyer- The Greek word translated "lawyer" is one who is considered a legal expert. In the book of Matthew often uses a word that translates as a "scribe"; someone who was an expert in the law, who copied the law, and was an authority on interpreting the law kind of half attorney, half theologian. Here Matthew uses a different word changing the meaning of this scribe as one who probably was an expert

in biblical law, not secular law who obviously stood out as an expert among the experts. He was sent to Jesus to ask a question on behalf of the rest of the Pharisees.

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”

Matthew 22:37

- **Heart-** kardia {kar-dee'-ah} 2588- the heart; that organ in the center of and seat of life
- **Soul-** psuche {psoo-khay'} 5590- breath of life/the soul of man, the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions
- **Mind-** dianoia {dee-an'-oy-ah} 1271- the mind as a faculty of understanding, feeling, desiring or the spirit in the way of thinking and feeling
 - **Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27- the word strength is added.**
 - **Mutual respect for each others values** will give you the opportunity for success
 - **Commitment to excellence** in those areas will give you that much more potential
 - **Rejection to mediocrity** in those areas will almost solidify your success

But without God at the foundation of all of these principles, the relationship, family or marriage will end up in despair, frustration and eventually in separation of some kind.

- **Spiritual Values**
 - Inconsistent worship practices
 - Busyness
 - Unhealthy appetites and desires
 - Commitment to the wrong things
 - Wrong interpretation of the Word of God
 - What saps your Spiritual relationship with God and what zaps your relationship with God?
 - What pulls Spiritual resources from you and what pours Spiritual resources into you?

When we are wanting to **commit ourselves to some key values**, all we are really committing to is these **four things**:

1. See what you are **doing RIGHT**—so you **can keep it up...**
 2. See what you are **doing WRONG**—so you can **take it out...**
 3. See exactly what you need to **do DIFFERENT**— so you can **change it in you,**
 4. See what you **need to START**- so you can **see it around** you each day — producing the results that agrees with the values that will truly bring the most happiness, create the brightest future and extend principles that can pass down through each generation.
- Sometimes a **small change in perspective** gives you a **huge change in power.**
 - What is important today is to shift your perspective, change your point of view, and to invite specific action that will bring you closer to the relationship, family and marriage that God actually desires for you.
 - The difference between a pleasant and painful relationship, a happy or miserable marriage or a healthy or disastrous family is how we respond individually during difficult

situations that demand clear communication, special care and full commitment. We have a tendency to retract to the well-worn paths in our minds that cause us to gravitate to the same old ruts, that asserts the bad habits, bad decisions and resorting to the weaker, unhealthy but most familiar responses. These ingrained responses will have a huge bearing on the outcome of all our decisions and thousands of little choices we make every day of our lives.

- Do you know that the feeling of pleasure, happiness and well-being are actually signals of satisfaction from the same part of your brain that controls important bodily systems such as your immune system and cardiovascular system? When your initial needs aren't met, these systems are seriously affected and your defenses against germs, viruses and cancer cells are weakened.
- Let me ask you a question: **“Which of these two people do you believe has more potential to having a successful marriage and life?”**
 - **Person A** who is often seen as lively, passionate, enthusiastic, a self-starter, focused, validating, organized, punctual and proactive?
 - **Person B** who is often seen as exhausted all the time, burned out, adrift in life, pessimistic, obscure, unrehearsed, unfocused, critical, random, late and indecisive?

Hopefully you are able to choose person A as the individual who had more potential of being productive and successful than person B; and it is for this simple reason, because he or she makes choices that will create positive responses that will eventually flow back to them.

Complication: Now there is something you must understand. What makes this message different from just a positive talk on behavior modification is the understanding that as a Christian, our passion and reason for living is HIGHLY influenced by what God thinks. Here's what the apostle John tells us how God thinks about you as a believer today:

“...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. .”
1 John 4:4

Satan's attempt at distorting your marriage, family and life can be challenging and at times overwhelming. Paul tells us why:

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”
Ephesians 6:12

As a Christian couple and family, you actually have an additional component in your relationship. It actually comes from NO God to All God. And this can complicate things. Look what Jesus said:

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”
John 16:33

They can't agree on anything when it comes to the present or the future. There are

two different desires and two different ways of going about getting those desires met. Until we find a place to agree, there will be no place for a future.

The Law of Value- "Each value demands equal execution"

A **value** comes with it a certain **price tag, (expectation)**, and often the payment is through a commitment of **time, action** or **expression** of some kind.

Value Rule: When the expectation level of a certain value is reached with an equal amount of time, thought/mental energy, physical energy and financial support, then and only then can you say that you value the same thing. Anything short of valuing the same thing on these terms is considered a miss or a failure, not an "almost" or "just short" of the target.

The Primary Assumption: If a certain value is consistently looked after or equally respected, then happiness, unity and/or success will be the end result.

Another way of saying it is, **"If you wanted what I wanted and did what I wanted done the way I wanted it, then I could be happy and live happily ever after."** Many times we can go through life never seriously asking ourselves if the things we desperately desire will actually provide what we actually want. We know that what you consider to be important to you, what you *value* the most, will be determined by where you spend your **time, thoughts, physical energy**, and financial **support**.

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Matthew 6:21

- A good question to ask yourself is, "What is the evidence that you are focused on what you say is important goals to you?"
- Answer: Your **VALUES** are in the forefront of every thing you do.
- Question: Is your life moving on a daily basis toward what you say you value or is everything around you taking you apart piece by piece leaving you with vary little to actually exchange for a relationship?
- Truth: The cold hard reality is that your relationships, family or marriage can only have or ever be what you have personally committed to as a value. What you do is what you really value.

Most families and couples miss or fail each other in this way most of the time. The problem with most relationships, families and couples failing to reach the desired acquired value is because of two things:

1. Values cost and the only relationship currency that it takes is **time**, much **thought/mental energy, physical energy and financial support**.
2. There is a difficulty in understanding the difference between a "want" and a "value". There can be too many wants/values that demand all the time, thoughts, physical energy and financial support. Therefore failing in every way because so little is going to all when it would be better that a few have all the attention needed. The result is that nothing is satisfied and in the process you end up going bankrupt.
 - When the expectation level of a certain value is reached with an equal amount of time, thought, physical energy and financial support, it tells your spouse or family that you value the same thing.

- When the expectation level of a certain value is reached and confirmed, it energizes you to do more and create more.
- When there is no review to see if the activity and energy spent on what was perceived as a value then it drains the energy and causes a person to be reluctant.
- When there is review of the activity and energy spent and happiness is not the end result, the energy is still spent. You have to allow time for the acquired resources to be regrouped or regained. Often when the thing valued didn't bring the anticipated expectation, the unsatisfied individual is quickly ready for the next thing. A review is an important thing. By yielding to review rather than moving toward the next thing, your potential of being happy will increase.

Distractions of The Non-essentials

Do you know what clutter is? It could be things that are important and things of no worth, but they are placed in a way, in your way of accomplishing your values. To remove the clutter in your marriage and family and future is to first remove the **“distractions of the non-essentials”** by determining what your real values are.

Clutter of the Pharisees- The history of **Jewish law records** that there are **613 separate laws to obey**. They **arrived at that number** because **613 separate letters** are used in the **Ten Commandments**. There is no apparent connection in the letters and the laws but that was the number they came up with. This is what is termed, **“Rabbinical letterism.”** They then **divided** their **interpretation of the law** into **two parts: 248 affirmative laws--one for every part of the human body--and 365 negative laws--one for every day of the year**. They **divided** the 613 laws into **light laws** and **heavy laws**. The light laws were not as binding as the heavier laws. They knew they **couldn't** possibly **keep all 613 laws**, so they were **more lenient on some and heavy on others**. Matthew 23:4 says the Pharisees "bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders." (The Great Commandment by John MacArthur; Matthew 22:34-40, Tape GC 2358)

Quick test of what you value: If you can review in your mind what brings you the highest sense of accomplishment and greatest joy must be considered a potential value. Anything that is demanding attention from you that does not contribute to your passion for God, connection to your immediate family or productivity on your job is potential clutter. For you to reach your life's objectives in these areas you must determine what is clutter and what is value and place your **time, thought/mental energy, physical energy and financial support**, even if it is not a bad thing.

When you are depleted in these four areas all you can do is sit and worry or be frustrated raising the burden of stress and end up exhausted and overwhelmed. Clutter will take its toll on you and you will eventually perform at a lower level which gives you a less than expected future.

By simplifying your values to a core unit, then success on those levels will encourage and energize each other for more. Values can only be reached when equal levels of execution meet the same level of expectation. Each and every value has a different price tag. The important thing is to know or find out which values are worth spending your time, thoughts, physical energy and finances on. It would be

more probable that you would have happy relationships, joyful families and enjoyable marriages if certain key values were reached rather than many of them missed. What is important is to know which values you want and which brings the best results in your life and relationships.

By thinking this way you can:

- Have better control your finances... attain financial freedom for the future.
- Focus on things that are important that will give you the **edge** in life differentiating yourself from other couples and families, even at work.
- **Reach your goals** for your family and yourself —now rather than later.
- **Be energized rather than drained**... well-balanced and encouraged life.
- **Live at a higher level during the good *and* bad times.**
- Grow in your **confidence** as a partner in great future.
 - **Develop your influential potential on others to grow this area.**

With God's Assistance You must discover what your values are and also find out certain things about the energy that it will take to satisfy those values:

Once you find out what energy gainers are, what zaps or pours energy into you, then repeat that often. You can actually grow in this area of your life but you have to be committed to it, every day of the week.

Four Components of Supporting A Value

1. Time: Energy Bank Account

- If you had a bank account and every day there was a deposit of \$1440, what would you do with all that money? The truth is, you are given 1440 minutes in everyone of your days. That's what we have that is the same no matter who you are. You can be rich, poor, tall, short, famous or a nobody, but there is no difference with the amount of time we have. What is different is how we spend that time.
- 1440 minutes in a day
- 440 minutes of sleep and down time.
- That only leaves 1000 minutes each day that you must invest or it will be taken from you.
- We all have the same amount of time. And, at midnight, the difficult thing about your time is that it goes back to zero. You can not catch up on your sleep and you can hardly ever make up for lost time, you will have to pay it back some how and some way, and it usually comes out of the time where it needs it the most, your family and spouse.
- **"The secret of your future is hidden in your daily routine." ~ Mike Murdock**

Tremendous Results: After reviewing the habits of several thousand people who have tremendous results at work and in their family, here are **four common actions** in their day:

1. They **schedule** the first block of time in their day for your **most important work**.

- If you treat your marriage like a job, you will always be waiting for a better paycheck.
 - If you treat your marriage like a responsibility, it will always seem like living for a bunch of rules.
 - If you treat your marriage like an obligation, it will always seem like a chore.
 - If you treat your marriage like an opportunity, you can always make it better every day.
2. They **prioritize** the most important **responsibilities** and **values** with the **biggest amounts of time**.
 3. They **review** their schedule to see if the the time allotted for their **work** was **in balance** with the **quality** of their completed task.
 4. They **project** their findings on **future days** based upon what they have learned

Key Action: Block out time in your schedule to focus on your top priorities that support your values each day.

**"You will never FIND time for anything. If you want time, you must MAKE it."
~ Charles Bixton**

Time Gainers and Time Drainers

- **Time**
 - **Poor planning**
 - **Lack of focus**
 - **Procrastination**
 - **Unhealthy boundaries**
- What saps your time and what zaps your time?
- What pulls time from your day and what pours time into your day?

2. Thought/Mental Energy-

The choices you and I make on a daily basis will determine the expenditure of all your resources and how much you will end up with by the end of the day. If you want more time, the ability to think, physical energy and finances in your evening, you have to think of how these four things are being spent during the day. If you learn to think about where you want your time, mental energy, physical energy and financial support to go early you will have greater results with less mistakes. So, if you are going to have the time, ability to think, physical energy and financial support to do what you need to do with the time you have to do it in, you will have to pay attention to what actually gives and takes your strength and energy.

Mental Energy Gainers and Mental Energy Drainers

Mental Energy Drainers:

- **Emotional**
 - **Worry**
 - **Stress**

- Unresolved conflict
- Unhealthy boundaries
- What saps your thoughts and emotional well being and what zaps your thoughts and emotional well being?
- What pulls thoughts and emotional energy from you during the day and what pours thoughts and emotional energy into you during your day?

3. Physical Energy

- If you would utilize the 1000 key minutes of your day then I would say that you would encourage you to become **NEWW**. Four areas you must balance to be Neww in your life:
 1. **Nutrition**
 2. **Exercise**
 3. **Work/Rest**
 4. **Worship**
- **Physical Energy Gainers and Physical Energy Drainers**
 - **Physically**
 - Inconsistent sleeping patterns
 - Unhealthy diet
 - Over worked
 - Lack of exercise
 - Laziness
 - What saps your physical energy and what zaps your physical energy?
 - What pulls physical strength from you and what pours physical strength into you?

4. Financial Support

The Complication of Serving God

- When discussing causes of divorce, one thing continues to come up in research as a major influence to couples splitting up and it is the stress that comes from the lack or mismanagement of money. **According to PREP (Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program), money is said to start more arguments than any other topic. Citibank also states that their research shows money to be the leading cause of divorce.** Couples not having enough money or even having more money then they know what to do with can cause major friction in any marriage.

Knowing God and serving Him will have a huge influence on your finances:

- Will we tithe or not tithe?
- Will we give additionally to the building campaign?
- Will we pay for our kids to go to camp or ski trip?
- Will we be obedient to the Holy Spirit when He tells us to give money or things away?
- Will we get out of debt not for retirements sake but for the Kingdom's sake?

This is only one of the areas where it can get complicated. This challenges us today in

our walk with the Lord and our future with our family and spouse. Here is two things that millions of dollars of research has proved about people who fail:

“They have fuzzy expectations and poor execution”

“Where [there is] no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy [is] he.”

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

In other words, they don't know what they want and they have no plans to get there.

Mental Energy Gainers and Mental Energy Drainers

Financial Drainers:

- **Finances**
 - Poor planning
 - Habits and vices
 - Health complications
 - Poor choices
 - Fear
- What saps your finances and what zaps your finances?
- What pulls finances from your goals and dreams and what pours finances toward your goals and dreams...values?

Solution: Less is More

Five Simple Values That We All Share

Dr. Gary Chapman has written a book called, “The Five Love Languages,” that I would encourage everyone to go purchase and read. He describes how your emotional love language and the language of your spouse may be as different as Chinese from English. No matter how hard you try to express love in “English”, if your spouse understands only “Chinese”, you will never understand how to love each other.

1. **Words of Affirmation**- Mark Twain once said “I can live for two months on a good compliment.” Verbal appreciation speaks powerfully to persons whose primary Love Language is “Words of Affirmation.” Simple statements, such as, “You look great in that suit,” or “You must be the best baker in the world! I love your oatmeal cookies,” are sometimes all a person needs to hear to feel loved.
2. **Quality Time**- Quality time is more than mere proximity. It's about focusing all your energy on your mate. A husband watching sports while talking to his wife is NOT quality time. Unless all of your attention is focused on your mate, even an intimate dinner for two can come and go without a minute of quality time being shared.

Quality conversation is very important in a healthy relationship. It involves sharing experiences, thoughts, feelings and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context. A good mate will not only listen, but offer advice and respond to assure their mate they are truly listening. Many mates don't expect you to solve their problems. They need a sympathetic listener.

- 3. Receiving Gifts-** Some mates respond well to visual symbols of love. If you speak this love language, you are more likely to treasure any gift as an expression of love and devotion. People who speak this love language often feel that a lack of gifts represents a lack of love from their mate. Luckily, this love language is one of the easiest to learn.

If you want to become an effective gift giver, many mates will have to learn to change their attitude about money. If you are naturally a spender, you will have no trouble buying gifts for your mate. However, a person who is used to investing and saving their money may have a tough time adjusting to the concept of spending money as an expression of love. These people must understand that you are investing the money not in gifts, but in deepening your relationship with your mate.

- 4. Acts of Service-** Sometimes simple chores around the house can be an undeniable expression of love. Even simple things like laundry and taking out the trash require some form of planning, time, effort, and energy. Just as Jesus demonstrated when he washed the feet of his disciples, doing humble chores can be a very powerful expression of love and devotion to your mate.

Very often, both pairs in a couple will speak to the Acts of Service Language. However, it is very important to understand what acts of service your mate most appreciates. Even though couples are helping each other around the house, couples will still fight because they are unknowingly communicating with each other in two different dialects. For example, a wife may spend her day washing the cars and walking to dog, but if her husband feels that laundry and dishes are a superior necessity, he may feel unloved, despite the fact that his wife did many other chores throughout the day. It is important to learn your mate's dialect and work hard to understand what acts of service will show your love.

It is important to do these acts of service out of love and not obligation. A mate who does chores and helps out around the house out of guilt or fear will inevitably not be speaking a language of love, but a language of resentment. It's important to perform these acts out of the kindness of your heart.

- 5. Physical Touch-** Many mates feel the most loved when they receive physical contact from their partner. For a mate who speaks this love language loudly, physical touch can make or break the relationship.

Sexual intercourse makes many mates feel secure and loved in a marriage. However, it is only one dialect of physical touch. Many parts of the body are extremely sensitive to stimulation. It is important to discover how your partner not only physically responds but also psychologically responds to these touches.

It is important to learn how your mate speaks the physical touch language. Some touches are irritating and uncomfortable for your mate. Take the time to learn the touches your mate likes. They can be big acts, such as back massages or lovemaking, or little acts such as touches on the cheek or a hand on the shoulder. It's important to learn how your mate responds to touch. That is how you will make the most of this love language.

All marriages will experience crisis. In these cases, physical touch is very important. In a crisis situation, a hug can communicate an immense amount of love for that person.

A person whose primary love language is physical touch would much rather have you hold them and be silent than offer any advice.

Put simply, to be effective in this area of your life you must KNOW your strengths and weaknesses, the rights and the wrongs, what needs to be done differently and what needs to start. Then as you constantly strive to improve both your effectiveness in each of these areas it will improve all of the people around you.

Review and Celebrate Commitment To Your Values Every Day.

Conclusion:

Questions: Find Out Where You Are Investing Your Strength and Energy

1. What is the challenging task or decision that you have to complete or make today or this week? (Remember, these are not emergency decisions, they are projected for future help. Example: Pay the light bill would be the emergency while get a job is the projected decision. Both tasks and decisions take the same amount of energy so use it wisely.)
2. What are you struggling over right now that is beyond your immediate control or responsibility. (Example: Elderly parent or your children's marriage? You cannot control some things, but if you do not recognize that you will spend the same amount of energy on things that cannot be resolved, than those that can, you must recognize you are spending your energy wrong.)
3. What is captivating your thoughts today that could be directed toward better relationships, better production which leads to a better future?

Finding Common Ground With Your Spouse (From Gary Chapman's- Getting Started: Six First steps to a new beginning from newlyweds to empty-nesters)

Our first inclination when you are wanting to address shortcomings or issues in your marriage is to find fault with our spouse, but you'll have much more success when you take a personal inventory of your own imperfections and ask God to forgive you for those sins. Now, you're ready to take these six steps to improving your marriage.

1. Having confessed your failures and accepted God's forgiveness, ask your partner to forgive you. Then ask God to let you be His agent for loving your partner. Ask Him to fill you with His Spirit and His love.
2. Forget about your feelings. You do not have to feel anything to love your spouse. Feelings may change because of your actions, but feelings should not dictate your actions. Choose to love your mate, no matter how you feel.
3. Express love to your mate by word or action once each day for the next month. Perhaps you could begin with a compliment each day for the next week.
4. Do not allow your mate's reaction to stifle your love. Nothing your mate does can stop your love as long as you choose to love. Why stop when love is your greatest weapon for good and growth?
5. Consider the possibility of accepting in your mate some imperfection that has irritated you for years. If you decide to accept it, be sure to tell your mate. Such acceptance can be a positive step in your own emotional growth.

6. Few individuals can resist genuine, unconditional love for more than a year. Why not start today? Make this the greatest year of your marriage. Many have found that in less than a month, love has begotten love, and their whole marriage has been turned around.