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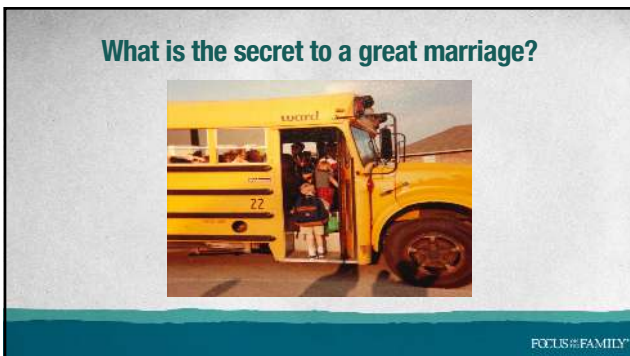
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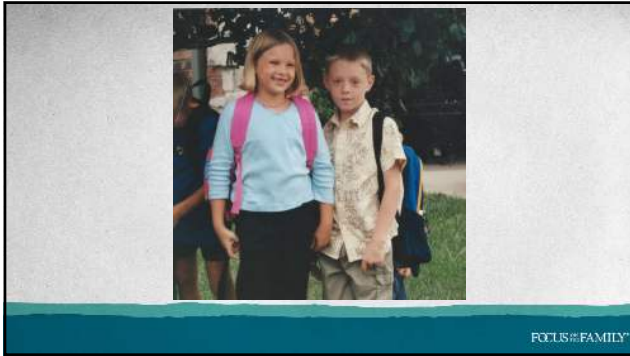
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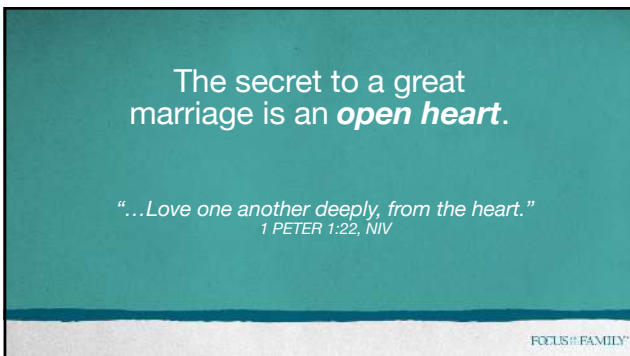
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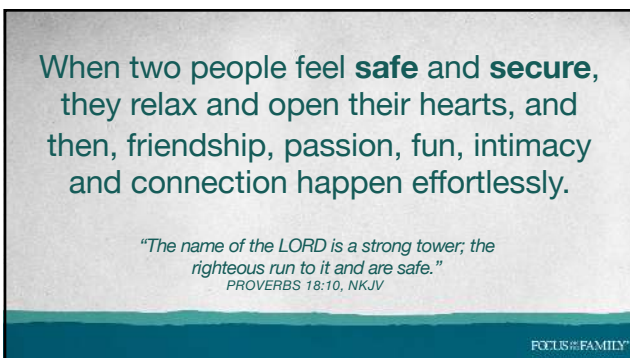
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## Session 1

### Safe & Secure

“You have been entrusted with the heart of another human being. Whatever else your life’s great mission will entail, loving and defending this heart next to you is part of your great quest.”  
(John and Stasi Eldridge)

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### Safe & Secure

Feeling free to open your heart and be fully known, and trust that, as an imperfect person, your spouse will unconditionally love, cherish and nurture you for a lifetime.

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*“For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church.”*  
EPHESIANS 5:29, ESV

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## 1. Cherish Your Spouse

Recognize your spouse's incredible *value*.

*"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*  
Luke 12:34, ESV

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## The Cherish List

Make a list of things you value about your spouse (p.6).

- Personality traits
- Character qualities
- Spirituality
- Caring behaviors
- Accomplishments
- Physical characteristics

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## 2. Nourish Your Spouse

Treat your spouse in *valuable* ways.

*"Let us not love with words or speech but with actions..."*  
1 JOHN 3:18, NIV

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*"I feel loved when you..."*

- Remind me of your lifelong commitment (secure)
- Pray with me and share a deep faith
- Communicate (know me and be known)
- Provide positive affirmation
- Express gratitude
- Spend time with me
- Provide affection (sexual and non-sexual)
- Have fun and laugh with me

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**The Nourish List**

Make a list of things that help you feel loved and cared for (p.7).

*"I feel loved when you..."*

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When two people feel **safe** and **secure**, they relax and open their hearts, and then, friendship, passion, fun, intimacy and connection happen effortlessly.

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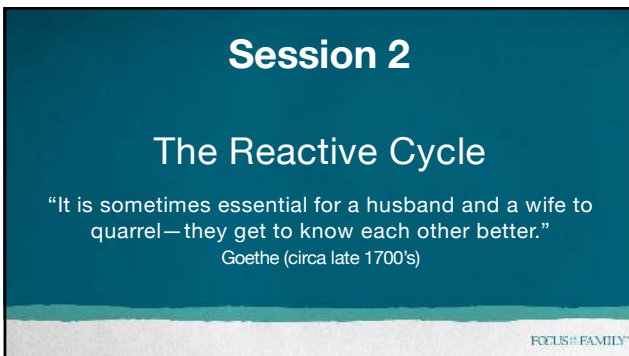
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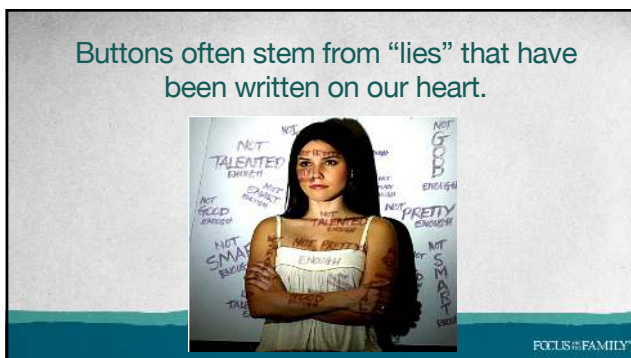
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### Common lies

*I'm defective...I'm unlovable*  
*I'm worthless...I'm not valuable*  
*People won't respect me*  
*I'm a failure*  
*I'm inadequate...I don't have what it takes*  
*I'm not good enough*  
*I'll never measure up*  
*No one will ever love me*  
*I'm unwanted...people will abandon me*  
*I'm helpless or powerless to change anything*  
*People will try to control me*

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The messages are **lies**. Satan is the father of lies. (John 8:44)

Once a lie is written on our heart, those lies become our **deepest beliefs**. *“For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.”* (Proverbs 23:7, NKJV)

The messages on our heart affect how we **see** ourselves and how we **interact** with others.

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“Year after year, word after word our life scripts are etched...We believe what we are being told by others and what we are telling ourselves. Repetition is a convincing argument. In time we became what we most believed about ourselves.”  
(Shad Helmstetter)

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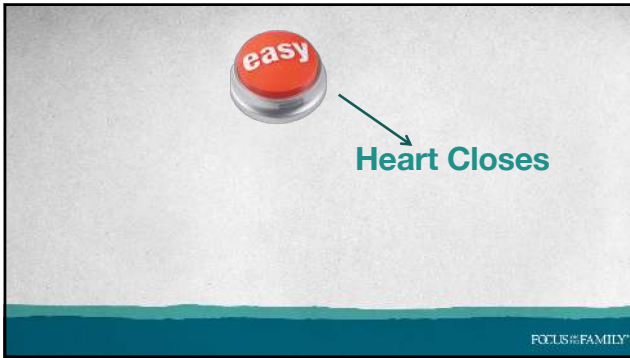
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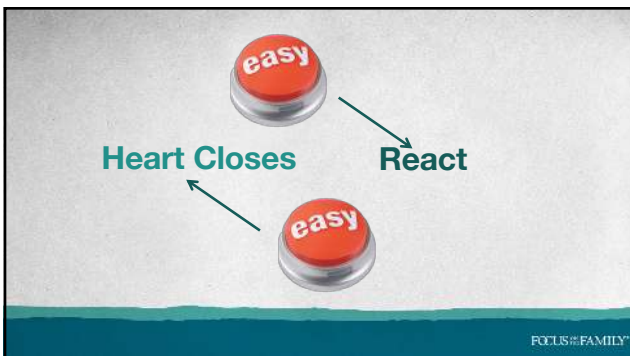
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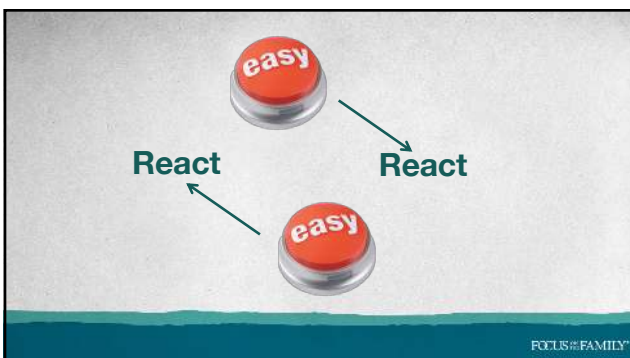
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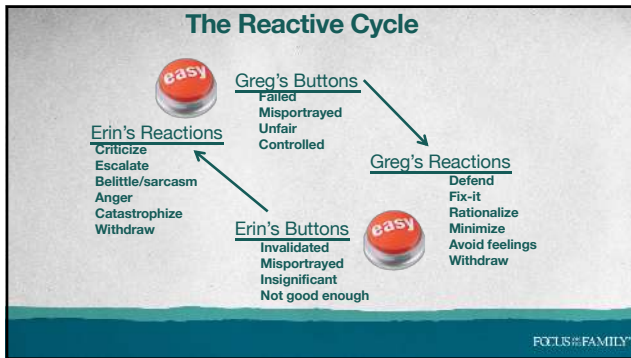
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**Unhealthy** conflict (“combat”) sets us up as **adversaries**.

This makes the relationship feel **unsafe**.

When we feel unsafe, our heart **closes** and we **react**.

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The heart that stays closed will slowly fossilize or **harden**.

*“Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.” (Matthew 19:8, NIV)*

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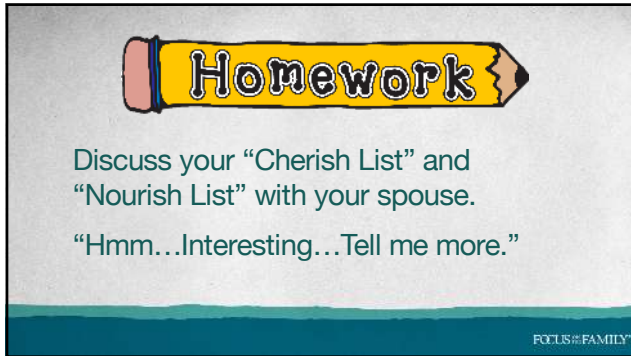
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**Homework**

Discuss your “Cherish List” and  
“Nourish List” with your spouse.  
“Hmm...Interesting...Tell me more.”

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*journey* **TO us**

**CONFERENCE**

BUILDING A MARRIAGE YOU'LL BOTH LOVE

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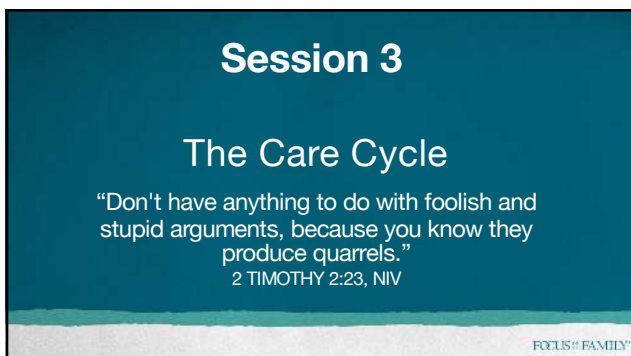
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**Session 3**

**The Care Cycle**

“Don't have anything to do with foolish and  
stupid arguments, because you know they  
produce quarrels.”  
2 TIMOTHY 2:23, NIV

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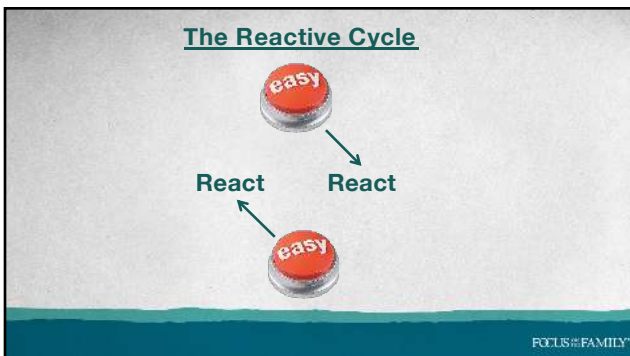
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Take the *Reactive Cycle Test* (p.15) and map out your unique conflict cycle (p.14)

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“And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye.”  
MATTHEW 7:3-5, NLT

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The Reactive Cycle

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The Reactive Cycle

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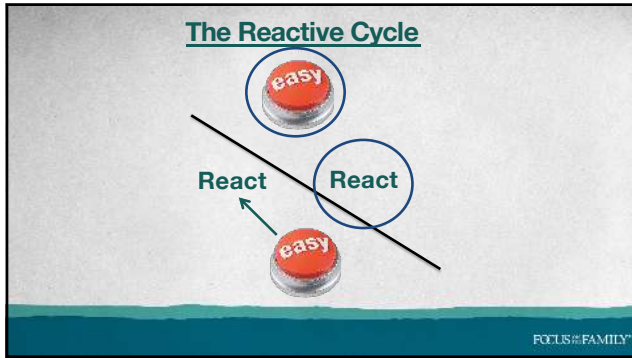
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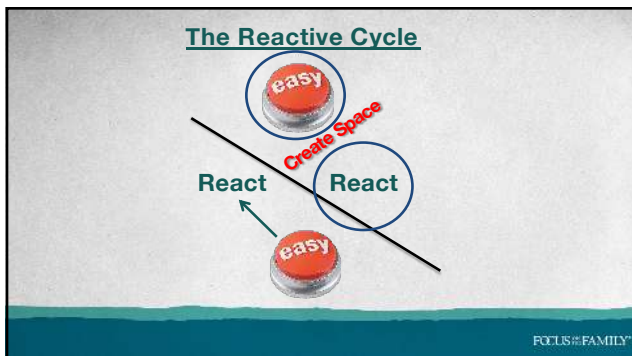
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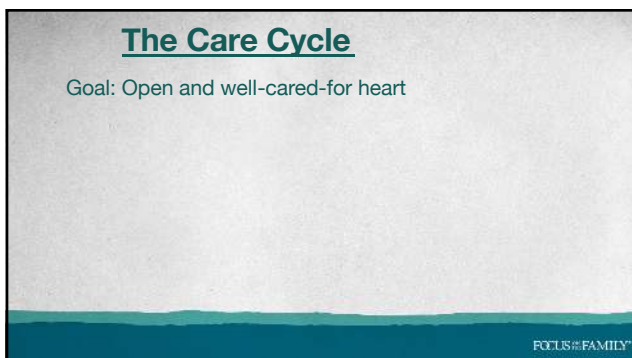
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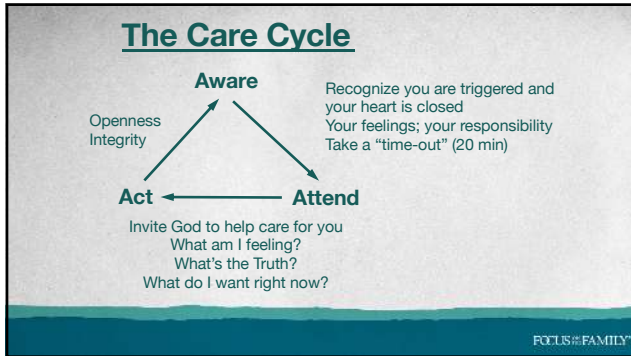
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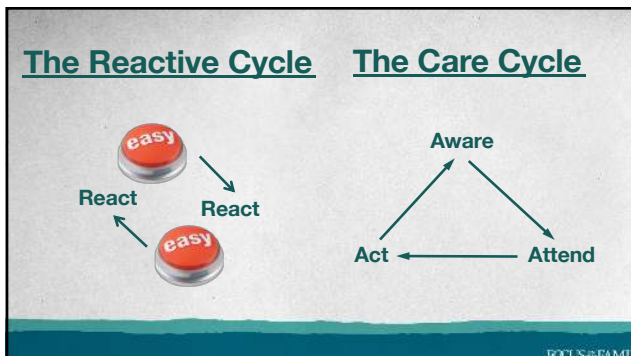
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"Sometimes when I feel **(button)**, I **(reaction)**, but what I really want is to feel **(want)**." (p. 25)

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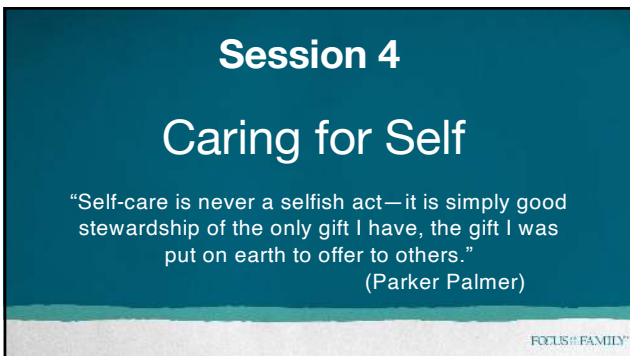
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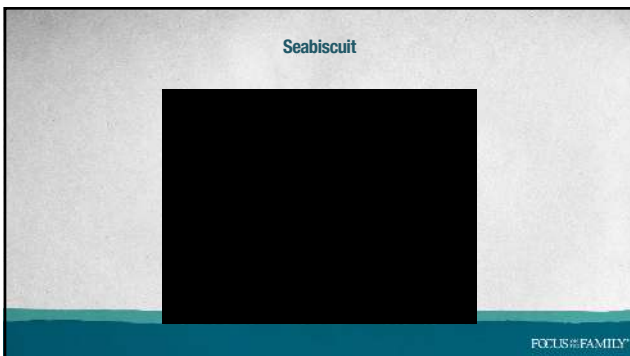
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*"He's so beat up it's hard to tell what he's like. I just can't help thinking that they got him so screwed up running in a circle, he's forgotten what he was born to do..."*

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"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself..."

Mark 12:30-31, NIV

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"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor **instead of** yourself..."

Mark 12:30-31, NIV

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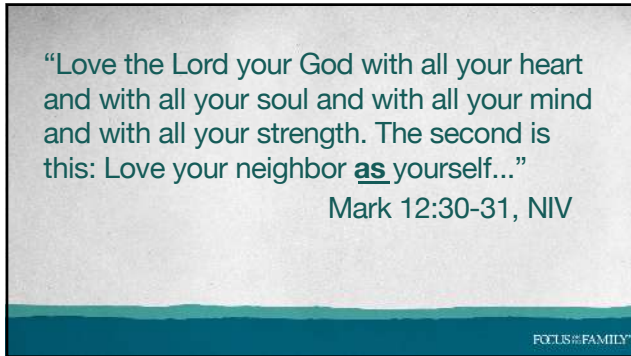
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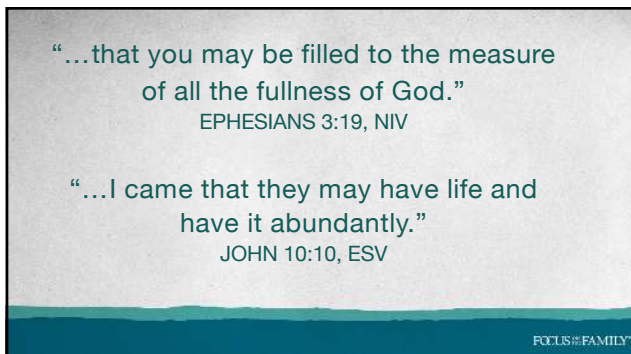
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“When we are filled with His abundant life, we overflow. We have plenty to give to others. That is how marriage is supposed to work: we find our identity and fulfillment in Christ, we fill to overflowing with the fruit of the Spirit, and then we pour that love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and gentleness onto our spouse.”

Francis Chan, *You and Me Forever*

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## Godly Self-Care

- Recognize your incredible value
- Regularly do things that fill you up in four key areas: emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and physically.

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**Godly Self-Care**

- Recognize your incredible value
- Regularly do things that fill you up in four key areas: emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and physically.

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Take the "Self-Care Quiz" on p. 29.

In this season, what activity best helps you to care for you (emotionally, spiritually, mentally and physically)?

How can your spouse best support you in pursuit of this activity? (p. 26)

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Taking great care of yourself is always in the best interest of you, your spouse and your marriage.

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### Healthy Adult

A person is an adult at the point when he or she is capable of and is fully responsible for their own well-being: emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and physically.



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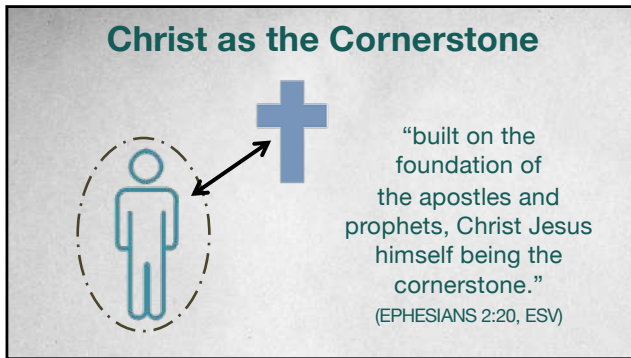
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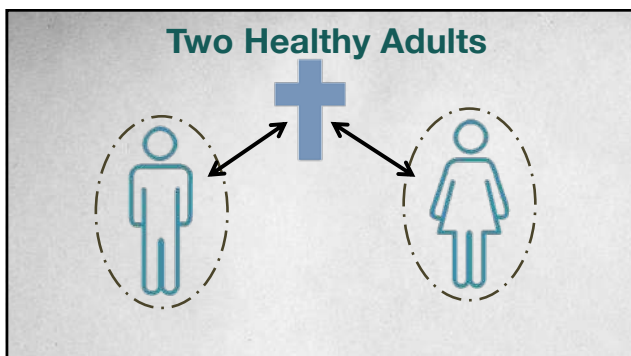
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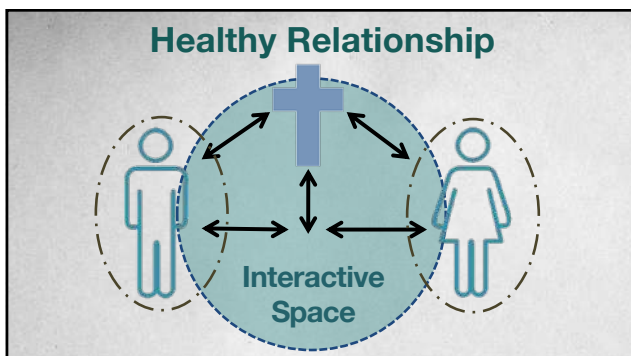
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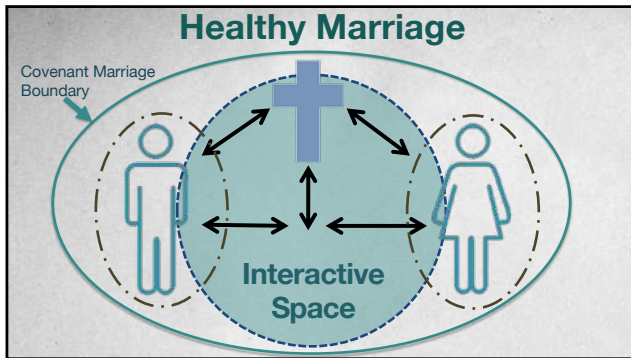
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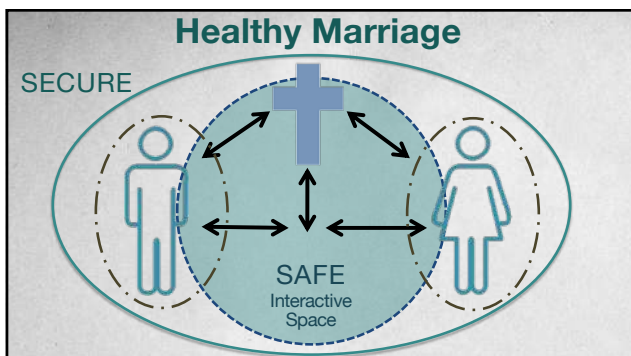
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Talk about the Healthy Marriage Model. Which aspects do you want to include in your own marriage? (p. 27)

The diagram shows a man and a woman within a dashed "Covenant Marriage Boundary" and a solid "Interactive Space", with a central cross. The text "Talk about the Healthy Marriage Model. Which aspects do you want to include in your own marriage? (p. 27)" is at the top. The "FOCUS ON FAMILY" logo is in the bottom right corner.

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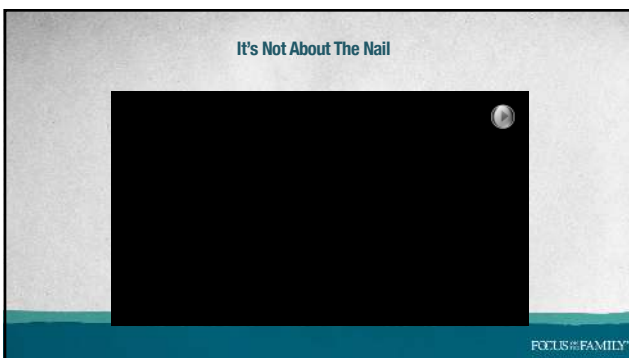
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<u>Work Talk</u>	<u>Heart Talk</u>
A → B	A  B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem Solving (brain)</li> <li>• Focus: Facts &amp; opinions</li> <li>• Goal: Solution</li> <li>• Sense of Accomplishment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring (inner life)</li> <li>• Focus: Feelings &amp; Longings</li> <li>• Goal: Validation &amp; Empathy</li> <li>• Connection and Bonding</li> </ul>

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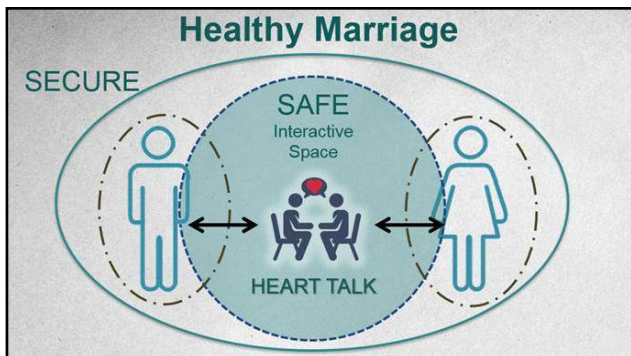
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<u>Speaker</u>		<u>Listener</u>
I - Identify my feelings	I	  = EYES  = EARS  = OPEN HEART
C - Care about my feelings	C	
U - Seek to be understood, "I feel..."	U	

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## Heart Talk

Speaker

**I** - Identify my feelings

**C** - Care about my feelings

**U** - Seek to be understood, "I feel..."



Listener

**I** - Identify the emotional message

**C** - Care about the feelings (compassion and empathy)

**U** - Seek to understand by summarizing the emotional message (validation)

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Choose a fun topic like your ideal date night, dream vacation, or something from your "bucket list."

Take turns describing in detail where you would go and what you would do.

Practice listening and repeating back what you hear your spouse saying—especially the emotions.

Remember your goal is to create a "heart-to-heart" connection. This is not the time for Work Talk. (p. 35)

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*journey TO us*

## CONFERENCE

BUILDING A MARRIAGE YOU'LL BOTH LOVE

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## Session 6

# Work Talk

The Law of Win/Win says, "Let's not do it your way or my way; let's do it the best way."  
(Greg Anderson)

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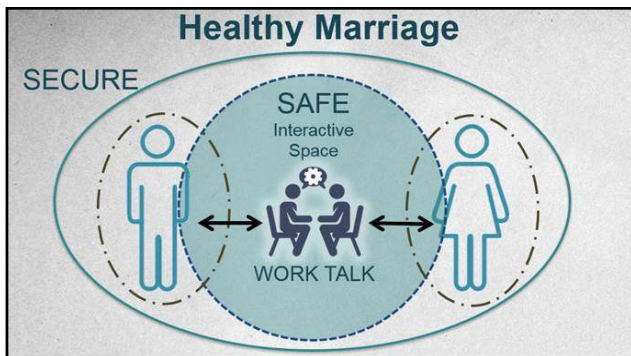
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<u>Work Talk</u>	<u>Heart Talk</u>
<p>A → B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem Solving (brain)</li> <li>• Focus: Facts &amp; Opinions</li> <li>• Goal: Solution</li> <li>• Sense of Accomplishment</li> </ul>	<p>A  B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring (inner life)</li> <li>• Focus: Feelings &amp; Longings</li> <li>• Goal: Validation &amp; Empathy</li> <li>• Connection and Bonding</li> </ul>

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In marriage, a “win-win” solution is always better than a “win-lose” solution.

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In a marriage, you are on the same team. Thus, you either “win” together or “lose” together.

There is no such thing as a “win-lose” solution because you’re on the same team.

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Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.”

(MATTHEW 12:25, NIV)

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## "No Losers" Policy

Make it unacceptable for either person to walk away feeling as if he or she lost.

Both recognize that if either loses, the whole team loses.

Redefine winning as *finding a solution that both feel good about.*

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"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

(PHILIPPIANS 2:4, NIV)

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## 7 Steps to a Win-Win Solution




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## 7 Steps to a Win-Win Solution

1. Invoke the "No Losers" policy.
2. Heart Talk the issue (underlying desire).

*"What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?"*  
JAMES 4:1, NIV

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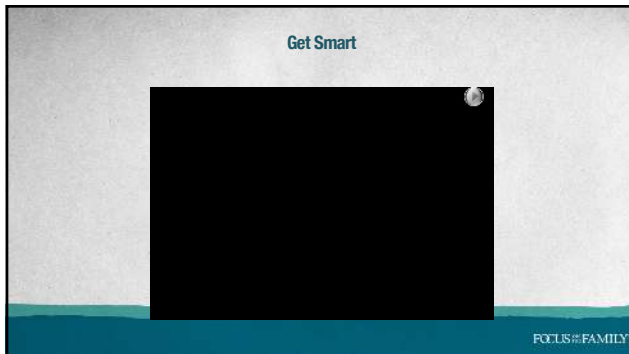
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## 7 Steps to a Win-Win Solution

1. Invoke the "No Losers" policy.
2. Heart Talk the issue (underlying desire).




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## 7 Steps to a Win-Win Solution

1. Invoke the "No Losers" policy.
2. Heart Talk the issue (underlying desire).
3. Pray for unity and God's will.
4. Brainstorm options.
5. Evaluate and pick one you both feel good about.
6. Try it.
7. Reevaluate and make changes as necessary.

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Write your own "No Losers Policy."

"We want both people to feel good about all decisions, outcomes, solutions, and plans we make. We will not be content with, or settle for, either of us feeling like we are losing. We will seek understanding and resolution until we both feel good about the direction we are headed." (p. 39)

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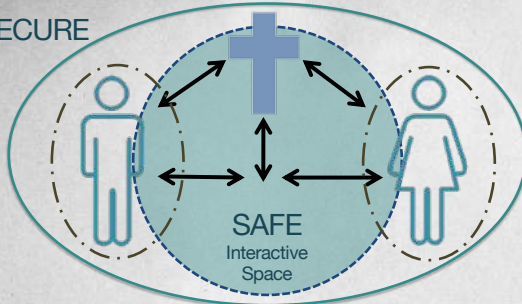
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92

## Healthy Marriage

SECURE




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