

# **The Marriage Prescription**

## **Bickering Stops Here**

This book is an interactive journal

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## CHAPTER 1

# The Power of Intention

## *Mastering Arguments*

Like a sculptor, we use our minds to form our life story. Right now, you're in the process of sculpting your marriage back on track and guess what? You're in the right place. There are plenty of opportunities to learn something meaningful within this book. There are easy to use communication strategies to implement immediately because change can happen in a moment. *It's in your power to decide how you want each conversation in every chapter to heal your marriage, let what speaks to you be your guide.* Your intention fuels the energy behind your words so consider what *outcome you both want to experience before engaging in conversation.* If your intention is to manifest a happy life long relationship, then keep the word 'respect' in perspective.

Many couples who hope to be with each other for life will bicker their way through the years until they realize it's not working. A marriage is not about winning, making your spouse feel inferior, controlling or trying to avoid one another. It's about trying more methods to go deeper, to bridge misunderstandings, to see your partner heal instead of be broken, and it's about being honest. Being in a life long relationship with someone who thinks and feels differently can be challenging, draining and scary especially when you would prefer everything to be easy.

"When you become your own person within a relationship, you can offer your partner a hand instead of just your needs" David Schnarch

Every couple needs to refresh how they understand one another, upgrade their problem solving skills and get into the zone of making their marriage work. A good start would be to become *aware of the overall vibe of your marriage.*

### **Awareness**

Being in your partner's life is a special opportunity that should never to be taken for granted. However, sometimes we do. We forget to notice the overall well-being of our spouse because we're caught up in our own issues. In time, this can be felt. Are you aware of what is going on in your spouse's life right now? Do you pay attention to their *requests to **stop or begin*** something in your marriage? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Resentment, frustration, compounding issues and looping arguments are created from failure to acknowledge your spouse's original requests and being in a daze in general.

That's one perspective. Let's look at more suggestions on how awareness makes a difference.

## **Your Spouse's Accomplishments**

*Be* a witness to your partner's life accomplishments by showing your support. Help them overcome obstacles, create opportunities, do whatever you can to show them you're noticing their brilliance.

## **Your Partner's Mindset**

Sometimes our mindset will be influenced by *the past*, help your spouse reset by listening to what thoughts might be putting up walls. Help them look to the future with optimism right now.

## **Your Mindset**

Have Awareness in *your current thoughts*. Are you preoccupied with your own confusion and therefore have zero energy to focus on your marriage, kids, let alone other obligations? Share your frustrations with your spouse and ask them to keep you accountable moving forward.

## **The Obscure**

The *unspoken* within a relationship can cause ambiguity. Everyone has developed coping strategies to deal with life's ups and downs. For an example, your husband or wife might appear distraught and irritable to camouflage conflicting emotions to keep the peace. This is where reading between the lines is sometimes helpful. Let's say your partner is *ignoring intimacy* and is pretending they're tired but what's really happening is their desires are on hold because they're stressed out. Instead of feeling rejected, change your thoughts to understand alternative ideas. When you begin to learn your spouse's pattern of unspoken gestures, it gives you the privilege of helping them through the situation rather than seeing it as a means for an argument or excuse to distance yourself.

**Practicing Awareness** literally takes practice.

## **Notice Everything**

Let's say you forget to show interest in your spouse's day due to paying more attention to the kids or your computer. If you later realize that you ignored what may have been significant, it's not too late to approach them and acknowledge. Give the gift of being a super partner on a regular basis.

## **Perfect Imperfection**

If things are rocky and you both need distance, quietly do your part to keep building a cozy atmosphere of trust and likeability in the unique way that only makes sense to the two of you.

Build a solid foundation that's different from every other couple in the world. Being your spouse's number 1 keeps the experience pleasurable.

## Intentions

Words, emotions, tones, facial expressions and body language all uncover your said or unsaid attitude. Any intention can be used to instigate love, lust, distrust or frustration, you have the power to choose what experience your partner will get from you. Each conversation builds a memory, good or bad. Before any conversation, prepare your mindset to consider how your spouse might react and adjust accordingly if you think it will likely bring about more stress.

*The intention of words chosen can actually have a historical effect on someone who chose to love you* - Shanon Dawn

Live Your Wildest Dreams Life Coach

## Bickering Styles

What's behind bickering anyway? This style of communication is sometimes about winning petty issues or is an intervention to feel understood.

During a heated negotiation, one spouse is trying to explain while the other is defending. These conversations have the potential to spin into irrational requests and demands that can lead to ignoring or shutdown. Being unsure of how to respond is normal and in fact, not responding at all is the best method.

If you decide to stick around to engage, there might be excuses or even fake answers to sway evidence to perhaps get out of having to deal with the real issue. This only leads to chronic frustration. If tensions go unresolved, games are played, there will be resentment which will further complicate the original issue and this is exactly how an argument repeats and compounds for weeks, months or years.

## The Goal

The goal is to be **honest**, **intentional** and **aware** from the beginning of a conversation. If you no longer have this vibe, there's always time to fix it, but you'll both have to be willing to keep each other accountable starting right now:

are you in?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## Decide

If you're slightly right about a particular topic the two of you are bickering about, shift and meet halfway or let it go. If your goal is to stay married instead of being right, begin the process of being a team and find the quickest way to a solution. If you decide not to advance harmony, you've made a decision too.

## Bickering for Attention

What if bickering is a way of helping one of partner feel closer to their spouse because conversation in general has been a struggle? Sounds crazy but it's a fact that couples who have deteriorating communication may actually create an argument to avoid struggling through more emotional distance. The solution here would be to have a real discussion about the isolation and lack of quality conversation which is the accurate issue.

## In The Beginning

The source of all bickering can be traced back to one moment when evidence being presented was not taken seriously. One person felt confused and responsible for an issue all by themselves. What they really wanted was understanding and a better outcome but their husband/wife were unaware of the significance and shrugged it off leaving their spouse feeling disrespected, raw, resentful and vulnerable. If there is no recognition of this incident, other presented issues will be met with careless effort because this is the energy that is being allowed.

## Journal Your Thoughts

Find a moment where the two of you are willing to make a change and go deep discussing issues that have been hidden away beneath the surface of your mind but won't escape until properly discussed. Opening up can leave you both feeling magical or defeated depending on how supportive you are to one another. Remember to be *aware* and *intentional* about each other's feelings and focus on the outcome you're both striving for *through a lens of love*. The only way to move forward is to let it go or be a team and get through what needs to be dealt with.

Write down one topic that needs proper understanding and provide 3 solutions you haven't tried before:

The Issue

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Solutions

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Is there another topic of concern? Write down 3 new solutions

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Were you able to team up right now? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Why?

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If any of this journaling provokes anxiety, write down your feelings here or in another journal, share to understand the significance.

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#### Confusion

Is there a misinterpretation of each other's perspectives?

Any denial going on? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Are either of you delaying what needs to be said? Yes\_\_ No\_\_

#### Laziness

Being uncooperative is frustrating to the spouse who does want to work on things. If you are in a situation where open communication is complicated, write down why you think your partner is like this. Are they shut down for specific reasons? Are they out of touch with emotions? Are there other sources of evidence that proves they understand but cannot open up?

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What about discussing how to let go of an outcome that cannot be agreed on? Can you agree to disagree?

Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Has an issue been resolved today? What's the date?

Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Going forward, what are 2 ways you will help each other stay on track of being accountable to settle issues with solutions not shutting down or giving lazy answers?

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(be aware of your spouse's intention for a better outcome)

Can you remember another time when the two of you made it through a tough situation? How did you do that? Through Prayer? Jogging? Professional help? Open discussion?

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(what was effective in the past will provide clues on how to be better at solving issues in the future)

*Divorce happens because couples cannot find their way out of trying to win - Shanon Dawn*

*Break for a hug, remember to recognize each other's hard work, be open to reconnect in a slightly new way, keep trying*

## Keep Trying

If the prior exercises didn't go as smoothly as you had hoped, it's ok. When you try, that's progress. Have a look again another day when perhaps you're both feeling even more open. If you've tried twice with little to no success, it can be disappointing leaving you feeling hopeless, but don't give up!

I know these exercises may not be everyone's cup of tea, but I personally think some strategies in this book will click. Try this: how about ordering in your favorite food this Friday night and take turns reading one of the chapters, or if you're really adventurous, read it with friends!

## Start Fresh

Let's have the two of you lighten up the mood for the rest of the day by being playful, leave love notes around the house, in the car or write with lipstick on a mirror, do something cute and romantically playful to shift the atmosphere in your home. *Energy can* shift anytime, all it takes is one person and it might as well be the person(s) reading this book.

*Harmony comes from acknowledging each other's happiness -Shanon Dawn*

## Shake it up

In a rut? Change the everyday routine by going out into the community, find activities such as volunteering to get involved in. When you decide to shift your focus and energy away from bickering with your spouse to enhancing other areas of the planet, there will be a new sense of purpose that builds a feeling of accomplishment, especially if you do it together.

Date Nights. Decide to go on hot dates to show each other off, not just to get out of the house! Take the time to show appreciation for one another and build fun memories. If you can't get out, celebrate life from home by putting on your favorite songs and dance, on the couch, slide across the floor and be animalistic. The goal is to flirt, and let the magic of creating new memories take place. Being stale thinker won't accomplish anything.

### Love Bond (exercise)

Take a deep breath, find a moment to connect with your spouse and place your hand on your partner's heart. Have your partner place their hand on yours. Look deeply into each other's eyes with no distractions. Breathe in a synchronized rhythm for a moment and really pause to feel one another emotionally.

Slowly describe:

- How much you appreciate one another
- What you find amazing about being in this relationship
- Why you're grateful for them

-Feel into the words you speak while looking into their eyes and just give one another a truthful conversation that doesn't lead to sex or an argument, it just needs to be pure authenticity.

Reconnecting this way helps the cells of your body heal, helps sooth your heart and allows the two of you to really be in the moment for one another.

Recognize the contributions and commitments you're both making to have this relationship work. Appreciate and acknowledge how far you've both come through the years. Being on the same path is healing to a marriage.

If either of you find the love bond uncomfortable, think about why that is. What scares you about being emotionally sensitive to one another?

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*Many couples argue about the same issue for months because there is a flaw in maintaining the change. Keep your end of the deal - Shanon Dawn Live Your Wildest Dreams Life Coach*

## Thoughts to Live By

Don't take each other for granted

Have trust in your partner

Maintain a sense of humor

Flirting is essential

Date nights are meant to be sexy  
use your imagination to create new experiences

Show appreciation

Forgive

Say sorry first

Say I love you in the most romantic way possible

Be a team

Find solutions not blame

Be open to new things

Be friends

Treat your partner like the only amazing person a room full of people

Have your own circle of friends and activities

Be authentic

*Change is internal first external second*

Be the first to change

seek happiness

- Make sure to listen to understand not to just to answer and do not interrupt your partner or blank out
- A conversation today doesn't mean a history lesson from the past 25 years of your life stick with what's important on that specific conversation and that's it
- Try to be patient and have a full conversation without negative tones or facial expressions compounding the issue
- Remember this is a person that fell in love with you and married you, always consider their thoughts and emotions
- Discuss what feels good and what doesn't, be playful, flirty and innovative
- Attitude is everything come from a place of gratitude
- Kids want their parents to hold hands not grudges

### **The prescription**

Love even when the struggle is real