

Nine Steps to Save Your Marriage

for Wives

... after indiscretion

By Kenneth Johnston
Text and Exercises



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Nine Steps to Save Your Marriage — for Wives ... after Indiscretion

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(Nobody likes to read this kind of stuff. We wish we didn't have to do it.)

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See also: "Sagery:" <http://www.sagery.com>

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The Apology

We know something about what you're experiencing now. Your feelings may be at an all time low. You may be feeling guilt, embarrassment, humiliation, and sadness. It takes courage to fight through that and fight for your marriage. We're here to help you save your marriage, and go on to create a really strong and satisfying relationship.

Research

Much research has been done, interviewing men and women who've been through divorce because of infidelity. The results are fascinating. With few exceptions, both men and women agreed that in retrospect, divorce — solely because of infidelity — was a mistake.

Almost all of divorce seekers wished that they had been more forgiving, or that their spouse had talked them out of the divorce. In summary: they felt the divorce had ruined (to one degree or another), both of their lives, and damaged innocent family members and friends, as well.

So, you are doing the right thing, doing your best to stop the divorce and save your marriage. You and your husband, your family and friends will all benefit from your efforts.

What's Needed to Save the Marriage

The researchers asked the husbands who had insisted upon divorce, "What would you have needed to hear from your wife that would have convinced you to forgive her and save the marriage?" The husbands were very clear, and consistent. They said they would need to hear these things:

1. A very persuasive apology.
2. Reasons for the infidelity that the husband couldn't take personally. In other words, he wasn't to blame, by anything he did or didn't do.
3. Convincing evidence it wouldn't happen again.
4. Strong evidence that his wife wanted to save the marriage.
5. Some evidence that the relationship would be better in the future.
6. Appreciation for their willingness to forgive.

This module will help you prepare a message of apology that will give your husband each of these six things that men say they would need to hear.

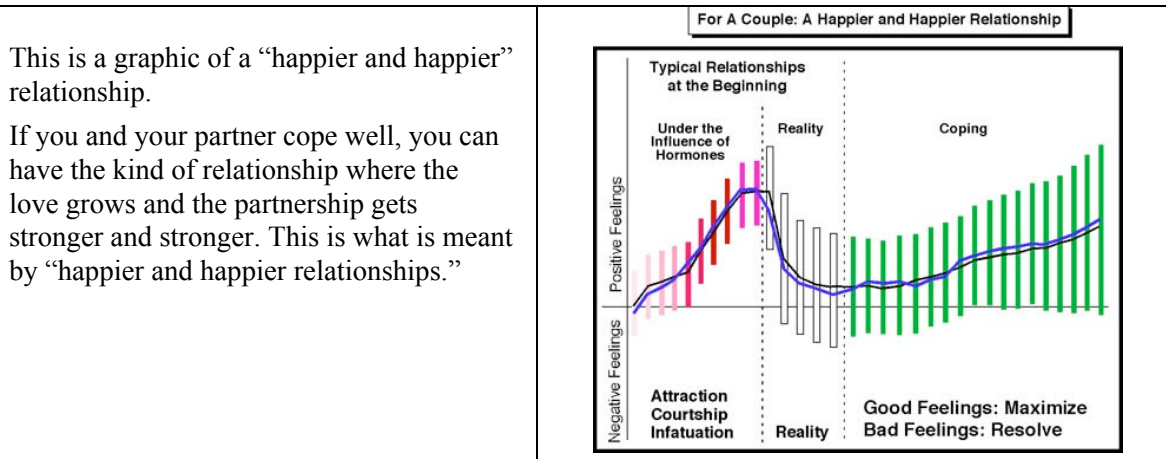
Can You Do It?

Can you give your husband the things he would need to hear, in order to forgive you? You may have some doubts. Maybe you think he was partly to blame, i.e. “I did what I did because he (fill in the blanks),” Or maybe you still have feelings for your lover, and you’re not sure you won’t be tempted again. Or, maybe you have conflicting thoughts about whether you really want to save your marriage. Or, maybe you just worry that you just don’t know how to make your relationship better in the future.

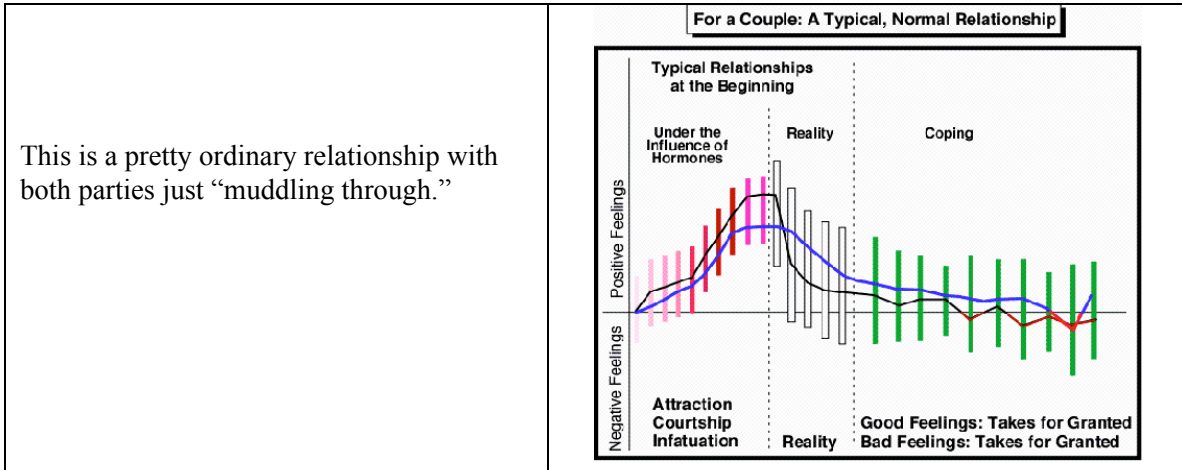
We’ll make you a promise. If you take this course, and read the e-books on how to build a happier and happier relationship, all of your doubts will be resolved. We’ll show you how.

Relationships

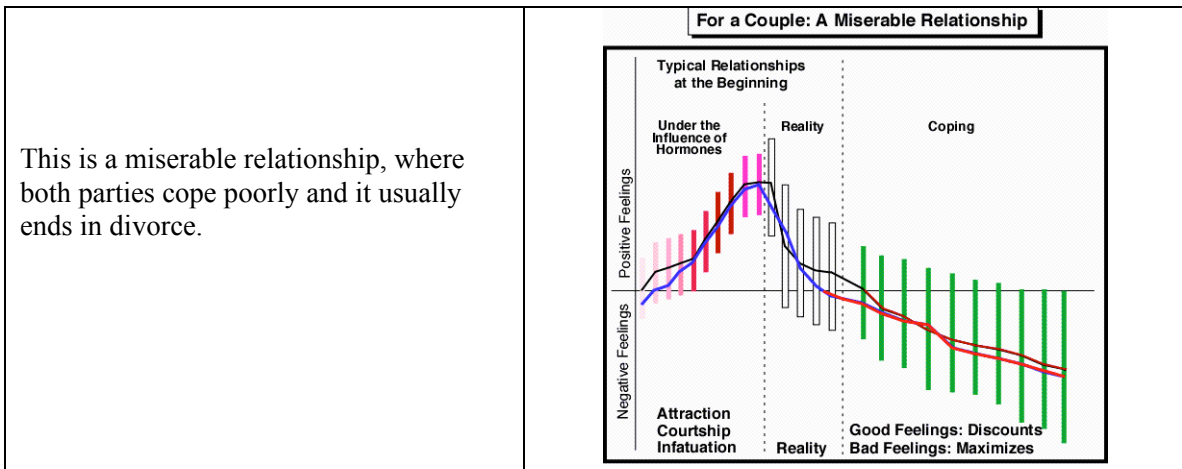
Most relationships start out pretty close to the same. They begin with some attraction, followed by flirting or courting, or maybe even infatuation, and then reality brings everybody back to earth. And the relationship for the rest of the time the two people are together depends on coping.



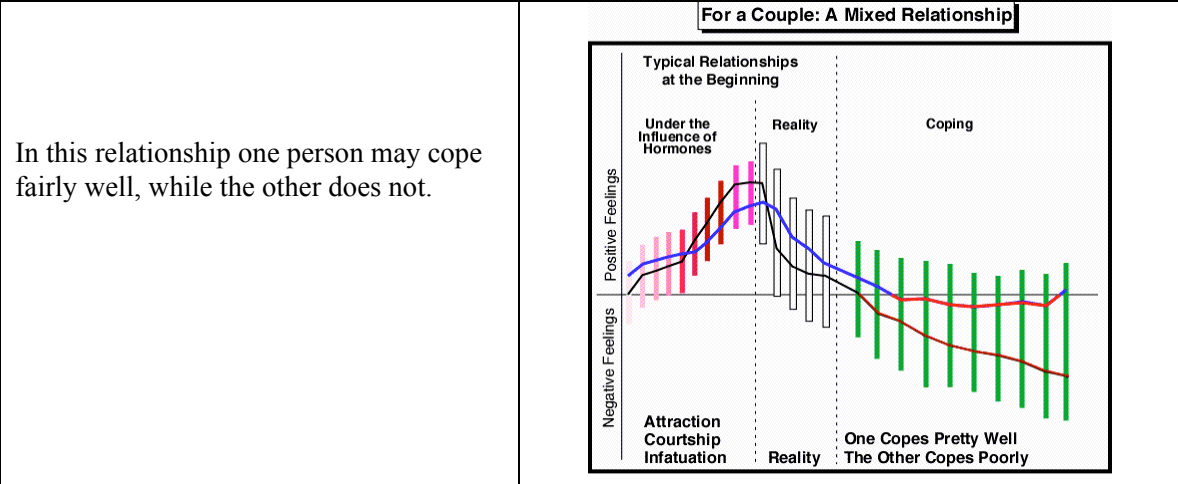
But, since coping isn't taught in school, here is what often happens.



Or, you might have seen this kind of relationship.



We can't know exactly what your relationship was like, but we do know that you didn't find it totally satisfying. We know that, because the research shows that women who find their marriage totally satisfying, don't stray.

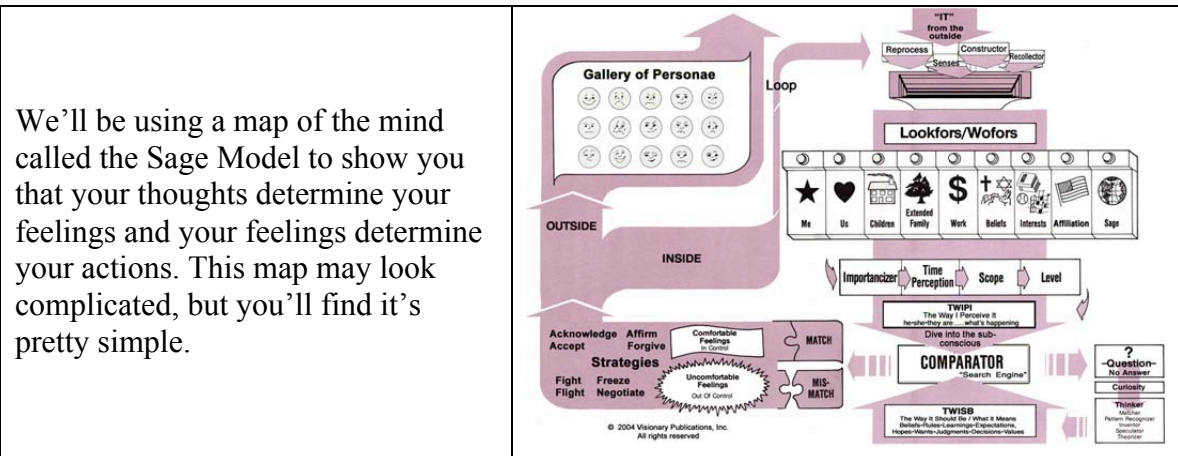


Coping Well

Our job, and indeed, our mission is to teach you to cope so well that you can create a happier and happier relationship. When you've learned how to create a happier and happier relationship you'll realize you're no longer vulnerable to temptations from outside your marriage and you'll fully understand that your husband had little to do with your dissatisfaction. You were totally responsible for your coping and for your experience of your relationship.

Self-talk and the Sage Model

Good coping is all about managing your self-talk.



The power of the Sage Model is that it shows you at least thirty different ways that you can manage your thoughts to get lots of good feelings, and cut short your bad ones. That's what good coping is all about: lots of good feelings, and very few bad feelings, and very little inner conflict. We won't take any more time with the Sage Model here, but you'll learn a great deal about how your mind works, in the rest of the course and in the readings. It's enough to say that when you learn to cope well, you'll have everything you need to resolve any doubts you may have about the marriage-saving message we're here to help you put together.

The Marriage-saving Message

Let's go step by step through the marriage-saving message that you're going to prepare. It contains the following ideas:

- A very persuasive apology.
- A reason for the infidelity that your spouse won't take personally.
- Convincing evidence that it won't happen again.
- A strong statement that you want to save the marriage.
- Some hope that your future together will be better than ever.
- A statement that you accept the fact that your transgressions may be unforgivable.

1. The Persuasive Apology

In a very persuasive apology, you want to make it clear that you were foolish to put your marriage at risk and that you now see you were risking the loss of a marriage that you treasure and the loss of the most important person in your life — the man that you love — your husband. You might say: *"I was so foolish to put our marriage at risk. I'm so very sorry for the pain I've put you through. I know now that I was risking our marriage and risking the loss of my best friend and the person I love — you."*

2. A Reason Your Spouse Won't Take Personally

You want to indicate that the reasons for your infidelity had nothing to do with your spouse. In your message, convey that you were unfaithful because you were seeking something that you weren't getting from your relationship and you didn't realize, until you discovered this course, that *you* were responsible for making the *relationship* unsatisfying, by your self-talk and your thoughts. Your spouse wasn't to blame. Your marriage wasn't to blame. You could say: *"I see that I was making our relationship unsatisfying to me, by my negative thoughts. The course is teaching me that it had nothing to do with you, that it was my responsibility and my fault."*

3. Convincing Evidence It Won't Happen Again

He'll need convincing evidence that it won't happen again. You can tell him that now you're learning how to build a great relationship, and you want a great relationship with him. You really want to do it. You want to create a loving and appreciative relationship, one that you would never again put it at risk. You could say something like: *"I'm learning how to build a great relationship, and I want that to be with you. I want to appreciate you, and love you in the way you deserve. I want to build a relationship so strong I would never put it at risk again."*

4. A Strong Statement You Want to Save the Marriage

To give your husband a strong indication you want to save the marriage, you could start by telling him that you've gone to great lengths to discover how to save your marriage. You searched the Internet, researching all of your choices. You decided on this course because it not only helps you save your marriage, but to build a great relationship. So, you might say: *"I want to save our marriage, and I'm working hard to learn how to create a great relationship, and I want to do it with you."*

5. Hope That Your Future Together Will be Better than Ever

To give your husband some hope your future will be better than the past, tell him that you believe that because of what you're learning, your future relationship will be stronger and more satisfying than it ever was. You know that if your spouse forgives your infidelity, your bond will be stronger than ever. You might say *"If you can find it in your heart to forgive me, I know our future relationship will be stronger and more satisfying. I believe we'll have an even stronger bond."*

6. A Statement You Know Your Transgression May be Unforgivable

We add this step because your husband needs to know you're going to really appreciate it, if he forgives you, so we add this statement that your transgressions may be unforgivable. You tell him that you understand that. Then, when he does forgive you, he knows you'll really appreciate him for it. By contrast, if you said you expected him to forgive you, he wouldn't feel like his generous forgiveness was being appreciated. You might say something like: *"I realize my actions may be unforgivable. I would understand if you refuse to give me another chance. Before I learned what I'm learning, I might not have been forgiving, either."*

Last: Take the Pressure Off

Finally, you take the pressure off by saying, *"Take all the time you need, because I'm going to be busy studying and learning how to build a truly great relationship, the one I want to build with you. Thanks for hearing me out."*

Your Husband's Module

After you deliver your message, tell your husband that this course has a module just for him, one that explains what you've been trying to say, and tells him about the training course you're taking. Download it and print it out for him. Tell him you hope he'll read it. Tell him again you want to save your marriage. You'll see when you read his module that we do a little selling on your behalf. We do our best to show him how he benefits if he forgives you.

What You've Accomplished

You've done your husband a really great favor in many ways.

- You've taken all the responsibility.
- You've made it clear that it was not his fault in any way.
- You've given him an entirely new way to think about the situation.
- You've made it possible for him to keep the marriage.
- Men sometimes have a lot of pride and ego, and you've protected his.
- You may have even turned a disaster into a benefit, if it turns out you have a stronger marriage.
- You'll learn to have and to share with him a really appealing relationship, one that's loving, accepting, forgiving, and happy.

Prepare Your Message

Now it's time to prepare your message. Your apology and your explanation are complex. They must be, to produce the enormous shift in perception that has to occur. So, it's best if your comments and thoughts are written, or recorded, so that you're sure that you're saying exactly what you want to say. Also, that way your husband can read, see, or listen many times to your message. If you want to deliver it and wait while he reads it, only you can judge whether that's wise. Often, it's best to give him the message and allow him to read it and think about it alone.

If just delivering the message, or having him read the module that explains it all to him — if that brings his forgiveness and he wants you back — please continue on with the course anyway. You'll learn to do what you've promised and your marriage will benefit. If he's not ready do that, stay with the course. Be patient. The steps you'll learn will bring him around, and if that never happens, you'll still be learning valuable skills for a relationship in the future.

Please continue with the exercises.

Exercises — The Apology

Objective: At the end of this module you will have prepared a message for your husband that will help him make the decision to stay in the relationship.

Here’s the compilation of the parts of the message suggested in the program.

“I was so foolish to put our marriage at risk. I’m so very sorry for the pain I’ve put you through. I know now that I was risking our marriage and risking the loss of my best friend and the person I love — you. I see that *I* was making our relationship unsatisfying to me, by my negative thoughts. The course is teaching me that it had nothing to do with you, that it was my responsibility and my fault. I’m learning how to build a great relationship, and I want that to be with you. I want to appreciate you, and love you in the way you deserve. I want to build a relationship so strong I would never put it at risk again. I want to save our marriage, and I’m working hard to learn how to create a great relationship, and I want to do it with you.

If you can find it in your heart to forgive me, I know our future relationship will be stronger and more satisfying. We’ll have an even stronger bond. I realize my actions may be unforgivable. I would understand if you refuse to give me another chance. Before I learned what I’m learning, I might not have been forgiving, either. Take all the time you need, because I’m going to be busy studying and learning how to build a truly great relationship, the one I want to build with you. Thanks for hearing me out.”

Exercise 1:

Step 1: The persuasive apology. Make it clear that you were foolish to put your marriage at risk and that you now see you were risking the loss of a marriage that you treasure, and the loss of the most important person in your life — the man that you love — your husband.

You might say: *“I was so foolish to put our marriage at risk. I’m so very sorry for the pain I’ve put you through. I know now that I was risking our marriage and risking the loss of my best friend and the person I love — you.”*

Write your message:

Exercise 2:

Step 2: Indicate the reason for the infidelity. You want to indicate that the reason for your infidelity had nothing to do with your spouse. In your message, convey that you were unfaithful because you were seeking something that you weren't getting from your relationship and you didn't realize, until you discovered this course, that *you* were responsible for making the *relationship* unsatisfying, by your self-talk and your thoughts. Your spouse wasn't to blame. Your marriage wasn't to blame.

You could say: *"I see that I was making our relationship unsatisfying to me, by my negative thoughts. The course is teaching me that it had nothing to do with you, that it was my responsibility and my fault."*

Write your message:

Exercise 3:

Step 3: Convincing evidence that it won't happen again. Tell him that you're now learning how to build a great relationship, and you want a great relationship with him. You really want to do it. You want to create a loving and appreciative relationship, one that you would never again put it at risk.

You could say something like: *"I'm learning how to build a great relationship, and I want that to be with you. I want to appreciate you, and love you in the way you deserve. I want to build a relationship so strong I would never put it at risk again."*

Write your message:

Exercise 4:

Step 4: A strong indication you want to save the marriage. Start by convincing him how strongly you feel. You've gone to great lengths to discover how to save your marriage. You searched the Internet, researching all of your choices. You decided on this course because it not only helps you save your marriage, but will help build a great relationship. You might say: *"I want to save our marriage, and I'm working hard to learn how to create a great relationship, and I want to do it with you."*

Write your message:

Exercise 5:

Step 5: Some hope that the future will be better. To give your husband some hope your future will be better, tell him that you believe that because of what you are learning, your future relationship will be stronger, and more satisfying than it ever was. You know that if your spouse forgives your infidelity, your bond will be stronger than ever. You might say *"If you can find it in your heart to forgive me, I know our future relationship will be stronger and more satisfying. We'll have an even stronger bond."*

Write your message:

Exercise 6:

Step 6: You realize your transgression may be unforgivable. We added this step because your husband needs to know you're going to really be appreciative, if he forgives you. Tell him that you understand that. Then, when he does forgive you, he knows you'll really appreciate him for it. By contrast, if you said you expected him to forgive you, he wouldn't feel like his generous forgiveness was being appreciated.

You might say: *"I realize my actions may be unforgivable. I would understand if you refuse to give me another chance. Before I learned what I'm learning, I might not have been forgiving, either."*

Write your message:

Exercise 7:

Take the Pressure off.

Say something like *"Take all the time you need, because I'm going to be busy studying and learning how to build a truly great relationship, the one I want to build with you. Thanks for hearing me out."*

Write your message:

Exercise 8:

Write out your whole message then decide how you will deliver it. An audiotape? A letter? Personally?

Write your message:

Exercise 9:

Please read the “Husband’s” module. (Download it, if you haven’t already done that.) You’ll learn that we do a little selling on your behalf. We do our best to show him how he benefits if he forgives you.

Then tell your husband about the training course you’re taking and that it has a module just for him. Tell him that it explains what you’ve been trying to say. Tell him you hope he’ll read it. Tell him again you want to save your marriage.

Please continue with the reading on the next page.

Step 1: Listen to Your Self-talk

Your marriage is threatened by some breach of your marital vows. You regret what you did and you want to get back with your husband and save your marriage.

We make no judgments. We know the statistics. Your situation happens far more often than you'd imagine. Many long-lasting marriages have overcome fidelity lapses. Our goal is to help both spouses put indiscretions behind them and build stronger and happier marriages in the future. We know the cost, the pain, and the turmoil of divorce, and that's why we will counsel both of you to do everything you can to keep your marriage together.

You want your husband back. We're here to help you win him back in a way that will make your marriage secure.

A wife's infidelity almost always occurs because she is seeking something she feels is missing from her relationship. Research indicates that wives hardly ever stray from a relationship that they find totally satisfying. We'll show you how to find whatever you were missing in your relationship. How can we say that, if *you* say, "It wasn't there?" We'll believe you when you say that it "wasn't there," if you'll open your mind to the idea that you can "put it there!" That's right, whatever was missing — that you found outside your marriage — is, to some degree or another, available to you within your marriage, and we'll show you how to find it.

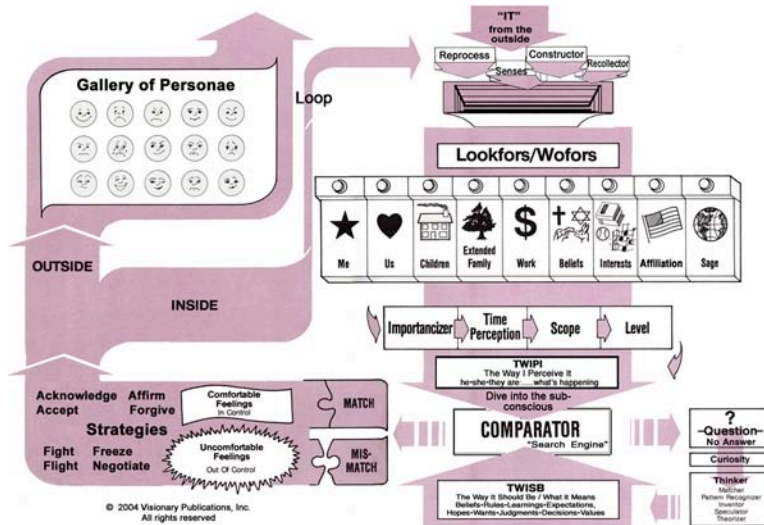
Self-talk

You'll learn about self-talk, which is what we call the thoughts that run through your mind. You'll learn that all feelings come from self-talk. You'll learn that all of us have some thoughts that are distorted, exaggerated, magnified, or just plain wrong. You'll learn that all of us sometimes make erroneous evaluations of our thoughts. For example, we might use expectations, or hopes, or standards of perfection to evaluate our thoughts. You'll learn about all of this and you'll find that it's easy to understand.

The payoff for you of learning how your mind works, is that you can learn to recognize the thoughts that are hurting you and bringing you pain, and change them so they stop hurting you. You can learn to use more realistic expectations and standards of perfection to feel more satisfied with people and situations in your life. And, if you aim specifically for one thing you found missing in your relationship, we'll show you how to find it, with your existing partner.

The Sage Model

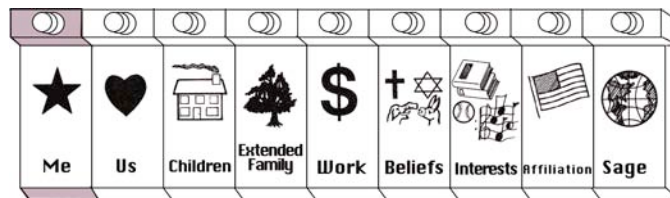
Let me show you an example of what you’ll be learning about. This is a model of how the mind works. It looks complicated when you first see it. We teach it in detail in the books with this course.



At this point, we’re just going to show you how your thoughts are created and how the different parts of you create the self-talk that goes around and around in your mind. (If you read “The Husband’s Module,” you will find the following information on “Parts,” a review.)

The Parts

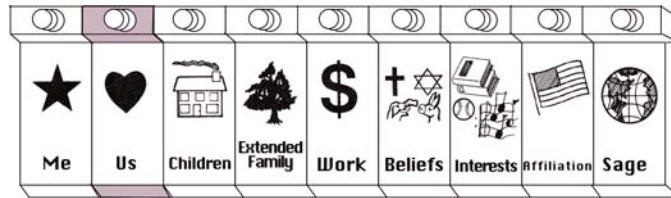
We’ve identified nine different parts that everyone has. Each part has different needs and interests. Later on, in the books, you’ll discover how all of these parts can get their needs met without fighting and arguing inside your mind. Getting them all together on the same team is the key to peace of mind. But right now you don’t have peace of mind. You have many parts in conflict with each other.



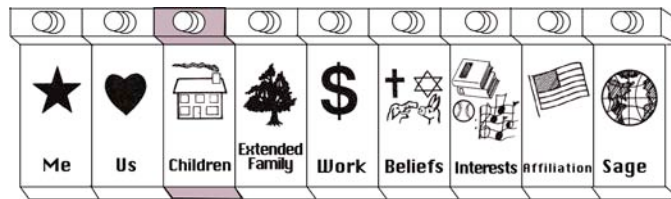
The Me-part, cares only about you. It puts your interests first. It says: “Me, me, me.” This is the part that feels vanity, jealousy, greed, lust, and pride, and it also makes sure you eat and keeps you alive if you’re in danger. It’s a vital part, probably the most important

single part you have, but it tends to be selfish and self-centered. It puts its interests above those of your other parts.

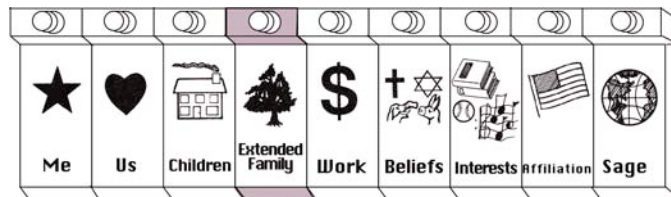
You have a whole team of parts that wants to keep your marriage. This entire group of parts wants to avoid divorce and have a loving relationship. This is the team of parts that brought you to this course, and wants to save your marriage.



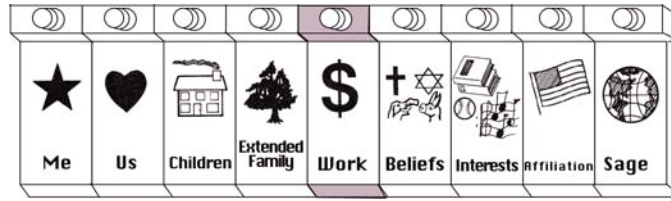
For example, the Relationship-part, cares primarily about having a partner and a loving relationship. It's the part of you that puts the needs of your husband and the relationship above your own. This is the part of you that may have felt something was lacking in your relationship. This part will learn a lot about relationships in this course.



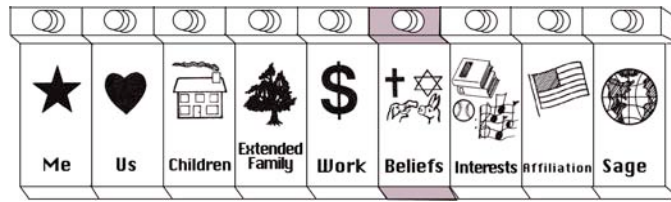
The Children-part, cares about children, and takes care of them and nurtures them. It puts a child's needs ahead of your own. The Children-part wants a loving partner who loves the kids you have, or wants kids in the future.



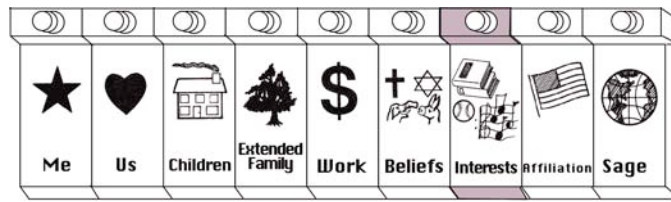
The Family-part cares about the extended family on both sides. Blood is thicker than water. There are times when you put the needs of your extended family members above your own, your husband's, or even your children. The extended Family-part wants to keep both your family and his family relationships at peace.



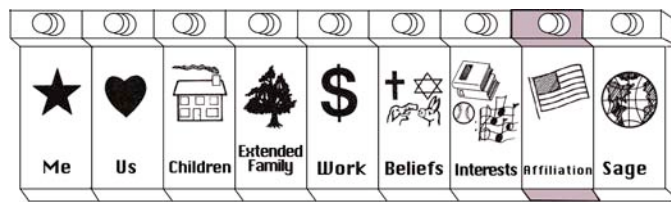
Your Work-part, whether in the workplace or your homemaking work at home, may from time to time put those duties above your own needs, or those of other parts.



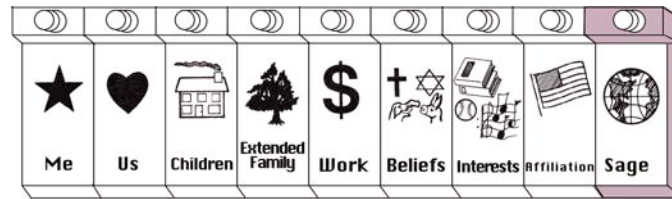
If you have strong beliefs, this is the part of you that honors them. And you may have strong beliefs about marriage and divorce. This part can help you have the strength to do what it takes to save your marriage.



Maybe you and your husband have mutual interests, maybe not. In the future, you might join with your husband to find something that interests both of you. Then this part will join the others in strengthening your marriage.



Your Affiliation-part has a stake in all the friends, neighbors, acquaintances, fellow worshipers, and all the other groups that you know and who know you. This part wants you two to stay together and will gain support from all of your established friendships.



And, you can be sure that your Sage-part, that is, your wisest part, knows that it's wise to keep your marriage, to get a fresh start, and to build a loving relationship.

Conflicting Self-talk

What happens when a husband wants a divorce, or walks out, is that all of these parts are thrown into distress. And, all of these parts are talking to each other. That's what we mean by self-talk. Maybe you've even stopped to listen to what the parts are saying. We're going to work with self-talk in this course. We'll help you discover what your parts are saying to each other now, and we'll talk later about how you can change your self-talk to help you have happier, calmer and more satisfied feelings.

The Me-part thinks and talks about humiliation, pride, and embarrassment. The Me-part carries all the resentments from past hurts, This part remembers the slights, can rattle off a list of your husband's weaknesses, his failings, his mistakes, and flaws. This is the part that asks, *"Why should I change? He should change. Anything missing in our relationship was his fault. Whatever I was seeking outside the relationship was something he didn't provide."*

The Relationship-part might say, *"Oh, no, I really, down deep, love my husband. I'm losing my partner. I'll be alone. I don't want to start over."*

The Children-part worries about the effect on the children. *"They'll be damaged,"* or *"Now I'll never have any."*

The Family-part agonizes, *"Now we'll lose his whole family."*

And the Beliefs-part may worry about your vows and the sacred nature of your unity.

And your Affiliations-part may worry about all of the friends and people you'll lose if you break this marriage up.

Your situation may differ from others, but every wife in this situation faces the same chaos. All of these parts distressed at once make your mind go back and forth. You can feel totally confused, overwhelmed, in chaos.

"I'll let him go. He'll never forgive me. No, No, we gotta' get him back, for the kids, for the family, for my church. I want to stay in my neighborhood. I'll do it, because it's wise. The relationship is more important than my selfish pride, I'll be proud of saving it!"

Torn and Upset

The conflicting self-talk and these racing thoughts can make you feel torn and upset. We understand that and we admire you for persisting through the inner conflicts, to keep your marriage together. Even though part of you is saying, “*It may be too hard,*” you also believe that you can make this marriage work, and work well. This is the inner battle that you may be fighting. Most of your parts want him back, and your marriage to be loving. On the other side is your Me-part, the part capable of feeling some pretty nasty feelings like humiliation, embarrassment and maybe the most dangerous, pride.

If you’re worried about your pride, you can be very proud of yourself for deciding to keep your marriage. You’ve overcome a lot to make the commitment. You’ll have a little more to overcome if you do what it takes to bring him back with you. You can do it. You’ve already dealt with the hardest parts, but you’ll have to keep strong and not let selfish pride defeat the whole team of parts within you that values your partner and your marriage.

That brings us to the end of the first step. You’ll do the exercises associated with step 1, and you’ll make some fascinating discoveries about your self-talk. You’ll begin to gain control over those thoughts that may be racing around in your head and causing so much turmoil.

Please continue with the exercises.

Step 1: Exercises

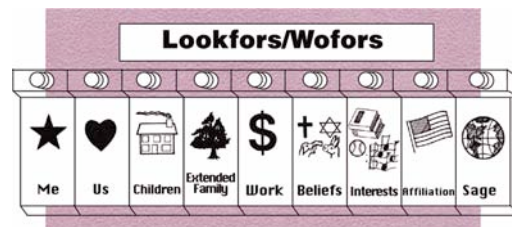
Objective: At the end of this module, you will have identified some of the conflicting “self-talk” that you’re experiencing and will have selected several thoughts that are causing the most “noise.”

Exercise 1:

Please read the following information about the nine parts. Write down at least one thought for each of the parts. A full copy of the map is included at the end, if you wish to refer to it.

Before we expand on the parts, let’s look quickly at the Lookfors and Wofors.

Lookfors and Wofors



Your parts create *Lookfors* when they need something. Your Me-part creates a Lookfor when it’s hungry. In that case you’ll find yourself screening the outside world, looking for any sign of something to eat. If your Us-part has no SIGO (significant other), then you’ll find yourself ever alert for anyone who could become a possible SIGO for you. If you have a SIGO, but no children, you might find yourself with a Lookfor for any child; a child coming into your space will immediately cause your Children-part to take over and give attention to the child.

Wofors are things your parts have asked you to “watch out for” — things that represent danger or threat. For example, when you’re first in line in your car at a red light, you may look carefully to the left and right when the light turns green, to be sure no one is still entering the intersection. Or, if you’ve had a bad experience with a dog, you might set up a Wofer to watch out for any sign of a dog in your space. If you spot a dog, immediately you’ll begin reacting to the dog, regardless of other needs that may have brought you to that space.

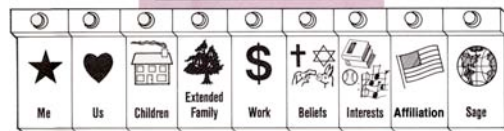
Lookfors and Wofors are the tools your parts use to screen the environment for things they need and things they fear. Lookfors and Wofors are the tools your parts use to gain control when they are needy or are alarmed.

Your Parts

At least nine separate and distinct human needs have been identified. By the time you reach adulthood, all of your needs have developed. Each need creates tension in you until it is satisfied.

If this is the first time that you're learning about your separate parts, you may feel surprised. That is not unusual. As your conscious mind learns about them, and you become aware of their unique personalities, you'll discover you're really a team of parts. Most people find this to be a delightful revelation.

To understand these needs, it is helpful to think of yourself as having a separate sub-personality for each of your needs. We call these sub-personalities "parts." For example, you have a part of you that needs to bond with a significant other. You also have a part that needs to work or contribute to the world in some way. When you're involved in meeting your bonding need, you're using a separate sub-personality from the sub-personality that you use when you're involved in work. The two parts look, talk, and behave differently. They hold different beliefs; they use different strategies; they produce different feelings. Different things satisfy each of them. They may have different levels of okayness; they have different needs for dominance or submission; they may have different levels of motivation. They often come into conflict with each other as they each strive to get what they need.

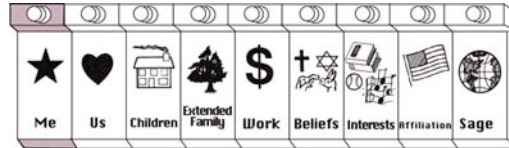


The parts take turns in taking control of your mind, based on the amount of tension (or urgency) they feel, to get their respective needs met. At any instant in time, one part and only one part is in control of your mind and it's processing. Sometimes two or more parts are interested in the same input being processed, and they will switch control from one part to another so fast that the conscious mind cannot keep up.

As long as you aren't aware of the separateness of the parts, each must do what it can to get its needs met. Frequently they must compete with each other to get what they need. For example, there may be times when one part of you wants to do your work, and another part wants to be with your family or significant other. This causes internal conflict and you may feel pulled in two directions at once.

The goal is to get all of your parts working together as a team, in order for you to get all of your needs met and still achieve peace of mind and inner harmony.

The Me-Part

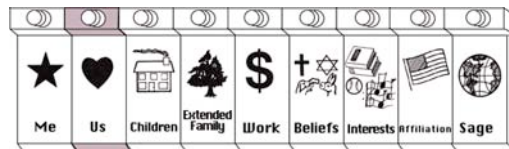


The me-part is the part responsible for you and you alone. It is not concerned about others. It wants what it wants when it wants it. This part has all of your physical needs and appetites to satisfy. It gets hungry, has sexual needs, feels hot or cold, and needs to sleep. It likes to play, and it likes to rest. Your other parts might call the me-part your selfish part, because it is only interested in what it wants.

Whenever you have some physical need, the me-part will take over from the other parts to take care of it. If you don't allow it to get what it wants, it may distract your other parts and could even try to keep other parts from getting what they need.

What is your Me-part saying about your present situation?

The Us-Part



Your Us-part is responsible for attracting, courting, and bonding with a significant other. It cares as much about your partner's needs as your own. The Us-part becomes attracted, feels attractive, gets infatuated, and falls in love.

What is your Us-part saying about your present situation?

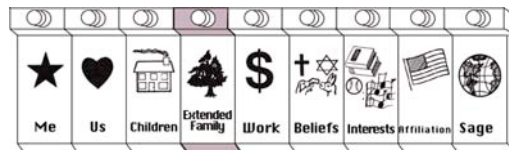
The Children-Part



Your Children-part is the part of you that responds to your need to have and to care for children. The Children-part loves and bonds with children. The Children-part is less concerned with your needs than with the needs of your child or children. You also use this nurturing part in caring for the sick or elderly or those who need your help.

What is your Children-part saying about your present situation?

The Extended-Family-Part



Your Extended-family-part has a special bond with your mother, father, or whomever raised you. It has special caring and bonding with brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins. It has special loyalties that it reserves for your extended family. Later in life it is this part that feels the need to be a grandparent and has special affection and bonding with grandchildren. Your Extended-family-part is the part that feels that “blood is thicker than water.”

What is your Extended-family-part saying about your present situation?

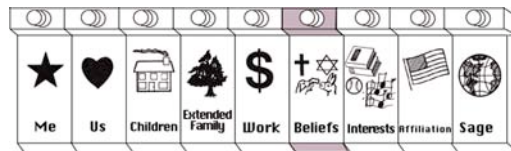
The Work-Part



Your Work-part is the part that works or contributes to society in some way. The Work-part has special needs for achievement, accomplishment, responsibility, recognition, and growth. Your Work-part might get special satisfaction out of the work itself. Your Work-part is willing to put self-interest aside and serve someone else, or serve an organization that serves others.

What is your Work-part saying about your present situation?

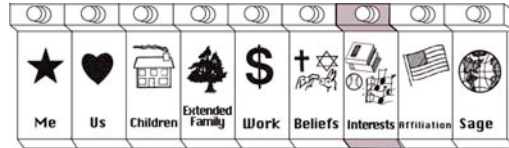
The Beliefs-Part



Your Beliefs-part is the part responsible for choosing your beliefs and honoring them. This is the part that takes you to your selected house of worship, and supports others with shared beliefs. This part has political beliefs and opinions. It puts your interests behind those that it believes in. Your Beliefs-part might be willing to join protest marches, write letters to political leaders, and sign petitions. It may make contributions to causes that it believes in. This is the part that people use, for example, if they choose to become missionaries, or to fight holy wars.

What is your Beliefs-part saying about your present situation?

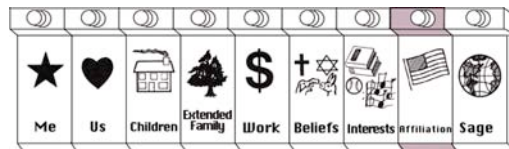
The Interests-Part



Your Interests-part enjoys hobbies or learning. If you're curious about something and eager to learn about it, that is probably your Interests-part. It may collect stamps, study history, read biographies, tour museums, travel to foreign countries, or climb mountains. It may want to watch birds, grow orchids, collect butterflies, and watch public television programming. It has the need to satisfy curiosity and discover the outside world.

What is your Interests-part saying about your present situation?

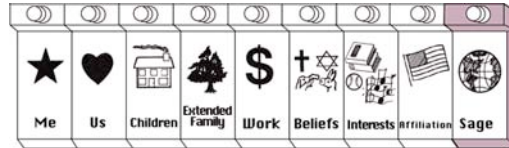
The Affiliation-Part



Your Affiliation-part is the part of you that seeks affiliation and has needs to join and be part of packs or groups. It's also concerned with *place* and bonds with others who share that place. Your Affiliation-part creates your sense of home where you live, and the sense of neighborhood around your home. It is patriotic and has a special loyalty that it shares with others from your homeland. It is the part of you that roots for your team (your school, your town, your state, etc). Your Affiliation-part is willing to put all other needs aside and go to war to fight to protect your home, town, state, nation, or pack of nations.

What is your Affiliation-part saying about your present situation?

The Sage-Part



Your Sage-part is that part of you that possesses your innate wisdom. This part has the potential for growing beyond the special interests of your other eight parts. Your Sage-part sees the world as one people. It cares for the future of the earth, and feels responsible for protecting the environment for future generations. The Sage-part is willing, when asked, to become responsible for resolving conflicts between your other eight parts, and resolving those conflicts in such a way that all parts get their needs met. The Sage-part respects and appreciates all beliefs. The Sage-part respects and appreciates all nations and all places. The Sage-part feels family loyalty and love for the widest possible family — all mankind.

What is your Sage-part saying about your present situation?

Exercise 2: Doubts and Arguments

There are many thoughts that may be racing around in your mind. Write some of the “loudest” messages below. If you have some idea of which part each thought represents, write that down. If you’re not sure, don’t worry.

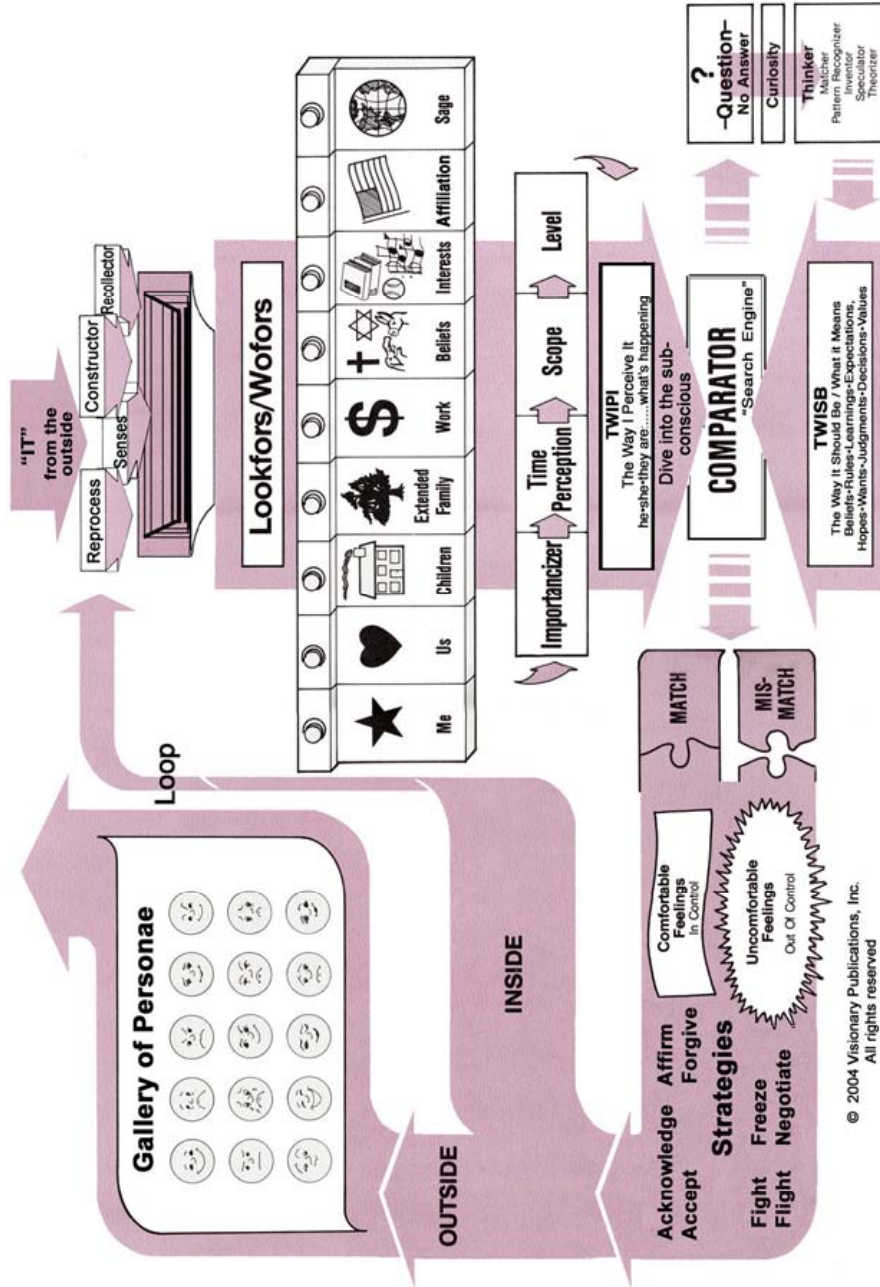
Date: _____

	Thoughts	Part
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Exercise 3:

Select the top (loudest) four or five arguments going on in your head (put a check mark next to those). Put a date on this page so that you can come back to it at a future time to check progress.

Map: The Sage Model



Please continue with Step 2: Make a Fresh Start

Step 2: Make a Fresh Start

This second step is nothing more than just a decision on your part to make a fresh start. At the end of this part, there is an exercise where you'll decide whether you have the kind of commitment that it takes to do what we teach. Our steps are the most powerful, and will work the most often, but they require some courage and commitment on your part. So, at the end of this step you'll be making a decision. But let's talk about what you'll be deciding about. You want your husband back, but you don't want the same old relationship back!

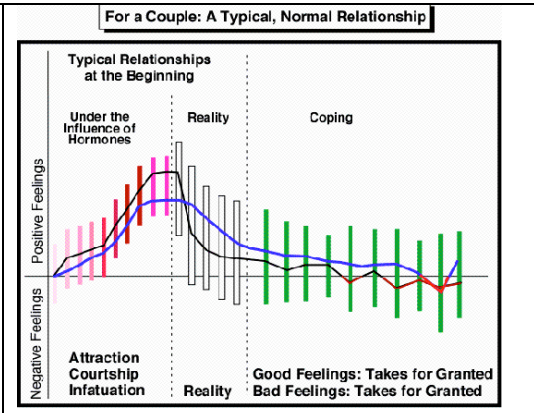
That's so important I'm going to repeat it. You want to get your husband back, but *you don't want to continue the same relationship that drove you apart.*

If you try to get your husband back into the same old relationship, you could fail, and if he does come home you still might not ever feel real secure.

Here is a diagram of how relationships usually begin. The different phases are attraction, courting, maybe infatuation, then reality, and coping goes on for as long as the relationship lasts. (If you read the Husband's module, the following discussion will serve as a review for you.)

A Typical, Normal Relationship

Notice that vertical bars represent the range and strength of the feelings you have about your partner. The top of the bar represents a strong good feeling; the bottom a bad feeling. As you can see here, at the beginning, most of your feelings are good. The few bad feelings — little niggling concerns — aren't very strong. So, on balance between your good feelings and your bad feelings, your total feelings are well above the neutral line.



If you experience infatuation, wow! This is the stuff of romance and magic. If you were infatuated with your partner you loved every little thing about him. He was the funniest, the cleverest, and the handsomest. You were blinded by infatuation. Even his failings were not so bad. You never know when he's going to show up? That means he's spontaneous. When he drinks too much he gets so hilarious. And so on. The worst feelings you have about your partner during this phase are still very, very positive.

Coping

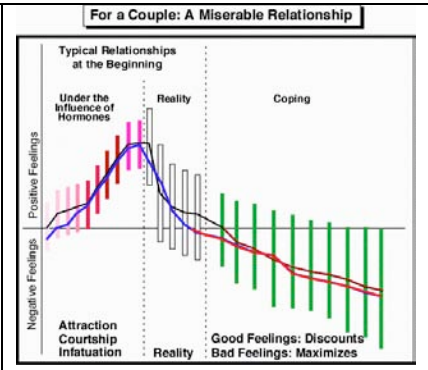
Then, because infatuation can only last two to three months — maybe six months at the longest — reality kicks in, and all of a sudden everything isn't quite so funny, or cute, or reliable, or caring anymore.

After reality, coping comes into play and coping is the key to the rest of your life in a relationship.

The key is to keep positive feelings strong, and if you cope well, you can keep them strong, and you have a lot of them. And you want to keep your negative feelings mild, and have few of them. Sadly, we aren't taught coping as young people, so sometimes we get it wrong. We have lots of bad feelings, and not enough good feelings about our partner.

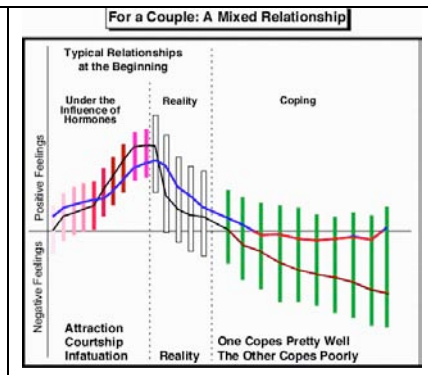
A Miserable Relationship

For example: let's say that your husband becomes less attentive, and you feel hurt, or alone and abandoned. Or you don't feel like your husband is your friend, or the only time he pays attention to you is when he wants sex. The natural reaction is to be less responsive. *"Heck, if he does that to me, I'll do it back to him,"* and the act and counter act begins. If that happens — and both partners participate — it's possible to turn a wonderful, loving relationship into a truly miserable relationship.



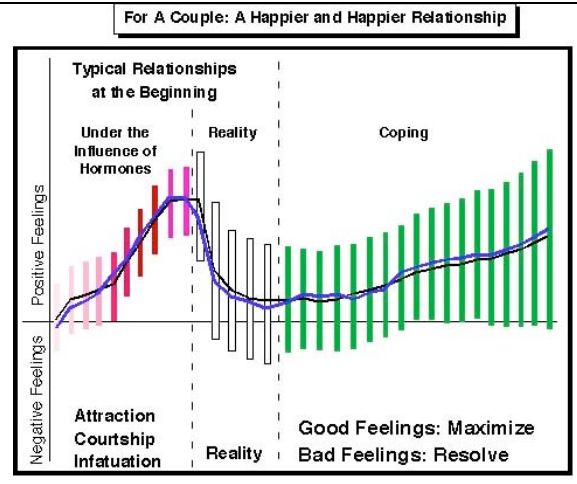
A Mixed Relationship

Or, it sometimes happens that one person copes pretty well, and the other one doesn't. Coping takes some skills. They don't teach those skills in school, so we're each on our own in a relationship. In this example, we're showing here, one person copes poorly, and the other one does okay. That explains the relationship where one person is really unhappy and the other doesn't think the relationship is in trouble.



A Happier and Happier Relationship

There's a whole book that explains everything about relationships and the secrets of coping (*Metamating Series: Books one through six*), so once you and your husband are back together you can start a fresh new relationship, and this time, do it wonderfully, so the relationship rises above the line and stays there, and grows stronger over the years. But, that isn't what you need at this moment. This course is about how to get you two back together — even if you're separated — even if he has a lover.



I'm Willing to Start Over

The second step is all about starting your relationship over again. We'll show you how, but you have to accept the idea and not get defensive about the old relationship. You'll have to agree with the idea. "Yes, I want him back, and I'm willing to start a brand new relationship all over again, and this time I'm going to get it right."

If you can accept the idea of fresh start, leaving all the baggage of this failed relationship behind you, then you can get him back and you can build the kind of relationship you always wanted.

He'll come back willingly and he'll love the chance to start over again.

He loved you once completely, and he still has love for you. There is some left to rekindle. No matter what he says, down deep, he still loves you. He may even have said he doesn't.

If you like the idea of starting over, forgetting all that's gone wrong, being loving again, you can get him back, and we'll show you how to do it, step by step. We'll help you figure out exactly what to say and what not to say, and things to do. And then you'll practice until it fits you perfectly.

We want you to be the authentic you — the woman he fell in love with — the woman he still cares about today, underneath the pain of the relationship that didn't work for him.

The Goal: A Terrific Relationship

Let's talk about the goal. What kind of relationship do you want to create? Some marriage counselors aim for something a little better than it was. We call that the “baby steps” strategy. It's a marriage counseling strategy — ten or twenty sessions — and baby steps toward a better relationship. Well, baby steps aren't going to bring back a husband who's gone, or one who has one foot out of the door.

Our course aims for a really terrific relationship. Why? Well, if you aim high and fall a little short, you've got something a lot better. And, it's actually much easier to aim for a really terrific relationship, because it's such a big difference from what you have, that it's very noticeable and very appealing. And you want your husband back, with him having some hope and optimism.

We're going to aim for the kind of relationship you had when you first fell in love. We're going to teach you how to “jump” there. It's actually easier than the “baby step” strategy, because it leaves all the “baggage” behind.

Maybe you and your husband took some marriage counseling. Maybe you “worked” on your relationship. Well, in our experience, “working” on the relationship is the last step before divorce, and the statistics aren't very encouraging. So, we discourage, “working” on the relationship. Most men don't like it. Jump to a new one — an appealing one — a new you.

The New You

What's going to be appealing, is the new you, a chance at a ‘fresh’ start, with no baggage to rummage through. You, the way you were when he fell in love with you. No, not your figure, or younger skin: you the inner you, the personality you, the you that loved *him*, that made him feel wonderful, that found him attractive, that made him want to be around you, that made him feel good about himself.

Now, do you think you can be that loving woman again? Do you want to be? Are you willing to be? Are you too resentful? Too Angry? Too hurt, to love him again, and make him feel loved? Too humiliated, to make him feel good about himself? Because, if you are too hurt, too resentful, too angry, too humiliated, to love him like he really needs and wants to be loved, then maybe, just maybe, you really don't want him back. And, more importantly, it will be hard to get him back.

Choice Point

So, you're facing a choice point: Very pivotal. Your choice here will determine the outcome of this entire process. There are three possibilities:

Possibility 1: You can: get past your damaged pride; leave the baggage in the past; accept him as he is; forgive him and yourself for being so forgiving; be loving again to him and you welcome a fresh start. *You really want him back, and a loving marriage.*

Possibility 2: You want him back, but you can't: forgive or forget, overlook the past, accept him unless he changes, or feel loving toward him. You might think that you can never forget what he put you through. *You want him back so you can make his life as miserable as he's made yours.*

Possibility 3: You really want him back, and a loving marriage, but you don't feel real loving towards him now, and you have difficulty imagining how you could forgive or forget what he's done to you. You can't accept him as he is; he has to change. *You're really torn.*

If you choose possibility 1, this course is for you. You can be almost certain to get your husband to come back to you, and you'll learn to build a wonderful, loving relationship, by jumping to a brand new, "fresh" start. Or, if you choose number 3 and have reservations, then the odds are very good that this course will work for you. We can show you how to overcome your reservations and teach you a lot about accepting and forgiving. If you chose number 2 we suggest you find some other answer to your search. If you change your mind and decide to be accepting and forgiving, come on back.

Please continue with the exercises.

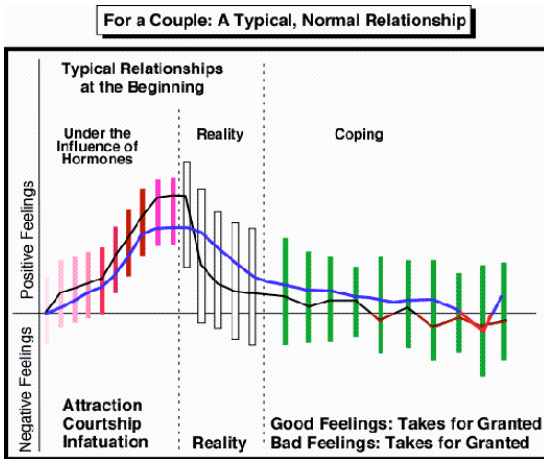
Exercises — Step 2

Objective: At the end of this step you will have selected among three choices, for a decision of how you will go forward.

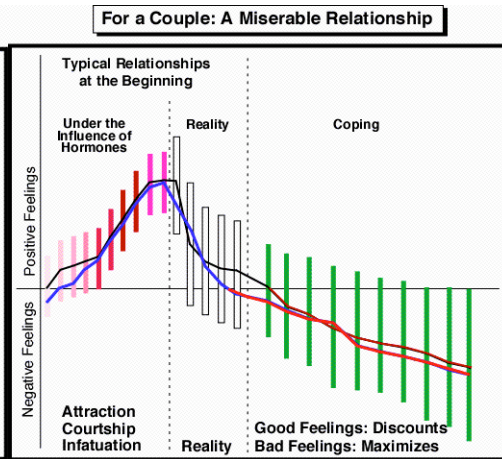
Exercise 1:

Please review the charts that were described previously.

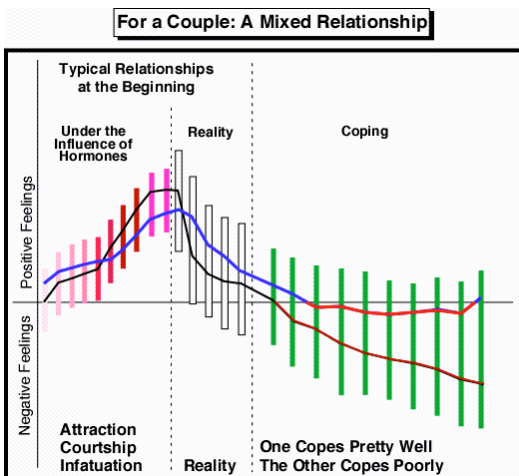
A.



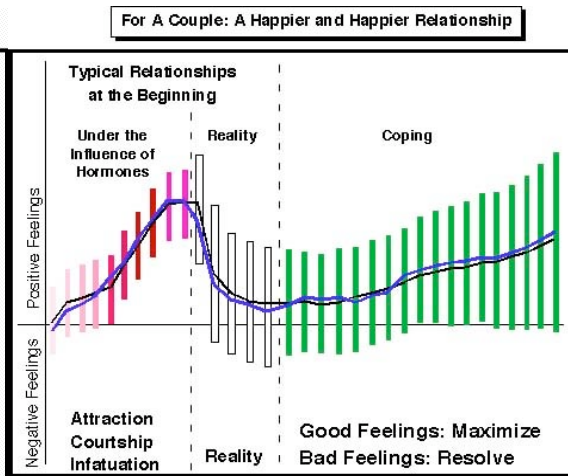
B.



C.



D.



Exercise 2:

Look at each of the charts and select the one that comes closest to your present relationship. On that chart, draw the line that represents your situation.

Exercise 3:

How well you do cope? On a scale of 1-3, where 1 is almost always, 2 is often, 3 is sometimes, 4 is seldom and 5 is almost never, rate yourself on the four aspects of coping:

	almost always	often	some- times	seldom	never
I keep positive feelings strong	1	2	3	4	5
I have positive feelings often	1	2	3	4	5
I keep negative feelings mild	1	2	3	4	5
I don't have many negative feelings	1	2	3	4	5

If your score is 9-20, you can make great progress as you go through this program, concentrating on the positives, and shortening the amount of time you spend in negative feelings.

If your score is 4-8 you're doing well. Concentrate on letting negative feelings go and maximize the positive feelings.

Exercise 4:

Read *Metamating Series: Book Six — Troubleshooting Bonding* (it's short, only four chapters).

Exercise 5:

Consider the three options. Read through these, and put a check mark next to those statements with which you agree. Then make your choice.

Some advice: even if you are tempted to choose #2, continue with the program, then come back to this at the end, and see if your feelings have changed.

Possibility #1: I want him back, and I can:

- get past my damaged pride
- put the baggage in the past
- accept him as he is
- forgive him and myself
- be loving again
- welcome a fresh start

Bottom Line: *I really want him back, and a loving marriage.*

Possibility #2: I want him back, but

I can't forgive or forget
I can't and won't overlook the past
he has to change
I'll never forget (some situation)

Bottom Line: *I want him back, so I can make his life as miserable as he's made mine.*

Possibility #3: I just don't know

I'm torn
I want him back
I want a loving marriage

Bottom Line: *I don't know if I can forgive or forget; he has to change.*

My Choice:

Please continue with Step 3: Say “You were right.”

Step 3: Say, “You were right.”

Congratulations! You’ve committed to saving your marriage. You’re ready to do what it takes.

What it takes is for you to change the only thing you can really change: yourself! When you change yourself any relationship you’re in also changes, and the other parties to the relationship have to change as well. So, by taking charge of yourself, and changing yourself, you’ll soon find yourself in control of the relationship with you and your husband. I know it doesn’t look that way or feel that way, but that’s what’s happening. So, let’s start the change process. Let’s begin with some goals.

Goals

What do you want from this new relationship that you’re going to create? You’ll have a chance to make your list later, but most women want some or all of these things:

- to feel loved
- to feel appreciated
- to feel attractive
- to be respected
- to feel like a good wife
- to have a fun, joyous relationship and
- to enjoy spousal companionship.

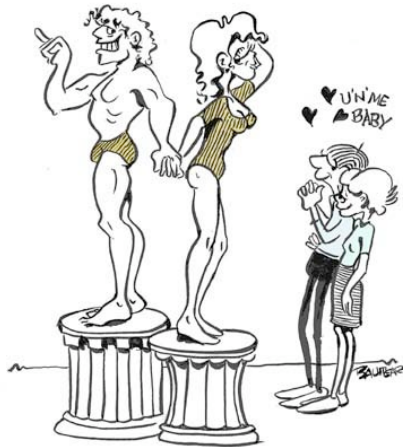
You’re going to get these things, either from your current husband, or failing that, in your next relationship. Now, the second most important secret: To get your goals met, you must meet your partner’s goals, first and continually. *To get, you must give.* Part of you probably thinks that’s all you’ve ever done is to give.

What do you suppose your husband’s goals are? You’ll get a chance later to list exactly what you think they are, but here’s a starter list of what virtually every man wants in a relationship. Pay lots of attention to this list, because this list is what you are going to help your husband achieve, if he stays in the relationship. And if you help him meet his goals, he will help you achieve yours.

- To feel competent and capable
- To be appreciated for whatever he brings to the relationship
- To be respected as a man and as a husband
- To make a woman happy and satisfied
- To have fun and enjoy spousal companionship
- To be a good sexual partner, as often as his needs dictate.

The Early Days

When you were first married, you helped your husband feel all those things, and that's the main reason he married you. You helped him feel great about himself.



You may know that 50% of marriages end in divorce; the other half of marriages endure. The difference is all about these lists of what people want to feel. We can make relationships pretty complex, but at the same time, these lists show that they're pretty simple. If each person helps the other one achieve their goals the union continues happily ever after until and unless one party messes it up.

A Deteriorating Relationship

Doesn't matter who starts it.



It won't matter if the other party doesn't react, but at least half of the time the other party does react.



“If you won’t give me what I want, I won’t give you what you want. So, there!” So, one party withdraws, or criticizes, or ignores the other, or makes the other feel unattractive, or incompetent, or unloved, or unmanly, or disrespected, and certainly not appreciated. Each of these goals becomes a “hot button.” Doing the opposite of what’s on your husband’s goal list is exactly what you can do to “get back” at him for not meeting your needs.



So, the circle of deterioration begins, and one good kick deserves another, and pretty soon, no one’s getting their needs met.

And now, two lovers, who swore to love, honor, and cherish, are both guilty of diminishing, hurting, belittling and disrespecting and not appreciating the other.



Who’s fault was it? Who started it? Who cares? They both messed it up. It was both of their faults. No matter what the first one did wrong, or didn’t do, the other could have let it go and continued to treat their partner with love and respect, have fun and good companionship and continued to help the other partner feel wonderful in the relationship.

Unfortunately, husbands and wives are also human, and most of us haven’t yet learned the magic of acceptance and forgiveness. But, suppose one party *does* learn the magic of acceptance and forgiveness? What happens?

One Person Can Do it

If one party learns to accept and forgive, the relationship will not deteriorate. Who's going to attack, or chisel away at the self-respect of a spouse who keeps them on the pedestal? Nobody, that's who.

So, it's proven, one party can — by herself — keep a relationship sound and happy for her spouse, even if not getting her needs met.

This drawing illustrates what you can do to save your marriage, fight off divorce, and bring back the love and mutual respect to the marriage. Forgive, accept, love, and rebuild the pedestal.



We're making this point to show that one person can turn a troubled relationship around, and if one partner in a troubled relationship puts the other partner back on the pedestal, the one now on the pedestal almost always responds very positively.

That's what we meant by the big jump. We're going to teach you the easy and quick way to rebuild his pedestal, overnight!

Our goal, and your goal, is to have you both back on the pedestals, for the long term. It's exactly the same thing as the vicious circle, except it's a virtuous cycle.



The Steps

So, how to we get from where we are to where we want to be? Here are some of the steps in the process:

Stop Fighting the Separation

First: totally stop fighting the separation. Make no further efforts to “save” this already dead relationship.

Write the Message

You'll put together a message that's perfect for your situation, and your skills. If you can, it's best to deliver the message personally, or by phone, but if you don't feel comfortable with that, you can send him a letter, email, voice mail, whatever works for you.

The words will be up to you, but the message will indicate this:

<p>You were right to terminate our unsatisfying relationship. I'm not going to fight the breakup. I see now what I did wrong. Sorry about that. It was great for a while, I'll never forget (something memorable between the two of you). I'm sad it's over, but I'm really excited about the future. I'm learning so much about relationships. More later.</p>	<p>You were right to terminate our relationship. I won't fight it. I see now what I did wrong, and I'm sorry about that. It was great and I'll never forget the good times. I'm sad it's over, but I'm really excited about the future. I'm learning so much about relationships. Well, I just wanted you to know. Bye</p>

Deliver the Message

Then, after you deliver the message, just wait until it sinks in, he's free; you're not fighting him. He has no guilt.

Start Your New Life

So, start getting on with your life. Take the steps necessary and appropriate — but not permanent — because you may have to cancel them.

Small talk, that's all you'll do now is small talk: normal, everyday happy issues; little tiny pleasant things that will remind him of home; short discussions, "Oops, gotta go now."

This is important, if you can still do it: wherever possible keep your life the same, and see that his life changes as much as possible. Make him do all the moving and changing.

He's Free but Uncomfortable

He's free, but he's uncomfortable. Change is uncomfortable for everyone. For him, everything has changed. There isn't any more normal. He's free, but he's missing his old life and his old comforts, so don't go out of your way to make things easier for him.

He may be curious and want to provoke you to prove that you haven't change, or test you to be sure you have.

Remember, no serious talk, just short, small happy talk only.

Reality is different from any idea he might have of 'being free'. He might have had some fantasies about what it would be like to be outside the marriage. But now he's dealing with reality. Know that part of him still loves you. He will miss the comforts, the knowns, the smooth, easy life. Too much change is uncomfortable. Let the strain build.



Now, it's time for your exercise: this is where you craft your message that you've changed, he's free, and you're excited about the future.

Please continue with the exercises.

Exercises — Step 3

Objective: At the end of this step you will have written a statement for your husband that essentially says that he was right to terminate the (existing) relationship.

Exercise 1:

Make a list of what you think your husband wants to feel. Here is a starter list. Check those that apply, cross off those that don't, and add any that you wish.

Characteristic	Priority	Y/N/S
<input type="checkbox"/> competent as a man	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> competent as a lover	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> competent as a provider	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> appreciated as a man	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> appreciated as a lover	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> appreciated as a provider	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> appreciated as a husband	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> respected as a man	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> respected as a provider	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> respected as a husband	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> loved for himself	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> fun to be with	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> wants to be with fun companion	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> comfortable, relaxed, no pressures	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> have his sexual needs met	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/> attractive	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	___	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	___	___

Exercise 2:

Choose 5 or 6 and put them in priority sequence, with “1” being the highest priority for your husband.

Exercise 3:

Of those you chose in Exercise 2, think about how well you met those needs. Put a “Y” for positively yes, “N” for “no, hardly ever, and “S” for sometimes.

Exercise 4:

Now you have some idea about what to say in your statement. Feel free to use any or all of the following statements to construct your message. Fill in the information within the box, with what you want to say.

You were right to terminate our unsatisfying relationship.

I'm not going to fight the breakup.

You're free to go — guilt free.

I see now what I did wrong, and I'm sorry about that.

I see now that I didn't give you (the love and acceptance) that you deserved.

I'm sorry for everything I did or didn't do.

I realize now that you were right about (what he said, thought, felt).

I've discovered something really important (since you left; asked for a divorce; etc.).

I didn't (give you, make you feel), (something he would consider important in the list above, where he considers you to be seriously short), that you deserved.

The way I was, I didn't deserve you (optional if you think it's valuable).

I'll give you what you want, and won't fight it (divorce, separation, break, etc.).

It was great for a while and I'm sad it's over. I'll never forget (something memorable for both of you).

I'm really excited about the future. I'll be spending my time learning what I should have learned before we married: how to create a really great relationship, be a good wife, and meet a man's needs.

You're free now, and unless you change your mind, we're over.

Your statement:

Exercise 5:

Think about the method you want to use to deliver the message, e.g. e-mail, letter, voice mail etc. Choose one then deliver it.

Exercise 6:

After you deliver the message, give him time to absorb it, while you continue with your studying. When you do talk to him, keep it light, no heavy discussions. Practice being

accepting

forgiving

calm

gentle

cheerful

optimistic

positive

Please continue with Step 4: Prepare and Present “The Promise”

Step 4: Prepare and Present “The Promise”

Let’s review the plan. You’ve delivered the statement you prepared in the last lesson. As far as possible, you’re keeping your life the same. And to the extent possible, his life has changed a lot. We’re letting the tension and stress of radical change build. You’ve stopped fighting what he wants, and he’s free, and with little guilt.

How do you make him feel totally free? If he hasn’t left yet, just assume that he’s sleeping in the guest room, or couch, that he’ll handle preparing his own meals, doing his own laundry, etc. If he’s gone, or if you’re gone, just assume that it’s better for everyone if he does his thing and you get on with the rest of your life, unless, of course, he wants to change his mind and come back.



Leave the door open for coming home. It’s totally his decision, but overall, you’ve learned from this course that it’s best if he leaves, or stays away and does he own laundry, and everything else. If he needs his dry cleaning picked up, sorry, you’ve got to study.

He’ll be curious. What are you doing? Studying relationships. You’re learning about the future. Very exciting stuff. You’re getting on with your life; his life has changed.

What have you learned?

To not discuss the old stuff, the bad stuff; to put that behind you; to forgive and forget; to get on with your life.

And to not fight with him or to fight the split. He’s free and increasingly uncomfortable.

What do you two talk about? You mostly listen, and empathize. Talk about little things, anything about which he would have been interested before — not stuff that you found interesting, and he didn’t. Plan ahead. Save things you know he’d be interested in, to mention briefly. No serious discussions of what went wrong. Leave the baggage behind, going to a fresh start in life, learning how to create truly “happier and happier” relationships for the next time, in case he comes back. Stay open at all times for him to raise the question of coming back. Don’t bring it up ‘til he does. The door is open, but it’s totally his decision.

You're Still Learning

You're still learning about relationships. Prepare him for the promise.

"I'm learning something really, really important. I'll talk about it later, when I've learned it. But, wow, it's really exciting."

It's about great relationships, how they have mutual respect, lots of appreciation, good companionship.

"I'm sorry we didn't have enough of that for you, but I didn't know then what I know now." (Another hint of change in you.)

Now you just have to wait until the tension and stress of change has built in him. When you sense the time is right, share the promise, the promise you've made to yourself. Describe it with positive feelings, and excitement.

"I've promised myself in my next relationship with somebody new, or you, to be a loving, appreciative, respectful, partner."

Now, you're going to use your worksheets to tailor the promise to exactly what you believe and desire for the future. Write it to fit you, and your situation. Rehearse it; say it again and again to yourself,

"In my next relationship, or second chance, I promise myself that I will

_____”

This is a commitment you make to yourself, for yourself. Mean it. Believe it. Say it again and again to yourself, and be ready to share it with him, when you feel natural and comfortable and committed to it for your future.

Please continue with the exercises.

Exercises — Step 4

Objective: At the end of this step you will have written a promise to yourself as to exactly what you believe and desire for the future.

Exercise 1:

Review what you've learned so far, and be sure you are ready to move forward. The steps that you've taken are:

- You're not fighting the split.
- You don't discuss the old stuff (baggage).
- You're practicing forgiving and forgetting.
- You mostly listen, and talk about little things.
- You're studying how to build a magnificent relationship.
- You're getting on with your new life (being sure his life has changed).
- You're staying open.

Exercise 2:

Work on writing your promise. There are some examples below. Underline (or mark) those sentences that seem to make the most sense for you.

- I'm learning how important it is to appreciate the good things that my mate brings into the relationship. I didn't do that enough with you. I'm sorry. I've promised myself, in my next relationship, I'm going to be grateful every day for the strengths the sharing and the many contributions that my partner brings into our relationship.
- I'm learning how important it is to accept your partner just the way he is, and not to try to change him, improve him or criticize him. I wasn't that way with you. I'm sorry. I've promised myself, that in my next relationship, I'm going to accept my partner just the way he is, without being critical or trying to change him.
- I'm learning how important it is to be warm and loving toward my partner. I didn't do enough of that with you. I'm sorry about that. I've promised myself, that in my next relationship, I'm going to be the warmest and most loving partner a man could ever want.
- I'm learning how important it is to always make your partner feel good about himself and his contributions to the relationship. I didn't always do that with you, and I'm sorry. I've promised myself, that in my next relationship, I'll do my absolute best to make my partner feel really good about himself, appreciated, respected, and loved.
- I'm learning how important it is to have an enjoyable and peaceful relationship. I wasn't as much fun in my relationship with you, and I didn't make the

relationship very peaceful. I'm sorry about that. I've promised myself, that in my next relationship, I'm going to really lighten up and have fun, and respect my partner's need to have a peaceful loving home.

- I'm learning how important it is to have a loving, fun, sexual side to a relationship, that's never held hostage to anything my partner does. I didn't do that with you, and I'm sorry. I've promised myself that in my next relationship, I'm going to do everything I can to have a fun, loving and exciting sexual side, no matter what my partner does or says, or doesn't do or doesn't say. I'll do it just because it's vital to having a great relationship.
- I've learned how important it is to respect my partner, and to make sure he knows how much I respect him. I didn't do enough of that with you. I'm sorry. I've promised myself, that in my next relationship, I'll start each day with a moment of being grateful for my partner, and commit to show him the respect and love that he deserves.

Exercise 3:

Here is a list of elements that make for an extraordinary relationship (see Exercise 2 above).

- appreciate the good things my partner brings to the relationship
 - accept my partner the way he is
 - be warm and loving toward my partner
 - make my partner feel good about himself and his contributions
 - have an enjoyable and peaceful relationship
 - have a loving, fun, sexual side to the relationship
- a. Rank them from top to bottom — the way you think your partner would score *you* on each element. It doesn't matter whether you agree with him or not. (Odds are good that you *don't* think he is right.)
 - b. You'll structure your promise around the two or three elements that you think he would most like you to do differently, if you ever got back together.
 - c. You'll state what you're learning from this course, and how important that element is.
 - d. Acknowledge that you didn't do enough of that for him.
 - e. Apologize for that.

Exercise 4:

State your promise, as to how you're going to be different in the future, in your next relationship, whether with him or someone new. Make it as honest, and true to yourself as you possibly can.

If you can't honestly make a promise regarding the item you think would be tops on his list, see if you could make a promise on the second from the top of the list as you imagine he would rank them.

If you can't honestly assert that you didn't do very well with that element, try to modify the statement to say something like, "I know you didn't feel I did well on that, and for that I'm sorry." If you can't feel genuinely sorry, say, "I'm sorry that you found me wanting in that area." Do your best to include an honest, heartfelt apology. If you can't, better to leave out the assertion.

Tell him what you've promised yourself to do differently in your next relationship, whether with him or another.

Write Your Promise

Exercise 5:

When you're comfortable and have practiced the promise, deliver it verbally to your husband. You don't need a response from him.

Please continue with Step 5: Stop Fighting

Step 5: Stop Fighting

We're going to talk about fighting, because fighting damages a relationship and it drains the fun out of it. It makes it unpleasant, uncomfortable, less loving, and provokes partners to say hurtful, accusative, mean, and unloving things to one another. Fighting is the opposite of what we're working to achieve. So, this session is about fighting and how to avoid it.

Fighting Patterns

Let's look quickly at most fighting patterns. One partner either does or doesn't do something. We call this "It," or the stimulus. (1) The other partner evaluates "it" and gets a bad feeling. (2, 3, 4, 5, 6) The partner with the bad feeling generally selects from the limited number of responses or strategies: fight, flight, freeze, or negotiate.

(7) If the partner picks a fight strategy, he or she might respond with an attack, and adopt an unhappy persona. (8) This "fight" response provokes a responding response in the first partner, and they are off to do battle.

Early in a relationship these fights can continue for a long time. At stake is the issue of "who wins." One partner wins by "being right" and the other partner loses by "being wrong." One wins, one loses. But, rarely do either one think they're wrong. Eventually, fights can become so draining that partners move to withdrawal, using personae like disgusted, or the silent treatment. Or someone just walks out of the room. Finally, there can be a certain deadness that people speak about. One or another of the partners just ignores the other, and no communication exists.

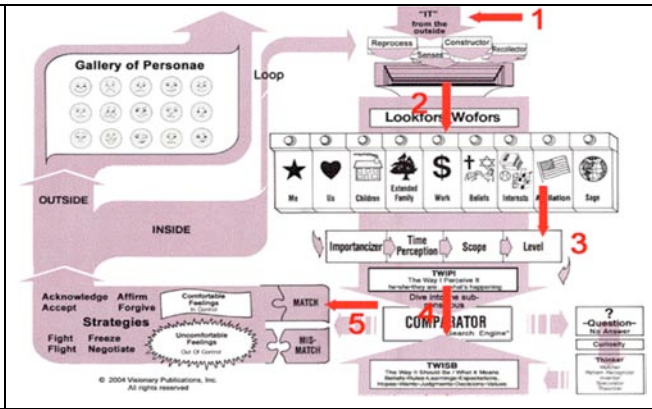
If you and your husband went through one or more of these phases, it's vital that your transactions during this tenuous time don't become replays of the kind of transactions that caused you problems in the past.

Two Approaches

We're going to suggest two different approaches to avoid fighting. One is an *affirming strategy* and the other is a *level shifting* strategy. You'll find both of these techniques covered extensively in the books with this course. But, you may find this module, and the practice in the workbook to be an easier and simpler way of learning these new skills.

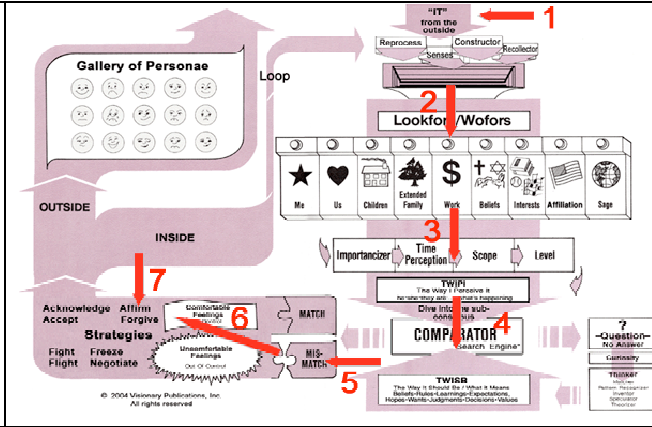
Change Levels

Here's where we're going. Following the path of a thought in the Sage Model, (1, 2) we can see that to shift levels (3) means that you are changing the thought that is causing the bad feeling (4, 5). We'll show you how to do that.



Change Strategy

The other is a change in strategy. Following the thought (1 -5): instead of fight or withdrawal you adopt an affirming strategy (5, 6, 7) which is one you normally use when you have a good feeling. So, you can change the thought that's making you feel bad, or you can change the strategy for dealing with the bad feeling. We'll show you both. You can try them out, and see what works for you.



Affirming Strategy

Let's start with changing the strategy you use when something happens to provoke a bad feeling. Let's say you're meeting with your husband and you mention something you did and he says, "*Why'd you do that? That was really stupid.*" It's likely you'll feel an angry response welling up inside you. You freeze; you look at your options. You can affirm either the comment or your husband. Or, you can change levels

Let's start with some affirming options: listen to some possible responses for affirming the comment "*Why'd you do that? That was really stupid.*"

"Yeah! I suppose it was a little stupid."

"Yeah! Sometimes I can act stupidly."

"Well, you make a good point."

Did you hear from your Me-part? Did it feel to you like you would lose if you agree with something negative he says about you? Well, here's the secret you need in order to handle that Me-part. Why don't you decide to let your husband be "right" anytime he wants to be? Just think to yourself, "I'm willing to let him be right about any little thing, as long as I get to be right about building a great relationship." When you do that, no fighting happens. *The relationship trumps the transaction.*

Or, the second way is affirm *him*: don't respond to the content of "That was stupid." Respond with something about him. Here are some examples. One of them may feel more comfortable to you than another. "*That was really stupid.*"

"Well, if you think it was stupid, maybe it was."

"If you'd been there, you would have handled it better."

"If you weren't so darn clever, I might argue that."

"If you weren't so sweet, I'd take offense."

You've heard examples of affirming the *content* of what is said, or affirming *him*. You'll get a chance in the exercise to create some more of these, ones that fit you and your husband exactly, so that you'll have them ready anytime he seems to be provoking a fight. Remember, it only takes one person to stop a fight.

Change the Level

The other easy way to stop a fight is to change the level. You don't deal with the content. You deal with the *kind of statement* it is. We'll illustrate that with some examples. The phrase, "*That was really stupid,*" could be described as an insult. Or, it could be described as an invitation to fight. Or, it could be described as a judgment subject to debate, and probably other ways as well. So, if you choose to stop the fight by changing levels, you could respond at a different level, responding not to the *content* of the message, but the *type* of messages. Let's illustrate.

Here are a few examples of things where you talk *about* the statement or situation. In the exercise, you can practice these, and the other things you've practiced until you find something that really works for you. Notice this. By changing the level in any of these examples, you not only avoid a fight, you get to shift the conversation to where you want it to go. You take control. You set the agenda. You become a powerful figure in the relationship and that's a wonderful thing to do, if he was the power figure in your old relationship, because it marks such a huge change in you.

He says: *"That was really stupid."*

You respond: *"Let's not exchange insults. I'd rather be friendly."*

"Let's not fight. I'm all through with fighting. I want to have a warm, friendly relationship with you."

"Let's not argue or debate. That was our old relationship, and we're both tired of that kind of thing."

You'll Be tested

What a wonderful thing you've learned: how to avoid fights and trade fighting words for affirming words. If our plan is working, you'll need these skills pretty quickly, because you'll be tested. Your transformation will seem "too good to be true" to him, and he'll have to test you and find the limits of "The New You." How will he test you? Be alert for one or several of these ways of testing the new you. Depending on your husband, and how he approaches things, you might expect him to tease, attack, provoke, or say something outrageous or do something outrageous.

We're pretty sure you'll be tested, and because your ability to avoid fights is still so new, you'll make mistakes. Mostly, you'll make mistakes because your husband knows all of your buttons — those things unique to you that he has spent some time learning how to push — to get you to react. If you know exactly what button he'll push, you can practice and rehearse how you'll handle that, and that's smart. But, he knows you pretty well, and if one button doesn't work he may try another button that catches you off guard.



So, you're going to prepare and practice an error statement that you can use when you falter. One that is exactly right for you, one you create in the exercise, and practice in your mind until it becomes easy and automatic for you to say.

Error Statements

An error statement has four parts:

1. *"Oops,"* or some verbal acknowledgement of error
2. *"I'm still learning,"* confirms your intent and commitment to the new you!
3. *"Sorry,"* or some apologetic behavior or statement, and
4. *"That was the old me,"* (admission that you're human and that you once were different than you are now learning to be).

Deliver this in a cheerful manner.

Use your error statement anytime you wake up to find yourself fighting, being angry, striking back, or using any of the old patterns. As soon as you recognize or become aware, you shift to your new persona.

In the exercise, you'll adopt a new persona, one that fits the real, authentic you, with attitude, facial expressions, gestures, voice tone, and everything that fits the new you. You'll aim to be positive, happy, confident, good humored. That's the new you, the way you want to be when you're with him, and it's got to be authentic. By that I mean, the natural, normal you that is there, that you're just going to put together in this new persona.

Wow. You've come a long way. The new you is coming alive. You won't fight any more and you've got some nifty things to say and do if he wants to fight. You're building an error statement to use if and when you make a mistake, and you're adopting a new cheerful and happy persona.

That's a lot to practice. Enjoy the exercises.

Please continue with the exercises.

Exercises — Step 5

Objective: At the end of this step you will be able to respond in two different ways to criticism or attack (affirmations or level shift). You will have identified your hot buttons, prepared an error statement, and selected an authentic persona to practice.

Additional Reading: Metamating Series: Books 1 and 2

Exercise 1:

Circle any of the strategies that you've been using when in a confrontational situation with your husband. Add any of your own.

Anger:

attacking (verbally, e.g. "you are," "you always," "you never")

accusing

yelling

other: _____

Disgust:

shaming

trying to make him feel guilty

using demeaning remarks

other: _____

Withdrawal:

pouting

using the silent treatment

sulking

other: _____

Other:

Exercise 2:

Identify the "over and over" kinds of situations (hot buttons) that result in the above strategies. What is he doing when you chose that strategy?

Example: A hot button: He isn't listening to me when I tell him something important. I get upset; I look angry; I act like a tyrant; I feel discounted; I say: "You never listen to me."

A hot button: he _____
I get: _____
I look: _____
I act: _____
I feel: _____
I say: _____

A hot button: he _____
I get: _____
I look: _____
I act: _____
I feel: _____
I say: _____

A hot button: he _____
I get: _____
I look: _____
I act: _____
I feel: _____
I say: _____

Exercise 3:

Make notes about the following concepts and how you feel about them. Determine how seriously you can commit to use or apply them.

- *"My relationship trumps the transaction,"* (the relationship is more important than winning the argument).

- *"It only takes one person to stop an argument."*

- *"I will let him be right when he wants to be. I'll be right about the relationship."*

Exercise 4:

In the program you learned two new strategies for responding in situations where your “hot button” is being tested. In other words, instead of responding in your usual way, you can *affirm something or him*, or *change the level*. Some of the examples below may be uncomfortable for you. Look for ones that will be comfortable.

A. Affirm: either the content or your husband.

Examples for affirming the negative content for “*You’re stupid!*”

- “Yeah, I suppose it was a little stupid.”
- “Yes, sometimes I can act stupidly.”
- “Well, you make a good point.”

Examples for affirming him when he says, “*You’re stupid.*”

- “If you think it was stupid, maybe it was.”
- “If you’d been there, you would have handled it better.”
- “If you weren’t so darn clever, I might argue that.”
- “If you weren’t so sweet, I’d take offense.”

Write your own response for a provocation, criticism, or attack.

Example 1:

When he says: “You can’t do anything right.”
 I will say: “I’ve got to believe you, if you say so.”

Example 2:

When he says: _____

I will say: _____

Example 3:

When he says: _____

I will say: _____

Example 4:

When he says: _____

I will say: _____

B. Change the Level by not responding to the content of the message.

Examples for responses to: “You’re stupid.”

“Let’s not exchange insults. I’d rather be friendly.”

“Let’s not fight. I’m all through with fighting. I want to have a warm, friendly relationship with you.”

“Let’s not argue or debate. That was our old relationship and we’re both tired of that kind of thing.”

Example 1:

When he says, “You can’t do anything right.”

I will say, “Let’s not fight. I’d rather spend time making it right.”

Example 2:

When he says: _____

I will say: _____

Example 3:

When he says: _____

I will say: _____

Example 4:

When he says: _____

I will say: _____

Exercise 5:

Write some kind of error statement that includes:

1. “Oops.” (Some verbal acknowledgement of error.)
2. “I’m still learning.” (Confirmation of your intent and commitment to the new you.)
3. “Sorry.” (Some apologetic behavior or statement.)
4. “That was the old me.” (Admission that you’re human and that you once were different than you are now learning to be.)

Write it out and practice it until you’re comfortable delivering it. Practice a cheerful manner when you say it (a persona that fits you, is happy, positive, confident, good humored and authentic). You may want to practice with a mirror so you can be sure your facial expressions, gestures, body language, attitude etc. match the intent of the error statement.

Error Statement:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please continue with Step 6: Build a List of Appreciables

Step 6: Build a List of Appreciables

When he comes back, or when he makes himself available to you again, the plan is to make to make him feel really good about himself and highly valued by you.

To make a “fresh start,” to start a damaged relationship over again, you’ll want to take extra care. It’ll be a bit like courting again; to make your partner feel loved, respected, appreciated, and enjoyable to be with. You’re taking the lead with the idea of the ‘fresh start’ and the exercise that follows this, will give you some tools.



It may seem to you like you’re doing all the work, but when he comes back it’s very likely that he too will take extra care. He’ll follow your lead, and respond to the new and sensitive way you’re handling the ‘fresh start’ to your relationship, even if your future relationship is simply going to be “friendly exes.”

During the separation — or ‘breathing space’ — you’re not openly declaring your love, because you’ve accepted his decision, and unless he changes his decision you’re getting on with your life.



Your husband is going to have mixed feelings. You've changed, so his decision — which is based on his mental list of reasons for splitting — is being threatened. In order to defend his decision to himself, he has to continue to chew over in his mind any and all shortcomings that he thinks about and remembers from your relationship. He's increasingly uncomfortable because everything is new and unfamiliar, and all of his everyday, routine habits and comforts are missing.



Your job, during this time, is to give him nothing new to add to his list of reasons for splitting, and without being obvious about it, do a few different things that might challenge the things on his list. For example, if you've always disliked his brother, say something nice about his brother. If you've always hated sports on TV, let it drop that you watched the game recently. Mention every time you think of it, how you *now* appreciate this thing he used to do. Regardless of reality, his perception will be that all of the good things he brought to the relationship were not fully appreciated.



Your Challenge, during this time, will be to find new things about him that you can appreciate and admire. The exercise will help you with that.

It's normal in a declining relationship for each partner to focus on the negatives in their partner and discount the positives. You might find that that's been true for your case as well.

For example, if he was away from home a lot, or didn't listen to you, or didn't seem to appreciate you, it's likely that you focused more on that, than you did giving him credit for being a good provider, or handling the things that he did handle in your relationship.



If you did focus on his negatives, and kind of took his positives for granted, this exercise will be powerful for you.

It is normal for a sensitive, loving woman to feel a little guilt as you go through this exercise. You might end up “beating yourself up” for not appreciating him enough.



The normal reaction to “beating yourself up” is to defend yourself by thinking about all the negatives again: more negative self-talk. The risk is that you might allow yourself to have bad feelings about yourself or your husband. As bad feelings arise, just be aware of them. Let them pass, and focus on your goal of preserving your marriage.

Congratulate yourself for having the courage to let the past go and fight for a man and a partnership that you value (although not necessarily that past relationship).

Remember, your goal is to win him back and save your marriage. Once he's back, your goal will be to avoid the vicious circle. You'll need to regularly appreciate of all his contributions. This list is critical to your mission.

Here's a helpful hint for this exercise. It's helpful for you to "stretch" a little. For example, maybe one of his chores was to take out the garbage. As you list this contribution, you might find yourself thinking something negative like "Yeah, but he forgot so often, I had to take it out myself." If that kind of thought arises, just count that as one of the negative thoughts you'll let pass and give him full credit for his contribution of taking out the garbage. Because you can be sure that he'd remember the times he *did* take it out, and won't remember the times he *didn't*.



Your challenge is to see things the way he probably sees them as you do this exercise.

Please continue with the exercises.

Exercises — Step 6

Objective: At the end of this step you will have prepared a list of appreciables about your husband, and selected several to bring up in casual conversation with him. The goal is to make him feel good about himself, and highly valued by you.

Exercise 1:

Make a list of the household *chores* your husband used to do. These might have been shared jobs as well, that you are now totally responsible for. Examples:

- pay bills
- look after the car
- driving when we went somewhere
- taking out the garbage
- fixing things
- handling pests, etc.

Chores

Exercise 2:

Make a list of *roles* he had during your time together. Again these may have been shared roles that you're now responsible for.

- handled long-term financial planning
- thoughtful about world events, etc.
- brought friends into the relationship
- brought family into the relationship
- was religious and involved
- played with the children
- disciplined the children
- was generous to friends and family
- was kind to animals and the homeless
- handled charitable gifting

Roles

Exercise 3:

Select from the lists above the ones that you think he would consider important (not the ones that were most important to you), and prioritize them.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Exercise 4:

Use this list to drop into your short, happy chats. The higher the item would rank on his list, the better. Mention casually how you *now* are more appreciative of the things he did and the ways he contributed to the relationship. Affirm how you are learning that when you and he were together, you weren't as appreciative as you will be in your next relationship.

Don't dwell on them, or ask him to pity you for now having to do them all by yourself. You want to stay upbeat, and appreciative of the many good things he brought to the relationship, and also let him know that you *are* handling everything.

Please continue with Step 7: Be Hopeful and Optimistic

Step 7: Be Hopeful and Optimistic

This step is about building, hopeful excitement about the future.

So far, you've committed to taking charge of saving the marriage by jumping to a "fresh start" in a new and improved relationship with your husband. You've set him free, stopped fighting what he wants, and you've told him he was right to want to escape the old relationship. You've shared "the promise" you made to yourself about any future relationship. You've built a great list of things to appreciate about your husband.

You've avoided any serious talk with your husband about your old relationship, and the old relationship is history.

Your husband has become increasingly uncomfortable as his reasons for leaving have become less and less valid. His comfortable "old shoe" life has disappeared, and been replaced by vast and uncomfortable changes — and you've become more interesting, maybe intriguing, positive, optimistic, and hopeful about the future. You've come a long way, and no matter how he seems to be handling this, he is under severe stress.

You could be back together by now, or it may be coming very soon. He may be curious about what you're doing, so learn and practice the skills you'll use to put him back on his pedestal, so you can love, honor, and cherish him anew, as you "jump" into your "fresh start" relationship.

It is very normal, at this point, to wonder just how you are going to be able to "Jump" into a fresh start, and love, honor, and cherish him anew, a spouse that you may not have felt that way about, maybe for a long time.

Change Your Self-talk

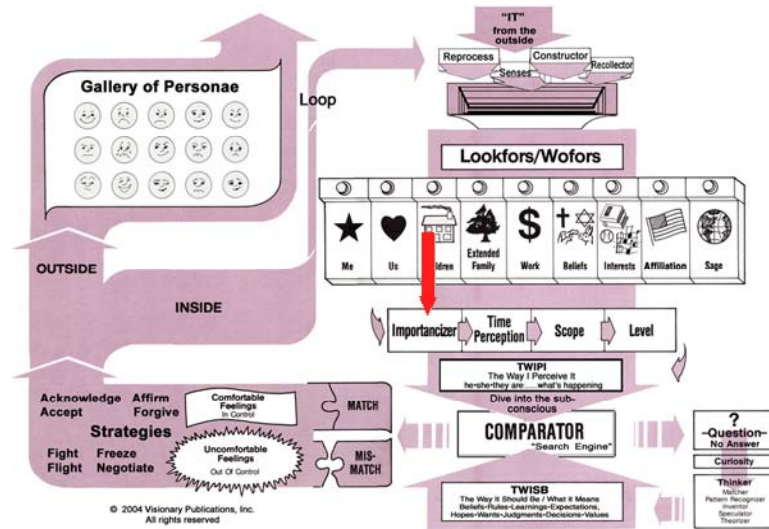
The key is changing your "self-talk." We'll show you how in this step.

If you change your self-talk, you'll change your feelings, because feelings are wholly a result of self-talk. It's all explained in the book with this course. We'll show you which parts of your self-talk and your thought processes, to change. Because when you change your self-talk and change your feelings, your thoughts about your spouse and your marriage are going to become very, very positive.

Importance

Think of how valuable it would be to you to be able to increase or decrease the amount of importance you give to any issue.

Notice on our map of the mind, that every thought has some level of importance that you give it. I say you have given it importance, because some part of you did. Maybe you didn't mean to. Maybe you didn't want to, but you gave the thought some level of importance.



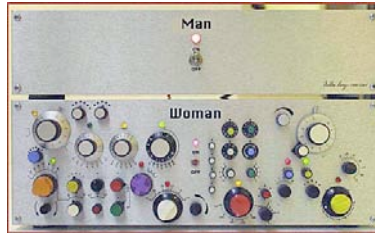
From now on, you're going to become conscious of how much importance you attach to anything. Your goal is to keep him on his pedestal. Love, honor and cherish him and that's much easier if you learn to give almost no importance to his flaws, and increase the importance of things *he* thinks are important.

We're going to give you some starter thoughts — they're also in your worksheets — for you to choose from. Use them all, or pick one and use it every time you get a bad feeling about him, or about what he does, or says, or doesn't do or doesn't say. You can also use these thoughts to reduce the importance you give to any accidental memory of the past relationship. We'll remind you from time to time that you need to let all those unpleasant memories from the past, dead, relationship that didn't work, go by without notice, or as little notice as possible.

Okay, here are some starter things you can say to yourself whenever you get a bad feeling, related to him. Just pick one or two, the ones that feel most comfortable to you.

- “Oh, it's nothing. I'm just so glad to have him back.”
- “OOPS! That's how the old me would have felt.”
- “Don't sweat the small stuff; remember, it's all small stuff.”
- “What he did isn't important enough for me to lower his pedestal.”
- “Remember! Love! Honor! And Cherish!
- “In 100 years, it won't matter.”
- “Sometime in the future, I'll laugh about this.”

Do you remember our mentioning that men are very different from women? Here’s a wonderful graphic someone sent me on the Internet. I wish I knew who created it, so I could give them credit. I just love it.



Expectations

Men are really quite simple to understand, compared to women. Just remember this photo the next time you have expectations about how a man should be, or act, or what he should or shouldn’t say or do. Do your best not to expect too much from your man.

We’re going to give you some thoughts you can use to help you manage your expectations so that you get good feelings, rather than bad feelings. Lots of times you get a bad feeling, just because what is, is not what you expected. See here on the Sage Model.

If you evaluate the thought you have about something that your man is doing or not doing, saying or not saying, (1, 2 3, 4, 5) using expectations, you might get a bad feeling. (6) There are some thoughts you can use if this happens — and it will — you can count on it. You see, down deep, as a man I can’t ever expect to totally understand women. Maybe

someday I really will, but it’s better for me if I don’t expect to. I do, however, predict that you’ll have some expectations for your man, and it’s likely he won’t live up to them. (7)

We’re going to give you a starter list of thoughts you might use whenever you have a bad feeling because something turns out different than you expected. In the exercise that follows this, you’ll have a chance to go through each of these and find one or several that you want to use to manage your expectations about how things should be or shouldn’t be.

“What did I expect? He’s just a man.”

“Whoa! Surprise! Next time, I’ll adjust my expectations.”

“OOPS! Unrealistic expectations again.”

“How long will I keep making myself feel bad by having unrealistic expectations?”

“Remember! Almost every expectation can be unrealistic.”

“Now I remember! No expectations, no disappointments.”

“In the future, I’ll have NO expectations.”

The e-books as part of this course have a lot more to say about expectations, acceptance and forgiveness. Here is an expectation about expectations.

“I expect that sometimes I won’t get what I want, or want what I get.”

Acceptance

Now, let’s talk about accepting what is, and what can’t be changed. History can’t be changed. So, it is wise to accept that history happened, and accept that thinking about it won’t and can’t change it. It’s best to let any negative thoughts about the past just flow through your mind and out again. It’s very valuable to learn not to “self-talk” about past negatives.

What if it’s something that you get a bad feeling about that’s happening right now — involving your husband — the one you’re doing your best to love, honor and cherish? Here are some things you can say to yourself to help you accept what is.

“I’ll laugh about this someday.”

“It is what it is, and I choose to accept what is.”

“What is, is exactly what it should be.”

“In a week, or a year, it won’t matter.”

“Let it go. Accept what is.”

“It’s God’s will, or my Karma, or fate — whatever.”

“It’s worth putting up with a lot for a loving relationship.”

“I’m just glad he’s back home and happy.”

Forgiveness

Another wonderful skill to have is forgiveness. Is forgiveness a skill? Or is it a decision? Actually, it’s both.

It starts with making the decision to be a forgiving person and then practicing forgiveness.

Here are some reasons to be a forgiving person.

Every, and I mean every person who is expert in mental health, religion, or philosophy recommends that you choose forgiveness over resentment. Nobody — I mean nobody — who’s expert in human behavior or psychology recommends resentment over forgiveness.

Resentment causes stresses; so for the good of your body and your mind, choose forgiveness. It relieves the stresses.

Here are some great quotes. If you find it difficult to forgive, write these down, print them out, post them on your refrigerator, needlepoint them on a pillow.

Failure to forgive is the severest form of self-punishment.

Forgiveness is a modest price to pay for peace of mind.

Forgiveness frees me to have more love and less pain.

Don't forgive someone because he or she deserves it, they may not. Forgiving another is something you do for yourself!

Wow! That's a lot of stuff. All we're asking you to do is to stay cool when things don't go your way, to have modest expectations, to accept whatever happens, and to forgive everybody who has ever hurt you, including yourself. Saint You!



Your Me-part

We've asked a lot of you. It's reasonable that you'd find some hurtful thoughts running through your head. These kinds of negative thoughts come from your Me-part, the one that has all that "pride" and feels humiliated and victimized.

That's also the part that took vengeance during the vicious cycle that made a mess of your old relationship. She's a powerful part of you, and you'll have to get her on board with your new goals once your husband and you are back together. The book on how to create extraordinary relationships has a series of steps you can take to get all of your parts on the same team.

Until you can get to that, you'll have to listen to those kind of doubting messages like these rattling around in your head, Sorry about that.

“You want me to be a doormat?”

“I've got to put up with anything that happens?”

“Look buster, I've got my limits!”

“I'm not going to be anybody's patsy.”

“Wait until my friends hear what you recommend. They'll think you guys are crazy!”

“I don't care what you say, there are some things that XGJW!!% did or said that I'll never forgive!!!!”

“This is ridiculous! I think I'd rather have a rotten relationship!”

These thoughts are courtesy of your “me” part — the part that messed up your existing relationship

Your Me-part doesn't really want to sabotage your relationship. She's just values her pride more than your overall happiness. She's the part of you that would *rather be “right” than be loved.*

We know we're overloading you by asking you to be cool, be accepting, have modest expectations, and forgive everyone for everything. We realize that no one could do all of that, all at once.

We're starting a process of change that you'll spend the rest of your life perfecting. Accept yourself when you stumble. Forgive yourself when you fail. Don't make a big thing out of doing it all perfectly. You're human; don't expect too much.

Now, it's time to use your worksheets and practice some of these skills.

Please continue with the exercises.

Exercises — Step 7

Objective: At the end of this step you will be able to change negative thoughts into more productive thoughts, through modifying Importance, and changing Expectations. You will also have practiced Acceptance and Forgiveness.

Additional Reading: *Metamating Series: Book 2*

Exercise 1: Importance

Lending too much *importance* to something can lead to a bad feeling. From a series of statements, select any statement that will help you reduce the over-importance that you once gave to something. Add your own, as well.

“Oh, it’s nothing — I’m just so glad to have him back.”

“OOPS! That’s how the old me would have felt.”

“Don’t sweat the small stuff — remember — it’s all small stuff.”

“What he did isn’t important enough for me to lower the pedestal.”

“Remember! Love! Honor! And Cherish!

“In 100 years, it won’t matter.”

“Sometime in the future, I’ll laugh about this.”

“My goal is a great relationship. How will I handle this?”

“It’s a guy thing, no big deal.”

“My buttons don’t work any more; he can’t push my buttons.”

“Is being upset what I want for my life?”

“Think about my goals for this relationship. How can I be positive?”

Exercise 2: Expectations

Having unrealistic *expectations* can lead to bad feelings. Select from a series of statements, any statements that will help you manage your expectations. Add your own, as well.

“What did I expect? He’s just a man.”

“Whoa! Surprise! Next time, I’ll adjust my expectations.”

“OOPS! Unrealistic expectations again.”

“How long will I keep making myself feel bad by having unrealistic expectations?”

“Remember! Almost every expectation can be unrealistic.”

“Now I remember! No expectations, no disappointments.”

“In the future, I’ll have NO expectations.”

“Expect little! Anything good will be a surprise.”

“I don’t expect that anymore; I’m a grown up now.”

“What do I expect? He’s an alien.”

“What is, is just what I expected.”

Exercise 3: Acceptance

a. Make notes about things you haven't *accepted* in the past.

b. Write down what you will be more *accepting* of in the future.

c. List your reasons for being more *accepting*, e.g. having a great relationship, giving something less importance, knowing what to expect, etc.

d. Select from a series of statements, any statement that will be helpful in your *acceptance* of "the way it is." Add your own, as well.

"I can't change history."

"I'm wise to accept that history happened."

"Thinking about it won't change it."

"Just let my negative thoughts flow through."

"I'll laugh about this someday."

"It is what it is, and I choose to accept what is."

"What is, is exactly what it should be."

"In a week (year) it won't matter."

"Let it go. Accept what is."

"It's God's will, or my Karma, or fate — whatever."

"It's worth putting up with a lot for a loving relationship."

Exercise 4: Forgiveness

a. Make notes about people and acts that don't deserve *forgiveness*.

b. Write down notes about people and acts that you're going to *forgive* — for your own benefit.

c. Select from a series of statements, any statement that will be helpful in your practice in *forgiveness*. Add your own, as well.

“Failure to forgive is the severest form of self-punishment.”

“Forgiveness is a modest price to pay for peace of mind.”

“Forgiveness frees me to have more love and less pain.”

“Don't forgive someone because he or she deserve it. Forgiving is something you do for yourself.”

“If I forgive, I am free to create my experience of my life with more loving thoughts, and fewer pained and angry thoughts.”

“If I can forgive others, I can forgive myself.”

“Don't forgive someone because they deserve it, they may not. Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself.”

“Forgiveness does not change the past — but it enlarges the future.”

“Any man can seek revenge: it takes a king or prince to grant a pardon.”

“Forgiveness is a gift of great value — yet it costs nothing.”

“When a deep injury is done to us we will never recover until we forgive.”

“A good marriage is the union of two forgivers.”

“Forgiveness is a choice. Not a decision. It's an act of will.”

“Don't wait to forgive until you feel like it. You may never feel like it. Feelings may take time to heal after the choice of forgiveness is made.”

Please continue with Step 8: Decide About Intimacy

Step 8: Decide About Intimacy

Many people have difficulty with the question of when to re-introduce intimacy. All we can say about it is be prepared and have a plan. Each situation is different and you're totally the best judge about when or if, to re-introduce it.

There are, however, many possible scenarios, and we've outlined some recommendations and thoughts for each. One of them may be useful to you. You can just observe those that don't fit you.

Possibility #1:

Intimacy never stopped. It's satisfying to both of you and your needs are about equal.

Our suggestions are just to continue as you are with some additional thoughts: Make the mood as light as possible. Have fun. Make it fun. Use lots of affirmations.

"You're good."

"You're an amazing lover."

"I'll miss this"

Make it clear. You can say that your course says:

"When marriage ends, sex ends. I have to get on with my life. And the course says that if I continue a sexual life with you, after divorce, that that would keep me from getting on with my life."

That's what the course says, and it's useful to quote it, but it's totally up to you.

Possibility #2:

Intimacy has stopped. It used to be mutually satisfying, but he had stronger needs.

We suggest that you stay with what the course says: "No sex during the separation," even if you have to add:

"But I'm really struggling with that. I don't know if I can do what they say, but I'll try."

The idea is to let the pressure build. When it builds and when you're ready, give in joyfully. Then, let the pressure build again. Make it not your fault. Blame the guidance you're getting from this course, and the guidance is "no sex during separation." This keeps the pressure building

Possibility #3:

Intimacy has stopped. It was mutually satisfying, and you had stronger needs.

We suggest you say things like

"I've learned from the course. I was too demanding. I'm learning that I should have respected and appreciated my husband enough to let him set the pace. I've learned that

just because my needs are strong, doesn't mean you're any less of a man. You're a wonderful, complete, and satisfying lover. I'm the one with the problem and now I've learned what I've learned. I know I don't have to satisfy every little urge. I shouldn't be overly demanding, just because you are such a good lover. I'm cured."

It's probably best to stay with what the course says "no sex during separation" as a reason to let the pressure build.

If the pressure for sex never builds and you still want him back, allow the issue to fade away. He must feel no pressure, unless and until he's ready.

Possibility #4:

Intimacy has stopped. It was mutually satisfying, and you had about equal needs.

We suggest you stay with what you've learned from the course. The course says no sex during the separation. You might say:

"But that's going to be really hard for me. We had such a great sex life. I don't think I told you enough how satisfying a lover you are. I'm going to miss that a lot."

Then let the pressure build. As you change, he'll find reasons to want to be around you. When the time is right and it's right for you, give in joyfully. If the pressure doesn't build, he may well have a lover, and if you want him back you may have to consider seduction. He's still your husband. You've got every right to fight for him. When the time seems right for you make it clear that you'd welcome him back in your bed. Here are a couple of approaches.

You can take the fun-loving approach, "just for old times sake," or you can say:

"The course has shown me I have a lot to learn. Maybe I could practice on you so I'll be a really terrific lover in my next relationship."

However you do it, make it really good for him, showing him you're eager to learn and appreciate what a great lover he is.

Whatever the situation, you have specific goals for the re-introduction of intimacy. The timing depends on how the separation is progressing. You want the pressure to build. You want the discomfort to grow. You're holding off until the situation is resolved, but it's really hard for you. He's such a desirable lover.

The goal is to make it clear to him that while you accept his decision and you won't fight, you'll really miss the sexual intimacy

Intimacy

If the first seven steps have worked the way they normally do, intimacy will seem the most natural step. You're going to let time work for you.

If the first seven steps haven't worked at all and no pressure seems to be building — you may never really know. You might try seduction as a last measure. It might leave him

with a very positive latest experience of you. You're going to let time work for you, while you get on cheerfully with the rest of your life.

There's no formal exercise for this module. You'll know what's best for your situation. If you need a plan, think about it. Decide how you want to deal with it and have a plan. Just recognize that events may change quickly, so feel free to abandon your plan if it seems right to you.

Please continue with Step 9: Learning to Live with an Alien

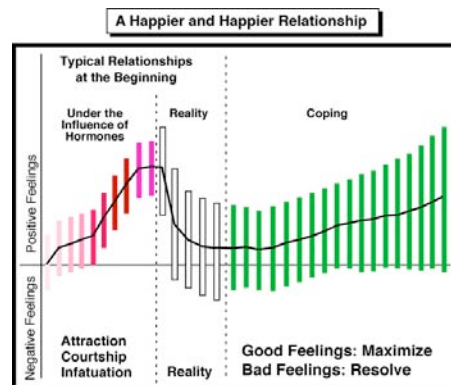
Step 9: Learning to Live with an Alien

This step deals with what to do when he comes back. We use the term ‘alien’ here because as the book *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus* points out, there are great gender differences. We recommend you think about him as an alien, so you don’t get the idea that you can understand him. You speak different languages. You have different feelings, and you have different needs.



The New You!

You’re different! You’re a new person and you’re keeping your feelings range above the neutral line. That means that your worst feeling about him is still positive. You’re providing the magnet that will draw him, to join you above the line.



You’re different because you accept him completely, and you’ve forgiven everything from the past relationship.

You won’t fight, argue, complain, whine, or sulk, and you have a standard error message for when you do.

You’re full of happy talk, light talk, and open to listening to him. You don’t want to discuss the past or talk about your relationship, or “work on it.”

You appreciate and are grateful for all his appreciables, and you seem incredibly tolerant and understanding of his foibles.

Congratulations, Saint You.



He's Different

He's different. He's a stranger now. He's confused. He doesn't know what's expected of him. Make it clear you have no new expectations for him. Tell him you just want him to be happy and comfortable. He has to react differently, because you're different.

He can't just use the same old habits. He has to pay attention. He feels like a stranger in a strange land, so be understanding of his unsettled feelings. Love him for who he is.

And, remember: don't talk seriously to the alien. Find a girl friend, she'll understand what you're going through.

He Will Test You

He almost *has* to test you. He needs to know the new limits. He won't be comfortable until he discovers the new limits and you can help him learn.

If he provokes you or tests you, use some higher-level statements like:

"Feels a little strange, doesn't it? We have to find out who we are all over again."

Practice up on affirmations.

"It's a good thing you're so..."

Explain your goals, what *you* are seeking to achieve. But be clear. You're not asking or expecting him to change, or set the same goals. Explain that if *you* achieve *your* goals, both of you will be happier with the new relationship.

Keep Learning

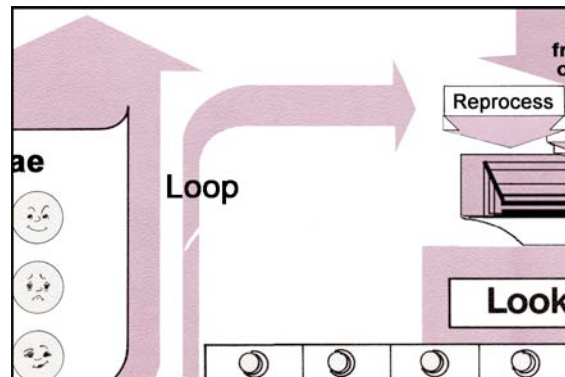
To achieve your goals and build that extraordinary relationship, keep learning.

Read the books with this course; the skills you’ve learned about all build on the Sage Model that we’ve only touched on.

- Learn more about minimizing the importance you give to negative things.
- Maximize the importance of being grateful for appreciables.
- Learn to raise a level to avoid conflicts. It’s magical.
- Learn how to use time to decrease bad feelings, or maximize good feelings.
- Learn to modify your evaluations.
- Minimize expectations so you can be constantly surprised.
- Learn to avoid judgments, especially negative judgments.
- Learn that your hopes and dreams are just that, they’re not realities, and may never be. If, by chance one is realized, then dance with delight, but don’t expect it.

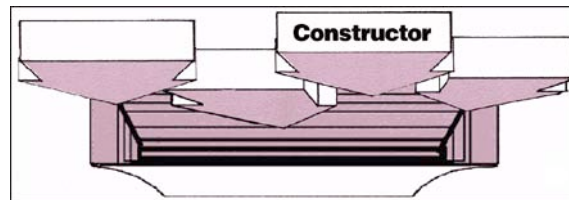
Hurt Loops

In the readings you’ll learn to break “hurt loops.” Hurt Loops cause incredible pain and they produce nothing good. A “hurt loop” is created when you dwell, or continually mull over some negative thought.



Constructor

And, if you find yourself anxious, or fearful of the future, you'll find it very helpful to learn to manage your imagination so you only construct productive scenarios for the future.



There's much to learn about managing your own thought processes, so you have lots of strong good feelings, and fewer and fewer instances of bad feelings. The instruction for how to manage your own thoughts is included in the books.

Learn and Practice

Learn to thank *yourself* for your appreciables. Your strengths, contributions, and sacrifices toward a great relationship are gifts without strings. Take pride in them.

Pride in creating a wonderful relationship is far more worthwhile than the pride you must sacrifice when you let your husband "win" an argument, or be "right." If, in response to your modeling, you get an ounce of thanks for an appreciable of yours, affirm it, appreciate it, and thank him for it. Maybe someday you'll get another one, but don't expect it. Remember, you're living with an alien.

Practice the incredible power of accepting what is. If you can make "what is" exactly "the way it should be," you've found one recipe for a happy life.

Continue to practice forgiveness. It's the greatest gift you can give yourself. If you forgive everyone in your life who has ever wronged you, including yourself, you'll have a mind and body free from anger, resentment and pain.

Some Advice

Here's some advice. Suppose he asks about this course, or expresses interest in taking it. Do your best to keep him from taking the men's version of this course. You want him going forward, away from the past. Explain what he might be interested in: your e-book on great relationships.

Be casual about the extraordinary relationship book. Tell him if he wants to read it he's welcome, but let him decide for himself if he wants to do that. Explain that doing it together is a little like "working on our relationship," and can sometimes be risky. Support him if he decides to read it. Have very short conversations about it, but remember: don't talk about your relationship to the alien.

If he decides on his own that he wants some of the magic that you found, and does the reading and changing, it can be valuable. Two people committed to an extraordinary relationship, each working on their own, on their own issues, can jet propel the relationship. Just notice that there is a great danger in doing it together. It can quickly deteriorate into, "Wait a minute, you should have accepted what I said," and the competition to be "right" may resume.

If you're not back together yet, be patient. Time is on your side, just keep on being light, cheerful, hopeful, optimistic, and preparing for the rest of your life.

While you're waiting, learn more. Read the books you've downloaded, so you'll be ready for him when you do get back together.

If and when *you* decide to stop waiting for him, read the introduction to relationships book. Discover the hidden secrets of attracting a man. Learn how to make the best part of his life the moments he spends with you. Learn about attraction, infatuation and courting, all those things you'll wish you'd have known when you were just starting this relationship. You'll discover that everything you've learned about how to get your man back is useful in attracting and courting another man, when you decide you're ready. With what you know, you can create an extraordinary relationship, all by yourself.

And remember, the next fellow will also be an alien.

Thank you for joining us in this pursuit of a truly extraordinary relationship. Just want to say Goodbye! Good Luck! Have a wonderful life.

Please review your notes from Module 1, Exercise 2 (page 28), to see what changes have taken place.

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Nine Steps to Save Your Marriage

Husband's Module TEXT

by Kenneth Johnston



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Husband's Module

You're in the right place if you are a husband whose wife's indiscretion has threatened your marriage. We're the people who help save marriages and avoid divorce. Your wife came to us because she wants to save her marriage.

Why This Module

We wrote this for husbands because we found it's critical that you clearly understand what your wife has said to you and exactly what she means. This is a deeply troubling time for you and your wife. Feelings are strong. Your thoughts race. Self-talk can come in torrents. It's sometimes difficult to get things across to each other.

So in this module we'll deal with these things:

1. What is your wife saying to you?
2. What will she learn from our course?
3. How will she be different — if you forgive her — and resume your marriage?
4. How divorce will affect your life if you choose not to forgive.
5. A few thoughts on the benefits of forgiveness.

What Is Your Wife Saying

Let's start with what your wife is saying to you:

- She is deeply apologetic. She is sorry that she risked her marriage and risked losing you.
- She feels mortified, ashamed, and embarrassed that her foolishness put her whole life at risk. She loves you. She wants your marriage to endure and she wants to learn to appreciate you and your marriage more.
- She now realizes that her indiscretions had nothing to do with you.
- She had unrealistic expectations about her marriage and relationship.
- She felt unsatisfied — not because you or the marriage was at fault.
- She had a woman's dreams of "happily ever after," what we call Barbie doll dreams.
- Real life isn't like that. Real life is coping with reality. She knows that now.
- We will teach her to cope, and how to create a really great relationship.
- She wants to build that relationship with you, and she'll do all the work. You'll get all the benefits.

Relationships

Each person creates his or her own experience of a relationship. We'll show you how that works in a minute. You may have actually created a better experience of your marriage than she did.

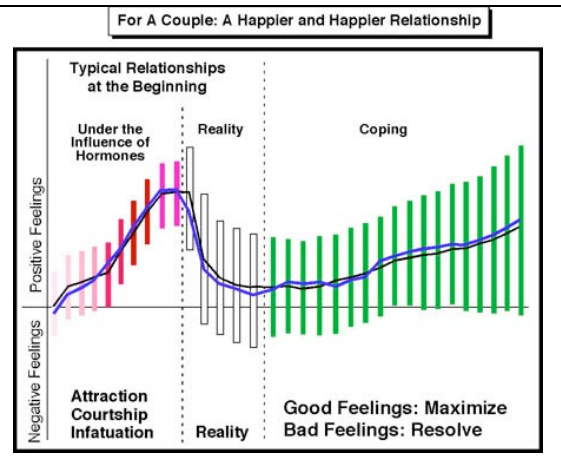
Her coping was not very good. She made herself dissatisfied, and her dissatisfaction made her vulnerable. She won't make that mistake again.

We'll show you what we showed your wife, about relationships and coping. We won't be teaching you about coping here, but if you're interested, it's all taught in the books with your wife's course. Here is something about coping that your wife will be learning.

Relationship Diagram

This is a diagram of how relationships usually begin. The different phases are Attraction, Courting, maybe Infatuation, then Reality, and last, Coping.

Notice the vertical bars. These represent the range and strength of the feelings partners have for each other. The top of any of the bars represents a strong good feeling, the bottom a bad feeling. At the beginning, most of your feelings are good. The few bad feelings — little niggling concerns — aren't very strong. So, on balance between your good feelings and bad feelings about your partner, your total feelings are well above the neutral line.



We tell her that if she experienced infatuation — wow — this is the stuff of romance and magic. If she was infatuated with you, she loved every little thing about you. You were the funniest, the cleverest, and the handsomest. She was blinded by infatuation. Even failings were not so bad. She might think: “I never know when he'll show up. That means he's spontaneous. His belches are so cute! When he drinks too much, he gets so hilarious. When he ignores me, it shows that he's cool,” and so on. The worst feelings she might have about you during this phase were better than the best feelings she might have had for any previous suitors.

Then, of course, reality kicks back in because infatuation only lasts two, or three, or maybe six months, and all of a sudden everything isn't quite so funny, or cute, or reliable, or caring.

Coping

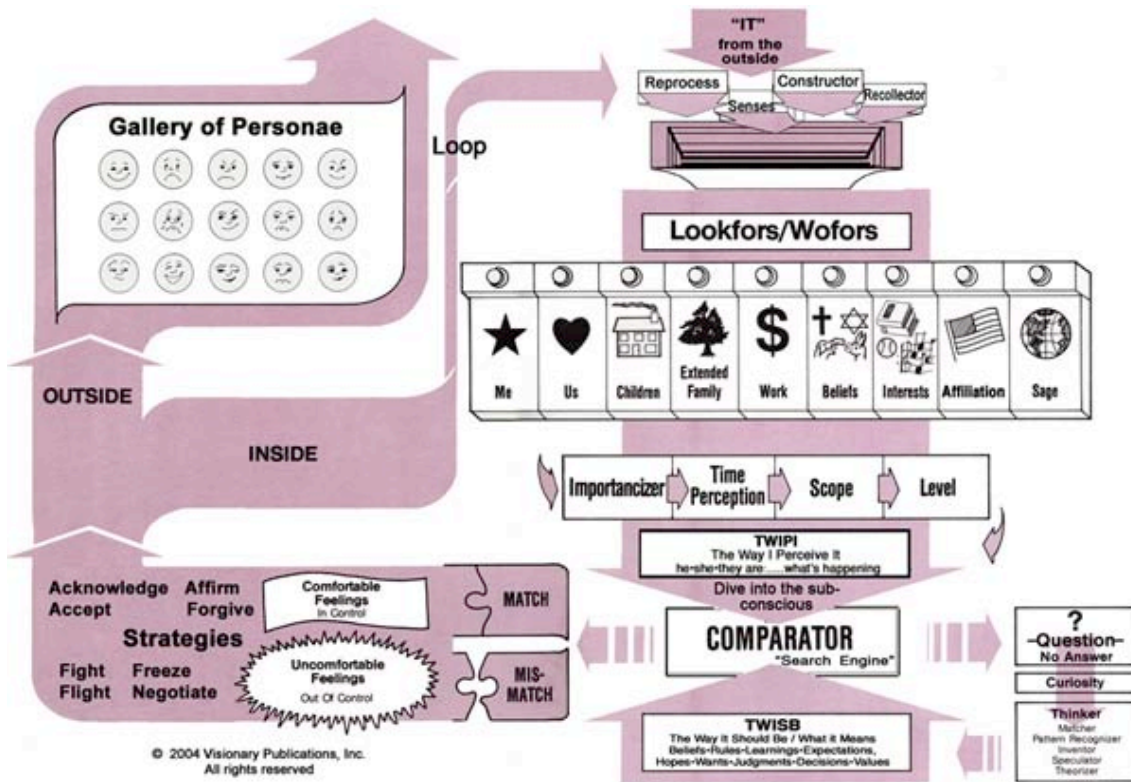
Coping is what happens for the rest of your lives. The keys to successful coping are:

- many good feelings — that are strong — and that last
- fewer bad feelings — that are milder and shorter.

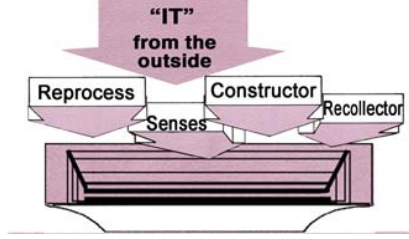


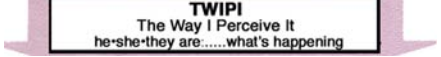



How will we teach your wife to cope well? It's all about self-talk — the thoughts we have — and how we evaluate the thoughts that we have. You probably have noticed that your self-talk — those thoughts running around in your mind — has been in some turmoil lately; many thoughts flowing through your mind.

The Sage Model

Here's a diagram that we use in your wife's course. We don't teach it thoroughly in the short course your wife is taking, but it's all taught in the books with the course.

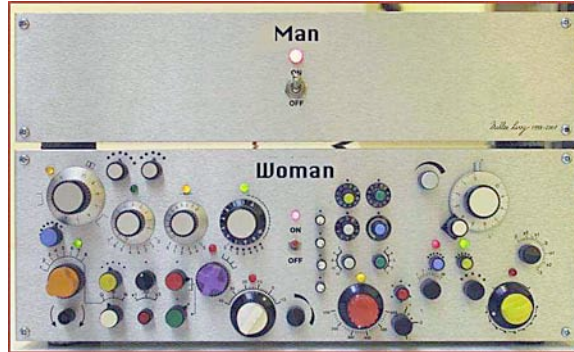


The Sage Model demonstrates that feelings are created by four thoughts. Here are brief highlights of the model to show you how our self-talk determines our feelings, actions, and responses. Glance through it and then continue to read something about each of its sections.

<p>Any given thought comes from either memory of past events (Recollector), from our senses (Senses), or from imagination about something that has happened or might happen in the future (Constructor).</p>	
<p>One of your nine sub-parts grabs it.</p>	
<p>You add some importance, time perspective, scope and level to the input.</p>	
<p>And you have a thought (called TWIPI: The Way I Perceive It).</p>	
<p>Your comparator is like a search engine. It takes the thought and evaluates it based on your storehouse of all of your past experiences.</p>	
<p>Then you get a match or a mismatch, which creates a good feeling or a bad feeling. That feeling leads to a strategy.</p>	
<p>Then you choose a persona, and you respond to the world.</p>	

This happens so fast that you can't follow it in your conscious mind (your awareness). You'll see in a moment how this relates to coping, but first I want to ask you to notice that men are different from women. You and I understand that men are somewhat simpler to understand than women. Men might use logic where a woman might use emotion. That doesn't make them wrong; it just makes them different.

Here's a graphic that makes the point visually.



I apologize for using something funny when we're discussing something so serious, but I think it might help you be clearer about my next point.

Strategies

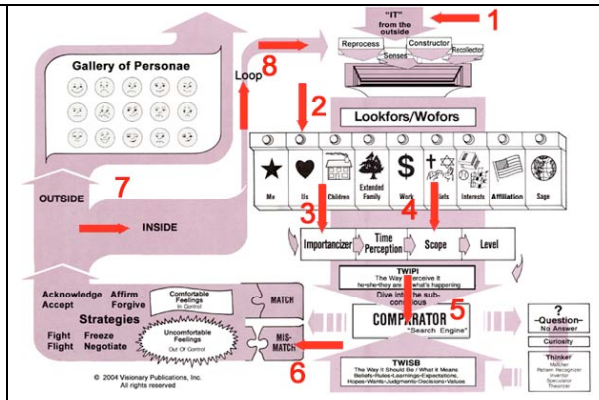
How can one person cope well, while someone else copes poorly in the same situation? Here's the Sage Model again. Let's say a man and his wife have a fight. Nothing big, just a little spat. They yell at each other and then it's over. Let's see how a man might cope differently than a woman. We'll take the man's case first.

She says, "I've told you ten times to put the toilet seat down. You're very inconsiderate." The man says, "Get off my back! You're always nagging me." I'll trace the man's path first, using the Sage Model.

<p>1) He hears a complaint, and a judgment — toilet seat left up —he's inconsiderate. 2) He processes that and 3) gets a bad feeling and he becomes angry. 4) He adopts a fighting attitude and facial expression and says 5) "Get off my back. You're always nagging me." Now, unless she wants to continue the fight, the exchange is over. He promptly forgets about it and goes back to what he was doing. Actually, in this example, his response wasn't very good but his coping was excellent. Tiny bad feeling — very short — not strong at all.</p>	
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Now let's see how a woman might handle the same transaction and cope poorly.

- 1) She hears the attack; "You're always nagging me," and
- 2) switches to her Us-part, the relationship part.
- 3) She gives it lots of importance because her husband, who is important to her, is shouting at her.
- 4) She hears "always" and gives it a huge scope and gets the thought "He thinks



I'm a terrible wife because I'm *always* nagging him." 5) Partly because she's a woman, and feels things stronger than men tend to do, and partly because she puts a lot of importance in whatever angers her husband (and because she believes he means she is "always" nagging him), 6) she has a very strong "hurt" feeling. Then, because she is using her Us-part (which doesn't like to fight because it's bad for the relationship), she 7) stays inside her head and 8) reprocesses her hurt feeling. We call it looping. Over and over she replays the exchange — every time, feeling worse each time.

Some women cope so poorly, they could take an exchange like that and pout or sulk for a day or two, creating extremely bad feelings, nursing them and keeping them around for a long time. Making bad feelings strong and long lasting is exactly the wrong recipe for good coping.

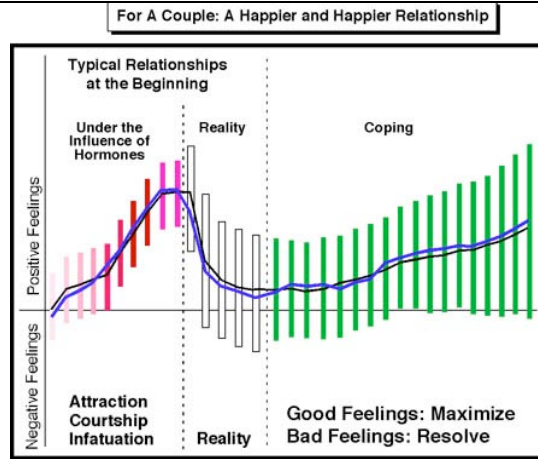
We don't know exactly how your wife manages her coping, but we want you to understand that she now knows that poor coping can damage a relationship, and it's exactly the opposite of what she really wants. Her poor coping made her vulnerable, and she now realizes she was seeking something outside of your marriage because she was creating negative experiences of her marriage for herself.

Her pain at the thought of losing you, and her search for help, led her to us. We will teach her how to cope superbly well, so well, that she — all by herself — can learn to turn your relationship totally around, and make it loving, accepting, and forgiving.

If you'll let her back into your life, she'll make your marriage better than it ever was.

A Happier and Happier Relationship

Here is the relationship diagram for a really good marriage, where one person copes really well and leads both parties to have very good feelings about the relationship. That's what we teach: how to cope well and build extraordinary relationships.



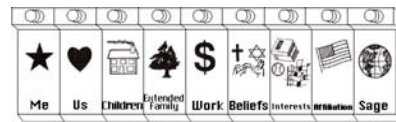
Forgiveness

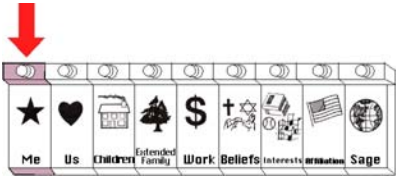
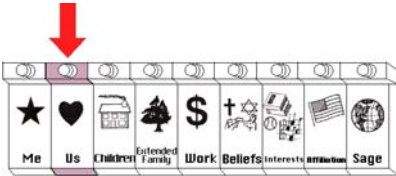
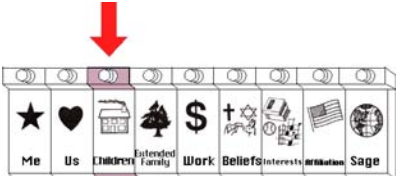
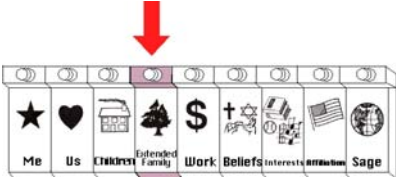
If you won't forgive, then you're going to face the terrible specter of divorce. Everyone who has been through one will tell you it is awful. Divorce can cost a lot of money, be damaging to children, if you have them, pull family members apart, cause stress at work, split your friends, cause huge changes in your life and the lives of everybody that cares about you: your extended family and all of your friends.

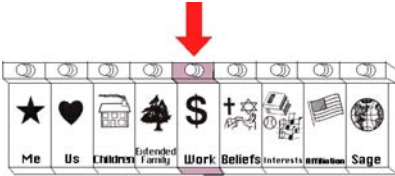
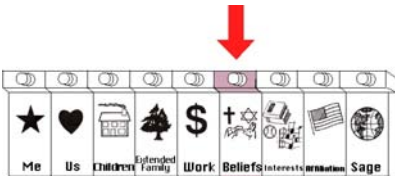
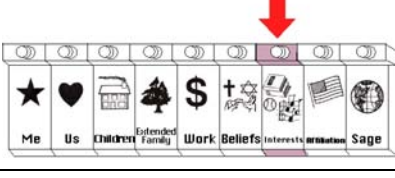
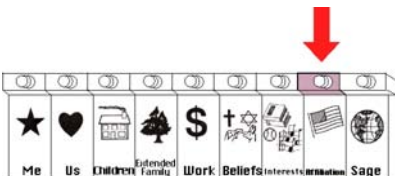
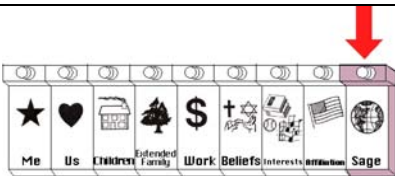
And worst of all, you'll never get over it. The pain of divorce would stay with you forever, and bring you nothing but pain and grief, because the self-talk will stay with you for the rest of your life. In the self-talk, you will blame your wife for the indiscretion, but you will blame yourself for the divorce.

If Some Parts Won't Forgive (refer to full Sage Model, at the end of this module).

Let me illustrate what I mean when I say you'll never get over it. Here are your parts, each with different needs. You've got one, maybe two parts that won't forgive, if you won't forgive.



<p>This is your Me-part. This part cares only about you. “Me, me, me. I want what I want when I want it.” This part has your ego, your need for status, power, and aggression. This part also keeps you alive and out of danger, and eating, and surviving. It’s a vital, important and strong part, maybe the strongest part of you.</p> <p>Your Me-part is the one whose ego has been damaged by your wife’s mistake. But all the other parts know that your Me-part is causing the divorce, choosing the divorce, and they’ll never let your Me-part forget it.</p>	
<p>Here’s the Us-part that needs a partner in a relationship, the part that can put the needs of your partner ahead of your own.</p> <p>Your Us-part loves your wife, and will miss her terribly, and will keep talking about it to you inside your head. Your Us-part is very forgiving and wants to keep the marriage.</p>	
<p>Here’s the Children-part that needs children and puts the needs of children ahead of your own.</p> <p>Your Children-part knows the damage that divorce can do to children, and this part puts the needs of the children ahead of your own or your partner’s. If you have children, this part is saying things like <i>“Don’t break up, it’s bad for the kids, it could ruin them, they need both of you. You need to soft-pedal the ego thing and pay attention to what’s good for the kids.”</i></p>	
<p>Here’s the Extended-family-part. It has a blood bond with siblings and parents, and respects the inter-family relationships with your in-laws.</p> <p>Your Extended-family-part will be yelling at you about the chaos a divorce would bring to both extended families. You’ll lose part of your extended family, and that part will complain to you forever.</p>	

<p>Here is your Work-part that has needs to contribute and achieve and will sometimes put the needs of the work ahead of the needs of yourself, partner, kids, or family.</p> <p>Your Work-part will tell you that divorce is stressful. It could affect your work, and odds are good that this part is feeling enough work stress already.</p>	
<p>Here is your Beliefs-part, the part that can put the need to honor your beliefs ahead of your own or other parts' needs.</p> <p>Depending on your beliefs, your Beliefs-part may be with your Me-part, or against it. You may have some deeply held beliefs that fidelity is vitally important. You may also have some deeply felt beliefs about the value and importance of forgiveness. So, the beliefs part may vacillate and make internal comments on both sides of the question.</p>	
<p>This is your Interests-part, the part that might put your need to go fishing, or play golf, or watch the big game ahead of the other parts' needs.</p>	
<p>This is your Affiliation-part, that needs to have friends, neighbors, groups to be part of, and a nation to serve. This part will put the needs of the group, or the nation ahead of all other needs when called to do so.</p> <p>Your Affiliation-part will want to keep all your friends, and neighbors, and church groups, poker buddies, and other groups, many of which will be lost if you have to move, or if you get spread too thin on supporting two households.</p>	
<p>Last, here is your Sage-part, your wisest part, that has the need to use your accumulated wisdom. Your sage part won't say much, but if asked, it'll tell you that forgiveness is wise, and divorce is painful.</p>	

You're probably hearing all these voices and thoughts running through your head already, and based on everything we hear from people who have chosen divorce in your situation, the self-talk continues for the rest of your life. Not only that, but you can become defensive about your decision to divorce, and then you have inner arguments among your own parts that can last a lifetime. And, failure to forgive means the pain of this episode will stay with you forever. The anger, the self-doubts, and the continuing pain will hurt for a very long time.

Forgiveness is a Wise Option

So, the more you consider your options, the wiser forgiveness becomes. If you won't forgive, you face a lifetime of pain and regret, and you've hurt a lot of people, and you're the one making the choice to do it.

If you forgive, and accept your wife's mistake as a human error brought on by poor coping on her part, then you'll get some really great benefits.

We'll teach her to cope well. Your relationship will be much happier for her and for you. She'll be more loving, accepting and appreciative of you than she ever was in the past. She'll respect and admire you for your generous forgiveness. You'll forge a stronger bond than you ever had before, as she learns good coping. As the relationship strengthens, she won't be tempted to look outside the relationship for what she already has with you.

About Forgiveness

Here are some things about forgiveness that we will teach your wife in her course. So, if *you've* ever done anything within the relationship that can use some forgiving, notice how forgiving she'll be in the future. In the meantime these thoughts are for you.

Failure to forgive is the severest form of self punishment.

We'll end this with a list of additional quotations on forgiveness. Thanks for listening. Your wife loves you and wants your marriage to continue. She's willing to learn what it takes to make that happen. You're a very lucky man.

More Quotes

If I forgive, I am free to create my experience of my life with more loving thoughts, and fewer pained and angry thoughts.

Forgiveness is a modest price to pay to achieve peace of mind.

If I can forgive others, I can forgive myself.

Don't forgive someone because they deserve it; they may not. Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself.

Forgiveness does not change the past, but it enlarges the future.

Any man can seek revenge. It takes a king or prince to grant a pardon.

Forgiveness is a gift of great value, yet it costs nothing.

When a deep injury is done to us we will never recover until we forgive.

A good marriage is the union of two forgivers.

Forgiveness is a choice. Not a decision. It's an act of will.

Don't wait to forgive until you feel like it. You may never feel like it. Feelings may take time to heal after the choice of forgiveness is made.

Additional Reading follows.

About Divorce — Additional Reading

Those who have researched divorces stemming from infidelity find there are significant differences between men and women who have been through the divorce experience.

Almost universally, both the men and women reported that in retrospect, divorce between a loving couple because of infidelity, was a mistake. They almost universally wished they had been more forgiving, or that their spouse had talked them out of it. In summary, they felt the divorce ruined, to one degree or another, both of their lives.

When men and women were asked, “What would it have taken for you to forgive your spouse and continue the marriage?” the answers were different for husbands and wives.

Here is what the men said they would have need to hear in order to forgive their wives, and continue the marriage:

- A very persuasive apology: an admission that the infidelity was foolish, wrong, and hurtful.
- That his wife did not blame her transgressions on him. They didn’t want to hear, “I only did what I did because he...”
- Convincing evidence that it would never happen again.
- Strong evidence that the wife really wants to save the marriage.
- Some indication that a reunited marriage would be more fun and more satisfying than it had been before (less criticalness, more loving and fun, less fighting).
- Recognition that her acts may have been unforgivable, and that he would be a very generous and loving person to forgive them.

Here is what the women said they would have needed to hear in order to forgive their husband for his indiscretions:

- A very persuasive apology: he has to be truly sorry, or forget reconciliation.
- That his transgressions weren’t because she was an unsatisfactory or unsatisfying wife.
- Strong indication that her husband really loves her, and wants to save the marriage.
- Persuasive evidence that he was committed to their marriage for life, and nothing that might happen in the future would jeopardize that. (The research showed that women, in general, were not as interested in promises of “never again,” because they tend to think men are not capable of keeping those promises. The fear was that any possible future episode could break up their marriage at a time when the wife was less likely to find another relationship. Another way to put this would be the spoken or unspoken agreement, “If I forgive you now and take you back, you won’t take my best years and then dump me when I’m old and less likely to form a new relationship.”)
- A clear commitment that if she forgives him this transgression, he will never, ever, ever expose her in the future to public humiliation or a sexually transmitted disease. (Many women evidently think that once an adulterer, a man is likely to be an adulterer again, and if she accepts him back the first time, she asks that he never expose her to public humiliation by being indiscrete, careless, or reckless, and that he be extremely careful to

- not expose her to potentially life-threatening diseases like AIDS or the embarrassment of STDs.)
- Recognition that his acts were really difficult to forgive and that he would appreciate it forever, if she would forgive him and resume the marriage. (The view seemed to be that a man could promise lifelong appreciation and mean it, whereas he might not be trusted to promise lifelong fidelity.)