

FROM ANGER TO AFFECTION

WITH DR. GREG & ERIN SMALLEY

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY® | FOCUS ON MARRIAGE™

VIDEO 1: THE MOMENT RIGHT AFTER CONFLICT

“Therefore, behold, I will allure her...and speak tenderly to her.”

Hosea 2:14 (ESV)

1. Greg talks about how Hosea 2:14 highlights the importance of speaking tenderly to each other, especially after conflict. Proverbs 15:1 conveys a similar idea, saying that “a soft answer turns away wrath.” This can be difficult, but it is effective.

- Pray aloud together, asking for the desire to speak softly to each other, even in the midst of conflict.

2. Greg mentions that he had to learn how to recapture Erin’s attention after a big argument they had. What are some ways you can re-capture your spouse’s attention after a conflict?

- Share with each other about methods of reconciliation that are most effective for you. Do you like hugs? An act of service? A written note?

3. What do you desire most to hear after a conflict? Talk to each other about words and phrases that mean the most after you feel you have been wronged.

- Next time conflict arises, remember some of these reassuring phrases to encourage your spouse and reconcile with each other.

CONSULTATIONS & REFERRALS

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VIDEO 2: THE WRONG QUESTION TO ASK IN MARRIAGE

1. Mending disagreements takes perseverance and sometimes outside help. Erin suggests that surrounding yourself with a good community is beneficial. Think of some couples or individuals you trust for support in times of conflict. Do you know of other couples who have overcome conflict in their marriage?

- Share with your spouse why these particular people could offer good counsel.

2. A hard heart can make reconciliation difficult or impossible. How often are you critical of your spouse's actions? How often do you appreciate what he/she does and extend grace?

- Share honestly with your spouse how emotionally open you feel.

This might be a bit difficult.

Pray aloud together for softer attitudes towards each other.

3. Erin's job as a nurse allowed her to take a 12-hour break from her argument with Greg. Although 12 hours is not always necessary, taking a break from conflict can help each of you calm down and rethink things.

- Discuss taking breaks and agree on an amount of break time that is beneficial. Keep in mind your spouse may need more time to calm down than you. Decide together on a respectful and gentle way to communicate that you need a break.

(This should not involve storming out of the room or slamming a door.)

- Talk about how to give each other some space to breathe and agree on a time to come back together to resolve things.

4. Greg mentions the importance of perspective. For a few minutes, think about your own issues rather than your spouse's. What could you be doing to make this marriage better? In what areas do you need to grow and improve?

- Share with each other some ways you need improvement and be honest about your areas of growth. Pray together about how to work on your individual needs.

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VIDEO 3: TELLING YOUR SPOUSE HE OR SHE IS VALUABLE

1. Reminding your spouse of their value can fall by the wayside in the daily grind, but it is critical. How often do you let your spouse know that they are valuable?

- Share a time when you felt valued by your spouse.

What happened during that time? Was it something they did or said?

Be specific.

2. What does your spouse mean to you? In what ways is he or she valuable in your eyes?

- Spend some time right now to tell your spouse how valuable he or she is to you.
- The next opportunity you have, express to them in a unique way how much they mean to you.

3. Ask your spouse about specific ways he or she needs to be shown they are valuable.

Whether it's through an act of service, a hug, a note, a few words of affirmation or something else, be aware of how he or she needs to be treated to feel valuable to you.

- Actively look for opportunities to do this throughout the day.

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VIDEO 4: SERVING ONE ANOTHER AND BUILDING SPIRITUAL INTIMACY

1. Greg and Erin talk about how serving each other is crucial to being a team as a couple. Serving your spouse can mean simply doing a household chore, or it can mean taking a break from a busy schedule to help him or her relax.
 - Share with your spouse the ways you enjoy serving him or her and the ways you appreciate being served. Why are those meaningful to you?
2. Think about times when a lack of service usually causes conflict. Does the problem typically arise from a specific household chore? Outside work? Involvement with the kids?
 - Brainstorm some ways you can help each other around the house and beyond to prevent conflict in these areas. Communicate about your need for help in certain areas and be willing to reciprocate. Pray for opportunities to serve your spouse more.
3. Sometimes seasons of life can distract from spiritual intimacy with each other. Greg feels the most spiritually connected when he is outdoors, while Erin especially enjoys communion at church. Are you in a season that is distracting you from connecting spiritually? What are some ways you can reconnect?
 - Share with each other where you feel the most connected to the Lord. When those opportunities arise, join your spouse in that environment and spend time with the Lord together.
4. Focusing on each other's spiritual weaknesses can be harmful to your relationship.
 - Take some time to think about where your spouse is succeeding, not failing. Keep in mind that he or she are still developing and learning, as you are. What are some things the other person is doing well?
Spend some time encouraging and reaffirming one another in these positive things.

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VIDEO 5: ONE STEP TO RESTORE CONNECTION IN YOUR MARRIAGE

1. Greg warns that maintaining an interest in your spouse can be difficult at times. However, it is important to love your spouse as you both grow through seasons of life.

- Commit to spending some time each day or week just chatting with your spouse and connecting with him or her. Right now, take some time to share with one another ways you have changed over the past year. You may be surprised at what you learn!

2. Where you are in life (as a couple or individually) can affect your connection and influence what conflicts may arise.

- Share how you feel about the season of life you are currently in.

Does it wear on you encourage you, or distract you? Listen and learn about how your spouse is handling the specific situations you are dealing with right now. Pray for each other as you progress through these different seasons.

3. Ask specifically how you can speak love to and connect with the other person. What are some words and acts that he or she really connects with you? What are some ways they love being treated? What are some small activities you love doing together?

- Pray for a desire to know your spouse more deeply.

4. After watching this video series, what has made the biggest impact on you?
How can it change your relationship?

- Based on what affected you the most, develop a specific goal for handling conflict and discuss with your spouse.

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