

5 Marriage Relationship Tips Your Parents Never Taught You

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FLOODING

Flooding is the overwhelming release of these hormones, which cause us to either fight, flight or freeze. We have learned if you can p-a-u-s-e during the flooding stage and wait 20 minutes, this gives the body enough time to reabsorb the stress hormones back into your system. You will actually feel differently about the conflict and you might protect yourself from saying unkind things.

1 SECOND PAUSE

“To do it well, you must simultaneously be able to tolerate low-level conflict, and yet be aware of when it has become more beneficial to stop an argument at a moment’s notice. When every fiber of your being wants to shut down or scream, catch yourself on the cusp of feeling compromised and take a deep breath, and let your partner know that you need a break.” - Dr. Gottman

SOFTENED START-UP

Start the conversation gently – Have something difficult to discuss with your spouse? Instead of leading off with the difficult topic, prepare your spouse by saying, “I have something hard to share with you and wanted to know if now is a good time?” Or, “I’m anxious about something I’ve been dealing with and need to discuss it with you. Can you support me by being emotionally safe right now?”

“I” VS “YOU” STATEMENTS

Make statements that start with “I” instead of “you.” Psychologist Thomas Gordon noted that when statements start with the word “You” instead of the word “I,” they are usually more likely to be critical and to make your partner defensive. Say this: “I’m feeling lonely and would love a hug.” Instead of this: “You’re ignoring me.” Don’t cheat and form an “I” statement that is actually a “You” statement such as: “I think you’re mean.”

BRAG

And last but not least, share a brag with your spouse. Share what you are grateful for...the kind of parent they are to your children, their work ethic, the errands they run, the dinners they make, how they take care of their parents...find something to compliment them on. This came so naturally to us during dating and in marriage both spouses still crave this affirmation. It’s easy to point out what’s wrong. Have an extraordinary marriage by pointing out what’s right.

Share your questions and/or successes by tagging us at [#im!](#)

Would you like more tips?

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