

CULTIVATING CONNECTION

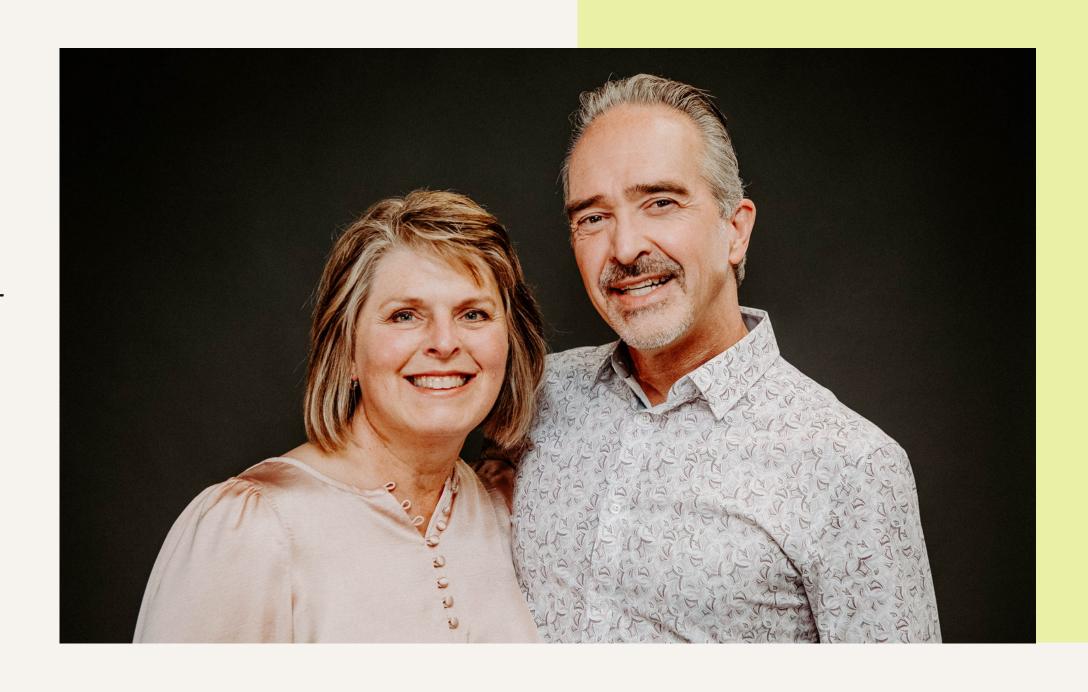
Norlee Flaaten

CONTINUING EDUCATION SPECIALIST Relationships @ Work

Rosemary Flaaten

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Center for Healthy Relationships









CULTIVATING

- a very action-oriented word
- creates the environment
- impacts long-term growth
- requires intentionality

WHATINTENTIONALITY IS AND IS NOT

INTENTIONALITY IS:

- purpose
- clarity
- boundaries
- consistency

INTENTIONALITY IS NOT:

- passive
- uncertain
- reflexive
- obligatory

CULTIVATING

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CONECTION

- linked
- cohesion
- commonality
- same team

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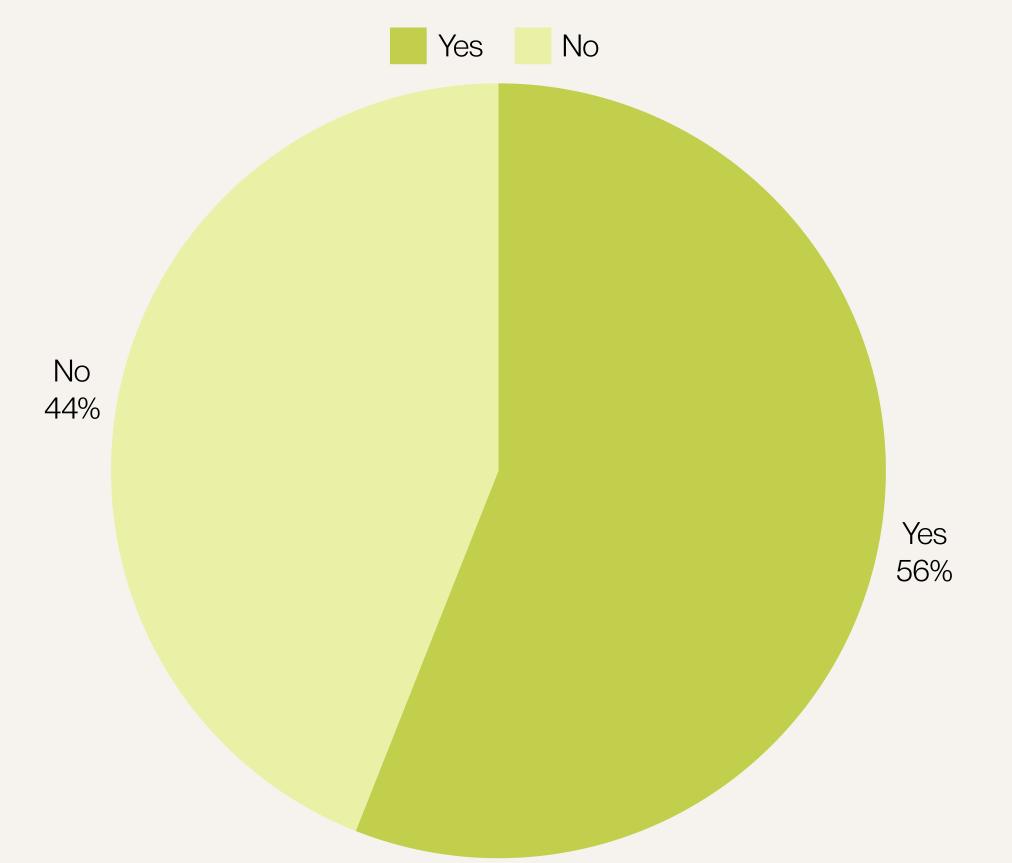
CONVECTION

- linked
- cohesion
- commonality
- same team

THIS IS THE TARGET WE ARE AIMING FOR THIS WEEKEND!

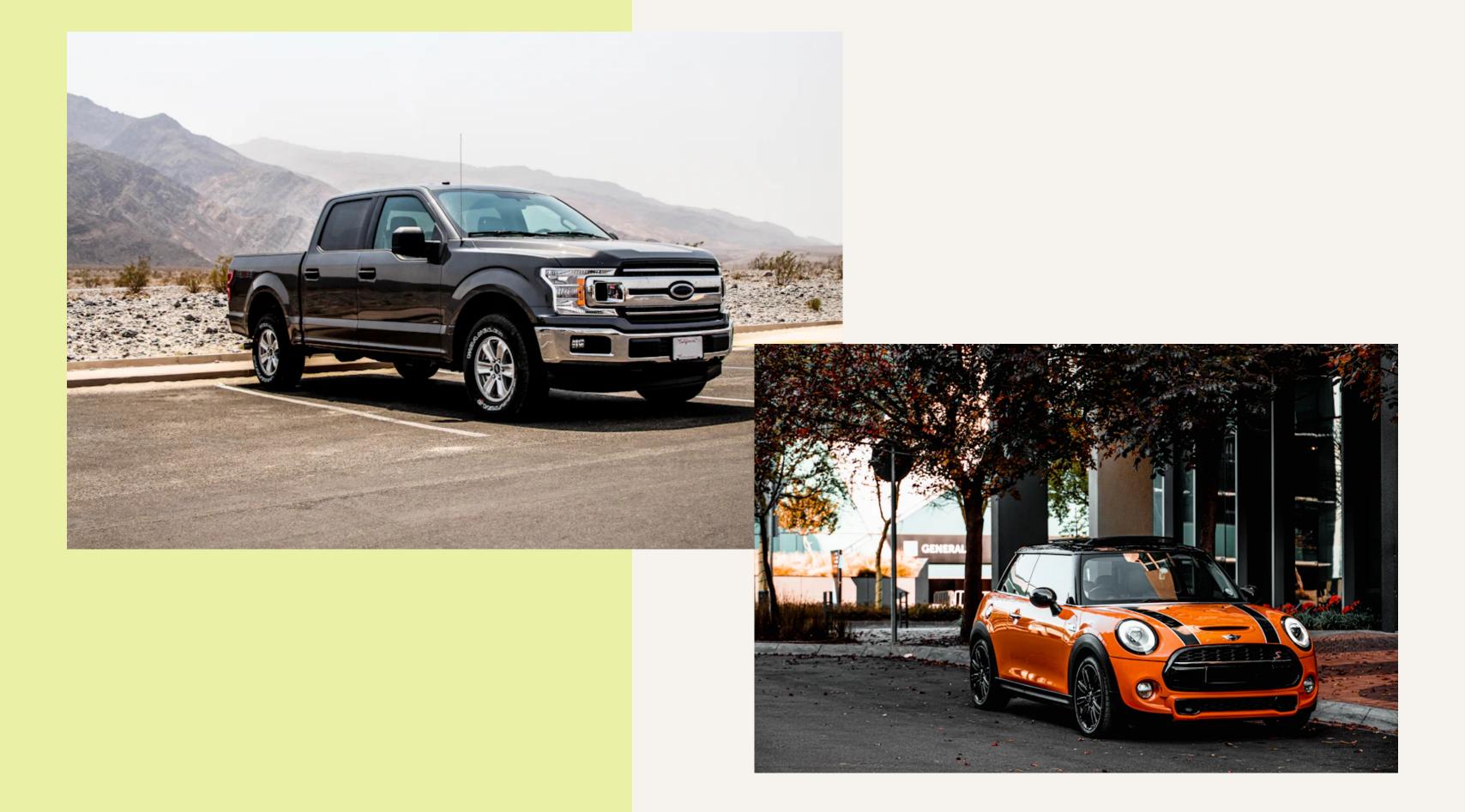
LIMITATIONS OF THE WEEKEND

- addiction
- mental health
- abuse
- infidelity



600 NWA PARTICIPANTS SURVEYED

PERCENTAGE OF
COUPLES WHO FEEL
CONNECTED TO THEIR
SPOUSE





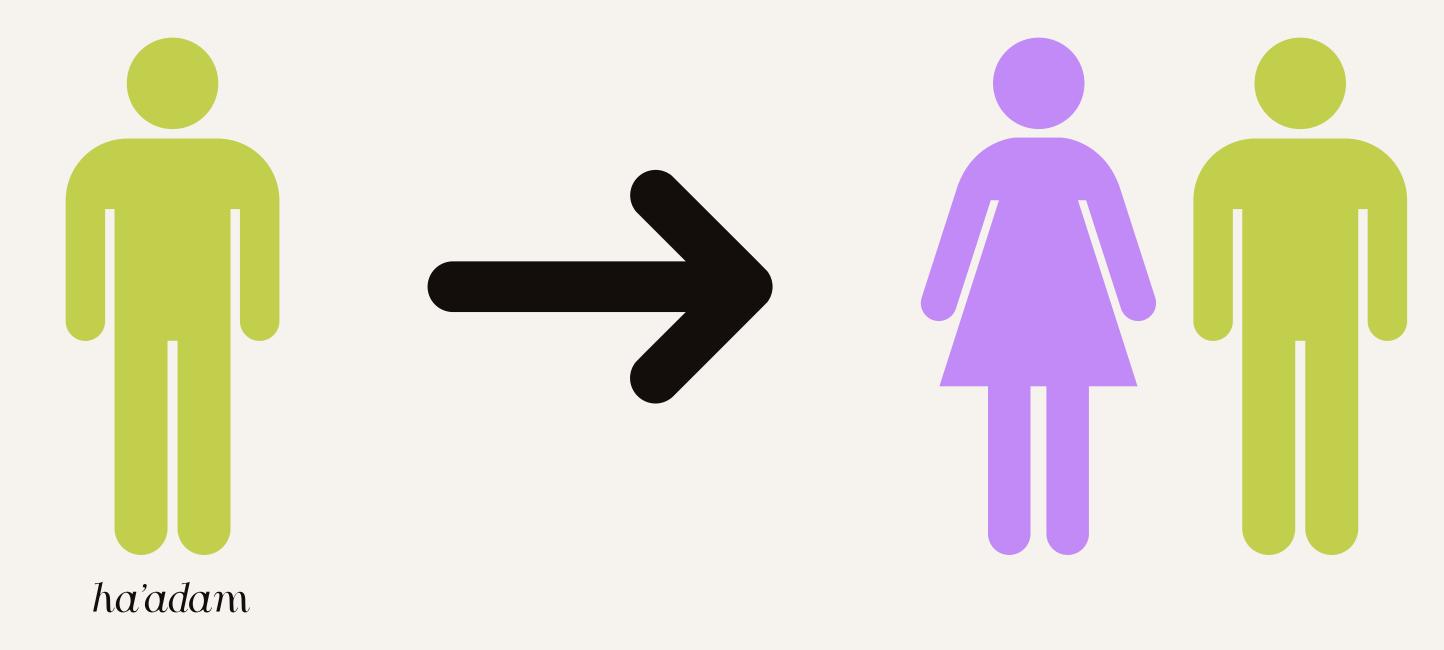
IMACO DEI

"So God created human being (ha'adam) in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern in."

-Genesis 1:27-28

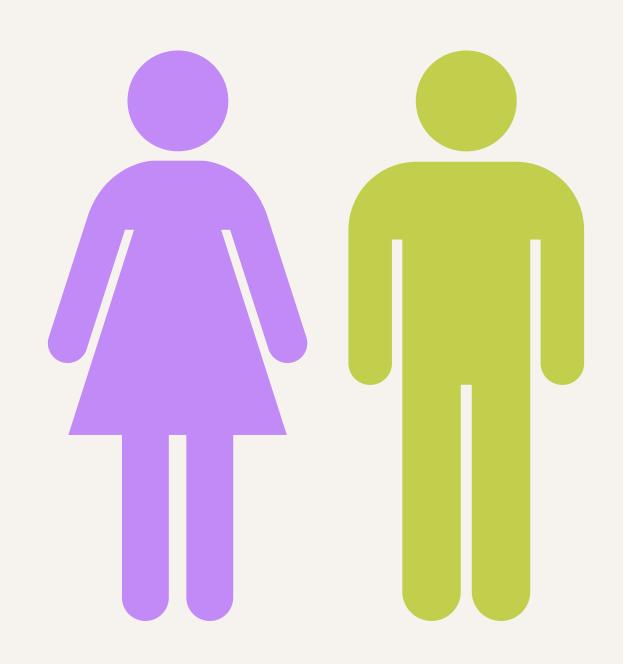


IMACO DEI



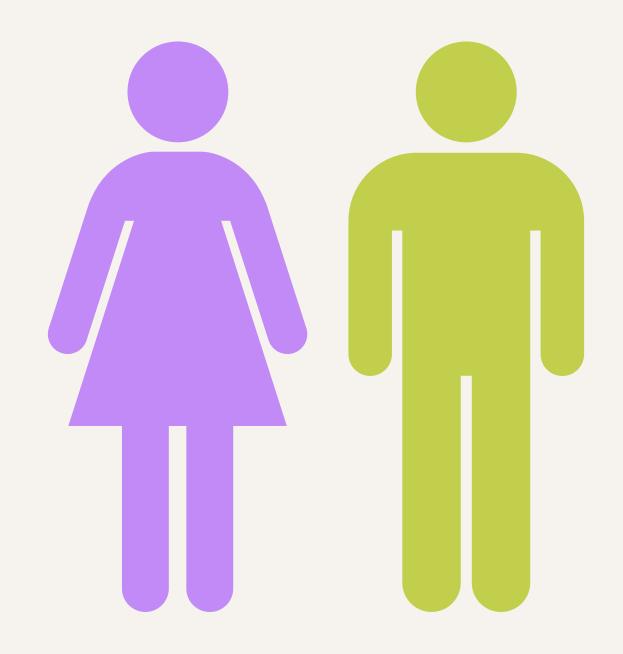
CULTURAL MANDATE

- 1. go and be fruitful
- 2. govern/subdue/rule the earth



CULTURAL MANDATE

- 1. co-create
- 2. co-care



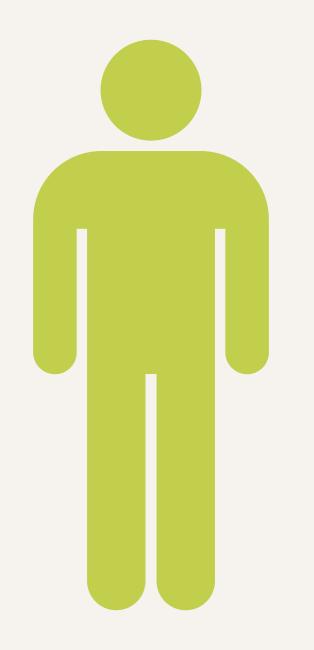
"The Lord God placed the man (human/ha'adam) in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it."

GENESIS 2:15

"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man (ha'adam) to be alone. I will make a helper (ezer) suitable (kenegdo) for him."

GENESIS 2:18





"kenegdo" - similar but different "ezer" - ally



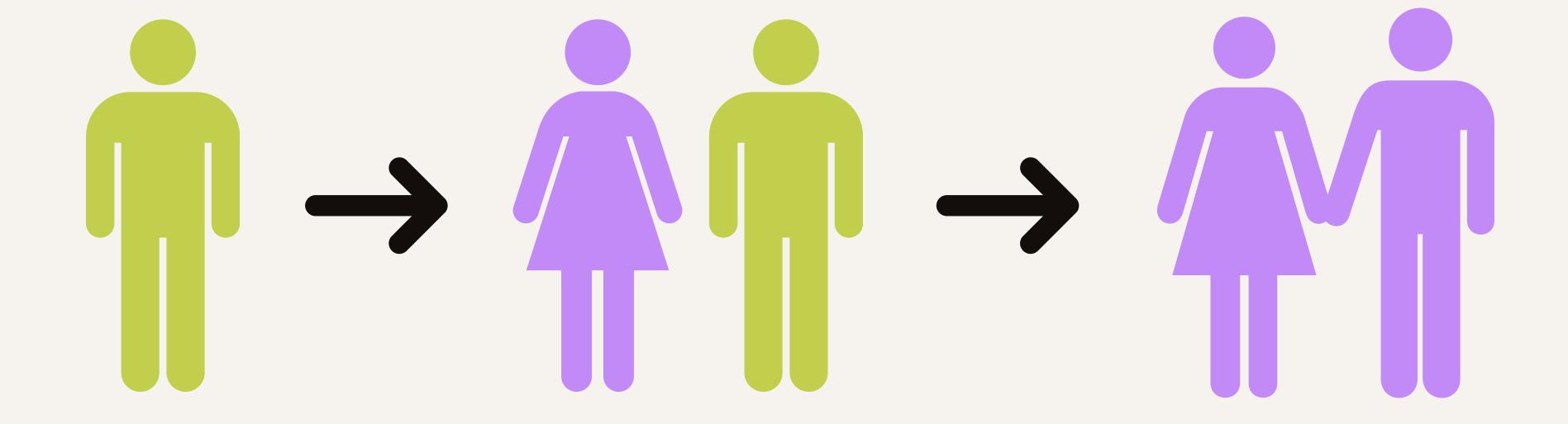
"Where does my help (ezer) come from? My help (ezer) comes from the Lord."

PSALM 121:1-2

"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."

GENESIS 2:24-25

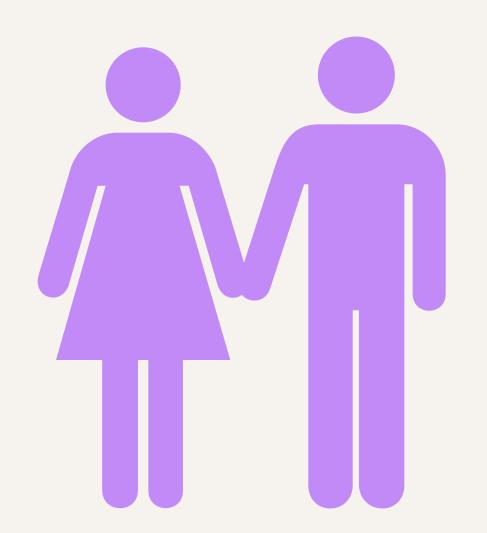
CENESIS 2



CENESIS 1 & 2 co-create & co-care

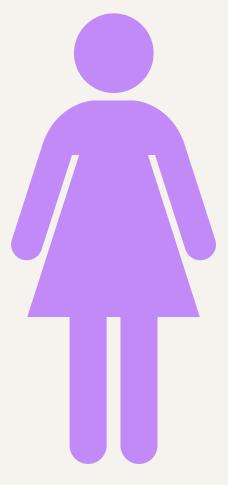
FRACTURED

CENESIS 3
disconnection, rivalry, & manipulation











Share examples of how your uniqueness and your similarities have benefitted your union as you've worked together to co-create and co-care.

COUPLE TALK



INTIMACY: INTO-ME-SEE

BEING SEEN BEING KNOWN BEING SAFE

INTIMACY

"Think of feeling safe enough with another person that without weighing words or measuring thoughts, you are able to pour yourself out, trusting that the other person will keep what is worth keeping and, with a breath of kindness, blow the rest away."

DINAH CRAIK, 1859

INTIMACY

"I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued...when they can give and receive without judgment...and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship."

BRENE BROWN

MACY

sharing ideas, thoughts, & experiences

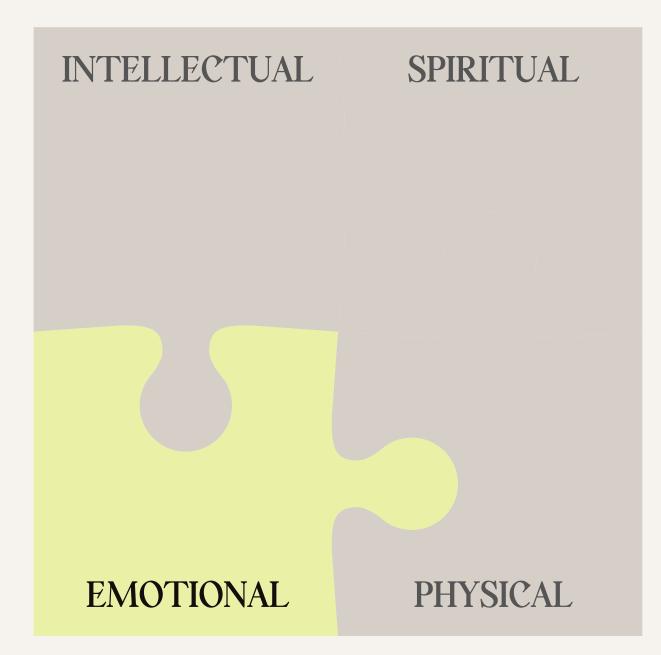
INTELLECTUAL **SPIRITUAL EMOTIONAL PHYSICAL**

sharing beliefs, values, & practices

sharing feelings & emotions

sharing healthy touch, sexual touch, & intimacy

INTIMACY



sharing feelings & emotions

7 LEVELS OF EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

CLICHES

FACTS

OPINIONS

HOPES & DREAMS

FEELINGS

FAULTS, FEARS, & FAILURES

NEEDS

Modified from a system by Matthew Kelly

EMOTIONAL INTIMACY INDICATORS

- safety
- trust
- vulnerability

- deep/meaningful communication
- empathy
- shared experience

FACTS

OPINIONS

HOPES & DREAMS

FEELINGS

FAULTS, FEARS, & FAILURES

NEEDS

Where do we land on these seven levels of emotional intimacy? When was the last time we shared at the lower 4 levels? What do you remember about that conversation? How did it impact our emotional intimacy?

COUPLE TALK



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

"The ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions."

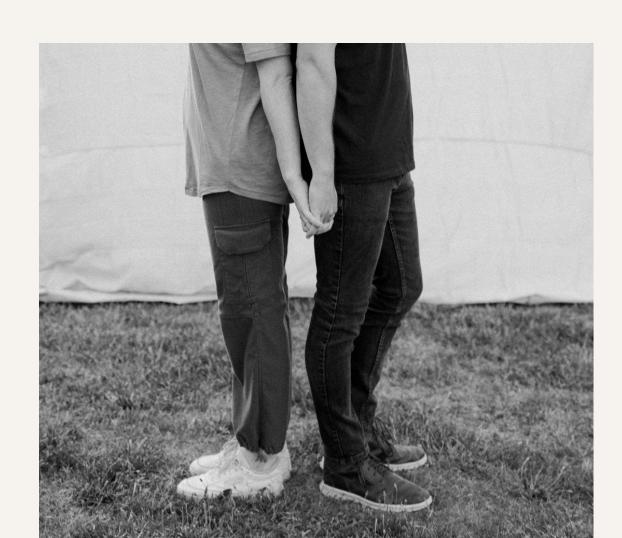
P. SALOVEY & J. D. MAYER

Cultivating Connection

STEPS FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



- 1. understand/assess what is going on in yourself
- 2.regulate/control what is going on in your self
- 3. enter the relationship with empathy
- 4. use what you learn to build the relationship



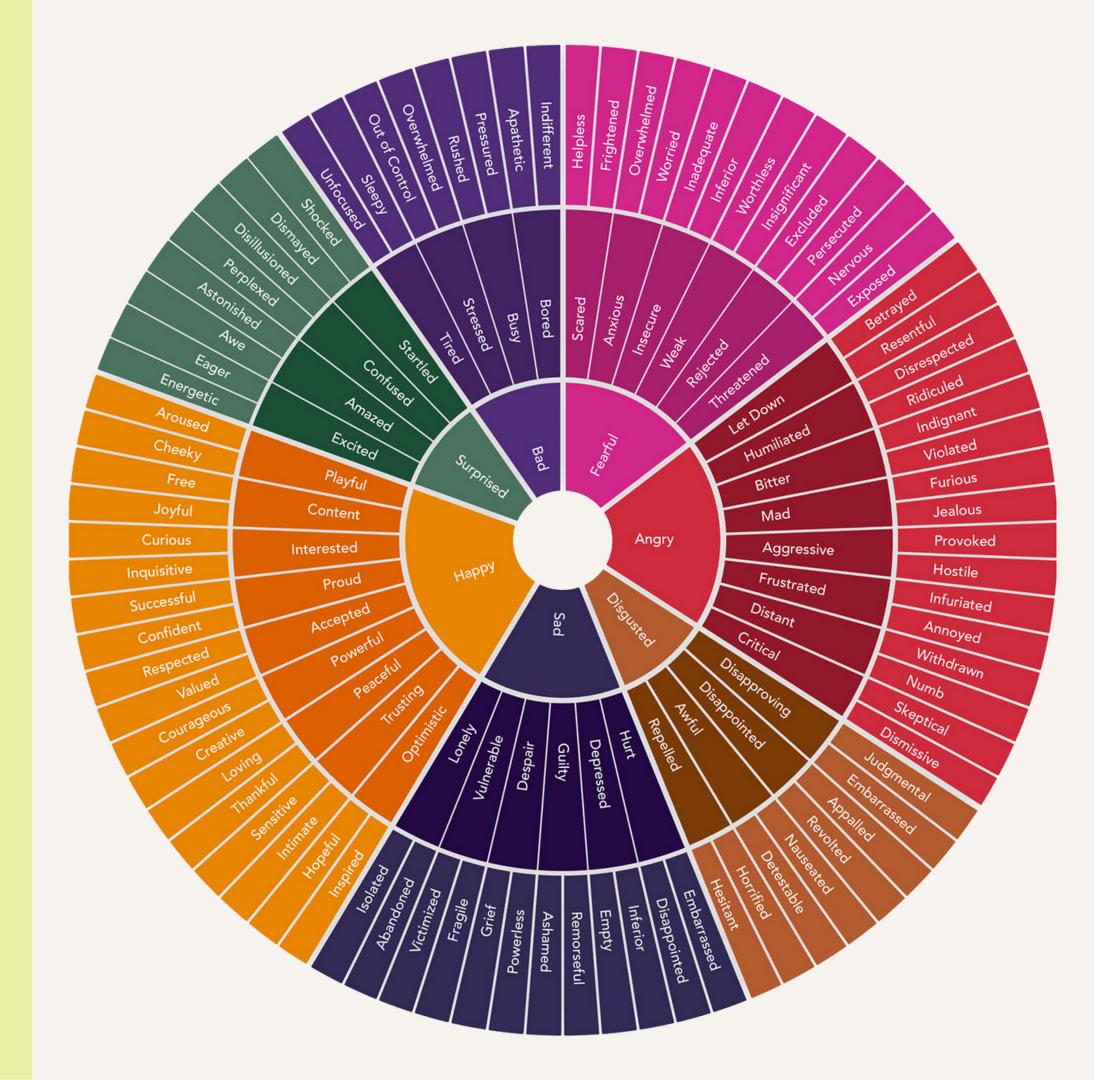
DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

1. prioritize emotional intimacy

- 1. prioritize emotional intimacy
- 2. identify what's causing your disconnection

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- 2. identify what's causing your disconnection
- 3. expand your emotional language

EMOTIONAL LANGUAGE WHEEL



- 1. prioritize emotional intimacy
- 2. identify what's causing your disconnection
- 3. expand your emotional language
- 4. ask deeper questions: feelings, fears, desires, needs

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- 6. show genuine care and respect

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- 8. reminisce positive experiences like falling in love

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- 8. reminisce positive experiences like falling in love
- 9. improve your ability to resolve conflict

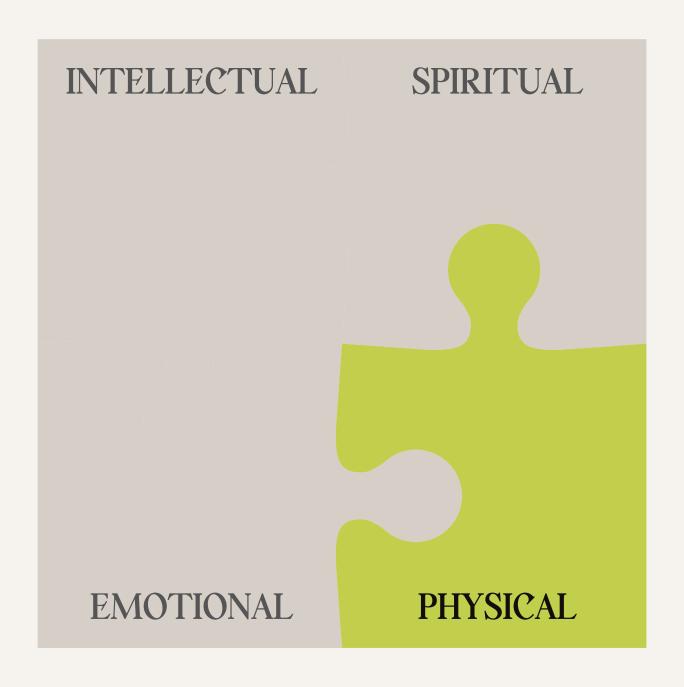


Ask your spouse one of these "deeper questions." Try to get to one of the deeper levels of emotional intimacy.

COUPLE TALK



MIMACY



sharing healthy touch, sexual touch, & intimacy

INTIMACY

"Everything positive you do in your relationship is foreplay."

DR. JOHN GOTTMAN

PHYSICAL & SEXUAL INTIMACY

PHYSICAL INTIMACY

- body closeness
- physically connected
- non-sexual touch

SEXUAL INTIMACY

- touching
- exploring
- pleasuring
- being pleasured
- not just intercourse

WHY SEXUAL INTIMACY

- 1. bonding
- 2. procreation
- 3. pleasure

WHY SEXUAL INTIMACY AN ACT OF LOVE & GIVING

"Each **man** should have his own wife.
Each **woman**should have her own husband."

I CORINTHIANS 7:2

"The husband should fulfill his [marital] duty to his wife. Likewise the wife to her husband."

I CORINTHIANS 7:3

"The wife's body
does not belong to
her alone, but also
to her husband. The
husband's body
does not belong to
him alone, but also
to his wife."

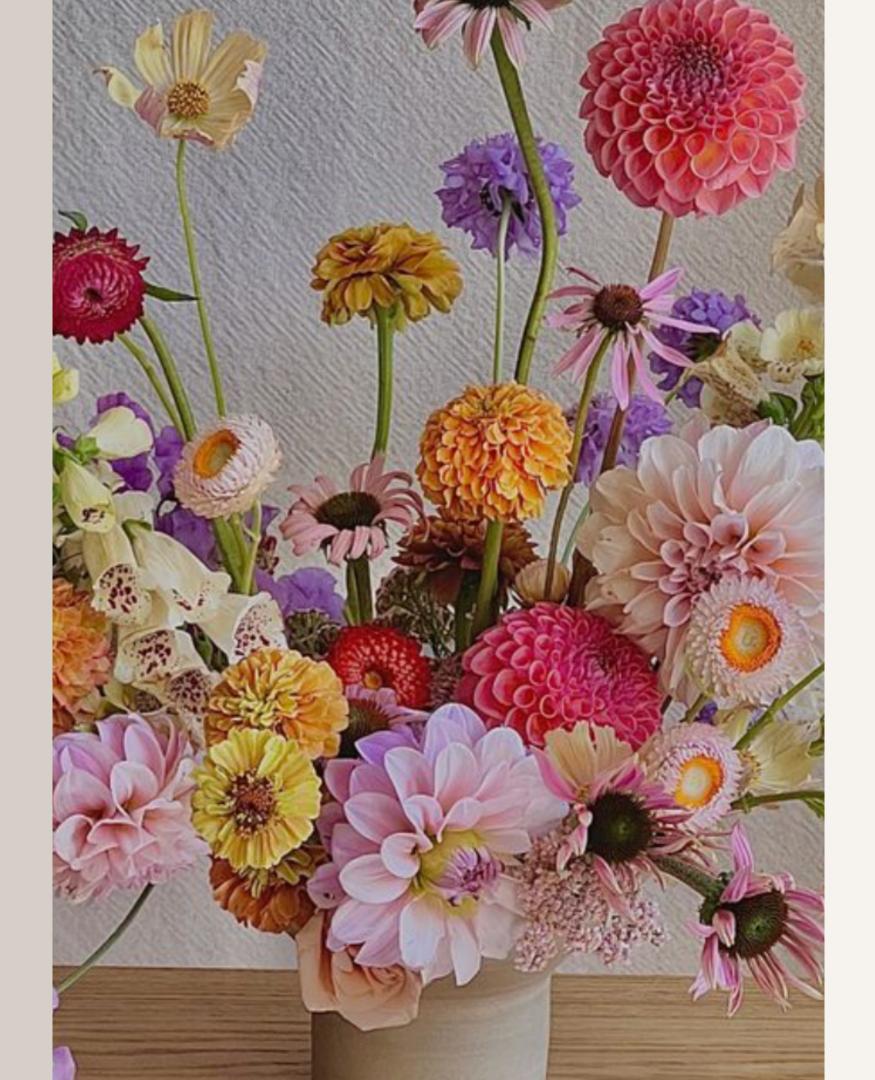
I CORINTHIANS 7:4

"Neither should deprive the other except by **mutual consent** and for a time..."

I CORINTHIANS 7:5



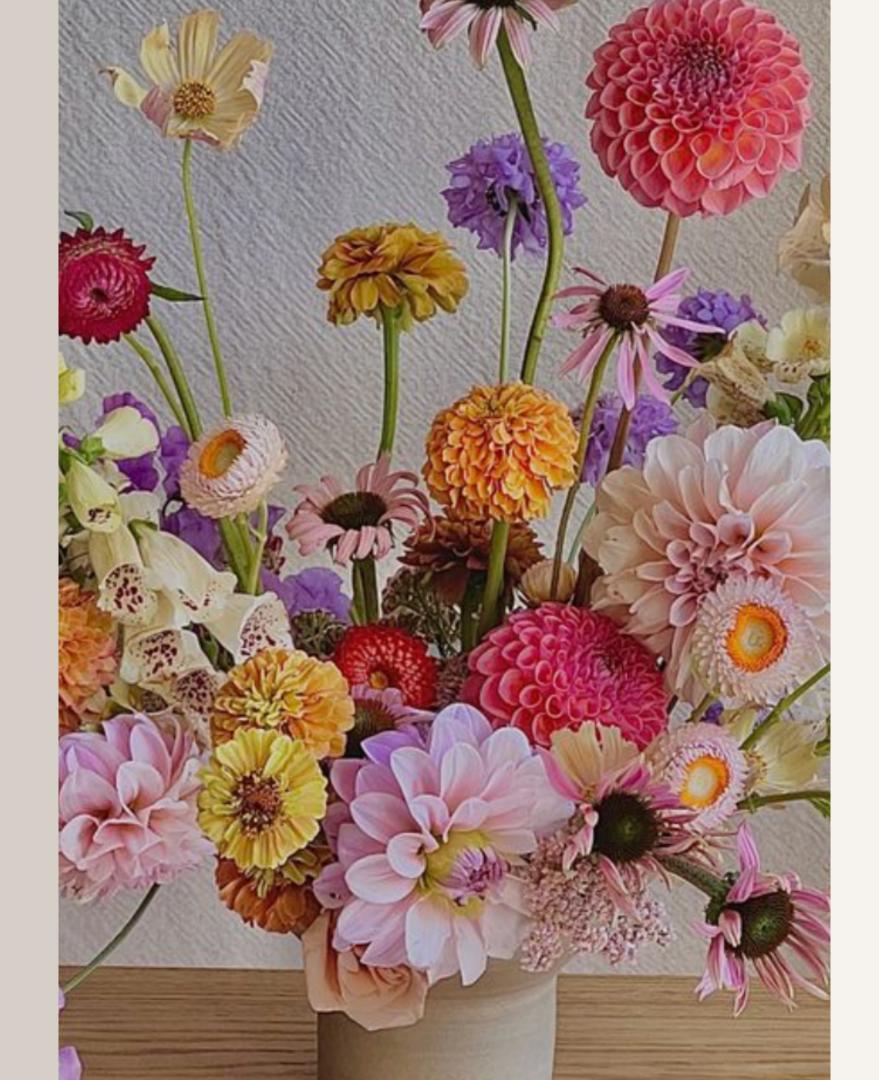
personal



- personal
- pleasurable



- personal
- pleasurable
- pure

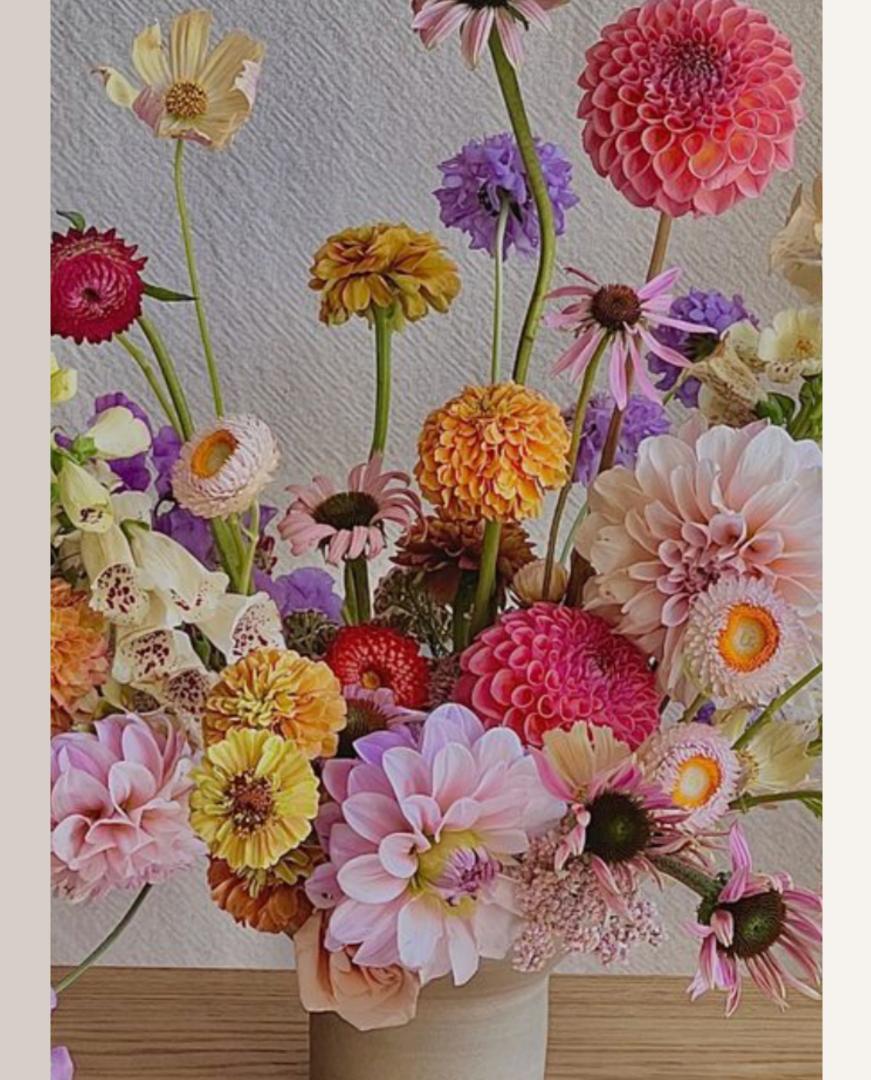


- personal
- pleasurable
- pure
- prioritized

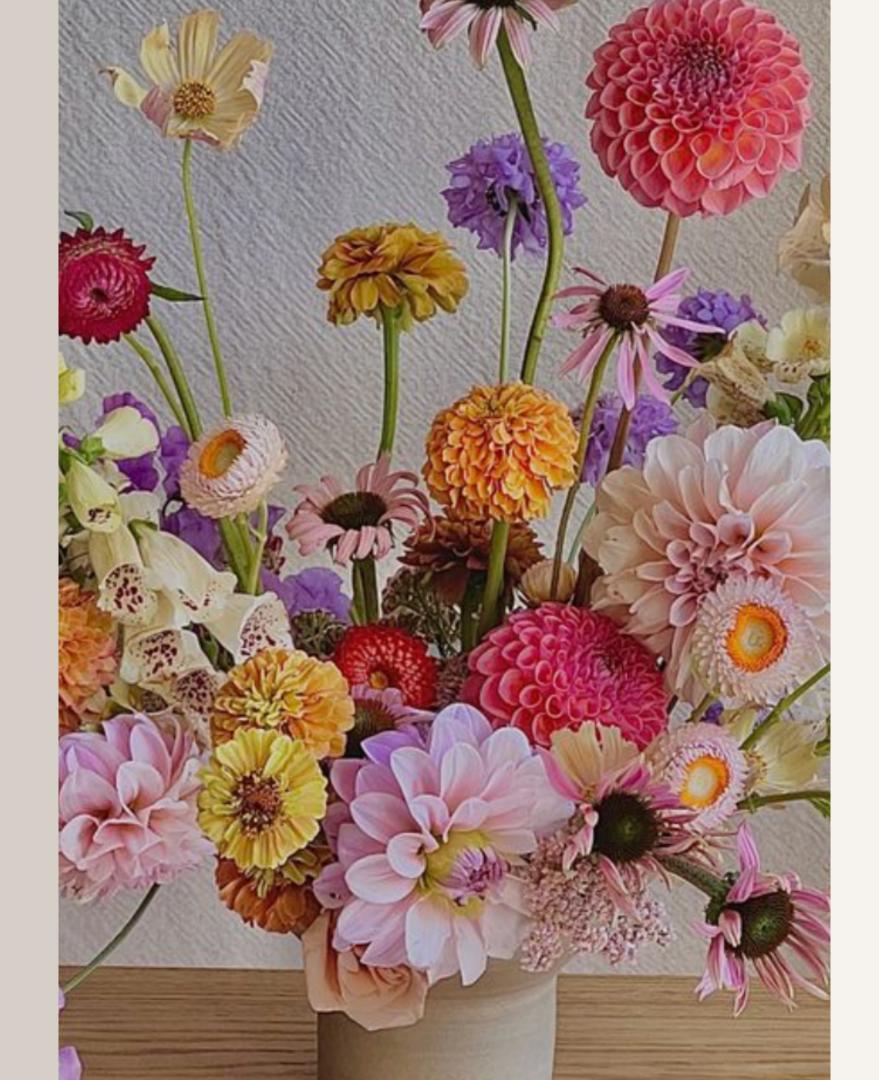
COOD CIRL'S GUIDE TO CREAT SEX

COOD GUYS GUIDE TO CREAT SEX

BY SHEILA WRAY GREGOIRE



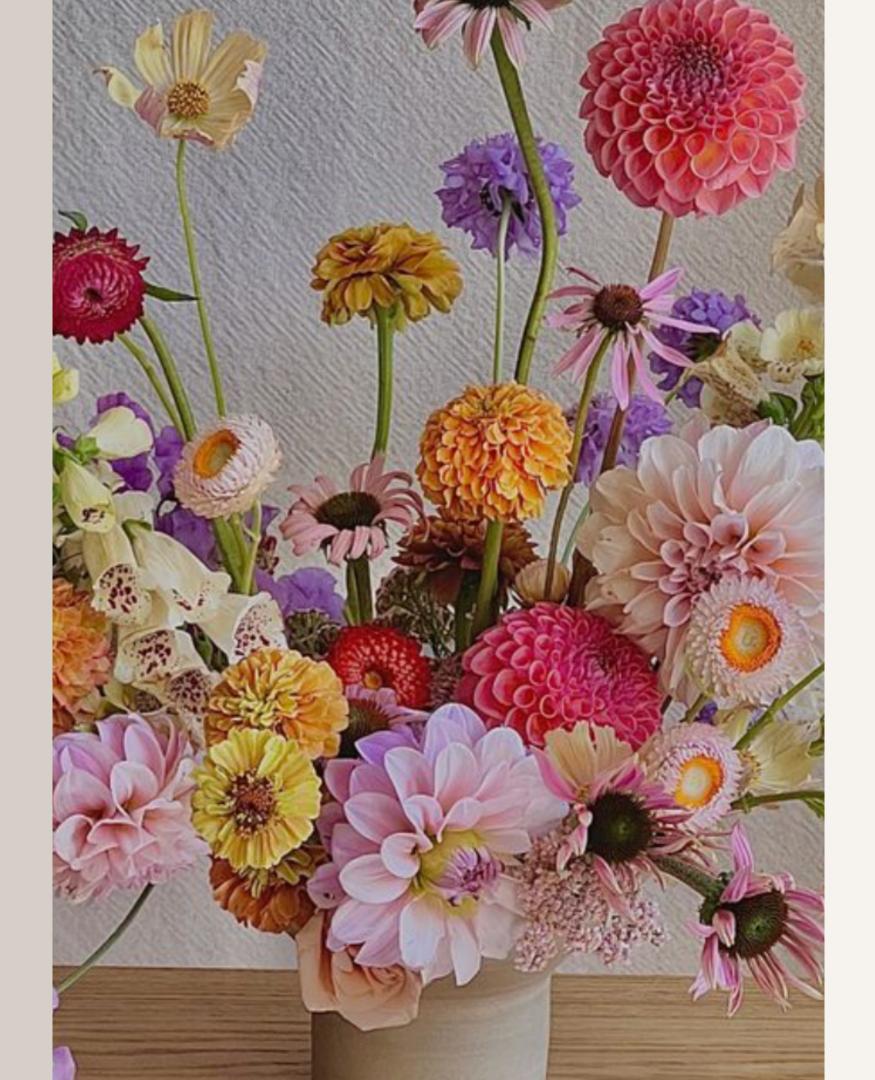
- personal
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- pure
- prioritized
- pressure-free



- personal
- pleasurable
- pure
- prioritized
- pressure-free
- putting the other first

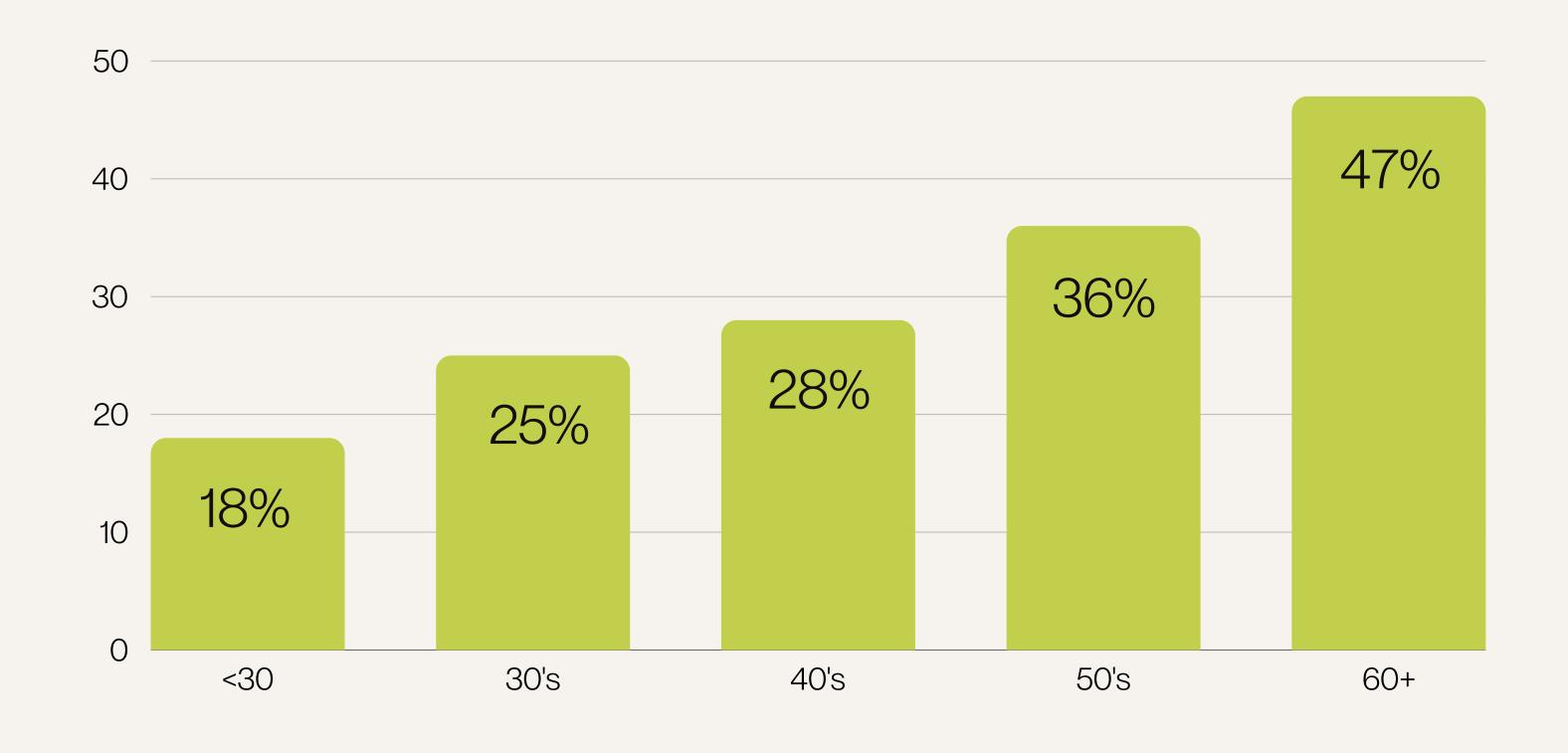


Now I can have sex whenever I want.



- personal
- pleasurable
- pure
- prioritized
- pressure-free
- putting the other first
- passionate

SEXLESS MARRIAGE BY AGE





- 1. What is one thing we each can do to increase our emotional intimacy?
- 2. What is one aspect of our physical/sexual intimacy that you'd like to talk further about?

COUPLE TAIK

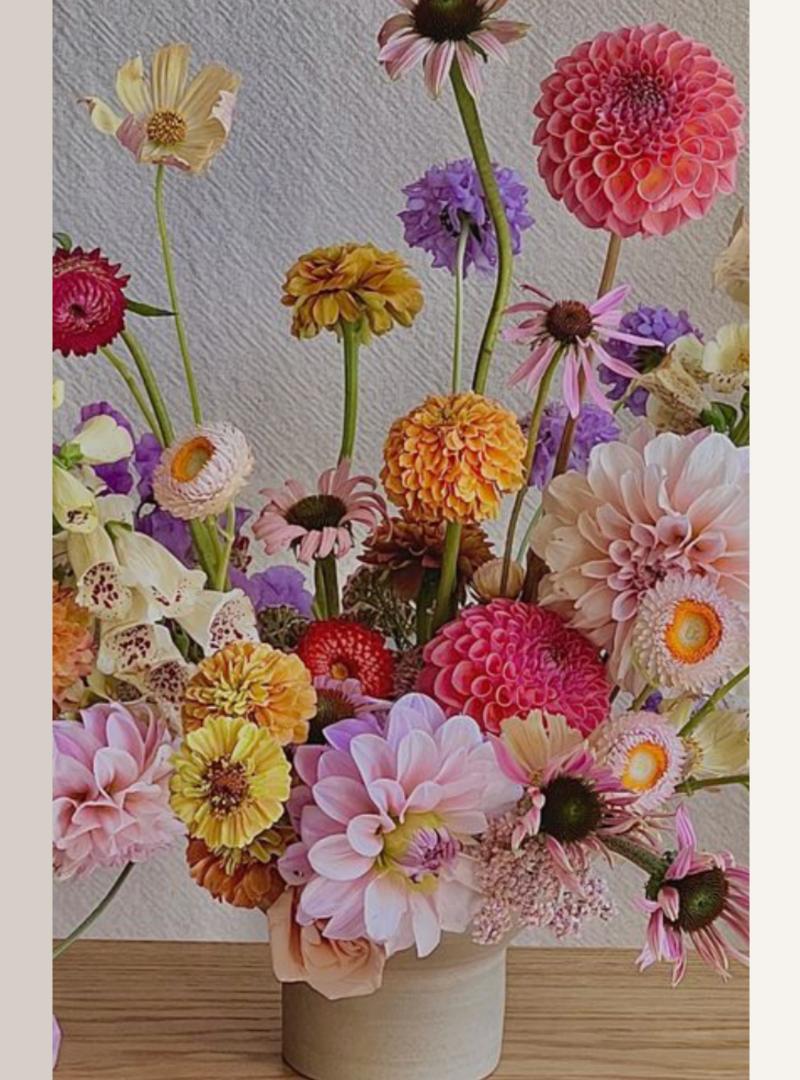






INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Conflict is any situation where the needs, desires, or preferences produce differences of opinion about how the world should be. This can be complicated by limited resources, such as time, space, or money.



PRINCIPLES OF CONFLICT

1. it's inevitable

CONFLICT IS INEVITABLE

"Conflict is the price smart couples pay for intimacy."

LES & LESLIE PARROTT

IT DOESN'T MEAN YOUR MARRIAGE IS IN TROUBLE

UNHAPPY COUPLES

69% of conflict over perpetual problems



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UNHAPPY COUPLES

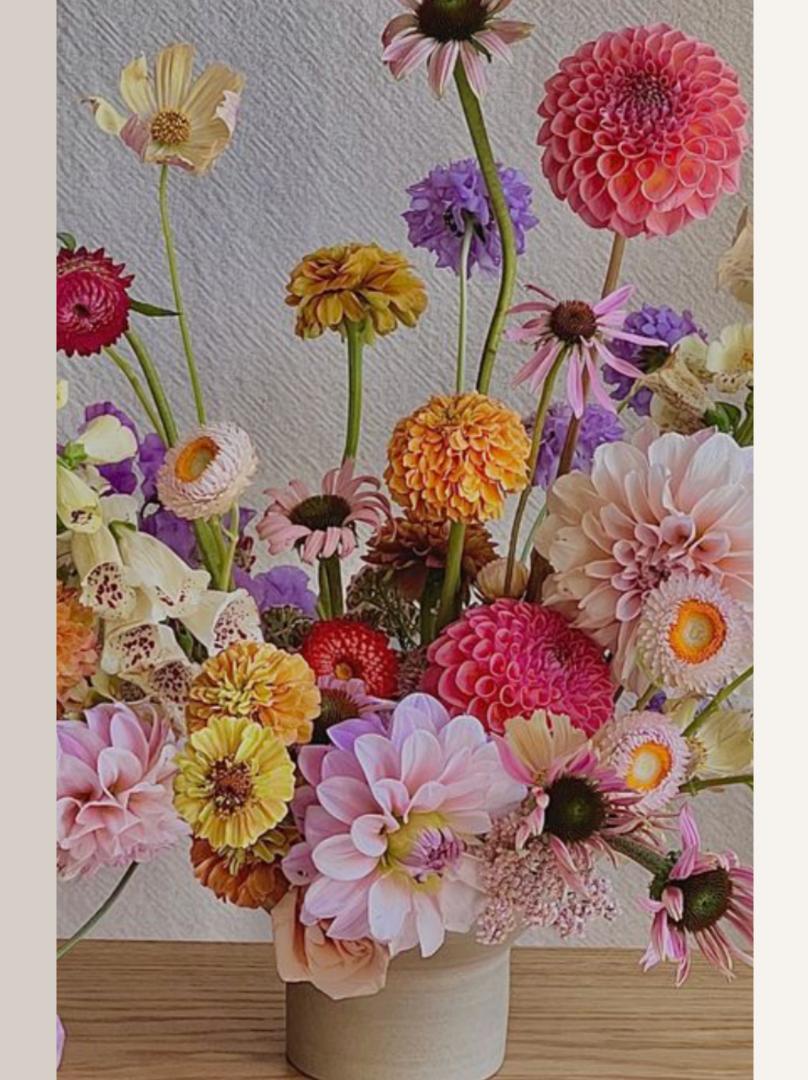
69% of conflict over perpetual problems

HAPPY COUPLES

69% of conflict over perpetual problems







PRINCIPLES OF CONFLICT

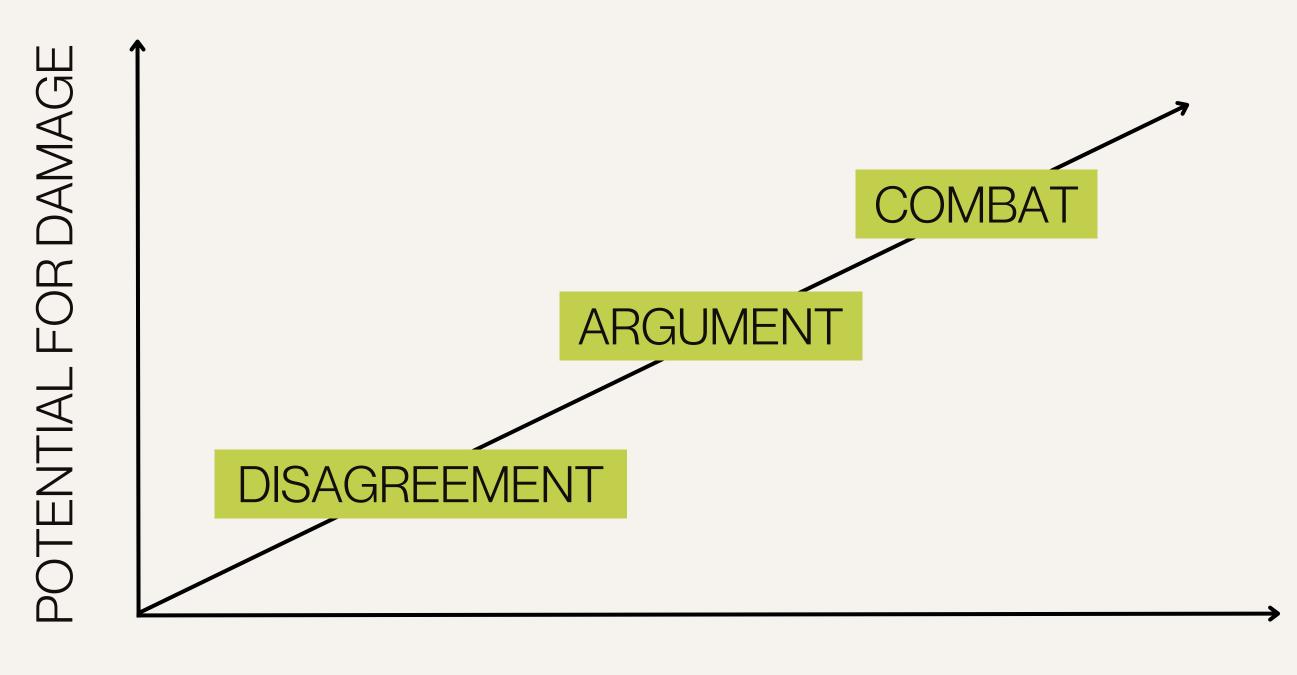
1. it's inevitable

2. solve what you can

3.most are perpetual

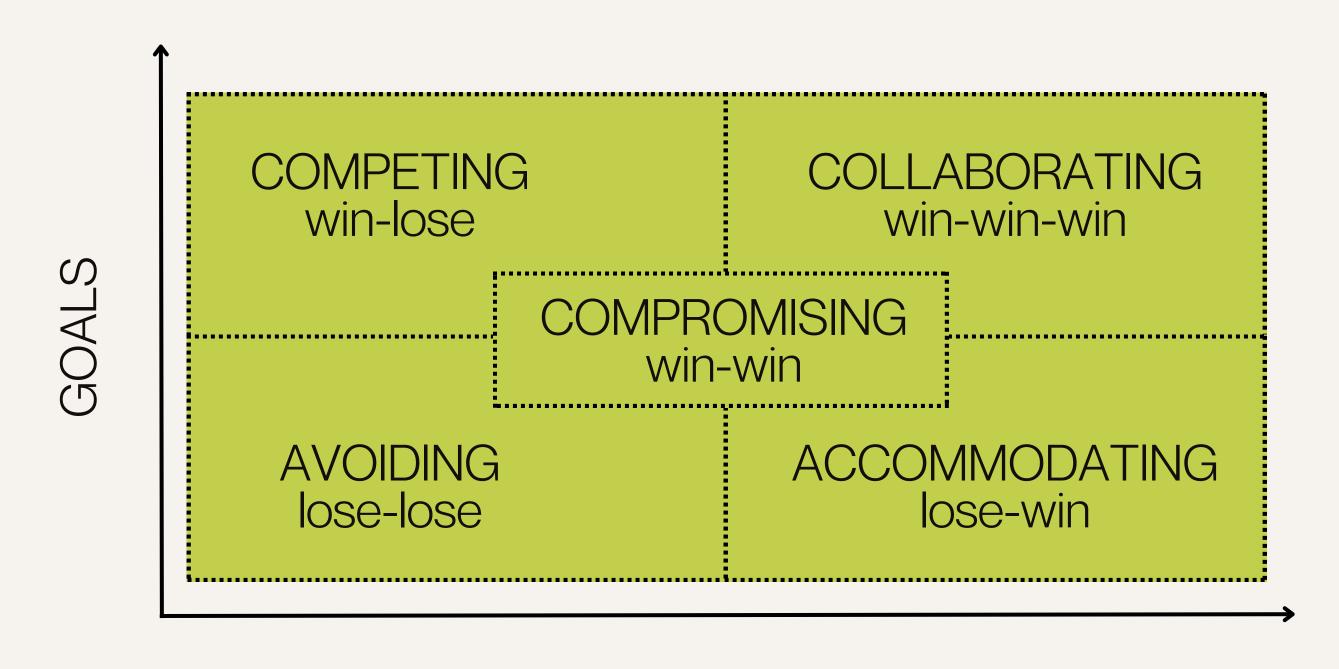
4.a few may become gridlocked

DAMAGE VS. REGULATION



DECREASING REGULATION

WHAT IS YOUR DEFAULT STYLE OF CONFLICT?



RELATIONSHIPS

WHAT HAS IMPACTED YOUR STYLE OF CONFLICT?

- social context
- family systems
- past experiences
- education
- modeling
- personality how you are wired



Share with each other what you feel is your most natural or most frequent conflict style. Where do you think you might have learned that?

COUPLE TALK



WHAT CAUSES CONFLICT IN YOUR MARRIAGE?



WORD CLOUD

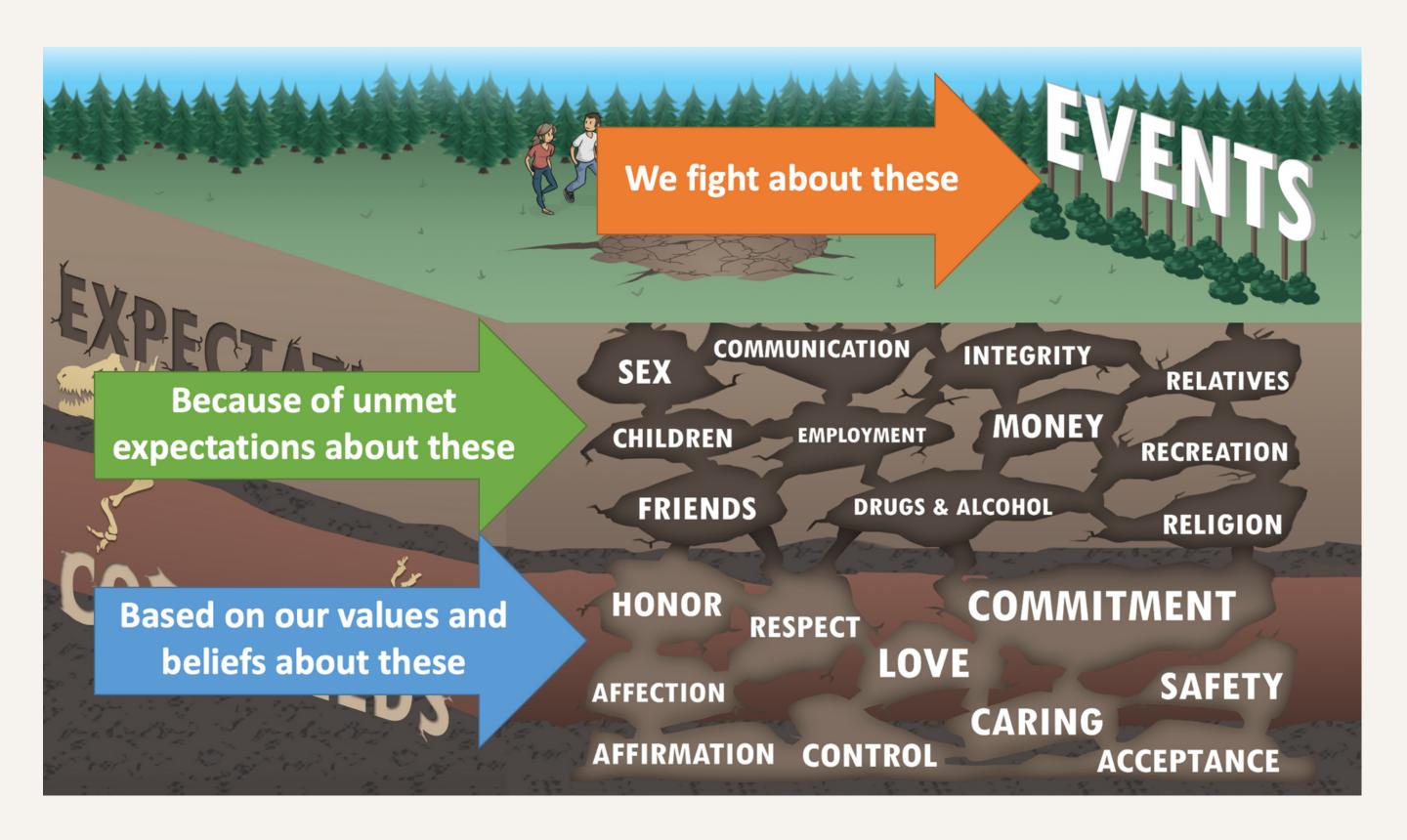
- work/family balance
- parenting issues
- extended family
- finances
- sexual issues
- unrealistic expectations

- feeling neglected
- jealousy
- resistance to change
- passive-aggressive behavior
- scheduling issues & commitments
- silence

CONFLICT SOURCES



CONFLICT SOURCES



FRIENDS / LEMONS

VIDEO



NECATIVE RESPONSES

- 1. negative interpretation
- 2. illusionist
- 3. investigator
- 4. destructive criticism
- 5. defensiveness
- 6. disrespect/contempt
- 7. escalation/anger
- 8. withdrawal (stonewalling)



1. negative interpretationbenefit of the doubt



1. negative interpretation

- benefit of the doubt
- 2. illusionist
 - validate their experience



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- 1. negative interpretation
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- 4. destructive criticism
 - claim your own feelings



5. defensiveness

claim your own behaviors



5. defensiveness

- claim your own behaviors
- 6. disrespect/contempt
 - validation and empathy



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 - regain your composure
- 8. withdrawal (stonewalling)
 - take a short break

COUPLE TALK

"You have worked a lot of hours this week!"

Discuss how you could move from negative to positive responses.



- 1. negative interpretation
 - benefit of the doubt
- 2. illusionist
 - validate their experience
- 3. investigator
 - move past the facts and care about their emotions
- 4. destructive criticism
 - o claim your own feelings
- 5. defensiveness
 - o claim your own behaviors
- 6. disrespect
 - validation and empathy
- 7.escalation/anger
 - o regain your composure
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EMOTIONAL INTELLICENCE & YOUR MARRIAGE



1. claiming your own feelings - self-awareness



EMOTIONAL INTELLICENCE & YOUR MARRIAGE



- 1. claiming your own feelings self-awareness
- 2. claiming your own behaviors self-regulation



EMOTIONAL INTELLICENCE & YOUR MARRIAGE



- 1. claiming your own feelings self-awareness
- 2. claiming your own behaviors self-regulation
- 3. show awareness of spouse



EMOTIONAL INTELLICENCE & YOUR MARRIAGE



- 1. claiming your own feelings self-awareness
- 2. claiming your own behaviors self-regulation
- 3. show awareness of spouse
- 4. relationship development



EMPATHY

The ability to imagine yourself in another's situation and feel what they feel.

VALIDATION

The process of understanding someone's emotional experience.



"The process of understanding someone's emotional experience."

1. actively listen



"The process of understanding someone's emotional experience."

1. actively listen

2. express an appropriate emotional response

VALIDATION

"The process of understanding someone's emotional experience."

- 1. actively listen
- 2. express an appropriate emotional response
- 3. avoid problem-solving

VALIDATION

"The process of understanding someone's emotional experience."

- 1. actively listen
- 2. express an appropriate emotional response
- 3. avoid problem-solving
- 4. use validating responses



"The process of understanding someone's emotional experience."

GOAL: to see and hear, NOT fix or shut down.



Name one thing that your partner does that makes you feel heard and seen.

COUPLE TAIK



I recognize that my behavior caused you to feel hurt. That is not my intent. I hate that I did something that made you feel that way and I am sorry. Can you forgive me?

CHAD & ANGELA IMHOFF

1. I recognize my behavior

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- 2. Caused you to feel

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- 4. Will you forgive me?

If we claim that we're free of sin, we're only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—simply come clean about them—he won't let us down; he'll be true to himself. He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing."

1 JOHN 1:9 (MSG)

WHAT FORCIVENESS IS NOT

- making excuses or minimizing
- forgetting or ignoring
- instantly granting trust
- lacking boundaries
- avoiding consequences
- promising reconciliation

WHAT FORCIVENESS IS

- a decision
- an ongoing process
- critical for the health of the relationship

BENEFITS OF FORCIVENESS

- healthier relationships
- greater spiritual and psychological well-being
- less anxiety, stress, and hostility
- lower blood pressure
- fewer symptoms of depression
- stronger immune systems
- improved heart health

MAYO CLINIC, 2022



Over lunch, talk about what you've heard this morning and what stood out to each of you. Use this opportunity to apologize and offer forgiveness to each other.

COUPLE TALK







THE SURVEY SAYS



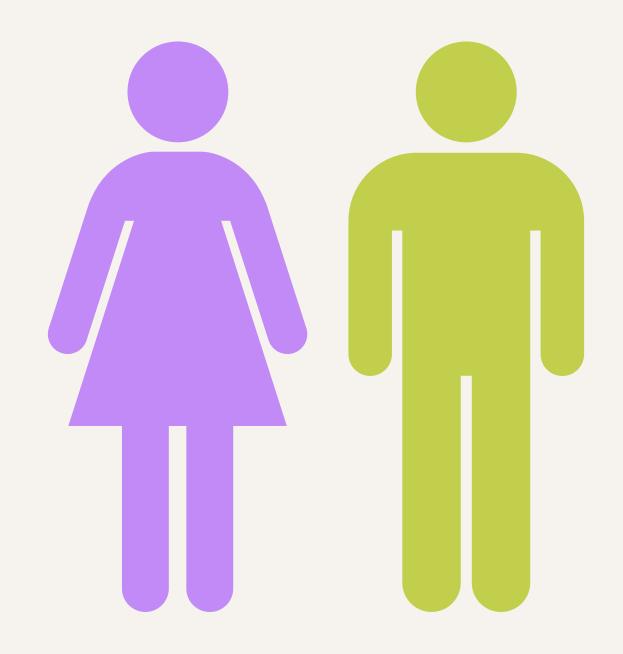
MARITAL SATISFACTION IS IMPACTED BY:

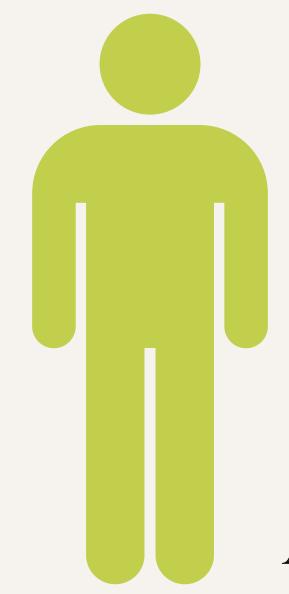
- 1. connection
- 2. how we deal with conflict
- 3. gender roles



CULTURAL MANDATE

- 1. co-create
- 2. co-care

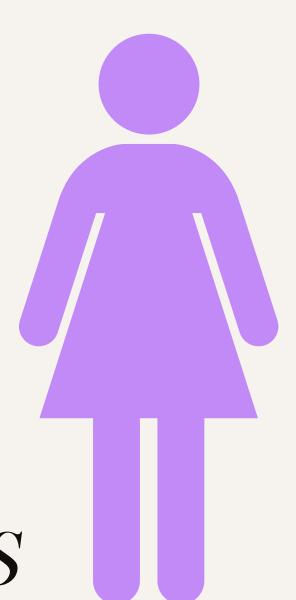




"ezer" - ally

"kenegdo" - similar but different ally - an indispensible companion ezer is not a gendered role

AN INDISPENSABLE COMPANION IS *NOT* A CENDERED ROLE





Turn to your spouse and say, "You are my indispensable companion."

COUPLE TALK



ALLY

A sovereign state that formally cooperates with another to achieve a mutual purpose.

MARRIAGE

- two become one
- yet still two acting individuals
- common purpose and values

MARRIAGE / ALLY

MARRIAGE

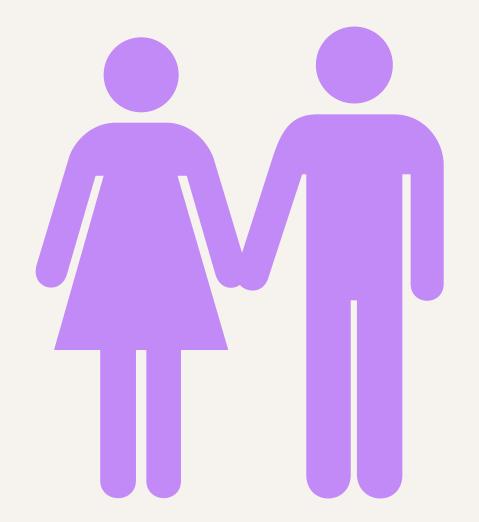
- two become one
- yet still two acting individuals
- common purpose and values

ALLY

Come together to ensure a unified front against that which would seek to destroy them.

CENESIS 1 & 2

co-create & co-care



FRACTURED

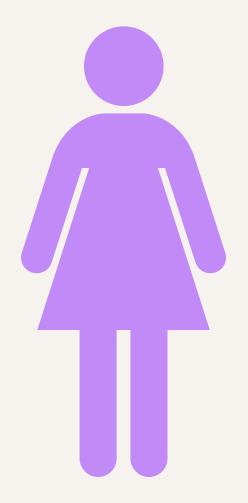


labor with the earth



CENESIS 3

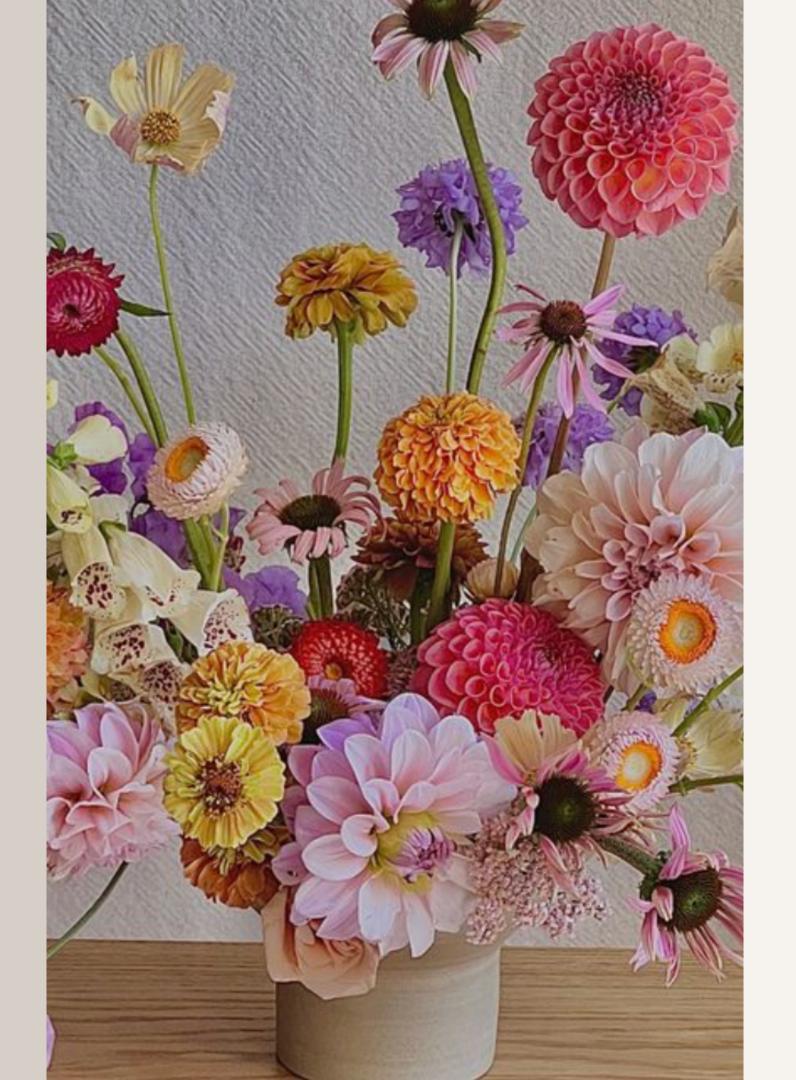
labor with family





PRINCIPLES FOR MUTUALITY IN MARRIAGE

- 1. communication
- 2. collaboration
- 3. compromise



PRINCIPLES FOR MUTUALITY IN MARRIAGE

- 1. communication
- 2. collaboration
- 3. compromise

EXPECTATIONS & DESIRES

EXPECTATIONS:

beliefs that we hold about outcomes of an event & impose on others

DESIRES:

a strong feeling of wanting something or wishing for something to happen, but not imposing it on others



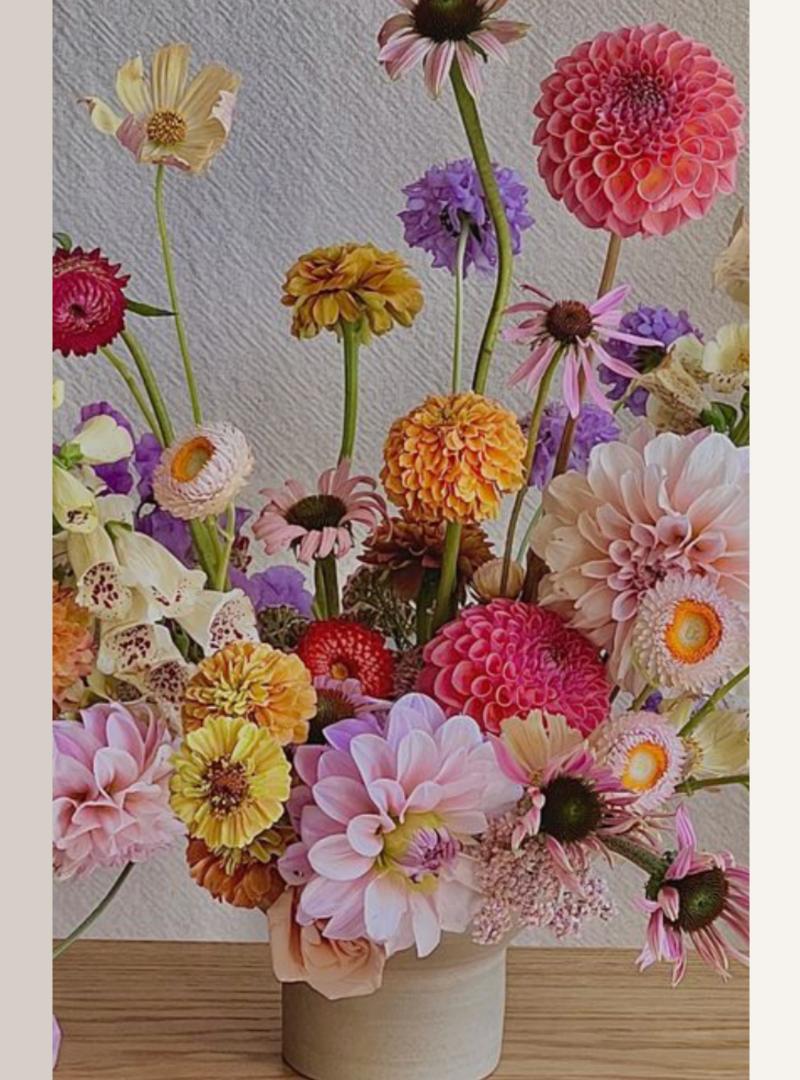
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- 2. I sometimes have difficulty asking my partner for what I want. 69%
- 3. My partner often does not understand how I feel. 65%
- 4. My partner often refuses to discuss issues or problems. 64%
- 5. My partner makes comments that put me down. 62%

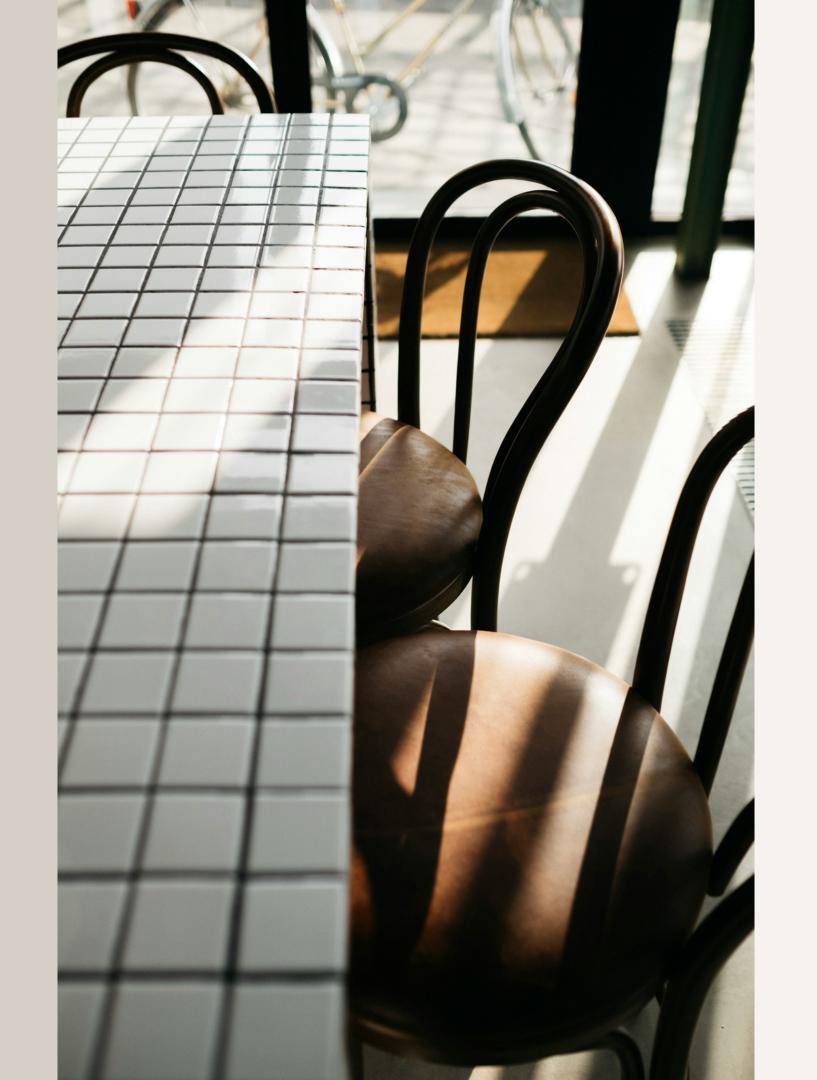


PRINCIPLES FOR MUTUALITY IN MARRIAGE

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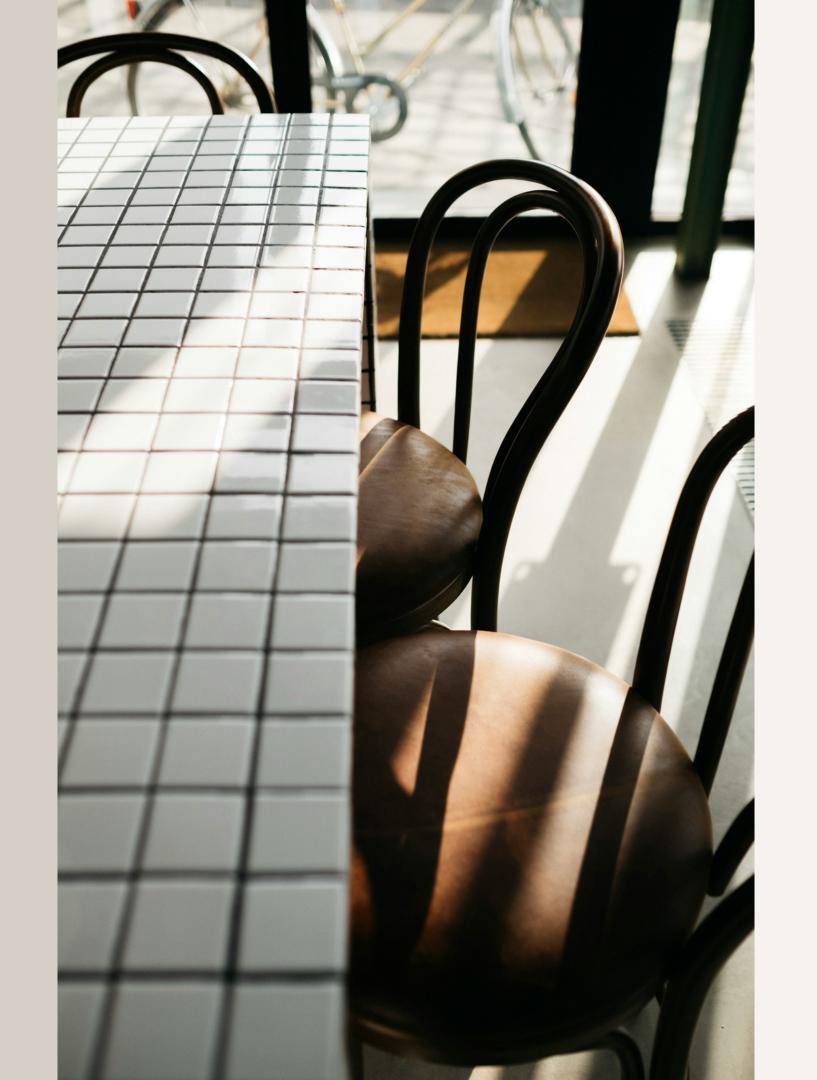
5 TYPES OF POWER

- 1. exploitive
- 2. manipulative
- 3. competitive
- 4. nutritive
- 5. integrative



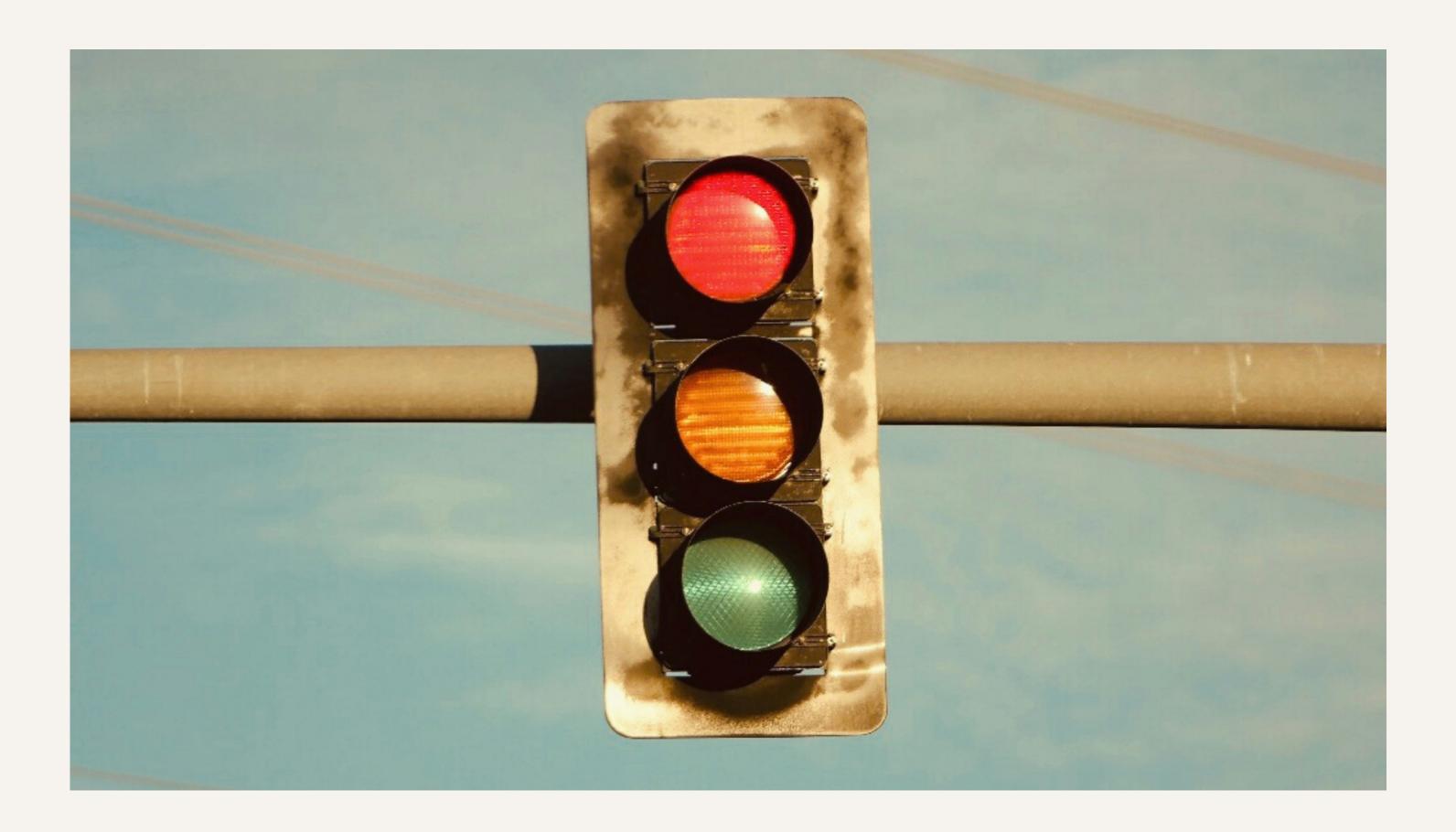
COLLABORATION WORKING TOWARDS THE SAME GOAL

- What needs doing?
- Who is the best person to do it?
- Who has the time to do it?
- Who enjoys doing it?



COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING

- 1. get on the same side of the table
- 2. approach the problem in terms of needs, not solutions
- 3. listen to the other person and share your expectations and needs
- 4. make a list of possible solutions
- 5. together pick the best solution come to agreement



COLLABORATION BREAKS DOWN WHEN:

1. frustration & criticism





POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE RATIO OF COMMUNICATION INTERACTIONS

Marriages that flourish: 5:1

Marriages that end in divorce: 1:1

GOTTMAN & LEVENSON, 1992

- 1. frustration & criticism
- 2. impatience





- 1. frustration & criticism
- 2. impatience
- 3. uneven responsibilities





- 1. frustration & criticism
- 2. impatience
- 3. uneven responsibilities
- 4. lack of appreciation





- 1. frustration & criticism
- 2. impatience
- 3. uneven responsibilities
- 4. lack of appreciation
- 5. demand your own way





COD'S DESIGN

- submit to each other (Ephesians 5:21)
- serve one another (Galatians 5:13)
- value others above you (Philippians 2:3)
- build each other up (Romans 14:19
- purpose: glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31)



PRINCIPLES FOR MUTUALITY IN MARRIAGE

- 1. communication
- 2. collaboration
- 3. compromise

COMPROMSE

An agreement or settlement of a dispute that is reached by each side making concessions.

The ability to listen to two sides in a dispute and devise a solution that is acceptable to both.

INFLUENCING ONE ANOTHER

"One of the leading gauges for measuring a happy marriage is whether spouses allow themselves to be influenced by the other person."

JOHN GOTTMAN
The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work, 2000, p. 45

BIOLA UNIVERSITY'S CENTER FOR MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS

1. identifying your expectations as well as your spouse's

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COUPLE TALK

Which step is hardest for you?

Which do you find easiest and why?



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