Volume 01 Issue 02: Words of Affirmation

As married couples, before we learn, some of us find ourselves working hard to express love to our spouses and it feels like the recipient doesn't really feel loved by our actions. This is because we all speak and respond to different love languages. Different things communicate love to us. A husband may work so hard to provide his wife with all financial benefits and feel that by doing this, he is loving her. But that wife may not necessarily feel loved by this if it's not what she cares for. It helps to learn our spouse's love language and do things that communicate love specifically to them. One of the common love languages for some people is words of affirmation. This is not what communicates love to everybody but it does to some people.

Words of affirmation can be expressed in several ways;

1. Verbal compliments: Make your collection of words of affirmation to use in communicating love to your spouse regularly. You can be creative and add to your collection of compliments from lines you hear from movies or programs that inspire you.

Examples: *"I really appreciate you for taking time to come for this function with me".*

"Thanks for getting the rent paid on time this month. I want you to know that I don't take that for granted".

We can also affirm our spouse indirectly by saying positive things about them when they are not present. We can also affirm them in front of others when they are present and; by writing them affirming words.

If you are like me, speaking words of affirmation doesn't come naturally. It helps to practice words of affirmation in front of a mirror before delivery.

2. Encouraging words: To encourage is to inspire courage. It is only encouragement if it is in the area your spouse already has an interest in. This is different from pressurizing our spouse to do something we want. Since encouragement requires seeing the world from your spouse's perspective, we should first learn what is important to our spouse, then encourage them to go for it.

Examples: *"If you decide to do that, I can tell you one thing, you will be a success. That's one of the things I like about you. When you set your mind on something, you do it".*

"If that's what you want to do, I will certainly do everything I can to help you".

3). Kind Words: Meaning is derived from how something is said. We use kind words to communicate love verbally. Check your tone of voice in the words that you speak as your spouse interprets your message based on your tone of voice, not the words you use. Share your hurt, pain and anger in a kind manner. When your spouse is angry and lashing out words of heat, choose to be loving and not reciprocate with additional heat but with a soft voice. This is mature love. When wronged seek forgiveness instead of justice and choose to live today free from the failures of yesterday.

4). Humble Words: We should express our desires as requests, not demands. We use humble words when we make known our needs and desires as requests. This way we affirm our spouse's worth and abilities. A request creates the possibility for the expression of love, whereas a demand suffocates that possibility.

This is inspired by one of my coaches, Dr. Gary Chapman.

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