



DC501: My Husband and I Fight All the Time

“This is my third marriage, and I’ve had several other serious relationships, and I’ve finally come to the conclusion that I don’t have the slightest idea how to participate in a healthy relationship. No clue. But at least my present husband is willing to stay in there with me while we figure this out. But it seems like we argue constantly. About everything. He has to be right all the time, and so do I. He points out stuff I do wrong, and I just have to defend myself. But then he won’t let me point out anything he does wrong. And I don’t know how to change this.”

I’m sure that at times this sounds so hopelessly complicated you could just scream. The arguments are endless. He picks at you, you pick at him, you compromise on this or that, and the details go on and on. But this is not complicated. The solution here is extraordinarily simple.

You need to ask yourself a single question, which has a number of variations or permutations. That question is, What do you want? What do you really want in your life and in your relationship? Do you want to be safe, OR do you want to be happy? Do you want to be RIGHT, OR do you want to be happy? Here’s why that’s important. If you want to be SAFE or RIGHT, you’re choosing forms of Imitation Love, and you would then be committed to a lifetime of Protecting Behaviors. You would be committed to lying, attacking, acting like a victim, and running, all of which are SELFISH behaviors that are designed to keep YOU safe and WILL destroy your relationship. Come to think of it, you’re ALREADY doing that. You’ve been doing that your whole life and you’ve been destroying all your relationships with that approach.

See the point? You can’t choose to be safe AND happy—or right AND happy. Being right is just a way to be safe and powerful, so for simplicity we’ll just talk about being safe instead of being safe and being right. You can only choose ONE of those options, safe or happy. If you want to be happy as a human being and in your marriage, you have to GIVE UP Imitation Love, in this case safety. Safety is an ILLUSION anyway. The only real safety in life comes from feeling loved, and you’ll never feel loved while you’re defending YOURSELF and thinking solely of YOURSELF.

So we’re back to the original question. What do you want? Do you want to feel safe OR happy? You really have to make that decision, NOW—once and forever—and all the other decisions you make will follow from that. I’m not kidding. If you make that your primary decision in your marriage, and if you make it well, you’ll succeed. If you don’t, you’ll become confused, and you’ll keep falling into the trap of defending yourself, which communicates I DON’T LOVE YOU to your partner every single time, and then your relationship suffers horribly, which you’ve already proven how many thousand times?

I suggest that you make that decision, and IF you decide that you want to be happy—instead of safe—I suggest that you take one more step. Make the following commitment. Every day, several times a day, say this to yourself: “I will not do or say anything that detracts from the Real Love in my life or my marriage.” If you find yourself becoming the least bit anxious or irritated in any interaction with your husband, STOP TALKING. Instead call someone who can accept and love you until your anxiety is gone. Then talk with your husband. Remember that you do not need to defend yourself or be right. What you need is to feel loved and to be loving and to be happy. That is the decision to be made. And it’s a decision worth making. And keeping.