

Here We Go Again

Sometimes we hear so much about communication that we reach the point of saying to ourselves “Ugh, not again!”. But it’s so important. Strike that thought. It’s essential.

Communication isn’t the act of merely voicing your thoughts. Communication is the process of creating mutual understanding. John Lennon was wrong when he said “all you need is love.” Love doesn't always conquer all. Add a mortgage, careers, debt, religion and kids into the mix and you quickly discover how unprepared or overwhelmed “love” can get.

What makes communication effective?

- 1) Listening to understand and not to defend or accuse.
- 2) Acknowledging your partner’s point of view.
- 3) Sharing your point of view.
- 4) And then discussing to decide where you will go from here.

(FYI - it’s perfectly okay to decide to agree to disagree.)

Re-establish effective communication by following these tips:

1. **Decide what kind of marriage you want.**

Do you want an average marriage or a great marriage? If you want a great marriage then your relationship MUST become your highest priority - not golf, work, or other pursuits & hobbies; your relationship must come first.

2. **Be fully present in your relationship.**

Your relationship requires ALL of you - your time and attention - to grow.

3. **Practice being a good communicator.**

Imagine being able to talk with your spouse about anything under the sun from the trivial to the important...

Imagine feeling emotionally safe and being free to share whatever is on your heart or mind...

Imagine being able to share your beliefs, convictions, wants, desires, likes and dislikes knowing your spouse will acknowledge, listen and support you without ridicule, contempt or disrespect – even if/when they have a much different perspective.

It’s within your power to create a relational environment where great communication is the standard and not the exception. Great communication is the result of honesty, love, practice, patience, respect, time, experience and decision.

Until next time, this is Mike & the Crew and we want you to be *mad about marriage!*