

Too Honest?

Honesty is crucial, but can you be too honest in marriage?

Although honesty brings you closer together, it can also hurt your spouse deeply.

For example, don't use honesty as an excuse to say hurtful things.

Your relationship thrives on tactful, not brutal honesty.

You would never say something like, "I don't like the way you dress anymore - it's frumpy" or "your laugh annoys me!" and expect your spouse NOT to get hurt.

Here's how to be honest with your spouse without hurting their feelings:

- **Timing**

Choose a time they will be open to hearing the truth (which is probably NOT when they're already feeling low or after a hard day at work).

Be tender and *compassionate*.

- **Motivation**

Don't jump right into the "truth."

Before you say anything, make sure it IS the truth.

With as much tenderness as you can muster, explain that it isn't your intention to hurt them but to strengthen your relationship.

*** If you're only doing this to get something off your chest, feel better about yourself, or to hurt them, think twice because you're doing it for the wrong reasons. ***

- **Words**

Start your sentences with "I" instead of "you" so they know you're not blaming them. For example, you can say, "I feel hurt when _____."

Avoid superlatives like "always" or "never." Stick to the facts. Don't make things worse than they really are.

- **Solutions**

Explain the situation as you see it without whining or dwelling on the "problem."

Once your spouse understands what you're trying to say, focus on solutions; otherwise, they will feel attacked and become defensive.

(By the way, remember that just because they understand what you say doesn't mean they agree.)

- **Expect honesty in return**

Honesty with your spouse is an invitation for them to be honest with you; it's a two-way street.

If you can't handle them being honest with you in return, maybe this isn't the best time to bring something up.

Remember, your spouse might struggle with tactful honesty, too, so sharing this article could be a great way to work on practicing open and honest communication together.

Until next time, this is Mike Tucker and I want YOU to be mad about marriage!