

# Is Your Marriage Poisoned?

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Unresolved hurt poisons relationships; it's a slow death. Unresolved hurt erodes trust, fractures emotional connection, and drains the relationships of warmth, joy and affection. Unresolved hurt is a wedge that destroys intimacy. Every couple must learn to let go of hurts...especially past hurts. Here's how to start that process:

## **Step 1: Overcome the fear of getting hurt...**

We tend to wall-off our heart when we're afraid of getting hurt. Although we desperately want love and connection, we live a guarded, cautious life. If your spouse has hurt you before, you're probably afraid they'll hurt you again. But the best indicator of your spouse's level of commitment to you and the relationship is their *current* actions. So, unless they're giving you a reason to believe they'll hurt you again, strive to overcome the fear of getting hurt. Besides, what difference does it make to have a heart if you're not going to use it? If you want to live a life filled with love, connection, happiness and affection, enjoy the freedom an open heart brings.

## **Step 2: Forgive...**

It's hard to get beyond hurt feelings without forgiving your spouse. Forgiveness releases you from pain, allowing you to move on...but it doesn't happen overnight. Forgiveness is a process. Be patient with yourself. Ask God to open your heart and help you to forgive. Cry, scream, and vent to a friend if you need to but, with time, the pain will fade. Forgiveness isn't saying that you're okay with what they did. Nor does it mean you're going to look the other way and participate in an unhealthy relationship. Forgiveness is cutting the pain loose so you can heal. Yes, *most* of the time it involves a fresh start and a clean slate.

## **Step 3: Learn from the past...**

Letting go of the past isn't the same as forgetting the past. Reflect on the past and learn from it. Until you acknowledge how your actions might've contributed to the hurtful situation, and can empathize with your spouse, you're not ready to move on. No spouse is perfect. No spouse loves perfectly. Learning from the past equips you to handle similar situations in the future.

## **Step 4: Deal with new relationship issues as they arise...**

Deal with hurts as they happen; don't wait. You must face things head on if you want a healthy and happy relationship. Communicate. Ask questions. Start by acknowledging your feelings and sharing them with your spouse. What you feel could be real or imagined...but how will you know if you don't talk about it with them? Give your spouse a chance to share how they feel. Communication is the pathway to forgiveness and reconciliation. So...how are things with you and your partner? Is your emotional connection healthy and strong? Do you feel free to be yourself in the relationship? If not, could unresolved hurt be part of the issue? If you want to be free from the past and stop reliving it...let it go.

To have a happy and satisfying marriage, forgive each other, learn and grow from your past, and deal with new issues as they arise.

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