

LESSON 6:

Listening Beyond the Words

Not Listening

Communication

Not Speaking

Obligation on both listen and insist on being heard

“It is sad how quickly some couples move from the attentive unmarrieds to the preoccupied marrieds.” – Ann Carroll

Good listening requires: TIME, ENERGY, and QUIET.

“Being heard is so close to being loved that, for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable.” – Augsburg

REFLECTIVE LISTENING

1. Give full attention to spouse who is talking (including non-verbals).
2. Reflect back what you think you heard (including feelings).
3. Check for accuracy.
4. Repeat steps 1 – 3 until spouse feels heard.
5. Reverse roles and repeat with other spouse talking/listening.

TOOLS FOR YOUR TOOLBOX

Bill of Rights p. 49

Scripture Notations:

Listening p. 44-45

EXERCISE

Every evening, take 10 minutes to practice reflective listening to the question, “How was your day?”

Gradually expand the technique to include troublesome issues.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Self:

- Do I reserve time and energy for my spouse? How good a listener am I?
- Do I create an accepting atmosphere which encourages my spouse to communicate?
- What ways do I use to avoid listening?
- In what ways do I tend to scramble?
- Do I always make sure what I have heard is what my spouse means?

In Relation to My Spouse:

- If my spouse seems to be avoiding listening to me, what might this suggest about my manner of communicating? (Is it mostly negative, critical, complaining, blaming, or demanding?)
- Could a change of my attitude help open channels of communication?
- If necessary, do I insist on my right to be equally heard?