

Hindrances to Becoming One in Marriage

“Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Gen. 2:24 Eph. 5:31

What keeps us from becoming one?

1. **Ungodly Beliefs about men and women** – *things that we believe about married life that do not agree with the Word of God.* For example:

- "Women are impossible to understand." "Women are the problem."
- "Women are inferior to men." "Men are supposed to be the "boss."
- "Men only think about sex." "Men don't have or show emotions or feelings."
- "Men won't listen to me."

2. **Selfishness and Independence**

- When things are going well and we get distracted doing other things, we can get lazy with our relationship with our spouse. We start to drift apart.
- The excitement fades, the romance stops, and we start to coast until something goes wrong or a crisis arises in our marriage and there's no strength in the relationship to weather the storm.
- Self-centeredness and fear of losing control will draw us into our own corners and further apart. If left unchecked, oneness will never be achieved in the marriage.
- Pride and independence can also keep us apart fighting for our own position and being right.
- “*Vending machine marriage*” You put some effort in and you expect to get something back. When you don't, you kick the machine!

3. **Lack of Communication**

- Men need to validate their wife and her value with their words.
- "Miss communication" and "missed" communication can create hurts and wounds that hinder our ability to achieve oneness.
- Communication is one of the biggest factors to keep the marriage alive and together – Don't stop talking!

4. **Lack of Romance or Not Valuing the Relationship**

- *When the wife talks about intimacy, he thinks that she is talking about sex!*
- With no romance, no non-sexual touching, or no meaningful communications (only surface-level topical conversations), a woman will have little desire for sexual intimacy.
- Differences between having sex and making love (**having sex** is all self-focused, **making love** is focused on the other person receiving pleasure and love).
- Focus is on physical needs and not heart-to-heart connections.
- A woman needs to feel pursued, know that she is beautiful, exotic, chosen, and worth fighting for.

5. **Differences in Masculine and Feminine Characteristics in a Marriage**

- Women have a “feeling loved” bank account. When a wife feels loved by something her husband says or does, points are deposited in her love account. Then when something happens that makes her not feel loved by her husband, points are removed from the account.

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- Hurtful or unloving things a husband may do will not create as big of a negative response from the wife if there is a positive balance in her “feeling loved” bank account!
- However women keep score differently than men. The man thinks what he did is worth 10,000 points, but the women only give him 1 point!
- When Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil their natural eyes were opened and they began living in the *fallen masculine and feminine*.
- The first signs of this were the fear and shame they felt in God’s presence and both blame shifting.
- Since the Fall in the Garden, men and women have hardened their hearts against each other and lost touch with the loving, tender, nurturing qualities placed in their hearts by Father.
- The result has been misogyny, the feminist movement, human trafficking, male dominance, and other social evils that spill over into marriages and hinder oneness.

6. No time for each other

- A man has his projects, friends, and outside activities
- A woman works outside the home, raises the children, drives a taxi service for the kids, and is responsible for everything around the house.
- Scheduling or making time for each other becomes a low priority.

7. Passive Men and Controlling Women

- A man can live in his cave all the time and not be engaged with the family.
- The man does not take spiritual leadership.
- The father does not set boundaries for the children and standards for the family.
- If the husband is passive, the wife is forced to take control.
- Strong or domineering women can also manipulate and control with sex, cooking, house etc.

8. The Crazy Cycle (Read Eph. 5:22-33)

- I'll love her when she respects me! – I'll respect him when he loves me!
- A woman's greatest need is to feel loved and accepted for who she is.
- A man's greatest need is respect and appreciation.
- The cycle begins either when the husband does not get respect and says, "I will not give my wife love until she shows me respect." or the wife does not receive love and says, "I will not show my husband respect until he shows me love." If neither one is willing to give in and break the cycle, it just keeps going round and round!
- *The way to break the cycle* is to have either the husband decide to show love whether his wife shows him respect or not, or for the wife to decide to show her husband respect whether he ever shows her love or not.
- **To show love**, a man must convey to his wife that she is a high priority and that her opinions and feelings matter.
- Lack of love occurs when the man does not pay attention to his wife and invalidates her feelings, emotions, and opinions.
- **To show respect**, a woman must convey to her husband that he is acceptable, adequate, and a success in her sight (“good husband messages!”)
- Lack of respect happens when the wife criticizes her husband or refuses to acknowledge his efforts to try and please her.

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9. Expectations are set too high for the marriage

- They try to suck all the life out of each other
- They expect the other person to meet all their love needs.

Attachment Styles

There are basically four ways that we enter into relationships with other people. They're either Secure attachments or one of three insecure attachments: Dismissive, Distracted, or Disorganized.

- **Secure Attachments - *Anchors*** - If a baby experiences security and love-bonded relationships that they could trust with their primary caregivers, they will form secure attachments as adults. Secure relationships include playfulness, fun interactions, sensitivity to the other person, good feelings, protection, and a place for relief and comfort during stressful situations.
- **Dismissive Attachments – *Islands*** – If a baby was rotated between caregivers or had parents who valued something else over their relationship with the baby or they created an insecure environment, then they will have insecure fear-bonded relationships as adults. Dismissive relationships are characterized by low sense of security, be distant or avoidant, lack intimacy or feelings of closeness, feel comfortable being alone, easily withdraw, dismisses the importance of emotions and relationships, highly competitive or workaholic.
- **Distracted Attachments – *Waves*** – This comes from a childhood in which love and affection are inconsistently given and the child doesn't understand. Parental interactions tend to be intrusive, and needs are inconsistently met or unmet. There's no guarantee that love will be there when they need it. As adults they tend to be highly emotional, have difficulty quieting, compulsive and excitable, they feel unsafe, highly needy and anxious, overwhelmed with one crisis after another.
- **Disorganized Attachments** – Here the child/parent relationship is a source of comfort and terror. Parents exhibit chaotic and disorganized behavior, addictive behavior, or physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Infants can't make sense of the "come here – go away" relationship. As adults they tend to be hostile/aggressive with peers, controlling, exhibit addictive behaviors, and have difficulty with social relationships. They get close and then withdraw and are terrified when someone gets too close or intimate. They sabotage their own relationships.

Understanding these attachment styles will give you a better perspective why your spouse may be responding to you the way they are. If both of you had secure parents and are solidly in positive love-bonded relationships, you are blessed!

- However, when either one or both of you have insecure attachment styles, it may be like *waves* crashing onto *islands* and withdrawing or you may hide on your *island* and not want to interact with your spouse at all.
- Or if you or your spouse's style is disorganized, there might be lots of strong negative emotions and unpredictable behaviors that try to overwhelm your marriage.
- If you find yourself with these problems, we suggest you take a look at *Wired for Love* by Stan Tatkin that we have listed in our marriage reference list or get help from a counselor.

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Relational Maturity Stages

We all are supposed to grow in maturity through five distinct stages:

Infant – birth through age 3

Parent – 1st child through last child becoming an adult

Child - age 4 through 12

Elder – beginning when last child becomes an adult

Adult – age 13 through 1st child

- The ages listed here are when we were supposed to advance to the next stage.
- However, there are specific tasks that must be accomplished before we can move to the next maturity stage. (all the tasks can be found in *The Life Model – Living From the Heart Jesus Gave Us* – **James G. Friesen, et al.**)
- Therefore, most people get stuck in the first two stages for most of their lives because of trauma, pain, and other circumstances that prevent them from moving to the next stage.
- That is why we can see a grown man pounding his fist at the airline counter demanding he gets his own way (*a 3 year old throwing a temper tantrum in an adult body!*)
- The ability to respond appropriately and stay relational is hindered without mastering the higher maturity stage tasks first.

Beware of the "Little Foxes" (Song of Solomon 2:15)

"...the little foxes that spoil the vineyard (of our love), for our vineyards are in blossom" AMP

Work on the things that annoy you about your spouse.

- You and your spouse can be like porcupines trying to get close to each other. When either of you has a strong reaction on an issue, you form quills that push the other person away.
- Often people will also bristle when they feel pain.
- Your spouse may turn off their relational circuits (RCs) and be unable to receive or give love. Just as you can only see ten percent of an iceberg, your spouse may also become icy in their actions towards you, but keep most of their feelings hidden.
- Your spouse needs to feel safe before they can admit what is really going on inside them.

Dealing with childhood issues and patterns that were established while you were quite young will allow you to receive Father God's love and give it away to your spouse.

- Everyone reacts differently to the pain of not getting our love needs met growing up.
- We cut ourselves off from others, put up walls or do something else to protect from pain, shame, and rejection.
- ***Marriages struggle when there is fractured trust because of what happened in each person's past.***

Ungodly Beliefs, Judgments, and Inner Vows

- *Marriage is meant to be a flow of love between you and your spouse.* Yet judgments we have made against others, inner vows, ungodly beliefs and established habits may hinder that flow
- These are usually in areas where we were hurt or experienced trauma.

Ungodly Beliefs – Isaiah 55:7, Rom. 12:2

Ungodly beliefs are **all the beliefs, decisions, attitudes, agreements, judgments, expectations, vows, and oaths** that **do not** agree with God, His Word, His nature, and His character.

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Everyone, to some extent, lives his life out of wrong beliefs or lies. We may believe lies about ourselves, about others, or about God. All of these are ungodly beliefs.

- A perfect ungodly belief is one that appears to be absolutely **true** based on the **facts** of our experience and yet is absolutely **false** based on **God's Word**.
- Most ungodly beliefs are not absolutes but a mixture of truth and error.

(From Chester and Betsy Kylstra *Restoring the Foundations*)

Negative beliefs also result from the ungodly, hurtful ways we have been treated.

- Hurts and wrongs tend to bind us up inside and hold us captive.
- Ungodly beliefs also give legal permission for demons to stay.

Ungodly beliefs can also come from the world, our natural minds, and our culture.

- Ultimately, our negative belief system comes from our natural, unsanctified minds, attempting to handle and make sense out of life, its hurts, and problems.
- We also inherit the beliefs of our families about almost everything: life, politics, religion, education, relationships, etc.

The Belief-Expectation Cycle

1. **Ungodly beliefs** are formed out of hurtful experiences, leading to
2. **expectations** arising from these beliefs. These expectations affect our
3. **behavior**, causing us also to influence the behavior of others, leading to
4. **experiences** in line with these behaviors that confirm the ungodly beliefs.

This cycle traps a person. *You must renounce your agreement with the ungodly beliefs and stop the cycle. We must choose to make God's Word our new belief. As we receive the truth and let it change what we believe, we can expect positive things to happen in our lives.*

Ungodly Beliefs In Marriage Your parents are your role models about marriage relationships!

Bitter Root Judgments are some of the most destructive bitter root influences in our lives and can hinder our ability to receive and give love away.

“And make sure no one lives with a root of bitterness sprouting within them which will only cause trouble and poison the hearts of many.” Heb. 12:15 TPT

1. You can just share the facts about someone's actions. However, if their actions change your attitude about them, then you have made a judgment and are destined to experience the consequences!
2. A sure sign we have a bitterroot judgment is when we have big negative emotions over a small incident or transgression.
3. We usually judge others as a result of being hurt or wounded by something they did or said. It can come in the form of bitterness, blame, condemnation, jealousy, envy, unrighteous anger, or unforgiveness.
4. When we judge others, we set in motion a spiritual law that demands a response. The way we judge others is the way we will be judged. (**Matt. 7:1-2**)

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5. The standard and measure of our judgment will come back on us at some point in our lives. The three greatest times for judgments are *when we get married, have our first child, and our first teenager*. Unfortunately, the judgment we receive is usually much greater than what we sowed because of the laws of sowing and reaping and increase. (**Gal. 6:7, Lk. 6:38**)
6. Our bitterness or resentment towards those who hurt us causes a judgment that demands justice. The judgment against us is the curse of reaping what we sowed
7. "Bitterness is unfilled revenge. It eats away at our mind and emotions. It can even eat away our stomach. If we succumb to walk in a spirit of judgment and unforgiveness, our words and actions will be driven by the poison of bitterness. We will defile all our relationships." Paul and Gretel Haglin

Another law that is set in motion when we judge others is found in **Romans 2:1-16**.

- We become what we judged in others. It will bring forth the same behavior either in our self, our spouse, or our children.
- The spiritual law and forces within us begin to influence those around us and we defile others. We draw out that same bad behavior in them or us.
- Then **Romans 7:19** becomes a reality and we begin doing what we did not want to do!

Bitter Root Judgments in Marriage

- Since we are a complex bundle of what has happened to us in the past, we may not even be aware of what we bring into a marriage hidden in our hearts and how that controls our perceptions, attitudes, and behavior.
- The hidden things from the past become trigger points that cause us to explode at our mate.
- Each mate has certain expectancies of the other depending upon how they judged their parents while growing up. *We expect our mate to behave in certain ways based upon what we saw our parents do. We expect them to treat us the way our parents treated each other.*
- Our bitter expectancies *become self-fulfilling prophecies* as we draw that behavior out of our spouse. (**Heb. 12:15**) Our mate will often end up living up to our expectancies!
- We end up defiling those around us. (weak father » weak husband; alcoholic father » alcoholic husband; cold, distant father » cold, distant husband; domineering, controlling mother » domineering, controlling wife) If these are not exactly the same, they will at least be parallel.
- If your spouse had that tendency already in them, it will be that much easier to draw it out of them.

Six Steps to Freedom From Judgments

- 1) We must ask the Holy Spirit to reveal each judgment that we made against another person or our parents. Where are we embittered, lack compassion, or our actions are out of proportion with what is going on? Can we only think bad or bitter thoughts about someone or view them as our enemy? Any of these bad fruits in our life can be an indicator of a judgment we made in the past.
- 2) We need to go back to the time when we made that judgment and the child, teenager, or adult *must invite Jesus to take care of each specific bitterroot judgment*. Call the judgments to death on the cross. (**Luke 9:23**)
- 3) We need to ask God to forgive us for making that bitter root judgment. We need to forgive those who may have done the wrong that caused us to make the judgment, and then we need to forgive ourselves for making it.

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- 4) We need to repent for how we have caused others to act badly around us, for drawing the negative out of them. We need to ask for a new heart that can bring out the best in others.
- 5) We need to remain diligent to catch ourselves in the areas we have identified until the habit patterns are changed. Pray for God to reverse the old patterns and build a new way. **(Phil. 3:10)**
- 6) As we get free from the bitter root judgments, the reverse will begin to happen. **People will begin to respond just the opposite from the way they were responding before.**

How to Walk Free From Specific Bitter Root Judgments and Expectancies

- Jesus came not to do away with the law, but to fulfill it. **(Matt. 5:17)**
- What Jesus did through the cross was to become a substitute for us and fulfill the demands of the law for us. What should have been a curse on us for judging others was put on Jesus and He takes it in our place.
- By repenting and asking God's forgiveness, we remove the demand of the law from us and place it on Jesus. Jesus takes the consequences of the judgment on himself.

Inner Vows – Matt. 5:33-37, James 4:13-17

An inner vow is a determination set in the flesh by your mind and heart early in life to do or not do something. Vows leave Father out of our relationship as we take things into our own hands.

- As a child these vows may have been made without you being conscious of them, even in the womb.
- Vows are usually forgotten until revealed by the Holy Spirit.
- They can lie dormant until triggered by the right person or situations.
- Vows are powerful and resist change. They are the strongest type of judgments.
- Vows block God's good plan for our lives.
- We must release the good vows too as they came from our flesh, not God.
- Vows are like railroad tracks. Our conscious mind may be good, but we can only run on the track set in our childhood.
- **1 out of 5 women in America make inner vows because they were molested by a trusted man** (a father, grandfather, brother, etc.) She may vow to "shut down."

How To Break Inner Vows

1. Look for stubborn practices in the old nature – compulsive behaviors.
2. ***They usually work in tandem with bitter roots, hidden resentments, and fears.***
3. Take authority ("*exousia*") over it. The person could say, "In the name of Jesus, I break this inner vow ___ (which you then state)."
4. This prayer should be voiced so the inner child hears it. "I break this inner vow of _____. Inner child, I release you from this habit of _____. I restore you to the original delight of your soul to share with others. I release you to open your heart and be with others. Lord, continue to work in my life until one day I realize I am free."

Worksheet Handout for Hindrances to Becoming One in Marriage

Father created us to have relationships first with Him and then with each other. The most powerful and strongest relationship He designed was for a man and woman to join together in marriage and become one “flesh.” Besides the sexual union of a man and woman, the Hebrew word used for “flesh” can also be used to mean the whole body of the man and woman become one “body.” This is more in line with **Gen. 1:27** where, before the fall, the man and woman were both referred to as “man.” I believe this “oneness” was Father’s original intent for a man and woman in marriage. This covenant relationship of marriage was meant to last a lifetime. However, because of all the differences and problems we bring into our marriage, achieving that level of oneness is not automatic. It’s a process that requires time and effort with many potential hindrances trying to stop us from experiencing the beautiful union Father desires each one of us to have.

Before the next time we meet, use the questions and activities below to help you get past the potential hindrances in becoming one in your marriage. Have fun with this worksheet and enjoy the journey to greater oneness in your relationship!

Dealing with Ungodly Beliefs

1. Look through the handout on “Husband and Wife Complementary Reinforcing Ungodly Beliefs” and pick out several that may stand out to you and talk about how that might affect your relationship. Ask Father to help you write out some Godly Beliefs that will counter the lies presented by these ungodly beliefs.
2. Are there any other ungodly beliefs that you might have about men, women, or marriage that you may have heard or thought based upon your own experiences at home growing up and observing other married couples. If there are any, again ask Father to help you develop some Godly Beliefs to counter these.

The Crazy Cycle

1. Make two lists of ways that you would feel honored or respected for the man and ways that you would feel loved and cherished for the woman. Exchange your lists and talk about what each of you put down. Be sure to express how each would make you feel and explain what you meant if it is not clear to the other person.

Attachment Styles

1. Look over the 4 attachment styles on page 3 and see which one seems to fit you best. You may have some overlap between two or more styles, but one should stand out as the strongest. Share with each other which one you chose and why you chose it. Only one attachment style is considered “healthy” for establishing and maintaining good love-bonded relationships, but all 4 can work into healthy relationships by modifying your attachment style and/or by seeking help. Just knowing what you and your spouse’s attachment styles are will allow you to be more loving, compassionate, forgiving, and understanding of each other as your different styles crash against each other!

Bitterroot Judgments

1. Together ask Father for His help, and each of you make a list of where you might have made a judgment against a person, group of people, positions or roles that people take, habits, ethnic groups, gender, marriage styles, roles in marriage, parents, etc. If you believe that you may have made a judgment, take the list for breaking judgments on page 7 and walk through the steps so you both can be free!
2. Together ask Father to show you if you have made any inner vows about how you will live your life or the decisions you will make that take God out of the relationship. If you believe you have made any vows, use the steps on page 7 to break those vows.

Romance

1. Make a list of 10 romantic places that you both would like to visit sometime during your life together. Dream about what fun things and activities that you would do for each of these places. Talk about how that makes you feel just talking about your dreams together.
2. Plan something romantic that you can do together before the wedding and then do it!