

5 STEP ACTION
The PLAN TO A
HAPPY & HEALTHY
Marriage
WORKBOOK

INCREASE THE JOY
OF SANCTITY, SAFETY, AND
STABILITY IN YOUR HOME

A GLOBAL INITIATIVE OF THE MARRIAGE RESTORATION PROJECT
KEEPING COUPLES TOGETHER, HAPPILY

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The following exercises are designed to complement the material in both the book and the audio cds. The questions are designed to get you thinking about how you can practically apply what you have learned. To gain the most from these exercises, please read the chapter in the book and listen to the corresponding audio before completing. If you are doing this program along with your spouse, you may want to do the exercises together or separate

STEP 2: SEAL YOUR EXITS

Sealing your exits is a logical continuation of commitment. Once you have decided to work harder to be present to the idea of relationship, the next step is to make sure that you are focused on the relationship as opposed to elsewhere. While there are more serious exits you can take to escape your relationship such as infidelity and substance abuse, there are a host of seemingly benign activities that when done with the motive to avoid your spouse, can have a corrosive effect on your marriage. Whether it is work, exercise, your Ipad, or your kids, if you engage in any of these activities to escape your marriage, it may be an exit. Let's explore some of the exits you may be taking that are sucking the energy out of your relationship.

1) How do you exit your relationship? Make a list of any activities in which you engage where even a partial motivation for doing so is to avoid your spouse.

2) What triggers you to want to exit? When do you feel threatened in your relationship and why? Begin to notice when it starts...

3) What exits did you see your caregivers take ? (Ex. Sleep a lot, workaholic)

4) What exits may have you adopted from your caregivers?

5) What exits are you able to seal now, even before your relationship improves?

6) What other exits are easy for you to seal?

7) Are there any exits that you don't think you will be able to seal?
If so, Why?

8) Are there areas where you are susceptible to exits even if you haven't taken them yet? Where are you exit-prone?

You may not even feel the need to close certain exits because you feel that you are getting your needs met better outside of the relationship. Whether it be friends, family, a therapist, or a significant other, if you are feeling fulfilled in those relationships you may be reluctant to get those needs met from your spouse. Let's explore the influence others may be having in keeping you "checked out" of your relationship.

1) Who else do you talk to that listens to you better than your spouse?

2) How else are you getting your needs met? And with whom?

3) Do you see an individual therapist? Are they helpful or unhelpful?

4) Do you fight with your spouse when you get home from a session with your therapist?

5) Does your therapist talk about your spouse and cause you to doubt him/her?

6) Who else may be poisoning your view of your spouse?

7) How may they be jaded against men/women?

8) Could they be jealous of you?

9) Is their advice neutral or do they have an agenda?

Having relationships with members of the opposite sex can be exciting, especially if you are having a hard time in your marriage. You may have found someone who pays attention to you or seems to take an interest in your life. While you may daydream of what it would be liked to be married to this person, you are only seeing their “good side”. Much like when you fell in love with your spouse, you are overlooking or are oblivious to their negative traits. Even a friendship that is not intimate is a dangerous prospect. A marriage between a husband and wife is a sacred bond where no one else should interfere. Being friends with a member of the opposite sex can damage that sanctity and redirect the positive loving feelings that belong for your spouse only.

1) Do you have any relationships with members of the opposite sex?

2) Even if you don't have feelings for them, is it possible they may have feelings for you?

3) What boundaries and guidelines could you set up to avoid getting into a relationship with another man/woman?

4) When have you felt chemistry with someone you barely knew? Why do you think it happened? Was it physical touch that started it?

