

MARRIAGE  
**COURSE**

After “I Do”  
THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO NEWLYWED LIFE

**MODULE 4**

COMMUNICATION



COMMUNICATION HAS A MAJOR IMPACT ON YOUR MARRIAGE AND CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONNECTION AND DISCONNECTION.

## HOW TO BE **AN AMAZING LISTENER**

### **1 BE PRESENT**

If you're in a place filled with distractions, move to a different room. If timing is bad and you just can't take your mind off of that big presentation you have to give tomorrow, say so and propose a different time to talk so you can give your full attention. Prioritizing your ability to listen and sharing your desire to listen well with your spouse will make them feel more heard before they even open their mouth.

### **2 ASK QUESTIONS AND ENGAGE IN CONVERSATION**

And while your spouse shares, show you're truly listening by asking clarifying questions, like, "What did you do after that?" or "Wow, that does sound hard." In heated conversation, this can also help you make sure you're tracking with the conversation and not making assumptions. Plus, it will help you fight the temptation you feel to start crafting your response instead of listening to the very end.

### **3 PAY ATTENTION TO BODY LANGUAGE**

Have you ever wanted to grab your partner's face and say, "Look at me when I'm talking to you"? Let's just be honest, it's so easy to tell when someone is "fake listening." They may be looking at you and even nodding, but you know they're actually thinking about their response to you or what kind of dessert they want later... Solve this problem by turning toward your spouse when they're speaking and make eye contact with them. Maybe even hold their hand.

# WATCH OUT FOR THESE COMMUNICATION KILLERS



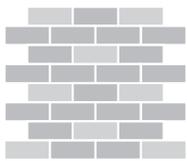
## \_\_\_\_\_ : **blaming or finding fault**

It's different than critiquing or complaining. This killer is an attack on your partner and is often filled with words like “always” and “never.” It can often lead to or be a result of unhealthy/unresolved conflict. This is where the other 3 killers start, and is likely the one you may see in your relationship the most at this stage.



## \_\_\_\_\_ : **turning your back to a perceived attack**

This killer often happens when we feel accused without reason and feel like a victim of our partner's criticism. It often includes shifting the blame to the other person.



## \_\_\_\_\_ : **refusing to communicate/shutting down**

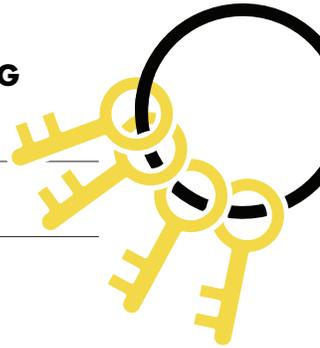
With this killer, the partner not only shuts down, but completely disengages from the spouse. It often can look like the silent treatment, leaving the room, or busying yourself from your spouse.



## \_\_\_\_\_ : **an attitude of looking down on your spouse**

It is a lack of respect. The goal of this killer is to make the other person feel dispensable and despised. The universal sign is eye-rolling. It takes a position of moral superiority over your spouse.

# FOUR KEYS TO UNLOCK COMMUNICATION



## 1 BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT SPENDING TIME TOGETHER TALKING

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## 2 USE MORE "I" STATEMENTS AND LESS "YOU" STATEMENTS

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## 3 BE SPECIFIC

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## 4 AVOID MIND READING

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### GUIDELINES FOR HAVING A

# Difficult Conversation

- You are a team
- Listen to your spouse's heart
- Be open to ideas different from yours
- Be curious and ask questions

## CONCLUSION

**COMMUNICATION IS ABOUT LISTENING,  
BEING WATCHFUL FOR COMMUNICATION  
KILLERS AND BEING CLEAR WHEN YOU  
SPEAK.**

*Recognizing we all have made missteps communicating with our loved ones allows you to course-correct and be intentional about spending time talking with your spouse. Communication is a bridge that connects your heart to your spouse's heart.*

### LET'S NOT FORGET:

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