



Marriage Retreat

Wellbeing in our Marriage

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Building a Health Marriage

- In marriage, it's 100% each person
- We bring and give of ourselves
- Each person is responsible for themselves and bring their 'self' to the marriage
- Together, both people are responsible for building, nurturing, valuing, regarding, respecting the commitment made
- Your marriage is a relationship requiring intention, value and respect.
- Like individual wellbeing, your marriage is also a journey, requiring you to reflect on the foundations and you want to build your marriage moving forward.
- How do you attend to the wellbeing of your marriage?



A photograph of an olive branch with several green olives, set against a warm sunset background with orange and yellow light filtering through the leaves. A semi-transparent white circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title text.

Principles of Wellbeing



Physical



Emotional



Social /
Relational



Spiritual



Psychological
(mind)



Contextual

Wellbeing

- Wellbeing in marriage is about the marriage functioning effectively even with the varied challenges of daily life
- Wellbeing is about the whole marriage, as well as the interdependent components

Wellbeing

Healthy wellbeing assists people to

- live fulfilled lives
- maintain healthy relationships
- navigate the 'world around us' & challenges experienced throughout life

Marriage Wellbeing

Reflecting on our histories:

- Family of Origin
- Attachment
- Differentiation
- Ideas of Marriage

Understanding our Now:

- Communication – connect to communicate
- The Relationship House
- Internal & external to marriage
- Learning from each other: Openness, intentional, hospitality

Building into our Future

- Hopes, dreams
- Realistic planning

Wellbeing in Marriage

Floor 1: Build Love Maps

- Learning about and understanding your husband/wife's inner world.
 - What are their likes and dislikes?
 - Who are their close friends?
 - What are the interests?
 - What was their childhood like?
 - What do they appreciate at the end of the day?
- Maintaining an awareness of your partner's world.



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Wellbeing in Marriage

Floor 2: Share Fondness and Admiration

- Sharing with your spouse what you admire and respect about them
- Sharing the characteristics, you appreciate and value
- Being able to articulate the big and little reasons you love your partner.
 - I enjoy your humour
 - I appreciate your kindness to be when you bring me a cup of tea
- Building a culture of appreciation, fondness, affection and respect within your relationship.



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Wellbeing in Marriage

Floor 3: Turn Towards instead of Away

- Emotional connection
- Moments of everyday life, big or small, are the building blocks of a relationship.
- Spouses may either turn toward, turn away, or turn against a bid for connection from you
- People makes bids, a gesture, verbal or nonverbal, for positive & needed connection: comfort, attention, conversation, humor, affection or support
- Turning away or against, brings challenge to the relationship
- Recognising and turning towards each other's bids creates a safe space for both to express themselves and their needs



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Wellbeing in Marriage

Floor 4: The Positive Perspective

- Seeing the best in each other based on experience and the strength and trust of friendship.
- Don't rush to offense or criticism, giving the benefit of the doubt
- Positive attitudes with problem-solving discussions and the success of repair attempts
- Experiencing and believing that you're on the same team solidifies the union and strengthens both people from the inside out.



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Wellbeing in Marriage

Floor 5: Manage Conflict

- Managing conflict as relationship conflict is natural and has functional, positive aspects.
- Taking their feelings and desires into account instead of doing everything your own way.
- Continuing to talk whether problems are solvable or ongoing, being open to negotiate and compromise
- Practice self soothing techniques for when you are becoming overwhelmed. Taking a walk or taking deep breaths will help you find calm
- De-escalate a conflict.
- Repair a conflict within 24 hours.

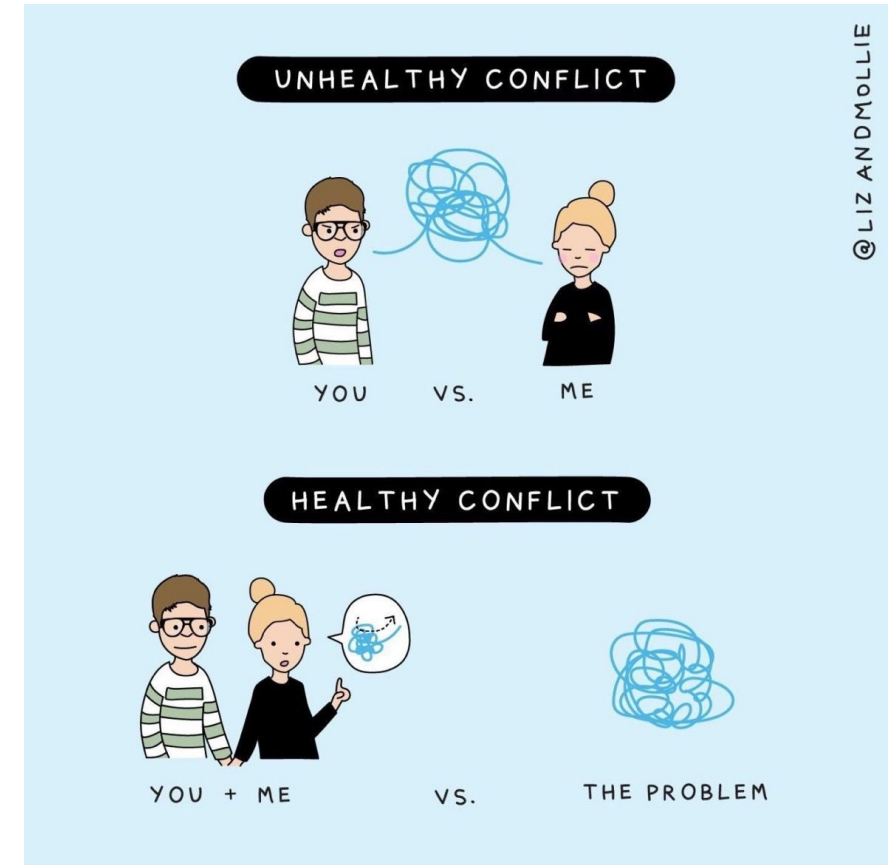


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Responding to Conflict

CURB

- C – Connect: Present, Intentional and ‘with’ the Other
- U – Understand: Listen, clarify and understand
- R – Reframe: See the other person’s perspective
- B – Brainstorm: Problem solve and find solutions together



Wellbeing in Marriage

Floor 6: Make Life Dreams Come True

- With healthy companionship comes someone who will both encourage you in your goals and help you reach them
- Creating space for an atmosphere that encourages each person to talk honestly about their dreams, values, convictions and aspirations and to find ways to reach these
- This includes play, fun, and exploration/adventure.
- Each person demonstrating they want the best possible life for their spouse and a willingness help it happen



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Floor 7: Create Shared Meaning

- Building and understanding an inner world as a couple, a shared sense of purpose.
- Asking questions including, What impact do we want to have?
- Creating rituals of connection together, both formal & informal aspects, including shared goals & supporting each other's life roles
- Agreeing about aspects of the relationship such as what home, money, sex and time together/apart mean.
- Blending each person's history, meaning, culture, values, and beliefs to create a new culture.



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Wellbeing in Marriage

Pillars: Trust and Commitment

- In a healthy, supportive relationship, two people make the decision to have faith in each other and grow together.
- **Trust** develops when have each others best interests in mind and acts in ways that benefit you. Valuing each other, each person's interests and needs.
- There are 5 ways to build trust:
 1. Make *being* trustworthy a main priority in your relationship. Trust needs to be earned.
 2. Act to maximize your spouse's well-being.
 3. Know that trust is built in small, positive moments in your daily interactions.
 4. Avoid negatively comparing your spouse with others.
 5. Generate frequent



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Wellbeing in Marriage

Pillars: Trust and Commitment

- **Commitment** means believing and behaving as if this relationship is a lifelong journey, for better or for worse.
- When challenge comes, both will work to improve it.
- Cherishing each other's positive qualities and nurturing an attitude of gratitude about what you have with this person.



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A photograph of an olive branch with several green olives, set against a warm, golden sunset sky with soft clouds. The sun is partially obscured by the leaves, creating a lens flare effect. A semi-transparent white circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text.

Building Wellbeing



Kindness

Kindness reminds us of being seen, heard, valued, connected and belonging with others

Kindness demonstrates a commitment to the wellbeing of others & ourselves and an understanding of the common humanity we share as people.

When we are kind, we can show care and love to others & ourselves:

- authentic
- genuine
- compassionate
- present
- listening to understand
- encouraging
- considerate and more.

Kindness

Kindness shows respect and brings nurturance to others.

It can let a person know

- they have been seen, belong,
- can receive comfort when stress and distress is overwhelming,
- can help someone have a brighter day,
- have hope they can manage a challenging season, with certainty someone will be by their side.

This can be the kindness of God, who will bring absolute certainty even in the most uncertain of times.

This can also be the kindness we bring when we connect with others, and also ourselves.

Research on Kindness: has been found it to add to wellbeing and more satisfaction within relationships.



Building Kindness into our Lives and Relationships

Daily Decision, Step by Step

- Colossians 3:12 says to us “clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” – what a timely reminder,
- In the morning and throughout the day, pause and connect with God, be intentional with this passage, asking God to help you each day to grow and bring kindness to others and yourself.
- Being kind to yourself is so helpful – allow yourself self compassion and kindness as we remember we are all on a journey when it comes to being kind and bringing kindness.
- Allow yourself to talk with Him, and trusted people in your life as you learn to grow in this area

Building Kindness into our Lives and Relationships

Being Intentional With Our Thoughts

We can choose helpful, unhelpful, kind, unkind thoughts about people, and ourselves. It's important to be intentional with our thinking, bringing it back to God's word, asking His Spirit to help us.

- We also have to put in the effort to manage our thoughts as our thought impact our feelings and what we do.
- Be in the moment, the now, and understanding we can get lost in our thoughts and feelings. Let's work on catching our thoughts, replacing negative self-talk with kind, compassionate, thoughts.
- Noticing how we are thinking and feeling, and how we can look after ourselves.

Building Kindness into our Lives and Relationships

Being Intentional With Our Words And Actions

Our words and actions are equally important. Sharing kind words and actions with others and ourselves is vital for wellbeing and healthy relationships.

- Saying one or more kind words
- Catching yourself being self-critical, and say something kinder to yourself;
- Call, text, visit someone
- Write a card
- Check in on someone & encourage them
- Listening to music
- Sharing a meal
- Prayer
- Reading
- Taking a lunch break
- Staying in the moment
- Exercise with someone
- Remembering to breathe
- Connecting with God and any ways you can think of



Kindness – Balm for the Soul

We need kindness in our world at the moment, it brings hope, joy, peace and a wonderful regard for each other.

I encourage you to think of two ways you can show kindness to someone else and to yourselves.

Communication Skills

01

CONNECT

- Important to connect prior to communicating and problem solving

02

COOPERATION

- Agree to work on together
- Brainstorm ideas to resolve
- Start with 'easier' topics first

03

MANAGING EMOTION

- Respect
- Turn taking
- Take Cool Down time if needed, better than aggression & avoidance
- "I feel... when... because..."

Communication Skills

04

EMPATHY

- Learning to listen to and understand the needs and concerns of other people.
- Being in another person's shoes

05

COMMUNICATION

- Listening to understand
- Being respectful
- Turn taking

06

COMPROMISE

- Finding common ground and a resolution
- No Resolution: finding some ground to agree on

Communication Skills

07

SAFETY

- Safety first
- No place for aggression and violence

08

WORKING TOGETHER

- Working on projects
- Problem-solving and decision-making skills.

09

CALM & RELAXATION

- Engage in calming & grounding activities
- Laugh
- Visualize your favourite place
- Breathe deeply
- Savour a food or drink

Communication Skills

10

FAMILY CHALLENGE

- Seek to understand
- Boundaries
- Making plans within the parameters

11

PRIORITISE

- Making relationships a priority

12

REACH OUT

- Sometimes we need extra support
- A trusted friend, pastor, professional
- Helplines & your doctor