

Nine Steps to Save Your Marriage

for Husbands

Step 7: Be Hopeful and Optimistic

W9-h7



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Step Seven: Be Hopeful and Optimistic

Objective: At the end of this step you will be able to change negative thoughts into more productive thoughts, through modifying Importance and changing Expectations. You will also have practiced Acceptance and Forgiveness.

Exercise 1: Importance

Lending too much *importance* to something can lead to a bad feeling. From a series of statements, select any statement that will help you reduce the over-importance that you once gave to something. Add your own, as well.

- “Oh, it’s nothing. I’m just so glad to have her back.”
- “OOPS! That’s how the old me would have felt.”
- “Don’t sweat the small stuff. Remember, it’s all small stuff.”
- “What she did isn’t important enough for me to lower her pedestal.”
- “Remember! Love! Honor! And Cherish!
- “In 100 years, it won’t matter.”
- “Sometime in the future, I’ll laugh about this”.
- “My goal is a great relationship. How will I handle this?”
- “It’s a woman thing; no big deal.”
- “My buttons don’t work any more; she can’t push my buttons.”
- “Is being upset what I want for my life?”
- “Think about my goals for this relationship. How can I be positive?”

Exercise 2: Expectations

Having unrealistic *expectations* can lead to bad feelings. Select from a series of statements, any statement that will help you manage your expectations. Add your own, as well.

- “What did I expect? She’s just a woman.”
- “Whoa! Surprise! Next time, I’ll adjust my expectations.”
- “OOPS! Unrealistic expectations again.”
- “How long will I keep making myself feel bad by having unrealistic expectations?”
- “Remember! Almost every expectation can be unrealistic.”
- “Now I remember! No expectations, no disappointments.
- “In the future, I’ll have NO expectations.”
- “Expect little! Anything good will be a surprise.”
- “I don’t expect that anymore; I’m a grown up now.”
- “What do I expect? She’s an alien.”
- “What is, is just what I expected.”

Step Seven: Be Hopeful and Optimistic

Exercise 2 (cont'd)

Exercise 3: Acceptance

- a. Make notes about things you haven't *accepted* in the past.

- b. Write down what you will be more *accepting* of in the future.

- c. List your reasons for being more *accepting*, e.g. having a great relationship, giving something less importance, knowing what to expect, etc.

- d. Select from a series of statements, any statement that will be helpful in your *acceptance* of "the way it is." Add your own, as well.

- "I can't change history."
- "I'm wise to accept that history happened."
- "Thinking about it won't change it."
- "Just let my negative thoughts flow through."
- "I'll laugh about this someday."
- "It is what it is, and I choose to accept what is."
- "What is, is exactly what it should be."
- "In a week (year, etc.), it won't matter."
- "Let it go. Accept what is."
- "It's God's will, or my Karma, or fate — whatever."
- "It's worth putting up with a lot for a loving relationship."

Step Seven: Be Hopeful and Optimistic

Exercise 3 cont'd

Exercise 4: Forgiveness

a. Make notes about people and acts that don't deserve *forgiveness*.

b. Write down notes about people and acts that you're going to *forgive* — for your own benefit.

c. Select from a series of statements, any statement that will be helpful in your practice in *forgiveness*. Add your own, as well.

- “Failure to forgive is the severest form of self-punishment.”
- “Forgiveness is a modest price to pay for peace of mind.”
- “Forgiveness frees me to have more love and less pain.”
- “Don't forgive someone because he or she deserve it. Forgiving is something I do for myself.”
- “If I forgive, I am free to create my experience of my life with more loving thoughts, and fewer pained and angry thoughts.”
- “If I can forgive others, I can forgive myself.”
- “Don't forgive someone because they deserve it, they may not. Forgiveness is a gift I give myself.”
- “Forgiveness does not change the past...but it enlarges the future.”
- “Any man can seek revenge; it takes a king or prince to grant a pardon.”
- “Forgiveness is a gift of great value, yet it costs nothing.”
- “When a deep injury is done to us, we will never recover until we forgive.”
- “A good marriage is the union of two forgivers.”
- “Forgiveness is a choice, not a decision. It's an act of will.”
- “Don't wait to forgive until I feel like it. I may never feel like it. Feelings may take time to heal after the choice of forgiveness is made.”

Please continue with Step 8: Decide About Intimacy