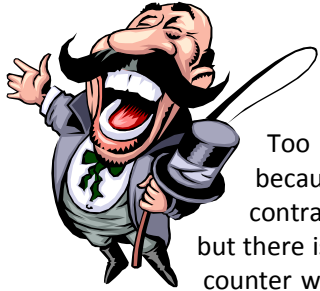


A Marriage Minute™

A simple help to make your marriage just a little better this week.

AU CONTRAIRE!



“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”—Amos 3:3

Too many couples have communication problems because at least one party –sometimes both- has a contrary spirit. No, I don’t mean they are possessed, but there is an inner default mechanism programmed to counter whatever the other spouse says. We hear it all the time in the counseling room, “I say black; you say white.” Sometimes we observe one spouse just sitting, watching and waiting for something they can pounce on to contradict or challenge. Whether or not there is merit to the contradiction, the result is that the parties will be in opposition to each other instead of being “one.” If there’s going to be any meaningful, mutually edifying communication, it must begin with both parties feeling they are on the same side, straining forward together, as one. Establishing that oneness provides the atmosphere of grace that makes it possible to communicate. Even if you disagree with your spouse, you can still find something to agree about first to establish that emotional unity, and from that place you can express your thoughts and opinions speaking the truth in love. In any event, choose to respond positively instead of reacting negatively. Don’t let that contrary spirit shut down communication and intimacy.

Question For The Both of Us: Do You think I have a contrary spirit? Can you give me an example? How does it make you feel?

Prayer For The Both of Us: Lord, help us to have the presence of mind and self-control to respond positively to one another, to agree and to be affirming rather than being negative and contrary. Let us not be ruled by a contrary spirit, but by your Holy Spirit.

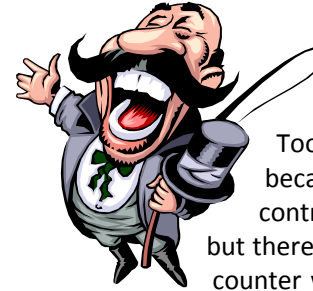
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