

A Marriage Minute

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

LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND



*He who answers before listening—
that is his folly and his shame.*

-Proverbs 18:13

Why do you listen? Do you listen to correct? To contradict? To defend yourself? To “set them straight?” If you can stop for a moment to examine your motive for listening, you can make some changes in your communication that will change the very nature of your marriage. We need to listen to one another for one reason, and one reason only: **to understand!** Effective communication begins with a desire to understand. Intimacy grows with understanding how we see and feel about things. Intimacy is “*into-me-see*.” You can’t do that by correcting or criticizing your spouse, or defending yourself. It’s that simple! You may be right on the facts. In fact, you can be *right* all the way to divorce court, but that won’t help the relationship. You must listen to understand. I didn’t say you will understand. In fact, very often you won’t! But your motive for listening has to be a desire –a “*want to*”- to understand. This is a condition of the heart more than anything else. But only then can oneness begin and intimacy grow. In fact, that becomes the great adventure of growing together --understanding one another. Let your relationship be built on wisdom, and established through understanding. Yes, it takes patience, self-control and spiritual maturity, but the prize is so worth it! It’s called intimacy!

Question For The Both of Us: Do you feel like I listen to try to understand you, or do you feel I just listen to criticize you, or try to get my point across?

Prayer For The Both of Us: Lord give us the maturity and the self-control to be quick to listen. Help us to change the purpose for which we listen. No more criticism and defensiveness. Help us focus not on correcting one another but on understanding one another.

This MARRIAGE MINUTE is brought to you by Marriage & Family Savers Institute.
Visit them at www.marriageandfamily.org.

A Marriage Minute

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

LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND



*He who answers before listening—
that is his folly and his shame.*

-Proverbs 18:13

Why do you listen? Do you listen to correct? To contradict? To defend yourself? To “set them straight?” If you can stop for a moment to examine your motive for listening, you can make some changes in your communication that will change the very nature of your marriage. We need to listen to one another for one reason, and one reason only: **to understand!** Effective communication begins with a desire to understand. Intimacy grows with understanding how we see and feel about things. Intimacy is “*into-me-see*.” You can’t do that by correcting or criticizing your spouse, or defending yourself. It’s that simple! You may be right on the facts. In fact, you can be *right* all the way to divorce court, but that won’t help the relationship. You must listen to understand. I didn’t say you will understand. In fact, very often you won’t! But your motive for listening has to be a desire –a “*want to*”- to understand. This is a condition of the heart more than anything else. But only then can oneness begin and intimacy grow. In fact, that becomes the great adventure of growing together --understanding one another. Let your relationship be built on wisdom, and established through understanding. Yes, it takes patience, self-control and spiritual maturity, but the prize is so worth it! It’s called intimacy!

Question For The Both of Us: Do you feel like I listen to try to understand you, or do you feel I just listen to criticize you, or try to get my point across?

Prayer For The Both of Us: Lord give us the maturity and the self-control to be quick to listen. Help us to change the purpose for which we listen. No more criticism and defensiveness. Help us focus not on correcting one another but on understanding one another.

This MARRIAGE MINUTE is brought to you by Marriage & Family Savers Institute.
Visit them at www.marriageandfamily.org.