

MARRIAGE EXERCISE #5 - ACCEPTANCE

REMOVE THE WORD "YOU"

Rationale

People gravitate towards environments of acceptance and away from environments of rejection. Although we usually know, husbands can be critical of their wives and never even realize it. A lot of our criticism starts with the word "you." "You didn't do _____," "You never _____." "You used to _____, but now you don't." "If only you would _____." Get the picture? Stop criticizing your wife and you may find her leaning in your direction.

Challenge Assignment

For the next thirty days, you're going to stop criticizing your wife. Remove the word "you" from your vocabulary. Accept her and do not criticize her in any way. No matter what she does or doesn't do, says or doesn't say, hold your tongue and do not criticize her. Do not push back. Period.

Debrief

Start a conversation about the difference between criticism and acceptance. Be ready because guys are going to come in fully loaded with all the reasons this was horrible . . . how unfair it is, how dishonest it is not to let her know when she's screwing up, how "she really needs to know how I feel" . . . stuff like that. Ask each guy to share what happened when he stopped using the word "you" to start criticism, defend himself, or keep an argument going. Ask each guy if the environment in his home was better or worse while he practiced this. Ask each guy if he can remember a time when he criticized his wife and she came back with "Oh honey, thank you. I'm so glad you pointed that out. I'll start working on that immediately!?" Answer is *never*. There's a lesson in there!