



Do you have any fears of being a “doormat” if you really try to respect your husband unconditionally? Write your honest thoughts here:



Do you have any fears of looking like a fool if you try to unconditionally love your wife and fail—or she doesn’t respond with respect? Write your honest thoughts here:



One (or both) of you may feel a little uncomfortable discussing your answer(s) to the questions above. Admitting your fears and then talking about them can be beneficial, but only if both of you are willing to share your hearts.

2 The concerns described in Question 1 raise another major question that spouses have. Read “Who Should Make the First Move?” (book pages 74–75) carefully. What is Emerson’s answer to spouses who wonder: “Should I make the first move?”

Why does Emerson claim that the spouse who makes the first move can rarely lose?



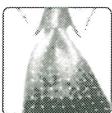
This is another question that you may feel reluctant to discuss. Even so, being willing to discuss this is, in a sense, being willing to make the first move! If one of you is willing to take the risk, the rewards will be well worth it.

3 In “Not a Doormat but a Woman with Power” (book pages 75–77), Emerson attempts to assure wives he is not a chauvinist in disguise, trying to lure them into a life of subservience. Read this material carefully, then go down the “list of a wife’s fears” below and check off anything that you believe is a concern in your marriage.



Which of the following fears concerns you to some degree at this time?

- If I respect him, he won’t really be more loving.
- If I respect him, I will wind up a doormat, and doing whatever he wants.
- If I respect him, I’ll have to bury my brains, never think for myself or speak my mind.
- If I respect him, he will ignore how I hurt and where I’m vulnerable.
- If I respect him, he’ll become arrogant and self-centered.
- If I respect him, I’ll have to do something I don’t really feel, and that’s impossible.
- My fear, in my own words, is:



Do you see anything in the above list that may be of concern to your wife? Check those concerns and be ready to talk about them.



This question provides plenty of opportunity for sensitive sharing. Wife, if you don't have any of these fears, you should tell your husband, which will be a big encouragement to him. Husband, if your wife does have fears about showing you unconditional respect, you can do several things: First, be thankful that she is courageous and humble enough to tell you. Second, remember she is a good-willed woman who wants your love. Third, do not dismiss her fears as "silly" or just say, "Oh, you don't have to worry about that." Fourth, seek to understand her and empathize as much as possible.



4 According to "Not a Doormat but a Woman with Power" (book pages 75–77), one of the ways a wife feels empowered is when she corrects or "mothers" her husband (page 76). According to Emerson's counsel, why doesn't this work? Finish his observation on page 77: when a wife continues to mother, correct, or goad a husband into changing, she wins the battle but loses _____.



This question is similar to Questions 13 and 14 in Session 3, which dealt with the wife's scolding. If you choose to discuss this one, be careful of stepping on each other's air hose. If the two of you can share without arguing, it will be helpful for him to explain when he feels he is being "corrected and mothered," and for her to learn how she can come across a bit differently as she constantly sees things that need putting right. Remember, if you can avoid battling each other, and see each other as an ally, not an enemy, you will win the war of the Crazy Cycle.



5 In "What If You're Afraid to Take the Risk?" (book pages 77–80), there are several letters from wives who were hesitant to try showing their husbands respect—but who trusted God anyway. Read these letters carefully. Write out phrases that may give you help, hope, or assurance for your marriage.



Husbands, while this question is designed primarily for wives, you can benefit from answering it as well and then comparing notes with your wife. Can you identify with why the husbands described in these letters were so energized? As you share with your wife, what can you say to her to alleviate any fears or questions she may still have? Whatever you do, refrain from shaming your wife as she awakens to your need for respect.

6 In “Husbands, Remember Only One Idea—Love” (book pages 80–82), Emerson admits that there have been plenty of times when he has felt like the husband who wrote in to say: “I have spent the last twenty years literally consumed with trying to figure out what is going on in our marriage.” What has helped Emerson during those times? What are the two questions a husband must focus on when his wife gets critical or negative? (See book page 81.)



Even though Question 6 is directed primarily toward the husband, the wife can benefit by answering it as well and then comparing her answers to her husband's. As a wife, do you agree that when you get critical or angry you are actually saying, in one way or another, “I need your love, please love me!”? As a husband, are you remembering to ask yourself: “Will what I do or say next come across as loving or unloving?” Ask your wife how she thinks you are doing in that department.

7 Read the story of how “This Husband Decoded in Jail” (book pages 82–85). As he spent the entire weekend in jail, this man had an “epiphany experience” that helped him to finally understand his wife’s angry messages. What stands out in this story from your point of view as a spouse?



Compare your answers, which may be quite different. Concerning this man’s story, Emerson says: “Husbands and wives please note: physical violence against a wife is reprehensible and evil. Sharing this man’s letter should not be construed as sanctioning such evil in any way. The story shows what can happen when God works in a husband’s life and he learns how to decode his wife.”

8 Two more letters from husbands who learned to decode their wives are on book pages 85–86. As you read these letters, make notes on some important ways a spouse can decode. What phrases or ideas stand out? Which ones should you use more often?



Compare your answers. How are all of these ideas about decoding summed up in Emerson’s observation, “The Crazy Cycle can be slowed—and stopped—if only we would have eyes to see and ears to hear”? Not only is it important for you to “get it” (understand what you need to do), it is also very important to listen and respond when your mate “gets it” as well. (See Emerson’s additional comments on Question 8 in *Workbook Appendix VI*.)

Questions for Chapter Six

9 Chapter Six opens with a letter from a woman who was trying to respect her alcoholic husband, but she did not “want to be a hypocrite.” How does Emerson answer this concern (book pages 87–88)? Why does continuing with criticism and anger only mean that a wife shoots herself in both feet?



This could be a delicate question, especially if the wife has any feelings about being a hypocrite as she tries to show the husband unconditional respect. Go slowly and gently and remember that practicing Love and Respect isn't about feelings; it's about doing what the Scriptures teach.

10 On book page 89 Emerson tells of having asked a wife: “Are you afraid that your respectful manner will lessen your chances of motivating your husband to change?” Read her response, then write your own. According to Emerson, “Obeying God’s Word does not make a wife a powerless hypocrite.” Do you agree? Explain.



Husband, while this question is directed to your wife, write your answer as well, then discuss it with her. As your wife shows you respect, especially when you are not as loving as you could be, do you see her as “power-less” or “power-full”? Why?

11 Read the letter from a wife at the bottom of book page 90, plus the paragraph at the top of page 91. What did she get out of being respectful? What has she made sure to do in response to all his loving acts? How do you think the husband feels when he comes home to a clean house, a hot meal, and a wife who looks good and acts like she is happy to see him?



You and your mate may see this question as rather simple, not to mention that it flies in the face of a culture where a stay-at-home-spouse is unrealistic in many households. Nonetheless, there are principles here any couple can apply. Today's woman expects her emotional needs to be met, even if she has a career, because her traditional need for love has not changed. Conversely, a husband has a traditional need for respect, but when he expresses it, some want to tar and feather him. If the way your spouse wants to be treated seems unrealistic or outdated, look beyond all the cultural baggage and see the deeper need to be loved or respected. Talk about why the Love and Respect Connection is so simple, yet sometimes so difficult. Why can it be so powerful when used by two good-willed people?

12 Read “Refuse to Play Rodney Dangerfield—Don’t Stonewall!” (book pages 91–92). Instead of muttering, “I just don’t get no respect,” husbands are to move toward their wives even when they are receiving “verbal deathblows.” How does Proverbs 12:16 help a husband when his wife is being abusively disrespectful?



Handle this question (and each other) with care. As a husband, you have the opportunity to apologize for the times you “stonewalled” your wife when you received what felt like “verbal deathblows” from her when she felt angry (and unloved). Tell her that from now on you want to follow Proverbs 12:16 and “conceal the dishonor.” In other words, no stonewalling—no getting angry in return. You just want to keep coming with unconditional love. As a wife, you have the opportunity to apologize for your anger and promise to give your husband unconditional respect. Both of you realize you can’t be perfect at practicing Love and Respect, but you also know that just being willing to try means real progress. Pray together for guidance as you seek to slow and stop the Crazy Cycle.

13 In “I Used to Say, ‘I’ll Show Her!’” (book pages 92–94), Emerson confesses how he reacted badly to Sarah when feeling disrespected. Then he discovered a way to motivate her to be more respectful, which in turn motivated him to be more loving! Read this section carefully and find the combination of short sentences Emerson used to develop what amounts to the “Love and Respect ‘I’ Message.” Also turn to *Love & Respect* Appendix A, page 306, “To communicate feelings or start discussion,” where an example is given for the wife as well as the husband. To start memorizing the “Love and Respect ‘I’ Message,” fill in the blanks below:

As a husband, you can say: “That felt _____ . Did I just come across as _____ ?”

As a wife, you can say: "That felt _____ . Did I just come across as _____ ?"

Note on book page 306 what you are to say if your spouse answers yes to your question. Is the "Love and Respect 'I' Message" something you can use in your marriage? Write your thoughts:



Compare your answers and also discuss what Emerson and Sarah have done when angry, which is stated in Ephesians 4:26 (see "It Works—Even on Our Bad Days," book page 94). Read this verse together. Could this verse change the way you deal with anger?

14 In "If I Can Do It, So Can You" (book pages 95–97), there are two letters from struggling husbands (bottom of page 95, top of page 96). Finish this bit of advice Emerson gives both of them: "Gentlemen, it is true you are not designed by God to enjoy contempt, but He does call you to _____ ."



As you talk together, note the comments by marriage researcher John Gottman who concluded it is more effective for a husband to embrace his wife's anger (bottom of book page 96). (For more discussion ideas, see Emerson's additional comments in *Workbook* Appendix VI.)

15 At the bottom of book page 96, top of 97, Emerson suggests what a husband can say if his wife vents her feelings with venomous remarks: "Honey, I love you. I don't want this. When you talk this way, I know you're feeling unloved. Let's work on

this. I want to come across more lovingly, and I hope you would like to come across more respectfully.”



Because a husband does not love naturally, God commands him to do so (see Ephesians 5:25–33). It may never feel “natural” to say something like what is quoted above, when your wife is venting her anger at you, but as a man of honor, are you willing to try it?

YES _____ NO _____ NOT SURE _____



If your husband used Emerson’s suggestions when you were venting your anger at him, how might this make you feel? Would it help? Why or why not?



Compare your answers. Is Emerson’s suggestion for turning aside a wife’s anger something that could work in your marriage right now? Talk about how it would feel in the middle of an argument or angry exchange for the husband to talk about wanting to be more loving and hoping the wife could be more respectful. (For more ideas on defusing anger, see “Things to Remember,” *Love & Respect* Appendix A, pages 305–6.)

16 Read the story of “The Husband Who Never Stopped Loving” (book pages 97–99). Note two or three things that stand out for you in the wife’s letter about how her husband wouldn’t give up on her, even when it seemed hopeless.



Compare notes, then talk and pray about your own marriage. Emerson adds this note on the value of prayer: "As you go through this study of *Love & Respect*, you may have moments of feeling overwhelmed. All husbands and wives who are believers in Christ have His promise: 'Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest' (Matthew 11:28). And Peter adds: '[cast] all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you' (1 Peter 5:7). If you are feeling weary and heavy-laden, will you pray to the Father? Will you cast your anxieties on Him? Do this because He cares for you. Jesus, the Perfect One, depended on the Father while on earth. All God's children are free to do the same. Depend on God for all your needs. He is eager to help you!"

17 Read carefully the second paragraph on book page 99 (beginning, "No matter how desperate or hopeless a marriage may seem . . ."). What do you think? Can love and respect, plus basic goodwill in both spouses, conquer anything?

I TOTALLY AGREE _____

I PARTIALLY AGREE _____

I DOUBT IT _____

My comments:



You may know people who face tremendous problems in their marriage such as adultery, abuse, or addictions. You may face tremendous problems yourself. Does Love and Respect work when the going gets really tough? (Those who may need specific help to deal with adultery, spousal abuse, and drug addictions, go to the following Web site: <http://www.loveandrespect.com/pearl.>)

Questions for Chapter Seven

18 As he has counseled wives over the years, Emerson often hears comments like these: “Forgive him? Yes, I know what Jesus said about seventy times seven, and I’ve forgiven him at least that many times! But when is he going to ask me for forgiveness? When is he ever going to care about how much he hurts me?” Is there some truth in comments like these? Shouldn’t a husband ask for forgiveness in order to be forgiven? Can granting forgiveness, even when it isn’t wanted, really help the situation at all? Read the opening book pages of Chapter Seven (101–3). Then put down your response to Emerson’s teaching:



Talk about what it means to forgive. Do you agree with Emerson’s assertion that when you forgive someone for being unloving, you give up your right to hold a grudge? Note the letter from the wife on page 103. What insights does she provide that might make forgiveness possible, even if it doesn’t seem practical? Husbands, don’t skip this material because it seems to be directed to wives. You may need to do some forgiving yourself, or perhaps it is time you asked for forgiveness. Forgiving someone, or being forgiven, can be a humbling experience. Each one of you should try to be sensitive to the other’s needs at this time.

19 At the bottom of book page 105, Emerson writes, “Nothing is easier than judging, nothing is harder than forgiving, and nothing can reap more blessings.” Read the letters from the wife whose husband strayed into adultery (pages 104–5). How did she find it in her heart to forgive him? What was her driving motivation?



Compare notes on what you see in this woman's letters. She faced having to decide to forgive her husband at the hardest level: for his immorality. It may be of help to spend time together reading and discussing Emerson's views on forgiveness at two levels (see *Workbook Appendix III*, page 207). He gives sound biblical advice to the spouse who has been wounded deep in the heart by a mate's adultery. For the woman who wrote the letters, her strongest motivation was, obviously, her faith and trust in God. She had no trust for her husband, and little or no inclination to forgive. But when she did, he responded. Emerson adds: "Situations like this do not always have such a happy ending, but God calls us to obey Him and His word, one step at a time, and to accept what happens as His will."

20

Read book page 106, "If You Fail to Love Her, Rebound," then respond to the following:



How good a rebounder are you? (In other words, how well do you bounce back when you are unloving and get clobbered with contempt?)



How good a rebounder is your husband when you criticize him with good reason? (For that matter, how good a rebounder are you when he reacts to your disrespect?)



Talk together about Emerson's "rebound" analogy. Even if you know nothing about basketball, the principle is there to use: a good rebounder is determined to try again and again. Do one or both of you need to be a better rebounder?

21 Read Emerson's humorous account of how he has had to rebound after blowing it with Sarah (bottom of book page 106 to top of 109). What truths in his transparent admissions stand out for you?



As a husband, note especially the two choices you have if your wife comes at you "with disrespect flashing in her eyes and venom shooting from her tongue": defend your pride or surrender with unconditional love. As a wife how would you respond if your husband said, "I'm sorry. I know I've been unloving"?

22 In “Marriage—A Two-Become-One Proposition” (book pages 109–12), Emerson claims that when couples practice love and respect, “Bad marriages become good, boring marriages become exciting, and good marriages become better.” Note these words from a husband who from all appearances had a good marriage (and even conducted marriage seminars with his wife): “On a scale of 1–10 we were living with a 5–6 marriage most of the time.” When he and his wife started making Love and Respect a priority, that number went way up. How would you rate your marriage right now on a scale of 1–10, with 10 being “great”? Our marriage is a _____.



Be aware that this question could be difficult to discuss. Be sensitive to each other and willing to hear the other person’s reasons for the number he/she chose. Concentrate on agreeing about how you can work together to make that number higher.

23 In “From the Crazy Cycle to the Energizing Cycle” (book pages 112–13), Emerson reminds spouses that you can slow or stop the Crazy Cycle, but you can never get off completely. He and Sarah know they have to work continually at controlling the Crazy Cycle, and some of the best ways they have learned to do this are stated in capsule form in *Love & Respect* Appendix A, especially in “Always Ask Yourself” and “Things to Remember” (pages 305–6). Take time to go over these suggestions now, and write down several ideas that stand out as things you want to practice as you move into Part II—The Energizing Cycle.



As you complete your study of Part I: The Crazy Cycle, share and pray together concerning these questions:

1. How much progress have we made in slowing and stopping the Crazy Cycle?

2. What can we do, as a couple, to keep the Crazy Cycle under control?

A JOURNAL OF MY JOURNEY TO LOVE AND RESPECT

This section of your workbook is your private area to write whatever you are thinking or feeling at this time. The Scripture Meditations can help you start thinking and praying and putting down what is on your heart. There is also room to record any other current thoughts about your marriage.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS

1. In your marriage, be the first to “seek peace and pursue it” (1 Peter 3:11). Can you say you are the one in your marriage who consistently seeks peace and pursues it? Do you ever seek peace at any price, ignoring or compromising the clear teaching of Scripture? Or, do you stubbornly and selfishly demand your own way in small matters because you foolishly make these “little things” symbols of how you are unloved or disrespected? Consider this wife’s letter: “I turned the temperature down last year . . . [then] my husband bought a plastic box that fits over the dial complete with lock and key. . . . I was appalled when he put a locked box over the temperature dial. . . . I found a way to change the dial without using the key [and] I turned the heat down to 68. This has always been an area where we don’t agree. He told me last month that he felt I was being disrespectful.” How would you answer this wife? At this rate, why will she and her husband not experience peace? How could they change in an attempt to seek peace?
2. It is always wise for a husband to be “humble in spirit” (1 Peter 3:8). What does it mean for a husband to be humble in spirit? Will a wife walk all over a husband who approaches her in this way?

3. Over the years, as I have blown it and been unloving to Sarah, I have found solace in Proverbs 24:16: "Though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again"(NIV). The husband who tries to live an honorable life with his wife, but fails, knows two things: (1) He is "righteous" only through the blood of Christ; (2) he can no more always show his wife perfect love than she can show him perfect respect. What does Proverbs 24:16 tell the husband or wife to do in the moment of failure? The last time you came across as unloving or disrespectful what did you do?

4. To stop the Crazy Cycle, and keep it in its cage, seek to obey God's Word "which also performs its work in you who believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). We have God's promise that His Word will do His work deep in our souls! Your marriage isn't first about performance; it's about God doing a work in and through you: "... for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). As you live with your spouse, stop at least once each day and pray, "Dear God, perform Your work in me. Do Your work through me. Please, Lord, I need You!"

My current thoughts about our marriage:

PART TWO: THE ENERGIZING CYCLE

Sessions 5 to 12 cover Chapters Eight to Twenty-Two of *Love & Respect*

A PERSONAL WORD FROM EMERSON:

I hope you have made progress to this point in slowing or stopping the effects of the Crazy Cycle on your marriage. Your next step is to learn how to keep the Crazy Cycle from spinning, or how to stop it if it seems to be starting up again. You can do this by getting on the Energizing Cycle in which his love motivates her respect and her respect motivates his love.

To help you get on the Energizing Cycle and stay there, I developed two acronyms covering six important principles for each spouse. The acronym C-O-U-P-L-E contains advice for husbands in six brief chapters on Closeness, Openness, Understanding, Peacemaking, Loyalty, and Esteem. The acronym C-H-A-I-R-S contains advice for wives in six brief chapters on Conquest, Hierarchy, Authority, Insight, Relationship, and Sexuality.

Keep in mind that if you are studying together with your spouse, discussing some of these questions may be tough going. Husbands and wives need to be sensitive to each other and take it slowly, easily, and gently. There is no rule that says you must exhaustively discuss every question. Some questions may prove sticky, even irritating to one or both of you. The first rule in being a Love and Respect couple is to do just that—show love and respect to each other! This will mean not always saying everything that may be on your mind. Be honest, but not brutally honest. (Speak the truth in love—Ephesians 4:15.) Remember, having a difference of opinion or a different understanding of something does not mean you have major problems as a couple. What you must

guard against, however, is allowing disagreements to turn into disapproval of the other person. Always, the goal is Love and Respect, whether you agree or disagree. The husband should focus on loving his wife, the wife on respecting her husband. If you do this, the Energizing Cycle will hum along nicely and the Crazy Cycle will not have a chance to spin.

SESSION FIVE

In preparation for this session, read the first two chapters in Part Two of *Love & Respect*, which covers the Energizing Cycle. Begin with Chapter Eight, “C-O-U-P-L-E How to Spell Love to Your Wife,” and Chapter Nine, “Closeness—She Wants You to Be Close.” The following questions are for individual study or study by a couple. Remember to answer all unmarked questions first, then answer questions marked by the male or female icon (whichever applies to you). Finally, answer the questions with the couple icon, if you’re studying with your mate. (Suggestions for leading a small group can be found in *Workbook Appendix I*, page 201.)

This session opens your study of C-O-U-P-L-E, six important principles that will help a husband learn important aspects of loving his wife. In *Love and Respect*, just under the title of Chapter 8, is a brief note to wives saying the next several chapters are for “husbands only, but wives are invited to read along.” Wives are also invited to study along in Sessions 5-8 of this workbook, so please do! As your husband discusses the six parts of C-O-U-P-L-E with you, he will learn more about how to love you (and you will learn how to help him do it better!).

A SPECIAL WORD FOR HUSBANDS FROM EMERSON:

Welcome to the Energizing Cycle and your study of the acronym C-O-U-P-L-E: Closeness, Openness, Understanding, Peacemaking, Loyalty, Esteem. These are the six principles you can practice to make your wife feel loved. More than that, you can use C-O-U-P-L-E as a diagnostic tool to tell when you and your wife are slipping off the Energizing Cycle and back on the Crazy Cycle. According to the Crazy Cycle, a wife acts disrespectfully when she isn’t feeling loved. Her disrespect is not justified, but when it does happen you can say to yourself, “Since my wife is reacting in ways that

feel disrespectful to me, there is a good chance I have done something to make her feel unloved. I have two choices: react to her unlovingly, or try to decode. Which one of the principles in C-O-U-P-L-E might I be neglecting in her view?" This way you soften your reaction, as you remember that your wife is basically a good-willed woman who is not intending to show you contempt.

Next, depending on the situation (what has been going on between the two of you), you can probably make a good guess at what's wrong. For example, you've been working long hours, and she is feeling the need for closeness. Talk to her and ask if this is what is wrong. If she says it is, you can say you are sorry for your behavior, make adjustments, and get the Energizing Cycle going again.

But what do you do if, for whatever reason, you can't decode (figure out what is bothering her)? If that happens, you can communicate your feelings to your wife by gently (not defensively or aggressively) saying, "I'm feeling disrespected right now. Have I been coming across as unloving? How can I come across more lovingly?" (In other words, tell me where I am messing things up.)

I believe that as you go through C-O-U-P-L-E for husbands and C-H-A-I-R-S for wives, you will get to know each other better than you ever have before as you are challenged, stretched, and, I hope, blessed. But remember, if any of the questions in the following sessions makes either of you uncomfortable, agree together to table that item for right now. Later, you may be ready to come back and discuss the topic with real profit as you go to new levels of Love and Respect. But for now, let's get going with the Energizing Cycle—and have a great trip!

Questions for Chapter Eight

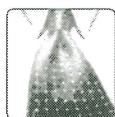
1 To get started with Session Five, the six words represented by C-O-U-P-L-E are listed below. Next to each word is a brief definition. Under each word, write what it suggests to you. Does your definition match the one given?

Closeness: She wants you to be close.



My definition:

Openness: She wants you to open up to her.



My definition:

Understanding: Don't try to "fix" her; just listen.



My definition:

Peacemaking: She wants you to say, "I'm sorry."



My definition:

Loyalty: She needs to know you're committed.



My definition:

Esteem: She wants you to honor and cherish her.



My definition:

Which of these six principles sounds most interesting? Which is most necessary to a happy marriage? Why?



Husbands and wives should compare their respective definitions and discuss them. How did they differ from the definitions given? How does your definition differ from your spouse's? How do your answers to the other two questions differ? When your study of C-O-U-P-L-E is complete, see if your opinions have changed and note why they might have changed.

On book page 118, Emerson defines the acrostic word C-O-U-P-L-E as "two people connected together." What does it mean to you to be "connected" to your spouse?



This question could prove sensitive, especially if the husband sees his wife's efforts to connect with him as an effort to control him. Go over book page 118 again. Wife, do you agree that when you come across as negative and offensive you are really crying out for C-O-U-P-L-E, the things your husband can do to connect with you? Husband, can you see yourself starting to decode your wife's messages, which may sound negative, but are really her cries for your love?

3 Farther down on page 118 Emerson writes, “Wives want connectivity. . . . Women confront to connect.” Why is this good? How can it turn out “not so good”?



Discuss your answers and learn a little more about one another.

4 In “This Husband Wouldn’t Believe Me Until . . .” (book pages 118–20) is a story about a husband who saw his wife’s effort to connect by confronting as an effort to control him. He finally “got it” and realized this was not true, but only after attending a Love and Respect Conference. Why do many men fear being controlled? How could understanding this fear help prevent the Crazy Cycle from spinning? Who needs to understand it more—the husband or the wife?



Generally speaking, men want to be responsibly in control. See especially Session Ten, under C-H-A-I-R-S, which talks about the wife respecting the husband's desire to protect, provide, serve, and lead. All of these involve being responsibly in control to one degree or another. When a husband feels his role in any of these areas is threatened, he may start to think his wife is trying to control him. ("She's trying to mother me.") On the other hand, if a wife feels her husband is being too dictatorial or demanding, she will feel unloved. ("He treats me like a doormat!") Talk together about the issue of control. Wife, let your husband know you are not trying to "wear the pants"; you only wish to connect with him. Husband, ask your wife for honest feedback about how "controlling" you are in your marriage. A good-willed husband wants to be a loving and responsible servant-leader. Talk about how the husband's control can be good as long as a wife feels secure, but bad if she starts to feel unloved. Perhaps the key phrase is "responsible servant-leader." What does that look and feel like to each of you?

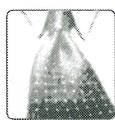
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Read carefully the "Learn to Trust Your Instruments" section on pages 120–21. How can practicing C-O-U-P-L-E prevent "marital vertigo?" Husbands, are you willing to "trust your instrument panel"?

NO PROBLEM _____

NOT TOTALLY SURE _____

DOUBTFUL _____



Husband, discuss your answer with your wife and share any doubts you may have about how well you can practice the principles in C-O-U-P-L-E (that is, "trust your instrument panel"). For example, are you willing to ask her if she confronts you to connect or control? (In other words, does she want to con-

nect to create mutual understanding or is she confronting to control you and get her way?) Many wives are also mothers (or want to be), and it is in their nature to be helpful. Not only that, but wives are called to be “helpers” (Genesis 2:18). Can a wife seek to help her husband and come across as controlling without meaning to? Should the husband be willing to trust her goodwill, even though her helping can make him feel like she is being “bossy” at times?

6 In “In the Ocean of Conflict, Men Sink Unless . . .” (book pages 121–22), Emerson shares the story of one husband who had the guts not to stonewall his angry wife. How would you describe what he did as he “trusted his instrument panel”?



Compare your answers, which could be very revealing by showing how each of you think. Also see *Love & Respect* Appendix C (page 311), which lists “need communicator” statements both of you can use when appropriate.

7 At the bottom of book page 122, as he summarizes Chapter Eight, Emerson writes, “To turn to your wife in the middle of a conflict and say, ‘I am sorry, will you forgive me?’ takes guts. I know because I have been there. It isn’t pleasant, but it works powerfully. Over time it becomes easier, but it is never natural. Even so, this response gives you the power to drain negativity out of your wife in conflict after conflict.” Why does it take guts to say “I’m sorry”? What often stands in a husband’s way?



This can be a good question to discuss, but only if both of you are “up for it.” Be sensitive to each other’s needs and, if feasible, talk together about why it’s hard for him to say, “I’m sorry.” Is it pride? Or is it fear that later he will use his apology against him in a disrespectful way?

Questions for Chapter Nine

8 Chapter Nine opens with a biblical definition of *closeness* (book page 125). Write that definition below and be sure to add what it means “to cleave.” Obviously “cleaving” involves sex, but what other kinds of closeness are involved?



Talk together about what closeness means to each of you. How important is it for the husband to let his wife know he wants to be close with a look, a touch, or a smile?

9 Read carefully “The First Few Seconds Set the Tone” (book pages 126–27). Why are those moments when a couple comes together after being apart all day so important to the wife?



Share your answers, then talk about how you are doing during the first few moments when you arrive home. How easy is it to be perfunctory, preoccupied, and self-absorbed with your own needs? Is Emerson saying couples have to spend a lot of time reconnecting? What is more important—quantity or quality? Take a good look at what the two of you have been doing to reconnect after a busy day. What is your typical routine? Is Emerson right when he says, “The first few moments of reconnecting will set the tone for the rest of the evening”? If you agree with him, you may want to talk about changing your usual routine and spending at least a few minutes talking about what each of you did that day—achievements, frustrations, humorous incidents . . .

10 How important is face-to-face connection? (Read “What My Four-Year-Old Taught Me . . .” book pages 127–28.) Question for husbands: How are you doing at face-to-face with your wife? Question for wives: How can you respectfully

ask your husband for more face-to-face connecting? (See *Love & Respect* Appendix C, under “Wives can humbly and softly say,” page 311.)



Not every husband will appreciate being confronted about his face-to-face time with his wife, particularly if he hasn't been doing it that much. Wives should be sensitive to this. In addition, Emerson adds an important point: “If a wife wants to encourage her husband to be close face-to-face, she must always consider what her face looks like. I'm not talking about looking like some cover girl; I mean the facial expression, which can be sweet and welcoming or sour and rejecting. From his extensive research with thousands of married couples, John Gottman concluded that ‘Wives who make sour facial expressions when their husbands talk are likely to be separated within four years.’ⁱ When a husband does move toward a wife face-to-face, she should think about showing respectful interest. At the same time the husband should place importance on looking like he wants to be close and loving, not like he is in a board meeting. For both spouses the emphasis is always on being humble and gentle as you seek to meet each other’s needs.”

11 Read the sections entitled, “Involvement or Independence?” and “Only Chickens Get Henpecked” (book pages 128–30). Then mark the line below according to what you need—more involvement with your spouse or more independence from your spouse.

Involvement ————— Independence



According to Emerson, “In the typical marriage relationship, she leans more toward the ‘Involvement’ side while he leans more toward the ‘Independence’ side.” Talk together about the amount of tension you see in your marriage,

ⁱ John Gottman, *Why Marriages Succeed or Fail* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), back cover.

between her need for involvement and his need for independence. Remember, this kind of tension is normal, so think positively about how you can solve his need for ‘space’ and her need to be ‘close.’ If this subject isn’t too sensitive, discuss what Emerson says on book page 129 about a wife not wanting her husband to become like a “girl friend,” but how even small moves toward closeness by the husband can energize the wife. Wife, do you agree? Husband, are you willing to give up a little independence in order to be a little closer to your wife? What might happen if you did? For more tips and helps for talking together about something like this, see *Love & Respect* Appendix A, page 305–307, especially “Always ask yourself,” “Things to remember,” and “Things to say to lighten up the relationship.”

12 According to Emerson, there is a battle to the death going on between the Crazy Cycle and the Energizing Cycle (pages 130–31). What suggestions does he make in this section to help husbands win that battle and have a great marriage? Check off phrases that sound helpful to you, or write down your own ideas.

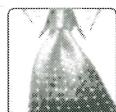
- Always seek to motivate and not demoralize.
- Always be trying to adjust your “sunglasses” and “hearing aids.”
- Always try to do the positive, loving thing.
- I think:



While this question is directed primarily at helping husbands love their wives, the suggestions listed above can easily be used by wives who want to respect their husbands. Do you both agree with Emerson's assertion that "this is a war—a battle to the death between the Crazy Cycle and the Energizing Cycle"? Why or why not?



13 Chapter Nine closes with tips and techniques for being close (book pages 131–33). Go down the list and find things that you are doing well. Then find one thing that you have not done for a while. Write it here, then plan how you can do it in the next twenty-four hours.



Husband, take time to ask your wife what she would like. (Maybe she will just want you to surprise her.)

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Always take at least a few minutes to write down your feelings, questions, insights gained, and other comments when you finish a study session. Months, or even years,