Today on the girl to find show, we are talking about how premarital counseling can either break or make your future marriage, and this may seem crazy to some of y'all, and we didn't actually plan to do this, but when Dave and I were dating, so we went through pre engagement counseling, which is something I recommend for every couple to go through. Like, why not get counseling before you say yes? I want to spend the rest of my life. With you and plan your wedding like, why not get really good counselling before anyways? That's a whole other topic for different day. Different story. But we went through really intense pre engagement counseling which is basically just premarital counseling. Before you, you know, get engaged and then. We went through a really intensive like 8 to 10 week premarital course at our church and then after that, when we asked our pastor to marry us, he also required us to go through another additional set of counseling. So by the time we got married, we had gone through three different sets of free marital counseling. And now I am not recommending that everyone needs to go through three sets although it. Was very helpful. And I think really prepared us for marriage, but I am recommending that you go through at least one pre engagement. Counseling would be my number one recommendation. But I'm gonna unpack today with Adam and Carissa King from dear Young Maria. Why it is so crucial for every couple to pursue serious and intentional biblically based, good premarital counseling before you get married, whether it's before engagement or before you just say, do on, you know, before you walk down the aisle, get pre marital counseling. I have an incredible resource for you to help you do this so you can navigate that. Process. But you're gonna love today. We're gonna talk about everything from honeymoon to sex. On the honeymoon. To before you walk down the aisle. All the things you need to know. Let's jump in. Adam and Carissa King, thank you all for being here. I have to say really quick. Y'all are actually one of our most popular podcast episodes ever, so it is an honor to. Have you back? Thank you for being here.

That's awesome.

Thank you, Bethany. It's an honor to be on your podcast. We love girl to find. We've love your books. We've done. We've done so many Bible studies. Girl groups on your books and we just love everything that you and Kristen do. So thank. You so much for having us. On again.

Absolutely. So if you're wondering what episode that was like, OK, what's? So popular, you're gonna know why it is the episode called how to prepare for sex on your honeymoon. And Adam and Karissa. I love it, cuz. You both like you don't shy away from anything obviously on your podcast, you know, on your whole website. Dear young. Married couple y'all are. Willing to talk about everything and the questions people actually want to know. So today as we talk about. Premarital counseling and just preparing for marriage as like a newly engaged couple. I have some some spicy questions for you all. So you better be. Prepared but before.

Let's go.

We jump in before we jump in. Just give everyone really quick like I talk about daring young married couple all the time. But just tell us why you start. Put it why you created this premarital course. This preparation prequalified just give us a little bit of rundown of who. You are and what you do, sure.

Sure, we create a dear young married couple as just because we saw a need to equip couples with tools and kind of to meld the science and theology together in a way that actually works. And so and we've we just saw that need and wanted to kind of fill that gap and it wasn't something. That we like, really. Looked for it just kind of God, I think. Just brought this. To pass and we absolutely are so honored to be doing this and and partnering with God and and all of the people. That we work with.

And people like you.

Yes, it's it's. The amazing.

Yeah, I mean, you all have something for everyone. Dave and I have worked through your expectation card deck, which is amazing. You know, like all the questions about sex and they're like and especially I've recommended it so many times cause people are like, I feel awkward. I don't know what to ask. And it's like here we ask all the questions for you so you don't even have to be embarrassed. So they go to their website. Dear, Young married couple. If they have everything, obviously your podcast I love, I recommend all the time. But what I want to talk about today, so I have a sister that just got engaged and she is actually. She's gonna get married in four months. So it's a pretty quick engagement which I love. And one of the questions we were talking about literally we got together shortly, like literally a couple. To go and she was asking. She was like, OK, so, you know, we've been really careful not to talk about, like, sex and intimacy for, like, the wedding night or the honeymoon. But she's like, I feel like we need to at some point, like, talk about that. But how, how do we talk about sex? When should we talk about sex? When should we talk about sex? Is this a conversation like my fiance?

MM.

And I should be having. So I wanna know from you say a couple's engaged and they're feeling like unsure about how to prepare for intimacy. Unsure of how to communicate about sex. Can you just give us some insight? On when, if, what that conversation should look.

Like yes, absolutely. So this is actually an entire week in our seven week course. So the answer is yes, up front you you need to be. Talking about sex and. Intimacy when you're preparing for marriage. But there are specific ways to do. That and guardrails to put in place. To make sure that you're having a. You're preparing for your covenant relationship, and so this is this is a beautiful thing, sex. Is a beautiful. Gift and we don't want to shy away from talking about it. So we actually you talked about this expectations that we actually number the specific cards that are appropriate for premarital couples to talk about.

Love that.

In the pre equipped. Course we also have an entire section in there on how to talk about your sexual history. So when couples have a sexual history, we give them a list of questions because we don't want to like clutter our, you know, partners, mind with all the like, who, where, when, what, what position that's. Like we. That's unnecessary and unhelpful and can be traumatizing to your partner. But we do. Ask a lot of the questions you need to be asking that have to do. With, you know. What did you learn about yourself and what? What made you actually stop that relationship? You know what are some? Of the the things that transitioned you into. A season where you were walking in God's plan for you around sexuality and so we have that entire PDF of list, a list of questions for you to ask each other about sexual history.

So from a atom, from a guy's perspective, because I know I've obviously girl define, we talked to a lot of women and so they're probably listening and thinking, OK, I might get this course pre equipped for me and my guy to go through together and what I've come across at least in the girl to find sisterhood and just in other women. That I talk to that are engaged. Is I feel like preparing for intimacy seems at least a lot of women feel maybe more unsure and secure. It just seems complicated, and I know even in my own experience Dave and I, he was like, let's go. I'm ready. You know, I feel like confident. And I was like, I'm not sure I know how everything works, you know? So I know that's how women can feel. So how? From a man's perspective, how can I don't know? How can a girl go, you know, go about approaching her guy in a way that doesn't lead to temptation. I you know what I mean? Just how can she approach him and begin that conversation? And what would be too much? I know you talked about it that in pre quips but can. Give us some. Give us something right.

Now, yes. Well, first of all, let me let me back up. A little bit. The there is a. Stigma, I think around sexuality within the church. And we have avoided it for a long time for fear of, you know, some of these fears of like, oh, if if we talk about it, we're gonna go too far and it's all gonna fall apart. And we're gonna have sex before marriage. And that's not a good. Thing and. And so for some of these fears, we've absolutely stayed away from talking about it at all. So it's been that this. No, no, no, no, no, no, don't even get close. Don't say the word sex. Don't say the word or any of your anatomical parts use weird names for them like. And then all of a sudden we opened the. Door of the hotel room and it to go. And the woman?

Was like.

Ohh snap I'm here and I don't really know how this is supposed to go. I don't even know how I'm supposed to feel right now. I don't even. And this is we've heard this from a lot of couples and This is why we created per crypt to actually curate a conversation around sexuality that is helpful, that embraces that a woman is a sexual being and for a lot of them they've closed that off and we we are, we're almost in the friend zone and then we're oh. Oh yeah, that that's right. I'm a sexy. Being and So what we try to do is curate the conversation in a safe way in a safe place to say, OK, what do I need to know? What do we need to prepare for? Because there is there are a lot of worries around this. And so I find. And just I did a session yesterday with a couple premarital couple on this very subject and we did. We took, gave them the the first night checklist and we talked through this is what to expect. This is what you should prepare for. You know, make sure you do this and this and this and and they walk out of there going. I'm looking forward to this. This is not as scary as as as some people make it, you know. And so we try to bring some reality to it. Hence give some like Chris has had some hand rails to guide the conversation to give some healthy expectations and what they should aim for. So like for instance, what they should aim for, we shouldn't aim for a destination. For the first night, let's just use the first night I. Think we've talked about this a little bit, but. Like we, we shouldn't aim for destination. This is a journey journey of exploration, of vulnerability and getting to know someone. And so if we take that expectation of this needs to happen off the table and we could just say let's just get to know each other. Let's just start by taking. Off each other. 'S clothes slowly and loving each other and and. Being grateful and full of thankfulness for what God has gifted you in this beautiful. Moment. So many things can go so much better.

Yes, I love that now. You mentioned the wedding night checklist everyone is like. What is that? Where do I? Get that? What are you? Talking about So what is that?

That is a free download that they can grab today. We'll give you the link so you can put it in the show notes, but it's just a first night checklist. It's a one page deal that gives you practical stuff. For instance, most women don't know that they need to urinate after having sex.

This took a while for us to figure out.

Yeah, like that's just something people don't tell you in premarital counseling, usually. Yeah. And so that's, you know, you need to know that. And that's on the first night checklist. Like, don't just lay there in bed, get up and urinate, or you're gonna get a UTI. Right. So just some practical things like that and fun things like.

No fun.

Make sure to pack a Bluetooth speaker so you. You can play your fun. Music and make a playlist ahead of time and.

Explore the five senses. Try to. Bring all of them in at once, yeah.

Wow, this is awesome. I wish you know I didn't get married that long ago. 3 1/2 years ago, and I felt when Dave and I got married, I felt like we were much more prepared than like a lot of our friends had been cuz they gave us all the info. You know, I did get married till I was 30. So like, here's everything you need to know, but even now. And like there was there, there were so much more I didn't know. Which is fine. It's just a starting point. But I love that you were helping couples to be equipped. And I know your entire course, pre equipped is not just about intimacy, sexual intimacy, but like spiritual intimacy and through. The past working through just differences like growing closer to Christ, what would you say within your course? Per quipped is, I don't know, like one of the outside of the week on sex, another week or session that you feel is like a must to like this one is just so crucial for engaged couples to talk through.

So my favorite. Are you gonna have, say, maybe you're gonna say something different than mine? Well, kind of. You made me think of it when you talked about, like, spiritual intimacy. But my favorite is that we guide them through how to write a marriage miss.

OK, what is that?

And statement. So that's how they close out the course is what are our values? What is God calling us to do as a couple and what is our marriage mission statement going to be that guides us? It's a tenant for us and and is a foundation for us as a newly married couple. And that to me is like the most empowering part of. The whole course.

OK, so for me then I like that part. That's a good one. My favorite part is probably either the communication or the conflict resolution sections because. We still use. Those things and OK, let me let me back up because we have so many like threads going here. Let's be clear like we've been. Married. OK, almost 14 years. And we were not pre equipped like we had one session. It was pretty much like. Do you love each other, OK? You guys should be good then.

Really like you both grew up in good homes. You, you know, like you love each other. Remember? You're not actually married until you consummate the marriage. Like, you know, just like, kind of little things like that were like. Cool. Great.

Yeah, but we we had. Shut down. We had a lot of shutdown around sexuality. Yeah, that became an. Issue for us right away. We had difficulty communicating because krissa is very hard headed.

And and you're not at all, babe, not at all.

You you see that? Little bit of blame. Yeah. Yeah, Full disclosure, Adam is hard headed as well. And and so we had so many preconceived notions and we had no, like we did not have the talk. Well, I had the talk once and that was it. I did not have a a place that I. Can go to ask questions.

And I grew up with a lot. More talks, plural, like around sex and sexuality. And but it still was it it still we had this clashing of our attitude around sex growing up that caused conflict.

Right. Well, she didn't know how to ask what she needed for what she needed, and I didn't know. How to ask for that? So there's so many things that we weren't prepared for going. In and so if. We would have had some simple tools and this this and and it will probably sounds like everybody like we're pushing for equipped, yes we are. I'm sorry but.

That's why we made it for you.

At the same time, it's because, like we wish we would have had this tool now being counselors and having seen thousands and thousands of people in our office and, you know, working with them in seminars and everything else that we. Do it would been so helpful to. Say OK, use this. Wish list tool. When you have something you need to ask them, and if you don't feel understood. Use the because because because. Tool and if you guys are getting flooded and you have lots of, you know like lots of like hormones like take a breather and if this happens use this.

OK.

And and this is common to every single marriage, every single marriage is going to have difficult. Like we like to say, why is pre crypt important? Will every single marriage goes into marriage thinking that that that this marriage is gonna last or they never would get?

Yes, yeah, yeah.

Married. True. Why would I get married if I thought this was the one that's gonna fail, but? You know the next marriage is gonna work. Right, like, no, like, we don't go into that, but. A lot of people have failing marriages. And I I think a large part of that is they haven't had sufficient grounding in what to expect and the tools needed to help them figure out their differences, because the one of the beautiful, most beautiful things that God did was create a full size smear. For you called your spouse. And sometimes what we see in that mirror is. Not what we like.

It's true, true.

So it's and that is the sanctification process that God has created.

Amen. Yeah. And I mean, the numbers don't. Lie like you. Know the divorce rate is. Hovering around 50%, it's gone down by like a. Percent or two in the last.

Well, just because people aren't getting married.

Few people aren't getting married, so yeah, but.

No, it's true.

You know you can. Reduce your chances of divorce by 31%.

Say that again.

31% by getting premarital counseling or. Engaging in a in a premarital. Sports. And so if you can do that, you can take your chances of divorce from 50% down to 20% simply by getting premarital counseling. Why not? I mean, so, I mean, like the state of Texas, you're in Texas the. State of Texas. Recognizes this, so they actually your, your, your marriage license is like 60 bucks. OK, well, you can actually.

Texas is awesome.

Take that down to 0 by doing a premarital course.

There you go, $60.00 back.

No way. Yeah.

So like. Download your certificate of completion from the course. You submit it. With your marriage license application and you don't pay a dime and there's, I think, 7 states that offer a discount. But but Texas actually gives it for free. They're all conservative states. Sadly, none of not. California does not offer that because they.

I had no idea.

We're not fans of marriage over here.

They believe in. Marriage, right. They want you to stay married, yeah.

I had no idea. I mean, Dave and I, we lost 60 bucks. Come on. That's that's amazing. And I love what you. Know that you've said that because. We all know how much time and effort for most couples goes into the wedding and planning the wedding. I mean, I see my sister now working full speed, everything. She's just so excited. The venue, the dress, like everything is all consuming, which is so fun. And which is so exciting, but it can be really hard to prioritize the, you know, the counseling and the preparation, because I think it's exactly what you all said.

Yes, totally.

Where you feel like, well, we're OK or we're different. We're the ones that are gonna be perfectly fine. And it's sad to me to see because even now, like on my Instagram account, David, I've only been three married 3 1/2 years. But we're both sinners. And so there are times where I feel frustrated or we have.

You are.

Definitely I I feel like I am the bigger Center for sure. Like Dave is so patient and kind and I'm.

Like you know.

And stuff but. And then we had, you know, Davy Junior, our son. And I feel like that brought in a whole new level of sanctification. And what's sad to me is I. Will see a single people or dating couples. When I talk about how like David. Had this, you know, disagreement or this argument or whatever, I people will literally message me or comment and say like if a Mario. Which is a good or if it's, you know, meant to be there shouldn't be conflict. There shouldn't be. That's a sign that you're actually not supposed to to, you know, be together, whatever and. I have had. So many single and dating couples say that, and I think there's like this disillusion. Like, everything should be easy. So can you talk to our friends who are listening, who are either dating or engaged, or maybe even single, and they're thinking. Shouldn't it? Why would I need counseling? Like if we're a fit like we should just get along. Can you speak to that a little bit?

We can.

Yes. So that's the whole myth of compatibility, right? If I find somebody that's perfectly compatible, then they're they're not going to want to change me. They're gonna accept me. Exactly. For who I am. I think the biblical model is, I think it was Tim Keller who said, like, I recognize what God is trying to do in. You and I'm going to partner with. God, to help you become the best version that God is trying to make you. Become love that. And that's exactly. What we're trying to do as spouses, we're we're looking at our spouse and saying I love you so much that I want. To help you. Do with patience, with love, with gentleness, with goodness, with respect, help you become everything that God wants you to become and and and vice versa. And we have to learn to take that influence. But see if if we go into marriage thinking that we want to stay the same same way and our spouse is like, but hold on, I'm going to partner with Jesus.

Right. You know, it's just.

But normally it's like, you know, just leave me alone. I'm gonna do my thing. You do your. Thing. Yeah, but then we're also one. But you're doing your own thing like. That sounds like a conflicted enough itself, and that's where we find a lot of couples is there? They don't want. To hear the criticisms, or let's say they don't want to hear what that what your wife or your your husband notices that they could get better at because you know that's hard to hear what they could get better at if they're not in that frame of mind. Right. And if I can't accept influence. Then we're just, we're just going to be in a space where it's going to be a. Lot of frustration.

Exactly. Yeah and. You know, the studies show it's not the number of arguments that determines your satisfaction in the marriage. It's how those arguments are handled. So we, yeah, we actually teach couples how to argue. Well, there's an entire unit on it. Like, here's how to.

Yes. Uh-huh.

Argue the right way we have.

We have literally have people that tell. Us like we. We we don't, we don't really argue in our marriage and my wife and I just go well and we're thinking to ourselves and we get down to it really quick. Somebody is avoiding issues in order to keep the peace because.

Oh yeah.

And and remember, the argument is not necessarily. Let's be clear. Is not necessarily yelling.

Right, yeah.

Or screaming at each other. That's not arguing. Like, oh, it is arguing.

But that's fine. It's immaturity.

It's fighting. Yeah, it's it's fighting.

Yeah, yeah.

But arguing is simply having different perspectives. Yeah, and that's exactly what I would expect from someone that's raised in a completely different home has completely different values than me that has completely different thought processes in their head than.

Who's a completely different gender than you? Yes.

Oh, my word. That accounts for so.

Much, yes, it's.

True, I love that so much and I just. I want, you know, everyone listening to not not go into marriage naive thinking like well, we'll be the one exception you know. And I love how y'all shared like the facts and the statistics like hey. You know by doing pre marital counseling literally it's like a 30% decrease. You know of your chances of, you know, getting getting divorced. And I think that that's crucial. And so I guess as you have counseled couples who have not done premarital. Handling what kind of issues and conversations do you have with couples as the years go on that maybe could have been avoided or they could have been better prepared for if they had done premarital counseling.

Yeah, it reminds me of a few months back when we put out a sticker on Instagram and we said, what's your? I wish I had premarital counseling. And we had of responses.

Hundreds. So you know the sticker on Instagram. She just kept flicking. It up up it was.

I was like.

No. Yeah, like that's such a good question.

Yeah. And I mean people, I mean we we chose like I think 5-6 or seven our team put together this graphic and put it up that you know, just this week actually cuz they're they're promoting the premarital counseling. And they they like put. Up some of these responses and there were things. Like, yeah, my pastor said, like the Holy Ghost will help us. So he doesn't really have much to say. So. Like that was their premarital counseling. You know? Or like, you know. But you came from good homes. So you. Should be good. To go. And So what we're dealing with 10 years down the road when people come to us. Is they don't know how to ask for what they want or need in their relationship.

That's called assertiveness.

They don't know how to listen well, they don't know how to solve. Arguments and be a team and they're arguing.

So let me let.

Me. Pull from that now so that that's what they don't have those. Things. Yeah, so. Then you have a need, OK. It needs don't just like \*\*\*\*. Go away. Yeah, right. But when I have a need and it's not, I can't ask for it. What Chris was saying, like, I can't be assertive. What do we have to do with that? Need what we. Have to kick it under the under the rug. But The thing is, is they don't stay the same size under the rug, they kind of grow and they kind of get bigger. And then what happens after a while is. I'm I'm the man of the house. Like, why am I walking around this stinking huge, stinking lump in the? Rug like this is my house plus God. So I start to feel very controlled. My wife is so stinking controlling, she's always nagging me. She's always my wife. Doesn't ever. But just joking.

These are the stories we. Hear not real life examples.

No, never, never. We never give real life examples. But this is. What happened? So if we don't have assertiveness, we don't have tools. We haven't been trained and then these are skills. These are not personalities. These are skills that are trained that we train in our office and and in. Equipped. So if they have assertiveness, we can work on the self-confidence. The self-confidence helps us to not avoid big issues that become big issues and it helps us bring down the feelings of I'm feeling controlled because if I can't express I start feeling controlled and so that's what we really want to avoid and that we do. See a lot of. At year five year six year 7.

Yeah, yeah, totally.

Yeah. So with couples that get married, when do you typically seeks? I know you counsel tons and tons of couples, which is amazing. And if you are listening and you're like, wow, I would love to work with them directly, you can go to their website. Dear Young married couple. And you can. I mean, you'll just have so many options. It's like the HubSpot. Like I literally I'm like. Constantly tagging all on Instagram because there isn't. Anything else like? You too, you know, and I just love your team and everything you're doing. I'm such a fan. Which reminds me, they did give us a discount code for their. Equipped premarital course y'all. So if you go to their website dearyoungmarriedcouple.com right during married couple.com, you'll see it on there. You can go to all their resources. This is their course. Their premarital course, pre quipped and the code is girl defined 22 and that'll get you $50 off it expires May 10th, so make sure to get it. I'll link all this below so you'll have all the details. But now is your chance to jump on this. I do want to know, so I have so many questions popping around in my mind and I I'm always telling Adam and Chris, I'm like, oh, it'll only.

Be this long.

That I have so many things I want to ask, but this is something that that Dave and I kind of ran into in the beginning of our IT really was in our engagement in early marriage. And I feel like we've come so. Far I was. You know, I I knew we lived and we still do live in this world where \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* is rampant. And I was exposed to it as a young girl because there was a magazine in our yard and I write all about this in my book, sex parity and the longings of a girl's heart. And then I knew people that had struggled with \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*. Since God spared me in that department, but I was just so fearful that that was going to be like a part of our relationship and tear it apart. And just like I was struggling to, like trust, I had been in a bad relationship before Dave. And so I just had, like, a lot of trust issues. And it came out like it was just like, he's like, OK, like he didn't understand. And I didn't know how to express. And so it was just hard. So. For the couple, whether it's someone who has, like fears of stuff that will become a part of their marriage or fears because their parents maybe got divorced.

Right.

Or maybe there really is something that you're afraid to confess. Like how can we approach those, like fears that we have? Maybe that we've never spoken before without allowing the years to go on. And for me it would be like Dave looking at me like, why is this always such a problem? And I haven't shared. So how do we approach those conversations?

Excellent. Yeah. The answer in short is vulnerability and you have to curate an environment that is safe enough for vulnerability. And you know, as a premarital couple, often times the focus is on dating and fun and adventure. And those are all good things. We need all of that we need. And it's this balance. We need the the dopamine and adrenaline that we get from adventure and risk and fun and excitement. But we need the oxytocin. That we get from connection and safety and security and stability. And you need to have conversations that curate that safety so that you can be vulnerable to share those things. And we actually have a tool. It's called because because because and we we give that in the course, it's a communication tool that's that's all about empathizing. Empathizing is one of the number one skills that you need to curate that environment of safety. And if you can use that tool to further curate that environment when you're dating or engaged, then you're going to feel a lot safer to talk about these fears and to be heard and empathized with.

Yeah, we. So I think that. Deep down, everyone wants to be loved and know. Those are the two things loved and known, and I think a lot of dating couples. And by the way, Pre equipped is not just for engaged, it's for dating couples too that that are seriously dating.

That's awesome. Yeah.

Yeah, because we're huge fans. Like, why wait until engagement? Because once we are engaged, we start to feel like, well, we're all in, we have to go through with it. I spent all this.

I agree.

Money. I got. You know, I. Got the everything to show for. It and so they kind of feel locked in and it's a checklist item at that point. It's like I I need we have to get premarital.

And it's a checklist item.

We all want to be loved and known, and I think a lot of couples what happens is they begin. If you think of, we call it the dating ladder. It's a concept that we have inside of the kind of helping people with boundaries because we don't like saying, don't do this, don't do this. That's not, I don't think the best way of. Of curating the converse. I like asking questions a little bit better, but if you think of a dating ladder like you have a ladder in the middle that represents like the bottom would be, you know, just talking and then what would be the next stage of relationship, you know, defining the relationship will be the next stage. Talking goes into seriously talking and then goes into dating, which goes into. You like you have all these stages well on on the left side would be feeling loved, right? Oftentimes we're really good at leaning heavily on the loved side of it. So the affection side, oh, I just, oh, love them. And, you know, they get physical. And maybe they're they're pushing the boundaries there, but what happens is they're feeling very loved. But what's rough about all this is they haven't taken time to seriously get to know. Remember that love without knowing is superficial. Our deepest fear, though, is being known but not loved like they know everything about me. And that's what a lot of people say. I feel like they, you know, they know we've been together for eight years, but I don't feel. Loved, that's what. We want to avoid but feeling loved. And known as what we get from God. So what we want to do is we want to make sure that the couples moving fast enough on the love side, but also keeps up with the conversations on the known side. What do you need to know when you are dating? What are the questions that should be being asked? And then what should be being asked when you're seriously dating? What do you need to know there? What are and and what you brought up about \*\*\*\*? That would be a deeper conversation for maybe a little bit longer. You're farther in because that's not like, you know, first day. Hey. So by the way, what's your experience with \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*? That might not work there, but it's definitely a big fear. And so you invested, you've you've gained rapport with this person, you become vulnerable with this person. Then we're at this place that OK, maybe I can open up and share some of these longings. Some of these things that I've struggled with. And they will. Catch them. Most likely if you curate that vulnerability as Chris was talking about.

That's so good. What about the couple? Who is say they even start working through pre equipped and as they're working through? Maybe they are getting to know each other in ways they had it before because they maybe haven't hadn't been as intentional. And what if a couple is like or maybe, you know, the woman since that's mostly who we're talking to right now. Like wow, I don't actually like starting to have doubts like I'm not actually sure this is the best thing and I kind of romanticized this and we had a lot of affection and we felt really close, but wow, like, spiritually, we're not even on the same page and and red flags start to come up, you know, and I know so many women feel like I just have to go through with it because we've. Invested so much like you said. So what? What should she? Do or he do if they start to have those red flags and start to have those questions and they're serious, you know, it's not just like I'm feeling nervous because this is a big commitment. But it's like, wow, these are some serious issues and serious differences.

Yeah, absolutely. So sadly like one of our goals. And I say sadly because it's not the the bright, cheery, celebratory side of of the conversation, but one of our goals is to help couples break up who are not ready to get married or don't share the same values, you know. Like, that's one of our goals. The studies do show that, you know, couples who have premarital counseling, 27% of them actually do break up, and that's considered a success because that that contributes to the lower divorce rate, right?

That's a good thing. We've had, we. Had one girl send us a letter in the. Mail, which is unusual.

We get a lot of.

Emails there.

Guns. Yeah, but it was so sweet of her. She just thanked us for equipped. She's like, I want to tell you just how much I'm thankful. I was in this relationship. I had my doubts. We went through. It and we peacefully decided that to separate. And she's like, that was like, I have so much peace now from this. And. And she's like, this is a God thing. And I was like, that is what we want because look, there is somebody out there. The ocean is really big. Don't don't fixate. You know, it's it's not your last chance. I. But God has something. A plan for you and you have to trust that process and you are not going to change that other person. You can only change yourself, but if you don't see the willingness for the other person to work on themselves. I'm sorry, the best thing probably would be to to pull back from that relationship.

And you know you can break an engagement. We probably all know. Somebody who has. But this is one of the reasons why we actually recommend doing pre equipped or a premarital counseling or program before you're even engaged so that it's not a checklist item. It's not a, you know, all the pomp and circumstances.

I love that so much.

On Instagram now and everyone knows we're engaged in now, we have to delete all the pictures, that is, that is something that you can do and we recommend that as opposed to just getting married and divorcing several years down the. But if you can do this before you're even engaged. Ohh you save yourself a lot of heartache.

So much better. Yeah, and and by the way too, like we, we've created this course to integrate with your mentor or somebody that you love that's around you so that they can. So there are lots of different sections, but there's a think about. There is a talk about it. There's a do it. And what happens is we focused on bringing the counselor in or the trained professional or even a mentor to kind of help walk through and ask some of those difficult questions.

In the talk about it section and then do the activities in the do it section and I think that speaks Bethany to your question of like how do you break things off or start this conversation of I have reservations. You do that with accountability. That's why you need to have an A mentor in your corner. And so if you have somebody walking through a course with you, you're talking with them along the way about these red flags that come up. We call them the 3A's. If there is abuse, adultery or cheating, right, or addiction. And so if, if those 3A's are present, you need to be hitting a hard pause and not moving toward marriage. So you know. And we, like you, are a big fan of short engagement. This is one of the reasons why we're a big fan of pre engagement. Counseling. So have an accountability partner, a mentor to walk through this course with you so that you can have these conversations in the light without it being this manipulative or emotion driven decision. It's very logic and spiritually driven decision.

And by the. Way for all pastors or marriage mentors out. There that are listening. If you just. E-mail Us us an e-mail at hello@dearmarycouple.com. We'll send you a free copy of. Of pre equipped so that you can, you know, become equipped to walk couples through in your church. All that we ask is that the couples themselves invest in the course.

I love that so much. All are so generous in your heart for just to see couples thrive and to see them, you know, make it. The distance is amazing. I Dave and I both, we've benefited so much from everything you do. So for the woman who's listening right now and who is saying like, this has been really amazing, but I'm actually already married. What do you have for listeners who are already on the married side? Can you tell us about some of the like awesome resources that you have available?

Sure, sure. Yeah. Just kind of in summary, I mean, please just connect with our community. We curate a lot of marriage advice from solid married couples all over the world on Instagram. So that's a free resource. The podcast is a free resource. We have lots of free PDF's and downloads. There's a PDF series with videos. Called when trust has been broken. Five steps when trust has been broken, so there is a that's a free resource.

By the way, I think one of the coolest resources that we do is a live. We call it monthly live. Right. I think that's probably the least expensive, coolest thing that we do because we have people from all over the world that meet on one Friday a month and we we hit a subject that is important, so could be sex, could be on anxiety, could be on.

Friendship in the emotional intelligence.

Friendship and the marriage. Dating. Yeah, we're we're doing it very soon on emotional intelligence. And if you sign up too, you have access to all the past date nights. So you guys can binge watch if you want. That's your thing.

Yeah, so it's 10 bucks a month. Like that's that's one of our our favorite things to do is the monthly live date.

It's huge. We love it. And then we have card decks.

Yeah. So Bethany mentioned the card decks. Yeah. Yeah. So that's there's foundations, expectations, realizations. They all have a different spend. So you can read about that on the website.

I love your card.

Check them out on Amazon.

We have having the talks coming out April 26. I don't know when this is airing, but that's for parents and children to have the sex talks plural with their. And so like just lots of good resources that we and we say that we say it without shame because like that's. Why we built? Them was for people like you who want to get.

More equipped well as well as we as we work more and more couples, we're starting to see, OK, here is a huge need. So here's a huge need. So we. Been trying to plug these holes. But why not try? To avoid the pain that we are trying to fix. But you know what is it like a Oz? Of prevention is I I forgot the quote. I'm I'm I'm gonna you guys know. Thank you. OK. Yes, yes, some like that. Yeah. Stinking quotes.

Yes, yes, yes, we know what? You're saying?

Is worth more than like a pound of intervals, yeah.

Yeah, that's amazing. Thank you so much. Just for taking time. I know you are very busy. You have your own family and your whole, you know, everything that you are doing, counseling and running. Dear, Young married couple. I know pretty much everything is dear, young married couple. So like Instagram. Is that dear young married couple. Your podcast is daring young married couples. So you can literally. With Google, dear Young married couple and you will find them. And I don't know if other people have trouble, but I hate that I have trouble finding set expectations on Amazon like unless I go directly to the page so y'all I will link it directly so you can find it. But if you're like I googled on Amazon or whatever, looked on Amazon and I cannot find this expectations. Yes, which is very annoying.

Slow down, yeah.

So click the link below or just go on your website to card decks you know youngmarriedcouple.com. Cuz that really annoys me for you all. So just. No, I'm taking the adult.

Thank you.

Category. So thankfully a lot of people who are looking for other adult things end up finding this and helping their marriage. In a real way like.

I was not expecting these questions.

Yes, you can actually look up dear young married couple sex expectations on Google. Just a Google search, and normally they'll pop up.

Just don't keep scrolling, just look in the first couple hits because you never know. What could pop up?

I wouldn't go to images.

Yeah, yeah. Don't go to images.

I'm not.

Well, thank y'all so much. Is there any final word you want to leave with our listeners today?

We just encourage you guys to continue to link arms with people like girl to find, like your mentors, your pastors talk to people who have gone through what you've gone through and don't be hesitant to ask the hard questions because that's what. That's really what's going to change the dynamics of silence that we see in the church around sex, sexuality, premarital, you know, hard convos, so really link arms and stay connected. Stay account.

I think that the the average number of of money spent on a wedding is $36,000.

Something ridiculous. Wow.

And I could go on and on about that. I think this is probably the most simple or one of the most least expensive investments that you can. Make that have. Well, so much real potential to help your marriage that you could do like this is so, so important. We'd highly recommend there's so many couples that come in super nervous not knowing what to expect and coming out feeling so much more confident and sure. About where they're going in their relationship and their marriage, and that's that's what we want to help partner with the listeners of of the girl to find show we want to help them find that confidence. And and have those conversations.

Amen. I love that. Thank you all so much for taking the time to be. With us, this has been amazing. Thank you, Bethany. It's always an honor to have Adam and Carissa on the podcast. They're just such an incredible couple. Their ministry, dear young, married couple is absolutely amazing. This has been such an incredible conversation. If you are in a season of life where you're like, wow, this was really, really great, I would love more resources. I need to know, like I want to grow. I want to learn whether you're single or dating or engaged. One of the books I want to recommend. You is sex, purity, and the longings of a girl's heart by us. Kristen and Bethany. This book has been so life changing and transformative for so many women. Single dating and married. And I just think of this topic that we talked about and my hope and prayer is. That every woman would. Before getting married, or if you're already married. Have a good biblical, practical understanding of God's design for intimacy, sexuality, everything that goes along with that. So you can find sex, purity, and the longings of a girl's heart to help you gain a biblical view of God's design. Effects and just really take a deep dive into that topic over at girldefine.com/shop. That's girldefine.com/shop and if you enjoy this conversation and want to see more guests like this on the show, go and leave us a 5 star review and then leave your comment letting us know what you liked about this interview and who you would like to see on the show in the future. We read those and we really take your feedback seriously. All right. We will see you again next week.