

The Christian Arsenal

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DEFUSING FEARS IN RELATIONSHIPS Home Improvement

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Part 5 of 8

Ephesians 4:15; Genesis 3:1-19

"Let our lives lovingly express the truth in all things, speaking truly, dealing truly and living truly." Eph. 4:15 (Amp)

HOW FEAR RUINES RELATIONSHIPS

1. WHEN I'M AFRAID OF MY FAULTS, I BECOME DEFENSIVE

We hate to admit our faults.
Sometimes we defend our faults.

"God asked, 'Did you eat what I told you not to eat?' Adam answered, 'The woman you put here with me gave me the fruit and I ate it.' She replied, 'The snake tricked me into eating it.'" Gen. 3:12,13 (GN)

We accuse our mate and then we excuse ourself.

"If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth." I John 1:8 (LB)

What are you pretending is not a problem in your relationship?

What fault do you get defensive about when it is mentioned?

What do you do when you have a problem in a relationship?

- Don't conceal it.
- Don't condone it.
- Don't condense it.
- You confess it.

2. WHEN I'M AFRAID OF MY FEELINGS, I BECOME DISTANT.

"God called Adam and He said, 'Why are you hiding?' Adam answered and said, 'I was afraid and I hid from you because I was naked.'" Gen. 3:9-10 (LB/GN)

FEELINGS THAT FRIGHTEN US

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- **HURT FEELINGS** – We hate to admit when somebody hurts us.

It is easier to admit anger than it is to admit hurt.

Hurt will not destroy a relationship, but resentment will.

- **ANGRY FEELINGS** – It is not a sin to get angry. It's what you do with it that matters.

"Be angry and don't sin." Eph. 4:26

- **SEXUAL FEELINGS** – Sexual feelings scare a lot of people.

3. WHEN I'M AFRAID OF LOSING MY FREEDOM I BECOME DEMANDING IN A RELATIONSHIP.

Insecurity demands that I get my own way.

Insecurity demands that I always get the last word.

Insecurity demands that my rights be met.

Insecurity demands that I be in control of the relationship.

"...Your yearning shall be for your husband, yet he will lord it over you." Gen. 3:16 (JB)

"...he will dominate you ..." (Ber)

God doesn't intend for men and women to be competing, dominating, and struggling, for control in a relationship.

God made men and women to complement each other, not to compete with each other.

Many marriage problems could be summed up in two words: Power struggle

If you make your personal rights the focus of your life you're going to be angry most of your life and you'll be miserable, too.

You must learn to be happy in spite of the fact that not all of your needs are met.

Stop fixing the blame and start fixing the problem.

The fear of losing my freedom is behind what I consider to be the greatest fear of all in our society today and that is the fear of commitment. The fear of commitment is in epidemic proportions in American society.

Statistics:

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- The number of people living together in America without the commitment of marriage has risen 600% since 1970.
- 40% of all people living together break up within 16 months.
- People who live together before marriage have a far greater likelihood of divorce if they do not get married than those who didn't live together first.
- People who are sexually active before marriage have a 75% higher divorce rate than those who aren't.

THE ANTIDOTE TO FEAR AND DISHONESTY

1. Be honest with yourself.

"The Lord gave us a conscience; we cannot hide from ourselves." Prov 20:27 (GN)

So you face up to your faults and you face up to your fears and you face up to your feelings about the relationship and stop stuffing them down. You let them come up and you look at them and examine them and you admit them.

2. Be honest with God.

"We have no need to fear someone who loves us perfectly; his perfect love for us eliminates all dread..." I John 4:18 (LB)

God is not going to beat you on the head when you come to Him admitting your faults. He already knows what they are. He wants you to come to Him for forgiveness and for healing.

3. Be honest with your mate.

"Admit your faults to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed." James 5:16 (LB)

Intimacy is always found through the tunnel of truth.

It is the riskiest thing you'll ever do, to be totally honest – It is also the most rewarding thing you'll ever do.

Definition of an arch: Leonardo Da Vinci, "An arch is two weaknesses that, when they lean on each other, they create a strength."

"Fully developed love expels every particle of fear, for fear always contains some of the torture of feeling guilty." I John 4:18 (Ph)

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