

Week 22

Five Fights That Everyone Has - Fight #1

The Antidote to the Harsh Start-up

The antidote to the harsh start-up is the softened start-up. Using a Soft Start-up can feel like learning a new language. It is definitely not easy! Since we are human, our job is not to be perfect, but to own those inevitable mistakes, to make a repair, and to get back on track.

The basic script for a soft start-up should be as follows:

I feel (emotion) about (the situation or problem), and I need (your positive need).

There should be no “kitchen-sinking.” Don’t pile on. Avoid using “you always...” and “you never...” statements.

The listener should avoid stating their point of view. Listen well. Ask clarifying questions in order to better understand your spouse’s position. Summarize their point of view. Only when this can be done to your spouse’s satisfaction is it appropriate to move on. Offer words of validation (“I think I am beginning to understand where you’re coming from.” “That seems to make sense.”).

Then, and only then, can persuasion begin. There are several methods that can be used, which will be discussed at a later date.

Interesting factoid #4

A universal quality of the masters of love is that they start with kindness, even when they’re upset!

Next week: Five Fights That Everyone Has - Fight #2: Flooding