

Week 40

Five Fights That Everyone Has - Fight #5

How to Process a Fight

In order to understand what happened and to repair the hurt that was done, we really have to understand what our spouse saw, heard, and felt, even if it was different from what we experienced during the incident.

What we don't want is for the repair conversation to devolve into whose reality is more correct or who remembers the fight better. When we reunite, we must work from the perspective that both realities are valid and that each reality holds some truth.

The goal is not to agree on a set of facts about what happened. It is to understand your spouse's experience so you can empathize with them and understand where they were coming from.

Steps to Processing a Fight (Regrettable Incident):

1. Feelings - Share how you felt. Don't say why you felt that way, and don't comment on your spouse's feelings. Simply describe your own feelings using "I" statements.
2. Realities - Describe your reality. Take turns. Summarize and validate at least part of your spouse's reality.
3. Triggers - Share what memories or experiences you've had that might have escalated the interaction and the stories of why these are triggers for each of you.
4. Responsibility - Acknowledge your own role in contributing to the fight.
5. Constructive Planning - Together, plan one way each of you can make it better next time.
6. Use this as a blueprint for future Regrettable Incidents.

There is no time limit on repair. It is never too late to process a Regrettable Incident.

Next week: Repair Pitfalls