



The 4-Step L.O.V.E. Formula

If you and your spouse have drifted apart, it's time to bring back the love.

A loving marriage helps you:

1. Regulate your emotions in times of stress or anxiety.
2. Lowers the amount of pain you feel when you get hurt (physical or emotional hurt!)
3. Gives you the sense of belonging, connection and intimacy you need to live a healthy, happy and meaningful life.

I'm sure I don't need to convince you of the benefits of a loving marriage, so let's get right to it.

People pull away from their spouse because they lose trust. **Over time your spouse has lost trust that you are able to love them the way they want to be loved.** They have hidden themselves behind a wall of hurt and isolation.

Crazy right? And you thought you were the one who was hurt and lost trust!

To bring back the love in your marriage you need to SHOW your spouse that you DO love them. Telling them you love them is not enough.

Follow this 4-Step L.O.V.E. Formula to show your love. **When you are able to show YOUR love, the doors to THEIR heart will open and you will begin to feel the love flow once again.**

- L** **Listen** without defensiveness. Hurt people often use blame and judgement when they speak. Instead of getting offended by what they say, be generous and listen without needing to defend yourself or explain why.
- O** **Open** your heart. Disconnection happens when we're in our head justifying ourself. An open heart isn't analyzing for accuracy or proving a point. An open heart is feeling emotions.
- V** **Validate** their experience. Your partner is having an experience that is theirs. It is their truth. You don't have to agree with it to acknowledge their perspective and validate their experience.
- E** **Empathetically communicate** with your partner. Empathy is the most important skill to learn in marriage. It does two important things. It shows your partner that you understand how they feel. And it shows that you understand the precious needs missing that led to those feelings.

Do this well and your spouse's heart will open, and the love will start to flow again.

Make sense? If not, reach out. Email me at michael@happilymarried.ca

And FYI - Empathy is a skill that takes time to get good at. But more important than perfection, is your willingness to try. Give it a try and let me know how it goes.

Wishing you an easy, peaceful and passionate marriage,

Michael Sheely

