

Adventure in Intimacy

Notes from a Talk by Hedy Schleifer (www.HedyYumi.org)



5 Assumptions About Marriage

1. Marriage is a crucible for healing and growth; being in the relationship is your personal therapy.
2. Marriage is not a problem to solve but a gift and an adventure to embrace and experience.
3. Embrace conflict as an opportunity for growth and maturity.
4. Marriage is a living laboratory for the co-creation of two adults.
5. Marriage has a higher mission--to reclaim wholeness, reclaim energy, embrace life with full passion, and see yourselves as connected to each other and all others.

“Be open to new learning and have a beginner’s mind...”

Crossing the Bridge to Turn Conflict into Loving Connection

Note: Conflict is an opportunity for the next stage of growth and maturation...

10 Steps to a Loving Relationship

1. **One person (the Host) invites their partner (the Visitor) and makes an appointment with them to come and Cross the Bridge for a Visit to their world**
2. **Arrive Together and Practice “Presencing”**
 - a. The purpose is to quiet the mental chatter and to “arrive” into the here and now
 - b. Sit in facing chairs with your eyes 18-inches apart (the visitor makes room for the knees of the host between his/her knees)
 - c. Touch/hold hands
 - d. Breathe deeply
 - e. Look at each other with eyes full of curiosity
 - f. Allow your souls, minds, hearts, and bodies to settle into being present
3. **Attitudes**
 - a. Visitor: Bring curiosity and compassion and leave all else behind
 - b. Host: Surrender to the moment and allow yourself to be vulnerable
 - c. Be willing to commune with each other and connect
 - d. Be conscious of each other’s hunger to be seen and understood
4. **The Visitor’s Preparation**
 - a. Give yourself time to prepare for the visit
 - b. Leave your resentments and stories behind
 - c. Remember that your problems are the clash of your immaturities, and you need to go to a higher level of maturity to solve them; your issues are an opportunity for growth

5. Speaking and Hearing

- a. The Host speaks in manageable, digestible chunks and is direct, truthful, slow, clear, simple, and honest
- b. The Visitor fully hears and listens, learning the language of his/her partner's world by repeating what he/she has heard, and using the partner's words without interpretation or paraphrasing
- c. As the Host speaks, each step of the Visit goes deeper; Visitor responds compassionately with "Tell me more"
- d. Note that often only about 10% of the initial request for the Visit is about the present and the current issues, and 90% of the deeper layers is about the past
- e. Stay focused on the immediate topic

6. Listening and Acknowledgement

- a. The Visitor summarizes the essence of what he/she heard

7. Understanding

- a. Visitor "steps into his/her partner's shoes" and looks at the experience of the Host from the Host's perspective
- b. Visitor expresses their understanding of the Host's story and owns his/her contribution (There is no judgment of right/wrong or guilt, only understanding and validation of the experience)

8. Empathy

- a. Visitor says to Host, "and the way you might have been feeling is _____, and now you might be feeling _____." (Use 1-word answers to fill in the blanks; such as, angry, anxious, strong, loving, connected...)

9. Neutral Appreciation

- a. Both express their appreciation to the other for their respective contribution during the Visit

10. Name Qualities of the Relational Space at the End of Journey

- a. Assess the space between you and describe its qualities...hopefully closer to "loving connection" than "conflicted"

Source:

These are Susanne Alexander's notes from the 4-CD Set, *Crossing the Bridge* by Hedy Schleifer, MA, LMHC. Susanne Alexander is a relationship/marriage coach and president of Marriage Transformation.

Hedy Schleifer's *Crossing the Bridge* and other audio CDs are available for purchase on www.MiracleOfConnection.com. Information about Hedy and the Adventure in Intimacy workshop for couples is available on www.HedyYumi.org.