

Healthy Marriage Tips from A to Z
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Vulnerable

Surgery on Your Soul - Matt's Thoughts

Purposely make yourself vulnerable? Although that flies in the face of the human desire to have the upper hand in a relationship it has been my experience that vulnerability, which is seemingly weak, has made me stronger. Hopefully you can follow my choppy thoughts.

In a healthy marriage two people are so connected that they go beyond commonplace communication into touchy topics that make themselves vulnerable. They allow themselves to be vulnerable yet they are confident that they won't be attacked. The two talk about everything: temptations, in-laws, physical intimacy preferences, conflicting opinions and stances, sin in your life, fears, failures, confusing issues in life and in your faith journey, sin in your spouse's life, and other difficult topics.

The two talk about everything, both shallow and deep because they are friends. Friends listen. Friends build up. Friends even wound when necessary. As a matter of fact, the meaning of the root word in *vulnerable* is - to wound. The "wound" is truth spoken in love from your dearest friend who wants the best for you. Like the Biblical Proverb says, "The kisses of an enemy may be profuse, but faithful are the wounds of a friend" (27:6). So, part of making yourself vulnerable is allowing your spouse to do surgery on your soul.

But who wants surgery?!? Well, when there is floating cartilage that locks up your knee often enough surgery becomes an option. When a sizable cancerous tumor is detected, then removal by knife will be chosen.

I am a sinner. I want a healthy marriage. I need the knife that removes the floating cartilage and cancerous tumors in my soul. I need the faithful wounds of a friend.

And so, becoming vulnerable by sharing my weaknesses with my wife/friend so that she can gently do surgery has made me stronger.

The Gift of Vulnerability - Laura's Thoughts

Whether we realize it or not, being vulnerable is a gift we can give our spouse, ourselves and our marriage. Don't try to put up walls to protect yourself from what you might learn while being vulnerable. Trust your spouse and share your heart. There is great beauty in opening yourself up to hear what you need to hear, to share what you need to share, and to love in a way that is so free you'll wonder why you ever held back.

My greatest moments of personal growth have come from the times I am vulnerable to Matt and let him help me work through my weaknesses. If I ask, "What can I do to stay calm when the boys are trying my patience?" or if I tell him, "I am really struggling today with my feelings toward xyz. I need to forgive and I'm not sure how," Matt doesn't love me less. In fact, when we open ourselves up and share intimately, this is when we grow the most - both in our marriage relationship and in our relationships with the Father.

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