WORK PRIVATELY

Four Commitments

Read each commitment on your own. Consider what it would require of you, then make these commitments to your marriage. Give each one at least thirty seconds of thought before moving on.

NOTICE MY ESCAPE

01

When I feel stressed, disappointed, or tired, I will notice where I most naturally go for relief. I will ask whether that habit helps me return to my spouse or quietly avoid them.

BRING MY BEST HOME

02

I will not reserve all of my laughter, energy, attention, and enjoyment for life outside our marriage. I will intentionally bring some of my best back home.

ADDRESS, DON'T OUTRUN

03

I will resist an impulse to cope with tension by turning to people and things outside of my marriage. I will help us choose a good time to talk.

PROTECT OUR SHARED LIFE

04

I will look for one part of our life that has become too separate and take a practical step this week to make it shared again.

REFLECT PRIVATELY

Before We Discuss

Work on this privately and be prepared to discuss in an upcoming conversation.

BEFORE WE TALK
Answer each question for yourself. Then, with a kind and considerate heart, note how you think your spouse might answer as well. Be prepared to listen and discover whether you understood them correctly.

FOR THE HUSBAND

1. When I am stressed or disappointed, where do I most naturally go for relief before turning toward my wife?

2. What part of our life has become too separate, and what could I do this week to help bring us back together?

FOR THE WIFE

1. When life feels hard, what do I turn to for comfort, and does it draw me closer to my husband or help me withdraw from him?

2. Where have we drifted into separate routines, and what step could I take this week to help us reconnect?

OUR QUALITY TIME CHECK-IN

Rate yourself from 1 (needs growth) to 10 (consistently strong). Compare your answers with your spouse during the conversation.

Area to Consider	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Turning toward each other	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sharing joy and rest	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Facing problems together	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Protecting our shared life	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

How can "absence makes the heart grow fonder" backfire in marriage?

PRACTICE TOGETHER

The Ten-Minute Conversation

Sit down together without distractions. Share what you wrote on *Before We Discuss*. Be mutually inquisitive, then use the four helps below to guide your conversation.

CONVERSATION STARTER

Name one thing each of you does separately that is healthy and good. Then name one area where independence may have become distance instead of strength.

01	**DEFINE THE LINE** Healthy space refreshes us and helps us return to the marriage. Unhealthy distance makes it easier to avoid the marriage. How can we understand the difference?
02	**NAME THE ESCAPE** When things are hard between us, where are we most tempted to go for relief instead of working toward repair?
03	**BRING SOMETHING BACK** Choose one activity, routine, or part of life that brings each of us joy, and discuss how we could include the other person in it more often.
04	**FACE ONE THING TOGETHER** Choose one unresolved issue we have been avoiding. Set a private time to address it and decide whether outside help would make the conversation healthier.

ENDING QUESTIONS

When do you most need me to turn toward you instead of away?

What can we pray about together this week?

PRAY AND COMMIT

Choose Us Again

TURN TOWARD. STAY CLOSE. GROW TOGETHER.

OUR PRAYER

Father, thank You for joining our lives together and for the good You have given us in one another. Thank You for Your patience as we learn to love. Give us wisdom to recognize when healthy space is becoming an escape. Help us face our problems with humility and know when to seek help. Teach us to find peace in You and bring that peace home. Help us share our joys as well as our burdens, and keep turning toward one another. Guide our choices so that we strengthen the life You have joined together. In Jesus' name, amen.

THIS WEEK WE WILL

- [ ] Notice one moment when we are tempted to withdraw and choose a healthier way to turn toward one another.
- [ ] Reclaim one shared activity, rhythm, or responsibility that has become too separate.
- [ ] Talk privately about one issue we have been avoiding and choose one next step together.

THINGS I HAVE LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AND MY SPOUSE