

The Question That Saves Marriages

by Mike Danchak

The only way you can have intimate connection is to know your spouse's intimacy needs and consistently and intentionally provide the behaviors to meet their needs.

How do you find out the what behaviors your spouse needs to feel loved?

You ask what I simply call, "The Question." This one questions has kept marriages on target and turned failing marriages around. Learning to master it the closest thing to a "relational silver bullet" you will find.

Get alone with one another. Allow about 45 to 60 minutes for the discussion and ask your spouse, "What do I need to be doing so that you feel loved?" When your spouse asks this questions, your response should be framed with, "To feel loved by you, I need," then tell your spouse what behaviors you need from them.

My wife and I ask "the question" once a quarter. By being intentional in asking the question, we have avoided drifting apart over the forty years of our marriage. Another benefit of a "quarterly question" is you get your concerns (needs) out in the open, you talk about them, you can manage them, and they are quickly repaired.

In our last quarterly question discussion my wife said that she needed me to "keep the kitchen counter top picked up and clean" and I ask her to tell me at least once a week how much she appreciated my work. The results, two simple request, easily done, without harsh words or hurt feelings and our intimacy map and fuel needs were met, and we were drawn together. These two behaviors have are simple, but specific caring deeds that communicate, "I love you!"

One of the by products of having quarterly discussions is that when you ask the question, the response is often, "I don't need anything...just keep doing what you are doing." Erica tells how her husband meets her intimacy and relational needs: "He

takes good care of me. When we go to bed at night he always makes sure that we're touching in some part or he will cuddle with me. He does simple things like cooking or going to the grocery store, or making sure that we have a fire in the fireplace so I'm not cold. He makes it a point to tend to my needs."

In Married Love coaching , I help couples learn and master the five step "Question" process.