



## 4 STEPS TO PREVENTING LOVE EROSION



by Grace Baxter for  
Mind Your Marriage

The following steps will keep your love relationship from eroding into apathy.

### Step #1 Admit When You're Wrong

Without knowing it, you may have been the cause of your spouse becoming upset. Even if they don't verbalize it to you, their body language and attitude gives them away. Do not let it slide.

If you detect that your spouse is upset or fretting about something, find out what that is. He/she may not want to say, for fear that it could escalate into an argument. So KNOWING that, proceed with caution and be kind in your approach. It may be through tears of disappointment that they open up to you and share the reason they are hurt.

Now that you know it was something you said or did, (however small it may seem to you)... ADMIT that you were wrong. See yourself through your spouse's eyes. Admitting our own shortcomings is not a comfortable thing to do. But it is very necessary in order to put it behind you both, and move forward in the relationship.

Here's something I have had the privilege of hearing from someone close to me:

*I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?*

Wow! The first time I heard it, I was blown away. First the apology, then asking me to forgive him! It was a double whammy, and I loved it. Not only did this strengthen his remorse, in my mind it proved that he wanted and needed my forgiveness. Of course, I had to say, "yes". And that's when the healing took place. There was an immediate sense of relief when I said yes. The resentment in my heart began floating away like a cloud that dissipates.

The more you practise this technique, the easier it will become. Soon it will be an automatic response.

### Step #2 Forgive IMMEDIATELY

Suppose that YOU are the offended party and it was your spouse who hurt you. Always approach the wrongdoing as though it were unintended. In a "normal" love relationship, no one wants to deliberately hurt the other. That would be cruel and pointless.

If the offence is very hurtful to you and you can't get it off your mind, you may want to talk about it with your spouse. The best way to begin the conversation is to ask a question, as in this scenario:

*Honey, I was wondering about something. When we were at our friends' wedding reception the other night, and my best friend (Jerry or Sue) asked you to dance, why did you jump at the chance to dance with him/her when you wouldn't dance with me?*

Give your spouse a chance to process what you are asking. Remember, in your question, do not accuse. Simply ask for clarification of his/her actions. Let them give you an answer. And then... here it is... FORGIVE them. Even if the answer is lame, you will never get past the feelings of doubt and insecurity by holding onto any kind of resentment. Your love relationship will stop growing at that point. So you must forgive.

There is also a spiritual reason that you must forgive. When you know this principle, you will WANT to forgive, and immediately! For details, watch my video called "Forgive, So That YOU Will Be Forgiven".

Big or small, the size of the offence does not change the process of forgiving. Forgiveness is the RIGHT response, every time. It is an important step in the growth of a healthy and lifelong relationship.

### Step #3 DO the Little Things

Everyday life often gets in the way of our ability to notice what our spouse needs, at any given time. If for example, you've been working long hours, and you believe your spouse understands that it's for the good of the family... you may be oblivious to the fact that he/she is sad or disappointed.

Most likely, your spouse just misses you. Usually, women feel this way more than men. But either spouse can feel alone or even ignored when their partner doesn't (or can't) make time for them.

Nip that in the bud! The moment you suspect your spouse is feeling "sidelined", do something to let them know how very special they are to you. It can be as simple as a note you plant in their pocket, or tape to the steering wheel of their car. Just a reminder that you're thinking of them (in the middle of your chaotic day), and that you love and miss them.

If you aren't the mushy type, do a sweet, kind gesture that you know will melt your spouse's heart. Maybe it's a household chore that you normally hate doing. It could be

taking the children for ice cream to give your partner a much needed break. Or how about this one: Write a note to give them at dinner that says,

*I hereby give you permission, authority and encouragement to enjoy the entire evening to yourself, to spend in whatever way pleases you... be it watching the ball game on TV, yacking on the phone for hours with your sister, or taking a leisurely bath without any disturbance. Enjoy!*

Who wouldn't love that kind of allowing? It shows how much you love them. And it proves that you don't need to be the only source of their fun in life (though, you will be your spouse's favourite)!

#### **Step #4 REPEAT**

Success comes through REPEATING good actions. As you continue giving, supporting and loving in your marriage, you will find that the previous 3 steps provide you with ongoing ideas on how to please your spouse. As this process becomes automatic, you will realize how easy it is to avoid hurt and disappointment altogether. You will have mastered the way to Prevent Love Erosion.