

MODULE 1 — RECOGNIZING DISRESPECT

The Pattern Clarity Practice

THE CORE SKILL: NAME THE PATTERN

You cannot heal what you refuse to see. Disrespect hides in patterns. Once you name the pattern, it loses its power to control you.

TOOL: THE DISRESPECT PATTERN MAP (Fill-in)

Create three columns:

BEHAVIOR	TRIGGER	ROOT CAUSE
Eye-rolling when I speak	Whenever I express opinions	Feels criticized; needs control
Sarcastic comments about cooking	When stressed at work	Feels inadequate; food = area where he feels competent
Stonewalling (refuses to talk)	After disagreements or conflict	Feels overwhelmed; shuts down when flooded

YOUR DISRESPECT PATTERN MAP

BEHAVIOR	TRIGGER	ROOT CAUSE
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

WHAT THIS DOES

Once you see the pattern:

- ✓ You stop blaming yourself (not about your worth)
- ✓ You stop personalizing (about their wound)
- ✓ You shift from VICTIM to OBSERVER
- ✓ You gain strategic clarity
- ✓ You can respond instead of react

KEY INSIGHT: THE WOUND BEHIND THE BEHAVIOR

Most disrespect stems from your spouse's wound, not your unworthiness.

Common wounds driving disrespect:

- Fear of inadequacy → needs to regain control through criticism
- Shame about failure → uses sarcasm to feel superior
- Feeling unheard → shuts down (stonewalling) when triggered
- Loss of power → attacks/criticizes to feel in control again
- Deep insecurity → constant criticism of partner

Understanding the wound does NOT excuse the behavior. It CONTEXTUALIZES it so you can respond wisely instead of reactively.

GOTTMAN'S RESEARCH: THE CONTEMPT KILLER

Gottman identified contempt as the single greatest predictor of divorce.

Contempt = Disgust + Superiority

When contempt is present:

Your spouse's brain registers you as a THREAT

They enter defensive mode automatically

Genuine connection becomes impossible

The relationship deteriorates rapidly

This is why recognizing the pattern matters: contempt is the most serious disrespect and requires immediate addressing.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT THE PATTERN

Once you understand it, you can approach your spouse with curiosity.

NOT: You are disrespectful (This is accusation)

YES: I have noticed a pattern. When X, you tend to Y. I wonder if you might be feeling Z?

THE HEART BEHIND THE HURT DIALOGUE

Calm moment. Say:

"When you [behavior], I wonder if you might be feeling [emotion]?"

Listen without defending. Reflect. Validate.

This creates understanding. Understanding opens the door to change.

TRANSFORMATION HAPPENS WHEN

You can name the pattern without emotion

You understand it is about their wound, not your worth

You feel strategic clarity instead of personal hurt

You can speak about it with curiosity instead of blame

RED FLAGS: When recognition alone is not enough

If any of these are true, seek professional help immediately:

Physical violence or threats

Severe emotional abuse (constant degradation)

Infidelity or betrayal

Addiction without treatment

Refusal to acknowledge the pattern exists

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