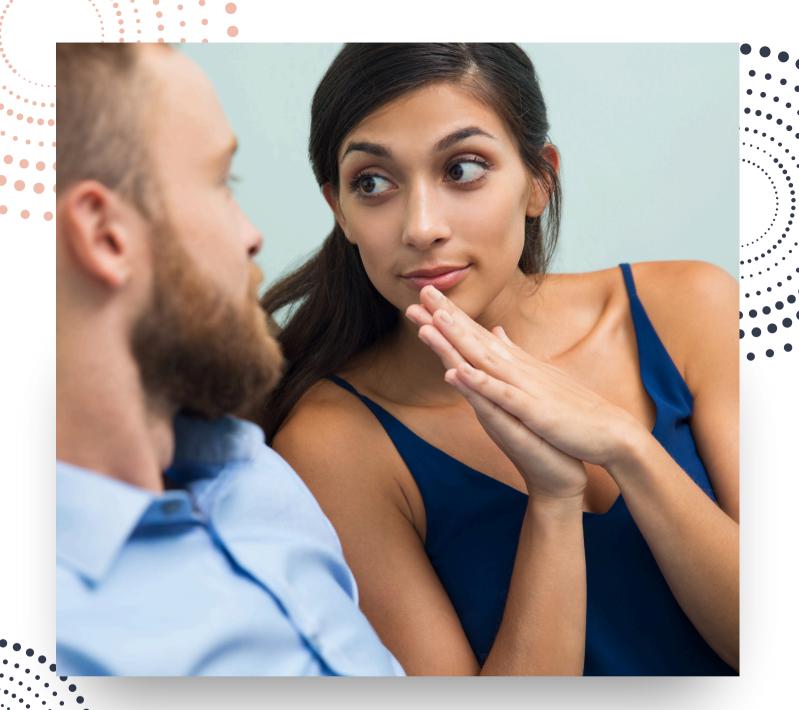
ASKING HUBBY FOR What you need...





ASKING HUBBY FOR WHAT YOU NEED...

10 seconds! That's all we need to ruin our relationship. 10 seconds in which we defend, demand, tear down, and hit back... hard. Here's the thing about words, you cannot un-ring the bell. Once words leave your mouth, the impact is felt, damage done, and the consequences are set in motion. If we want a mutually fulfilling marriage we need to be thoughtful about the words and tone we use. We must be careful of the posture of our hearts when having a difficult conversation with our husbands

When approaching a difficult conversation with your husband, it's important to do so with love, humility, and an eye towards unity. You are on the same team. Although being a blended family can make you feel like you are in-state rival schools, the truth is the two of you are one, and it is God's intention that your marriage reflect His heart for you both.

Before you have a conversation with your husband about your needs, have a conversation with the Lord. Pray for wisdom and grace. Ask God to guide your words and soften both of your hearts. Pray that the posture of your heart, your tone and attitude reflect Christ's love. Ask God to help you discern only what He can provide so you aren't tempted to demand it of your husband. Ask God to help you aim for resolution and deeper understanding. Above all, trust in God's guidance and be patient with the process, knowing that healthy communication builds a stronger, more resilient marriage.

In addition to prayer, consider the following tips:

- We judge ourselves by our intentions. We judge others by their impact. Take the time to discover your intention, then communicate that before you address an issue.
- The initial goal is to invite your spouse to the table so you can approach the issue as a team. Keep that in mind as you prepare to speak with him.
- Do not ambush. Choose a time that is convenient for you both when you can talk privately without distraction. If you interrupt something that's important to him, he may feel resentful before your first word.
- Douglas Stone, author of Difficult Conversations, wrote, "People almost never change without first feeling understood." Seek to understand your husband before you ask for what you need. Seeking to understand him communicates that you are on his side.
- Begin the conversation by expressing your love and appreciation for your husband, making it clear that your goal is to strengthen your relationship.
- Avoid hyperbolic phrases like "you never," "we always," and "only I can..."
- Use "I" statements to share your feelings and concern, avoiding blame and accusations.
- Under no circumstances should you respond to him with the word, "but". But is conjunction that marries the preceding words to exception, nullification, modification, and contradiction. Think how you feel when someone apologizes to you with, "I'm sorry, but..."
- Keep the conversation focused on the issue at hand, and be willing to compromise to find solutions together.
- Understand not only are the two of you learning new ways of communicating, but change takes time. In other words, it is going to take practice and patience. Give yourselves lots of grace.

Now let's put all of this together.

Scenario: You are struggling with not being respected as another authority figure in the home. Your husband's permissive parenting has strengthened the insider/outsider phenomenon in your home. Your stepkids mock, resist, or outright ignore you. Even worse, you feel unsupported by your husband. You constantly wonder if you made a colossal mistake marrying him. Things come to a head one night when, after agreeing to a later than usual 10 PM bedtime, you asked the children to go to bed, they defied you again, and your husband said to you, "They don't have to go to bed now. Why don't you just lay off them!" Fuming, you storm to your bedroom and cry yourself to sleep. It's time to talk.

After praying, you may come up with something like this:

OPEN THE CONVERSATION:

"Hi [Husband's Name]. I've been praying about something, and I believe it's important for us to discuss it together. Is now a convenient time?"

- If he responds with a yes, choose a private location where the two of you can have an uninterrupted, in-depth conversation.
- If he responds with a no, ask him to tell you when it would be best for him to set aside some time to chat about something important.

EXPRESS LOVE AND INTENT

"First, I want you to know how much I love and appreciate you. Our relationship and our family are incredibly important to me, and I believe that having open and honest conversations helps us grow stronger together."

INTRODUCE THE CONCERN:

"There's been something on my heart regarding our parenting approach, specifically about [describe the specific parenting difference, e.g., discipline, bedtime routines, etc.]. I've noticed that we have different perspectives, and I think it's causing some tension between us."



SEEK UNDERSTANDING AND COLLABORATIONS:

"I'd love to hear your thoughts and feelings on this. Maybe there's something I'm not seeing or understanding. How do you feel about [the specific issue]? What are your concerns or reasons for your approach?"

- Listen to him more than you talk to him. When he reveals something, draw him out with, "Tell me more about that," then say nothing else until he does.
- Once he has completed sharing, respond with...

EMPATHY FOR HIS STRUGGLES

Let's say he reveals he is scared the children won't want to be around him if he enforces the rules, or he feels guilty because he's not with them as much anymore so he wants to be around them as much as possible.

You might respond to that with:

"I'm so sorry you're experiencing [name his feeling]. I want you to know that I understand this isn't easy for you either. I can see that you're doing your best, and I truly respect and appreciate your role as a father and partner. I know you care deeply about the kids and want to make the best decisions for them."

ACKNOWLEDGE HIS PERSPECTIVE:

"I realize that we may come from different backgrounds or have different experiences that shape our views on parenting. I can imagine that sometimes it must be challenging to balance everything, and I appreciate how much effort you put into being a great dad."

VALIDATE HIS FEELINGS:

"I also want to acknowledge that your feelings and concerns are just as valid as mine. I don't want you to feel like your thoughts aren't heard or valued. Your perspective is important to me, and I want to make sure we both feel understood and supported." Once he has been fully heard, if he is ready, it's now time to...

OFFER SUPPORT:

"If there's anything you're struggling with or any worries you have, please know I'm here for you. We're a team, and I want to support you just as much as I hope you'll support me. Let's work through this together, leaning on each other and our faith to guide us."

This actually may be the end of the round one of your conversation. If this is the first time he's pouring out his heart, it may be all he can handle. Ask your husband if he is able to continue the conversation. If he is not, suggest a time FOR THE NEXT DAY when you can share your feelings and observations. When you're ready to continue, you can now...

SHARE YOUR FEELINGS AND OBSERVATIONS:

"When I heard or saw [words or actions], I felt [share your feelings, e.g., lonely, confused, frustrated, unsupported]. I want to make sure we're on the same page for the sake of the kids and our relationship. I know we both want what's best for them and our family as a whole."

Notice you spend less time talking about your needs than you do listening to his concerns. Be concise and specific, and do not give the enemy room to escalate a resolvable issue.

PROPOSE SOLUTIONS AND COMPROMISE:

"Can we talk about ways we can find a middle ground or work together on this? I think if we both share our ideas and listen to each other, we can come up with a plan that honors both of our perspectives and supports the kids' well-being."

RENEW YOUR COMMITMENT TO HIM AND YOUR FAMILY:

"At the end of the day, I believe that by showing empathy and understanding for each other, we can build a stronger relationship and create a loving environment for our family. I'm committed to working through this with you, and I trust that, with God's help, we'll find the best way forward."

CLOSE WITH ENCOURAGEMENT AND PRAYER:

"I really appreciate you listening and being willing to work through this together. It means a lot to me. Can we pray together about this? I believe that with God's guidance, we can find a way that strengthens our family and brings us closer together."

"Dear Lord, thank you for bringing us together as a family. Please give us wisdom and understanding as we navigate these challenges. Help us to communicate with love and patience, and to find solutions that honor You and strengthen our family bond. Amen."

No one can guarantee how a person will respond, no matter how reasonable the approach. • This script is designed to help YOU open the lines of communication with empathy and respect, fostering a collaborative approach to resolving differences.

Stay tuned to the content library for more scripts to give you the language you need to journey well.

