

Our 5-Step Process for Talking to Your Spouse About Anything Without Getting Killed.



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Tandem Marriage

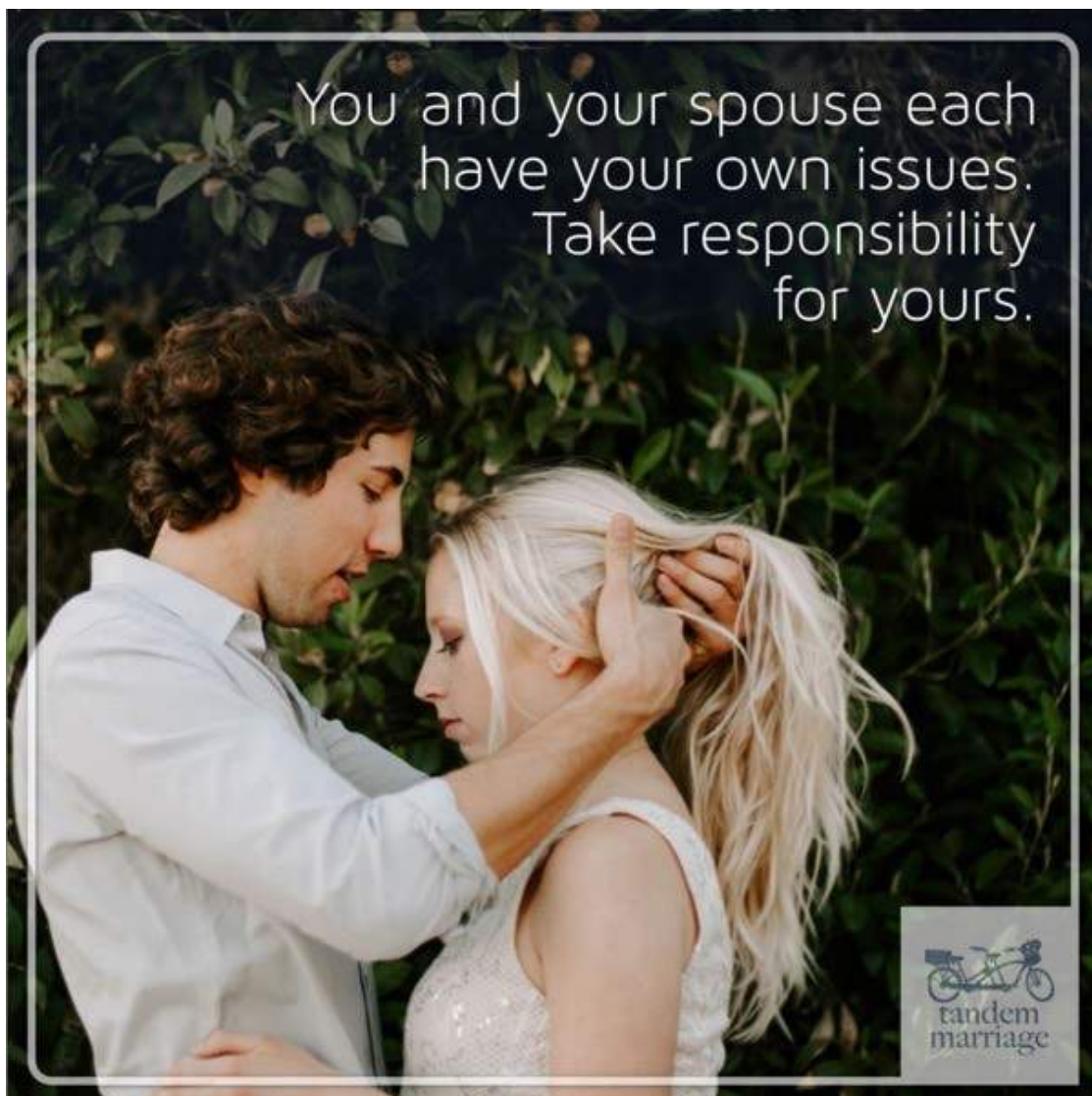


Step 1

Think Carefully About Your Topic

There will be times, if you think carefully about your current conflict with your spouse, when you will realize that the issue at hand is simply something that bugs **you**. If you can learn to use this to your advantage, you will save yourself a great deal of trouble.

The truth is, we all have things that bug us — we all have our own peculiarities and preferences. Don't make the mistake of thinking that your spouse has to: (1) figure out exactly what bugs you; and (2) avoid those things like the Black Plague. This kind of thinking is unrealistic.





Step 2

Realize That Timing is Important

One of the biggest mistakes people make when needing to talk to their spouse about something touchy is bringing it up in the heat of the moment. This is not the right time and we are begging you not to do it. Instead, wait until you can calmly think the issue through. Practice talking to your spouse (either in your head or out loud in front of a mirror) using loving language, then set up a time away from any distractions. Taking a walk together could work or you may want to plan a picnic at a local park. Then, surprise your spouse by how calmly you can talk through a difficult subject. Decide not to make it into a major issue.

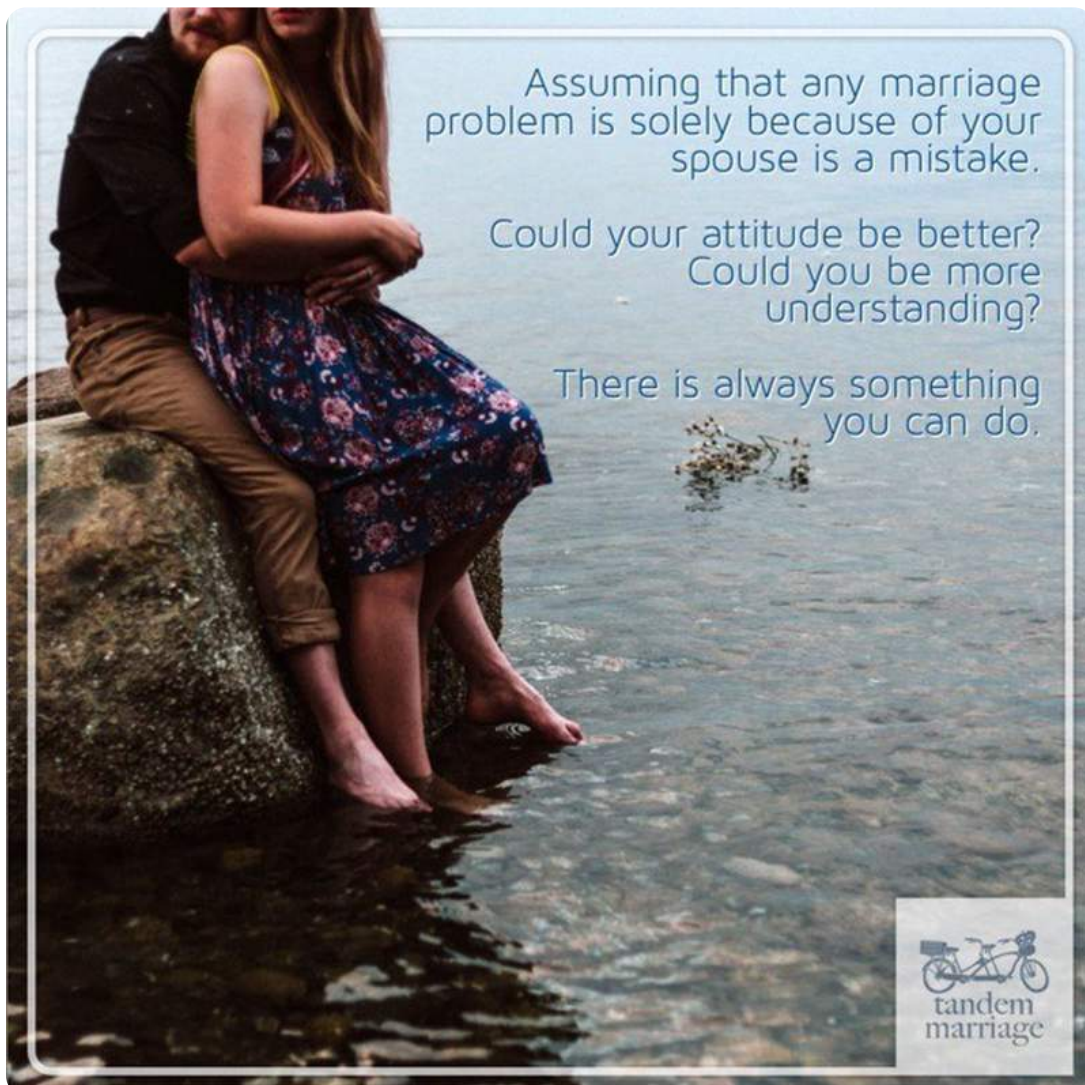




Step 3

Use Me Statements, Not You Statements

Saying, “you do this” or anything similar will always put your spouse on the defensive, and doing so will not work out well for either of you. Instead turn what you are feeling into a **me** statement. Instead of, “I hate how you treat my mother” try, “It makes me sad to see my mother dismissed.” Instead of, “You always make us late” try, “Being on time is very important to me. I would love it if we could work together on this.” Do you see the difference? Which one would you prefer your spouse use, the ME statements or the YOU statements?





Step 4

The Goal is to Understand Each Other, Not to Win

If you approach a disagreement, argument, or a perceived offense against you, etc. as a fight that you must win, you will lose every single time. After all, what do you gain if you win an argument, but lose the heart of your spouse?

Instead, seek first to understand them. How can you truly hope to love your spouse well and at the same time get *your* point across if you don't seek to understand them first?





Step 5

Remember That you Are on the Same Team

Many conflicts and arguments could be minimized or avoided altogether if spouses would remember that they are on the same team. Stop for just a minute and think this through. Imagine that you are in a small boat together and there is a hole in your spouse's side of the boat. Does it make sense to look at your spouse, point your finger accusingly at them, and say, "Hey, your side of the boat is sinking!" NO! Remember that it is your boat too.

