

HOW TO GET YOUR SPOUSE TO STOP

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Have you thought about giving your spouse an **ULTIMATUM**? Something like, "If you don't stop XYZ, this marriage is over."

Is your spouse having an **AFFAIR**, hooked on **PORN**, addicted to **DRUGS** or **ALCOHOL**, a **WORKAHOLIC**, too emotionally close to an **OPPOSITE SEX FRIEND**, or **OBSESSIVE** about a hobby or activity?

How do you get your spouse to **STOP** behavior that's destroying your marriage?

An ultimatum is an interesting idea. I bet a friend or family member even suggested it. I'm sure it's crossed your mind. Maybe it was even advised by your counselor. But will it work?

If you want to restore your marriage, do **NOT** give your spouse an ultimatum. It will **NOT** work. Let me explain why. And let me explain how **YOU CAN** get your spouse to end their affair or stop their addictive or obsessive behavior.

In a sense, it's empowering to think, and even say to your spouse, "Your behavior is unacceptable. And if it doesn't stop, I'm leaving you." An ultimatum offers the ultimate role reversal. It puts you, the victim, in control. Understandably, that's appealing. And there's no doubt that in the **SHORT RUN**, you'll **FEEL** better. But it also **FEELS** good to eat dessert after every meal. Just because something **FEELS** good does **NOT** mean it is good. The question you have to ask yourself is: Will the **LONG TERM** effect be good? Will an ultimatum give me the result I want? Will it lead to the renewal of my marriage?

The answer is **NO**.

Now I know what you're thinking, "Mort, what about **TOUGH LOVE**? Don't I have to set borders and boundaries?"

If you give your spouse an ultimatum, you'll establish clear **RULES** for your marriage. You'll set borders and boundaries. But where will the **MOTIVATION** come from for your spouse to live by the rules? In other words, the rules will be clear, but why would your spouse **WANT** to adhere to them?

If your spouse is a sex addict, a workaholic, an alcoholic, having an affair, into porn, or involved in any other type of obsessive or destructive behavior, the problem is **NOT** a lack of rules; it's a lack of **MOTIVATION** to live by the rules.

Your spouse knows their behavior is wrong. Even if they won't admit it, even if they justify it, deep down they know that their behavior is immoral and that it's destroying your marriage and soiling their soul. The problem is that they don't care. The problem is that they lack an internal **MOTIVATION** to do the right thing.

Your spouse has to **WANT** to stop. The key is their inner motivation, their **WILL**. An ultimatum imposes rules from the outside; it does nothing to address the lack of motivation on the inside.

Bottom line: although giving an ultimatum feels good, it misses your target.

Your target is your spouse's inner motivation. And how do you affect someone's inner motivation? The secret is to **CONNECT** with them. Let me explain.

Life begins as a connected experience in the womb of our mother. When we're born and that physical connection is severed, we yearn to connect again. How we go about creating that connection and how well we succeed becomes the story of our life.

People who make healthy and meaningful connections with other people feel happy and fulfilled. (Research proves that the single most important factor that determines happiness in life is **CONNECTEDNESS**.) People who lack a real emotional connection with others will grasp at anything in an attempt to fill that void in their life. That's what leads people to sex, drugs, alcohol, hours of mindless TV, falling in love over and over again with new people, or an obsessive commitment to money, success, work, or a hobby. These trappings offer a **MOMENTARY** filling. But the cause of the emptiness your spouse seeks to fill is a lack of a meaningful **CONNECTION** in their life.

When you create that connection with your spouse, you accomplish two profound things.

First, you eliminate your spouse's desire for their destructive behavior. You take the wind right out of its sail. You cut it off at its source. They don't need it anymore. There's no more hole to fill. YOU filled it!

Second, you offer your spouse a permanent filling for a hole that's been insatiable probably since their childhood. (Your spouse's destructive behaviors can probably be traced back to a disconnected relationship they had with their mother or father). And their DESIRE for your connection, a REAL and LASTING filling of that hole, will trump any momentary interest in seductive pleasures.

So how do you get your spouse to stop their destructive behavior? You create a connection with them.

Now here's the kicker.

The chances are very good that YOU have no clue how to deeply CONNECT with your spouse.

Disconnected people tend to marry disconnected people. In other words, you picked your spouse BECAUSE they're disconnected, and that was safe and familiar for you. (Your spouse is probably like your mother or father.) You didn't have to make a real connection to your spouse and that's why you fell in love with them. Your spouse didn't need what you couldn't offer. Do you see how that worked? It's totally dysfunctional, but it's true.

Now don't misunderstand, I'm not saying that your spouse's inappropriate behavior is your fault. But it is your RESPONSIBILITY. Meaning, that you can choose (if you want) to do something about it. You can impact your spouse's choices. But you'll need to learn to forge a real connection with your spouse, and you'll need to learn to do that WITHOUT your spouse's cooperation.

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