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INDIVIDUAL & COUPLES PSYCHOTHERAPY

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MOVING FROM AN UNCONSCIOUS MARRIAGE TO A CONSCIOUS MARRIAGE

The Five Part Marital Assertiveness Message

1. **When you do or say ????**
(Use a non-blameful description of your spouse's behavior. Totally avoid inflammatory words such as "always" or "never" and labels such as "clumsy" or "stupid".)
2. **I feel ???? or I am ????**
(Use one word to capture your feeling. Avoid phrases such as "I feel like," "I feel that," or "I feel you/we/I" for each of these phrases because you can substitute "I think" and the sentence will still make sense.. Stating the feeling in one word is imperative because it states our personhood, i.e. who we are at that moment. For example, "I feel lonely" equals "I am lonely." We also need to connect with our deeper feelings, i.e. underneath my feeling angry, I feel hurt. Underneath that I feel disrespected. Underneath that I feel unimportant and ultimately disregarded and invisible. Obviously, feelings vary based upon each person's uniqueness and the particular situation.)
3. **I can't stand it!**
4. **It's the same way I used to feel when ????**
(The goal here is to connect with the root or the origins of the feeling so that you establish a parallel between what is happening now in the current relationship and what happened then in the family of origin. Hopefully, this sharing will be immensely motivational for your spouse to change their injuring behavior so as to be responsive and healing towards you.)
5. **What I'd like you to do or say instead is ????**
(This often is a difficult issue to identify because we have to stop, think, and determine what will be healing for us. We must have a healing change from our spouse to fully heal our childhood emotional wound.)