



**The Crazy Cycle**

Without Love She Reacts Without Respect.  
Without Respect He Reacts Without Love.



**The Energizing Cycle!**

His Love Motivates Her Respect.  
Her Respect Motivates His Love.



**The Rewarded Cycle!**

His Love Blesses Regardless of Her Respect.  
Her Respect Blesses Regardless of His Love.

### **She Says, That's the Worst Meal I Ever Made!**

*Two good willed people can experience moments of craziness. A husband and wife can "say" something that results in the other "hearing" a "meaning" that was never intended! The misunderstanding leads to conflict.*

A wife comes home from work and fixes the evening dinner. She not only had a bad day, nothing goes right with the food preparation. She burns the meat, she had no lettuce for the salad, the fire alarm went off, she overcooked the vegetables, and she forgot some ingredient to the pecan pie which left it liquid. Later, to her husband, she says with sadness and slumped shoulders, "That's the worst meal I've ever made."

He replies, "No it isn't, honey."

Feeling inadequate already, her insecurity prompts her to yell, "What do you mean 'No it isn't, honey?' You're saying I've made a lot of worse meals! You've been holding this against me, haven't you? Ok, Mama's boy, from now on eat at your mother's house!?"

If the guy is full of goodwill, trying to comfort, he might stand there in utter disbelief. If he's been feeling a bit unappreciated himself and that she's been critical and negative toward him, he says to himself, "I don't have to put up with this." He exits the house. As he leaves, he snipes, "You treat me like a god. Every night you present me with another burnt offering."

Later that evening, as they retire for bed, he wants to be intimate. She cold shoulders him, so he cold shoulders her. He doesn't talk to her the next day. She tells him the next night that he is an uncaring human being.

Round and round it goes. Where it stops nobody knows. Well, not exactly. We can get you off this crazy cycle.

We believe most couples have good will. However, our maleness and femaleness affects our communication in such a way that we hurt each other.

**In some cases we grow suspicious. "Why doesn't my spouse get it?"**

We believe good things are in store for that couple who mutually understands two simple truths. One, a wife needs to feel loved during a conflict. If she feels unloved, unfortunately she can react in very disrespectful ways. We provide help through our resources that enable a husband to reassure his wife and soften her negative reaction. A slight adjustment on his part, which isn't tough to do, creates a huge and positive shift in the marriage. He won't lose face in doing this and will not be asked to be feminine in doing this!

Two, a husband needs to feel respected during a conflict. (We take the position that most husbands are assured of a wife's love whereas a wife wonders, "Does my husband really love me?") If he feels disrespected, sadly he can react in very unloving ways. We enable a wife to help her husband understand where she is coming from and to defuse his negative reaction. Certainly, we know a wife does not "feel" respect when she feels her husband does not deserve respect. But, if she is willing to give her husband a very small, inexpensive gift of what we call unconditional respect, which takes all of a few seconds, it can be worth a million dollars to him.

Discuss:

1. Do you go round and round in your marriage? In your opinion, why do you do that?
2. Would it be helpful to you as a husband to see your wife in one simple way: she needs to feel you love her, especially when she is feeling upset, insecure or inadequate? Do you believe you have the power to reassure her?
3. Would it help you as a husband to know that when your wife says things that feel disrespectful to you that she is probably feeling like she does not matter? Have you discerned that she is not trying to emasculate you, though it can appear that way? Have you recognized that when a wife comes across disrespectfully she can be crying out, "I need to feel you love me?"
4. Would it be helpful to you as a wife to see your husband in one simple way: he needs to feel you respect him for who he is, even when he is failing to come across as loving, otherwise he'll get angry and close you out? Do you believe you have the power to prevent him from getting upset and withdrawing from you?
5. Would it help you as a wife to know that when your husband says things that feel unloving to you that he is probably feeling like he does not matter? Have you discerned that he is not trying to treat you like a door mat, though it can appear that way? Have you recognized that when a husband comes across unlovingly, he can be crying out, "I need to feel you respect me?"
6. Do you feel it is too simplistic to say, "A wife needs to feel loved and a husband needs to feel respected?" Is this what the Bible is teaching in Ephesians 5:33? "Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband."

We are all about love and respect in marriage. This is based on Ephesians 5:33.

We have seen a love and respect connection. For instance, when a wife feels unloved, she tends to react in ways that feel disrespectful to her husband. Or, when a husband feels disrespected, he tends to react in ways that feel unloving to his wife. We call this The Crazy Cycle. It can trigger itself and keep spinning. Well, there are 3 basic cycles. Let me give you an overview.

Concerning the Crazy Cycle, we observe certain negative reactions that are ineffective. None of us manages our marriages perfectly. Adjustments can be made by all of us.

Does that threaten you? Would you be distressed by this statement, "My response is my responsibility?" That can intimidate! Or, what about this comment, "You need God in your marriage?" For the believer that is "believed." For the un-churched that may sound like a crutch. We take the position that each person has weaknesses with which they struggle, though they have a ton of strengths. Further, we believe God intends for us to look to Him to help us in that area of weakness. He sent the Holy Spirit. Jesus called Him the Helper. Does that description strike you, like it does me? The Helper. According to Jesus, we need help, and that isn't a bad thing. Abba Father desires to help. I love the Bible verse, "Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Jesus did not see "help" as a bad thing but a good thing. Do you? If things are too crazy in your marriage, there's help on the way! We point out the help God has provided in Scripture, and even in the social sciences, which explain why we negatively react to each other in the Crazy Cycle. Right knowledge empowers us to stop the craziness.

Concerning the Energizing Cycle, which you can learn about from this site, we focus on what motivates a spouse, as opposed to what manipulates. Having said we need help, does not mean we are absolutely powerless. We can influence. We can touch our spouse's spirit. God has revealed a right way and a wrong way to motivate another person. We are not to motivate a person for selfish ends. That is manipulation. We motivate by meeting another's need. Meet a wife's need for love, and she responds. She wants to respond. If she senses we do that for ulterior motives, all bets are off. Or, a husband needs to feel respected for who he is. If a wife meets that need, the guy will die for her. Whereas flattery may get you somewhere short-term, it backfires long term.

In the Rewarded Cycle, we enter a whole new sphere. Some have said, next to their conversion this was the most powerful thing they had ever heard. We address the simple question: what if my spouse doesn't respond, then what? We realize that though our spouse frustrates us to no end, they cannot control our inner person. We are free inside to do what we want. They cannot get us to hate them! That is a choice we make. We also discover that at the end of the day, marriage is far less about my spouse. There is something far deeper going on that does not catch the eye like it should. We discern that since Abba Father is there and intimately acquainted with everything we think, feel and do, everything we do matters to God. Nothing is wasted. We unfold that our situation results in eternal rewards even if our spouse is ugly toward us.

1. **In the Crazy Cycle, we own up to our ineffective reactions**

- a. I cannot manage everything perfectly, and I accept that about me.
- b. my response is my responsibility, and I won't run from that axiom
- c. I need God; that is both ok and wonderful.

2. **In the Energizing Cycle, we commit ourselves to what motivates (not manipulates)**

- a. I am not powerless but can influence
- b. My spouse's spirit can be touched
- c. God's way to motivate is right

3. **In the Rewarded Cycle, we do one thing independent of our spouse**

- a. We realize that inwardly we are free to do this one thing if we want
- b. We discover much of marriage isn't about my spouse but this one thing
- c. We discern that this one thing matters to God, and counts for eternity even if my spouse doesn't respond.

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