

Acceptance: Valuing another person for who they are



Acceptance is a key principle for healthy relationships and critical to a healthy marriage. When we accept our spouse for who they are, we value them. We are *not* talking about accepting poor or sinful behavior! The spouse who says; that their husband or wife has to ‘just accept me for who I am,’ when the spouse attempts to address wrong behavior aims at justifying their behavior, which has *nothing* to do with who they are. Genesis states that we are made in the image of God and Psalms 139:14-16 says that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. God gives us value and we are to value our spouse and others.

Differences tend to draw two people together, but once married, those same differences tend to drive them apart. Every person is unique and valuable and when we demonstrate that they are valuable, we *will* build the relationship. Our differences are good and help us to better meet the challenges we face in life. But we must realize that differences are not right or wrong—they are just different. Again, it doesn’t mean that we can tell our spouse they have to accept our differences, when hurtful behavior is involved. As an example; I am a choleric, lion personality and I tend to do things very quickly and get impatient when things don’t get done at the speed I think they should be done. When I get impatient with my wife, it can be hurtful to her. To say, ‘that’s just the way God made me,’ denies the fact the God desires that I be patient with my wife and all those I come in contact with. Acceptance values the person, but also addresses hurtful or wrong behavior.

Accepting my wife means that I value her as a person, that I choose to see the strengths of who she is (there are many) and that we respectfully work out our differences we have (there are many of those also!). This acceptance should extend to our children, family, friends, co-workers and everyone we come in contact with. When I am accepting of others, I do not judge them, but respect them and hear what they have to say. Do you accept your spouse? Does he or she know they are accepted?

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Articles to check out:

Accepting Differences in Marriage by Cindy and Steve Wright - marriagemissions.com

Grace and Acceptance in an Imperfect Marriage by Mark Savage - www.focusonthefamily.com

Empathy – Accept Others for Who They Are by Terry Schmitz - www.conovercompany.com