

Words:

Units of language, consisting of one or more spoken sounds



Do you remember the old childish saying? “Sticks and stones may break my bones...” Did you automatically finish, “*but words will never hurt me.*”? The problem is that words *do* hurt. In fact the Bible tells us that; “The tongue has the power of life and death...” (Proverbs 18:21). Our words can build up or they can tear down. Even though many claim that they don’t have a choice (it’s my culture, or it’s just the way I am), we in fact, do have a choice in our language. James wrote; “With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be” (James 3:9-10). Many couples spend too much time using words cutting each other down, defending themselves, or attacking the very character of their spouse. Brothers and sisters, this should not be so!

The Proverbs go on to tell us that; “Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing” (Proverbs 12:18). Again, too often in marriage, reckless words fly! People who act professionally in business and outside of the home use words to hurt and destroy within the home. Paul wrote; “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:29) Are the words you use in your home building others up or tearing them down? There *is* no excuse for hurtful words! You cannot blame your family of origin, your culture, or your spouse - *you* are responsible for the words you use.

Yes, it can be a challenge to change years of poor habits. It seems to be natural for many to react in anger when certain situations arise. We’ve been told by some during counseling that they *can’t* change. Can we do *some* things in Christ, who strengthens us? No! We can do *all* things in Christ who strengthens us. Be the man or woman who finds joy in giving an apt reply - to give a timely word to encourage and build your spouse, children or others up. Be the person of knowledge and understanding who walks by the Spirit and not the flesh. Use your words to build others up *according to their needs.*#

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

Our website has some great articles and resources to help use words in healthy ways, including a Communication Effectiveness Inventory and a downloadable list of Scriptures about communication.

www.fortifiedmarriages.com/marriage_resources.aspx#4