

*A Thomas Room Tip - To sizzle, or turn up the heat knob before adding your spices can prove to be detrimental to your dish. It is best to identify the spices that will be added to the pot before you turn up the fire.*

Webster's Dictionary tells us that a plant substance used to add flavoring to food is called a spice. Being from New Orleans, I was taught that the more variety of spices you add to a recipe, the more flavorful the dish will turn out. All spices are not the same. Each is uniquely different and adds zest to a dish. Without spices, a dish can taste quite bland and dull.

In marriage, each partner, male and female, have their own unique and individual spices which are commonly referred to as needs. These needs may be emotional, physical, and/or spiritual in nature. Each spouse's needs adds flavor to the marriage relationship. Without a variety of individual and different needs a marriage relationship would be unstimulating, tedious, and thereby lack flavor. A failure to properly identify and meet the needs of your spouse is one of two ways conflict occurs in marriage.

**Marital conflict is created one of two ways:**

1. Failure to **care**.

*Couples fail to make each other happy and they become frustrated because their needs are not being met.*

Because the woman "feels" like he doesn't care she becomes frustrated and begins complaining. "Why don't you do this for me & Why don't you do that." Complaints progress to nagging. In the husband's mind she sounds more and more like Charlie Brown's School Teacher, "Wah, Wah, Wah, Wah, Wah!"

The husband becomes frustrated because of the nagging.. He doesn't understand the wife's cry for her need for attention, therefore, he shuts down from her emotionally.

2. Failure to **protect**.

*Couples deliberately hurt each other.*

Failing to care can progress to failing to protect. Couples hurt one another through words- like an email, once you send it out, you can't get it back- and actions – a wives often lock down what he desires the most-SEX- click! click!

Now the Days of Wine & Roses have turned into the Days of Thunder & Lightening. We will look more at the failure to care, which is directly caused by not meeting needs.

A growing marriage understands that part of God's design is to meet their needs through one another as husband and wife. In order to do that, we must be willing to share openly with one another. Your spouse may not be thinking the same thoughts as you. Often times they do not handle situations the way you would handle them. Everything from the every day driving route to the way the toilet tissue rolls over or under could be different. Being different doesn't compromise the potential of the relationship. Being different is a SPICE of relationships.

In marriage, the needs of the husband are often different from the needs of his wife. As a matter of fact, his top emotional needs usually do not match any of her top emotional needs. It is important for each spouse to understand each others needs and seek to meet them. *PHI 2:3 - Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as*

*more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.* The inability to develop a real interest in understanding each other's needs is source of trouble.

Also, realize, just because your spouse does not treat you or respond to you the way you need to be does not mean that he/she does not care and is not treating you the best way he/she knows how to. That is why it is so important for both spouses in a marriage relationship to be sensitive and lovingly communicate what emotional needs have "need" of more attention.

First and foremost, we must identify the needs of men and women in marriage. Notice they are very different.

***DIVA, What The Man Really Need From You:***

1. Sexual Fulfillment (shocking news, right?!)
2. Admiration (stroke his ego)
3. An Attractive Spouse
4. Domestic Support
5. Recreational Companionship

***What Women Really Need From A Man:***

1. Affection (non-sexual)
2. Conversation
3. Honesty and Openness
4. Family Commitment
5. Financial Support

The tendency is to assume that the way I want my spouse to love me is the way he or she wants to be loved by me. If my top need is affection, then I may naturally assume that is my husband's top need as well, when in fact his top need is very different. In other words, he wants more than a hug!

A major problem in marriage is selfishness or insensitivity to the needs of my mate. Our commitment is to "love, cherish, care for, provide and protect" them as long as they live. Our commitment is to exercise care and love "in sickness and in health, for better or worse, for richer or poorer!" We have made a vow to meet their needs! We have a Biblical obligation to do everything in our power to make sure that their needs are fulfilled.

It is also in our best interest to meet our mates needs. When a husband is sexual fulfilled, admired and has enjoyed the recreational companionship of his wife, he is far more likely to be tender and affectionate.

A mature person has the ability to be considerate of the needs of others. Babies are extremely self-centered. & immature They are not aware of any needs other than their own. Self-centeredness will not work in marriage. In order to have a successful marriage, we must learn to be sensitive to the needs of the other person. We must put a priority on meeting their needs and caring for them, without expecting "payment". In others words a spouse must learn to minister (meeting needs) to their partner without expecting anything in return.

**Because we are all women, we will concentrate on meeting the needs of our husband. Topping off the list is Sexual Fulfillment, our next topic of discussion. What a way to start the course!**