



The 7 stages of Disconnect

Is your marriage feeling disconnected, starved of nourishment?

Many couples do not fully realise how important this connection is until it is too late. It is not given the priority it deserves.

As a result, life gets in the way: careers, friends, hobbies, interests, children and, over time, the distractions build up until one day, you realise that either you do not feel the warmth toward your spouse or your spouse does not feel the warmth toward you and you are no longer meeting each other's emotional needs.

You have become disconnected and may never have seen it coming!

Many couples believe that 'the relationship' will take care of itself. It will survive on the connection created and built during their dating days.

One client recently told me, *"I thought the marriage would just roll along. We would be happy and all would be good. I forgot to reach out to him. He stopped reaching out to me. Now, there is a huge, cold divide between us in bed. I don't even know how to move forward. I am beginning to think he doesn't even like me anymore. And I have lost all respect."*

Sue identified 2 stages in the process of disconnection (see below): Dislike and Disrespect (See guide-Naming and communicating feeling)

The 7 stages of disconnect

1. Disconnection – distance, out of synch – date night, mutual hobbies
2. Disinterest – outside interests take over – new friends
3. Disregard – don't take the other into account, don't care – independence
4. Disrespect – uncivil, unkind – lack of cooperation, criticism



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5. Disappointment – disillusionment – stop trying, start blaming
6. Dislike – don't want to be around, only see the bad things, deficits
7. Distain – anger and resentment, pushing away, replacement investment

Where is YOUR relationship? What stage is your marriage from both your perspectives? Check in with each other and find out what you both need to know so that you can make decisions together about what to do next.

How do you each feel about each other? Be honest and decide what you both want to do about this. Use the guide- Naming and communicating feeling, to help you.

Will you be able to reconnect as a couple? Do you want to? Even if you do not, what about your parenting relationship the need to support each other as parents?

If you know the stages, you can understand the process. And the process of disconnect can be reversible if you both want it to be.

The earlier you start, the easier the process. The deeper the hurt and the lower the stage, the more difficult the recovery process.

Are you ready to reconnect? Or, even if you are not sure, speak to a Divorce Coach.

You can always both come back to mediation when you have both decided that this is what you both want and need to do because you intend to separate and need to do so together, sorting out arrangements for your children and your future financial arrangements together.

That is the time to speak to one of our mediators.

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