

Needs Meetings

Goal: Understanding our emotional needs, which are connection points to God, and inviting our spouse/friend(s) to join us in bringing those needs to God to seek His way of meeting those needs for us.

“Needs meetings” give our spouse/friend(s) the opportunity to enter into the blessing of seeking to be used by God as a way in which He meets our emotional needs. However, if we express/expect too much from our spouse/friend(s), or if we turn our needs into demands, we will hinder our spouse/friend(s) ability to enter into the blessing of being part of what God will do. The reason for this is that *God will graciously make our relationships unsatisfying when we rely on them rather than on Him*, if we try to replace God with our spouse/friend(s) [or, church, job, success, etc.] as the ultimate source for our needs to be met, we will become disappointed and frustrated.

What the needs meeting is **NOT**:

This meeting is not a platform for making our spouse/friend(s) responsible for things God has told us to rely on Him for [see the list of needs below for examples]. ***God is capable of meeting your needs*** even if your spouse/friend(s) does not. **This has to be the foundational belief for the needs meetings.**

The Needs Meeting:

5 Minutes: Pray - ask God to bless the time together

20 minutes (10 Minutes per person)

Each person talks about their inner world.

- Share feelings (*separate from feelings in our about the relationship*) that you have had since your last meeting. Describe a time(s) you experienced:
 - Positive feelings
 - Painful feelings
 - Hopeful feelings
 - Things that made you angry (a goal that you felt was blocked)
 - Joyful feelings

If speaking, *focus on emotions*, rather than data, or facts.

If listening, *only listen, affirm, or seek to understand*. Don't fix, interrupt, or change the subject.

5 Minutes (2½ minutes each): Share what 1 of the 12 emotional needs you would like the other person(s) to enter into asking God to meet for you. Your spouse/friend(s) may (*or may not*) be a part of God's overall solution to meet the needs you have.

Note: Do not “stack” or add needs from week to week. Repeat the same need or choose a different need each time.

12 Emotional Needs (Connection Points to God):

1. **Affection** – Physical reassurances of value and care (*Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26*).
2. **Attention** – To feel worthy of someone's time and thought (*Phil. 1:3-4*).
3. **Acceptance** – To be valued, approved, and appreciated by those you see as important (*Rom. 15:5-7; Phil. 2:3*).
4. **Affirmation** – To have your internal character qualities and personal characteristics valued (*Rom 12:10*).
5. **Appreciation** – That you are able to make meaningful contributions to others (*1 Cor. 12:22-26*).
6. **Comfort** (Psychological) – To be at peace looking ahead to the future (*2 Cor. 1:3-7*).
7. **Encouragement** – To be energized to move forward toward a worthwhile purpose or goal (*1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 10:24*).
8. **Respect/Significance/Approval** – To be affirmed and appreciated for contributions (*Rom. 14:18; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Peter 2:17*).
9. **Security** – Confidence of harmony in relationships, to feel protected from things that can jeopardize your physical, emotional, spiritual, and/or mental well-being (*Rom. 12:16-18; Eph. 4:1-3*).
10. **Support** – Typically through acts of service (*Acts 20:35; Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:14*).
11. **Understanding** - Someone else knows and can empathize with why you are feeling and seeing situations the way you do. This is not the same as agreeing with them. (*Rom. 12:15-18; Col. 3:12; James 5:16; 1 Peter 3:8*)
12. **Growth** – The ability to continually become more alive spiritually, intellectually, psychologically, physically, and emotionally, (everything is either growing or it is dying) growth enables one to more fully exercise their spiritual, intellectual, psychological, physical, and emotional range (*Prov. 27:17; Eph. 4:13-16; Heb. 10:24; 2 Peter 1:3-8*).

For Married Couples

Prioritize **5 hours of intentional marriage work a week** in the following 4 ways:

1. Weekly Staff Meeting (30 min)
2. Weekly Date Night (2.5 hours)
3. Bi-Weekly Needs Meetings (30 min. each) [1 hour a week]
4. Bi-Weekly Reading Meetings (30 min. each) [1 hour a week]

Details:

- 1) **Staff Meetings** → The goal is to show respect to the other person's schedule.
 - Discuss: *Schedules/ Logistics - Nothing else until this is done.*
 - Do NOT: Discuss grievances, disappointments, etc.
 - Do NOT: Criticize or critique the way the other person is using their time.
- 2) **Date Night** → The goal is to expand the range of things you enjoy doing together.
 - Once a Week – 2 ½ Hours → *Only Fun*
 - Alternate responsibility for planning.
 - Do NOT use date night to deal with issues in the marriage.
- 3) **2 Needs Meetings**
- 4) **2 Book Discussions**
 - Take turns reading out loud books on marriage
Recommended Reading:
 - *How We Love* by Mila and Kay Yerkovic
 - *Sacred Marriage* by Gary Thomas
 - *The Meaning of Marriage* by Tim and Kathy Keller
 - *The Lies Couples Believe* by Chris Thurman
 - *Boundaries in Marriage* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend
 - *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman
 - *Attachments* by Tim Clinton
 - Discuss what you read
 - Close the meeting in prayer.