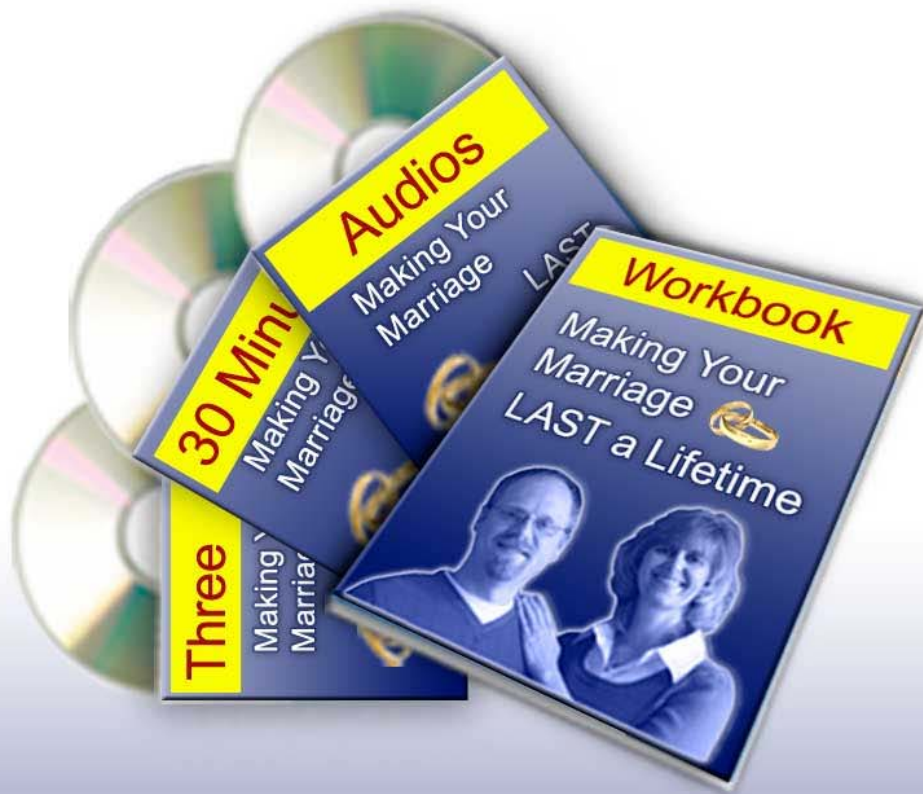


Audio  
Workbook

# Make Your Marriage

# LAST a LIFETIME!



## Tim & Dawn Cole

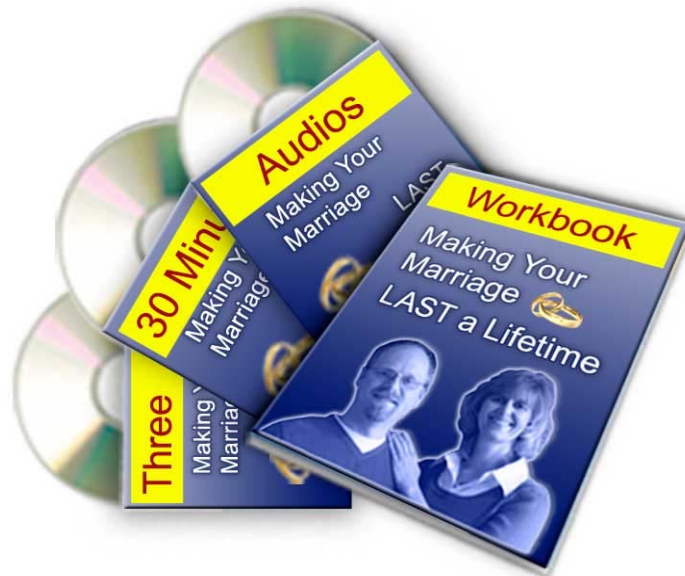
# Making Your Marriage Last a Lifetime

## Audio Workbook Contents

Introduction .....	3
1. Audio One	
a. Introduction .....	4
b. Reflection Questions .....	5
2. Audio Two	
a. Introduction .....	9
b. Reflection Questions .....	10
3. Audio Three	
a. Introduction .....	14
b. Reflection Questions .....	14

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# Making Your Marriage Last a Lifetime



Tim and Dawn Cole here, and welcome to our **Making Your Marriage Last a Lifetime** Course! We're honored to stand beside you in your quest for a solid, loving, growing, thriving relationship!

After each of you listen to each audio in our series, please read over these reflection questions and answer them as honestly as you can. Have your spouse read over your answers and talk about what you agree on, and where you disagree. Please note – it's fine to disagree. Just do so with honor and grace. This isn't a competition, and your answers aren't turned in for a "grade". There are no wrong answers; Just opportunities for deeper and more intimate communication.

Ready?

Please listen to Audio One: Learning to Connect with Your Partner in Communication.



# Audio One

## Learning to Connect with Your Partner in Communication

### INTRODUCTION

Heart to heart communication is the foundation and backbone of every successful relationship. Without the ability to connect, it's far more difficult to maintain a growing, healthy relationship. Fortunately, communication is a skill that can be learned and improved upon with some practice and determination.

To begin with, it's easier to communicate when you understand your mate's personality. Getting a grasp on how your partner processes information can help when it's time to share about an important decision or bad day. Also, we are all wired to receive and give love in certain ways. Learning how your partner really receives and feels love can be a great boost to every relationship.

Every couple will face the need to have a critical conversation about an important issue - and more than once! Learning some simple tips to making that encounter the most productive can spell the difference between a "win, win" outcome or a blowup that further alienates you and your mate. Possibly one of the best things you can do for you mate is learn to be a good listener. There is a significant difference between the mechanical process of hearing and the art of listening. By being aware of this difference, you can increase your ability to communicate and ultimately appreciate the way it feels to be genuinely heard.

One note of warning - the communication process can be greatly hampered by playing the blame game. Taking personal responsibility for our actions and words is crucial to keeping our partner in the conversation with us. Sometimes an apology is necessary. Saying you are sorry and forgiving your partner are important steps in the meaningful exchange we call communication.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your communication? Why did you rate yourself that way?
2. What are the top three reasons why you think you and your spouse have difficulty communicating?
3. What is your personality type? What is your mate's?
4. How do you think personality has affected your communication?
5. How can knowing the personality type of your mate help you to relate to him/her more effectively?



11. Think about an issue that you want to discuss with your mate? How can you present your concern by using “I” statements instead of blaming him/her for the problem?

12. What do you think are qualities of a good listener? How many of these qualities do you have?

13. Can you share your heart with your mate? What are the barriers that you find in the way of deep communication?

14. If you could share one really deep and personal thing with your partner, what would it be?

15. Do you know how to apologize with sincerity?

16. In what areas of your life do you find it most difficult to take personal responsibility?

17. Keep a log of your communication interactions; write down successes as well as areas that could be improved. Periodically, look through the log and assess your progress. See what your partner thinks. Are your assessments the same or different?



# Audio Two

## Tips to Surviving Decisions and In-Laws and Still be Together

### INTRODUCTION

All relationships go through changes. The ability to weather these changes comes when we learn to keep things in the right perspective. Probably one of the most common things that happens to couples is they lose their ability to really appreciate their mate. It is all too easy to forget why we really got together with this person in the first place when the pressure of life is squeezing us hard. Getting back to the basics of relational etiquette can be a real lifesaver. Things like honoring your spouse, being his/her biggest cheerleader, complimenting strengths in front of others and choosing not to correct or embarrass your mate in front of others. These tips that can go a long way to keeping your relationship strong and together.

Also, basic decision making skills are essential to keeping two people on the same page, moving in the same direction, fighting for the same things. How do you choose who is the one who makes the final decisions? What are some practical ways that you can eliminate these stresses that can become wedges? Having a clear understanding of roles, areas of responsibility and working together are a necessary foundation for every relationship. When you have the basics in place, decision making can be a whole lot easier, less stressful, and more rewarding.

Almost all couples go through difficult seasons of financial stress. By learning to make decisions together and keeping the lines of communication clear, you can weather these storms – side by side. These same survival skills can be applied to other areas when you are faced with tough situations.



5. Think about one thing that you can do every day this week to show your partner how much you love him/her.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Praise your mate for something he/she did for you that you really appreciated.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Who makes all the “big” decisions in your house? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What have been the easiest and hardest decisions you and your mate have ever made?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. When you come up to your next major decision, make a list of the “must haves” and the “willing to give up”. Use this to negotiate through the compromise phase of the decision.

10. Who is the best partner to handle financial matters? Why?

11. What are three or four common financial goals that you have for your family and your future?

12. How can you successfully navigate through the lean seasons of life?

13. Do you have a plan in place in case of financial emergency?

14. What are some family traditions that you brought with you into your relationship?

15. How can you blend the traditions of both families into your own family?

16. What do you feel are important boundaries that need to be kept as you relate to your in-laws?

17. What are some practical ways that you can maintain those boundaries without offending your family?

18. How are you and your partner going to deal with overbearing family members? What is your together strategy?



# Audio Three

## A Relationship that can Go the Distance

### INTRODUCTION

The most fulfilling thing about being in a growing relationship is that you can encourage each other through the difficult times and challenge each other to go for greatness. All the changes that life brings can cause partners to drift apart. By making choices that include each other, you can maintain healthy ties and create an environment where you can continue to grow together. There are simple steps that every couple can take to keep the flame burning.

The stresses of life and family can sometimes drown out the passion and dreams that were once front and center in our thinking and actions. By revisiting these hopes and dreams, you can create new strategies for making them a reality. There is nothing more fulfilling than working together toward common goals. This is not to say that everything you do has to involve each other or that you should eliminate your individual pursuits, but having activities you both enjoy can be the glue that helps you stick things out together.

This wonderful thing called relationship gives you and your mate the opportunity to live, work and dream together. The power of two is exponential – think of the possibilities!

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What are some activities you did early on in your relationship that you thought were enjoyable?



8. How comfortable are you with yourself? In what areas do you wish to become more comfortable? (i.e. appreciating your body, valuing your own strengths)

9. How do you specifically show your spouse grace?