



How to Speak Up When You Never Have

Are you tired of feeling you never get to speak your mind? Does it feel like your spouse is always in charge and is never interested in your ideas? You can do something about this and we have some ideas listed below.

- Have a trusted friend read the article, *Keeping Peace at Any Cost*. Ask your friend to identify if this is true about you. Does your friend believe that it is time for you to begin addressing this in your marriage?
- If you know this is true about you and your friend affirms it, it is now time for you to make a decision. Will you begin to address this problem or will you choose to ignore it?
- **How To Get Started:**
 1. **Outline the problem from the beginning** (when you believe the problem first started), and list examples of times you believe you tried to express yourself, and it was ignored or cut off. We recommend that you write this down so that you have an outline to follow when you talk about it and to help both of you see the whole picture.
 2. **Prepare and set a time to talk to your spouse about it.**
 - a. Prepare your attitude.
 - b. Approach this without placing blame- your spouse may be totally unaware that you feel this way. Even though you may have thought you asserted yourself; your spouse may not have really understood it or viewed it the way you did.
 - c. Don't be shocked if your spouse has no idea that you have been feeling this way.
 3. **Be prepared that it will take time to change this**, and you are likely to experience a lot of frustration and feel as though there are many setbacks. This is normal. It would be rare to solve this in one sit down.
 4. **Be sure that your spouse understands what changes you want**, and that both of you will need to work on making those changes.

Addressing this type of change in your relationship is hard, and we applaud you for wanting to tackle it. You may have good intentions about these changes in your relationship but be prepared that it is very hard work. Your current patterns of interaction may be longstanding which makes these changes difficult but not impossible. If you know that change needs to happen but feel overwhelmed by the process, it is time to seek help.

We have helped couples work through this issue for years, and we can help you too. Call us at 331-308-0113 for a 15 to 20 minute free consult to see if we are a good fit to guide you through this.

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