



Forgiveness & Healing Exercise

Therefore confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. – James 5:16

If we acknowledge our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing. 1John 1:9

1. **Examination of Conscience** - Spend at least 30 minutes alone with God in prayer. Pray to God, expressing your desire that all hurt between you and your spouse would be healed and ask Him to show you the truth about the exact hurts that you have caused your spouse in your marriage; think back to your dating days, engagement and early marriage. Include any behaviors that were selfish, critical, insensitive, disrespectful, verbally/physically abusive, unsupportive, ungrateful, unfaithful, rejecting or unforgiving. It is important that you think of the ways that “you” have caused hurt and pain in the marriage. It is easy to point out the ways that your spouse has hurt you and this can lead to additional problems because it puts your spouse on the defense. Avoid the urge to rationalize your own behavior and don’t blame your spouse for your deeds or misdeeds. Also, don’t forget about the things that you have failed to do that have contributed to the hurt and pain of your spouse.
2. **Penance** - Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation as soon as possible.
3. **Contrition** – We must be truly sorry for the pain that we have caused our spouse.
4. **Intention not to commit again** – As in any good confession we must try with the best of our ability, coupled with God’s grace not to commit that sin again.
5. **Confess** - After you finish your lists come together with your spouse. The husband should go first and recite from his list all things that he has done to cause hurt to his wife – you may start with the phrase, “I am sorry for the time that...or I am sorry for the way that...”. After you have voiced the items from your list, ask your spouse for their forgiveness and it is important for the spouse to voice his/her acknowledgement of forgiveness. Then the husband should ask if there is anything else that he might have forgotten that he needs to ask forgiveness for. If not, then the wife is to repeat the same steps.

Contrition to my Spouse

O my _____, I am heartily sorry for having offended you and I detest all my sins, because of the way that they hurt you, but most of all because they offended our God who is in you, who is all-good and deserving of all our love. I firmly resolve, with the help of God’s Grace, to not sin against you or to intentionally hurt you and to avoid the near occasion of sin. *Amen*