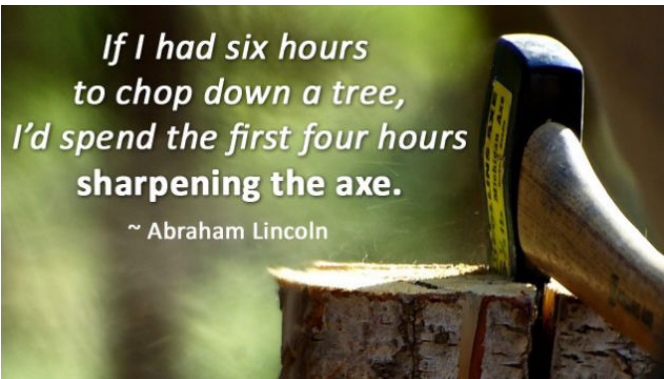


Daily Sharpen the Ax

* DSTA *



*** Sharpen the Marital Ax Each Day** by connecting emotionally. When you get home from work or the activities of the day, seek out your spouse and pull her/him aside so you are alone and can connect for a few minutes. **This is a fundamental "Ritual of Connection."**

1. How was your day?

LISTEN! Don't bring up anything with conflict potential - finances, schedules, kids or problems.

2. VALIDATE!

Sounds like you had a great day. That's awesome!

I'm really happy for you. Tell me more about your day.

-OR-

Sounds like you had a tough day.

I'm sorry! Is there anything I can do for you?

Why don't you take a break - I'll take care of the kids... dinner... rides... shopping... etc.

3. How are you feeling about your job, all of your responsibilities - the load that you're carrying?

Would it help to talk about it? If now isn't a good time, can we talk later? I'd really like to know how you're doing.

★ **Message:**

- *I care about you.*
- *I'm here for you.*
- *You have my physical and emotional support.*

Weekly Sharpen the Ax

WSTA

* **Sharpen the Marital Ax Each Week.** Plan to spend time the same day each week (Sunday) after activities and family meal. Separate yourselves – let everyone know you will be busy talking and planning for 30-45 minutes. During the week make note of things you are doing well as a family and as a couple. Have at least **5 positive things to highlight about both your family and marriage.** Suggest **1 thing** that you feel would be helpful for the family and **1 thing** for you as a couple to work on the coming week. Now you are prepared to “Sharpen the Marital Ax.”



1. What are we doing well as a family?

★ **5 Deposits x 2 = 10**

2. What one thing do you think we should work as a family to improve this week?

★ **1 Area of focus for improvement (withdrawal)**

3. What are we doing well as a couple?

★ **5 Deposits x 2 = 10**

4. What one thing do you think we should work as a couple to improve this week?

★ **1 Area of focus for improvement (withdrawal)**

(Deposits to Withdrawals = 5 to 1)

5. What one need do you have of me that I can work on for you this week?

- *Sure, I will work on that this week. Thank you for pointing that out.*
- *I would appreciate it if you would work on _____ for me. It would mean a lot to me!*

6. Calendar/Planning - What do we have coming up this week? This month?

- *Schedule and review all upcoming events:*

- *Family: birthdays, soccer, dance, piano; summer - vacations, camping, family reunions; other activities?*
- *Couple: DSTA, Weekly Date Night, anniversary, etc.*



7. Budget/Financial Review -

Let's look at our budget. How are we doing? Are we living within our means? Unexpected expenses? Savings, retirement, etc.?

