

Communication in Marriage

No More Perfect Date Night

Jill Savage: Well, welcome to this dive deep interview, and today our guest is Patti Reed, and Patti is a conversational intelligence coach.

Mark Savage: Awesome. [chuckle]

JS: I love that. Welcome, Patti.

[chuckle]

Patti Reed: Thank you.

JS: We're so glad to have you.

PR: Yeah. I'm so glad to be here.

JS: I... I had never ever heard of a conversational intelligence coach, but the minute I heard that, I was like, "We have to have her on date night."

MS: Right. We all need that.

[chuckle]

JS: Because we need to be coached in having healthy conversations.

MS: Yeah.

JS: And we honestly need to recognize that many of us are not intelligent in conversations.
[chuckle]

MS: Uh, no kidding.

PR: It's okay, we're all in the same club Jill. [laughter] I mean, but it's good, it's all good.

JS: Oh my gosh.

MS: Yeah.

JS: So umm, so let's talk about what is conversational intelligence.

PR: Yep.

JS: What is it and what does it mean, and umm and just help us to better understand that.

PR: Yeah, so conversational intelligence is a body of work that helps us understand what conversations open up the brain for trust and what conversations close them down, and really the whole uh premise is based on a book written by a woman named Judith Glaser and this is really her life work of studying, you know, the chemical reactions in the body and things like that. And so, umm I had mentioned to you at another time that umm if we were to put MRIs on our head, right, and we can actually see what is happening in our body whether it be a positive chemical or a negative one that is occurring in our conversation.

MS: Wow.

JS: Gosh.

PR: Umm, Because we know that information we can...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Impact, uh our conversations both personally and professionally.

MS: That's cool.

JS: It is really cool, and I love how you use that language, 'cause I'm thinking about it from a marriage perspective. So what you're saying is, the way that we talk to our spouse either opens up their brain for trust or it shuts their brain down for trust.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yes, yes, yes. That's correct.

JS: That's huge.

[chuckle]

MS: And it makes incredible sense really.

JS: It does. And you know so often, uh, I mean God's word has a lot to say about our words...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: And the weight of our words.

PR: Yeah yeah.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Umm, in fact, we've got a couple of sheets that are like what God says about listening and what God says about our words.

PR: Mm-hmm.

MS: Yeah.

JS: And we'll make sure and put those in the notes and quotes section of this video guys.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: So umm you can print those out because God has a lot to say about our words, but unfortunately too often in marriage we are very careless with our words.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah. Yeah. We are, and umm... I mean, I don't have it down. I mean, I'm still in practicing you know with my husband and the people in my life but the first step is really becoming aware...

JS: Yes.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Of umm, "Oh I shouldn't have said it that way. That, you know, that didn't, you know, help us connect, that certainly umm pushed you away, and I'm sorry you know, will you forgive me?"

JS: Yes.

MS: How, uh how... Is there a process that people can learn how to become aware? I just think of some people that we coach, their perspective is "Well, that's just the way I talk so you just need to toughen up."

PR: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

[laughter]

JS: Mm-hmm yeah. So what would you... What would you say to that, conversational intelligence coach?

[laughter]

PR: So that's just... So, so what I would say is, so that's just who I am, which, you know, we've heard that from different people and so...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: What, how I would respond to that person would be... Umm so are you, do you wanna stay that way? Do you want to have a good marriage? Do you... Do you think that you cannot change?

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Because to me, honestly, that's just an excuse, like that is how I am, I'm just this is how God made me. But we know that God is always moving in our lives and moving us on if we let him, if we decide to acquiesce, right? To...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: How and where He sees us to be, and so yeah, that would be a big flag for me... [chuckle]

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Umm, if someone said that because that seems selfish. [chuckle]

MS: Yeah.

JS: It is. It is a very selfish statement, you're right.

PR: Yeah.

JS: And we need to call it what it is.

PR: Yeah.

JS: I mean, it is selfish, and umm and nobody's asking you to stop being who you are. Like...

PR: Right.

JS: For me, and this is a place that I've really had to grow because I am naturally a straight shooter.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: I am a direct communicator...

[chuckle]

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Okay? And that serves me well in so many different areas of my life. It really does. I mean, I know you're involved in radio...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: And it makes you a confident radio announcer, uh, you know, it makes me a confident speaker.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: Those... It's really needed for what God's called me to do.

PR: Yeah, yeah.

JS: But if I use that tone of voice.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: That I use on a radio or on a stage.

PR: Yeah.

JS: Or and if I do that in my home, it doesn't produce the same result.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: So, I... I have had to learn to soften my uh, my communication and to say things in a way that they can be better received.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Mm-hmm. Absolutely, well, and I'm in your club Jill. I mean, I'm totally very direct, very forward. I'm a truth teller, and my husband is the very sensitive emotional one. And...

MS: That's me.

PR: And I'm sure you are, Mark.

MS: Yes.

PR: Uh, And yeah. I mean, hey, we've been married 30 years, so we have figured it out. But I mean, it's not been easy, umm and I pretty consistently got in trouble for, umm, how I said it.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Oh yeah.

PR: My kids then, and I just...

JS: Yes. Yeah.

PR: It's not... It's hard.

JS: It is hard. But part of the Christian life is that we are becoming more like Jesus every day.

PR: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

JS: And so this is how God is growing me to become more like Jesus...

PR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm, yes.

JS: Is to have that humble sensitive, gentle... In fact, when you look at the fruits of the spirit, umm, you know, the fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Right.

JS: That's a fruit of the Spirit.

MS: Yeah.

PR: Well, and self-control...

JS: And self-control.

MS: Yeah.

[laughter]

MS: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

JS: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

PR: Yeah.

JS: And, and so I've really had to learn, no, no, no, no, no, this isn't just who I am, this... That is a way that God's made me, but it's not effective in all environments.

PR: Okay.

JS: And I have to change who I bring to the relationships that mean the most to me.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: That's exactly right. And, and that is part of the becoming. Right? You know, who are you becoming along the way, because we are not the same people we were five years ago or 10 years ago.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Because we have submitted to the Lord and asked him. Because we care, we care about the

people in our lives. And...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: You know, we want to have relationships with them, and so, umm, having the awareness of, "Oh, I did that again. Oh, that's not working."

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Umm, you know, and asking yourself, can you please pray for me 'cause I know that that's not good?

JS: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

MS: Hmm...

PR: I know, I know that hurts you and I'm, I'm struggling.

JS: Yeah.

MS: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

JS: Well, and this is where I mean, one of the things we teach in our coaching is the impact and the power of do-overs. And that we've been using do-overs for me to learn this.

MS: Right. Mm-hmm.

JS: So sometimes Mark, when I was characterized by more harsh communication...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: I would say...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: I'm now characterized by more gentle communication because I've been working hard on it for probably 10 years.

MS: Mm-hmm. I agree.

PR: Yeah.

JS: But... Oh good, I'm so glad you agree.

PR: Yay!

[laughter]

MS: Yeah, yeah, yep. [laughter]

JS: But, umm, when I was characterized by it, he would... In order to help me and I had to be willing to the, you know, to receive the help. And he would say something like, "Do you think you could go back and say that again in a gentler way that I could better receive it?"

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: That's good. That's really good.

JS: And that would be my reminder like, uh yeah, you're right, I slipped back into an old way and...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Thank you. Yep. Let me rewind the tape, and sometimes we'll even do a...

[vocalization]

JS: Like... [laughter] Have a little bit of fun like, I'm rewinding the tape you know.

PR: Yeah. That's good.

JS: For those of us that remember tapes you know...

MS: Yeah.

PR: Yes, yes.

JS: That were old enough to remember that.

MS: Younger listeners are like...

JS: What you're talking about? But when you would rewind a tape, it would make a funny noise.

MS: Yep.

JS: And so umm I'll do that and then I will redeliver what it is that I said in a, in a way that his heart can better receive it.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah, I love that, Jill. And you know, you have to umm humble yourself and...

JS: Yeah.

PR: That's you know, that's foundational that...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Okay, he's pointing this out and he's not out to get me, he's not out to hurt me, he loves me and I love him.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And so, yay, because you know, it's sanctification at it's best. Marriage.

[laughter]

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Yeah. And sanctification is becoming more like Jesus, it's, it's becoming...

PR: Yes.

JS: Better versions of ourselves.

MS: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

JS: Is what it is.

PR: That's exactly right.

JS: Mm-hmm.

MS: Yeah.

PR: That's exactly right.

JS: And what were you gonna say?

MS: Well, I like, I like the idea of the science behind what you're talking about. And just for, for individuals to realize that the, the way we communicate can be measured.

PR: Yes.

MS: And, uh, I think that's fascinating for, for individuals who might be even more intellectual or more uh... Oh what's the word?

JS: Logical, maybe.

MS: Yeah. More logical.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MS: And want to maybe stay where they are because that's the way they're made, but there's science behind it.

PR: That's exactly right, that's exactly right. And you know, I think that science is catching up with the Bible.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And you know there's a reason why God says, think on what is pure, what is lovely, what is right, right? It's like because when you are thinking on those things, you are going to have a positive chemical reaction in your body. And so therefore you will present yourself you know, in that light.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And so, umm, it's fascinating to me you know, to read the word and you know, having studied this. Umm, it really is true. I mean, science is catching up.

MS: Yeah.

PR: Which Gods know not all the time, to know the why behind...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Why He says the things He does, 'cause He knows our bodies and He made our bodies.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And umm... You know you can kind of sense when Jill is a little chilly, Mark, right?

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Like, you're not doing well today. [laughter]

MS: Right. Yep.

PR: Yes 'cause she's got stuff going on in her body that, you know...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Is giving that off.

JS: Mm-hmm.

MS: Yep, makes sense. Yeah.

JS: Mm-hmm. It does, and it was really interesting that you said, that you know so you're more the straight shooter and your husband is umm tender-hearted.

PR: Yeah.

JS: You know same for us.

MS: Yeah.

JS: And that's usually the way it is. I mean, it may be that the husband's the straight shooter and the wife is tender-hearted...

PR: Right.

MS: Right.

JS: But in general opposites do attract.

PR: Yes, yeah.

JS: So we were initially drawn to that tender heart...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Right?

PR: Yeah. Yes.

JS: But then we don't know how to nurture that, and that is a place of growth for us.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: So yeah.

PR: Yeah, yeah, that is very true.

JS: So I know that you say that what we... What our tendency is in communication is our tendency is to tell, sell and yell...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: And we need to learn to ask, listen and respond.

PR: Yeah, yes.

JS: So can we... Can we just, uh, dive into those as it relates to umm... As it relates to marriage.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: And uh what does it look like to tell in a marriage, what does it look like to sell in a marriage, I think we all know what it looks like to yell.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: But umm so...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Let's talk about that umm for a moment so that we can maybe see ourselves in this.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: So telling, what does that look like?

PR: Yeah, and honestly, they're kind of, you know, very closely related telling and selling.

MS: Sure.

PR: And so umm... Well, I mean again, we've been married a long time, so we know what works and what doesn't work, and so, you know, you know my husband is not going to umm warm up to me umm if I am telling him what he needs to do, and I do try.

[laughter]

MS: Yeah.

PR: On occasion, when he's like, "Hmm, yeah."

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Umm so I mean telling is telling.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: I mean telling him, you know, you've gotta do this and you've gotta do that, as opposed to "Hey, I've got a couple of things that, you know, I'd really love done this weekend, umm you know, do you think that that's, you know, possible?" Umm, you know, it's really just that simple. And, and, and selling would be, you know persuading, persuading and advocating for my position, which again, I'm a strong woman and I try to persuade and advocate at times, but also now that, umm that again is not something that, umm, that, that works well, you need to have an open discussion about uh whatever the situation is, right, that you're dealing with. And also, I think, you know, going back to choosing your words, the words that you do...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Use in the discussion, and I have a umm a little uh exercise that I will do in a workshop.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And it's basically words create world. And so I have probably 10 pictures that I uh... That I hold up, and umm so what I tell them is to write down the first thing that comes to mind, whatever comes to mind, just write it down.

JS: Okay.

PR: So, we go through all these 10 pictures and then we go back and every single person's word is different, so even, even, even to the point of it being abstract or concrete, so umm it might be some plants, right? Well, they may say, which was really fascinating to me. I didn't really expect this. They might say peaceful. Umm other people would say, plants, right? Concrete word, right? Other people might say, umm garden, and so, so it, it goes back to, again, as we continue to ask and be curious about what they mean, especially if you're trying to resolve a conflict, right? I mean, that's like the hardest thing in marriage is...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: It's figuring out your system to resolve disagreements and conflicts in your marriage. And so you know there are some times when my husband, you know will say "Well, da da da da," and I'm thinking I wasn't even thinking that, I'm not even sure where that came from.

MS: Hmm.

PR: But again, it was his interpretation of this conversation, and so again, what, what do you think I meant by that? Or tell me more about that.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And again, you've gotta kinda dig down to really get to the answer, because again, what you see plant, someone else sees garden or peaceful or tranquil, and you know God has made us all uniquely and differently.

JS: Yeah.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: So that can help the conversation.

JS: Yeah, we all see things through our own lens of experience.

MS: Yeah.

JS: Through our lens of even how we process the world.

MS: Right.

JS: And yeah, and some people are umm logical and some are emotional, so like when I hear you saying like tranquil, like to look at plants and to go tranquil, probably you'd say that, and I would say plants or I'd say green.

[laughter]

MS: Yes.

PR: Right, right, right, right, right.

MS: Yeah, yeah, and although you love to garden...

JS: I do love to garden. I do, yeah, I do love that. And nature, I might say nature.

MS: Yeah.

JS: But see, I'm still describing it, I'm not describing how it feels and...

PR: Right.

JS: Right?

MS: Right. Right.

JS: And so and you're a feeler, I'm a thinker.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: And so umm...

PR: Yeah.

JS: It's just a reminder that when... Number one, what I think of is [A], we have to allow each other to be different, and we have to stop saying, "Well, that's a wrong description of that."

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: You know and...

MS: Right, we get defensive and try, and try to sell our partner...

PR: Yes, yes.

MS: Or another person into the correct way of, of seeing it and...

JS: And so we need our God tool of acceptance...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: For that.

MS: Right.

JS: To accept their different perspective.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: To accept. So that's the first thing that I come to, but the second is, God brought us together because he needs both of those perspectives...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah.

JS: In this relationship, and for us to make the decisions.

PR: Absolutely.

MS: Yeah.

PR: Yeah. Yeah.

JS: And so if we just keep trying to make the other person be like us, we're missing the other half...

PR: Yeah.

JS: Of this relationship and why God brought us together.

MS: Yeah, mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah, it's like the other part of the beauty.

MS: Yeah.

PR: I mean my husband and I are very different.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And, you know, he'll just say sometimes, "Well, Patti, I think differently than that." [chuckle]
And I'm like, "Oh, okay."

[laughter]

MS: Darn it.

PR: Okay, then...

MS: Yeah.

PR: Yeah, yeah.

JS: Oh that's good. Yeah.

MS: I know.

JS: Yeah. Yeah.

MS: I love, uh, how you brought it back it to a way to kinda dig into those differences is uh... Tell me more about that. We...

JS: Oh, we use that phrase all the time.

MS: Right, and we really teach couples to do that same thing, and the... Most often, couples just wanna jump in and start debating or uh, or arguing about it, and we can learn so much about each other by digging in and saying, "Tell me more about that."

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah.

JS: Yeah, tell me more about what you're thinking, or tell me more about how you came to that conclusion, or... Just tell me more about that. And by the way, those of you that are watching this, uh if you're newer to our date night program, if you haven't done our basics...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Umm, in our... In our basics, uh I think it's under start here umm in the navigation, but in our basics we uh... Or our core, I think it might be called core, umm messages. I'm not looking at it right now, but uh we have three uh videos, one is called umm Your God Tools, one is Slow Fades that affect your marriage.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: And the third is called Safe Conversations.

MS: Right.

JS: And so I wanna make sure umm that we will put a link to that safe conversations conversa... Or video, I think it's about a 20-minute video that will give you some specific...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Almost like a template to have a safe conversation and...

PR: That's good.

JS: Tell me more about that, is part of that safe conversation.

MS: Right.

JS: You literally say that multiple times because it digs deeper.

PR: Yeah.

JS: Umm, and it's so very important.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah, and just umm the other thing that I was uh... One of the questions that I... 'Cause I wrote a [0:21:22.2] _____ on conversations, umm, and one of the questions we can ask our spouse is, you know, what words do I use consistently that "You don't want to hear me."

JS: Oh!

PR: Right, because...

JS: Like, what words do I use that shut you down.

PR: Yeah, I mean, what am I consistently saying? Because it's like, you know, I've had these conversations with my husband sometimes and he'll say it... Oh, I'm like, "Babe. I don't get it, you have to like find a different way to say it. You know, you have... I'm not... I'm not understanding this," and he can't figure out why I can't understand it.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: But it's like his brain is made differently, but are there any words that I use consistently that trigger you, that cause you to shutdown...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: That cause you to feel rejected or become defensive in any way? I'm sure there are.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: I'm sure there are. And so knowing that can help us communicate, uh, more lovingly and, uh, you know, in a trustworthy way, so...

JS: Yeah.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: We were just working with a couple this weekend and that exact thing happened.

MS: Yeah.

JS: Exact thing happened.

PR: Yes.

MS: Yeah.

JS: They were here for a marriage intensive, and umm there was a certain phrase that when she would say it, and he finally said, I... He said, "When you say that, it takes me back to fifth grade."

PR: Yes.

MS: Right.

JS: "And my mother telling me that, that A minus wasn't good enough and it needed to be an A," so it was very... That phrase was triggering for him.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah.

JS: And so we even brainstormed with them to go...

MS: Right.

JS: 'Cause her need needed to be able to be expressed.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Her... Her struggle, her request of him needed to be able to be expressed, but the words she was using was not connecting to him because they triggered pain in his life.

MS: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

PR: Yes, yes, yes. And I've done that to my husband too, I definitely have triggered him about his mom 'cause she was also a very strong woman, and umm...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: You know, and 'cause he's told me that you... When you do that, it flashes me back to my mom.

JS: Yeah.

MS: Yeah.

JS: And we have to honor that in each other.

PR: Yeah.

JS: And umm we really do and that's...

MS: For me, it was my stepdad.

JS: Yes.

MS: And uh he...

JS: Because your stepdad was harsh in this communication.

MS: Direct, matter of fact, and concrete, and there was no negotiation.

PR: Right.

JS: And but he went beyond that to abusive.

MS: Right, yeah. Yeah.

PR: Yeah.

JS: And so while I wasn't abusive, my style of communication felt very similar to his.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: And so it would snag you back to that.

MS: Yeah. I think too, uh what you were saying is that we say a phrase and it triggers. We also get locked into a phrase and we don't know what else to say, so we keep saying that same phrase over and over again.

PR: Yeah, yeah.

MS: Thinking if we say it differently or...

JS: Or louder.

MS: Yeah.

PR: Yes, yeah.

MS: Yes, there you go.

JS: And then we get into yelling, right?

MS: I know, yeah.

JS: We're gonna keep saying it, but we're gonna say it louder, it's so ineffective.

MS: It is.

PR: Yeah.

MS: And uh the power of just saying "Honey, uh I don't understand what that means."

PR: Right.

MS: "Could you help me by telling... Giving me examples or... "

PR: Yeah.

MS: Or just some way to help our spouse get off that or get out of that box.

PR: Yes, yes.

MS: Is so important.

PR: Yes, yes, and I have again, another little exercise that I do in my workshop, and it's called umm, "Say this, not that."

MS: Oh.

PR: And so umm... So there's like different statements, right, that... You know, statements that would shutdown the brain and then there's statements that would open up the brain, and so like they kinda match them up, like what goes with what?

MS: Oh.

PR: And then what...

JS: Can you give us a couple of examples?

PR: Oh gosh... I don't know how...

JS: Okay.

PR: Umm, yeah, I could step away and grab it if you want me to.

JS: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MS: Yeah.

PR: Okay, hold on...

JS: I think that would be great. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think that would be wonderful, very practical umm...

PR: Yes.

JS: Uh because...

PR: My little... My little cards here. Got my little cards here.

JS: That didn't take too long. You had those at your fingertips.

MS: Yeah.

PR: I did, I had them on the floor. [laughter] You know a little pile over there. That's my file.

JS: I understand. Oh my goodness, yes.

PR: Alright, umm so for instance, umm again, and our tone matters, how we deliver it, it's not what we say, it's how we say it. Umm, so this one is, you know, "I can't believe you can't figure this out, that you know, why can't you figure this out, I can't believe you can't figure this out." So, and we could replace that with, "Let's talk about creative ways to solve this problem." I mean, it's much more open and loving than like, "You're dumb."

MS: Right.

PR: I mean, that's what that first one kind of sounds like. Right?

MS: It does, and it's taken that way.

JS: Right. And so let's go back to the beginning. The first one would have shut the brain down to trust.

PR: That's right, that's right.

JS: And the second one would open the brain up to trust.

PR: That's right, that's right.

JS: Okay.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Okay, so this one is, "Well, that wasn't good enough. That... That really wasn't good enough." Instead of, "I don't have all the answers, I'd really like to know your perspective on that."

JS: Hmm. Okay.

PR: Because we do act like we know it all, right, at times.

JS: Mm-hmm.

MS: Mm-hmm. Yeah, pride is a powerful thing.

PR: Well, we're all addicted to being right, unfortunately.

MS: Yeah. [chuckle]

PR: We are.

MS: That's true.

PR: We all are addicted to being right.

MS: Yeah.

PR: Umm. Okay, so let's see, this one is... This one's a good one. Okay, umm, "What in the world were you thinking?"

JS: Oh man!

MS: Oh yes, yes.

JS: That one is like so often used in marriage.

MS: Yeah.

JS: I mean that one's also used... Let's be honest guys, and, and even... I mean we're talking marriage here, but we do that with our kids.

MS: Oh yeah.

PR: Oh totally.

JS: With our teenagers, with our young adults. Right?

PR: Totally. Totally.

JS: Okay, so "What are you thinking." What's another way... What can we do better?

PR: So to open up the brain would be, "Share some thoughts. I'd love to know what you're thinking."

JS: Oh!

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: You know, "What in the world you're thinking?" It sounds so arrogant. I mean it just sounds like...

MS: Right.

PR: Again, it sounds like you're a dummy.

MS: Right.

JS: Mm-hmm.

MS: Yeah, it's very shaming.

JS: Shaming and it, and...

PR: Yes, yes.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Yeah.

MS: Rejecting.

JS: Yeah, and it does... And it... Rejecting and it shuts... It shuts down conversation.

MS: Yeah.

JS: 'Cause it's... Because it's said as a rhetorical question, like...

PR: Yeah.

JS: I don't really want an answer to that, but the way you rephrased that is really a question...

MS: It invited conversation.

PR: It's inviting. It's inviting.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Absolutely, and again, when this is happening, you can either have a negative download of chemicals in your body or an uptick in good chemicals in your body.

MS: Oh yeah.

PR: And so that's why it's so fascinating. And again, it begins with awareness, and something I was gonna say earlier, we have to slow down.

JS: Yes.

PR: We have to slow down.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And I've been on a slow down journey for a couple of years now, but slowing down in responding...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Slowing down in thinking.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Slowing down... What... I wonder what they're saying, or what might they need, you know, in this moment that they're saying that.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: So I think slowing down has a lot to do with the impact on our communication.

MS: Yeah.

JS: Yes, yes. And so we've really kinda covered asking and listening, but that what... We have to slow down to listen. Number one.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah.

JS: But then that responding, we really need to slow down our responses.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yeah.

JS: And that's also where reflective listening comes in.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: We call that McDonald's drive-through listening where...

PR: Right.

JS: We repeat back what they said. And so often when we teach that to the couples that we're coaching, you know, at first people will say, "This just takes too long."

MS: Right.

JS: "This... This just takes too long."

MS: Yep.

JS: But the next thing we'll say is, "Okay, so how's conversation working for you now?"

MS: Right.

JS: 'Cause it's not.

MS: No.

JS: Or you wouldn't be sitting here.

MS: Right.

JS: And umm the second thing that we have come to understand is when we were misusing conversation, when we weren't being safe with each other...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: We'd have a hard conversation, knock down, drag out.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Okay, like...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: Big conflict. We wouldn't like hurt each other or anything like that, but it'd be big conflict...

MS: Well, we'd hurt each other.

PR: You thought about it. [laughter]

MS: Yeah, that's true. Yeah, yeah. That's true.

JS: And then we... And then we would not... And then we'd be mad for three days.

MS: Right.

PR: Oh yeah.

JS: Right? You'd have the silent treatment and you'd be just coexisting and giving each other short responses.

PR: Yeah.

JS: Now What we've learned is...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Sometimes it takes us three days to get through multiple safe conversations.

MS: Right.

PR: Hmm.

MS: But the three days are productive.

PR: Good.

JS: They're productive and they are connecting.

MS: Yep.

JS: Because we're listening well.

PR: Yeah.

JS: We're taking time.

PR: Yeah.

JS: In fact we... And we also umm... One of the things we've learned is one person's heard at a time.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yes.

JS: And so if you are listening to understand...

PR: Yes.

JS: That's where you're maybe saying "Tell me more about that, or I want to better understand that," umm...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: And, and so you're staying focused on their hurt. You may be hurt too.

PR: Yes. Yeah.

JS: But for right now, let's just work on their hurt.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

JS: Your hurt can be handled in another conversation, maybe even the next day, maybe later in the day, and yes, it takes longer, but we're heard, we're valued umm...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: And we're honoring each other.

MS: Right.

PR: Absolutely. And you know, there's something beautiful about that. And you know, it takes a while to get there in your marriage, right? That...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: That we cannot, again it goes back to the slowing down of... We don't have to rush through this. I know that we wanna be out of pain, like we want them to get how we feel.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Umm, but there is something beautiful about being heard and knowing that what you said, they got it. Like so for instance... [chuckle] So I... Well, let's just say I like my husband's driving maybe a little bit better now, but I don't really like his driving. [chuckle]

JS: Okay.

PR: And so umm, I hate the trucks. I just hate the trucks, and so you know, I just remember saying like, "Could you please get past the truck? I hate trucks." Right? And he would respond, you know like he just wasn't hearing me. Well, after, you know, many years, finally in the last, I don't know five years or so, he gets it. Like he will speed past, I never have to say anything anymore because he finally has heard me and he'll automatically get past them quickly 'cause he knows that it makes me uncomfortable. Instead of getting defensive about, "You're fine, you're safe, you're..." I don't feel safe, I'm not comfortable...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Next to these trucks, it makes me uncomfortable. So, you know, but that took a slowing down, like it's just how I feel, it's just where I'm at.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: I can't... You know, this is who I am as far as, it's an uncomfortable situation. So anyway. But he got defensive you know, initially over that, my request for that.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Yeah.

PR: And so I like to say that we drove to Florida umm well, in November, when our first call, Jill, didn't work, and umm it was actually we didn't have one argument on, on the way there, it was all good, and umm we actually got a new car and it beeps, like if you get too close.

JS: Oh yeah.

PR: And so it's wonderful. God has provided this car. That, oh, he's getting... I just look out the window. [chuckle] And say thank you God.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Yeah, yeah.

PR: So, anyway.

JS: But he began to hear you instead...

PR: Yes.

JS: Of minimize you or shut you down...

PR: Yes.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: And, and he just honored, he honored a fear that you have.

PR: Yeah.

JS: For whatever reason that bothers you, and so he honored it instead of minimized it, or told you that it was foolish. Yeah.

PR: Dismiss it. Yeah, yeah, and that makes me love him more. You know what I'm saying?

MS: Right.

PR: It opens up my heart.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Like thank you for caring about that little thing.

JS: Yeah, yep.

MS: Yeah, I can see how uh it's a normal flesh response that we don't wanna, we don't wanna meet

another person's need, we don't wanna be generous, uh we want... This is, we wanna blow it off or minimize it, and uh love is really learning to sacrifice to lay to in humility lay ourselves down...

PR: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

MS: And to accommodate, but in the world, there accommodation is a negative thing, or...

PR: Hmm.

MS: Umm, uh or in some way, you're gonna lose yourself if you accommodate.

PR: Right, right.

MS: But...

PR: Or be taken advantage of if you do that.

MS: Right.

PR: Right.

MS: But really, it puts control in our lap, in our midst when we accommodate, when we choose, when we decide...

PR: Yeah.

MS: To accommodate, to be generous, to make adjustments for the benefit of another person, it's huge.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Well, it's for the relationship.

MS: Right.

PR: Right? It's for the life and the breath, and the beauty of the relationship.

MS: Yeah, yep.

JS: Yeah, and uh you know we often talk about Romans 8 uh verse 5, it says umm that when we operate in the flesh, the result is death.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: When we operate in the spirit, the result is life and peace.

MS: Right, right.

PR: That's right, that's right.

JS: And I see that here as we talk about conversations.

MS: Absolutely.

JS: That...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: When we are telling, selling and yelling, we're in the flesh.

PR: Yes.

JS: And it will end in death and when I uh, so death to a conversation. Death to connection.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: But...

MS: Death to trust.

JS: Yes, death to trust.

PR: Yes.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: But when we operate in the spirit, which operates out of gentleness and self-control and, and then we are asking, listening and responding.

PR: Yes.

JS: It ends in life and peace, it brings life to the relationship.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Yes.

JS: It brings a sense of peace and trust.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: That we're looking for.

PR: Absolutely, absolutely, yeah absolutely.

JS: This has been a good conversation. Thank you.

MS: Yes, it has.

PR: Thank you, thank you. I'm so glad.

JS: Oh, thank you Patti. Umm So, uh Patti has a book, umm it's titled uh Smart Conversation... No wait, wait Face to Face: Smart Conversations with Yourself, Your Teenager and Your Young Adult.

PR: Yes.

JS: So it is specifically for those who have uh teenagers and young adult children, umm, I'd say any adult children umm...

MS: Right.

PR: Yes.

JS: But uh, it is a mix of a devotional and it really kinda gives direction on conversations...

MS: And really those uh skills that you teach or that you write about could be used in marriage.

PR: Yes, they can. And there's... There's definitely overlap, and people have told me that like "Oh my gosh, I can use this in, you know my work place or with my husband."

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: So there's definitely some overlap there umm. That was just beachhead that God gave me, umm...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: But it definitely can be used in marriage for sure.

JS: Yeah.

MS: Yeah.

JS: Yeah, so we'll include a link below this video, umm down in the notes and quotes section to Patti's book, if that interests you at all. And I love uh Patti your subtitle is "Smart Conversations With Yourself, Your Teenager, and Your Young Adult." Because one of the things you talk about and this applies to our marriage relationships uh as well, is that sometimes we need to have a conversation with God and with ourself...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Before we ever have a conversation with our spouse. And honestly...

PR: That's right, that's right.

JS: Half the time when I have a conversation with God and myself, I find out I don't need to have a conversation here.

MS: Right.

[laughter]

PR: Yeah.

JS: Especially if it's like something negative or something that's bugging me, it's like I can work that out internally.

MS: Right.

PR: Yes.

JS: And I, we don't even need to talk about it.

MS: It's got more to do with...

PR: Yes.

MS: Me than you.

PR: That's exactly right.

MS: Yeah.

PR: That's exactly right. Hey, Jill, could I leave you guys with umm, a little acronym that I use...

JS: Yes, please.

PR: So that, umm, they can become pals.

JS: Okay.

PR: And so, the acrostic is PALS, and P is for Prep the conversation, okay? So, how can we prep the conversation? We can prep it with prayer. Umm, we can prep it with where we have the conversation, maybe at a favorite coffee shop, if it's an important conversation that you might wanna have with someone. Umm, so there's ways that you can think about that conversation and how you want it to turn out, how you would like it to go, like kind of thinking about that beforehand.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Umm, So that's the P. And then the A is ask, okay? So we're gonna ask open-ended questions, and, umm, we're gonna ask what else, and, umm, tell me more. So that's super important.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: L is for listen, and we are gonna listen to make the connection, not just to affirm what someone says, but we're going to listen to connect. We're not going to assume, we're not going to judge, we're gonna go into the conversation neutral.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And then the S is for support or standby. So, umm, you know, what are ways... In having this conversation...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: What are ways that we can support this person, uh, that we're having the conversation, how can we stand by them? Umm, it doesn't always mean we agree with them, we can agree to disagree.

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: But we can support them in some way. So, that's just a little acrostic umm that I use so that they can become PALS.

JS: I love that.

MS: That's cool, and that's simple.

JS: Yep, very practical.

MS: It's totally doable.

JS: Yep.

MS: Yep.

JS: Very practical. Uh, Good stuff, good stuff.

PR: Yeah.

JS: Well, umm, we often ask, umm, those that we interview, because this is, uh, our No More Perfect Date Night members.

PR: Yeah.

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Umm, We often ask, umm, what's a favorite date night that you and your husband do? What's a date night activity that's kind of a favorite for you guys? And I'm, I'm just throwing this your way. I haven't given you any prep to think about that, but what comes to your mind...

PR: Aaaah!

[laughter]

JS: When you think about, when you think about how you guys enjoy spending time together intentionally?

PR: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And we do do that. Umm, I guess the first thing... Well, so, Jill, now you know there's my favorite date night, and then there's his favorite date night, okay? So let's make that clear. [chuckle]

JS: Well, that's a really important way to answer the question.

MS: Right. Yeah, yeah. Thank you.

JS: So yes. Uh-huh.

PR: There's always, you know, his side and my side. So, umm, you know, for me, I would say really it's just very simple, umm, really just, you know, out to dinner and to a movie.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Umm, we like, you know, to do that. So, that's pretty simple. Umm, for him, umm, we do have a lake house in East Texas, and so umm...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: He loves going to the lake, and you know, we spend the night, and go out on the boat, and drive over to the marina and get a Coke or something, and... So, you know, he loves being out there. And so, that's, that's what he loves.

JS: Mm-hmm.

MS: Oh, that's neat.

JS: And what that requires is that we have to step into each other's world.

MS: Yep.

PR: Yes. Yeah.

JS: You know.

PR: Yeah.

JS: And so, we, we have to, we have to honor the, the likes...

MS: Mm-hmm.

JS: Even though they might not be our like and, umm...

PR: Mm-hmm.

JS: And umm and step into each other's world. So...

MS: Right, absolutely.

PR: Yeah.

JS: Good stuff.

PR: Yeah.

JS: Umm, Patti, would you be willing to pray for the couples that are watching this?

PR: Yes.

JS: Umm, just to close us out here?

PR: Yeah. Absolutely. Sure, sure. Father God, we thank you so much, Lord, uh, for this day. God, I thank you so much for Jill and Mark. God, I thank you so much for their heart Lord, uh, to help, uh, couples really have the best marriages, umm, that can be. And Lord, we know that marriage represents, umm, you to the body, right? Like, it represents, umm, you and your relationship, right? To Jesus, to the world. And so...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: Father, we just... I ask, umm, that you would bless every couple Lord, who's listening and watching, Father. Lord, I pray they can take some of these things and apply them to their marriage consistently.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: And intentionally, Father, uh, to make a huge difference God.

MS: Hmm.

PR: And I would just encourage them to go first...

JS: Hmm.

MS: Hmm.

PR: That there are times that we're waiting for, he's not doing it.

JS: Yeah.

PR: Umm, but I just wanna encourage, umm, whoever feels like that is resonating with them, to go first and to be intentional about building...

MS: Mm-hmm.

PR: A beautiful life, uh, building beautiful conversations, Father, umm, umm, in their relationship with you and with others. And, uh, we just ask your blessing on that.

JS: Mm-hmm.

PR: In Jesus' name, Amen.

MS: Amen.

JS: Amen.

MS: Awesome.

[music]