

# "Space & Grace" Suggestions

I wanted to give you a few suggestions for how to offer yourself and your partner "Space & Grace" over the next few weeks as your coaching is beginning. These are just suggestions, but I find they help to take some of the tension out of a relationship when we first begin working together:

**1. The marriage is like a "broken leg"** that keeps getting pressure put on it... it is in *trauma*, and needs for the time being to be allowed to de-stress, to be taken "out of service" on some levels (a broken leg is put into a cast and kept immobilized until it begins to heal. Even then, walking again is slow, with lots of PT!) So... look for ways that you can give each other additional *SPACE & GRACE*. No need to totally ignore each other, but look to be more self-reliant, more introspective, and practicing more self-care.... Also, begin to *listen* more to understand the other, and ask God to help you "take the log out of your own eye."

**2. Please don't try to resolve any charged issues** that may trigger one or both of you. Don't fight (one of you needs to walk away if a fight starts.) You haven't yet learned the skills you soon will for the best method of speaking, listening and understanding one another so you can effectively resolve things in an edifying way *to both parties*. We're going to work on this, but for now, *cease and desist!*

**3. If you need to vent, do something productive:** exercise, journal, rake leaves, shovel snow, organize a sock drawer, etc. Don't share negative feelings or long stories if you can help it. Give each other physical space... GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP! This may mean one of you sleeps in another room if there's restlessness, snoring, etc.

**4. Don't expect or demand a lot of physical intimacy at this time.** When there are unresolved feelings, sex can sometimes be hard, and is not bonding if emotions are unsettled. We'll address this in time.

**5. Financially, please don't commit yourself** to any large purchase (over \$300), credit card debt or any financially significant decision (buying a car, renting a space, booking a vacation, big gift items, etc.) if at all possible, unless you BOTH agree to it and feel confident that it will be a blessing, not a burden.

**6. If you have a problem or question about something, don't hammer your partner for an answer.** But don't forget it, either: write it down, and bring it to our next session so we can discuss it and get you the information you need. Let me be your ally in helping bridge gaps in your understanding of the relationship.

**7. Jesus and Conversations Across Divides** (by Benjamin Cremer, "Into the Gray" newsletter, 9/21/25)

*Jesus himself modeled a way of engaging across deep divides without being consumed by outrage or revenge.*

- *With the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), he crossed deep cultural and religious barriers to **listen, to dignify her story, and to speak truth gently and personally.***
- *With Zacchaeus (Luke 19), a man despised for his exploitation, Jesus did not begin with condemnation. Instead, he invited himself into Zacchaeus's home, where **transformation came through relationship.***
- *With his disciples, who often misunderstood him or grasped for power, **Jesus corrected with patience and sometimes silence, trusting that time and presence would shape them more deeply than argument alone.***

*Jesus shows us that listening, compassion, and embodied presence often open doors that arguments cannot.*