

Host Connie Durham

Episode 5 – Creating Unity

Today Connie shares 5 ways you can develop more unity and connection in your marriage. Jaci from "No-Problem Parenting" shared 3 words with me on a prior podcast, that are not only for children, but also useful in marriage.

Happy Couples = Happier Kids

www.theextraordinarymarriage.com

connie@theextraordinarymarriage.com

Unedited Show Notes as transcribed by “Headliner”

Three ways that you can cultivate unity in your marriage

Speaker A: Hello, and welcome to the extraordinary marriage. Today we're going to be looking at three ways that you can cultivate unity in your marriage. Isn't that what everybody wants? Well, just last weekend, I was at a women's business function. It was BWFC, which is business women, Fayette, Cal. And it was an all day conference that we were having. We ate lunch together. We heard different speakers. And I always love that kind of thing because it gives me ideas. I'm inspired by it. I'm inspired by, other people's success. Well, one of the ladies, she was a couple of tables down from me, and she was a sparkler. I mean, I think she had no fear. She was excited about everything. Well, we did a drawing, and guess who won that first drawing? It was a book. It was one of the John Maxwell books. Well, she said, after she won, she said, you know what? And so thought, hm. So in other words, she was saying, me, and she was believing that she was going to win. And guess what? She did win. Well, they went on about, and they called out a few other names, and I was thinking, oh, I already have that book. And I've read it like it's full of marks that I've made in it by all the useful materials in it. It was a John Maxwell communicating, book. And so I thought, well, I don't

need that one. And so I just listened as everyone kept winning and winning. There was this little spinning of the wheel that was going on, all right? All the names were on there. So after a second, I asked one of the girls beside me at my table, and I said, are they still giving away books? And she goes, oh, no, they're giving away flowers. The flowers that are on the table. And I thought, I would like to have those flowers. And so I didn't say it out loud because I wouldn't want anybody really to know that I was doing that. But all of a sudden, I sat there and I thought, I'd like to have those flowers. Me. And guess what? They called my name. They called my name.

Sometimes challenges have happened in our marriage or we're in a bad mood

Speaker A: What kind of power does belief have? I mean, what kind of power do we have? Do you have if you believe in something? I know for one thing, if I believe in something, it gives me passion, it gives me ideas. It gives me, ways to move forward. if I believe in something, I am there to try to make it happen. And why do I tell you that today is because sometimes challenges have happened in our marriage or we're in a bad mood. I don't know about you. But sometimes I get those moods where I just feel like nothing can go right. And then another time, I'm on the top of the world. They say that that person who, goes high, there's a long ways to fall right? So sometimes we believe in things, and sometimes we just lose our belief. Maybe things have been hard when it comes to relationships. Sometimes people aren't open and they don't share, and you feel like you're closed out. Sometimes we don't speak out and tell our spouse what we really need from them. You can do that whenever you share with someone, and you do it with the right tone of voice and the right attitude. You can share. And what do we have to lose? If we don't share? Then they never know what we really needed or what was really important to us. But I do realize that sometimes there are people that just won't listen. And there's a lot of different reasons for that. Sometimes it's their personality. sometimes it's hardships they've experienced as a kid or a young person or maybe in a past marriage. There's all different reasons why people are unforgiving or won't listen. Or how about tempers? Sometimes we have to deal with tempers, and those tempers are a real thing, and you find yourself tippy toeing around. So there's all different kind of things that cause us to lose our hope, lose our belief, and to start to believe that I'm stuck here. We're never going to move on. We're never going to move on. Or you might be a person who

everything's cool in your marriage. You're just looking for a little something more. Well, that's what I've got for you today. Because when you're cultivating unity in your marriage, number one, you have to want it, you have to believe you can get it. And then you have to take action in getting that. You have to have a clear vision. You have to have a destination. You got to know where you want to go. One thing is like a flight plan. Think about an airplane that's headed on vacation, taking a whole bunch of excited people on vacation, and it doesn't have a flight plan. Well, they're never going to get there, are they? And it's the same kind of thing. When we're married, we want to have a clear vision of where we want to go. And sometimes that means we have to talk about it, dream about it together, because it can't be his vision of what he wants for life. And her vision for what she wants in life, they need to talk about it. And, some people are super outgoing, and some people are kind of quiet, and they go along with the crowd, and sometimes we go along with things that we really don't want to do. So it's important to have a vision. If you want to cultivate unity, you have to stop and talk about what you want. You got to have a compass that's showing you what the direction is to get there. And sometimes we have to stop in that conversation and we have to talk about where we each come from. Because, his family, her family, they come from different places. Even when you think that you're coming from the same place because you think your families are alike, no two families are just alike. And so you have to identify where you're coming from. There might have been challenges, like I said, in childhood or in youth, or when you're a teenager, or you might have been married before, and you don't want to repeat those same kind of things again. So you have to identify what didn't work before or what's not working now and identify where you want to go. There is a story, about a Chinese bamboo tree. And when you plant the seed for that bamboo tree, it looks like it's doing nothing for four whole years. Can you imagine planting a seed and it going nowhere for four years? You see this tiny little sprig and you're thinking, well, I might as well throw this in the trash because it's doing nothing. I water it and I do all these different things and I can't get it to grow four whole years, a tiny shoot. But guess what? While you're seeing that tiny little shoot grow on top of the dirt underneath, those roots are growing down and they're growing wide. They're getting bigger and bigger and they're spreading out, but you cannot see because they're under the dirt. They're kind of like that foundation that's being spread and it's getting better and better, but you can't see it. Well, four years tiny shoot giant roots under the dirt. And guess what? On the fifth year, yes, the fifth year. That's a long time. That Chinese bamboo tree grows 8ft that Chinese bamboo tree grows 8ft in just five years. Now, does that give you any hope? Sometimes when we're taking action and we're believing, in what we

want, we can't see it happening. We can only see the troubles and the challenges. And too often, that's what we get focused on. Let me ask you does it do you any good to stay focused on, what you don't like? I really believe that when we focus on something, if we focus on good things, what we want more of, then we get more of those. And, when we focus on what we don't want, which is really what happens when we're irritated or tired or stressed, we focus on everything that bothers us. We just keep getting more of it. Because guess what? That's what we're giving attention to. Well, my family, I have three grown kids, everybody's married. Everybody married, the love of their life in their youth. And what I realized once they got married was that all families are not alike. We don't have the same habits, we don't have the same expectations. They're just simply different. And it takes a while to figure it out. Well, all three of my kids are married and they have kids now. One of my kids is remarried. And no, I never thought that would happen, that one of my kids would, their marriage would not work out. BUt it's painful when that happens. But you have to figure out what went wrong and then rethink. What do you want for the future. You have to move on. You don't want to stay stuck in the past. So just as a little side note, I always have to share this because, my younger son, as he got remarried, and I'm not going to tell that whole story, but he got remarried. Actually, I'll tell a little bit. He actually started dating somebody on eHarmony in another state.

A South Carolina couple started dating on eharmony and now have nine children

Speaker A: He had four children, four girls, which he had, which he had custody of, four girls. And guess what? That lady that he started, dating on eharmony, she was in South Carolina and she had four kids. Oh, my gosh, that equals eight kids. And guess what they did? They got married. They've been married a couple of years now, and they wanted to have one child of their own right down the middle line, mine plus yours, and bring them together in the middle, right? And, ah, so they have a, one year old, and so they now have nine children. And I can't help but think about, oh, my gosh, when they start to drive, when they start to date, when they start getting married. Because guess what? It's eight girls and one boy. But kind of like the Brady Bunch from the 70s. They have come together to make one beautiful family. So sometimes challenges happen. Stuff happens in life. It's not what happens to you, it's what you do with it. It's how you move forward. So I hope that's speaking

to somebody today as I share that so everything doesn't go perfect and we have to figure it out and move forward.

JC from no problem parenting talks about children being respectful and responsible

Speaker A: Well, let me give you three things today. These are actually something JC from no problem parenting said to me. She said they have three things that they focus on when they're thinking about children. And I thought these are three great things to focus on today when they're thinking about kids. And she's, teaching programs on children and how to, parent your kids. She talks about the importance of being respectful. Think about children being respectful to parents. Yes. Children being responsible and children being fun to be with. Well, I don't know about you, but usually when you have one child, it's kind of easy. You might think it's hard if you just have one, but when you add two or three or four or five or nine, like my younger son has, then kids start irritating each other and not getting along. So just think if all children were respectful, responsible and fun to be with. I like that one. Because when they are respectful and responsible, then they are fun to be with. Right? Well, the same thing goes for us in our relationship, our number one relationship, our marriage, because it is a trickle down effect. When parents get along and they're respectful, they're responsible, and they're fun to be with, then it trickles down into the kids. I have always thought that there's kids who are bullies, they're badmouthing other kids, just doing things to be mean. And why? Because it makes them feel powerful. Well, most of the time when a kid is a bully, somebody else is bullying them, whether it's their parent that is bullying them or a, big brother or a big sister that's bullying them. Usually people who are bullied, they pass it along to somebody else. But let's shift gears. Let's go back to that. Respectful or. Yeah, respectful.

Being respectful in marriage means being a great listener

Speaker A: All right, so in marriage, what makes marriage respectful? What makes you feel respected? Instead of talking about what makes us feel disrespected. All right, so respectful in marriage means being a great listener. Being a great listener. My husband is an awesome listener. And for that I am very thankful, because I am a talker and it's important for me to be

heard. When somebody's listening to you, it makes you feel important. And that means that if they're not listening to you, it makes you feel unimportant. And sometimes it's not that they're meaning to make you feel unimportant. They're just thinking they're more important, and they don't have time to listen to you. There are some personality styles who are especially challenged at this, and they, only want to hear, what they have to hear. They don't want to hear all the details. Don't give them all the stuff. Just tell them exactly. Kind of stay on track whenever you're talking to them. But listening, that's a skill, and sometimes we have to work at that a little bit. Another thing in marriage that, makes us feel respected is tone of voice, how we talk to one another. You never want to be talked down to, as if you're a kid. I mean, we don't even like to be talked down to at work. Think about it. Have you ever had someone talk down to you, think about how that made you feel? So when it comes to marriage, we want to make sure that we are talking to one another in a respectful, loving, kind, thoughtful voice. And that's easier for some people rather than others. So listening and tone of voice and how you talk to me, it matters.

The second thing is being responsible. Some people don't even know what that is

Speaker A: Now, I want you to think about, that kind of thing, of being able to apologize. I'm sorry. Are you a person who apologizes easily, or are you a person who, oh, my gosh, it's so hard to say I'm sorry. I've heard other people go, oh, yeah, it's really hard. and I like to say I'm sorry. Well, for me, that's one of my easy things. Thank you. I have plenty of hard things. but to say I'm sorry. So if I know I did something, I want to say I'm sorry because I don't want to hurt the other person. So if saying you're sorry or apologizing is really hard for you, that's something you want to think about and you want to take action on and you want to work on. The second thing is being responsible. So we want to be respectful, and we want to be responsible. To be responsible. Some people don't even know what that is. Maybe they've never seen a responsible person in their life. Now, that is something we forget to even think about. We don't know anything that we've not seen before. And so if somebody's not witnessed somebody being responsible, they don't know how to be responsible. So you want to make sure that to be responsible, you want to, number one, you want to learn to keep your word. Learn to keep your word. That means if you tell somebody, then you're going to follow through with it, and it's really self discipline. So if I tell a child even that I'm going to do

something, then I opened my mouth, I spoke the words, and now I have to follow through and do that. So be careful to speak slowly, right? Think about it, get your answer, and then, speak. Because when you say, yes, you could do that, or, yes, I'll do that, or, yes, I'll go to the pumpkin patch with you, or, yes, I'll go to that Christmas party with you. Then, there's no other way around it. You have to go to the Christmas party, or you have to go to the pumpkin patch. You always want to keep your word, and sometimes we have to push our own personal self down in order to keep our word because we're tired or we're not in the mood. But to be a responsible person, you must keep your word. Another thing as a responsible person is you want to do your part. There's a lot of work around the house. it takes a lot to keep a house running. It's just about like a business. You have to keep food in the house. You cook, you got to keep it clean. You got to wash the clothes. The bills have got to be paid. there's the kids activities, your work. There's a lot of different things that go into keeping, a home. And making a home a house or an apartment is not just a, house or an apartment. It's a home. And you want to make that the home that you want it to be. So we each have to do our part. Some people are natural servants. yeah, they're natural servants, and they just step in and they do. They're so organized. They've got it together while others only step in and do when they're in the mood to do something or they feel like doing something or they decided to do something. And so it's important for us all to kind of divvy up all the different, things that we have to do at our house. We have to divvy it up. You do part, I do part. You do part, I do part. Because if one person'S doing it all, they start to resent it. And we all need a break once in a while.

Being responsible is keeping your word, doing your part, and being truthful

Speaker A: And the last part I have today, just a few things on being responsible, is learning to be truthful. There again, if you've never witnessed or been around somebody who was truthful, maybe you were around somebody who told stories all the time. Most of us grow out of that. When we're kids, when our moms, let us know they always know when we're lying. Right. But sometimes people get pushed in a corner, or it's just a habit they formed and they never got rid of it as a kid. Be aware. It's important. Part of responsibility is being truthful. So you want to be truthful. All right. So respectful is listening, using a great tone of voice, being thankful, and remembering to apologize when you need to. Being responsible is keeping your word, doing your part, and being truthful.

It's important to smile. Some people's face will hardly crack a smile

Speaker A: Well, I like the last one. And it's called fun to be with. Some people are more fun to be with than others. Some people's face will hardly crack a smile. Do you know somebody like that? Are they smiling inside? I always wonder that. Or do they just look on the outside like they feel on the inside? It's important to smile. Do you know that? With somebody's face, whenever, maybe they're even, frustrated. But whenever somebody makes them smile, it's like everything starts to change. It's important to be fun to be with.

Laughing reduces stress, so a sense of humor is very helpful

Speaker A: Now, this means different things for different people. So what makes you fun to be with? What makes you fun to be with? I wrote down a few things. One might be adventurous. Adventure is always doing something new and exploring. and it might be climbing a mountain, or it might be going skiing or just going bowling for the first time, being adventurous, going to a new restaurant. Okay, how about funny? Some people are funnier than others. Some people are just naturally funny. And let's be real. Laughing is a stress reducer. Laughing reduces stress. Whether you're laughing at little kids instead of getting mad. Laughing at little kids, laughing at something stupid that just happened, maybe even laughing over spilt milk. It, cuts through the stress and the frustration. Right. I remember one time my husband and I were at Disney with all three of our small children. They were probably, like, seven years old and younger. We had three. So, we had all three of our kids in five years. So seven and younger, three little kids. You build up Disney to be the most awesome place, and it is fun, right? But about the middle of the afternoon, when it's nap time for your children and they don't get their nap time, everybody starts getting whiny and fussy. And on this day, we were at the president's hall there at Disney, and we were waiting in a nice, cool room because it was summertime and it was hot outside. And, yeah, we were tired. And yes, the children were tired. Well, we were waiting in the hall to go into the president's, I guess it's called the president's hall at Disney. And, all three of our little kids really were pretty good, pretty well behaved. But all of a sudden, they're starting to have that mental breakdown. And as they start having that mental breakdown, they start crying, and they're whining, they're fuzzing. And my husband and I could have gotten frustrated from that. But instead, we looked at each other and we started laughing. We started laughing because we started to see it comical. It was literally a comical routine that the children were

doing. And, yeah, they were tired, and they just needed their, you know, it was just kind of funny because you spend so much money going to Disney, it's built up to be the most wonderful thing at all. It's going to be the most fun thing you ever do. And now the children are melting down in the middle of a floor, causing a scene, and all the people are looking at us, and we just started laughing. A couple of older ladies who are probably my age now came over to us and they said, they just laughed with us. And they said, oh, we remember when. We remember when that happened with us and Our children, too. So we took it funny. So a sense of humor is very, very helpful. Some people have a dry sense of humor. They like to tell jokes. They say things with a straight face, and you're wondering, okay, are they serious or are they kidding? I'm not sure. And they have a dry sense of humor. But, you know, there's other ways to be fun, and that is that person who is helpful, fun to be with somebody who's helpful around the house, or helpful getting the car packed for vacation, or helpful cleaning up the dishes at night, helpful is also fun to be with.

Learning to be encouraging and uplifting can enrich your marriage

Speaker A: And the last one I'm going to share on this is encouraging, learning to be encouraging and uplifting. So instead of smashing each other down for what you're not or what you're frustrated with, learning to be encouraging, I don't know about you, but when my husband encourages me, and I believe him because he's always really complimentary, so sometimes I'm like, is he just being nice, or is he really being real with that? That was a side note. Okay. But being encouraging, when we're encouraged, we're appreciated. It means a lot to us. And I want to lift my spouse. I know as my kids grew up, I wanted to make sure I helped them grow to be confident. I don't want to tear them down. I wanted to lift them up so they could be the best that they could be in the world. Well, today I hope you'll hit subscribe if this has meant anything to you and I would love to hear from you,

Connie@theextraordinarymarriage.com. And guess what? This is episode five. And you can find in the show notes, you can find a recipe for a happy, healthy marriage. And that's just a 20 minutes or a 27 minutes video that gives you a few more things that can help you enrich your marriage and make it what you want it to be. But this month of November, between, here and November 30, if you watch all seven of the debuting podcast for the month of November 2023, if you email me, Connie at Connie's Connie's Connie at the extraordinary marriage there are three ways to win prizes. Number one, the first person to email me will

win a private 1 hour of coaching. And I don't mean just chitchat. I mean you can share with me and I'll give you some direction. 1 hour of private coaching. That's the very first person who emails me with all of the code words from each of the seven podcasts. And then seven people. This is the second way you can win. Seven people are going to get free my ten days to a happier, healthier marriage. Each day for ten days, you get just a little five minute video, and it gives you a way to consistently for ten days, pour into your marriage and make it a little more positive. And then everybody who emails me with all seven code words is going to go into a drawing for a free course that I have. And it is discovering work and family dynamics, and it teaches you how to communicate with all the people around you. That's not just with family and not just with your spouse, but it's with your clients and with the people that you work with.

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Speaker A: All right? So be sure and hit subscribe. The extraordinary marriage so that you don't miss a single podcast. I'll be podcasting every single week on Thursday at 09:00 I can't wait to meet you on one of my webinars or in my Facebook group. And my name is Connie and I thank you today for listening, listening to the extraordinary marriage. Bye.