

# Couple's Workbook

## Session 00

MARRIAGE  
*refresh*



**M** | The  
Meaningful  
Marriage

# ABOUT US

Did you know that over 50% of marriages end in divorce? This number is way too high, and that is why it's our mission to provide every marriage with the best fighting chance for success.

The Meaningful Marriage is the result of countless conversations within our own marriage and with hundreds of other couples to not only better understand why over 50% of marriages end in divorce but what we could do about it. Tips, tricks, hacks, and tools alone are typically short-term solutions to a way bigger problem: our beliefs about marriage.

We often inherit beliefs and notions about how marriage is "supposed" to happen. Whether it be what we were taught or somehow inadvertently absorbed, these beliefs can have detrimental impact on our marriage without us ever realizing why.

Ashley and I had been happily married for 7 years, when all of a sudden our reality didn't match our expectations as a result of misguided beliefs about marriage. When I say "all of a sudden," that is only how it felt. The reality is we experienced a slow decline and distance based on the lies we believed about having found the perfect match and a love that would last a lifetime.

We focus on developing deep, lasting relationships that not only stand the test of time but also thrive on meaning so that your marriage can be a Meaningful Marriage!



# SESSION 00 | Fairytales are the Worst (The Meaningful Marriage Model)

# 00

*We (all of us) have inherited certain beliefs about marriage that leave us ill-equipped to navigate life with another person.*

After 1000s of conversations with 100s of couples we have identified that nearly all issues marriages face fall into 3 categories...**Adversity, Incompatibility, and Deception**. These are what we affectionately call **RELATIONSHIP KILLERS**.

The other reality we have come to learn is that it's not ultimately the relationship killers that cause marriages to fall apart. Although all marriages face these relationship killers in some way or another, they don't kill all relationships. **WHY?** Different beliefs!

The hard truth is...and we hate to say it...**FAIRYTALES ARE THE WORST**. Fairytales have set us up for failure because they have taught us **3 LIES** that we continue to believe that make us ill-equipped to face and overcome adversity, incompatibility, and deception.

There is **GOOD NEWS**. We have also identified the **3 MINDSET SHIFTS** that help us overcome the lies we believe. Unfortunately, these shifts don't just happen. But if you invest the time and effort in the right areas, you can experience deep meaning in your relationship.

## What do you think is the **biggest challenge** facing your marriage?

Spouse 1 | What do you think?

Spouse 2 | What do you think?

Before we further define the 3 Relationship Killer categories, which do you think your challenges fit into ?

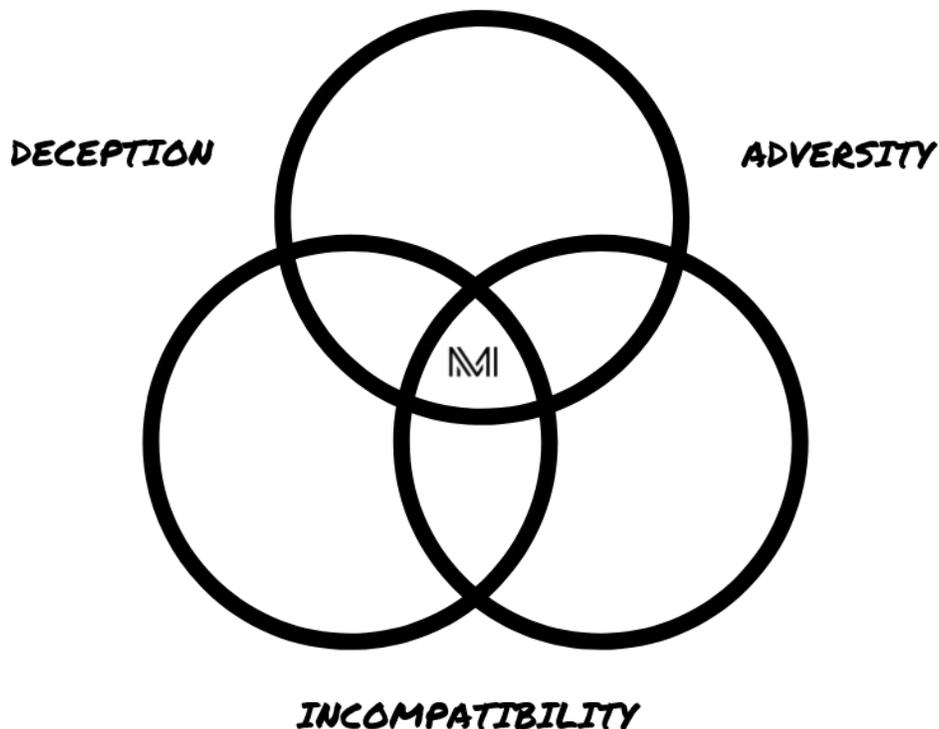
 Press **PLAY** to move on to Chapter 3

# The 3 RELATIONSHIP KILLERS...

**Deception. Incompatibility. Adversity.**

Regardless of the biggest challenge facing your marriage, our research shows that almost all challenges can fall into one of 3 categories we call RELATIONSHIP KILLERS...Adversity, Incompatibility, and Deception.

- **Adversity** = Transitions, difficulties, and bumps in the road.
- **Incompatibility** = Seeing our differences as irreconcilable
- **Deception** = Anything from big lies (infidelity, debt, etc) to not following through on your word.



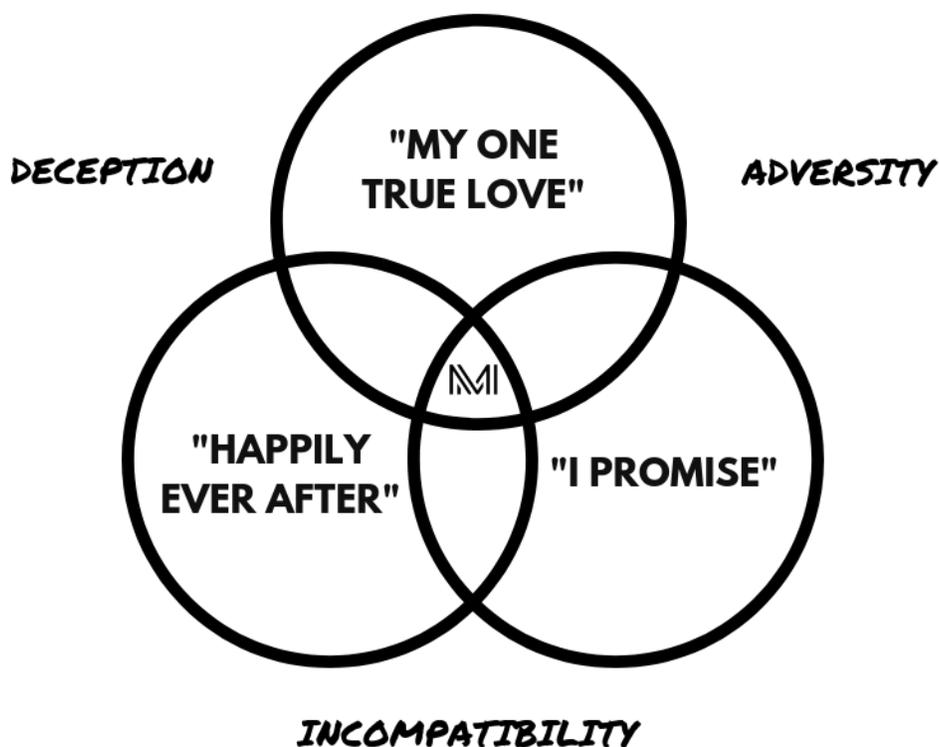
The best relationships are not measured by the absence of these issues. The best relationships are measured by how well they navigate them.

# The 3 LIES

**Happily Ever After. My One True Love. I Promise.**

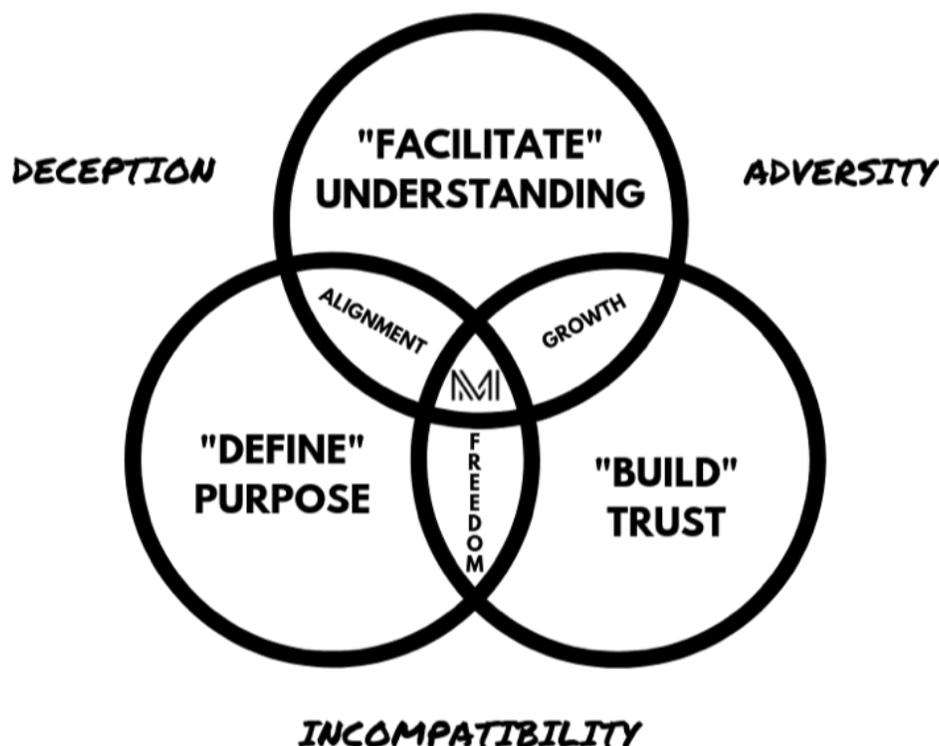
From a very early age we have been taught that a fairytale relationship is the desired future dream. We were taught that things like "happily ever after," "my one true love," and "I promise" were enough to overcome whatever comes our way, or even worse, that these things would prevent us from ever having to face difficulty in our own marriage.

The problem is...THESE ARE LIES. They are well intentioned lies, but lies nonetheless.



# The 3 ANTIDOTES

Define Purpose. Facilitate Understanding. Build Trust



**MM** Meaningful Marriage Model

- **The antidote to adversity** is taking time to DEFINE PURPOSE. We should know why we chose each other and we should revisit where we are going regularly.
- **The antidote to incompatibility** is to FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING. “Facilitate” implies that the process of knowing and understanding each other is ongoing.
- **The antidote to deception** is working to BUILD TRUST. Building trust takes continual honesty and transparency, as well as, grace when we get it wrong.

# How does your marriage measure up?



The following pages are designed to help you determine how prepared you are to navigate the relationship killers in your relationship.

We recommend doing this separately and then coming together to compare your scores. To get one combined score, add your totals together and divide by 2 for an average score.



## LIE #1 | Happily Ever After

Mindset Shift - From Length to Meaning = DEFINE PURPOSE

What good is a long marriage if it's terrible?

"Happily Ever After" focuses on length of marriage and leads us to believing the myth that happy couples don't have problems. If we shift our focus from length to experiencing meaning in our marriage, the length will be a byproduct and the result will be a lasting & meaningful marriage. The key to developing a meaningful marriage is to first define your purpose.

### DEFINE PURPOSE

On a scale of 1 to 10...

- *How well do you feel you focus on the positive aspects of your relationship?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- *How would you rate the clarity of your future mission and vision for your relationship?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- *How aligned are you and your partner when it comes to worldview and beliefs?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



## LIE #2 | My One True Love

Mindset Shift - From Finding to Knowing = FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING

Are you that good or just that lucky?

“My One True Love” focuses on our ability to find the “perfect person.” If we believe the myth that we are somehow that good or that the stars have somehow perfectly aligned, we will at some point be very disappointed when we realize our perfect person is anything but. If we shift our focus from finding the perfect person to focusing on really knowing our partner, we allow for giving and receiving understanding as our relationship grows.

## FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING

On a scale of 1 to 10...

- *How well do you feel you and your partner understand and adjust to each other's differences?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- *How would you rate your ability to communicate on important or difficult topics?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- *How well do you understand how each other's upbringings affect your relationship?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



## LIE #3 | I Promise

Mindset Shift - From an Event to a Journey = BUILD TRUST

Perfect Wedding Day = Perfect Marriage, Right?

“I Promise” is not enough. Unfortunately, focusing so much on “I do” tends to trick us into believing the myth that marriage as a one time decision is enough. If we shift our focus to a journey full of daily choices rather than one choice that will last a lifetime, we not only actively build trust, we leave room for extending grace and restoring trust when things don’t go perfectly.

## BUILD TRUST

On a scale of 1 to 10...

- *How well do you handle conflict and fight fair?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- *How would you rate your ability to plan and manage your money together?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- *How aligned are you and your partner when it comes to expectations for intimacy?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

# YOUR RESULTS

Add up all of your scores from the previous pages and record your total here:

\*\*\*If you and your partner had differing opinions, add both totals and divide by 2.\*\*\*

## **If your scores added up to a number between 80-90:**

Congratulations! Your relationship is in good shape. You may have your differences of opinion now and then, but you share an understanding for one another's point of view, and you have a solid foundation for the future. However, don't wait until things are bad to invest in your marriage.

## **If your scores added up to a number between 65-79:**

Some aspects of your relationship are in order, and you are probably happy with each other MOST of the time. However, there are some potential roadblocks that could continue to cause stress and problems that may erode your relationship over time. Ensure that your relationship stays on the right track by investing now.

## **If your scores added up to 64 or less:**

Don't panic! While your relationship is in need of some improvements, it's never too late. Communication and underlying issues cause stress and frustration in everyday life. You have likely experienced a loss of interest in one or more things that once brought you joy. There can still be plenty of hope for your future, and we can help. Don't wait... invest now!

Based on **your answers** in each section, which session are you most looking forward to?



Press **PLAY** to move on to Chapter 4

## **What's Next**

- As you move through the course, be sure to keep your scores from Session 00 handy so you can get the most out of each session.
- Prepare to dig into Session 01 and make a plan for getting started.

# SESSION 01 Foundation: CORE (why, mindset, celebration)

# 01

*Relationships require an intentional shift in the way we see life. The core is the crucial part of your relationship upon which all other things are built.*

## **A Willingness To Serve**

Marriage requires a complete shift of how we see others, especially our spouse. The best marriages are between two people who continually put the other's needs before their own.

## **Expectations**

Marriage isn't intended to meet your needs or make you happy. Marriage is crazy, difficult, and yet incredibly rewarding. Marriage strengthens us and shapes us.

*By focusing on meeting the needs of others, your needs are more regularly met. - The Meaningful Marriage*

**What is your motivation/ambition for getting married (write your partner's name below)?**

Why [name]\_\_\_\_\_?

Why [name]\_\_\_\_\_?

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**Visit [www.themeaningfulmarriage.us](http://www.themeaningfulmarriage.us) to purchase the full 6-Session Marriage Refresh Program!**

**Get Started!**