

Keys to Counseling Success *From Peacemaking for Families by Ken Sande*

In order to get the most benefit out of marriage counseling as quickly as possible, there are five things you can do.

- 1) Focus on your responsibilities. (Matthew 7:3-5)
 - a. Although you can be an influence on your spouse as can the counselor, you are the only person in your marriage that you have the ability to change.
 - b. The less you dwell on your spouse's deficiencies, and the more you seek to work with God as He changes you, the more quickly you will see progress in improving your marital relationship.
- 2) Go to the heart of your problems (James 4:1-3)
 - a. Behavior change is not enough
 - b. You must also focus on the desires that have become demands that are controlling your heart and undermining your marriage.
 - c. Behavior patterns will change on a consistent basis only when our thoughts, attitudes, and desires have been changed. (Ephesians 4:24-26)
- 3) Remember the Gospel (Romans 1:16)
 - a. Jesus Christ came to deliver us from our sins
 - b. He will enable both you and your spouse
 - i. to put off your old ways
 - ii. to develop radically new ways of thinking and behaving toward each other
 - iii. to give you a love for each other that surpasses anything that you can imagine (Ephesians 3:20)
- 4) Ask for prayer support and accountability from within your church (James 5:16)
 - a. Marriage counseling is a form of spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18) Satan does not want you to succeed.
 - b. Seek godly, discreet people who will commit to pray for you and to keep your confidence.
- 5) Persevere (James 1:12)
 - a. These problems have probably been present for a long time and have developed into habits. It takes time and effort to resolve them.
 - b. Be patient and keep working

