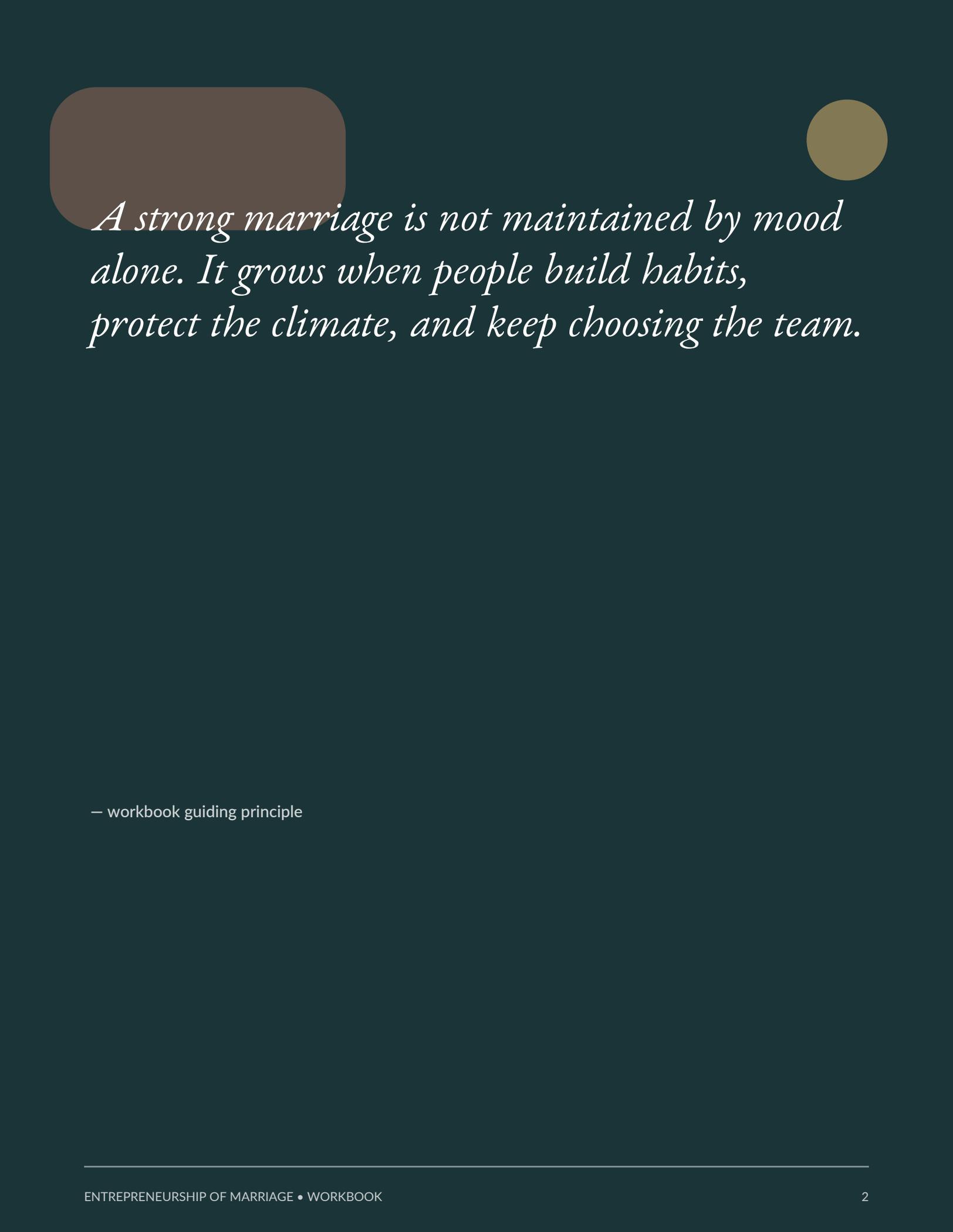


# The Entrepreneurship of Marriage

A guided workbook for building a marriage with warmth, systems, repair, and shared direction.





*A strong marriage is not maintained by mood alone. It grows when people build habits, protect the climate, and keep choosing the team.*

— workbook guiding principle

# How to work through it

This workbook turns the book into a practice space. Move slowly, answer honestly, and use the pages to build habits you can repeat in real life.

NAME

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DATE STARTED

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PARTNER / SPOUSE

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### 1. Start with reality

Answer for the relationship you actually have—not the version you perform online or the one you hope will appear by itself.

### 2. Work one module at a time

You do not need to solve everything in a single sitting. Pick the pressure point that matters most right now.

### 3. Turn insight into a habit

Every section should end with one repeatable move: a conversation, a ritual, a boundary, or a repair step.

WHAT WOULD MAKE THIS WORKBOOK VALUABLE FOR ME RIGHT NOW?

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A good workbook does not just describe the problem. It helps you leave with a clearer standard and one next action.

# Workbook map

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This workbook reorganizes the book into practical modules so the experience feels more like training than reading notes.

# Relationship venture snapshot

Rate each statement from 1 to 5. The point is not perfection. It is to see where the current marriage climate is strong, strained, or unclear.

STARTING-POINT INVENTORY	1	2	3	4	5
We repair faster than we escalate.	<input type="radio"/>				
We protect our connection from outside noise.	<input type="radio"/>				
We make time for emotional closeness.	<input type="radio"/>				
We make time for affection or intimacy.	<input type="radio"/>				
We have at least one shared goal bigger than logistics.	<input type="radio"/>				
We talk about hard things with timing and respect.	<input type="radio"/>				
We support each other's growth, not only survival.	<input type="radio"/>				
We understand the season we are in.	<input type="radio"/>				
We handle money stress as a team.	<input type="radio"/>				
This relationship feels like a place of strength.	<input type="radio"/>				

1 = rarely true • 3 = inconsistent • 5 = strongly true

# What the snapshot suggests

Use the scores as a starting signal. Look for leverage—not shame. A marriage usually improves fastest when you protect one strong area and repair one recurring leak.

**WHICH PART OF THE RELATIONSHIP FEELS STRONGEST RIGHT NOW—AND WHY?**

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**WHERE DO WE LOSE THE MOST ENERGY OR GOODWILL?**

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**WHAT IS THE FIRST OPERATING PRIORITY FOR THE NEXT 30 DAYS?**

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**ONE SENTENCE THAT DESCRIBES THE MARRIAGE CLIMATE TODAY**

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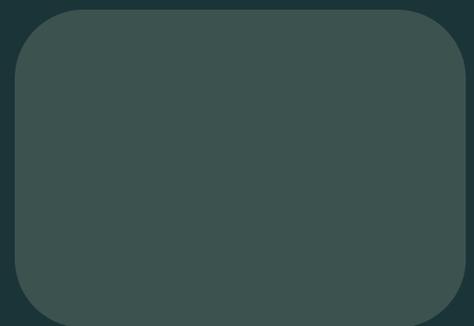
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PART I

# Foundation Capital



What creates safety, attraction, trust, and shared momentum in the marriage.



# The relationship balance sheet

The book repeatedly returns to a simple idea: marriages weaken when emotional warmth, physical closeness, and mutual value are treated like background items. They strengthen when those essentials are intentionally maintained.

## Emotional capital

Trust, attunement, loyalty, and the feeling that home is emotionally safe.

## Physical warmth

Affection, touch, attraction, and the habits that keep intimacy alive without turning it into pressure.

## Mutual value

Feeling appreciated, supported, and strengthened by the relationship rather than drained by it.

## SKILLS BUILT

- emotional responsiveness
- everyday appreciation
- maintenance before resentment

## CORE TAKEAWAY

Strong marriages are not a constant high. They are relationships where the basics are treated like assets worth protecting.

Ask yourself on the next page: what are we actively investing in, and what have we quietly allowed to depreciate?



# Balance sheet audit

Area	Current strength	What drains it	One weekly repair action
Emotional climate			
Affection / intimacy			
Appreciation			
Trust and follow-through			

**THE ASSET I MOST WANT TO PROTECT THIS MONTH**

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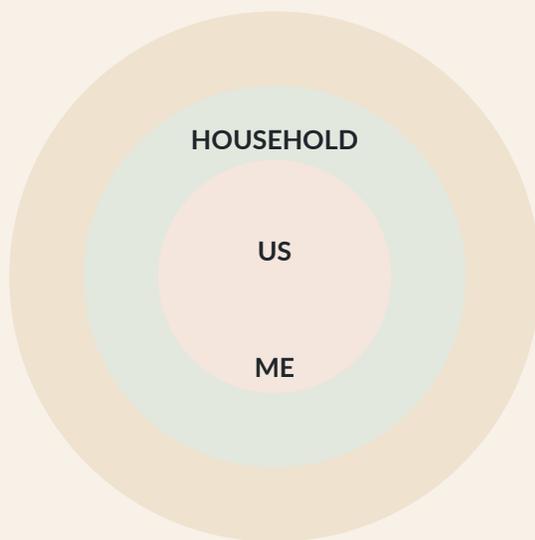
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# Shared goals build the unit

One of the book's clearest themes is that couples stabilize when they are building something together. The marriage moves from chemistry alone to a sense of mission, stewardship, and shared direction.



## Core idea

A healthy marriage needs more than compatibility. It needs something to build, maintain, and protect together.

### Skills built

alignment

future thinking

cooperation under pressure

WHAT MAKES US FEEL MOST LIKE A TEAM?

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# Mission to momentum

WHAT ARE WE BUILDING RIGHT NOW BESIDES PAYING BILLS AND GETTING THROUGH THE WEEK?

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WHERE HAVE WE DRIFTED INTO MAINTENANCE MODE WITH NO SHARED EXCITEMENT?

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WHICH PROJECT, RITUAL, OR GOAL WOULD MAKE US FEEL LIKE A TEAM AGAIN?

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OUR VERSION OF A HEALTHY FAMILY UNIT LOOKS LIKE...

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# Autonomy without distance

The book distinguishes between freedom and autonomy. In workbook language: a healthy marriage makes room for individuality, but not in a way that quietly erodes trust or connection.

## Healthy autonomy sounds like...

I can name my needs clearly.

I stay honest about my limits.

I protect my identity without punishing the bond.

## Avoidance sounds like...

I disappear instead of speaking.

I call distance “space” when I am really dodging discomfort.

I use independence as a shield.

## SKILLS BUILT

- boundaries without hostility
- honest self-expression
- interdependence rather than fusion

## GUIDING QUESTION

Does this choice protect both my values and the bond—or only my urge to escape discomfort?

## MY ONE-SENTENCE DEFINITION OF ALIGNED AUTONOMY

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# Autonomy filter

Situation or tension	Need	Boundary / honest response

**THIS WEEK I WILL PROTECT BOTH MY VALUES AND THE MARRIAGE BY...**

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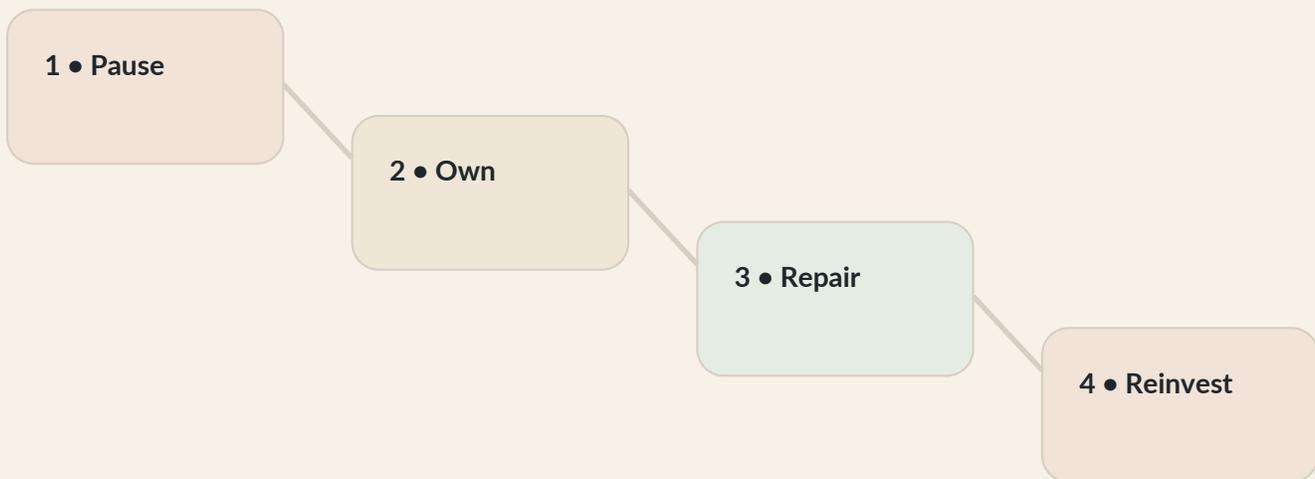
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# Repair, forgiveness, reinvestment

The book frames crisis as a possible turning point. That only works when conflict becomes repair-capable. Forgiveness is not pretending nothing happened; it is refusing to let every disagreement become a permanent identity for the marriage.



## CORE TAKEAWAY

Strong marriages are not conflict-free. They are relationships where people can stop the spiral, own a piece of the problem, repair what they can, and return to the investment.

# Repair plan

WHEN I FEEL HURT, I USUALLY...

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THE ESCALATION PATTERN I WANT TO STOP IS...

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WHAT I CAN OWN WITHOUT SHRINKING MYSELF

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WHAT FORGIVENESS WOULD FREE ME FROM

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THE NEXT REPAIR CONVERSATION SHOULD OPEN LIKE THIS...

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PART II

# Systems and Pressure



What keeps the unit stable when real life, outside voices, and old habits start pulling at the bond.



# The interference audit

The book names several forces that can destabilize a marriage: family pressure, media consumption, old attachments, unhealthy habits, self-doubt, and social environments that reward comparison or resentment.

	WITHIN OUR CONTROL	OUTSIDE OUR CONTROL
STRENGTHENS	Weekly check-in shared routines clear boundaries	supportive family healthy mentors helpful community
DESTABILIZES	doom-scrolling resentful venting substance habits	work stress illness unexpected financial strain

The task is not to control everything. It is to know what needs a boundary, a filter, or a replacement habit.



# Firewall builder

Pressure source	How it shows up	Boundary or filter	Replacement habit
Family / in-laws			
Media / phone habits			
Friends / old attachments			
Coping habits / crutches			

# Communication as an operating standard

A theme throughout the book is that venting is not the same thing as skill. Strong conversations are prepared. They respect timing, tone, emotional regulation, and the difference between facts and accusations.

## Before

Regulate your body.

Define the issue.

Choose timing with intention.

## During

Use one example.

Make one clear ask.

Do not attack character.

## After

Agree on the next step.

Follow through.

Notice what improved.

## SKILLS BUILT

timing • tone • clarity • self-regulation • follow-through

# Boardroom conversation prep

**ISSUE I NEED TO RAISE**

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**OUTCOME I ACTUALLY WANT**

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**WHAT I AM ASSUMING**

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**WHAT IS FACTUAL**

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**THE RESPECTFUL OPENING SENTENCE I WANT TO USE**

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**BEST TIME AND SETTING FOR THIS CONVERSATION**

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**ONE SIMPLE ASK I WANT TO LEAVE WITH**

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# The marriage operating system

In business terms, systems reduce chaos. In marriage, routines and rituals reduce preventable resentment. The goal is not rigidity—it is having a minimum structure that protects connection.

## Daily

One small touchpoint: affection, eye contact, a ten-minute check-in, a calm goodbye, or a quiet reset.

## Weekly

A board meeting: logistics, appreciations, pressure points, one shared decision.

## Monthly

A reset conversation about money, home load, intimacy, family obligations, or plans.

## Seasonal

A larger goal or recovery plan for the season you are in: new baby, work stretch, health repair, rebuilding trust.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Systems are often kinder than repeated disappointment. They make care visible and reduce the number of things couples keep having to “remember” only after a blow-up.

# Our operating system

DAILY TOUCHPOINT

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WEEKLY BOARD MEETING TIME

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MONTHLY RESET QUESTION

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SEASONAL GOAL

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WHICH ROUTINES WOULD LOWER FRICTION IN OUR HOME MOST QUICKLY?

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WHO OWNS WHAT RIGHT NOW—AND WHERE DO WE NEED MORE CLARITY, GRATITUDE, OR REDISTRIBUTION?

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# Growth mindset and default thoughts

The book argues that a relationship can become the place where old defaults are exposed and replaced. You see the inherited communication style, the victim loop, the self-doubt, the addictive escape—and decide not to keep living from it.

TRIGGER

DEFAULT STORY

BETTER QUESTION

GROWTH MOVE

## ANTI-VISION PROMPT

Name the marriage dynamic you do not want to become: the tone, the habits, the kind of distance, the kind of home climate. A clear anti-vision can sharpen your choices.

## ONE ANTI-VISION SENTENCE

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# Thought reset table

Trigger	Default thought	Better question	Growth move

Example: "He seems distant" → "What else could be true besides rejection?" → "I will ask a clean question instead of spiraling."

# Support through uneven seasons

Money stress, exhaustion, career asymmetry, parenting load, and changing desire can all distort how a marriage feels. The healthier move is not moralizing the season. It is naming it, planning for it, and protecting each other through it.

## Season gauges

### CORE TAKEAWAY

Strong couples do not assume every hard season means the relationship is failing. They ask: what season are we in, what does support look like here, and how do we stop turning strain into contempt?

### WHAT MAKES A SEASON HARD FOR US—PRACTICALLY, EMOTIONALLY, RELATIONALLY?

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# Season of support

WHICH SEASON ARE WE IN RIGHT NOW?

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WHAT SUPPORT DO I NEED?

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WHAT SUPPORT MIGHT MY SPOUSE NEED?

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WHAT RESENTMENT OR FEAR NEEDS A CLEAN SENTENCE—NOT SILENT BUILDUP?

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WHAT PRACTICAL PLAN WOULD LOWER PRESSURE THIS MONTH?

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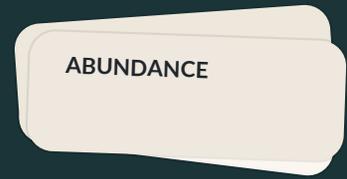
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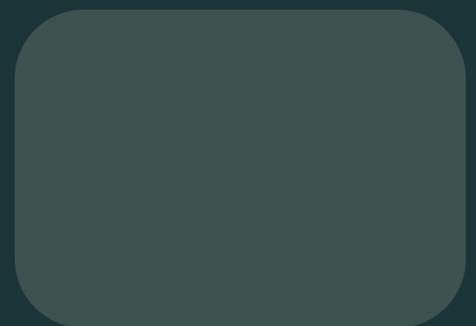
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PART III

# Scale What Works



How a marriage moves from survival mode into something more deliberate, appreciative, resilient, and worth growing.



# Same team mentality

One of the book's strongest reframes is simple: stop treating the spouse like the enemy. When the marriage remembers the team, conflict becomes less personal and more solvable.

Situation	Enemy lens	Team lens
Stressful week	You are the problem.	We are under pressure; how do we respond well?
Conflict	I must win this.	We need a resolution that protects us both.
Success	What about my recognition?	How do we celebrate the team and the person?

## SKILLS BUILT

loyalty • de-escalation • perspective • protection of the bond

# Switch the team

THE REAL PROBLEM WE ARE FACING RIGHT NOW IS...

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WHEN I ACT LIKE MY SPOUSE IS THE PROBLEM, IT SOUNDS LIKE...

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SAME-TEAM LANGUAGE WOULD SOUND LIKE...

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ONE AGREEMENT THAT WOULD PROTECT THE TEAM THIS WEEK

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# Clarity creates direction

The book warns that if you are not aiming to thrive, drift takes over. In workbook form, that means a marriage needs goals in more than one lane: individual growth, the relationship itself, the home, health, and the future you want to build.

## Self

The skill, habit, or healing work I need to prioritize.

## Us

The quality of connection we want to create together.

## Home

The environment, roles, or routines that make life smoother.

## Wellbeing

The energy, health, and recovery that sustain the relationship.

## Future

The financial, family, or life direction we are choosing on purpose.

Clarity lowers projection. It helps you tell the difference between a marriage problem and a direction problem in your own life.

# 90-day goal board

MY PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL

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OUR RELATIONSHIP GOAL

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HOME / FAMILY GOAL

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HEALTH OR RECOVERY GOAL

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HOW WILL WE KNOW THESE GOALS ARE MOVING? WHAT ARE THE SIGNS, METRICS, OR VISIBLE PROOFS?

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ONE HABIT I WILL PRACTICE EVERY WEEK TO SUPPORT THIS DIRECTION

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# Abundance over scarcity

The book contrasts abundance and scarcity in how partners think, speak, and interpret each other. A scarcity lens makes every ambiguity feel like a threat. An abundance lens steadies the nervous system and chooses a more grounded story.

Scarcity script	More grounded rewrite
"If things feel off, something must be wrong with us."	"A hard week may simply mean we need clarity, rest, or repair."
"I have to protect myself first at all times."	"Protection and openness can coexist when boundaries are clear."
"Mixed emotions mean the relationship is failing."	"Emotions fluctuate; standards and actions matter more."

## CORE IDEA

Abundance is not naivety. It is the discipline of refusing to feed suspicion, contempt, or emotional famine when a clearer, steadier interpretation is available.

# Scarcity-to-abundance rewrite

My scarcity script	A steadier truth	Action that matches the steadier truth

HOW DO I BEHAVE WHEN I FEEL SECURE? WHICH OF THOSE BEHAVIORS COULD I PRACTICE ON PURPOSE?

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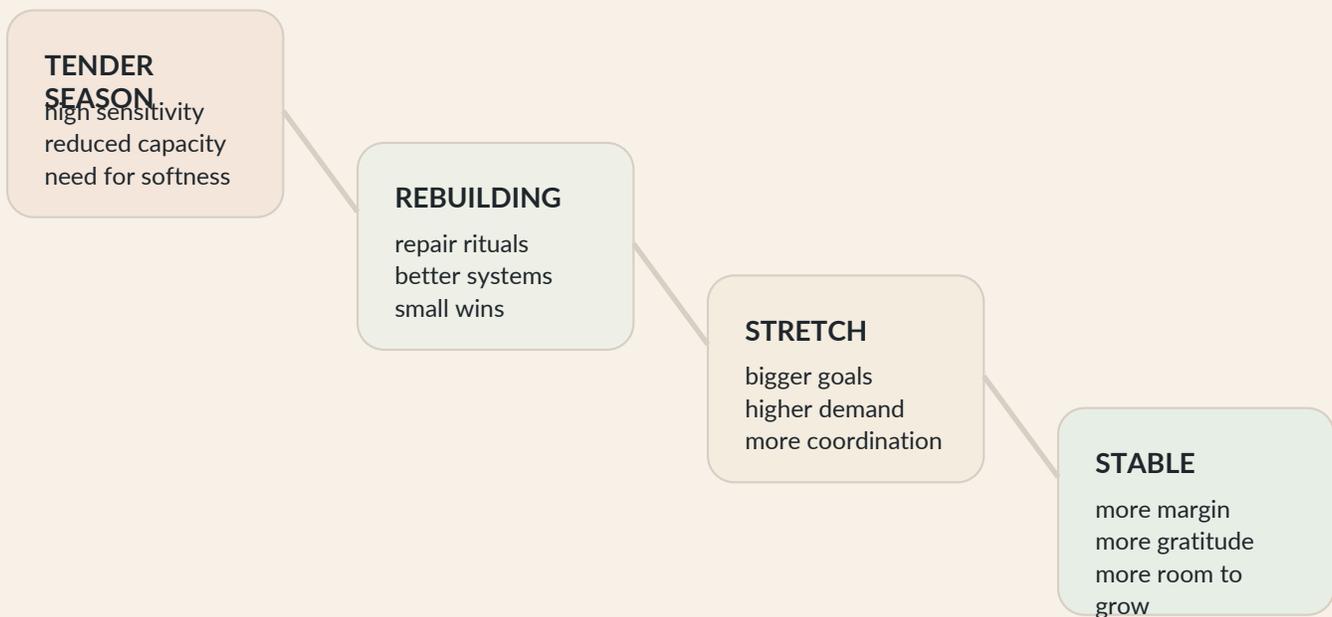
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# Pressure seasons playbook

The book names several high-pressure seasons that can strain a marriage: new parenthood, exhaustion, substance habits, low self-worth, health decline, and other chain reactions that start inside one person but affect the whole home.



## WHAT MATTERS MOST IN PRESSURE SEASONS

Name the season. Lower the ego. Protect energy. Ask what can wait. Ask what is non-negotiable. Ask what kind of support preserves tenderness rather than adding more load.

# Pressure season workbook

THE SEASON WE ARE IN RIGHT NOW

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WHAT CAN WAIT?

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WHAT MUST BE PROTECTED?

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SUPPORT I NEED FROM MY SPOUSE

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SUPPORT MY SPOUSE MAY NEED FROM ME

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ONE RITUAL OR SUPPORT RESOURCE THAT WOULD MAKE THIS SEASON EASIER

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# The final choice

The book closes by returning to choice. Not fantasy. Not perfect timing. Not waiting for every feeling to line up. Choice. The choice to invest, to repair, to keep building standards, and to make the marriage a place that strengthens life instead of draining it.

WHAT KIND OF MARRIAGE AM I CHOOSING TO HELP BUILD?

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WHAT WOULD I REGRET IF I KEPT DELAYING OR AVOIDING?

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THE NEXT DELIBERATE CHOICE I AM MAKING IS...

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# Marriage venture sprint

Use this page as a short implementation cycle. One month is enough time to feel whether the marriage climate is shifting because the habits are changing.

## WEEK 1 • CONNECTION

- one appreciation each day
- one protected conversation
- one affection ritual

## WEEK 2 • SYSTEMS

- weekly board meeting
- one friction-reducing routine
- clarify one role or expectation

## WEEK 3 • MINDSET

- catch three default stories
- rewrite one scarcity script
- practice same-team language

## WEEK 4 • MOMENTUM

- review progress
- name one next goal
- celebrate one visible improvement

Do not try to change everything. Repetition beats intensity here.

# Weekly board meeting

Use this once a week. Keep it calm, short, and focused. The point is to prevent buildup, not to stage a courtroom trial.

ONE WIN FROM THIS WEEK

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ONE PRESSURE POINT

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ONE APPRECIATION

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ONE ASK

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THE PRACTICAL DECISION OR NEXT STEP WE ARE LEAVING WITH

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NOTES / FOLLOW-THROUGH

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## Quick ratings

Connection

Stress

Clarity

Teamwork

# Our next operating standard

Let this page turn reflection into a living standard. Keep it somewhere visible and revisit it at the end of the month.

THE MARRIAGE CLIMATE WE ARE BUILDING

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THE HABITS THAT WILL PROTECT IT

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THE ONE THING WE REFUSE TO NORMALIZE ANYMORE

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SIGNED

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DATE

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A workbook cannot do the marriage for you. It can help you see the pattern, choose the standard, and keep returning to the work.