

## **MY SPOUSE IS AFRAID TO GET COUNSELING. WHAT NOW?**

*By Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott – SYMBIS Blog – February 8, 2023*

If your spouse won't go to counseling with you, what can you do?

Let's say you and your spouse have been going through a difficult time. Maybe you're dealing with some differences or problems that have been hard to overcome. You think that seeing a licensed counselor would benefit both of you (and your marriage), but your spouse is either afraid to go or refuses altogether.

First, remember that you can't make your spouse seek help. You can encourage it, but ultimately, going to see a therapist or counselor is their choice. Even if you wholeheartedly believe that a counselor could help you through your current situation, going together might not happen.

But hope isn't lost. Even if your spouse won't get counseling, you can still go for yourself.

### **GOING TO COUNSELING CAN HELP YOU—EVEN IF YOUR SPOUSE WON'T GO**

You might be wondering whether counseling will do you any good. Can it help your marriage if your spouse won't be a part of it? Here's good news.

**Yes**—going to counseling can help you, even if you see a therapist alone. Your spouse's refusal to attend sessions with you doesn't have to stop you from getting the support you need. It's even possible that your seeking help could potentially bring more health to your marriage in the long run.

The truth is that a marriage can only ever be as healthy as its least healthy spouse. Because of this, the most important decision you can make for your marriage is to work on yourself and your own well-being from a spiritual, psychological, and emotional standpoint. Your willingness to seek out professional support for yourself could potentially put your marriage on a path toward healing, even if it doesn't feel like it right now.

### **YOUR CHANGE COULD INSPIRE YOUR SPOUSE'S**

We believe that every healthy choice you make for yourself, including seeing a therapist, opens up the possibility of a positive transformation for your spouse. Working on your own well-being could inspire them to grow, too. The momentum you build toward becoming a healthier person just might be contagious.

Sometimes, all it takes is one spouse making major steps in a healthier direction to change the trajectory of the entire relationship. We've seen individuals in marriages get healthier and then watched as the entire relationship has to rebalance itself. In the process, the other spouse begins to grow and change for the better, too.

Still, no matter the outcome, it's critically important for you to seek counseling so you can get the much-needed support you're looking for. Whatever you're going through, there are professionals who can help you navigate these rough waters. Don't wait for your spouse to agree to counseling before you get help yourself.