

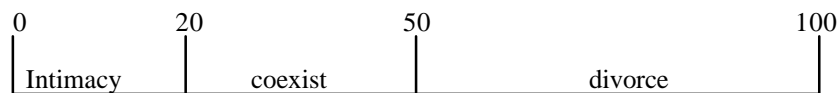
# The Practice of Marriage

## (Developing Intimacy with Your Mate—Part 1)

**Key Thought:** Oneness grows only through the consistent practice of marital love by both spouses.

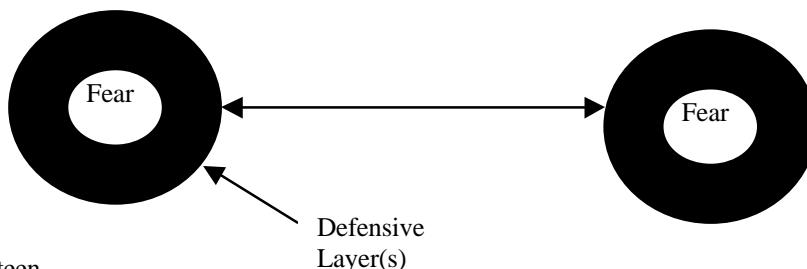
(Corollary: Isolation develops through the inconsistent practice of marital love by one or both spouses.)

**Word Study: ‘Intimacy’** (Lat. ‘*Intimus*’—inmost; the state of being most private. Depicts emotional closeness; being understood by one who cares deeply)



*(only 10-20% of married couples experience intimacy in their relationship)*

- ❑ **Why is there a lack of intimacy between married couples?**  
(Gen.3:10)
  1. Core emotion “I was afraid”
  2. Core motivation “because I was naked”
  3. Core strategy “so I hid myself”
- It is our inherent nature to hide; this tendency is exacerbated in some due to conditioning by parents/guardians, emotional hurt caused by others and personal guilt.
- ❖ **Principle:** Fear moves us away from people and problems and causes us to hide, cover up, and self-protect.
- ❑ **Why does fear move us away from people and problems?** We are attempting to avoid the exposure of our true selves which may lead to rejection (i.e. “You may not like who I really am”)
- ❑ **How do we hide from one another?** By erecting defensive “layers” around our inner person.



- **Layers can also....**
  - a) make us appear ‘okay’ and acceptable
  - b) enable us to deal from a position of strength

□ **What kind of layers do people put up?**

1. Shyness/introversion
2. Social withdrawal
3. Non-verbal
4. Dogmatic/know-it-all
5. Critical spirit
6. Chronically angry
7. Intellectualization
8. Position/status
9. Money
10. Power
11. Fame
12. Sociability

- **How do we develop intimacy with our mate if we both have layers?** By penetrating his/her layers and reducing or eliminating their fear.

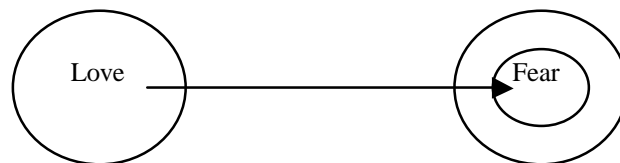
- **How do we penetrate his/her layers and reduce or eliminate their fear?**

**(Hint)** When are we least afraid to be ourselves with others? (i.e., comfortable, relaxed, secure).

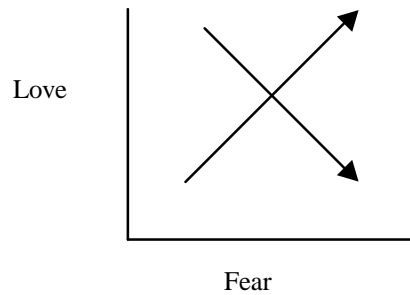
- ❖ **Principle:** When we feel completely accepted and loved by the other person intimacy can grow. We are able to enter a “layer-free” relationship with our mate.

- The solution is not **total openness** (i.e. to throw off our inhibitions and expose ourselves) but **total commitment** (i.e. demonstrating acceptance and love).

**( I John 4:18) “...perfect (mature) love casts (i.e. throw or hurl) out fear.”**



- ❖ **Principle:** Love moves us toward people and problems and causes us to take the risk of being open and vulnerable.



- ❑ **Love penetrates our mate's defensive layers and overcomes their fears**
- ❑ **Where does this kind of love come from?** “The love of God has been **poured out** in our hearts through the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 5:5)
- ❑ **What do we do with this love?** By an *act of our will* we demonstrate this godly love to our mate. It is a *conscious decision backed by action*. It is a decision to *“touch”* our mate physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

**Conclusion:** Intimacy is the result of creating a layer-free relationship with your mate.