

one  
more  
try

*What to do when your marriage is falling apart*

GARY CHAPMAN

Growth Assignments



1



# what happened to our dream?

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. Whether you are separated or in marital crisis, read the next chapter with an open mind. Examine your attitudes and actions.



2



# how to start saving your marriage

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. Which of your attitudes or actions will have to be changed if you are going to work on reconciliation?

Make a list of five statements, each beginning “I will have to . . .”

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2. Are you willing to make those changes? If so, why not start today? You need not announce to your spouse what you are doing—simply do it as you have opportunity.

3



# change yourself, change your marriage

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. Ask a pastor or counselor to arrange for you to take the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis or the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory. Either will help you identify personality patterns.
  
2. You may want to enroll in a class on personality development at your church or community college.

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3. To get started in better understanding your personality, on a sheet of paper write answers to the following questions:

- What do I like about myself?

- What emotions do I feel today? Divide those into two columns:

Negative feelings

Positive feelings

- What do my negative feelings tell me about myself?

- What do my positive feelings tell me about myself?







4



# turning to God

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

If you have not already done so, ask God to bring to your mind the areas in which you have failed in your marriage.

1. Make a list of your failures and confess each one to God. Thank Him that Christ has paid the penalty for those sins, and accept His forgiveness.
  
2. Begin the practice of reading, marking, and talking to God about a chapter in the Bible each day. You may want to begin with the book of James in the New Testament.

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3. Try singing a psalm to God. Make your own tune and rhythm. You may begin with Psalm 1.
  
4. If you are not active in a local church, decide today which church you will visit next Sunday. Be sure to attend the Bible study class as well as the worship service.
  
5. Don't give up the search until you find a warm, loving group of Christians with whom you can share life.





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# tough love

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. Which of the following were part of your spouse's behavior in your marriage? (Put his or her initials by the ones that apply.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> physical abuse           | <input type="checkbox"/> verbal abuse          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sexual abuse of children | <input type="checkbox"/> sexual unfaithfulness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> alcohol abuse            | <input type="checkbox"/> drug abuse            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____              |  |

2. Which of the above were part of your own behavior in your marriage? (Put your initials by the ones that apply.)

3. What steps have you taken to deal with your own destructive behavior?

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4. What steps has your spouse taken to deal with their destructive behavior?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. If any of the above are established patterns in either of your lives, there can be authentic reconciliation only after these behavior patterns have been changed. Almost always, this will require the help of a pastor or professional counselor. If you are not yet seeing a pastor or counselor, you may want to take steps immediately to find such a person and make an appointment.  

Also, make sure that your spouse understands that there can be no reconciliation without counseling. Tell them that promises of change are not enough. If your spouse is serious, he or she will be willing to seek help.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. If your spouse is not willing to go for counseling about these destructive behavior patterns, then you may want to secure your own counselor so you will have help in knowing how to set tough-love boundaries with your spouse.



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# Loneliness: “the deepest pit”

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. Clarify your feelings of social loneliness by answering the following:
  - Do you feel cut off, removed from all that is worthwhile in the world?
  - Do you see others accomplishing meaningful goals while you sit in the stands and watch?

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- If you could do anything in the world with your life, what would you like to do?
- Is that goal realistic for you? If not, what would be a realistic goal?
- If you were to accomplish that goal, what would be the first step?
- How will that step affect your relationship with your spouse?
- What will such a step do for you?

loneliness: "the deepest pit"

- Why not take that step and ask God to steer you into what is best?

2. Clarify your feelings of emotional loneliness by answering the following:

- Do you feel emotionally alone? That there is no one with whom you can share your honest feelings?
  
- What opportunity and freedom do you have to share your feelings with your spouse?
  
- Is there a friend with whom you can share without fear of being rejected? If so, have you shared your present pain with that new friend? Why not do so today?

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- Do you feel the need to develop friendships with others? Where, in your community, could you go to develop such friendships?
  - Are you presently involved in a Christian fellowship? If not, what keeps you from doing so immediately?
3. If loneliness is acute, and you have been unable to share with anyone, make an appointment with a counselor or pastor, who can help you see your situation more objectively.

8



# “i’m so angry”

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. Express your anger in writing. Ask God to guide you as you try to express your feelings. You may begin, “I am angry because . . .”
2. Think of a friend who will be objective, with whom you may share what you have written. Ask him or her to listen as you read and then to help you find constructive ways to deal with the issue.
3. Do you feel that you have allowed your anger to develop into bitterness? If so, are you willing to confess it as sin and accept God’s forgiveness?



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# rebuilding

## GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. No one, including God, will force you to work on your marriage. That is a decision that only you can make. But if you decide, you will have all the help of God at your disposal. You have talked with and observed many who have experienced divorce. Would you be willing to find a couple that has a good marriage and ask them how they obtained it? Perhaps you could interview several married couples and ask what problems they have overcome to find fulfillment.

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2. If you decide to take the road "less traveled by," you may want to use the checklist below:

**Steps we have taken:**

**Date:**

Made my decision to seek  
reconciliation\_\_\_\_\_

Talked with God about my decision  
and asked for His help\_\_\_\_\_

Asked my spouse for a  
dinner date\_\_\_\_\_

Spouse accepted invitation\_\_\_\_\_

Related my decision to my spouse\_\_\_\_\_

Spouse agreed to seek reconciliation\_\_\_\_\_

Arranged for session with pastor or  
counselor\_\_\_\_\_

Did assignments made by counselor\_\_\_\_\_

Additional counseling sessions\_\_\_\_\_

Completed additional communication  
assignments\_\_\_\_\_



Additional counseling sessions \_\_\_\_\_

Completed additional communication assignments \_\_\_\_\_

Books we have read and discussed:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Podcasts or DVDs on marriage we have listened to and discussed:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

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Marriage workshops, seminars, or classes we have attended:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

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and if it doesn't  
work out . . .

#### GROWTH ASSIGNMENTS

1. If your spouse insists on divorce and refuses to take any steps toward reconciliation, ask God to give you strength and wisdom in accepting this decision.
  
2. Keep the door of reconciliation open from your side and pray that God will continue to stimulate the mind of your spouse.

