



The RISC Course

Session #7 – From Me to We:

Co-Creating Phenomenal Partnership

Session Transcript

[0:00:00]

Sonika: Welcome, everybody! Welcome back to the RISC Course. We're very excited to be with you here today, our last session, RISC Course number seven, Co-creating Phenomenal, Extraordinary Partnership.

Christian: Yes. Welcome to our living room. Sonika and Christian here, as per usual now. We're thrilled to get to be with you and talk about partnership.

Sonika: And love.

Christian: And love.

Sonika: We're still going to give you in this session what we consider to be the five essential ingredients for how to do love. We call this actually the five tenets of love. We're also going to show you or you're going to learn, I guess is a better way of saying it, how to best show your partner that you love them.

We're also going to talk with you here about how to strengthen the we in relationship, how you can move more effectively together in partnership. Then we'll end our evening tonight with a brief review and questions and comments from you.

Christian: That's right. We're just going to dive right in and talk about what we call the five tenets of love. There are two ways you can look at the five tenets of love here. One is it's a recipe for doing love. It's a way to always be able to do love, so you don't have to wait for those glorious, lucky, fortunate times where love smiles upon you and your partner is in a good mood and everything is wonderful and the sun's on your back. You can do it at your own pace.

So, it is that. It is also an attitude, you can say. It's an attitude of love and presence to bring forward that you can do with anybody at any time. Obviously, for our conversation here, we recommend you do this as much as you humanly, possibly can with your partner, but it's just really as essential with your kids or your dates or whomever.

Sonika: Yeah. Once you know how to do love, you can do it on purpose. It's not just a feeling that comes around. It's a way of being, and you can step inside of it. So we're going to tell you now what those five tenets are and then we're going to give you an opportunity to practice.

Christian: Yes, indeed. So, here goes. Number one is be acutely present. That means when I'm with you, you have my undivided attention. Whether it's just the five seconds that we say, "Goodbye," or, "Hi," at the door before we go our separate ways, or it's the 30 minutes we have dinner or whatever, I'm just with you.

As you all know, there is so much opportunity to be distracted more and more and more as culture evolves. When you go out on a date or you go out to a restaurant with your partner, there are typically five television screens with different channels playing right above your partner's head, not to mention your phone and everything else that's going on in your mind.

So, first one is to be acutely present. I'm just with you. Second one is to be nonjudgmental. Oh, sorry, my bad. I have them ordered in a different way in my sheet here. We'll go from the slide show, no problem. Taking an active interest in. That means pay attention to. That means just that, take an active interest in.

A great way to think about that is pretend you don't know this person already, which, by default, we tend to do just that especially when we've known each other for years. It's, like, "Well, I know you. I know what you like. I know what you don't like."

So a great way to take an active interest in is pretend you don't know what turns them on or off and have an interest in learning. As we talked about in a previous session, taking an interest in is love. That is an aspect of love is taking an interest.

Sonika: Actually, we tend to think the opposite of love is hate. In actuality, the opposite of love is disinterest. So, interest is our way of expressing love. It's a way of saying, "You matter, and I'm curious about you. I am here with you. I am interested in what your dreams are, what your feelings are, what your thoughts are and who you are."

Christian: Yes. Awesome. Number three...

Sonika: We're going to wait until you put it in the right order.

Christian: That was the one I was just starting to say, is, to the best of your ability, be nonjudgmental because now that I'm here with you, present and taking an active interest in you, you might tell me things about, say, what your dreams for the future are that I initially might have judgment about.

I might think, "Oh, that's a bad idea. That's never going to happen. Nobody should have that kind of dream. That's stupid." I'm trying not to be that and if it shows up, just put it on the parking lot and take it more at face value, what your desires, as you express them, are, instead of adding my own judgments to them.

[0:05:13]

All right. Cool. Number four, to root for. So not only am I here present with you and taking an active interest in you and doing my best not to judge whatever it is you're expressing, I also root for you to have what you want, to do what you want, to get to be who you want to be whether or not I understand it even. I root for you to have that because you want that, and I want you to be happy.

Sonika: Notice -- I'll just say too -- when we're rooting for people, we feel great. We've got kids, when they're playing basketball and we're all these parents on the stands, we're rooting for our kids. We are expressing so much love and adoration and wanting to support that other person to rise. So in rooting for someone else, it's not just for them that we're expressing this love. It's for us because it feels good. We say, "Yeah, yeah, go for it!"

Christian: You'll notice when you're rooting for someone like us on the basketball stands, we're really sitting there rooting for the very best possibility. Whether they're playing great out on the court or not at all, whether they get creamed or they're creaming someone else, we're still rooting for their very best expression. We're trying to do our best to make that happen from the stands. This is a way to do that as well.

All right. Fifth and last is being useful or being of service to. How might I be useful to you in you having what you want, doing what you want, getting to be who you want to be? Often, the way to be useful is simply to be here with you, present, giving you my interest and attention. That is useful. That is partnership. That is way to build each other up. That is a way to cultivate a space of love between us, that simple thing.

So the four items that came before number five, those are all being useful. Sometimes there are other direct actions involved. Maybe I know just the person

you could talk to, to get to do that thing you want to do. Maybe I can do it myself. "Oh, you want that? I know just how to do that. I'll help you with that if I can. How might I be useful to you?"

Okay? So, those are the five tenets of love. We're going to have you do an exercise here in a moment. Before we do that, we'll just add a little more detail about that.

Sonika: So, these five tenets of love are something you can practice all the time and really, it's a great thing to include in your relationship life. When we're sitting at the table, for example, we endeavor to not have electronics at the table that that is a time for us to really be with each other, to be present, to take an active interest and ask questions, listen, to be nonjudgmental, to really support each other, be of use. Those are all aspects of love that are really great practices to take on.

Now in this next exercise, what we're going to ask you to do with your partner, if you're here with your partner, is we're going to do what we call a repeated question where you're going to ask your partner one question over and over. They're just going to answer it to the best of their ability. As soon as they're done, you're going to say, "Thank you," and ask it again.

The question you're going to be asking your partner is: How can I best show you I love you?

As you are asking this question, we're going to encourage you to include, be, demonstrate these five tenets of love. We want you to be totally present, to take an active interest in, not be judgmental about whatever it is they share with you, and have the intention to be of use for them by just asking this question and supporting them to discover that for themselves.

Now you might notice, and sometimes this happens for people who do this exercise, that you don't really know what has you feel loved.

Christian: You just know that sometimes, it seems you get lucky in the sunshine and you feel glorious, but you're not really sure why or what that is.

Sonika: So, this exercise is an opportunity to explore that. Why it's important -- so, we'll just give a little background here and then talk about some things you should be listening for and looking for here in this exercise -- is when we're first together with our partners, we are showing them we love them in 20,000 different ways. We're looking at them. We're touching them. We're telling them.

Christian: We're telling them. We're giving them presents. We're leaving them love notes. We're making poetry and songs and movies for them.

[0:10:00]

Sonika: We're making dinner. We're listening and hanging onto every word. We're showing them all the time how great and wonderful and loving they are. We happen to hit upon what we call our partner's love strategy, the thing that has them feel loved because we are just doing it all.

Christian: Shotgun style love, you just fire the shotgun and inevitably, you hit something.

Sonika: So, what happens after we've been in relationships, especially for a long time, is we tend to show our partners we love them in the same way we like. So let's just say, for example, I really like being shown that I am loved and so I'm busy showing him I love him by buying him things, putting out little presents. But how he really likes to be loved -- I mean, all that is kind of nice, but really the thing that has him melt is when I tell him in his ear in a certain tone, "You are a good man. I couldn't pick a better partner."

So, if I am showing him I love him in all of these ways but really what works for him is something else, and same vice versa, you can see how some people, over many years of being together, while they know in their head that they're loved by their partner, they don't actually feel it.

Christian: So a couple of things to look for is -- Eric, you can go on the next slide here -- how we think of love strategy is in three different -- there are three major love strategies. First one is visual. That might be, I give you things, give you gifts. If you're familiar with the Five Love Languages, they have five different ones. This is one of them, giving gifts. Or I show you by my actions. I go out of my way and do anything for you; write you a song, for example.

Sonika: Right. Make you a meal.

Christian: Make you a meal.

Sonika: Another way it might show up visually is I really like it when Christian makes eye contact with me where I get to see him loving me. That's one of the ways I know that he loves me. It's a visual experience. He's looking at me.

Acts of service are another way, as Christian already said about action.

Christian: Yeah. He make a meal for you. I'll just take out the trash or drive the kids around or whatever.

Sonika: Or bringing flowers.

Christian: Bringing flowers is another one. Yeah. Excellent.

Sonika: So for some people, it's more of an auditory experience. It's something in particular that is said, affirming words. It's saying, "I love you," repeatedly. We have some people who say, "God, he hasn't told me he loves me in ten years," when I-love-you really matters to them. For some people, it's, "You're a good man." Or, "God, you are so beautiful." Words of affirmation, it's an auditory experience. Something particular that's said. Sometimes they're little whispers in just the right moments that will have somebody feel very loved.

Christian: Yeah. Finally, it's the kinesthetic experience; touch, sex, spending quality time together, sitting next to each other, something I can feel. I would say, for me, one of my answers to the question is both auditory and kinesthetic. One of my answers, when she asks...

Sonika: How can I best show you I love you?

Christian: One is, well, you can do just that thing you know, as you come up close to me and you tell me, "You're a good man. You're doing a great job." I love hearing those words from her. It, for some reason, who knows why, has my heart just open and relax and my mind go, "Everything is going to be okay, and I feel at home."

Sonika: It's really great when you're doing this too, to get as specific as you can as you're exploring this question. For me, I also really like kinesthetic. It's a certain way he holds me, firm, my shoulders in his hands. Or how he holds my hand when we're walking down the street, it's this firm grasp of my hand that has me feel really loved. He's got me, and he's taking me on this walk.

So, the more specific you can get about what it is that really has you feel loved and adored in your relationship, the more information your partner has about what really works for you. Not only that, the other part that's great about this actually is whatever they're telling you has them feel loved, is probably the way they're showing you, you're loved.

So the next time, even if buying flowers isn't your thing, next time they buy flowers for you and that really works for them, you know, "Oh, she's telling me she loves me because she just got me flowers. I know that's one of the ways the she likes to feel loved, probably what she's saying to me right now by getting me some flowers."

Christian: Yeah. It's by no means a matter of course that you know all this, what makes you feel loved or your partner feel loved. We had a workshop a couple of weeks ago where there was a couple who, they hadn't been together that long, and it's clear they love each other very much. When they asked the question of each other, they didn't know how to answer that, which means they don't know how to do love on purpose.

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They don't know how to purposefully create a partnership of love, a partnership that strengthens love, that creates an environment of love because they have no idea. They just sometimes get lucky. Fortunately for them, it's still pretty new, so they get lucky quite a bit. But that's not necessarily the case as relationship matures, so it's really important to figure out both for yourself and your partner, what is it that works? What works to have you feel loved?

Sonika: So we're going to invite you to take a few minutes now for one of you. You can decide right now who's going to go first, and one of you is going to do love.

So, I'm going to ask the question while I'm being totally present, totally interested in whatever it is he has to say. I'm not going to judge what has him feel loved. Even if it's different than mine or even if I don't ever want to do that, it doesn't matter. I'm going to just allow him to express what has him feel loved.

You're going to keep going until we very clearly tell you when to stop and switch. If you are not at home with a partner at this point, we encourage you to explore for yourself what has you feel loved so that you can tell your partner when they get home, if you're in a relationship. If you're not, you could tell your future partner what it is that really works for you.

Christian: So are you ready to be asking the question of yourself? How can someone show me they love me? What is it that happens that has me feel really loved?

All right. Cool. So we'll put the question up here on a slide. You can put the exercise slide up here, Eric. Thank you very much. You'll see the question on here as a repeated question. How can I best show you I love you? Other person answers, you say, "Thank you. How else can I show you I love you?"

Sonika: All right. So go on ahead, whoever is starting, to ask first, keeping in mind the five tenets of love. Go ahead.

Christian: Take another minute, still same person asking.

Go ahead and complete the question you're answering right now.

Person who has been answering the questions, go ahead and say to your partner, "Thank you so much for your interest and your presence. I really appreciate that."

Sonika: Yeah. Thanks for asking.

Christian: Thanks for asking.

All right. I invite you to take a deep breath. Then go ahead and switch roles now. Other person asks while you practice the five tenets of love. How can I best show you I love you? Go ahead.

Take another minute with this question.

Go ahead and complete the one you're on.

Person who's been answering and exploring, go ahead and say to your partner, "Thank you so much for your interest. I really appreciate your presence." The other person says, "You're welcome. Thanks for asking. Thanks for exploring."

Then turn your attention back here please.

Sonika: So, we hope you all have that be the beginning or even longer conversation perhaps. Sometimes it can even be useful to go back to the beginning and, "What was it that you did at the beginning that really had me feel loved?" To really begin to specify what it is that really works for us.

Of course, we also want to be doing our own work of living inside the question. If I knew you loved me, if I was loved right now, what would I do, what would I say, so we're not totally dependent upon our partners doing or not doing these certain things to have us feel loved. I'm also doing my part and working in partnership to make sure I co-create this experience of love both for myself as well as for you.

[0:20:06]

Christian: Yeah, and how we co-create this experience of loving partnership is we both play both horses, so to speak. I take 100% responsibility for how I feel. I don't blame you for it. I know using, for example, stimulus make up reaction, I can examine and change what it is that has me feel angry or hurt or sad or scared or whatever. I do, and I will, and you can help me too. If we both do both of those, that is the optimal situation for co-creating a partnership where that's everything we want, where love and appreciation is the prevalent environment.

Sonika: Yes. One of the homework assignments that we'll give you this week is in addition to your three appreciations everyday, do something that -- your partner just gave you a whole bunch of ideas. Do one or two of those everyday to let your partner know that you love them. Play with it.

All right. We want to actually talk about a bunch of other ways to do love that can really make a huge difference in a relationship. Truthfully, these are a lot of places where we see couples have breakdown in how they interact with each other. So, one of the things that we want to bring forward here today is a distinction in how men and women respond to stress and what really works for us to bring us back to love and center.

Christian: So go ahead and put the next slide up, Eric.

Sonika: So, when men are under stress -- again, we're going to talk in generalities here, men, women, and you may or may not relate to this. It's for you specifically. So while we say, "Men react this way," some of you women out there might say, "Well, that really describes me," and same, vice versa.

Typically, the masculine likes, under stress, to withdraw, to go into space. When you are in emptiness, when you get to withdraw and just be in yourself, you are rejuvenated. Women, on the other hand, under stress, want to talk. We come forward to be more in relationship. We converse. We talk to feel better.

Now you can imagine if a man and a woman are in a relationship and they're both stressed out at the same time and one wants to disappear and one wants to talk, they've got a little bit of a break down there and it produces a little more stress. So it's really useful to know that, one, there's this difference, potentially, for both of us in relationship; and two, how can we show each other we love each other when we've got that going on?

One of the things that we recommend for men, one way to do love for your woman partner or, like I said, if it's the man -- some men like to talk too, if that's the case for you -- where you, what we call, hold the basket for your partner. Meaning, I'm just going to be present, I'm going to be nonjudgmental, I'm going to be interested, and I'm just going to allow you to empty out all the stuff that's stuck in your head or maybe that you have feelings about and you have thoughts about. I'm just going to allow you to express all that, and I'm just going to hold space for you to be able to do that.

Christian: Often how that shows up often is the woman partner is the one who has the quickest urge to do just that, to talk, to relate outwards, forwards, to empty out all the stuff that's going on in here and in here, just empty out. If I, as the

partner, can just do what's called hold the basket, nothing else, while I embody presence and the five tenets of love, often that is all that's required to restore a space of love and relaxation and calm and connection.

Sonika: Yeah. One of the things they discovered for women or female brains is that when we talk, we release more oxytocin which is the feel-good hormone.

Christian: At the same time reduce cortisol which is what makes us feel stressed.

Sonika: So we feel better just by talking. Now because the masculine brain likes to get back to empty, there's often a quick desire to fix it, whatever it is that's going on, so we can get back to everything being fine and having that sense of spaciousness.

Christian: Yeah. Because I love feeling efficient and I love feeling that I can help and produce some good results, so I'm often looking for, "Okay, great. What can I do to help that? Okay, great. Here's what I see I can do to help that. I want you to be happy." But more often than not, what there is to do to solve it and to fix it and to help is to just hold the basket.

[0:25:04]

Sonika: Yes. A great visual actually is to imagine my head is full and it has to get stuff out. If you're offering solutions to fix it, it's more stuff in, and it just gets more and more stressful. I'm not necessarily in my logical brain when I'm having a lot of feelings going on, so a logical solution isn't really the thing that's needed in this moment. Really, it's just to be able to express.

Yesterday, Christian and I, we went to bed. I was pissed off. Just things weren't flowing for me through the day. Christian did this really great thing. He said, "Would you like to just **[0:25:38] [Indiscernible]** for a minute?" I was, like, "Yes." So I did. I think I talked maybe for four minutes, and I was done. He just listened through the whole thing.

As I got to express all of that, I felt great before we went to sleep. We got to snuggle up, and that was all that was required. So, really great way for you to do love for you partner is let her talk when she wants to talk until she's done and trust that she's going to be feeling a lot better in the end.

Christian: Yeah. So another couple of pointers for men to do love with your partner. Secondly, talk with more detail. That is you practice relating forward and adding more detail because often, what is required, what is wanted when I have a conversation with Sonika, really what she is wanting -- this is typical of men-

women dynamics -- is the connection is in the talking. It's a passing back and forth of energy, of attention. That is connection for her.

So, often, when she asks me a question, she says, "How was your day," and I say, "Fine," that is an accurate and precise and fulfilling answer from my point of view. But really what she's after is the interchange of attention and energy, so if I add some more detail, I can really help with creating a space of love and connectedness here.

I'll say, "It was a great day. Here's one thing that happened that was pretty cool." Or, "Here's one thing that happened that was really uncool." It doesn't really matter as long as I talk and add more detail than I might naturally.

The third thing is what we call, connect and reassure. Like Sonika talked about men under stress, we have a strong tendency to pull back and go into our own space so we can sort out our own troubles. When I do that, will often leave her feeling abandoned. It's not to say that's true or not true, but it's often the direct result or impact of the action of withdrawing is she'll be left with, "Oh, my God. You just left. What happened?"

Sonika: Well a lot of it too is because we assume men are like us. We talk to connect. When we want to disconnect or when we're feeling disconnected, we quit talking. So when you withdraw and quit talking, we assume you're disconnecting from us. We have a tendency to assume you're not talking is a personal declaration of "I don't want to be in relationship with you. I don't want to connect with you right now. I don't want to be with you right now."

Christian: Whereas nine times out of ten, it's something I do to make myself feel better. So a thing that I can do about that is to continue to connect and reassure; and why it says, "I'll be back," in parenthesis there is that's a great way to do that. If I know that whatever was going on in my head, I'm stressed, I'm full, I'm whatever, I need to take some time to go do my thing; I will tell her. I will simply tell her, "I'm not leaving you. Don't worry, honey. I'll be back. I'm just going to go, do my thing for a little bit and then I'll be back."

Sonika: He actually really does say that.

Christian: Yeah, I do. Then I'll go, do my thing, sit under a tree or work in the garage or dive into the computer or whatever.

Sonika: Which makes it a lot easier for me in those moments to actually grant him space, the space he needs. I'm reassured this isn't about our relationship. It's not that he doesn't love me. He is coming back. I matter. That allows me to take a deep breath and allow him to go.

Christian: The final thing I'll recommend is actually go, read and peruse *When You Love Your Woman*. It's a book I wrote. The subtitle is *129 One-Minute Lessons to Win a Woman's Heart*. It was given to you as a bonus for your signing up for the RISC Course here. So, go ahead and read that. It has, well, 129 really great ways to practice that with your partner.

Sonika: Yeah. He actually wrote it as a way to support men to know what to do with their woman partners to have them feel loved. There really are lots of great ideas including this one here about just reassuring her, letting her know that your withdrawal isn't a withdrawal from the relationship. It's an opportunity for you to go into yourself.

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What they've actually shown in true research is that when men go off to be by themselves, they replenish. They restore their testosterone. They reduce cortisol. That is their way of returning to center. So sometimes what I will tell myself when he goes away is he's going away for our relationship. He's going away to make our relationship better when he returns.

Christian: Cool. Now we'll give a couple of pointers to women or those who embody the feminine more, more ways you can do love.

Sonika: So, the first one, we've just been talking about already is granting space, remembering that that's one of the ways he replenishes so we want to make sure to give him that opportunity. The other way that we say it is I can join him actually in space, swimming in the silence. One of the ways this used to show up in our relationship so good actually is when we're in the car, I'm, like, "Yay! Great opportunity for us to be able to talk for three hours."

Christian: And I'm, like, "Yay, space, open road, profoundly satisfying."

Sonika: So I'll say something like, "Hey, tell me something. What do you want to talk about?" Or introduce a conversation. That used to sometimes produce stress from him, like, "I don't know. I'm just driving."

Christian: "Oh, look, a billboard."

Sonika: Now what we do is sometimes we talk, and sometimes I join him in silence. Just allow us to feel connected just as much in that empty space as I do feel when we're conversing.

Christian: Which I really like.

Sonika: So, assume connection. Because we value talking so much, we sometimes will think that a lack of talking equals a lack of connection, a lack of relationship, a lack of love, and so it's really helped me to take on the practice of assuming we're connected, no matter what.

The other thing that I do a lot and recommend wholeheartedly for women is to remind your man and tell him that he's a good man. We just led a workshop this last weekend where we got to hear from so many men talk about how hard they are trying to make their woman happy.

Christian: And how hard we are on ourselves in our minds. A lot of women expressed, after they heard from a whole bunch of different men expressing that, like, "Wow. I had no idea that is what's going on in your heads."

Sonika: So there's a lot of -- for men, they had their own standard of what they want to achieve for them to be a good man in a relationship and so when we're not happy, they feel a little bit like a failure. They've got that internal critic running in their minds so when we're dissatisfied, we're not happy, it's like heaping on another bit of criticism to a whole bunch of criticisms that are already there.

How the men expressed it this weekend is that "When I hear from you how much you love me or what I'm doing that's working for you where I'm a good man, where I'm succeeding for you in our relationship, it takes out some of that criticism that's floating around in my brain and allows me to relax a little bit into, 'Wow. Maybe I'm doing okay. Maybe I am loved here. Maybe I am wanted here. Maybe it's going to be all right.'"

So, as much as you can, really reassure your men about what they're doing that's really working. What do you love? The dual purpose in that is it communicates to them what has you feel loved, what has you feel special, what makes you happy.

Christian: And since there's nothing we want more than to make you happy but often we don't know how, if you tell us, "Thank you so much. I really appreciate -- actually, Eric, you can click on the last bullet here because that is about the doing of it, the appreciating of his efforts -- if you tell me, "Thank you so much for bringing in the wood or going to work one more day or making that reservation at that vegetarian restaurant I love," I'm, like, okay. Great. She just told me she liked that. Awesome. That means I know I can do that. That is something that works to produce a good result, and I love producing the result of you being happy. I just do.

Sonika: So, that's another way for us to communicate to our partners what we love that has them want to do it again which is way better than that complaining for

change that we talked about before. It's just another way of being able to express and build each other up and get what we want.

Christian: Yeah. I always say, give points for trying. Even if it's not perfect yet, still give appreciation for the effort because you can be sure that in your man's mind, there is that thing going on about, "Am I doing enough? Am I doing it good enough? Am I being successful enough? I don't know." So, help him out with that.

[0:35:19]

Sonika: So those are some more ways you can do love, and here are a couple of others. The one we already mentioned is do some of the things that your partner just said that they love about you. Another thing is to take time to understand each other. We have such a tendency to assume our partners are like us so when they do things we don't understand, we tend to put our make ups on them to assign meaning to their behavior.

It can make a huge difference to just ask questions and explore. "Wow. I notice every time I bring up the subject of my mom, you start looking at your phone. Would you be willing to tell me more what's going on for you about that?" Or, "Wow. I notice every time I suggest we go out on a date that you push it back over to me and say, 'Great. You create some time.' I notice you don't initiate. I'm just wondering if you could tell me more what's behind that lack of planning or lack of initiation on your part. Is there something going on there I don't know? I'm curious."

Christian: So when you take the time to understand your partner, you're also telling them that I don't necessarily just assume that my own first theory or assumption or reaction is the truth. That could be something else. It's a way to give the benefit of the doubt. Or at least be open to, that something else entirely is going on, which is most often the case.

Sonika: So, asking a question is really great. I'll tell you a fabulous book we highly recommend all of you read. Just do it. It's a funny, hilarious, informative book about the difference between a masculine and feminine brain. I will tell you, knowing this information about some of our differences has nipped so many fights in the bud, I cannot even tell you. It's helped me understand my children better. It's fun. It's called, "Why Men Don't Listen and Women Can't Read Maps."

Christian: By Barbara and Allan Pease, like peace and love but it's Pease with an S instead of a C.

Sonika: Yeah. Fabulous book, *Why Men Don't Listen and Women Can't Read Maps*. It's hilariously written and very informative, and it will help you understand each other and give you a foundation from which to explore. I'll just say a couple of examples here, just how men and women drive differently. We all know how many fights happen in the car. It really helped me, reading this book, in understanding, we actually are not having the same experience when we're in the car. We're not even seeing the same road.

Christian: Our eyes don't produce the same pictures in our brains. It's widely different.

Sonika: Yeah. So, highly recommend that and that will be a good place to ask questions. "Wow. Is that true for you? How is that for you?" Get behind the scenes of a whole bunch of stuff we generally take for granted or make a bunch of erroneous assumptions about.

Christian: Next one is we say, notice where you're the same. When we have our attention on all the things that we're not the same that is all our differences, it tends to produce separation. Remember the diagram we did in Session 4 about conflicts where we had to choose separate circles which is where most conflicts start out is from looking at, I'm in this circle. You're in that circle. We're all separate and different. You always want to stay home. I always want to go out. You always want to spend money. I always want to save money. You're totally into spirit and vegetarian, and I'm a Republican.

It's all different, which produces the gap, becomes wider and wider. But when you look at when we're the same, what you used from Session 2, for example, what we don't want, what we do want, and what's the real experience we're after? Well, turns out we're always both trying to feel relaxed and connected. We're always trying to both feel free and loved. Those aren't very different. When it comes right down to it, we're on the same page a whole lot more than we think.

A way to help ourselves notice where we're the same is to not get so stuck on the form. Remember we talked about that in Session 2. It's the form of a desire and then there's the bottom of it, what we truly feel and want to experience.

[0:40:00]

Sonika: I just want to acknowledge here that we're saying, find out where you're different and ask questions about it. Then we're, like, don't focus on those. Focus on where you're the same. It might sound like a contradiction. Really, you want to appreciate in finding the differences and look for all of the places that you have in common. Go drop all the way down, as Christian is saying here, to the

positive intent underneath all of it. That is where you're going to find connection in both the differences and similarities.

Christian: Yeah. A great example of that is what Sonika just shared about how women typically -- granted, typically -- try to produce relaxation and de-stress, is to talk; how men typically try to produce de-stress and relaxation by going away and stop talking. Those seem like complete opposites. Those are so different. But what's the same about them is that we are both trying to produce stress levels getting down and relaxation.

Sonika: And feeling better.

Christian: And feeling better.

Sonika: All right. A couple more things, ways to do love. Take responsibility. Take 100% responsibility for everything. Look at your part. Look at what you really want. Look at what you're making up. Look at what you can do to help move yourself towards what you want. Stay away as much as you can from blame, criticism and complaints.

You're going to have a way better relationship when you drop down and take responsibility. Don't worry about trying to make your partner take responsibility. Responsibility is something to take, not something to give. You just keep taking it, taking it, taking it, and you're going to be a model for taking responsibility. Also, the more you take it, the more they're going to be left, themselves, on their part. So keep playing with that.

Christian: Yes. Next one is think and speak in we. We're going to talk a little bit more about that later. We talked some about it in Session 4 as well. Take time to come up with an actual win-win before you decide anything of any importance so that when you do, the decisions you make are supported equally by both of you.

Sonika: It's a great way to show you love somebody is, like, your opinion matters. What you care about matters. I'm not going to just move ahead and betray you to take care of myself. I'm also not going to betray me to take care of you. I'm going to extend to include both of us. Chris and I actually have a workable intention here in our relationship that we don't move forward on any major decision unless we are both completely 100% aligned.

Christian: If we can't find the alignment first, we wait. We're willing to wait unless it's something of total emergency in nature which hardly anything is. It's like the two diagrams. We keep working that until we find the place in the middle and then we take action from there.

Sonika: All right, last one here. This is probably the most -- oh, I don't know about the most important but very important, and that is to live in your relationship inside this story.

Christian: Or to adopt some new beliefs.

Sonika: They are these. Everything I want is coming. Everything is on its way to me. I will absolutely have everything I want. Every time we are unhappy in a relationship, anytime we are triggered, we are believing, we are making up that we can't have what we want here. Every time we are living inside of "I can't have what I want," we don't make any moves towards what we want, and life looks like that's really true. So the more we can live inside of "How would I be if I knew I could have what I want here," the more it's going to drop me down into my power, drop me down into my center, and openings are going to show up for me that I can move towards in getting what I want.

Christian: The second one is my partner wants me to have what I want. My partner wants me to be happy. We often, in our triggered states and whenever we feel sad or my needs aren't being met, it's easy to just assume that, well, she's doing this on purpose. She doesn't want me to be happy because if she did want me to be happy, surely she would be doing what I'm asking for here. As we've shown, there are many reasons why that may not be the case, complaining for change being one of them.

Really, assume your partner wants you to be happy. You can just ask yourself to verify that. Do you want your partner to be happy? Even in your last relationship that ended in divorce, did you want your partner to be happy? Yes. You did. We do. We all do. There's always a positive intent. Nobody ever wakes up in the morning thinking, "I'm going to really screw my partner over today. I'm going to mess up my relationship." We don't do that. So remember and assume my partner wants me to be happy and have what I want.

Sonika: Not only that but my happiness is dependent on you being happy. It's hard to be happy with an unhappy partner, so my happiness is dependent on your happiness.

[0:45:10]

Last belief: I'm loved. Really living inside this story, this make up, I am loved. I'm adored. I'm cherished. I'm valued. You can help yourself by living inside this question: How would I be if I were loved right now? How would I be if I knew I was loved right now? So help yourself drop into that, as well as to show each other by some of the ways that we talked about here today.

All right. So, those are some other ways that you can do love. We want to take these last couple of minutes here to review everything that we've done so far here in this course and then we'll open it up for comments and questions here from you before we end today.

Christian: You might notice that everything we have done so far in this RISC Course, which we'll review for you in a second, are all aspects of creating amazing, extraordinary, phenomenal, efficient, loving, smooth, running relationships and partnerships, all of them. So here goes the RISC Course, the condensed review.

Sonika: You'll realize actually as we go through these that these are always to do love as well. So, in Session 1, A Fresh Start: How to Create Extraordinary Relationships, we talked about how to make a distinction between your full potential and your current behaviors. We showed you how much direct power your words and thoughts have on your relationship and how to reinforce what you want to see by looking for opportunities to speak what you really want to create, this full potential vision into existence.

So, we recommend -- again this is a way to do love -- to focus in on your own full potential everyday, if you can, and to make sure you speak both of yours and your partner's full potential every single day. One of the ways we said that is three affirmations at the very least everyday, before you go to bed or dinner. Make sure you express your love and adoration for each other.

Christian: Yeah. I want to say, I don't know if we mentioned that already, but this overview is available to you in a neat PDF in the RISC forum here or where the course materials are.

Session 2, The Fulfillment Formula: How to Eradicate Complaint and Criticism. We spoke about how not to get stuck in complaints and trigger reactions, and how to move us as quickly as possible towards creating what you do want. The fastest way we have found to do that is what we call the Fulfillment Formula, a simple model for turning all our don't-wants into do-wants.

Once you access the form of what you want then drop below the form of these desires to discover the positive feeling or experience that you really want underneath. From there, you ask the question: If I were happy, loved, connected right now, what would I do? What would I say? So you can imagine yourself already having what you want right now and then you take action from that desired feeling right now. Take the action. That is how you bring this desired state into your life.

Sonika: Again, this is another way to do love. The more I cultivate the experience I'm after, take responsibility for that and step into that, the more likely we are to

create the experience we want together. That is way more effective than me trying to get you to change. It doesn't really produce much of a love feeling at all.

Christian: Yeah.

Sonika: All right. Session 3, The True Source of Upsets. Remember the true source of upset is not what your partner is saying or doing or what they're not doing. It's about what you're making up about what's going on. Remember the quality of your relationship is the quality of your make ups. When you live in a positive story about yourself and your partner, you have a positive relationship. Mostly, you live in a negative story, you're going to have a negative relationship and a negative experience.

So whenever you find yourself stuck, just slow it down. Find out what are those old negative beliefs here in the middle, and what else could I make up instead?

Christian: And what are the beliefs that are creating these feelings? Then change them if you so desire, to new make ups that might produce a better feeling for you.

Sonika: I'll tell you. It creates a very different experience on a relationship when I own I'm making up something instead of telling you what you're doing that you now want to defend and react against. When I can own my make ups, it gives us some room to actually look to see, well, is that really true? Do we want to keep having it be true? What else could we create instead?

[0:50:04]

Christian: It's one of the other ways that Sonika and I can truthfully claim that we have no blame and criticism and complaints in this ten-plus-year marriage. We just don't go there. One of the ways we just don't go there is this. I just know that whenever I feel angry, it's not because of that thing she said. Cool. I might want to deal with that later, but that's not what created the bad feeling. I know how to access that myself.

All right. Cool. In Session 4, Accessing the Gift of Conflict. Underneath every conflict is a desire for something good. Sometimes it's just a call for us to create something even better than any of the two of us can imagine so far. So to move from conflict and resentment towards real win-win solutions that take care of what you both want to create, you start by speaking in we, as suggested in that week's call.

Take on your partner's concerns as your own. Or declare -- I'm adding declare -- that your partner's concerns are as important as yours, yours are as important as theirs. Agree to not take action on any major stuff in a way that don't take care

of the other person because if you do, you might get what you want in one area but you won't in another, with an unhappy partner, like the couple where the man just went out and bought the damn boat that he had been trying to argue for, for a year then he ended up having a boat in his driveway that they didn't have enough money to sail and it was a big --

Sonika: Monument.

Christian: -- symbol or monument of their failure to work as a team.

Sonika: To come up with a win-win.

Christian: Yeah.

Sonika: So, yeah, make sure you come up with win-wins and extend to include both of your concerns.

All right. Session 5, The Healthy Masculine: How to Win in Relationship. We heard some really great things from some of you about the power of this one. This is how to generate spark nothing by playing and dancing with the roles of leading and following.

So we dared you to play with expressing your masculine force by stepping in more firmly, without wobble, without a question mark, into presence with your partner, to fill your partner with that healthy, electric masculine force and at the same time, to allow your partner to practice letting go and surrendering as completely as possible. So, keep playing with that one. That is a powerful polarity, energy-creating experience.

Christian: I know, and it dares you to or invites you to both get conscious about how are you as a man? How are you as a woman? How do you both embody these various qualities of leading and following, surrendering powerful presence?

All right. Cool. Session number 6 was last week's more better sex. Yes, sex. We suggested a new way to approach sex so that instead of waiting for those magical, glorious times when all the conditions are perfect, the kids are in bed and there's nothing else on your calendar, when all the conditions are perfect and you both just want to have sex, to instead initiate sex from the perspective of what it truly provides for you as individuals and for your partnership. We spoke about ways to generate desire so you both want to make sex a priority.

Sonika: Then in this session, as you already know, Co-creating Partnership, how do we work as partners to help produce for each other this experience of feeling loved? We talked about the five essential ingredients for how to do love and begin a

conversation for you with your partner in what to do to actually show each other that you love each other so that you get to cultivate this experience of being loved that we so desperately long for in our relationship.

Christian: Yeah. I want to stress, for this Session 7 and for the entire course really is, cultivating an environment of love and that which is what we are talking about, doing love in all these different ways, and appreciation, is probably the most crucial aspect of simply having a relationship that functions well. It's probably also one of the most crucial aspects of having a relationship inside of which you have a chance at working out your legitimate problems. Because if that is not there, working out anything is very difficult, sometimes impossible so that if you can remember -- this is tricky sometimes -- that even when we're in periods of turmoil and disagreement and challenges, if we can still, in those times, remember to keep doing these ways of doing love, that is to keep this environment of love and connection alive, we're probably going to be okay.

[0:55:14]

It's when those actions of love and appreciation, when they cease or diminish is when we get ourselves into real trouble. When they cease altogether is when one of us tends to conclude, we're gone. There's no hope here. So, never stop doing that.

Sonika: Yeah. It's like putting deposits in the bank. The more love deposits you've got, the better able you are to get through the lean times --

Christian: So true.

Sonika: -- the challenging times.

All right. Well, we would love to open it up for comments and questions, either what you're taking out of your experience here with this course, or anything you're still sitting with from any of these course sessions that you would like some additional support around. So, this is your time. If you have a question, you can --

Christian: Here you click the little Q&A button at the bottom of your screen and then you type at the word share, hit enter and Eric will bring you on. Or, alternatively, you can also just add a question in the chat box on the bottom of the screen here.

Sonika: We have a couple more opportunities here for questions and shares. If we have time, we'll do one more very powerful exercise here.

So, yeah, what are you taking out of this course? What works for you? In particular really, is there anything you're still struggling with or you really like help with, some particular recurring breakdown that keeps showing up in your relationship that you would love some ideas about how to deal with?

Christian: Eric, you just let us know if anybody raising their hand out there. We totally invite you guys to go for it. Give it to yourself to get the help that you need or just share your breakthroughs as well.

Eric: I think it must be the case that everybody is such a master at doing love now after these seven weeks that no one has questions.

Christian: That is not bad. For seven weeks, that is sensational.

Sonika: Well, we'll use this as an opportunity to say that this webinar is going to be up for the next, what, 90 days, and we will also be available still on the discussion forum for you to be able to ask us any questions or anything that comes up for you. Please feel free. We'll be checking it periodically throughout the next three months so that you can avail yourself of really being able to ask questions, get the support that you signed up for this course for. So just know that we're available for that.

All right, last call, comments, questions. All right. Let's end with one more exercise here. Your turn.

Christian: Okay. Great. We just want to make sure we did that as well. All right. Cool.

Sonika: So, with your partner, or if you're doing this by yourself, you can answer this question by yourself, it's a really great one.

Christian: Eric, if you'll go back a slide or two, the slide with Partner Exercise: What Do You Want to Be?

Sonika: So, we're going to invite you to ask your partner, if you're with your partner, what do you most want to be known for or seen for, acknowledged for, celebrated for? There are many different ways to ask this question. What do you want to be acknowledged for? The person listening gets to explore. "God, I'd like to be known for..." You can go back to the past. You can go forward into the future. Like I'd like to be known for being a famous author.

Christian: Yeah. You're happy you're just writing.

Sonika: But you haven't written a book yet.

Christian: Oh, yeah, good point. Sorry.

Sonika: Or it can be something in the moment. So I might ask, what do you most want to be seen and celebrated for?

Christian: I'd love to be known for having made a positive difference in thousands of people's lives. I'd really like that.

Sonika: Thank you. What else would you like to be known or seen or celebrated for?

Christian: I'd like to be seen for always trying my best to do the right thing and working diligently to be a good man that doesn't blame other people and takes responsibility and lives a life of purpose and integrity. I'd love to be known for that.

Sonika: Right. Thank you.

So you're just going to ask your partner that. We'll just do about two minutes each here and just give you a chance to ask your partner, one of you, that question until we tell you to stop and switch. It's a really great way to get to know what really matters to your partner, what they value, what they care about, and what they want to be seen and celebrated for by you.

Christian: And if you're out there by yourself currently, ask yourself, what would I like to be seen or known or celebrated or acknowledged for? First thing that comes to mind, say that and then ask it again.

[1:00:11]

All right. Decide who's going to ask first and who's going to answer first. Then go right ahead. We will tell you when to switch.

Sonika: Go ahead and complete the one you're on. Then go ahead and switch, other person asking, what do you most want to be known, seen, celebrated for? Go ahead.

Complete the one you're on and stop talking please. Go ahead and thank each other for asking that, for caring enough to ask and then turn your attention back this way.

I wanted to just say about that, that is a great question. Please ask it a lot more. It's a great conversation you can have in the car to just keep exploring what is it that would have you feel really loved and what you'd like to be seen, known and celebrated for; really great, important conversations.

So, a couple of homework assignments and a present for you so stick around here. Your homework for this week is do love, all of the different ways that we talked about, the five tenets that we talked about here today, everything that we've done in this class up until this point. Especially, pick one or two things that your partner said to you today and do one or two of those.

Christian: Yeah. If you put up the -- should be the last slide, Eric, the homework slide.

Sonika: Then the last thing really and probably the most important that we were just speaking to Patrick and Cindy about here is, decide a way to keep this course alive for you. Come up with some kind of regular practice so that you keep employing the things that we've been talking about here in this course.

Christian: Yeah. One example is pick a certain time where you keep this course alive or you review the materials or the recordings. Maybe Wednesday night because we already have that. Or pick a certain practice or a couple of them that you're really going to practice, like we just talked to Patrick and Cindy about. Every time we have a disagreement about something, we're going to whip out that circle diagram, and we're just going to play with it. Every time I feel, oh, man, there's something I get mad about, I'm going to really think about, okay, what don't I want? What do I want? What's the experience I'm after?

Sonika: Yeah. Just pick one to keep working with for a week or two. Let yourself master it. You try to do everything, you'll probably find a time that you don't do any of it. So just pick one thing and keep it going. Keep it alive for you.

Remember we are here for you for the next 90 days so make sure you keep asking us your questions and comments as they arise. We know a bunch of you are listening to the recording. You haven't had a chance to be on the live trainings, so take advantage. We're here for you. We really want to support you in your relationship.

Christian: Yeah. If you're interested in diving deeper into this rich relationship conversation or you just need more help, which is totally fine, you are welcome to contact us. You can find us through loveworksforyou.com. We'd also like to give you the gift of inviting you to our two-day training that we call, "Give Yourself to Love" because this is the training that really gives you in your body a different foundation for relationship forever more.

Tomorrow we'll send the email we send out. We'll have a link to where to check it out. There's a free video there that we encourage you to watch, no matter what, and we'll give you a coupon code that you can use and you can register for

half-price of what everybody else pays for that course. That will also be in the email we send out tomorrow, so look out for that.

The coupon code will be good through Valentine's Day of 2016, so you have a little time. We do five Give Yourself to Love trainings in two different locations in Northern California in 2016. So if you want to dive deeper into it, you can take us up on that and come join us out here in Northern California. We sure love to see you again and keep supporting your great relationship journey.

Sonika: I wanted to just say, thank you so much for being with us these last seven weeks. It's been a real honor getting to be with you and supporting your relationship. Have a happy Holiday coming up here in the next couple of weeks. We hope you have a really great experience over the Holidays, integrating a lot of this love stuff that we've been teaching you.

Be gentle with yourselves. It takes time for bodies to learn these new things. It's a little bit like those little babies learning how to walk. They do it one little baby step at a time. So be gentle with yourself. Appreciate you --

Christian: And your partner.

Sonika: And your partner -- for the steps that you're taking. Just know that we're here for you if there's anything else we can offer for you. We love you very much. Thank you so much.

Christian: Yes. We love you guys. Good job. Thank you for being someone who would take a step for more love and better partnership. Finally, thank you very much, Eric Thomas in the background who you didn't see much of, but he is the one who made everything work so smoothly. Good job, Eric. Thanks so much.

Sonika: Yeah, and a big thank you to ManKind Project USA for promoting and supporting this course to happen, really amazing courses there. If you aren't familiar with it, man, we highly recommend you check out the Warrior Training through MKP, amazing. They turn out great men.

Christian: Yeah, mkp.org.

Sonika: Great partners in relationship.

Christian: All right, friends --

Sonika: Thank you, everybody. Mwah! We love you so much. We look forward to hearing from you again soon.

Christian: We sure do. Take care, guys.

Sonika: Bye.

[1:05:57] End of Audio