

Stephanie: This is episode 173 for Stay Happily Married: H.U.G. & K.I.S.S. Hierarchy.

Announcer: Welcome to Stay Happily Married, your source for weekly updates on the latest tips and advice to build a happy and healthy marriage. Today's episode of Stay Happily Married is brought to you by the Rosen Law Firm. For more information, visit us at Rosen.com.

Stephanie: I'm Stephanie Lockwood and I'm your host today. Welcome to the show. Is your inability to read your partner ruining your relationship? We've all stumbled into those relationship traps where it can feel like we're constantly sticking our foot in our mouths. Anything we say or do just seems to land us even further into hot water with our spouse.

Perhaps you've been stuck in a similar situation in the past. Relationship coach Dave Elliott thinks that the only tools that you'll need to solve this problem, for now and forever, are a H.U.G. and a K.I.S.S.

When it comes to making sense of the often mystifying topic of relationships, Dave Elliott is an international relationship coach and human behavior specialist who breaks down complex concepts into easily understandable principles and practices. With his deep understanding of human motivational psychology, Dave helps people pull back the curtain in a nonjudgmental way on why they are doing what they're doing over and over again.

Dave travels around the nation working with groups and individuals, supporting Anthony Robbins, one of the world's foremost authorities on peak performance psychology. In 2011, Dave was honored as Man of the Year candidate for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Dave joins us today to talk about how your relationship can be saved and revitalized using his H.U.G.& K.I.S.S. Hierarchy. Welcome to the show, Dave. I'm so glad you could join us.

Dave: Thanks so much. I'm glad to be here.

Stephanie: To have created the solution that you did, you must have seen a problem in the way that couples were interacting. What issues do you find are most common with couples today?

Dave: That's a great question. I see a lot of different issues. I work with a lot of different clients. There are always a bit of different flavors. I think when you boil it all down, the one recurring issue is that people are simply not loving their partners the way they want to be loved. I think it's just that lack of awareness, and that's why I created the H.U.G.& K.I.S.S. Hierarchy, to teach people a better way.

Stephanie: Do you think these issues that arise in a relationship, that you're seeing so often, are because the couple is a bad fit, or are these standard in all relationships?

Dave: There are certainly plenty of bad fits out there, and I think that happens most often because people have a simple lack of clarity about what they want. I always do this exercise with people. I have them design exactly the things they want, things that they must have, the things that they don't think they want, and then the absolute deal-breaker, what is absolutely something they are not going to put up with. I help them get that clarity, and that eliminates the bad fits. But then once they are in the relationship, I think it's really just a lack of awareness overall. Again, it comes back to clarity about what they want and how to elicit it and how to get it for themselves, and quite frankly, how to give it, too.

Stephanie: Obviously, what we want is probably the number one thing we think about when we're looking for someone who we think is a suitable partner. Is there a certain method for how people go about choosing their spouse and why they became attracted to them?

Dave: Absolutely. That's what I refer to as the "lover attraction" strategy. Those develop over time. You are sort of still on [inaudible 03:56]. More specifically, our past experiences and relationships we've had with people, times that we've felt loved in the past, and what I call 'preferences and references'.

Preferences are things that you've decided, "Oh, that feels good. I like that. That feels like I'm loved, appreciated, respected, honored," all those different things that we need to feel. References would be like when you see your parents' relationship and that is something that you aspire to have, or someone that you really admire, the kind of relationship that they have developed. So, preferences and references.

Stephanie: Is that all that people look at when they are looking for a partner, or are there any other factors to create this love strategy?

Dave: There are a number of factors. It's mostly based on experiential, and it could be also be based on things like fairy tales, pop culture, movies we've seen, things that just really seemed appealing to us. That creates an imprint in your psyche, "Oh, I want that." I think we're constantly out there in the world looking at things that we really like or appreciate and desire and saying, "I want that." We're taking a mental note. That goes into the whole way of how a love strategy or preference is created.

Stephanie: What would you say is the key distinction that makes your H.U.G. & K.I.S.S. Hierarchy so transformational for couples like this?

Dave: That's a great question. I think it takes, things that you are not necessarily, you are aware of them in your subconscious, but what it does, and the beauty of it, is that

it makes it conscious. It gives you a set of rule books. It gives you a metric of sorts to put out there. You can put it on the table and say, "Here's what I know about me now, because now I've done this work or I've had this experience, and I know what my preferences are," instead of just a vague, "Mm, no. That's not it."

Instead of poking around in the dark, now you are actually able to say, "This is what I like. This is what it looks like, and this is really what I prefer. Would you be willing to provide that?" It's really a just a very mature and adult way of helping your partner win the game. My personal belief is that I don't see any reason to play a game that you know you can't win. The truth is, people have that experience in life and pretty soon they stop playing it because they just get tired of it.

If you can say, "Listen, you can win the game, and here's how you'll be able to do it effectively, easily and efficiently over and over," now you've got something that you can work with.

Stephanie: People who haven't realized what it is that they want and need out of a relationship, what are the challenges that you see them struggling with as a couple?

Dave: I think it's really just a problem of communication. Most people know what they want. They know enough to say, "No, that's not it," or, "I'm not happy. I'm not getting what I want." But they don't really have a good mechanism or framework to discuss what it is that they do want so that they could explain or show or teach their partner how to win the game. I just boil it down that way; how to win a game.

Stephanie: On your CD for the H.U.G. & K.I.S.S. Hierarchy, you talk about opening the love vault. Can you tell us exactly what that is?

Dave: As a matter of fact, I can. I use that as a metaphor. It's about identifying a strategy that's all about doing the right things in the right order and syntax so that you get the desired result. If you think of it, it's almost like a combination; one number left, this number right, and so on. And every time you try it, it's going to work because you have the combination now. And if you have the combination out of sequences, you can try over and over to open it, but it's only going to lead to frustration.

So that's really important. That's why it's in a hierarchy, so I know now what the top need is. If you're hitting the top need over and over again, people will be a little more flexible if you're not getting needs 6 and 7 exactly right. If you've got 1, 2 and 3, and you're hitting them pretty well over and over, you're going to have a really good and successful relationship and your partner is going to be pretty happy.

Stephanie: Also, in your H.U.G. & K.I.S.S. Hierarchy, you mention that the Golden Rule, which is, "Do unto others as you would have done unto you," is not very effective as a strategy in relationships. I'm looking at this completely as an outsider and it seems like it would be a good strategy. What's the reasoning, exactly, behind why this isn't good for relationships?

Dave: Again, that's the exact reason why I created the product. Simply put, doing unto others as you want done is not their strategy. Everyone has a different strategy and what they are not taking into effect is that there is actually a Platinum Rule.

Stephanie: What is the Platinum Rule?

Dave: The Platinum Rule actually trumps the Golden Rule. The Platinum Rule is, "Treat others the way they need to be treated." That's why I developed this metric or framework, so that people can now go in and figure out what exactly their partner needs and then give it to them. That's the essence of a business, too. Find a need, solve a problem, fix it, and give it to people.

Stephanie: Say you have a couple where obviously their needs are different, and one person won't move or change the way they act around their spouse or how they treat their spouse and communicate in a way that is compatible for their spouse's likes. What happens in situations like that, or what can they do?

Dave: It comes down to a level of maturity. Some people out there are just very much about having their own needs met because they are in a place where it hasn't been done, and so they become very much about themselves. I find that most people, when I can work with them, get to a place of wanting to please a partner as well as get their needs met in return. It's not a win/lose thing. It's all about creating a win/win.

When you're meeting your partner's needs, your needs will actually be met at a much higher level, too. It's about faith, it's about trust, and it's about having the maturity to say, "You know what? I'm in a relationship with this person, this man or this woman, and this is an outstanding and amazing person. They deserve to have their needs met." That's not really a huge leap, when I can have someone step back and say, "Don't you believe that your partner deserves to have their needs met, just as you certainly do?" And now I've given them a reference, a framework, so that they can do it.

Stephanie: Having started this H.U.G. & K.I.S.S. Hierarchy, you must have been able to apply it to your own relationship. Could you give us an example of that?

Dave: I can. The interesting thing that I've found in doing this work is that I started to see some patterns show up. One of the things that I realized is that it's a living, breathing thing in that it can change over time. I can give you a perfect example in my own relationship. My girl Katrina and I have a different need at the top, and

we'll go over all of them in a moment. But to give you an example, the thing that I find is that most men are very high 'human touch' or kinesthetic touching. That tends to be a preference that's high for me because men tend to experience love through touch, whereas women come to intimacy through a feeling of love first. So that's complementary, it's the opposite. But a lot of men have that need for human touch at the top of their hierarchy.

My girl Katrina's preference of love in the H.U.G. & K.I.S.S. Hierarchy is all about special moments and quality time. In the time that we've been together, I have learned to be flexible and be able to communicate love in her terms or her love language, if you will. In order to do that, I've needed to be a lot better in special moments and quality time.

What that looks like is that we have quality time every day. At the end of the evening we some time and we do our little evening ritual. Ritual sounds like it's painful, but it's actually really pleasant and fun. We just sit and talk about things like, "What are five things that happened today that you're really grateful for?"

That has been such a beautiful thing. I didn't always do that, but I've come to look forward to it. It just helps you to get back to a place of gratitude or a place of appreciation, a place of slowing down at the end of the day and just connecting. I've really come to like it, and although that wasn't high on my hierarchy originally, it's become something that I really do look forward to every day.

Stephanie: We've been talking about how this hierarchy affects relationships. You mention on your CD that you can actually use this hierarchy on a first date. How would this work for single people?

Dave: I think that's interesting, too, because again, once you have this information and you have this framework where you can understand yourself at a much deeper level, because it's really all about how to know yourself. When you know what you need, that's the first step of being able to communicate it to someone else. Because it's such a simple framework, it's a couple of letters everyone can remember, hug and kiss, H-U-G-K-I-S-S, now you can explain it to someone else. That's really why I came up with it, because frankly, I needed help remembering it, and just putting it in an acronym made it a lot easier for me to retain the information and then use it over and over again.

They say 'knowledge is power', but knowledge is only power when it's applied. Even if you're meeting someone for the first time, you can tell them about this. I talk about it on the CD. "I read this book, or I got this CD, and I heard all about this. Here's what I found out about myself. Tell me; what's the most important thing for you in a relationship? What are you looking for?" That's a question that's probably going to come up anyway. If you put it in that framework and say, "If you have these seven choices, which would be the one that's most important to

you? What do you need to feel in order to feel loved?" Now someone can answer that question and you get to a quality level of conversation really quickly.

Stephanie: I know that a couple of your clients have actually gotten married after originally coming to you with a crisis in the relationship. Is it true that one skill can turn around a couple who has been struggling for years?

Dave: I have had that experience. In fact, I just had a couple where I got a chance to go down and sign as a witness for them at their wedding, just recently. That was really great. I was thinking about this the other day. I've now had three different engagements, two weddings, and I've even had a couple who had put in divorce papers and rescinded them a couple of months later, right as they were getting down to the wire. So yes, I've seen some really powerful transformations with this. This absolutely has the power to turn things around.

If you think about it, if someone thinks they are in crisis, but you can say, "No, it's really not as bad as you think. Here's the piece that's missing," and you show them where they are getting stuck, it's like, "Oh, that's it." Most people, when you've given them a better option, it kind of makes sense that most people will take the better option when it's presented. People get stuck and feel hopeless. People don't leave people, they leave situations that seem painful or endless. They want to get out of pain. They don't necessarily want to get away from the person. I believe if they had access to better resources and a way to actually win the game, I think they'd stay and play it much more effectively. Does that make sense?

Stephanie: Oh, yes. Well, Dave, thank you so much for taking the time and being on the show with us today.

Dave: My pleasure. I'm happy to do it.

Stephanie: To find out more about Dave Elliott and the H.U.G. & K.I.S.S. Hierarchy program, you can visit relationshipfixnow.com or legendaryloveforlife.com. Thank you so much, everyone, for taking the time and listening to us today, and I hope you'll join us again next week.

We always love hearing from you, so to comment on this or any other episode, you can call our listener comment line at 919-256-3083, or you can email your comments to comments@stayhappilymarried.com.

I'm Stephanie Lockwood. Until next time, Stay Happily Married.

Announcer: Thank you for joining us today on Stay Happily Married. If you'd like more information, please visit us on the web at stayhappilymarried.com. We'd love to hear your feedback or comments. Please email us at comments@stayhappilymarried.com or call us at 919-256-3083. Until next time, best wishes.