

# **December Marriage Masterclass: How to change your marriage without including your spouse: How To Find Happiness With The One You're With**

Welcome everyone to my December Marriage Masterclass where we are talking about how to find happiness with the one you are with. I'm Christine Bongiovanni, a love & relationship coach and I help both individuals and couples find the courage and inspiration to change their marriage without changing their spouse, and today I'm going to help you do that by moving forward with the work we've done in previous marriage masterclasses, today looking at what we can do as individuals to create a marriage that we feel happy in.

What I did over the past month since our last MMC, is look over each of the MMC topics and think about the one common underlying beneficial practice. In each class I was able to look inward when thinking about the problem addressed in the class and start working through it by asking myself how I was feeling in the moment and then asking myself why I felt that way. What I came away with is the core of what I help people identify with when working through different solutions to what they are struggling with. Emotions are what keep us from doing things we envision ourselves doing in our dream relationship and they are what keep us doing what we don't want to do.

Today I'm going to talk about the marriage we dream of having and how we think that relationship will feel - this is at the core of why we are dreaming of something different, because of how it will feel. I'm going to talk about where our security lies and why we feel insecure, then we'll talk about why we act the way we do and how to start taking care of ourselves instead of waiting for our spouses to do that for us and the repeatable process of building trust within ourselves and how that allows us to show up honestly in our intimate relationship.

## **Everything you do or don't do is driven by how you are feeling in the moment & everything you want in your marriage is based on how you want to feel**

This means that those things you want to do, those things that you want to be part of your dream relationship are going to be driven by how you want to feel BUT, in order to execute them and make them a normal part of what you do, you will have to figure out how to genuinely feel an emotion that would drive those actions.

1. So the work we want to do is to find security within ourselves because we're repeating old familiar actions/inaction out of some sort of fear or shame
2. We start creating that security by learning why we tend to act the way we are, whether that's showing up in a way we don't really love or not even doing the things we dream of being able to do in the marriage we want.
  1. Those actions come from the way we are thinking
  2. Adaptive patterning: core beliefs, true self, personality, history, trauma, culture, natural abilities

1. We have to start looking at what is happening outside of ourselves and get curious about:
  1. What we are thinking & why
  2. What we are feeling & why (most important)
  3. How we are reacting
2. Then asking ourselves the following:
  1. How is this familiar to something from my past? Why?
  2. How will acting this way serve the relationship?
  3. How am I protecting myself from a perceived bad outcome? Why?
  4. Am I safe? Finding a grounding technique
3. We learn how to start taking care of ourselves - re-parenting ourselves - having our own back, we do this by:
  1. Creating and noticing our safety through grounding practices
  2. Giving ourselves space to regulate
  3. Taking time to process what happened through
    1. mentally reviewing on paper - getting it out of our head
    2. processing the emotion and learning from it - discovering why it is there, what it is doing for us and why
  4. Then deciding how we want to act and feel
  5. Coming back together and talking about what happened knowing this may take a few iterations
4. Then it is repeating the process over and over and as we do this what happens is:
  1. We build trust within ourselves in that we will take care of ourselves instead of throwing out our go to shame shield (fight/flight/fawn)
  2. We build honesty and repair and trust within the relationship

**The big umbrella over all of this work is the work of learning how to feel, identify, understand, process and then regulate our emotions.**

## **OUR EMOTIONS ARE OUR GUIDES - OUR TRUTH TELLERS**

So today I am going to share three different steps you can take this month to better understand how to start bringing in more happiness into your life and your marriage.

1. A grounding practice you can do at any time: repeating the mantra “I am safe, I am loved, I am ok, I can let my guard down.” Use this when you wake up, when you go to bed and any time you feel activated by an external stimuli - someone’s words/actions/behaviors, when possible place your hands over your heart or on the top of your thighs to help bring you into the present moment
2. Take a few minutes sometime during the day, preferably towards the end of the day and reflect on moments with your spouse. Write down your reflections on these things
  1. What specifically happened - write specific details/facts, not your thoughts about what happened
  2. Do you know what you were thinking about what happened? If yes, write some of those thoughts down, if not just ask yourself what you were thinking and let your brain percolate on it

3. Do you know how you felt? If so, write it down, if not ask yourself how you felt and again, let your brain think about it
4. How did you react or how did you want to react? Why? If you're not sure it's ok, think about if what they did made you feel similar to how you felt as a child, this is a learning exercise, ask yourself why and let your mind ponder the response, by the end of four weeks of doing this practice it will have information to reveal to you.
3. Take time to reflect on how you would react if you felt safe and secure in your relationship with yourself - if you knew no matter how your spouse acted you could comfort and love yourself? Pose the question to yourself and then at the end of each week write about how you might see yourself reacting from a secure place instead of from an old, adaptive pattern

This powerful practice will help you begin to see how you have been protecting yourself from getting hurt in your marital relationship and how that pattern may have developed earlier in your life. Give this time, if you commit to this practice for four weeks, I promise you will learn something about yourself and the patterns you have in your intimate relationship.

Today what we did is learned about the underlying work that is necessary to start understanding who we are and why we do the things we do and that through this process we will start understanding ourselves better and learn how to reparent ourselves so we can show up in our marriages in a way that will create the happiness we desire. I showed you how there was a gap between where you are and where you want to go and that though there are a lot of different things we can learn and apply to get to the other side - the one thing we need to be able to do/understand are our emotions - they drive all of our actions/inactions towards the marriage we want to be inspired to create.

If you're not on my mailing list I want to encourage you to do so by clicking on the link I am sharing because that is how you will hear firsthand about any online or live teachings I am doing. All of this year I have taught this monthly marriage masterclass going into 2023 it will look different, possibly a quarterly class as well as some live gatherings for those of you who are local here in Minneapolis.

To get on my mailing list: <https://landingpage.christinebongiovanni.com/love-notes>

Mini-coaching session information where you will learn how coaching can help you and what working together will look like.

> As a thank you for attending this class, whether live or on #replay, I am offering you a free 30 minute mini-coaching session registration link: <https://calendly.com/christinebongiovanni/program-inquiry-call>