



HOW COUPLES *Get Out of Trouble*

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Hello! I'm Dr. Jackie.

How Couples Get Out of Trouble

What keeps couples stuck – and what begins to shift when you stop living in reactivity

I wrote this guide for you because I know, firsthand, that there are inevitable challenges that all couples experience. These challenges can be heartbreaking, and cause you to feel deeply dissatisfied with your partner, your relationship – and even your life.

I know because I have worked with many couples who still loved each other, but had become reactive, discouraged, lonely, and exhausted in the relationship.

Couples who didn't necessarily want to leave each other, but who no longer knew how to get back to the closeness, tenderness, and partnership they once shared.

And I also know this:

Many couples stay stuck far longer than they need to – not because change is impossible, but because they don't yet fully understand what is actually happening between them.

This guide will help you make sense of that.

BEING IN TROUBLE IS REAL

For many couples, the years since the beginning of your love have not been kind.

There have been many assaults on your hopes and dreams of “happily ever after.”

Through the course of daily life together, it is completely legitimate to feel disappointed, disillusioned, frustrated, hurt, and mad – for a moment.

Then, it is vital that you return to acting proactively on your own behalf, and being close and connected to your partner, no matter what just happened.

Your ability to do this is known as resilience.

Resilience is like the mortar between the bricks of your love and caring. However, over time, your ability to be resilient can become impaired, and you can't return to acting proactively on your own behalf or feel close and connected to your partner the way you once could.

All too often, when one or both partners notice a change in their closeness and connection, **neither is comfortable or brave enough to bring it to the attention of the other.**

 **A quiet moment to consider:**

*When something feels off between you...
do you tend to bring it forward, or let it sit?*

THERE ARE TWO THINGS TO KNOW

#1. When you can't tap into your resilience, you start behaving in really unproductive ways:

You have the same argument over and over and over again.

There's a stubborn issue that keeps coming up and seems to make itself the centerpiece of every conversation.

You know how a conversation will go (or not) before you even have it, **so you shut down instead of engaging with curiosity, compassion and with your whole heart.**

Your partner starts to speak, and you tune out or turn off.

You've lost track of how long it has been since you were close and cuddly together; or worse, you bristle when they approach.

One or both of you start fights that seem to be about nothing important.

You hear yourself complaining to friends about them.

You tease them or kid on the square, and when their feelings get hurt, you claim they just don't have a sense of humor or they are just too sensitive.



THERE ARE TWO THINGS TO KNOW

#1. When you can't tap into your resilience, you start behaving in really unproductive ways:

Continued...

You bicker or argue or push back on absolutely everything; or maybe you're cordial and respectful with each other, **but the slight chill in the room or the lack of warmth between you is unmistakable.**

When you can't tap into your resilience, damaging patterns of behavior creep silently into your relationship dynamic, often out of your conscious awareness, and BAM – **you are a couple in trouble.**

 **Just notice:**

Which one of these feels the most familiar, right now?

“

“We stopped protecting each other with silence and **learned how to share safely**, even when things are scary.”

–Maurice and Sue B.

”

THERE ARE TWO THINGS TO KNOW

#2. You are in a cycle of reactivity

If you are no longer able to be proactive on your own behalf, you will become reactive, and your learned defense and coping patterns will automatically kick in.

The learned defense or coping patterns of one partner almost always triggers the survival pattern of the other partner, **and now you are operating in a cycle of reactivity.**

Your patterns are reacting to each other rather than you, as individuals, interacting with each other.

Be assured this cycle is common and predictable AND can be interrupted and positively affected.

💬 **A simple but powerful shift:**

Instead of asking, "What is my partner doing?"

Choose to ask, **"What pattern are we in right now?"**

Deliberately asking this question changes your relationship dynamic.

GETTING OUT OF TROUBLE

An important key to getting out of trouble is being aware of your feelings and your reactions related to your partner's behavior.

Not just what happened.

But how you are experiencing it.

What are you tolerating in your marriage?

Toleration #1:

You are feeling resigned to the rut that has become your existence with your partner.

You know something has to change and it needs to change, now.

Toleration #2:

You are committed to staying in your relationship even though some days it feels more like a prison sentence than a choice.

You know that your marriage cannot limp along like this too much longer. Something has to change.

And there's more →

GETTING OUT OF TROUBLE

Toleration #3:

You and your partner have competing needs and priorities which result in tremendous external pressures on your relationship. Something has to change soon.

If you are regularly tolerating one or more frustrating or upsetting situations in your relationship, **it is time to get new couple-specific tools so you and your partner can come back to being loving and strong.**

A gentle reflection:

What have you been noticing lately that you've been pushing away and telling yourself,

"This is just how it is;"
"Just let it slide."

But it doesn't feel tolerable, anymore.

THERE IS HELP FOR COUPLES IN TROUBLE

Whether you're pretty sure that there is no hope to turn things around, wondering if Marriage Coaching can help, or you're ready to make serious changes in your relationship today, **Let's Talk.**

Marriage Coaching might be exactly what you have been looking for.

You don't need more time.

You need the right support, the right structure, and the right tools to shift what's actually happening between you.

You Can Expect Powerful Results

Marriage Coaching is a vigorous change process. You can expect results that will give both of you cause for celebration, instead of more fuel for disappointment, disillusionment or argument.

You can:

- reconnect and feel close again
- close the distance gap that has widened over time
- respond to each other from a grounded, loving place
- stop being triggered by the little things
- replace blame with respectful sharing

CONSIDER THIS

Just because there is so much going on – work, family, responsibilities, the day-to-day pull of life – it doesn't mean your relationship has to feel the impact.

It means it's time to stop the downward cycle, shift the destructive patterns you and your partner have (unknowingly) developed, and return to a loving, respectful pattern of interacting.

Happy couples respond; they don't react.

Happy couples listen for the purpose of knowing and being known.

Happy couples recognize that they BOTH have legitimate needs.

Marriage Coaching can revitalize the love and energy that still lies inside you for each other and your relationship.

“Dr. Jackie made the emotional chaos of illness understandable and manageable. **The shift in our relationship is profound.**”
–David and Monica F.

IF THIS SOUNDS LIKE YOU...

If you feel the quiet knowing that it's time to step into what's calling you forward, I invite you into a conversation with me.

Each month, I open a limited number of private conversations where we take a thoughtful look at what's working, what feels hard, and what you wish were different.

These conversations are by application, and I personally review each one. If it feels like the right moment for you and your partner, I would love to meet you.

If you would like one...

[Book A Private Let's Talk Conversation With Me](#)

My private programs are for couples who don't need fixing – just the right way forward.

Cheers to your joy with your partner,

Dr. Jackie
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