

# Lesson 3 — The Moment of Truth: Why Intimacy Breaks Down Even in “Good” Marriages

In many marriages, intimacy slowly fades even when things look calm on the outside. This lesson explains why that happens and what really destroys closeness between partners.

## Key Ideas About Intimacy:

- **Intimacy is not just sex.** It is emotional closeness and trust between two people. Sex should **only happen where there is real emotional connection, not as a way to fix problems.**
- Many couples seem peaceful, but inside they are careful and guarded. They avoid conflict so much that they also avoid being fully honest or open with each other.
- **Intimacy breaks down when people stop being real with each other.** Four quiet behaviours slowly destroy closeness:
  1. **Withholding feelings** — pretending to avoid arguments but actually staying distant.
  2. **Selective honesty** — telling only part of the truth, especially about emotions.
  3. **Surface-level affection** — being kind on the outside but not emotionally close.
  4. **Performing stability** — acting like everything is fine even when it isn't.
- These habits don't happen all at once. They build up slowly from many small hurts, jokes that sting, or moments when one partner feels unseen.
- The reason intimacy feels risky is because one or both partners have learned from past hurts that showing their true self can lead to feeling hurt again.
- **The breakthrough** involves deciding to be vulnerable again — to “be truly seen” — and that willingness starts real healing and deep connection.

- Several year ago, when I was not nearly as mature as I am now, I can remember thinking about this very issue. I was thinking about how I was making myself so vulnerable, treating my wife better than I felt she was treating me. I was was wondering how she would react to me when I was talking about the deep emotions I felt.
- Little did I know that it would work out so well. I never imaged how, after 53 years of being married, it would be by far the most delightful time of my married life.



**If something in this lesson helped you see your marriage—or yourself—more clearly, you're welcome to DM me. Peter Enns...aka marriageguy7 (on Instagram)**

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