

Kind of Married: When Enmeshment Keeps A Spouse From Fully Committing

Today's podcast is called, "Kind of Married: When Enmeshment Keeps A Spouse From Fully Committing."

Marriage is meant to be a covenant between two people, a union where husband & wife become one flesh, building a life together with loyalty, trust, & love. Scripture is clear about this design. Genesis 2:24 in the Amplified Bible says: ***"For this reason a man shall leave his father & his mother, & shall be joined to his wife; & they shall become one flesh."***

But in marriages affected by enmeshment, this leaving & cleaving never fully happens. A person who is deeply entangled in an enmeshed family system often struggles to shift their loyalty from their parents & family of origin to their spouse. Instead, they live in an in-between where they are married on paper, but emotionally unavailable & half committed in reality.

Because of these unhealthy family ties, the enmeshed spouse often moves in & out of the marriage role as it benefits them. They may act married when it is socially expected or convenient, but when commitment feels restrictive or threatens their family loyalty, they may act as though they are single.

For some, this even opens the door to infidelity. An enmeshed spouse is uncomfortable with true intimacy so they may seek out affairs or casual encounters, preferring the illusion of freedom & detachment over the vulnerability that real marriage requires. To them, marital intimacy may feel like a betrayal of their family bonds. Outside intimacy feels easier because it carries no demand for emotional depth.

In enmeshed marriages, the spouse's family remains their true priority. Plans may be made without consulting the husband or wife. Family opinions carry more weight than spousal concerns. The enmeshed spouse consistently chooses to keep the peace with their parents or siblings rather than nurture their marriage.

This dynamic leaves the non-enmeshed spouse in the heartbreaking position of always being second place, always trying harder, & yet never fully chosen.

The loyal spouse often works tirelessly to prove their love & commitment, hoping that one day it will be enough to draw their partner closer. But in enmeshed systems, no one outside the family circle can ever truly measure up. The spouse's needs are dismissed as too much. They are labeled needy, demanding, or smothering for wanting the very things a healthy marriage requires: connection, unity, & priority.

What God designed as a safe & secure partnership becomes, instead, a place of loneliness, rejection, & striving.

God's Word shows us His heart clearly: marriage is meant to reflect the covenant love of Christ & His church. It is meant to be a place of faithfulness, mutual honor, & deep

intimacy. Enmeshment disrupts this design by dividing loyalty & undermining the one flesh bond.

If you find yourself in this kind of marriage, know this: you are not too much. Your desire for connection & partnership is not wrong. It is Biblical. The problem is not that you expect too much, but that your spouse is offering too little.

Consider Matthew 19:6: ***“So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.”***

Enmeshed families who attempt to divide their family members' marriages are going against God's will.

Being kind of married is one of the loneliest places to live. It is not what God intended for you. While you cannot force an enmeshed spouse to change, you can guard your heart, seek God's comfort, & remember your worth as His beloved child. Your voice matters, your needs are valid, & you deserve a relationship where you are fully chosen.

Thank you for listening to my podcast!