Eric MacDougall *Coaching*

NO THERAPY. JUST TRAINING.

The Connection Blueprint

This is how you stop protecting yourself and start connecting with your spouse again.

A simple guide for couples who still love each other, but feel more like roommates than partners.

Eric MacDougall
Certified Master Relationship Coach

STEP 1 OF THE RECONNECTION METHOD

Recognize your pattern

Right now it might feel like you're managing each other instead of loving each other. That doesn't mean you're broken. It doesn't mean you're alone. You can't change what your spouse does. But you can change what you do. Start by seeing how you protect yourself. Look at the four boxes below. One will feel a little too familiar. That one's yours.

	TOWARD	AWAY
ACTIVE	→← **Fight** PROTECTS BY PUSHING You keep making your case after they've gone quiet. Louder. Sharper. *They stopped listening the second your voice got louder.*	|→ **Flight** PROTECTS BY PULLING AWAY You get busy. You leave the room, check your phone, find a task. *The fight stops, but nothing gets fixed. It just goes underground.*
QUIET	♡ **Fawn** PROTECTS BY PEOPLE-PLEASING You say sorry before you know what for. You agree. You smooth it over. *They never get to know you, just the version that keeps the peace.*	✳ **Freeze** PROTECTS BY GOING NUMB You go blank. "I'm fine." "It's nothing." Your system powers down. *Your silence tells them "I don't care," right when you care the most.*

Your first move, today: the next time you feel that pressure building, pause for half a second before you speak or move. Just notice it. Say to yourself, "there it is, that's my pattern." That half-second of noticing is the whole skill.

STEP 2 OF THE RECONNECTION METHOD

Reset, then use your tool

Pause · Breathe · Name the story · Choose

Thirty seconds, every time. You can't connect with someone while you're still worked up.

IF YOU FIGHT OR FLIGHT

The L.E.A.D. Model

Listen, in a way that helps them feel understood.

1. **Label what you see**
   Say what you notice out loud. It shows your spouse you're paying attention.

   "It seems like you're feeling hurt right now."

2. **Empathize before you speak**
   Try to imagine what's going on for them before you say anything to defend yourself.

   "Help me understand what that feels like for you."

3. **Accept it, don't judge it**
   Let them know their feelings make sense. You don't have to agree with them, only accept how they feel.

   "That makes sense. I get why you'd feel that way."

4. **Deepen: ask what's underneath**
   Stick with it a little longer. Ask what's going on underneath.

   "What do you need from me right now that you're not getting?"

Your presence heals more than your advice ever will.

IF YOU FREEZE OR FAWN

The Feedback Loop

Share, in a way that can be received.

1. **Share the fact, no spin**
   Say what happened. No extra emotion, no story, just the fact.

   "You said you'd be home at 7:30. It was 8:05."

2. **Share the story you told yourself**
   This is the meaning you gave it in your head. It's your story, not the whole truth.

   "The story I'm telling myself is I'm not a priority."

3. **Share the feeling it created**
   Name it in a word or two: hurt, dismissed, alone.

   "That left me feeling hurt, a little rejected."

4. **Make one specific request**
   Say exactly what you need. Make it specific enough that they can say yes.

   "I need a text when you're running late. That's it."

Facts first, feelings second. That's how you stay safe enough to tell the truth.



STEP 3 OF THE RECONNECTION METHOD

Book your Marriage *Action Plan Call*

You've named your half. Now see the whole pattern.

Your move never happens by itself. It runs into your spouse's move, and together they create a pattern you can't see while you're stuck inside it. In 45 minutes, we'll name exactly what's going on between you two, and build your first 30 days of clear next moves.

Book your Marriage Action Plan Call →

A free 45-minute call. No pitch, just clarity.

Your spouse doesn't have to be on board yet. Most repair starts with just one person who's ready.

Eric