

NIKAH & NAFS

A couple is shown from behind, embracing in a field of tall, green grass. The woman is wearing a white hijab and a dark, patterned dress. The man is wearing a dark blue sweater. They are standing close together, with the woman's arms around the man's neck and the man's arms around the woman's waist. The background is a dense field of tall grass, slightly out of focus.

# *Emotional Intimacy Reset*

Rebuild affection in your Marriage

AN HONEST GUIDE FOR MUSLIM WOMEN WHO  
FEEL UNHEARD OR NEGLECTED IN THEIR  
MARRIAGE TO RE-IGNITE EMOTIONAL INTIMACY



# A letter to you: *you're not alone.*

Dear Sister,

I see you. The woman who keeps everything running smoothly but can't shake the feeling that something's missing. You're not fighting with your husband but there's also no... warmth. No heartfelt conversations. No moment when he looks at you and you feel truly seen.

You ask how his day was, and he gives you three words. You try to connect, and it feels like talking to a wall. You drop hints but nothing changes. Quietly, you start to wonder: Is it me? Am I asking for too much?

But, you are not too much. You're not ungrateful. You're just lonely **in your own marriage**. And that's one of the hardest, most isolating feelings in the world.

But here's what I want you to know: **This can change**. Not overnight. Not with one big conversation. But with small, intentional actions over the next 14 days that create space for affection, warmth, and real connection to grow again.

This guide isn't about fixing him. It's not about blaming yourself either. It's about restoring your power to love and learning how emotional connection can return when both hearts feel safe again.

You just need 10 minutes a day and the willingness to try something different. Sometimes the affection, attention, and gentle validation that once made you feel safe starts to fade, not always out of cruelty. Sometimes just out of habit, stress, or not knowing how to reconnect.

**You deserve a marriage that feels alive again, let's help make that happen.**

With love and belief,  
*Your Sister in This Journey*

A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows the silhouettes of a man and a woman walking away from the camera on a sandy beach. They are holding hands. The background features a calm sea and a sky with soft, white clouds, suggesting a sunset or sunrise scene.

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# The 14-Day Promise



## WHY 14 DAYS?

**Because you don't need months of therapy or a complete marriage overhaul to start feeling connected again.**

You need something simple, clear, and fast — something you can start today that will either:

1. Begin rebuilding the warmth and closeness you've been missing, or
2. Give you clarity about what's really going on (and what to do next).

Fourteen days is enough time to shift the energy between you and your husband without exhausting yourself in the process.

It's enough time to create small, meaningful moments that add up to something real. And it's enough time to see if he's willing to meet you halfway.

This isn't about performing for him or becoming the "perfect wife" so he finally notices you.

This is about intentionally creating space for connection and then watching, with calm clarity, whether he steps into that space with you.

Because here's the truth most marriage advice won't tell you: connection requires two people. You can do your part beautifully, but if he's not willing to try, that tells you something important too.

This guide will help you try without losing yourself. Stay open without being a doormat. Hope without being naive.

**And no matter what happens, you'll walk away with peace, clarity, and tools to protect your emotional health.**

# What This Reset Will (and Won't) Do

## ✓ THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU:

- Understand why your spouse seems distant or disinterested (it's not always what you think)
- Bring up your emotional needs without sounding "needy" or critical
- Follow a clear, step-by-step plan that takes just 10 minutes a day
- Use conversation prompts, micro-habits, and mindset shifts that work fast
- Notice within two weeks: him opening up more, conversations feeling natural again, small gestures of affection returning
- Feel calmer, more confident, and hopeful — with a roadmap to bring emotional closeness back home

## ✗ THIS GUIDE WON'T HELP YOU:

- Promise your marriage will be perfect in 14 days (real healing takes time)
- Guarantee he'll change (you can't control him)
- Ask you to beg, chase, or lose your dignity
- Tell you to "just be patient" or "lower your expectations"
- Pretend that emotional distance is normal or acceptable in Islamic marriage

**Let's be honest: some marriages reconnect beautifully. Some need more help. This guide will help you figure out which one you're in.**

# How To Use This Guide

## **Step 1: Start with Day 0 (The Foundation)**

Before you jump into the reset, you need to understand where you actually are. What's really going on? What's missing? What are you contributing to the distance (even unintentionally)? This section takes 15 minutes and includes a quick audit + some honest reflections.

## **Step 2: Follow the 14-Day Reset (10 Minutes a Day)**

Each day has one small, specific action — a conversation prompt, a micro-habit, or a mindset shift. Some days will feel easy. Some will feel vulnerable. Some might feel pointless. Do them anyway. The magic isn't in one day — it's in the cumulative effect of two weeks of intentional effort.

## **Step 3: Notice What Shifts**

At the end of each day, pause for 2 minutes and reflect:

- Did he respond? Did he soften?
- Did you feel different?
- What did you learn?

Write it down. Patterns will emerge.

## **Step 4: On Day 14, Assess Honestly**

At the end of two weeks, you'll have clarity. Has anything shifted? Is he trying? Are conversations feeling warmer? Or are you still the only one reaching?

The guide will help you decide what comes next — whether that's continuing, seeking help, or protecting your peace. Before starting you need to commit to three things: Honesty, Consistency, and Self-Respect.

**Take a deep breath.**

**Say a du‘ā**

**Turn the page.**

# DAY 0

## Before You Begin

Before you start the 14-day reset, you need to know where you're actually standing now. Because you can't fix what you can't see. And you can't reconnect if you don't understand what's disconnected in the first place. Grab a notebook or your phone. Answer these questions honestly just for you.

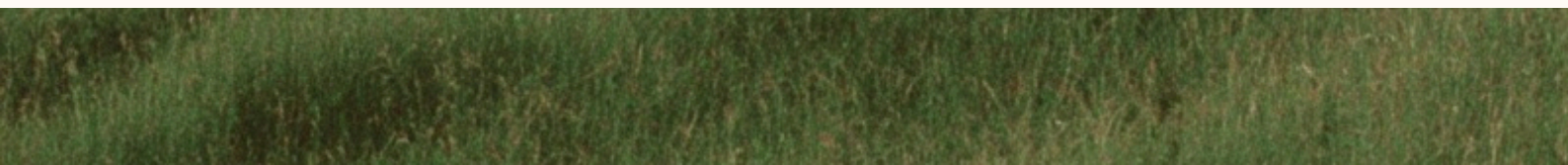
### What Emotional Neglect Can Look Like

Sometimes emotional distance is obvious — he ignores you, dismisses you, or outright says hurtful things. But it can be subtle. Easy to miss until you're drowning in it.

#### Here are some signs:

- ✓ Your conversations stay surface-level.
- ✓ He's physically present but emotionally absent. He's in the room, but he's on his phone. He's next to you in bed, but miles away.
- ✓ Your concerns get dismissed or minimised. When you try to talk about what's bothering you, he says you're "making a big deal out of nothing."
- ✓ You feel invisible. He doesn't notice when you dress up, when you're upset or when you're trying.
- ✓ Affection has faded. No more random hugs. No "I missed you today." Physical touch feels obligatory or nonexistent.
- ✓ You feel more alone in the marriage than you did before marriage.

Check the ones that resonate. Write them down.



# The 5 Question Honesty

Answer each question with a number from 1-5 on your phone or notebook:

**1 = Never/Not at all | 5 = Always/Completely**

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## 1. Communication Depth 💬

Do you have meaningful conversations that go beyond logistics?  
(Not just "Did you pick up the kids?" but "What's been on your mind lately?")

## 2. Emotional Safety ❤️🩹

Do you feel like your concerns are taken seriously?  
(Can you share your feelings without being dismissed, blamed, or shut down?)

## 3. Physical & Romantic Connection ❤️❤️

Are you still attracted to each other? Is there affection and intimacy?  
(Not just sex — but holding hands, hugging, kissing goodbye, playful touches)

## 4. Resentment Check 💔

Are you holding onto past hurts? Are you keeping score?  
(Do old arguments still live rent-free in your head? Do you bring up the past when you're upset?)

## 5. Daily Presence 🕒

Do you spend quality time together with no distractions?  
(Not sitting in the same room on different screens but actual conversation, laughter, shared moments)

**Now, add up your total score (out of 25):**

**20-25:** This reset will help you maintain your strong connection.

**11-20:** There are some gaps, but there's a foundation to build on.

**5-10:** This reset will show you if reconnection is possible.

**Write down your score. Look at which areas scored lowest. Those are your focus areas.**



# The Starting Point

Before you begin Day 1, complete this final reflection:

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**1. What's the main thing missing in your marriage right now?**

(Affection? Deep conversation? Feeling appreciated? Laughter? Intimacy?)

**2. What's one thing you've been doing that *might* be pushing him away?**

(Be honest. This is just for you.)

**3. What's one thing you're hoping will change by Day 14?**

(Be specific. "I want him to talk to me for 10 minutes without his phone" is better than "I want us to be closer.")

**4. On a scale of 1-10, how willing are you to try something different for the next 14 days?**

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## One More Thing Before You Start

**This is not about fixing him.** It's about creating space for connection and seeing if he meets you there. This is not about being perfect. It's about being intentional. And no matter what happens — you'll be okay.

You'll either reconnect, or you'll have clarity. Both are gifts.

### **Tomorrow, you start Day 1.**

Tonight, make a du'ā. Ask Allah SWT to soften both your hearts, guide your words, and bring peace to your home.

*"Our Lord, grant us from among our spouses and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us a leader for the righteous." — Qur'an 25:74*

# DAY 1

## The Soft Greeting

### Today's Focus: Create safety in the first 5 minutes

There's research from the Gottman Institute that shows this: the first three minutes of reconnection predict the rest of your interaction.

If the first few minutes when your husband walks through the door (or when you see him after being apart) are cold, distracted, or tense — the rest of the evening will follow that tone.

But if those first few minutes are warm, welcoming, and calm — everything softens. Maybe you've been greeting him with complaints or maybe you've been greeting him with silence.

Today, we're resetting that pattern.

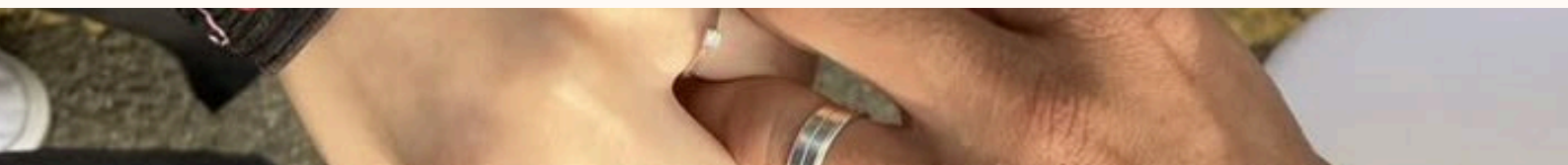
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### **TASK.** What You'll Do Today:

When you see your husband for the first time today, greet him with warmth and presence. Put your phone down. Look at him. Smile. Even if you don't feel like it. Even if you're tired. Say "Assalamu alaikum" or "Hey, you're home" in a soft, genuine tone.

Then ask one simple question: "How was your day, anything special?" Just listen to his answer. Don't jump in with your own day. Just listen for 2 minutes.

That's it. A few minutes of warmth. No demands. No cold shoulder. If he's used to coming home to tension or silence, this will catch him off guard.



## Why This Works:

Islamic wisdom teaches us the power of greeting with peace. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would greet his wives warmly when he returned home, and Aisha (may Allah SWT be pleased with her) described how his face would light up when he saw her.

A warm greeting signals that you're safe. You matter to me. It's simple. But it's also one of the most powerful ways to start shifting the energy between you.

## What If He Doesn't Respond?

He might give you a short answer, he might go straight to his phone. He might seem surprised or confused. Remember: you're not doing this to get an immediate reaction. You're doing this to create a pattern over 14 days. Just stay warm. Stay consistent. Let him get used to this version of you.



## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

Before you go to bed, answer these questions:

1. How did he respond when I greeted him warmly?
2. How did I feel doing this?
3. Was it hard to stay warm? Why or why not?

Tomorrow: Day 2. The Curious Question.

# DAY 2

## The Curious Question

### Today's Focus: Create safety in the first 5 minutes

Most of your conversations might sound like this: "Did you pay the electric bill?" "Can you pick up the kids?" "What time will you be home?"

Surface-level exchanges that keep the house running but don't actually connect you as people. When all your conversations are transactional, your relationship starts to feel transactional too. You become roommates who manage a household together. Not partners who actually know each other.

Today, you're going to ask him a question that has nothing to do with logistics and everything to do with what's going on underneath the routine. This may seem basic, but sometimes going back to foundations is what needs to happen for connection to rebuild.

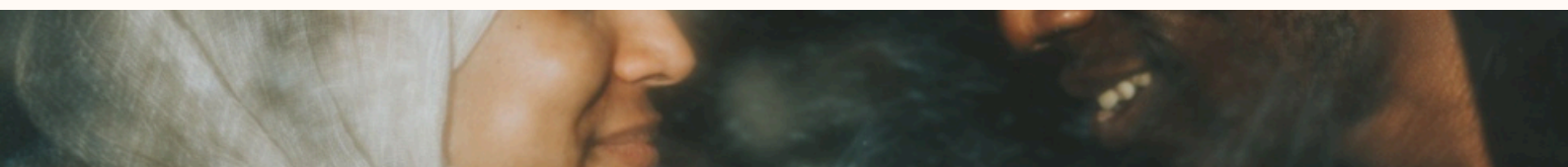
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### **TASK.** What You'll Do Today:

Sometime today — over dinner, during a car ride, before bed — ask your husband one curious, open-ended question about his internal world.

- "What's been on your mind lately?"
- "What's something you're looking forward to this week?"
- "What's something that made you smile today?"
- "What's been the hardest part of your week so far?"

Pick one. Ask it with genuine curiosity. Don't interrupt with your own story. Don't try to fix his problem. Don't judge his answer. Just listen. Ask a follow-up if it feels natural.





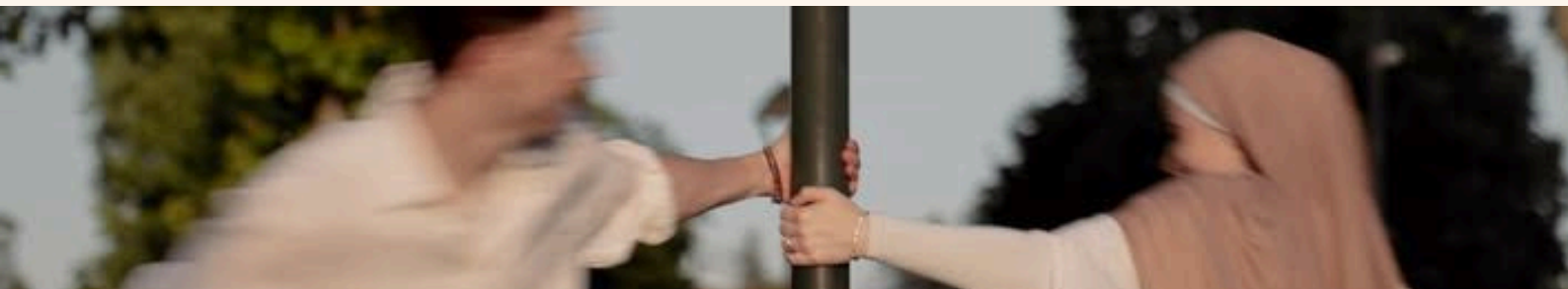
## Why This Works:

Research shows that couples who ask each other open-ended questions about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences report higher levels of emotional intimacy.

When you ask someone about their inner world, you're inviting them to share parts of themselves that may be shielded to the rest of the world. That's intimacy.

## What If He Gives a Short Answer?

He might say, *"I don't know"* or *"Nothing much."* That's okay. Don't get frustrated. Just say, *"Okay, well if you think of something, I'd love to hear it."* You're not trying to force depth. You're just opening a door. If he's been used to surface-level conversations, it might take a few tries before he walks through it.



## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

1. What question did I ask?
2. How did he respond?
3. Did I learn anything new about him today?
4. How did it feel to focus on him without talking about tasks?

Tomorrow: Day 3. The Appreciation.

# DAY 3

## The Appreciation

### Today's Focus: Notice what he does right

When was the last time you appreciated your husband out loud? Not thanked him for doing something you asked him to do.

Most of us are way better at noticing what's wrong than what's right. He forgot to take out the trash? You notice. He left his shoes in the middle of the floor? You notice. But when he does something thoughtful, responsible, or kind? Silence. Not because you're ungrateful. But because you're hurt, tired, or just used to it. The problem is this: people move toward appreciation and away from criticism. If all he hears from you is what he's doing wrong, he'll stop trying altogether.

Today, you're going to break that cycle.

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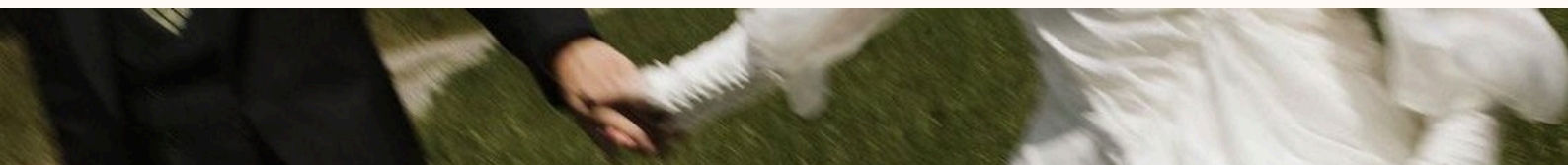
### **TASK.** What You'll Do Today:

Notice one thing your husband does today and acknowledge it out loud with genuine appreciation. It doesn't have to be a grand gesture. In fact, the smaller and more specific, the better.

- "I noticed you made breakfast this morning without leaving a mess. That was really helpful, thank you."
- "Thank you for putting gas in the car. I know you do a lot of things like that without me having to ask."
- "I saw how patient you were today. That meant a lot."

Say it simply. Say it sincerely. Don't add a "but" at the end.

(Not: "Thanks for doing the dishes... but you didn't wipe the counter.")



## Why This Works:

Dr. John Gottman's research found that happy couples have a 5:1 ratio of positive to negative interactions. That means for every one criticism or complaint, there need to be five positive moments.

Most struggling marriages are running on a 1:5 ratio, five complaints for every one kind word. You can't change that overnight. But you can start tipping the scale in your favour.

In Islam, gratitude (shukr) is a core principle. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Whoever does not thank people has not thanked Allah SWT." Appreciating your spouse isn't just good for your marriage, it's also an act of worship.

## What If You Can't Think of Anything to Appreciate?

Dig deeper. Is he going to work every day? Appreciate that. Is he still here, still trying (even if it doesn't feel like enough)? Appreciate that.

You have to be honest about one thing he's doing that deserves acknowledgment.

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## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

1. What did I appreciate about him today?
2. How did he respond?
3. Was it hard for me to find something to appreciate? Why?
4. How did I feel after saying it?

Tomorrow: Day 4. The Shared Silence

# DAY 4

## The Shared Silence

### Today's Focus: 15 minutes together, no distractions

When was the last time you and your husband were in the same space, doing nothing, just being together? No TV. No phones. No kids demanding attention. No tasks to complete.

If you can't remember, you're not alone. Most couples don't spend real, undistracted time together anymore. They sit in the same room but one person is scrolling, the other is watching something, and neither is actually there. Proximity isn't presence.

Today, you're going to reclaim 15 minutes of shared presence.

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### **TASK.** What You'll Do Today:

Spend 15 minutes with your husband in the same space, with no screens, no distractions, no agenda. You don't have to talk the whole time (though you can if it feels natural). You're just going to be together.

- **Sit outside together after dinner**
- **Have tea or coffee together in the living room**
- **Go for a short walk around the block**
- **Sit in the car together for 15 minutes before going inside**
- **Lie in bed before sleep and just... exist in the quiet**

No phones. No TV. Just you and him.

If conversation happens, great. If it's quiet, that's okay too. The point isn't to force connection but just to create space for it.





## Why This Works:

There's something deeply bonding about simply being present with another person without distraction. It's called co-regulation when two people are physically near each other in a calm, safe way, their nervous systems sync up.

In our world of constant noise and distraction, 15 minutes of presence is radical. And it works.

## How to Bring It Up:

You don't have to make it a big deal. Just say something casual:

- "Hey, want to sit outside with me for a bit?"
- "Can we just have tea together before bed? No phones."
- "How about we take a quick walk. I need some air."

If he asks why, just say, *"I just want to spend a few minutes with you."* Simple. No pressure.



## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

1. Did we get 15 minutes together no distractions? If not, what got in the way?
2. Was it quiet, or did we talk? How did it feel?
3. Did I feel closer to him after? Why or why not?
4. Was it hard to stay present, or did it feel natural?

Tomorrow: Day 5. The Gentle Touch

# DAY 5

## The Gentle Touch

### Today's Focus: Rebuild physical affection without pressure

Physical touch is one of the most powerful ways humans bond. When you touch someone with affection your brain releases oxytocin, the "bonding hormone." But what happens in a lot of struggling marriages is physical touch stops.

It could be because you don't want to be vulnerable or because every time you've initiated, he's been cold or unresponsive. Maybe because all touch has become either functional (passing something) or sexual (only in bed when he wants something).

So you stop trying. And he stops trying. And now you're two people who live together but rarely touch at all.

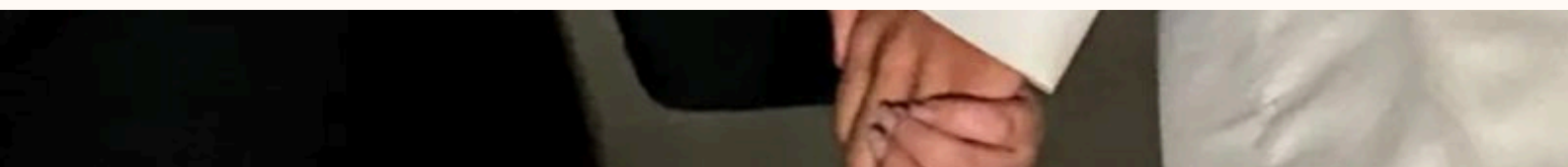
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### **TASK.** What You'll Do Today:

Initiate one small, non-sexual, affectionate touch with your husband. Just a gentle, warm moment of physical connection. For example:

- Put your hand on his shoulder when you walk past him
- Hold his hand for a few seconds while you're sitting together
- Hug him when he comes home (a real hug, not a side hug)
- Rest your hand on his arm while you're talking
- Kiss him on the cheek or forehead before he leaves

You're not trying to initiate intimacy. You're not testing him. You're just reminding both of you that you're allowed to touch each other with affection again.



## Why This Works:

Research shows that couples who engage in non-sexual physical affection (holding hands, hugging, gentle touches) report higher relationship satisfaction and lower stress levels.

In Islam, physical affection in marriage is not only permissible but encouraged. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was affectionate with his wives — he would kiss Aisha (may Allah SWT be pleased with her) before leaving the house, and they would drink from the same cup, intentionally placing their lips where the other's had been. Small acts of tenderness matter. Touch says what words sometimes can't.

## What If You Don't Want to Touch Him?

If you're hurt, angry, or resentful, the idea of initiating affection might feel impossible. Why should I be the one reaching out when he hasn't touched me in months? Fair. But someone has to go first.

This isn't about letting him off the hook. It's about creating an opening. If you wait for him to initiate, you might be waiting forever. But if you create warmth, he might remember what it feels like. You're not doing this for him. You're doing it for both of you.

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### End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

1. What kind of small touch did I initiate?
2. How did he respond?
3. How did I feel doing it? Was it hard? Natural? Awkward?
4. Do I feel more comfortable with physical affection now, or is this still difficult?

Tomorrow: Day 6. The Spiritual Connection

# DAY 6

## Spiritual Connection

### Today's Focus: Pray together or share a du'ā

Your marriage isn't just a partnership between two people. It's a partnership between two people and Allah SWT. And when you forget that — when your marriage becomes just about you and him, your needs and his failures, your hurt and his distance — you lose the thing that's supposed to hold you together when everything else feels shaky.

The Qur'an says that spouses are meant to be "garments" for each other (2:187) — coverings that protect, comfort, and beautify. But that only works when both of you are rooted in something bigger than yourselves.

Today, you're going to reconnect with your husband through your shared faith, even if your deen might not be the strongest right now.

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### **TASK. What You'll Do Today:**

Do one of these three things with your husband today:

#### **Option 1: Pray together**

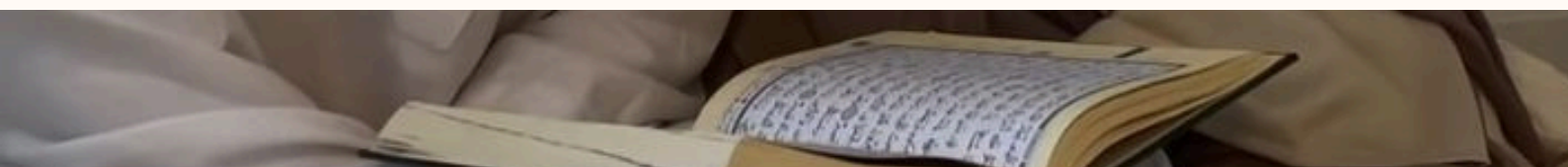
If you don't already pray together, invite him to join you for one prayer. You don't have to make it a big deal. Just say, "Want to pray together?"

#### **Option 2: Make du'ā for him (and let him hear it)**

After a prayer, or before bed, make a short, sincere du'ā for him out loud: "Ya Allah SWT, please grant my husband ease in his work, peace in his heart, and strength in his faith. Ameen."

#### **Option 3: Read a short Qur'anic verse or hadith together**

Pick one verse or hadith, read it together and talk about it.





## Why This Works:

When you bring Allah SWT into your marriage, you remember that this relationship is bigger than your ego, your hurt, or your frustration. You remember that you're both imperfect people trying to fulfill a sacred bond.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "When a man marries, he has completed half of his religion." Marriage is an act of worship. And worship — done together — softens hearts.

Praying together, making du'ā for each other, and reflecting on Islamic teachings creates a shared spiritual foundation. It reminds you both: We're on the same team. We answer to the same Lord.

## What If This Feels Performative?

If it feels forced at first, that's okay. Sincerity grows with practice. If he's not interested in praying together or talking about faith, don't force it. Make du'ā for him privately. And for yourself. And for your marriage.

Allah SWT hears you even when your husband doesn't.

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## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

1. What did I do today to connect spiritually?
2. How did he respond?
3. How did I feel bringing faith into our relationship today?
4. Do I feel like we share a spiritual bond, or is that missing?

Tomorrow: Day 7. The Vulnerability Ask

# DAY 7

## The Vulnerability Ask

### Today's Focus: Share what you need without blame

You've made it through six days of softening, reconnecting, and creating warmth. Today, you're going to open up. Not in an accusatory, "we need to talk" way. But in a simple, honest, vulnerable way.

You're going to tell your husband one thing you need from him — clearly, calmly, and without blame. He's not a mind reader. And even if it feels like you've told him countless times, maybe it just needs to be reframed.

Maybe you need more conversation. Maybe you need affection. Maybe you just need him to look up from his phone when you walk in the room.

Whatever it is, today, you're going to name it.

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### **TASK. What You'll Do Today:**

Using the formula below, tell your husband one specific thing you need in a way that invites connection instead of defense.

#### **The Formula: "I feel, I need, I request"**

**Step 1: Name how you feel (without blaming him)**

"I've been feeling a little lonely lately."

**Step 2: Name what you need (specific, not vague)**

"I need us to have real conversations, not just about logistics."

**Step 3: Make a clear, kind request**

"Would you be open to talking for 10 minutes after dinner each night?"

**That's it. Simple. Clear. Kind.**

## Why This Works:

Research from Dr. Sue Johnson (creator of Emotionally Focused Therapy) shows that when people express their needs as vulnerability instead of criticism, their partner is far more likely to respond with care instead of defense. Compare these:

✗ "You never talk to me anymore. You're always on your phone."  
(Criticism → Defense)

✓ "I've been feeling lonely lately. I need us to talk more. Can we try to have 10 minutes together each night?"  
(Vulnerability → Connection)

## See the difference?

You're allowed to have needs. You're allowed to ask for them. Just do it in a way that makes him want to meet you, not defend himself.

## What If He Gets Defensive Anyway?

If he says something like, "I do talk to you" or "You're being dramatic," stay calm. Don't escalate. Just say:

*"I'm not saying you don't. I'm just telling you what I need to feel close to you again. Can we try?"* Then let it sit. Give him the space.

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## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

1. How did he respond to my ask?
2. Was it hard for me to be vulnerable? Why?
3. Do I feel like he heard me, even if he didn't respond the way I hoped?

## What Did You Notice?

**Alhamdulillah, you've completed the first seven days.**

**Take a moment to pause and reflect on the week as a whole.**

1. What's been the hardest day so far? Why?
2. What's been the easiest or most natural day? Why?
3. Has your husband responded to any of your efforts? How?
4. Have you felt any shifts in how you see him or how you feel about the relationship?
5. On a scale of 1-10, how hopeful do you feel right now about reconnecting?
6. What's one thing you want to keep doing, even after this reset is over?

At the end of this week you might be thinking it still feels like you're the only one trying. If your marriage has been cold for months (or years), his walls won't come down in seven days.

Week 2 is where the small actions you've been taking begin to build and he starts to feel safe enough to meet you halfway — if he's going to. And if he doesn't? By the end, you'll have more clarity on where your marriage stands.

Don't give up yet. Seven more days. That's all I'm asking. You're standing in your worth and saying, "I'm willing to try. But I'm not doing this alone forever."

**Take a breath. Make a du'ā. Thank yourself for making it this far.**

# DAY 8

## Future Glimpse

### **Today's Focus: Talk about what you're looking forward to together**

When a marriage feels stuck, you stop talking about the future. You stop dreaming together.

But here's what happens when you never talk about the future: you stop feeling like a team. Because teams have shared goals. Teams are building toward something.

Today, you're going to remind both of you that you're not just surviving. You're supposed to be building something together.

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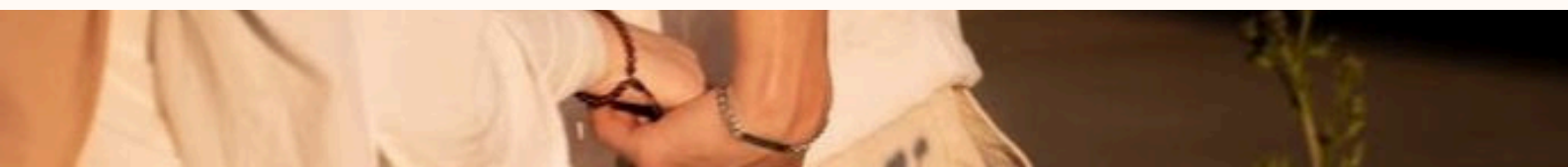
### **TASK. What You'll Do Today:**

Bring up one thing you're looking forward to — something in the near or distant future that involves both of you. It doesn't have to be big. It just has to be something that creates a sense of "we" instead of "I."

Examples:

- "I was thinking... wouldn't it be nice if we went away for a weekend soon? Just the two of us."
- "I'd love for us to try that restaurant everyone's been talking about."
- "Can we plan a day where we just do something fun together?"
- "I've been thinking about our next vacation. Where would you want to go?"

Keep it light. Keep it hopeful. You're not demanding anything, you're just opening the door to the idea that there's a future worth looking forward to.





## Why This Works:

Couples who talk about shared future goals report higher relationship satisfaction. Because it signals: We're still in this together. We're still building something. When you stop dreaming together, you start drifting apart.

## What If He Shuts It Down?

If he says something like, *"We can't afford that right now"* or *"I'm too busy,"* don't take it personally.

Just say, *"I know. I'm not saying we have to do it tomorrow. I just want us to have something to look forward to."*



## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

1. What future idea did I bring up?
2. How did he respond?
3. Do we talk about the future together, or does it feel like we're just stuck in the present?
4. How did it feel to imagine something good ahead?

Tomorrow: Day 9. The Playful Moment

# DAY 9

## The Playful Moment

### Today's Focus: Bring lightness and laughter back

When did you stop laughing together?

Maybe it was gradual. Maybe you can't even pinpoint when it happened. But somewhere along the way, your marriage got heavy.

Everything became serious. The lightness, inside jokes, teasing, moments where you'd just crack up together over something silly — disappeared.

When laughter leaves a marriage, intimacy follows. You can't feel close to someone if you never have fun with them.

Today, you're going to bring a little bit of lightness back.

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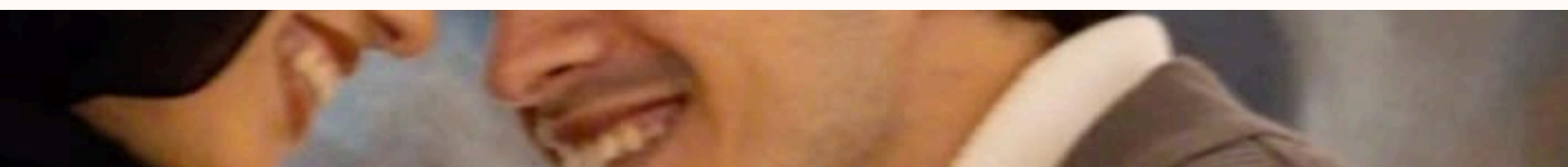
### TASK. What You'll Do Today:

Do something playful, lighthearted, or fun with your husband today. Something that has no agenda other than just enjoying each other.

Ideas:

- Watch a funny video together and laugh about it
- Reminisce about something funny that happened early in your marriage
- Play a quick game (cards, a phone game, anything low-stakes)
- Cook something together and make it silly (dance in the kitchen, taste-test dramatically)

The goal isn't to force comedy. It's just to break the heaviness for a moment and remind both of you that you're allowed to enjoy each other.



## Why This Works:

Research shows that couples who laugh together have stronger emotional bonds and handle conflict better. Laughter releases endorphins and creates positive associations with your partner.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had a playful side with his wives. He would joke with Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), race with her, and bring lightness into their relationship, even during difficult times.

## What If He Shuts It Down?

He might be caught off guard. Or he might not be in the mood.

That's okay. Don't force it. Just stay light yourself.

Sometimes one person's lightness is enough to shift the energy. And even if he doesn't laugh today, you're still reminding him (and yourself) that joy is allowed here.



## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

- 1. What playful thing did I do or suggest today?**
- 2. Did he engage? Did he smile or laugh?**
- 3. When was the last time we genuinely had fun together?**
- 4. How did I feel being a little lighter today?**

Tomorrow: Day 10. The Forgiveness Practice

# DAY 10

## Forgiveness Practice

### Today's Focus: Let go of one small resentment

Resentment is intimacy's killer. You can do all the warm greetings, all the curious questions, all the gentle touches you want — but if you're holding onto a list of things he's done wrong, none of it will penetrate.

Because resentment builds walls. It makes every nice thing he does feel like "too little, too late." It keeps you stuck in the past instead of moving toward the future.

And he can feel it. Even if you don't say it out loud, he can sense that you're keeping score. And it makes him pull away.

Today, you're going to release one piece of that weight.

---

### TASK. What You'll Do Today:

#### Step 1: Write down one thing you're still holding onto.

Maybe it's something he said two years ago. Maybe it's the time he forgot your birthday. Whatever it is, write it down.

#### Step 2: Ask yourself: "Is holding onto this helping me or hurting me?"

#### Step 3: Choose to let it go.

Not because he's apologised (though if he has, acknowledge that). But because you deserve peace more than you deserve to be right.

*"I'm choosing to release my resentment about [specific thing]. I'm not saying it didn't hurt. But I'm letting it go so it doesn't keep hurting me."*

#### Step 4: Make du'ā for yourself and for him.

"Ya Allah, help me let go of what's weighing on my heart. Grant me the strength to forgive, and grant him the awareness to do better. Ameen."

## Why This Works:

The Qur'an says: "Let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (24:22)

Forgiveness isn't about letting him off the hook. It's about freeing yourself from the prison of past pain. Research shows that people who practice forgiveness experience lower stress, better mental health, and stronger relationships. Holding onto resentment doesn't punish him, it punishes you.

## What If I'm Not Ready to Forgive?

That's okay. Forgiveness is a process, not a switch. Start small. Release one thing today. You can work on the bigger stuff later.

## Do I Have to Tell Him?

No. This is between you and Allah. But if it feels right, you can say something simple like: *"I've been holding onto some hurt from the past, and I'm working on letting it go. I just wanted you to know."*

You don't have to rehash the details. Just acknowledge that you're choosing to move forward.

---

### End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

- 1. What resentment did I choose to release today?**
- 2. How do I feel after letting it go — lighter or still stuck?**
- 3. Are there other resentments I'm still holding?**
- 4. What would it feel like to let go of all of it?**

Tomorrow: Day 11. The Service Act



# DAY 11

## The Service Act

### **Today's Focus: Do something for him without expecting thanks**

When a marriage feels one-sided, we stop giving freely. We start operating from a place of "Why should I do anything when he doesn't?"

And that's fair. That's human. But here's the thing: generosity softens hearts. Not just his. Yours too.

Today, you're going to give without keeping score.

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### **TASK. What You'll Do Today:**

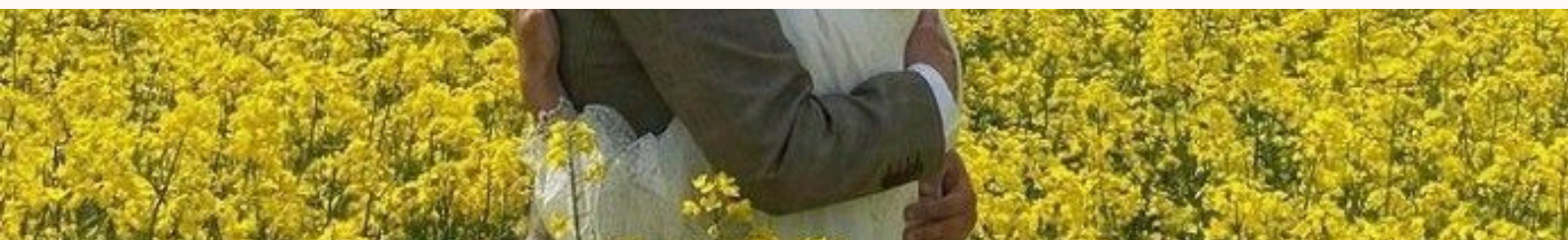
Do one act of service for your husband today, something thoughtful, without announcing it or expecting acknowledgment.

Ideas:

- Make his favorite meal or dessert
- Prepare his coffee or tea the way he likes it
- Iron his clothes or lay out something nice for him
- Leave a small note somewhere he'll see it: "Hope you have a good day."
- Do something that makes his day a little easier

Do it silently. Don't point it out. Don't wait for him to notice.

This isn't about getting credit. It's about remembering what it feels like to give from a place of love instead of obligation or resentment.



## Why This Works:

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "The best of you are those who are best to their families." Acts of service are a form of love. And when you serve someone without expectation, something shifts inside you. You stop feeling like a victim. You start feeling like a person who still has something to give.

And often — not always, but often — when you give warmth, warmth comes back.

## What If He Doesn't Notice?

You're not doing this to test him. You're doing it to remind yourself that you're still capable of love, even when it's hard. If he does notice and says thank you, receive it with grace. If he doesn't, let it go.

This one's between you and Allah.



## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

- 1. What did I do for him today?**
- 2. Did he notice? Did he thank me?**
- 3. How did I feel doing something kind without expectation?**
- 4. Is giving freely easy for me, or does it feel hard right now?**

Tomorrow: Day 12. The Deep Conversation

# The Deep Conversation

## Today's Focus: Use a conversation starter that goes deep

You've been building warmth for almost two weeks now. You've softened. You've shown up and created space. Today, you're going to go deeper.

Not in a heavy, therapy-session way. But in a way that reminds both of you that you're not just roommates managing a household but you're two people who are supposed to actually know each other.

Today, you're going to ask a question that invites real intimacy.

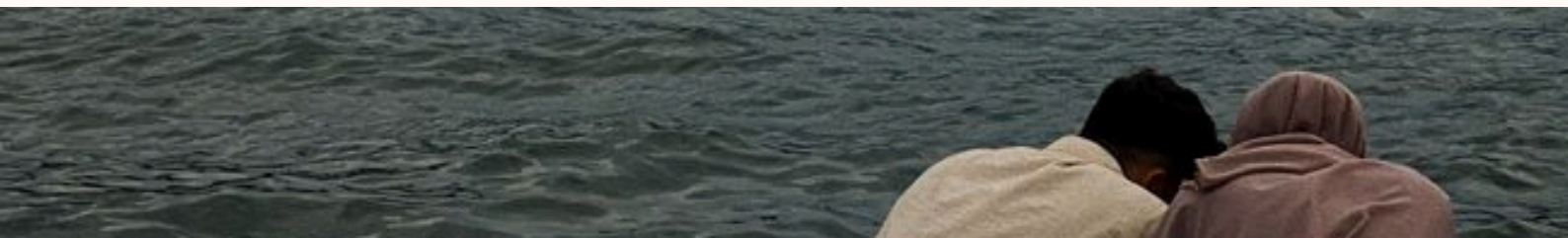
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### **TASK.** What You'll Do Today:

Pick one question from the list below (or your own) and ask your husband during a quiet moment — over tea, during a walk, before bed.

- "What's one thing you wish I understood about you?"
- "What do you need from me that you're not getting?"
- "What's been the hardest part of this year for you?"
- "When do you feel most like yourself?"
- "What's something you're proud of that you don't talk about?"
- "What's one thing about our marriage that you'd like to be different?"
- "If you could change one thing about your life right now, what would it be?"
- "What's something I do that makes you feel loved?"

Then actually listen. Don't interrupt. Don't fix. Don't judge. Just hear him.



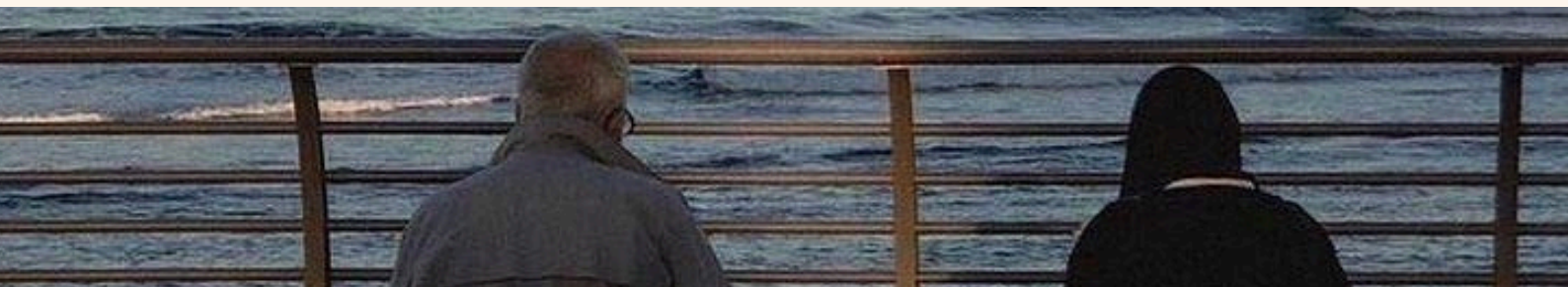
## Why This Works:

Psychologist Arthur Aron conducted a study where strangers asked each other 36 increasingly personal questions and many reported feeling deeply connected afterward. Why? Because vulnerability creates intimacy.

When you ask someone a real question and give them space to answer honestly, you're saying: I want to know you. You matter to me beyond what you do.

## What If He Says "I Don't Know"?

Don't push. Just say, *"That's okay. If you think of something later, I'd love to hear it."* Then let it sit. He might come back to it when he's ready.



## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

- 1. What question did I ask?**
- 2. What did he say? Did I learn anything new about him?**
- 3. Did the conversation feel natural or forced?**
- 4. Do I feel like we're starting to connect on a deeper level, or does it still feel surface?**

Tomorrow: Day 13. The Honest Check-In

# The Honest Check-in

**Today's Focus: Assess if your efforts are being met**

You've spent almost two weeks trying. Today, you're going to pause and honestly ask yourself: Is he meeting me? Or am I still doing this alone?

This isn't about judgment. It's not about giving up. It's about clarity.

Because the truth is: you can do everything right and it still might not be enough — not because you're not enough, but because connection requires two people.

Today, you're going to check in with yourself. And if needed, you're going to check in with him.

---

## **TASK. What You'll Do Today:**

### **Step 1: Honest Self-Assessment**

**1. Has he softened at all over the past 12 days?**

(Even a little? More eye contact? Warmer responses? Small gestures?)

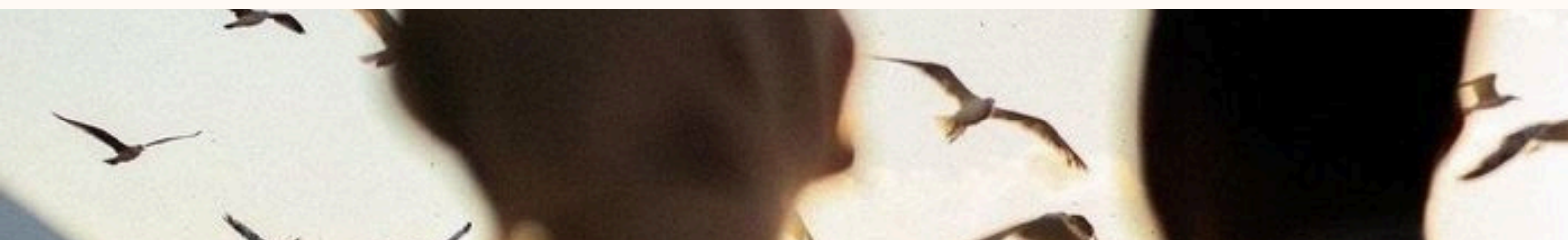
**2. Has he initiated anything — a conversation, affection, time together?**

**3. When you've been vulnerable or asked for something, how has he responded?**

(Defensive? Dismissive? Open? Trying?)

**4. Do you feel like he wants to reconnect, or does it feel like he's just tolerating your efforts?**

**5. On a scale of 1-10, how much effort is he putting in compared to you?**





## Step 2: Decide what to do next

### Option A: He's trying — keep going

If he's softened, engaged, or shown any sign of effort (even small), then keep going. You're making progress. Don't stop now. Tomorrow is Day 14 — the recommitment. Use it to anchor what you've built together.

### Option B: He's not trying, but you want to give him one more chance to see it

If he hasn't responded much, but you're not ready to give up yet, it's time to name what you're doing. Have a calm, honest conversation:

*"I want to talk to you about something. For the past couple of weeks, I've been intentionally trying to reconnect with us — being warmer, more present, asking deeper questions. I've noticed [insert what you've noticed — maybe he's softened a little, or maybe he hasn't]. I'm not trying to criticize you. I just want to know: do you want to work on this with me? Because I can't do it alone."*

Then listen. His response will tell you everything.

### Option C: He's not trying, and you're exhausted

If he's been dismissive, cold, or completely unresponsive — and you feel like you've given all you can — it might be time to protect your peace.

That doesn't necessarily mean leaving. But it does mean stepping back. You might say: *"I've been trying really hard to reconnect with you, and I don't feel like you're meeting me. I'm not angry. I'm just tired. I need to take a step back and focus on myself for a bit."*

Then use the next section of this guide (Chapter 2: When He Doesn't Respond) to figure out what boundaries you need.

## End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):

**1. Based on my honest assessment, which option feels right?**

**2. If I need to have a conversation with him, when will I do it?**

**3. How do I feel right now. Hopeful? Tired? Relieved?**

Tomorrow: Day 14. The Recommitment

# The Recommitment

## Today's Focus: Decide what you'll keep doing — together

You made it. Two full weeks of intentional effort, vulnerability, and showing up. Today isn't about doing one more action. It's about naming what you've built and deciding what happens next.

If he's been meeting you, today is about recommitting together. If he hasn't, today is about recommitting to yourself.

Either way, you're not the same person you were 14 days ago. You've learned something and reclaimed your power.

---

### **TASK.** What You'll Do Today:

#### **If he's been trying:**

Have a calm, appreciative conversation where you acknowledge the shift and talk about what you want to continue.

*"I want to talk to you about something. Over the past two weeks, I've been really intentional about reconnecting with us — and I've noticed [positive thing you've seen]. I really appreciate that you've [specific thing he's done]. I don't want this to just be a two-week thing. I want us to keep building on this. What do you think? Is there anything you need from me to make that easier?"*

Examples of what to keep doing:

- 10 minutes of phone-free conversation each night
- Weekly date night (even if it's just tea on the couch)
- Praying together once a day
- One deep question per week
- Regular physical affection (hugs, hand-holding)

**If he hasn't been trying:**

Have a clear, calm conversation where you name what you've been doing and what you need going forward.

*"I want to be honest with you. For the past two weeks, I've been intentionally trying to reconnect. I've been more affectionate, more present, more open. I've done this because I love you and I want us to feel close again. But I also need you to know: I can't do this alone. I need to see effort from you too. I'm not asking you to be perfect. I'm just asking you to try. Can you do that?"*

His response will tell you everything:

- If he says yes and follows through: keep going.
- If he says yes but nothing changes: it's time for counseling or a bigger conversation.
- If he says no or dismisses you: it's time to protect yourself (see Chapter 2).

**If you're exhausted and need to step back:**

You don't owe him another conversation. You've already tried. But you do owe yourself clarity.

Take today to reflect:

- What do I need right now?
- What boundaries do I need to set?
- Do I want to stay and keep working, or do I need space?

**End-of-Day Reflection (2 minutes):**

- 1. Did I have a conversation with him today? How did it go?**
- 2. What did we agree to keep doing (if anything)?**
- 3. On a scale of 1-10, how hopeful do I feel about our future right now?**
- 4. What's the biggest thing I learned about us during these 14 days?**
- 6. What's one thing I want to remember going forward?**

# You Did It.

Fourteen days. You showed up. You tried. You loved with courage and clarity.

Maybe your marriage is warmer now. Maybe you're laughing again. Maybe he's meeting you halfway and you feel hope blooming in your chest.

Or maybe it's still hard. Maybe he didn't respond the way you hoped. Maybe you're standing at a crossroads, trying to figure out what comes next.

**Either way, you're not the same person you were two weeks ago.**

You know what you're capable of now. You know what real effort looks like. You know that you can create warmth, show up with grace, and still protect your peace.

That's power. That's growth. That's something no one can take from you.

So what happens now?

The next section will help you figure out where to go from here.

Whether you're rebuilding, seeking help, or protecting yourself — there's a path forward.

And you're strong enough to walk it.



# What Comes Next? Communication.

## How to communicate without sounding critical

You've spent 14 days creating warmth. But sometimes you need a bigger conversation — one where you name what's not working and ask for real change. Most conversations turn into fights because of how we say things.

### **The Formula: Revisit the "I Feel, I Need, I Request" formula from page 22**

#### Avoid These Phrases:

- "You never..." / "You always..."
- "Why can't you just..."
- "Other husbands do this..."
- "I shouldn't have to ask for this."

#### Say This Instead:

- "I've noticed..." (not "You always")
- "I need..." (not "You should")
- "Can we try..." (not "Why can't you")
- "I'm feeling..." (not "You make me feel")

*"I want to talk about something. I've been feeling [emotion] because [situation]. I'm not blaming you — I just need [specific thing]. Can we work on this together?"*

If he gets defensive: "I'm not attacking you. I'm telling you what I need. Can we figure this out together?"

If he shuts down, that's information. It tells you he's not ready yet.

Remember: You can say everything perfectly and he might still react badly. That's not your fault. But at least you'll know you tried with clarity and grace.

# What Comes Next? Boundaries.

## When he doesn't respond

You tried. You showed up. You communicated clearly. And he still didn't meet you. Now what?

### **What Boundaries Actually Are**

Boundaries aren't punishments or ultimatums. They're about protecting yourself while staying in integrity. They say: "I love you, but I also love myself. And I won't keep giving to someone who won't give back."

### **Boundary Scripts:**

1. "I hear you don't see it the same way, but my feelings are still valid. I'm asking you to take me seriously."
2. "I've tried to talk about this several times and you keep shutting down. If we can't talk about hard things, we can't grow. I need you to try too."
3. "I love you, but I'm not okay right now. I need space to take care of myself. That doesn't mean I'm giving up — it means I can't keep carrying this alone."

### **How to Hold a Boundary Without Guilt**

Boundaries feel scary because we're taught that "good wives" are endlessly patient. You're allowed to protect yourself. You're allowed to say, "I need more than this."

### **When to Walk Away (Even Temporarily)**

If after 14 days, clear communication, and boundaries, he's still dismissing you, refusing to try, blaming you for everything, or showing contempt — it might be time to step back.

Not necessarily divorce. But distance. You can't force someone to love you the way you need. But you can stop accepting less than you deserve.



# What Comes Next? Help.

## When to seek help

### Signs You Need Counselling:

- You've tried everything and nothing's changing
- Every conversation becomes a fight
- There's contempt, criticism, defensiveness, or stonewalling
- You're dealing with infidelity, addiction, or betrayal
- You love each other but can't figure out how to connect
- One of you is willing but doesn't know how

If any are true, get help.

### How to Bring It Up:

*"I think we could benefit from talking to someone together. This isn't about blame — we just need help. Would you be open to counselling?"*

If he says no:

"I understand you're hesitant, but I'm struggling. I need us to try something different. Can we do a few sessions?"

If he still refuses, go on your own. Individual therapy can help you get clarity even if he won't participate.

### Finding the Right Counselor:

Questions to ask:

"What's your approach?"

"Have you worked with Muslim couples?"

"What's your stance on reconciliation vs. separation?"

# What Comes Next? Protection.

## Protecting your emotional health

### 1. Anchor in Faith

Make du'ā — not just for your marriage, but for you.

### 2. Build Support (Without Gossip)

Talk to:

- A trusted friend who won't trash your husband
- A counselor or therapist
- A mentor who's been through this

Avoid:

- People who make you feel guilty
- People who tell you to "just leave" without understanding
- People who spread your business

### 3. Journal for Clarity

Write every day. It helps you process feelings and see patterns.

Quick Prompts:

- What did I learn about myself during the reset?
- What do I need most right now?
- What am I afraid of?
- What would I tell my daughter in this situation?
- What does peace look like for me?

### 4. Create Daily Routines

Morning: 5 min du'ā or Qur'an + one thing you're grateful for

Midday: 10-min walk or stretch + one deep breath when overwhelmed

Evening: Journal 5 min + go to bed without resentment

### 5. Remember: You Are Not Your Marriage

You are a whole person. A servant of Allah. A woman with worth that exists outside of your relationship.

Your marriage is part of your life. It's not your whole life.

Whether it heals or ends, you will be okay.

# What Comes Next? Decision.

## Stay, work, or leave?

### Questions to Ask Yourself:

#### 1. Is he willing to try?

- Yes → Keep working
- No → Consider space or leaving

#### 2. Is there abuse (emotional, physical, financial)?

- Yes → Prioritise your safety. Talk to a counsellor, imam, or trusted person immediately

#### 3. Have you both genuinely tried (counseling, communication, effort)?

- No → Try counseling first
- Yes, and nothing changed → It might be time

#### 4. What does your gut tell you?

#### Red Flags (Consider Leaving):

- Consistent contempt or cruelty
- Refusal to acknowledge your feelings
- Patterns of manipulation or control
- Unwillingness to try or change
- Abuse of any kind

Divorce is permissible when staying causes more harm than leaving. If you've tried everything — communication, boundaries, counseling, prayer — and he won't meet you, you're allowed to protect yourself.

**Whatever you decide, make it from a place of clarity, not chaos.**

**Pray istikhara. Seek counsel. Listen to your heart.**

**And trust that Allah sees you, knows your struggle, and will guide you to what's best.**

**You will be okay. I promise.**

# Your New Beginning

Dear Sister,

You made it. Fourteen days. Moments of courage, vulnerability, and grace.

Maybe your marriage feels warmer now. Maybe conversations are flowing again. Maybe he's meeting you halfway and hope is blooming.

Or maybe it's still hard. Maybe you're standing at a crossroads, trying to figure out what comes next.

Either way, you showed up and tried with sincerity and dignity.

You are not responsible for his choices. Only yours.

You can't force someone to meet you. But you can decide who you want to be. What you're willing to accept and what you're not.

**That's your power. And no one can take it from you.**

If your marriage is healing — beautiful. Keep going. Stay consistent. Don't slip back into old patterns. Remember what got you here.

If it's not — you gave it everything. And now you have clarity. Use it.

Whether you're rebuilding, seeking help, or walking away — you will be okay.

Because you're braver than you feel. And worthy of a love that doesn't require you to beg.

Make du'ā. Trust Allah. Protect your peace. "Indeed, with hardship comes ease." — Qur'an 94:6

With all my love and belief in you,  
*Your Sister in This Journey*