

re|engage Testimonies

Thank you for choosing to share about God's work in your marriage with us at **re|engage**. Know that we are so grateful for the time, coordination and energy it takes to prepare and to speak. We are excited to see how the Lord will use your specific story to encourage and challenge couples towards oneness with each other, and intimacy with Christ. We are grateful for you!

Remember these two questions as you pray and prepare to speak at **re|engage**:

WHO is your audience? And WHAT is your aim?

Your audience: couples in varying stages of marriage, married anywhere from 5 months to 40 years, some are 8's on a scale of 1-10 but most are below 5, in fact, many are closer to 1-2.

Your aim: To give hope that no matter where they are in their marriage, they have not crossed a line they can't come back from! And to convey to the listener, "You are not alone." (This is in addition to your own aim, specific to your own story, but this is one aim we'd like you to convey).

Things to keep in mind:

1. Creating your "marriage story" is a difficult process. You'll need to decide what things you want to talk about. Then you will need to be agreeable about talking about them in front of other people.
2. You can expect to be emotional during this process. This process will cause you to revisit some potentially hurtful and difficult situations. However, please remember that God can and has redeemed those moments and feeling for His glory.
3. Once you get your story written, you will need to alternate reading it. The husband should read his portion and the wife should read hers. The best way to accomplish this and keep the story moving along is to take turns telling the story.
4. You will need to practice reading your story out loud several times to get the pacing down and make sure it flows and makes sense to the listener.
5. If you need any help with this please don't hesitate to contact us.

Testimony Guidelines:

**** Send a copy of your testimony to Robert Conn (robert.conn@reality.church) at least two weeks before your speaking date.****

- a. First, as you prepare your testimony, pray and ask God for help in your preparation and the words to share.
- b. Your testimony needs to be **written out**. You will have approximately **15 minutes to speak**. A guideline to achieve this time constraint is, roughly, 7- 8 double-spaced pages in 12 pt. font with 1" margins. We will read and edit it with a focus on the audience and aim of the story.
- c. Please include **1 or 2 of your favorite Scriptures**. Avoid religious clichés, and do not mention specific denominations as this can serve as a distraction from the heart of your story. We believe it is God's Word that changes people's hearts and we desire that people would hear it when they come to **re|engage**.

- d. Tell your story in a way that breaks down misconceptions that you are different from the audience. They need to know they can relate to you.
- e. Tell a story that is old enough for you to reflect on how the Lord brought comfort in the middle of it, and how He used people to do it. But also, make sure it is fresh and current too.
- f. Each of you should be honest in describing your *individual* struggles and failures. Own **your** part, and be sure to highlight God's grace in your weakness, not your heroic faith. Tell it with humility, admitting your continuing need for grace. (This is not the time to throw your mate under the bus. Let him or her do that themselves).
- g. Be discerning and purposeful, aware of a specific "aim" you want your audience to achieve. Limit the "gory" details. Your focus is not the situation, but the God who met you in the middle of it. Avoid "TMI" – some testimonies contain *too much information* (particularly if they are sexual in nature). If a detail paints a graphic picture in permanent ink in the listener's head, leave it out. The one thing we want permanently painted on the mind of our listener is the greatness of God.
- h. The goal of your story should be to reflect God's transforming power – not your church, this program, or your own. His. Tell it in a way that makes God the change agent in your story. This is about Him and for His glory.

The Four Parts of Your Story

1st – The Old Me/Us

- a. You can include some family background, but try to keep this as brief as possible (1/2 page maximum). The key is to talk about your marriage, challenges you have faced, and how God brought restoration and healing.
- b. How you met or something about the early days of your relationship.
- c. How your marriage story progressed/regressed.
- d. What are some of the circumstances that others could relate to? Also, what is unique/different about your story?
- e. What was your relationship with God like?

2nd – The Transition

- a. What was the turning point in your marriage?
- b. How has your growing relationship with Jesus Christ influenced your marriage? Be specific.

3rd – The New Me

- a. What changes has God made in your relationship?
- b. What unhealthy ways of approaching your marriage are gone and how have they changed?
- c. How has each of your individual walks with God changed?

4th – Outreach

- a. What encouragement can you give? Any tips?
- b. Leave the listener with **hope**. They want to believe that their marriage will improve. Remind them that with God nothing is impossible.

If you have any questions, please contact Robert Conn (robert.conn@reality.church). We are sincerely grateful for your willingness to serve us in this way, and are excited to see how the Lord uses the story of His work in your lives to draw others closer to each other, and closer to Him.