



Chapter 7.

Good & Bad Leadership Strategies During Separation

Have you heard the phrase, “Fake it ‘til you make it”?

This saying is used to help people who feel overwhelmed with the task in front of them. When you feel like you don’t yet have what it takes to do what you need to do, the idea is, “Fake it until one day you get so good at it that you’re not faking it anymore.”

Fake it ‘til you make it. Then you’ll *be* it.

It sounds like strange advice to give someone going through separation, but sometimes this fake-it-‘til-you-make-it mindset can be helpful for guys struggling to maintain composure during a separation. Sometimes, you need to step outside yourself in order to do the things that you need to do or become the man that you want to be. Sometimes you need to fake it; sometimes you need to put on a mask to survive.

This chapter is one of my favorites in the book because it is the chapter that I would want to read if I were in your shoes.

First, A Word on Leadership Diversity

Seeing countless men go through separation, I have learned that **every husband has a different style of leadership.** Especially during crisis.

Every husband aspires to be a slightly different man. While we all share many of the same core leadership traits (and we'll talk more about those traits at the end of the chapter), in practice, every man does things slightly differently. The ones who do it right tend to fall into one of a few good leadership archetypes, but in application, every man does things a bit differently.

The big things that will affect how you demonstrate leadership during your marriage crisis include:

1. Your beliefs
2. Your personality
3. Your circumstances

Since these three things can vary so much from person to person, what works to get one man's wife back may create frustration and distance in another man's marriage. It just goes to show, there is no hard-and-fast rulebook for marriage relationships. What you'll learn in this book and this chapter is a guideline, but it is YOU that must apply it in a way that feels natural and productive.

Good & Bad Leadership Strategies for Marriage Crisis

For the rest of this chapter, we're going to look at the three major leadership archetypes that I have seen in men who have separated well.

In other words, these are the different "styles" of leadership I've seen men fall into during marriage crisis. These are each a different way to apply the "let her go to get her back" mindset we discussed in Chapter 1.

What I want you to do is read through this chapter. Carefully read through each different archetype. And as you do so, listen to your gut... Which one of the bad archetypes do you see yourself falling into? Which of the good ones do you want to aspire to be? Which one of these do you read and think, *"Okay, THIS is me. This type of leadership makes sense to me."*

The idea here is that by reading this chapter, you will paint a picture of the type of leader you WANT to be throughout the separation. By identifying what type of leader you want to be, you will have more tools to make optimal decisions about the things you can control, and it'll be easier to stay consistent in your approach your marriage.

For each archetype, I will give a brief description, I will tell you which type fits best for different motives of separation, and I will tell you personality traits that mesh well with this leadership style. We'll do the bad archetypes first – the ones to avoid – because this is where most men start. Then we'll talk about the good archetypes in the second half of the chapter.

4 Common “Bad” Leadership Strategies

We're going to start by overviewing the most common BAD leadership strategies. These are the “default” mindsets that men facing marriage crisis tend to fall into, and they are the wrong way to approach a separation.

If you find yourself falling into one of these “bad” leadership archetypes, don't be discouraged.

At least 90% of the men I've seen Inside the Haven started out in one of these first four “bad” strategies. Many of them had to constantly check themselves to prevent from falling back into old habits. It's okay! After you figure out which “bad” archetype you tend to fall back on, identify the “good” leadership strategy that appeals to you most. Then you can keep the picture of that man in your mind as a plumb line.

Bad Leadership Archetype #1. The Clinger

*“Please don't leave me, I need you.
One more chance, please. I love you!”*

When this type of husband is told that his wife wants out of the marriage, he has one simple reaction:

He holds on for dear life.

Being The Clinger feels like you've leaned too far back in your chair and started to tip backwards... The moment you realizes you're falling, you spring into action, flailing around and trying to grab onto anything you can reach. You're frantic, desperate, and you'll “do anything to get her back.”

The Clinger usually displays a few key behaviors that he believes will help the marriage stay afloat:

- Begging, sometimes literally getting down on his knees in tears
- Says he just needs “one more chance”
- Constantly saying “I love you”
- Promises to change over and over again (but his actions don’t back it up)
- Tries to get as much raw time with his wife as possible, even if that time is unfruitful and results in her pushing him further away over and over again
- Guilt trips his wife when she doesn’t respond to his pleas

The more The Clinger’s wife pushes him away, the more desperately he tries to hold on.

Generally, your wife will have one of two reactions to this type of clingy behavior:

- A. She will pity you and feel bad for you that you’re so hurt (but she knows your clinginess is selfish)
- B. She will resent you and push away and every time you cling to her she will spike you right back down to the ground harder than a pro volleyball player on steroids.

Either way, she will be repulsed. She will NOT be attracted or enticed by your clingy behavior. Instead, it will drive her away and validate her decision to leave.

Bad Leadership Archetype #2. The Madman

“How dare you leave me, I hate you!

Wait, no, I love you... It’s all my fault, I’m sorry, take me back!”

This type of husband is completely unpredictable during marriage crisis. He goes back and forth more than his wife does, swinging between two extremes on a daily or even hourly basis.

This man is ruled by his emotions in the moment. Since your emotions are going to be all over the place during marriage crisis, this is a dangerous place to be.

Some defining characteristics and behaviors of The Madman include:

- The most common emotion is anger and frustration, but the Madman is defined by wild swings back and forth between many emotions...
- One minute, he is enraged, furious that his wife would do this to him. The next minute he's wracked with guilt and his anger is replaced by immense depression.
- Feels a potent mixture of guilt over his own failures, resentment over his wife's hurtful choices and fear of losing what he loves.
- I've seen a Madman buy his wife flowers and send her a love letter one day, then the next day he's literally destroying her stuff and yelling at her to move out.
- Displays attributes of other archetypes too... For example, just like The Trader (below), the madman gets frustrated that his wife isn't seeing the "changes" he's made to himself.
- The biggest struggle for the Madman is usually in accepting responsibility for the problems in the marriage *in a healthy way*... Instead, he either feels so guilty he can't even get out of bed or so angry and prideful that he hates his wife for leaving.

Above all, the Madman is one thing: unpredictable.

By now, you know that one of the most important things to do during any separation is to focus on what you can control. The absolute best thing that you can be doing right now is making the most of the things that are under your control.

Unfortunately, The Madman cannot make the most of the things under his control because quite simply, NOTHING is under his control... Not even himself.

The Madman is the most likely archetype to fall into for men who have preexisting issues in themselves outside of the marriage troubles they're facing. For example, I've seen many Madmen driven by alcohol or bipolar or anxiety. These are men who naturally have very poor control over their emotions, a problem which is exaggerated when they're going through crisis.

The Madman lacks clear goals in his separation, and so he has no way to focus and rein in his behavior. Instead, he feels even more out of control underneath the surface as he appears on the outside.

Bad Leadership Archetype #3. The Victim

“How could she do this to me?”

This archetype is pretty self-explanatory... This is the husband who plays the role of the victim and plays it very well.

- The Victim may turn to his wife’s friends and family in an effort to get them to sympathize with him, although his reasoning is that he “wants them to talk some sense into her.”
- May spend weeks at a time in deep depression, unable to break out of his own pity party.
- May have many similar behaviors as The Clinger, but his clinginess isn’t as constant... Instead, it comes in bursts when he has an “epiphany” and breaks out of his pity party long enough to try and get his wife back. When it fails, he’s right back to feeling sorry for himself.
- Spends *all* his time thinking about everything he’s lost, how terrible his life will be without his wife, how sad it is that the marriage got to this point, etc.
- Despite believing that everyone around him should sympathize with him, The Victim rarely has any sort of social life... He’s too busy moping around at home.

Ultimately, The Victim fails to recognize that self-pity is just another form of pride.

Even though many times The Victim’s feelings of being, well, victimized are justified, it doesn’t change that as a man and leader, you cannot afford to let your life get to this point. You cannot afford to paint yourself as the victim to the point that you can’t see anything else.

In fact, many times, the more you deserve to be viewed as The Victim, the more important it is that you NOT let yourself think that way. For example, if your wife is going through a Level III midlife crisis or she’s involved in an affair, then it’s crucial that you remain focused and set your feelings aside to be there for your kids. Usually, the more hurtful and destructive your wife’s desire for separation is, the more people there will be that need your protection and love. And, even if you don’t have kids, you probably have a job or other responsibilities that REQUIRE you to think clearly as a leader. Victims can’t be leaders inside their marriage, and they will struggle to lead outside the marriage too as long as they keep this mindset.

Bad Leadership Archetype #4. The Trader

"I did my part, now why won't you do yours?"

Hands down, The Trader is the archetype which will result in the most frustration.

Want to feel like you're banging your head against a brick wall over and over again? Let yourself be The Trader.

The Trader is defined by a belief that his changes should be reciprocated and recognized by his wife. And it's her fault if she doesn't.

In other words, The Trader prides himself on making the changes needed in order to do his part in the reconciliation and marriage. Once he's made those changes, he expects his wife to do the same.

The hardest part is that The Trader KNOWS his marriage can be saved. He KNOWS that if his wife put in the effort, they could be happy. It's so obvious to him that he literally can't understand how she doesn't see it the same way. Some common ways this will come out in practice:

- He is disappointed every single time he has a negative interaction with his wife.
- He never curbs his expectations that she will change or that she will recognize and appreciate his changes.
- He gets his hope up sky high after every positive interaction – however small – he gets with his wife.
- He may make a point of telling his wife about the changes he's made or demonstrating them in front of her... But the moment she disagrees or dismisses his changes he gets extremely frustrated.
- And really, The Trader spends most of his time frustrated. He is a very performance-oriented individual; he has high expectations for himself and high expectations for his wife.
- This is usually the man that can't accept the Let Her Go mindset because in his mind, letting her go is like giving up. He prides himself on "never giving up" on his marriage.

Have you ever heard the phrase, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results"?

Yeah, that's The Trader in a nutshell.

Don't get me wrong – **The Trader is a very good husband.** Objectively, this man is great at seeing changes that need to be made in himself. He is right that with his wife's cooperation, the marriage could be saved. The problem comes when his wife doesn't see it the same way, because the hard truth is that sometimes your wife can't see the marriage clearly until after she's already left it. And even then, sometimes she's just determined to remain cold.

3 Ideal “Good” Leadership Archetypes

These archetypes are the ones that you want to try and live up to. This is where the “fake it ‘til you make it” approach will come in handy.

What I want you to do is read through each of these archetypes and really try to picture yourself living out this mindset in your marriage as it is right now. If one of the archetypes feels particularly natural for you to picture yourself in, then chances are that is the right one for you.

If none of the archetypes feel natural or if you have a hard time picturing yourself living out any of these leadership styles during your marriage crisis, don't worry! For each one, I've included a bit of info about when each archetype works best.

Good Leadership Archetype #1. The Stern Father

*“You may have as much space as you want
as long as you don't break the rules.”*

The Stern Father's approach when his wife wants out is to basically take on the role of a father trying to keep his rampant teenage daughter in line.

Imagine that your daughter told you she wanted out of the family. Imagine she told you she hated you and wanted to start a life on her own. Only problem is she's 15 and still needs time before she can actually make those changes happen.

On the one hand, The Stern Father knows he's powerless. If we're sticking with the analogy, he knows he's stuck watching his rebellious daughter's destructive behavior from the sidelines. Even though he knows that what she wants and what she's doing

won't make her happy, he also knows he can't change her or show her that himself. He knows that it must be *her* choice to change, but he maintains hope that she will break out of this funk eventually and make that choice.

On the other hand, The Stern Father has to set some boundaries because his daughter isn't the only person in the world; he still has other people to protect, including himself. And, when she breaks those boundaries, he knows that there must be consequences in order to prevent those boundaries from being broken again.

The Stern Father is patient, forgiving and tolerant. He recognizes that his wife is not in a good place right now, and he's able to let the painful she says and does roll off his shoulders (for the most part).

However, The Stern Father is not a door mat. He DOES have boundaries, he DOES have self-worth, and there is a line that, when crossed, will cause him to take matters into his own hands (which usually means initiating divorce or asking her to move out).

This type of leadership tends to fit very well for natural Type A guys who have the confidence, the determination and the guts to demand accountability and honesty from their wife. You must be confident as a man that you know what is best for the marriage, for your family and for your wife, and you must be able to do the right things consistently. And when you don't do the right things, you need to be able to recognize that with humility and apologize.

I know it's kind of weird to describe your role as a husband as being similar to a father. But, it really is the best description for this kind of mindset; you're patient and loving, but at the same time you aren't going to let things slide under your nose.

The way you approach your wife is sort of like, "You want out? Okay, this is what I'm going to do, this is what I want you to do, and this is what will happen in our marriage. I will be patient, but I also have boundaries."

Defining Characteristics of The Stern Father

- This type of leader does not leave it up to chance. Everything he does is deliberate.
- He tends to challenge her when she says irrational or untrue things about the marriage (although he also senses when it's better to let it go)
- Never lets her doubt that he's committed to the marriage
- Expects her to put work in and challenges her when she doesn't
- Looks for occasional-but-consistent opportunities to communicate with her

- At the same time, will not engage with her if she refuses to connect or work; capable of being the distant husband when he has to. And he'll tell her that.
- When boundaries are being broken, this husband is willing to give an ultimatum sooner rather than later
- Takes the initiative around the house and in the marriage; very much a strong and direct leader
- Does not beat around the bush in confronting big problems...
 - If she is having an ongoing affair, he asks her to end it.
 - If she's having a midlife crisis, he asks her to get help.
 - If she's out of love, he accepts responsibility and asks her to be patient or work at it.

To expand a bit further...

The Stern Father sees and understands that his wife is not herself right now, but at the same time he isn't interested in making excuses for her... He won't treat her differently or exempt her from household responsibilities just because of what she's going through. Granted, when she skips those household responsibilities (which is to be expected in some cases), he will patiently pick up the slack for her just as long as she's not breaking the boundaries that he has set for himself.

The Stern Father has clear boundaries, but those boundaries are tempered with patience and love. He knows his wife will try to push those boundaries, but he makes it clear to her that willfully breaking the boundaries outright *will* have consequences. She can choose to do what she wants, but if she breaks the boundaries, she won't get to choose the consequences.

For example, when The Stern Father's wife is having an ongoing physical affair, or if she stops her affair but restarts it again, he will not tolerate it for very long before an ultimatum is given – "Stop the affair or leave the house." If she won't leave the house, then the house will be sold during the divorce and the money split evenly. Just as a father wouldn't move out so his rebellious daughter can have the house, The Stern Father doesn't move out to accommodate his wife's extramarital aspirations.

To be clear, The Stern Father doesn't *want* to make his wife feel consequences for what she's doing, but at the same time he knows that sometimes experiencing consequences is the only way to learn.

Similarly, **The Stern Father isn't one to play games.** He isn't interested in trying to trick his wife to come back... In his eyes, he's her husband and he shouldn't have to "trick"

or “convince” her to do anything. He knows that he deserves a wife who *chooses* to be with him, and he refuses to do anything other than let her make that choice.

He **takes his leadership seriously and he always says it like it is**. Everyone in his home knows that he is the leader. His kids see him, they sense his confidence and they respect him. His wife sees his leadership and at first, she always pushes away from it.

Common Pitfalls for The Stern Father

The biggest thing that you have to be careful of is the way you view and communicate with your wife. You never want to communicate your expectations for the marriage in a belittling way. You never want to let your acceptance of her distance turn into resentment or anger.

The Stern Father is firm, yes, but he is not hateful or bitter. He is still patient and caring and ultimately wants what is best for his wife. Even though The Stern Father may end up asking his wife to leave if she breaks the boundaries of marriage enough times, he still wants nothing more than to get the marriage back.

Here are some other common ways I’ve seen Stern Fathers go sour:

- **The Stern Father can easily border on The Trader.** It is very easy for this husband to get very frustrated when his wife fails to live up to his expectations. It’s okay to have high expectations for your wife, just as long as you don’t get frustrated when she fails to meet them.
- **The Stern Father can easily become prideful and arrogant in this mindset...** It’s very easy to get caught up in the blame game and tell yourself that your wife is the only one responsible for all this and/or the only one who needs to change. It’s easy to feel pretentious, like you’re so much better than your wife. Even though your mindset is that of a father, you cannot treat your wife like a child.
- **Be careful where you set your boundaries and how rigidly you enforce them.** Remember from Chapter 2 that your boundaries are things that you WILL NOT accept in the marriage, both from yourself and from your wife.
 - If you set boundaries but then consistently break them or allow them to be broken, you look weak.
 - If you set boundaries but they are too rigid, you are setting yourself up for failure.
 - This is why The Stern Father must temper his enforcement of the boundaries with love and patience. Inevitably, these boundaries may be broken a few times. The problem is when your wife is willfully breaking

these boundaries over and over again... That's when you must make a change in your situation.

- **The Stern Father must still be flexible and fluid in the marriage.** Just because you start out as The Stern Father doesn't mean you have to stay in this archetype. And, even if you do, maybe you transition from being vocal in communicating what you want your wife to do to instead leading by example.
- Be careful that you are not so firm and demanding to the extent that you are inconsiderate, unempathetic or controlling.
- Many times, being The Stern Father will feel like a real pain in the butt; you'll have to bite your tongue not to show your frustration. You can be stern, with clear expectations

When Does The Stern Father Work Best?

First let me reiterate, each of these three "good" leadership archetypes can be used successfully in any form of marriage crisis. Whether your wife has initiated a loss-of-love-driven separation or she's having an affair or MLC, The Stern Father's mindset can be applied. If you identify very well with this archetype, use it! The Stern Father is flexible because he is confident and he is patient.

That being said, this type of leadership is especially well-suited for a wife who has made or is making big mistakes in the marriage. For example...

- She's having a Level II or III midlife crisis
- She had or is having an affair

If your wife is going through a destructive midlife crisis, then The Stern Father will help keep order in your home. The Stern Father is also able to maintain a very sturdy and resilient mindset when his wife is having or had an affair... Although like we said earlier, if there is an ongoing affair, there will come a point where this husband will give an ultimatum. Many times that ultimatum comes sooner rather than later.

In some scenarios, The Stern Father may be better described like The *Patient* Father than the stern one, almost like a fusion with the 3rd archetype, The Loyal Hound, which we'll talk more about below. This would be like the father of the prodigal son in [Luke 15:11-32](#). This father has boundaries in his own home, but will permit his son to leave without a fight if that's what he wishes.

Good Leadership Archetype #2. The Mystery Man

"You want out? So be it."

If you can pull it off, this is one of the single most effective ways to get through to your wife when she wants out of the marriage.

The Mystery Man responds to his wife's desire for space by matching it with his own and refusing to pursue her. He says, *"You want space? Great! Have as much space as you want; I'll do the same."*

This sounds very counterintuitive on the surface, but there is a reason that this can be such an effective tool. In fact, it's actually pretty simple when you think about it...

Right now, your wife wants what she can't have.

By becoming The Mystery Man, your goal is to *become* the man she can't have. You're playing hard to get.

... The difference is, while you're playing hard to get, you're also building a life for yourself in case she never pursues you and the distance never goes away.

The Mystery Man matches his wife's distance from the marriage, but the difference between his distance and his wife's distance is that his heart stays in the marriage. Unlike his wife, The Mystery Man's ultimate desire is still for her to come back. But, until then, he assumes the worst. He assumes that the marriage is over and it's time to move on. He refuses to mourn for a marriage his wife wants to end, and instead he determines to start building a new life for himself immediately.

Here are some things that this type of husband would do:

Defining Characteristics of The Mystery Man

- The Mystery Man might make a point of going out at least as often as his wife; determined to match her time away from home with his own
- You are always positive and upbeat; your wife never sees you upset or down in the dumps. As far as she can tell, you're perfectly happy with her leaving. In fact, you barely even noticed.
- Never tell your wife where you're going, what you're doing or who you're doing it with. When she asks, you remain vague. You only give details when she presses, and even then you keep it minimal.

- Make yourself seem very unavailable... You're always busy, always have something to do, always in the middle of something.
- Despite the distance, you're always kind and cordial. You're never mean or dismissive, you're just "busy".
- You're not interested in arguing. Agree with her in everything and just move on. Don't get caught up in arguments or her blatant disregard of logic.
- Don't even *try* to convince your wife to stay; if she wants back in the marriage, fine. If she doesn't, fine. You're not going to waste your breath trying to make up her mind for her.
- Don't look for "talks" with your wife. Every conversation is kept short except the ones SHE starts. Don't invest yourself in the conversations you have with your wife; don't expect them to change anything.
- Find new things to do that you've never done before. Force yourself to be adventurous and social. You're never just sitting around at home unless you're working, sleeping, eating or hanging out with your kids.
- This type of leader still works to identify areas where he needs improvement as a man and husband. And he makes those improvements. But he ONLY lets his actions speak; he never tries to convince his wife of his changes. And he doesn't *expect* them to change anything.

Basically, becoming The Mystery Man makes you attractive again. It shows your wife very clearly that if she chooses to leave, she will *not* be leaving behind an unhappy, miserable husband. You WILL be happy without her and you WILL have a life without her.

Common Pitfalls for The Mystery Man

While The Mystery Man can be very effective at disrupting your wife's desires to leave the marriage, it can be very tricky to pull off. This is usually the most "unnatural" feeling archetype of the three listed in this chapter because it is the only time where your actions will say, in effect, "I don't care about you," while your words still say "I am here for you." (at least when your wife cares to hear them!)

There are a couple pitfalls with this type of leadership that you will have to be mindful of:

- **If you have kids, you must not treat them the same way that you are treating your wife.** You must continue to engage with them, make time for them and love

on them even more than you did before all of this started. Perhaps even more than is fair for you to do.

- **Be careful that you do not twist your heart towards the marriage to make it easier to stay distant.** Do not let your distance be fueled by bitterness or resentment, but rather by a keen awareness of what you can and can't control.
- **The Mystery Man has a tendency to refuse help.** Just because in your marriage you are pretending like nothing is wrong, does not mean that you can't get help or support from family and friends.
- **If you do not immediately feel your wife start to pursue you,** you may be tempted to believe it's because "she doesn't think I care about the marriage since I'm so distant." This is almost NEVER the case.
 - Every single time in recent memory that I've seen a Mystery Man do a 180° and start pursuing his wife before she's started pursuing him, it backfires. He learns the hard way that the reason she hadn't responded to his mysteriousness is because she's not ready to come back to the marriage. Her claims that she "didn't think you cared about me" are NOT the reason she hasn't come back. If she cared about you not caring, she would make an effort to change it and pursue you.
 - When your wife raises this concern that you've moved on from the marriage, calmly correct her and tell her that you love her and would gladly spend more time with her if she wanted. But you're not going to try and force it when you know it's not what she wants... You respect her too much to do that!
- **There is a delicate balance between distancing yourself from your wife and deliberately trying to hurt her or keep her away.** It gets even trickier once she's STARTED to pursue you, but hasn't fully come back to the marriage yet. You have to maintain your distance, but tone it down gradually as she shows more and more interest in you. Wean her off the space you're giving her until you're sure she's fully back in the marriage.

When Does The Mystery Man Work Best?

This type of leadership works best when your wife's chief desire is that she wants space, or when she has a "grass is greener" mindset.

Many times during a separation, especially if your wife is having a midlife crisis, her desires are driven by what she can't have. As we said earlier, this leadership archetype

plays on her desire for what she can't have; it makes you attractive because it makes you unattainable.

If your wife has a strong "grass is greener" mindset about the marriage, then this approach could be very good for you because it makes it so that YOU are the grass that is greener. YOU are out of reach, unattainable, something your wife can't have. You're unavailable and your time is accounted for... You don't have time for her and you're not interested in trying to make time for her unless SHE initiates it; you've got other stuff to do.

The type of men who do best with this style of leadership are the ones who are naturally independent, stubborn, and who are capable of controlling their emotions very well.

In order to make The Mystery Man work, you will sometimes have to do things that make you uncomfortable or uneasy. You will have to deliberately get out of the house and force yourself to not just give your wife space, but to take space for yourself too.

The Mystery Man can be fit to most separations. The one case where The Mystery Man really does *not* work is when you were the one to cause the separation. For example, I've had men come Inside the Haven who were actually the ones to first ask for divorce, but then several months later changed their mind and wanted their wife back. The Mystery Man would not be a good archetype for these men.

Case Study: Dale

Of the best examples I've seen of this type of unfazed Mystery Man leadership comes from a guy named Dale. Dale didn't start out as a good example, but once he realized how distant his wife had become, he grew into the ideal unfazed leader. I will let him tell you the story himself:

Stephen,

My wife and I have been married for 13 years and have an 11 year old son together. At first, everything was great between us. Over time, things started falling apart. Due to my wife attending school full time to become an RN and my ex-wife sucking as much child support out of me as possible, I had to work constant overtime hours at work to keep our family afloat financially. My wife was less than understanding about the obligations and felt ignored and neglected.

Over time, my wife pulled away from me emotionally and became very close with her sister. My wife comes from a Jewish family who by default hate any "outsiders" who join

the family. My wife and her sister shared their "husband hating" stories with each other on a weekly basis. This went on for about the past 5 years.

This year, her sister finally kicked out her alcoholic, drug addict, never-there husband. By the way, her sister is a drug addict too.

A few months later, my wife followed suit. It was on 10/12/15 that my wife told me she wants out of our marriage because of all her pent up resentment. My wife spewed so much hate for me. I've always sensed something was bothering her but she would never discuss it with me. It all came out at once. I was devastated to say the least. That's my background and here is where your emails came in to play.

I found Husband Help Haven and signed up for your emails. I learned from your emails that I was making all of the typical mistakes like begging for a second chance and smothering her. All it did was make her madder. I followed your advice and changed up my approach.

I completely gave her space and stopped talking about us. She had moved into our guest room; I gave her the master bedroom and I moved out on the couch because I know she hates the guest room. After 3 nights on the couch and leaving her alone, she brought me back into our bed. Even then, I still continued to give her space and do my own thing as much as possible.

During this time, I've changed my mindset from being hopeful that she will love me again to assuming that our marriage is over and there is nothing anyone can do to change it.

At the same time, I made changes in myself that she finally was able to tell me she needed from me. It made me feel better and eventually my wife's attitude toward me changed drastically. I am not out of the woods yet, but she does open up to me more, calls me babe, hugs and kisses me goodbye and talks about our future plans together.

I know she still needs more time to trust my changes are permanent and I am fine with that. I can't stress to your readers enough how important it is to give their wives space and even avoid giving them any attention at all for awhile. Thank you for all your great advice.

*Much manly love,
- Dale*

Ok, so that's Dale's initial story. But, I was so intrigued I asked him to share a few more details, including advice for other guys about how to deal with an negative outside

influence when your wife wants out, as well as tips for adopting the "let her go" mindset and how he gave her so much space.

Here was his follow up email:

Stephen,

To answer your first question, my sister-in-law has many of her own negative issues, including her own marriage. She decided to kick out her alcoholic husband and tried to get my wife to do the same to me so that they could "have fun being single together".

Soon after my wife said she wanted a divorce, I overheard my sister-in-law say some very negative, hateful and false things about me. I mentioned this to my wife expecting her to apologize for her sister's words, but instead she was extremely defensive of her sister and got mad at me for bringing it up!

*When my wife got that defensive, I guess that's when I knew I had to let her go because I realized that my wife was in the mindset that no matter what, she would go against me. **In her eyes, I was the enemy we were going to clash about everything.***

Realizing this helped me to not take everything personal. I stayed focused on the fact that she would make a fight happen every chance she had with me. I recognized that if she had an opportunity to hurt me or push me away, she was going to take it. So I avoided those situations, and when they happened anyways, I tried to keep myself from getting emotional with it.

I always told myself that there was nothing anyone could do to prevent us from getting divorced if my wife really wanted to. This took a lot of pressure off of me in the way of stress. I immediately started having a social life of my own. I made sure I went out a couple times a week and would only tell her I was "going out for a while," never any details. Sometimes I met friends for drinks and sometimes I simply went shopping or went for a long drive. She never asked where I went.

- I stopped begging for another chance.
- I stopped trying to fix us.
- I made the changes I needed to make.
- I gave her lots of space.
- I accepted it was over.
- I started working on my social life.
- I told her to stop embracing her resentment of me.
- I told her that no matter what, I will always love her.

Above all, I let things be and let my actions do my talking.

It wasn't long before my wife started talking to me about her sister in a negative way. I think my wife realized she would be losing a much better husband than her sister was losing. I essentially took on a positive, yes attitude about everything.

- She stopped picking fights.
- She stopped being angry.
- She appreciated the changes I was making but waiting to see if it lasts.
- She appreciated the space I gave her.
- She brought me back in our bedroom to sleep with her.
- She became resistant to her sister's negative influence.

We are back to being a couple again. We are taking it as slow as she needs us to. It's a lot like when we first started dating. It's like falling in love with each other all over again.

My advice for other men would be...

- 1. Trust and follow the advice on Husband Help Haven.**
- 2. Give her lots of space, almost to the point that she isn't there.**
- 3. Don't try to "fix" the marriage. Make the changes in yourself without telling her. She will notice.**
- 4. Take up running. Gets rid of stress, gets you back in shape.**
- 5. Accept there is nothing you can do to prevent divorce and try to be happy anyways.**
- 6. Start working on your single social life.**

*Thanks for all your help,
- Dale*

I'm not saying Dale is the perfect example of husbandly leadership. But, he's a great example of what The Mystery Man archetype looks like in practice and I hope you can learn from hearing his own experiences and realizations that led him to put it into practice. Hopefully that gives you a bit of insight into what this mindset could look like when applied to your marriage.

Good Leadership Archetype #3. The Loyal Hound

*"I will not keep you, but I also will not leave...
I will wait, unwavering with love."*

[Argos](#) was perhaps the most loyal canine in history; the original man's best friend. His tale comes from Homer's epic story, The Odyssey.

Odysseus bred Argos himself. In his days as a pup, Argos was the finest hunting hound ever seen. Strong, quick and with uncanny tracking ability. "There was not a wild beast in the forest that could get away from him once he was on its tracks."

Unfortunately, after only a couple years of companionship with his hound, Odysseus was called up to Troy to fight in the Trojan War and Argos was left behind at his estate.

Odysseus didn't come home for 20 years. The Trojan War lasted 10 years and his journey home was 10 years more. Over time Odysseus' estate fell into ruin. After the war ended, Odysseus was believed dead. His once-loyal friends and employees conspired to court his widowed wife in order to take over his homestead. Without the accountability of their employer, the servants grew lazy and Argos was neglected. This loyal dog was forced to make his bed on a dung heap.

For 20 years, Argos waited.

When Odysseus finally arrived home, the once-great Argos was nothing more than an old, mangy flea-ridden mutt. He was too weak to even stand up.

When Odysseus finally came home, he had to wear a disguise to safely get into his estate. But, despite being disguised as an old, filthy beggar, Argos recognized Odysseus immediately. Odysseus own best friend didn't recognize him, but Argos did. The old forgotten hound was too weak to run to his master, but he perked up his ears and wagged his tail. His master was alive, and he'd returned!

Sadly, Odysseus could not go to Argos because it would have given away his identity. Instead, he shed a tear. The most he could do was ask what happened to the noble hound before he had to enter into his own mansion to eventually

reclaim it and make his identity known. Moments later, after having seen his master alive one last time, Argos died.

Why am I telling you this story?

I've known several husbands over the years who demonstrated the same unwavering patience and willingness to wait as Argos did for Odysseus.

Common Characteristics of The Loyal Hound

The Loyal Hound is a husband who leads through patience...

- Unlike The Mystery Man, he does not pretend to feel any differently than what he truly feels – unconditional love for his wife.
- Unlike The Stern Father, he does not have any boundary apart from the oath he swore on his wedding day... 'Til death do us part.
- He has immense endurance and patience. Because on a big-picture level he has already made the decision that he will NOT leave the marriage no matter what, he stays strong through the daily ups and downs. He doesn't care what she does; he knows what HE is doing, and that's living up to the true meaning of unconditional love.
- He may wait months or even years for his wife's return to the marriage
- The Loyal Hound is never anything but loving, kind and accepting. Not to say he's a pushover, but he does his best never to be mean or bitter or apathetic (although sometimes in reality, a little apathy is the only way to survive).
- Accepts and expects that he will be the only one bearing the burden of the marriage and perhaps the family for the foreseeable future. This way he isn't surprised when his wife reinforces this expectation time and time again.

Do not let the romanticism of this idea lull you in – this is often an unrewarding and painful path to take. And sometimes it doesn't pay off the way that you want it to... Sometimes your wife never comes back. Sometimes she takes advantage of you. Sometimes she uses you as her safety net. There may be few small victories to celebrate.

Through it all, The Loyal Hound waits and he endures. Every day he wakes up and renews his unconditional love, acceptance and forgiveness of his wife. While he doesn't flaunt it, he also doesn't try to hide it. He's honest and transparent about what he wants and he will continue to be consistently affectionate no matter how many times he's been rejected.

The Loyal Hound outlasts oppression. That is his defining characteristic. You might think that the tale of Argos is a sad one, but really, the noble hound died victorious. Argos endured 20 years of neglect and misery, but on his death bed he saw his master return home alive and well. The hound died happy.

Common Pitfalls for The Loyal Hound

- **Dealing with frustration and impatience.** Guess what? Even the most patient man on earth would struggle to endure and stand by his unconditional love when faced with marriage crisis and rejection. Your patience will grow with time, and there will be times where you are pushed to your limits. In those moments you will struggle with frustration and impatience.
- **Coming to terms with moving on.** When The Loyal Hound is faced with divorce despite his best efforts, it can be very challenging for him to accept. Just because you are willing to wait forever for the marriage doesn't mean you have to deny the divorce is still a possibility.
- **Fighting off depression.** It is very easy for the loyal hound to fall into the victim. Just because you are patiently waiting inside your marriage doesn't mean you have to make your life revolve around waiting too. You can and should still do things outside the house, if nothing else to keep your emotions under control.
- **Coping with doubt and maintaining overall emotional control.** Because you will be faced with constant discouragement inside your marriage, it is very easy for the loyal hound to become discouraged or to let his emotions run rampant. Again, the loyal hound has a natural tendency to put more hope in his marriage than the other archetypes. This can have negative consequences if it's not kept in check.

When Does The Loyal Hound Work Best?

More than the other archetypes, The Loyal Hound leadership archetype is very dependent on the type of person you are. If you identify very strongly with this archetype, it probably fits well for you. If you don't, one of the other two is probably a better choice, or a fusion of archetypes that fits your own personality.

Some men are naturally very patient and seem to have a supernatural ability to endure neglect and rejection. Some men don't have this, and that's fine – they have other gifts, like the strength and confidence to lead like the Stern Father or the independence to lead like The Mystery Man.

Some men will read this description of The Loyal Hound and think, “Okay, yes, this is me.” For everyone else, I highly encourage you to identify with The Stern Father or The Mystery Man instead. Like I said earlier, this is not a pleasant or enjoyable road to take.

For Christians Considering The Loyal Hound

Many Christians will find that The Loyal Hound is a very Christ-like approach to marriage crisis. In fact, many of the men I’ve seen identify with this archetype have described it as “giving your wife over to Jesus” and trusting that it’s no longer in your hands.

Of course, I’m not saying that if you’re a Christian you should feel obligated to use this archetype or that the others are unbiblical... I’ve seen strong Christian men take on The Stern Father and The Mystery Man archetypes with equal love, respect and humility. It’s just that when I think about Jesus’ love for me, I can’t help but wonder how He could be so patient. Throughout my life, I’ve pushed God away time and time again. I’ve done deplorable things that I know made Him weep. And yet, He waits for me and is never far when I need Him. The way The Loyal Hound waits for his wife, the way he’s so willing to carry the marriage in the meantime reminds me of the poem, *Footprints in the Sand*, which illustrates how God does the same for us throughout our lives:

*One night I dreamed a dream.
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.*

*After the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,
there was only one set of footprints.*

*This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.
“Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,
You’d walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,*

there was only one set of footprints.

I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you

Never, ever, during your trials and testings.

When you saw only one set of footprints,

It was then that I carried you."

This is your approach to your marriage right now.

You are waiting, and continuing to walk alongside your wife even if she doesn't know it or recognize it. In the meantime, you will carry the marriage and you will carry it patiently.

You don't expect praise or recognition – you do it because you love your wife truly unconditionally.

With patience and love, The Loyal Hound can endure an ongoing affair. The Loyal Hound can endure an extreme, destructive midlife crisis. Sometimes, The Loyal Hound can even endure divorce, all without diminishing his love for his wife. For more information on being The Loyal Hound after divorce, see the chapter titled Hoping For the Future.

All 3 Good Leadership Archetypes Share These 3 Traits...

While each of the three good leadership archetypes you find about in this chapter have their own unique approach to handling marriage crisis, they all have a few traits in common. No matter which archetype you most identify with, even if you don't strictly identify with one of these three archetypes and believe that your approach to your marriage will be unique... These three traits will still be required in order for you to be the man you want to be.

Trait #1. They Are Focused On What They Can Control

The things that are under your control will stay the same regardless of which archetype you choose to identify yourself with. These three leadership archetypes are three different ways of making the most of the things that are already under your control.

Nothing about these archetypes changes the actual circumstances in your marriage... They are each a different way to respond to those circumstances.

No matter what you decide to do or how you decide to behave during your separation, stay focused on what you can control.

Trait #2. They Want the Marriage to Work

Even the distant Mystery Man would still reconcile up to the day that the divorce was finalized. Even the Stern Father would forgive his wife after she's broken the boundaries of the marriage if she stopped her affair and made a genuine effort to come back to the marriage.

It sounds obvious to say this, but no matter what style of leadership you choose to use throughout the crisis you're facing in your marriage, remember that your underlying desire is to see the marriage reconciled.

Again, I know this is obvious, but sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the archetype you've adopted for yourself to the point that you forget what your true goal is. The Stern Father shouldn't be so Stern that he becomes unmerciful. The Mystery Man should become so mysterious that he actually starts a relationship with another woman. The loyal hound must not let himself become so jaded that even if his wife came back, he would be unable to let go of the pain and suffering endured.

Trait #3. They Will Require Immense Strength & Forgiveness

Lastly, all three leadership archetypes are hard. None of these are easy to implement. Even if you find that one of these three archetypes really speaks to you and make sense to you on a guttural level, there will still be moments where you doubt yourself. There will still be moments where you feel like giving up.

It's okay and expected to have moments like this. The fact that you feel discouraged is not a reason to be discouraged. As we talked about earlier in this book, discouragement is a natural part of this process.

In order to maintain each one of the good leadership archetypes listed in this chapter, you will need inner strength and you will need to practice constant forgiveness. Otherwise, the bitterness, resentment and apathy will take hold, or the doubt will take over and cause you to spiral into depression. You must have the strength to keep your

emotions in check and not let the things you feel drive you to make poor decisions that are out of line with your archetype.

...

The conclusion to this chapter is still unwritten, but I didn't think you guys would mind since we've covered all the core concepts.