

## The De-Coder

In our newest book, *The Marriage Code*, we encourage couples to use “the code” God gives to your mate’s heart. The key to the code is The Holy Spirit. No one knows your mate like God, who created him/her, so no one can clue you in on what’s going on in your spouse’s heart as well as God’s Spirit can.

God’s Spirit works in connection with God’s Word and your heart. Often, something in the Bible will be exactly what you need to gain the access code or password to your mate’s heart.

Just recently, Bill and I found ourselves off rhythm with one another. I was frustrated by the many tasks still remaining on Bill’s to-do list that I thought should have been checked off. In short, I was afraid he would let me down.

I (Bill) was frustrated by what seemed to me to be unrealistic expectations. I was afraid that I would never be able to live up to her demands on me.

There had been an underlying cooling of the temperature of our relationship over a few days, and I (Pam) began to pray that God would show me who needed to change and own the issue. I secretly hoped it would be Bill so I’d get a heartfelt apology. I could then valiantly forgive him, and I wouldn’t have to change my to-do list for him!

I often listen to Walking in the Word music that I’ve downloaded on to my iPod. That day at the gym I was listening to the New Testament Experience, and there, piped into my headphones, was some wonderfully irritating insight.

Ephesians 4:1-3 was dramatically read into my heart: “As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

God’s Spirit gently asked me, *Have you been humble toward Bill or have you already decided it has to be his fault? Have you been gentle? Patient? Have you been bearing with him and all the pile of responsibilities on his list coming from all different directions? When was the last time you said thank you instead of barking out orders or emailing requests for action? Pam, have you made every effort to bless Bill? Every effort to encourage him? Every effort to lower his stress? Every effort to meet his emotional needs? You are a relationship specialist, so you know better. Have you really been living worthy of your calling? Pam, pause for a moment, right here in this gym, and pray. Ask Me what you can do for Bill that will help him feel My love, My plan, My hope. The way to your hope, Pam, is to meet Bill’s needs right now rather than have him meet yours.*

Overall, Bill and I try to be kind to one another in the workplace, and we both try to go “over the top” in our encouragement to each other. We have high respect for the baggage that is still being redeemed from our pasts, and we do not want to put more pressure than necessary on each other. However, the pressure of a looming deadline had taken the place of our positive interactions.

Fortunately, I knew this part of our marriage code and decided to put into action the message that God had been spoken into my heart. I called Bill up, took him to his favorite coffeehouse, and apologized. I told him the story of how God’s Spirit had instructed me, and then I listed off all the traits of his I appreciated but had been taking for granted. Emotional reconnection happened almost instantaneously. Physical connection, or Red-Hot Monogamy as we like to call it, happened that night behind our bedroom door. I, for one, am grateful to The Spirit, the great decoder for love and life.