

The Science and Art of Marriage: Maintaining a Flourishing Partnership in the Presidency



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2024 Presidents Institute Spouses and Partners Program
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Presenter

Carol Bruess, Chair CIC Spouses & Partners Taskforce,
Presidential Spouse, College of St. Benedict and St. John's
University (Minnesota)



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The Science and Art of Marriage: Maintaining a Flourishing Partnership in the Presidency

Carol Bruess, PhD

Author | Researcher | Professor

Professor Emeritus, University of St. Thomas, MN

First Spouse, College of St. Benedict & St. John's University

Chair, CIC Partners and Spouses Taskforce

**“The richest relationships are lifeboats,
but they are also submarines that
descend to the darkest and most
disquieting places ...”**

Maria Popova

What you *practice* becomes *stronger*

micro-dynamics

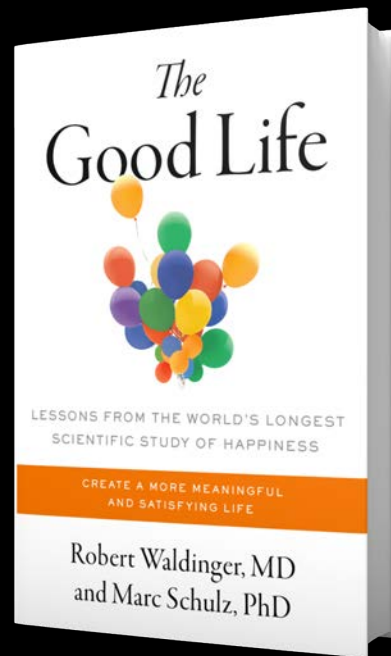
LITTLE things that make
BIG differences in RELATIONSHIPS

HEALTH + HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



TED

75-year Harvard Study, Dr. Robert Waldinger



What Makes a Good Life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness



PLAY

GOOD NEWS:
MICRO-CHANGES
MATTER

DRS. JOHN & JULIE GOTTMAN

U OF WASHINGTON

GOTTMAN RELATIONSHIP INSTITUTE

Dr. John Gottman

Dr. Julie Schwartz Gottman



5 COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORS

>90%

CRITICISM

CONTEMPT

DEFENSIVENESS



STONEWALLING

BELLIGERENCE

FIRST 3 MINUTES!

HARSH START vs. SOFT START

ACKNOWLEDGE

AFFIRM

ADMIRE

APPRECIATE

DAILY RITUALS OF CONNECTION



THE RATIOS

8 : 1

5 : 1

THE BID

"I want to feel *connected* to you."



THREE RESPONSE OPTIONS

TURN TOWARD


TURN AWAY

TURN AGAINST

50%
82%

BY THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING MARRIAGE WORK

JOHN M. GOTTMAN, PH.D.
and Joan DeClaire




The Relationship Cure

A **5** Step Guide to Strengthening
Your Marriage, Family, and
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ODDS OF RE-BIDDING?

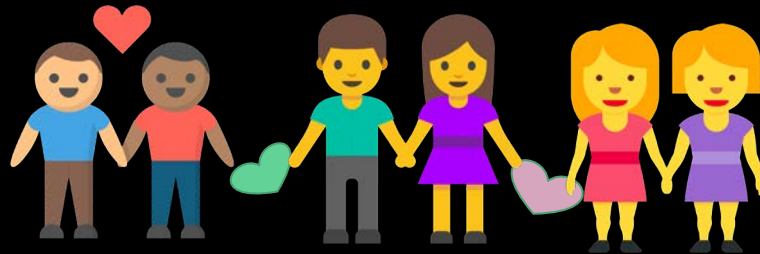
ALMOST ZERO



“Complex, fulfilling and satisfying relationships don’t just suddenly appear in our lives ... each one is made up of many smaller exchanges. They develop one encounter at a time ... like cells of the body or bricks of a house.”

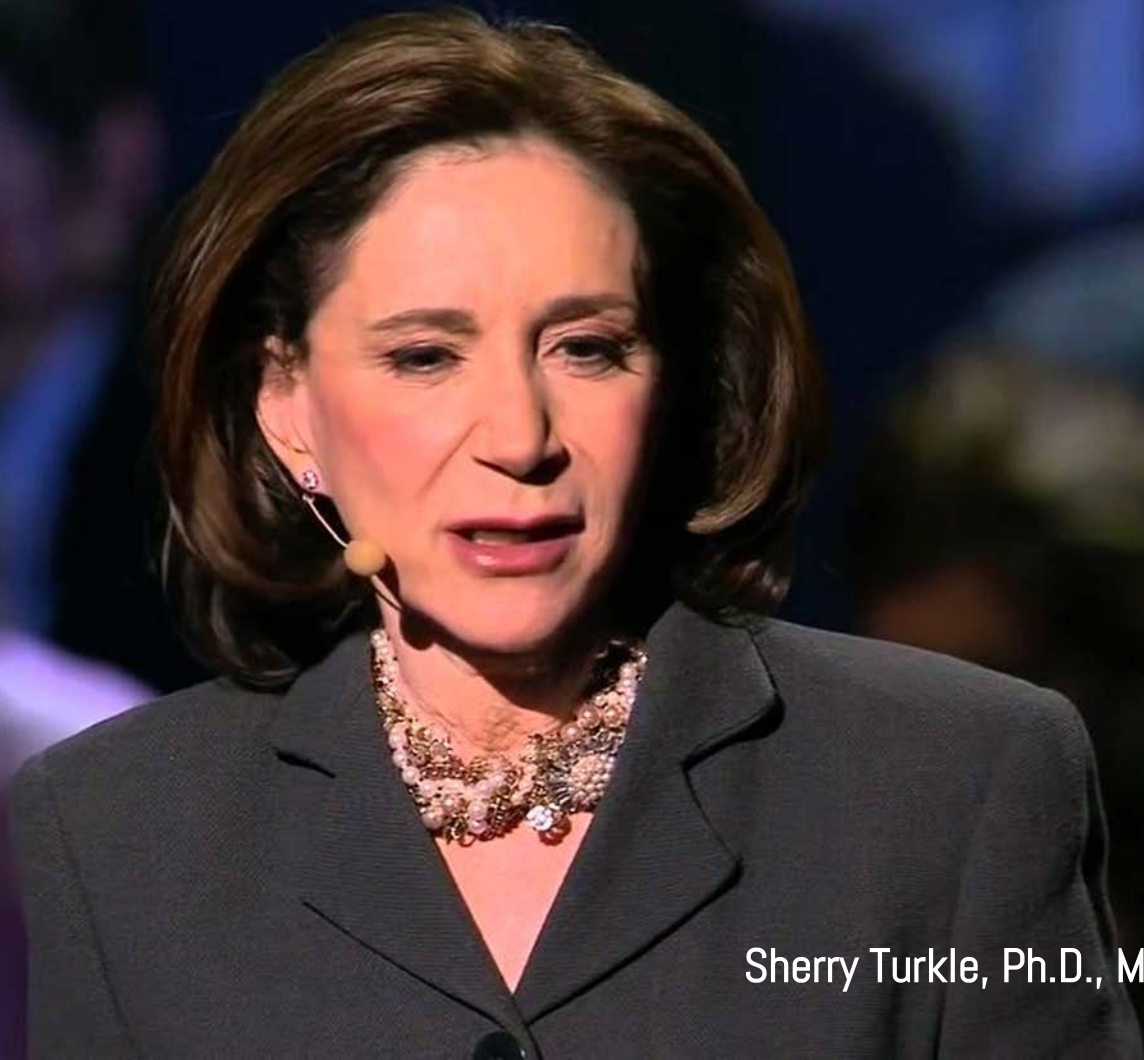
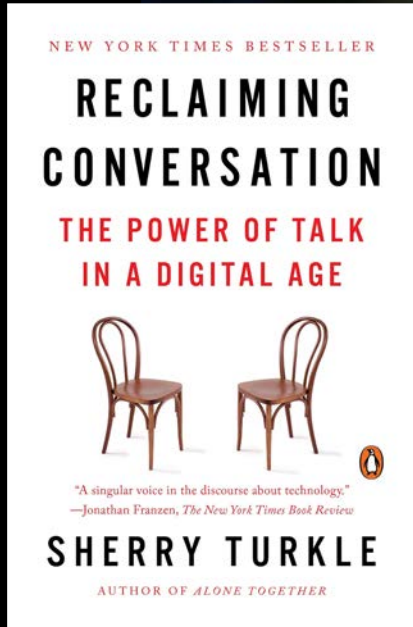
- Dr. John Gottman

What you *practice* becomes *stronger*



CAROL  TECH

CAROL  CONCERNED



Sherry Turkle, Ph.D., MIT

“We rarely give each other our full attention anymore.”





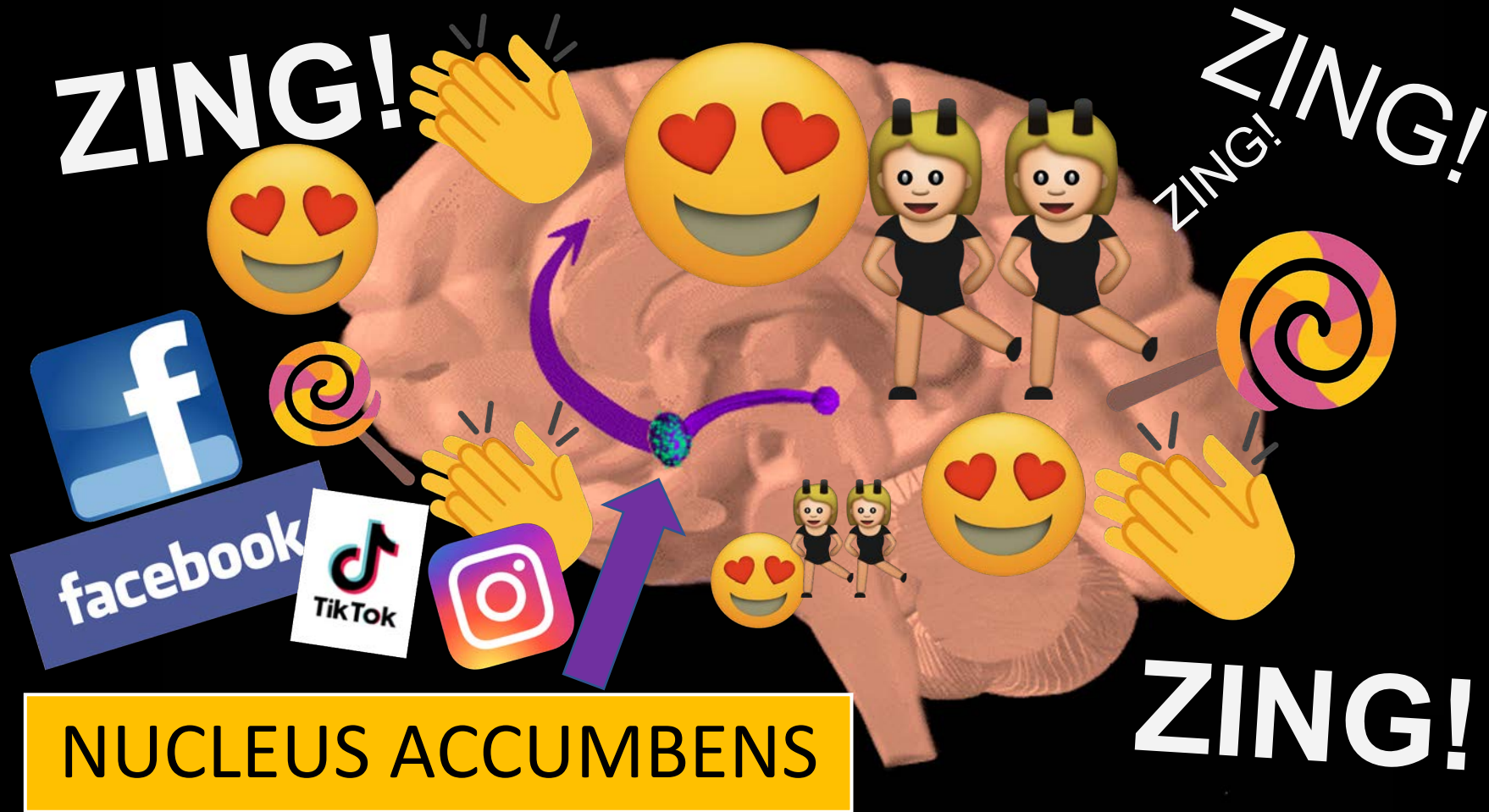
"BORING BITS"

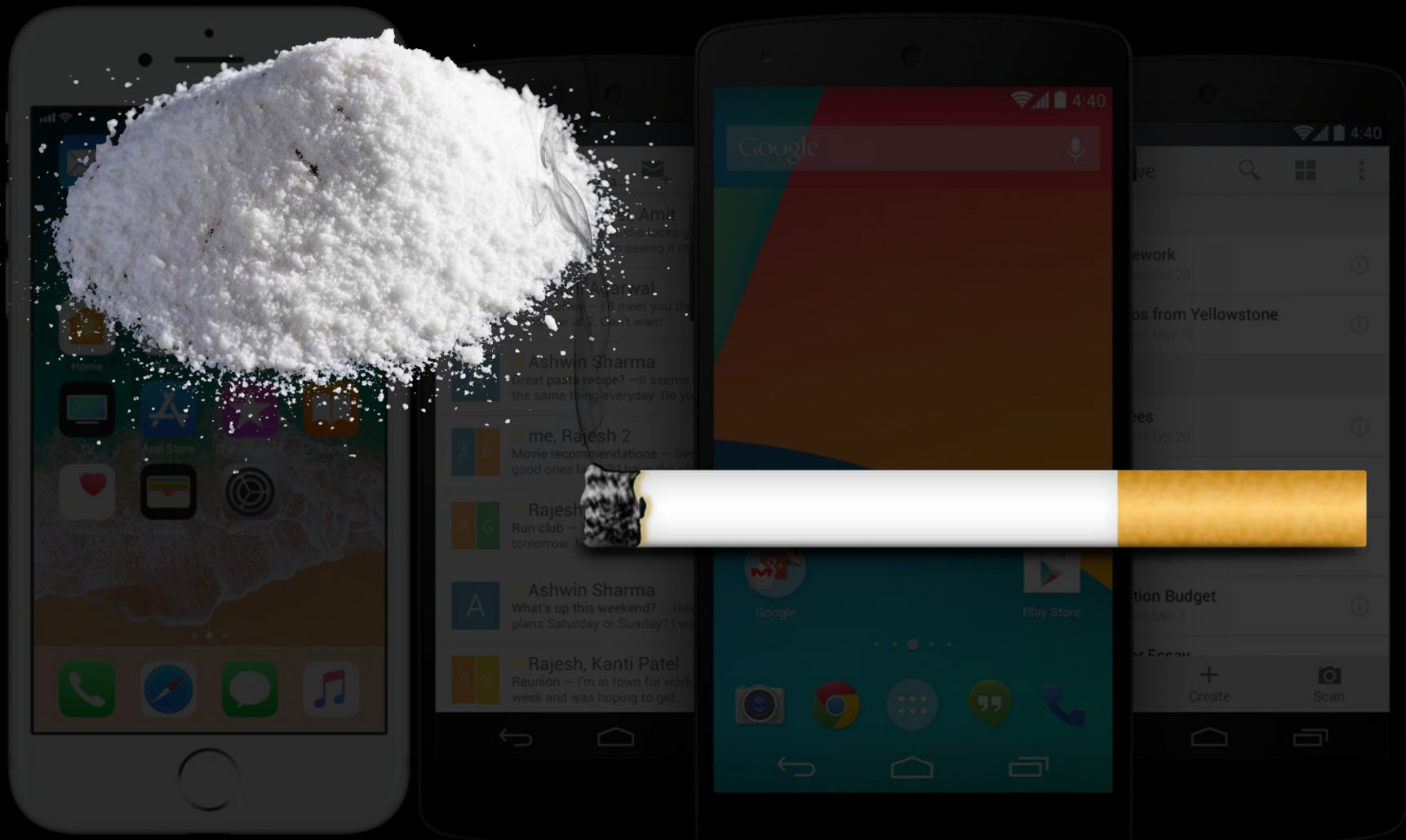
EMPATHY

40% ↓ 👁 👁

8 BILLION TIMES A DAY







"CAN'T LIVE"

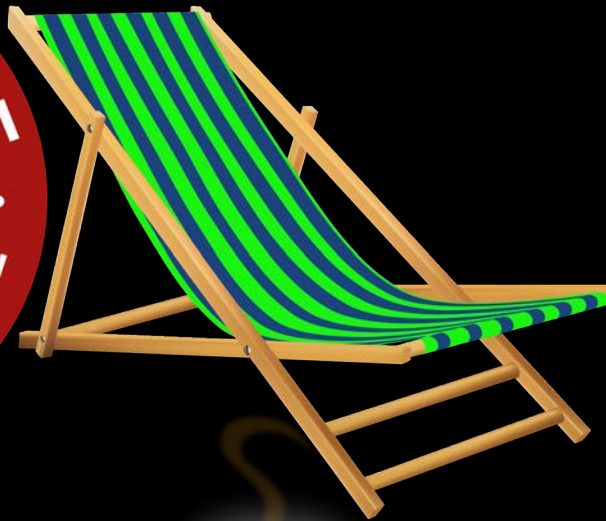


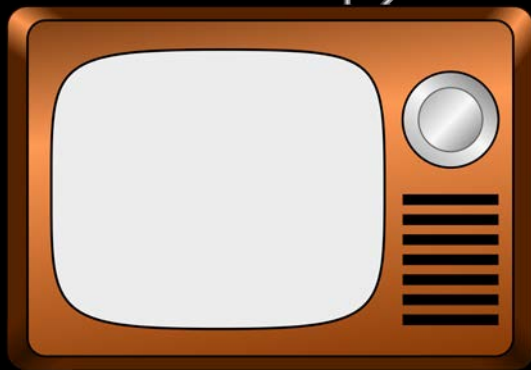
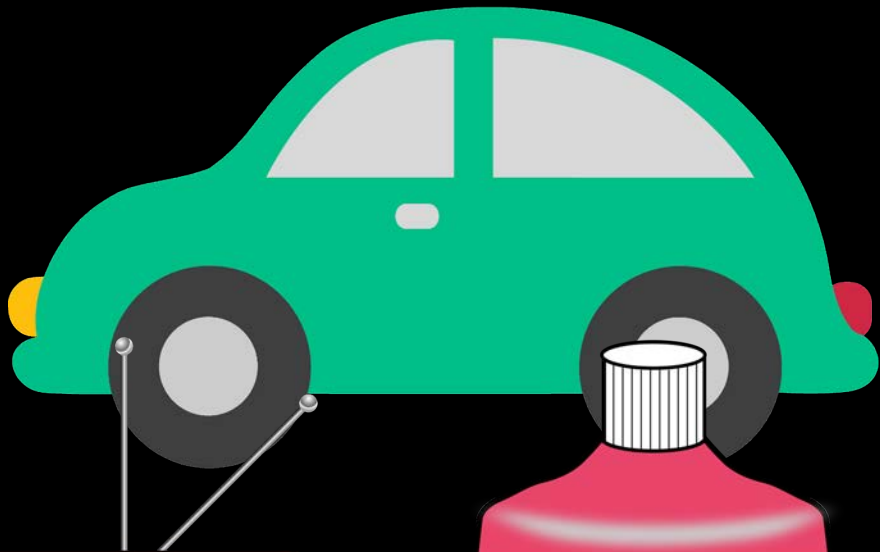
53%



33%







7 minutes (#zap!)

(Random
image
stolen
from
the internets)



Timothy Wilson, Ph.D., University of Virginia—Charlottesville



We are at the HELM of our
relationSHIPS

What you **PRACTICE** is
KEY to a **FLOURISHING** marriage
AND presidency.



Q&A Session



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