***Recap of 8/4/13:***

*(The following is based upon an article entitled* ***“Why Marriages Fail”*** *by Kerby Anderson of Probe Ministries International,* [*www.probe.org*](http://www.probe.org)*.)*

*1. The third of the four toxic communication patterns (Escalation and Invalidation are the first two) is called “Negative Interpretations.” It includes assigning negative motives to your mate’s actions and or words, making negative assumptions; as well as “mind reading”. According to Anderson, “Mind reading occurs when you assume you know what your partner is thinking or why he or she did something.” The danger in this is that “research shows that in distressed marriages there is a tendency to discount the positive things they see, attributing them to causes such as chance rather than to positive characteristics of the partner.” The antidote for Negative Interpretation is re-assess what you think about your partner’s motives. Are you being too negative, why not give them the benefit of the doubt. Secondly, push yourself to look for positive evidence. Don’t mind read. (1 Corinthians 4:5; Luke 6:41)*

*2. The fourth toxic communication pattern is “withdrawal and avoidance.” It is defined as: “unwillingness to get in or stay in a discussion that is too threatening.” It has two manifestations: physically leaving the room or situation, and “tuning off” or “shutting down” emotionally. It is taken by the other partner as a lack of caring. “Couples who want to have a good marriage must learn to stay engaged.” It is crucial to not let avoidance become a pattern in your marriage. Paul urged believers to keep short accounts, to reconcile their difference in the same day if possible as a goal for which to strive. (Ephesians 4:25-27).*

*3. In dealing with conflict there are five discernible patterns, according to Dr. H. Norman Wright. There is withdrawal, winning (where a person looks out primarily for their own interests and must win at all costs), yielding (yielding one’s desires to avoid the confrontation allowing the other person to win), compromise (both parties give up something to get a workable solution, but may lead to sacrifice of important principles or dissatisfaction). Of the five, withdrawal and avoidance is the lowest in achieved needs and concern for the relationship. The person has in effect checked out of the relationship.*