

14th June Couples Talk

Lessons from Lockdown with Dave & Charli Mathew

Dave and Charli had a year of challenges: both doctors, finding out they were expecting, having parents/in-laws move in with them, getting covid, becoming parents, moving house. All those things are challenging enough in 'normal' circumstances, against the backdrop of a pandemic and lockdown, the pressure in their cooker rose to very high levels.

All of us will have had different pressures in our lives throughout this pandemic.

- What have been the particular pressures for you?
- Which things have made you fearful?
- How have you experienced community during lockdown?
- Have you been challenged to consider life in a different way when your usual securities are stripped away? Here is an article you may find useful, it was written in the earlier stages of lockdown.

<https://www.agape.org.uk/when-all-is-stripped-away/>

Any challenging times can bring to the surface things we don't like about ourselves and each other. Dave & Charli talked about having lots of concentrated time together and learning new things about each other during this time.

- What new things have you learned about yourself? Your spouse?
- How have you changed during the past 15 months?
- Which difficult things have been exposed?
- Which things have drawn you together?
- Which things have pushed you apart?
- Are there conflicts you need to resolve?

Dave & Charli talked about the feeling of not being in control, particularly as Freddie's arrival was more imminent. They found that being honest about how they were feeling and acknowledging their own helplessness, not just

to each other but also to God, was helpful. Faith is not about having all the answers but trusting God *in spite* of the circumstances.

- What feelings do you need to express? To your spouse to God?
- If you haven't ever thought about talking to God about how you're doing, now is a good time to try! Not sure where to start? Here's a prayer you could try saying:

“ Father God, I acknowledge my helplessness and that I am not in control. I can't easily make sense of my own feelings but please see my heart and help me make sense of how I feel. Meet me at my point of need and help me to know your love for me. Give me strength where I am weak, hope where I feel despair, comfort where I feel pain”

With the benefit of hindsight, we can look back over the past 15 months and see where things have worked for good.

- Which things are you thankful for?
- Which things have surprised you?
- Which things do you grieve?

As we come out of lockdown, it's helpful to take time to reflect on its impact. We've created a 'debrief' for you to work through to help in this process.

In the broadest sense, debriefing is just a time to pause, remember, and tell the story about a particular event or season.

It's a time to connect with our own soul and, if you're a christian, with Jesus.

In debriefing, we look at all that has happened in a season and ask “What is here to see, Lord? What do I need to resolve? What can I celebrate? What do I carry forward with me? How have I been shaped?”

You can find this debrief here: [Relationship Reflections](#).

