

Defensiveness

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concealing the wrong we've done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicating that, "It's just the way I am"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taking offense (i.e. being thin skinned) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being highly critical; blaming others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tending to play dumb or act confused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Counterpunching; backstabbing; gossiping; recruiting others to your side
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needing to be right/ wanting the last word 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flooding with information or justification; lengthy explaining and rationalizing that confuses/distracts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical or verbal attacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Having a sudden onset of illness or fatigue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playing the victim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acting crazy or eccentric
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching or preaching to them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intellectualizing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being too rigid and inflexible ('when hell freezes over') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being self-deprecating/public self-loathing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being in denial (there's no problem) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being saccharine sweet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Withdrawal from relationship or from negotiations; suddenly having many things needing your attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hearing only what you want to hear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cynicism/sarcasm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bitterness/grudge holding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trivializing their concerns w/ humor/ making fun of them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pretending to already know something rather than opening up to what they have to say.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expressing sour grapes (didn't want this anyway) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refusing to listen

1. What defenses have you experienced from your friend/spouse? Which ones really get to you?
2. What defenses do you tend to use?
3. When are you most likely to be defensive?
4. What behaviors in them seem to trigger your defensiveness? Can you remember a time when you dropped your defenses in the middle of them criticizing you? If so, what happened then?
5. Think of a situation where you responded defensively: How could you have been more open; listened more actively or disclosed more about yourself? What alternative responses could you imagine substituting instead?
6. What's the payoff for using defenses (i.e. What do your defenses actually protect)?
7. What role might God play in modifying your defensiveness?