HUSBAND HELP PODCAST · EPISODE 40 · CHEAT SHEET

When She Says "I Love You, But I'm Not In Love With You"

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She's telling the truth. It's just not the whole truth.

"I love you" means she really does think well of you. "I'm not in love with you" means she's convinced something essential is missing... and it's built so you can't argue with it.

"I love you..."

- You're a good person. I have good reason to see you positively.
- On the face of it, this marriage is "good enough."

Also sounds like: *"You're a great father." "You're my best friend."*

"...but I'm not in love with you."

- I'm leaving for reasons I can't explain.
- I know I don't have a good reason, and I'm still going.

Also sounds like: *"I'm just not happy." "There's something missing." "We're just roommates."*

THE TRUTH YOU SENSE

- **It's a dead end, on purpose.** You can't explain "in love", yet no other reason is ever required.
- **It runs both ways.** Those same words are her own explanation to herself, which gives her a reason to not dig deeper.
- **A watched heart never falls back in love.** She's been checking for the feeling, not finding it... Then every day without it "proves" it's gone and puts more pressure on tomorrow.
- **You're right that love is a verb.** The grass is indeed greener where you water it.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK

Each of these meets one half of the sentence at face value, and puts you in direct opposition to her.

1. **Demanding the real reason.** "That can't be the whole story." You're right, it isn't. Pressing on it just highlights the disconnection.
2. **Guilt-tripping.** "You're really gonna leave our kids? You're gonna destroy our finances?" By the time she says it, she already knows.
3. **Pushing to work on the marriage.** Counseling, a book, a plan. "Not in love" is exactly what you say when you believe work can't bring the feeling back.

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

1 Work with the "I love you" part.

Swim with the current. Meet her where she's still open: friendship, fatherhood, normal family stuff that feels good. If you can text and have fun together, do that. Let the in-love part just sit for a while.

2 Keep the pot unwatched.

You can't force the feeling back, and it's a symptom, not the first thing to fix. Take the pressure off. Help her put the measuring stick away. Lead the way in being okay with slow.

3 Rebuild the goodwill.

More consideration, more partnership, more friendship, more platonic intimacy. You go first. Small and platonic is fine: "Tell me about your day." A cup of coffee. "Take the night off from bedtime. I'll handle the kids tonight."

THE HEADSPACE, NOT A SCRIPT *"I don't want you to have to stay in a marriage that's missing something that is critically important to you... All the same, I'm fine doing this slowly... In the meantime, let's just have life be easy for us. Can we do that?"*

"Stop trying to get her to be in love with you. Work with the love that is still there."

Everything here builds on the fundamentals of getting through separation. My free Separation Roadmap walks you through them.

Get the free Separation Roadmap → husbandhelphaven.com/map