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Impact Iowa's Heroes is investing in five Iowa first responder and military couples to be trained as life and marriage coaches by the **International Christian Coaching Institute** to assist Impact Iowa's Heroes constituents. *Let us introduce one of our couples!*



CODY & BRANDI ECKLES

Cody and Brandi Eckles are from Harlan, Ia. They have been married for 13 years and have 3 daughters. Cody is the Chief Deputy for the Shelby County Sheriff's Office and Brandi is a 5th grade teacher at Harlan Community Schools. Brandi is also a coach of numerous sports. They are active in their church and have been active with Impact Iowa's Heroes since its inception. They believe that first responder marriages are unique and hope to help couples keep their marriages from adding to the already stressful life of being a first responder.

DATE NIGHTS

On the evening of February 25th, Aaron and Tricia Groves hosted a date night in Newton where 20 first responder and military couples gathered. Spahn and Rose Lumber of Newton generously sponsored dinner! It was a great night of connection and fellowship as hero couples from around Central Iowa gathered to strengthen their marriages. The coaching video and materials of Dr. Gary and Barb provided relevant coaching and opportunities for discussion and connection. It was a wonderful evening!

On March 5th, Matt Proctor, the Marion Police Department Chaplain, hosted a date night in his home for 4 hero couples. Impact Iowa's Heroes sent the materials, they enjoyed dinner together and went through the coaching videos by Dr. Gary and Barb, as well as coaching done by Aaron and Tricia. Matt shared that it went great and there was immediate interest in the September Getaway event. Two of the couples said they'd host a date night in the future. Great job Matt as we continue to provide relevant marriage coaching across the state of Iowa. If you are interested in hosting a date night, please contact Aaron at aaron@iaheroes.org.





IMPACT IOWA'S HEROES



Marriage Getaway

save the date

September 23-24, 2022

Watch your inbox for information on upcoming date night events and activities in your area! We hope to see you at the Impact Iowa's Heroes Marriage Getaway 2022 in West Des Moines.

MINUTE FOR MARRIAGE

One minute of reading to strengthen your marriage

In their latest video coaching session, Dr. Gary and Barb talk about the importance of using “I” statements versus “you” statements. This is important to remember when telling our spouse how we feel. A lot of us can become defensive when we are accused of making someone feel a certain way. It doesn't mean we don't make them feel that way, but it does mean we put up defensive walls that can inhibit our ability to communicate and work through conflict in order to connect. Using “I” statements can prevent those walls from automatically going up.

For example, Officer Johnson goes home on break during a patrol shift and he shows up late, again. He was late because he had gotten dispatched to a call that required his attention. When Officer Johnson walks in the door, he finds out that his family had already eaten and his wife is annoyed. She says, “You are never home on time, I am getting sick of not knowing when to cook and to have the food warm so we can eat as a family.” Mrs. Johnson was frustrated that her husband was late, her frustration was with his job, but what she said, placed the blame on him. Officer Johnson's walls went up and some conflict of words ensued.

Now let's take a different approach to the same situation, using “I” statements. Mrs. Johnson expresses her feelings, “I feel frustrated with your job because sometimes you are not home on time for dinner. I want us to sit down as a family and eat together.” Fortunately, they were able to work through the conflict and come to an understanding that his job is unpredictable and that it was okay for his family to eat without him. This approach, of using “I” statements, allows for couples to communicate to each other without feeling accused. Walls aren't put up, communication is more effective, and working through the conflict ultimately leads to connection.

Be vigilant and be safe,

Aaron Groves
IIH Program Coordinator

