

Is There a Megalodon in Your Marriage?

Without warning, you begin to get the eerie feeling something is not right. A dark shadow looms far beneath the surface of the still waters, lurking in the deepest depths of the sea.

It's a creature from your worst nightmares, with jaws that bite through the skull of a prehistoric whale as easily as you bite through a blueberry. Seventy feet and 50 tons of sheer terror stalk the space just below the calm surface before suddenly breaking through and wreaking havoc on everything in sight. This is the megalodon.

Unfortunately, there are times when this prehistoric megalodon swims out of the ocean and into my marriage. A megalodon in marriage is a recurring issue that develops into a relational predator. When it comes to my marriage, the creature that attacks me all too often is the megalodon of discontentment.

When Susan does something nice for me, I want her to do it more. When Susan does something I ask her to do, I ask her to do something else. Sometimes I'm just not satisfied with what I've got. But I should be grateful. So I'm working hard to keep this vicious predator at bay.

Here are four steps to address the megalodon in your marriage:

1. Identify it. Everyone's got megalodons in marriage. Start by identifying exactly what yours is. For example, as I mentioned, one of the megalodons in my life is discontentment.

2. Understand it. Once you've identified the problem, take time to study the issue and understand where it comes from. In my case, I know that megalodon is born from my selfishness.

3. Track it. Now it's time to track the megalodon's patterns.

Be on the lookout for recurring warning signs so you will more easily see your megalodon approaching. Over the years, I've found that I sometimes project how I'm generally feeling upon Susan. For example, if things are going well at work, then I'm content with Susan. But if times are tough, that discontentment will show its teeth in our marriage.

4. Avoid it. So you may not be able to destroy this beast, but you certainly can take actions to avoid it. Avoiding the megalodon in my marriage requires discipline on my part. Once I see it approaching, I need to remember not to project my feelings upon Susan and make her feel like it's her job to bring me joy and contentment in life. I also need to find joy in the daily grind by developing an attitude of gratitude, being content with what I have and being God-dependent in everything.

What is a megalodon in your marriage, and what are you doing about it?