Catching the Reach

BEING A SAFE PLACE TO LAND

> *When someone hands you their heart,*
> *everything else can wait.*

A reach only builds the bond if it gets caught, and catching is its own skill. It is different from fixing, explaining, or even agreeing. When your partner shows you something soft (a fear, a hurt, a need), the moment asks for one thing first: to be received. Turn toward them. Put everything down. Let what they said land on your face.

The classic fumbles all come from good intentions. The Fixer jumps to solutions before the feeling has been felt. The Lawyer explains why the hurt is a misunderstanding. The Matcher counters with their own pain: “Well, I've been lonely too.” Each one says, without meaning to, your soft spot is a problem to be handled, not a person to be held.

Catching is simple, and it sounds like this: “Come here. Tell me more. That matters to me. I'm glad you told me.” Sometimes it isn't words at all. A hand. An arm. Staying close. What you are sending is the bedrock answer: you can bring me your tender things and I will handle them with care. Every reach you catch teaches both of you the same lesson. It is safe to be known here. Repeated enough, that lesson is most of the cure.

PRACTICE THE CATCH

1. When your partner shows something soft this week, stop moving. Face them. Screens down.
2. First response is acknowledgment only: “That sounds really painful.” “I'm glad you told me.”
3. Ask one gentle question: “What's the hardest part of that for you?”
4. Offer closeness before solutions: “Do you want comfort, or ideas, or both?”
5. Afterward, ask: “Did that land the way you needed?” Take notes for next time.

WHEN IT’S HARD

If your partner's pain involves something you did, catching gets twice as hard. Receiving their hurt can feel like signing a confession. It isn't. “I can see I hurt you, and I want to hear all of it” is not an admission that you're a bad partner. It is what a good partner does.

TO SIT WITH

Which fumble is your specialty, the Fixer, the Lawyer, or the Matcher? What drives it?

Describe a time someone truly caught you. What exactly did they do?

OUR INTENTION THIS WEEK

Something small you can both actually do this week.

WITH YOU ON THE JOURNEY,

Dr. Mark Gregory Karris