

Valentines help others create happiness

Couple offers 4-week course on relationships

By Joan Conrow
Kaua'i People

Wendy and Cary Valentine are putting their doubts to work.

Instead of letting those negative thoughts derail them, they've turned them into coaches and trainers that are helping them achieve their dreams.

And that includes a happy marriage that's still as juicy as when they first met.

Now they're sharing the tools they've developed with others through a four-week "relationship makeover" course that covers the seven steps needed for a "forever vibrant" relationship.

"If we can do this, anybody can," Cary says.

"We were the worst of the worst," adds Wendy, noting that she and Cary, musicians who met in 1988, were considered by many to be the perfect couple. In fact, each was unhappy, and as a result, their marriage was

going flat.

"We were stuck in a never-ending loop of doubt," Cary says. Like many men, he was worried about his sexual prowess and ability to make money, while Wendy, like many women, was insecure about her body and attractiveness.

"We were both self-absorbed in our doubts," Wendy says. "But we moved through that

and now we can look at who the other person really is."

Their approach is based on several premises, including "the power of choice," Cary says. "I realized that if I'm creating

unhappiness, I can create happiness. I started to choose what diet of thoughts I allowed in my life."

To do that, they began "turning their doubts inside out," he says. "When the doubts come up, you use that as a reminder that you want to do the opposite."

Another important component is what they call "complete and delete," or deciding you're ready to move beyond the limiting details of your own sad story that's built on the wrongs,



photo by JOAN CONROW

Relationship coaches Wendy and Cary Valentine.

hurts and disappointments suffered in the past.

"Once you let your story go, then it's over and it frees you up," Cary says. "It's simple, but very effective."

While the course is built on five practical exercises aimed at "ending our personal wars, putting down our weapons, our harshness toward ourselves," Cary says, it also gets into couple issues, including how men and women approach relation-

to engage in "sandbox talk," where they openly share their doubts, fears, insecurities and worries as a way to build intimacy, trust and support.

"The cool thing is you begin to work as a team to help each other to be your very best," Wendy says. "We can either crush each other's dreams because of our own personal fears or we can step out of it and realize we can each shine on stage."

That leads to why the Valentines chose to name their course, which is now in the process of becoming a book, the "Cinderella Effect." They were influenced by the 1957 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, in which Cinderella believes so strongly in her dream of going to the ball and meeting the prince that she makes it come true.

"We need dreams," Wendy says.

"And a lot of people bury their dreams alive, while they're still warm," adds Cary.

Many people dream of being happy and having a good relationship, he says, and both are possible if they take steps to "get real, bring our vulnerabilities out, break that shell. We've created the misery we live in, but that can change."

For more information, call 828.6863 or e-mail cinderellaeffect@gmail.com.

ships differently.

Women need "heart action" to get the sex going, Cary explains, while "the sexual connection creates a heart connection for the man. Guys know women are the power. If she comes to him with sweetness, rather than sourness, he flourishes."

"Especially if she brings love-making to it," adds Wendy.

"Then he'll do anything for her." They also teach couples how