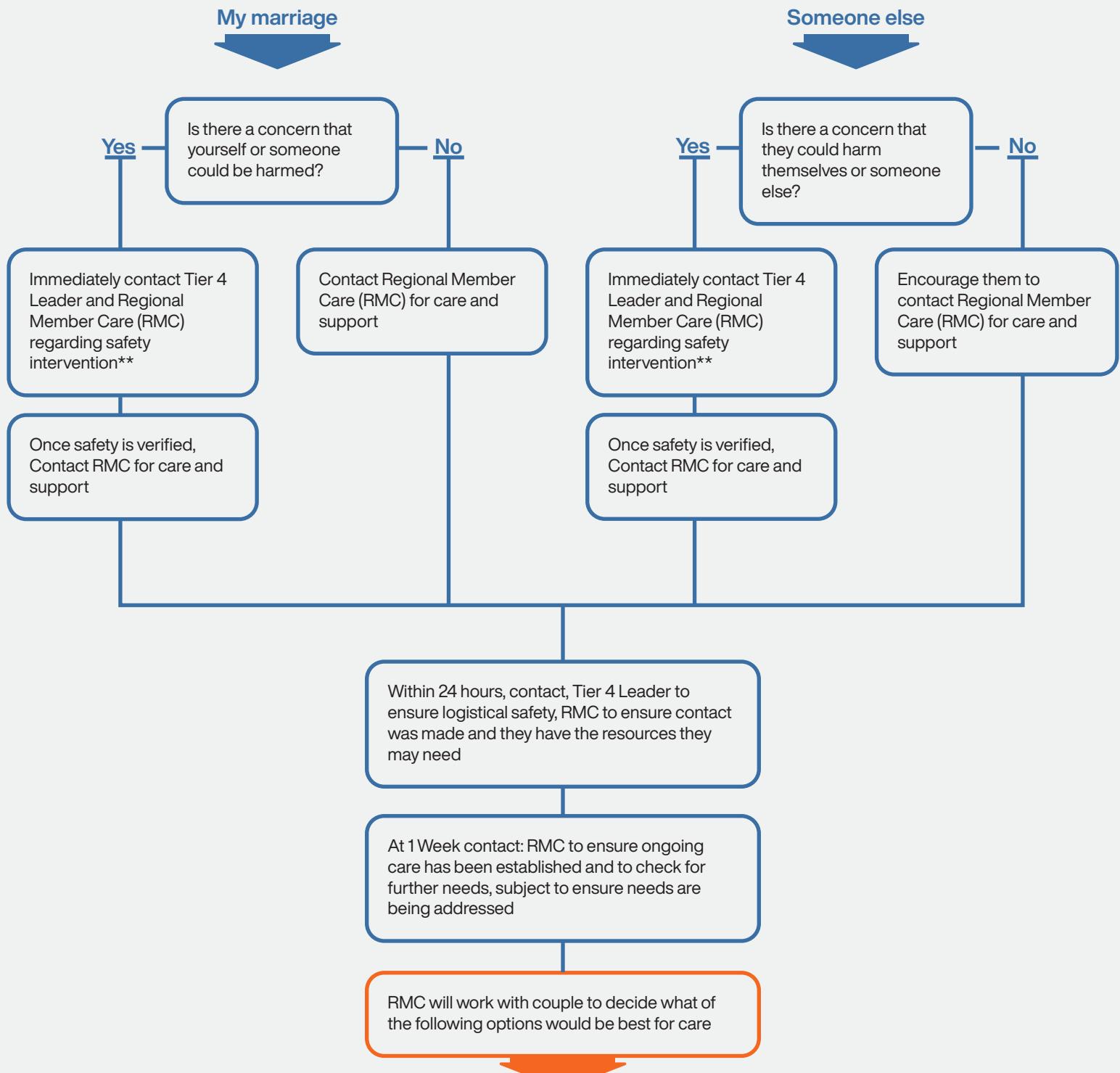


# Are you concerned about your marriage or someone else's?

(Consider taking marriage self assessment tool if it is your marriage)



- Accountability partner/friend
- Hope Restored

- Pastoral Counseling
- Prepare/Enrich

- Professional Counseling
- Other

**Marriage in crisis defined:** A marriage is considered “in crisis,” when one or both spouses are experiencing prolonged and unresolved conflict, disconnection, or distress that threatens the stability, health or continuation of the relationship, and when the couple’s usual coping strategies are no longer sufficient to restore safety, trust, or intimacy.

In a cross-cultural context signs of a marriage in crisis could be:

- Emotional withdrawal or persistent hostility
- Ongoing breakdowns in communication
- Erosion of trust (betrayal, secrecy, infidelity)
- Severe stress from ministry, cultural adaptation, or isolation
- Escalating patterns of conflict without resolution.

# **\*Marriage in Crisis Self-Assessment Tool**

To help you identify when your marriage may need focused attention, intervention or outside support.  
Instructions:

Read each Statement and mark:

- Yes—if this describes your marriage often or currently.
- Sometimes—if this happens occasionally but rarely causes concern.
- No—if this rarely or never happens.

## **Section 1: Emotional and Relational Health**

1. We have ongoing unresolved conflicts that resurface regularly.
2. Communication often feels tense, hostile or shut down.
3. One or both of us feel emotionally disconnected or “alone” in the marriage.
4. Affection, kindness, and intimacy have noticeably decreased or disappeared.
5. We no longer enjoy spending time together outside of ministry tasks.

## **Section 2: Trust and Safety**

1. One or both of us feel unsafe being emotionally vulnerable.
2. There is secrecy, dishonesty, or betrayal (emotional or physical infidelity).
3. We withhold important feelings, needs, or information from each other.
4. One or both of us avoid coming home or spending time together.

## **Section 3: Stress and External Pressures**

1. Ministry, cultural adaptation, or financial stress is straining our relationship.
2. We have limited or no support system where we are serving.
3. One or both of us feel isolated from friendships or mentors.
4. Fatigue, burnout, or over commitment had left little energy for our relationship.

## **Section 4: Conflict Patterns**

1. Arguments escalate quickly, with no resolution or repair.
2. We “stonewall,” (withdraw) or give silent treatment during conflict.
3. Disagreements lead to personal attacks or contempt.
4. We avoid discussing important issues to prevent fights.

## **Section 5: Red Flags for Urgent Help**

If any of these are Yes, immediate intervention is recommended:

- Physical, verbal or emotional abuse.
- Threats of separation or divorce.
- Addiction to compulsive behaviors that harm the marriage.
- Ongoing infidelity.
- One or both spouses experiencing suicidal thoughts.

### **Scoring Guide:**

- **0-4 “Yes” responses**– Normal ups and downs. Stay attentive, keep nurturing connection.
- **5-8 “Yes” responses**– Strain is emerging. Consider seeking mentoring, counseling, or a marriage retreat.
- **9-12 “Yes” responses**– Relationship is at high risk. Seek professional counseling and member care support soon.
- **13+ “Yes” responses**– Marriage in crisis. Immediate intervention is needed.

\*\*A marriage safety intervention checklist primarily focuses on addressing and mitigating domestic violence within a relationship, and promoting the safety and well-being of the victim. It is a critical tool for those experiencing abuse and for professionals assisting them.

## **1. Recognizing and assessing the abuse**

- **Understanding the forms of abuse:** Identifying if physical, emotional, sexual, financial, or other forms of abuse are present.
- **Assessing risk:** Evaluating the severity and frequency of violence, threats, presence of weapons, attempts to strangle, and potential for homicide.
- **Considering threats to children:** Assessing if children are at risk and if threats have been made against them.
- **Recognizing isolation and control:** Identifying patterns of excessive jealousy, attempts to isolate the victim from support systems, and controlling behavior.

## **2. Planning for safety and departure (if needed)**

- **Harm to Self:** Assess if the person is a harm to self or their children.
- **Developing a safety plan:** Creating a detailed plan for what to do during an argument or at the first sign of violence, including escape routes and safe places to go.
- **Preparing an emergency bag:** Packing essential items like identification, money, medications, a change of clothes, and children's comfort items.
- **Identifying safe places and people:** Pinpointing trusted friends, family, or shelters where the victim and children can go for help.
- **Ensuring communication safety:** Establishing a code word with trusted individuals, securing digital devices to prevent tracking, and using new contact methods if necessary.
- **Seeking legal protection:** Obtaining an order of protection and understanding its implications.
- **Addressing financial concerns:** Taking steps to secure financial independence, such as opening separate accounts and redirecting bank communications.

## **3. Post-separation safety (if applicable)**

- **Securing the home:** Changing locks, installing security systems, and considering steel doors and window locks.
- **Protecting children:** Informing schools and daycare about custody arrangements and providing a copy of the Order of Protection.
- **Maintaining personal safety:** Being vigilant in public, parking in well-lit areas, and seeking escorts if feeling unsafe.
- **Safety at work:** Informing team leaders and team members, and having an escape plan in case the abuser enters the workplace.
- **Digital safety:** Being cautious with social media and securing personal information online.

#### **4. Seeking support and resources**

- **Connecting with member care:** Joining groups for survivors of domestic violence.
- **Consulting with professionals:** Engaging with counselors, therapists, and legal advisors for guidance and assistance.
- **Contacting domestic violence services:** Reaching out to hotlines and organizations specializing in domestic violence support.