This is the transcript-

Hi, guys. How are we doing today?

Good. Thank you.

Good? OK. So today, I wanted to go over the results of the marital satisfaction inventory revised. Before I jump into that, I wanted to see what both of your experiences were in taking the inventory.

I actually thought it was easier than what I expected. I took your advice and really answered each question very much, like, intuitively. So it didn't take me that long. And the questions were interesting to me. So yeah.

And Mike?

It was good. I was hesitant at first. But overall, it was, I guess, more positive than negative.

Perfect. I'm glad. So before we get started, I just wanted to thank you guys for even agreeing to take the inventory. I know that before we got started, there was a lot of hesitancy, a lot of anxiety surrounding what we'd get in terms of results. But thank you for really trusting the process and agreeing to do it.

You're welcome.

OK. So in terms of results, one of the first skills that I like to look at is your approach to taking the inventory. So your results show that you guys took a lot of care and took your time with answering the questions, and that you really did answer honestly. You didn't shy away from letting us know some areas that are more difficult and some areas that are also really positive. So it was very balanced.

The next skill that I like to look at is one that talks about distress and distress inside your relationship. Your results indicated that you guys are experiencing a moderate level of distress. And I don't want that to worry too much, because that's very normal for couples that are coming into therapy.

OK.

It would make sense that there are some distressing aspects of your relationship. And that's why you are coming in to do the work. So I just wanted to note that there are some areas in which that you guys both indicated that need some work. And those are around managing a lot of frequent arguments.

But there's also some positives that you noted and that although there are some difficulties, the good always outweigh the bad. I think that's something that you guys should keep in mind as we move forward. OK?

So one of the skills also talks about communication. I'd like to see what you guys think about how you communicate in your relationship.

How do you think we communicate?

Yeah, I mean, I guess, obviously, we communicate better.

We have different styles of communicating. Yeah, different. Mike's more of, like, an extrovert. He just says it how it is. I think sometimes he doesn't think before he says things. And then I'm just more introverted. Yeah, more vocal.

Sure.

Yeah? OK. So your results indicate that you both agree that there are some aspects, or some topics, that kind of seem like they're off limits and that you don't really want to talk about. There are also topics that when you start to communicate about them, they kind of escalate very quickly into major arguments. Do you guys feel like that's accurate?

Yeah. Yeah. I know which ones too.

Which ones do you think that they are?

Money and my parents' involvement with Danny.

OK. Mike, do you feel like that's accurate?

Yeah. I feel like I can't openly express my feelings because I'm always pinned as the bad guy.

That's not appropriate.

That's not appropriate? What are you talking about?

You were never pinned as the bad guy. My parents love you.

Basically, I feel that I don't have space. So I love her parents. Her parents help a lot. They're a big help.

But at the same time, they're there a lot. So after a long day at work, if I come home-- and sometimes I would like maybe to have the house to myself. Why is that such a crazy thing to ask for?

It's not a crazy thing. But we have a son. He's very active. He gets into everything. My parents have been incredible to us. Without them, I don't even know what I would do.

But Danny is, like, so, so wild. And he's always getting into things. So honestly, we're just on watch for safety reasons, even. And my parents-- I just feel like you have a lack of respect to my parents, and that deeply hurts me.

This has nothing to do with respect. All I'm saying is to draw some boundaries. Is that so crazy? I love them. They can come over whenever.

But too much is too much. And it's like, to say that at one point, maybe, you know, I could have some space and time to myself, I don't think that's disrespectful.

But you're not a full time mom.

No, but I'm working full time. So it's the same thing.

No, it's very different.

I don't understand why it has to be one or the other. Why can't there be a middle ground? It's one extreme or the other.

Because I'm overwhelmed when I have to spend all day with Danny and you're not around. And when you come home--

Well, where am I? What am I doing when I'm not around? I'm working. You make it like I'm out, like, partying or something. I go to work. And I work long hours. And when I get home, sometimes I'm tired, and sometimes I would like to have some space to myself.

Exactly.

So why is that so crazy?

It's not crazy. But my parents are there to help.

You guys, I feel like this is a really good example of what the assessment was trying to-- what it reflected and that this topic does seem to cause a lot of tension and cause things to escalate really quickly. And I think that this is something that we can really work on.

We can learn how to enhance your communication skills and really slow down things so that they don't escalate as quickly as they do. I think this should be one of the major goals in therapy. Do you agree?

Yes. I do. We agree.

Mike, do we agree?

Yes.

OK. I think that will be one of the major focuses moving forward.