

SPONSOR COUPLE PROGRAM - SESSION TWO

VALUES AND CONFLICTS IN OUR RELATIONSHIP

All relationships require communication to identify values, establish goals and resolve conflicts. Our decision to love each other is also a commitment to open, trusting and loving expression of our thoughts and feelings. The following questions are designed to help identify our values and goals.

VALUES

1. From among the couples you know, make a list of those who are on your personal list of “Best Marriages.” (Try to list five.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. Why are they attractive to you?

3. How do you think our personalities compliment each other?

4. How will your couple relationship change your outside activities?

How will changing current activities make you feel?

5. Is there anything about your fiancé that you would like changed? If so, what?

6. Is there anything about yourself that you would like changed? If so, what?

7. Is there anything your fiancé would like changed about you? If so, what?

8. Am I concerned about your use of drugs or alcohol?

GOALS

1. What goals do you plan to achieve during the first year of your marriage?

2 Which of your values, habits or personality traits will be a hindrance to achieving these goals?

3. List three steps you can begin to take now to insure achievement of your goals?

1.

2.

3.

4. Which of your goals would you give up first if you had to? Why?

PROBLEM SOLVING

In any relationship conflicts can and do occur. Our commitment to share our feelings is a decision to share ourselves with each other. That commitment of sharing is the source of open communication that helps us work through conflict situations, not only to resolve them, but also to grow in our relationship.

1. What is there about me that makes my personality really different from my fiancé's?

How do I anticipate this difference causing conflict between us in the future?

2. What personality trait does my fiancé have that irritates me the most?

How do I cope with this trait?

3. Do I think that either of us ought to make any changes in the traits that cause conflict?

If so, have we any specific plans as to how we can do this?

4. At the present time, how do we deal with important conflicts and differences?

5. Do I think that my fiancé and I have a constructive way of “fighting”?

6. Do I think that either of us tends to fight “unfairly”?

Give examples:

7. Over what issue(s) do I think the greatest conflicts will occur between my fiancé and me?

How do I think we should deal with these conflicts? (Be as specific as possible.)

COMMUNICATION

1. Read the qualities listed below. Write down the five you appreciate most in your fiancé. Then number them in order of their importance to you. Feel free to write in qualities that are not included in the list below.

Socially at ease	Strong
Sexually attractive	Dependable
Flexible and open	Intelligent
Turns me on physically	Religious
Cares about people	Imaginative
Makes me feel secure	Understanding
Considerate	Affectionate
Hard working	Patient with me
Makes me do new things	Makes me laugh
Interesting and alive	Doesn't blow up
Doesn't push me	Cares about a home
Listens to me	Talks to me

2. Next to my fiancé, who is the one person I can confide in most?

How does that person get along with my fiancé?

3. Can I imagine sharing things with that person that I would not share with my fiancé?

What are my feelings about that?

4. Do I think that I am responsible for your feelings?

5. What five things did you do for the deepening and strengthening of your relationship with your fiancé last week?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

CAR QUESTIONS

1. How can/does good communication enhance our decision to love?

2. How can/does lack of communication deter us in our decision to love?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

ONGOING COMMUNICATION

An excellent way to build a good marriage is to share with each other continually. Share what you most appreciate in the other person. **This is called affirmation.** Also share the things that bother you inside yourself. **This is called openness.**

Since your fiancé is not a mind reader, it is essential to make these realities known in some way. Actions may speak louder than words, but it takes words to tell the meaning of our actions. Learning to speak and write important words to each other may be difficult for some people. But words in a love relationship are like gas to a car, you simply cannot go far without them.

Now take a sheet of stationery and write a letter to your fiancé. To get started, silently ask the question: Why do I appreciate you? (You may want to reflect back to answers in Session 2.) Then write out in detail the qualities you most appreciate in your fiancé. Give a full explanation of each quality. After you have finished the letter, sign it, fold it, and put it in an envelope. But do not seal it. Go to the next assignment.

Take another sheet of stationery and write another letter. In this letter, write about the one thing you find most difficult to discuss with your partner. It might be an area of disagreement between the two of you. It might be something very painful in your life that you have not shared with your partner. Or it might be a fear you have about your relationship that you find embarrassing to admit. Note: Do not reveal matters such as sexual activity with others. Revelations of this type very easily cause irreparable harm.

Take time to write about this difficulty in full detail. Then sign the letter, fold it, put it in the envelope with the first letter, and seal the envelope.

On the front of the envelope, write your fiancé's name. Then write "Special Gift."

The final step is to share the letters and discuss them. Try to set aside at least 2 hours for this, so that you will have plenty of time to listen fully to each other.

The next time you meet with your sponsor couple, share with them what this assignment was like for you. Most people find this exercise to be a very beneficial experience even if parts of it are difficult. If your experience was not beneficial, perhaps your sponsor couple can help you understand how to go about intimate sharing in a more constructive manner.