

PREMARITAL EDUCATION PACKET

Options I – III

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PREMARITAL EDUCATION

Couples NEED Premarital Education!!

Marriages may be made in heaven but they must be grounded here on earth. Experts acknowledge that premarital education is very beneficial to building a strong foundation for your marriage.

Just the Facts:

Fact #1 About 50% of all first marriages end in divorce, and 20% of those divorces occur in the first two years.

Fact #2 Many divorces occur partly because couples are not prepared for marriage. Most couples spend more time preparing for the wedding ceremony than for their marriage relationship. In fact, most people prepare more to obtain a driver's license than a marriage license.

Fact #3 Research indicates that the earlier a couple identifies their strengths and differences and learn practical skills - talking, listening, and conflict-resolving skills - for dealing collaboratively with life's issues, the better their chances are for building a satisfying, viable, and lasting relationship.

THREE EXCITING OPTIONS!

OPTION I - COMPLETE PREMARITAL SYSTEM (10 Sessions - \$750)

The Complete Premarital System is a wonderful marriage education plan for couples getting married. It consists of three parts: 1) Assessment - PREPARE; 2) Education - CCI; 3) One Year Follow-Up (ENRICH & CCII). There are six premarital sessions and four follow-up sessions (10 sessions for the entire program).

Premarital Assessment The assessment instrument of 165 questions examines your strength and growth areas as a couple. The assessment should not be construed as a "test" in that it does not determine whether you are compatible as a couple. Instead, the assessment focuses on where you two are very similar and dissimilar. This knowledge creates a great deal of useful information for your marriage.

Education The educational sessions are in-depth couple communications explanations and demonstrations based on the renowned Couple Communication Program. You will:

- Explore how to better understand yourself and talk about issues efficiently using the Awareness Wheel
- Apply the Listening Cycle to assist you in connecting with and understanding your partner better
- Learn how to resolve conflict collaboratively by mapping issues
- Expand your awareness and choices for communicating effectively in different situations

One Year Follow-Up The first year of marriage is often the most difficult. At the one year follow-up you will complete the ENRICH assessment instrument and complete four to six educational sessions discussing:

- The Relationship Map
- Collaborative Communication
- Managing Anger (Self/Partner's)
- Phases of a Relationship

OPTION II – WONDERFUL BEGINNINGS (Six Sessions – \$450)

The Wonderful Beginning Option would include everything above with the exception of the one year follow-up. There are six sessions in this option.





OPTION III – BASIC PREMARITAL PACKAGE (Four Sessions - \$300)

The Basic Premarital Package would be comprised of four meetings. The first meeting would be completing the premarital assessment instrument discussed above. Each of the remaining three sessions is designed to be one hour in length. Isn't your marriage worth four hours of preparation?

In these sessions you will:

- Explore your relationship strength and growth areas
- Strengthen your communication skills, including assertiveness and active listening
- Resolve your conflicts using the Ten Steps Procedure
- Explore your relationship and families-of-origin issues with the Couple and Family Map
- Develop a workable budget and financial plan
- Develop your personal, couple and family goals
- Address other issues that arise

Couple Communication I Content of the Program

<p style="text-align: center;">Caring About Yourself</p> 	<p>Effective communication flows out of self-awareness and skill in communicating awareness, particularly about issues. You will learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish types of issues. • Use the Awareness Wheel™, a practical map for understanding issues and the foundation for communication skills. • Reflect on and expand your awareness through the Self-Talk process. • Apply six talking skills for expressing yourself more clearly when it is important. • Understand how caring or uncaring attitudes and skilled or unskilled communication affect the way you and your partner relate.
<p style="text-align: center;">Caring About Your Partner</p> 	<p>Relationships grow with attentive listening and accurate understanding of one another. You will learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify poor listening behaviors and attentive listening behaviors. • Apply five practical listening skills for tuning in to your partner. • Experience the power of the Listening Cycle™ for getting to the heart of your partner's concern.
<p style="text-align: center;">Resolving Conflicts: Mapping Issues</p> 	<p>The way you and your partner handle conflicts determines your satisfaction with the outcomes and each other. You will learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize your typical patterns for handling disagreements. • Set comfortable procedures for managing conflicts. • Combine the talking and listening skills in an 8-step collaborative conflict-resolving process, called Mapping an Issue.
<p style="text-align: center;">Choosing Communication Styles</p> 	<p>Partners respond as much to <i>how</i> something is said as to <i>what</i> is said. You will learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the characteristics of four distinct styles of talking and listening. • Recognize the positive and negative impacts of each style. • Apply skills to increase meaningful conversations or decrease stressful exchanges. • Understand the impact of mixed messages and how to deal with them. • Integrate the Styles of Communication™ with all COUPLE COMMUNICATION I skills and concepts.

□ Learning Methods

In the COUPLE COMMUNICATION I Program, you will:

- Hear brief *explanations* of the concepts, skills, and processes.
- *Reflect* on and then *discuss* your own experiences in exercises.
- *Practice* skills and processes with real issues of your own choice using skills mats, tools to speed learning and extend skill use after the class.
- *Receive coaching* and *feedback* on your use of skills.
- *Apply* your learning in real situations between sessions.

□ Program Materials






For **COUPLE COMMUNICATION I** (CCI), each couple uses a CCI Couple Packet for class sessions and to extend learning and skill use at home. The CCI Couple Packet contains:



- 2 *Talking and Listening Together* workbooks (one copy for each partner). Each workbook includes:
 - A pre-questionnaire (based on the program concepts and skills) to help you as partners assess your current skills and set learning goals
 - Introduction and 4 chapters with practical concepts, skills, and processes, plus examples, guidelines, worksheets, exercises, and action plans
 - A post-questionnaire to check what has been learned
- 2 Communication Skills Floor Mats.
 - One mat shows the Awareness Wheel™ and the other, the Listening Cycle™
 - They are for practice during and between sessions, as well as for continued application of the skills following the program. The mats accelerate your learning by simultaneously engaging your visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modes of learning.
- 2 Sets of Pocket Cards. Each set contains four cards, which help to reinforce concepts and skills learned in COUPLE COMMUNICATION I.

Couple Communication II

Content of the Program

<p>The Relationship Map</p> 	<p>As you and your partner understand a map of your relationship, you can set direction for and take better charge of how you relate. You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what goes into a relationship dance - time together, apart and changing, in both positive or negative emotional climates. • Discover your current relationship map (dance). • Choose steps to create a more desirable relationship dance.
<p>Collaborative Communication</p> 	<p>Your important discussions - making decisions, solving problems, setting priorities - can build your relationship rather than bring conflict to it. You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize three forces at work in your interactions. • Learn how you alone can make a major positive or negative difference in discussions between you and your partner. • Identify leading or following skills and choice points in an interaction. • Apply skills to communicate collaboratively as a couple.
<p>Managing My Anger</p> 	<p>As you make constructive changes in how you handle the emotion of anger, you will enjoy a healthier, happier life. You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the components of anger - its focus, catalyst, and expression in unhealthy or healthy ways. • Learn three major steps to deal with a specific experience of anger. • Create an individual strategy for managing your anger. • Discover how to use a "Time Out" effectively for taking longer-term constructive action.
<p>Responding to My Partners Anger</p> 	<p>While you cannot control your partner's angry emotion, you can manage your own response to it, which contributes to the overall climate you both experience. You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how your responses to your partner help escalate, maintain, or de-escalate the anger. • Identify your interactional choices during the situation. • Take three steps for connecting positively with your partner when he or she is angry. • Create an individual strategy for responding effectively to your partner's anger.
<p>Phases of Relationship</p> 	<p>In the course of a relationship, changes occur, and you can be pro-active about how you relate during these various seasons. You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify four typical phases, including the characteristics and positive and negative elements of each phase. • Clarify your values and desires for self, partner, and your relationship. • Choose actions to align your values and desires as a couple.

□ Learning Methods

In the COUPLE COMMUNICATION II Program, you will:

- Hear brief *explanations* of the concepts, skills, and processes.
- *Reflect* on and then *discuss* your own experiences in exercises.
- *Practice* skills and processes with real issues of your own choice using skills mats, tools to speed learning and extend skill use after the class.
- *Receive coaching* and *feedback* on your use of skills.
- *Apply* your learning in real situations between class sessions.

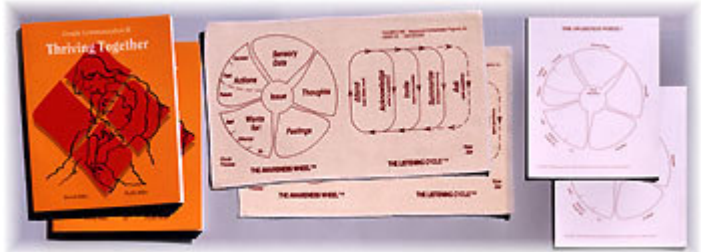
The program activities are designed so you:

- Choose together privately, as a couple, the issues you discuss and practice.

□ Program Materials

Couples use a COUPLE COMMUNICATION II Couple Packet to assist in developing and retaining new processes. The CCI II Couple Packet contains:

- 2 Thriving Together Workbooks - includes text, guidelines, assessments and exercise worksheets
- 2 Awareness Wheel Pads - for expanding awareness
- 2 Skills Lapmats - for skill application and reinforcement



Basic Premarital Education Sessions

Session One

- ⇒ Go over goals
- ⇒ Confidentiality
- ⇒ Review session content
- ⇒ Begin to prepare wedding ceremony (if applicable)
- ⇒ Take PREPARE instrument (**this can now be done online!**)

Session Two

- ⇒ Couple Communication Exercise I
- ⇒ Couple Communication Exercise II
- ⇒ Review 10 Steps Procedure for homework
- ⇒ Examine wedding ceremony (if applicable)

Session Three

- ⇒ Review 10 Steps homework
- ⇒ Review Communication and Conflict Resolution strengths and growth areas
- ⇒ Special Focus Items
- ⇒ Explore Couple Relationship and Family of Origin
- ⇒ Financial Plans and Budget Homework
- ⇒ Ceremony Status report (if applicable)

Session Four

- ⇒ Review Financial Plans and Budget
- ⇒ Goal Exercise
- ⇒ Summarize
- ⇒ Finalize wedding ceremony (if applicable)