



PREPARE  ENRICH.

Manual

for Certified Facilitators

WELCOME TO PREPARE/ENRICH

Our goal at PREPARE/ENRICH is to build strong marriages.

It is our hope you will find PREPARE/ENRICH a valuable resource as you help empower premarital and married couples. Thank you for investing time, energy, and resources into working with couples.

This training manual is designed for you to take notes and highlight ideas and information during the training. This information will enhance your work with couples and make the tasks of administering and providing feedback to couples more efficient and effective.

This Manual for Certified Facilitators is also a handy reference for you. It covers the basic information you need to know in using PREPARE/ENRICH. When you need additional information, visit our website at www.prepare-enrich.com for additional resources.

We wish you much success in your work with couples!

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GOALS OF TRAINING

For Facilitators

- Learn the areas assessed in PREPARE/ENRICH
- Understand differences between Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) and Individual Scores
- Learn how to read and interpret the Facilitator's Report
- Understand and interpret the Couple and Family Maps
- Become familiar with the Workbook for Couples as a resource in providing feedback and teaching relationship skills

GOALS FOR COUPLES

Six Goals of the PREPARE-ENRICH Program

- Explore strength and growth areas
- Strengthen communication skills
- Identify and manage major stressors
- Resolve conflicts using the Ten Step Model
- Develop a more balanced relationship using the Couple and Family Maps
- Understand personality differences and maximize teamwork

The Workbook for Couples contains **over 20 exercises** you can utilize in providing feedback to couples. The Facilitator's Report will recommend exercises in the Workbook for Couples for each topic. Note: Core Exercises related to the goals above are marked in the Contents with a star.

FOUNDATION OF PREPARE/ENRICH

PREPARE/ENRICH is based on:

- Systems theory, which integrates concepts and principles from Marital and Family Therapy
- Couple and Family Strengths Model
- Prevention-oriented approaches

The Two Components of PREPARE/ENRICH

1 Online couple assessment

- Primes the couple for relevant and revealing discussion
- Identifies strength and growth areas

2 Feedback & teaching relationship skills

- Communication and Conflict Resolution
- Closeness and Flexibility
- Personality Compatibility
- Stress Management

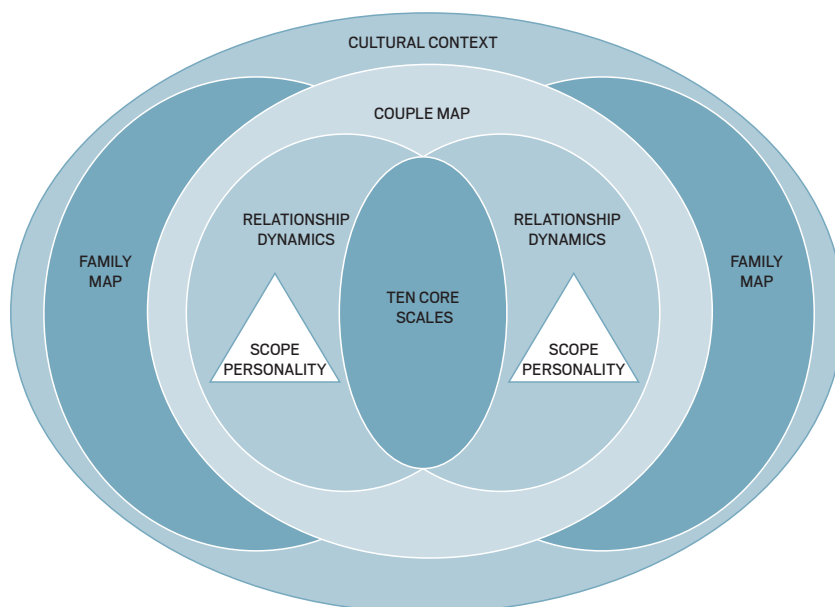
Strong Research and Scientific Background

All the couple scales have the following characteristics:

- High levels of reliability and validity
- National norms based on over 500,000 premarital and married couples
- Validated with various ethnic groups
- Adapted for use in several other countries

PREPARE/ENRICH is an online assessment. The assessment tailors itself to the unique stage and structure of each couple's relationship, as well as to the larger cultural context in which they live.

Systemic Components of PREPARE/ENRICH



FACILITATOR'S REPORT

Ten Core Scales

The ten core scales that assess couple's relationship health are:

- Idealistic Distortion
- Communication
- Conflict Resolution
- Partner Style and Habits
- Financial Management
- Leisure Activities
- Sexuality and Affection
- Family and Friends
- Relationship Roles
- Spiritual Beliefs

SCOPE Personality Profile

The SCOPE Personality Profile assesses each person based on five personality areas. It is derived from the highly researched Five Factor Model of Personality, sometimes called the Big Five Model. The five areas have been renamed to be easier for couples to understand, in the acronym SCOPE:

- **S**ocial extroversion vs. introversion
- **C**hange dependable vs. open to change
- **O**rganized conscientious vs. easy going
- **P**leasing agreeable vs. competitive
- **E**motionally Steady calm vs. sensitive

Relationship Dynamics

The dynamics of a couple's relationship are measured in four interconnected areas:

- **Assertiveness** – the ability to express one's feelings and ask for what one wants in the relationship
- **Self Confidence** – how good one feels about oneself and their ability to accomplish what they want in life
- **Avoidance** – the tendency to minimize issues and reluctance to deal with issues directly
- **Partner Dominance** – how much one feels controlled or dominated by their partner

Couple Map and Family Map

PREPARE/ENRICH utilizes the Couple and Family Maps to assess the two dimensions of Closeness and Flexibility in a couple's relationship and in their families of origin.

Personal Stress Profile

Using the Personal Stress Profile helps couples assess their current level of stress and identifies their most stressful issues.

Satisfaction

Individual and relational satisfaction is examined for all couples.

Commitment

Each individual describes their commitment to the relationship and how they think their partner feels about commitment.

Abuse and Substance Abuse

Physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual abuse are examined for all couples. Also assessed are substance abuse issues and problematic sexual behaviors.

Customized Scales

Based on the stage and structure of each couple's relationship, many unique scales and categories may be assessed:

General Issues

- Cohabitation issues
- Cultural and ethnic differences
- Character traits
- Problems from previous marriages
- Forgiveness

Older Couples

- Health issues
- Role transitions
- Intergenerational issues
- Sexual relationship in later life
- Financial management in later life

Parenting issues

- No children
- Planning to have children someday
- Becoming parents (pregnant, first child)
- Currently have children
- Stepparenting expectations (premarital) and satisfaction (have stepchildren)
- Intergenerational issues (empty nest)

Faith-based Scales

- Spiritual beliefs measured in a nonsectarian format
- Various religious traditions
- Interfaith/Interchurch

BENEFITS TO COUPLES

Couples benefit from taking PREPARE/ENRICH:

- Creates curiosity about how their partner responded to the items
- Stimulates dialogue about important relationship topics
- Increases awareness about themselves and their partner
- Assessment results help couples apply concepts and skills relevant to their unique relationship
- Increases relationship skills and satisfaction (see Research section at www.prepare-enrich.com)

BENEFITS TO FACILITATORS

Your work with couples is enhanced by:

- Flexibility of program—use the structured feedback exercises or just the assessment
- Client-initiated learning brought about by assessment results
- Identifying both strength and growth areas
- Ease of goal setting; PREPARE/ENRICH logically connects with relationship goals
- Providing concrete and objective data about the couple relationship
- Format options—couple/facilitator, couple/mentor, small group
- Additional resources and counseling skills easily integrate into the feedback process



PREPARE/ENRICH leverages technology to maximize accuracy, relevancy, and ease of use for you and your couples. The online system allows PREPARE/ENRICH to be customized for each couple and scored as soon as they have completed the assessment.

INFORMATION FOR COUPLES

Remind couples that PREPARE/ENRICH:

- Is not intended as a test
- Protects their identity
- Will help them understand their relationship in a variety of areas
- Is not intended to predict chances of relational success or failure

SETTING UP A COUPLE

To administer PREPARE/ENRICH to a couple, you must log in to www.prepare-enrich.com with your unique Facilitator ID (which you will receive upon certification) and set your couple up to receive their log-in information via email. You will need the following information in order to register a couple: their first names, email addresses and language preference. You will also choose how the scoring fee will be paid and which “spiritual beliefs” scale your couple will receive.

Names, Email, and Language Preference

When adding a couple, enter your couple’s first names (or nicknames or initials), their email addresses, and the preferred language for taking the assessment. In the Parenting Version, you will need the names and ages of the children (you can enter up to four children).

Scoring Fee

Will the couple pay for the assessment or will you/your organization pay? The scoring fee can be purchased using a major credit card or PayPal. If you select to have the couple pay, they will be asked for payment the first time one of them logs in. If you select to pay, you can use an existing scoring credit or purchase a scoring at the time you register the couple. You will still need to apply the purchased scoring to the couple that you entered. Quantity discounts are available and scoring credits do not expire.

Select Spiritual Beliefs Version

You will select if the couple receives the “standard non faith-specific” scale or one of the “faith-specific” scales.

COUPLES BEGIN THE ASSESSMENT

Getting Started

Couples log in using the code provided in the email sent to them. NOTE: Facilitators receive a copy of the email sent to the couple. A link is provided in the email for logging in. Couples can also log in at www.prepare-enrich.com.

After logging in, couples will be asked to:

- Review and accept Terms and Conditions
- Provide payment if facilitator has not already paid
- Answer background questions to customize the assessment (first person only)
- Review the directions and complete the assessment

It typically takes between 30–45 minutes to complete the assessment. When both partners are finished with their assessment, you will receive an email letting you know their report is ready. You may also log in to your account at any time and view the status of your couple (have they started, has one person completed, etc.).

SECTION
3

FACILITATOR'S REPORT AND GIVING FEEDBACK



MATERIALS NEEDED

To provide feedback to the couple, you will need:

- The **Facilitator's Report**
 - The Facilitator's Report provides a comprehensive overview of the couple. This report is intended for the Facilitator and should not be given to the couple. The Facilitator's Report appears in your account for **one year from the date of completion**. You can save a copy of the report on your computer for future use and fast access.
- Facilitator's Feedback Guide (optional)

The couple will need:

- The **Workbook for Couples** or selected couple exercises.
 - The Workbook for Couples is designed to be given to the couple. The Six Core Exercises are recommended, and additional exercises may also be used based on issues each couple present.
 - You can order copies of the Workbook for Couples online at the bookstore or from our office. Workbooks are available in standard or Biblical versions. You can also print selected couple exercises for each couple from a PDF version on the website.
- The **Couple's Report** (optional)
 - The optional **Couple's Report** is a subset of some of the pages from the Facilitator's Report, designed for the couples to keep.

Six Core Exercises

- ★ Sharing Strength and Growth Areas
- ★ Creating a Wish List Using Assertiveness & Active Listening
- ★ Ten Steps for Resolving Conflict
- ★ Couple & Family Maps – Mapping your Relationship
- ★ Personal Stress Profile – Identifying Most Critical Issues
- ★ Personality Exercise – SCOPE out your Personality

INAPPROPRIATE USES OF PREPARE/ENRICH

Remember, PREPARE/ENRICH:

- Is not intended to predict relationship success or failure
- Is not a "test" to be passed or failed
- Is not intended to deal with only issues or weakness, but also to help you identify a couple's strengths

PREPARE/ENRICH Customized Version

Facilitator: <Your Name>

Date Completed: <Date Completed>

Couple Names: Daniel
Maria

Couple ID Code: 12A4-67B9

Customizations:

- Engaged
- Standard – Non Faith-Based
- Possibility of Children in Future

This Facilitator's Report is not to be given to the couple. It is for your use only.
Please print a copy of the Couple's Report for the couple.

Contents

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Background Information

<u>Question</u>	<u>Daniel</u>	<u>Maria</u>
Gender	Male	Female
Age Range	26-30	26-30
Ethnic Background	Hispanic/Latino	Hispanic/Latino
Education Completed	Four-Year College	Graduate/Professional
Religious Affiliation	Protestant (Christian)	Protestant (Christian)
Area of Employment	Education	Retail/Wholesale
Role at work	Trained Professional	Support Staff
Employment Status	Full-time	Part-time
Individual Yearly Income	\$40,000 - \$49,999	\$10,000 - \$19,999
Birth Position in Family	Third	First
Number of children in your family	Five or more	One
Where do you live?	Large City	Suburban Area
Current Living Arrangement	Live Alone	With Others
How long known partner?	1-2 years	1-2 years
How long engaged?	6-12 months	6-12 months
Months until marriage	7-12 months	7-12 months
Friends' feelings about marriage plans	Mainly Positive	Very Positive
Family's feelings about marriage plans	Mainly Positive	Neutral
Number of children you have	None	None
How many children do you want?	Three	One
When do you want children?	1-2 years	3-4 years
Are you expecting a child?	No	No
Number of times broken up	Three times	Two times
Number of previous marriages	0 - never married before	0 - never married before
Parents' marital status	Divorced, 1 single/ 1 remarried	Married
Raised by	A combination of Biological and Stepparent(s)	Both Biological Parents



COUPLE TYPOLOGY

Couple Typology is based on patterns in couples' scores across nine relationship areas.

Couple Types are based on Positive Couple Agreement (PCA), which indicate how much couples agree with each other in a healthy direction. Statistical analysis identified four types of premarital couples and five types of married couples.

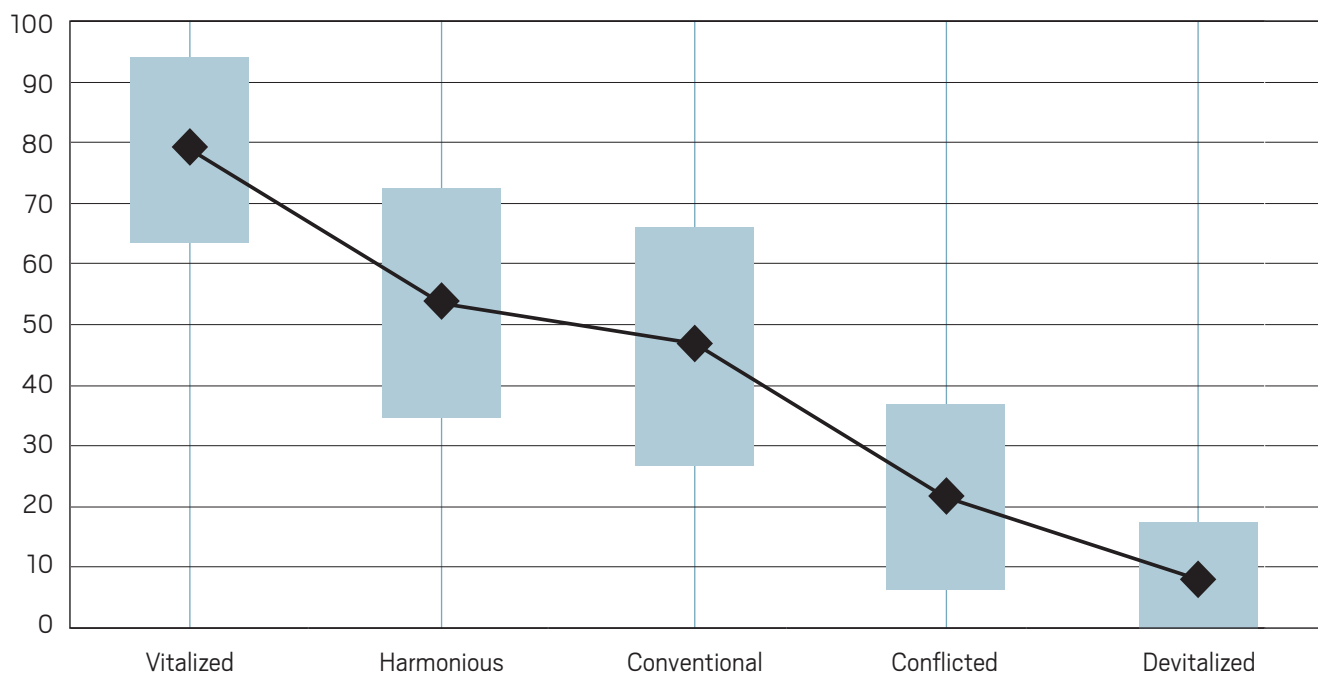
Couple Types

- Vitalized
- Harmonious
- Conventional
- Conflicted
- Devitalized (married couples only)

These couple types differ in how satisfied they are in their relationship. Notice that Vitalized couples have the highest levels of satisfaction, while Devitalized couples have the lowest.

COUPLE TYPES & COUPLE SATISFACTION

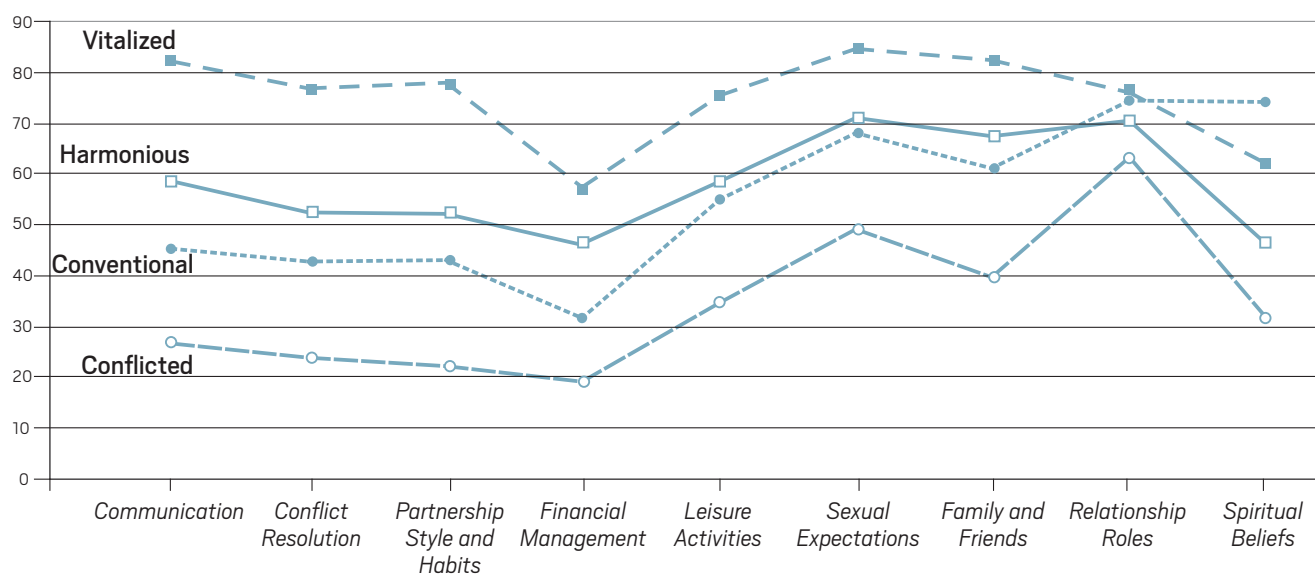
Mean and Range for PCA Scores



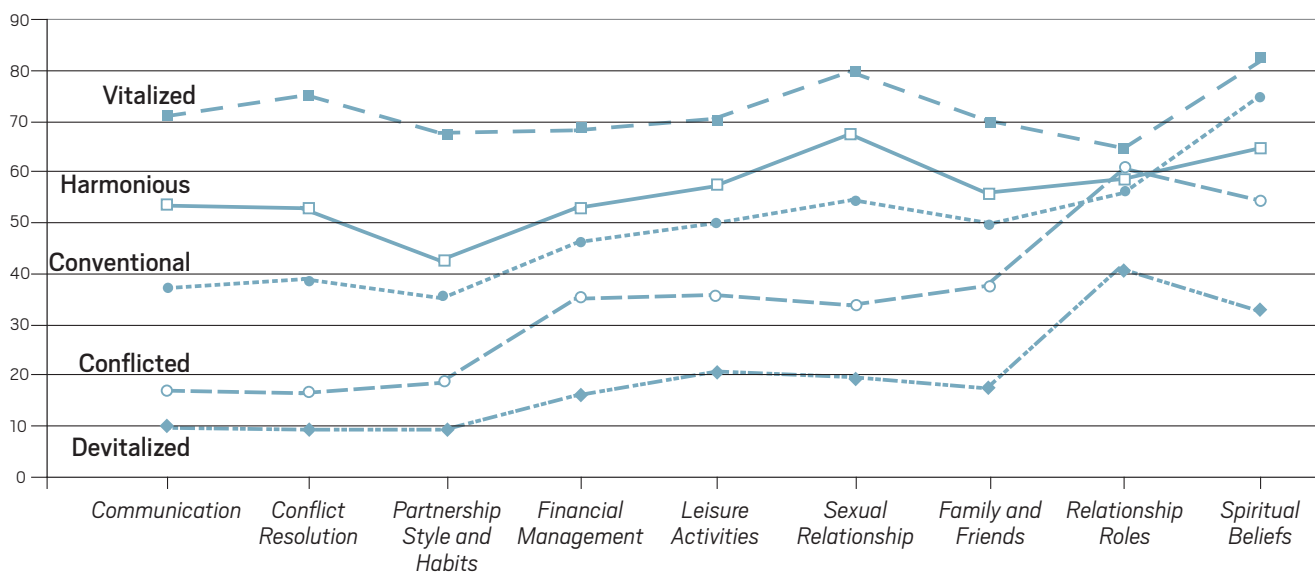
Variation Across Categories

Examine these Couple Types and how they vary across the categories.

FOUR TYPES OF PREMARITAL COUPLES



FIVE TYPES OF MARRIED COUPLES



Overview of the Five Couple Types

- “Vitalized” couples tend to have the highest levels of relationship satisfaction and high Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) across most of the nine core scales.
- “Harmonious” and “Conventional” couples tend to have moderate relationship satisfaction and moderate agreement (PCA).
- “Conventional” couples tend to have lower PCA in Communication and Conflict Resolution and higher PCA in Roles and Spiritual Beliefs.
- “Conflicted” and “Devalitized” couples tend to have moderately low to low levels of couple satisfaction and PCA.

Couple Typologies Validated Cross-culturally

- In the United States, African-Americans and Hispanic Americans fall into the same couple typologies as Caucasians. Also, the frequency of couples in each couple type is the same across these groups.
- Around the world, the same couple types were found. However, regions such as Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korea have higher rates of Conventional couples.

SUMMARY OF STRENGTH AND GROWTH AREAS

Each relationship category is broken down into four areas:

- Strength (High Couple Agreement)
- Possible Strength (Moderately High Couple Agreement)
- Possible Growth (Moderately Low Couple Agreement)
- Growth (Low Couple Agreement)

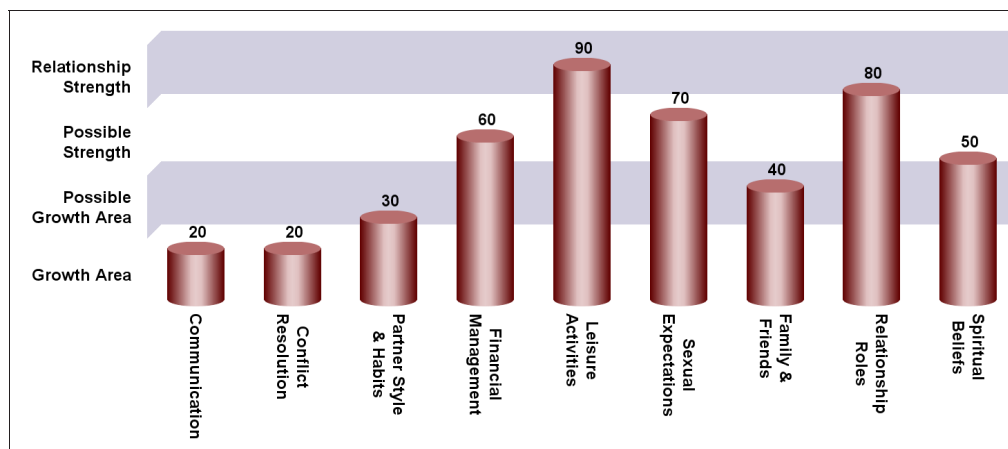
Next Step

- Review the couple’s results in the Facilitator’s Report. Use this information in giving feedback to the couple.



COUPLE EXERCISE SHARING STRENGTH AND GROWTH AREAS

Couple Typology (based on Core Scales)



Conventional Couple Type

Based on the PCA scores across the core categories, this couple is best categorized as a **Conventional Couple**. Conventional couples are often highly committed and have more strengths in areas such as Relationship Roles and Spiritual Beliefs. They can improve the quality of their relationship by working on communication and conflict resolution skills.

Based on research PREPARE/ENRICH categorizes couple relationships into one of five common patterns:

- **Vitalized** couples are typically the most satisfied with their relationship, skilled in communication and conflict resolution.
- **Harmonious** couples also enjoy high levels of satisfaction across most areas of their relationship.
- **Conventional** couples are often highly committed to one another, but not as skilled in communication or conflict resolution.
- **Conflicted** couples have a lower level of satisfaction and often struggle with many areas of their relationship.
- **Devitalized** couples have the lowest level of satisfaction and have growth areas in almost all aspects of their relationship.

Strength and Growth Areas

Levels of Positive Couple Agreement	Core Scale plus Customized Scales *
Relationship Strengths (PCA=80-100%) Areas with <i>High</i> Couple Agreement	Leisure Activities Parenting Expectations * Relationship Roles
Possible Relationship Strength (PCA=50-70%) Areas with <i>Moderately High</i> Couple Agreement	Financial Management Sexual Expectations Spiritual Beliefs
Possible Growth Areas (PCA=30-40%) Areas with <i>Moderately Low</i> Couple Agreement	Family & Friends Marriage Expectations * Partner Style & Habits
Growth Areas (PCA=0-20%) Areas with <i>Low</i> Couple Agreement	Communication Conflict Resolution



SHARING STRENGTH AND GROWTH AREAS

"Your strengths develop by working through your issues."

Check what areas you agree or disagree most with your partner.

1. **Select three Strength Areas** (most agreement and positive aspects of your relationship)
2. **Select three Growth Areas** (most disagreement and areas you want to improve)

	STRENGTH AREAS	GROWTH AREAS
1. COMMUNICATION <i>We share feelings and understand each other.</i>		
2. CONFLICT RESOLUTION <i>We are able to discuss and resolve differences.</i>		
3. PARTNER STYLE AND HABITS <i>We appreciate each other's personality and habits.</i>		
4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT <i>We agree on budget and financial matters.</i>		
5. LEISURE ACTIVITIES <i>We have a good balance of activities together and apart.</i>		
6. SEXUALITY AND AFFECTION <i>We are comfortable discussing sexual issues and affection.</i>		
7. FAMILY AND FRIENDS <i>We feel good about our relationships with relatives and friends.</i>		
8. RELATIONSHIP ROLES <i>We agree on how to share decision-making and responsibilities.</i>		
9. CHILDREN AND PARENTING <i>We agree on issues related to having and raising children.</i>		
10. SPIRITUAL BELIEFS <i>We hold similar religious values and beliefs.</i>		

COUPLE DISCUSSION

- Take turns sharing what each of you perceive as your relationship strengths. Verbally share one strength at a time, until you each have shared three.
- Use the same procedure to share and discuss growth areas.
- Discuss these three questions:
 - Did any of your partner's responses surprise you?
 - In what areas did you mostly agree with your partner?
 - In what areas did you mostly disagree with your partner?





OVERALL SATISFACTION

Two components in measuring Overall Satisfaction:

- Individual Satisfaction
 - Scores based on the average of each person's Individual Scores across the core relationship categories
- Couple Satisfaction
 - Scores based on the average of the couple's Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) scores across the core relationship categories

IDEALISTIC DISTORTION

Idealistic Distortion measures how much a person is wearing “rose-colored glasses” and is used to revise or correct individual scores. Idealistic Distortion is not used to adjust Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) scores.

RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS

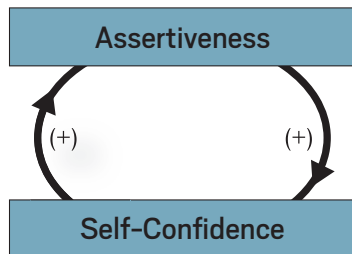
Four key relationship dynamics that affect couple success:

- **Assertiveness** – the ability to express one's feelings and ask for what one wants
- **Self-Confidence** – how good one feels about oneself and their ability to accomplish what they want in life
- **Avoidance** – the tendency to minimize issues and reluctance to deal with issues directly
- **Partner Dominance** – how much one feels controlled or dominated by their partner

CYCLES OF RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS

Positive Cycle

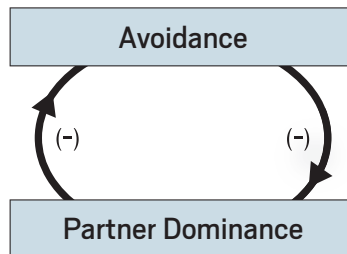
There is a positive cycle between Assertiveness and Self Confidence.



(Goal is to strengthen the Positive Cycle)

Negative Cycle

There is a negative cycle between Avoidance and Partner Dominance.



(Goal is to reduce the Negative Cycle)

Those high in Assertiveness:

- Score higher in Self Confidence
- Tend to like the personality of their partner
- Feel good about their Communication and Conflict Resolution skills
- Score lower in Avoidance and Partner Dominance

Those high in Avoidance:

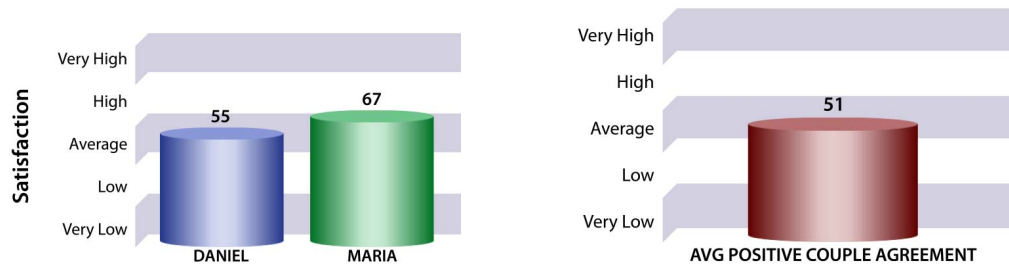
- Score higher in Partner Dominance
- Tend to dislike the personality of their partner
- Are less satisfied with their Communication and Conflict Resolution skills
- Score lower in Self Confidence and Assertiveness



COUPLE EXERCISE
CREATING A WISH LIST

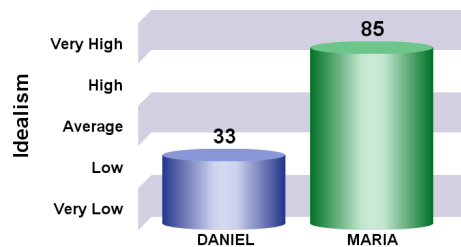
Overall Satisfaction

The graphs below plot the **Overall Satisfaction** for each individual and the couple, based on the Core Scales.



Idealistic Distortion

Idealistic Distortion measures the extent to which a person distorts the relationship in a positive direction.



Interpretation of Idealism

A high score (above 65%) indicates that a person describes the relationship in an overly positive manner and sees it through "rose colored" glasses. A lower score (below 40%) indicates a more realistic approach to describing the relationship.

Revised Individual Scores

In order to provide more accurate Individual Scores for each category, each person's Individual Scores are corrected based on how high their score is on Idealistic Distortion.

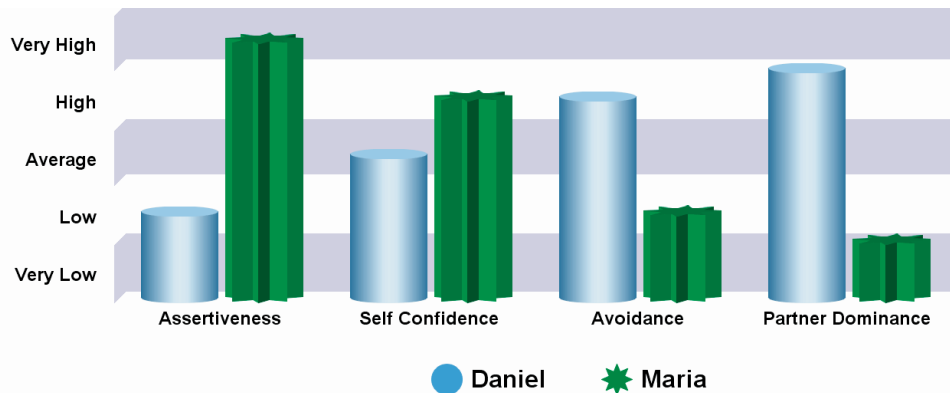
Daniel is generally realistic and open to admitting limitations or problems in their relationship.

Maria is often idealistic about their relationship and may tend to deny or minimize problems.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Daniel	Maria	Idealistic Distortion Items
2	4	Every new thing I have learned about my partner has pleased me.
4	5	I have never regretted my relationship with my partner.
2	4	My partner always gives me the love and affection I need.
2	4	My partner and I understand each other completely.
1	4	My partner completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.
3	3	My partner has all the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.
3	4	We are as happy as any couple could possibly be.

Relationship Dynamics



Assertiveness is the ability to express one's feelings and ask for what one wants.

Daniel: **Low**

Daniel has some difficulty expressing thoughts and feelings, and sometimes finds it difficult to ask for what he/she wants in the relationship.

Maria: **Very High**

Maria is good at openly expressing thoughts and feelings and can easily ask for what he/she wants in the relationship.

Self-Confidence focuses on how good one feels about oneself and their ability to accomplish what they want in life.

Daniel: **Average**

Daniel has a moderate level of Self Confidence and may generally have positive self-esteem, and typically feels good about his/her ability to accomplish what is wanted in life.

Maria: **High**

Maria has a high level of Self Confidence, positive self-esteem, and feels assurance of his/her ability to effectively accomplish what is wanted in life.

Avoidance is the tendency to minimize issues and a reluctance to deal with issues directly.

Daniel: **High**

Daniel scored in the high range and may tend to minimize problems and be reluctant to deal directly with issues.

Maria: **Low**

Maria scored low in avoidance and will generally be open to identifying and discussing issues in their relationship.

Partner Dominance focuses on how much one feels controlled or dominated by their partner.

Daniel: **High**

Daniel scored in the high range in Partner Dominance and may often feel his/her partner is dominant, controlling, or interested in managing his/her life.

Maria: **Very Low**

Maria scored in the very low range in Partner Dominance and does not feel his/her partner is dominant, controlling, or interested in managing his/her life.



COMMUNICATION

*"It is a luxury to be understood."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson*

CREATING A WISH LIST

In this exercise, you will each individually make a Wish List of things you would like more or less of in your relationship. Next, take turns sharing your Wish Lists with each other.

Assertiveness is the ability to express your feelings and ask for what you want in your relationship.

Active listening is the ability to let your partner know you understand them by restating their message.

In sharing your Wish List with your partner, you will be demonstrating your Assertiveness skills. In giving feedback to your partner about their Wish List, you will be demonstrating your Active Listening skills.

Make a Wish List of three things you would like more or less of in your relationship.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SHARING YOUR WISH LIST

Take turns sharing your Wish List with each other, keeping in mind the following:

- Speaker's Job:
 - Speak for yourself ("I" statements e.g. "I wish...").
 - Describe how you would feel if your wish came true.
- Listener's Job:
 - Repeat/summarize what you have heard.
 - Describe the wish AND how your partner would feel if the wish came true.

COUPLE DISCUSSION

After completing the Wish List Exercise, discuss the following questions:

- How good were each of you at being assertive?
- In what ways did you each effectively use active listening skills?





COMMITMENT

Commitment to the relationship is a powerful dynamic for couples. Couples who are more committed to each other are more likely to have vitalized relationships. This scale measures each person's commitment level and their perception of their partner's commitment level.

ABUSE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

This is a broad measure of abuse and substance abuse. These scales provide a good overview of any abuse each person experienced in their relationship with their parents, others, or partner. It is important to know your limitations in working with a couple and when to make a referral to a professional.

PERSONAL STRESS PROFILE

The Personal Stress Profile describes each individual's personal level of stress, and is based on responses to 25 common sources of stress. For engaged couples the stress profile includes 10 items related to wedding planning stress. The top 10 stressors for each individual are listed in the Report.

Key Ideas about Stress

- There is a curvilinear relationship between moderate, short-lived stress and cognitive and mental performance. The right amount of stress can be motivating for people: Too little stress can lead to boredom and too much can cause anxiety.
- Chronic stress, even that which is the result of minor daily hassles, can overexpose the body to stress hormones increasing the risk of numerous health problems.
- Managing stress begins with identifying the sources of stress, assessing ability to control or change the situation, and staying connected to each other as you discuss healthy ways to cope.



COUPLE EXERCISE IDENTIFYING MOST-CRITICAL ISSUES

Commitment

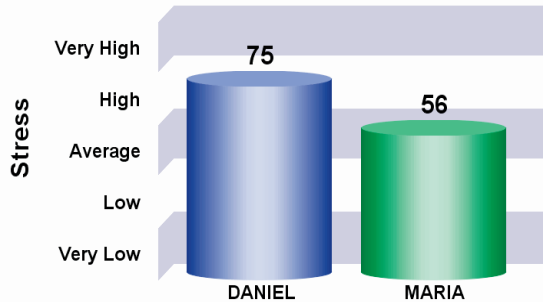
Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
<u>Questions</u>	<u>Daniel</u>		<u>Maria</u>	
I am committed to making our marriage last a lifetime.	Agree		Strongly Agree	
I am willing to doing whatever it takes to improve our relationship.	Agree		Strongly Agree	
I believe my partner is committed to making our marriage last a lifetime.	Strongly Agree		Strongly Agree	
I believe my partner is willing to doing whatever it takes to improve our relationship.	Strongly Agree		Strongly Agree	

Abuse

Never 1	Seldom 2	Sometimes 3	Often 4	Very Often 5
<u>Questions</u>	<u>Daniel</u>		<u>Maria</u>	
Have your parents ever had problems with alcohol or drug use?	Sometimes		Never	
Have you ever had problems with alcohol or drug use?	Seldom		Never	
Has your partner ever had problems with alcohol or drug use?	Never		Sometimes	
Have you ever observed abuse between your parents?	Sometimes		Never	
Were you ever abused by your parents?	Never		Never	
Have you ever been abused by your current partner?	Never		Never	
Have you ever been abused by anyone else?	Never		Never	
Do you struggle with unhealthy sexual behavior or use of pornography?	Seldom		Never	
Does your partner struggle with unhealthy sexual behavior or use of pornography?	Never		Never	

Personal Stress Profile

The **Personal Stress Profile** examines each individual's personal stress level over the last year. For engaged couples, stress levels are based on responses to 25 common sources of personal and wedding-related stress.



Daniel appears to have a very high level of personal stress, which can create demands on a person's time and energy. The stress may also contribute to problems with physical, relational, and emotional health. It will be helpful to learn and make use of effective coping resources to better manage personal stress.

Maria appears to have a moderate level of frustration or personal stress. Such frustrations and stressors may at times affect attitudes, health, and relationships. It will be helpful to identify effective coping resources so stress does not become overwhelming.

How often have these issues created stress for you?

Never 1 Seldom 2 Sometimes 3 Often 4 Very Often 5

Daniel Top Stressors	Maria Top Stressors
<p><u>Very Often</u></p> <p>Decisions about wedding details Your current living arrangement</p>	<p><u>Very Often</u></p> <p>Dealing with the wedding party Decisions about wedding details Financial concerns</p>
<p><u>Often</u></p> <p>Dealing with your in-laws Lack of exercise Lack of time for fiancé</p>	<p><u>Often</u></p> <p>Lack of time for friends Your current living arrangement</p>
<p><u>Sometimes</u></p> <p>Emotionally upset/emotional issues Fiancé not getting things done Fiancé stressed by wedding planning Your partner</p>	<p><u>Sometimes</u></p> <p>Emotionally upset/emotional issues Lack of time for fiancé Opinions from friends or relatives Your job Your partner</p>

Help this couple compare their lists of top stressors. It is not uncommon for the lists to be somewhat different. Take a moment to help them discuss which stressors are similar and which are different. Key resources for coping with stress include healthy communication, conflict resolution, flexibility, and closeness.

PREPARE/ENRICH Exercises: *Identifying Most Critical Issues, Balancing your Priorities, Wedding Stress*



PERSONAL STRESS PROFILE

"Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference." —Reinhold Niebuhr

IDENTIFYING MOST CRITICAL ISSUES

Do you control stress in your life or does stress control you?

Stressors are events that cause an emotional and/or physical reaction. Stress can be positive (wedding, job promotion) or negative (loss of job, car accident, major illness). But what is important is to be able to manage the many stressors in your life.

One way to manage stress is to prioritize the issues that are most important to you. Another is to decide what issues can be changed or resolved and which ones cannot. This exercise will help you focus on the high priority issues and those that can be changed (Box 1).

COUPLE EXERCISE

1. Select up to **four issues** that are the most stressful for each of you.
2. Review each issue and put it into one of the four cells below. (Box 1 contains the "Most Critical Issues.")

	Able to Change	Difficult to Change
High Priority	Box 1 MOST CRITICAL ISSUES <i>What changes can you each make?</i>	Box 2 <i>How do you plan to cope?</i>
Low Priority	Box 3 <i>Are you spending too much time on low priority issues?</i>	Box 4 LEAST CRITICAL ISSUES <i>Can you accept or forget about these issues?</i>

COUPLE DISCUSSION

- Select one issue from Box 1 that you will work on together as a couple.
- Work together as a team to achieve your goals.
 - Communicate about the issue.
 - Use good conflict resolution skills.
 - Be flexible with one another.





SIX COMPONENTS

Each Relationship Category has a one-page summary that follows a standard format. The **Communication** and **Conflict Resolution** categories are used to illustrate the design.

- Brief definition of the category and what is being measured
- Individual scores for the couple are summarized and graphed
- Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) graphed along the continuum from Growth Area to Strength
- Response scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”
- Actual items and responses for each individual listed by couple result
- Suggested PREPARE/ENRICH Exercises from the Workbook for Couples

When listing the items and responses, each statement has a (+) or (–) sign in front of it.

- Positive items (+) indicate healthy or positive statements about couple relationships.
- Negative items (–) indicate unhealthy or negative statements about couple relationships.

COUPLE’S RESPONSES

A couple’s response to each item is compared and categorized as follows:

- **Positive Couple Agreement** – partners agree with one another in a healthy direction
- **Disagreement** – partners disagree with one another by two or more points on the five-point scale
- **Indecision** – one or both partners are undecided, as indicated by a number 3 response, and the other partner is within one point of this either way
- **Special Focus** – partners agree it is an area of concern

BALANCING YOUR FEEDBACK

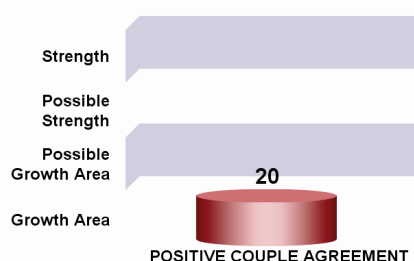
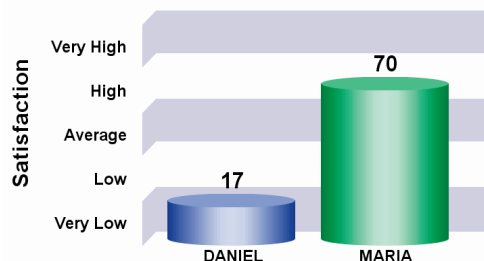
Share **both strength and growth areas** with couple. For each category, help couples discuss 1–2 Positive Couple Agreement items (Strengths) and 2–3 Disagreement, Indecision, and Special Focus items (Growth Areas).



COUPLE EXERCISE TEN STEPS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

Communication

The **Communication** category measures how couples feel about the quality and quantity of communication in their relationship. It explores how they share feelings, understand, and listen to one another.



Daniel appears to be very concerned about the quality of their communication and feels they have few strengths in this area.

Maria feels positive about their communication and how they share feelings and listen to one another.

Growth Area: The couple disagrees or shares mutual concern about most items in this category. Help them discuss 1-2 Agreement items and 2-3 of the Disagreement, Indecision, or Special Focus items listed below. By practicing and learning new communication skills, such as assertiveness and active listening, they can improve their relationship.

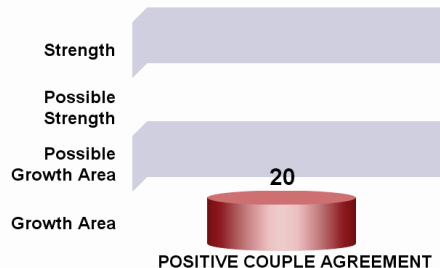
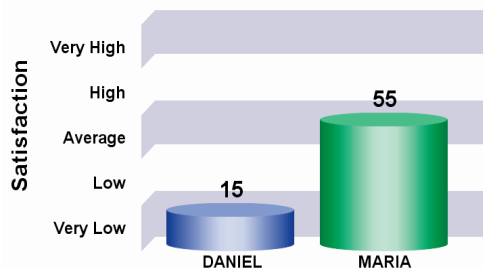
Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
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Daniel	Maria	Positive Couple Agreement (20%)
2	1	- I wish my partner were more willing to share his/her feelings with me.
1	1	- Sometimes I have trouble believing everything my partner tells me.
		Disagreement (50%)
5	1	- At times it is hard for me to ask my partner for what I want.
2	5	+ I can express my true feelings to my partner.
4	2	- It is difficult for me to share negative feelings with my partner.
2	5	+ My partner is a very good listener.
1	3	- When we are having a problem, my partner often refuses to talk about it.
		Indecision (20%)
2	3	+ I am very satisfied with how my partner and I talk with each other.
3	2	- My partner sometimes makes comments that put me down.
		Special Focus (10%)
4	4	- My partner often doesn't understand how I feel.

PREPARE/ENRICH Exercises: *Creating a Wish List using Assertiveness & Active Listening, Daily Dialogue, and Daily Compliments*

Conflict Resolution

The **Conflict Resolution** category looks at a couple's ability to discuss and resolve differences. It measures how effectively couples share opinions, ideas, and feelings, even during times of conflict.



Daniel appears to be very concerned about their ability to discuss and resolve differences, and feels they have few strengths in this area.

Maria feels generally good about their conflict resolution, but has concerns about some aspects of their ability to discuss and resolve differences.

Growth Area: The couple disagrees or shares mutual concern about most items in this category. Help them discuss 1-2 Agreement items and 2-3 of the Disagreement, Indecision, or Special Focus items listed below. By learning and practicing new skills such as the 10 Steps for Resolving Conflict, they can improve their relationship.

Strongly Disagree 1 Disagree 2 Undecided 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree 5

Daniel	Maria	Positive Couple Agreement (20%)
2	2	- At times my partner does not take our disagreements seriously.
2	1	- Sometimes we have serious disputes over unimportant issues.
Disagreement (60%)		
5	3	- At times I feel some of our differences never get resolved.
1	5	+ Even during disagreements, I can share my feelings and ideas with my partner.
3	1	- I go out of my way to avoid conflict with my partner.
5	1	- To end an argument, I tend to give in too quickly.
4	2	- When we argue, I usually end up feeling responsible for the problem.
1	3	+ When we discuss problems, my partner understands my opinions and ideas.
Indecision (10%)		
3	2	- To avoid hurting my partner's feelings during an argument, I tend to say nothing.
Special Focus (10%)		
5	4	- My partner and I have different ideas about the best way to solve our disagreements.

PREPARE/ENRICH Exercises: *Ten Steps for Resolving Conflict, How to Take a Time-Out, Seeking and Granting Forgiveness*



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

"Anyone can become angry. That is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way – that is not easy." —Aristotle

TEN STEPS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

All couples have differences and disagreements. Studies show the amount of disagreements are not related to marital happiness as much as how they are handled. Happy couples do not avoid disagreements; they resolve them while remaining respectful of each other, thereby strengthening their relationship. This Ten Step Model is a simple, but effective way to resolve conflict while avoiding the common and destructive patterns. Use this model with an ongoing issue in your relationship, as well as future issues.

1. **Set a time and place for discussion.**

2. **Define the problem.** Be specific. _____

3. **List the ways you each contribute to the problem.**

Partner 1: _____

Partner 2: _____

4. **List past attempts to resolve the issue that were not successful.**

1) _____ 3) _____

2) _____ 4) _____

5. **Brainstorm 10 possible solutions to the problem.** Do not judge or criticize any of the suggestions at this point.

1) _____ 3) _____

3) _____ 4) _____

5) _____ 6) _____

7) _____ 8) _____

9) _____ 10) _____

6. **Discuss and evaluate each of these possible solutions.** Be as objective as possible. Talk about how useful and appropriate each suggestion feels for resolving your issue.

7. **Agree on one solution to try:** _____

8. **Agree how you will each work toward this solution.** Be as specific as possible.

Partner 1: _____

Partner 2: _____

9. **Set up another meeting to discuss your progress.**

Place: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

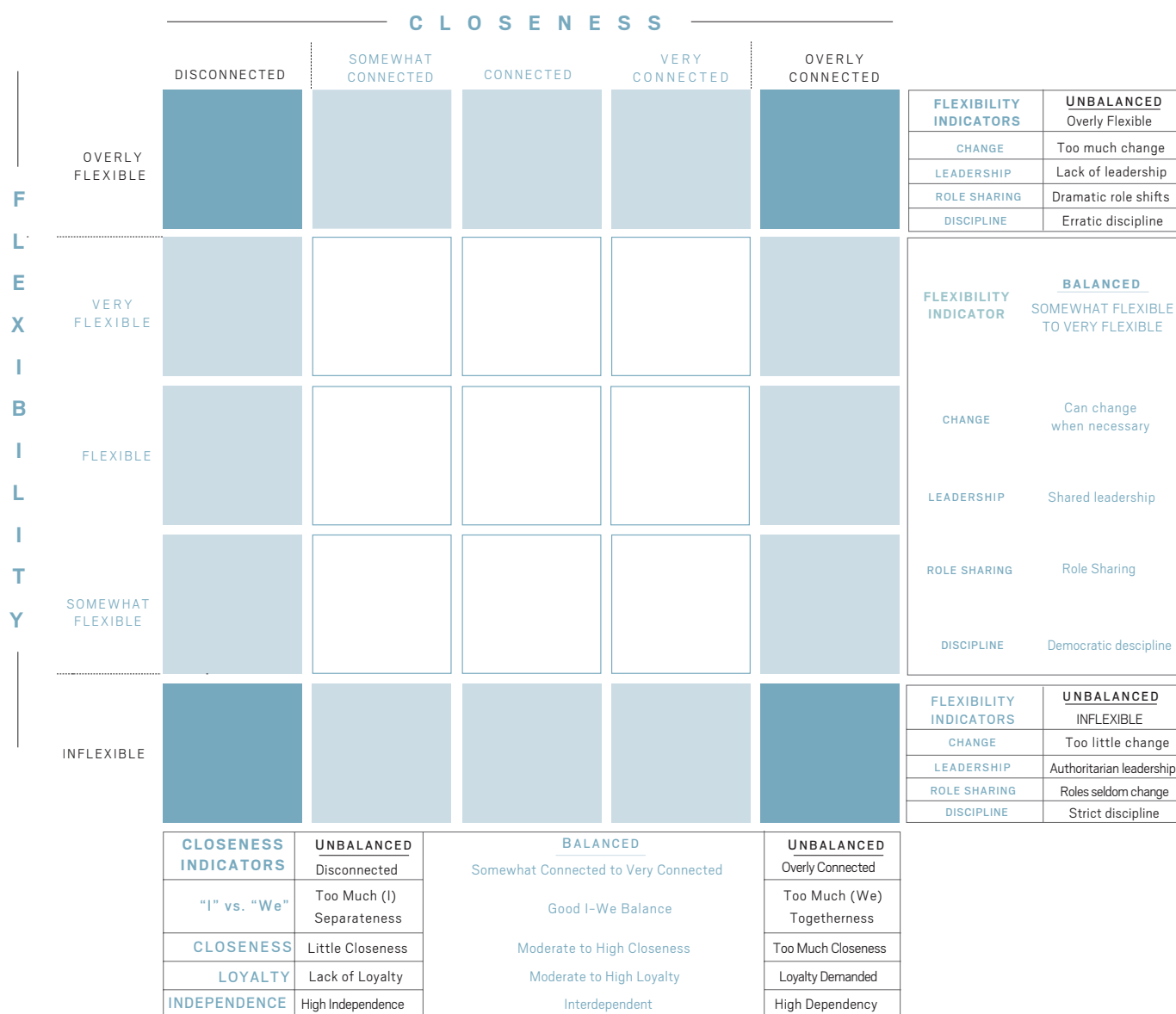
10. **Reward each other for progress.** If you notice your partner making a positive contribution toward the solution, praise his/her effort.

SECTION 8

COUPLE AND FAMILY MAPS



The Couple and Family Maps are based on the Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems, which is a very popular and well-researched model of couple and family health.



COUPLE AND FAMILY MAPS

Five levels of Closeness and five levels of Flexibility for couples in their relationship and in their family of origin:

- **Closeness** – the feeling of togetherness and emotional connection with each other. Measured by **I vs. We**, **loyalty**, and **independence**.
- **Flexibility** – the ability to make changes in roles and leadership when necessary. Measured by openness to **change**, **leadership**, **role sharing**, and **discipline**.

HEALTHY BALANCE

Balancing Closeness and Flexibility is the key to couple and family health. Couples who are in the nine central squares are considered balanced.

- For Closeness, couples/families need to balance **separateness (I)** vs. **togetherness (We)**.
- For Flexibility, couples/families need to balance **stability** vs. **change**.

The two Unbalanced levels of Closeness are “Disconnected” and “Overly Connected”:

- **Disconnected** – too much separateness, lack of loyalty, high independence
- **Overly Connected** – too much togetherness, loyalty is demanded, high dependency

The two Unbalanced levels of Flexibility are “Inflexible” and “Overly Flexible”:

- **Inflexible** – too little change, authoritarian leadership, overly strict discipline
- **Overly Flexible** – too much change, lack of effective leadership, dramatic role shifting, erratic discipline

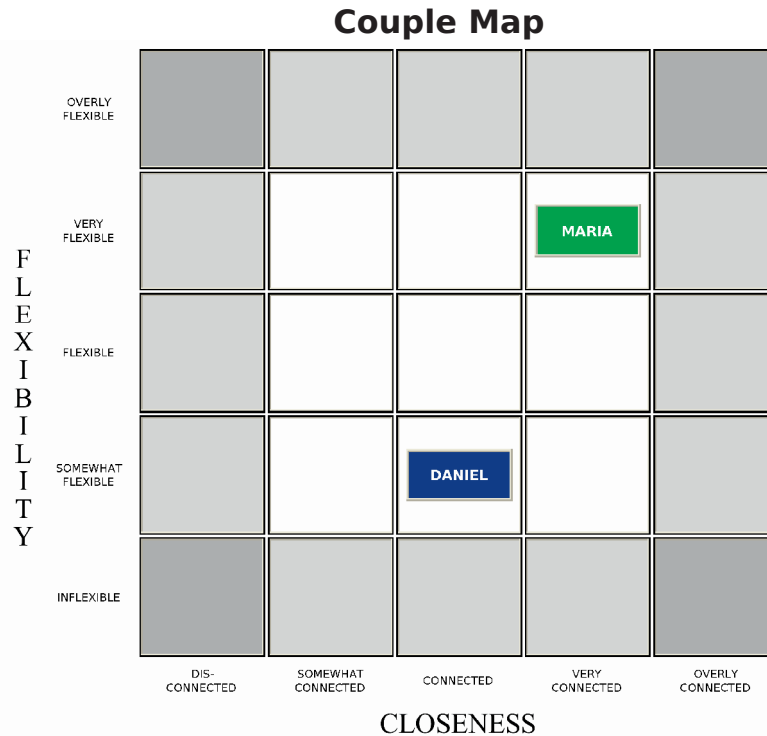
COUPLE AND FAMILY MAPS ARE DYNAMIC

The Maps capture a snapshot of the couple and family at one point in time. Relationships change over time, and so does their movement on the Couple and Family Maps:

- It is normal for couples and families to change on the Map across the family life cycle.
- Stressful and/or traumatic events will cause movement on the Map.
- Couples often become more unbalanced for short periods of time to adapt to stress.
- After dealing with stress, couples often move back toward their previous position on the Map, though rarely to exactly the same position.



COUPLE EXERCISE
MAPPING YOUR RELATIONSHIP



Couple Closeness is defined as the emotional closeness one feels toward their partner. On this dimension, relationships can range from *disconnected* to *overly connected*.

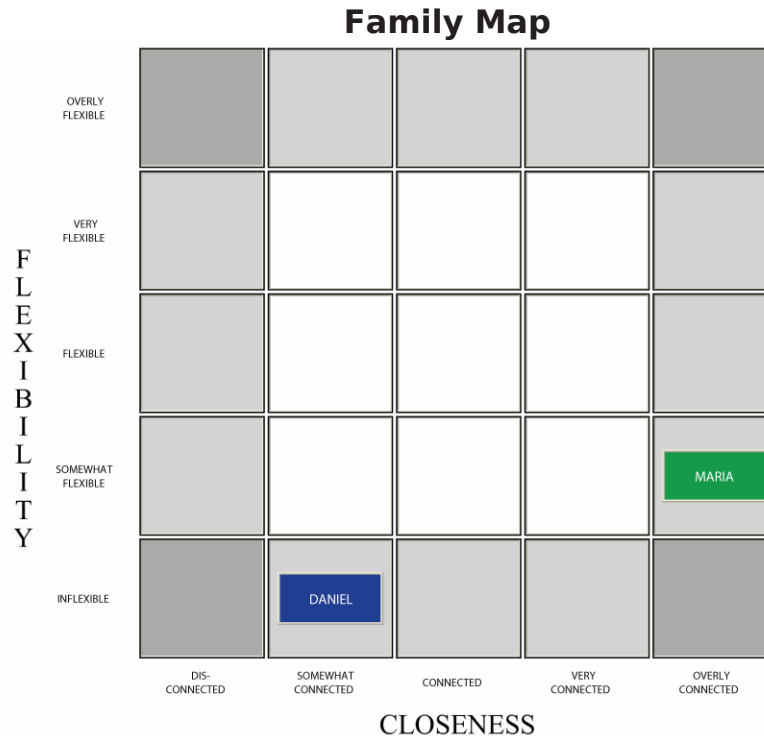
- **Daniel** describes this relationship as **Connected**. These individuals experience a healthy balance of "We" and "I", or closeness and separateness, which reflects an interdependent relationship. Most healthy marriages not only foster connection, but also leave room for each partner to continue to grow and develop as individuals.
- **Maria** describes this relationship as **Very Connected**. Very connected couples often have a good balance of closeness and separateness, which reflects an interdependent relationship. Healthy marriages foster connection, but also leave room for each partner to pursue individual interests and activities.

Couple Flexibility is defined as the ability to adjust to changes in roles and leadership in response to life's demands. On this dimension, relationships can range from *inflexible* to *overly flexible*.

- **Daniel** feels the relationship is **Somewhat Flexible**, with more stability and less openness to change. The partners may sometimes resist changes in leadership or roles and may need to remember that healthy relationships often require the ability to be flexible while meeting the demands of busy lives.
- **Maria** feels the relationship is **Very Flexible**, with a good balance between stability and change. They may often share decision making and are able to adjust to ongoing issues. Most couples function well with this level of flexibility.

Couple Discussion: Review the Closeness and Flexibility results. It can be helpful to discuss what is positive about the current levels of closeness and flexibility. It can also be helpful to discuss any desired changes (increases or decreases) in closeness and flexibility.

PREPARE/ENRICH Exercises: *Mapping Your Relationship, Closeness Exercises, Flexibility Exercises*



Family Closeness is defined as the emotional closeness one felt growing up in their family of origin. On this dimension, family relationships can range from *disconnected* to *overly connected*.

- **Daniel** grew up in a family that was **Somewhat Connected**. These individuals experienced some family closeness, with plenty of freedom to be an individual and pursue outside relationships.
- **Maria** grew up in an **Overly Connected** family. These individuals often describe feeling a high level of closeness in their family of origin, with closeness and loyalty being the priorities. At times they may have experienced too much connection and wished for more freedom from their family.

Family Flexibility is defined as a family's ability to adjust to changes in roles, leadership and discipline. On this dimension, family relationships can range from *inflexible* to *overly flexible*.

- **Daniel** experienced a family of origin that felt **Inflexible**. These families are not very open to change. Family members are often too rigid and resist changes in leadership, roles, and routines. These families also have trouble adjusting to stress and finding new ways to deal with issues.
- **Maria** experienced a family of origin that felt **Somewhat Flexible**. These families maintain a high level of structure and organization. Leadership, decision-making, and roles are clearly defined with little flexibility. They can have some difficulty adjusting to stress and finding new ways to deal with challenges.

Couple Discussion: Review family of origin closeness and flexibility results. Discuss family closeness and flexibility with actual examples such as observing a holiday, celebrating a birthday, or handling discipline. What does each person want to bring from their family into the current relationship? What does each person want to leave behind?

PREPARE/ENRICH Exercises: *Mapping Your Relationship, Closeness Exercises, Flexibility Exercises*



COUPLE AND FAMILY MAPS

"In marrying another person, you are also marrying their family."

MAPPING YOUR RELATIONSHIP

In your report, there is a **Couple Map**, which indicates how you each described your relationship, and a **Family Map** which indicates how you each described your family of origin. These Maps are designed to help you better understand and discuss your couple relationship and families. The fact that families are so diverse can add to the challenge of merging individuals from two families into a couple relationship.

Closeness

Closeness refers to how emotionally connected you feel to your partner and family. How do you balance separateness and togetherness? Indicators of Closeness are I vs. We, loyalty, and independence vs. dependence. There are five levels of Closeness. **Balanced levels** (3 central levels) of Closeness are most healthy for couples and families, while the two **Unbalanced levels** (2 extreme ends) are more problematic.

Flexibility

Flexibility refers to how open couples and families are to change. How do you balance stability and change? Indicators of Flexibility are leadership, relationship roles, discipline and rules. As with Closeness, there are five levels of Flexibility. **Balanced levels** (3 central levels) of Flexibility are the most happy and healthy, while the two **Unbalanced levels** (2 extreme ends) are more problematic.

COUPLE DISCUSSION



- Compare how you each described your couple relationship.
- Compare your family of origin with your partner's family on Closeness and Flexibility. Use the examples below for your discussion:
 - Family gatherings during a holiday
 - Celebrating a birthday or anniversary
 - Dinner time / Meal time
 - Handling discipline and parenting responsibilities
 - Closeness and Flexibility in your parents marriage
 - Caring for a sick family member
 - Adjusting to a stressful change (e.g. a move, job transition).
- How similar or different were your families in terms of Closeness and Flexibility?
- How might the similarities or differences impact your current relationship?
- What from your family of origin would you like to repeat in your couple relationship?
- What from your family would you not like to repeat in your couple relationship?
- How satisfied are you with the current level of Closeness and Flexibility in your couple relationship?
- Consider ways you might increase or decrease Closeness and Flexibility (see next section for ideas).

SECTION
9

SCOPE PERSONALITY PROFILE



The SCOPE Personality Profile is based on the Five Factor Model, one of the most widely accepted theories of personality. This model is sometimes referred to as the Big Five Theory of Personality, and has been widely replicated across cultures.

SCOPE ACRONYM

- **S**ocial – extroversion vs. introversion; preference and behavior in social situations
- **C**hange – dependable vs. open to change; flexibility, and interest in new experiences
- **O**rganized – conscientious vs. easygoing; how organized and persistent a person is in their daily life and in pursuing goals
- **P**leasing – agreeable vs. competitive; how considerate and cooperative with others
- **E**motionally Steady – calm vs. sensitive; the emotional reaction to stress

AN EFFECTIVE TOOL

SCOPE is intended to help couples:

- Foster awareness and understanding about personality similarities and differences
- Help couples learn how to work with differences, not change them
- Increase couple's ability to work together as a team using individual personality strengths

GIVING FEEDBACK ON SCOPE

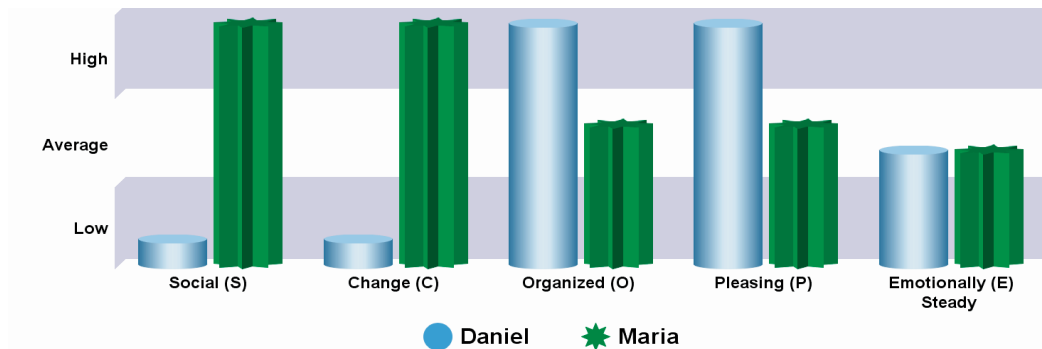
Remember:

- The results are written in positive and descriptive language
- Both high and low scores can be interpreted in a positive way
- SCOPE works best for those in normal range of personality, not with clinical disorders
- Consider all five scales, not just the one or two highest/lowest scores



COUPLE EXERCISE SCOPE OUT YOUR PERSONALITY

SCOPE Personality Scales



The **SCOPE Personality** Assessment consists of five dimensions based on the Five Factor Model of Personality. The five dimensions and the couple's results are described below. Review the results of all five dimensions, rather than focusing on just one or two traits where individuals score high or low.

Compare where the Personality SCOPE results are similar and where they are different. Discuss the advantages and drawbacks to each.

PREPARE/ENRICH Exercise: *SCOPE out your Personality*

Social (S)

This trait reflects preference for, and behavior, in social situations.

- **Daniel** scored **Low** on being Social. Such individuals tend to be reserved or introverted. Social introverts often lack the exuberance and activity levels of extroverts. They may be low-key, deliberate, and less connected socially. They often prefer to be alone or with just a few close friends. These individuals likely feel re-energized after spending time alone or in small, intimate settings, as opposed to large groups or parties. If out of balance, they could appear reclusive or cut off from others.
- **Maria** scored **High** on the Social dimension. These individuals are generally outgoing. Social extroverts enjoy being with people and are often full of energy. They may be enthusiastic and action-oriented. They often enjoy their ability to make friends and acquaintances easily and do not prefer solitude. In groups they like to talk, assert themselves, and may often be the center of attention. If out of balance, they could appear to be attention seeking or shallow.

Couple Results: Couples with one person scoring higher than the other will need to communicate openly with one another about attending social events and getting together with others. One person receives energy from socializing, while the other prefers more privacy and alone time. This difference may become more apparent when they are experiencing greater amounts of stress. They can avoid unnecessary conflict in their relationship by seeking agreement with each other before saying "yes" or "no" to making social plans.



PERSONALITY

Question: Do "opposites attract" or do "birds of a feather flock together"?

Answer: Both are true.

SCOPE OUT YOUR PERSONALITY

Exploring your personality and your partner's personality can be a fascinating and fun process. It can also point out challenges for couples who love one another, but have very different personalities and approaches to life.

COUPLE DISCUSSION

First, review the Personality SCOPE section of your Couple's Report.

- In what area(s) are your personalities similar?
 - How can your similarities be a strength?
 - How can your similarities create problems?
- In what areas are your personalities different?
 - How can your differences be a strength?
 - How can your differences create problems?
- Do the roles you fulfill in your relationship match your personality strengths? (e.g. Does the person who scored high on organization manage the checkbook?)



DEALING WITH PERSONALITY DIFFERENCES

- Don't try to change your partner's personality.
- Remember the positive aspects of your partner's personality that attracted you in the first place.
- Be responsible for yourself. Learn behaviors that will positively contribute to your relationship.
- How can you use your personality differences as a strength in your relationship?



EXTRA CHALLENGES

Stepfamilies face unique challenges:

- While 45–50% of first marriages end in divorce, 60–75% of remarriages end in divorce.
- The first two years of creating a stepfamily are considered as stressful as the first two years following a divorce.
- Parental influence is often diminished when children have more than one set of parents.
- It is often necessary for stepfamilies to do more negotiating than traditional families (e.g. where children will spend holidays, etc.), and these issues can be emotionally loaded.
- Before marriage, relationship satisfaction is closely related to what is happening in the couple's relationship, but after marriage, relationship satisfaction is closely related to what is happening with other relationships (child, ex-spouses, etc.).

USING PREPARE/ENRICH WITH STEP COUPLES

- When working on communication skills and managing conflict, have your couple choose a stepfamily-related topic to discuss.
- Pay attention to the “Partner Style & Habits” scale as this has been shown to be highly predictive of step couple success. Ask couples to reflect on how they believe these issues may play out in their relationship and how they may play out in the child–stepparent relationship.
- Help your couple discuss and define the stepparent roles (e.g. how will the biological parent make space for the stepparent to be included in the parenting process).
- Help your step couple embrace realistic expectations concerning how long it may take for their family to feel a sense of family identity. You may choose to share with them that the average time to form a new healthy stepfamily identity is seven years.



COUPLE EXERCISE STEPFAMILIES: REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS



CHILDREN AND PARENTING

"After two years, I still feel like an outsider." —a stepparent

STEPFAMILIES: CHOOSING REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Read through these common myths, noticing if any of them resonate with you and your partner. Use the questions in the Couple Discussion (below) to guide your discussion.

Myth: Because we love each other, the other family members will also love each other.

Reality: Love and/or good relationships may or may not happen between stepfamily members. It will likely take time for emotional bonds to develop; some will bond quickly, others slowly, and it is possible that some individuals may never bond.

Myth: We'll do marriage better this time around.

Reality: Those who have experienced a breakup or divorce have often learned tough lessons from the past. While a new marriage involves different people and different dynamics, it is not uncommon for individuals to slip into old patterns and routines (e.g., being avoidant during conflict). Be mindful not to repeat mistakes of the past.

Myth: Our children will feel as happy about this new family as we do.

Reality: The truth is children will at best be confused about the new marriage and at worst, they'll resent it. Remarriage is a gain for adults and a challenge for children. Only after much time, when family stability is obtained, does the remarriage also become a gain for children. Be patient with them.

Myth: The stepparent(s) will quickly bond with the children and act like another parent.

Reality: Sometimes stepparents want so badly to be accepted they try to manage the children as a parent would. They may also try to show affection like a biological parent would. Children often need some space initially to build a relationship with the stepparent. It is often a good idea to let the child set the pace and follow their lead.

Myth: We will be able to easily form a new family.

Reality: In most cases, children didn't ask for this new family, they need time to develop a history and sense of family. Don't push to create relationships. It is often better to have minimal expectations of how relationships will develop rather than grand expectations which may fail to materialize.

Adapted from *The Smart Stepfamily: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family* by Ron L. Deal, Bethany House Publishers (2014).

COUPLE DISCUSSION

- Which of these myths have you been tempted to believe?
- How could having these unrealistic expectations set you up for frustration and disappointment?
- How are you going to balance the challenges of a stepfamily and nourishing your couple relationship?





GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH CONFLICTED AND DEVITALIZED COUPLES

- Since “Conflicted” and “Devitalized” couples are often more aware of, and more focused on their “growth areas”, it is important to bring attention to, and build upon their strengths.
- If couples do not have strengths at the “category” level (Communication, Finances, etc.), look within each category to find Positive Couple Agreement at the item level. Help them reconnect with these positive aspects of their relationship.
- Provide encouragement and hope by normalizing “seasons” of unhappiness in relationships. Studies have demonstrated that when couples are followed for five years, majorities of those who report being “unhappily married” later report being “happily married”.
- Make note of how each partner responded to questions on commitment and consider asking your couple what they believe the connection may be between commitment and relationship satisfaction. In PREPARE/ENRICH Research, 95% of “vitalized” couples report high relationship commitment, whereas only 23% of “devitalized” couples report the same.
- Conflicted and devitalized couples have a high risk of divorce and often need more feedback sessions and/or more intensive intervention to improve their relationship.
- It is always important to know your limitations and this may be more important when working with conflicted or devitalized couples. Based on your level of training and experience, know when to refer couples for further help.

DIFFICULT ISSUES THAT REQUIRE COUNSELING FROM A PROFESSIONAL THERAPIST

- Substance abuse or addiction
- Physical abuse
- Sexual addictions or abuse
- Ongoing infidelity
- Serious mental health concerns such as depression, bipolar disorders, etc.

- Creating a Wish List Using Assertiveness and Active Listening
- Ten Steps for Resolving Conflict
- How to Take a Time-Out
- Seeking and Granting Forgiveness



COUPLE EXERCISE CREATING A WISH LIST



COMMUNICATION

*"It is a luxury to be understood."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson*

CREATING A WISH LIST

In this exercise, you will each individually make a Wish List of things you would like more or less of in your relationship. Next, take turns sharing your Wish Lists with each other.

Assertiveness is the ability to express your feelings and ask for what you want in your relationship.

Active listening is the ability to let your partner know you understand them by restating their message.

In sharing your Wish List with your partner, you will be demonstrating your Assertiveness skills. In giving feedback to your partner about their Wish List, you will be demonstrating your Active Listening skills.

Make a Wish List of three things you would like more or less of in your relationship.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SHARING YOUR WISH LIST

Take turns sharing your Wish List with each other, keeping in mind the following:

- Speaker's Job:
 - Speak for yourself ("I" statements e.g. "I wish...").
 - Describe how you would feel if your wish came true.
- Listener's Job:
 - Repeat/summarize what you have heard.
 - Describe the wish AND how your partner would feel if the wish came true.

COUPLE DISCUSSION

After completing the Wish List Exercise, discuss the following questions:

- How good were each of you at being assertive?
- In what ways did you each effectively use active listening skills?





EXPERIENCE THE ASSESSMENT

Your Facilitator account will be credited with a **complimentary online scoring for PREPARE/ENRICH**. Use this complimentary credit soon with your partner or with a couple. Experiencing the program will help solidify what you have learned.

REVIEW RESOURCES ON THE WEBSITE

- Videos and documents covering a range of topics relevant to your work with couples
- FAQ's
- Research studies highlighting useful information about PREPARE/ENRICH
- Standard and supplemental feedback materials
- Books and other resources available for purchase

KEEP YOUR PROFILE UPDATED

If you **move or change your email address**, please update your Profile. If you choose to be in our "Referral Network" system, your contact information will be available for couples who are looking for a PREPARE/ENRICH Facilitator.

USING PREPARE/ENRICH IN GROUPS

PREPARE/ENRICH is a great tool to add to your relationship enrichment groups. Whether your group follows what is outlined in the PREPARE/ENRICH Group Program Instructor's Guide or your own curriculum, a personalized assessment gets couples interested and engaged in the topics that will be addressed.

Couples pay attention when content applies to them, which may be one of the reasons that assessment has been shown to increase the impact of relationship programs by 30%.

6 EASY STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING GROUPS

1. Choose a leader or team leaders to facilitate your group (marriage ministry leaders or marriage mentor couples often lead these groups).
2. Decide whether you would like your group to meet weekly or presented as a half-day, day or weekend intensive.
3. If meeting weekly, how many sessions will you have? If presenting the program as an intensive, how many hours will you devote to the program?
4. Based on the number of sessions/hours determine which lessons will be covered. The **PREPARE/ENRICH Group Program's Instructor's Guide** outlines 10 sessions including an introduction and wrap-up session. Each session can be covered in an hour.
5. Set a date for the group's initial meeting. At this meeting, you may choose to have couples weigh in on meeting dates, times and topics they would find most interesting or helpful.
6. Let couples know about the group. Post flyers around your place of worship/community, newsletters, the web including social media sites.

For information on using PREPARE/ENRICH in small groups, marriage mentor programs, or our specialized versions (Adoption/Foster Care, Parenting), visit our website or contact the PREPARE/ENRICH Office.

*Thank you for partnering with us to help
build strong marriages and healthy relationships!*



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651.635.0511 800.331.1661 www.prepare-enrich.com