

Important: Please save this to your computer!

Your Online Premarital Course

(With lifetime membership)

How the Course Works

Hyperlink; [How the course works](#)

"Because 'love' itself not enough - you also need to know how to grow it, nurture it and protect it."

Directions: As simple as: 1, 2, 3

1. Spend at least 4 hours on this course – as required by the state of Florida. There are two mandatory profiles that take a total of 15 – 20 minutes. For the remaining 3 hours and 40 minutes YOU can choose from the remaining content that will benefit you the most. There are 7 presentation videos (with guided discussion questions), as well as, games, exercises and questions. (Estimated over 15 hours of content)
2. After you completed the 4 hours on the course you can scroll to the last page and submit your verification form. (This last stage works better from a computer or laptop.)
3. After you submit the verification form the Certificate of Completion will appear instantly in your browser. Just type in both names, print the certificate and then take it to the courthouse with you.

Note: This is a PDF document, so you cannot directly write on it unless you print it out. Be sure to save it to your computer so you can come back to the course as needed.

Let's Begin

Section 1: Highly recommended – Complete these two profiles

1. The Five Love Languages

This profile is a classic! There are 5 ways that we communicate and express love to one another. They are:

1. Physical touch
2. Words of affirmation
3. Quality time
4. Acts of Service
5. Receiving gifts.

Here is the problem about these five love languages. One of the five is usually more important to you than the other four. And you and your partner probably do not have the same love language. What typically happens is that each person expresses their 'own' love language instead what the other person needs. It is entirely possible for a couple to deeply love each other but end up in divorce court because they didn't know how to express love in the manner that the other person needed.

Use this link: [The 5 Love Language Profile](#)

You might find it interesting to try to guess your 'own' love language as well as your partners before taking the profile.

2. [Personality Profile](#)

Understanding personality differences is key when it comes to communication and expressing love in a relationship.

You can do a [5-minute free personality test online](#) that tells you how to best love and how to communicate to your spouse given their unique personality. We tend to want to love and communicate to our partner in the way we like, rather than the way our partner likes.

Use this Link: [The five-minute personality test](#)

SECTION 2: Video Options to Course

Watch the videos of your choice. The guided discussion questions will help you apply the teaching lessons to your relationship.



Guided Discussion Questions



Guided Discussion Questions



Guided Discussing Questions





Guided Discussion Questions



God's Blueprint for Marriage



Guided Discussion Questions



6 Common Divorce Predictors

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Guided Discussion Questions



Guided Discussion Questions

SECTION 3: ACTIVITIES

1. Fix this problem

You are the counselor! What would you say to these couples:

- She likes her family to drop in anytime to visit. He thinks it's rude and inconsiderate for them to do so.
- He bought a new truck without talking to her about it. She's upset because they are having trouble paying for their bills.
- She's ready to have a baby. He says it's still too soon.



Think of other couples you know of at work, in the family, etc. and problems they have had and how you would solve them.

Discussing other couple's problems will help you to reveal to each other your perspectives on how problems are solve

2. My Uncle Left Me a Million Dollars!

It's fun to dream, and **our dreams say a lot about what is important to us.**

Let's say your favorite uncle left you a million dollars!

What would you do with the money?

You might want to write out your answers separately, and then come together to discuss what you've written.

You can learn a lot about each other's aspirations, values and hopes.

3. My Best Family Vacation

This is a simple and fun exercise and one in which you can learn a lot about each other.

Each of you describes your favorite vacation and what made it so great.

Aside note: Gary Smalley who writes and speaks widely on marriage and family topics has found in questioning thousands of people in his seminars that the one activity that seems to bring families close more than any other single thing is camping.



There's something about camping. The adventure, the problems you encounter along the way but pull through as a family, and the lack of distractions are probably some of the reasons so many families report camping as a family activity that made them close.

Maybe camping is not your thing. That's ok. But think about the principle here and how you can use it to make your marriage and someday your family strong and close.

It's not necessarily how far you go, and how much money you spend. It's what you do and what happens along the way. What are your thoughts?

4. Try on Another Pair of Shoes

Put yourself in the other person's shoes. (Ladies, if he literally wants to wear your clothes, you may want to get him help). **Be the other person and try to describe what their day is like.**

We all know what our day is like and all the problems we have to deal with. But what is my partner's day like? Do your best to try to understand their unique challenges. What's it like being them? Who are the people they deal with? What expectations do they face from others? What's it like having you as their partner? Want to go deeper? Think about past family experiences of your partner. Put yourself in those shoes and see how they affect you day to day. This is another exercise designed to value your significant other - to show them respect, understanding and appreciation.

5. Research 101 - Good and Bad Examples

Does this sound too much like going to school? No need to go to the library for this research though. One of the best ways to learn is to look to role models, and even bad examples can teach us.

- **Each of you think of someone you know who has a successful marriage...**not just long, but what you consider a good marriage. Each of you go separately & talk to the husband or wife and ask them about their marriage (asking will compliment them). Come back together and compare notes. What did you learn about marriage from your research?
- **Each of you describe a person or persons whom you consider to be a exceptional father or mother, or husband or wife.** Of course, explain your choices...what makes them great in your estimation?
- **Describe a really bad marriage that you are aware of.** What makes it bad? Where did it go wrong? How will yours be different

Note: Many churches are now using mentoring programs to help engaged couples prepare for marriage. Basically, they pair you up with a couple who has a healthy marriage and you spend time with them learning from them and asking them questions. If you are interested, check with your church to see if they have such a program or can get you contact with one that does.

6. Watch a Movie

Can you believe you can do marriage preparation watching a movie? Overhearing (and over-watching) others can be a great learning tool.

Rent the movie [The Story of Us](#) starring Michelle Pfeiffer and Bruce Willis. Here's a relationship that gets into a lot of trouble.

After the movie, discuss what went wrong and how they could have prevented things going so bad. If you'd like a free extended guide to discussing the movie go to

<http://www.smartmarriages.com/story.guide.html>

Please note! This movie is Rated R.



You may not be able to find this movie in the stores. You can try Netflix, Blockbuster Online, etc.

Watch the movie trailer at this link: <http://www.imdb.com/video/screenplay/vi33227033/>

[Fireproof](#) - The faith-based couple is at the brink of divorce. As a last resort, the husband commits to the 21-day challenge of praying for his wife and of doing unexpected favors for her. Alex and Stephen Kendrick

[Family Man](#)

Ups and downs between a husband (Nicolas Cage) and wife (Tea Leoni),

but the moral of the story is that the family relationships that are built are far more important than the success and money earned in a life alone.

7. Take a Field Trip



Remember taking field trips in school? Now that was a fun way to learn.

Go to the mall or a restaurant (she says, “That sounds like fun!”) and **observe couples**.

How do couples treat each other? Are they in love? Can you really tell by looking?

This is not meant to judge people that we don’t really know, but is a **way of exploring your own notions of marriage**.

Your observations and **answers will say a lot about your expectations for marriage** (for instance, should couples show affection in public?)

SECTION 4: DIGGING DEEPER

1. What We Need to Talk About Now

Below are 12 aspects of a relationship.

Each of you look through the list and decide on 3 that you believe are *strength areas* in your relationship right now, and decide on 3 that you believe are *growth areas* in your relationship right now. Mark a “S” beside the 3 strength areas and a “G” beside the 3 growth areas. Whoever goes first, be sure your responses are covered so your partner can’t see what you have marked (or print two copies of this page). When you both are finished, take a look and see if you marked most of the same areas. Discuss any differences, and what you were thinking when you marked what you did.

She says (left side) and He says (right side)

- ___ Communication skills ___
- ___ Resolving conflicts ___
- ___ Expectations of marriage ___
- ___ Money matters ___
- ___ Shared recreation activities ___
- ___ Children & parenting views ___

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- ___ Extended family issues ___
- ___ Husband / wife roles ___
- ___ Family backgrounds ___
- ___ Religious views & practices ___
- ___ Personality concerns ___
- ___ Sexual relationship issues ___

There is a list of questions at the end of this Course for each of the above relationship areas to help you get started in a discussion of the areas each of you decided was a growth area.

While you may have discussed many of these areas in your courting, this exercise provides an organized approach to help you focus on the most important things you need to talk about right now.

NOTICE! This is a fun & helpful exercise.

Should you hit some bumpy spots, remember to practice good communication principles like these:

- Let your partner be honest with you. You don't have to like or agree with what you hear, but negative reactions cause your partner to shut down. These reactions could include defensiveness, anger, put-downs, and threats.
- Listen. Give your partner the time they need to express their viewpoint & seek to truly understand. Ask questions, & put in your own words what you hear said.
- Speak to each other in a normal tone of voice.
- Remember the goal is to strengthen your relationship. This will enable you to work together toward solutions.

2. Asking and Listening

Husbands & wives need to both ask for what they want and listen to their mate ask for what they want. We all have needs and there is nothing wrong with wanting those needs met. But it must go both ways for a healthy relationship. Marriage is not a 50-50 proposition, rather both give 100%.

The following exercise will give you both practice in assertively asking for what you want and in listening to what your partner wants & needs.

Separately, each of you look over the list below. Rate from 1 to 3 how important each item is to you ("1" is of lesser importance & "3" is of greater importance). Print out two copies to respond separately.

There is a blank at the end for “other” if there is something else you think of that’s important to you.

When both are finished, discuss your 3’s & then others as you wish.

NOTICE! As you share your responses:

- Listen carefully to your partner as they express their needs and why these are so important to them.
- This is not meant as an opportunity to make selfish demands.
- Be realistic in your expectations and be willing to compromise in some areas.

Ask and Listen

- ___ Spend most of your free time with me
- ___ Let me make my own decisions
- ___ Change a personal habit if it bothers me
- ___ Always tell me what you are thinking
- ___ Discuss with me before spending money
- ___ Join in with me in things I like to do
- ___ Go shopping with me
- ___ Have sex with me whenever I want
- ___ Kiss me every day
- ___ Show / don’t show affection to me in public
- ___ You take care of birth control
- ___ Have no contact with former girl/boyfriends
- ___ I’d like to spend regular time with my parents
- ___ Both of us be involved in religious activities
- ___ Speak about me & to me with respect in public
- ___ Remember special days with presents
- ___ Call if you are running late
- ___ Clean up your own messes
- ___ Throw away old love letters
- ___ Have good personal hygiene
- ___ Talk to me face to face daily
- ___ Always tell me what’s bothering you
- ___ Compliment me often
- ___ Keep the house clean
- ___ Keep yourself attractive
- ___ Be home in the evenings
- ___ Help with dinner
- ___ Make me feel better when I’m down
- ___ Take care of me when I’m sick

- ___ Support me in my dreams
- ___ Plan fun dates for us
- ___ Be nice to my family
- ___ Other: _____

3. I Feel Loved When...

It's important to keep your relationship positive & loving.

This exercise further helps you to express to your partner how you are made to feel cared for. This keeps your partner from having to guess (and maybe guessing wrong) about what you appreciate most.

Each of you complete the statement “I feel loved by you when you...” below. Write down 3-5 things your partner can do.

Once you've both written down your responses, share your list with your partner. Discuss and explain if necessary, but most importantly do the things your partner has listed . . . and enjoy!

NOTICE! As you write down your responses apply these principles:

- **Keep it positive.** Don't write, “I feel loved when you don't nag me.” Instead, “I feel loved when you remember to call me during the day” or “I feel loved when you tell me you love me.”
- **Make the cost of the behavior free or inexpensive.** Not “I feel loved when you buy me jewelry” but, “I feel loved when you rub my back” or “I feel loved when you bring me a romantic card”
- **Choose something that can happen every day or with some frequency.** “I feel loved when you kiss me hello and/or good-bye” or “I feel loved when you compliment me on my appearance.”

“His” I feel loved by you when you . . .

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

5. _____

“Hers” I feel loved by you when you . . .

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

*“A diplomat is a man who always remembers a woman’s birthday but never her age”
“Women like silent men. They think they are listening.”*

4. I Love You Because...

Answer as much as you can below.

You can share your answers with each other now.

But you’ll also want to **seal this page in an envelope and put it away with your other important pagers.** Get it out on your anniversary and enjoy it all over again.

You will also want to look at it when your marriage hits a rough spot. When we are in conflict with our mates, we tend to magnify the negative and minimize the positive. We also forget the past and what it was really like. Your notes will remind you why you married this person.

- I am marrying you because:
- The things I admire / like about you include:
- Our relationship is good right now because:
- My favorite “memory” of us right now is:
- We share these common values, beliefs and goals in life:

5. Questions About Commitment

This section will seem very negative to some...and maybe it is. But commitment is the key (or at least a big key) to a successful marriage. It can only help to be sure a couple understands each other's views about commitment in marriage.

Here are some questions to get you started:

1. Under what circumstances could we imagine getting a divorce?
2. How are we going to guard ourselves from sexual unfaithfulness?
3. What happens when my individual needs aren't the same as yours?
4. Are we getting married for the right reasons?
5. Do we need to fine-tune our approaches to handling problems & handling money?

Here's what one husband wrote to his wife. See what you think. Maybe you'll want to write your own commitment statements:

- There is no other woman I long to be with other than you.
- I will remain your life companion until one of our deaths dissolves our covenant.
- I will try to grow in my ability to tend to your needs as a human being, as a woman, and as a Christian.
- I will try to conduct myself in our marriage the way I imagine Christ would treat you if he were the one married to you.
- I will control my desires to look at & fantasize about being with other women.
- I will be your servant.
- I will place your well-being above my career and above my recreation.
- I will work to make you feel loved, since that is different from my loving you in the ways I prefer.
- I will view our relationship as a resource to us both.
- I will not perceive you as someone who exists to meet my needs but rather as someone who exists for me to serve.

6. “Let’s Talk about This” Exercise

Groom, make a checkmark to the left and Bride, make a checkmark to the right of questions or statements you believe you need to discuss.

Communication Skills

The amount of time we must talk
Differences in our communication styles
What I/you do when we have trouble communicating
The topic hardest for me to discuss with you is:
My/your ability openly & fully express ourselves
My/your tendency to use put-downs
My/your lack of being a good listener
My/your honesty
My/your tendency to become quiet
My/your tendency to interrupt
My/your tendency to dominate the conversation
My/your lack of interest in what I say
What we talk about most of the time
Our acceptance (or lack) of what one of us says
Becoming negative in our communication
Keeping secrets
Need to find someone to help us communicate better

Resolving Conflicts

Our general ability to resolve conflicts
My/your tendency to give in too quickly
My/your need to be right & get my/your way
My/your tendency to say one thing, then do another
My/your getting upset over trivial things
My/your lack of taking issues seriously enough
My/your not saying enough
My/your talking too much & not listening
My/your avoiding dealing with conflict
My/your ability to share feelings/thoughts
My/your ability to accept other’s feelings/thoughts
Our unresolved issue of:
An issue we have not discussed is:
My/your getting angry too much
My/your saying hurtful things
Need to find someone to help us resolve conflicts
Who has to have the last word

Will we ever discuss our conflicts with friends/family
Ever air differences in public / in front of our children
Our ability to compromise

Expectations in Marriage

My/Your expectations of our marriage
Do you expect me to meet all your needs
What happens if unexpected problems come our way
What do we believe about commitment in marriage
Are you going to try to change me
How we view romantic love in a marriage

Money Matters

Our expenses & can we pay the bills
Who will “keep the books.”
When & for what will we borrow money
Are we going to keep a budget
Will we have credit cards & for what use
Current debts one or both of us have
Will both of us work now, or later
Move if one of us received an offer of better pay
Will we have separate banking accounts
Each others spending habits
When do we need to consult with each other before spending money
How much of our income will we save
What we will save for
Would we ever lend money to a friend/family member
Would we ever borrow money from a friend/family
Will we shop for discounts
How much will we spend on fun stuff
How important should money be in our thinking & lives

Shared Recreational Activities

What we will do for fun
How much time you spend away from me
Our balance of work and play
Number & kind of activities we both can enjoy
This is something I'd like us to do together:
This is something I'd like to do with others:
I'm concerned about the money you spend on this activity:

Children & Parenting Views

Birth control
When we will have children
How many children we will have & spacing
How we will nurture our children
How we will discipline our children
Who will discipline our children
Private, public, or home schools for our children
The role of the father
The role of the mother
If we discover we can't have children, what then
Value we'll place on spending time with our children
Value we'll place on showing affection to our children
Value we'll place on family mealtimes
Will one parent always be home with the children
How parenting will affect our marriage

Extended Family Issues

How supportive our friends/family are of our marriage?
How your family feels about me
How my family feels about you
The time you spend with your family/friends
Family members that nose into our business
A family member/friend of yours that concerns me is:
A family member/friend of yours that I really like is:
How close/far away we'll live from our parents
Will we accept/ask for financial help from our parents
How we will decide where to go for Christmas
How you speak to/treat my family
What happens if one of our parents needs special care

Husband / Wife Roles

Will we both work outside the home
Our division of labor at home
How we will make major decisions
My/your role as father
My/your role as mother
Who will keep up with the money
Who will do the yard work
Who will keep the house clean?
Who will help children with homework

Who will discipline the children?

Family Background Similarities/Differences

How much time our families spent together/apart
How our families express their love to each other
How decisions were made
How children were disciplined
Who disciplined the children
How conflicts were handled
Who did what (roles)
The stability of our parent's marriages
How holidays & birthdays were celebrated
What we did for vacations
What we did on weeknights
The time our parents spent together alone
The way children were taught about money
How crises were handled
The place of religious faith in my/your family
The person I like most in my/your family is:
The person I like least in my/your family is:
Family secrets
What we can learn from our families, good or bad

Religious Values / Practices

Our views on the importance of spiritual life
The role of our spiritual practices in our relationship
How our faith will help us deal with problems
How active we will be in a church
What I/you believe about:
A non-negotiable belief/practice for me is:
What we will teach our children about:
How our parents will feel about our choices in faith practices
Our devotional time together as a couple
Our devotional time together as a family
What the Bible teaches about marriage, husbands & wives
How much we will give to our church
What we will do about any religious differences
Our difficulty in discussing religious matters
Our need to discuss our viewpoints with a minister

Personality Concerns

My/your stubbornness
My/your temper

My/your honesty
My/your jealousy
My/your moodiness
My/your bad habits
My/your domineering behavior
My/your negativity
My/your _____

Sexual Relationship Issues

Your expectations of me sexually
What I need from you sexually
Sexual acts I am not comfortable with
Amount of affection in our relationship
Our method of birth control
Previous sexual experiences and/or abuse
My comfort level in talking to you about sex
How often we will make love
Concerns or fears I have about sex
What sex means to our relationship
Male / female viewpoints in regards to sex
How I feel about my body/sexual attractiveness
Using sex as a punishment or reward
Should the man always initiate sex
Can we be affectionate without sex

SECTION 5: SPECIAL INTERESTS

1. Spiritual Resources for Your Marriage



Read these Bible passages & discuss each one's meaning to your marriage.

You may wish to make some notes:

Serving Each Other (Matthew 7:12; Philippians 2:1-8; I Corinthians 10:24)

Honesty (Ephesians 4:25 / Colossians 3:9)

Christ's love as the model for marital love (Ephesians 5:21-33)

Positive communications (Ephesians 4:29)

Dealing with unexpected problems (Romans 8:28 / Jeremiah 29:11)

God's design for marriage (Genesis 2:18-25)

Forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32 / Matthew 18:21-35)

The Bible's description of love (I Corinthians 13)

Sexual needs (I Corinthians 7:1-5)

Parenting (Ephesians 6:1-4)

Money & priorities (I Timothy 6:10; Philippians 4:11-12; Matthew 6:33-34)

Sources of conflicts (James 4:1; Proverbs 15:1)

2. Resources for Blended Families



There are many special challenges with a second marriage and the formation of a step family – too many to delve into here.

Below are a few typical areas of concern you can discuss.

Then, there are listed several Internet resources where you can dig deeper. If you are becoming a step-family, I strongly urge you to make use of some of the available materials.

1. Do either of you have concerns about the other's previous marriage. Examples: Interference from the previous partner, child support or alimony.
2. Have you thoroughly discussed your new home and lifestyle? Examples: Will you have a place new to the both of you? Whose or which furnishings will you keep? How will your home be decorated?
3. What are the greatest challenges each of you expects in this relationship?
4. Are you in agreement regarding your children? Examples: Who will make the rules for the children? Who will discipline the children and how will they be disciplined? Will your children's needs come first?

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Additional Internet resources for step-families:

Successful Stepfamilies – <http://www.successfulstepfamilies.com> / Offers Christian-based book and video resources.

The Blended Family Ministry – <http://www.blendedfamilyministry.com> / Resources from Edward and Sharon Douglas, authors of *The Blended Family: Achieving Peace and Harmony in the Christian Home*.

Stepfamily Association of America – <http://www.saafamilies.org> / A national, non-profit organization that sells a variety of books and materials for families & professionals.

Stepfamily Information – <http://www.stepfamilyinfo.org> / A wealth of information, including an eight-module remarriage preparation course.

Your Stepfamily – <http://www.yourstepfamily.com> / Bi-monthly magazine for dads, moms, & kids to help them evolve as a family.

Stepdads.com – <http://www.stepdads.com/>

3. Getting Along with In-Laws



Well, this is a common approach for dealing with problems with in-laws!

However, it's not one I advise.

Here are some better approaches:

SET SOME GOALS:

You need to be intentional about your relationship with your family.

Describe the kind of relationship you want with your extended family.

LOOKING AT DIFFERENCES

- Extended families bring together diverse people with differing expectations for family.

- Discuss your families' differences in terms of: generational gaps, geographical factors (city vs. rural), financial levels, and spiritual / religious viewpoints
- As you think about the above, what is the difference between acceptance and agreement?
- How will you work to bridge generation & value gaps?
- What does it mean to you to love someone unconditionally?
- Who do you clash with most in your extended family? Why? What are the strong points of the person you clash with?
- Try re-framing negative qualities: meddlesome becomes concerned, and bossy becomes shows leadership

WHEN THERE'S TENSION

- Talk about how you will keep lines of communication open even when relationships are strained.
- What is your plan for remaining calm if an antagonistic family member tries to draw you into an argument?
- How will you respond when you are given unsolicited advice?
- How will you deal with contentious subjects?
- You know what your complaints are toward your future in-laws. Now consider the major complaints that your in-laws have toward their children-in-law, and how you can respond to them in a positive way: Some examples: they view you as indifferent, distant, - thoughtless, inconsiderate, or too busy to be interested in their parent's lives

KEEPING THINGS POSITIVE

- What can you do to promote harmony when the family is together?
- What fun things can you do with your extended family that will help strengthen relationships?

BOUNDARIES

- How will you know when extended family issues are affecting your marriage and what will you do about it?

- What are the boundaries for your immediate family and how will you communicate those to your extended family?
- When you have to be direct & forceful with extended family: Who should do it? When should it be done? How should it be said?

Congratulations!

Here your free Name Change Kit



Name Change Kit

Your ***Certificate of Completion*** will be emailed to you automatically after completing the application form.

Please click below

Your Certificate of Application Form

