

Intellectual Property

VESSELS OF HONOR

ABSTINENCE AND HEALTHY MARRIAGES

RECAPTURING THE VISION



Helping People Dream Again

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Published by Mindset Publishing
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Published 1996, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012

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Empowerment Concepts:
P.O. Box 570456
Miami, Florida 33257

Manufactured in the United States of America
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN 0-9705627-0-5



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When we hear the word honor, what immediately comes to mind are the things that we treasure or hold most dear. Whether it is honor for our country, honor for our heritage and family traditions or honor for someone who has inspired us to greatness, we can all think of something or someone deserving of this high sentiment.

The dream of ReCapturing the Vision for the myriad of young men and women who read this book is that they will hold their bodies and virtue in this high esteem. As students read about the importance of abstinence, the consequences of premarital sex and the wisdom behind strong and healthy marriages, our desire is that they will value their most precious gift - their bodies.

The need for such a book as this is evident in recent statistics that show a rise in Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) among teenagers as well as the research that shows that teenagers who are sexually active are more likely to attempt suicide. This is a timely work that is greatly needed to redirect the mindset of our teens.

Vessels of Honor goes beyond the basic boot camp information to give youth the higher level strategies on creating healthy marriages, becoming effective parents, preserving the family unit, coping with divorce and valuing themselves. That so much information could be encapsulated all in one book is indeed a remarkable accomplishment.

Well done.

Tommy Ford



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Dr. Jacqueline Del Rosario

Dr. Jacqueline Del Rosario is a certified marriage coach, state-approved premarital course provider, recognized public speaker, youth advocate, visionary author and education enthusiast whose mantra derives from the idea that the foundation of any society starts in the individual homes of people.

As a forerunner in the area of youth empowerment and abstinence education, Dr. Del Rosario has achieved unprecedented success with ReCapturing the Vision; for over 20 years she has guided a first-rate organization that has helped thousands of at-risk youth craft a better future.

Known as America's Marriage Coach™, Dr. Jacquie has developed proven tools to help couples develop through their quarrels and discover healthy solutions to marital circumstances across all borders. As both a married woman and marriage counselor of over 20 years, Dr. Jacquie continues to travel coast to coast speaking about and discussing the plights attached to the institution of marriage and less privileged families; she also continues to tirelessly advocate the youth through ReCapturing the Vision and all of its yearly programs and events. Dr. Jacquie resides in Miami, FL with her husband and two sons.

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HONOR

1

What is Honor?

Your journey towards becoming a Vessel of Honor begins with honor. Webster's Dictionary defines "honor" as great respect, high public esteem or value. In the pages that follow, you will learn to value who you are so that others in turn will respect and honor you as well.

As you govern your life, you will begin to demonstrate the behaviors that promote honor. It will become your road map to the winding roads ahead. As you remain true to yourself, your values will sparkle like rare jewels before others. You will not engage in harmful behaviors such as premarital sex, drugs or crime.

Honoring yourself and your body teaches others to respect you, but it starts with you respecting yourself.

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Honor Has its Own Reward

It makes individuals feel very good about being good people and doing the right thing. You could say that living honorably promotes your self-esteem. But how do we live honorably when it's easier to do the wrong thing? It's always harder to do what's right, especially if it goes against what might feel natural to us.

Contrary to honor, **shame** is an emotion that makes you feel bad about yourself. Shame crops up to let you know that you are living beneath your potential. Much like when pain indicates that the body has been injured and needs care, shame indicates that you need to do better with your life. The thing that makes you feel ashamed typically points to the area that needs attention.

Here's a rule of thumb in regards to shame: Never do anything that you wouldn't want the whole world to know. Recognize that the bad things we do are often done in the dark and are secrets that we don't want brought to light. By avoiding behaviors that we wish to conceal, we avoid committing shameful acts. Can you think of a few things that fit the bill, like sneaking out at night or having sex before marriage?

In the lessons to follow, you will have an opportunity to peer into honor across a wide range of actions. You will also have a chance to take an account of your own life... Are you suffering with shame? What areas of your life are indicating that you need to up your game?

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Abstinence

Increasingly, teens are deciding to put off sex until marriage. Numbers reflect a sharp increase among students between the ages of 14-18 who have delayed engaging in sex. Also, births to unwed teen has simultaneously gone down.

Abstinence: the fact or practice of restraining oneself from indulging in something, typically sex or alcohol.

Abstinence is an expected standard for all school aged children.

Teens who have been sexually active may choose to return to abstinence.

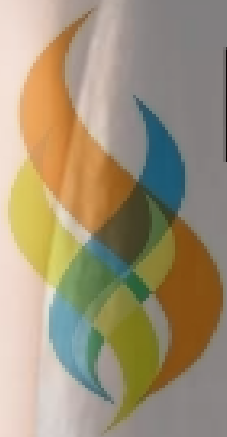
Teens that choose abstinence, even after they have been sexually active, are likely to improve their future well-being.

Research shows that abstinence is not only honorable, but it has rewards for young people too.

Fact: Did You Know...

- Sexually active teens are more likely to be depressed and to attempt suicide
- Almost 70% of teens regret having had sex as early as they did
- 60% of college freshman disagree that hooking up with a casual acquaintance is okay
- Parenthood is the leading cause why teen girls drop out of school
- 80% of teen guys say they think there is "way too much pressure from society to have sex."

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CONSEQUENCES

2

Reality Lesson

Directions: Read the Reality Lesson and answer the questions that follow.

Three's a Crowd

Myra is a 22-year-old mother of three. Each of her children has a different father. Myra believed she was in love with each of the fathers every time she decided to give herself to them. After she had her first child, she felt certain that the father would marry her. To her dismay, that did not happen. Even with the second and third child, she was similarly disappointed in her attempt to demonstrate her love and to be loved by someone.

TANF dollars (government funds) will not cover the expenses needed to support her children and public assistance is being phased out. She does not have the education, skills or experience to secure a job that will pay enough to support her family. Currently, Myra is earning minimum wage.

Myra now realizes that she has made many bad decisions. Beyond making bad decisions, she is now reeling from the consequences of a moment's decision that will affect her entire life and that of her children. She is overwhelmed to the point of being depressed. How will she support her family? Will she ever make something out of herself or will she live in poverty forever? These are the questions that race through Myra's mind everyday

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Reality Lesson

Directions: Answer the questions below.

1. What financial challenges will Myra face as a single mother?

2. How will the children feel about not having a relationship with their father?

3. What is the likelihood of all three fathers establishing a relationship with each of their children?

4. What would happen if one of the fathers visited his child, while the other children had no contact with their fathers?

5. What are the emotional challenges or consequences that Myra will face as a single mother having to raise her family alone and being rejected by three men who have not committed to marrying her?

Reality Lesson

6. Should Myra allow another man to come around the children before marriage?

I n t e l l e c t u a l P r o p e r t y

7. What could the mother do to ensure that the children are brought up without emotional scars?

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8. How could the mother's depression affect the children?

H e l p i n g P e o p l e D r e a m A g a i n

9. Could education, skills or experience make a difference in this situation?

Action Step #1

Action Step #3

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

HIV/AIDS

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) destroys the body's immune system.

The first case of AIDS was reported in the United States in 1981. Homosexual males and intravenous drug users were believed to be the primary victims. Today, AIDS has grown to epidemic proportions in certain regions of the world. One of the fastest growing groups is among minority youth. This disease now affects male/female, and homosexuals/heterosexuals alike. Monogamous relationships among married couples and abstinence are considered the best ways to avoid contracting this deadly virus.

Organism

HIV-Human Immunodeficiency Virus

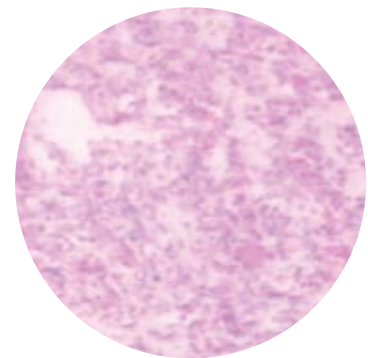
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, more commonly known as AIDS, is a disease that causes failure of the immune system. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus that causes AIDS. It is spread through exposure to infected body fluids such as blood, semen or vaginal fluids.

Persons with HIV may test positive for HIV antibodies without displaying symptoms. AIDS symptoms may include swollen lymph glands, fever, night sweats, severe fatigue and weight loss. Many AIDS symptoms are similar to other diseases, except that AIDS symptoms persist and get worse. There are medicines available today that may help HIV positive individuals stay healthy and not develop the symptoms of AIDS. However, there is no cure for AIDS.

HIV infection results in the destruction of the immune system, making people susceptible to diseases and illness that a person with a healthy immune system generally wouldn't get. A typical result of AIDS is an AIDS related pneumonia. Due to the

Fact: Did You Know...

- In 2010, two-thirds (67%) of P&S syphilis occurred among men who have sex with men.
- The average time between infection with syphilis and appearance of the first symptom is 21 days, but it can range from 10 to 90 days.



Syphilis with Vasculitis in AIDS

Trichomoniasis

Unlike many of the other STIs, trichomoniasis is caused by protozoan.

Organism (Protozoan)

For women, the “Trich” infection causes a foamy, yellowish discharge that may be accompanied by a burning sensation, itching, and painful urination. These symptoms are most likely to occur during or shortly after menstruation, although they can occur at any time or not at all. Usually transmitted by sexual contact, this organism may be spread by wet towels or other items that may have discharged fluids on them.

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Fact: Did You Know...

- Trichomoniasis is considered the most common curable STI.
- About 70% of infected people do not have any signs or symptoms.
- Trichomoniasis can cause genital inflammation that makes it easier to get infected with the HIV virus, or to pass the HIV virus on to a sex partner.

Trichomonal vaginitis

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Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Human papillomavirus (HPV) is probably the most common sexually transmitted disease in the United States. Approximately 5.5 million new cases of HPV infections are reported every year and at least 20 million Americans are already infected. There is no cure or vaccine for HPV. Fifty to seventy percent of all sexually active men and women in the US will contract HPV at some time in their lives.

There are more than 100 types of HPV. About 30 types of HPV can infect the genital area – vulva, vagina, cervix, rectum, anus, penis or scrotum. Genital HPV infections are usually spread through vaginal, anal and oral sex. Some types of HPV can cause genital warts, (see next page) but in most cases a person infected with HPV has no noticeable signs or symptoms. This is called a subclinical infection. While genital warts can be treated and cured, some of the other complications from HPV are more life threatening. Subclinical HPV infections can lead to cervical, penile and anal cancer.

In fact, persistent cervical infection with certain types of HPV is the single most important risk factor for cervical cancer. HPV has also been linked to infertility in women. Condoms are not as effective against HPV as they are against more serious infections such as HIV. The only guaranteed way to avoid HPV is to be abstinent.

Fact: Did You Know...

- Teenagers are more susceptible to human papilloma virus (HPV). Rates of HPV infection in teenagers can be as high as 40%, whereas in the adult population, the rate is less than 15%.
- Teens are also more likely to develop precancerous growths as a result of HPV infection, and these growths more likely to develop into invasive cancer.



Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Genital Warts

Genital Warts are extremely contagious and for this reason is a very common STI. If genital warts are not treated they can multiply rapidly and cause serious problems. Genital warts can be removed by a doctor or clinician. Since they are caused by a virus, genital warts can recur.

Organism

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Caused by a virus transmitted sexually.

Warts may appear from 6 weeks to 8 months or longer after exposure to the virus. Some genital warts are flat while others are round bumps that resemble cauliflower. Warts are often found on fingers or legs. Warts inside the body are not visible. They are usually painless, but can itch or burn, especially as they grow larger or spread.

Treatment of genital warts is similar to the warts on other parts of the body. They are removed surgically, frozen off, cauterized (burnt off) or removed by chemical treatment.

Some types of genital warts may be a warning that cancer will develop later. Untreated, genital warts can spread enough to block vaginal, rectal or throat openings. There is also a risk of cancer of the vulva, penis, anus, or throat. Babies born to mothers with genital warts may have warts in their throats. Most cases of cervical cancer are caused by human papilloma virus. Sexually transmitted infections and diseases can be best avoided by abstaining from sex.

Fact: Did You Know...

- Treatment removes visible warts, but does not eradicate the wart virus. There are several types of treatment. Each may cause mild irritation, but if you experience significant discomfort or inflammation you should tell your doctor. An alternative treatment may be required.



Genital Warts

It's Your Life

Directions: Imagine that you are sitting in the doctor's office. You just took an HIV test and you are waiting for the results. You are paralyzed with fear. You know that this one diagnosis could change your life forever. Your teacher will hand you the results of your diagnosis on a piece of paper. Those with the (+) are HIV positive and those with the (-) are HIV negative. Take a few minutes to think about how you feel after waiting so long to find out, then answer the following questions.

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The Aftermath

Directions: Once you have recieved your (+) or (-) sign, answer the questions below.

1. Negative or positive, what are you feeling at this moment?

2. Who will you tell about your results?

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4. Do you plan on getting married?

5. Will you have children?

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6. What are your future plans?

7. What are the risks to a person choosing abstinence?

Traumas

Individuals who encounter trauma as a child often find it difficult to develop healthy relationships as adults. Trauma does not always mean physical bruises that can be seen. In fact, trauma takes many forms. Trauma is verbal, physical, emotional, and sexual.

All types of child abuse and neglect leave lasting scars. Some of these scars might be physical, but emotional scarring has long lasting effects throughout life, damaging a child's sense of self, ability to have healthy relationships, and ability to function at home, at work and at school. Some effects include:

- **Lack of trust and relationship difficulties.** If you have been betrayed or suffered child abuse or neglect as a child, it may not be easy for you to feel safe or to trust yourself to others. Abuse by a primary caregiver damages the most fundamental relationship as a child —This can lead to difficulty maintaining relationships due to fear of being controlled or abused. It can also lead to unhealthy relationships because as an adult you don't know what a good relationship is.
- **Core feelings of being "worthless" or "damaged."** If you were verbally abused and told repeatedly that you are no good, stupid or ugly, it may be difficult to overcome these core feelings. As adults this trauma may lead you to settle for little, and never strive for more education, a better paying job, or someone who treats you well because you don't believe you are worth it. Sexual abuse survivors, with the stigma and shame surrounding the abuse, may struggle in similar ways
- **Trouble regulating emotions.** Often abused children do not express emotions safely because they stuff them down. However they can come out in unexpected ways. As a result, adult survivors of child abuse may struggle with anxiety, depression, or anger. They may turn to alcohol or drugs to numb the painful feelings.



Tips for Recovering from Trauma

If you are a survivor of trauma, you cannot undo what you have gone through. What you can do is take charge of your recovery and what you do now. Here are few tips on things you can do as you recover and learn to live again.

- **DO NOT isolate yourself.** Isolating yourself from others may seem like a good idea, but it is not. As you recover you should connect with others to help yourself heal.
- **Ask for support.** It is important to talk about how you are feeling to someone you can trust. Family member, teacher, counselor or clergyman are good examples of people you can turn to.
- **Participate.** Do “normal” things that have nothing to do with your traumatic experience. Find positive healthy activities to engage in with others.
- **Join a support group.** There is a support group in your area that you can join where others who have been through a similar experience can help you see you are not the only that has survived this.
- **Volunteer.** Sometimes helping someone else is the best way to help yourself. Find an organization

Activity:

Write a letter to a survivor of abuse. What can you say to them to help them heal?

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Stress Management

Stress is an inevitable part of life that everyone must deal with. Did you know there are two types of stress? There is eustress and distress. Eustress or good stress is stress that motivates you to keep going. Stress that motivates or challenges you is not bad. When eustress becomes unbearable and it seems as if there is no end in sight, it becomes distress. Distress can display itself in overeating, being short tempered, drinking, smoking, and other negative behaviors. Because stress is inevitable, it is important to learn constructive ways to deal with stress. Below are a few tips:

- **Move your body.** Physical activity is the best way to relieve stress.
- **Sleep.** When you sleep your mind and body rejuvenate. It is important for teens to get at least nine hours of sleep per night.
- **Balance.** Learn to balance all of your responsibilities with something that you enjoy doing. Schedule time for fun activities into your weekly schedule.
- **Enjoy yourself.** When you are feeling stressed take a break and do something that you enjoy.
- **Shine!** Think of all of the things you do well and remember the things you have accomplished. Remember you rock!
- **Talk.** Find an adult you trust (like a teacher, counselor, or parent) and talk through the thing(s) that are stressing you. They will be able to provide you with valuable tools to cope.



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Feeling the Pressure

Directions: Read the scenario below and answer the questions that follow.

LaTasha is a sophomore in high school and the oldest of four children. Her dad is not a part of their lives and her mom drinks a lot. LaTasha has a part time job and takes care of her younger siblings when she is not in school or at work. She dreams of receiving an academic scholarship to attend college when she graduates. Between the time she spends working, caring for her siblings and trying to help her mom she is starting to fill the pressure of her responsibilities.

1. What are some things that may be causing LaTasha stress?

I n t e l l e c t u a l P r o p e r t y

2. Is her stress eustress or distress? How can you tell?

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THE VISION

3. What are possible consequences of LaTasha not dealing with her stress?

H e l p i n g P e o p l e D r e a m A g a i n

4. List three things LaTasha can do to properly deal with her stress.

My Dream or My Dad's?

Directions: Read the scenario below and answer the questions that follow.

Joseph is a star athlete in his high school. His father seems to care more about his athletic prospects than his education and has made it clear that he expects him to play professional ball one day. Joseph has lost interest in sports as a result of the pressure he feels from his father to succeed. Joseph really enjoys creating dishes with his mother and would like to go to culinary school after graduation. Will he follow his dad's plan for him or his own dream?

1. What are some things that may be causing Joseph stress?

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2. Is his stress eustress or distress? How can you tell?

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3. What are possible consequences of Joseph not dealing with his stress?

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4. List three things Joseph can do to properly deal with his stress.

Anger Management

What makes you angry? Someone talking about you or your family? When someone cuts you off while you are speaking? If someone skips you in line? Worrying? Not doing well on an assignment or test? Remembering a traumatic event?

Think about the last time you were angry. Did your heart feel like it was going to beat out of your chest? Did your palms get sweaty? Does it feel like your blood is boiling? Do your muscles get tense? Did you turn red? These are all physical responses to anger. Anger is a natural emotion that must be properly controlled.

Generally when you are angry your natural response is to respond aggressively. These aggressive feels are natural to help you defend yourself when you are in a threatening situation or environment. It is vital to learn ways to assertively not aggressively express your anger.

Strategies for Coping with Anger

- **Relax.** Take a few deep breaths. Repeat a relaxing phrase.
- **Mind your words.** Angry people tend to use profanity to reflect what they are thinking. Instead repeat a calming phrase.
- **Make a Plan.** When you are calm create a plan on how what you will do when you are angry.
- **Don't Jump.** When you are angry don't jump to conclusions.
- **Laugh.** Nothing can defuse anger like a good laugh. So laugh!
- **Move.** Sometimes it is necessary to move to a different environment. A change of scenery may help.

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Activity:

Directions: Read the scenario below and answer the questions that follow.

Tiffany is usually very calm and laid back. During a recent disagreement with a classmate; her classmate called her mother and sister derogatory names. When Tiffany did not respond the classmate continued to make comments about Tiffany's family until Tiffany punched her in the face.

1. What could Tiffany have done to better handle the situation?

I n t e l l e c t u a l P r o p e r t y

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2. If you were Tiffany what would you have done?

THE VISION

H e l p i n g P e o p l e D r e a m A g a i n

3. With a partner rewrite Tiffany's response.

Create a plan for yourself with the steps you will take the next time you get angry.

[illegible]

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[illegible]



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SEXUAL CONFLICT
RESOLUTION

3

Peer Pressure

Peer Pressure: The influence of others upon your behavior.

Drugs and alcohol are not the only deterrents on the abstinence path. Peer pressure is often used by your friends as a tactic to get you involved in whatever they are doing. Peer pressure is the influence of others upon your behavior. Let's face it, sometimes your friends may want a partner in crime. Have you ever noticed that when you're down, you often want company; someone to share with or relate to? It is much the same with teenage sex. Your friends will use a number of tactics to get you involved if they are sexually active: „Everyone is doing it... You need to grow up... You're missing out...How do you expect to get a man?% Perhaps you have heard several of these statements yourself.

Have you noticed that most bad things are done in secret and there is always at least two people involved. Why? Because people often want someone to share their experience with. That is why choosing the right friends are very important. They should be people who share similar goals, morals and values. If two people have different directions, one will have to change to coincide with the other's. I'm sure you can recall at least one instance in your life where your friendship with a certain person either changed your direction for good or bad. Everyone wants to be accepted and liked. This is a natural emotion. However, as natural or as common as it may be, you must rise above the desire to conform if you are ever going to accomplish your own personal goals. Your goals are motivations that should dictate your choices in life. They keep you from being tossed to and fro by the opinions of those around you.

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FINDING A MATE THATS
WORTH THE WAIT

5

Love & Compatibility

Compatibility is essential when choosing a mate. You want someone who is like you or similar. In order to determine compatibility, you must know your areas where compatibility is certain. Listed below are areas that are foundational to any marriage. Lack of agreement in any of these areas can wreck your union.

Marital Beliefs

Just because you and your partner agree to get married doesn't mean that you share the same views on marriage or what it takes to make the relationship work. Which of the following statements do you find yourself agreeing with most? Consider how your relationship would work if your partner had an opposing view.

Once I get married, I would never consider getting a divorce.	I would consider a divorce under certain circumstances.
I would seek marriage counseling if my partner and I started having problems.	I do not believe in marriage counseling.
If my partner cheated on me, I would end the relationship.	If my partner cheated on me, I would try to work through our problems.
Cooking and household chores are the wife's responsibility.	Cooking and household chores should be a shared responsibility.
When I'm upset, I sit down and calmly talk about the issue.	When I'm upset, I don't want to talk to anyone.

Morals and Values

The backbone of a good marriage is a husband and wife who are dedicated to maintaining a strong union. That can be hard to do if they don't share the same morals and values. Humans are guided by their values, and a husband and wife who have differing values will eventually take different directions. They won't arrive at the same place because of what they believe.

Values – What if one person values education and wants to better themselves, but the other doesn't? The couple must plan their life with two clashing ideas.

Morals – What if one person decides to no longer use drugs or alcohol and the other doesn't? It might have been acceptable to them when they were younger but with children and adult responsibilities something has to give.

Morals and Values: What morals and values will guide your family?

Family

Differing views on family can be a major point of contention in the marriage. Whether or not you want children, how they are going to be raised, how involved your extended family will be in your life. These are all areas in which there must be agreement in order for the marriage to work. Which of the following statements best represent your views? If your mate had a different opinion, how would the relationship be affected?

I want a big family with lots of kids.	I don't want any kids.
My motto is spare the rod, spoil the child.	I do not believe in hitting children.
Taking care of the children is primarily the woman's responsibility.	Taking care of the children is both parents' responsibility.
My family and I are very close.	I try to avoid my family at all times.
I expect my family to go to church every Sunday.	I don't believe in God.

Dealing with Family: How will you deal with relatives?

Child Rearing: How will you raise your children?

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just married

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MARRIAGE 101

6

Marriage

Having a Marriage Blueprint™ in place greatly increases the likelihood that your marriage will be healthy and happy. A good marriage is just like baking a cake: there are some ingredients that enhance the flavor and there other ingredients so important that if they are not added, the cake will be ruined! In a similar vein, there are certain qualities that enhance marriage, while the absence of others causes problems. In this section, we will explore the various ingredients that are inherently important to a good marriage. A few of those ingredients are: fidelity, respect, commitment, common goals, beliefs and values.

A Shake of Fidelity is faithfulness and allegiance to those you are bound to in affection or honor. It is the act of being faithful and loyal to one another. You must vow not to have an affair with another person outside of the marriage. Fidelity is viewing your marriage as the two of you against the world.

Infidelity brings such problems as distrust, betrayal and pain. When one mate cheats on the other, he or she dishonors them and breaks down the wall of trust that protected and brought strength to the marriage. Without the wall of strength, the marriage will fail because it will fall prey to every threat from the outside world.

Two Teaspoons of Respect: Respect is having a great honor, regard and esteem for someone. If you respect someone, you will treat him or her kindly with the honor they deserve. When respect is absent from a marriage, strife and division arises. As a result, partners begin to treat one another unkindly and become unconcerned with the other's feelings. This ingredient, if lacking, makes for a very unhappy union. The whole idea behind a marriage is that someone will love and care for you all of the days of your life. Respect enables couples to love and care for one another. Without respect, you can only have misery.

Three Cups of Commitment: Commitment is the act of pledging or engagement. Commitment is the foundation upon which marriage is built. If you are committed, it means that for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, whatever may come, you are determined to stand with your mate through thick and thin. This wedding verse basically covers it all: "You will find in life that there are many fair-weather friends, those who love to be with you when everything is going well, but as soon as trouble strikes they disappear like water on a rock. Marriage is forever and can be if both parties are truly committed to stand together through whatever may come."

Marriage

A Sprinkle of Goals: A goal is the point or aim one strives to reach. Many marriages end up shipwrecked because couples find themselves in love without ever identifying their goals and directions. One may want a career in the movie industry while the other may want to move to a small town in the middle of nowhere to live the easy life. These two goals are obviously in conflict and will not make for a stable marriage or a happy home.

A Tablespoon of Values: Values are those things you believe and feel are important. Morals and values are very important to a marriage. They bring balance and serve to regulate the activity and energy within the union. If one values education and hard work while the other values spending a lot of the couple's income on drinking and partying, there is an obvious imbalance in the values of this relationship.

The ingredients we have covered are not the only ones you may like or need to have in your marriage. You must first discover what qualities are important to you and know which ones you absolutely cannot live happily without.

Fact: Did You Know...

- Married couples report greater sexual satisfaction. The highest levels of sexual satisfaction were reported by individuals who were in married, monogamous relationships, while those who were single or cohabiting reported slightly lower levels of sexual satisfaction.
- Married women report higher levels of physical and psychological health. Formerly married women reported the worst health while never married women fell between these two groups. Compared with unmarried women, married women had less job stress, environment stress, child stress, financial stress, and relationship stress. Health measures included self-rated health, distress level, chronic illness, and a number of stress types, ranging from social life stress to job strain.

Marriage

Designing Your Wedding Plan

Directions: Choose the dresses for your maid of honor and bridesmaids. Place the pictures below



Marriage

Directions: Make a list of precious items you would store in your chest in preparation for marriage.

MY HOPE CHEST LIST

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Marriage Celebration

Now that all of the work and planning has been done, it's time to enjoy your labors. It's time for a party. Plan your Great to Wait party as you would a Secret Santa. Pull names from a hat and buy or make a gift for that person. This gift will be given to them to store in their hope chest. Take a picture of the gift you received. Memorialize this event by making a collage of photos from your party. Get ready to have fun. You're going to party with a purpose...celebrate your future.



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FAMILY, PARENTING &
DIVORCE

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Consequences

A family is more than relatives. There is actually a purpose behind the family unit that benefits all. While in a nuclear family, mothers sometimes work and bring financial support to the home, the father has traditionally been the main provider. His role is to provide direction and security. Usually, he is the one that carries the vision of the family. Under his leadership, the family not only bears his name but the direction that he wills the family to take as well. The importance of his role as a father is very striking. Research shows that the majority of children born into single-family homes, when asked, prefer to have a relationship with their father. It adds to their emotional well-being.

Trevor Stammers, a medical educator writing in the online publication News Weekly, noted that girls who have a strong relationship with their father are more likely to remain abstinent until marriage or postpone sexual intercourse outside of marriage. Research by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Fatherhood Initiative found that children whose fathers are involved in activities with them, such as eating meals together, going on outings and helping with homework, have fewer behavioral problems and a higher level of performance. Other research has also shown that a healthy father-daughter relationship improves a girl's mathematical ability and brings about a stronger sense of femininity. So we see there are a number of benefits to the father's role in the lives of each of us.

The mother is the nurturer. She is the one that brings you into the world after carrying you in her body. Her nurturing begins before you are born. She cares for her body, as she carries her children in the womb for nine months, by eating and drinking the right things. She is the one that usually watches over your daily needs. Moms are there to make the house feel like a home.



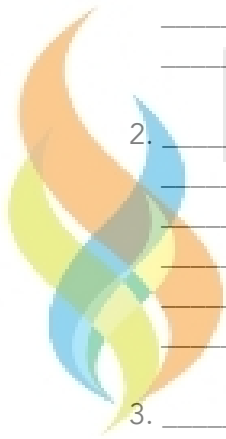
Activity:

List some ways that divorce is likely to affect the father of the family.

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

What are some things that a parent can do to make a bad situation better. Example: spend as much time with his family as possible, encourage the children to feel free to talk to him, etc.

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4. _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Activity:

Directions: Facilitate a rap session about divorce. Permit students to talk about it and how it has affected their lives. Ask them to complete the activity sheet, allowing time to discuss both their issues with divorce and solutions for those issues.

1. List some ways divorce has affected your life or the life of someone you know.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

2. What can you do to deal with these effects?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

3. Describe several things you can do to assist your siblings to deal with divorce.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

4. What can you do to make the divorce easier on your mother?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

5. What can you do to make the divorce easier on your father?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

6. Can you prevent your parents from divorcing?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Dealing with Divorce

Directions: Read the following divorce scenario and write out your responses.

You have not been happy in your marriage for some time. You suspect your husband or wife may be involved with someone else. You have been tempted to ask for a divorce but you fear being alone. Everytime you think of leaving, fear cripples you into staying. Your thoughts are, "It's better to be with them unhappily than to not have them and be alone."

1. What seems to be the problem in this scenario?

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2. What would be the best solution to this marital problem? Explain your response in detail describing each partner's responsibility.

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3. List steps to resolve this issue.

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

Step 5:

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Dealing with Divorce

Fact: Did You Know...

- When an adult divorces he or she essentially loses the financial support of their partner; as a result, he or she must assume additional workloads in order to make end's meet, thus the parent-child relationship may suffer because parental supervision and individual attention is at a minimum.
- It has been documented that parental skills may diminish immediately following a divorce, but this change is only temporary: "A number of researchers have shown that a disequilibrium, including diminished parenting skills, occurs in the year following the divorce but that by two years after the divorce restabilization has occurred and parenting skills have improved"
- Research indicates that 25 percent of adolescents who have experienced a divorce become disengaged from their families compared to only 10 percent of adolescents from two parent homes. Children who have experienced a divorce frequently have lower academic achievement than children from non-divorced families.
- Children from divorced families are twice as likely to drop out of high school and are less likely to attend college than children from non-divorced families.

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A photograph of a young man and woman smiling and embracing each other outdoors. The man has curly brown hair and is wearing a light blue shirt. The woman has dark hair and is wearing a white shirt. They are both looking towards the camera with warm expressions. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

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HEALTHY MARRIAGES

8

Making Marriages Strong

All too often couples find themselves feeling resentful and alienated in marriage due to the struggles that occur as they attempt to live as one. Unfortunately, many marriages end in divorce over simple things that could have easily been addressed before the escalation of anger and before ill feelings took root.

There are a number of things that can be implemented in a marriage to maintain or restore happiness and cohesion. Many times couples begin to bicker and complain about things that may seem minor in the eyes of some. However, what is important to one person may not be important to their mate. Similarly, what is hurtful to one may not affect the other. These things must be kept in mind if couples are going to find harmony in their relationship.

Firstly, couples must learn to minimize disagreements by using reflective listening. This ensures that misunderstandings are identified and addressed before they cause greater discord. Secondly, couples must learn to empathize with one another; that is, they must be aware of the other's feelings so that they are better able to relate to their reactions and behaviors. Finally, couples must learn the art of compromise. By being willing to give and take, couples learn to find the middle ground that will enable them to peaceably resolve problems.

Fact: Did You Know...

- Children reared in a two parent home, particularly in marriage, live healthier and happier lives, while maintaining higher academic performances.
- Raising a family within marriage ensures that your offspring(s), in turn, also reaches and achieves marriage, and subsequently procreates the right way.
- Married people (versus single) accumulate four times more savings, which produce better stable financial circumstances.
- Adults who are married and contract a disease such as cancer have a greater chance of survival and recovery.

Reflective Listening

Reflective listening is a technique that ensures couples discuss their problems without anger and that they hear what the other person is saying. The speaker starts the conversation by simply stating how they feel. They allow the listener to repeat what they heard and respond to the statement.

You can probably relate to the escalation of tempers when two people disagree. It is in the heat of these types of moments that miscommunication is most likely to occur. Imagine how much higher the stakes are when the disagreement involves the man or woman that you love most. When emotions are this high, meanings can be misconstrued. Reflective Listening is a very important technique that can ensure that the intended message is what is relayed to the listener. It effectively lessens misunderstandings and allows the couple to deal with the real issues at hand instead of getting more angered over unintended messages.

In a conversation using Reflective Listening, the speakers should refrain from blaming or making accusations. They should use short statements such as, "When you do this...", or "I feel this way when..." The listener repeats what the speaker said before responding. Here is an example:

With Reflective Listening:

Janet: I am unhappy in this relationship.

Jeremy: What I hear you saying is that you are unhappy with our relationship.

Janet: Yes, I'm unhappy because you spend too much time at work and it makes me feel as though your work is more important to you than I am. I get what is left over.

Jeremy: I hear you saying that you feel unhappy because I work too much and you feel that I have put work before you.

Janet: Yes, I feel this way when you work too much.

Jeremy: Janet, I am working long hours because I want to be able to give you nice things. It's for our future. I don't want for this to cause problems. So what do you want me to do, cut back?

Without Reflective Listening:

Janet: I am unhappy in our relationship.

Jeremy: I don't know what you want!

Janet: You spend too much time at work and it makes me feel as though your work is more important to you than I am. I get what is left over.

Jeremy: I don't give you left-overs I am trying to make ends meet. Isn't anything I do good enough for you? You wanted new furniture, so I am working my hands to the bone for it and you still aren't happy. I don't know what else I can do.

Janet: I don't need you to do anything for me, I'll get the furniture on my own. I only wanted the house to look like a home and be nice for you to come home to!

Empathy

Empathy is being aware of and sharing another person's feelings, experiences and emotions.

Showing empathy is important in any relationship. If you understand why someone reacts as they do in given situations, you are better able to interact with them and resolve any problems that may arise.

Imagine that your best friend is sensitive about her nose. You happen to know a little about her history. You were there during her childhood when others teased her and called her bird nose. It will be very easy for you to understand how she responds when certain comments are made about her appearance. You are able to empathize with her and deal with her from the position of someone that understands her feelings, therefore you are able to relate to her pain.

Couples also come to marriages with histories. There may be a lot of painful situations that each partner may harbor from their past that may still affect the way that they relate to the world around them today.

Almost like walking in the shoes of another person, empathizing is when you try to understand the feelings of another. Wanting to understand them, you seek to imagine how and why they feel as they do. To empathize, hear what the other person is feeling. Then imagine how you would feel if you were walking in their shoes. Being able to empathize with your mate will make living harmoniously possible as you tackle the problems of the world together.

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