

# **Marital Enrichment Manual**

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**MP542**  
**Missouri Cooperative Extension Service**



# Acknowledgments

The original edition was written by Dr. David R. Imig for the Michigan Cooperative Extension Service. We would like to thank Dr. Imig for permission to revise his program. Dr. Imig is a faculty member in the Department of Child and Family Development, University of Missouri-Columbia.

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# Introduction

**Marital Enrichment** (ME) seeks to provide a growing experience for couples who have a basically sound and satisfying relationship. In a series of four two-hour meetings, with four to six couples, this enrichment program attempts to resensitize couples to the basic dynamics of interpersonal relationships.

A variety of activities—individual, couple and group—are used in this re-sensitization process. Participants are given log books containing individual and couple assignments which are to be completed before each group session. Group sessions allow for individuals and couples to practice the skills of expressing their feelings and communicating with one another. Emphasis is placed on positive expressions of feelings and positive feedback.

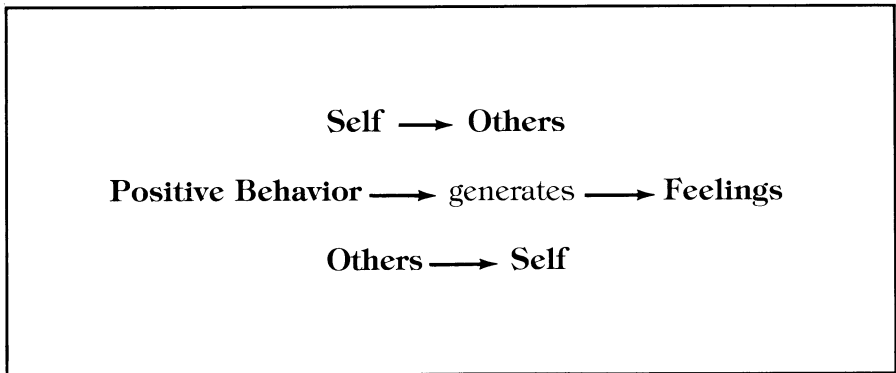
The philosophy underlying this program of marital enrichment includes these principles—

- People are responsible for their own lives.
- People are capable of change primarily when self-motivated.
- People and relationships have the capacity and resources to grow and change.
- People and relationships have the greatest opportunity to grow and change when functioning from a position of positiveness and mutual feelings of goodwill.
- It is more helpful to view relationships as having challenges and opportunities rather than problems and deficiencies.
- The program assumes no responsibility for solving personal or relational problems or challenges.
- The program does not accept the responsibility to identify to the group the challenges facing individual couples.

# Instructions to Marital Enrichment Leaders

Consistent with the principles mentioned, this program of marital enrichment is designed to accomplish two major objectives.

1. To enrich couple interaction by emphasizing the positive aspects of their relationship.
2. To increase couple awareness of the **feelings** (and the type of feelings) that are generated when they behave positively toward each other. (See diagram.)



# Basic Elements of Interpersonal Communications

In order to achieve these two objectives, this program presents a detailed and highly structured format. **Your role** is to be the **facilitator** of the group activities—the one who leads the group through the process as it is outlined in this manual. It is not the purpose of the program to solve problems, nor to provide couples with therapy. Your role is not to be a problem solver, a therapist, a counselor, nor information or advice giver.

The manual is designed to allow the facilitator the freedom to concentrate on the process. As participants vary from the intent of activities it is the responsibility of the facilitator to re-structure (re-read the instructions for that specific activity) so that the program design is maintained. As long as the group adheres to the process, the objectives will be accomplished.

Instructions for the facilitator are provided for each session. The instructions which you are to *read* to the group are boxed. You may change words or phrases so that the prose is more your style. However, it is important to keep the intent of the instructions.

## **“How will I know when the group is off course?”**

If participants are talking about specific behaviors and expressing feelings according to your instructions, then your group is likely on target. However, if the group is attempting to analyze behaviors or doing evaluations of others, then there is a good chance that the group is off target. It is then necessary for the facilitator to intervene.

As the participants begin to share feelings, thoughts, and experiences, there is a tendency for the **listeners** to want to **generalize** and **externalize**. For example, a participant might say, “Often people feel embarrassed when they hear others say positive things about them.”

Such a statement might better be translated into a first-person context. As the group facilitator you might say something like, “I am sure you mean to say, ‘Often **I** feel embarrassed when **I** hear positive things said about **me**.’ ”

This change from externalizing to personalizing will help participants to **own** their feelings and thoughts. Owning of feelings and thoughts helps to insure that destructive interpersonal interactions will not occur.

An important principle for us to observe might be, “When another’s sharing generates feelings and insights in me, it will be more beneficial for me, as well as for the group, if I look to see what I can learn about myself than if I generalize about the other.”

Feelings are natural and spontaneous. They disclose emotional responses to experiences. Feelings are not good or bad; they do not represent what should be but rather what is. It has been said, “Your feelings are you, the person you are.” Ownership of feelings is very important to healthy interpersonal relationships. It is the responsibility of the facilitator to establish and maintain a trusting and protective climate that will help identification and expression of feelings by group members when appropriate. However, since people are responsible for their own lives, individuals and couples are finally responsible for what they will do with expressed feelings.

### **“Is the marital enrichment process designed to help the facilitator to establish and maintain a proper group climate?”**

The program is highly structured and each part is designed to accomplish particular goals. The facilitator can establish and maintain a healthy interpersonal climate by adhering to the program design.

Each of the four sessions involves the following component parts. See diagram on page 8.

### **“How is the class run?”**

**Homework** assignments are made and participants are expected to complete them prior to each group meeting. Completion of the homework insures that the members of the group will not come into the group cold, or be expected to participate spontaneously. Having the opportunity to consider what will be said prior to each session should reduce the foot-in-mouth and getting-in-over-my-head syndromes common to many group processes.

**Warmup** activity at the beginning of each session allows the participants to interact in a structured manner rather than a spontaneous one. It is an activity that is designed to reduce the initial anxiety of the group members while at the same time establishing the appropriate mood and climate. If unplanned dynamics and confronta-

tions should occur, a good method for handling such situations is to

- 1) stop the structured process and ask the group to express their feelings about the occurrence;
- 2) return to the process at an appropriate moment.

**Activities** form the bulk of the marriage enrichment process. Feelings and behavior and the relationship between them are of central concern in spousal and group interaction. Emphasis is placed on promoting positive feelings and behaviors throughout the program.

**Closure**—Each of the four sessions is concluded with an opportunity for participant feedback. Feedback is not a time for analysis of others but rather an opportunity for sharing newly gained insights in regard to self or relationship.

**“Is there anything I, as a group facilitator, should know about the overall nature of the ME process?”**

Each session has its own characteristics. **Session one** is characterized by the initial anxiety of the participants. The facilitator attempts to create a relaxed and accepting atmosphere. The group members learn to *trust* that the facilitator will maintain the ME structure, and that their spouses will not embarrass them.

**In session two** the pecking order phenomenon develops. Couples have compared themselves to each other, allowing them to feel both the strengths and challenges in their own marriage relationships. This comparison serves to help couples appreciate the unique aspects of their own relationships, as well as to point out the concerns that many couples share in common. Often a couple feels that the concerns and challenges of their marriage are unique to their own relationship. In session two the facilitator must become more forceful in applying the several basic principles of the program—owning feelings and thoughts, not permitting analyzing others, or generalizing and externalizing.

**In session three** married partners have opportunity to spend time together as a couple. Couples generally enjoy this experience but sometimes will respond by becoming more sentimental or reserved than usual. While the couples may appear to be subdued, many things are likely happening within each partner as well as between them. Closure of this session can be quiet but powerful.

**Session four** generally is enthusiastic, but, by this time, the participants have developed some dependency on the ME process for enriching their communications. Comments noting that this is the last session are not uncommon. The facilitators should reinforce the



notion that his/her role has been minimal. It was the energy of the group that makes or breaks the experience. The facilitator's role was to provide the opportunity for couples to develop skills that will aid them in further development of their relationships.

**A mini-session for getting people interested?**

A mini-session has been developed for this purpose. It can be conducted with one leader and from four to 400 couples. This mini-session will provide couples a sample of what they could expect in the four-week program. Instructions on "How to Conduct a Marital Enrichment Mini-Session" are included.

Any information that is in gray box is included in the participants' log book.

	I	II	III	IV
<b>Homework</b>	Goals for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● myself</li> <li>● partner</li> <li>● relationship</li> </ul>	Communication Exercise goals “My Partner’s Loving Behavior”	Communication Exercise—loving behavior and “My Needs Which My Partner Meets”	Communication Exercise—new loving behavior, “My Loving Behavior,” Goals for our Relationship: A Restatement
<b>Warm-up</b>	Introduction of Names Three Questions	Communication Exercise of similarity & difference of goals	Communication Exercise of what we learned about loving behaviors	Communication Exercise on actions taken on “new” loving behaviors
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One Thing I Like About My Partner/Our Relationship (Husband first data/Wife first feelings)-then reverse</li> <li>● Goals: share in isolated dyads; share with group in husband/wife setting (All husbands first. Husband data/wife feelings; then on to other group members</li> <li>● Group feedback for this activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● My Partner’s Loving Behaviors—in role groups but not within total group</li> <li>● Sharing seats structure. Husband or wife shares, then opposite partner feedback feelings. Then partners reverse-then group feedback to couple. The couple feedback to group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Needs my partner meets in me—“fish bowl” structure</li> <li>● Isolated marital dyads—new loving behaviors—that I want to start and two that I want you to start</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● isolated marital dyads—My loving behavior</li> </ul>
<b>Closure</b>	Group feedback about session	Group feedback about session	Group feedback about session	Group feedback about total ME experience

# PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

This is your individual log book. It is a book of assignments. It will be a private and confidential record of the feelings and thoughts you have during your participation in this Marital Enrichment Group. You will be asked to share some thoughts and feelings in the group, but only to the extent that you are willing. Everything should be written in private and **not discussed with your partner prior to the group session** unless otherwise instructed. Respect the privacy of your partner in this matter and **do not violate the right to confidentiality.**

Be conscientious in carrying out each log book assignment. As you do the assignments you are preparing yourself for the upcoming session. Each assignment may require: (1) thinking about yourself, your partner and/or your relationship; and (2) listening to and recording your thoughts and feelings. **There is a strong relationship between how much you put into working on the log book assignments and the benefits you get from being in this Marital Enrichment Group.**

Several of the log book assignments are communication exercises. In these you and your partner privately discuss some of your feelings about yourselves and each other. Again, what you get from participating in this Marital Enrichment Group is dependent upon conscientiously trying the communication exercises as instructed in the log book assignment.

**DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR LOG BOOK AND  
A PEN OR PENCIL WITH YOU TO EACH SESSION**

# **1st LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT**

**In Preparation for the FIRST SESSION**

## **Goals for Myself**

What kind of person would you like to be in three to five years from now? Describe the dimensions in which you would need (or like) to grow in order to become that person. (You may wish to refer to such items as attitudes, behaviors, personal qualities, roles, or responsibilities.)

## **2nd LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT**

In Preparation for the FIRST SESSION

### **Goals for My Partner**

What kind of person would you like your partner to be in the next three to five years? Describe the dimensions in which she or he would need to grow and change in order to become that person. (You may refer to such matters as attitudes, behaviors, personal qualities, roles, or responsibilities.)

## **3rd LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT**

In Preparation for the FIRST SESSION

### **Goals for Our Relationship**

Describe ways you want your relationship to grow in the next three to five years: the way you do things together, the manner in which you relate, and the mutual needs you meet for each other.

## SESSION ONE WORKSHEET

This is to be used during the first session; do not use until instructed to do so.

*SELF:*

*PARTNER:*

*RELATIONSHIP:*

# Session One

## Introductory Instructions and Activity

1. As the couples arrive, make sure that they fill out a name tag.
2. When all couples have arrived, ask them to form a circle with the husbands seated on the **right side** of their wives.
3. Introduction of participants. **Do not** allow the groups to begin spontaneously. As facilitator begin by saying:

GOOD EVENING. THE FIRST ACTIVITY TONIGHT IS TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES. MY NAME IS \_\_\_\_\_ AND I WILL BE YOUR GROUP LEADER FOR THIS MARITAL ENRICHMENT EXPERIENCE. STARTING ON MY RIGHT AND CONTINUING AROUND THE GROUP, PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF.

4. After everyone has been introduced, read the following instructions.

*Session One*  
Three Questions  
Warm Up

## Introducing An Unrelated Partner

FOR THE NEXT ACTIVITY IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR YOU TO PAIR UP WITH AN UNRELATED PARTNER. WE CAN DO THIS QUICKLY BY HAVING EACH MAN PAIR OFF WITH THE WOMAN TO HIS RIGHT.



5. Assist in the pairing of couples as necessary. After all are paired, say:

SO THAT WE MIGHT GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER A LITTLE BETTER, EACH PERSON WILL BE ASKED TO INTRODUCE HIS OR HER PARTNER TO THE GROUP IN A CERTAIN WAY. FIRST, EACH OF YOU SHOULD SHARE WITH HIS/HER PARTNER THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- 1) YOUR FAVORITE HOBBIES AND INTERESTS
- 2) AN UNACHIEVED GOAL OR ASPIRATION THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH AND
- 3) A PERSONAL TRAIT OR CHARACTERISTIC OF WHICH YOU ARE PROUD.

WILL EACH COUPLE NOW FIND A CORNER OF THE ROOM IN WHICH TO TALK?

EACH PERSON WILL BE ALLOWED FIVE MINUTES TO ANSWER THE THREE QUESTIONS.

AFTER BOTH OF YOU HAVE SHARED, PLEASE RETURN TO THE GROUP. YOU MAY BEGIN. IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT TO DO, JUST RAISE YOUR HAND.

6. After all couples are separated from the group, but before they have started, interrupt and say the following:

EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT - IT MIGHT HELP YOU TO REMEMBER THE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PARTNER IF ONE PERSON WOULD ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS FIRST. WHEN ONE IS FINISHED, THE OTHER PERSON CAN ANSWER ALL THREE QUESTIONS. IF YOU SWITCH BACK AND FORTH FROM PERSON TO PERSON THERE IS MORE OPPORTUNITY TO FORGET WHAT WAS SAID. PLEASE CONTINUE.

7. When approximately four minutes are up, indicate to your couples that the first person should be finished in about one minute and then the other person should start.
8. After nine minutes tell the couples that they should finish up in about one minute.
9. After ten minutes have elapsed, ask the couples to return to the group circle, making sure that they return to their original places.
10. When the group has re-formed, say the following:

WHEN MAKING INTRODUCTIONS, PLEASE INCLUDE INFORMATION ABOUT ALL THREE QUESTIONS. WHEN YOU FINISH, THEN YOUR PARTNER WILL INTRODUCE YOU BY SHARING WITH THE GROUP THE INFORMATION LEARNED ABOUT YOU. THEN WE WILL MOVE TO THE NEXT COUPLE IN A CLOCKWISE FASHION. ALL RIGHT . . . WHO WILL BE FIRST?

11. As the group proceeds in this activity of introductions be sure that you, the facilitator, introduce yourself. (Answer the three questions about yourself.) If there are two facilitators in the group then you may introduce each other.
12. When everyone has been introduced, move on to the next activity: Individuals reflecting on one positive thought about their partnerships.

FOR THE NEXT ACTIVITY I WANT TO FOCUS YOUR THOUGHTS ON JUST ONE OF THE MANY ASPECTS YOU **LIKE ABOUT YOUR MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP**. IT MAY NOT BE THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP, BUT IT IS ONE OF MANY THINGS THAT IS A SOURCE OF JOY TO YOU. SO, FOR THE NEXT MINUTE CLOSE YOUR EYES AND FOCUS YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ON **JUST ONE THING TO SHARE WITH YOUR PARTNER**.—SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR MARRIAGE WITH WHICH YOU ARE REALLY PLEASED. WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED, OPEN YOUR EYES AND WAIT FOR THE OTHERS BY REMAINING SILENT.

1. When all eyes are open, continue with the following instructions:

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE MEN. PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR SPOUSE ONE OF THE THINGS YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP. WOMEN, WILL YOU PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU ARE FEELING AS YOU LISTEN TO YOUR HUSBAND, BECAUSE WHEN ALL OF THE MEN ARE FINISHED, I WILL ASK EACH OF YOU TO DESCRIBE WHAT YOU WERE FEELING AS YOU LISTENED TO YOUR HUSBAND. SO, GENTLEMEN, WHO WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN?

2. In order to encourage spontaneity and not set up a style where participants respond only when you nod your head to them or call them by name, **let them decide** who will begin. However, you may need to be direct with the hesitant members.
3. At this point in the group process do not try to enforce the two ground rules regarding (1) the use of the personal pronouns, "I," "my," or "me," and (2) speaking directly to other group

members. After this exercise you will remind them of both rules and from that time on you will encourage their use.

4. After all the husbands have shared one thing, ask the wives to respond:

WIVES, WHAT WERE YOU FEELING AS YOUR PARTNER TALKED ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

5. **Let the wives respond spontaneously.** Encourage the hesitant if necessary. Permit them to talk to the group about their feelings rather than requiring them to speak to the specific person about whom they have the feelings. **Such direct feedback will be introduced later in this session.**
6. Regardless of what else the wives may say, make sure that each says something about how she felt in reaction to her husband's comments. You may need to ask, "What were you feeling?" "Did you have any other feelings?"
7. **It is also very important to keep the wives talking about feelings.** Frequently, they will move quickly from describing a feeling to discussing why they felt that way. If they become preoccupied with the "because" and/or begin intellectualizing, RESTRUCTURE: "Just try to describe what you were feeling while listening to what your husband said."
8. Now reverse the procedure and invite the women to share. You should say:

NOW WILL THE WIVES TAKE THEIR TURN? DESCRIBE ONE OF THE THINGS YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP. HUSBANDS PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO WHAT *YOU ARE FEELING* AS YOU LISTEN TO YOUR WIFE. WHEN ALL OF THE WOMEN ARE FINISHED I WILL ASK YOU TO DESCRIBE WHAT YOU WERE FEELING AS YOU LISTENED TO YOUR MATE.

9. Let the women respond spontaneously.
10. When the women have finished, instruct the men as follows:

MEN, WHAT WERE YOUR FEELINGS AS YOU LISTENED TO YOUR MATE?

## Suggestions for Enriching Husbands' Responses

11. You can anticipate that some husbands will experience difficulty in describing their feelings and will attempt to substitute by talking about reactions other than feeling reactions. They may give evaluative statements, representing judgments and opinions rather than feelings. As necessary, encourage them to describe their feelings.  
Sometimes, they may jump from describing the feelings just experienced to talking about the same feeling experienced several days or weeks earlier and to conditions surrounding that experience. *Quickly intervene and ask them to simply describe the feelings experienced while listening to their partners.*
12. If the husbands report only the feelings experienced while listening to their own partners, ask them to describe any other feelings they may have experienced while listening to the other women.
13. When all of the husbands have shared their feelings, make the following observations:

THIS EXERCISE ILLUSTRATED WHAT WE WILL BE DOING IN THE REMAINING SESSIONS. THAT IS,

1) YOUR PARTNER WILL SHARE WITH YOU HIS/HER PERCEPTION OF SOME OF THE POSITIVE BEHAVIORS IN YOUR MARITAL RELATIONSHIP.

2) THIS ACT OF IDENTIFYING POSITIVE EXPERIENCES ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WILL CAUSE YOU IN TURN TO EXPERIENCE FEELINGS.

3) YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DESCRIBE THOSE FEELINGS. OFTEN YOUR FEELINGS WILL BE MILD AND THEREFORE SEEM TO BE INSIGNIFICANT. YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF RESISTING THE REPORTING OF THESE FEELINGS THAT SEEM SO UNIMPORTANT; HOWEVER, IT IS NECESSARY TO KEEP TRYING.

ALSO, YOUR REACTIONS TO WHAT IS SAID WILL NOT ALWAYS BE WARM AND GLOWING. SOMETIMES YOU MAY FEEL HURT OR DISAPPOINTED, EVEN ENVIOUS OR HOSTILE. TRY TO BE JUST AS OPEN IN DESCRIBING THESE FEELINGS ALSO.

14. At this point remind the group of the following ground rules:

AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE OF GOOD INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IS TO SPEAK **DIRECTLY TO THE OTHER PERSON**. AS YOU SHARED WHAT YOU LIKED ABOUT YOUR MARITAL RELATIONSHIP IN THE PREVIOUS EXERCISE, YOU MAY HAVE BEEN TALKING TO THE GROUP INSTEAD OF YOUR PARTNER. FROM NOW ON I WOULD LIKE FOR YOU TO SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE PERSON RATHER THAN TO THE GROUP. IN RESPONDING TO ANOTHER'S THOUGHT, OR WHEN EXPRESSING A FEELING YOU HAVE ABOUT WHAT ANOTHER HAS SAID, PLEASE SAY IT TO THE OTHER DIRECTLY.

A SECOND IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE OF GOOD INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IS TO **"OWN" YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS**. THAT IS, WHEN YOU EXPRESS A THOUGHT OR FEELING, SPEAK IN THE FIRST PERSON, USING THE WORDS "I," "MY," OR "ME." FOR EXAMPLE, IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO LEARN TO SAY "I FEEL GOOD ABOUT *MYSELF*" WHEN YOU GIVE *ME* A COMPLIMENT."

RATHER THAN

"ONE CAN FEEL GOOD ABOUT HERSELF WHEN SHE RECEIVES A COMPLIMENT." THE LATTER STATEMENT IS INDIRECT, COUCHING FEELINGS IN A MORE GENERAL STATEMENT. HOWEVER, OWNING FEELINGS AND BEING DIRECT ALMOST ALWAYS LEADS TO BETTER COMMUNICATION. FINALLY, A DANGER OF THE LATTER STATEMENT IS THAT IT LENDS ITSELF TO **EVALUATING AND ANALYZING** WHAT THE OTHER PERSON SAID. IN RESPONDING TO WHAT SOMEONE ELSE SAID IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO ANALYZE AND EVALUATE THE STATEMENT. INSTEAD, IT CAN BE MORE VALUABLE TO CONSIDER WHAT MEANING IT HAS FOR YOU AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A GROUP LEADER WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING REMINDERS:

- 1) TO SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE PERSON WHOM YOU ARE ADDRESSING,
- 2) TO OWN YOUR FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS BY SPEAKING IN THE FIRST PERSON,
- 3) TO CONSIDER THE MEANING OF WHAT ANOTHER HAS SAID FOR YOUR OWN LIFE RATHER THAN ANALYZING AND EVALUATING HIM/HER.

THE BENEFITS YOU GET FROM THIS GROUP EXPERIENCE WILL DEPEND FOR ONE THING, ON HOW THOUGHTFULLY AND COMPLETELY YOU AND YOUR PARTNER DO YOUR HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS. THE PURPOSE OF THE HOMEWORK IS TO BRING INTO FOCUS MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP. THESE EXPERIENCES, AS SHARED WITH YOUR PARTNER, WILL ELICIT FEELINGS. SUCH FEELINGS GENERALLY FORM THE BASIS OF YOUR PARTNER'S COMMUNICATIONS TO YOU, SO THAT YOU MIGHT MORE EFFECTIVELY ENRICH YOUR RELATIONSHIP. IT IS NECESSARY FOR EACH OF YOU TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY AND DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL FEELINGS. WE ARE ONLY ABLE TO DEVELOP OUR RELATIONSHIPS TO THE EXTENT THAT WE UNDERSTAND OUR FEELINGS AND THE EXACT BEHAVIORS THAT CAUSED THOSE FEELINGS. OBVIOUSLY WE CANNOT ACCURATELY AND KNOWINGLY COMMUNICATE THAT WHICH WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

15. After you have presented this information, provide an opportunity for group members to clarify any point which may be a source of confusion for them.

### Unrelated Marital Dyads: Deciding on Personal Goals

NOW IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT EXERCISE, I WANT YOU TO PAIR OFF AGAIN WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOUR PARTNER AND OTHER THAN THE PERSON YOU PAIRED OFF WITH IN THE EARLIER EXERCISE. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, WILL EACH WOMAN LOOK TO THE SECOND MALE ON HER LEFT. THE FIRST MAN ON YOUR LEFT WAS YOUR EARLIER PARTNER: THE SECOND ONE IS YOUR NEW PARTNER. I WANT THE TWO OF YOU TO BE A PAIR FOR THIS ACTIVITY.

16. There are several reasons why the pairing off has been structured in this manner. The main objective is to give each group member an opportunity to become better acquainted with another group member while doing this exercise.

Secondly, your instructions speed up the process of getting two unrelated people paired together while at the same time eliminating much of the anxiety often associated with choosing or being chosen.

Thirdly, since *you* have made the selections, no husband or wife has to wonder about the person his or her spouse has chosen.

The exercises in this group experience are not designed to deal with the feelings described in the two previous statements.

I WANT EACH PAIR TO FIND A PLACE IN THE ROOM SO THERE IS AS MUCH DISTANCE AS POSSIBLE BETWEEN PAIRS. AFTER YOU HAVE GOTTEN TOGETHER AS A NEW TWOSOME I WILL GIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE EXERCISE YOU WILL DO TOGETHER.

17. Making sure that all members are quiet and that you have their attention, give the following instructions very slowly, in subdued voice, allowing a moment between each sentence.



YOUR LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE FIRST SESSION WERE TO DESCRIBE WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE FOR YOURSELF, FOR YOUR PARTNER AND FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIP IN THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS. FOR THE SECOND EXERCISE I WANT YOU TO FOCUS ON GOALS WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH DURING THIS MARITAL ENRICHMENT WORKSHOP.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR YOURSELF, YOUR PARTNER, AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP? IN WHICH AREAS OF GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR MARRIAGE WOULD YOU LIKE THESE SESSIONS TO ASSIST YOU?

DECIDE WHAT YOU WOULD SPECIFICALLY LIKE TO GET FOR YOURSELF AS A MARRIED PERSON OUT OF THIS ENRICHMENT EXPERIENCE. DECIDE HOW AND IN WHAT WAYS YOU WOULD LIKE FOR YOUR PARTNER TO GROW. DECIDE WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP THAT WOULD GIVE YOU MORE JOY AND SATISFACTION THAN YOU ALREADY EXPERIENCE.

TAKE TWO OR THREE MINUTES TO THINK ABOUT WHAT IT IS YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET FROM THIS MARITAL ENRICHMENT GROUP. IF YOU FINISH BEFORE THE TIME IS UP, PLEASE REMAIN SILENT AND STAY WITH YOUR FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR GOALS.

19. After three minutes, give the following information:

YOU ARE PAIRED WITH A PERSON OTHER THAN YOUR MARRIAGE PARTNER; NEVERTHELESS, I WANT YOU TO SHARE WITH THIS PERSON THE WAYS IN WHICH YOU HOPE YOU AND YOUR MARRIAGE PARTNER AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP WILL GROW DURING YOUR EXPERIENCES IN THIS GROUP.

SHARING THESE GOALS WILL GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET ACQUAINTED WITH ANOTHER PERSON IN THE GROUP. IT WILL ALSO ALLOW YOU TO PRACTICE TALKING ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT FROM THE GROUP. IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES YOU WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THESE GOALS WITH THE ENTIRE GROUP.

I WANT YOU TO LIMIT THE TIME FOR THIS EXERCISE TO TEN MINUTES. THE FIRST PERSON WHO SHARES SHOULD TAKE NO MORE THAN FIVE MINUTES. AFTER FOUR MINUTES I WILL INFORM YOU TO TRY TO FINISH UP IN ANOTHER MINUTE. DON'T WORRY IF YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO SHARE EVERYTHING. THIS PART OF THE EXERCISE IS TO HELP YOU BECOME BETTER PREPARED TO SHARE WITH THE TOTAL GROUP.

ON THE WORKSHEET IN YOUR LOG BOOK, LIST THE GOALS WHICH YOU HAVE JUST IDENTIFIED FOR YOURSELF, YOUR PARTNER, AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP. ADD ANY ADDITIONAL GOALS WHICH YOU DISCOVER WHILE LISTENING TO YOUR PARTNER, OR TO ANY OF THE OTHERS, DURING THIS ACTIVITY.

20. After four minutes, inform each couple that if the first person has not finished, he should try to do so within the next minute, so as to allow the other person five minutes.
21. At the end of nine minutes, again inform each couple to try to complete their discussion in another minute or two.
22. When all couples have completed their lists, ask them to return to the circle.

### The Group: Sharing Personal Goals

Pre-Exercise instructions to group facilitator:

23. This is the first occasion in which you are expected to instruct them to speak directly to their marriage partners when describing something which involves the partners and/or their relationships.
24. Encourage the participants to say I-my-me when describing goals for himself, encourage the participants to say you-yours when describing goals for his partner, encourage the participants to say and we-us-our when describing goals for their relationship.
25. Use the first name of the person to whom you are speaking. An underlined space will mean you are to fill in the name at that point.
26. If the participant fails to talk directly to his partner in sharing goals that involve him or her, then gently interrupt. "Excuse me, \_\_\_\_\_, may I interrupt you; speak directly to \_\_\_\_\_." After doing this with several persons you need only say, "Speak directly to him (or her)."
27. Now, read the following instructions:

WITH THE MEN GOING FIRST, I WANT EACH HUSBAND TO SHARE HIS LIST OF GOALS WITH THE GROUP. HOWEVER, THERE IS A CERTAIN WAY I WANT YOU TO SHARE WITH US. AS YOU TELL US *WHAT YOU WANT FOR YOURSELF, SPEAK TO THE GROUP*; BUT AS YOU DESCRIBE WHAT YOU HOPE THAT YOUR *WIFE GETS FOR HERSELF* AND WHAT YOU WANT FOR *YOUR RELATIONSHIP TOGETHER*, TURN AND SPEAK DIRECTLY TO *HER*. REMEMBER TO SPEAK IN A PERSONALIZED CONTEXT - SUCH AS "I-MY," "YOU-YOURS," AND "WE-OURS."

WHILE EACH OF THE HUSBANDS IS SHARING HIS LIST I WANT HIS WIFE TO BE VERY AWARE OF WHAT SHE IS FEELING AND HOW SHE IS REACTING AS SHE LISTENS TO HIM. WHY? BECAUSE WHEN HE IS FINISHED, I WILL ASK YOU TO *TELL HIM* WHAT YOU WERE FEELING AS HE DESCRIBED HIS GOALS.

WHEN THE FIRST COUPLE HAS COMPLETED THIS PROCESS, IT WILL BE ANOTHER COUPLE'S TURN, WITH THE MAN SHARING HIS GOALS FOLLOWED BY THE WOMAN'S SHARING HER FEELINGS ABOUT WHAT HE HAS SAID.  
ALL RIGHT, WHO WILL BE FIRST?

28. When the listening partner has finished reporting her feelings, then ask another man to share his goals with the group. **Do not let the listening partner share her goals at this time.** She will have an opportunity to share her goals later. At this point she is to report her feelings only.
29. After the first husband has shared his goals, instruct his marriage partner, by giving the following instructions:

(WIFE), TELL (HUSBAND) WHAT YOU ARE FEELING AS YOU LISTEN TO HIM SHARE HIS HOPES FOR WHAT YOU BOTH WILL GET FROM THIS EXPERIENCE. REMEMBER TO SPEAK DIRECTLY TO HIM. TRY TO REMEMBER THE DIFFERENT FEELINGS YOU HAD AS HE TALKED OF HIMSELF, OF YOU, AND FINALLY OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP. BE SPECIFIC, RELATING YOUR FEELINGS TO WHAT WAS SAID. EXAMPLE: SAY "I FELT \_\_\_\_\_ WHEN YOU SAID \_\_\_\_\_ ,"

30. Make sure she speaks directly to her partner rather than speaking to the group about him.
31. You should assist the first few people who have difficulty reporting feelings by asking what they felt in relation to each of the areas; i.e., goals for self, other and relationship.
32. But do not make a point of doing so with every participant. Help a few, but leave the rest to learn from seeing how others talk about their feelings.
33. Allow people to describe only the feelings experienced in relation to what was said while listening to their partners. Similarly, allow people to describe only the goals which they included on their lists.
34. **Do not permit a discussion to occur between partners or any two group members.** Urge them to save their questions.

Acknowledge that it would be interesting to discuss in more depth some of the points brought up, but that such is not the purpose of the marital enrichment experience.

35. After the wife has finished sharing her feelings with her husband, simply say:

THANK YOU \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_. NOW WHICH HUSBAND WOULD LIKE TO SHARE HIS GOALS NEXT?

36. You may need to indicate each time that the couple is finished and to invite another participant to start. Sometimes an “All right, who’s next?” is sufficient. However, your group may develop a god sense of timing and assume this responsibility. In the same way the listening partner may not always need an invitation to respond with her/his feelings. You will discover how much control you *really* need to exercise and how much control the group will exercise for itself.
37. When the last male has finished, simply reverse the procedure with the *wives sharing their goals* and the *husbands reporting their feelings*.
38. Instructions for wives sharing goals and husbands reporting feelings;

WOMEN, NOW IT IS YOUR TURN TO SHARE WHAT IT IS YOU WANT FOR YOURSELVES, YOUR MATES AND YOUR RELATIONSHIPS IN THESE FOUR COUPLE ENRICHMENT SESSIONS. REMEMBER, WHEN YOU SPEAK OF WHAT YOU WANT FOR YOURSELF, SPEAK TO THE GROUP, BUT WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT THE GOALS FOR YOUR SPOUSE AND FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIP TOGETHER, SPEAK TO HIM. MEN, AS YOUR WIFE IS DESCRIBING HER GOALS I WANT YOU TO BE AWARE OF WHAT YOU ARE FEELING BECAUSE, AFTER SHE IS FINISHED, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SHARE YOUR FEELINGS WITH HER ABOUT WHAT SHE SAID. “ALL RIGHT, WHO WILL BEGIN?”

39. When each woman has completed her goals, read the following instructions to her husband:

(HUSBAND), AS YOU SHARE YOUR FEELINGS WITH (WIFE), TRY TO REMEMBER WHAT YOU WERE FEELING. BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE.

40. After all the women have shared their goals, make the following observations.

TONIGHT, WE HAVE BEEN GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER AND HAVE IDENTIFIED SOME OF THE THINGS WE WOULD LIKE TO GET FOR OURSELVES FROM THESE SESSIONS. IN FUTURE SESSIONS WE CAN WORK TOWARD ACHIEVING THEM. BE AWARE THAT THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARTNERS WAS MORE DIRECT AND PERSONAL IN THIS LAST EXERCISE. WE ARE MOVING TOWARD SHARING MORE AND MORE AS MARRIED PARTNERS.

ALSO, BE AWARE OF THE PROCESS WE ARE USING: ONE PERSON SHARES A FEELING OR THOUGHT THAT INVOLVES HIS OR HER PARTNER IN SOME WAY, AND THEN THE OTHER DESCRIBES HOW S/HE FEELS IN RESPONSE TO HEARING THAT THOUGHT/FEELING.

WE WILL USE THIS PATTERN OF INTERACTION REPEATEDLY. LET'S TAKE TIME NOW TO DESCRIBE WHATEVER FEELINGS WE MAY HAVE HAD AS WE LISTENED TO OTHER COUPLES SHARING THEIR GOALS AND FEELINGS. YOU MAY HAVE FELT SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF, YOUR PARTNER OR YOUR OWN RELATIONSHIP AS YOU WERE LISTENING.

TRY TO REMEMBER WHAT WAS SAID WHEN YOU STATE YOUR FEELINGS. YOU MAY WISH TO SAY, "I FELT \_\_\_\_\_, WHEN YOU SAID, \_\_\_\_\_ . THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO ME AND/OR MY RELATIONSHIP."

41. Allow ten or fifteen minutes for group members to describe feelings they had as they listened to the other couples sharing their goals and their feelings.
42. At some point during this feedback of the group, share any of the feelings you experienced.
43. Let group members respond spontaneously. Those who go first usually set a good model for the hesitant. The rationale is to encourage individual responsibility rather than dependency upon the leader to ask each individual to report his feelings.
44. However, you may need to encourage a few people by actually calling upon them by name; For example, “\_\_\_\_\_ , what feelings do you recall experiencing as you were listening?”

## **Session One** Closure

### **The Group: Feedback Time**

45. At the end of each session give members an opportunity to describe how they are feeling about the session’s activities, what they got for themselves, any unexpressed feelings they have about themselves, their partner and for any other member of the group.

AS A FINAL GROUP ACTIVITY, LET’S SHARE WITH EACH OTHER HOW WE ARE FEELING ABOUT TONIGHT’S SESSION.

46. Share with the group any of your own feelings during the feedback time. (Be careful not to analyze).
47. After all have finished sharing, move on to review the log book assignments for the second session.
48. Point out that the log books will be used extensively in all the sessions and that they should be sure to bring them.
49. Also point out that the communication exercise to be done for the next session (see log book) uses the information written in the first three assignments as well as the goals which were discussed tonight.
50. Go over the instructions for log book assignments four and five, reading them to the group and answering questions about them. Stress the importance of doing each one before the next session.
51. Give them a final reminder to bring their log books to the next session.

## 4th LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT

In Preparation for the SECOND SESSION

### Communication Exercise

(To be done *with* your partner)

Sometime before the Second Session you and your marriage partner should set aside 20 to 30 minutes to do this exercise. Pick a time when you are least likely to be disturbed. Discuss each of the following:

- (1) Discuss the specific goals each of you presented in the First Session.
- (2) Turn, in your Log Books, to your goals for the next three to five years and discuss those which were not presented in the First Session.
- (3) Compare the similarities and differences between what you want in yourself and what your partner wants in you.
- (4) Compare the ways each wants the relationship to grow.
- (5) Describe to each other the various feelings you experienced during this discussion. (This is especially important to do.)

Try to learn as much as you can about each other from these goals and the manner in which they are similar and different. Try to be aware of what you are feeling throughout your discussion.

(Record your feelings afterward if it helps you to remember them.)



## 5th LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT

In Preparation for the SECOND SESSION

### **My Partner's Loving Behavior** (To be done *alone*.)

List the day-to-day things your partner does which makes you feel you are loved, valued, respected, understood, and appreciated by him/her. Be specific.

Write all you can in one setting. Do this very soon after the First Session. Continue to add to this list as you think of additional things.

**THESE ARE THE THINGS YOU DO WHICH MAKE ME FEEL THAT YOU:**

Love me:

Appreciate me:

Understand me:

Value me:

Respect me:

# SESSION TWO

## Session Two Warm-Up

ONE OF YOUR LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS SESSION WAS TO DISCUSS THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR MARRIAGE. IN CONNECTION WITH THIS ASSIGNMENT, YOU WERE TO DESCRIBE WHAT YOU FELT DOING THIS TOGETHER.

TONIGHT, LET'S BEGIN BY SHARING WITH THE GROUP SOME OF THE FEELINGS YOU HAD WHILE DISCUSSING YOUR GOALS. YOU MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED CLOSENESS, WARMTH, OR JOY. OR YOU MAY HAVE BEEN SURPRISED, DISAPPOINTED OR EVEN IRRITATED. YOU MAY HAVE HAD MIXED FEELINGS. AS BEST YOU CAN, SHARE WITH US WHAT FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED. ANYONE MAY START.

1. Let group members respond spontaneously; however, if necessary, be direct with the hesitant by inviting them to respond by name.
2. *Restructure if individuals go on very long talking of reasons for feelings rather than describing feelings.*
3. *Do not permit a group discussion of reasons to get started.*
4. Keep the group focused on *describing their feelings*. Do not allow a dialogue to start.
5. If necessary, encourage the participants to recall what they felt by asking if what anyone else has related has any meaning to them. (Make reference to what others have already said and/or to some of the feelings identified above.)
6. You want them to develop the expectancy of describing their feelings to the group. Therefore, this exercise is both a warm-up for the second session as well as a warm-up to exercises in subsequent sessions.

7. Let this procedure go for *only* ten or fifteen minutes; pace everyone so that each has time to participate.

**Session Two**  
First Activity

**Separate Role Groups**

IN ASSIGNMENT FIVE YOU LISTED THE THINGS YOUR PARTNER DOES FROM DAY TO DAY WHICH COMMUNICATES TO YOU THAT HE OR SHE LOVES YOU, APPRECIATES YOU, UNDERSTANDS YOU, VALUES YOU, RESPECTS YOU.

FOR THE NEXT EXERCISE I WANT YOU TO DIVIDE INTO TWO GROUPS: ALL HUSBANDS IN ONE GROUP, AND ALL WIVES IN THE OTHER GROUP. IN YOUR GROUPS I WANT YOU TO DISCUSS AMONG YOURSELVES WHAT IT IS YOUR PARTNERS DO WHICH MAKES YOU FEEL LOVED, APPRECIATED, UNDERSTOOD, VALUED AND RESPECTED.

NOW SEPARATE INTO GROUPS AND I WILL COME TO EACH GROUP AND GIVE YOU MORE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.

1. Go to each group with the following instructions.

WITH EACH PERSON TAKING A TURN, DESCRIBE WHAT IT IS THAT YOUR PARTNER DOES THAT MAKES YOU FEEL LOVED, APPRECIATED, UNDERSTOOD, VALUED AND RESPECTED. LET ME EMPHASIZE THAT YOU SHOULD DESCRIBE *SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR* AND MAKE PERSONAL REFERENCE TO YOUR PARTNER, *RATHER THAN* COMMENT ABOUT PARTNERS *IN GENERAL*.

2. Listen in on both groups from time to time to insure that your instructions are being carried out.
3. If one group finishes before the other, encourage additional responses. Others may have said something that reminded them of additional loving behaviors.

4. When both groups have finished, ask them to return and regroup into one tight circle.

**Session Two**  
Second Activity

### SHARING SEATS

5. You should plan to sit close together so as to hear every word and give instructions.

THE NEXT THING WE'RE GOING TO DO IS THE "SHARING SEAT" EXERCISE. FACE YOUR MARRIAGE PARTNER AND SHARE WHAT YOU SAID WHEN YOU WERE IN YOUR SAME-SEX GROUP. THAT IS, YOU WILL TELL EACH OTHER WHAT IT IS THAT S/HE DOES THAT COMMUNICATES LOVE, APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, BEING VALUED AND RESPECTED.

ALTHOUGH I WANT YOU TO TALK LOUD ENOUGH FOR ALL OF US TO HEAR, YOU ARE TO TALK TO EACH OTHER AS THOUGH YOU WERE ALONE. DON'T TALK TO THE GROUP ABOUT YOUR PARTNER. TALK DIRECTLY TO YOUR PARTNER. WHICH COUPLE WILL BE FIRST? (Permit the couples to go in the order they choose.)

6. When the first couple volunteers have them turn their chairs so that they face each other and are close together. Do not put them in the middle of the circle. Each time a new couple begins sharing, make sure that a tight circle is maintained.
7. I would just remind you that this is a serious moment in which you are facilitating a couple's communication; the other members of the group are to be listeners. It is critical that you be sensitive to the couple's exchange, and that the group remain silent during this part of the exercise.
8. When the couple is settled and ready to share, read the following to them.

NOW I WANT YOU TO DO THIS IN A SPECIFIC WAY. WHO WILL TALK FIRST? Now address your instructions specifically to each person.

NOW, (BILL), I WANT YOU TO TELL (MARY) WHAT IT IS SHE DOES WHICH MAKES YOU FEEL SHE LOVES, APPRECIATES, UNDERSTANDS, VALUES, AND RESPECTS YOU. YOU MAY REPEAT WHAT YOU HAVE ALREADY WRITTEN AND SAID AS WELL AS ANY ADDITIONAL THINGS WHICH COME TO MIND. BE SPECIFIC AND DETAILED IN TELLING HER. TRY TO POINT OUT NOT ONLY THE BIG IMPORTANT THINGS BUT THE DAY TO DAY THINGS SHE DOES WHICH COMMUNICATE THESE FEELINGS TO YOU.

AND (MARY), WHILE (BILL) IS SHARING WITH YOU I WANT YOU TO BE QUIET AND NOT RESPOND UNTIL YOU ARE ASKED TO DO SO. WHEN HE IS FINISHED, I WILL ASK YOU TO DESCRIBE WHAT YOU WERE FEELING AS YOU LISTENED TO WHAT HE SAID. THEN YOU WILL HAVE YOUR TURN TO SHARE WITH HIM.

9. Immediately restructure for the person sharing if he fails to speak in the first person to his partner, "I-you," "you-me," or if he fails to bring the past into the present, "When you do \_\_\_\_\_, I feel you love me."
10. Do not let a conversation get started between them. One is to listen while the other talks.
11. If the one speaking has very little to say, encourage and support him, e.g., "Are there other things she does, little day to day things?" "Are there any specific things she does which makes you feel she understands you, respects you?"
12. When the first person is finished, instruct the listener as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_, WHAT WERE YOUR FEELINGS AS YOU WERE LISTENING TO \_\_\_\_\_? WILL YOU DESCRIBE THEM TO HIM.

13. If necessary, encourage her to tell him what she is feeling right then, e.g., "I am feeling, etc." and also what she felt in response to specific statements like "When you said, etc., I felt. . ."
14. When she is finished describing her feelings, give explicit instructions regarding sharing with him:

NOW, \_\_\_\_\_, I WANT YOU TO TELL \_\_\_\_\_ WHAT IT IS HE DOES WHICH MAKES YOU FEEL HE LOVES, APPRECIATES, UNDERSTANDS, VALUES AND RESPECTS YOU. BE SPECIFIC AND DETAILED IN TELLING HIM.

15. When she is finished:

\_\_\_\_\_, WHAT WERE YOUR FEELINGS AS YOU LISTENED TO \_\_\_\_\_? WILL YOU DESCRIBE THEM TO HER.

16. With the first couple it is usually necessary to ask for additional feedback or feelings. It is often helpful to ask them to be more specific in describing such general feelings as: "I am feeling good," or "happy," to say, "What is it like in you when you are feeling good?"
17. When he has finished describing to her his feelings and before they leave the sharing seats, give the following instructions to the group:

NOW LET'S GO AROUND THE GROUP AND DESCRIBE ANY FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED AS YOU LISTENED TO \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_. YOU MAY HAVE FELT SOMETHING ABOUT THEM THAT MEANT SOMETHING TO YOU OR YOUR OWN RELATIONSHIP; WHATEVER FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED, PLEASE DESCRIBE THEM TO THE GROUP.

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE PERSON TO THE LEFT OF THE COUPLE AND GO IN ORDER FROM PERSON TO PERSON UNTIL EACH HAS HAD A CHANCE TO DESCRIBE THE FEELINGS S/HE EXPERIENCED WHILE LISTENING TO THEM.

18. While group members are giving feedback do not permit any interaction to occur between the sharing couple and the group members.
19. Be very strict with individual group members as they describe their feelings. Restructure quickly as necessary. They may feel a need to follow the description of a feeling with a because statement. Permit the 'because' statement only as it is directly related to the feeling; **do not let them go beyond the simple statement of 'because' into some dissertation regarding that particular feeling.**
20. The group leader may also report his/her feelings.
21. When everyone in the group has finished, then ask the couple:

WHAT ARE YOU NOW FEELING AS YOU LISTENED TO THE GROUP FEEDBACK?

22. After they respond, ask for a second couple to share their loving behaviors.
23. Return to page 35 and start where it says, "Now (Bill) I want. . ." Give the same set of instructions you gave the first couple.
24. Every couple must participate during this session.
25. At some point you may have to revitalize the words most frequently used during the sharing seat and by the observers. Individuals will begin to be apologetic for the frequent use of the words, "love," "happy," "joy," "close," etc. Remind them that the frequent use of the words does not reduce the genuineness of the feelings they are trying to describe by the use of the words. Emphasize that they should not permit the reality of their own experienced feelings to become unreal simply because there are not different words to use to describe the experience.
26. When the last couple has had a chance to respond to the feedback of the group, move into closure by reading the following:

FOR THE FINAL GROUP ACTIVITY, LET'S SHARE WITH EACH OTHER HOW WE ARE FEELING ABOUT TONIGHT'S SESSION.

27. After everyone has had an opportunity to share his/her feelings, move on to the assignments for session three.

**Session Two**  
Log Book Assign-  
ments for  
Session Three

28. Have the group read the instructions for each of the assignments, or, you may choose to read them—at least provide an opportunity to clarify any ambiguities.
29. Remind them again to respect each other's privacy regarding the assignments.
30. Also, remind them to bring their Log Book to the next session, if you feel a reminder is necessary.



## **6th LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT**

### **In Preparation for the THIRD SESSION**

#### **Communication Exercise** (To be done with your partner)

Sometime before the third session you and your partner should set aside 20 to 30 minutes to do this exercise. Pick a time when you are least likely to be disturbed. Discuss the following:

In the sharing seat exercise, in session two, you described to each other the things your partner does which makes you feel that he or she loves, appreciates, understands, values and respects you.

At that time, you and your partner did not have the opportunity to discuss these behaviors and related feelings in detail. Take that time now.

**DESCRIBE TO EACH OTHER THE VARIOUS FEELINGS AND INSIGHTS YOU EXPERIENCED DURING THIS DISCUSSION.**

## 7th LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT

in Preparation for the THIRD SESSION

### **My Needs Which My Partner Meets** (To be done *alone*)

What are the needs which your partner meets or gratifies in some way?

Need/gratification has to do with ways in which the other person becomes very important to you, helps you, fulfills you, adds to your life. You have need to be loved, accepted, encouraged, understood, etc. Often we need to love someone, to take care of someone. We all have a need for sexual gratification.

List as many needs as you can in one sitting. Add additional ones as you become aware of them. Introduce each need with the following statement and be as thorough and as specific as possible in describing what it is your partner does to meet these needs in you.

“I HAVE A NEED (FOR OR TO) \_\_\_\_\_  
AND YOU MEET THIS NEED (BY OR WHEN  
YOU) \_\_\_\_\_ .

## WORKSHEET FOR FIRST ACTIVITY - SESSION THREE

This is to be completed during the third session; do not use it until instructed to do so.

For recording feelings while listening to role group.

Use the format:

I felt \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_  
said. I have a need for or to \_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_ meets my need when he/she does  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

# SESSION THREE

## Session Three Warm-Up

FOR YOUR COMMUNICATION EXERCISE FOR THIS SESSION YOU DISCUSSED IN GREATER DETAIL YOUR FEELING RESPONSES TO EACH OF THE THINGS YOUR PARTNER DOES WHICH MAKE YOU FEEL LOVED, APPRECIATED, UNDERSTOOD, VALUED AND RESPECTED. BESIDES COMPARING AND DISCUSSING YOUR LISTS OF BEHAVIORS, YOU EXPRESSED FEELINGS AND INSIGHTS THAT YOU MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED DURING THIS SESSION.

LET'S TAKE THE NEXT TEN OR FIFTEEN MINUTES TO SHARE WITH EACH OTHER WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS COMMUNICATION EXERCISE. DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING MORE ABOUT YOURSELVES? OF WHAT BENEFIT WAS THIS EXERCISE TO YOU? WHAT WERE SOME OF THE FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED WHILE DOING THIS COMMUNICATION EXERCISE? WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU SHARED WITH EACH OTHER THE FEELINGS AND INSIGHTS YOU EXPERIENCED? DID YOU MAKE ANY DECISIONS?

1. Use ten to fifteen minutes at the most, giving each couple opportunity to relate what they did, responding as they choose, to your several questions. If you need to do so you can repeat those questions.
2. Do not probe the reported experience except as it is necessary to get further clarification in order to understand. Primarily, this is simply a time to describe an experience.
3. Pace this activity so that each couple has an opportunity to indicate whether they tried the exercise and what the results were.

4. When you are ready to move to the next exercise stress again the importance of doing the communication exercise each week.

FOR THE NEXT SESSION YOU HAVE ANOTHER COMMUNICATION EXERCISE IN WHICH YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DISCUSS YOUR LISTS. BEFORE YOU FINISH YOUR DISCUSSION BE SURE TO SHARE WITH EACH OTHER THE FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED WHILE DOING THE EXERCISE TOGETHER. I URGE YOU TO TAKE THE TIME NECESSARY TO PREPARE FOR EACH COMMUNICATION EXERCISE. YOU CAN EXPECT TO GET MORE FROM EACH GROUP SESSION BY DOING SO.

5. It is typical for some couples to dismiss, in a joking or complaining manner, the value of doing the communication exercises at home. Deal with their resistance by emphasizing again that you expect them to try each one.

### **Session Three** First Activity

#### **Needs Which My Partner Meets**

THE NEXT EXERCISE WILL FOCUS ON THE NEEDS WHICH YOU MEET IN EACH OTHER. ONE OF YOUR LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENTS HAD TO DO WITH LISTING THE VARIOUS NEEDS YOUR PARTNER MET FOR YOU AND DESCRIBING HOW SHE OR HE DID SO.

I WOULD LIKE THE MEN TO SIT IN A TIGHT CIRCLE. BE SURE TO HAVE YOUR LOG BOOKS. WOMEN, WILL YOU FORM AN OUTER CIRCLE, SEATING YOURSELVES IN POSITIONS THAT WILL ALLOW YOU TO FACE YOUR HUSBANDS SO THAT YOU CAN WATCH EACH OTHER'S FACIAL EXPRESSIONS.

1. Make sure the inner circle is very tight and that each person is opposite his/her partners.
2. You, the group leader, should be in the outer circle filling one of the gaps between two women. You can observe the group dynamics as well as give instructions as needed from there.
3. Give the following instructions:

GENTLEMEN, I WANT YOU TO DISCUSS AMONG YOURSELVES THE VARIOUS NEEDS YOUR WIVES MEET FOR YOU, GIVING SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF THEIR BEHAVIOR.

WE CAN BEGIN THE DISCUSSION BY HAVING ONE OF YOU PRESENT HIS LIST. AS HE SHARES PARTICULAR NEEDS FROM HIS LIST, OTHERS OF YOU CAN SHARE A SIMILAR NEED AND HOW HIS WIFE MEETS IT.

FOR EXAMPLE: (BILL) MIGHT START BY SAYING: "I HAVE A NEED FOR APPROVAL AND (MARY) MAKES A POINT OF TELLING ME WHEN I'VE DONE SOMETHING ESPECIALLY GOOD. LIKE THE OTHER DAY WHEN SHE . . . (WHATEVER IT WAS). AFTER (BILL) HAS FINISHED, (FRED) MIGHT ALSO HAVE A SIMILAR NEED FOR APPROVAL. IN WHICH CASE HE WOULD SHARE WITH THE GROUP HIS NEED FOR APPROVAL AND HOW IT IS MET. WHEN THE DISCUSSION CENTERING ON THE NEED FOR APPROVAL HAS FINISHED (BILL) WOULD CONTINUE WITH HIS LIST. AFTER (BILL) HAS COMPLETED HIS LIST THE GROUP WOULD GO ON TO ANOTHER HUSBAND WHO HAS A NEED NOT EXPRESSED BY (BILL). WE WILL DO THIS UNTIL ALL THE MEN HAVE COMPLETED THEIR LISTS.

AND MEN, WHILE IT MAY BE DIFFICULT, TRY TO TALK TO EACH OTHER AS IF NO ONE ELSE WERE PRESENT.

WOMEN, WHEN THE MEN HAVE FINISHED, EACH OF YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DESCRIBE THE FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED WHILE LISTENING

TO YOUR PARTNER. (LATER, YOU WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DESCRIBE ANY OTHER FEELINGS YOU HAD WHILE LISTENING TO THE OTHER MEN AS WELL.) I WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO WRITE DOWN YOUR FEELINGS IN YOUR LOG BOOK SO THAT YOU DO NOT FORGET THEM DURING THIS LENGTHY EXERCISE. PLEASE REMEMBER TO REMAIN SILENT WHILE THE MEN ARE SHARING THEIR LISTS.

WHICH OF YOU MEN WILL BE FIRST?

4. Make sure the men introduce each need with “I have a need to . . . or for . . .”  
Restructure as necessary.
5. When all husbands have completed their lists ask the wife of the first husband to describe her feelings.

(MARY), TELL (BILL) WHAT YOU FELT AS YOU LISTENED TO HIM DESCRIBE HOW YOU MET HIS NEEDS. BE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU CAN.

6. Make sure she speaks to her partner.
7. When she is finished, then allow the other women to respond.  
You may say:

WHAT FEELINGS DID YOU OTHER WOMEN EXPERIENCE WHEN LISTENING TO (BILL)? YOU MAY HAVE FELT SOMETHING THAT HAD MEANING FOR YOU, YOUR PARTNER, OR YOUR RELATIONSHIP. WOULD YOU PLEASE SHARE THOSE FEELINGS WITH YOUR PARTNER.

8. When all the women have finished, ask the husband who is being responded to:

WHAT FEELINGS DID YOU EXPERIENCE WHILE LISTENING TO YOUR PARTNER AND TO THE OTHER WOMEN?

9. There is an interactional pattern which this and previous exercises are designed to stimulate. By acknowledging a positive aspect of our relationship, I cause you to feel good. When you give me feedback regarding the good feeling I've caused you to have, I also feel good.
10. Repeat the process:
  - a) allow each female partner to provide feedback to her mate;
  - b) allow the other women to share any feelings they may have had;
  - c) allow the male to share any feelings he may have experienced as his woman and the other women gave him feedback;
  - d) continue this process until each male has been the center of attention.
11. Reverse the circles and repeat, saying:

NOW, WILL THE WOMEN SIT IN THE INNER CIRCLE, MAKING A VERY TIGHT CIRCLE, AND MEN SIT IN THE OUTER CIRCLE WHERE YOU WILL BE FACING YOUR PARTNER.

WHICH OF YOU WILL BE FIRST?

PLEASE FOLLOW THE SAME PROCEDURE, SAYING, "I HAVE A NEED FOR. . ." OR "I HAVE A NEED TO. . ." THEN STATE WHAT THE NEED IS AND DESCRIBE HOW YOUR PARTNER MEETS IT. AGAIN, EACH WOMAN MAY ENTER INTO THE DISCUSSION WHEN SHE HAS A SIMILAR NEED. AFTER THE DISCUSSION HAS ENDED FOR THAT PARTICULAR NEED, THE FIRST WOMAN SHOULD CONTINUE DOWN HER LIST, PREFACING EACH NEED WITH "I HAVE A NEED FOR. . ."

12. Follow same procedure as above; the husband of the woman sharing reports his feelings to her, then all of the men can respond, and finally she reports her feelings.



**Marital Dyads: New Ways to Express Love for Each Other**

NOW GET TOGETHER AS A COUPLE AND FIND A CORNER IN THE ROOM SO YOU CAN BE BY YOURSELVES.

13. Each married pair should try to get as far from every other pair as possible.

I WANT EACH OF YOU TO GET VERY COMFORTABLE AND THEN CLOSE YOUR EYES AND REMAIN SILENT.

NOW I WANT YOU TO THINK OF **TWO THINGS YOU REALLY WANT TO START DOING** FOR YOUR PARTNER WHICH WILL BE EXPRESSIVE OF YOUR LOVE, APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, VALUING AND RESPECTING. THIS MAY BE SOME BEHAVIOR YOU HAVEN'T DONE BEFORE, OR IT MAY BE SOME BEHAVIOR YOU WANT TO START DOING MORE OFTEN. SOMETHING YOU'VE DISCOVERED YOUR PARTNER WANTS YOU TO DO OR WOULD APPRECIATE YOU DOING OR SOMETHING YOU HAVE SEEN IN ANOTHER COUPLE'S RELATIONSHIP WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADOPT TO EXPRESS YOUR LIFE.

FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MINUTES SILENTLY FOCUS YOUR THINKING ON TWO NEW WAYS YOU WANT TO SHOW YOUR LOVE.

14. Allow several minutes of silence, and then say:

NOW, FOR THE NEXT FEW MINUTES SILENTLY, AND WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED, FOCUS YOUR THINKING ON TWO THINGS YOU WANT YOUR PARTNER TO DO MORE OFTEN, OR TO START DOING FOR THE FIRST TIME, WHICH YOU WOULD EXPERIENCE AS LOVING BEHAVIOR.

15. Allow several minutes of silence.

NOW, OPEN YOUR EYES AND RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS IN YOUR LOG BOOK. THEN WHEN BOTH OF YOU ARE FINISHED, SHARE WITH YOUR PARTNER THESE NEW WAYS OF EXPRESSING HOW YOU LOVE, APPRECIATE, UNDERSTAND, VALUE AND RESPECT EACH OTHER.

16. Allow each couple sufficient time to record and share their thoughts with each other.
17. When it looks like all have finished, ask if everyone has finished, then ask them to regroup in the circle. If some are much slower than others, place time limit on them—say, an additional five minutes. When all have finished, say:

**Session Three**  
Closure

LET'S RETURN AND MAKE OUR CIRCLE AGAIN. (Wait until all have returned.) FOR THE FINAL ACTIVITY THIS EVENING. LET'S SHARE WITH EACH OTHER HOW WE ARE FEELING ABOUT TONIGHT'S SESSION. (Check your watch to determine how long you can allow this activity to continue.)

**Session Three**  
Log Book  
Assignments for  
Session Four

18. The homework assignments for session four are rather extensive. Be supportive and encourage them to complete these exercises as the next session is the final session.
19. Review each of the log book assignments for the fourth session and be prepared to give any additional explanation that may be needed for the communication exercise.

## 8th LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT

### In Preparation for the FOURTH SESSION

#### Communications Exercise

In session three you and your partner were asked to identify and then discuss:

- A) *Two things that you wanted to do for your partner that would be expressive of your love, appreciation, respect, understanding, etc., and*
- B) *Two things that you wanted your partner to do more often, or to start doing for the first time, which you would experience as loving behavior.*

#### ASSIGNMENTS:

- 1) Record the new loving behaviors which you and your partner initiated and the related feelings which each of you experienced as you attempted them.
- 2) Then, you and your partner should discuss those feelings. Share your feelings with each other just as you would do during the Marital Enrichment Sessions. For example, use the format of (when you/I started doing \_\_\_\_\_, I felt \_\_\_\_\_.)

Do not carry on a dialogue at this point. Explanation and rebuttal may come later, but for now focus on the newly initiated behaviors and the related feelings.

## **9th LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT**

In Preparation for the **FOURTH SESSION**

### **MY LOVING BEHAVIOR**

(Read the Instructions for this exercise, on next page of log book, before completing this sheet.)

List all the things you do which communicate that you love, value, respect, understand and appreciate your partner. (Be specific. What day-to-day behavior do you carry out which says to your partner I love you, value you, etc.)

Write all you can in one sitting. Do this very soon after the Second Session. Then continue to add to this list as you think of additional things you do.

I am saying I love you when I do the following:

I am saying I appreciate you when I:

I am saying I understand you when I:

I am saying I value you when I:

I am saying I respect you when I:

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE “MY *LOVING BEHAVIOR*” EXERCISE

(Using the 9th Log Book Assignment in the Fourth Session)

First, read instructions 1-10. Then begin the exercise. Refer to these instructions at any time you feel you need clarification.

1. Decide who is going to share first. (For purposes of clarifying these instructions let's assume the wife will begin.)
2. *WIFE*. Turn to page in your log book and go down the list introducing each activity with:  
“I am saying I love you when I . . .”
3. After each statement, she should ask her husband for feedback:  
“Do you experience being loved when I do this?”
4. *HUSBAND* responds with a brief explanation of what he experiences when the wife does the thing she has mentioned.
5. During the feedback try to keep your discussion brief and related to the specific behavior in question.
6. *WIFE*, when you've gotten feedback, then go to the next thing you have written on your list and introduce it with the same statement: “I am saying I love you when. . .” and then ask for feedback, “Do you experience being loved when I do this?”
7. Both of you will need to resist getting into a long discussion about any particular behavior. The primary purpose is to find out if your feelings are being recognized and to find out what your partner is experiencing. Don't fall into the trap of debating and arguing about why your behavior should or should not be understood. Just identify the loving behavior and find out if your partner is getting the message.

8. When the wife has finished presenting her list and getting feedback for each behavior, then the HUSBAND should review his list, using the same style of presentation.
9. Do *not* refer to behavior cited in the Second Session unless there are additional feelings you want to communicate related to that behavior.
10. Again, it is important to share your entire list and get the feedback, but don't use up too much time in discussions. Remember you have another important communication exercise to do.

When you have finished, if you still have time to share, then you can return to some of the things you want to explore further with each other.

## **10th LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT**

### **In Preparation for the FOURTH SESSION Goals for Our Relationship: A Re-Statement**

Turn back in your log book to page 12 (3rd log book assignment - *Goals for Our Relationship*) and review what you recorded in preparation for the First Session. Then re-state the ways in which you want your relationship to grow in the next three to five years. Include both previously stated goals as well as “new” goals.

# WORKSHEET FOR FOURTH SESSION

## Goals Commitment Exercise

1A

Goals

- 1.
- 2.

1B

Why are these Goals important to your relationship?

11

Benefits for Our Relationship

- 1st Goal
- 2nd Goal

111

Resources Necessary

- Goal one
- Goal two

IV

When we will start to fulfill:

- Goal one
- Goal two

V

What are we feeling about these goals?



# SESSION FOUR

## Session Four Warm-Up

DURING THIS PAST WEEK YOU WERE TO INITIATE SOME NEW BEHAVIORS TOWARD YOUR SPOUSE, OR TO INCREASE SOME BEHAVIORS YOU WANTED TO DO MORE OFTEN. ALSO, YOU WERE TO SUGGEST TWO THINGS THAT YOU WANTED YOUR PARTNER TO DO MORE OFTEN, OR START DOING FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT YOU WOULD LIKELY EXPERIENCE AS LOVING BEHAVIOR.

IN ADDITION, YOU WERE TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR PARTNER THE FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED AS YOU EXPERIMENTED WITH THESE NEW BEHAVIORS. LET'S TAKE THE FIRST PART OF TONIGHT'S SESSION TO SHARE WITH THE GROUP SOME OF THE LOVING BEHAVIORS YOU OR YOUR PARTNER INITIATED AND THE FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCED.

WHO WILL BE FIRST?

1. It is important that only the description of the effort and related feelings are shared, *not reasons why* the effort succeeded, failed, or whatever.
2. Allow sufficient time for each person in the group to share at least one experience.
3. Even though both persons in the dyad may describe the same event, encourage each to share his or her feelings. Such a sharing of feelings by both partners will often provide valuable feedback for the couple.
4. When all persons have completed this warm-up exercise, give the following instructions.

**Session Four**  
First Activity

FOR THE NEXT PART OF TONIGHT'S SESSION EACH COUPLE WILL NEED TO FIND A CORNER OF THE ROOM THAT WILL GIVE YOU AS MUCH PRIVACY AS POSSIBLE. YOU WILL DO TWO VERBAL COMMUNICATION EXERCISES USING THE CONTENT FROM LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENTS NINE AND TEN. THE FIRST EXERCISE IS CALLED "MY LOVING BEHAVIOR" AND THE SECOND IS "GOALS FOR OUR RELATIONSHIP - A RESTATEMENT."

YOU WILL FIND IN YOUR LOG BOOK A SET OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR "MY LOVING BEHAVIOR." FOR THE FIRST EXERCISE YOU WILL BE USING THIS WEEK'S LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENT IN WHICH YOU RECORDED ALL THE THINGS YOU DO WHICH ARE COMMUNICATING *YOUR* LOVE, APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, ETC. CAREFULLY READ THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR "MY LOVING BEHAVIOR" EXERCISE ON PAGE 51. MAKE SURE YOU BOTH UNDERSTAND THE INSTRUCTIONS. DISCUSS WITH YOUR PARTNER ANY INSTRUCTIONS WHICH ARE UNCLEAR TO YOU. IF STILL IN DOUBT, RAISE YOUR HAND AND I WILL ATTEMPT TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

AS YOU FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS, YOU WILL BE SHARING YOUR LISTS OF LOVING BEHAVIOR AND CHECKING WHETHER THE OTHER IS GETTING THE INTENDED MESSAGE. I DO WANT TO STRESS THAT IN PREPARATION FOR THIS EXERCISE YOU PROBABLY HAVE WRITTEN DOWN MANY OF THE THINGS YOU DO WHICH YOUR PARTNER MENTIONED IN THE SECOND SESSION. FOR TONIGHT'S EXERCISE YOU NEED ONLY CITE THAT BEHAVIOR THAT WAS NOT MENTIONED OR FOR WHICH THERE ARE ADDITIONAL FEELINGS WHICH YOU WANT TO EXPRESS BUT WHICH WERE NOT REFERRED TO BEFORE.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN FIFTEEN MINUTES TO DO THIS FIRST EXERCISE - APPROXIMATELY SEVEN MINUTES EACH FOR SHARING YOUR LISTS. AT THE END OF FIFTEEN MINUTES, PLEASE STOP WHERE YOU ARE AND I WILL GIVE YOU INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE NEXT EXERCISE.

5. When seven minutes are up, indicate to the couples that they should be half finished and switch to the other person in the dyad.
6. When fourteen minutes have elapsed tell the couples to finish up in one minute. After the one minute, get their attention and read the following instructions.

**Session Four**  
Second Activity

**Goals for Our Relationship: Restatement and Commitment**

FOR ONE OF YOUR LOG BOOK ASSIGNMENTS THIS WEEK YOU WERE TO RESTATE YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIP FOR THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS. FOR EXAMPLE, WAYS OF DOING THINGS TOGETHER, HOW CAN WE MEET NEEDS FOR EACH OTHER, AND NEW WAYS OF COMMUNICATING.

FOR THIS ACTIVITY I WANT YOU TO DO TWO THINGS: 1) SHARE WITH EACH OTHER THE GOALS FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIP IN THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS AS YOU HAVE THEM WRITTEN IN YOUR LOG BOOK. ONE PARTNER SHOULD SHARE HIS LIST WHILE THE OTHER PERSON LISTENS: 2) WHEN THE SHARING OF BOTH LISTS OF GOALS IS COMPLETED, THEN YOU AND YOUR PARTNER SHOULD a) IDENTIFY WHAT YOU BOTH FEEL TO BE THE *TWO MOST IMPORTANT GOALS* TO ACCOMPLISH FOR THE GROWTH OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP. b) DISCUSS AND LIST IN YOUR LOG BOOK THE *BENEFITS* THAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WILL DE-

RIVE FROM THE FULFILLMENT OF THESE TWO GOALS. c) DETERMINE WHAT RESOURCES WILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE MEETING OF THESE GOALS AND d) IDENTIFY A REASONABLE TIME TABLE FOR FULFILLING THESE GOALS. BE SURE TO INCLUDE A STARTING DATE.

USE THE WORKSHEET PROVIDED IN YOUR LOG BOOK FOR COMPLETING THIS EXERCISE.

5. Indicate to the group the approximate time allocated for each portion of the exercise.
6. Time schedule for second activity:
  - a) 7-8 minutes per person to share lists (15 minutes)
  - b) 8 minutes to identify two most important goals (8 minutes)
  - c) 8 minutes to list benefits of two goals (8 minutes)
  - d) 15 minutes to determine resources necessary for fulfillment and starting time (15 minutes)
  - e) total time - 46 minutes
7. Review instructions as necessary. It is wise to check each couple individually as they get started.
8. When all couples have completed the goals commitment exercise, reform the group in a circle and ask each couple to share one of their goals. Have one partner state the goal and why it is important to their relationship, and what they expect to derive from that goal. The other partner should share the resources necessary for fulfillment of this goal and approximately when they will start to actualize the goal. Do this by reading the following:

TO COMPLETE THE GOALS COMMITMENT EXERCISE I WOULD LIKE FOR EACH COUPLE TO SHARE JUST ONE OF THEIR GOALS WITH THE GROUP. *ONE PARTNER* WILL STATE WHAT THE CHOSEN GOAL IS, WHY IT IS IMPORTANT, AND HOW THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THIS GOAL WILL BENEFIT YOUR RELATIONSHIP. THE *OTHER PARTNER* WILL INDICATE WHAT IT WILL TAKE TO FULFILL THE GOAL AND WHEN YOU WILL START TO WORK ON IT.

ALL RIGHT, WHICH COUPLE WILL BE FIRST?

9. When the couple has finished, ask them to describe how they are each feeling in relation to this goal?

WOULD EACH OF YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW YOU ARE FEELING ABOUT THIS GOAL.

10. Allow couples to spontaneously share their goals. Encourage them to use their worksheets.
11. If necessary remind the group that only one person should be talking at any one time. It is important that an equal division of labor and responsibility be maintained.
12. When all couples have shared their goal with the group, say the following:

HAVING JUST CONCLUDED OUR FINAL ACTIVITY, LET'S TAKE A MOMENT BEFORE LEAVING TO SHARE WITH EACH OTHER WHAT WE'RE FEELING ABOUT OURSELVES AND OUR RELATIONSHIP BECAUSE OF WHAT WE HAVE EXPERIENCED DURING THIS MARITAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM.

# Instructions for Conducting a Mini-Marital Enrichment Session

## INTRODUCTION

This is a short experience that will provide you with a limited amount of insight as to what Marital Enrichment is about.

This experience can be held with four or more couples. (Small groups should consist of 4-6 couples.) The time necessary for this should be approximately one to two hours.

## PART ONE

**Getting Acquainted Exercise.** Place 4-6 couples in a circular group. The wife should be on the left of the husband and the husband on the right of the wife. The object of the session is to get acquainted, not with your spouse, but with another spouse, who should be on the wife's left, and on the husband's right.

*The goal of this first session is to be able to introduce your new acquaintance to the group. DO NOT discuss your job, work, occupation or vocation as this tends to set up roles. What we want to accomplish is the knowing of each other as humans.*

Find out three things about your neighbor:

1. Favorite hobby or interest?
2. An unachieved goal or aspiration?
3. Ability that they are proud of?

Take about four minutes to do this. After this is accomplished, ask that someone volunteer to introduce his/her partner, then reverse the introduction. After each partner has been introduced, continue in a clockwise fashion until all individuals have been introduced.

## PART TWO

After Part One is finished, ask the couples to take a few minutes in silence, to meditate about two things that they like, admire or appreciate in their spouses. After a few minutes, ask them to do the following task.

Ask the husbands to go first and to share with the group two things that they like or admire in their spouses. At the same time wives should try to be aware of the feelings in themselves that are elicited or produced when they listen to their husbands talk about them. After *all* the husbands have had a chance to state two things that they like about their spouses, then the wives can respond.

After all husbands have reported, and all wives have responded, reverse the procedure. Wives stating what they like, etc., in their husbands. When all wives have finished, then the husbands can respond as to what their feelings were when they were listening to their wives talk about them.

## PART THREE

(Hand out the sheets for the third part to the individuals. It might help if you could also have pencils available.)

Ask the people to list one or two things in each category that their partner does in their day-to-day response to which they feel *loved* (a feeling of strong affection), *appreciated or valued* (a feeling of enhancing self-worth or self-esteem), *understood* (a feeling of knowing me), and *respected* (a feeling of being treated with honor and good will). Take about 5 minutes to do this.

Now each individual should pair off with that person they introduced originally to the group. They should get as far away from their spouse as they can, so they cannot be overheard. They should review their list of traits with this person. (Allow 10 minutes at the most.) The other person also reviews his/her list.

Return to the group after 5-10 minutes. (Check to see if everyone has finished first.)

After returning to the circle break up into five to six small groups with spouses in the same group. Husbands and wives are instructed to face each other and sit as close to each other as they desire, holding hands, touching knees, etc. When all the couples are in this position, instruct them to describe what they were previously describing.

(Point out that this is what we typically do when we want to say something nice about our spouse - we generally tell someone else.

This exercise is called "Sharing Seats." (In this mini-session all couples do this simultaneously.)

The husband is to first tell those traits that he loves, values, etc., in his wife. After the husband has finished, he should inform his wife that he has said all he has to say. Now the wife should describe the feelings she experienced while listening to her husband. They should be honest and open, regardless of the type or intensity of feelings experienced. After the wife has finished the spouses should reverse roles with the wife stating those traits that make her feel loved, valued, etc. The husband expresses what he was feeling when his wife was discussing the traits.

Each couple should sit with their thoughts and feelings until every couple has finished.

The couples should turn their chairs around to re-form a circular group. Starting with anyone, each person should take turns and describe their "here and now" feelings about what they have experienced tonight as they have progressed through the sessions. This allows for closure for each member of the group.



## **MY PARTNER'S POSITIVE BEHAVIOR**

List all those day-to-day things your partner does in response to which you feel loved, appreciated or valued, understood and respected.

**loved** (a feeling of strong affection)

**appreciated or valued** (a feeling of enhancing self-worth or self-esteem)

**understood** (a feeling of knowing me)

**respected** (a feeling of being treated with honor and good will)

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