

## Marriage and Family Ministry Resources Recommended by United Methodists

Updated January 30, 2012

The 2001 revision of the *Growing Love in Christian Marriage Pastor's Manual* provides an extensive annotated list of supplementary resources for marriage and family ministries. Since the publication of that manual, many new books, videos, and program materials have become available, and we have also discovered other materials of which we were not previously aware.

This document provides descriptions and contact information for some new Marriage and Family Ministry Resources, along with updated information for those listed in the *GLCM Pastors' Manual* that are still in print. While most of these materials are Biblically-based and use religious language, others, while clearly compatible with Christian teaching, use primarily secular language. These work well for outreach to other faith groups and non-churched people in your community, as well as for members of your church family less comfortable with overtly religious language. Leaders can also add appropriate Scripture and devotional material as desired.

Contact information and websites are correct as of today. We will post updates and corrections as we become aware of them and continue to review materials that are not already on this list. Please call to our attention anything you see that needs updating and also advise us of other materials you would recommend for our next update.

Because some resources may be suitable for more than one of the categories below, you may want to consider the entire list, not just specific sections. We hope you will find reading the reviews educational and informative!

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### I. RESOURCES FOR COMPREHENSIVE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

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## READING LIST FOR COMPREHENSIVE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

***Blessed be the Bond: Christian Perspectives on Marriage and Family***, by William Johnson Everett (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1990). The author explores social changes that have taken place in the way we think about marriage and family life, emphasizing the theological concepts of sacrament, covenant, vocation, communion, and marriage as a “manifestation of God’s redemptive purposes in re-creating our world.” [Out of Print]

***Connection: A Self-Care Approach to Conflict Management***, by Bonnie R. Fraser, 2010. 480-278-3702, [bonnie@connectionselfcare.com](mailto:bonnie@connectionselfcare.com), [www.connectionselfcare.com](http://www.connectionselfcare.com). The author clearly presents the basic concepts of Marshall Rosenberg’s Nonviolent Communication, with examples and exercises that effectively facilitate understanding and skill development. She emphasizes throughout the importance of active self-care and self-awareness in order to improve our communication and conflict management. This text would serve well for group or individual study. Visit the website for sample pages and exercises.

***Counseling African American Marriages and Families***, by Edward P. Wimberly (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1977). The author describes the cultural context which impacts the marriage and family life of African Americans, providing guidance for pastors to work effectively with them. He also provides insights and tools that can enhance a pastor’s work with persons of any ethnic heritage: the use of family systems theory; a narrative approach to theology and Scripture; and an emphasis on the love ethic as the cornerstone of marriage and family life.

***Domestic Violence: What Every Pastor Needs to Know***, by Reverend Al Miles (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Fortress, 2000). The author explores the complex problem of domestic violence, offering guidance for ministering effectively with both perpetrators and victims. Warning pastors of the dangers inherent in naïve and untrained approaches to such situations, Miles makes a strong case for pastors to participate in domestic violence prevention training and to make referrals to trained professionals. Miles shows pastors how they may inadvertently blame the victims and encourage and excuse violent behavior. He also recommends specific strategies for ensuring the safety of victims and for holding their abusers accountable.

***embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology***, by James B. Nelson (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1978). The author reviews the history of religious thought about sex and sexuality and discusses various related ethical issues. He affirms the centrality of our sexuality to our personhood and to our ability to relate to others, and he emphasizes the capacity of sexual love to “break the self open to the true meaning of divine-human communion.”(p. 256)

***Family Ministries Desk Reference: Holistic Responses to Contemporary Challenges***, by Patricia D. Fosarelli (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003). The author addresses a number of common challenges experienced by families (addition of a new members, loss, single parenting, blending families, caring for aging parents, parenting adolescents, moving, substance abuse, depression). After clarifying physical and emotional aspects of each challenge, the author proposes specific individual and congregational responses and relevant resources for

effective ministries in each situation.

***Family Ministries: Helping Families Become Centers of Faith Formation***, by Mary Jane Pierce Norton (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008). Part of the Guidelines series for United Methodist church leaders, this booklet provides general guidance, specific suggestions, and recommendations for resources for local church family ministries.

***Marriage Counseling: A Christian Approach to Counseling Couples***, by Everett L. Worthington, Jr. (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1989). The author provides a Biblically-based theory of marriage and marriage therapy which draws on many secular theories of counseling and therapy, but integrates them into a Christian framework. He describes specific techniques for assessing a couple's relationship, for promoting change and growth, and for helping couples avoid slipping back into old patterns.

***Marriage Enrichment in the Church***, by David and Vera Mace (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1976). The authors succinctly discuss the importance of marriage, the nature of Christian marriage, and ways churches can become vitally involved in strengthening marriages and family life.

***Marriage Enrichment: Preparation, Mentoring, and Outreach***, by Richard A. Hunt, Larry Hof, and Rita DeMaria. Phil.: Brunner/Mazel, 1998). This book provides an overview of marriage enrichment concepts and programs. Part 1 summarizes basic assumptions of the marriage enrichment movement, its history and its potential. Part 2 discusses some of the major programs available, and Part 3 reviews current research. Part 4 focuses on such recent developments as new approaches to therapy, utilizing mentor couples, and working to change the social climate for marriage.

***Marriage: Just a Piece of Paper?*** edited by Katherine Anderson, Don Browning, and Brian Boyer (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 800-253-7521. This companion book to the national PBS documentary reviewed below offers a variety of essays on topics related to marriage and divorce in our contemporary culture, interspersed with personal narratives illustrating various themes. Selections analyze how we arrived at our current situation, the effects on children, and directions we might take to improve the quality of family life.

***Marriage Savers: Helping Your Friends and Family Avoid Divorce (formerly "...Stay Married,")*** by Michael J. McManus (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995). The author writes passionately about the church's need to do all it can to help couples form lasting, healthy marriages and about the necessity for community marriage agreements and reforms in marriage and divorce law. He describes specific programs providing relationship education for the young, effective marriage preparation for engaged couples, enrichment for couples who have been married for a while, and strategies for helping couples in crisis.

***Non-Violent Communication: A Language of Compassion***, by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D. (Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 1999), [www.nonviolentcommunication.com](http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com). This clear and straightforward text shows how to break patterns of thinking that lead to arguments and anger and how to communicate with mutual respect and understanding. The skills (separating

observation from evaluation, taking responsibility for our feelings, making requests instead of demands, and listening empathically) can enhance any relationship. This book works well with groups of individuals whether single or married. A Companion Workbook available at the website provides discussion questions and exercises for individual or group study, and various related books for parents, teachers, community leaders, etc., address specific topics.

***The Surprising Purpose of Anger. Beyond Anger Management: Finding the Gift***, by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D (Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 2005).

Rosenberg, developer of Nonviolent Communication, challenges us to think of anger as a gift, pointing us to unmet needs, but subverted by the judgments we make about others. He describes how to create strategies focused on meeting needs and to find solutions instead of just reacting. [www.nonviolentcommunication.com](http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com)),

***Nurturing Faith in Families: 425 Creative Ideas for Family Ministry***, by Jolene L. Roehlkepartain (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002). Recognizing the vulnerability of families with children to stress and challenge, the author proposes that responsibility for nurturing their faith rests with the entire congregation. This book catalogues a wide variety of ideas and resources for becoming a family-nurturing church.

## **PROGRAM RESOURCES FOR COMPREHENSIVE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES**

***A Manual on how to Create a Marriage Savers Congregation***, by Michael J. McManus (Potomac, Maryland: Marriage Savers, Inc., 1999), 9311 Harrington Drive, Potomac, MD 20854, 301-469-5873, [mike@marriagesavers.com](mailto:mike@marriagesavers.com). Chapters focus on marriage preparation, marriage enrichment, rebuilding troubled marriages, reconciling the separated, and working with stepfamilies, as well as how to organize a congregation for comprehensive marriage ministry. Materials from different “Marriage Saver Congregations” illustrate various approaches, and an extensive appendix contains sample brochures, letters, forms, and “Steps in Creating a Community Marriage Policy®.”

***Domestic Violence: What Churches Can Do***, FaithTrust Institute, 2400 N 45<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 101, Seattle, WA 98103, [www.faithtrustinstitute.org](http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org), 206-634-1903x23, 877-860-2255. This 20-minute video provides an overview of the reality of domestic violence and raises awareness of its prevalence, dynamics, and the attitudes that underlie both abusive behavior and the fear of leaving an abusive relationship. The accompanying study guide suggests approaches for helping persons caught in such relationships and steps for congregations to take in order to more effectively minister to such families. “Safety for the woman and her children has to be addressed first. After that has been ensured, ongoing support can best be accomplished by helping the victim find appropriate community resources and providing the support of her faith community as she starts the journey of healing and decision-making for the future. The most helpful support that the congregation can offer to the abuser is to hold him accountable, to support him in taking responsibility for his behavior and recognizing that he has a problem, and to stand by him as he seeks treatment from a specialized batterers’ counseling program.” (Study guide, p.19-20)

***Growing Love in Christian Marriage Pastor’s Manual, Revised***, by Jane P. and S. Clifton Ives (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001). The Pastor’s Manual is a marriage preparation and

comprehensive marriage and family ministry resource for pastors and other church leaders. In addition to guidelines for using the *Growing Love in Christian Marriage Couple's Edition* and for pre-marital counseling, the Pastor's Manual includes information for establishing a mentor couple ministry, for working with couples in groups, and for providing relationship education for all ages and stages of family life. An annotated list of resources includes organizations, programs, and curriculum materials that may be incorporated into local church and community ministries. Visit [www.marriagelovepower.net](http://www.marriagelovepower.net) for an expanded version of this resource list, along with a Directory of United Methodist Marriage and Family Ministry leaders and consultants, a Training Model for the use of *Growing Love in Christian Marriage*, and other helps.

### **COMPREHENSIVE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES**

**Center for the Family at Pepperdine University**, 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, CA, 90263-4771, 310-506-4771, [centerforthefamily@pepperdine.edu](mailto:centerforthefamily@pepperdine.edu), [www.family.pepperdine.edu](http://www.family.pepperdine.edu)

This center offers resources and training for church leaders involved in family ministry, as well as other marriage and family enrichment programs. The website lists retreats, seminars, and online resources for students as well as for the community at large. The Family of Faith Network's annual conference encourages and prepares church leaders – lay and professional- for the vital field of family ministry.

**Coalition for Marriage, Family, and Couples Education, LLC, (Smart Marriages)** 5310 Belt Road, NW, Washington, DC 20015-1961, 202-362-3332, [CMFCE@smartmarriages.com](mailto:CMFCE@smartmarriages.com), [www.smartmarriages.com](http://www.smartmarriages.com). This non-denominational, non-partisan, non-sectarian organization offers the most comprehensive source of marriage and family ministry information and resources. For 14 years, ending in 2010, the Coalition held an annual Smart Marriages/Happy Families conference, bringing together researchers, program developers, and other experts for plenary sessions, seminars, workshops, and training institutes. At the website, you can order Playback Now recordings of the presentations made at those conferences, read articles on a variety of relevant topics, check the Directory of Programs for available relationship education courses, and sign up for a free online e-newsletter.

**Dovetail Institute for Interfaith Family Resources**, 775 Simon Greenwell Lane, Boston, KY 40107; 800-530-1596, [www.dovetailinstitute.org](http://www.dovetailinstitute.org), [DI-IFR@Bardstown.com](mailto:DI-IFR@Bardstown.com). Respecting the right and need of interfaith marriage partners to explore the spiritual and religious dimensions of an interfaith household, this organization provides such couples, their families and friends, and the professionals who serve them, with non-judgmental educational and networking resources and opportunities.

**Non-Violent Communication**, PuddleDancer Press, PO Box 231129, Encinitas, CA 92023-1129, 858-759-6963, [www.nonviolentcommunication.com](http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com). Non-violent Communication, developed by Marshall Rosenberg in the 1960's, teaches people of all ages, genders, ethnicity, and background a more effective way to communicate. Separating observation from evaluation,

taking responsibility for our feelings, making requests instead of demands, and listening empathically are skills that can enhance any relationship. Certified trainers now teach those skills all over the world. At the above website, you can sign up for an e-newsletter and other free resources, read articles about NVC, and purchase books (a basic text and companion workbook for group study and a variety of smaller books specifically addressed to parents, teachers, community leaders, etc.) Visit [www.cnvc.org/en/trainingcal](http://www.cnvc.org/en/trainingcal) for more information, schedules of upcoming events, free introductory tools, and contact information for certified trainers. For information about telecourses, visit [www.nvctraining.com](http://www.nvctraining.com).

**The Association of Marriage and Family Ministries (AMFM)**, 8283 N. Hayden Rd., Suite 258, Scottsdale, AZ 85258, 480-718-3020, FAX: 480-718-3021, [staff@amfmonline.com](mailto:staff@amfmonline.com), [www.amfmonline.com](http://www.amfmonline.com). Operating out of a belief that “healthy marriages produce strong families, which create vibrant churches impacting their local communities and the world we live in for Christ,” this ecumenical organization offers resources and events to train and equip the church for effective marriage and family ministry. Visit the website to learn more about the various ministry teams, the Marriage and Family Ministry Training Conference, and the annual Resource Guide.

**The Healthy Marriage Initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families:** <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/> Visit this website for General Information, Research Reports, Articles, Resources, and to sign up for a free e-newsletter.

*The Relationship Suite: The Key to Vibrant Long Term Relationships*, by Rachel Moheban, LCSW, [www.therelationshipsuite.com](http://www.therelationshipsuite.com). At this site, Rachel offers both free and fee-based relationship coaching products and services, effectively combining advice from experts with her own unique insights. You can sign up for the following free resources: weekly email relationship tips, a report on improving communication, a link to an audio presentation on dealing with money problems, and a five-minute relationship assessment quiz. Rachel’s coaching products range from her free starter set, “*Three Secret Shortcuts to Bring You to Your Best Relationships*” audio and eBook, to her comprehensive *Ultimate Relationship Resolution Program*, which includes five audio programs with accompanying workbooks (Communication, Anger, Money, Physical Intimacy, and Emotional Intimacy). The workbooks provide a verbatim script of the audio for those who want to follow along while listening to Rachel’s teaching, which includes visualizations and exercises related to each topic. These presentations are suitable for couples, premarital couples, and singles. You may also sign up for occasional teleclasses, individual and couple therapy, corporate counseling, training and employee assistance in English, Spanish, Hebrew and Farsi. You can access Rachel’s Facebook blog, tips, and articles by typing “The Relationship Suite” into the Facebook search bar or by clicking on the Facebook symbol at her website.

**United Methodist General Board of Discipleship**, 615-340-7170, 877-899-2780. The GBOD website provides a variety of articles related to various aspects of marriage and family ministry, as well as resources for ministries directed toward specific age groups. [www.gbod.org](http://www.gbod.org) (click “Minister to People”), [www.gbod.org/marriage](http://www.gbod.org/marriage), [www.gbod.org/families](http://www.gbod.org/families)

**United Methodist Marriage and Family Ministries: [www.marriagelovepower.net](http://www.marriagelovepower.net)**

This website offers a variety of helps and updates for couples, pastors, and mentor couples, including a Directory of United Methodists trained in a variety of marriage and family programs. Check this web site for supplementary resources, updates, and information about training for pastors and mentor couples. Contents of this website are being integrated into the General Board of Discipleship website at [www.gbod.org](http://www.gbod.org) (Click “Minister to People”), [www.gbod.org/marriage](http://www.gbod.org/marriage), [www.gbod.org/families](http://www.gbod.org/families)

**II. RESOURCES FOR RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS (includes parenting resources)**

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**READING LIST FOR RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULTS**

***9 Ways to Bring Out the Best in You and Your Child***, by Maggie Reigh (Kelowna, Canada: Northstone Publishing, 2004, [www.northstone.com](http://www.northstone.com)). The author shows parents how to raise respectful, responsible, and resilient children, while at the same time bringing more life and laughter to their homes. This highly spiritual, easy-to-understand approach emphasizes mutual respect, bringing values to life, mutual empowerment, dealing with feelings, effective communication, encouragement, living harmoniously, loving discipline, and helping children trust their inner guidance.

***50 Things Everyone Should Know About Dating Violence*** (brochure), The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, CA, 94707-0881, 800-695-7975, FAX: 972-226-2824, [Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org), [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org).

***1001 Ways to Introduce Your Child to God***, by Kathie Reimer (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1992). Simple everyday activities you can use to teach your child about God and Godly attitudes, behaviors, and Relationships.

***Before They Ask: Talking With Your Child About Sex From a Christian Perspective: A Guide for Parents of Children from Birth Through Age Twelve***, edited by Vince Isner (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999). This companion piece to the *Created by God* curriculum (see below) helps parents initiate conversations on sex with their children, identify teachable moments, and respond effectively to typical questions.

***Boys Should Be Boys: Seven Secrets to Raising Healthy Sons***, by Meg Meeker, M.D. (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2008). Sound advice on raising boys to healthy maturity and countering the negative influences prevalent in our culture is presented in easily understood language, with clear examples.

***How to Avoid Falling in Love with a Jerk: The Foolproof Way to Follow Your Heart Without Losing Your Mind***, by Dr. John Van Epp, Ph.D. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007) The author describes five dynamics that create the feelings of attachment in every relationship: knowledge, trust, reliance, commitment, and sex. Understanding these dynamics can help persons avoid forming over-attachments of the heart that can override the judgments of the mind. Dr. Van Epp provides the following rule of thumb: “The degree or level of each bonding dynamic should never exceed the level of the previous.” Participants learn to accurately predict what a person will be like after marriage by thoroughly investigating five specific areas (family background, conscience, compatibility potential, relationship skills, and past relationship patterns). [[www lovethinks.com](http://www lovethinks.com) ]

***How to Have a Real Conversation With Your Teen: Tips for parents from veteran youth workers with teens of their own,*** by Ron Habermas and David Olshine (Cincinnati, Ohio: The Standard Publishing Company, 1998). The first part of this book contains four chapters exploring relational styles in families and describing effective approaches for improving communication. Each chapter includes suggestions for individual and group study. The second part of the book offers relevant anecdotes, advice, fresh ideas, helpful reminders, and discussion topics.

***Live It! Building Skills for Christian Living: Dealing With Anger*** (For Tweens Ages 10-13, Leader’s Guide), edited by Ruth Moore (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006). Complete guide with reproducible pages for six sessions with Tweens plus one session with Tweens and Parents together. Session topics include What Makes Me Angry?, Under Control, Righteous Anger, Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Forgiveness, and Parent-Teen Communication.

***Living Together: Myths, Risks, and Answers***, by Mike and Harriet McManus, (New York: Howard Books, 2008). The authors dispel the myth that living together leads to a successful marriage, exploring the risks as revealed by research and by their own experiences counseling couples. This book also provides helpful guidance for marriage preparation counseling.

***Packaging Girlhood: Rescuing Our Daughters from Marketers’ Schemes***, by Sharon Lamb, Ed.D. and Lyn Mikel Brown, Ed.D (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2006). The authors describe three messages marketers promote to girls through advertising: looks matter above all else; “thin and sexy” is the ideal; boyfriends and shopping should be the center of their attention. Marketers and advertisers hire psychologists to research what children want and what they respond to, not in order to encourage their healthy development, but to create “brand loyalty” among shoppers, starting at a very young age. In order to counter these messages, Lamb and Brown suggest asking good questions and listening respectfully and reflectively to girls’ responses, rather than doing all the talking. Children and youth will remember what they themselves conclude and verbalize much more vividly than what is said to them.

***Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood***, by William Pollack, Ph.D. (New York: Random House, 1998). The author documents the high cost to our sons and to our society of the emotional repression boys experience in our culture and shows parents and others how to free boys from this “gender straitjacket” so that they no longer feel they have to “choose between being the kind of tough, competitive, unfeeling, uncommunicative man traditionally celebrated as ‘masculine’ and being the kind of open, expressive, egalitarian man now heralded as ideal by much of contemporary society.” (p. 396)

***Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Kids***, by Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller (Colorado Springs, Waterbrook Press, 2000). The authors show parents how to practice and teach honor in their relationships with their children, describing the beneficial changes honor can bring to family life. Learning to treat each other as special, to do more than is expected, and to maintain a good attitude will also help children get along better in the world. Chapters include discussion questions suitable for individual or group study. Eight Family Together Time activities provide opportunities for families to learn how to practice honor. [www.biblicalparenting.org](http://www.biblicalparenting.org), 800-771-8334

***Sex and the New You: For Ages 11 to 14 and Parents***, by Richard Bimler (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1995). The author helps young teens understand the physical aspects of sexuality, feel good about themselves as male or female, and develop healthy relationships. This is Book 4 in the *Learning About Sex* series. Other titles include “Why Boys and Girls Are Different,” “Where Do Babies Come From,” “How You are Changing,” “Love, Sex and God,” and “How to Talk Confidently with Your Child about Sex...and Appreciate Your Own Sexuality Too.” [Order through Cokesbury 800-672-1789].

***Speaking of Sex: Are You Ready to Answer the Questions Your Kids Will Ask?***, by Meg Hickling, R.N. (Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada: Northstone, 1996). The author, a Sexual Health Educator, shares and responds to real questions she has been asked over the years by children of all ages. With sensitivity, honesty, and humor, she provides practical, up-to-date suggestions to help parents address sexuality and sexual health issues with their children.

***Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters: 10 Secrets Every Father Should Know***, by Meg Meeker, M.D. (New York: Ballentine Books, 2006). A parent and pediatrician with more than twenty years of experience discusses the essential role fathers play in the lives of their daughters and how they can most effectively provide the attention, protection, encouragement, and wisdom girls need.

***The 5 Love Languages of Children***, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2005). The author shows parents how to use with their children the five languages of love: Quality Time, Words of Affirmation, Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. While encouraging use of all five of the love languages, he also explains how to determine which ones communicate best to your child and how to respond to challenging behavior.

***The 5 Love Languages of Teenagers: The Secret to Loving Teens Effectively***, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2010). The author shows parents, grandparents, and others how to effectively interact with teenagers by using the five languages of love: Quality

Time, Words of Affirmation, Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. After exploring the particular challenges of the teen years, the author encourages use of all five of the love languages, explains how to determine which ones communicate best to your child, and how to respond to difficult behaviors and situations.

***The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families: Building a Beautiful Family Culture in a Turbulent World***, by Stephen R. Covey (Franklin Covey Co., 1997), 800-867-1492, [www.franklincovey.com](http://www.franklincovey.com) . The author shows how establishing new patterns of thinking and doing can transform a family's relationships and life together. The "7 habits" provide a framework for unconditional love, mutual respect, personal responsibility, interdependence, and cooperative problem-solving. Each of the "7 habits" is presented clearly with moving examples from real life, followed by guidelines for discussion with adults, teens, and children, which make this an excellent study for a parenting class.

***The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens***, by Sean Covey (Franklin Covey Co., 1998) and ***The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens Workbook***, by Sean Covey (Franklin Covey Co., 1999), 800-867-1492, [www.franklincovey.com](http://www.franklincovey.com). Stephan Covey's son presents the "7 habits" principles in language and with examples relevant to teenagers. ("Take Responsibility for Your Life," "Define your mission and goals in life," "Prioritize, and do the most important things first," "Have an everyone-can-win attitude," "Listen to people sincerely," "Work together to achieve more," "Renew yourself regularly.") An excellent resource for individual or group study

***The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People***, by Stephen R. Covey (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1989). By cultivating the "7 Habits," ("Be Proactive," "Begin with the End in Mind," "Put First Things First," "Think Win/Win," "Seek First to Understand...," "Synergize," "Sharpen the Saw"), individuals can grow in self-mastery and in the ability to build healthy relationships and to heal hurting or broken relationships. A good study for adult singles, couples, and/or parents.

***What Children Learn from Their Parents' Marriage***, by Judith P. Siegel, Ph.D., C.S.W. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000). Because the marriage relationship serves as the child's "blueprint for intimacy," couples need to discover how they have been impacted by the relationship of their parents and what they, in turn, are communicating to their children. Each chapter discusses and gives clear examples of an aspect of healthy intimacy ("Establishing the Priority of the Marriage," "Teaching the Value of Interdependence," "Instilling the Importance of Mutual Respect," "Maintaining Trust in Word and Deed," "Negotiating Differences Constructively," "Understanding the Long-Term Effects of Conflict," "Emphasizing the Positives," "Building a Better Marriage." At the end of each chapter, questions are provided to encourage couples to reflect on their own relationships and to move toward healthier patterns both for their own happiness and for that of their children. This would be an excellent resource for a nine-week group study for young parents or a helpful gift for individual couples.

**CURRICULUM MATERIALS FOR RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION  
FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULTS**  
(Many of the books on the Reading List above could also be used for group study)

*Active Parenting Now*, by Michael H. Popkin, Ph.D. (Active Parenting Publishers, Inc., 2002) This 6-session curriculum for parents of children ages 5 to 12 provides excellent insights on “Winning Cooperation,” teaching “Responsibility and Discipline,” “Understanding and Redirecting Misbehavior,” and “Building Courage, Character, and Self-Esteem.” Family Enrichment Activities and Family Meeting suggestions strengthen families and the individuals in them. The Biblical and Theological Guide described below offers supplementary activities and materials for faith communities. [Active Parenting Publishers, Inc. 1955 Vaughn Road NW, Suite 108, Kennesaw, GA 30144-7808, 800-825-0060, [www.ActiveParenting.com](http://www.ActiveParenting.com) ]

*Active Parenting Now in the Faith Community: A Biblical and Theological Guide*, by Freda Gardiner (Atlanta: Active Parenting Publishers, 2003). The author provides general guidelines and specific suggestions, including handouts, for adapting the above program for faith communities.

*Building Lasting Relationships: A Guidebook That Helps Individuals Get In Touch With What Makes Relationships Last*, by Britton Wood, Ph.D. and Bobbye Wood, Ph.D. (Fort Worth, TX: Britton Wood and Associates, 1991). Six interactive group sessions, linked to scripture, explore the following topics: barriers to lasting relationships; communication; what men and women want from each other; how conflict relates to closeness; anger; and ways to turn barriers into bridges. May be used with singles, engaged, or married couples. [Contact the authors at 4055 Glanavon Court, Fort Worth, TX 76109, (817) 924-8509. ]

*Building Relationships: Developing Skills for Life*, by David H. Olson, John DeFrain, and Amy K. Olson (Minneapolis, MN: Life Innovations, Inc., 1999) Each of the thirteen chapters focuses on one of the PREPARE/ENRICH categories and begins with a self-scoring quiz, which participants take before and after reading the chapter. The chapters fall into five categories, as follows: An Overview of Marriage: 1. Marriage and Families Today; Dating and Marriage Preparation: 2. Dating and Mate Selection, 3. Love and Marriage, 4. Preparing for Marriage; Stages of Family Life: 5. Adjusting to Marriage, 6. Children and Parenting; Relationship Skills: 7. Communication Skills, 8. Conflict Resolution Skills; Common Relationship Issues: 9. Role Relationships, 10. Affection and Sexuality, 11. Financial Decisions, 12. Values, Beliefs, and Behaviors, and 13. Understanding Your Family. The goal of this program is to help youth develop personal and relationship skills they can use in all of their relationships throughout life. Skills taught include assertiveness and active listening, constructive conflict resolution, verbal and nonverbal communication, managing finances and creating a budget, finding and using a mentor, defining goals and taking steps to reach them. No training is required to use this resource. [The student workbook and teachers' manual (with either Powerpoint or transparencies) may be purchased at [www.prepare-enrich.com](http://www.prepare-enrich.com) and also from Amazon.]

*Christian Parents as Sex Educators: One Couple’s Approach to Guiding Their Teenagers*, by Joanne and Kevin Witt (gbod.org/Minister to People/Families/General Resources – scroll down to Parts I, II, and III posted 9/22/2010 and 2/22/2010). The authors share out of their own

experience how parents can effectively “provide well-rounded learning on many topics that are important for meaningful lives and sexual relationships.”

***Connections and PREP: Relationships and Marriage: Interpersonal Relationship Program for Secondary Students*** (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, rev. 2003), Call 800-695-7975, email [RelationshipSkills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:RelationshipSkills@DibbleInstitute.org), visit [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org) or [www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org](http://www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org) for free sample lessons, other information, and to order. Instructor’s and Student Manuals provide complete resources for eighteen one-hour sessions for those in grades 11 to 14, offering practical tools for understanding and making wise decisions about relationships and marriage. The course incorporates materials from PREP® dealing with self awareness, communication, and conflict management and also includes a “marriage game.” Although designed for use in public schools, the teachings are clearly compatible with Christian teaching and can easily be adapted for use in church settings by adding appropriate worship moments. Lessons may also be combined into fewer sessions.

***Created by God: About Human Sexuality for Older Boys and Girls***, by James Ritchie (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009). This updated resource emphasizes a healthy biblical and Christian perspective on human sexuality, relationships, and values for “tweens.” A **Leader’s Guide CD-ROM** and a **DVD** provide guidance for planning, promotion, and leading of the program. The Student Book and Parent Guide provide information for individual study, for parent-child discussion, and for classroom use. See also the parent resource, *Before They Ask*, on the reading list above. Other resources are listed in the back of the Parent Guide. [Order through Cokesbury (800-672-1789).]

***Dealing With Anger***, edited by Marcia J. Stoner (Nashville: Abingdon, 2006). This Leader’s Guide provides six sessions with fifth- and sixth-grade students, plus an additional session for the youth and their parents together. Reproducible handouts included. Other offerings in this *Live It! Series* include *My Family*, *Building Character*, *Being a Friend*, *Being a Christian at School*, *Talking With God*, *Making a World of Difference*, and *Growing Spiritually*.

***Embracing Parents: How Your Congregation Can Strengthen Families***, by Jolene and Eugene Roehlkepartain (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004). The authors clearly describe and illustrate how churches can provide for all parents and families a strong web of support built around a research-based list of the developmental assets children need to experience in order to succeed in life.

***FaithHome*** (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999). This nine-week church-sponsored experience helps families learn how to talk to God and how to talk with each other about God and faith issues. *FaithHome* encourages home-based practice, while weekly sessions at the church provide a network of support. Program materials include a Leader’s Guide, Family Guide, Pastor’s Guide, Weekly Session Video, and Audiocassette with songs to reinforce the weekly theme. Additional Parenting Booklets address a number of specific concerns: “Communicating With Your Preschooler,” “Communicating With Your Child Age 6-12,” “Communicating With Your Teenager,” “Secrets for Successful Step-parents,” “Your Child and Anger: How to Manage Anger and Resolve Conflict,” and others. [Call Cokesbury at 800-672-1789 for more information or to order either the full program or the booklets. Free promotional video available.]

***Growing in Our Interpersonal Relations, Vol. I***, by Keith and Marilyn Hamilton (1070 West Jefferson Street, Franklin, Indiana 46131), [KandMHamilton@earthlink.net](mailto:KandMHamilton@earthlink.net), 317-736-1286. Also available in Spanish, ***Creciendo en Nuestras Relaciones Interpersonales, Tomo I***, this program is an adaptation for singles of the Hamilton's program for couples, ***Growing in Marital Love, Vol I*** (reviewed below) The twenty hours of this program may be experienced as a single event or spread out over days or weeks, according to the needs of the group. [Order through the authors or download free at [www.ywamconnect.com/sites/KandMHamilton](http://www.ywamconnect.com/sites/KandMHamilton) .]

***Growing in our Interpersonal Relations: Vol. II***, by Keith and Marilyn Hamilton (1070 West Jefferson St., Franklin, Indiana 46131), [KandMHamilton@earthlink.net](mailto:KandMHamilton@earthlink.net), 317-736-1286. This companion piece to Vol. I, described above, provides both basic and advanced training workshops for leaders of the program detailed in Vol. I. A pre-marital workshop is also included. [Order through the authors or download free at [www.ywamconnect.com/sites/KandMHamilton](http://www.ywamconnect.com/sites/KandMHamilton) .]

***Home Improvement: The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids***, by Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller (Lawrenceville, NJ: National Center for Biblical Parenting, 1996). This book provides parents with clear instructions and helpful examples for “Encouraging Obedience Without Yelling,” “Making Every Discipline Time Constructive,” “Helping Children Make Lasting Changes,” “Communicating Values so Kids Will Listen,” “Dealing with Anger in Children,” “Disciplining Consistently Even When You’re Tired,” “Teaching Kids to Learn from Life,” and “Approaching Deep-rooted Problems.” [www.biblicalparenting.org](http://www.biblicalparenting.org), 800-771-8002

***Money Habitudes for Teens: Get a Jump on Your Habits and Attitudes about Money***, by Syble Solomon (LifeWise, 2007, [www.moneyhabitudes.com](http://www.moneyhabitudes.com), 888-833-4331). This set of cards may be used by individuals or as part of a group activity to help youth discern the values and attitudes that guide their thoughts and actions in regard to saving, spending, and dealing with debt and money in general . Following a card sorting activity, participants discover the challenges and advantages of each financial type (Spontaneous, Status, Giving, Security, Carefree, and/or Planning) and ways to achieve a healthy balance. Since differences in attitudes toward and use of money are a primary causes of conflict in intimate relationships, teens benefit by increased self understanding and the ability to discuss differences with others.

***PICK a Partner: Premarital Interpersonal Choices and Knowledge (How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk)***, by John Van Epp, PhD. (1997-2008) [www.lovethinks.com](http://www.lovethinks.com). This set of 2 DVDs provides five 50-minute presentations of a plan for pacing a relationship and for exploring the key areas that foreshadow what a potential partner will be like in marriage. Participants can write in the accompanying workbook. Magnetic “Relationship Attachment Model” boards illustrate the five aspects of a relationship that need to be built in sequence: knowing, trusting, relying, committing, and sexual touching. The website offers training information, workbooks, and resources for helping singles and singles again to build healthy relationships by using both their heads and their hearts.

***Parenting with Intimacy: Experiencing Great Commandment Love in Your Family***, by David Ferguson, Teresa Ferguson, Paul Warren, and Vicki Warren (Austin, TX: Relationship Press, 1995). This Biblically-based and practical handbook shows parents how to give their children

what they really need, heal hurts, respond lovingly to misbehavior, and strengthen family relationships. Each chapter includes exercises and assignments for individuals, couples, or for group study. Companion resources (videos, audios, and a detailed teaching curriculum are available at [www.GreatCommandment.net](http://www.GreatCommandment.net).

***Raising Children Compassionately: Parenting the couple Communication Way***, by Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D. (Encinitas, CA: Puddledancer Press, 2005). The author urges parents to put compassionate connection first and to use compassionate communication to build a mutually respectful and enriching family lifestyle. Learn how to motivate without threatening punishment or promising reward, listen to really understand, discover the needs underlying behavior or speech, and reduce family conflict. [www.Puddledancer.com](http://www.Puddledancer.com)

***Talking With Your Child: Conversations for Life***, edited by Rebecca Laird (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999). This six-session study for parents addresses the following topics: communication, emotions, respect, success and failure, grief and loss, and sexuality. The participant's book provides clear information about children's developmental stages, sound strategies for effective parenting, Biblical connections, and suggestions for family conversations and activities. A leader's guide outlines the group sessions. [Cokesbury, 800-672-1789]

***Talking With Your Teen: Conversations for Life***, edited by Lynn Hutton (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1999). Same format and focus as *Talking With Your Child*, above, but appropriate for parents with children ages thirteen and up. [Cokesbury, 800-672-1789]

***Teen Sexuality Resources*** (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998). [Cokesbury 800-672-1789]. ***Let's Be Real: Honest Discussions about Faith and Sexuality***. This leader's resource addresses issues related to youth sexuality and offers several models for learning experiences with youth grades 6 through 12. The kit includes one copy each of both the student and parent resources listed next.

***Let's Decide: Faith and My Sexuality***. This student resource discusses beliefs, values, and sexuality to provide guidance for youth and help them in their decision-making.

***Let's Listen: Communicating With Your Youth About Faith and Sexuality***  
This resource for parents provides practical help and simple techniques for inviting conversation to clarify the connection between faith and sexuality.

***Proactive Parenting Series***, by Jim Williams (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004) Leader Guide DVDs and participant study books outline four group sessions for each of five topics: "Parenting 101," "Communication With Your Child or Teen," "Discipline With Children and Teens," "Handling Anger in Your Home," and "Your Family and Money." [*FaithHome for Parents* resources, Cokesbury, 800-672-1789].

***Ten Things Teens Should Know About Marriage*** (brochure), The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, CA, 94707-0881, 800-695-7975, FAX: 972-226-2824, [Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org), [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org). This brochure presents marriage as a beneficial goal for teens and offers ten tips to increase chances for a healthy, happy, long-term marriage. Order by phone or from the website. Click on Bookstore, then on Media Type, then on Brochures. Other selections available for youth and parents include ***What***

*You Should Know About Living Together, 50 Things Everyone Should Know About Dating Violence, 9 Signs of a Healthy Relationship, Relationship Redux: Tips and Scripts for Talking to Your Kids About Relationships*, and more.

***The Art of Loving Well: A Character Education Curriculum for Today's Teenagers***, Boston University School of Education: **The Loving Well Project, 1993**. The main text for a literature-based relationship education curriculum, this book offers brief stories, discussion questions, writing assignments, and other activities to stimulate thinking about love, intimacy, and human sexuality. The stories help young people think about emotional experiences and, by considering the behaviors of the literary characters and the consequences of those behaviors, reflect on how they might choose to deal with similar situations in their own lives.

***The Connections Series***, by Charlene R. Kamper (Berkley, California: The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, 1996, 1999, 2004, 2010). This series consists of two complete ready-to-teach programs designed to help teens learn skills essential for healthy, fulfilling relationships. Intended for use in schools, youth groups, and youth organizations, available in both religious and non-religious language, the content is non-sexual and reflects current research in family life education. Effective teaching methods incorporate games and exercises to deepen understanding and strengthen skills. The complete kit for each course includes an Instructor's Manual, complete lesson plans for 15 one-hour sessions, transparency and handout masters, activity and game cards, and thirty student workbooks. Extra student workbooks and instructor's kits may be purchased. Free sample lessons available by request. Order from The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, California, 94707-0881, 800-695-7975, FAX: 972-226-2824, [Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org)

***Dating and Emotions*** (2010) helps thirteen- through seventeen-year-olds learn how relationships develop, how to communicate effectively, how to spot destructive patterns, how to deal with emotions, and other interpersonal skills.

***Relationships and Marriage*** (1996), for young adults aged sixteen through twenty, gives participants practical tools for understanding, managing, and making wise decisions about their relationships.

***The LoveU2 Series***: by Marline F. Pearson (Berkeley: Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, 2004), 800-695-7975, [RelationshipSkills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:RelationshipSkills@DibbleInstitute.org); [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org) or [www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org](http://www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org). These activity-based courses may be used separately or in sequence or by combining key lessons from each. Designed for use in public settings but completely compatible with Christian teachings and easily adapted by adding worship moments before, during, and/or after sessions. Sample lessons available at websites.

***LoveU2: Baby Smarts: Through the Eyes of a Child***

Ten lessons for teens help them consider what birth to young, unprepared, and unwed parents means to a child and that child's future. Challenges teens to see the consequences through the eyes and heart of a child.

***Love U2: Becoming Sex Smart***

Eleven lessons address the physical, emotional, and social consequences of sexual activity, helping teens learn to define and maintain personal boundaries and to deal with the complexities of romantic relationships.

Offers compelling reasons and skills for postponing sexual involvement.

***Love U2: Communication Smarts for All Relationships,***

Instructor's Manual contains everything needed for seven sessions for teens based on the PREP program. These sessions focus on communication and conflict management skills and teach recognition of patterns that can damage relationships with peers and family.

***Love U2: Dating Smarts: A Bit More Than Friends for Younger Teens***

Instructor's Manual for six one-hour sessions to help youth in grades 5 through 8 explore attraction, infatuation, rejection and other aspects of budding relationships. Highly engaging activities teach what to say and do when dating, as well as how to build a positive relationship.

***Love U2: Relationship Smarts Plus*** (updated 2010)

Instructor's Manual for thirteen sessions with youth grades 9 through 12, Offers practical guidance for building healthy relationships by understanding attractions, infatuation, falling in love, emotions, how to gauge the health of relationships, and breaking up. Also includes date violence prevention and assertiveness skills, communication/conflict skills, identity and future orientation, and a unique approach to pregnancy prevention that educates about the needs of children.

***Things to Know Before You Say "Go": Powerful Questions to Ask Before You Give Your Heart Away,*** Elizabeth Martindale, Psy.D. (2009, [www.couragetobloom.com](http://www.couragetobloom.com)). This attractively packaged set contains 76 question cards for individuals to ask themselves to evaluate a potential or actual dating partner. The accompanying booklet explains the importance of consciousness in dating and relationships and provides instructions for various card sort and discussion activities. Sample questions: "Can this person accept things about me I am unable or unwilling to change? 'How does this person deal with disappointment and loss?'" "Do I like how this person responds when I am hurting or upset?" "Does this person follow through on commitments and obligations?" The cards may also be used for self-evaluation and for clarification of priorities.

***What's Reel? Myths and Facts About Marriage,*** (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, 2010), 800-695-7975, Relationship[Skills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:Skills@DibbleInstitute.org), [www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org](http://www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org), [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org) . The vast majority of teens say that marriage and family are a high priority for their future, but most youthful ideas about marriage reflect not facts, but media messages, street talk, and poor role models. Using popular movies, *What's Reel?* provides seven ready-to-teach and fun lessons to help teens compare ideas about marriage with actual research, examine their own expectations, become critical observers of media, and identify helpful and problematic behaviors.

## ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES FOR RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULTS

**Active Parenting Publishers**, 1955 Vaughn Road NW, Suite 108, Kennesaw, GA 30144-7808, 800-825-0060, [www.ActiveParenting.com](http://www.ActiveParenting.com) This organization provides a variety of excellent programs for general and specific parenting needs. *Active Parenting Now* is a 6-session curriculum for parents of children ages 5 to 12. *Active Parenting Now in the Faith Community: A Biblical and Theological Guide*, by Freda Gardiner (Atlanta: Active Parenting Publishers, 2003) provides general guidelines and specific suggestions, including handouts, for adapting the above program for faith communities. Other curriculums address the specific concerns of divorced parents, stepfamilies, single parents, parents of teens, etc. In addition to the video curriculums, the catalog lists a number of books for both children and parents addressing a wide range of issues. Visit the website or call to order a catalog.

***PICK a Partner (How to Avoid Falling in Love With a Jerk)***, [www.lovethinks.com](http://www.lovethinks.com)

This program provides a plan for pacing a relationship and for exploring the key areas that foreshadow what a potential partner will be like in marriages. The website offers training information, workbooks, and resources for helping singles and singles again to build healthy relationships by using both their heads and their hearts.

**The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education**, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, CA, 94707-0881, 800-695-7975, [Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org), [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org). “The Dibble Institute equips young people with the skills and knowledge they need to develop healthy romantic relationships now and in the future. We will be successful when more children are nurtured and protected by their own parents in a healthy marriage and when more young people make healthy life choices.” At the website you will find curriculum resources and training opportunities for workers with youth. Order helpful brochures for teens. Sign up for monthly e-newsletters to keep abreast of new research and resources. You will also find links to [www.stayteen.org](http://www.stayteen.org), which provides teens with information about relationships and sex in an attractive and fun format, including interactive quizzes and games.

**The National Center for Biblical Parenting**, [www.biblicalparenting.org](http://www.biblicalparenting.org), 75 Hopatcong Drive, Lawrenceville, NJ 08638-4136, 609-77-8002, 800-771-8334, [parent@biblicalparenting.org](mailto:parent@biblicalparenting.org) Sign up at the website for free email parenting tips (in English or Spanish) and explore excellent resources such as *Home Improvement: The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids*; *Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Kids*; and *Parenting is Heart Work* (Training Manual and audio CDs).

### III. RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION MINISTRIES

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#### READING LIST FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION MINISTRIES

***All-in-One Marriage Prep: 75 Experts Share Tips and Wisdom to Help You Get Ready Now***, Susanne M. Alexander (Naples, FL: Barringer, 2010). This comprehensive collection of short articles by various authors is grouped by topic and covers a wide-range of issues for courting, engaged, and newly-wed couples to consider and discuss. Contributors include Claudia and David Arp, John Van Epp, Mark Gungor, Scott Haltzman, Mike McManus, and others. [Marriage Transformation L.L.C., 800-501-6682, [www.allinonemarriageprep.com](http://www.allinonemarriageprep.com)]

***Before You Say “I Do,”*** by H. Norman Wright and Wes Roberts (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House, 1997). This workbook provides interactive surveys, thoughtful questions, and real-life examples to help couples discover areas of harmony and areas of potential discord. Couples can deepen their relationship by exploring ways to adjust to their differences, clarify role expectations, develop spiritual intimacy, establish a positive sexual relationship, handle finances, and build healthy relationships with in-laws.

***Before You Remarry***, by H. Norman Wright (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House , 1999). This workbook, for those couples in which one or both have been previously married, promotes interaction on the major issues of marriage, including making sure they are ready to marry again. Couples discover how to use positive experiences from previous marriages and how to overcome the negative, along with how to handle common problems related to previous and new in-laws, blended families, financial concerns, and sexual issues.

***Celebrating Our Differences: Living Two Faiths in One Marriage***, by Mary Helene Rosenbaum and Stanley Ned Rosenbaum (Boston, KY: Ragged Edge Press and Black Bear Productions, Inc., 1992). The authors offer practical advice and resources for interfaith couples and for pastors and rabbis working with them, clearly pointing out the various pitfalls that can take such couples by surprise, so that couples can foresee and discuss potential problems before they arise.

***Growing in Remarriage: Seven Keys to a Successful Second Marriage***, by Jim Smoke (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming H. Revell, 1990). This book emphasizes that successful divorce recovery involves taking responsibility for yourself, not finding someone else to assume that for you. Remarriage is not a rescue! Persons entering second marriages need to take care of unresolved business in regard to emotional, financial, vocational, and relational needs. The author recommends allowing two or three years after a divorce to overcome feelings of rejection and put one’s self back together in a positive way.

***Mixed Matches: How to Create successful Interracial, Interethnic, and Interfaith Relationships***, by Joel Crohn, Ph.D. (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1995). The author, drawing on years of counseling experience, shows couples in cross-cultural relationships how to approach each other compassionately and negotiate solutions to their cultural and religious differences. This book also offers practical advice on how couples can confront prejudice, deal with in-laws, and help their children develop a sense of identity in a bicultural family.

***Preparing to Marry Again***, by Dick Dunn (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1999). The author addresses issues related to divorce and remarriage from a faith perspective and describes what must be done before the wedding and after, when either one or both have been married before, for a marriage to succeed. Separate chapters discuss “Being Ready,” “Practical Considerations,” “When There are Children,” and “The Wedding: Before and After.” The Leader’s Guide outlines five group sessions.

***The Interfaith Family Guidebook: Practical Advice for Jewish and Christian Partners***, by Joan C. Hawxhurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Dovetail Publishing, 1988). This book is designed to help interfaith couples respect and appreciate each other’s religious heritage and successfully resolve the many issues they will face in their marriage, such as planning their wedding, raising their children, and celebrating holidays.

***The Marriage Mentor Manual: How You Can Help the Newlywed Couple Stay Married***, by Dr. Les Parrott III and Dr. Leslie Parrott (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995). (1-800-727-3480) This 76-page book contains general information about mentoring and specific suggestions for three meetings with newlywed couples (at approximately three, seven, and twelve months after the wedding). Suggestions are given for mentoring between meetings, as well, and chapters are devoted to what to do when professional help appears needed and to the beneficial effects of mentoring for the mentoring couple themselves. The text also includes report forms to be submitted to a marriage mentoring coordinator.

***Things I Wish I’d Known Before We Got Married***, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2010). Practical wisdom and tips, dispelling the myths, illusions, and expectations that can undermine happiness in marriage. This would be an excellent gift for engaged or newlywed couples.

## **CURRICULUM MATERIALS AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION MINISTRIES**

***Antes de que digas, Si, acepto*** (“*Before You Say, “I Do”*”) and ***Antes de que ellos digan, “Si, acepto,”*** (“*Before They Say “I Do”*”), by James and Doris Long (Los Reyes la Paz, Edo. de Mexico: Editorial Ideogramma, 1994), 4739 East Pawnee Circle, Phoenix, AZ 85044-2010 Phone: 480-598-9474, [jamesblong@aol.com](mailto:jamesblong@aol.com) . The couple workbooks are based on Wright’s *Before You Say, “I Do,”* described on above, but with many adaptations and additional original material, including a section on finances. The counselors’ book provides guidelines and additional material for use with the couples using the workbook. Order directly from the authors, above.

***Building a Lifelong Marriage: Workbook for Couples***, by Rudy and Faith Buettner (Bethesda, MD: Marriage Savers, Inc., 1999). This workbook provides exercises for mentor couples to use in marriage preparation with engaged couples, along with the FOCCUS premarital inventory. Topics include Family Heritage, Optional Premarital Sexual Covenant, Managing Your Money, communication, etc. Designed for use with the Mentor's Guide to FOCCUS, reviewed below, this workbook may be purchased from Marriage Savers, Inc., 301-469-5873 or email [Harriet@marriagesavers.com](mailto:Harriet@marriagesavers.com) .

***Building Lasting Relationships: A Guidebook That Helps Individuals get in Touch With What Makes Relationships Last***, by Britton Wood, Ph.D. and Bobbye Wood, Ph.D (Fort Worth, TX: Britton Wood and Associates, 1991). Six interactive sessions, linked to Scripture, explore the following topics: barriers to lasting relationships; communication; what men and women want from each other; how conflict relates to closeness; anger; and ways to turn barriers into bridges. May be used with singles or couples.

***Christian Weddings: Resources to Make Your Ceremony Unique***, by Andy Langford (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995). Couples can personalize their wedding ceremony by selecting different liturgical elements from those offered in this book, representing more than twenty different denominational traditions around the world.

***Growing Love in Christian Marriage Couple's Edition***, by Richard and Joan Hunt (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001). For use by couples for marriage preparation, pre-wedding counseling, and marriage counseling, with a pastor, mentor couple, or independently. *The Couple's Edition* provides information, suggestions, discussion exercises, Scripture, and excerpts from the Service of Christian Marriage. Based on I Corinthians 13, *The Couple's Edition* is organized around four vital marriage themes: "Faith Through Covenantal Commitment" (what each person brings to their marriage); "Hope as Vision for Your Journey" (goals, transitions, challenges and opportunities for growth); "Love Through Daily Caring Relationships" (the couple, their families, and their work); "Power Through Shared Communication" (basic skills for communication in marriage). Sixty "Explore" guides and a "Marriage Lifestyle Questionnaire" help identify strengths and areas for growth. Additional helps for using *The Couple's edition* are provided in the companion piece, the ***Growing Love in Christian Marriage Pastor's Manual***, described below.

***Growing Love in Christian Marriage Pastor's Manual, Revised***, by Jane P. and S. Clifton Ives (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001). The Pastor's Manual is a marriage preparation and comprehensive marriage and family ministry resource for pastors and other church leaders. In addition to guidelines for using the *Growing Love in Christian Marriage Couple's Edition* and for pre-marital counseling, the Pastor's Manual includes information for establishing a mentor couple ministry, for working with couples in groups, and for providing relationship education for all ages and stages of family life. An annotated list of resources includes organizations, programs, and curriculum materials that may be incorporated into local church and community ministries. At [www.marriagelovepower.net](http://www.marriagelovepower.net) an expanded version of this resource list is provided, along with a Directory of Methodist Marriage and Family Ministry leaders and consultants, a Training Model for the use of *Growing Love in Christian Marriage*, and other helps.

***Interfaith Wedding Ceremonies: Samples and Sources***, selected and with an introduction by Joan C. Hawxhurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Dovetail Publishing, 1966). The author discusses issues interfaith couples should consider when planning their wedding, then offers sample ceremonies, excerpts from other ceremonies, and a variety of helpful resources.

***Marriage Mentoring: Twelve Conversations***, by Dr. Edward A. Gray, LMFT (2005). Training and discussion guides for twelve mentoring sessions with engaged couples or newlyweds. These sessions are based on sharing of personal stories and experiences around twelve specific topics in order to build a supportive relationship and help couples approach marriage with realistic expectations and practical information. [For more information or to purchase, 901-681-9200, [egray@harding.edu](mailto:egray@harding.edu), [www.12conversations.com](http://www.12conversations.com)].

***Mentoring Engaged and Newlywed Couples: Building Marriages That Love for a Lifetime Curriculum Kit***, by Drs. Les III and Leslie Parrott (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997). (1-800-727-3480). This kit includes a Leader's Guide, a Participant's Guide, a copy of *Questions Couples Ask: Answers to the Top 100 Marital Questions*, and a video with brief segments to be shown during each of five training sessions. The tape also includes introductory segments which may be used to explain the program and/or to recruit mentor couples. The Leader's Guide spells out details for these five sessions, which include "warm-up" activities, Bible study, teaching content, and practice exercises. These sessions, approximately an hour each, may be scheduled over time or combined for a one-day training event. The Leader's Guide also offers suggestions for organizing a mentoring program and for selecting and screening marriage mentors.

***Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts: A Marriage Curriculum for Engaged, About-to-be Engaged, and the Newly Married***, by Dr. Les Parrott III, Dr. Leslie Parrott and Sheryl Baar Moon (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995). (1-800-727-3480). This kit includes a Leader's Guide, *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts* (a book for newlywed couples), a Workbook for Women, a Workbook for Men, a copy of *The Marriage Mentor Manual: How You Can Help the Newlywed Couple Stay Married*, and two video tapes with eight 15 to 25-minute segments for use in each of eight group sessions. You will need to purchase copies of the book for each couple, workbooks for each individual, and a *Marriage Mentor Manual* for each mentor couple).

***The First Dance: Managing the People Stress of Wedding Planning***, by William J. Doherty, Ph.D. This excellent program addresses both the couple and extended family dynamics of wedding planning and offers guidance for addressing issues in ways that lead to healthy relationships and prevent future problems. The Individual DVD, which can be viewed by couples and parents on their own in about two hours, and a group version with exercises and discussion questions may be purchased at [www.TheFirstDance.com](http://www.TheFirstDance.com).

***"The Marriage Preparation Course,"*** [www.themarriagecourseusa.org/](http://www.themarriagecourseusa.org/) Using a format similar to the Alpha series, churches offer couples seven candlelit dinners, with a lively, often humorous video presentation at each, time to talk privately as a couple, and opportunity to practice new

strategies to deepen their relationship. Alpha also offers “The Marriage Course,” “The Parenting Children Course,” and “The Parenting Teenagers Course.”

## PREMARITAL INVENTORIES

***FOCCUS: Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, and Study***, (Omaha, Nebraska: FOCCUS Inc., 1997). Family Life Office, 3214 North 60<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68104 (402-551-9003), [jatkins@omahaflo.creighton.edu](mailto:jatkins@omahaflo.creighton.edu), [www.foccusinc.com](http://www.foccusinc.com). This inventory provides individualized couple feedback on where each partner stands in regard to topics important to marriage. It is not a predictor of marital success or failure, but a tool to help couples name and work through issues before marriage. The inventory can be administered to an individual couple or to groups. The act of responding to the questions raises issues for the couple to discuss, even before it is scored. Forms are submitted for scoring, with a small fee. A facilitator uses the report analyzing the couple’s responses to help them reflect on the following topics: Life-Style Expectations, Friends and Interests, Personality Match, Personal Issues, Communication, Problem-Solving, Religion and Values, Parenting Issues, Extended Family Issues, Sexuality Issues, Financial Issues, Readiness Issues, Marriage Covenant, Key Problem Indicators, Family of Origin. Additional questions are available for the following topics, where appropriate: Dual Careers, Interfaith Marriages, Second Marriages, and Cohabiting Couples. FOCCUS is available in several languages, including Braille, and four different versions for Catholic, Christian non-denominational, non-denominational, and learning-disabled persons. Training is strongly recommended.

***Growing Love in Christian Marriage Couple’s Edition: Marriage Lifestyle Questionnaire***, by Richard and Joan Hunt (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2000. Instructions for administering and interpreting the Inventory are provided in the ***GLCM Pastor’s Manual*** by Cliff and Jane Ives, same publisher.

***Money Habitudes: Target Your Habits and Attitudes About Money***, created by Syble Solomon, (LifeWise, 2006, [www.moneyhabitudes.com](http://www.moneyhabitudes.com), 888-833-4331). This set of cards may be used by couples or as part of a group activity to help persons discern the values and attitudes that guide their thoughts and actions in regard to saving, spending, and dealing with debt and money in general. Following a card sorting activity, participants learn about the challenges and advantages of each financial type (Spontaneous, Status, Giving, Security, Carefree, and/or Planning) and ways to achieve a healthy balance. Since differences in attitudes toward and use of money often cause conflict in marriage, couples benefit by increased understanding of themselves and each other and by learning to discuss their differences and to make mutually agreeable decisions that take those differences into consideration. Available in Spanish.

***Premarriage Awareness Inventory***, by Peter L. Velandar (St. Paul, MN: Logos Productions Inc., 1993). Recognizing that couples coming to be married are increasing likely to be cohabiting or remarrying, the author developed this resource to enable pastors to address non-judgmentally the impact of these factors on a relationship. Available in three versions (First Time, Remarriage, and Cohabitation), the *Counseling Packet* includes multiple-choice surveys for each participant

and a Profile Copy for compiling the individual responses on a single form for comparison and discussion. The *Administrator's Portfolio* provides clear information about administering, evaluating, and using the inventory in pre-marital counseling with couples. *A Good Beginning* is an optional 46-page resource for couples to read on their own. Reading assignments are suggested in the *Administrator's Portfolio*, which outlines four counseling sessions. [Contact Logos Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 240, South St. Paul, MN 55075-0240, 800-328-0200, or visit [www.logosproductions.com](http://www.logosproductions.com)].

**PREPARE/ENRICH** (Minneapolis, MN: Life Innovations, Inc., 1996) This program, now in use by over 50,000 clergy and counselors, offers specific relationship inventories for premarital use (PREPARE), for use with premarital couples who already have children (PREPARE-MC), for use with couples who have been married for a while (ENRICH), and for use with couples over fifty years old (MATE). The goals of the program are to help couples explore their relationship strengths and areas in which they need to grow, while learning communication and conflict-management skills. Couples also receive guidance in considering influences from their families-of-origin; developing a financial plan and budget; and setting personal, couple, and family goals. After submitting the couple's completed inventories, the counselor or clergy person receives back a print-out analyzing their strengths and growth areas to discuss, along with the *Building a Strong Marriage Workbook*. The training, which is required, provides a clear process for feedback sessions with the couple. Available in several languages. [Contact Life Innovations, Inc., P.O. Box 190, Minneapolis, MN 55440-0190, 800-331-1661, [cs@lifeinnovations.com](mailto:cs@lifeinnovations.com), or visit [www.lifeinnovations.com](http://www.lifeinnovations.com) to order sample copies of computerized results, payment vouchers, question booklets, answer sheets and other related material or to inquire regarding training.]

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS

**Engaged Encounter United Methodist**, [www.encounter.org](http://www.encounter.org) This organization offers weekend experiences for engaged couples, providing an opportunity for private reflection and discussion of their dreams, ambitions, and attitudes. To find dates and locations for Engaged Encounter - United Methodist events, visit the website or call 866-633-3862.

**Rodgers Christian Counseling**, 1206 Jules Ct., Charlotte, NC 28226, 704-364-9176, FAX (704) 366-0729, [www.soulhealinglove.com](http://www.soulhealinglove.com). This center presents a Soul Healers Workshop and publishes resources for engaged couples, married couples wishing to grow deeper in love, couples in crisis, and singles seeking a soul mate. Find events and resources at the website.

#### IV. RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT MINISTRIES

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#### MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT READING LIST (\* study guide)

***10 Great Dates to Energize Your Marriage*** (formerly "... Revitalize Your Marriage,") by Claudia and David Arp, MSW (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.) Spark romance with memory-making dates built on key, marriage-enriching themes. The book includes his and her copies of tear-out dating guides. Enjoy your dates alone as a couple or use this resource as a marriage enrichment program for your church or community. See *10 Great Dates* curriculum kit, described below.

***Adult Children of Divorced Parents: Making Your Marriage Work***, by Beverly and Tom Rodgers, (San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 2002). Adult children of divorced parents can overcome the negative effects of that experience and improve the odds of marital success by understanding their wounds, breaking out of reactivity patterns, and learning how to help each other heal. The authors write out of their own experience as well as that of couples with whom they have worked, offering Scripture-based insights and exercises.

***A Joyful Meeting: Sexuality in Marriage***, by Drs. Mike and Joyce Grace (St.Paul, Minnesota: International Marriage Encounter, 1980). The authors discuss marital sexuality both from a spiritual viewpoint and with humor. They emphasize the importance of mature love for sexual harmony and share practical advice for overcoming the conflicts that are likely to arise because of sexual differences.

***A Lasting Promise: A Christian Guide to Fighting for Your Marriage***, by Scott Stanley, Daniel Trathen, Savanna McCain, and Milt Bryan,. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998. The relationship principles of PREP (Prevention and Enhancement Program), which are also presented in *Fighting for Your Marriage*, are linked to Scripture in this book. Based on solid research, this work shows couples how they can make their marriages stronger and happier.

***And They Were Not Ashamed: Strengthening Marriage through Sexual Fulfillment***, by Laura M. Brotherson (Boise, Idaho: Inspire Book, 2004). "As three books in one, this marriage book, sex book and parenting book: Shines light and truth on the intimate marital relationship, restoring sex to its proper position as ordained of God; Effectively addresses, with self-help solutions, the emotional, spiritual and physical intimacy issues that plague so many marriages; Provides principles and practices to help parents teach and better prepare their children for intimacy and lasting fulfillment in marriage." (back cover)

***\*Anger: Handling a Powerful Emotion in a Healthy Way***, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2007). The author states his belief that God designed human anger to motivate us to take action against injustice or wrongdoing. However, we often cause harm to others and ourselves by reacting without thinking through what has happened and how best to address our grievances – real or perceived. He offers a process for owning our anger and processing the situation in order to choose constructive, not destructive action. A study guide at the end provides suggestions for thirteen sessions.

***Becoming Parents: Exploring the Bonds Between Mothers, Fathers, and Their Infants***, by Judith A. Feeney, Lydia Hohaus, Patricia Noller, and Richard P. Alexander (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001). The authors explore issues and challenges that arise as couples transition to parenthood, based on a study they conducted with a variety of couples. They discuss attachment theory and dynamics, division of household tasks, and other matters that influence adjustment to parenthood.

***Close Companions: The Marriage Enrichment Handbook***, by David R. Mace (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1982) The author describes the new companionship model for marriage brought about by changes in our society; the skills couples need in order to make this model work; and strategies for providing marriage preparation, enrichment, and therapy. [purchase at [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org)]

***Couples and the Art of Playing: Three Easy and Enjoyable Ways to Nurture and Heal Relationships***, by Keith Hackett (Lincoln, Nebraska: iUniverse, Inc., 2003). The author, a United Methodist pastor and Marriage and Family Therapist, encourages couples to develop playful, creative habits to enrich and strengthen their marriages.

***C Through Marriage***, by Jim Hughes (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing, LLC, 2009). The author shares a collection of essays exploring topics relevant to marriage, weaving together scripture, practical advice, and discussion questions for use by individuals and couples who want to strengthen and find more joy in their relationships.

***Discovering Your Couple Sexual Style***, by Barry W. McCarthy and Emily McCarthy (New York: Routledge, 2009). The authors provide information, a personal assessment tool, exercises, and practical suggestions for couples to energize their relationship by developing their own unique erotic style. By cultivating positive and realistic expectations, understanding the “dimensions of touch,” and learning to communicate clearly with each other, couples can build on the romantic love that drew them together and create an enduring sexual bond.

***Do-It-Yourself Marriage Enrichment***, by Warren and Mary Ebinger (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998). The authors provide a chance for couples to enrich their marriages “on their own time, on their own terms, and on their own turf.” Issues include communication, priorities, short-and-long term goals, keeping the spark alive, children, finances, and more. The text includes step-by-step instructions, practical exercises, and devotional materials.

***Empowering Couples: Building on Your Strengths***, by David H. Olson and Amy K. Olson (Minneapolis, MN: Life Innovations, Inc., 2000). Each chapter begins with a quiz about a

particular relationship topic to help couples or individuals assess their strengths and needs for growth in that area. Clarifying information is followed by couple exercises to help turn “stumbling blocks into stepping stones” (p. ix). Chapter topics include “Communication,” “Conflict Resolution,” “Role Relationship,” “Managing Finances,” “Sexual Relationship,” “Children and Parenting,” “Personal, Couple, and Family Goals.”

***Fighting for Your Marriage***, by Howard Markman, Scott Stanley, and Susan L. Blumberg (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994). This book teaches effective skills for handling conflict and disagreements, explains the attitudes and behaviors that promote a healthy relationship, and shows couples how to enhance and protect their love. Straightforward and easy-to-understand content includes helpful exercises and suggestions for practice. The same information is linked to Scripture and expressed with religious language in *A Lasting Promise: A Christian Guide to Fighting for Your Marriage*, reviewed above.

***For Better and Better: Building a Healthy Marriage for a Lifetime***, by Jeanette C. Lauer and Robert H. Lauer, Nashville: Dimensions for Living, 1995). The authors describe a healthy marriage based on a shared faith in Christ and nine relationship resources you can cultivate to enjoy a lasting, fulfilling marriage. Each chapter contains “checkup questions” and “prescription plans.” Exercises can be used by couples privately or in groups.

***Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples***, by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1988). This classic work describes the unconscious needs which lead us to choose our mates and how learned behaviors from childhood lead to conflict; shows how to learn positive ways to meet those needs; and outlines a ten-week course in relationship therapy couples can do on their own.

***His Needs, Her Needs: Building An Affair-Proof Marriage***, by Willard F. Harley, Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming H. Revell, 1994). Based on the simple premise that husbands and wives can find lifelong happiness in marriage by committing themselves to meet each other’s needs, this book offers information and exercises to help couples deepen their understanding of each other and intentionally behave in ways that will nourish the relationship. The author explains that with every encounter we affect each other positively or negatively, making deposits in or withdrawals from each other’s “Love Bank.” The author also clarifies the dynamics that may make spouses vulnerable to the temptation of an affair and offers strategies for healing relationships damaged by infidelity.

***Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love***, by Sue Johnson (New York: Little, Brown, & Company, 2008). This easy to understand and practical guide for couples stresses the importance of emotional attachment. The seven transforming conversations, which encourage emotional responsiveness vital to healthy, lasting marriages, help couples recognize destructive dialogue patterns, find their emotional “raw spots,” revisit rocky moments, communicate needs, connect and engage with each other, forgive and repair injuries, bond through sex and touch, and keep their love alive.

***Hot Monogamy: Essential Steps to More Passionate, Intimate Lovemaking***, by Dr.

Patricia Love and Jo Robinson (New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1994). The author helps couples understand the dynamics of sexual attraction and learn how to talk about sex, resolve differences in desire, enjoy life-long romance, and deepen intimacy.

***How One of You Can Bring the Two of You Together: Breakthrough Strategies to Resolve Your Conflicts and Reignite Your Love***, by Susan Page (NY: Broadway Books, 1997). The author's insights and suggestions will help both those who feel stuck and frustrated with their relationships and those who, although happy and stable, feel some disillusionment or lack of connection. Page presents a series of "experiments" one person can use, based on 8 specific principles: 1) Act on your own. 2) Do the opposite of what you have been doing. 3) Reframe a power struggle. 4) Enlist your partner's help. 5) Express empathy for your partner's position. 6) Gracefully accept what you can't change. 7) Ask for what you want. 8) Men: tune in; Women: stop coaching. Detailed analysis and examples make this approach clearly understandable.

***Keeping the Love You Find: A Personal Guide***, by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. (New York: Atria Books, 1992). The author provides information and exercises to help readers deepen their understanding of who they are and what they long for in their relationships and then to learn the skills to make behavior changes needed in order to achieve an intentional, "conscious" relationship.

***Intended for Pleasure***, by Ed Wheat, M.D., and Gaye Wheat (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming H. Revell, 2010). The authors provide comprehensive and clear information about many aspects of sex and sexuality from a Christian perspective: understanding the basics, techniques of lovemaking, solutions to common problems, and suggestions for specific situations such as pregnancy and aging.

***Love and Anger in Marriage***, by David Mace (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982). Couples can learn to accept anger as a normal function of a relationship, to communicate without attacking each other, and to work together for positive solutions to whatever produces the anger in the first place. [Available at [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org)]

***Love and Intimacy: Five Ways to Get Together and Stay Together***, by Joseph W. Walker III (Nashville: Abingdon, 2010). Bishop Walker describes five strategies for giving and receiving love: "Be Ready for a Holy Hookup," "Meet the Standard for Women" and "Meet the Standard for Men," "Be Real," "Be on the Same Team," and "Live to the Glory of God." [Available through Cokesbury, 800-672-1789]

***Love and Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs***, by Emerson Eggerichs, (Colorado Springs: Integrity Publishers, 2004). Writing from a Christian perspective and frequently quoting Scripture, the author makes a clear case for the importance of honoring the primary needs of women and men. He identifies the "Crazy Cycle" (she reacts to a perceived lack of love and he reacts to a perceived lack of respect) and recommends clear steps to move toward closeness and a mutually satisfying relationship.

***Love for All Seasons: Eight Ways to Nurture Intimacy***, by John Trent, Ph.D. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). The author uses the Song of Songs as a framework for describing eight specific ways couples can deepen their emotional and spiritual bond. A study guide provides suggestions for self-assessment and discussion.

***Love is Never Enough***, by Aaron T. Beck, M.D. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1988). The author explores how couples can avoid the misunderstandings and inaccurate interpretations of each other's behavior that lead to marital conflict. This book explains how "partners can learn to be more reasonable with each other by adopting a more humble, tentative attitude about the accuracy of their mind reading, and its resulting negative conclusions; by checking out the accuracy of their mind reading; and by considering alternative explanations for what a partner does." (p. 17)

***Love, Marriage, and Money: Understanding and Achieving Financial Compatibility Before-and After-You Say "I Do,"*** by Gail Liberman and Alan Lavine (Chicago: Dearborn Financial Publishing, Inc., 1998). The authors blend psychological, legal, and financial information into a helpful resource for couples. Topics include financial personalities, how to compromise, renting or purchasing a home, planning for children, preparing for retirement, and estate planning.

***Making Love Last a Lifetime: Biblical Perspectives on Love, Marriage and Sex***, by Adam Hamilton (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004) Based on learnings from secular research, his own experiences as a counselor, surveys, and interviews, this book provides biblical perspectives on male/female differences, sexual intimacy, the role of faith in marriage, attitudes and behaviors that strengthen marriages, and ways to rekindle love in difficult times. Each chapter contains exercises for couple or group use.

***Passages of Marriage***, by Dr. Frank and Mary Alice Minirth, Dr. Brian and Dr. Deborah Newman, and Dr. Robert and Susan Hemfelt (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1991). These authors discuss five stages of marriage: Young Love, Realistic Love, Comfortable Love, Renewing Love, and Transcendent Love. The tasks of each stage are clearly described, with suggestions and self-assessment exercises to help couples make the most of each passage.

***Pure Gold: Encouraging Character Qualities in Marriage***, by Susanne M. Alexander, with Craig A. Farnsworth and John S. Miller (Cleveland, OH: Marriage Transformation LLC, 2005). The middle section of this book presents 56 positive character traits, listed alphabetically from *acceptance* and *assertiveness* to *wisdom*, each of which is discussed in a two-page format for deepened understanding, self-assessment, and goal setting. The first section of the book addresses issues related to character development and transformation, and the third section provides exercises for couple use. Couples could use this material for self-study; or a group, such as a Sunday School class, could use it for weekly lessons. [216-383-9943, 800-501-6682, [staff@marriagetransformation.com](mailto:staff@marriagetransformation.com), [www.marriagetransformation.com](http://www.marriagetransformation.com)]

***Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?*** by Gary Thomas (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000). The author invites readers to view marriage as a spiritual discipline through which persons can come to know God more fully and intimately. Marriage teaches us to love and to respect others, exposes

our sin, and encourages us to develop perseverance, forgiveness, and the ability to embrace differences.

***Supercouple Syndrome: How Overworked Couples Can Beat Stress Together***, by Wayne M. Sotile and Mary O. Sotile, M.A. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998). The authors challenge the myths and behavior patterns that cause stress and burnout and show busy couples how to “use their relationships as havens from outside demands, take time out to have fun, and nurture their partners,” (page x)

***Surrendering to Marriage: Husbands, Wives, and Other Imperfections***, by Iris Krasnow (New York: Hyperion, 2001). The author cuts through the mythology and unrealistic expectations surrounding marriage to show readers that: “The best we can do for our children, and for ourselves, is to make our own marriages go the distance, weathering waves of sadness, even rage, because we know that our grit and perseverance are going to pay off hugely in the end.” She shares the testimony of senior citizens who say “they are more in love than ever with the partner they married a half-century ago. It is not a love of lust and infatuation. It is the deepest of love, built over time, through joy and tragedy.” (pages 5, 6)

***Sustaining Love: Healing and Growth in the Passages of Marriage***, by David Augsberger (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1988). The author outlines four stages of marriage: The Dream, The Disillusionment, The Discovery, and The Depth, describing how to successfully negotiate these challenging transitions. Especially dangerous, of course, is the Disillusionment Stage, when the excitement of new love wears off and couples face who they really are and how they really relate. Not only is this stage inevitable, but it can also provide a doorway to deeper discovery and depth in the relationship.

***Talking and Listening Together: Couple Communication I***, by Sherod Miller, Ph.D., Phyllis A. Miller, Ph.D., Elam W. Nunnally, Ph.D., and Daniel B. Wackman, Ph.D. (Littleton, Colorado: Interpersonal Communication Programs, Inc., 1991). [www.couplecommunication.com](http://www.couplecommunication.com) This text/workbook, which accompanies the Couple Communication I program, deals with self-awareness, caring about your partner, resolving conflicts, and choosing communication styles for talking and listening.

***The Case For Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially***, by Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher (New York: Doubleday, 2000). Research reveals that marriage brings greater happiness, health, earnings, sexual satisfaction, and many other positive benefits to couples who commit to it, as well as to their children. The authors explode many negative myths about marriage, show how marriage transforms individuals and relationships, and document solid reasons for supporting marriage-strengthening initiatives.

***The Dance of Anger: A Woman’s Guide to Changing the Patterns of Intimate Relationships*** by Harriet Goldhor Lerner, Ph.D. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985). “Close relationships are akin to circular dances, in which the behavior of each partner provokes and maintains the behavior of the other.” (p. 12) This book helps the reader clarify her feelings, learn to communicate them effectively, and interrupt negative patterns in relationships, not only with her husband, but also with children, parents, and others.

***The Essential Humility of Marriage: Honoring the Third Identity in Couple Therapy***, by Terry D. Hargrave, Ph.D. (Phoenix, AZ: Zeig, Tucker, & Theisen, Inc., 2000). The author provides therapy guidelines, strategies, and exercises for helping couples strengthen the vital “us” relationship that is at the heart of a marriage.

***The Five Languages of Apology***, by Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2006). The author identifies five languages of apology: Expressing Regret, Accepting Responsibility, Making Restitution, Genuinely Repenting, and Requesting Forgiveness. By understanding and using the Apology Language or Languages that are most important to each other, couples can more effectively repair and heal their relationship.

***The Five Love Languages: The Secret to Love That Lasts***, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2010). The author identifies five languages of love: Quality Time, Words of Affirmation, Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. By learning to speak and understand these unique languages of love, persons can more effectively communicate love and feel more truly loved as well.

***The Five Secrets of Marriage from the Heart***, by Jack Rosenblum and Corinne Dugas (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing, LLC, 2006) Through the engaging story of a couple whose marriage is in crisis, the authors explain and illustrate five keys to strengthening and/or healing a relationship. This easy-to-read, well-grounded book would be an excellent gift for couples or a resource for a study group.

***The Gift of Sex: A Christian Guide to Sexual Fulfillment***, by Clifford and Joyce Penner (Waco, Texas: Word, Inc., 2003). The book offers detailed information on the physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of sexual relationships. It provides a Biblical perspective, advice for moving past sexual barriers and resolving difficulties, and Sexual Enhancement Exercises for increasing awareness and pleasure.

***The Heart of Commitment: Compelling Research that Reveals the Secrets of a Lifelong, Intimate Marriage***, by Scott Stanley, Ph.D. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998). Research shows that couples dedicated to each other and to their relationship are happier and enjoy a deeper relationship with each other. The author of this Scripturally-based book explores ways to preserve or restore commitment in a marriage.

***The Intimate Enemy: How to Fight Fair in Love and Marriage***, by George R. Back and Peter Wyden (New York: Avon Books, 1968). In this insightful classic, the authors describe how to avoid or stop “gunnysacking,” the practice of holding on to grievances instead of expressing them, which sabotages intimacy and creates distance in relationships.

***The Love Dare*** by Stephen Kendrick and Alan Kendrick (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008). Featured in the movie *Fireproof*, this book offers forty days of faith-based relationship information and challenges to be used by a spouse hoping to improve his or her marriage.

***The Power of Commitment: A Guide to Active, Lifelong Love***, by Scott M. Stanley (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass 2005). The author offers practical and spiritual guidance to help couples understand commitment, handle everyday pressures, deal with the pain of disappointment and unfulfilled hopes, overcome extramarital attractions, and transform “me versus you” to “we” thinking in order to experience the joy of lifelong devotion and loyalty.

***The Second Half of Marriage: Facing the Eight Challenges of the Empty Nest Years***, by Claudia and David Arp, MSW (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996). When children leave home, it’s time for couples to renew their love and refocus on their marriages. The second half of marriage can be a time of incredible fulfillment. No matter what challenges a couple previously faced, they can surmount them and turn this phase of their relationship into a second honeymoon!

***The Secrets of Happily Married Men: Eight Ways to Win Your Wife’s Heart Forever***, by Scott Haltzman, M.D. with Theresa Foy Digeronimo (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006). The author shows men how to use their natural masculine talents to enhance their marriages. The determination to do a job and to do it right (which involves the abilities to focus, prioritize, develop strategies, problem-solve, pay attention to details, negotiate and compromise, resolve conflict, work through step-by-step processes, and achieve goals) can be used to build a strong, healthy, and lasting marriage.

***The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work***, by John M. Gottman, Ph.D. and Nan Silver. (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1999). The authors offer information, exercises, and strategies for nurturing the deep friendship essential to strong, happy marriages.

***The Surprising Purpose of Anger. Beyond Anger Management: Finding the Gift***, by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D (Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 2005. Rosenberg, developer of the Nonviolent Communication program ([www.nonviolentcommunication.com](http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com) ), challenges us to think of anger as a gift, pointing us to unmet needs, but subverted by the judgments we make about others. He describes how to create strategies focused on meeting needs and to find solutions instead of just reacting.

***The Surprising Way to a Stronger Marriage: How the Power of One Changes Everything***, by Michael and Amy Smalley (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2010). The authors describe how one spouse, strengthened by God and Biblical principles, can bring about positive change and growth in a marriage. The authors emphasize the importance of taking responsibility for your own emotions and reactions, focusing on what you want to have happen, and repairing hurts by asking your spouse what he/she needs in order to heal. A Study Guide in the back of the book provides scripture and discussion questions for each of the eighteen chapters.

***Things I Wish I’d Known Before We Got Married***, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2010). The author’s practical wisdom and tips dispel the myths, illusions, and expectations that can undermine happiness in marriage. This would be an excellent gift for engaged or newly-wed couples.

***You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation***, by Deborah Tannen, Ph.D. (New York, Ballentine Books, 1990). The author analyzes how boys and girls develop different perspectives and communication styles because of differences in how they are raised. By trying to see things from the other's perspective, rather than reacting negatively, men and women can prevent these differences from undermining their relationships.

***What Children Learn from Their Parents' Marriage***, by Judith P. Siegel, Ph.D., C.S.W. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000). Because the marriage relationship serves as the child's "blueprint for intimacy," couples need to discover how they have been impacted by the relationship of their parents and what they, in turn, are communicating to their children. Each chapter of this book discusses and gives clear examples of an aspect of healthy intimacy ("Establishing the Priority of the Marriage," "Teaching the Value of Interdependence," "Instilling the Importance of Mutual Respect," "Maintaining Trust in Word and Deed," "Negotiating Differences Constructively," "Understanding the Long-Term Effects of Conflict," "Emphasizing the Positives," and "Building a Better Marriage." Questions at the end of each chapter encourage couples to reflect on their own relationships and to move toward healthier patterns both for their own happiness and for that of their children. This would be an excellent resource for a nine-week group study for young parents or a helpful gift for individuals or couples.

***What Your Mother Couldn't Tell You and Your Father Didn't Know: Advanced Relationship Skills for Better Communication and Lasting Intimacy***, by John Gray, Ph.D. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1994). The author shows how men and women, by understanding differences in male and female development, can relate more effectively to each other and build a passionate, enduring relationship.

***Why Marriages Succeed or Fail: What You Can Learn from the Breakthrough Research to Make Your Marriage Last***, by John Gottman, Ph.D. with Nan Silver (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994). The author presents four strategies for breaking cycles of negativity and maintaining a lasting, healthy marriage: calming yourself so that you are not overwhelmed by flooding emotions; speaking and listening nondefensively; validating each other as well as your relationship; and overlearning these principles so that the new skills become automatic and can be used under stress.

***Why Mars and Venus Collide: Improving Relationship by Understanding How Men and Women Cope Differently With Stress***, by John Gray, Ph.D. (New York: Harper, 2008). The author expands on male/female differences, drawing on brain scan research to clarify how men and women react differently to stress and often misunderstand each other. He offers clear, concrete steps to prevent and heal the conflicts that arise from such misunderstandings.

***Why Talking is Not Enough: Eight Loving Actions that Will Transform Your Marriage*** by Susan Page (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint, 2006). The author encourages individuals and couples to treat their relationships as spiritual disciplines, practicing acceptance, compassion, restraint, and kindness. By focusing on loving each other, in a spirit of good will, couples can build a true spiritual partnership. The author's insights and "experiments" can be utilized by both or by just one party in the relationship.

## DEVOTIONAL RESOURCES FOR COUPLES

***Couples' Devotional Bible: New International Version***, edited by the staff of Marriage Partnership Magazine (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994).

In addition to the complete text of the Bible, this volume offers helpful introductions to each book, daily devotions with “marriage builder” activities, and a “Weekending” exercise with thought-provoking questions and quizzes for exploring various areas of your marriage. An index helps you find devotional readings on specific topics with which couples might need help.

***Devotions for Couples*** (previously titled *Two-Part Harmony*), by Patrick M. Morley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994). Organized around seven different themes, each selection addresses a significant couple issue with a Scripture passage, reading, discussion question, application suggestion, and closing prayer.

***15 Minute Devotions for Couples***, by Bob and Emilie Barnes (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1995). Brief selections offer Scripture passages, related devotional reading, and suggestions for activities to strengthen couple communication and intimacy.

***Holy Relationships***, by Christine A. Adams (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse Publishing, 1998). Approximately eighty-five brief paragraphs and scripture passages for daily readings are grouped in three sections of the book: “Guidelines for Holy Relationships,” “Practices of Holy Relationships,” and “Purposes of Holy Relationships.” Topics include forgiveness, feelings, autonomy, listening, faith, developing rituals, affirming your love, and more.

***In the Presence of God: Readings for a Christian Marriage***, by David and Vera Mace (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1985). Four weeks worth of daily meditations on “The Purposes of Marriage,” “The Adjustments of Marriage,” “The Fellowship of Marriage,” and “The Wider Implications of Marriage.” Each entry includes scripture, quotations and reflections, and prayer.

***Staying Connected in Your Marriage: Daily Reflections and Dialogue***, by Al Francis Lacki. (Troy Michigan: Uplift Enterprises, 2000). Designed to foster both individual and relationship growth, these daily selections are for individual reading and reflection, followed by couple dialogue and sharing. [Contact at P.O. Box 1612, Troy, Michigan, 48099-1612, 248-362-3340, [uplift@ameritech.net](mailto:uplift@ameritech.net).]

***The Couples Companion: Meditations and Exercises for Getting the Love You Want***, by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. and Helen Hunt, M.A. (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1994). Each of these 365 entries for cultivating spirituality in the marriage relationship begins with a quotation, offers insights, suggests an action, and ends with a faith affirmation. Content is compatible with Christian tradition and useful for couples of any faith.

***365 Meditations for Couples***, edited by Sally D. Sharpe (Nashville: Dimensions for Living, 2003). Daily selections offer scripture, a brief meditation, prayer, and “Talk it Over” topics for couples. Each month’s selection is written by a different couple.

**PROGRAM GUIDES AND CURRICULUM RESOURCES  
FOR MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT**

(Many of the books reviewed above would also serve as excellent group studies.)

***10 Great Dates to Energize Your Marriage Video Kit***, by Claudia and David Arp (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997). This kit contains two 75-minute videos, featuring ten fun date launches, a Leader's Guide, and one Participant's book, which includes a dating guide with tear-out sheets. Couples come together for the video date launch with its low-key discussion starter; then each couple has time alone to talk during their date. Churches offering this program are encouraged to provide child care, as needed. The program could be scheduled one night a week for ten weeks, one night every other week or once a month, or over the course of a weekend retreat. [Order through Marriage Alive International, Inc., P.O. Box 31408, Knoxville, TN 37930, 888-690-6667, [www.marriagealive.com](http://www.marriagealive.com), [mailine97@aol.com](mailto:mailine97@aol.com) . You will need one copy of the *10 Great Dates* book for each participating couple.]

***Building Lasting Marriages: A Study Guide for Marriage Enrichment***, by Dr. Bobbye Wood (Fort Worth, TX: Britton Wood & Associates, 2002, 2004) The author uses personal examples and humor in nine study sessions with exercises for couples based on Better Marriages (formerly ACME) principles and the work of Drs. David and Vera Mace. This book would work well for a Marriage Enrichment Group. [Available at [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org) ]

***Celebremos Nuestro Matrimonio (Let Us Celebrate Our Marriage)***, by James and Doris Long (self-published), 4739 East Pawnee Circle, Phoenix, AZ 85044-2010, 480-598-9474, [jamesblong@aol.com](mailto:jamesblong@aol.com) A detailed course designed for four three-hour sessions for six to eight couples plus a facilitator couple. Built on the authors' training with the Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment (now Better Marriages), this material provides complete and clear instructions for the facilitator couple's presentations and directions for each activity. [Order directly from the authors.]

***Enriquecimiento Matrimonial: Manual de Actividades para grupos de Matrimonios***, by James and Doris Long (Los Reyes la Paz, Edo.de Mexico: Editorial Ideogramma, 1994). 4739 East Pawnee Circle, Phoenix, AZ 85044-2010, 480-598-9474, [jamesblong@aol.com](mailto:jamesblong@aol.com). This manual includes over eighty-five experiential activities that can be used as a resource for marriage enrichment programs: both retreats and ongoing marriage enrichment groups. In addition to general information on how to conduct marriage enrichment programs, this book includes instructions for a two-hour program, a six-hour program, and a weekend program. Special sections are devoted to Bible-based activities and to family activities including children. [Order directly from the authors.]

***Fireproof Your Marriage: Couple's Kit***, by Jennifer Dion, (Vista, CA: Outreach, Inc., 2008), 800-991-6011, [www.outreach.com](http://www.outreach.com). This kit contains a six-session DVD, and two Participant's Guides. The DVD sessions recap briefly (2-5 minutes each) scenes from the *Fireproof* movie. The Participant's Guides provide discussion questions, scripture references, and exercises for use by couples or small groups. The movie itself is available through video/DVD rental sources, but a special license is required for public showings, other than in a private home. You may purchase the license, which is good for one year, by visiting [www.cvli.com](http://www.cvli.com) or calling 800-991-6011. The

cost of the site license, which underwrites Christian filmmaking, is based on average church attendance (for average worship attendance of 95, the license costs \$99.).

***Get Going and Grow: An Eight-month MEG Curriculum Leaders' Manual*** (Better Marriages, 502 North Broad St., P.O. Box 21374, Winston-Salem, NC 27120, 336-724-1526, 800-634-8325, [info@bettermarriages.org](mailto:info@bettermarriages.org), [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org)). The Leaders' Manual provides guidance for establishing and leading a Marriage Enrichment Group (MEG) and all materials needed for eight months of meetings.

***Growing in Faith, United In Love*, by Barb Nardi Kurtz** (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1998). This resource helps couples develop spirituality in marriage by exploring communication, mutual appreciation, balancing time together and time apart, shared prayer, and shared times for play and celebration. Scripturally based, each chapter contains true stories about married couples and challenges to reflect on the issues presented. A Leader's Guide provides suggestions for six weekly sessions or for a weekend retreat.

***Growing in Marital Love: Volumes I and II***, by Keith and Marilynn Hamilton, founders of Relationship Enrichment by Applying Preventive Principles (REAPP), 1070 West Jefferson Street, Franklin, IN 46131. These materials, based on the work of David and Vera Mace and the Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment (now Better Marriages), provide resources for a dynamic Marriage Enrichment Workshop. The five four-hour sessions incorporate Biblical principles and provide training in effective communication, the creative use of conflict, and a new model for understanding our sexuality. Also available in Spanish, German, and Portuguese. Translation into Arabic, Korean, Afrikaans, Malagasi, French, Bengali, and other languages is currently in process. Volume I contains the basic marriage enrichment workshop. Volume II contains a workshop for training facilitating couples (6 sessions, 24 hours), an advanced training workshop for instructor couples (60 hours), and a Pre-marital Workshop (5 sessions, 20 hours). Order through the authors at 317-736-1286 or [KandMHamilton@earthlink.net](mailto:KandMHamilton@earthlink.net), or download free at [www.ywamconnect.com/sites/KandMHamilton](http://www.ywamconnect.com/sites/KandMHamilton).

***HomeBuilders Couples Series***, edited by Dennis Rainey. (Little Rock, AR: f, 2000), 800-FL-TODAY, [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com). "A small-group Bible study dedicated to making your family all that God intended," this series is produced by a division of Campus Crusade for Christ International. Ten different studies, each in a separate book for participants (with Leader's Notes in the back), address topics such as improving communication, building teamwork, mastering money, resolving conflict, growing together in Christ, building each other's self-esteem, expressing love, managing pressure, etc. A separate book, *HomeBuilders Leader Guide: Starting and Leading your Couples Group*, provides valuable insight and information for organizing, preparing, dealing with challenges, and expanding this ministry.

***Imago Connects: Through Conflict to Connection*** (Imago Relationships International, 2006) One-hour DVD program explains and illustrates the Imago Dialogue process, which couples can use to share thoughts and feelings to heal and grow in relationships. This process works in all relationships, but is especially helpful for developing intimacy that can help heal childhood wounds. The Facilitator's Guide for Small Groups outlines three two-hour sessions. The

Couple's Handbook provides instruction and exercises for couples to use on their own, along with the DVD.

***Keys to Successful Communication: Your Pathway to Intimacy and Romance in Marriage***, by Jimmy Evans (Family and Marriage Today, P.O. Box 8400, Amarillo, TX, 866-800-3244, 866-800-3244, [www.famtoday.com](http://www.famtoday.com)). In these four Biblically-based audio CDs (45-50 minutes each), Jimmy Evans describes the power of words and the damage caused by ineffective communication habits; teaches principles of effective communication; and provides guidance for establishing a covenantal marriage. Useful for individual or group listening. Reflection questions could be developed for couple or group discussion.

***Making Love Last a Lifetime: Biblical Perspectives on Love, Marriage, and Sex***, by Adam Hamilton (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004). This kit contains a Studybook, Leader's Guide, video tapes, and DVD for an eight-week series for married couples of all ages or for singles or couples preparing for marriage. A Pastor's Guide provides directions for a church-wide emphasis and community outreach with this program. [Order through Cokesbury, 800-672-1789.]

***Marriage: Claiming God's Promises***, by Jack Gilbert and Nan Zoller (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1998). Complete instructions for eight sessions of Scripturally-based marriage enrichment activities. Training is not required, but leadership should be by couples who have strong marriages and group leadership skills, who are Christian disciples, and who can comfortably participate in personal sharing. Available through Cokesbury, 800-672-1789.

***Marriage Enrichment Groups: A Guide for Leaders of Ongoing Marriage Enrichment Groups***, by Dave and Sarah Catron (Winston-Salem, North Carolina: The Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, 1996). This manual explains how to start an ongoing marriage enrichment group for strengthening couples' marriages. Suggestions are made for how such a group might function, for topics they might discuss, and for appropriate resources. [800-634-8325 or [www.bettermarriages.com](http://www.bettermarriages.com)]

***Money Habitudes: Target Your Habits and Attitudes About Money***, created by Syble Solomon, (LifeWise, 2006). This set of cards may be used by couples or as part of a group activity to help persons determine the values and attitudes that guide their thoughts and actions in regard to saving, spending, and dealing with debt and money in general. Following a card sort activity, participants discover the challenges and advantages of each financial type (Spontaneous, Status, Giving, Security, Carefree, and/or Planning) and ways to achieve a healthy balance. Since differences in attitudes toward and use of money are a primary cause of conflict in marriage, couples benefit by increased understanding of themselves and each other and by learning to discuss their differences and to make mutually agreeable decisions that take those differences into consideration. [[www.moneyhabitudes.com](http://www.moneyhabitudes.com), 888-833-4331]

***Right Steps: Discovering a Better Marriage, A Self-Guided Course for Couples***, (Winston-Salem, NC: The Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, 2006). Based on the work of Dr. David and Vera Mace and on the Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment's leadership training program, the workbook outlines four two-hour sessions for couples to use on their own. Each person needs one copy. These may be purchased as hard copy or download by

phone or from [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org) (click on Store, then on either eResources or How-to Manuals).

***Right Steps: Discovering a Better Marriage Leaders' Manual*** for group sessions, (Winston-Salem, NC: The Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, 2006). The Leaders' Manual provides clear directions and reproducible handouts and exercises for four two-hour group sessions. Participating couples will need to purchase at least one copy of the *Self-Guided Course for Couples*, described above. Order by phone or from the website as hardcopy or download (click on Store, then on either eResources or How-to Manuals). This program could be adapted for shorter time frames or used in a retreat setting. [800-634-8325, [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org)]

**The Marriage Course**, [www.themarriagecourseusa.org/m/](http://www.themarriagecourseusa.org/m/) Using this program, similar to the Alpha series, churches offer couples seven candlelit dinners, with a lively, often humorous video presentation at each, time to talk privately as a couple, and opportunity to practice new strategies to deepen their relationship. The Marriage Course is designed for couples who have good marriages and want to keep them that way, and it also helps couples get back to being happy when they've forgotten how. [Order the Starter Kit, with videos, a leader's guide, and manuals for participating couples, at <http://www.alpharesources.org/stores/1/index.cfm>.] Alpha also offers "The Marriage Course," "The Marriage Preparation Course," "The Parenting Children Course," and "The Parenting Teenagers Course."

***The Second Half of Marriage: Facing the Eight Challenges of the Empty Nest Years Video Curriculum*** [Zondervan Groupware], by Claudia and David Arp, MSW. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000). Designed for a ten-week small group experience or weekend event, this kit includes two one-hour videos featuring ten program segments, a Participant's Guide and a Leader's Guide, both of which may be purchased separately. Drawing on their national survey of hundreds of "second-half" couples, the Arps offer strategies for meeting each of the eight challenges of the empty nest years: letting go of past disappointments; creating a partner-focused rather than child-focused marriage; learning to communicate better; using anger and conflict in a creative, constructive way; building a deeper friendship; renewing romance; adjusting to changing roles with aging parents and adult children; growing closer to God and to each other. Through thoughtful discussion and practical exercises, this program motivates couples to turn this phase of their relationship into a second honeymoon. [Order through Marriage Alive International, Inc., P.O. Box 31408, Knoxville, TN 37930, 888-690-6667, [www.marriagealive.com](http://www.marriagealive.com), [mailine97@aol.com](mailto:mailine97@aol.com).]

## MARITAL INVENTORIES

### ENRICH and MATE

See PREPARE/ENRICH entry above under Premarital Inventories for description and ordering information.

**My Marriage Coach** [www.mymarriagecoach.com](http://www.mymarriagecoach.com). Jay Tenney, an ordained United Methodist pastor in the North Georgia Conference, developed this website out of his extensive experiences counseling and coaching couples. to provide a place where couples can go to evaluate and strengthen their marriages. For only \$9.95, couples can sign on, respond to a series of questions individually or together, and instantly receive a two page "*Coaching Report*" which they can view online or print. Each report provides a list of the strengths and weaknesses of the marriage, an overall marriage score, and a list of recommended resources. Couples can follow up on their own by reading and discussing the suggested resources, or they can share the report with a pastor, mentor couple, or counselor. MyMarriageCoach.com is not intended for couples whose marriages are in crisis and results should not be interpreted as a substitute for marriage counseling. Individuals and couples using the site are encouraged to discuss coaching reports, profiles and recommended resources with professional counselors or pastors.

### REFOCCUS (Relationship Enrichment Facilitating Open Couple Communication)

A variation on the FOCCUS inventory, described above, for use with married couples. Five relationship areas are assessed: Marriage as a Process, Intimacy, Compatibility, Communication, Commitment. Couples may use this material on their own or in a group. A manual for facilitators is available, along with scoring software and a video program titled "Loving Your Marriage." See FOCCUS entry under Premarital Inventories for ordering information.

## ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES FOR MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT

**Better Marriages** (formerly ACME - Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment), 502 North Broad Street, P.O. Box 21374, Winston-Salem, NC 27120, 336-724-1526, 800-634-8325, [acme@bettermarriages.org](mailto:acme@bettermarriages.org), [www.bettermarriages.com](http://www.bettermarriages.com). Better Marriages is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization promoting enrichment opportunities and resources to "strengthen couple relationships and enhance personal growth, mutual fulfillment and family wellness." Better Marriages focuses mainly on helping couples in good marriages achieve their full potential. A leadership training and certification program provides skills for leading various couple events. Members receive a bi-monthly newsletter with schedules of upcoming events, book reviews, and articles addressing marriage issues. Call the office or visit the website to find out about leader couples and events in your area and to sign up for quarterly e-newsletters.

**Couple Communication**, Interpersonal Communication Programs, Inc. (ICP), 30772 Southview Dr., #200, Evergreen, CO 80439, 800-328-5099, 303-674-2051, [icp@comskills.com](mailto:icp@comskills.com), [www.couplecommunication.com](http://www.couplecommunication.com). This organization is perhaps best known as the originators and

registered copyright holders of the *Awareness Wheel*, the frameworks of *Styles of Communication* and “The Listening Cycle,” and the collaborative process called “Mapping an Issue.” COUPLE COMMUNICATION I and COUPLE COMMUNICATION II teach couples how to use these frameworks to communicate skillfully, make important decisions, and resolve conflicts collaboratively. CORE COMMUNICATION teaches these skills to individuals. This organization also offers I-SKILLSZONE and COLLABORATIVE TEAM SKILLS for businesses, as well as THRIVESPHERE, an on-line relationship inventory. Instructors for this program must complete a certification process and may be located through the website.

**Family Dynamics Institute**, Contact Joshua Persall, Ministry Consultant, Family Dynamics, 615-627-9751, [jpersall@familydynamics.net](mailto:jpersall@familydynamics.net), [www.familydynamics.net](http://www.familydynamics.net). Family Dynamics Institute helps couples build strong marriages and families through inspiring classes, workshops, and educational resources. Trained facilitators offer the following programs through local churches: “Dynamic Marriage” classes (8 weeks long, with a pre-class meeting), “Dynamic Love” (10 weeks), “Dynamic Families” (10 weeks), and “A New Beginning” (an intensive three-day workshop for couples in deep distress). The Dynamic Marriage approach is very behavioral and experiential. Couples report great improvement in their relationships, especially through the experience of learning to pray together. To learn about a telephone format for couples unable to attend an event, visit [http://www.familydynamics.net/dynamicmarriage\\_telephone.php](http://www.familydynamics.net/dynamicmarriage_telephone.php) or call 800-650-9995. Family Dynamics Ministry Consultants can also work with your congregation to develop a comprehensive Marriage Ministry.

**Marriage Alive International**, 7900 Grousemoor Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919, 800-690-6667, FAX: 856-691-1575, [TheArps@marriagealive.com](mailto:TheArps@marriagealive.com), [www.marriagealive.com](http://www.marriagealive.com). Claudia and David Arp, available for speaking engagements and seminars, also offer books, curriculum, training, and program resources designed to strengthen couples’ relationships. Sign up at the website for their free e-mail Marriage Builders Newsletter.

**Marriage Builders: Building Marriages to Last a Lifetime**, [www.marriagebuilders.com](http://www.marriagebuilders.com)  
Based on the work of Dr. Willard Harley, this website offers numerous articles and radio link recordings that teach couples how to meet each other’s important emotional needs and cultivate their passion. You can sign up for e-newsletters, purchase online courses and access to radio broadcast archives, and read Dr. Harley’s columns, which focus on preventing and healing from affairs.

**Marriage Encounter/Engaged Encounter United Methodist** (an Affiliate Organization with the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship), [www.encounter.org](http://www.encounter.org). One of the twelve faith expressions of Worldwide Marriage Encounter, ME/EEUM offers Christian weekend experiences for couples who want to prepare for or enrich their marriages. A team of lay couples and a clergy-spouse couple make a series of presentations. Each presentation encourages participants to look at themselves as individuals, at their relationships with each other, and at their relationship with God, the church, and the world. Following each presentation, husband and wife are given time in the privacy of their own room for personal sharing using the techniques taught during the weekend. No group discussion is required. Post-weekend experiences for nurturing ongoing growth are offered in many local areas. Visit the website above to learn about

events scheduled for your area. Visit [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org) or call 800-795-5683 to learn more about Worldwide Marriage Encounter and other faith expressions of this ministry

**Marriage Enrichment, Inc.**, Executive Administrator: JoAnn Johnson, 800-726-7424, [mewinfo@yahoo.com](mailto:mewinfo@yahoo.com), [www.marriageenrichment.org](http://www.marriageenrichment.org) This organization provides workshops, including weekend or mid-week retreats and other formats for nurturing personal and spiritual growth by providing tools to enhance marriage and family relationships. Leaders are committed Christians who have considerable experience with this program and who have completed a careful training process. Call to inquire about leader couples and events in your area.

**Marriage Savers**, 9311 Harrington Drive, Potomac, MD 20854. 301-469-5873, FAX: 301- 469-5871, [Harriet@marriagesavers.com](mailto:Harriet@marriagesavers.com), [www.marriagesavers.org](http://www.marriagesavers.org). Marriage Savers offers two-day seminars featuring national pioneers in the development of both Community Marriage Policies® and Marriage Savers Churches. In addition, whenever a Community Marriage Policy® is developed, Marriage Savers will train both clergy and lay mentor couples to create Marriage Savers Congregations. Marriage Savers now also offers webinar training for mentor couples and clergy for using the new customized version of the Prepare-Enrich pre-marital and marital inventories. Webinar dates and details available at the website.

**Marriage Transformation LLC**, 25241 Chatworth Dr., Cleveland, OH 44117, 216-255-9301, 800-501-6682, [susanne@marriagetransformation.com](mailto:susanne@marriagetransformation.com). Susanne M. Alexander, president of this organization, is a relationship and marriage coach specializing in character growth. She provides coaching, books, eBooks, and other resources for relationship education, marriage preparation, and marriage strengthening. Trained in PREPARE/ENRICH, Susanne is committed to empowering individuals and couples to create happy, lasting, character-based marriages. For information about resources, workshops, arrangements for mentoring and coaching, a free e-newsletter, and marriage education in general, visit [www.marriagetransformation.com](http://www.marriagetransformation.com).

**National Marriage Encounter**, 4704 Jamerson Place, Orlando, Florida 32807, 800-828-3351, FAX: 407-282-8120, [www.marriage-encounter.org](http://www.marriage-encounter.org). Interfaith weekend retreats for couples offer opportunities for personal reflection and communication between husband and wife. Trained leader couples share experiences from their own lives and suggest a process and specific questions for couples to respond to and dialogue about privately. There is no group discussion. Call or visit the website to learn about events offered in your area.

**Rodgers Christian Counseling**, 1206 Jules Ct., Charlotte, NC 28226, (704) 364-9176, FAX (704) 366-0729, [www.soulhealinglove.com](http://www.soulhealinglove.com). This center presents a Soul Healers Workshop and publishes resources for engaged couples, married couples wishing to grow deeper in love, couples in crisis, and singles seeking a soul mate. Sign up for free e-newsletter at the website.

**Weekend to Remember: Seminar for Couples**, Family Life Marriage Seminars (Little Rock, AR: Family Life Seminars), 800-FL-TODAY, [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com). These seminars, from the same organization that produces the HomeBuilders Couples Series described above, are offered around the country. Pastors may attend free of charge, and churches are encouraged to bring groups of couples. Promotional materials, as well as schedules, costs, and other details are available on the website or by phone.

**Worldwide Marriage Encounter**, 2210 East Highland Avenue, #106, San Bernardino, CA 92404, 800-795-5683, [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org), (for Marriage Encounter United Methodist visit [www.encounter.org](http://www.encounter.org)). There are twelve faith expressions in Worldwide Marriage Encounter, which offers Christian weekend experiences for couples who want to enrich their marriages. A team of lay couples and a priest or a clergy-spouse couple make a series of presentations. Each presentation encourages participants to look at themselves as individuals, at their relationship with each other, and at their relationship with God, the church, and the world. Following each presentation, husband and wife are given time in the privacy of their own room for personal sharing using the techniques taught during the weekend. There is no group discussion. Post-weekend experiences for nurturing ongoing growth are offered in many local areas. Call or visit the websites to learn about events scheduled for your area.

[www.familybuilders.net/](http://www.familybuilders.net/) -- Resources for strengthening marriages, articles on a variety of topics, couple check up on line (fee for scoring report).

[www.growthtrac.com/](http://www.growthtrac.com/) -- Resources for strengthening marriages; articles on a variety of topics. Sign-up for enewsletter. Connect on Facebook.

[www.HealthyMarriageTips.com](http://www.HealthyMarriageTips.com) – ((The National Healthy Marriage Institute LLC) At this website, you can download Healthy Marriage Pamphlets on a variety of topics, order resources, and sign up for “Healthy Marriage Tip of the Week” and “Healthy Marriage Tip of the Month” emails.

[www.susanpage.com](http://www.susanpage.com) – Learn about Susan’s concepts of Spiritual Partnerships and strategies for improving a relationship even if only one partner implements them. Read reviews of her books and subscribe to her email newsletter.

## V. RESOURCES FOR MINISTRIES WITH FAMILIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS, TRANSITION, AND CRISIS

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### READING LIST FOR MINISTRIES WITH FAMILIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS, TRANSITION, AND CRISIS – BY TOPIC

#### GENERAL

***Divorce Busting: A Step-by-Step Approach to Making Your Marriage Loving Again***, by Michele Weiner-Davis (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992). The practical problem-solving approach in this book demonstrates how behavior change, even by just one partner, can improve the dynamics of a marriage relationship. The author’s emphasis on finding solutions rather than exploring problems is based on a simple formula: “do more of what works and less of what doesn’t.”(page 17)

***How Can I Forgive You? The Courage to Forgive, the Freedom Not To***, by Janis Abrahms Spring, Ph.D. with Michael Spring (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004). The author describes the benefits of genuine forgiveness and the dangers of “cheap” or inauthentic forgiveness. She provides guidance for two processes: 1) acceptance (when the offender is unwilling or unable to make amends), and 2) genuine forgiveness (when the offender participates in the effort to repair and heal the relationship). Her instructions are designed to help persons make peace with themselves and with others.

***Rekindling Desire: A Step-by-Step program to Help Low-Sex and No-Sex Marriages***, by Barry and Emily McCarthy (New York: Burnner and Routledge, 2003). Inhibited sexual desire and discrepancies in sexual desire damage marital intimacy and can drain joy from a marriage. The authors provide information for understanding and strategies for addressing these issues.

***Relationship Rescue: A Seven-step Strategy for Reconnecting With Your Partner***, by Phillip C. McGraw (New York: Hyperion, 2000). The author helps readers understand how they contribute to the problems in their relationships and lays out clear strategies for getting a marriage back on track: 1) defining and diagnosing your relationship as it is now; 2) getting rid of wrong thinking (myths about marriage); 3) confronting your own negative attitudes and behaviors and ways you do harm to your relationship; 4) internalizing a new set of “Personal Relationship Values;” 5) learning how to make your needs known effectively and discovering the needs of your spouse; 6) reconnecting with your spouse; and 7) managing and maintaining your relationship. Although most of the book is written in secular language, near the end the author expresses his faith in God and in Biblical teachings on relationships. Except in the case of abusive relationships, he asserts “I do not believe that you can reject and criticize your mate and at the same time accept God and his will for your life....I believe that your partner may well be weak where you are strong, and have flaws and fallacies that inspire the best of who you are.” (page 244-246) The exercises in this book could be done by a person alone, but would work well with small groups or with

individual coaching. This might be an effective resource for use with a group of individuals (all female, all male, or mixture of both) who want to improve their marriages but whose spouses do not wish to participate in a couples' group.

***The Divorce Remedy: The Proven 7-Step Program for Saving Your Marriage***, by Michele Weiner Davis (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001). Written in a straightforward, personal manner, this book offers clear steps, encouragement, and hope for persons on the brink of divorce. The author lays out strategies that can be implemented by one partner in the marriage, even if the other shows no interest in working on the relationship. Focusing on one's self and taking responsibility for one's own attitudes and behavior helps persons feel better about themselves, regardless of the outcome for the relationship. Even happily married couples might learn from this book some steps they could take to fine-tune their relationships!

***The Love Dare*** by Stephen Kendrick and Alan Kendrick (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008). Based on the book featured in the movie *Fireproof*, this book offers forty days of faith-based relationship information and challenges to be used by a spouse hoping to improve his or her marriage.

***This is Not the Story You Think it Is...: A Season of Unlikely Happiness***, by Laura Munson (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2010). This memoir tells how one woman dealt with her husband's mid-life crisis announcement that he did not love her anymore. With the help of a good therapist, a stack of books, and the release she found in journaling, she gave him the space he needed, took responsibility for her own happiness, and changed the behaviors that alienated him. The author shares candidly and poignantly her inner struggle and conflicting emotions throughout these months of pain and uncertainty, learning not to base her happiness on things outside her control.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

***50 Things Everyone Should Know About Dating Violence*** (brochure), The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, CA, 94707-0881, 800-695-7975, FAX: 972-226-2824, [Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org](mailto:Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org), [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org).

***Domestic Violence: What Churches Can Do***, FaithTrust Institute, 2400 N 45<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 101, Seattle, WA 98103, [www.faithtrustinstitute.org](http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org), 206-634-1903x23, 877-860-2255. This 20-minute video provides an overview of the reality of domestic violence and raises awareness of its prevalence, dynamics, and the attitudes and false beliefs that underlie both abusive behavior and the fear of leaving an abusive relationship. The accompanying study guide suggests approaches for helping persons caught in such relationships and steps for congregations to take in order to more effectively minister to such families. "Safety for the woman and her children has to be addressed first. After that has been ensured, ongoing support can best be accomplished by helping the victim find appropriate community resources and providing the support of her faith community as she starts the journey of healing and decision-making for the future. The most helpful support that the congregation can offer to the abuser is to hold him accountable, to support him in taking responsibility for his behavior and recognizing that he has a problem, and

to stand by him as he seeks treatment from a specialized batterers' counseling program." (Study guide, p.19-20)

***Domestic Violence: What Every Pastor Needs to Know***, by Reverend Al Miles (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Fortress, 2000). The author explores the complex problem of domestic violence, offering guidance for ministering effectively with both perpetrators and victims. Warning of the dangers inherent in naïve and untrained approaches to such situations, Miles urges pastors to participate in domestic violence prevention training and to make referrals to trained professionals. Miles shows pastors how they may inadvertently blame the victims and encourage and excuse violent behavior. He also recommends specific strategies for ensuring the safety of victims and for holding abusers accountable.

***Opening the Door: A Pastor's Guide to Addressing Domestic Violence in Premarital Counseling***, by Susan Yarrow Morris (Seattle: Faithtrust Institute, 2006). The author defines domestic violence as "...a pattern of behavior used by one partner in an intimate relationship to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the use of or threat of violence." (p. 13). She provides a clear understanding of its dynamics and provides specific strategies, questions to ask, and information to share, not only in premarital counseling, but also in ongoing ministry and pastoral care, to prevent domestic violence and to intervene when abuse is suspected.

***Stop Walking on Eggshells: Taking Back Your Life When Someone You Care About Has Borderline Personality Disorder***, by Paul T. Mason, M.S. and Randi Kreger (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 1998). The authors explore the emotionally abusive and controlling behaviors of persons with low self-esteem and fear of failure, as well as the impact of those behaviors on spouses, children, and others. This supportive guide shows readers how to make sense of their situations, take back control of their lives, heal their wounds, and protect themselves and others from further damage.

***You Don't Have to Take It Anymore: Turn Your Resentful, Angry, or Emotionally Abusive Relationship into a Compassionate, Loving One***, by Steven Stosny, PhD (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2006). The author, acclaimed for his CompassionPower program for verbally and emotionally abusive persons and their families, provides information for understanding the dynamics and impact of such abuse and for taking action to change and heal the relationships and persons involved. This text, an excellent resource for individuals, couples, and small groups, provides instruction for healing the wounds from emotional abuse, for regulating feelings so as to avoid abusive words and behavior, and for reconnecting in a relationship – or for determining that a relationship is beyond repair. Visit [www.compassionpower.com](http://www.compassionpower.com) to learn more about the CompassionPower program and for schedules of upcoming events.

## **GRIEF**

***Survival Kit for Griefwork***, by Britton Wood, Ph.D. (Dallas, TX: Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1986). This workbook could be used by individuals or support groups for those who have experienced the death of a loved one. [Contact the author at P.O. Box 2190, Dallas, Texas 75221-2190, 817-924-8509.]

## **INFIDELITY – PREVENTION AND RECOVERY**

*Affair-Proofing Your Marriage: Preventive Maintenance for Christian Couples*, by Norman and Ann Bales (Atlanta: CarePoint Ministries, 2007). The authors share honestly and humbly out of their own experience with and recovery from infidelity, providing a workbook that could be used by couples or by groups of couples to affair-proof their marriages.

*After the Affair: Healing the Pain and Rebuilding Trust When a Partner Has Been Unfaithful*, by Janis Abrahms Spring, Ph.D. with Michael Spring (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996). Based on her clinical practice experiences, the author guides readers through the three stages of healing: understanding your reactions and feelings, deciding whether to recommit to the marriage or leave, and rebuilding the relationship.

*Every Heart Restored: A Wife's Guide to Healing in the Wake of a Husband's Sexual Sin*, by Fred and Brenda Stoeker, with Mike Yorkey (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2010). Guidance for wives whose husbands are addicted to pornography and sex and struggling for sexual purity.

*How Can I Forgive You? The Courage to Forgive, the Freedom Not To*, by Janis Abrahms Spring, Ph.D. with Michael Spring (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004). The author describes the benefits of forgiveness and the dangers of “cheap” or inauthentic forgiveness. She provides guidance for two processes: 1) acceptance (when the offender is unwilling or unable to make amends, and 2) genuine forgiveness (when the offender participates in the effort to repair and heal the relationship). Her instructions are designed to help persons make peace with themselves and with others.

*My Husband's Affair Became the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me*, by Anne Bercht, Brian Bercht, and Danielle Bercht (Victoria, B.C., Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2004). Devastated by her husband's unexpected announcement that he was in love with another woman, the author embarked on a tumultuous emotional journey, vacillating between despair and determination.

*Not “Just Friends”: Rebuilding Trust and Recovering Your Sanity After Infidelity*, by Shirley P. Glass, Ph.D. with Jean Coppock Staeheli (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2003). Understanding how easily friendships can slide down the “slippery slope” to infatuation can help couples prevent affairs and to recover if they do occur. Maintaining “windows” within the marital relationship and “walls” with those who could threaten the marriage is the first of seven tips by the author, who also provides insight into infidelity's traumatic effects and the steps necessary for recovery.

*Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*, by Patrick Carnes, Ph.D. (Minneapolis, MN: CompCare Publishers, 1983). The author describes sexual addiction as a relationship to a “mood-altering experience” which becomes central to a person's life, accompanied by shame and fear of discovery. He outlines three levels of sexual addiction, noting that a person can escalate quickly from one to the next. First are behaviors considered within the range of normal, but which may become compulsive, such as masturbating and viewing pornography. The second

level includes behaviors that may victimize others, such as voyeurism and self-exposure. The third level consists of behaviors with serious consequences, such as rape, incest, and child molestation. The author outlines what he calls the “Addiction Cycle,” which begins with Preoccupation, a trance-like state in which the addict’s mind is engrossed with thoughts of sex and obsessively seeks sexual stimulation. The second stage is Ritualization, special routines which lead up to and enhance the excitement of the sexual behavior. The third stage is the Compulsive Sexual Behavior itself with its exhilarating rush. Finally addicts experience Despair, deep guilt and hopelessness about their behavior and lack of control. The author recommends the Twelve Steps process for breaking through the isolation and secrecy that feed addiction and for helping addicts examine their thinking and behavior and reclaim their sense of personal worth.

***Private Lies: Infidelity and the Betrayal of Intimacy***, by Frank Pittman (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989). The author describes experiences of infidelity from real life, literature, and case studies from his counseling practice, including a wide variety of behaviors and attitudes. He describes romantic affairs as “temporary insanity” and concludes with an affirmation of monogamy and practical suggestions for maintaining fidelity.

***Surviving an Affair***, by Dr. Willard F. Harley, Jr, and Dr. Jennifer Harley Chalmers (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1998). The authors provide proven step-by-step solutions for recovering from an affair, based on their extensive work with couples in such situations. They emphasize the importance of meeting each other’s emotional needs, avoiding being the cause of each other’s unhappiness, taking time to give each other undivided attention, and being totally open and honest with each other. This book provides checklists and assessment tools to aid in the recovery process and a Marriage Recovery Agreement, all best used with the assistance of a trained counselor.

***When Good People Have Affairs: Inside the Hearts and Minds of People in Two Relationships***, by Mira Kirshenbaum (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2008). The author explores how good people may unintentionally drift into affairs, often because someone else seems to offer something missing from their lives, and the overwhelming pain, confusion, and anxiety they experience. She offers guidance for such persons and their spouses to sort out their feelings and make decisions that will lead to growth and happiness.

## **MINISTRY AND OTHER PROFESSIONS**

***Families in Ministry: How to Thrive—Not Just Survive*** by Andreas and Angela Frész (Dresden, Germany: Golden Gate Ventures GmbH, 2009). The authors share out of their own experience as a family in ministry and include testimonies from other ministry families from all over the world. Addressing a wide range of issues, they offer sound theological reflection and practical advice on setting a family vision and priorities, communicating love, integrating God into family life, overcoming stress and crises, managing differences and conflicts, and dealing with challenges specific to families in ministry. This book could be used to facilitate a course spread out over eight sessions or could serve as a helpful resource to individual families. Particularly useful are the clear guidelines for Spouse Dialogue and/or Group Discussion and for Family Activity related to material in the text. Order through YWAM Publishing, 800-922-2143, [www.ywampublishing.com](http://www.ywampublishing.com) . See also [www.families-in-ministry.com](http://www.families-in-ministry.com) for more information.

## REMARRIAGE AND STEPFAMILIES

*Successful Second Marriages*, by Patricia Bubash, M.ED., (Morgan Hill, CA: Bookstand Publishing, 2008). The author shares stories of couples in second marriages, describing how they have built happy, healthy relationships, in spite of the statistical odds against second marriages.

*The Smart Stepmom*, by Ron Deal and Laura Petherbridge (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 2009). The authors use their personal and professional skills and experiences to provide stepmothers with the information, attitudes, and skills to succeed in what is rapidly becoming the most common family form in the United States of America. The text provides clear analysis and helpful strategies for dealing with various pitfalls and challenges in ways that will help stepmoms not only survive, but thrive.

## SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

*Grace and Divorce: God's Healing Gift to Those Whose Marriages Fall Short*, by Dr. Les Carter (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2005). The author encourages both those who divorce and those who know and love them to remember that Jesus approached with compassion those who fall short of the highest standard of perfection. "My bias leans toward erring in the direction of maintaining the marriage if at all possible. At the same time, when people...tell me they've done all they can to save a marriage but to no avail, I want to be known as loving even if they divorce."

## SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

*Allies in Healing: When the Person You Love Was Sexually Abused as a Child*, by Laura Davis (NY: HarperCollins Publisher, 1991). The author, a nationally recognized workshop leader and expert in healing from child sexual abuse, provides partners of survivors with clear insight into the challenging dynamics of their relationships. She notes that while healing is possible, it is not easy or quick, and she offers sound practical advice for both self-care and relationship healing.

*Ghosts in the Bedroom: A Guide for Partners of Incest Survivors*, by Ken Graber, (Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 1991). The author describes his wife's growing realization that she was an incest survivor and his realization, when she sought out a therapist to help her heal, that he had issues he needed to work on while she was in recovery. He describes clearly the thoughts and feelings he experienced during this process, which were confirmed by other participants in support groups for Partners of Sexual Abuse Survivors, and he offers sound advice for coping with and growing through such an experience.

*Healing the Shame that Binds You*, by John Bradshaw (Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 2005). The author offers guidance for understanding and healing the shame that can lead to compulsions, codependency, addiction, and overwork.

*I Never Told Anyone: Writings by Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*, edited by Ellen Bass and Louise Thornton (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991). These essays by women of all ages and circumstances detail the powerful impact of the experience of abuse and offer guidance and hope for healing for all who have been affected by similar events.

***The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse***, by Ellen Bass and Laura Bass. The authors explore this subject thoroughly and in depth, interspersing descriptions of the dynamics and impact of child sexual abuse with explicit and dramatic stories of some of the many survivors with whom they have worked. They discuss how children cope with these experiences, how memories surface, and the different stages of recovery, as well as what they need in order to heal: assurance that the abuse was not their fault, that someone believes them, that healing is possible, that their feelings of grief and anger are accepted. The authors also address the concerns of partners, family members, and counselors and provide an extensive list of healing resources, including books, organizations, support groups, and counseling.

***The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Relationship: How to Support Your Partner and Keep Your Relationship Healthy***, by Diane England, Ph.D. (Avon, MA: Adams Media, 2009). The author explains how a traumatic event can overwhelm a person's ability to cope and cause ongoing fight-or-flight symptoms and other acting out even when danger no longer exists. Whether someone's distress results from war, natural disasters, or physical or sexual abuse, it deeply affects his or her partner and other members of the family. The author describes therapeutic options and provides practical helps for changing one's thoughts, improving the relationship, and deciding whether to stay or go.

***Victims No Longer: The Classic Guide for Men Recovering from Sexual Child Abuse***, by Mike Lew (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2004) The author, a psychotherapist and sexual abuse counselor, speaks to the needs of male survivors of incest and sexual abuse. This printing includes an updated resource section.

## UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

***Anger: Handling a Powerful Emotion in a Healthy Way***, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2007). The author states his belief that God designed human anger to motivate us to take action against injustice or wrongdoing. However, we often cause harm to others and ourselves by reacting without thinking through what has happened and how best to address our grievances – real or perceived. He offers a process for owning our anger and processing the situation in order to choose constructive, not destructive action. A study guide at the end provides suggestions for thirteen sessions.

***Stop Walking on Eggshells: Taking Back Your Life When Someone You Care About Has Borderline Personality Disorder***, by Paul T. Mason, M.S. and Randi Kreger (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 1998). The authors explore the emotionally abusive and controlling behaviors of persons with low self-esteem and fear of failure, as well as the impact of those behaviors on spouses, children, and others. This supportive guide shows readers how to make sense of their situations, take back control of their lives, heal their wounds, and protect themselves and others from further damage.

***Stop Walking on Eggshells Workbook: Practical Strategies for Living with Someone Who Has Borderline Personality Disorder***, by Randi Kreger with James Paul Shirley (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 2002). Exercises and Action Steps for clarifying troubling behavior and relationship patterns and for making wise decisions and practicing effective self-care.

*The Surprising Purpose of Anger. Beyond Anger Management: Finding the Gift*, by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D (Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 2005. Rosenberg, developer of the Nonviolent Communication program ([www.nonviolentcommunication.com](http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com)), challenges us to think of anger as a gift, pointing us to unmet needs, but often subverted by the judgments we make about others. He describes how to create strategies focused on meeting needs and to find solutions instead of just reacting. Visit [www.cnvc.org/en/trainingcal](http://www.cnvc.org/en/trainingcal) to locate certified Nonviolent Communication trainers or events in your area or on the web.

*You Don't Have to Take It Anymore: Turn Your Resentful, Angry, or Emotionally Abusive Relationship into a Compassionate, Loving One*, by Steven Stosny, PhD (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2006). The author, acclaimed for his CompassionPower program for verbally and emotionally abusive persons and their families, provides information for understanding the dynamics and impact of such abuse and for taking action to change and heal the relationships and persons involved. This text, an excellent resource for individuals, couples, and small groups, provides instruction for healing the wounds from emotional abuse, for regulating feelings so as to avoid abusive words and behavior, and for reconnecting in a relationship – or for determining that a relationship is beyond repair.

#### **CURRICULUM MATERIALS AND PROGRAMS FOR MINISTRIES WITH FAMILIES IN SPECIAL SITUARIONS, TRANSITION, AND CRISIS**

**A New Beginning: A Seminar for Marriages in Crisis** (Family Dynamics Institute ([www.familydynamics.net](http://www.familydynamics.net) click on Programs, then on A New Beginning) is an intensive weekend designed to turn marriages around, stop the hurt, and rekindle the love of couples who are in crisis or ambivalent about their relationship. The website offers an evaluation test couples can use to determine the appropriateness of this program for them. Call 800-650-9995 for more information.

**Before You Divorce** (Choosing Wisely Before You Divorce), Church Initiative, P.O. Box 1739, Wake Forest, NC 27588-1739, 800-489-7778, [Churchmail1@aol.com](mailto:Churchmail1@aol.com), [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org). This marriage crisis counseling resource is designed to help couples considering separation or divorce to reconsider their decision and redirect their efforts toward restoring their marriage. The five video sessions show the spiritual, physical, emotional, and financial impact of divorce on families and on children in particular. It does not try to address the underlying problems of the marriage, but attempts to stop the rapid momentum that develops when a couple begins to consider divorce. The couple's kit includes video sessions, two participant workbooks, and a facilitator's guide. The ministry edition provides video sessions, six participant workbooks, and a facilitator's guide with enough material for counseling with three couples.

*Developing a Successful Stepfamily Ministry*, by Dick Dunn (Seagrove Beach, Florida: Singles and Stepfamily Ministries, 1995). This workbook, designed to help churches start and carry out an effective ministry providing practical support for blended families, includes a cassette tape and a copy of Dick Dunn's book, *Willing to Try Again: Steps Toward Blending a Family*. The manual leads a planning team of stepfamily couples step by step through a six-

session process for developing a stepfamily ministry. Order directly from the author at 528 New Fourth Street, Fairport Harbor, Ohio 44077, 440-392-0335, [dickbettydunn@aol.com](mailto:dickbettydunn@aol.com) . Also available at [www.marriagesavers.org](http://www.marriagesavers.org) (click on Store).

***DivorceCare Starter Kit***, (Church Initiative, P.O. Box 1739, Wake Forest, NC 27588-1739, 800-489-7778, [info@divorcecare.org](mailto:info@divorcecare.org), [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org) . This Biblically-based resource for a divorce recovery ministry includes a Leader's Guide, Participant's Workbook, and five DVDs. The DVDs present teaching segments for 13 group sessions and three leadership training sessions. The Leader's Guide provides guidance and resources for an ongoing program so that separated and divorced persons always have a place to turn.

***Marriage 911: First Response***, by Joe and Michelle Williams (National Institute of Marriage, 2007). This Christ-centered 12-week program helps persons who are in troubled marriages or who desire a stronger relationship to place their focus and energy into self-healing through the use of a workbook and with the assistance of a support partner. The *Marriage 911: First Response Workbook* and the *Marriage 911: First Response Support Partner Handbook* provide clear directions to develop health and wholeness. [National Institute of Marriage, 250 Lakewood Drive, Hollister, MO 65672, 417-335-5882, [www.nationalmarriage.com](http://www.nationalmarriage.com)]

***Retrouvaille: A Lifeline for Troubled Marriages*** This Christian Peer Ministry begins with a weekend retreat in which husbands and wives are helped to re-establish communication and gain new understanding of themselves and each other. Presenting couples, who have experienced their own crises, share stories of their pain, reconciliation, and healing. Participants are not asked to share publicly in this setting, but learn tools and receive encouragement to rediscover each other and their relationship. This program also includes follow-up sessions over a three-month period. Couples who have experienced healing through *Retrouvaille* would be a wonderful resource for mentoring other couples in crisis. [Call 1-800-470-2230 or visit [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org) for information about schedule and location of retreats.]

**Rodgers Christian Counseling**, 1206 Jules Ct., Charlotte, NC 28226, (704) 364-9176, FAX (704) 366-0729, [www.soulhealinglove.com](http://www.soulhealinglove.com). This center presents a Soul Healers Workshop and publishes resources for engaged couples, married couples wishing to grow deeper in love, couples in crisis, and singles seeking a soul mate. Sign up for free e-newsletter at the website.

***Single & Parenting: Hard Work, Real Hope*** (Lake Forest, NC: Church Initiative, 2011) This "teach-out-of-the-box" curriculum kit provides a Leader's Guide, Participant's Workbook, set of DVDs, and promotional brochures and flyers. Detailed information is provided for organizing and promoting this experience, which consists of 13 two-hour sessions blending Biblical teaching with practical advice, and for recruiting leaders and using the training module on one of the DVDs. The Leader's Guide suggests offering the 13 sessions three times in a given year, since participants can enter the program at any time in the cycle, providing frequent points of entry for single parents seeking support. You will need to purchase a workbook for each participant (\$15.each at [www.singleandparenting.org](http://www.singleandparenting.org)), where you will also find extensive helps and resources. You can reach a consultant by phone during normal working hours.

***Starting Again: A Divorce Recovery Program***, by Sandra Scott (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1997). This course, designed to help persons take positive steps toward divorce

recovery, is based on the premise that everyone, through Christ, has the power to make decisions that will determine how divorce affects his or her future. Three sections provide helpful suggestions: “First Grieve,” “Then Grow,” “Then What?” A Guide for Group Leaders outlines eight sessions.

**Smart Stepfamilies** (formerly Successful Stepfamilies) [www.smartstepfamilies.com](http://www.smartstepfamilies.com). Visit the website of this organization, which features works by Ron Deal, an expert in this field, to sign up for a free e-newsletter, find conferences and events, read articles and book reviews, and view videos.

**The National Stepfamily Resource Center**, 2315 Centennial Mall South, Suite 212, Lincoln, NE, 68508, 800-735-0329, [www.stepfam.org](http://www.stepfam.org). This national non-profit organization offers resources and valuable information for step-families.

***The Third Option*** (Syracuse, NY: Family Life Education, Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, 1988). Contact Pat Ennis at (315) 472-6728 or [pat@thethirdoption.com](mailto:pat@thethirdoption.com), or visit [www.thethirdoption.com](http://www.thethirdoption.com). This on-going program of peer ministry and relationship education combines three dynamics: a support group, “sharing” couples, and workshops on relationship skills. The first hour of the weekly meeting offers orientation for newcomers and support group sharing for those already in the program. The second hour offers a 30-minute workshop on one of 14 topics, which continually recycle so that participants can come in at any time. The Third Option Manual, which contains the complete program and all needed materials, is sold only to non-profit organizations willing to offer this program free to the public. A staff person or volunteer with human services expertise could establish and run this program in about six hours a week for the first year, three hours a week thereafter. A professional counselor should be available for occasional screening of “sharing couples” and consultation as needed.

## ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES FOR MINISTRIES WITH FAMILIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS, TRANSITION, AND CRISIS

**Church Initiative**, 250 S. Allen Rd., P.O. Box 1739, Wake Forest, NC 27588-1739, 800-395-5755 (US and Canada), 919-562-2112 (local and international), 919-562-2114 (fax) [info@churchinitiative.org](mailto:info@churchinitiative.org), [www.churchinitiative.org](http://www.churchinitiative.org). A nondenominational, nonprofit ministry, Church Initiative provides resources and program support to help local churches minister effectively to persons in their community. All materials are Christ-centered, biblically based, and designed for use by local churches. Among the resources currently available are DivorceCare, DivorceCare for Kids, GriefShare, Chance to Change (for healing gambling addiction), Before You Divorce, and Facing Forever (issues of life, death, and eternity). Links to each program and schedules of training events are available at [www.churchinitiative.org](http://www.churchinitiative.org).

**Marriage Builders: Building Marriages to Last a Lifetime**, [www.marriagebuilders.com](http://www.marriagebuilders.com)  
Based on the work of Dr. Willard Harley, this website offers numerous articles and radio link recordings that teach couples how to meet each other's important emotional needs and cultivate their passion. You can sign up for e-newsletters, purchase online courses and access to radio broadcast archives, and read Dr. Harley's columns, which focus on preventing and healing from affairs.

**Rodgers Christian Counseling**, 1206 Jules Ct., Charlotte, NC 28226, 704-364-9176, FAX (704) 366-0729, [www.soulhealinglove.com](http://www.soulhealinglove.com). This center presents a Soul Healers Workshop and publishes resources for engaged couples, married couples wishing to grow deeper in love, couples in crisis, and singles seeking a soul mate. Find events and resources at the website.

**The Beyond Affairs Network (BAN)** Canada: 604-859-9393; USA: 727-935-4812. This network provides website resources and support for those affected by infidelity. Sign up for a free e-newsletter, find support groups near you, learn how others have dealt with such experiences. <http://www.beyondaffairs.com>.

**www.SuccessfulStepfamilies.com**, founded by Ron Deal, LMFT, to help stepfamilies move toward healthy living and equip churches to minister to their unique needs. Visit this website for articles, a free e-newsletter, online webinars, book reviews, curriculum materials (*Remarriage Success*, *The Smart Stepfamily*), and conference information.