

Welcome, Introduction, and Feelings ~ 100:15 (~~63:15~~)
Outline Only - Common Protestant Outline
(WITH 3RE CHANGES NOTED IN BOLD ITALICIZED CAPS)

Part I – 2nd set Lay couple (Total time 23:05 24:20)

I. Warm welcome and introduction (Total time: 3:40)

- A. Thank & affirm them for coming** (CL or CS: 0:20; LH or LW: 0:20)
- B. Team explains their role** (Lay who gave A: 0:30; CL: 0:30)
- C. Nuts and bolts** (Lay who did not give A and B: 2:00)
 - 1. Facility
 - 2. Marriage Encounter experience details (**LEAVE NAME TAGS HERE; TAKE HOME MATERIALS; ETC.**)
 - 3. Workbook (**GIVE OUT SPIRAL NOTEBOOK FOR DIALOGUE**)
 - 4. **SNACK TABLE ETIQUETTE**
 - 5. **HOLD QUESTIONS FOR BREAKS; EXPLAIN QUESTION "JAR" AND Q&A SESSIONS**
 - 6. **THEIR PRIVATE SPACE**

II. Why we (the couples) are here (A-D: CL and/or CS: 1:00)

- A. Make our marriage better**
- B. Improve our communication**
- C. Deepen our intimacy**
- D. To be alone together, away from children and other distractions**

III. Communication exercise (Total time: 2:40)

- A. Exercise**
 - 1. **Transition** (CL or CS: 0:15)
 - 2. **Share “A quality of yours that I appreciate is....”**
(LH & LW and CL & CS: 0:10 each)
- B. Ask couples to write a quality that they appreciate about their spouse in their Workbook**
(LH or LW: 0:45; instructions, 0:15, exercise, 0:30)
- C. Ask couples to share what they have written with each other** (LH or LW: 0:30)
- D. Wrap up: Why we did this exercise** (CL or CS: 0:30)

IV. Freeing self to experience the Marriage Encounter program
(Total time: 4:45)

A. Avoid distractions

1. Give guidelines (LH or LW: 1:30)

2. Don't compare with other experiences (CL or CS: 1:00)

B. Presenters share what they have to let go of in order to be fully present here (LH & LW and CL & CS: 0:15 each)

C. Ask the couples to write down their obstacles and worries in their Workbooks

(LH or LW: 1:15; instructions, 0:15; writing, 0:45; exercise, 0:15)

V. Motivation (Total 2:00) (LH or LW and CL or CS: 1:00 each)

VI. Questions (Total time: 9:00)
(CL or CS: 9:00; instructions, 1:00; writing, 5:00; reading and discussion, 3:00)

Why did I come here? What do I hope to gain? (5:00)

Part 2 – 3rd set Lay couple (Total time: ~~77:10~~ **38:55**)

VII. Transition from Part 1 into Feelings (LH or LW: 0:30)

VIII. Our feelings as we began our Marriage Encounter experience
(Total time: 2:00, LH & LW and CL & CS: 0:30 each)

IX. Feelings introduction (Total time: 13:55)

A. Definition of feelings (LH or LW: 0:10)

B. Give three simple and relatable examples of each of the following feelings (3:30 total for all presenters)

1. Happy (LH or LW who gave A: 1:00)

2. Sad (LH or LW who did not just speak: 0:45)

3. Afraid (CL or CS: 0:45)

4. Angry (CL or CS who did not just speak: 1:00 including wrap-up)

C. Explain the difference between thoughts and feelings
(LH or LW: 2:45)

1. Difference between thoughts and feelings

2. Explain the “I think vs. I feel” test

D. Feelings exercise, in place

(CL or CS: 2:30; instructions, 0:30; writing, 1:00; name feeling, 0:30; sharing, 0:30)

- 1. Recall a situation when you have had a strong feeling, an inner reaction. In one or two sentences describe the situation in writing.**
- 2. Name the feeling you experienced at the time of the situation and write it in your Workbook where it says, "I felt...."**
- 3. Tell the couples to read what the other wrote**

E. Communication example, thoughts vs. feelings (Total time: 1:45)

- 1. One spouse describes a situation using thoughts, no feelings** (LH or LW: 0:45)
- 2. Other spouse describes the same situation, but using feelings instead of thoughts** (Other Lay spouse: 0:45)
- 3. Clergy points out the difference** (CL or CS: 0:15)

F. Common misunderstandings about feelings (Total time: 3:15)

- 1. Feelings are unimportant** (LW: 0:45)
- 2. "Real men" don't have tender feelings** (LH: 0:45)
- 3. Some feelings are wrong or bad** (CL or CS: 1:00)
- 4. Others are to blame for my feelings**
(CL or CS who did not do 3 above: 0:45)

<p>X. Identifying and sharing our feelings enriches our communication (Total time: 2:00)</p>

A. What are the results when I share my feelings with my spouse?

(LH: 1:00)

- 1. I know myself better**
- 2. There is more to me than my brain**
- 3. We gain a better understanding of each other**
- 4. There is greater closeness in our marriage**

B. What are the results when I don't share my feelings with my spouse? (LW: 1:00)

- 1. Misunderstandings**
- 2. Unshared feelings result in inappropriate behavior**
- 3. It puts a wedge between us**

<p>XI. Introduce and briefly teach the dialogue process (Total time: 15:15)</p>
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A. Introduce (LH or LW: 0:30)

B. Teach steps (LH or LW [1-6]: 3:30; CL or CS [7]: 1:00)

- 1. At the end of each presentation we will give a question about our relationship, and we will separate to write.**

2. **First answer the question in 2 or 3 sentences sharing just thoughts. Then, reflecting on the answer, we get in touch with our feeling(s) about the question.**
 3. **Name the feeling(s) and write it/them down.**
 4. **Describe your strongest feeling in writing.**
 5. **Next, we will exchange what we have written in the privacy of our room and read twice what our spouse wrote to us.**
 6. **Pick the strongest feeling from the two reflections and help each other to clarify the feeling.**
 7. **Importance of writing** (CL or CS: 1:00)
- C. Sample dialogue on: “What is my strongest feeling as we begin this Marriage Encounter experience?”** (LH & LW: 8:00)
- D. Clergy wraps up the sample dialogue** (CL or CS: 0:45)
- E. Give helpful suggestions for dialogue** (CL or CS: 1:30)

XII. Motivation to share feelings (Total time: 2:00)

- A. Remember dating and early marriage and all that you talked about. It can be as good as that, even better** (LH or LW: 0:45)
- B. What we are going to share with you may make it possible to expand, enhance, enrich or deepen your marriage** (CL or CS: 0:45)
- C. Clergy provides further motivation** (CL: 0:30)

XIII. Wrap-up and Dialogue questions (CL or CS: Total time: **1:30**, & 20:00 dialogue)

~~**A. Wrap up**~~

- ~~1. **Flow of the Marriage Encounter Experience**~~
- ~~2. **Procedure to call them back to the conference room**~~
- ~~3. **Wake-up procedure**~~
- ~~4. **Any other relevant announcements**~~

~~**B. Worship details and closing prayer**~~ (CL and/or CS: 1:30)

A. Read the questions

1. **What qualities do I appreciate most about you? How do I feel as I write this to you? Describe the feelings in full detail.**
2. **What qualities do I appreciate most about us? How do I feel as I write this to you? Describe the feelings in full detail.**

B. TEACH THE QUESTIONS

B. EXPLAIN PROCESS OF MOVING TO PRIVATE SPACE AND CALL BACK

Writing time: 10 minutes

Dialogue time: 10 minutes

Husbands stay in the conference room to write (recommended).

XIV. MOTIVATION TO DIALOGUE AT HOME AND RETURN FOR NEXT SESSION (WRAP UP) (LH AND LW: TOTAL TIME: 15:00)

- A. REVIEW SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL HOME DIALOGUE**
- B. FEED BACK**
- C. TAKE-HOME DIALOGUE QUESTION ACRONYMS**
- D. Q & A (AND REMIND ABOUT BOX FOR NEXT TIME) (10:00)**
- E. MISSION POSSIBLE**

XV. TEASER FOR NEXT SESSION: (CL AND/OR CS: TOTAL TIME: 5:00)