

Encounter with Self –*ABOUT 113:00 (USUALLY 54:45)*

Outline & Mentality – Common Protestant Outline

Adapted for the Restore, Rekindle, Renew Enrichment

(3RE CHANGES IN BOLD ITALIC CAPS)

Objective

To help the couples take a realistic look at how they present themselves to others through their dominant personality style and behaviors and to help them get in touch with their self-doubts and how these self-doubts limit their relationships.

Goals of this presentation

To know

- they each have a dominant personality style
- their behaviors can have both positive and negative effects on their spouse and their relationship
- they cannot change their personality style, but they can change their behaviors
- the majority of people struggle with self-doubts or a poor self-image
- God created them good, lovable, and unique

To do

- complete an exercise to identify their dominant personality style
- recognize their patterns of behavior
- acknowledge that they have self-doubts or a poor self-image
- choose to believe in the “me” that God sees
- take an honest assessment of themselves

To experience

- an awareness of who they are as unique individuals
- a recognition of how their behaviors impact their relationship
- an openness to face their self-doubts or poor self-image
- a desire to make a choice to grow in their relationship throughout the Marriage Encounter

Flow of the presentation

We begin Encounter with Self with a Personality Styles Assessment to help the couples discover their dominant personality style. We give the WWME definitions of “personality style” and “behavior” and offer an analogy to illustrate the difference between the two. We make a very clear distinction between our dominant personality style (our temperament) and our behaviors (what we do), being careful not to blame our behaviors on our personality style or excuse our behaviors because of our personality style. We each share our dominant personality style. Next, we each provide brief descriptions of our typical behaviors, followed by examples of how we developed certain behaviors from childhood through adulthood. We illustrate how we used those behaviors at various stages in our life in an attempt to try to be in control, gain acceptance, or

protect our self-esteem. We give examples of how our behaviors have both positive and negative effects on our relationship. We point out that each of us has a “me” we do not want others to see. Then we illustrate how our doubts about our self-worth and lovability limit us in relationships by using the story of Aldonza and Don Quixote from the musical, “Man of La Mancha.” Our self-doubts also fuel our attitudes of superiority, which we define and illustrate, ending with the effect they have on our relationship. To further illustrate the damaging effect of our self-doubts, we give an example of how we minimize or reject compliments and how we use a double standard to judge ourselves. We reinforce God’s great love for us by reading portions of Psalm 139. We motivate the couples to choose to believe in “the ‘me’ that God sees.” We then invite each of them to make a choice – to stay where they are as individuals or to grow in their ability to love and to be loved. Finally, we give directions for the personal reflection time and urge the couples to make the most of this writing time.

Connection with other presentations

It is imperative that Encounter with Self is the first talk written by all presenting teams! Encounter with Self weaves through all the succeeding talks. My personality style (temperament) and my behaviors impact the specific barriers I have to listening, to sharing my feelings in sensitive areas in our relationship, and to risking to trust my spouse in dialogue. Discovering these various aspects prepares the couples to accept their own feelings, as well as the feelings of their spouse, in Listening, Areas for Reaching Out to Each Other, and Risking to Trust in Dialogue.

Formation:

The concepts presented in Encounter with Self are vitally important to the transformation of the couples. Each presenter **must** have a thorough understanding of these concepts, because they will be reflected in what we write about our personality style, behaviors, self-doubts, and attitudes of superiority throughout the Marriage Encounter experience.

The personality styles presented in Encounter with Self are based upon the universally-accepted Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. There is an established psychological basis for what we are teaching. Worldwide Marriage Encounter has adapted the Personality Styles Assessment to be less detailed and more easily relatable to the couples, assigning designations to four different personality styles that are descriptive and easy to remember.

Our personality style is with us from birth, and it is not something that will ever change. It is our “temperament” – and this innate style colors who we are and indicates our leanings in a certain direction. However, it is important to realize that our personality style alone does not define “who we are.” While our personality style forms the basis for “who we are,” much like the foundation of a building, the whole of “who we are” also includes our history, our experiences, our faith, our attitudes, and even our behaviors. This whole, total me, is referred to in the printed instructions in II A. as “our own personality.” Couples who wrote to the previous outline need to be clear that personality (total me) is not the same as “personality style” (temperament).

Knowing our own dominant personality style helps us to better understand ourselves and what motivates or drives us. Knowing our spouse’s dominant personality style can help us understand what “makes them tick.” As we begin to know and appreciate our different ways of looking at the world, this awareness can bring greater sensitivity and understanding to our relationship.

In describing our dominant personality style, it is important to remember that all Organizers are not the same; neither are all Thinkers, Helpers, or Catalysts the same. Each dominant personality style has distinct personal qualities, values, and traits. Within each dominant personality style, there are introverts and extroverts, optimists and pessimists, masculine and feminine, etc. Even though we do not specifically talk about these dynamics, most will be evident in how we describe ourselves.

We illustrate throughout this presentation that my dominant personality style (my temperament) is not the same as what I do (my behaviors). Since God has formed me and I am precious in His eyes, my dominant personality style is neither good nor bad – but my behaviors can certainly be judged as good or bad. Many people define who they are by finding their identity and self-worth in what they do and how they act. This distinction between our dominant personality style and our behaviors is essential because we have the power to change behaviors that may damage our relationship and lower our self-esteem. My dominant personality style will not change from moment to moment or day to day. However, my behaviors change often and I can choose to behave (or not behave) in certain ways. Although there is a relationship between our personality style and our typical behaviors, we must never use our dominant personality style as an excuse for our behaviors in Encounter with Self or in any other presentation.

Perhaps for the first time we begin to encounter who we are, what we do, and why we do it. Encounter with Self directs us to examine ourselves as individuals and to be accountable for the effect our behaviors have on our spouse and our relationship. We are asked to explore the deep fears that we keep hidden about who we are, which means exposing our doubts about our own worth and lovability. We focus on how our self-doubts prevent us from giving and receiving love, and how our superior attitudes affect our spouse and our relationship. This encounter with self should be difficult to share, and it is likely that most of us will experience some resistance to this level of vulnerability.

Another important objective of Encounter with Self is to lead the couples step-by-step to passages from Psalm 139, so they will be empowered to overcome any obstacle of self-doubt and choose to believe in "the 'me' that God sees." Our goal is to guide the couples to recognize their intrinsic worth and value as persons. These verses will provide the realization that God knows their inmost being and loves them as individuals. That is the powerful message we leave them with – that God loves them, just as they are. When we are able to accept that we are good and lovable, then all those things we do not like about ourselves no longer stand in the way of our giving and receiving the love God wants for us.

As we write Encounter with Self and try to understand and assimilate these concepts into our daily lives, it can lead us to an awareness about ourselves that may result in tremendous positive changes in our relationship.

I. WARM WELCOME AND REVIEW (LH AND/OR LW AND CL or CS: 8:00)

I A. WELCOME AND NUTS AND BOLTS (LH and/or LW: 3:00)

IN THE NEW SECTION I, WARM WELCOME AND REVIEW, THE LAY COUPLE SHARES A WARM WELCOME, A SPEEDY REVIEW OF NUTS AND BOLTS (ESPECIALLY IF THERE ARE CHANGES WITH SNACKS OR SPACE), AND A REMINDER THAT THE Q&A TIME IS COMING UP. IF YOU ARE NOT THE SAME PRESENTERS AS IN THE FIRST SESSION, INTRODUCE YOURSELVES.

I B. RECAP OF LAST SESSION (CL and/or CS: 5:00)

THE CLERGY DIVIDES UP A REVIEW OF THE HIGHLIGHTS AND PROGRESS OF THE FIRST SESSION. THIS MIGHT TAKE ON A "HIKING/ADVENTURE" THEME, AS THE FIRST SESSION "PACKED THEIR BACKPACKS" WITH SOME TOOLS AND WARM-UPS FOR THE JOURNEY, AS THEY TALKED OF WAYS TO FREE THEMSELVES OF DISTRACTIONS AND WERE INTRODUCED TO THE CONCEPT OF FEELINGS AND HOW TO SHARE THEM. THEY WERE PREPARED FOR A WEEK OF DIALOGUING AT HOME.

II. QUESTION & ANSWER TIME (CL AND/OR CS: 10:00)

BE PREPARED TO READ AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS IN THE JAR AND ASK:

- ***HOW HAS YOUR WEEK GONE?***
- ***WHAT NEW THINGS HAVE YOU LEARNED?***
- ***WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?***

III. Introduction and optional opening prayer (CL or CS: 0:30)

CONSIDER AN ENCOURAGING TRANSITION INTO THE CURRENT SESSION, INCLUDING WHATEVER VERBIAGE AND PRAYERS FROM THE TRADITIONAL FORMAT THAT YOU WISH.

State:

The title of this presentation is Encounter with Self. It can be found on page ___ of your Workbook.

Opening prayer (optional - WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN USED IN THE SECTION ABOVE)

Suggested wording:

Loving Father, as we begin this day, give each of us the openness to look at ourselves in a different light. Show us how to better understand ourselves and what we do and how our choices affect our relationship with our spouse. Help us recognize and let go of our self-doubts so that we may see our own goodness and open our hearts to each other.

IV. Typical ways we try to present ourselves (Total time: LH or LW: 15:00)

IV A. Introduce Personality Styles Assessment (LH or LW: 3:00)

After taking the couples to the correct page, read the instructions as they are written in the Workbook (words within parentheses are suggested verbal additions to printed instructions):

Read as is:

We invite you now to turn to page _____ in your Workbook.

Each of us has our own personality that reflects who we are as unique individuals. Our personality is built from our history, our experiences, our faith, our attitudes, and even our behaviors. (Our overall personality is the total of who we are.)

The foundation of our personality is our personality style, or temperament. Our personality style is with us from birth and is not something that will change. This temperament colors who we are and indicates our leanings, reflects our values and principles, and affects our relationships.

There are four basic personality styles that we use in Worldwide Marriage Encounter in order to help us discover who we are. All of us have aspects of each; however, knowing our dominant personality style is helpful in developing empathy, understanding, acceptance and trust in any relationship.

(We are now going to complete a Personality Styles Assessment to identify our dominant personality style.)

In this exercise, read the statements on the left and then write 1, 2, 3 or 4 in the boxes next to each of the four responses. A 1 indicates the response least like you, while 4 indicates the response most like you. Don't duplicate numbers along a row. If you look at the second statement in the example below, "the strongest value or principle for me," the person completing the assessment put a 4 next to "freedom," as that was most like him, and put a 1 next to "being correct," as that was least like him. Then the other boxes were filled in with a 2 and a 3 in the same way.

(Mark the boxes in terms of who you are, not who you would like to be or think you should be. Go with first impressions. You may have taken other personality inventories on a professional basis; but for this exercise, we ask that you focus your responses on how you see yourself in your home, family, or spousal relationships rather than your work environment.) Remember, 4 is most like you; 1 is least like you. (Please turn the page and begin now.)

IV B. Give them 8 minutes to complete the exercise (8:00)

NOTE:

Do not tell the couples the amount of time they will have for this assessment. This ensures consistency with the rest of the outline, where the only writing time provided is in reference to

the extended dialogue. Also, do not refer to this exercise as a “test” as this might create anxiety in some participants.

All presenters should complete the Personality Styles Assessment at the same time as the couples. The couples presenting this should also be observant to the possibility that everyone will complete the exercise more quickly than time allotted. Any of the presenting team should be ready to provide assistance to the couples, if needed. In the rare event that someone chooses NOT to complete the exercise, be supportive and offer to be available later, if desired. By the end of 8 minutes, let the couples know that you need to move on.

IV C. Give them 4 minutes to read the personality style descriptions and share their Personality Styles Assessment with their spouse (4:00)

Suggested wording:

If you are finished, please tally your results by adding the four vertical columns. The highest total indicates your dominant personality style. The letters next to the totals correspond to the four: Helper, Organizer, Thinker, and Catalyst. Take a few minutes to read over the descriptions of these on page ____ and then discuss the results of the exercise with your spouse. If you still need more time to complete the exercise, please do that first.

V. The way I try to present myself to others (TOTAL TIME: 51:00)

V A. The difference between personality style and behaviors
(LH or LW, usually the person who did not present section II)

V A 1. Give the definitions of personality style and behavior
(1:15)

After the suggested wording transition statement below, read as is the definition printed:
If you turn to page __ in the Workbook, you will see how we will be using two very important terms.

My personality style reflects my identity, becoming more apparent from childhood through adulthood. It influences and is reflected in the things I say and do, including my perceptions and reactions to persons, places, and events around me. It encompasses my personal values, beliefs, goals, expectations, hopes, and fears.

(Something verbal could be added here, such as: I like to think of my personality style as me on the inside, my internal motivation and the filter through which I process life.)

By comparison, a behavior is what I do. A behavior is a learned and adaptable manner of presenting myself in an attempt to be in control, win approval, gain respect, receive affirmation or acceptance, or protect my self-esteem. My behaviors have been learned over a lifetime; but,

unlike my personality style, they are subject to adaptation and change. They may be based on whether the setting is work, home, or play. Behaviors can be learned as well as unlearned.

(Something verbal could be added here, such as: So, if my personality style is internal, my behaviors are external – you can always see or hear them.)

V A 2. Give an analogy to illustrate the difference between personality style and behavior (1:00)

Suggested wording:

This distinction between personality style and behavior might make more sense if I offer you an analogy. For instance, the difference between personality style and behavior could be compared to the difference between a particular style of house and how I choose to decorate it. If I tell you that I live in a two-story house - that gives you a broad picture. Just like my personality style, which remains constant, the house is not suddenly going to change into a ranch-style. But for you to get a clearer picture of what my house is like, you would need to know more about how I've chosen to decorate – modern or colonial, paint or wallpaper, tile or carpeting. These specific choices are like our behaviors. They are all things that we can and will change over the years - but no matter what choices I make, I will still be living in that two-story house.

V A 3. Explain that we cannot change our personality style, but we can change our behaviors (0:30)

Suggested wording (to match what is printed in the Workbook):

Just as feelings are neither right nor wrong, neither is our personality style right nor wrong, nor is one style better than another. It is our behavior that can be right or wrong. Although there is a relationship between our personality style and the behaviors we choose, we should never excuse bad behavior by saying, "That's just because I'm a Thinker" (or a Helper, a Catalyst, or an Organizer). I cannot change my personality style, but I definitely can change what I do. I am responsible for my behaviors.

V B. Identify and describe my dominant personality style

(LH & LW and CL & CS: 1:00 each)

Lay husband or wife begins with a transition statement, indicating that while each of us is a blend of all four personality styles, we each have a dominant style.

As each presenter shares, be sure to refer to your dominant personality style. Use the full time allotted to name and describe your dominant personality style. To develop this section, explore the following questions (and review pages 23 and 24 at the end of this document):

- What do I value?
- What do I seek?
- What affirms me?
- What brings me down?

NOTE:

Affirmation goes beyond compliments, but can include situations or circumstances that instill satisfaction or security or promote positive feelings:

- Focus on what you believe, what you need, what you fear.
- Think about what you yearn for, admire, cherish, respect, etc.
- Be careful to avoid phrases such as “I like to ...” or “I tend to ...” because use of “to” typically points to a behavior, just as “that” after “I feel” typically points to a thought.

Here are a few examples of phrases that might describe your dominant personality style, without including behaviors:

- “I value integrity.”
- “I seek truth.”
- “I am affirmed by freedom and spontaneity.”
- “I distrust conformity and rules.”
- “I am motivated by logic and clarity.”
- “I appreciate kindness.”

For the sake of clarity, examples should be brief: while you may name a feeling where appropriate, do not include a description of it. In addition, you may want to incorporate some of your answers from your own Assessment, as this can provide reinforcement for the participants. Just be sure to focus on responses that illustrate your dominant personality style, not what you do. Our aim is to make ourselves transparent through candid self-disclosure. Our honesty can encourage and inspire the couples to seek self-awareness and self-discovery.

Formation:

In order to write this section effectively, each presenter should complete the Assessment again. Be certain you have determined your dominant personality style; focus your responses on how you see yourself in your spousal relationship rather than in a work environment. Rather than giving a “one-size-fits-all” description of a particular personality style, be specific. (Remember, the personality style descriptions in the Workbook are not all-inclusive.) It can be enlightening to complete the Assessment for the spouse and then compare notes. In situations where the Assessment results are very close for two personality styles, try completing the exercise again, using only the two categories that are similar, marking a “4” for the answer that is most like you and a “1” for the answer that is least like you. In presenting Encounter with Self, you are focusing only on your dominant personality style. This means specifically omitting values, qualities, and traits of others, even though they are part of who you are as a unique individual. This is not meant to restrict you, but to provide clarity in teaching the concept of dominant personality style in this section.

Caution:

It is very important that each person writing this specifically describes his/her dominant personality style, even though it may be the same as his or her spouse. If that is the case, the husband and wife should be sure to emphasize that, while their dominant personality styles are the same, they have different personal qualities or things that affirm them or bring them down. This demonstrates that each is a unique individual, even though they have the same dominant personality style. It is possible (although not ideal) that two or even all people presenting

Encounter with Self could have the same dominant personality style. Each person's description will be somewhat different, so it is unlikely that this will have a negative impact on the couples.

That being said, as the Lay couple goes first, the repetition regarding dominant personality styles falls on the Clergy couple, so they should be prepared to provide a shorter version to allow for unrepresented dominant personality styles to be mentioned briefly in D. below. It is very important that there is a clear separation between personality style as shared in this section and behaviors as shared in the next section.

V C. Dominant personality styles not covered (LH or LW: 0:45)

NOTE:

The purpose of section V C. is to allow for couples who have identified with certain dominant personality styles which are not represented by the presenters to be more included. These descriptions need only be read for the dominant personality styles not covered. The allotted time represents the additional time overall, because the Clergy leader and/or spouse should have used their shortened versions of their section V B in cases of duplication with the Lay couple.

Transition statement - sample wording:

You may have noticed that the four presenters represented just ___ of the four dominant personality styles. So, I'd like to go back a bit to talk about the _____.

You can write a very short description (maximum of 0:30 for each style) of the dominant personality styles which are not yours or your spouse's, based on the instructions of III B., or use or adapt the descriptions of page 25 in the Outline & Mentality. This is not meant to be comprehensive, and may not even describe a "real" person.

NOTE:

As the nature and implications of our choices of behaviors will be well covered in V D., and behavioral examples are no longer tied to a restricted list of behaviors "typical" for a dominant personality style, this section omits reference to behaviors.

V D. Identify and share about some of my typical behaviors

(0:30 for transition statement followed by LH & LW and CL & CS: 3:00 each for 2, 3, 4)

V D 1. Transition into behaviors (LH or LW: 0:30)

Lay husband or wife begins section with a transition before continuing on with sections 2 – 4.

Suggested wording:

We have talked about our personality styles. Now let's switch gears and focus on our behaviors – the things we do. Our behaviors develop over a lifetime as a result of many factors, including environment, family interactions, work, and our life experiences. From childhood on, we have each developed certain behaviors that help us to be in control, win approval, gain respect, receive affirmation or acceptance, or protect our self-esteem.

Suggested transition:

Some of my behaviors that I have developed in my everyday life include....

V D 2. Illustrate my typical behaviors (3:00 for each person for 2, 3 & 4)

NOTE:

Each presenter will present section D 2-4 prior to the next presenter's sharing, using a similar Transition before listing their typical behaviors.

Illustrate three or four of your typical behaviors so that the couples have a good idea of the things you normally choose to do. It may be very informative to ask your spouse to help you identify these. You can also review behaviors you checked on your Assessment (see statements 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10). Each behavior should be shared briefly, without any long stories.

The following is an example of how typical behaviors might be illustrated:

Some of my behaviors include marching to my own drummer and rarely shying away from debate or discussion. When a problem crops up, I make it my top priority and I tune out everyone and everything until I analyze the situation and come up with the right answer. Once a decision is made, though, I don't look back, and gladly leave it to others to put the plan into action.

Formation:

The most important thing we want the couples to know is that they can change what they do (behaviors). While we tend towards behaviors that are compatible with our dominant personality style, it is important to know that there is no list of behaviors that belongs exclusively to one personality style. It is not necessary, therefore, that the behaviors we describe be limited to those that are typically associated with our dominant personality style.

Rather, we have learned that certain behaviors just seem natural to us. We choose to behave in ways that get us what we want, help us to feel secure, or avoid consequences that we experience as negative. As an example, making lists is often associated with Organizers, but Helpers may also make lists to avoid forgetting things in their efforts to form consensus and avoid offending others. Thinkers may choose to make lists to assist in analyzing an issue or collecting information. Catalysts may make lists to be sure they have not forgotten anything for their newest creation. The behaviors are similar; what is different is the motivation.

Be aware that the name of our dominant personality style does not mean that the examples of behavior we share should only include helping, organizing, thinking, or spontaneity.

Helper: tends toward behaviors that focus on building and nurturing relationships, loyalty, fellowship, cooperation, tactfulness, collaboration.

Organizer: tends toward behaviors that focus on order, stability, security, efficiency, reliability, and responsibility.

Thinker: tends toward behaviors that focus on analysis, process, correctness, justice, sound principles, fairness.

Catalyst: tends toward behaviors that focus on innovation, motivation, change, freedom, creativity, risk-taking, excitement, competition.

V D 3. Give brief examples of the ways my behaviors developed

After giving brief examples of some of your typical behaviors, transition into how you used these same behaviors at various stages of your life in an attempt to be in control, win approval, gain respect, receive affirmation or acceptance, or protect your self-esteem. Be careful not to give the impression that you blame your behaviors on your dominant personality style or that your environment or past experiences cause your behaviors. Your examples should include the following key elements:

- To illustrate how your behaviors developed, include a childhood and adolescent example, as well as one or more adult examples that show how you choose these same types of behaviors today.
- For each example, briefly state the specific behavior you chose at that time in your life.
- Explain your motivation for choosing that behavior. What was the reward you sought or received (control, approval, respect, affirmation, acceptance, self-esteem, etc.) that reinforced your behavior?
- The development of behaviors is an on-going process to this day.

V D 4. Share the positive and negative effects of my behaviors

Transition statement - suggested wording:

My behaviors can have both positive and negative effects on our relationship.

Share two separate examples of your typical behaviors and the positive and negative effects of your behaviors on your spousal relationship. In determining which behaviors to share, focus on those that have a noticeable impact on your relationship.

Your examples should include the following key elements:

- Briefly identify a behavior of yours that has a noticeable impact on your relationship, without lengthy illustrations or details.
- Describe the positive effects on your communication, and/or your mutual interaction, and/or your physical intimacy when you choose to behave this way.
- It is not enough to simply state that a positive effect is that your relationship is “closer and more intimate.” Be very specific! Could some positive effects of your behavior be a sense of teamwork in your marriage or more passionate love-making? Is your relationship easy-going or filled with a sense of adventure? Is there more laughter, playfulness, or compliments between you, a sense of fun and spontaneity? Has your listening or sensitivity increased? Is life peaceful? Include multiple effects so that you paint a verbal picture of what your relationship is like when you choose these behaviors.
- Next share the negative effects of that same behavior on your relationship, again without lengthy illustrations or details.
- Describe the negative effects on your communication, and/or your mutual interaction, and/or your physical intimacy when you choose to behave this way. When describing the negative effects, you are showing the opposite side of what you shared above.
- Here again, be specific. It is not enough to simply state that a negative effect is “distance in your marriage.” Instead, consider whether your relationship is sometimes tense,

Encounter with Self
Outline & Mentality - CPO for 3RE

indifferent, or lonely. Are conversations sprinkled with impatience or sarcasm? Are there more separate activities than times spent together? Have holding hands, tender touches or physical intimacy diminished? Try to include multiple effects so that you paint a verbal picture of what it is like between you when you choose these behaviors.

- After sharing the positive and negative effects of one behavior, illustrate a second behavior and follow the same format as above.
- While not ideal, it is acceptable for the second example to identify two different behaviors – one illustrating the positive effects and another illustrating the negative.

Opposites often attract, and for couples, the same behaviors that may have attracted us to each other often become the source of many of our frustrations, disagreements and disappointments with each other later on. For that reason, it can make a very strong point when we illustrate how the same behavior can have both positive and negative effects on our relationship. For instance, analyzing a situation to try to determine the best outcome is certainly a behavior that can bring about positive effects; but if this behavior is used to the extreme, where we shut out our spouse or refuse to consider any other opinion, then the impact on our relationship can be quite negative. Under stress or in an argument, our instinctive behaviors can become most evident.

There should be no mention of your dominant personality style in this section, as this will confuse the participants. There is a definite separation between your personality style and what you do. We have previously told the couples that our personality style is neither right nor wrong, but our behaviors can be judged as right or wrong. Once that is stated, saying things like “my personality style has a negative effect on our relationship” gives the wrong message. Our behaviors have the positive or negative effects on our relationship, but we can choose the behaviors we use on a day-to-day basis.

Formation:

The underlying message we present in Encounter with Self is that we do not have to be enslaved by our behaviors. Our behaviors don't define us! We can choose different behaviors. Being aware of our natural tendency to behave in certain ways gives us the freedom to make different choices when we recognize that our behaviors have a negative effect on our relationship.

At this point on the Marriage Encounter experience, most couples are not even aware of the negative effects of their behaviors on their relationships. Their growing awareness that there are clear distinctions between my personality style (temperament) and the ways I choose to act (behaviors) will allow them to more fully appreciate the concept of “to love is a decision” in Marriage in Today's World. We do not mention making a change in our behavior, as this is presented later in the program. It is important to remember that the focus of this section is NOT on the specific behavior itself, whether typical or atypical. The focus is on positive effects and negative effects of specific behaviors on our relationship.

**V E. THE WAY I TRY TO PRESENT MYSELF TO OTHERS
(LH & LW: 35:00 INCLUDES DIALOGUE)**

THIS MODELS THE COMING DIALOGUE ON "WHAT BEHAVIOR OF MINE POSITIVELY AFFECTS OUR RELATIONSHIP? HOW DO I FEEL SHARING THIS WITH YOU?" BASICALLY THE LAY COUPLE WILL INTRODUCE THE SAMPLE DIALOGUE, QUICKLY RUNNING THROUGH THE POINTS TAUGHT IN WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, AND FEELINGS, AND THEN READ ALOUD THEIR TWO LETTERS BEFORE GIVING THE COUPLES 10:00 TO WRITE THEIR OWN REFLECTIONS IN PLACE. THE LAY COUPLE THEN DEMONSTRATES THE VERBAL PORTION OF DIALOGUE AND GIVES THE COUPLES 10:00 TO DO THEIRS IN THEIR PRIVATE SPACE. (OBVIOUSLY SOME TRAVEL TIME WILL BE INCURRED. TIME ALLOTTED TO THIS ENTIRE SECTION IS 35:00.) IF WRITERS NEED FURTHER INSTRUCTION ON HOW TO DO SUCH A SAMPLE, THEY SHOULD LOOK BACK AT THE O&M FOR FEELINGS.

V E 1. LAY COUPLE MODELS THIS DIALOGUE BY REVIEWING THE TECHNIQUE AND SHARING THEIR WRITTEN LETTERS (9:00 MAX)

SUGGESTED WORDING:

LET'S BRIEFLY REVIEW THE DIALOGUE PROCESS. FIRST, WE GIVE YOU A QUESTION ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP. THEN, YOU SEPARATE TO WRITE YOUR LOVE LETTER PRIVATELY. ANSWER THE QUESTION IN TWO OR THREE SENTENCES TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS, THEN WRITE DOWN THE FEELINGS YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THE QUESTION. AS A REMINDER, ON PAGE __, THERE IS A LIST TO HELP YOU NAME YOUR FEELINGS.

FOCUS ON YOUR STRONGEST FEELING AND DESCRIBE IT AS COMPLETELY AS YOU CAN, USING ANY OR ALL OF THE TECHNIQUES ON PAGE __. COMPARE IT WITH ANOTHER TIME YOU MAY HAVE HAD A SIMILAR FEELING; DESCRIBE IT USING YOUR SENSES – SOUND, TOUCH, SIGHT, SMELL, AND TASTE; EXPRESS WHAT YOUR FEELING MAKES YOU WANT TO DO; WHAT PHYSICAL SENSATION HAPPENS TO YOU WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE THE FEELING; HOW YOU WOULD RATE YOUR FEELING ON A SCALE OF 1-10.

READ BOTH OF YOUR LETTERS.

V E 2. GIVE THE COUPLES 10:00 TO WRITE ON THE SAME QUESTION (10:00 - DONE IN PLACE)

V E 3. LAY COUPLE DEMONSTRATES THE VERBAL PORTION OF DIALOGUE (6:00 MAX)

SUGGESTED WORDING:

NOW THAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN YOUR REFLECTIONS, NOW YOU WILL GO OFF TO YOUR PRIVATE SPACE AND LOVINGLY EXCHANGE YOUR REFLECTIONS, MAYBE WITH

A KISS OR HUG. READ EACH OTHER’S WORDS TWICE: ONCE FOR THE HEAD (FOCUSING ON THE WORDS), AND ONCE FOR THE HEART (FOCUSING ON THE PERSON BEHIND THE WORDS).

FOR YOUR VERBAL DIALOGUE, CHOOSE THE ONE STRONGEST FEELING FROM YOUR TWO LETTERS.

ONCE YOU HAVE CHOSEN THE STRONGEST FEELING, SPEND THE REST OF THE TIME GOING INTO GREATER DEPTH. ON PAGE __, YOU WILL FIND QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU WITH THE VERBAL DIALOGUE.

JUST AS _____ AND _____ DID BEFORE, ONE OF YOU WILL CONTINUE TO DESCRIBE YOUR FEELING WHILE THE OTHER LISTENS AND ASKS QUESTIONS TO ARRIVE AT A MUTUAL EXPERIENCE OF THE FEELING, WHICH IS THE GOAL OF YOUR VERBAL DIALOGUE.

WE’LL NOW DEMONSTRATE THIS FOR YOU WITH OUR OWN WRITING.

DO YOUR VERBAL DIALOGUE ALOUD.

V E 4. GIVE THE COUPLES 10:00 TO FINISH THEIR DIALOGUE (IN THEIR PRIVATE SPACES)

GIVE WHATEVER INSTRUCTIONS ARE NEEDED TO SEND THE COUPLES OFF TO THEIR SPACE AND REMIND THEM HOW YOU WILL CALL THEM BACK.

VI. How self-doubts limit me and my relationships (Total time: 13:00)

IV A. Introduce the “me” I don’t want others to see and the concept of self-doubts (CL or CS: 1:30)

Can be read as is:

In examining my behaviors, it’s clear that I tend to choose behaviors that highlight my strengths and help me put my best foot forward. Yet deep inside each of us is a “me” that we do not want others to see – a “me” that is sometimes weak or critical or selfish. I fear that if my spouse sees me with my flaws, I may be judged as not deserving of his/her (choose) love and respect. Hasn’t that been true for you too? Over the years, I have become expert at choosing behaviors that put myself in a positive light so I can hide those traits I see as less acceptable. Yet no matter how positively I portray myself, I have occasional self-doubts that cause me to question my worth as a person – and those self-doubts really limit me and my relationships. If I continually hide my doubts and the parts that I judge are unacceptable, I am hiding the most vulnerable and human part of who I am. I may be hesitant to grow too close to my spouse lest they peek deep inside and agree that I am unlovable. These choices make it all but impossible to have true intimacy. Until I can accept who I am, I cannot be vulnerable enough to truly love _____(spouse’s name).

**VI B. Introduce the story of Aldonza and Don Quixote; play the song,
Aldonza** (CL or CS: 6:00 including 3:30 for song)

NOTE:

For individuals with experiences of sexual or physical abuse, this song may be particularly painful to experience. Please keep this in mind as you read. Your tone, body language, speed - all these help convey sensitivity.

Read as is: (with minor changes to phrasing only, if needed, to make this "your own")
We are now going to play a song from the musical "Man of La Mancha." On Marriage Encounter experiences throughout the world, this story is used to illustrate how our self doubts can keep us from accepting the love of another - thus limiting our ability to truly love.

Allow us to set the scene. The musical is based on the classic novel, Don Quixote. He is an aging, self-proclaimed knight, who sets out with his squire, Sancho, on a quest to right the wrongs of the world. When they stop at a country inn, Don Quixote meets a woman named Aldonza and proclaims that she will be the lady to whom he will dedicate his quest. Judging that Aldonza is not a suitable name for someone so noble and beautiful, he chooses instead to call her Dulcinea, a name which means "sweet one."

Aldonza's reality, however, is far from that of a lady. She is a serving maid and part-time prostitute, engulfed by self-doubts fueled by a life of abandonment and despair. She mocks Don Quixote's image of her as "My Lady" and refuses to believe in the goodness he sees within her. She simply has no idea how to accept the kindness and devotion Don Quixote is offering. Instead, she lashes out in anger, trying to convince him that she is not the Dulcinea he believes her to be.

The words of the song can be found on page __. (PAUSE) It may not be easy to listen to this song. The language and tone are harsh - and Aldonza's anguish comes through powerfully in the shrillness of her voice and her scream of utter frustration at the end.

Behind the brutal words and harsh singing, Aldonza's pain is so raw, and her self-loathing so explicit; we can only mourn with her for a shattered life. Hear her anger, her sense of worthlessness, and how her self-doubts are holding her a prisoner of her painful past.

<< *PLAY SONG* >>

Formation:

Did you hear how Aldonza was trapped by her self-doubts, unable to see past this image of herself as nothing? Did you hear how impossible it was for her to believe in herself as Don Quixote did? These self-doubts often stand in the way of building healthy relationships. This story offers hope. As the Marriage Encounter experience unfolds, the couples will come to see how the unconditional love of Don Quixote was able to transform this broken woman into the beautiful person he sees within. And they will begin to experience for themselves how the power of their love can transform their Spouse into the beautiful person they see in them.

VI C. Give a personal sharing about my self-doubts, relating back to Aldonza (LH or LW and CL or CS: 1:30 each)

Lay husband or wife begins this section with a transition statement, which need not be repeated by the Clergy leader or spouse, but could be adapted for better flow.

Can be read as is (with the same sensitivity suggested in the set up of VI B):

While not all of us see ourselves in such a negative light, there are times when each of us may be trapped in our own self-doubts – and this limits how much we are willing to give and receive in our relationships.

Then the Lay husband or wife and Clergy leader or spouse share one or two specific examples of your own self-doubts and how you can personally relate to a specific line in the song. The focus is how you doubt, at the deepest level, that you are the good, lovable person you think you should be to deserve the love of your spouse. This should not be about a physical attribute.

Examples should include the following:

- Begin by stating your own personal reaction when you heard this song for the first time on a Marriage Encounter experience, or when you hear it now. Refer back to a specific line in the song that you can relate to. (See Formation Box below.)
- Share how your self-doubts hold you back and put limits on your spousal relationship.
- Briefly contrast the positive inner qualities you have chosen to highlight with those aspects of yourself that you judge to be negative or unacceptable and choose to hide from your spouse. For instance, you may want to be seen as compassionate, caring, and generous, but at times you may not really want to reach out to anyone, so you see yourself as selfish, lazy, and uncaring – and often judge yourself as unlovable.
- State and describe the feeling you experience when you judge that you are unlovable and have failed to live up to your own expectations.
- Illustrate how your feelings are sometimes manifested in behaviors that isolate or separate you from your spouse.
- Briefly describe your fears and the feelings you experience when you think about exposing your vulnerabilities and allowing your spouse to see you with these self-doubts. Like peeling an onion, when we get down to the core of our feelings, we have removed all the outer protective layers and we reveal our vulnerability.
- End this section by describing the specific negative effects on your relationship when you doubt your lovability.

This should be a difficult section to write and share. As Aldonza illustrates in the song, self-doubt has a detrimental effect on our ability to love ourselves. Aldonza sees herself as completely unlovable. Her negative self-judgments lead to powerful feelings and then to behaviors that put distance between herself and anyone who might want to grow too close and pierce her wall of self-protection. We want the participants to become aware of the destructive effects that self-doubt can have on them and on their relationship with their spouse. We are trying to convey that we are often very self-critical because we judge a part of who we are as a person as unacceptable. We focus so much on trying to keep this part hidden that we actually diminish our capacity to love someone else. Our self-doubts limit our relationship because we

doubt our own worth and value as a person. Until we can accept and love who we are, we cannot fully love anyone else.

Formation:

Most of us judge ourselves to be better than Aldonza, but at some level we can all relate to her inability to believe she was worthy of love and devotion. Each of us has missed the mark at one time or another; none of us is truly the hero or the heroine of our dreams. This experience of not living up to our own expectations or the expectations of others is universal and part of our life journey. Though the words of the song are troubling and may seem difficult to relate to, further reflection may help us discover how certain lines in the song align with our own poor self-image.

"Take the clouds from your eyes and see me as I really am." When our image of ourselves doesn't match what we think our spouse sees, we can't trust that the love being offered is really for us. We long to be loved as we are, but we're afraid to reveal who we are for fear of losing the respect of our spouse.

"... abuse I can take and give back again, tenderness I cannot bear." How many of today's popular TV shows are filled with put-downs that may seem typical in marriages? Some of us find it easier to accept criticism (and dish it out in return) than to accept tender praise from our spouse. We may feel vulnerable showing our own tender side. It's easier to hide behind thick armor.

"...what good is the sky to a creature who'll never do better than crawl?" At times even high-achievers see flaws in themselves and judge they'll never measure up.

"For a lady has modest and maidenly airs and a virtue I somehow suspect that I lack." Some of us question whether we measure up as far as our masculinity or femininity and all that goes with our sexuality. This line might apply to the way we see ourselves fulfilling expectations as husbands and wives.

"I'm no one. I'm nothing at all!" When we are weighed down with judgments that we have failed to provide what we think our spouse or family needs, we may be unable to see our own goodness and may judge ourselves worthless.

VI D. Superiorities also affect my spousal relationship (Total time: 2:30)

VI D 1. Self-doubts can lead to attitudes of superiority

(LH or LW: 0:30)

Suggested wording:

Attitudes of superiority also affect our spousal relationship. We often compensate for our self-doubts with attitudes of superiority – and we ALL have superiorities. These superior attitudes stem from our judgment that we possess certain qualities or traits or abilities that make us a better person than our spouse. When we make a negative judgment of our spouse in comparison to ourselves, it has a negative impact on our relationship.

VI D 2. Share a clear, concise example of my attitude of superiority (LH or LW and CL or CS: 1:00 each)

Share a clear example of an attitude of superiority in your marriage. This could reflect back to the sharing in C; include these key elements:

- Identify the superior attitude standing in the way of your relationship with your spouse.
- Include the specific personal quality, trait, or ability that you judge makes you a better person than your spouse.
- Illustrate how you make a negative judgment of your spouse in comparison to yourself and how you demonstrate your superior attitude toward your spouse.
- Share the negative effect of your superior attitude on your spouse and your relationship.

Formation:

The definition of the word “superior” is “thinking oneself is better than others.” Attitudes of superiority are specific attitudes I have in my relationship that lead me to judge that I am a better person than my spouse. Self-doubts lower our self-esteem – and this fuels these attitudes of superiority. My attitude of superiority is an attempt to compensate for my own sense of unworthiness by judging that others, even my spouse, are not as good as I am. In my attempt to build myself up, I am actually putting the other person down. I magnify my positive personal traits and qualities and abilities to convince myself that I am valued and worth being loved.

The presenters should spend time coming to understand what is meant by the term “superiorities,” as well as to recognize their own attitudes of superiority and the effect on their relationships. Our superior attitudes can be rooted in our qualities or character traits, or they can arise from our abilities. We may each have individual talents or skills that truly are superior to those of our spouse (singing, painting, skiing, etc.).

Explore those qualities, traits or abilities where we make the judgment that we are superior to our spouse, as they often trigger our belief that this makes us a better person. Regardless of the source, whenever we make negative judgments about our spouse in comparison to ourselves, these judgments upset the balance in our relationship and can become the source of many conflicts. Attitudes of superiority can be devastating to relationships.

The person who believes he or she has no attitude of superiority may need to look even deeper, because this, in itself, may be a deep-seated superiority. Becoming aware of our superior attitudes and the devastating effects they can have on relationships will provide us with insights which can foster personal growth and help us accept that we are “precious in God’s eyes.”

VII. Other ways to find out more about how I see myself (LH or LW: 1:30)

VII A. My reaction to compliments

VII A 1. State that we often minimize compliments or even reject them

Suggested wording:

Another way to gain insights into how we see ourselves is by our reaction when we receive a compliment. We often tend to minimize a compliment, question the motives behind it, or even reject it. While it is easy to assume that everybody loves to be complimented, there are times when our self-doubts make it difficult to believe the value others see in us.

VII A 2. Give a specific personal example of a compliment I received on an inner quality

Lay husband or wife (usually the one with the poorer self-image) gives a specific personal example of a compliment you received on an inner quality.

Your sharing should contain the following key elements:

- Identify the specific compliment you received on an inner quality (e.g., loyal, kind, clever, practical, spiritual, sympathetic, responsible, etc.).
- Describe your external reaction (i.e., how you minimized/rejected the compliment).
- Describe your internal reaction to the compliment (i.e., what you were feeling).

Note: This should not be a compliment about something you did for someone, nor should it be a compliment you easily accepted. Inner qualities are shared because compliments about them are often the most difficult for us to accept as a sign of our goodness. Our self-doubts and insecurity cause us to question the compliment and try to minimize or deflect it because we judge we are not worthy of the compliment.

VII B. How I use a double standard

VII B 1. Explain the concept of double standard

Suggested wording:

It is often difficult for me to accept a compliment because I use a double standard when I judge myself. For me to accept a virtue in myself, such as _____ (insert the quality named above in compliments), it is something I must see in myself on an ongoing basis. It needs to be there all the time, with no lapses. However, I readily accept a fault or weakness in myself, even if it only crops up occasionally. While I will easily acknowledge a quality in other people, even if it is not present all the time, I hold myself to an impossibly high standard – a double standard of judgment. If someone comments on a fault I have, I seldom forget it, and I usually accept it as true, even though the fault or weakness rarely shows up.

VII B 2. Give an example of how I use a double standard

Next, give a personal example of a time when you used a double standard when someone (especially your spouse) commented on a fault or weakness in you. Point out how you accepted the fault or weakness as being true, even though it shows up rarely.

NOTE:

Just as the compliment example was related to a personal quality, this example should also relate to one of your personal traits.

VIII. God created me good, lovable, and unique (CL and/or CS: Total time: 3:00)

VIII A. Introduce and read Psalm 139:1-4 & 13-14 (CL and/or CS: 1:30)

The Clergy leader and/or spouse gives a brief introduction to the scripture, then reads the passages as they are printed in the Workbook, with other short comments as desired. The scripture below is from the New Revised Standard Version.

NOTE:

Suggested wording never has to be workshopped, but presenters **always** have the flexibility to amend suggestions.

Suggested wording:

All of us have difficulty believing that God created us good, lovable, and unique and that He loves us despite our weaknesses and self-image. In the living word of God, He Himself tells me that I am special in His eyes. I am going to read some verses of Holy Scripture.

From Psalm 139:

¹ *O Lord, you have searched me and known me.*

² *You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.*

³ *You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.*

⁴ *Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely.*

¹³ *For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.*

¹⁴ *I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.*

Each one of us is unique. I can be replaced in what I do, but I am not replaceable for who I am. God has formed me and prepared me. As I begin to discover the beauty in this, I begin to see how God is calling me to be the best person I can be. I am not to become like another, but to develop my own potential and be the best I can be as an individual. I am a work in progress and God loves me.

VIII B. Choosing to believe in the “me” that God sees

(CL or CS and LH or LW: 0:45 each)

CL or CS begins with a transition statement, noting that God created me good, lovable, and unique. Then briefly share your personal reaction to the scripture (in part or in total), emphasizing that God finds me precious and/or that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. It is important that your response includes the specific phrase “choosing to believe in the ‘me’ that God sees.” It is permissible to include the phrase, “God Does Not Make Junk” in your sharing.

The sharing is not focused on God’s goodness. This is about your thoughts and feelings when you hear God say that He created and knows you, and loves you and finds you precious in His sight. We want the couples to see themselves as God sees them. The message should come across loud and clear – “Do not fear.” Note: The best way to prepare for writing this is to dialogue on these passages.

The emphasis should be on the passage: "... *it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works....*"

LH or LW shares a personal response as well.

NOTE:

This should be a moving and powerfully positive sharing, written by the person of each couple who can best express the joy of seeing him/herself with God's perspective.

Formation:

Focusing on these verses is the culmination of our efforts to help the couples to understand the negative influence self-doubts have on themselves and on their relationships. Now we show them a new paradigm, and motivate them to see themselves as intrinsically good and valuable, just as God created them. We want the couples to believe in their own goodness by trusting in the perspective of God, who knows and loves them completely. Use your personal response to help the couples realize that God knows individually (as a parent loves each child). Even the "less acceptable" parts, that we are only beginning to encounter, God knows - and loves us.

Only when we embrace ourselves in our entirety can we begin to see ourselves as God sees us. Hopefully, we have helped them recognize the difference between their personality style and their behaviors – and to understand that they are much more than an assortment of choices that have led to self-doubt and lowered self-esteem. In the Scripture passages we offer them God's vision of who they are, as well as God's ever-present love and acceptance. Each one of us is unique. I can be replaced in what I do, but I am irreplaceable for who I am. God has formed me and prepared me. As I begin to discover the beauty in this, I begin to see how God is calling me to be the best person I can be. I am not to be like another, but to develop my own potential and be the best I can be as an individual. I am a work in progress and God loves me.

IX. Invitation to make a choice and closing instructions

(LH and/or LW: 1:45: A&B, 0:30; C, 1:15)

IX A. Explain the choice to stay where you are (A & B: 0:30)

IX B. Explain the choice to grow in your ability to love and to be loved

Lay husband and/or wife extends an invitation to the participants to make a choice now – and as the Marriage Encounter experience progresses. Your sharing should contain the following key elements:

- Explain that they can choose to stay exactly where they are and very little is likely to change, AND that they can also choose to seize this incredible opportunity to grow in their ability to love and be loved.
- Inspire them to move forward by making the choice to invest themselves fully and honestly in the program.

- Perhaps briefly share how you made that choice on your own Marriage Encounter experience.
- Relate back to the sharing in VI.B and motivate the participants to choose to discover the beauty and goodness God sees within them.
- When presenting this section, speak directly to the couples, using “you” focus.
- This sharing needs to be motivational and give them a clear message that each of them has a choice to make at this time.

IX C. Closing instructions (1:15)

Lay husband and/or wife gives the instructions for the personal reflection time. Include:

- Let the couples know that there are a number of questions for their written reflection on page ___ in the Workbook and take them to that page.
- Advise the couples that we want them to have the freedom to be honest in their responses, so there will be no exchange of Workbooks and no dialogue after.
- Urge them to make the most of this reflection time and the discoveries they can make by using the full writing time to find out more about themselves. Their openness and honesty in this reflection may lay the groundwork for that same kind of openness with each other throughout this Marriage Encounter experience.
- Do not indicate how much time they will have to write.
- Let the participants know that the husbands (recommended) will go to their rooms to write and that there will be a signal when the writing time is over.
- Remind them once again that they will not be sharing their written reflections.

NOTE:

The method for bringing the husbands (recommended) back to the conference room is left to the discretion of the local area. The wives could be asked to go quickly to their rooms to get their spouse for the next presentation. However, the presenting team also has the option to contact the people in the rooms in the usual way while the wives remain in the conference room, particularly if distance is an issue.

X. QUESTIONS (LH AND/OR LW 1:00)

The Questions are explained

- 1. What do I like most about myself?**
- 2. What do I like least about myself?**
- 3. What is my dominant personality style?**
- 4. What is the way I try to present myself to others? Describe it briefly. How does it limit my relationships?**
- 5. What are my feelings about what I have written? Describe fully.**

Writing time: 15:00

Dialogue time: None

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

NOTE: There will be no exchange of books and no dialogue after this writing time.

XI. MOTIVATION TO RETURN (CL AND/OR CS 8:00)

THE COMPLETELY NEW SECTION XI, "MOTIVATION TO RETURN," IS SHARED BY THE CLERGY COUPLE TO INSPIRE AND PREPARE THE COUPLES FOR THEIR "HOMEWORK," TO REVIEW THE WAY THEY CAN STAY CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER AND THE PRESENTERS, AND TO PROVIDE A TEASER FOR THE NEXT SESSION. AGAIN, LANGUAGE ABOUT JOURNEYS AND CLIMBING MIGHT BE USED. (BEING IN THE FOOTHILLS DOESN'T ALLOW US TO SEE VERY MUCH YET.)

XI A. THE JOURNEY

XI B. TAKE HOME DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

THE PDA HOMEWORK IS GIVEN WITH MOTIVATION TO KEEP UP THESE STRETCHING EXERCISES.

XI C. MISSION POSSIBLE - STEP 2 OF COUPLE PRAYER

STEP 2 OF THE SEVEN STEPS TO COUPLE PRAYER IS EXPLAINED -- PRAYING A SIMPLE WRITTEN OR WELL-KNOWN PRAYER TOGETHER, HOLDING HANDS, SITTING SIDE BY SIDE.

XI D. PRESENTERS' WILLINGNESS TO BE CONNECTED

REMIND THEM OF YOUR EAGERNESS TO STAY CONNECTED WITH AND ACCESSIBLE TO THEM UNTIL THE NEXT SESSION.

XI E. ASSIGNMENT - BRING A WEDDING PHOTO WITH YOU NEXT SESSION

INVITE THEM TO BRING A WEDDING PHOTO WITH THEM NEXT WEEK.

XI F. TEASER FOR NEXT SESSION

THINK OF WAYS TO PIQUE THEIR INTEREST IN THE CONTENT OF THE NEXT SESSION. THIS MIGHT INCLUDE THAT WE WILL LOOK AT OUR ROMANCE, AND HOW IT MAY NOT BE WHAT IT USED TO BE BUT THERE'S HOPE - BECAUSE WE WILL BE LEARNING TOOLS FOR BETTER LISTENING.

XI G. TRANSITION, CLOSING PRAYER, DISMISSAL

THEN CLOSE WITH A PRAYER AND BLESSING AND INSTRUCTIONS DEPENDING ON WHETHER YOU ARE INVITING THE COUPLES TO LEAVE RIGHT AWAY, TO RETRIEVE CHILDREN IN THE CHILDCARE AREA, TO STAY FOR SNACKS, ETC.

How we live the concepts of this presentation:

The Personality Styles Assessment provides a great opportunity to learn about the various personality styles. An important concept to live out from Encounter with Self is accepting and appreciating the differences between my spouse and myself as unique individuals. We learn to admire each other, not in spite of our differences, but precisely for our differences, just as God has created us.

As WWME presenters, we strive to change our own unhealthy or destructive behaviors and attitudes of superiority for the sake of our relationship. I first address change in myself because, in order to grow in our relationship, the only person I can change is myself. I need to know and understand fully who I am and recognize attitudes and behaviors in myself that interfere with our relationship. Encountering myself is an ongoing journey. Self-awareness is the key to change.

We believe that God loves us as His creation and that He calls us by name. We acknowledge that we are good in God's eyes and forgive ourselves and accept ourselves as worthy of love. It is only through loving ourselves that we can love another and know for certain we are worthy of receiving the love of our spouse.

An assessment for us as a couple:

- Do I continue to truly encounter myself on an ongoing basis, including through daily dialogue?
- Do I sometimes stereotype my spouse or other people based on their personality style?
- Do I recognize, appreciate, and affirm the unique gifts my spouse brings to our relationship?
- Do I consistently examine my behaviors and the effects of my behaviors on others?
- Do I justify my behaviors by saying, "I can't help it – I'm an Organizer" (or Helper – or Thinker – or Catalyst)?
- Do I recognize how my self-doubts keep me from being vulnerable with my spouse?
- Do I confront my attitudes of superiority and recognize the times when I actually see myself as a better person than my spouse?
- Do I truly believe I am worthy of receiving my spouse's love, especially on my worst days?

Dialogue questions to help presenters develop their presentation:

HDIF?	How do I feel?	HDIFA	HDIF about?
HDIFAT	HDIFA that?	HDIFAMA?	HDIFA my answer?
HDIFTYT?	HDIF telling you this?		

1. I cannot change who I am, but I can change what I do. HDIFAT?
2. Describe my personality style. HDIFAMA?
3. How does my personality style promote relationships with others? HDIFAMA?
4. How does the way I present myself disappoint, frustrate or annoy others? HDIFAMA?
5. What is my strongest value? HDIFAT?
6. What do I seek from others? HDIFAT?
7. What are some things that affirm me? HDIFAT?
8. What are some things that disaffirm me or bring me down? HDIFAT?
9. My greatest source of worry and concern is _____? HDIFTYT?
10. What behaviors of mine am I most aware of? HDIFAMA?
11. What behaviors of mine have a positive effect on our relationship? HDIFTYT?
12. What behaviors of mine have a negative effect on our relationship? HDIFTYT?
13. What behaviors of yours have a positive effect on our relationship? HDIFTYT?
14. What behaviors of yours have a negative effect on our relationship? HDIFTYT?
15. What parts of me do I hide from others? HDIFAMA?
16. What parts of me do I hide from you? HDIFTYT?
17. When I feel most unsure, how do I try to conceal it? HDIFAMA?
18. What are the negative effects on my relationship(s) and my spouse when I conceal my vulnerabilities and weaknesses? HDIFAMA?
19. Each of us has self-doubts at times. What are mine? HDIFTYT?
20. HDIF when I hear the song, "Aldonza" from "Man of La Mancha"?
21. In what ways do I relate to Aldonza and her poor self-image? HDIFTYT?
22. What is my greatest attitude of superiority in our relationship? HDIFAMA?
23. HDIF when I receive a compliment at work?
24. HDIF when I receive a compliment from you?
25. HDIF when I receive a compliment from _____ (parent, child, boss)? (Pick someone from whom you least expect compliments.)
26. Am I more accepting of other people's faults or my own? HDIFAMA?
27. If I could change one thing, about myself, I would change _____ HDIFTYT?
28. HDIF knowing that God loves me just as I am?
29. Read Psalm 139:1-4 & 13-14. HDIF after reading these passages?
30. Do I believe that I am precious in God's eyes? HDIFAMA?

Reference:

Please Understand Me II, David Keirse (1998)

Catalyst	Artisan	pages 32-63
Organizer	Guardian	pages 75-103
Helper	Idealist	pages 116-149
Thinker	Rationalist	pages 161-195

Values, Qualities, and Traits

(These lists are suggestions and not meant to be all-inclusive)

What Do I Value?

security	variety	independence	competition	freedom
recognition	respect	creativity	originality	belonging
excitement	stability	relationships	balance	accountability
structure	individuality	learning	knowledge	spirituality
initiative	fun inclusion	efficiency	morals	courage
empathy	compassion	responsibility	thoroughness	order
logic	sincerity	truth	honesty	fairness
faith	accuracy	patience	loyalty	gentleness
honor	adaptability	harmony	peace	modesty
theory	enthusiasm	friendship	intuition	relaxation
curiosity	humor	acceptance	practicality	common sense
imagination	courtesy	challenge	frankness	confidence
popularity	cooperation	praise	authenticity	encouragement
integrity	punctuality	privacy	power	uniqueness
spontaneity	affirmation	clarity	frivolity	constancy
solitude	justice	consistency	reliability	simplicity
tradition	persuasion	intimacy	reason	obedience
assertiveness	risk	success	caution	compromise
tolerance	humility	tactfulness	courage	duty
bravery	intelligence	vulnerability	openness	zeal
charity	decency	generosity	romance	thrift
optimism	devotion	sensitivity	fortitude	happiness
predictability	organization	playfulness	prudence	affection

Various Ways to Express My Values, Beliefs, Aspirations, Emotional Needs:

Describing **WHO** we are as unique persons will include varying aspects of our likes/dislikes, our feelings, our beliefs, our fears, our emotional needs, dreams, hopes, life philosophy. Without using behaviors, some phrases that may help express them are:

I value	I respect	I prize	I cherish	I need
I admire	I appreciate	I embrace	I favor	I believe
I honor	I desire	I crave	I revere	I feel
I esteem	I yearn for	I imagine	I delight in	I relish
I am impressed by	I am invigorated by	I am inspired by	I am motivated by	
I am stimulated by	I am attracted by	I am affirmed by	I am validated by	
I am pleased by	I am satisfied by	I am renewed by	I am nourished by	
I am moved by	I am enriched by	I am gratified by	I am fulfilled by	
I am influenced by	I am intrigued by	I long for	I thrive with	

Many Ways of Expressing Dislikes, Concerns, or Fears:

I resent	I dislike	I distrust	I loathe	I oppose
I fear	I deplore	I envy	I hate	I despise
I am inhibited by	I am hindered by	I am troubled by	I detest	I am bothered by
I am frustrated by	I am displeased by	I am provoked by	I abhor	

Personal Qualities and Traits. Describing WHO we are as unique persons will include many of our personal qualities & traits such as:

quiet	serious	dependable	open-minded	practical	cooperative
skeptical	cautious	timid	courageous	trustworthy	determined
independent	responsible	adaptable	logical	competent	focused
orderly	empathetic	sympathetic	insightful	critical	sociable
loyal	dramatic	friendly	adventurous	tolerant	conscientious
confident	flexible	thorough	innovative	accurate	good-natured
persevering	assertive	imaginative	efficient	considerate	sensitive
kind	generous	courteous	neat	tidy	thoughtful
respectful	idealistic	supportive	decisive	curious	resourceful
creative	spontaneous	optimistic	intuitive	positive	spiritual
ethical	tactful	congenial	consistent	objective	helpful
perceptive	rational	stable	frugal	reliable	sensible
humorous	funny	witty	wise	conservative	absent-minded
agreeable	gracious	precise	faithful	factual	clever
resolute	obstinate	shrewd	versatile	capable	proficient
bold	gallant	enterprising	artistic	affable	affectionate
tender	devoted	adversarial	dynamic	eager	reserved
detached	ambitious	docile	ingenious	artless	audacious
attentive	shy	bashful	vivacious	cheerful	broad-minded
brusque	candid	meticulous	finicky	thrifty	discreet
cynical	diligent	high-strung	extravagant	zealous	whimsical
steadfast	virtuous				

Section III C:

Sample wording to describe the dominant personality styles not represented by one of the four presenters of Encounter with Self:

Helper:

A Helper thrives on being around people, and involved with them. Helpers are sensitive, empathetic, in-tune with what's not said as well as what is said aloud. Valuing cooperation and harmony, Helpers are natural-born peacemakers. The language of feelings comes most naturally for them, although it is very hard for a Helper to reveal feelings that may disappoint the listener. Criticize them, or suspect their motives of just wanting to be kind and helpful, and you can suck the life right out of them.

Organizer:

For an Organizer to find peace of mind and a sense of value, he pays attention to preparation, guidelines, rules, and organization of time, papers, or other stuff. Organizers prefer things to flow from A to Z in a predictable pattern. They value completion, reliability, and tradition, and "Responsibility" is the middle name of many an Organizer. Work first and then play - what a motto. Are Organizers the people I want on my committee? Yes, except that they may have already volunteered for 5 others.

Thinker:

A Thinker may be introvert or extrovert, but the language that brings control to her world is not the Helper's feelings, or the Organizer's order, but logic. Consistency, clarity, thoroughness, and understanding - these are what counts to a Thinker. He resists quick decision-making, and generally suspects feelings and knee-jerk reactions. The comfort zone for the Thinker is where he can find facts, potential outcomes, and even motives. A Thinker tends to aim for perfection and has trouble dealing with mistakes - yours and his.

Catalyst:

What describes the Catalyst best? There they are in the far right column of the Assessment: Spontaneity, creativity, freedom, fun - being unique and definitely never wanting to be a "loser," whatever that means to each person. A Catalyst is not afraid of gut reactions and comes across as a bold risk-taker. He doesn't mind challenging you if you disagree. He's competitive, easily bored, and often a motivational and outgoing leader. Just hang on to your hats, because he's going to make things happen.

ALDONZA

from “Man of La Mancha”

My Lady!

I am not your lady. I am not any kind of a lady.

I was spawned in a ditch by a mother who left me there, naked and cold and too hungry to cry. I never blamed her, I'm sure she left hoping that I'd have the good sense to die.

Then, of course, there's my father. I'm told that young ladies can point to their fathers with maidenly pride. Mine was some regiment here for an hour; I can't even tell you which side. So, of course, I became as befitted my delicate birth, the most casual bride of the murdering scum of the earth

And still thou art my Lady!

And still he torments me!

How should I be a lady? For a lady has modest and maidenly airs and a virtue I somehow suspect that I lack. It's hard to remember these maidenly airs in a stable laid flat on your back.

Won't you look at me, look at me. God, won't you look at me. Look at the kitchen-slut reeking of sweat, born on a dung heap to die on a dung heap, a strumpet men use and forget.

If you feel that you see me not quite at my virginal best, cross my palm with a coin and I'll willingly show you the rest

Never deny thou art Dulcinea.

Take the clouds from your eyes and see me as I really am.

You have shown me the sky, but what good is the sky to a creature who'll never do better than crawl? Of all the cruel devils who badgered and battered me, you are the cruellest of all!

Can't you see what your gentle insanities do to me? Rob me of anger and give me despair. Blows and abuse I can take and give back again, tenderness I cannot bear. So don't reach out to me when your sweet ‘Dulcinea’ you call. I am only Aldonza. I'm no one. I'm nothing at all!

Now and forever thou art my Lady Dulcinea.