



15 August 1998

Dear Friends:

We have finally finished the outline. As we said earlier, the outline we had was only usable for those who experienced the program with us. We have now tried to do an outline without the presenting couple having to undergo the program first. This took sometime because many of our personal sharing were not included in the outline and we had changes as we went from one group to another.

We hope that you can use this outline and have the same success as we are having in the Philippines.

Many parts of the outline were taken from the articles in the "Matrimony Magazine". The author of these articles were Marge and Con Terr and Denie and Dee Stemmler from the United States. The Formation part of the 5<sup>th</sup> module on relational needs was taken from the tape presentation of Fr. Guido Heybaut from Belgium in the World Council Meeting in 1982.

We have presented this to 6 groups with 7-10 couples per group. The participants were teams and non-teams. We have seen that it is more successful when the couples we were presenting the program to where also sharing what they experienced to another group of 4-5 couples the following week, which we call our Baby D.J. Since they had to make the same presentation, they tried to absorb more of our presentations and were encouraged to Dialogue.

In the process of appreciating the Dialogue and having a positive attitude about it, the couples also underwent a lot of re-evaluations. What was very encouraging was the re-evaluation which came from their Dialogue happened at home and not necessarily from our 6 meetings. **They were able to re-evaluate in the middle of the modern world.**

Why 90 days only? It is easier for couples to commit themselves to a short period of time (only 6 meetings) especially when they know there is an ending. If the invitation is open-ended and forever, then it is easy to miss a meeting and is very threatening.

Our experience with the 6 groups we met was that almost all finished the program and very rarely did anyone miss a meeting.

Also, after experiencing a sharing group for 90 days they wanted to continue and we have offered them another 120 days, if they are interested. We

think for a start, 90 days is enough a commitment. After they taste a sharing group for 90 days, it is easier to invite them for a longer period.

We have not included some reading materials in the e-mail because it can become voluminous, however, we are preparing hard copies of the outline together with some reading materials. If you are interested, please advise us so we can prepare one and mail this to you as soon as possible.

We would also appreciate some feedback if you do get to use the outline and any suggestions that we might have to improve it further.

Good Luck and may the Daily Dialogue (a holy and special moment of your life) be a part of your relationship, and your life.

Let us own the Daily Dialogue!

***DITTOY and CORA ATAYDE***

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## WHY THE DIALOGUE JOURNEY

1. Many couples, and even some of our team, do not know how to Dialogue. The Dialogue technique is hard to learn by itself.
2. Even after the glow of the Weekend is over, many couples end up fighting when they Dialogue. Thus, the Dialogue is seen as a negative tool rather than a positive one. The couples, therefore, develop negative feeling towards it and thus, reject it.
3. Those couples who have been Dialoguing for a long time have shared that the only way a couple can appreciate Dialogue is by Dialogue for a continuous long period of time. Dialoguing twice a month on sharing group meetings, enrichments, or formations alone will not make Dialogue attractive to the couple. It needs 2 to 3 months at least of continuous Dialogue for it to be appreciated.
4. Couples need to know that they are not alone and others are trying and struggling the same way. Old and new couples are on the same footing.
5. We should not teach couples the 5-step Dialogue until such time they have experienced a lot of Dialogue on feelings and a good formation on needs is experienced. Also, responsibility for one's needs must be clear. Unless this is accomplished, the 5-step Dialogue is going to turn couples off.

Based on the observations, we have tried to design a program entitled **"The Dialogue Journey"** which hopefully can satisfy our observations.

## PURPOSE OF THE DIALOGUE JOURNEY

1. The purpose of the Dialogue Journey is for couples to change their perception and attitude about the Dialogue and fall in love with it. Some of these perceptions which the Journey hopes to change are:
  - 1.1 The Dialogue is used by one or both spouses to dump "garbage" or to blame. It is used as a weapon instead of a tool to better understanding;
  - 1.2 Dialogue usually ends up in a fight; and
  - 1.3 Nothing much happens in a Dialogue so it is a waste of time and energy.

During the Journey, we hope the couples will experience some Dialogues which will allow them to discover something new about each other, feel closer to each other and not get into fights while doing their Dialogue.

2. We want the couples to learn some of the techniques that have helped other couples who have been Dialoguing and to try those they think will help them.
3. We want the couples to taste some formation experience that is not too deep or earth shaking. We are more concerned for the couples to experience joy and closeness in the Dialogue and in the sharing groups during the Journey. Although we are not after major conversions or re-evaluation in the meetings, if they Dialogue and attend all the sessions, they are bound to undergo re-evaluation in their own time.
4. We want the couples to experience the joy of a sharing group or a community and the joy of being able to touch the lives of the other couples in the sharing groups through their own simple sharing.
5. We want the couples to experience a new level of closeness in their relationship that they can attribute not to the Weekend alone but through the efforts in the daily Dialogue and sharing group. This will give them the motivation to Dialogue daily and look forward to a sharing group even after the program is finished. We hope to get couples into the habit of Dialoguing daily.
6. We want the couples to realize that nobody Dialogues alone. It is a constant struggle to live an open, trusting, communicating relationship and that all the encountered couples, priest and religious (Re: Old teams, new teams, community) are all Journeying together. It is in the Journey that we find joy in our relationship.

7. There is no one correct way of Dialogue. Anytime we use the "**WEDS**" technique and our relationship gets better, it is a good Dialogue.
8. By the time the Dialogue Journey is about to be finished, there is a tremendous energy among the couples because they have grown closer and are Dialoguing. We want this energy that is existing to be directed toward the Weekend. Recruiting for the Weekend, recruiting for sharing groups and involvement in the community is where we want this energy to be directed to.

## **FORMAT OF DIALOGUE JOURNEY**

We achieve our goals by inviting couples to attend the 90-Day Dialogue Journey with a group of 4-7 couples.

The couples are invited to commit to attend to a 2 hour meeting twice a month for 3 months for a total of 6 meetings. The couples will also be invited to try and do the Dialogue for the 90-days of the program using the questions that will be given to them at every meeting.

A couple who has experienced the program and believes and do the Dialogue daily will facilitate the meetings.

The format of the 2-hour meeting except for the first evening will be divided into 4 sections:

### **FIRST PART:**

During this time, the leaders will share their experience in doing the Dialogue during the past 15 days. What made it easy for them? What made it difficult? Were there any significant discoveries in their Dialogue at home? We also ask the couples on a voluntary basis to share on their own Dialogues.

This will make the couples realize that they are all struggling and that we can learn from each other. It will also make the couples closer to each other through their sharing.

### **SECOND PART:**

In this section, we try to teach the couples the “How to’s” in the Dialogue technique by sharing with them our own experience and attitudes first, then, that of other couples. Care must be taken that this part does not come out as “This is it!”, rather, each one of us must find an experience that best suits our own Dialogue. We also give out short reading materials that can help them.

The technique process is slow and we concentrate to teaching feelings and listening in the first four meetings before we introduce NEEDS and the 5 STEP DIALOGUE. Hopefully by then, we have Dialogued for at least 60 days on feelings. A good explanation of NEEDS and BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR NEEDS is presented before the 5 STEP DIALOGUE is introduced. The couples

are also given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the techniques and anyone may answer at this time.

### **THIRD PART:**

The leader shares one topic, short, simple, meaningful formation which the couples can identify very easily within their daily lives and is not too threatening or where too much confidence is required. It starts very light in the first meeting and slowly becomes deeper as we get nearer the end of the program. It is hoped that the sharing will be meaningful, joyous and enriching for the couples.

We then give the couples a 10/10 question regarding what the leader shared. They do the 10/10 anywhere the meeting is held.

After the 10/10 the couples are asked to do a group sharing on their discoveries with regard to their 10/10.

### **FOURTH PART:**

Dialogue questions of about 20 items are given to the couples for them to choose for the next 15 days. The questions are geared toward re-emphasizing what was taught regarding the techniques or to deepen the formation experience. Also, a short summary of what was learned during the evening is reinforced.

## OBSERVATIONS TO HELP PRESENTING COUPLES

1. Many of the Formations and Dialogue technique came from articles taken from the “Matrimony” magazine. What we did was insert personal sharing as we went along. As we all know, personal sharing is what makes our couples understand and relate better. If you use this outline we really encourage you to share your own experience wherever you may find the need.
2. There is no time frame for each subject matter. We found that the amount of time needed to share in one topic depended on the group. Sometimes we cut short one topic but spend a longer time on others depending on what we thought was needed for each group.
3. The presenting couples must be one who believes in the daily Dialogue and is willing to do the Dialogue questions given at the end of each module. Presenters must share their own struggles and joys in doing their daily Dialogue. They must not appear that they have “arrived in the area”.
4. Among the 6 groups that we conducted the program, it was the couples who Dialogued on the first 15 Dialogue questions given in the first module that really were able to experience the joy of Dialoguing and the most involved and affected by the Journey. Make every effort to encourage the couples to try out the 15 questions at home.
5. In module no. 5, the formation is on “Needs”. This is a very long topic and seems to be very teachy. We really need to make this as lively as we can. Because of its length, some groups divided the formation into 2 parts and asked the couples to meet on another night. This will be up to the group to decide.
6. The sequence of the presentation (Meeting 1 to Meeting 6) has worked well in the Philippines and has brought good results. We suggest that you try it out first before making any changes.
7. Not everyone immediately was able to do the Dialogue daily. A few really found difficulty but as long as they were able to attend all the meetings, they eventually were able to appreciate and finally started to do the daily Dialogue before the last meeting. We must be patient and not get discourage if initially, some couples find it difficult to Dialogue.
8. We also experienced that these couples attending our program who were able to form a small sharing group (Baby D.J.) as they were meeting with us got the most from the program. Since they were making the same presentations the following week to their (Baby D.J.) 4-5 couples, they were more attentive and were motivated to do the daily Dialogue. If it is

possible encourage the couples to form their own sharing group as soon as possible.

9. Some groups were just teams, others were a mix of teams, non-teams, old couples, young couples. The more varied the group, the more exciting it was. There should be no restrictions as to the type of couples in the group. Anyone willing to commit for 90 days should be welcome.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

*To my wife Cora whose love and passion for this Program overflows from her big heart.*

*To my loving husband Ditooy whose wisdom and dedication to the movement and love for the couples, priests, and religious molded this Dialogue Journey Program.*

*To our beautiful children Pom-Pom, Bim-Bim, Dondon and Boo-Boo who always supported us.*

*To the Philippine Leadership, Rey and Mel Sangalang and Rev. Fr. Danny Tiong who supported this Program and gave us the opportunity to share it throughout the country.*

*To the couples, priests, and religious, our friends who supported us all the way accepting our brokenness.*

*To our secretaries at work Loi and Myla who did the typing of the text.*

*To our son Dondon who helped us edit and layout the text.*

*To Rev. Fr. Chuck Gallagher who started it all.*

*To Rev. Fr. Paddy Colleran who gave us our original weekend and the Los Angeles Community who reached out to the Philippines.*

*To Ricardo Cardinal Vidal who continues to support us and the Movement.*

*And to God Almighty, there, every step of the way.*

**Thank you.**

## SOURCES/REFERENCES:

1. Denie and Dee Stemmler  
***Matrimony Magazine***  
  
Dialogue for Life Series:
  - a. Different Levels of Dialogue
  - b. Stresses in Marriage
  - c. Bringing Excellence to our Dialogue
  - d. Breaking the 3 Minute Barrier
  
2. Marge and Con Terr  
***Matrimony Magazine***  
  
Dialogue Workshop:
  - a. Turn Dialogue Blahs Into Dialogue Ahhs
  - b. Give Scripture Dialogue a Try
  - c. Spotlight on 5 Step Dialogue
  
3. Fr. Guido Heyrbaut  
Tape Presentation  
  
Relational Needs
  - a. Excerpts from His Tape Presentation to the World Council on Relational Needs (1982-1983)
  
4. Francis Baltazar-Schwartz  
***Chicken Soup for the Soul Online***
  - a. Attitude is Everything
  
5. Steven Covey  
***Seven Habits of Highly Effective People***
  
6. Fr Chuck Gallagher  
***Fun Person***
  
7. ***The Holy Bible***

We would like to thank all the couples, priests, and religious for sharing their experiences and thoughts to the Worldwide marriage Encounter Community.

The rest of the topics came from our own experiences and other couples who have shared their own personal experiences in their Dialogue Journey.

# **MEETING # 1**

***Attitude is Everything***

## MEETING # 1

### 1. OPENING PRAYER

- 1.1 (H or W) Say a short prayer.

### 2. WELCOME

- 2.1 *(H or W)* Give warm welcome to the couples.
  - 2.1.1 Be warm and try to make the couples at ease. You can make them laugh if you want. Do not present yourself as if you've done this before but you have also just started like them
- 2.2 *(H or W)* Share how you feel about the Dialogue Journey.
  - 2.2 Share how you feel about the Dialogue Journey. Share your excitement or fears about embarking on a sharing group.

### 3. EXPECTATIONS

- 3.1 *(H or W)* Share the expectations you have about the Dialogue Journey.

Points to consider:

  - 3.1.1 The group will have positive attitudes about the Dialogue and all will fall in love with it.
  - 3.1.2 You will get to know the group better and have a closer relationship with everyone.
  - 3.1.3 Your own Dialogue will be more meaningful because you will learn from others.
- 3.2 *(Group Open Sharing)* Ask the group to share on their own expectations by answering the question:

***“Why did I come tonight and what do I hope to gain?”***

- 3.2.1 Begin by telling the group that it is always good to start a program by being able to share all our expectations. Just like Friday night of the Weekend.
- 3.2.2 You can ask the couples to write on their notebooks their answers if they want before sharing.
- 3.2.3 Invite all couples to share.
- 3.3 (*Other Spouse*) Share the expectations you also have.

#### **4. HISTORY OF DIALOGUE IN MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER IN YOUR COUNTRY**

- 4.1 (*H or W*) Share with the group how Marriage Encounter treated the Dialogue before and now.

Points to include:

- Read attached Annex (page 12), History of Dialogue in the Philippines and make your own history for your country / community)

- 4.1.1 First heard on our Weekend
- 4.1.2 The objective was oneness of feeling
- 4.1.3 If you could feel what your spouse was feeling you could respond and grow closer in your oneness of feeling
- 4.1.4 Couples challenge each other by asking “HOW IS YOUR DIALOGUE?” and find ways of doing so. (ex: one rings on the phone)
- 4.1.5 In 1983 there was a change in outline and the Deeper Dialogue was introduced. Needs was also introduced.
- 4.1.6 This made Dialogue more difficult and it was suggested that we should not ask each other about our Dialogue.
- 4.1.7 The importance of Dialogue in the community slowly diminished and for many our Teams, Dialogue become a negative tool. Less emphasis was placed on the Dialogue.

## 4.2 (H or W) Reasons for Dialogue Journey

- 4.2.1 Many couples and even some of our teams do not know how to Dialogue. The Dialogue technique is difficult to learn by itself.
- 4.2.2 Many couples ended up fighting after the “glow” of the Weekend is over. The Dialogue is seen as a weapon to dump garbage, criticize, rather than a tool to bring the relationship closer.
- 4.2.3 Dialoguing only during meetings or once a week is not enough to appreciate or get the benefit of Dialogue. Couples who have Dialogued for a long time have shared that we need to experience about three months of continuous Dialogue for us to experience any benefits and for us to enjoy it.
- 4.2.4 We need to know that we are not alone in trying to live a Dialoguing way of life. Others are struggling the same way as we are. We need each other to encourage continuous Dialogue.
- 4.2.5 Based on these observations, the Dialogue Journey was designed in a way that could help bring about the joy of the Dialogue in our community.

## 4.3 Format of the Dialogue Journey

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### SECOND PART

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### THIRD PART

The leader shares one topic, short, simple, meaningful formation, which the couples can identify very easily within their daily lives.

We then give the couples a 10/10 question regarding what the leader shared. They do the 10/10 anywhere the meeting is held.

After the 10/10, the couples are asked to do a group sharing on their discoveries with regard to their 10/10.

### FOURTH PART

Dialogue questions of about 20 items are given to the couples for them to choose from for the next fifteen days. The questions are geared towards re-emphasizing what was taught regarding the techniques or to deepen the formation experience. Also, a short summary of what was learned during the evening is reinforced

## **5. DIALOGUE TECHNIQUE**

### **5.1 Reason for Dialogue (Mission / Vision)**

#### **5.1.1 (*H or W*) Ask the couples to share on the question:**

What was or is my reason for Dialoguing?

(If you are not Dialoguing, think back at the time just after your Weekend...you must have Dialogued for a few times... What was your reason then?)

- 5.1.2 Explain that to most of us wanted to Dialogue right after our Weekend but our Dialogue did not last.
- 5.1.3 Leader should try to list down each of their sharing so that you can give examples later on how their reasons could be different from each other and how this can create problems in Dialoguing from the very beginning.
- 5.2 (*H or W*) Explain the importance of a couple to have the same reasons for Dialoguing and the danger when each one has a different reason.
  - 5.2.1 Our experience in various groups is that many of the reasons given are “So that I can share my feelings with my spouse” or something similar to this.
  - 5.2.2 If this is the case, you can point out that many who shared the above omitted to say the other half of their reason which is “...so that my spouse will know it is his/her fault why I feel this way and he/she should change.” This will definitely not make the Dialogue enjoyable and will lead to fights.
  - 5.2.3 Point out that to many, the reason for Dialoguing of one spouse is different from the other. So from the very beginning the reason could be wrong or different from each other. Because of this, many of our Dialogues go wrong and just end up in a negative way. If our reasons are different from each other, our expectations will not be met and we will be disappointed. It is important that the couple should have the same reason for Dialoguing so that from the beginning their objectives are the same.
- 5.3 (*H or W*) Ask the couples to talk about and agree on the reason or Vision that they would like their Dialogue to have in this Journey. Ask them to write this on the back cover of this notebooks. Give them 5-10 minutes to agree and write in their notebooks.
- 5.4 (*H or W*) Ask the couples to share what they wrote and agreed on in their notebooks with the group.
- 5.5 (*H or W*) Share with the group your own Mission / Vision for their Dialogue.
- 5.6 (*H or W*) Point out that as they Dialogue at home, they should try to remind themselves what their Mission/Vision in order to be in focus.
- 5.7 (*H or W*) They could also change their reason if they find from the other’s sharing something they could apply to themselves.

## 6. Confiding Dialogue

6.1 (H or M) Share with the group the concept of Confiding Dialogue.

- *Introduce the need to have an attitude of a confidant in our Dialogue*

When we came out of the Weekend, we thought we could tell each other anything-our thoughts, our feeling inside or outside the Dialogue, thinking that the other would listen. However, we were often wrong because many times it became garbage dumping criticism, and manipulation. Those were the times that we got disillusioned with Dialogue and would completely stop. (Part of it is we had different reasons)

If we wanted the Dialogue to work for us then, what we needed was to become each other's confidant and make a confiding Dialogue.

Many times, our attitude was *"This is my chance to tell him/her defects, or to criticize, or to dump garbage; a chance to be in the offensive."* No wonder our Dialogue did not last long. We were enemies instead of confidants.

Many of us have confidants. These are not just friends but special friends whom we share our thoughts and feelings and will accept us, no matter what we tell them about us. They will not treat us differently even if we share with them our imperfections or innermost feelings.

**(H) Share what a confidant means to you.**

**(W) Share what a confidant means to you.**

That is the confiding Dialogue. It is a kind of Dialogue where you share who you are to your spouse knowing that he is your confidant and your spouse being your confidant, will accept who you are and will not be your enemy.

If you decide to try confiding Dialogue, we must learn to celebrate one another and to become appreciative of one another.

Many times because of the type of person we are and our background, we have different versions of what we experience and different versions of reality. We must learn to accept during our Dialogue, each other's reality even when we may not want to agree

with it. We also have to learn to stop trying to change each other and start celebrating and appreciate our differences.

At the end of these meetings, we have prepared for you some Dialogue questions which we hope you can practice and experience not only your own feelings but also listen to each other's feelings and really appreciate your spouse.

Become each other's confidant in your Dialogue. We need to have an attitude that we are friends during Dialogue and not enemies.

## 7. FORMATION ("Attitude is Everything")

- 7.1 (H or W) Introduce hand-out on "**Attitude is Everything** by Francis Baltazar-Schwartz"

*"Our son Dondon who is 23 years, likes to surf the internet and sometime last week he said to me "Daddy remember the time you wanted me to have a haircut when I was 13 years old? You told me: "Dondon you have two choices, you can have your haircut and go in a bad mood and a sour face OR you can have your haircut and go in a good mood and a smiling face. The CHOICE is yours" "Daddy, I have found something in the internet that is similar to what you said". He then gave me a one page print out titled "Attitude Is Everything" written by Francis Baltazar-Schwartz. I found it very interesting. We would like to share this now with you.*

7.1.1 Use your own introduction to the handout.

7.1.2 Pass out the handout and tell the couples you would like to read this together (see page 11).

7.1.3 Read aloud and ask them to follow as you read loud.

- 7.2 (Other Spouse) Read the hand-out aloud. After reading, H/W share.

Each share the following:

7.2.1 An experience when you chose negative attitude instead of a positive attitude and the result it had

7.2.1.1 General experience

7.2.1.2 one that involves your relationship

7.2.2 An experience where you chose a positive attitude instead of a negative attitude and the results it had-

7.2.2.1 general experience

7.2.2.2 one that involves your relationship

*Note: For the general experience you can share something simple like going to a party. Sometimes even before we arrive we already judge we will be bored and we plan even what time we will leave. If you have more examples, feel free to share them to the group.*

7.3 (H and W) Explain why the topic is appropriate for the Journey we are taking.

We chose this as the topic for the first module because just like I said, we are going on a Journey/trip. We need to choose the right attitude for this trip or else we will not enjoy it. Also we will need to make choices. Whether we will attend the next meeting or not. Whether we will try to Dialogue or not. Whether we will work for a baby group or not. Whether I will make our Dialogue enjoyable or will I use it to tell my spouse she is terrible and it is all his or her fault. You know we have 23 hours and 40 minutes everyday to do that. We should choose not to do it during our 20 minutes of Dialogue. Our Dialogue should be different from the rest of the day.

So we are inviting you in a Journey. As we said you can come to the Journey happy and smiling or you can come to the Journey with negative thoughts.

7.4 (H or W) Give the couples the Dialogue Question (10/10)

***7.4.1 What would I like to happen to us at the end of this Dialogue Journey?***

***7.4.2 What are the choices I can make for this to happen?***

***7.4.3 How do I feel sharing this with you?***

- 7.5 Ask the couples to share with the group their response to the question:

***What would I like to happen to us at the end of this Dialogue Journey?***

## **8. COMMITMENT TO THE DIALOGUE JOURNEY**

*(H or W)*

- 8.1 Agree to meet six times within ninety days preferably fifteen days apart. Try to make this a priority and a commitment. It is good if the days for the six meetings can be set in this meeting so everyone can prepare and adjust their schedule. Like every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> week or 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday, either to be a set date.
- 8.2 We will be giving you Dialogue Questions for the next fifteen days. Make serious effort to find time and Dialogue on the question given. Encourage them to Dialogue because starting together will really make the Journey enjoyable.
- 8.3 Encourage each other to Dialogue and ask each other "How is your Dialogue?"
- *Our experience in other groups show that those who Dialogued on the first 15 questions daily really got involved and looked forward to the next meetings and got the most from the program. So really encourage the couples.*

## **9. DIALOGUE QUESTIONS FOR THE NEXT FIFTEEN DAYS**

- 9.1 Give out list of questions for the next fifteen days (page 14)
- 9.2 Reminders:
- 9.2.1 Remind couples to concentrate on being confidants to each other (Confiding Dialogue);
- 9.2.2 Try to empathize and be compassionate rather trying to change or control;
- 9.2.3 Agree on the next meeting day and place

## **10. CLOSING PRAYER**

## **ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING**

**By Francis Baltazar-Schwartz**

Jerry was the kind of guy you love to hate. He was always in a good mood and always had something positive to say. When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would reply "If I were any better, I would be twins!" He was a unique manager because he had several waiters who had followed him around from restaurant to restaurant. The reason the waiters followed Jerry was because of his attitude. He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Jerry was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Seeing his style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Jerry and asked him "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all of the time. How do you do it?" Jerry replied "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, Jerry, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood!" I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it. Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life." "Yeah, right, it's not that easy!" I protest. "Yes it is" Jerry said. Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how to react to situations. You choose how people will affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live life". I reflected on what Jerry said. Soon thereafter, I left the restaurant industry to start my own business. We lost touch but often I thought about him when I made a choice about life instead of reacting to it.

Several years later, I heard that Jerry did something you are never supposed to do in a restaurant business: he left the back door open one morning and was held up at gunpoint by three armed robbers. While trying to open the safe, his hands shaking from nervousness, slipped off the combination. The robbers panicked and shot him. Luckily, Jerry was found relatively quickly and rushed to the local trauma center. After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Jerry was released from the hospital with fragments of the bullets still in his body.

I saw Jerry about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied, "If I were any better, I'd be twins. Wanna see my scars?" I declined to see his wounds, but I asked him what had gone through his mind as the robbery took place? "The first thing that went through my mind was that I should have locked the back door." Jerry replied. "Then, as I lay on the floor, I remember that I had two choices: I could choose to live or I could choose to die. I choose to live. "Weren't you scared? Did you lose consciousness?" I asked. Jerry continued, "The paramedics were great. They kept telling me that I was going to be fine but when they wheeled me into the emergency room and I saw the expressions on the faces of the doctors and nurses, I got really scared. In their eyes, I read "He's a dead man". I knew I needed to take action". "What did you do?" I asked. "Well, there was a big burly nurse shouting questions at me." Said Jerry. She asked me if I was allergic to anything? "Yes" I replied. The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled "Bullets!" Over their laughter, I told them "I am choosing to live. Operate me as if I am alive, not dead."

Jerry lived, thanks to the skills of his doctor, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully. Attitude, after all, is everything!

## HISTORY OF DIALOGUE IN THE PHILIPPINES

*Tonight, we will try to look at Dialogue and its history in Marriage Encounter and we will try to give you some ways of making it work for you.*

*“Remember, there is no right or wrong way of doing the Dialogue. However, there are many tips and techniques and experiences that can help each one make the Dialogue a beautiful and meaningful experience.*

First time we heard about the Dialogue was on our Weekend. The objective of the Dialogue was very simple” “To try to feel what our spouse was feeling – to be in his/her shoes.” If the spouse was about to cry, and after the Dialogue you also felt you were about to cry, then you had oneness of feelings. If you were happy that you wanted to smile, your spouse should feel the same way. End result was that if you could feel what your spouse was feeling, then you could response on your own free will. This went on for a couple of years.

When the American couples would come, the first thing they would ask was “How is your Dialogue?” For us that time, if you were Dialoguing, then you were growing in relationship. If you were not, then you will not grow. When we asked “How is your Dialogue?”, what we were really asking was “How is your relationship? – Your relationship is important to us”.

We thought of many things to encourage the couples to Dialogue. One of them was to form Love Circles because we believe that no one Dialogues alone. Then we had challenges to see how long you could go without missing. We even had couples who would call at night and ask "How is your Dialogue?" Lito and Cely Clemente were one of those who found time to call. When we heard some who went straight for 100 days, we would say to ourselves “If they can do it, so can we!” So we were challenged.

We tried to teach couples, priests & religious this oneness of feeling whenever we could. Some would even Dialogue in front of us while we helped them through this oneness of feelings. At that time, when we helped others through their Dialogue, they felt very close.

We made sure that every enrichment or gathering or meetings had Dialogues.

It was a period where we truly believed that Dialogue was like the discovery of an antibiotic – the miracle cure of our relationship.

Then came what we consider a change with others will say an improvement. Then came the expansion of feelings into needs and it seemed this came about because after we had oneness of feeling, some people complained and asked what was next? It seemed oneness of feeling was not enough.

So there came about a process of formation where needs were also explained and introduced. Some changes were made in the Weekend and the Deeper and Five-Step Dialogue was introduced. Now the objective of the Dialogue was not anymore oneness of feelings but the more important objective seemed to be “what can I do better?” it was during this time that asking each other how their Dialogue was, was threatening and would turn-off couples. We did not agree.

At first glance, the 5-Step Dialogue seemed to be the easier way because of the questions, but the problem couples were in a hurry to answer the fifth step – “What can I do better?” thus, forgetting that answering the fifth question is not what makes the Dialogue but it is the whole process or the Journey that is important. We need to accept feelings first before knowing what to do better.

Personally, I do not think that this message was really absorbed by the couples and, therefore, the Dialogue became much more threatening than what it was before because of the fifth question rather than the oneness of feeling.

### **WHY THE DIALOGUE JOURNEY NOW.**

So without couples challenging anymore and the dialogue became more threatening, less emphasis on daily Dialogue was place in our movement. There have been very few attempts to try to learn more about techniques that could help couples, and to pass on experiences of other couples who have been Dialoguing.

Now, there is an awareness that Dialogue is crucial to our movement and some efforts are being made to keep this in the forefront. That is why we are now trying on this Dialogue Journey.

## MEETING #1 DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. How do I feel about the way my parents treated me when I was growing up?
2. How do I feel about the way I am bringing up my children?
3. What would I have liked to change with the way I was brought up? HDIF sharing this with you?
4. How do I feel about the way my parents handled their finances?
5. How do I feel about the way I handle our finances?
6. What childhood hurts am I carrying into our relationship? HDIF sharing this with you?
7. How would I like to be remembered by you? HDIF sharing this with you?
8. HDIF about my relationship with God?
9. What can I do to become a better person for our relationship? HDIF Sharing this with you?
10. How do I feel about my involvement with you when we make love?
11. How do I feel about my prayer life?
12. How do I feel about my commitment or lack of commitment to our Daily Dialogue
13. How does my early childhood affect the way I treat our children? HDIF sharing this with you?
14. How does my attitude about sex while I was growing up affect my involvement in our lovemaking? HDIF Sharing this with you?
15. How do I feel about our commitment and involvement in Marriage Encounter?
16. If I could change my childhood, what part will I change?
17. What part of me can I not accept? HDIF sharing this with you?
18. What depresses me most? How do I behave when I am depressed? HDIF sharing this with you?
19. What do I think is my worst enemy within myself?

# **MEETING # 2**

***Feelings Are Important***

## MEETING #2

### 1. OPENING PRAYER

*(H or W)*

Include in your prayers the grace to be able to open with each other this evening and to help all of us to understand and learn to accept each other's feelings.

### 2. EXPERIENCE OF LAST 15 DAYS JOURNEY IN DIALOGUE

2.1 *(H or W)* Share your struggles in Dialogue in the last 15 days.

2.1.1 Share your joys and struggles in Dialogue:

2.1.1.1 Include whether you were able to do all the questions.

2.1.1.2 what made it easy or difficult to Dialogue?

2.1.2 Share any significant learning or awareness in your Dialogue the past 15 days

2.1.2.1 Did you become aware of anything significant about yourself or your spouse?

2.2 *(Other spouse)* Ask the couples to share their own struggles in Dialogue (Group sharing on voluntary basis).

2.2.1 We are asking you to share in your Dialogue (not to check whether you Dialogue or not but since we are together in this Journey we should know where we are all at so that we can help each other to move forward).

2.3 *(H or W)* For those couples handling another Dialogue Journey Group (Baby D.J.), ask them to share the joys and struggles of the group.

### 3. DIALOGUE TECHNIQUE INPUT

#### 3.1 (H or W) Explain the different levels/motives of Dialogue.

For those who have done the series of Dialogue questions we gave you, many would have discovered a lot about yourselves and your spouse. And many of you also continued to Dialogue because you wanted to know each other more. This type of Dialogue is what we call the discovery level. We want to Dialogue because we are discovering a lot about ourselves and our spouse. This is the **discovery type** of Dialogue.

For others we may be Dialoguing because we are teams and because teams are suppose to Dialogue or because we belong to M.E. and Dialogue is a pre-requisite to al meetings. Still some of us Dialogue so that we do not break the chain of Dialogue daily. This type of Dialogue is called the **commitment level**.

The third type or level of Dialogue is called the **tune in level**. We use this when our question focuses on what is really going on inside us right now. The question often used is “**What is my strongest feeling today**”. This is done normally when we know we are going to be very busy or when we are apart. Some time during the day we tune in to each other. This is good during hectic schedules and on trips.

The fourth level is what we call the **growth level**. This is a combination of all the other three levels plus a **call to change**. This is when we want to be better at being your spouse. We want to discover a motive for change. When we Dialogue in the discovery level, we get tons of awareness and the next step is what we are going to do about it. The five step or deeper Dialogue can help us achieve this growth level (5 steps or deeper Dialogue will be explained on the 5<sup>th</sup> session).

**There is no one correct way of Dialoguing.** What will make us Dialogue daily is when we do a mix of all the 4 levels (commitment, tune in, discovery and growth). What is important is not to stay only in one level but try to go to the growth level once in a while. As long as we all do the WEDS, we are Dialoguing no matter what level we are in. Not only write, not only talk but WEDS – write, exchange, dialogue and select..

### **3.2 (OTHER SPOUSE) EXPLAIN PRAYER IN DIALOGUE**

Definitely acceptance, experiencing with the heart and unity are something that are beyond mere human capabilities. They are definitely gifts from our Father. Consequently, our Father has to be a very, very real part of our love letter and Dialogue.

And so, we should start our love letter with a very, very intense awareness of our Father's presence as we begin to write; and to seek his yearning for us to be full in our love letter and to really get His urgency for what we are about to begin to write to our beloved. This prayer should not just be a formal prayer – just saying memorized words. Nor should it be something that we just do routinely so that we can say “Yes, we have referred to our Father before we began our love letter”. This prayer should be something that demands our full attention (1) that we are totally absorbed in, and that we really seek to feel our Father's feelings for us; (2) to have His intensity about what we are about to do and (3) to taste some of the stake that He has in our Dialogue.

Dialoguing is being our Father's business. We must pray very, very earnestly to deeply and truly realize that fact and not just accept it intellectually but make it real to us. Some couples have found it to be very helpful to write their prayer out and to really seek the earnestness in the writing to our Father that they have in writing to their spouse.

Our prayer has to have an urgency about the love letter that we are about to write.

We can pray together before writing. You can pray individually before writing your spouse. What's important is, it must be present in your Dialogue

### **3.3 DIALOGUE IS A SPECIAL MOMENT FOR THE TWO OF US.**

*(One spouse)*

Dialogue is not an easy thing to do. But for those of us who saw how it worked in the Weekend and experienced the closeness in our relationship, we chose to make Dialogue a part of our lives because we valued our relationship.

When we do this we choose not to be common or ordinary. Because writing a love letter sharing our feelings, accepting each other in the “20 minutes a day” is not a common thing that married couples do.

Therefore, if we choose to make Dialogue part of our lives, we have chosen the 20 minutes of Dialogue different and special. We then must treat this 20 minutes as a sacred time since God wants us to be close to each other. It must also be special because we try to focus only on our relationship. We listen differently and we talk differently. If we do not try to treat the 20 minutes of the day different from the 23 hours and 40 minutes and say the same things as the rest of the day, then there is no need for Dialogue. If we don't write and talk about feelings, then what difference does it make if we Dialogue or not, anyway, we talk. Remember, if we want Dialogue to work for us then we must choose to make the 20 minutes a special and sacred time, a Holy Special Moment of our day .

### **3.4 OUR BEHAVIOR PATTERNS AFFECT OUR DIALOGUE**

*(One spouse)*

On our Weekend we learned that our behavior patterns affects the way we behave and sometimes our behavior patterns affect our relationship.

In a similar way our behavior patterns can also affect our Dialogue because the same behavior patterns are operational while we are Dialoguing.

*(H or W)*

Share your behavior patterns in Dialogue which affect the quality of your Dialogue. (Things you can consider)

- What do you do if you fear confrontation?
- Doing 2 to 3 things at the same time.
- Wanting solutions right away?
- Using your mind rather than heart while listening?
- Listen patterns you use?
- Just agreeing to avoid confrontation.

- Not comfortable in describing feelings.
- Being always nice and accomodating.
- Concentrating always with your spouse' feelings so that you will not have to share your feelings.
- Seem always to be in differneces.

(DITTOY)

*Since I am the type of person that avoids confrontation at all costs, I am always on guard that our Dialogue does not end up in confrontation or fights. Many times while Dialoguing I am not relaxed.*

*My behavior pattern is that of an intellectualizer. I use my mind more than my heart. It is very difficult for me to accept Cora's feelings without first understanding the reason. This leads our Dialogue to the issues than to the feelings.*

*I am a very closed person and it is difficult for me to share my feelings. So many times I concentrate on Cora's feelings more than mine. I keep on asking questions and many times I ask like a psychiatrist. I escape from sharing my own feelings so Cora does not get to know me nor do I get the opportunity to grow.*

(CORA)

*I can not stand still and I must be busy all the time. So while Dialoguing I can watch T.V. and give instructions to the help at the same time. I can do 2 to 3 things at the same time. Although I say I can listen with my heart and this turns Ditoy off from sharing.*

*I am a high achiever and I get impatient with too much talk or slow talk. I am in a hurry to get to the bottom and find a solution right away. Sometimes I do not find feelings to be important. What is right is important. This makes us rush though our Dialogue.*

*I am a perfectionist and sometimes I find myself correcting Ditoy's spelling in his love letters or I want to know who is at fault not minding anymore feelings.*

*I am always very emotional and sensitive so most of the time it is my feelings that we talk about. I seem to always have more complaints.*

*DITTOY – What can I try to do?*

*For me, I should insist that once in a while, we concentrate on my feelings and try to really share them with Cora. Another thing I should try to do is to relax more and not to be concerned of acting like a psychologist and really try to feel Cora's feelings. I should also use my heart more than my mind during dialogue.*

*CORA – What can I try to do?*

*I should be a little slower and concentrate more on my feelings. I should develop patience in listening specially to an "Intellectualizer" who is so slow. I can stop looking at facts and look deeply on the feelings of Ditoy. Another thing is to concentrate on what is happening and learn to sit beside Ditoy.*

*(OTHER SPOUSE)*

As you can see, we need to be very much aware of our behavior patterns in order that we can make a conscious effort to change our behavior during Dialoguing time. Being aware can make our Dialogue more meaningful.

Each one of us has some behavior patterns in Dialogue that could stand some improvement.

Now for a few minutes we would like each one of you to reflect and think back of one or two behavior patterns that you have and how does this affect your Dialogue.

We will give you a few minutes to think and write it down. This is not a 10/10 but you can answer these questions in your notebook.

***What is one of my behavior pattern that affects negatively our Dialogue?***

***What can I do to make our Dialogue more pleasant and meaningful?***

(Give couples 5 minutes to write)

After 5 minutes invite the couples to share with the group what he/she wrote on a voluntary basis.

- 3.5 (Other spouse) Ask if they have any question on the Dialogue Technique which they have learned so far.

As much as possible try to erase what we learned in the past about the Dialogue. Let us re-learn it slowly.

Try to get the other members of the group to answer any question before the leaders answer any of the question.

If the answer to their questions will be answered in the next module, ask the person if they could wait.

#### 4. **FORMATION (FOCUS ON FEELINGS)**

- 4.1 (*H or W*)

We want to teach or review with the couples the things we learned about feelings on the Weekend and after the Weekend. We will do this by first going around the group and ask them to share “**one significant thing they know about feelings**” which could help us all understand feelings better.

After this sharing you can give them the handout “**Review on Feelings**” and share some personal examples on a few which they might have missed sharing. Feel free to expand on any of the items which you think can add understanding to their feelings.

## 4.2 REVIEW ON FEELINGS

- 4.2.1 Definition: A feeling is an inner reaction to a person, place or thing;
- 4.2.2 Feelings are neither right nor wrong (no morality);
- 4.2.3 Difference between a feeling and a judgement;
- 4.2.4 (Why and because) does not describe a feeling;
- 4.2.5 Three ways we react to feelings (rejection, toleration and acceptance);
- 4.2.6 Same words signifies different feelings for different people at different times and at different situations;
- 4.2.7 Feelings have no gender;
- 4.2.8 Feelings are signals of unmet needs;
- 4.2.9 Feelings are spontaneous and we normally have no control. Behavior, we can choose;
- 4.2.10 When we share our feelings, we normally can take responsibility for it and sometimes they change for the better;
- 4.2.11 Anger and resentment is only a symptom feeling. They are surface feelings. We need to be aware that they are surface feelings;
- 4.2.12 Some misconceptions of commonly used feeling words:
  - Rejection is a judgement – feel sad being rejected
  - Guilt is a moral issue – feel embarrassed or shame
  - Inadequacy is a Judgement – feel embarrassed or shame

### **4.3 FEELINGS ARE REAL TO THE PERSON EXPERIENCING THE FEELING.**

*(H or W)*

What each of us feels is based on the realities that we think we see or are experiencing. Each one of us can see or experience the same thing but because our realities are different. Our feelings will be different.

The realities we each see is based on the type of person we are, how we were brought up, our attitudes, our past experiences, etc. These are what make our realities different from each other and thus our feelings can be different for the same situation.

Many times we may not accept our spouse's feelings because we judge, we see the same situation in a different way and because we do not feel the same way, we want our spouse to have the same feelings.

We need to be aware that in spite of the situation being the same for both of us the feeling that our spouse is feeling is real at the present moment. If it is hurt, the pain is real. If it is fear, the fear is real. If it is sadness, that is real. Even if we ourselves are not experiencing any of those feelings.

Just like physical pains. Our threshold of pains are different. A simple to a person with a low threshold of pain is feeling the pain is great if we have a high threshold of pain we will not feel that way. The intensity or non-intensity of pain is real to every person.

*(H or W) Share -*

It is good to give personal examples of how we can see or experience the same thing, our feelings can be different. The feeling of our spouse is real to him/her. Our spouse can really feel a hurt even if we judge that we would not have gotten hurt if it was us.

### **4.4 DESCRIBE FEELINGS**

Describing feelings can take the focus away from blaming and complaining. Remember we have 23 hours and 40 minutes a day to do this. Dialogue time is special. Keep it sacred by staying away from blaming and complaining. Dialogue is not a time to

correct or straighten our spouse or blame our spouse. This is a time for us to be deeper in love.

What can help us in avoiding blaming and complaining is to elaborate on the feelings until our spouse can reflect the feeling back to the one who has the strongest feelings.

It is like drawing when the police are trying to identify a criminal. One is describing and the other is trying to draw based on the description. And finally share the picture to the one describing and is told “that is exactly what I saw”.

#### **4.5 ACCEPTING FEELINGS (UNCONDITIONAL LOVE)**

Many times we don’t understand the source of feeling and this could be frustrating. Our job as listeners is to reflect back acceptance of our spouse. Insisting on understanding first before accepting puts condition on the gift I give.

For example, I may be thinking I am not worried when the children are out late at night, why is Cora so worried? What I need to say first before trying to convince her that everything is alright is “Are you afraid when the children are out late? What is the fear like? When we are able to do this we are practicing unconditional love.

#### **4.6 SUGGESTED LETTER FORMAT FOR WRITING ON FEELINGS**

*(One spouse)* Give handout on letter format and briefly explain handout. Remind them that they should spend more time on describing feelings. Include also in explanation that this is just a suggestion and not the only way to write. (page 28)

#### **4.7 HELPFUL QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK DURING DIALOGUE.**

*(Other spouse)* Give handout on suggested questions and briefly explain handout. You do not need to explain each item, just a few. (page 29)

#### **4.8 FEELING WORDS YOU CAN USE.**

*(Other spouse)* Give handout and briefly comment on how you can use some of these words to describe your feeling.

Creativity adds color to bring your feelings alive in your letters. Here are some ideas for bringing out the shading and description of a feeling (page 30).

#### **4.9 DIALOGUE QUESTION (10/10)**

##### **4.9.1 What feelings did I have that I did not share with you in the past week?**

Reminder:

- 4.9.1.1 We want you to concentrate most of the time in describing your feelings.
- 4.9.1.2 During Dialogue we want you also to make every effort in trying to accept your spouse's feelings;
- 4.9.1.3 We can discuss issues later on. For today let us practice how to describe and accept feelings.
- 4.9.1.4 Use the letter format we suggested, the feeling words and the suggested Dialogue questions.

#### **4.10 GROUP SHARING**

##### **4.10.1 What is the significant thing I have become aware of with regard to feelings that I can apply in my life?**

#### **5. DIALOGUE QUESTIONS**

5.1 (One spouse) Explain the Dialogue question for the next 15 days. (page 31)

5.1.1 The first seven (7) questions are on behavior pattern.

5.1.2 The next fourteen (14) questions are on feelings.

- 5.2 (One spouse) Remind the couples on what they have learned when they do their Dialogue.
  - 5.2.1 Confidant Dialogue;
  - 5.2.2 Feelings are real to the person;
  - 5.2.3 Celebrate your differences;
  - 5.2.4 Do not try to change the other person;
  - 5.2.5 You have choices in everything from the moment you wake up;
  - 5.2.6 Behavior patterns are operational in our Dialogue; and
  - 5.2.7 Prayer should always be a part of Dialogue.

## **6. OTHER MATTERS**

- 6.1 Suggestions to make the Journey better;
- 6.2 Schedule of next meeting; and
- 6.3 Etc.

## **7. CLOSING PRAYERS**

**SUGGESTED LETTER FORMAT FOR FEELINGS**  
(This is just a suggestion and not the only way to write)

- Dear \_\_\_\_\_
- Your most endearing quality for today is \_\_\_\_\_
- About a paragraph describing your thoughts and reactions to be reflected and question.
- State the strongest feelings you have about the reflection question. Check out feeling words list. Check out between feeling and judgement.
- Answer the question: IS THERE SOMETHING IN MY BACKGROUND OR UPBRINGING THAT CAUSES OR ADD TO THIS FEELING THAT I HAVE?
- Describe your feelings in detail shared experience. A time when you believe your spouse may have the same feeling you are describing. Use color to rate your feelings of scale of 1 to 10 to help describe intensity. Use senses (smells like, tastes like, feels like, sounds like, looks like). Describe however you can. The purpose of the love letter is to allow your spouse to experience you through feelings.
- Close with an endearment.

NOTE: Feeling words and questions for better Dialogue.

**(OTHER SPOUSE) EXPLAIN SUGGESTED QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK DURING DIALOGUE WHICH CAN HELP IN DESCRIBING FEELINGS.**

You do not need to explain each item. Just emphasize a few and give this listing as a handout.

- Tell me more ... describe back.
- Is it like ... when you feel this way? Describe some feelings you may have had that you suspect is close or the same as the feelings of your spouse who is trying now to communicate to you.
- How does your feeling make you feel physically?
- What shape, size, color, texture does your feelings have? Can you associate any sound or sight or taste or smell with your feelings?
- What helps you to describe it more fully?
- How does it feel to feel the way you feel?
- Have I ever described a feeling like yours to you? Tell me how you remember that feeling of yours and mine. How does it compare with your present feelings?
- Have you ever felt this way before? How does it compare with those other times?
- What intensifies your feelings? What lessens it?
- What have I said or done in past Dialogues that helped you get out your feelings more?
- How do you feel about revealing this feeling? Is there a difference in your reaction in the love letter and the Dialogue?
- How do you see me when you feel this way?
- How do you see yourself when you fee this way?
- What do you need when you feel this way?
- What do you picture in your mind when you feel this way?
- What physical sensations do you have when you feel this way?
- Tell whether you have any real desire to feel his/her feeling now and what helps you to become more desirous of feeling that feeling.
- Have spouse tell you how he/she feels about your questions or your responses?
- How do you rate this feeling on a scale of 1-10, less to more?  
How do we rate this feeling as a couple on this scale?

NOTE: YOU WILL OBVIOUSLY NOT USE MORE THAT A COUPLE OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS DURING ANY GIVEN DIALOGUE.

## FEELING WORDS YOU CAN USE

As you describe your feelings, think about these starters:

It reminds me of a time...

It makes me want to...

My physical reactions inside are...

A picture I get is...

The color it would be is...

### ***I feel Angry.***

Like when I burned a piece of toast.  
Like when our kids are fighting.  
Like when I backed the car into the house.  
I want to pound my fist on the table.  
My eyes are popping and the top of my head is ready to blow.  
My face is hot, my fists are clenched, and my chest is upright and full of hot air.  
It's like an upset, swarming beehive.  
It's like a volcano erupting.  
It's flaming red.  
Other shades of angry: irritated, annoyed, irked, irate, enraged, furious.

### ***I feel Nervous***

Like when I had to give a speech in front of the company president.  
Like when I met your parents for the first time.  
Like when I was waiting for my exams to be graded.  
I want to do something fun to be distracted.  
I want to go away with you and relax.  
My whole body shakes, my palms are sweaty.  
I feel cold, light-headed and jangled.  
It's hard for me to concentrate.  
It's like waiting out a tornado or flood warning.  
It's an annoying neon yellow.  
Other shades of nervous: tense, anxious, worried, apprehensive, jittery, jumpy.

### ***I feel Happy.***

Like when I got an A on a test.  
Like the day when we got married.  
Like the day our child was born.  
Like when I'm lying in your arms after making love.  
I want to laugh and hug everybody.  
I can't stop smiling.  
My step is light, my face is shining and I feel warm inside.  
It's like hearing all the birds singing on a beautiful morning.  
It's brightly colored, like a huge hot hot air balloon.  
Other shades of happy: cheerful, delighted, lighthearted, exhilarated, joyful.

### ***I feel Excited***

Like waking up on a Christmas morning.  
Like going to Disneyland.  
Like when we accomplished something great.  
Like when we want to make love.  
I want to get up and move around.  
It's hard to sit still.  
It's like taking a bit breath of cool morning air.  
I have a lot cold energy.  
It's like seeing a shooting star.  
It's like a glimpse of a deer through the trees.  
It's bright pink.  
Other shades of excited: eager, enthusiasm, anxious, thrilled, wild, electrified.

### ***I feel Sad.***

Like when our friends moved.  
Like when our dog died.  
Like when you left for a long business trip.  
I want to lie down.  
I want to cry.  
I have a lump in my throat  
My shoulders slump and I can't joke or smile.  
It's like finding a dead bird.  
It's like a place where there's been a fire.  
It's muddy and gray. It reminds me of leaving a painting in the rain.  
Other shades of sad: down, disappointed, distressed, sorrowful, full of grief, miserable.

### ***I feel Afraid***

Like I realized I was driving on The wrong side of the street.  
Like when our smoke alarm Went off in the middle of the night  
Like when we called to the Hospital because our son was In an accident.  
I want to hide in bed until it's all Over.  
I want to hold my breath and just Get through it.  
I want to hold onto you and know You are here near me.  
My hands are shaking and my Stomach is tied in knots.  
My hands are sweating and my Heart is pounding.  
It's like hearing animals in the dark When you're camping.  
Other shades of afraid: shy, fearful, Frightened, alarmed, terrified.

## MEETING #2 DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

### BEHAVIOR PATTERN.

#### 1. QUESTIONS

- 1.1 How does my behavior pattern influence the way I behave toward you?
- 1.2 What quality or behavior which I have causes friction between us?
- 1.3 How does my behavior pattern influence the way I behave toward our children.
- 1.4 How does my behavior pattern influence the way I behave toward God?
- 1.5 Why do I believe I am important to others? What do I think is my greatest contributions to others?
- 1.6 How do I behave towards (you, children, people) in the house when I am upset or under pressure?

#### 2. FEELINGS QUESTIONS

- 2.1 What are the five things I would like to do or accomplish before I die. HDIF sharing this with you?
- 2.2 How do I feel when I make a mistake and you point it out to me?
- 2.3 How do I feel when you compliment or praise me?
- 2.4 How do I feel when you are late and I have to wait for you?
- 2.5 How do I feel when I think you are judging me?
- 2.6 How do I feel when I see you angry and annoyed with me?
- 2.7 How do I feel when you make a sacrifice for me?
- 2.8 How do I feel when I think I have hurt your feelings?
- 2.9 How do I feel about our sexual relationship?
- 2.10 How do I feel when you reach out for me after you hurt my feelings?
- 2.11 How do I feel about the way we make plans together?
- 2.12 What am I doing to make your life a pleasure? HDMAMMF?
- 2.13 How do I feel when I receive a gift from you?
- 2.14 How do I feel when you interrupt me in conversation?

# **MEETING # 3**

## ***Stresses in Our Marriage***

## MEETING #3

### 1. OPENING PRAYER

(H or W) Include in your prayers the grace to be able to handle better the stresses in our lives.

### 2. EXPERIENCE OF LAST 15 DAYS JOURNEY IN DIALOGUE

2.1 (H or W) Share your struggles in Dialogue in the last 15 days.

2.1.1 Show your joys and struggles in Dialogue

2.1.2 Include whether you were able to do all the questions.  
What made it easy or difficult to Dialogue

2.2 Share any significant learning or awareness in your Dialogue the past 15 days.

2.2.1 Did you become aware of anything significant about yourself or your spouse?

2.2.2 (Other Spouse) Ask the couples to share their own struggles in their Dialogue the past 15 days.

(GROUP SHARING ON VOLUNTARY BASIS)

2.3 (H or W) For those couples handling another Dialogue Journey group ask them to share the joy and struggles of the group

### 3. DIALOGUE TECHNIQUE INPUT

#### 3.1 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIALOGUE AND DISCUSSION

3.1.1 (H or W) EXPLAIN DIFFERENCE Between (Dialogue & discussion)

3.1.1.1 There is a difference between **Conjugal Dialogue** and **Discussion**.

- 3.1.1.2 **Discussion** deals with ideas and is concerned with information, advice comprehension and understanding one another.
- 3.1.1.3 Discussion frequently focuses on confronting problems, exchanging insights, making decisions, analyzing issues, developing proper judgement, planning, etc., etc...
- 3.1.1.4 Objective of discussion many times is to come to a decision and solve problems.
- 3.1.1.5 **Conjugal Dialogue** on the other hand, has, as its single focus, feelings, mine and yours. It is revealing my feelings to you in my most fulsome and loving way possible so that you can taste and accept how I feel.
- 3.1.1.6 **Closeness and unity is the objective of the Dialogue.**

In our marriage there are decisions to be made and problems to be solved. These solutions cannot be based on feelings. Many of our decisions are based on a reaction to our feelings. This is one of the reasons why we make wrong decisions & our spouse cannot understand or appreciate our decision. Decisions have to be based on good prudent analysis of facts this is the only way we can come up with a win/win solution. Unless we are facing the problem in the objective level, then the decisions that come out will not be very good.

That is why Dialogue on feelings is important. Feelings have to come out and they have to come out in the context of our relationship not in order to make the decision or the basis of the decision. Instead it is to know what is going on inside us so that we can be in tune with each other when we make the decision.

Dialogue is absolutely essential as a form of communication, but it is not the only form. It is feelings we build relationship with, but we use our heads to make decisions.

Discussion is obviously the form of communication between husband and wife that covers the broadest scope and consumes the largest amount of time. It is absolutely essential for all marriages.

Therefore although Dialogue and discussions are different we must not stop on feelings alone. There must be a natural flow from Dialogue to discussions. It is a logical consequence of any meaningful Dialogue that we would sit down and discuss areas that have come out of the Dialogue that may need clarification and decisions.

As we said before Dialogue must be different from discussion. For those of us who have chosen to try to make Dialogue a way of life for our relationship, the 20 minutes we spend in our Dialogue must be treated as a special moment and must be different from the rest of the 23 hrs. & 40 minutes of the day. Because if during the 20 minutes of Dialogue everything is the same as the rest of the day in the way we discuss, then we don't need to Dialogue.

Dialogue has to be different and during the times we should really be focussed on building relationship and closeness.

Dialogue time is a special time we choose for the two of us to get intimate and close to each other. Because intimacy is God's plan for us, thus, God has a stake in what we are doing during this special 20 minutes of the day. It is our prayer to the Father to let us live His plan for our marriage. Therefore, this 20 minutes is not only a special moment for us but it is also a Holy moment. So our daily Dialogue is not only our 10/10 but it is also our **HOLY AND SPECIAL MOMENT** that we choose from the 24 hours that we have in our hands to try to live God's plan. It is a couple's Daily Prayer.

### 3.2 WHEN NOT TO DIALOGUE

3.2.1 When feelings are strong and the only thing we want to do is hurt the other person. Dialogue should never be used as a weapon. Dialogue is a beautiful gift given to us by our Church for purposes of getting closer to each other.

3.2.2 There are times that we can not help it, but our Dialogue can slowly turn into a heated argument. When this happens **we should stop dialoging at the moment.** After 10 minutes you can continue arguing but not in your Dialogue anymore.

*What I do is to stand up and go to the bathroom for a while. This breaks the momentum for awhile and if when I go back we still need to talk, then it is already out of the Dialogue.*

3.2.3 Remember Dialogue should never be used to hurt or criticize the other person. Again, I repeat, **we can do this in the 23 hours and 40 minutes that we have in a day. Not in the special 20 minutes which we have reserve for each other.**

### **3.3 DIFFICULT AREAS NEED TO HAVE SERIES QUESTIONS.**

One of our big mistakes in the past is to ask the couples to Dialogue in difficult areas or in confidence questions to make Dialogue exciting and try to solve problems. This was very dangerous and would sometimes lead the couples to fight and stop dialoging.

Although difficult areas must be Dialogued on, they however must be treated gently and slowly. We need to Dialogue on them more times and slowly lead into difficult question. We need to have a series of questions on the same area in order for the Dialogue to help us. We call it a “***soft landing***” for difficult areas when we have strong feelings.

We have a handout for you, which you can use in having a soft landing on your difficult feelings. (page 43)

## **4. FORMATION (STRESS IN MARRIAGE)**

### **4.1 SHARE ON STRESS IN MARRIAGE**

(One spouse)

4.1.1 Stress has been part of our lives since the day we could understand and feel. When we got married it has been our companion. I don't think we can ever get rid of all our stress. As long as we are alive we will encounter stressful situations. However how well we handle stress in our life can influence how happy we can be and how well our relationship will be. Whether stress comes from outside of our marriage or from within our marriage it will always affect our relationship and the way we behave toward each other. Many of our stress that comes from outside our marriage are like pressures in the office, financial problems, bad business investments, in-laws, sick parents, etc..

4.1.2 (H/W) Share a few stresses you are presently experiencing outside of marriage.

4.1.3 (H/W) We also have many stresses that come directly from our marriage such as sex, criticism, anger, decisions, children, discipline, and temper. Share a few stresses you are presently experiencing coming directly from your own marriage

## **4.2 FILTERS OF REALITY**

(Other spouse)

4.2.1 Both sources of stress coming from the outside and from our marriage are greatly influenced by the filters we have on the reality that we see happening. These filters of the reality come from our childhood, the type of person, our attitudes, our values. As we said before, many times we see things differently and what we sometimes see with our personal filters create strong feelings which affect our behavior. This feelings and filters of reality create difficulties in our relationship.

4.2.2 (H/W) Share a time where you experienced stress which initially caused you a lot of strong feelings because of the filters you had and how it did not turn out to be as bad. Include the behaviors you had while you had strong feelings and how many of the stress come from your filters.

## **4.3 WHAT WE NEED TO DO IN ORDER TO HANDLE STRESS**

(Other spouse)

4.3.1 What we need to do in order to handle our stress better in our lives are:

4.3.1.1 Find out where the stress is really coming from

4.3.1.2 What are our feelings

4.3.1.3 How are we handling it

4.3.1.4 What are our filters

4.3.1.5 How can we handle it better

4.3.2 Dialogue can help us go through all of these. Finding out our feelings is a big step toward being able to handle our stress better.

4.3.3 In every stressful situation, there are two elements that determine how much stress I am actually experiencing.

4.3.3.1 The situation that we can easily identify as the cause of stress.

Give personal examples like:

- (No money in the Bank, Deadline at Office, Temper, Bad Economy, Children going home late)

4.3.3.2 Who I am and how I see the situation.

- (RE: My reality) How I am reacting to the stressful situation? What are my filters on the stress that I am experiencing?

Give some personal examples

4.4 External situations we can not do so much about since sometimes they just come and we do not have too much control. However, the internal stress levels come from our attitudes, the type of person that we are and from our past experiences. This is something we can look at and maybe it can be reduced. Dialogue can help us look into these stresses.

4.4.1 (H/W) Share how because of the type of person you are, you experience stress in some areas that are different from your spouse.

4.4.2 (H/W) Share how your attitudes about some area cause you to experience stress, which could also be different from your spouse.

The internal stressful situation is simply the way we interpret the different stressful situation in our lives.

STEVEN COVEY in his book ***“Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”*** says **“I SEE THE WORLD NOT AS IT REALLY IS, BUT AS I AM”**

#### 4.4.3 WIFE (Give own example for 4.4.3.1 and 4.4.3.2)

In our marriage stress comes from these sources:

4.4.3.1 *Painful situations of hurts in various areas which we carry around us from childhood and in our relationship. We try to protect ourselves from similar painful situations which is sometimes a reflex action and this sometimes amplifies the stress.*

4.4.3.2 *Sometimes we have the belief that our marriage all by itself will bring happiness. Sometimes we think that if we could get our marriage right, we could live happily ever after. Happiness comes from within by having peace within us. When I expect my spouse to be responsible for making me happy and does not happen, I seem to react with more stress.*

#### HUSBAND (Give own examples for 4.4.3.3 and 4.4.3.4)

4.4.3.3 *Oftentimes we believe that we can change each other. If only Cora can change, I am sure I will be happy. Expecting Cora to change brings more stress and disappointment. One of the very important things I have learned is the statement "There is only one person that I can change in this World – that person is me and nobody else".*

4.4.3.4 *Sometimes we also forget that people do change. We must accept changes happening to us and celebrate these changes. This is very strong when we reach 45. Physically, emotionally we change.*

#### (ONE SPOUSE)

4.4.4 We have many ways that we cope with stress. One common way many of us cope with stress is to have avoidance patterns. Avoidance patterns are distractions or coping mechanism that we do which we think will help us deal with sources of stress.

Examples:

- Sleep
- TV
- Drinking
- Shopping
- Anger
- Gambling
- Eating
- Time with children
- Church activities

#### 4.4.5 (H/W) Share your own personal avoidance patterns

There are many more avoidance patterns we use but we must look at the actions we are taking because avoidance is more in the attitude rather than the actions. We need to examine if we are avoiding confronting our feelings and our stress by doing avoidance pattern.

For high achievers they try to avoid stressful feelings by trying to immediately act and confront the situation so that it can be solved right away. By attacking and confronting without looking into the internal causes of the stress sometimes cause more problems than solutions because they are acting on feelings.

There are still other ways people cope or are handling stress but we do not have the time to cover it all.

We can improve the way we handle our stress by using the Dialogue techniques that we have learned in our Weekend. We have the tools we need to address the source of our stress right at our fingertips. We can use our Dialogues to discover how we are letting stress in our lives lead us to avoidance patterns. In order to do this we need to pick Dialogue questions that will help us see more clearly where our stress is coming from and what our avoidance patterns are.

We will be giving some suggestions on the questions we can use in our Dialogue.

#### 4.5 (One Spouse) Give couple the Dialogue question (10/10)

- 4.5.1 List five areas where you are now experiencing stress (in or out of your relationship).

4.5.2 Choose one area and share your feelings in this area.

4.5.3 Use the guided questionnaire (One Spouse) give handout (page 42) and explain.

4.6 (One Spouse) Ask the couples to share with the group their response to the question.

(Group Sharing)

***“What are some of the avoidance patterns I use in handling my stress?”***

## **5. DIALOGUE QUESTION**

5.1 (One Spouse) Explain the Dialogue questions for the next 15 days. (page 44)

5.1.1 You can use the four areas you wrote and Dialogue in these for the next four days.

5.1.2 You can use one area and Dialogue on the series type questions we gave you a handout. This could be good for 10 days.

5.1.3 We have 30 questions arranged in series question that you can use. Suggest that you try the three different ways of questions and see what works better for you.

5.2 (One Spouse) Remind couples of what they learned in the past meetings. Reinforce whatever might be helpful.

RE: (Reason for Dialogue, confident Dialogue feelings are real to the person etc.)

## **6. OTHER MATTERS**

6.1 Suggestions to make Journey better

6.2 Schedule of next meeting.

6.3 Etc.

## **7. CLOSING PRAYERS**

**QUESTION TO ANSWER IN DIALOGUE FOR AREAS OF STRESS**

1. Describe the cause of the stress.
2. Share your thoughts and judgements in this area of stress
3. Share the feeling you are experiencing.
4. Is there something in your background or upbringing that causes or adds to your stress or feeling.
5. Describe your feeling
  - 5.1 What color would describe this feeling
  - 5.2 What intensity 1-10
  - 5.3 What sound would I describe
  - 5.4 Can I recall a time when you might have felt the same
  - 5.5 Have I felt the same kind of feeling before
  - 5.6 Etc (Whatever helps to describe further)
6. Describe your behavior (avoidance, collusion, other)
  - 6.1 When I have this feeling what do I feel like doing
  - 6.2 Since I have had this feeling, how have I been behaving towards you, our children, the helpers, people at the office, at the Encounter.
7. How have I tried to cherish you in the middle of all this stress?

**DIALOGUE SERIES QUESTIONS (HAND OUT)**

1. What area do I want to Dialogue, and what do I hope to gain? HDIFAT
2. How do I feel about the way our family handled the same area as I was growing up?
3. What behavior pattern do I wear in this area? HDIFAT
4. What do I like best about myself in this area? HDIFAT
5. What do I like least about myself in this area? HDIFAT
6. What do I like best about you in this area? HDIFAT
7. What do I like least about you in this area? HDIFAT
8. When am I least open to listen to you in this area? HDIFAT
9. In this area, what feeling do I find most difficult to share with you? DFILD  
(Describe feeling in loving detail)

After Dialoguing in this area, what change do I need to make in order to make you #1? HDIFAT

- 
- 
1. Finances
  2. Sex
  3. God
  4. Death/Health
  5. in-laws
  6. Extended family
  7. Children discipline
  8. Jobs
  9. Hobbies

RELATIONSHIP

1. HDIF about our relationship being the first priority in my life?
2. What quality of yours do I most depend on?
3. When did you most listen to me this week? HDIFAT?  
WAMF when I think about living without you?
4. HDIF when we share ourselves totally with others?
5. What effect has Dialogue made in our daily lives? HDIFAT?
6. HDIF when I share on uncomfortable feelings with you?
7. HDIF when you share a feeling that I find difficult to accept in you?
8. HDIF when you share a feeling that I think you are blaming me for?
9. HDIF when I refuse to share with you what I'm experiencing?

FAMILY

1. What are your best qualities as a parent?
2. What are my best qualities as a parent?
3. What quality as a parent do I most envy in you? WAMF sharing this with you?
4. In what ways do I judge I'm superior to you as a parent? WAMF sharing this with you?
5. How do our children's activities affect our relationship? HDIFAT?  
HDIF when I see your best traits show up in our children?
6. HDIF when I/you punish the children?
7. HDIF when I/you discipline the children?
8. What do I like best about our family?
9. What do I like least about our family?

SEX

1. Do I see sex as a way of building our sacramental commitment to one another? HDIFAT?
2. What quality of yours have I discovered as a result of our sexual relationship? HDIFAT?
3. How do I feel when you touch me I public?
4. HDIF when our lovemaking is interrupted?
5. HDIF when I think it's been a long time since we've made love?
6. HDIF when you say my name during our lovemaking?
7. HDIF when I ask you to make love?
8. HDIF when you ask me to make love?
9. HDIF when I/you say no?
10. WAMF when I'm/you're not in the mood and we make love anyway?

# **MEETING # 4**

## ***Breaking The Three Minute Barrier***

## MEETING # 4

### 1. OPENING PRAYER

*(H or W)* Include in your prayers the grace to be open to each other and to help us listen to one another with loving tender hearts.

### 2. EXPERIENCE OF LAST 15 DAYS JOURNEY IN DIALOGUE

2.1 *(H or W)* Share your struggles in Dialogue in the last 15 days.

2.1.1 Share your joys and struggles in Dialogue

2.1.2 Include whether you were able to do all the questions.  
What made it easy or difficult to Dialogue

2.2 Share any significant learning or awareness in your Dialogue the past 15 days.

2.2.1 Did you become aware of anything significant about yourself or your spouse?

2.2.2 *(Other Spouse)* Ask the couples to share their own struggles in their Dialogue the past 15 days.

(GROUP SHARING ON VOLUNTARY BASIS)

2.3 *(H or W)* For those couples handling another Dialogue Journey group ask them to share the joy and struggles of the group

### 3. DIALOGUE TECHNIQUE INPUT

3.1 (One spouse) EXPLAIN IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A ROUTINE DIALOGUE.

Routine in Dialogue is what we do to make us ready, comfortable and focus on what we are about to do.

If you watch Golf Tournaments on T.V., you will see the pros doing and moving in the same manner before they putt the ball in the greens. But it is always the same – they do this in order to relax, concentrate and focus on what they are about to do.

*In my case I write at night before going to sleep. I sit at my desk, open my alarm clock and adjust the alarm clock 10 minutes. I use the same notebook and start writing by stating Cora's endearing quality today. Then I do not stop writing or stand up until the alarms rings. But before I start writing I say a short prayer. After the 10 minutes is up, I adjust the clock for another 10 minutes again and go to our bed where normally Cora is sitting down and sit beside her very close. This is where she writes. Then I sit down beside her and we do the Dialogue techniques on Weds – Write Exchange Dialogue. I do not leave the bed until the alarm rings. Even if we have stopped talking about the 10 minutes I try to stay in bed just in case there is something I can ask or say. This is the routine I try to do every time we Dialogue. For me, it sets the mood. This is not the only way. You need to find your own routine and stick to it every time you Dialogue.*

### **3.2 (Other spouse) DIALOGUE M.E. STYLE INCLUDES WRITING**

Without writing during the 20 minutes, it is not Dialogue M.E.. It probably is a nice discussion. It still is good because discussion is always good but it is not a Dialogue nor a special or a different moment just for the two of you. Without writing and having a few minutes to reflect on the question, we will not have a chance to look at our feelings and our needs. In order to Dialogue on feelings, we need a moment of being quiet and to write our thoughts and feelings. We also need to be free of distractions. If we do not write and just talk, any non-verbal reaction cause us to be distracted and not talk about feelings.

### **3.3 (One spouse) EXPLAIN HOT LIPS TECHNIQUES**

We need to use the hot lips technique in the Dialogue part. Try to keep asking questions and talking. However, we have to be careful here. For the one asking the question, our motive is to help our spouse on a spot and not to blame or to criticize. Ask questions that will help you understand and accept your spouse's feelings.

For the spouse answering the question, he/she needs to trust that your spouse is asking because he/she loves you and wants to have intimacy with you when he/she can understand, accept and taste whatever you are feeling.

The most important attitude is for both to truly trust each other and know that it is safe to be completely open to one another.

Dialogue is not always easy and fun. We may have Dialogues leaving us incomplete and disconnected from each other. We need to have an attitude and see these not as a failure but as a starting point we need to come back to. Dialogue is not easy. Relationship is not easy but with a lot of practice we can make Dialogue a very meaningful, efficient and a beautiful tool for intimacy which we are always yearning for in our relationship.

#### **4. FORMATION (BRINGING EXCELLENCE TO OUR DIALOGUE)**

##### **4.1 (H or W) SHARE HOW YOU CAN BRING EXCELLENCE TO OUR DIALOGUE.**

*Cora and I have been Dialoguing for a long time now but many times we lapse into routine in the way we listen to each other making our Dialogue like a ritual which does not bring any intimacy. We get a "BLAH" feeling after the Dialogue.*

Maybe some of us may be experiencing the same thing now since many of us have been Dialoguing for 45 days now.

So what do we do? What we can do is ask ourselves how can we bring back excellence in our Dialogue.

(CORA)

*The other night I was watching T.V. and what was on the screen was Figure Skating Competition. The Skating Competition was all about excellence in skating. After each performance the skaters were judged based on music, skills, stunts, etc.. Each item was awarded points and each skater tried to get as many points as possible in each criteria. This is how they strive for excellence.*

Now if we had a competition on Dialogue, what would be our criteria for excellence?

One of the criteria would probably be Endurance. Whoever can Dialogue for the longest time without missing a day. Maybe, consistency would be another criteria, imagination, persistence, determination. Also, points should be removed for not Dialoguing during Primetime, allowing distraction and not Dialoguing for 10 minutes.

But I think the medal for excellence in Dialogue or what should carry the most weight is whoever comes close to experiencing what it is like – to be their partner during each Dialogue.

So far, from time to time, we need to ask ourselves, are we trying to bring excellence in our Dialogue today? And since listening is also very important in Dialogue we should also ask – How seriously am I trying to be an excellent listener in Dialogue?

## **4.2 (H/W) LISTENING LIKE LOVERS VS. LISTENING LIKE ASSOCIATES**

*(DITTOY) – One spouse*

Listening like lovers was easy when we were young and courting. We were the best of friends and many time confidants to each other. We could spend long time talking to each other. Everything that was said was important. We shared our feelings, our dreams, fears, worries. And finally we were anxious to know and experience whatever could bring us closer to each other.

*That was then. It is different after 5 years when Cora starts telling me how she resents me when I come home late. It is hard to listen, let alone try to understand Cora's feelings when what I hear is that I am the cause of her negative feelings. It is hard to listen when what we hear is a tone of voice that is angry.*

*(CORA) – Other spouse*

Most of the time nowadays, we don't listen like lovers, we listen like associates:

- Nowadays, we listen with pre-occupied minds and our focus is to get data, understanding the problem and offering advise or making decisions;
- Other times because of our sad experience in our conversations we were in a defensive mood the moment our partners mention a sensitive area. We start to hear criticism mixed with feelings whether they are there or not;

- Even in our Dialogue, we read our lover’s letter and instead of exploring our feelings, we chat and we are more interested in data than what are the feelings going on with our spouse;
- If we continue to listen to each other like associates in our Dialogue, after a while we will start wondering whether it is worth the effort. Anyway, we do discuss and talk the whole day.

**We only listen like lovers when our spouse hears the message “I want to know all there is to know about you because I love you”, instead of “I already know you and I know what is best for you”.**

When we listen like associates, we make the same discovery we made when we stopped Dialoguing. That the act of Dialoguing all by itself does not change anything.

Finding excellence in our Dialogue and listening like lovers can only happen when we can accept that there is a difference between Dialogue and conversation. Dialogue is a way of communication, it is not ordinary or common, it could be difficult to learn at first. It needs practice, it needs imagination, it needs attitude. But think of the possible rewards in intimacy that one can get.

When we make Dialogue into conversation, we miss the point of Dialogue completely. Remember we need to converse, talk, discuss, decide and solve many times during the day. But we need to Dialogue only once a day.

The power of Dialogue is not in solving the problem we have in our lives. The power of Dialogue is in the intimacy we can gain through daily Dialogue. But often because of the intimacy we develop through Dialogue we sometimes are able to communicate better and thus make better decisions in our life.

#### **4.3 LISTENING – THE KEY TO BREAKING THE 3 MINUTE BARRIER**

*(DIT0Y) – One spouse*

*One of our experiences in Dialoguing is that we have no problem writing for 10 minutes but when after we read our love*

*letters we seem to talk for about 3 minutes and then there does not seem to be much more to talk about.*

*Many of you might be experiencing the same thing. Do not be alarmed. This is the experience of many couples throughout the encountering world. As a matter of fact they have named this the “3 Minute Barrier”. After 3 minutes there is nothing to talk about anymore.*

*To make Dialogue different from conversation we need to go through the 3 minute barrier of understanding in our Dialogue and to try to experience what it is like to be Cora right now. We need to talk past the 3 minute.*

*Listening like a lover is a decision we have to make each time we sit down to Dialogue. It does not come easy, but trying everyday will give us the skill to do it more often.*

*One of the things that really turns me off is when I am talking and I see that Cora is busy doing something else. Cora is not concentrating on what I am doing. When this happens, I just stop talking. I guess I am not alone in this area. When I see Cora being attentive, asking questions, interested in what I am saying, I can go on and on. As a matter of fact even when I am talking with other people when I see that what I am saying seems to be interesting to them, I can go on the whole night talking. Like when I talk to Kid and Tonia about the Dialogue Journey and I see their excitement, I cannot stop talking. It is the same in our Dialogue Journey. If our spouse really tries to listen, then we will be able to break the 3 minute barrier and have an intimate Dialogue for 10 minutes. So listening is the key!*

#### **4.4 TIPS FOR LISTENING LIKE A LOVER**

*(CORA) – Other spouse*

*I would like to share with you some tips in listening like a lover in our Dialogue:*

##### **4.4.1 Listen with our ears.**

Tone of voice - words said - need to focus and concentrate – most important is to give undivided attention not doing two things at the same time. We need a clear

mind when listening. We need to go to a quiet place where we can concentrate.

#### 4.4.2 Listen with our mind.

Active listening – need to clarify – need to feedback – need to confirm – need concentration and imagination.

#### 4.4.3 Listen to our eyes.

Pay attention to non verbals – any indication of feelings – posture – facial expressions.

#### 4.4.4 Listen with our hands.

Touch – hold hands – feel the outer person's flesh.

#### 4.4.5 Listen with our heart.

*This is the hardest part of listening in our Dialogue. If I need to give the message to Dito that what he is sharing is as important to me as it is to him. This is easier said than done especially when Dito has a strong feeling and it seems that subject matter involves me. During these times, defensive listening comes in and when this happens, listening like a lover ends.*

*So listening with the heart at this time will really take a strong decision and some willpower.*

*One technique is to try to convince myself that Dito's feeling is not being thrown at me or am I being blamed for his feelings, and what Dito needs now is for me to accept his feelings and it is not important for me to defend myself.*

## 4.5 CONCLUSION

So to summarize:

If we want to strive for excellence in our Dialogue we must break the 3 minute barrier by sharpening our skills in listening and believing that there is a difference in Dialogue as against discussion and we must not interchange the two.

Tonight in the Dialogue part of your 10/10 we will try to guide you a little in order to practice some of the listening techniques we

shared with you. You might be uncomfortable at first but let us try it out and trust us that what we are doing we think will help you.

## 5. LISTENING EXERCISE IN DIALOGUE

### 5.1 (One spouse) EXPLAIN THAT WE WILL DO AN EXERCISE IN LISTENING DURING OUR DIALOGUE.

Before the Dialogue question is given, we would like to explain that in the 10/10 what we will ask you to do will be a little different.

First we will give you the Dialogue question to answer for 10 minutes. This you will do in the normal way but remember the tips we gave you on writing. Spend more time in sharing and avoid blaming.

After you write for 10 minutes, we will ask you to sit together, facing each other but in a distance from the other couples so that you will not hear each other while Dialoguing, however, you need to be within hearing distance from the presenting couple since you will be given instructions as you proceed in your Dialogue.

### 5.2 (Other spouse) GIVE THE DIALOGUE QUESTION 10/10.

***“How do I feel about the way you spend our money?”***

NOTE: Ask the couples to start writing their love letter but tell them not to exchange or read the letters until we tell them to do so. Wait for our instructions.

#### 5.2.1 Now it is the husbands turn to interpret the love letter of the wife.

Do 5.3.2.4. and 5.3.2.5 again, but this time the husbands interprets the love letter of the wife without making any comment. Then the wife clarifies what she wrote without the husband making any comment (Wait for a few minutes).

### 5.3 When they have finish writing explain the technique in Listening.

#### 5.3.1 Before they go to the EXCHANGE, explain the following:

5.3.1.1 The feeling is not being thrown at you;

- 5.3.1.2 Remember your spouse loves you and does not want to hurt you and you spouse is the person who has committed to loving you forever.
- 5.3.1.3 Accept that whatever your spouse tells you is only his perceived reality. This is what he sees. It may not be true but right now, this is truth to your spouse. Once your spouse clarifies it and tells you what he/she really means, you must accept it to be true.
- 5.3.1.4 Remember what we shared and learned on how to LISTEN;
- 5.3.1.5 LISTEN WITH YOUR EYES, LISTEN WITH YOUR EARS, LISTEN WITH YOUR HEART BUT NEVER LISTEN WITH YOUR MOUTH.

#### 5.3.2 EXCHANGE/DIALOGUE TIME

Ask the couples to face each other , hold hands and say a personal prayer together to the Father to make this a meaningful Dialogue and ask specially for the grace of listening. Let us be fully aware that this is **God's Plan in Action.**

- 5.3.2.1 Exchange your love letters and if you want to give each other a kiss, feel free to do so, in fact it would be best if you do so. Read your love letters twice – trying to really read what your spouse is trying to say. Both of you remain silent, put your notebook down or under your seat and do not say anything until we tell you to do so.
- 5.3.2.2 Husband – take the notebook of your wife under her seat and go through her letter and tell your wife what YOU THINK she is telling you in her letter, what your perception is, that is how you look at it. While husband is sharing his perceived reality of your letter, WIVES MUST KEEP QUIET. NO VERBAL or NON-VERBAL ACTIONS should be made. Just look at your husband and LISTEN. He may not be expressing what you intend to say or making many judgements, let him be. Always remember it is just how he sees it. If wives cannot

control their mouth, try to bite your pens. Make a poker face or a straight face. Allow your husband to finish without your interrupting him. You will have your time to explain.

- 5.3.2.3 Wife – After your husband interpret your letter, lovingly, gently get your notebook from him and clarify to him what you have written. Tell him this is what I meant...etc....etc.. In the meantime, husband, while your wife is talking, it is now your turn to LISTEN AND ACCEPT that what she is saying is the TRUTH! HUSBAND should not interrupt your wives by verbal or non-verbal way. Listen with your eyes, with your ears, with your heart than with your mouth. Remember, this is the person who loves you and your relationship is top priority and what is happening right now is a Holy and Special Moment in your relationship.
- 5.3.2.4 Now it is the wives turn to interpret the love letter of his husband. Repeat the process 5.3.2.2, 5.3.2.3 and 5.3.2.4 again, but this time, the wife interprets the love letter of her husband and husband keeps quiet without verbal or non-verbal (you can also bite your ball pen if you cannot help yourself). After the wife speaks, husband now clarifies his letter to his wife and wife must accept it as truth and sees this man as the person who loves her and will never want to hurt her.
- 5.3.2.5 After husband's clarification and without further discussion or argumentation, husband and wife decides who has the strongest feeling.
- 5.3.2.6 **Without further discussing or arguing**, husband and wife decides who has the strongest feeling. After the decisions is made, the spouse with the strongest feeling should start describing your feelings so that the other spouse can try to relate until you can accept your spouse's feelings. Use the techniques we shared with you in the process of describing and accepting each other's feelings.

## ENJOY YOUR DIALOGUE!

Listen with your eyes, listen with your ears, listen with your heart, never listen with your mouth!

LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN!

- 5.4 (One spouse) ASK THE COUPLES TO SHARE WITH THE GROUP THEIR RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION:

***“What is your significant experience or learning with regard to listening in Dialogue?”***

## 6. DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- 6.1 (One spouse) EXPLAIN THE DIALOGUE QUESTION FOR THE NEXT 15 DAYS. (page 57)

6.1.1 Some of the questions will illicit strong feelings. During these times it is important to remember everything we have learned so far (It might make a difference between a beautiful Dialogue or a disaster). We have to talk about the questions if we want to grow closer.

6.1.2 Try not to skip 1-15. Go straight.

6.1.3 Do not cram. Try doing the questions daily. Though cramming might still work, it is advisable not to, as you will surely miss a lot.

- 6.2 (Other spouse) REMIND THE COUPLES OF WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNED

6.2.1 Remind the couples of some of the things taken up in the previous meetings as a review which you think might help them such as:

Being a confidant to each other. Attitudes are important and we have choices. Feelings are real to the person, goal of Dialogue is unity, listening is important, etc.

## 7. OTHER MATTERS

- 7.1 (One spouse) Suggestions to make meetings more exciting.

- 7.2 (Other spouse) Next meeting schedule.

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS:

1. Where do I feel superior to you? How does my answer make me feel?
2. What is the hardest thing about me that you have to live with? How do I feel sharing this with you?
3. In what ways do I treat you as my best friend? What are my feelings about this?
4. How do I judge you most when you want me to change? How do I feel sharing this with you?
5. What turns us on sexually to one another? How often do we use it? How do I feel about this?
6. How do our children describe me to their children? How do I feel sharing this with you?
7. Describe yourself as a Catholic. How do I feel sharing this with you?
8. What grudges do I hold and how does this affect our relationship? How does my answer make me feel?
9. Name the moments of greatest closeness, describe each fully. How do I feel sharing this with you?
10. How can we use Dialogue to draw us closer? How does my answer make me feel
11. What do I like most about our sex life? How does my answer make me feel?
12. At this time, what concerns me about the children? How do I feel about this?
13. What one thing can I change to improve the atmosphere in our home? How does my answer make me feel?
14. At this time in my life, what I need most from you is \_\_\_\_\_. How do I feel saying this to you?
15. Where do we need to grow in our sexual relationship? How do I feel about this?
16. What are the good things about our Dialogue? How does my answer make me feel?
17. Our goal is family unity. What does it mean to me? How are we doing it? How do I feel about that?
18. How do I feel about the way you spend money?
19. What are some of the values I think I pick up from my parents as I was growing up?  
Example: finances, sex, God, family relationship, atmosphere at home, discipline, etc.  
How do I feel sharing this with you?
20. What are my feelings about our financial situation?

# **MEETING # 5**

## ***Responsibility For My Needs***

## MEETING #5

### 1. OPENING PRAYER

*(H or W)*

Include in your prayer the grace to love is a decision whenever you do the Dialogue so that you can go beyond your hurts or negative reactions.

### 2. EXPERIENCE OF LAST 15 DAYS JOURNEY IN DIALOGUE.

2.1 *(H or W)* Share your struggles in Dialogue in the past 15 days.

2.1.1 Share your joys and struggles in Dialogue:

- Include whether you were able to do all of the question.
- What made it easy or difficult to Dialogue?

2.2 Share any significant learning or awareness in your Dialogue.

- Did you become aware of anything significant about yourself or your spouse?
- Did the Dialogue did any good in your relationship?

2.3 *(Other spouse)* Ask the couples to share their own struggles in Dialogue the past 15 days (group sharing).

2.4 *(H or W)* For those couples handling another Dialogue Journey, ask them to share the joys and struggles of their group.

### 3. DIALOGUE TECHNIQUE INPUT

3.1 EXPLAIN QUESTIONS ARE IMPORTANT.

3.1.1 Part of the success of the Dialogue Journey is the fact that you have been given questions to Dialogue on.

3.1.2 One of the reasons we find our Dialogue “blah!” at times or we even stop, is because we either have difficulty in making questions or we shy away from questions that evoke

feelings. Actually, questions that evoke feelings provide the most insight and discovery. We must have courage to try new topics.

3.1.3 If we believe in our Dialogue we must be responsible for it and being responsible means we must try to make Dialogue as meaningful and as exciting as we can. We can do this by spending a little time in preparing questions.

3.1.4 We have spent time in preparing questions. There are many sources of questions. We have the M.E. calendar, we have the internet which provide users a Dialogue question a day. We have the “matrimony magazine” from the U.S.. We have the Weekend handouts which we can go over and over again. We have scriptures, the sources are there, the choice is yours.

If you fail in your search for good questions, then, there is always the question “What is my strongest feeling for today?” Dialogue on this question to keep your Dialogue going until you find something better.

### 3.2 **EXPLAIN WE MAKE A DECISION TO LOVE WHEN WE DIALOGUE**

Every time we Dialogue especially when we try to make it a way of life we make a decision to love. Every time we pick up our pen to write, to exchange and read, to Dialogue and to select a question, we make that decision to love. Many more times we are asked to make the decision to love during our Dialogue. There will be times that we will be conscious at first or we can feel defensive or resentful about the topic or when we are feeling hurt. These are the times that we need to make the decision to continue and stick with the Dialogue and put aside our strong urges to react and just love one another for the sake of our relationship.

### 3.3 **DIALOGUE IS IMPORTANT! ACT LIKE IT IS!**

Many of your sharing have indicated that Dialogue has become important to you and your lives. If that is really true then you should act like it is! Important!

What you need to do is **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY** for the quality of your relationship and your Dialogue.

How serious are you in setting prime time. How do we arrange to be free from distraction when we Dialogue and keep the schedule everyday. Establishing the habit of Dialogue itself is a vital step that creates an important level of trust in our relationship. One of the reason for the success of these Journey is we provided you questions. We need to be responsible for looking for good questions to Dialogue on. Communication is difficult. We need to practice and we need to be responsible to bring excellence in our Dialogue.

So if you believe in Dialogue and you think it is important -  
ACT LIKE IT!

3.4 EXPLAIN THE “5 STEP DIALOGUE “OR “DEEPER DIALOGUE”.  
(Pass handout “5 Steps Letter Format) (page 72).

Many of you have heard of the “5 Step Dialogue”. Actually, it was originally called “Deeper Dialogue” in the early days it was introduced. Deeper seemed very threatening so it was changed to “5 Step Dialogue”. It is a form of Dialogue that can offer another method of examining our feelings and behavior and can lead to the growth level of Dialogue.

If you have already used the “5 Step Dialogue”, we would like to review the basics and offer a few suggestions to support you in your effort to grow closer to each other.

The five steps refer to love letter format. (distribute the handout re: format, (page 72)

Using a question or sometimes just a topic or a situation, we write our reflections in sections (look at your handouts)

Take note that the order in answering the questions is not that important and don't get boxed in. The important thing is to reflect on the suggestion or questions in your handout as you make your reflection. You need not go 1-15 in that order.

The other thing to remember and is very important is that we stay in the feelings as long as needed during Dialogue. We need to Dialogue and be able to understand and accept each other's feelings before we go further on needs or choices. Many times, when we can really feel our spouse's feelings, there may not be anymore a need to go further because we have reached intimacy and closeness. Dialogue is a Journey. Finishing the 5 step

question is not necessarily the end. What is important is if we have been open to each other, we have listened to each other, have we become closer?

Tonight we will be asking you to do the deeper Dialogue. Keep this in mind as you answer the questions and Dialogue.

### **3.5 ASK THE COUPLES IF THEY HAVE ANY QUESTION ON THE DIALOGUE TECHNIQUE**

Give the couples an opportunity to ask questions. However, in answering, try to answer from your own experience, if possible. Avoid sounding like you know everything or have arrived. We are all struggling.

## **4. FORMATION “RELATIONAL NEEDS”**

### **4.1 (One spouse) INTRODUCTION TO “GENESIS OF FEELINGS”** Remember the four levels of Dialogue we talked about earlier: (page 85)

- Commitment Level
- Tune in Level
- Discovery Level
- Growth Level

Many of us have already experienced the first three levels during our Dialogue Journey. So far it has been good and we have tried slowly to prepare you to start Dialoguing on the fourth level – the Growth Level. In order to achieve this, we need to go further than just accepting each other’s feelings. We need to go deeper into needs and behaviors.

To do this, we can use the deeper Dialogue technique which we will talk about today. When we have areas of strong feelings, stress, conflicts, we should try the deeper Dialogue.

During the Weekend, we discovered feelings and achieving oneness of feelings was our goal in Dialogue. As years went by and thorough studies made in the M.E. communities around the world it seemed that achieving oneness of feelings was not enough and there was much more to feelings that was discovered or understood.

One significant understanding of feelings that couples who were studying the Weekend come across was that besides feeling being “an inner reaction to a person, place or thing, feelings are also signals of something in us, it calls us to something, signals of unmet needs”.

I think to understand needs we need to first review where feelings come from. We prepared a flow chart of where we think feelings originated from. It is a simple chart but I think it will be able to help us to understand feels and needs a little better (pass Handout “Genesis on Feelings and Explain). (page 73)

#### 4.2 (H or W) EXPLANATION OF GENESIS OF FEELINGS CHANGE

4.2.1 When an event or situation happens we see these through filtered eyes and ears. This is represented by the dark glasses.

4.2.2 The type of filter we have depends on our childhood experiences, type of person, past experiences, self-talk and many others.

(H or W) Share some personal examples.

4.2.3 Based on these, each one of us gets a perceived reality of what we see or experience and for the same event it could be different for husband and wife.

(H or W) Share some personal experiences.

(Situation) Children not yet home at night and it is very late.

*DITTOY - My perceived reality is that they are having fun and forgot about the time.*

*CORA – She sees car accident or rapist or thieves or maybe the children are doing some foolishness.*

4.2.4 Our perceived reality is often interpreted in the context whether it is fulfilling our needs or not meeting our needs which are: 1) to love and to be loved; 2) self worth; 3) autonomy; and 4) belonging.

4.2.5 Depending whether our interpretation leads to meeting our needs or not meeting our needs, a feeling is generated inside us. It could be a green light feeling or red light feelings (sad, angry, fear) if our feelings are not being met. Green light feelings in our needs are being met (Happy).

(H or W) Share a few personal feelings. Coming from perceived reality.

4.2.6 Correspondingly when a feeling is generated then this is somehow manifested in a behavior.

For red light feelings:

Normally – the behavior is aggression or suppression.

Aggression – leads to shouting, criticism, hurting words, sometimes even physical.

Suppression – leads silence, depression or withdrawal.

In the Weekend we learned that there is another thing that we can do and that is communication. We can best do this in a Dialogue WEDS. This could bring about intimacy and closeness.

4.2.7 For the green light feelings – the behavior normally is closeness, intimacy, tenderness and smile.

When this happens, enjoy it but you can also use the Dialogue to share your joy and happiness with your spouse which can also bring you still closer with each other.

4.2.8 The chart can help us understand what is happening to us and if we know what is happening to us then we can see that we have options and choices that we can make to make our relationship better.

The deeper Dialogue covers basically every phase on this chart. That is when if we have strong feelings in our area, this 5 step Dialogue or deeper Dialogue can be very useful to all of us.

## 4.3 EXPLANATION OF NEEDS

(One spouse)

We have spent a lot of time explaining feelings in the previous modules, now we would also like to share with you a few thoughts with regard to relationship needs that might help us in our 5 steps Dialogue.

4.3.1 When we talk about needs, we need to be clear on the following:

- What we are talking about are emotional or relationship needs. We are talking in the context of people who want to be in a relationship.
- We will talk only about the 4 families of needs because we can be confused with other hierarchy of needs like those of Mascoff, Rogers (need to love and be loved, self-worth, belonging, autonomy).
- But before we can even start talking to people about these 4 basic needs, there are certain fundamental needs which people have to deal with, which are food, drink, shelter, rest, sleep and a minimum of security. We can not talk to people about emotional needs if these needs are not being met.
- We are not experts in these area and may not have all the answers. We can slowly discover the impact of feelings and needs as we reflect on our lived experience through our Dialogue.
- As we try to recognize, to discern, to be aware of our needs, you may find some uneasiness because just like feelings, it is hard to pin down. We need to clarify this need because they can have many meanings to it. We need the written and verbal Dialogue part in discovering the needs. It is not good enough to just name the need, we have to clarify the needs in our talking together and listening with one another. And if we do this, we may find out at one point that there are some things that are really not a basic need that is not being met but is what we call DESIRES and EXPECTATIONS.

### 4.3.2 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NEEDS/DESIRE/EXPECTATIONS

(page 74)

(One spouse)

We have just mentioned two words, “desires and expectations”. We will try to explain a little about this and not get very complicated. We will not be theoretical about this because to really explain the difference will again require a whole class in psychology. (Give handouts and explain the difference between needs desire / expectations. Also give your personal examples.)

<b>NEEDS</b>	<b>DESIRE</b>	<b>EXPECTATIONS</b>
(Four basic needs)	(Things I want for myself)	(Things I want from you)
a. To be loved	a. An education/diploma	a. Flowers from you
b. To belong	b. Wealth	b. Give me your pay check
c. Autonomy	c. Food/Steak	c. Come home early
d. Self-worth	d. Nice clothes	d. Understand my feelings

There is nothing wrong in having desires or expectations. As a matter of fact, there is always a certain amount of expectation in any committed relationship.

The reason why we should be aware of this is that sometimes in our Deeper Dialogue when we try to go to the level of needs, we may end up trying to convince our spouse that one of our desire or expectation as our need. Expectations can also be met if this is communicated. Many times we have expectations but expect our spouse to read our minds.

## 5. WE NEED THESE NEEDS IN THEMSELVES.

(One spouse)

The first thing we have to remember about these four basic needs is that to go on living, we need to have these needs in themselves. Having these needs in us is a gift we have from God. I can see these needs present in me all the time, and they are good in themselves because it helps me to become a better person. As a matter of fact, I think this is one of the things that differentiate me from being an animal.

**EXAMPLE:**

- Need to be loved - forgive, reach out
- Self-worth – strive to be better
- Belong – relationship, community, family
- Autonomy - develop God’s given gifts different from others.

Since these needs are inherent in us all the time, no one, not even our spouse causes us to have these needs. No one causes these needs – they are ever present in all of us. Maybe one or two needs are stronger in one person and the other needs are stronger in others, depending on the type of our upbringing. But definitely, these needs are inherent in each and every one of us.

**6. NEEDS INDICATED IN OUR BEHAVIOR**

(One spouse)

The next thing that we need to be aware of is these four basic needs are ever present in you and me and no matter what we do, we will be always trying to fulfill these needs.

If we do not fulfill these needs today something is going to be lacking and chances are we are going to have negative or red light feeling.

**EXAMPLE:**

- *If I judge, Cora criticizes me. I will get hurt and feel angry or sad. What is the unmet need? Self-worth. How will I behave? Chances are, I will try to defend myself and point out also her defect to equalize or go to my friends who will praise me or go to our children.*

We try to compensate somewhere else to tell how right we are and great we are and how terrible the other is, etc.

What we need to recognize and be aware of are that needs will always be there and will never once and for all be met.

**EXAMPLE:**

- Just like hunger and thirst.
- Eat now, after 3 hours hungry again.
- Hungry yesterday – eating today will not help in any way meet your hunger two days ago or two days after.

How these needs are being met now, will, to a large extent, determine how I act. Our unmet needs shape, to a large extent, our behavior.

**EXAMPLES:**

- If need to be loved is not met today, what I will do is try to get admiration from my friends or I will look for it some place else. Or try to be nice to our children. But definitely we are going to try to make up for the unmet need someplace. And this making up someplace is what we call **compensation**.
- If my need for self-worth is not met, I will strive for positions and titles. The first chance I get, I will probably tell you how great I am.
- If my need to belong is not met, I will try to be totally independent. If I do not feel I belong to a group, I will probably resign from the group and try to build a separatist group. Or probably try to convince myself that I can do it alone and do not need anybody.
- If my need for autonomy is not met, I will try to go to a total situation of no autonomy at all. All my actions are what you want me to do. I think this is what happens when we have a situation of peace at any price.

**7. PITFALLS DIALOGUING ON FEELINGS ALONE**

One of the pitfalls that we encounter if our Dialogue will always be limited on our feeling is that we can make our spouse guilty when we share our feelings and because of this, we expect our spouse to change in their behavior.

I don't think it's good enough to say, well, we have Dialogued and shared our feeling. Now I will respond and change my behavior. This is not wrong but not good enough because we can still go further.

Our experience when we respond to our spouse's feelings is that change in behavior is not permanent. But if we can go further into the area of needs (and this could be done through the deeper Dialogue) the motivation for change in behavior can be better, then, change will often come from both spouses.

## **8. GOD'S PLAN**

You know what God's plan is. God's plan is a man and a woman helping each other be responsible and helping one another to stand on their own two feet. Two people helping each other meet their needs. It is two different people with two legs, each being able to stand on their own two feet and take on their own responsibility who can really be united and become one. Oneness should not be the excuse for not being responsible for one's self, responsible for one's value, responsible for one's needs, for one's feelings and behavior.

Unity is not making both of us into one person but rather two different persons accepting each other and helping each other become the person they can become.

## **9. RELATIONSHIP IS WHAT WILL MEET OUR NEEDS**

We know feelings are signals of met or unmet needs. We also know that our needs will always be there and our behavior is dictated to a large extent on our unmet needs, so what is going to meet our needs?

The only thing that is going to meet our needs temporarily and at any point of time is an open, trusting and loving, accepting relationship.

And the Dialogue technique can help us be open, trusting and loving and accepting each other. Dialogue is not a value, Dialogue is the tool to help us put into reality the values we said we believed after the Weekend. God does not make junk. To love is a decision, listening, openness. These are values we need to practice in order to have an open, trusting, accepting relationship.

It is not I who will meet my needs, it is not my spouse alone who can meet my needs but it is our trusting, open, loving, accepting relationship that will meet my needs. And remember, even that is not forever. But just for today because our needs will always be there, it will never be completely satisfied. It will come again and again.

Since we cannot talk about relationship without also talking about an honest and open, loving and accepting communication, then Dialogue becomes the tool that we can use to have that communication.

When we were trying to use this tool to communicate in the level of feelings, it did us a lot of good but it was not enough. Now we have gone further into the level of needs. We are not confident with this yet, but we

can see the potential this has in our desire to have an open, trusting and loving communication.

## 10. RESPONSIBLE FOR MY NEEDS

I hope that at this point of time we do not think that these “needs thing” is okay and we will try to meet them and that is it, we will live happily ever after. This is not the case.

What we have to go through seeing on unmet needs is we can be open about it. Open to accept it for myself. To recognize it in me. Open to what we call deeper Dialogue. We still need to look at our feelings. We will need to experience where our spouse is and accepting her. From there we will be able to be open and talk about what we have found as being unmet needs. If the feelings are positive, enjoy it. If the feelings are negative, let's take a good look and be open about it.

If we want to try and live God's plan and help each other meet our needs, what we can do is:

10.1 Try to recognize that need is always in us and be responsible for our needs. Now those words “be responsible for our needs” are very big words and we will try to share with you some of our thoughts and the thoughts of other couples and the lived experiences of some of the couples that we were able to share with about this.

We will try to share with you what being responsible for my needs mean to us now. It is not the whole answer because we still have to experience more Dialogue, more sharing to really get the whole picture and maybe will never get the whole picture.

10.1.1 Responsible for my needs would mean that I will recognize **that I have this need**. I own this need and my spouse did not cause me to have it.

10.1.2 I have to be **responsible to my spouse to be able to communicate this to him/her** and preferably by being open to a deeper Dialogue.

10.1.3 **I should try to see** and communicate **how I am compensating** for my need and see how this unmet need or feeling is affecting my other behavior.

- 10.1.4 I should try to see how I might be communicating an **expectation rather than a real need**. And see whether that expectation is putting too much pressure on my spouse or whether I am determining my whole self-worth or to be love on one single expectation that my spouse might not be even aware of because I have not communicated it.
- 10.1.5 I have to face up this need and accept that this need I have for now may not be met but I should try to remain responsible for it and not allow it to dictate completely my behavior.
- 10.1.6 I Should look at how I could have done better. (example: make myself lovable). When my spouse comes home, I should look good, smell good and be very romantic. If I sit in one corner without a loving face, looking so ugly and dirty, I don't think I will be lovable.
- 10.1.7 Allow my spouse to help me discern what my real needs are.

Being responsible for our needs is going to help us live God's plan and will bring intimacy and closer to our marriage. Deeper Dialogue will help us choose to be responsible for our needs.

## 11. **DIALOGUE QUESTIONS** (page 75)

- 11.1 (Spouse) Explain the Dialogue question for the next 15 days.
  - 11.1.1 Explain how to use areas for reaching out questions.
  - 11.1.2 Explain situation questions for deeper Dialogue
- 11.2. (Other spouse) If there is time, remind the couple of any of the Dialogue inputs in the past meetings (re: confidant, behavior pattern, attitudes, feelings, etc.)

## 12. **OTHER MATTERS (One spouse)**

- 12.1 Date of last meeting
- 12.2 Preparation for a small celebration for the last meeting

## ***SUGGESTED LETTER FORMAT FOR DEEPER DIALOGUE***

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Your most endearing quality for today is \_\_\_\_\_.

1. What are my thoughts and judgements? Write a paragraph describing your thoughts, judgement and reaction to the Dialogue Question.
2. What are my feelings? State the strongest feeling you have about the Dialogue Question. Spend some time describing your feelings. Use all the techniques in describing feelings to make it alive for your spouse. Also answer the question "Is there something in my upbringing, background or past experiences that cause or add to this feeling that I have."
3. What are the needs that I am running after which are being unmet or being met? Do I have expectations? How am I compensating?
4. How am I behaving because of my needs being unmet or being met? (Describe behavior with spouse/children/home/office).
5. What can I do better? What options do I have? How can you help me do better?

Close with endearment.