**Healthy Dating and Relationships Lesson Plans and Activities**

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# Useful Resources:

* Wing Clips <http://www.wingclips.com/>
  + A resource intended for those giving sermons but very helpful in a classroom. Videos are sorted by movie title as well as by subject. A free account allows you to build a playlist so you can keep track of which videos you want to use. Or you can pay for an account and have the ability to download and do more with the videos. All videos are edited so if it comes from a movie not rated G, the swearing has been removed. Remember to follow district and school policy when showing video clips.
* How to Avoid Falling In Love With A Jerk by John Van Epp
  + “The foolproof way to follow your heart without losing your mind” This book is a must read for anyone teaching about dating. It has an older audience so consider your student’s maturity level before assigning reading directly from it. However remember that many girls will be married within 5 years of graduating. There are a lot of good ideas for activities in this book. USU Extension has created a few lesson plans to go along with the concepts taught in this book which I will include below. Visit the author’s site: <http://www.lovethinks.com/> for additional manuals, resources, and training on the subject
  + Call your county’s USU extension office to see if they offer classes on this book. Many will be willing to come present to your students.
  + <http://www.amazon.com/How-Avoid-Falling-Love-Jerk/dp/0071548424>
* The 6 Most Important Decisions You'll Ever Make
  + “MAKING SMART CHOICES IN CHALLENGING TIMES: The challenges teens face today are tougher than at any time in history: academic stress, parent communication, media bombardment, dating drama, abuse, bullying, addictions, depression, and peer pressure, just to name a few. And, like it or not, the choices teens make while navigating these challenges can make or break their futures. In The 6 Most Important Decisions You'll Ever Make, Sean Covey, author of the international bestseller The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, gives teens the strong advice they need to make informed and wise decisions. Using real stories from teens around the world, Sean shows teens how to succeed in school, make good friends, get along with parents, wisely handle dating and sex issues, avoid or overcome addictions, build self-esteem, and much more. This innovative audiobook will help teens not only survive but thrive during their teen years and beyond. Building upon the legacy of The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, this is an indispensable resource for teens everywhere.”
  + A great read for any Teen Living or Adult Roles class, there is a section on dating. Personally I think it’s geared more towards younger students but the information is great for all ages.
  + <http://www.amazon.com/Most-Important-Decisions-Youll-Ever/dp/1455892882>
* “The Art of Loving Well”
  + This is an awesome resource especially for those of you trying to incorporate more literacy in your classroom. The students can read the stories themselves, read along while someone reads out loud, or practice listening skills while you read to them.
  + From The Dibble Institute: “The Art of Loving Well” is a nationally acclaimed, literature based relationship skills curriculum from Boston University that teaches healthy relationship skills to youth. This program teaches students about the complexities and joys of a wide variety of relationships, including friendships and family, infatuations and first romances, enduring commitments and marriage. Studying short stories, poems, essays, folk tales, and myths empowers teachers to help students connect ideas in literature to choices in real life and the skills necessary to achieve healthy relationships.
  + You can buy the book used for very cheap on Amazon<http://www.amazon.com/The-Art-Loving-Well-Curriculum/dp/0872700798>
  + Or buy from the Dibble Institute: <https://www.dibbleinstitute.org/the-art-of-loving-well/>
  + There are student guides and activities that you can also purchase.
* Fight the New Drug:
  + This is a campaign against Pornography. Some schools now do a “white ribbon” week to encourage education about the harmful effects of pornography. You can plan a school wide white ribbon week or do one as a class. Contact the founders and they will have someone come present to your school/class
  + The website has many resources and videos to use in your classroom.
  + <http://www.fightthenewdrug.org/>
* The Dibble Institute:
  + Resources for teaching relationship skills to teens and young adults
  + Sign up for their e-mails and receive links to the most recent studies and articles involving teen’s dating habits.
  + They have free webinars once a month that are incredibly useful! Visit their youtube page to access old webinars. They are definitely worth your time!!
    - <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheDibbleInstitute>
* Movie: Fireproof
  + This movie is a fantastic movie that illustrates what people mean when they say “marriage is hard work.” I think this movie demonstrates incredibly well how two people who were once very much in love can gradually drift apart and end up wanting a divorce. Then the husband’s dad encourages his son to do something nice for his wife every day for 40 days and to see the difference. The wife has no idea he is doing this. Eventually they are brought back together and renew their vows.
  + One of my favorite clips: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/fireproof/better-or-worse>
* Some of you asked for the link to my Prezi, here it is:
  + <http://prezi.com/gdpvzq4_zwri/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy>

# Activities to use in the classroom

* **Crush and Hershey’s kiss**: (from Tracey Jensen and Kaye Dawn Falslev at Skyview High School)
  + To introduce the topic of dating, hand out chocolate kisses and orange crush soda. While the students are enjoying their treats, they will write a paragraph about their first crush or kiss (whichever they choose). Then the teacher will read them anonymously to the rest of the class. This activity helps the students get excited about the topic as well as open up in order to have good discussions about this difficult topic.
* **Romance or Nomance?** 
  + The students will watch a series of movie clips then specify why they would or wouldn’t want to be part of the romance depicted. They must give at least 3 reasons
  + This can be used as a pre and posttest for the teacher to evaluate how their students analyze relationships.
  + For the posttest, the students should be able to give specific examples (especially from How to Avoid Falling in Love with a Jerk) as to they would or wouldn’t want to be part of it. (EX: The ending scene in the Proposal [on my Prezi] Reasons why they wouldn’t want to be part of that is that it violates the 3 month rule (they’d only been together for 3 days).
* **Know**
  + Listen to the song “Hello, I love you won’t you tell me your name?” and discuss the idea of “love at first sight”
  + Assign the students to partners and have them answer questions about the other person. How well do they actually know them? (questions can be anything from favorites, to family questions, where they’ve vacationed, etc.)
  + Discuss: How do you know when you really know someone?
* **Trust**
  + Trust picture: How would your mom react if she asked you to clean the kitchen but you didn’t do it? *(see Extension lesson plans below)*
* **Rely**
  + Relying on someone you don’t trust means getting set up for disappointment
* **Commit**
  + Three legged race. Pair everyone up. Tie a belt or shoelaces around each other’s inside leg as they stand shoulder to shoulder. See who can win the race. Did they lose their balance? Did some crash and burn? Did they think they could go faster than they really could? How can this apply to relationships? Could they go as fast as if they were by themselves? Why? It takes time to really know someone. How does committing too quickly or having physical intimacy too soon throw your relationship out of balance? *(see Extension lesson plans below)*
* **Touch**
  + survey/discussion *(see Extension lesson plans below)*
* **Choosing a car vs choosing a date**:
  + Have the students write down everything they would do before buying a car. Then have them write down everything they would do before asking or accepting a date from someone. Which one do they put more effort into? Which is more important?
* **Future partner**:
  + Have the students take a piece of paper and fold it into thirds. In each column write “Must Have” “Must NOT Have” and “Would Be Nice.” The students will then fill in at least 3 items under each list.
* **3 month rule**: it takes three months for habits to appear
  + Assignment: have the students create a banner/flag/project where they create their own dating rules
  + When to kiss, hold hands, how to say no, etc.
* **Family Background:**
  + Family Tree: Cut out leaves from 3 colors to make a ‘family tree’. (p 55) Brown leaves: things we don’t want to repeat. Yellow: want to keep for our future family. Green: things we want to add that we never had *(see Extension lesson plans below)*
* **Pudding activity:**
  + Have two paper bags on the table. #1 has a big open bowl of pudding in it. #2 have a wrapped candy bar. Ask for a volunteer to come get a tasty treat out of #1. Discuss the mistake (Compatibility lesson plan *(see Extension lesson plans below))* Then have someone volunteer to get a treat out of bag #2 and discuss how they approached it differently.
* **Analyzing media:**
  + For a homework assignment have the students watch a chick-flick or romantic comedy and have them write down a specific number or healthy and unhealthy aspects of that relationship.
  + Have the students print off and bring in lyrics of 5 of their favorite love songs. Using two colors of pencil or highlighter they will highlight/underline lines that demonstrate healthy and unhealthy lines of songs. (A personal favorite is Adele’s Someone Like You. That just SCREAMS unhealthy attachment)
* **The truth about marriage:**
  + Have the students interview many married couples (5-10) and find out:
    - How the couple met
    - How long they dated
    - How long they have been married
    - How did they decide to get married
    - The biggest shock about marriage
    - The best thing about marriage
    - Something hard they worked through, that they are willing to share
* **Analyzing relationships**: these are just a few examples, feel free to create your own

2 couples:

Jenna & Mike:

18- year old Jenna was off to college and found her freedom exhilarating.  Knowing she was very attractive, she didn't want to bother with dating for her first semester so she decided that she would let everyone know she had boyfriend, even though she didn't actually.  Once she was settled in her new apartment, she found a job at grocery store. On her first day of work she was trained by her very good looking 25 year old supervisor. At the end of the day he asked her out. True to the promise she made herself, she told him she had a boyfriend. Disappointed, but still into her, he told her to let him know when that relationship was over so that he could her boyfriend. Throughout the next week she realized that she really liked him so she told him she broke up with her boyfriend. They went on a first date that night and then two weeks later he proposed and she said yes. They had a date set in March but got the wedding planned quickly and decided to get married right away- 2 months after their first date.

Sophie & Adam

Sophie and Adam grew up in the same neighborhood but didn't spend time with each other. Their parents were friends so they'd see each other at parties but they weren't necessarily friends. In middle and high school they had a few mutual friends and even went to one dance together but there was no romantic interest between the two of them. After two years of college they were both at a Christmas party, visiting home from college. They started talking and discovered a spark that hadn't been there previously. They started dating and married when they both graduated.

Ask the students: Which love story is more appealing to you?

The rest of the story:

Within the first year of marriage, Jenna realized that Mike's spontaneity made for a frustrating life. He rarely did what he said he would and would miss school to go have "fun." Mike felt that Jenna nagged him too much and put too much emphasis on work and school. They divorced shortly after their first anniversary.

Sophie and Adam had 3 children and stayed married.

Why do these stories have such different outcomes? What could Jenna and Mike have done differently? What could Sophie and Adam have done to hurt their relationship?

**Using Literature** *(brief examples. Refer to The Art of Loving Well for a more complete guide)*

* How well did Cinderella know the prince? Did she need rescuing? Why?
* What about Cinderella's family? A lot of teens relate to dysfunctional families. This is a great story to discuss real life with teens.
* An Appointment with Love by S.I. Kishor. READ the story to the students. Pause after the part where he sees the beautiful women and the older woman. Ask the students what they would do. (<http://mrelliott.net/shortstories/kishor-01.html>)
* Ask the students to finish the story. Is he irritated and offended by the “test” or do they get along?

A few other activities I did in the conference come from the lesson plans below.

# How to Avoid Falling in Love with a Jerk

# Lesson plans from USU extension based on the 5 components of the RAM

**No Jerks Lesson Plan for Trust and Rely**

**Contact JoLene Bunnell @ (801) 851-8473 or (801) 318-4603 or** [**jolene.bunnell@usu.edu**](mailto:jolene.bunnell@usu.edu)

**1.   What  is  “Trust”        10  minutes**

**In  this  session  we  will  look  at  the  way  trust  grows  in  a  relationship.  In  a  new  relationship, especially  a  dating  relationship,  you  may  not  give  a  lot  of  thought  to  how  your  trust  is growing. But  it  is  easy  to  become  too  trusting  too  fast  only  to  realize  later  that  the  person you  are dating  is  not  the  person  you  thought  he  or  she  was.**

**Another  danger  of  trust  is  the  result  of  the  fact  that  as  trust  increases  so  does  the  bond  and  glue  in  a  relationship.  You  can  easily  find  yourself  staying  in  a  relationship  with  someone  who  has  problems  because  your  trust  keeps  blinding  you  to  heir  issues.    There  is  an  important  connection  between  trust  and  what  you  know  about  someone.  Remember  in  the  RAM  that  the  level  of  your  trust  should  never  exceed  the  level  of  what  you  know  about  someone.**

**Let’s  look  at  *building  trust*  in  the  person  you  are  dating.  First,  TRUST  IS  VERY  BONDING.  By  this  I  mean  that  the  feelings  of  connection,  closeness,  security,  safety,  and  even  love  all  require  trust;  and  the  level  of  trust  will  strongly  affect  the  degree  that  you  feel  those  feelings  of  closeness  to  the  one  you  are  going  out  with.**

**For  instance,  it  is  common  to  refer  to  a  best  friend  as  the  person  “you  trust  the  most;”  or,  “my  most‐trusted  friend.”  And  in  contrast,  when  trust  is  broken,  the  relationship  bond  is  always  lowered.  As  I  previously  said,  trust  creates  a  strong  bond  in  a  relationship.**

**Trust  is  a  frequently  used  term  that  is  difficult  for  many  to  define.**

**”DISCUSSION  QUESTION”  *How  would  you  define  trust?  Trust  is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?***

The  main  idea  is  that  trust  comes  from  your  ***opinion***  of  someone.  It  is  a  mental  picture  that  is  sketched  as  you  get  to  know  someone,  sorting  through  your  stereotypes,  associations  and  ideals.

TRUST  AND  A  TRUST‐PICTURE

Then  explain:  **I  am  going  to  provide  you  with  a  slightly  different  definition  of  trust.  Trust  is  a  feeling  of  confidence  you  have  in  someone  that  comes  from  your  *belief  in  him/her—*in  other  words,  your  trust  feeling  is  *based  on  your  opinion  of  him/her*.  Think  about  it,  you  have  a  *picture  in  your  head*  of  everyone  you  know.  This  dynamic  picture  tells  you  what  he  or  she  is  doing  when  you  are  not  around.  For  example,  think  of  someone  you  know  fairly  well…**  (depending  on  the  class,  chose  a  boyfriend  or  girlfriend,  or  one  of  their  parents.  We  will  use  a  *mother*  in  our  script.  Feel  free  to  change  this  example  situation  if  you  think  your  class  would  relate  better  to  someone  different). **Can  you  imagine  what  your  mother  would  do  if  you  were  supposed  to  clean  the  kitchen  but  forgot?**Give  a  few  moments  for  the  class  to  think  or  banter  with  you  about  this.

**Of  course  you  can,  because  you  have  a  picture  in  your  head  that  takes  *what  you  know*  about  your  mom  and  plays  it  out  in  the  specific  situation.  We  are  going  to  refer  to  this  mental  profile  as  a  *trust‐picture*.  Your  confidence  in  someone  comes  from  this  mental  trust‐picture.  What  you  *believe*about  someone  leads  you  to  *feel*  a  confidence  or  trust  in  him/her.  And  your  expectations  of  what  this  person  will  say  or  do  also  come  from  what  your  opinion  or  trust‐picture  of  him/her.  This  trust‐picture  is  like  your  opinion  of  the  person,  but  it  is  quite  dynamic.**

**Sometimes,  you  even  have  a  conversation  with  the  trust‐picture.  Take  the  kitchen  situation.  When  you  realize  you  forgot  to  do  what  your  mom  asked,  don’t  you  think  you  might  be  able  to  hear  what  she  would  say  to  you  in  your  head  before  you  would  even  encounter  her?!?  In  fact,  you  would  probably  talk  to  her  *in  your  head*  to  figure  out  your  best  defense!  This  is  a  conversation  with  your  trust‐picture.  According  to  that  picture  of  your  mom,  what  would  you  trust  her  to  do?**Let  the  class  banter  with  you  to  make  sure  they  understand  the  concept.

**Reliance,  on  the  other  hand,  is  trust  put  into  action.**  Point  to  the  RELY  level  on  the  RAM  while  you  talk  about  the  difference  between  trust  and  reliance. **Reliance  is  the  ways  you  depend  on  someone  to  meet  your  needs.  You  could  say  that  your  Mom  was  *relying*  on  you  to  clean  the  kitchen  because  she  *trusted*  you.**Move  the  RELY  level  up  all  the  way  and  keep  the  TRUST  slider  only  about  ¼  of  the  way  up  on  the  R.A.M.  board.  Point  out  the  risk  that  occurs  when someone  relies  on  a  partner  that  they  cannot  trust.  **Remember  the  “safe  zone  rule”‐ don’t  let  one  level  exceed  the  previous.  What  happens  if  you  begin  to  depend  on  someone  to  meet  needs  in  your  life  *beyond*  what  you  can  really  trust  this  person  to  fulfll?**Examples  of  this  could  be  opening  up  too  fast;  dropping  time  with  your  friends  and  spending  all  of  your  free  time  with  the  dating  partner;  pulling  away  from  family  to  only  confide  with  the  dating  partner;  giving  much  more  than  what  your  dating  partner  is  going  to  give  in  the  relationship.

  Move  the  Reliance  slider  up  as  you  explain.  **The  more  you  rely  on  someone  you  do  not  have  trust  in,  the  more  you  are  at  risk  for  disappointment.  This  is  how  *expectations  lead  to  disappointments*.  As  we  are  going  to  see  in  this  session,  your  expectations  of  someone  come  from  your  trust‐picture.  If  it  is  accurate  then  you  will  usually  NOT  be  disappointed.  However,  when  you  have  a  “picture  in  your  head”  of  someone  that  you  like  that  does  not  match  the  “reality  in  life”  of  what  this  person  is  really  like,  then  you  are  bound  to  be  disappointed**(It  is  possible  that  you  can  be  pleasantly  surprised  if  the  person  in  real  life  is  actually  better  than  what  you  had  thought  in  our  opinion  or  trust‐picture  of  him/her).  **It  is  essential  to  *hold  back*  in  forming  strong  dependencies  in  order  to  make  sure  that  your  trust  has  maturedRemember:  your  trust‐picture  is  based  upon  what  you  THINK  ABOUT  what  you  KNOW  about  someone.  And  the  way  you  get  to  know  someone  is  by  talking,  diverse  experiences  together,  and  by  spending  time  with  them!**

**2.   Filling  in  the  Gaps       20  minutes**

At  this  point,  you  will  further  develop  the  concept  of  what  is  trust  and  why  it  is  important  to  make  sure  that  a  dating  partner  earns  trust.   You  will  do  this  by  explaining  the  way  an  opinion  or  *trust‐picture*  is  formed  in  a  new  relationship.

**”DISCUSSION  QUESTION”  *Can there be a difference between what you THINK of someone and what that person is really like?***  *Ideas*:  The  answer  is  yes.  This  may  be  because  someone  has  “assumed”  that  the  other  person  is  one  way  when  they  are  really  another.  You  are  helping  the  class  to  see  the  difference  between  what  you  “know”  about  someone  and  what  you  “think”  about  that  person.

**”DISCUSSION  QUESTION”  *Can there be a difference between what you THINK of someone and what you KNOW about that person?*** *Ideas*:  This  answer  is  also  yes.  This  section  will  explain  how  this  happens.

**Sometimes  we  give  someone  the  benefit  of  the  doubt  or  jump  to  conclusions  that  are  not  accurate.  In  other  words,  what  we  *know*  about  someone  is  only  part  of  what  we  *think*  of  them.  It  is  normal  to  “fill  in  the  gaps”  of  your  opinion  or  *trust‐picture*  of  what  this  person  is  like  when  you  are  getting  to  know  someone.  There  are  three  mental  “files”  that  you  draw  from  to  fill  in  the  gaps.  They  are  your  ideals,  your  stereotypes  and  your  associations.**

**GROUP ACTIVITY:**

**“Fill in the Blanks” Exercise (Need “fact cards” – see ideas of what to put on cards below)**

• Presenter reads 2 facts about a person

o Group tries to guess other details about the person’s life/character

o Group is asked whether this would a good person to go out with, care for your kids, trust to make a bank deposit

• Presenter reads 2 additional facts about the person

o Group modifies guesses about the person’s character, and trust questions

• Presenter reads 2 additional facts about the person

o Repeats the group discussion process

• Group discussion: how the trust picture changes – as more facts are added, the picture changes and the reply answers changes

o This is what happens when reliance comes before knowledge

Fact Card ideas:

Suggestions for “fact cards”

􀂃 Is working

􀂃 Has own car

􀂃 Treats my children nice

􀂃 Is the youngest child of the family

􀂃 Finished high school

􀂃 Great looking

􀂃 Is diabetic

􀂃 Lives with mother

􀂃 Makes more than you do

􀂃 Attends church regularly

􀂃 Loves kids, but doesn’t like being a parent

􀂃 Grew up in West Valley

􀂃 He’s got 3 kids by 3 different women

􀂃 Has a criminal background

􀂃 Does not attend church

􀂃 She’s got 3 kids by 3 different men

􀂃 Grew up in Provo

􀂃 Is the oldest child of the family

􀂃 Has more education than you do

􀂃 Didn’t finish high school

􀂃 Mother is ill; care for her daily

**You  can  compare  this  with  “jumping  to  conclusions”  or  “making  assumptions”  or  “first  impressions”—all  of  which  happen  quickly  but  as  you  spend  *time*  with  someone  and  are  *together*  with  them  to  see  how  they  act  in  various  settings,  test  out  what  they  have  told  you  when  they  *talk*  with  you  (the  formula  for  truly  and  fully  knowing  someone).**

**This  is  why  it  is  so  important  to  honor  the  90‐day  probation  period  in  a  new  relationship.  You  sometimes  have  to  convince  yourself  that  you  really  do  not  know  someone  as  well  as  you  *think*  you  know  that  person…  you  have  just  filled  in  all  the  blanks  from  what  you  have  been  told.  Remember  that  patterns  are  attitudes  and  behaviors  that  repeat  in  a  cycle  or  in  a  regular  fashion.  But  it  takes  time  for  certain  attitudes  and  behaviors  to  surface  for  the  FIRST  time,  and  then  even  longer  to  see  them  repeat  and  determine  that  they  are  pattern.**

**3. Testing Trustworthiness - 10 minutes**

**The acronym, M.A.R.R.I.A.G.E. is used to capture eight characteristics of a trustworthy person. They are:**

* **Mature**
* **Adaptable**
* **Relationship skills**
* **Responsible**
* **Inner confidence**
* **Anger management**
* **Gracious**
* **Emotionally stable**

**Individual Activity: Take the Testing Trustworthiness Test**

**Activity**

*Testing Trustworthiness*

When  you  “fall  in  love”  with  someone  there’s  a  period  where  both  people  put  their  best  foot  forward.  We  initially  tend  to  minimize,  or  not  even  see,  the  negatives  in  a  person  we’re  attracted  to.  Paying  attention  to  previous  friendship  and  relationship  patterns  is  smart  because  how  we  act  in  the  past  says  a  lot  about  howwe  will  act  in  the  future.  Beware  of  thinking:  “He  or  she  is  different  with  me.”

YES    NO    Does  this  person  keep  their  promises?

YES    NO    Can  this  person  keep  secrets?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  stand  up  for  people  when  they  deserve  it.

YES    NO    Can  this  person  admit  they  are  wrong  and  apologize?

YES    NO    Is  this  person  generally  kind  to  others?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  show  empathy  towards  others?

YES    NO    Is  this  person  genuine?

YES    NO    Is  this  person  a  good  listener?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  show  they  are  aware  of  how  their  actions  affect  others?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  take  responsibility  for  their  own  actions?

YES    NO    Can  this  person  control  their  anger?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  display  honesty?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  continually  put  people  down  ?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  make  unfair  judgments  or  spread  rumors  about  others?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  use  or  take  advantage  of  others?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  put  up  a  pretend  or  phony  front?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  act  helpless  and  look  for  others  to  take  care  of  them?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  blame  others?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  runaway  from  problems?

YES    NO    Does  this  person  engage  in  regular  drug  or  alcohol  use?

**Item  Key**

If  you  answered  more  no’s  on  the  top  half  and  more  yes’s  on  the  bottom  half,  beware!  This  person  has  many  problem  behaviors  that  make  will  make  it  difficult  for  him  or  her  to  have  successful  and  healthy  relationships.  If  you  answered  more  yes’s  on  the  top  half  and  more  no’s  on  the  bottom  half,  this  person  possesses  positive  relationship  qualities.

**Pace your trust by checking out their reliability (Rely) - 10 minutes**

**First Date Scenario**

**Let’s look  at  a  first  date  from  a  girl’s  perspective  so  let’s  imagine  going out  on  a  first  date  and  how  to  PACE  a  new  trust.**Move  all  the  sliders  to  the  bottom.  **Remember  that  you  “fill  in  the  gaps”  from  three  files  you  have  in  your  brain  (or  head):**

**1) Your  Associations**

**2) Your  Ideals**

**3) Your  Stereotypes.**

The  following  is  a  story  (with  a  humorous  ending)  to  illustrate  how  someone  can  PACE  their  trust  in  a  new  relationship  by  checking  out  the  reliability  (rely)  of  the  person  they  are  dating.

**Now,  you  have  one  serious  negative  association.  You  have  been  on  first  dates  where  the  guy  said  at  the  end  of  the  date  that  he  would  call  you  “sometime.”  And  you  learned  that  what  this  really  means is that  he  was  actually  NOT  going  to  call.**

**Let’s  say  that  you  have  met  a  guy  from  another  school  and  he  asks  you  out.  Let’s  give  him  an  unusual  name  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(ask  the  class  for  a  name  that  is  a  not  common…  i.e.  the  class  suggests  Bruno).  You  meet  him  after  school  at  a  coffee  shop  and  have  the  best  time  you  have  ever  had  with  a  guy.  **However,  at  the  end  of  the  evening  Bruno  says,  “I  had  a  great  time,  so  maybe  I’ll  give  you  a  call  sometime,  OK?”  You  say  “yes”  but  you  have  heard  this  line  before.  In  the  past,  this  line  always  meant,  “See  you  later,  I  am  never  going  to  call.”  This  is  one  of  your  stereotypes  of  how  a  good‐looking  guy  dumps  a  girl  he  really  is  not  interested  in.  Remember, *stereotypes  are  overgeneralizations  of  some  characteristic  of  a  person  that  you  assume  always  exist.*Stereotypes  are  certainly  not  always  true.**

**However,  a  week  later  the  phone  rings  and  a  voice  on  the  other  end  says  “Hello,  this  is  Bruno.”  You  answer,  “Bruno  who?”  And  he  says,  “How  many  Brunos  do  you  know?!?”  You  say,  I  thought  you  were  not  going  to  call.  Bruno  says,  What?  At  the  end  of  our  first  date  I  said  I  would  call  you  sometime.  You  say,  That  is  what  I  mean.  What  you  said  means  you  are  not  going  to  call.  Bruno  says,  “Maybe  that  is  what  other  guys  mean  by  that,  but  not  me!”**

**What  just  happened  to  your  trust?**Move  it  up  a  notch.  Point  out  that  you  begin  to  question  the  accuracy  of  your  stereotype  applying  to  him.  **At  the  end  of  your  next  date,  Bruno  tells  you  again  that  he  would  like  to  call.  “How  about  I  call  you  Saturday  at  2:00?  He  asks.  You  agree.  So  where  is  your  reliance?**Move  it  up  a  notch  to  match  the  trust  level.  

**What  are  you  doing  Saturday  at  2:00?**The  class  will  say  that  you  are  staring  at  your  phone.  **Sure  enough,  Saturday  at  2:00  the  phone  rings  and  it  is  your  man!  What  happens  to  your  trust?**Move  it  up  another  notch  or  two.  You  give  up  on  your  stereotype  and  wonder  if  this  is  lasting  or  just  temporary.

**You  go  out  again,  have  another  good  time,  and  he  promises  to  call  again.  What  happens  to  your  reliance?**Move  it  up  to  match  the  trust.

**Every  time  that  a  date  with  Bruno  ends  he  says  that  he  will  call  you  at  a  specific  time  and  a  specific  day.  Never  does  he  fail  to  call  at  the  time  he  stated.  Where  is  your  trust  and  reliance  after  a  couple  of  months?**Move  the  trust  and  reliance  up  several  notches.  **After  about  eleven  weeks  of  this,  are  you  still  watching  the  time  to  check  his  calls?**

**So  at  the  end  of  the  evening  he  says  he  will  call  you  Saturday  after  he  leaves  a  friend’s  house…  say  at  12:13!  You  agree.**Move  your  trust  up  a  little  farther.  **But  on  Saturday  at  12:13  your  phone  doesn’t  ring…  but  you  don’t  notice  it  until  12:45.  “Huh,  you  think,  he’s  never  late…  something  must  be  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”  Something  must  be  wrong.**That  is  the  trust‐picture  working  in  one’s  head.  **1:15‐ You  walk  over  to  your  phone  and  check  to  make  sure  you  have  service.  1:30  You  begin  calling  but  it  goes  immediately  to  his  voicemail  which  must  mean  that  he  turned  his  phone  off.  You  continue  calling  until  5:00.**

**By  this  time  you  are  figuring  out  the  timing  and  you  are  only  at  the  11th  week  which  is  not  yet  passed  the  90‐day  probation  period.  You  realize  that  this  class  was  right  after  all.  Bruno  was  only  able  to  hold  out  for  a  couple  of  months  before  his  true  colors  started  to  show!  You  are  now  angrily  talking  to  your  “missing  mystery  man”  while  looking  at  the  phone:**  this  is  an  example  of  a  conversation  with  your  trust‐picture.  You  can  act  this  out  like  you  are  talking  angrily  to  the  phone‐ **I  can’t  believe  I  fell  for  this‐ I  should  have  never  trusted  you…  you  guys  are  all  alike…**Move  the  trust  and  reliance  sliders  on  the  R.A.M. t*o  the  bottom*.   Then  tell  the  remainder  of  the  story  with  a  little  bit  of  drama.

**At  8:15  PM  the  phone  rings‐ it  is  an  E.M.T.  from  an  ambulance.  The  technician  says  to  you,  “Do  you  know  a  student  named  Bruno?”  You  say  yes  and  start  to  complain  about  how  untrustworthy  he  is!  “Well,”  the  E.M.T.  continues,  “Bruno  was  crossing  the  street  and  seemed  to  be  fiddling  with  his  phone  and  not  paying  attention  to  the  traffic  patterns  when  hewas  hit  by  a  car.  While  we  were  wheeling  him  into  the  ambulance,  he  grabbed  my  arm  and  made  me  promise  to  call  this  number  and  tell  you  he  is  sorry  he  didn’t  get  a  hold  of  you  at  12:13  because  of  this  accident.  I  had  several  calls  right  after  this  and  am  sorry  that  I  overlooked  calling  you  until  now.  He  is  at  the  hospital  and  in  stable  condition.”**

Pause,  and  then  silently  walk  over  to  the  R.A.M.  board  and  move  the  trust  slider  all  the  way  to  the  top  and  say:  **Now  you  know  that  this  would  happen!!  How  would  this  increased  trust  then  affect  the  other  areas  of  your  relationship?**Slowly  move  up  the  Rely  slider…and  point  out:  **and  I  know  that  some  of  you  would  also  move  up  in  your  commitment  and  attraction.  And  you  know  if  this  had  been  a  romantic  movie  about  two  people  in  their  late  20’s  then  she  would  have  stopped  by  and  pick  up  the  minister,  priest,  rabbi  or  even  the  local  judge  and  married  him  before  he  was  even  came  to!**

**This  story  just  illustrates  how  trust  and  reliance  should  interact.  Trust  prompts  expectations  that  are  then  tested  out  in  real  life  circumstances.  If  the  person  you  are  trusting  fulfills  your  expectations,  then  you  feel  that  you  can  *depend*  (or  rely)  on  them  to  meet  your  needs  and  you  alter  your  trust‐picture  in  positive  ways.  The  new,  altered  trust‐picture  prompts  more  expectations  that  lead  to  *relying*  on  your  dating  partner  in  deeper  ways.  If  your  partner  continues  to  meet  your  needs,  then  you  again  alter  your  trust‐picture  in  positive  ways…  and  so  on.  However,  if  your  needs  are  not  met,  or  your  expectations  are  disappointed,  then  you  alter  your  trust‐picture  in  a  negative  way  and  you  lower  your  expectations.**

**Keeping your Trust & Reliance in Balance – 10 minutes**

**Some  of  the  most  common  reasons  someone  keeps  building  unhealthy  relationships  or  chooses  a  partner  with  significant  problems  re  because  they  do  not  keep  their  TRUST  or  RELIANCE  levels  in  balance.**Go  to  the  R.A.M.  board  and  move  the  trust  to  the  top  with  the  KNOW  level  still  low;  then  move  the  TRUST  back  down  and  move  the  RELY  up  to  the  top.  Both  of  these  imbalances  are  common  causes  of  unhealthy  relationships.  **Remember  the  “safe zone  rule”‐ don’t  let  one  level  exceed  the  previous.  What  happens  if  you  are  overly  trusting  and  always  fill  in  your  trust‐opinion  with  positives?**  Let  the  class  give  you  some  ideas.

**Or,  what  happens  if  you  begin  to  depend  on  someone  to  meet  needs  in  your  life  *beyond*  your  developed  trust?  Or  others  have  an  extreme  need  to  take  care  of  someone—if  this  is  the  case  then  what  kind  of  partners  will  you  tend  to  seek  out?**The  answer  is  that  you  will  be  drawn  toward  partners  with  problems  because  they  need  and  want  someone  to  take  care  of  them.

Move  the  Reliance  slider  up  as  you  explain.  **The  more  you  rely  on  someone  you  do  not  have  trust  in,  the  more  you  are  at  risk  for  disappointment.  This  is  how  *expectations  lead  to  disappointments*.  It  is  essential  to  *hold  back*  in  forming  strong  dependencies  in  order  to  make  sure  that  your  trust‐picture  has  matured.**

**TRUST TAG ACTIVITY**

**GROUP SIZE:** 8 to 20 is ideal

**Items Needed:** blindfolds & maybe obstacle course items

Divide the group into pairs and blindfold one person from each pair. Designate a playing area to stay in for the game and select one pair to be it. The un blind folded partners try to verbally guide their blindfolded partners in a game of tag or around an obstacle course, The sighted partners try to keep their blindfolded partners safe and guide them away from the person who is it. If a pair is it, the sighted partner tries to guide his/her blindfolded partner towards the others.

Only verbal guidance may be given with no touching allowed (unless necessary for the safety of your partner or others). Halfway through the game, the blindfolded partners should become the guides and the guides become blindfolded.

**DISCUSSION PROMPTS:**

1. Did you trust your each other?

2. Was it harder to be the leader or the blindfolded person?

3. In life, do you have trouble trusting others or do you trust everyone?

4. Is trust important in relationships with others? Why?

OR

**\*The Trust Circle**

Group Activity

If you have a bigger class with more then 15-20 people, try making two circles

Have the participants count off by 2’s

Get in a circle and have everyone hold hands

The # 1’s will lean back, the # 2’s will lean forward

Concept: trust and commitment

As people lean forward or back, they will start to feel pressure and will have to trust that they are going to be help up. They will also have to increase their grip with the people next to them to ensure that they will not fall.

Discussion: Relationships can be related to this activity in a couple of ways- Sometimes there is going to be stress in a relationship. Commitment is important in helping your partner to know that they can trust you, and that you can trust them.

Sometimes it takes being able to hold on and get through some of the struggles and pressures that come up in a relationships to build a deeper commitment with that person.

Some questions for participants to think about: How does your partner react in stressful situations (or friends/family members)? Do they run away or try to avoid the crisis, or are they willing to face the problems that occur and come up in your relationship? Do you feel like your partner is as committed to you as you are to them?

**No Jerks**

**Commitment and Touch**

**Putting the Cart Before the Horse**

**Background and conclusion:**

Attachment is the glue of relationships. Current culture puts greater emphasis on the feelings of love and romance, than on really getting to know someone to see if you are compatible with them. This creates the “love is blind” syndrome and over attachment. Over attachment is a significant problem in dating relationships because it disengages the mind and leads to minimizing and denying problem areas in a prospective partner. In today’s society, the emotional attachment comes at an accelerated pace. Some research says those that “wait” to have sex in a relationship only “wait” about two weeks or until the third-fifth date. Otherwise, people say “they think you’re not interested”. The result of this accelerated pace of attachment is the illusion of knowing your partner when you actually know him or her in superficial ways. The depth of the bond begins to exceed the breadth of thoroughly knowing him or her.

**Commitment:**

What is commitment? Love and commitment are very similar concepts. When you say you love someone, to that same degree you will be expected to commit to them.

Commitment is: The definition of belonging or to what extent you belong to each other.

Biblical definition: a man and a woman shall leave their father and mother and cleave unto each other and the two shall become one.

Extremes: Committed in an instant and commitaphobia

How can you tell if the person you are attracted to is worth committing to?

**Desire: (this is a bit hard to understand and doesn’t gel very well to me, maybe you guys can come up with something shorter and better that has the same meaning)**

D Duo M.O (same mission -partnership, togetherness, companionship)

E Examples of commitment (their other relationships)  
S Sacrificial Spirit (make sacrifices for others including you)

I Importance of their partner (where are you on their list of priorities?)

R Resist Temptations (doesn’t want a new flavor of the week)

E Everlasting (capable of making that decision that lasts a lifetime)

There is the “I don’t want to lose you” in commitment

**Desist (Same with this one – is there a better way to explain this?)**

D Dislike of alternatives (single versus “a couple”)

E Expectations of Improvement (You think they will change or that you can change them)

S Stigma of Starting over (what will your friends, family, others think?)

I Investment (you are invested, have they invested back?)

S Shortage of available partners (Is there just one right one out there and is this that person?)

T Termination and the effects thereof ( you’re no longer a couple, financial, emotional, physical)

Find Movie Clip about commitment

Possible Questions to ask: Think about a relationship in which the “Desist” forces of commitment made the relationship difficult to end.

What does being in a committed relationship mean to you?

Do you become codependent on a person the longer you are with them?

Do you lose your identity in your relationships?

Desist and Desire forces can both keep you in a relationship. It is much healthier to have more Desirable forces than Desisting.

You shouldn’t have to rely on someone to take care of all of your needs or to take care of you. Reliance on one another should be balanced by a healthy dose of self-reliance. Commitment is about a promise to be there, even when it’s not convenient. It’s about putting their needs on par with yours. It’s about healthy giving to another.

**Activity:**

Three legged race. Pair everyone up. Tie a belt or shoelaces around each other’s inside leg as they stand shoulder to shoulder. See who can win the race. Did they lose their balance? Did some crash and burn? Did they think they could go faster than they really could? How can this apply to relationships? Could they go as fast as if they were by themselves? Why? It takes time to really know someone. How does committing too quickly or having physical intimacy too soon throw your relationship out of balance?

**Touch**

Physical touch and especially sex is bonding:

In early stages of infatuation the brain releases massive amounts of a hormone that make you bonded to that person. You can’t trust that hormone to choose your future spouse, but you can trust TIME.

Sexual chemistry and sexual touch is both bonding and intoxicating. The “love hormone” oxytocin is the culprit. During sexual arousal, the bond increases its production 3 times the normal level in men and 9 times the normal level in women. As a result, feelings of euphoria and bonding occur. In marriage, this is a way couples minimize problems and renew their feelings of love. However, while this can be very helpful in a marriage relationship, it can just as greatly delude and deceive a premarital relationship.

Intense bonding of sexual involvement alters judgement, leading to the minimization and overlooking of faults.

There are many different views of sexual involvement from abstinence to hooking up for a one night stand. Is there a best? What is the best? Why?

**Living for the present while risking your future: RESEARCH**

3 groups: 1. Cohabitation 2. Not living together, but sexually active 3. abstinence before marriage.

Those that abstained before marriage had better romance during marriage and less divorce.

The more one engages in sexual activity and the more partners one has, the harder time they have feeling romance and satisfaction in future relationships.

**Sexual boundaries do three important things.**

1. Prevent STD’s that are prevalent and life changing.
2. Sexual boundaries focus the relationship on more important areas of compatibility, character development and friendship.
3. Protect against the love is blind syndrome that can occur with over attachments.

**Real Scenarios:**

Cynthia and Mark – Our marriage sucks, but we were very sexually compatible from the start. Now divorced

Heather – Had sex with boyfriend in high school. Went away to college, stayed in touch and when the ex called she was there waiting – even if she had a current boyfriend who treated her very well. She ended up marrying her ex. He does drugs, lost his job. She raises two kids and goes to church and activities mostly by herself.

**Possible questions:**

What are some ways that sexual involvement can cause you to overlook problem areas in your relationship and in the person you are dating? What are some additional reasons to keep sexual boundaries during the dating and courtship process?

What can be done if couples are in relationship that already includes physical intimacy?

What do you think? “Hooking up” is not harmful if both parties are clear that is what’s happening.

Example: Waiting to kiss vs kissing on a first date. Which is better? Why? Are there pros and cons on both sides?

Are you really looking for a life partner in high school? If so, are you dating the type of person you want to spend the rest of your life with? If not, why date one person seriously?

Does a “bad boy” have to treat you bad too?

Is there any way you could go backwards on the RAM scale – have a do over with the same person in an existing relationship?

**Conclusion:**

Attachment is the glue of relationships. Current culture puts greater emphasis on the feelings of love and romance, than on really getting to know someone to see if you are compatible with them. This creates the “love is blind” syndrome and over attachment. Over attachment is a significant problem in dating relationships because it disengages the mind and leads to minimizing and denying problem areas in a prospective partner. In today’s society, the emotional attachment comes at an accelerated pace. Some research says those that “wait” to have sex in a relationship “wait” about two weeks or until the third date. Otherwise, people say “they think you’re not interested”. The result of this accelerated pace of attachment is the illusion of knowing your partner when you actually know him or her in superficial ways. The depth of the bond begins to exceed the breadth of thoroughly knowing him or her.

Note to Collegiate 4-Hers: This is a summary of the last two bonding areas of the RAM model. The subject is sensitive and can be embarrassing to some. We have to be sensitive to those issues. However, I believe beating around the bush, avoiding the subject, or not being clear is doing a disservice to our teenagers in this day and age. You guys have heard this stuff and know what goes on. I think we can be direct and say the word sex without going into any sort of explicit details. Just use your best judgement and I am available to discuss things with you. Email me or call 435-438-6452, cell: 435-310-0457, [clint.albrecht@usu.edu](mailto:clint.albrecht@usu.edu). This outline will be too long for 45 minutes. You will have to condense it down. This isn’t a document set-in-stone, but should be used as a guideline in planning your workshop. Good luck.

No Jerks Lesson Outline

Family Background / Conscience (Stacey Mac)

Welcome: introduce topics of Family Background & Conscience

**Family Background**: (about 20-25 min)

We are going to look at the influences of your childhood and other family experiences on the marriage you establish. We all know that the experiences we had during our growing up years have had an influence on how we act in relationships. You will be influenced by the good and the bad—and so will your partner (binder p. 41).

Possible Discussion Questions:

How can your family of origin influence your relationships?

What are some patterns from your family / home setting that you would like to replicate (or not repeat) in your relationships /marriage?

What relationship patterns do you want to look for in the family setting of the person you marry?

Possible activities to choose from: (probably only time for one)

Worksheets: 2A in workbook: characteristics of partner

(The first two activities are related to the same topic—only chose one)

a. Brainstorm things they liked / didn’t like about their family of origin on large post it notes.

b. Family Tree: Cut out leaves from 3 colors to make a ‘family tree’. (p 55)

Brown leaves: things we don’t want to repeat

Yellow: want to keep for our future family

Green: things we want to add that we never had

c. Family line up: have groups line up from the least expressive of emotions to most expressive. Have them explain why they chose to be in this spot and things they want to change or keep the same for relationships.

d. Family Roles: list and discuss the responsibilities of different family members. Evaluate how

your family of origin influences your perceptions of family roles. (Use Couple

Relationship Responsibilities worksheets).

Change: What if you have patterns from your background you don’t want to take to your relationships? Change them!

Premarital insight and change is much more easily accomplished than marital insight and change.

Insight: recognize a negative pattern or characteristic

Information: how to change and what you want to become

Deliberate Effort (aka: hard work): change requires determination and practice

Time: the real test of change is time—prove yourself (binder p. 44-46)

Summary: Summarize the role of family background on relationships.

**Attitudes & Actions of Conscience**: (about 20-25 min)

We are going to examine the way your conscience works, and what this means for your marriage.

What is conscience? (internal parent)

Two basic functions:

1. Monitor of your attitudes & actions (based on your values)

2. It transports you to the perspective of another person (empathy, understanding,

sympathy, compassion, etc)

How can it influence relationships?

Worksheet: Binder p. 63, Resource 2-B: Conscience Check-up

Possible activities:

a. Brainstorm and share stories of good and bad examples of conscience from personal experience.

b. Attitude & actions skit:

c. show a movie clip about good / negative conscience in a relationship

Possible Discussion Questions:

What are some signs to watch for to help reveal a person’s conscience and how it monitors their attitudes and actions?

What would you expect to see in someone you date who has a healthy and positive conscience? (consistency, self control, boundaries, respect, thoughtfulness, etc).

Summary: discuss why the conscience is such an important factor and why it is important to look for someone with a strong conscience. Relate it back to trust on the R.A.M. board and the importance of taking the time to get to know someone well enough to see how they are in a variety of different situations.

Compatibility Potential and Examples Lesson Plan (45 min)

**PART I: “C” Compatibility Potential**

Compatibility is the “C” in FACES.

**What to know Activity (10 min)**

Materials 2-3 beach balls with questions written on them (or 2-3 bags with questions on pieces of paper, enough for the whole group.

Objective Answer questions that are important for you to know about yourself and for you to learn about someone you are dating.

Break the large group into 2-3 smaller groups. Have them toss the beach ball back and forth. Each person must answer the question which a specific finger is touching.

Sample Questions:

How do you budget your money?

Who do you think is responsible to clean the kitchen?

Who is responsible to do the laundry?

Who should earn most of the money for the family?

Who should pay the family bills?

What do you do when you get angry?

What makes you feel sad?

What makes you angry?

When do you get up in the morning?

What big purchases have you made?

What goals do you have for your life?

What are you looking for in a spouse?

What are responsibilities of a wife/mother?

What are the responsibilities of a husband/father?

What characteristics do you like best about your parents?

How important is getting an education to you?

Describe the way you deal with conflict.

Which do you prefer - playing a game of ultimate Frisbee or watching videos.

Describe what would be your perfect romantic date.

How do you express affection?

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

What are your spiritual values?

What material possessions are important to you?

What amount of money is important for you to earn?

What values do you feel are the most important?

How do you relax?

What do you do to play?

What do you love to do?

How do you work?

What is your work ethic?

Etc.

These questions are all areas that help us discover our compatibility with others.

There are three areas of compatibility that are important to consider in building a relationship. These are Personality, Values and Lifestyle.

**Compatibility Area #1: How Do Our Personalities Fit Together? (5 min)**

There are 6 characteristics of personality compatibility that are important to consider:

1. Intelligence
   * Nobody wants to feel inferior to someone else.
   * Nobody wants to be with someone they feel cannot understand them.
2. Emotional Style
   * This is the way that someone typically reacts emotionally (ie worrier, steady-Freddy, hot-head, etc…)
3. Energy Level
   * Some people are nonstop on the go and some people are couch potatoes. Make sure there is a good fit.
4. Chemistry
   * The “in love” feeling.
   * Relationships change and develop over time but you need to maintain that spark of excitement a couple has for one another.
5. Openness and Expression of Affection
   * Tied to Family Background discussed in the last workshop.
6. Humor
   * Laughing helps show the enjoyment you have in each other’s company.

Humor, Chemistry and Energy Level are usually part of what first attracts you to someone. They are very visible at the beginning of the relationship. These three can often change as a relationship develops, which is why you can’t always trust your first impressions.

Discussion Questions you could ask after or throughout this section:

* Can two people with different emotional styles still have a healthy relationship? Why?
* How can you get know about someone’s Intelligence/Emotional Style/Energy Level/Chemistry/Openness and Expression of Affection/Humor?
* Why can’t you always trust first impressions? How can these characteristics change?
* Other?

**Compatibility Area #2: How Do Our Values Fit Together? (5 min)**

1. Faith and Spiritual Values
   * Similar faith and spiritual values are one of the top 5 predictors of happy marriages.
   * Contrast this to a survey of singles where only 48% thought this area of religious similarity was important.
2. Family Values
   * Tied to Family Background discussed in the last workshop.
   * It is very likely that family patterns you experience growing up will be repeated in the marriage and family you establish.
3. Material Values
   * This area includes how you handle money, the importance of material possessions, and long term financial goals.
   * This area is hard to judge in the teen and college years because people are generally not fully free in their finances.
   * Financial conflicts are very common in marriages, but discussing and agreeing on how these issues will be handled early will help alleviate concerns later.

Discussion Questions you could ask after or throughout this section:

* How does having similar spiritual values help strengthen a relationship?
* Can two people with different family backgrounds still have a healthy relationship? Why?
* Why is it important to talk about long term financial and material goals?
* Other?

**Compatibility Area #2: How Do Our Lifestyles Fit Together? (5 min)**

1. Work
   * How do you work?
   * Work ethic
2. Interests
   * What do you love to do?
3. Recreation
   * Where do you play?
   * How do you relax?

Interests and Recreation make up a lot of dating. These are opportunities to get to know each other but also to find out if you enjoy similar things. Dating shouldn’t end with marriage. The more you find you have in common the more you’ll enjoy the time spent together throughout a lifetime.

Discussion Questions you could ask after or throughout this section:

* How can the way we work affect our relationships?
* Is it okay to have interests your partner doesn’t? Why?
* Other?

**Self Review Activity (5 min)**

Ask everyone to take a moment and answer the following questions about themselves…

1. Describe yourself using the different areas of compatibility.
2. Which areas do you want to be similar in someone you date or marry?
3. Which areas do you want to be different?

Ask for volunteers to share their answers and reasons behind them.

**PART II: “E” Examples of Past Relationship Patterns (5 min)**

Examples of Past Relationship Patterns is the “E” in FACES.

You never see all sides of a person in a dating relationship. The way someone acts can change drastically after marriage. It is rarely true that “what you see is what you get.”

There are 3 basic reasons why someone has a drastic shift in their behavior after marriage…

1. Hidden issues from their family background
2. They put their best foot forward during dating
3. You only see one side of a person

While it can be an awkward topic for many, it is important to find out about your partner’s past relationships. You can learn more about someone by watching how they treat others.

Question: What other relationships can we observe to learn about someone’s true character? *(Answers could include friends, family members, teachers, leaders, etc.)*

We can learn a lot by watching these other relationships. Talking to friends and family can help you get a better impression of a person.

**Pudding Activity (Emotions are Tools by Beverly Carpenter p. 43-44, 66) (10 min)**

Materials bowl, spoon, pudding (already prepared), 2 small paper sacks, wrapped treat that is generally likeable

Objective Show that mistakes can and should be learned from.

Place an open bowl of pudding in a small paper sack. Tell the group that a tasty item is inside the bag and you need a volunteer to come eat it. Select one person to come reach into the bag to get the item without looking inside. Make sure the person’s hand goes into the open bowl of pudding. When the person pulls out their pudding covered hand tell him/her that you do not like the way they are eating the tasty item. They need to clean up the mess and finish eating it. (Make sure that you are positive in your criticism.)

Discussion

* Did the volunteer make a mistake?
* What can be learned from this mistake?
* Raise your hand if you have ever made a mistake.
* Do we make mistakes in relationships?
* Why are mistakes usually made?
* What can be learned from mistakes?
* Name something specific you have learned from a mistake.
* Name something specific you have learned from another person’s mistake.
* What can you do to lessen the negative effects of mistakes or failures?
* Does making a mistake mean you are a failure? What does it mean?
* How can you overcome negative thoughts about yourself after you have made a mistake?
* How can you overcome negative thoughts about another person who has made a mistake?
* What can you do to not make the same mistake again?

You may wish to do another activity between the previous and the following activity.

Place a wrapped tasty item in another small paper sack. Tell the group that another tasty item is inside the bag and you need another volunteer to come eat it. Select one person to come reach into the bag to get the item without looking inside. (Asking the same person as previously volunteered or a different person will both give good learning opportunities.) Remind the volunteer that he/she doesn’t want to make the same mistake as before. Ask how they can learn from the previous mistake and prevent another mistake from happening. Remind of the rule that the volunteer cannot look in the bag.

Discussion

* Why was the volunteer hesitant?
* Why did the volunteer reach into the bag even though he/she knew what had previously happened?
* What causes people to be cautious in other daily situations? (i.e.: avoid someone who you had an argument with, fear taking a class you have gotten a bad grade in in the past, avoid performing after you made a mistake at a recital, etc.)
* What do we miss out on when we do not do something because it has turned out bad in the past?
* After you have had a bad experience, how can you overcome the fear of making another mistake?