



Virgin Mary Coptic Orthodox Church

St-Hubert, Quebec

CANADA

# **Introduction to Coptic Orthodox Marriage**



**by**

**Dr. Nabil Baky Soliman**





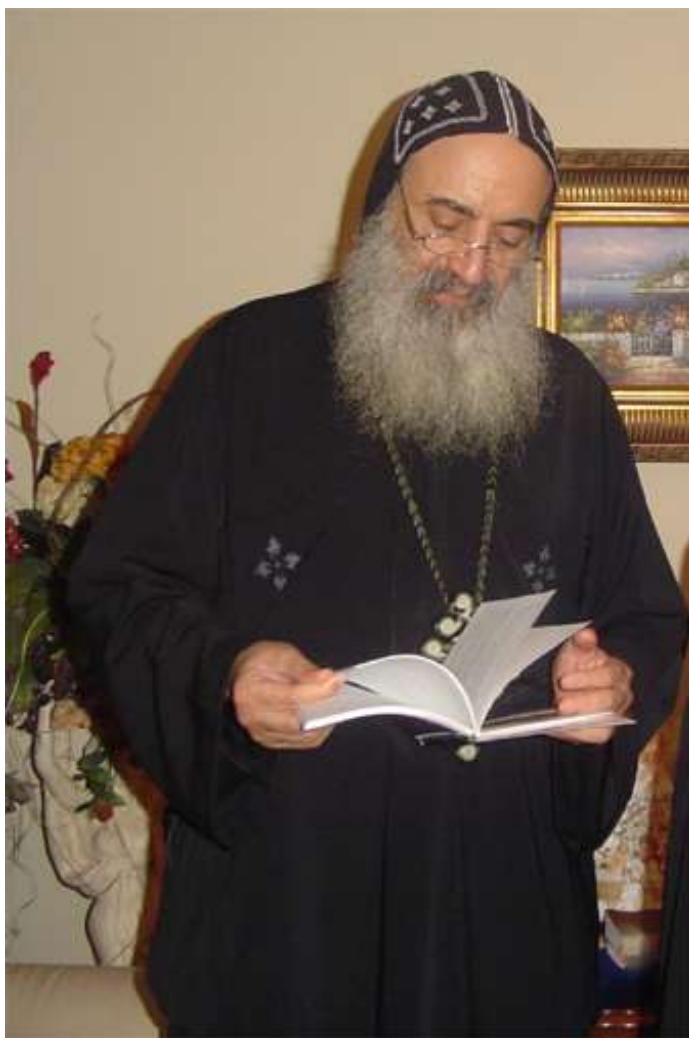
**Christ, blessing the groom and the bride  
at the wedding of Cana of Galilee**





**His Holiness Pope Tawadros II  
118<sup>th</sup> Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark**





**His Grace Bishop Paula**  
**Bishop of Tanta and**  
**Head of the Coptic Orthodox Council for Marital Affairs**

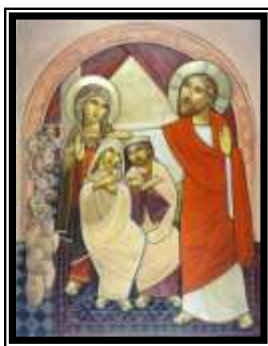




## FOREWARD – First Print

*“ Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."*

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*  
(Genesis 2:22-24)



“ ...they no longer seem like something earthly, but rather like the image of God Himself”.

(St. John Chrysostom)

Saint Paul expressed the sanctity of marriage, saying, “This is a great mystery” (Ephesians 5:32) and, “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled” (Hebrews 13:4)

Statistics in North America show that the rate of divorce is increasing and that the idea of living without marriage is wide spread among youth. Some fear the commitment of marriage, some are discouraged by the unhealthy examples they see around them, and some were just not educated in what marriage is and what love really means. Thus comes the need for this course of 15 lectures that covers the fundamental principles of Coptic Orthodox Marriage.

This course is the fruit of many years of study and counseling practice by Dr. Nabil B. Soliman, MD, PhD with a Master's degree in Christian counseling and active member in the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) and approved Marriage counselor in the Coptic Orthodox Church. This course was presented by Dr. Soliman in the English language during the Virgin Mary Spiritual revival in August 2005.

By the grace of God, Virgin Mary Coptic Orthodox Church in Montreal, Canada is happy to make available this set of lecture notes and CD containing the lectures in MP3 format to all young adults, engaged, newly married couples as well as married couples who look forward to healthier marital relationships.

May God use this course for the edification and prosperity of Christian marriages through the intercessions of the Theotokos, the Ever-Virgin Saint Mary and the prayers of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III. May the Lord keep him for the Church many years and peaceful times.

Fr. Saraphim Yousef

Fr. Tadros El-Masry

Feast of the Wedding of Cana of Galilee  
13<sup>th</sup> of Toubia 1722 AM                      21<sup>st</sup> of January, 2006

## **FOREWARD – Second Print**

By H. G. Bishop Paula

Bishop of Tanta

Head of the Coptic Orthodox Council for Marital Affairs

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God Amen. I am very happy to introduce to all of you a book “Introduction to Coptic Orthodox Marriage” by Dr. Nabil Baki. This Book or Booklet has 15 MP3 lectures on CD by Dr. Nabil

Baki. I think it is very important to have it. It is very important spiritually for pre-marriage counseling and preparing. It has 15 items on marriage. I think it is very spiritual, very orthodox, and very practical especially because it has been made by Dr. Nabil Baki, a professor in the University, a very coptic orthodox servant and counselor. Dr. Nabil Baki has long experience in this field. I think it is important to every couple, before marriage to read and listen to those lectures. I think if you read it before marriage, you will live a happy life, you will live a very successful marital life. We pray for these words and for these lectures to be of good benefit to every couple. Thanks be to God and to St. Mary church for this effort. Thanks to Dr. Nabil Baki. Thanks to all of you.

Bishop Paula of Tanta

Head of the Coptic Orthodox Council for Marital Affairs

30<sup>th</sup> of Baramouda 1722 AM

8<sup>th</sup> of May, 2006

Martyrdom of Saint Mark the Apostle

### **FORWARD – Third Print**

This course has proven very useful to marriage preparation for young couples, and due to high demand, we present this third print of the course. May the Lord use it to bless more and more couples and families through the intercessions of our mother Saint Mary and the prayers of His Holiness Pope Tawadros II.

Fr. Saraphim Yousef - Fr. Tadros El-Masry - Fr. Kyrillos Mourad

Feast of the Cross

17<sup>th</sup> of Tout, 1730 AM

27<sup>th</sup> of September 2013

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## MYSTERY OF LOVE

### I. Introduction

- A. Do we have a crisis?
- B. Value of pre-marital counseling
- C. A program for pre-marital counseling
- D. Who would counsel?
- E. The importance of a regional center for Christian counseling

### II. The Great Mystery

*30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.*

*31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."*

*32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Eph 5:30-32)*

### III. Preparing for the Great Mystery

*29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

*30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.*

*31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. (1 Cor 11:29-31)*

#### IV. **Stages of Preparation**

##### A. Pre-Embryonic Stage: Pre-Engagement

- ◆ Bethlehem
- ◆ The Vine Press

##### B. Embryonic Stage: Pre-engagement

##### C. Fetal Stage: Engagement

##### D. A Living Being: The Mystery of the Holy Matrimony

- ◆ The Holy Trinity: Crown, bless and sanctify
- ◆ Three in one
- ◆ Care for the living being
- ◆ Satan's plan to destroy the living being

#### V. **Mystery of Love**

##### A. Garden of Eden (Gen 2:18-25) and Cana of Galilee (Jn 2:1-10)

##### B. Nuptial community is a prophetic figure of .... St-John Chrysostom

##### C. The three phases of marriage:

LEAVE, CLEAVE, UNITE

(Gen 2:24-25) (Mt 19:3-12), (Mk 10:2-12), (Eph 5:31)

5 "and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?

6 "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."  
(Mt 19:5,6)

## Leave

- ◆ Leave before you cleave
- ◆ Priorities of the spouses
- ◆ What to leave
- ◆ Obstacles
- ◆ Failure to leave
- ◆ Factors that help

## **Cleave**

- ◆ The role of the husband
- ◆ Five mutual commitments:
  - Not to separate what God has joined together (Mt 19:6)
  - To love and respect
  - To be an affectionate and compassionate companion
  - To give, forgive and satisfy the conjugal needs
  - To change in order to pursue a godly and holy life

## **Unite**

- ◆ An icon of ...
- ◆ Completion of the flesh
- ◆ Perpetual interweaving of two beings into one



# THE CONSCIENCE & MIXED MARRIAGE

## I. Belief System

### 1. Components of Christian Being

*“Now May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely: and may your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”. (1 Thes 5:23)*

1. Human Soma (Body)
2. Human Spirit

#### **The Human Soul:**

3. Sub-Conscience
4. Conscience
5. Will
6. Thinking
7. Feeling
8. Holy Spirit  
*“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”  
(1 Co 3:16)*

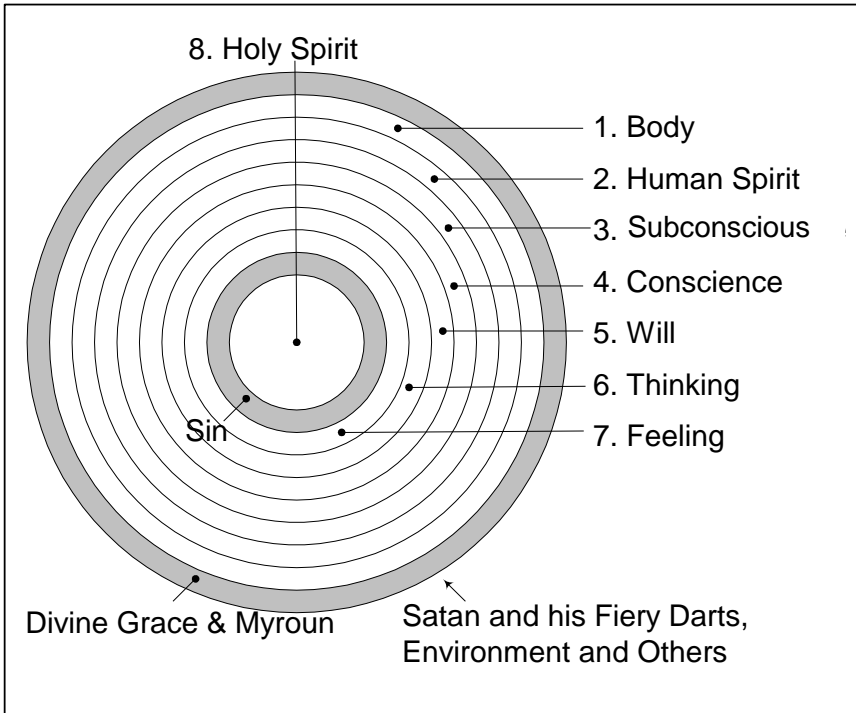


Figure 1: Components of Christian Being

## **2. Sin and Diabolic Wars**

## **3. Corruption and Incorruption**

## **4. Divinity and Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ**

## **5. Some Beliefs**

- ◆ The Real Theologian
- ◆ Holy Trinity
- ◆ Salvation
- ◆ Redemption
- ◆ Sanctification
- ◆ Incarnation
- ◆ Eternal Judgment
- ◆ Intercession
- ◆ The Church
- ◆ Coptic Orthodox Church:
  1. Christian
  2. Coptic
  3. Orthodox
  4. Apostolic
  5. Hierarchical
  6. Traditional
  7. Sacramental
  8. Liturgical
  9. Biblical
  10. Eschatological
  11. Monastic
  12. Ascetically Spiritual Church

## **6. Value System**

Love, Respect, Forgiveness, Humility, etc...

## **7. Are We Different from the Children of the World**

## **8. Development of the Conscience**

## **9. Conscience and Behavior**

## **10. New Age Movement and Satan's Deceptive Plan**

- ◆ Belittling the authority of the word of God (Holy Bible)
- ◆ Liberalism with its belief in the inherent goodness of man coupled with a tolerant, non-judgmental God
- ◆ The notion that all sexual relationships are legitimate as long as they are carried on by self-respecting adults (this has helped destroy the family).
- ◆ Pornography has contributed to:
  - The exploitation of children
  - The degradation of women
  - The wide-spread rejection that comes through the break-up of families
- ◆ Promising the people to satisfy their needs and fulfill the promises of God to them (but in a quicker way and with less hassle)
  - No moral demands
  - No confinement of one religion
  - The necessity of pleasure

- Don't wait for God's help
- No need to humble yourself
  
- ◆ Achieving spiritual reality through power of the mind, transcendental meditation, crystal healing, out-of-body experiences, hypnosis, channeling and others.
  
- ◆ Philosophy of the New Age Movement  
Through spirituality can be found in a return to the ancient wisdom of Eastern religions as Hinduism with its emphasis on quiet contemplation

### **Pantheism:**

*"You will be like God"* (Gen 3:4).

'God' is all and all is 'God'

### **Reincarnation:**

*"You will not surely die."*

There is always a chance to perfect yourself in another life and in another body.

### **Moral relativism:**

*"Knowing good and evil."*

What is good for you might not be good for me. There is no absolute truth. Good and evil are friends.

### **Esotericism:**

*"Your eyes will be opened."*

Salvation comes through transcendental meditation and experiences that unite us with the divine.

## II.     **Mixed Marriages**

- ◆ Different cultures
- ◆ Different religions
- ◆ Different denominations
- ◆ Sources of conflicts
- ◆ Outcome of mixed marriages
- ◆ Belief systems and mixed marriages
- ◆ Case presentations and workshops

# CHOOSING A LIFE PARTNER

## I. Philosophy and Mission

## II. Roles and Goals

## III. Marriage vs. Monasticism

## IV. Motives for Marriage:

### 1. Positives Motives:

- Unity and complementation (1+1=1)

*"Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Gen 1: 28)*

- Procreation

- Be Fruitful and Multiply

- Decrease in order to increase

- And if there is no child...

- When and how many children

- Purity

*"But if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Co 7:9)*

*"But if any man thinks he is not behaving improperly toward his virgin...Let him marry" (1 Co7:36)*

### 2. Negative motives for marriage

## V. Is He/She the gift of God to me?

- Keys:

1. Father of confession/Spiritual Guide
2. Prayer, Fasting, Bible
3. Blessing of parents
4. Circumstantial Evidences (“doors opening”).

- Criteria:

- ① Spiritual life:

Christ Centeredness

- ② Family

- ③ Communication skills:

(Listening, understanding, expressing and self disclosure)

- ④ Emotional expression:

Mood disorders, anger, aggression, violence, affection, compassion

- ⑤ Social skills:

Sociability, friends, jealousy, paranoia, self-control disorders (e.g. pornography, alcohol, drugs, gambling, spending, etc...);

- ⑥ Responsibility and reliability:

- ⑦ Career and financial stability

- ⑧ Features and Figure

- ⑨ Physical health

- ⑩ Mental health

- ⑪ Others



## **DEALING WITH THE PAST**

### **[The Old Baggage]**

#### **I. Abuse:**

1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Sexual
4. Neglect

#### **II. Anger:**

1. At Others
2. At Self
3. At God

#### **III. Family:**

##### **1. Parents:**

- ◆ Marital relationship
- ◆ Parental relationship (10 issues)
- ◆ Characters and habits

##### **2. Siblings:**

- ◆ Partiality and gender issues

##### **3. Relatives**

**4. Family life:**

- ◆ Spiritual
- ◆ Intellectual
- ◆ Social
- ◆ Emotional
- ◆ Financial Aspects

**IV. School and Education:**

- ◆ Skills and inferiority complexes

**V. Sexuality:**

- ◆ Development, pornography and sexual activity

**VI. Career and jobs:**

- ◆ Realistic dreams & ambitions
- ◆ Responsibility & stability

**VII. Previous relationships:**

- ◆ Dating, love, courtship, engagement and marriage

**VIII. Finances:**

- ◆ Loans and debts
- ◆ Credit cards
- ◆ Bank accounts

- ◆ Dealing with money
- ◆ Self control disorders.

**IX. Physical and mental health:**

- ◆ Pre-marital checkup
- ◆ Level of functioning

**X. Church:**

- ◆ Involvement
- ◆ Serving
- ◆ Spirituality
- ◆ Spiritual schedule
- ◆ Father of confession

**Note:**

In each of the previously mentioned events:

- A. Limit the event to time
- B. Limit the event to place
- C. Forgiveness
- D. Presence of Christ

# **PERSONALITY COMPATIBILITY AND PERSONALITY PROFILES**

## **I. Components of the personality**

1. The inherited, acquired and Godly characters
2. The inherited, acquired and Godly skills and ability
3. The acquired and Godly values and principals
4. The Glorious qualities of God

## **II. Characters of the healthy Christian personality**

1. Philosophy, mission and goals
2. Wisdom and discernment
3. Inner peace and security
4. Self control
5. Creative and Innovative abilities
6. Confidence
7. Belonging, values and principals
8. Mental skills and abilities
9. Emotional skills and abilities
10. Social skills and abilities
11. Ability to give and sacrifice
12. Ability to enjoy and be in Christ

### III. **DISC personality inventory**

Characters and how to have a better relationship with each of the following personalities:

A. The Dominant/Leading personality

B. Influencing/Emotional personality

C. Steady/Serving personality

D. Compliant/Perfectionist personality

### IV. **Personality disorders**

### V. **Workshop :**

Please conduct the personality inventory test\*. Find your profile and what is needed and how to have a better effective personality.

\* Recommended Personality Inventory Test:

***“The Biblical Personality System”***

Applying Biblical Insights to Personal Relationships

**Publisher:** The Institute for Motivational Living

## The Dominant Personality

The following are the features of one of the dominant profiles:

### 1. Biblical characters who represent this pattern:

Paul and Michal

### 2. Distinctive Features:

- Emotions:
  - a. Accepts aggression
  - b. Tends to be restrained in expression
  - c. Limits his contact with others
- Goals:
  - a. Dominance and control
  - b. Seeks unusual outcomes
- Judges others by:
  - a. His own personal standards
  - b. Progressive ideas in getting tasks accomplished
- Influences others by:
  - a. Setting a pace in developing systems
  - b. Being competitive
- Value within an organization:
  - a. Initiates activities that bring about challenges
  - b. Focuses on the future

- Overuses:
  - a. Bluntness toward others
  - b. Critical assessments
  
- Under pressure:
  - a. Is easily bored with routine work
  - b. Becomes sullen when not in a position of power and influence
  - c. Becomes assertive and pioneering
  
- Fears:
  - a. Not being influential
  - b. Not having authority to make preferred changes
  
- Would increase effectiveness with more:
  - a. Warmth
  - b. Tactful communication
  - c. Team cooperation
  - d. Recognition that traditions and sanctions exist

**Eight principles that will be useful in creating healthy relationships with a high Dominant personality**

1. They often become bored with routine work but operate best in an environment with challenging goals.
2. They like being “in charge”, and usually resist constraints.
3. Because of their strong drive to reach their goals, wise confrontation might be necessary in order to get their attention.
4. Once you have gained their attention, Show how their actions effect the fulfillment of mutual goals.
5. Be brief and to the point in your explanations, expect them to disagree, but feel free to leave if the volume gets too loud and direct.
6. Allow a cooling down period to reflect on their option before wanting a decision, use a messenger if necessary.
7. Be prepared for a quick change, once a commitment is made
8. Limit your expectations by understanding their greatest struggle.



## **The sociable personality**

**The following are the features of one of the sociable profiles:**

### **1. Biblical characters who represent this pattern:**

Aaron and King Saul

### **2. Distinctive features:**

- Emotions:  
Has a willingness to accept others
- Goals:
  - a. Gaining approval
  - b. Achieving recognition
- Judges others by:  
Their ability to express themselves in words
- Influences others by:
  - a. Verbal praises
  - b. Doing favors for them

- Value within an organization:
  - a. Relieves tension, promotes people and organization projects
  - b. Demonstrates openness and acceptance
  
- Overuses:

Praise and compliments that might portray an exaggerated picture for others
  
- Under pressure:

Can become careless, sentimental and appear disorganized in getting things accomplished
  
- Fears:

A loss of recognition, which is often compensated for by an attempt to please everyone
  
- Would increase effectiveness with more:
  - a. Control of time
  - b. Objectivity
  - c. Sense of urgency to complete tasks
  - d. Emotional control when under stress

**Nine Principles that will be useful in creating healthy relationships with a high E:**

1. Recognize that they have a need to be leaders in groups and to express themselves verbally
2. Watch out for their tendency to test boundaries to their limits.
3. Realize that they have high level of confidence in themselves and others
4. Don't be surprised if they have difficulty following through on commitments
5. Seek to create a fun and friendly environment for them.
6. Allow them the opportunity to express their own thoughts and opinions
7. Create ideas to transfer talk to action
8. Recognize that they have a need for positive social recognition
9. Use confrontation only when necessary.

## **The perfectionist personality**

**The following are the features of one of the perfectionist profiles:**

### **1. Biblical characters who represent this pattern:**

Esther, John and Moses

### **2. Distinctive features:**

- Emotions:
  - a. Competent in doing things right
  - b. Restrained
  - c. Cautious in expressing feelings
- Goals:
  - a. Security
  - b. Minimizing high risk decisions
- Judges others by:

Precise standards
- Influences others by:
  - a. Meticulous planning and preparation
  - b. Attention to quality

- Value within an organization:
  - a. Conscientious approach
  - b. Maintains high standards
  - c. Quality-control thinking
  
- Overuses:
  - a. Standards operating procedures
  - b. Dependency on people and processes that have worked in the past
  
- Under pressure:
  - a. Becomes tactful
  - b. Diplomatic with others
  
- Fears:

Antagonistic response from others
  
- Would increase effectiveness with more:
  - a. Clarification of responsibilities
  - b. Independent initiative
  - c. Confidence in self

**Twelve Principles are important to remember in helping to create a positive environment for a high P**

1. They have a preference for intellectual pursuits
2. When requesting their participation in a project, be ready to give specific details.
3. They will usually exercise caution and restraint
4. They need assurance of support for their efforts
5. Be prepared to answer questions in a patient and persistent manner
6. Be willing to provide re-assurances that no surprises will occur
7. Support your plan with accurate data and specific information
8. Strongly reject any “poor me” statements that they may give
9. Disagree with the facts and not the person
10. Be willing to offer assistance if their fears persist.
11. Recognize that they are consciousness, maintain high standards and complete assignments given to them
12. Modify your expectations by understanding their greatest struggle.

## D. The Serving Personality

The following are the features of one of the serving profiles:

### 1. Biblical characters who represent this pattern:

Abraham and Hannah

### 2. Distinctive features:

- Emotions:
  - a. Accepts affection
  - b. Rejects aggression
  - c. Tends to suppress his own angry thoughts or actions
- Goals:

Acceptance of and by others
- Judges others by:
  - a. Their tolerance and how they include others
  - b. Loyalty
- Influences others by:

Offering understanding and friendship

- Value within an organization:
  - a. Supportive
  - b. Strives for harmony
  - c. Shows empathy
  - d. Service oriented
  
- Overuses:  
Kindness
  
- Under pressure:
  - a. Adopts a low profile
  - b. Tries to smooth waters
  - c. Can be persuasive by using information effectively
  
- Fears:  
Dissension in relationships
  
- Would increase effectiveness with more:
  - a. Confidence in who he is and what he can do
  - b. Being firm when necessary
  - c. Self-assertive
  - d. Would benefit from saying no when appropriate



**Nine Principles are important to keep in mind when dealing with a high S:**

1. They usually seek acceptance and try to maintain stability
2. They prefer environments that maintains the “status quo”, unless specific reasons are given for change
3. They seek to avoid conflict within relationships
4. They demonstrate loyalty and support for those they respect
5. They strive for security for their families
6. They need to be given time to adjust to an opportunity and to visualize requests made of them.
7. They need personal assurances of support
8. They seek out close personal friendships
9. They need the persons dealing with them to modify their expectations of them by understanding their greatest their struggles.

## EVALUATE SOME OF YOUR QUALITIES

- \_\_\_\_\_ I hate to admit my weaknesses, even if they seem obvious to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I get irritated when other people make mistakes
- \_\_\_\_\_ I tend to use words like ‘should’, ‘ought’, ‘must’, ‘can’t’ when I am talking to other people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I tend to do an important job myself because someone else might not do it right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I’m uncomfortable with ideas that are different.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I’m annoyed and upset more often than I’d like to be.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Once I have formulated an opinion, I tend not to change it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I stay away from people whose opinion is different from mine.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When I’m working on a project, I often become so focused that I get irritated when people interrupt me and I tend to snap at them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I get impatient when other people can’t understand what needs to be done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would rather let people have a false favorable impression of me than be open and vulnerable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When someone tells me about a personal problem, I feel I have to provide a solution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I use silence to punish those who disappoint or disagree with me.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Before starting a project, I dwell on it constantly to be sure I'll do it just right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When someone else is in a bad mood, it puts me in a foul mood too.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Critical thoughts come to my mind more often than I would like.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When someone confronts me about my opinions or beliefs, I immediately begin to formulate a rebuttal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a mental list of standards people should meet before I accept them
- \_\_\_\_\_ I sometimes resent having to do so much for my family.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm uncomfortable when others share very personal emotions with me.

## **SCORE**

Count the number of affirmative answers then, if:

- ◆ Less than 5 'YES':  
You are a very calm person **or** you need to revise your answers.
- ◆ From 5 to 8 'YES':  
You are a very normal person.
- ◆ More than 9 'YES':  
You are exposed to many psychological and neurological pressures and you tend to control others. This might bring you trouble with people around you.

# **MALE AND FEMALE ROLES LEADERSHIP AND SUBMISSION**

## **Male and Female Roles**

### **I. Traditional Family**

#### **1. Male**

- ◆ Head (leader), who is the real head?
- ◆ Provider
- ◆ Husband
- ◆ Father

#### **2. Female**

- ◆ Wife
- ◆ Housewife
- ◆ Mother

### **II. Industrialization and the Working Mother**

### **III.    Non-Traditional Family**

#### **1. Male**

- ◆ Leader
- ◆ Provider
- ◆ Husband
- ◆ Father
- ◆ House Work

#### **2. Female**

- ◆ Co-leader
- ◆ Provider and career woman
- ◆ Wife
- ◆ House Wife
- ◆ Mother

### **IV.    Types of Marriages**

#### **1. Intrinsic**

#### **2. Utilitarian**

## Leadership and Submission

### I. The brain and the heart

#### **(1 Co 11:3, 7, 11 & 12):**

3 *But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman [is] man, and the head of Christ [is] God.*

7 *...He is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.*

11 *Nevertheless, neither [is] man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.*

12 *For as woman [came] from man, even so man also [comes] through woman; but all things are from God.*

#### **(Eph 5:21-29)**

21 *submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

22 *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*

23 *For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

24 *Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in everything.*

25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*

26 *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

28 *So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own*

*bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.*

*29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord [does] the church.*

**(Col 3:18-19)**

*18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

*19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.*

**(1 Pe 3:1-4)**

*1 Wives, likewise, [be] submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,*

*2 when they observe your chaste conduct [accompanied] by fear.*

*3 Do not let your adornment be [merely] outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on [fine] apparel—*

*4 rather [let] [it] [be] the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible [beauty] of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*

## II. MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD

- ◆ Chauvinism and Feminism
- ◆ Androgynous women and weak men
- ◆ Perverted gender

### A. Manhood

- ◆ Is not:
  1. Cruelty and muscle power (e.g. wrestlers)
  2. Potency
  3. Controlling others
- ◆ Is:
  1. Self control
  2. Courage
  3. Chivalry
  4. Generosity
  5. Assertiveness
  6. Involvement (group or family)
  7. Authoritativeness
  8. Responsibility
  9. Leadership
  10. Consistency
  11. Decisiveness
  12. Stability - Not like a reed shaken by the wind



## **B. Womanhood**

◆ Is not:

1. Seduction
2. Fake weakness
3. Androgyny
4. Nagging
5. Harshness
6. Loudness

◆ Is:

1. Purity
2. Holiness
3. Wisdom
4. Modest beauty
5. Gentleness or meekness
6. Calmness or quietness
7. Compassion
8. Affectionate
9. Motherhood

## **III. Christian Leadership**

Not in authoritarianism (absolute dictator)

- 1. Authoritative (Understand, communicate & delegate)**
- 2. Patient (1 Co 13:4)**
- 3. Encourager (1 The 5:14)**
- 4. Wise and responsible (Eph 5:26-27, 30, 33)**
- 5. Provider (nourish and cherish) (Eph 5:29)**
- 6. Sensitive: brain and body**
- 7. Submissive: Humble**

**8. Sacrificing:**

*“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Eph 5:25)*

**9. Spiritual:**

*” that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” (Eph 5:26-27)*

**10. Servant:**

*“If I then, [your] Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.” (Jn 13:14)*

**IV. Submission**

1. To respect
2. Reverence
3. To Regards
4. Refers to
5. Defers to
6. To Esteem
7. To Fear
8. To Honor
9. Humble
10. To Praise
11. To Support (The bridge)
12. To Obey
13. To Venerate
14. To Submit
15. To Admire Exceedingly

**V. Decision Making in the Family**

## **DYNAMICS OF THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP**

### **I. The Refuge**

- ◆ Value of a Refuge
- ◆ Who can be a Refuge?
- ◆ When to ask for help
- ◆ How often you ask for help

### **II. Dynamics of the Marital Relationship**

#### **A. The Ultimate Unity**

1. Christ & Divine Grace
2. Spouses
3. Bonding
4. Attraction
5. Time & Effort
6. Unity (See attached intimacy checklist)

#### **B. Priorities**

#### **C. Hindrances**

1. Children
  - ◆ Contraception
  - ◆ Pregnancy
  - ◆ Abortion
  - ◆ How Many
  - ◆ Parenting & Utilitarian Marriage

◆ Marital Satisfaction Curve

2. Original Family

- ◆ Authority of the Parents
- ◆ Guidelines in Dealing with the original Family
  - The Emotional Umbilical Cord
  - Care: Honor Your Father and Mother
  - Visitation
  - Communication
  - Accommodation

3. Work

- ◆ A Dream
- ◆ Business
- ◆ Career
- ◆ Jobs:
  - Competition
  - Lay-Off
  - Pension
  - Retirement
- ◆ Time & Effort
- ◆ Interest

4. Hobbies

5. Extramarital Affair

6. Friends & Activities

7. Church & Service

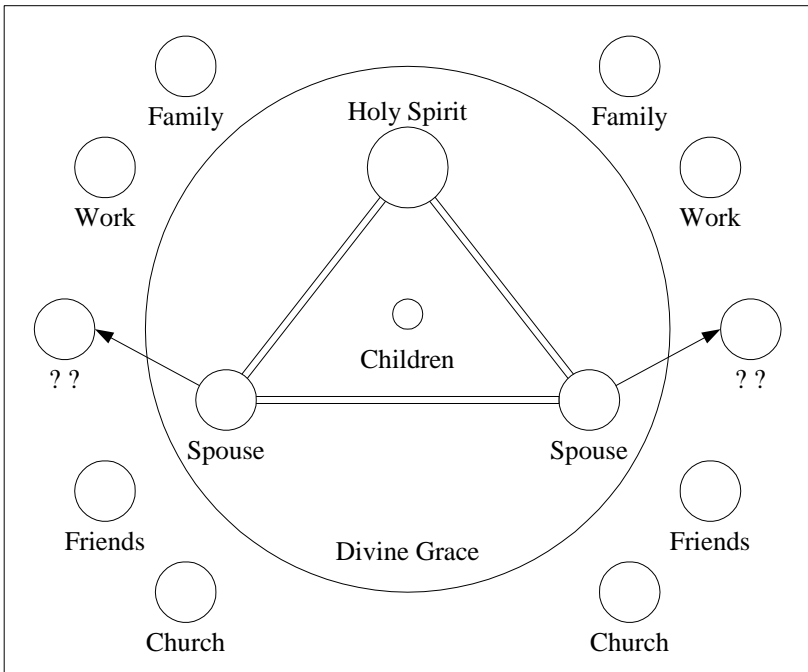


Figure 2: Dynamics of the Marital Relationship

### III. **Midlife Crisis**

- A. Men or Woman?
- B. Age Group
- C. The Crisis
- D. Factors
- E. Wives
- F. Prevention
- G. Therapy

## AN INTIMACY CHECKLIST

Take a minute to assess your beliefs about relationships.

Read each of the following statements and decide which are true and which are false:

1-If the other person really loves me, he/she will always know what I want or need to be happy.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

2-The best indicator of a good marriage is a good sex life

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

3-The level of satisfaction and intimacy automatically increases over the years of the relationship.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

4-It doesn't matter how I behave. The other person should show love for me simply because we are married to each other.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

5-If we are really close, we should be able to point out each other's errors and shortcomings without feeling threatened.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

6-My spouse either loves me or doesn't, if not, there is nothing I can do to make it any different.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

7-The more we can disclose – both good and bad information – to each other, the closer we become.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

8-Keeping the feeling of romantic love alive is necessary to fuel an intimate relationship.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

9-I have to feel love towards the other person before I can help the relationship become closer.

True \_\_\_\_\_

False \_\_\_\_\_

**Note**

The appropriate answer is false for all the previous nine statements

## **SETTING RULES FOR THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP**

### **I. FINANCIAL RULES**

#### **A. Money and divorce**

#### **B. Money and the Bible (2/3 of the parables deals with money)**

#### **C. Important principals in finances:**

1. OPM and definition of wealth according to the world and God.
2. Money does not make you a happy joyful marriage.
3. Spirituality and marital life are proportional to dealing with money.
4. God chooses the opposites for marriage.
5. God owns everything you have in your possession  
“you brought nothing when you came to the world and you will take nothing when you are going out of the world”
6. We are stewards or manager for His finances, and we manage His finances according to His plan.
7. There has to be a one book keeper who keeps balancing the checkbook and the budget and pays the bills. Most of the book keepers are the women.



8. Items of the budget must be discussed between the two spouses.
9. Before the marriage :
  - (a) The minimum is to learn how to manage God's finances in an excellent way.
  - (b) Set the goals, the objectives and the standards before the marriage and review it in a certain day every year.
10. God uses the money in certain ways:
  - (a) To test faithfulness
  - (b) To express His love
  - (c) To get the spouses closer to one another through communication
11. When the two spouses oppose one another: each one will write what is the best position, the worst position and what he/she could live with
12. If you want to buy something, get three quotes and wait for a month maybe another item will come as a priority and you will not buy the first one.
13. Most women when they go on a spending spree they usually buy clothes or food, but men buy cars, boats, electronics, computers or airplanes.

## 14. CREDIT AND CREDIT CARDS:

### The myth:

#### **1. you must have credit (i.e. you must borrow)**

Grand parents who lived in this country have never borrowed money but saved and bought with their savings

#### **2. Use the credit card wisely**

The reality is you can use it less foolishly because usually you will buy something which you will never buy it if you have to pay it in cash

#### **3. Interest payment is a tax break**

### **D. The budget**

#### **Purpose:**

- ◆ To get the 2 spouses closer together
- ◆ To trust God and obey Him
- ◆ To feel free and move freely within the boundaries of the budget (e.g. the fence between the kindergarten and the free way)

Pray about it together, plan it together and do it together

Planning and balancing the budget for one year must be done before the marriage.

The best way to get out of debt is to reverse the process, which means doing exactly the opposite of what you have done to get into debt

Commit yourselves and your finances to God, then stick to the plan (don't change or quit)

## **D. The budget (cont.)**

### **The twelve category envelopes per month**

- 1) Tithes
- 2) taxes

The spendable money is the difference between the gross income and items 1 and 2

- 3) 30% Home expenses (mortgage, insurance, taxes, utilities and maintenance, ...)
- 4) 15% Automobiles Expenses (payments, registration, insurance, gas and maintenance)
- 5) 16% Food
- 6) 5% Clothes for members of the family
- 7) 5% Insurance (life, health, etc...
- 8) 5% Medical expenses (dental, hospitals, medication, etc..
- 9) 7% Recreation (vacation, eating out etc...
- 10) 7% miscellaneous (perfumes, shampoo, etc..
- 11) 5% savings
- 12) 5% debts payment

Budget is better than “birds of the field system”

## **II. SPIRITUAL RULES**

- 1- Which church
- 2- Fathers of confession
- 3- Refuge, spiritual guide for marriage
- 4- Spiritual schedule

## **III. SOCIAL RULES**

- 1- In-laws
- 2- Relatives and friends
- 3- Vacations
- 4- Eating out and weekends

## **IV. EDUCATION, CAREER AND JOBS**

## **V. CHILDREN**

- 1- When
- 2- How many
- 3- How to raise them

## **VI. COMPANIONSHIP, MARITAL NEEDS AND INTIMACY**

## **COMPANIONSHIP, MARITAL NEEDS AND INTIMACY**

### **I. Companionship**

#### **1. Definition**

- ✓ Free choice
- ✓ Time together

#### **2. Features**

- 1) The choice
- 2) Leisure time
- 3) Unconditional love
- 4) Unconditional acceptance
- 5) Look for the jewels
- 6) Satisfy the needs
- 7) Ups and downs
- 8) Do not focus on changing your companion
- 9) Understand the language of your companion
- 10) Openness, no hidden agenda

3. Spending time together

- 1) Walk together
- 2) Date together
- 3) Weekend together
- 4) Conventions and marriage encounter
- 5) Bible and spiritual books
- 6) Prayer
- 7) Father of confession, Liturgy and Communion
- 8) Shopping
- 9) Recreation
- 10) House cleaning and chores
- 11) Visiting friends and family
- 12) Planning for the family
- 13) Discuss together parenting styles
- 14) Discuss finances and budget together
- 15) Others

## **II.      Marital Needs**

1. Spiritual needs
2. Admiration and respect
3. Love, affection and compassion
4. Conversation and communication
5. Companionship, recreational partner and domestic support
6. Loyalty, fidelity and family commitment
7. Financial support
8. Honesty and openness
9. Forgiveness
10. Sexual fulfillment

### III.     **Intimacy**

#### 1. Definition

- ❖ Holy Spirit and the mystery of marital unity
- ❖ A perpetual process of interweaving of two souls, two minds, two hearts and two bodies into one.
- ❖ Components of marital intimacy

#### 2. Prescription of St-John Chrysostom

- ❖ Repentance: Find your own shortcomings and mistakes
- ❖ Mirror: Admit to your partner and commit yourself
- ❖ Satisfy your commitments to your spouse

#### 3. A plan for rekindling the marital intimacy (SEATS)

- ❖ Spiritual Intimacy
- ❖ Edification and intellectual intimacy
  - Bank of respect
  - Positive communication
  - Credit and debits
- ❖ Affection and emotional intimacy
  - Bank of emotion
  - Love language
  - An ideal day
  - Tips
- ❖ Tenderness, time and non-sexual touch
- ❖ Sexual intimacy



# SPIRITUALITY AND SEXUALITY IN COPTIC ORTHODOX MARRIAGE

## I. Plan of God

### 1. (Genesis 1:26-28)

26. *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.*

27. *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

28. *Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

### 2. Holy of holies - St-John Chrysostom:

Holy; thoroughly pure; sanctified; mystical; totally acceptable to God

### 3. (1 Corinthians 7:3-5)

3 *Let the husband render to his wife the affection due to her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.*

4. *The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body but the wife does.*

5. *Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayers; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self control.*

## II. **Goals of God**

### A. Unity

- ◆ St John Chrysostom
- ◆ Diffusion of bodies
- ◆ Therapy for conflicts

### B. Procreation

### C. Enjoyment

## III. **Sexual Relationship**

### A. Time

### B. Love: Five kinds of love

### C. Understanding

### D. Ultimate goal

## IV. **Hindrances**

### **Plan of Satan**

1. Media, pornography, internet, friends, videotapes, books etc.
2. Sexuality vs. sexualization of life.
3. Relation vs. Genitalia
4. The myth of frequency, positions, duration, and quality of enjoyment, etc.
5. The myth of organs
6. Male or female fears and anxiety
7. Male or female inhibited sexual desire disorder

## **V. Sources of strength**

- 1- Prayer
- 2- Communication
- 3- Please ask for help
- 4- Suitable time and places
- 5- Progress in the treatment of impotence
- 6- Counseling for frigidity
- 7- God's plan for love making

## ANGER AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

### **(Matt 5:21-26)**

*"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'*

*22 "But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. 23*

*"Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24*

*"leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 5*

*"Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the*

*officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 "Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last*

*penny.*

### **(Eph 4: 26-27 & 31-32)**

*"26 Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil."*

*"31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one*

*another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you."*

# ANGER

## I. **Reasons for Anger:**

1. Threats for safety and security
2. Abuse and violence
3. Humiliation
4. Sarcasm, intimidation and provocation
5. Violation of rights
6. Violation of principles and values
7. Deprivation of needs
8. Long term unresolved conflicts:

*Separation, divorce, breaking relationship, sin, and grieving the loss*

9. Psycho Emotional:

*PMS, bipolar, explosive and antisocial personality disorder, substance abuse*

10. Organic:

*Thyroid and adrenal dysfunction, cerebral arthrosclerosis, brain tumor*

## II. Expression of Anger And Types

1. Denial because of guilt, shame, and fear
2. Explosion:           YOU PAY
3. Repression:         I PAY
4. Suppression:       SOMEONE WILL PAY
5. Forgiveness:        GOD HAS PAYED
6. Assertive controlled expression
7. Patience and calmness, easily drop it
8. Anger at others because of present or past events
9. Anger at self
10. Anger at God

## III. Treatment of Anger → ABCDEFG

Admit, Brainstorm, Control, Direct, Experts, Forgiveness and Guidance

1. Admit That you have an anger problem
2. Brainstorm:  
Analyze and think about your anger, when, where, with whom and how it shows on your body
3. Control:  
S\_\_\_\_\_R period, factors and exercises

4. Direct:

Talk it out

5. Experts:

Counseling therapy, anger management and medication

6. Forgiveness

7. Guidance:

Spiritual guidance and follow-up

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (D.V.)

I - Types

II- Reasons

III- Abuse Cycle

IV- Effects on children

V- Culture and Religion

VI- Prevention and Treatment

### **I- Types:**

1. Financial control
2. Physical violence
3. Psycho emotional violence
4. Sexual violence
5. Neglect

**II- Reasons for D.V.:**

1. Disrespect for the presence and headship of Christ
2. Disrespect of the authority of the Word of God
3. Quenching of the Holy Spirit in holy matrimony
4. Long term unresolved marital and family conflicts
5. Financial conflicts and unemployment
6. Domestic violence in the original and extended family
7. Suppressed anger because of past events
8. Addiction to alcohol, narcotic, and/or gambling
9. Personality disorders (P.D.) : antisocial, sadistic and explosive
10. Psychiatric disorders: Manic Depression and Schizophrenia

**III- Abuse Cycle: 3 phases**

1. Increasing tension and stress
2. Explosion and violence
3. The honeymoon

Feeling of regret & shame, repentance & promises & request for forgiveness, reconciliation

Result: Increasing stress and repetition of the same cycle



#### **IV- Effects on children:**

1. Insecurity
2. Acceptable approach to win and gain grounds
3. An obstacle for communication
4. A learn approach to resolve marital problems
5. Aggression, violence and disobedience at school and home
6. Psychosomatic symptoms: Headaches, Nocturnal Enuresis, etc...
7. Rebellion, resistance to authorities and rules, tendency and attraction to join bad crowd like gang groups
8. Depression, self inflicted injury and mutilation, suicide, hurting others including pets, plants
9. Personality disorders: Borderline, dependent, passive, aggressive, antisocial, sadistic and explosive
10. Psychiatric disorders: Clinical picture of the disorders start at earlier age in violence hostile environment.

## V- Culture & Religion:

1. Leadership and submission
2. Prevention of victims from asking for help and assistance
3. Doubting the value and confidentiality of confession and spiritual guidance
4. Islamic culture trends supremacy of men and hostility towards women
5. Irresponsible guidance and counseling which leads to justification of violence, feeling of guilt and shame, fear of punishment and rejection of God.

## VI- Prevention & Treatment:

1. Spiritual
2. Proper Understanding of Scripture

### **(Eph 5:22)**

*“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”*

### **(Col 3:18)**

*“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”*

**(Eph 5:25)**

*“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her”*

3. Respect and accountability to God, Scripture and Father of Confession
4. Marriage and family therapy to resolve conflicts and avoid violence
5. Anger management, respect and fear of law.
6. Treatment of psychiatric and personality disorders if any.

# **BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

## **[LISTENING - SELF DISCLOSURE - EXPRESSION]**

### **I- LISTENING**

#### **TRUE LISTENING**

Listening with the intention to do each or all of the following:

1. To understand.
2. To enjoy.
3. To learn.
4. To help.

#### **PSEUDO-LISTENING**

The intention is not to listen but to meet some of the following needs:

1. Making people think you are interested so they will like you.
2. Being alert to see if you are in danger of getting rejected.
3. Selective listening.
4. Buying time to prepare your next comment.
5. Half- listening so someone will listen to you.
6. Listening to find someone's vulnerabilities or to take advantage.
7. Searching for the weak points in an argument so you can always be right.
8. Check to see how people are reacting, making sure you produce the desired effect.
9. Half- listening because a good kind, or nice person would
10. Half- listening because you do not know how to get away without hurting or offending someone.

## BLOCKS TO LISTENING

1. Comparing
2. Mind reading
3. Rehearsing
4. Filtering
5. Judging
6. Dreaming
7. Identifying
8. Advising
9. Sparring
10. Being right
11. Derailing
12. Placating
13. Avoiding
14. Pretending to listen while involved with something else,  
like TV, computer, newspaper, etc...

## EFFECTIVE LISTENING

1. Active listening
  - a- Paraphrasing
  - b- Clarifying
  - c- Feedback
2. Listening with empathy

Ask yourself these questions regarding the other person:

  - a- What is the reason for his / her anger, etc...?
  - b- What danger is this person experiencing?
  - c- What is he or she asking for?
3. listening with openness
  - a- Do not prejudge
  - b- Respect abilities and limitations
  - c- Be patient
4. Listening with awareness
  - a- Compare what is being said to your own knowledge of history , people and the way things are
  - b- Observe congruence

## TOTAL LISTENING

1. Maintain good eye contact.
2. Lean slightly forward.
3. Reinforce the speaker by nodding or paraphrasing.
4. Clarify by asking questions.
5. Actively move away from distractions.
6. Be committed, even if you are angry or upset, to understanding what was said.

## LISTENING FOR COUPLES

When you are the speaker:

1. Explain your point of view briefly and clearly.
2. Avoid blaming and name calling. Do not accuse, and do not focus on your partner's failings.
3. Talk in terms of yourself and your experience. Focus on what you want and what you feel.

When you are the listener:

1. Give your full attention so that you can really understand your partner's feelings, opinions and needs.
2. Do not disagree, argue, or correct anything your partner says.
3. You can ask questions to clarify an issue but not to debate and make counterpoints.

## II - SELF-DISCLOSURE

### 1. **Open self**

Known to self and unknown to others

### 2. **Blind Self**

Unknown to self and known to others

### 3. **Hidden Self**

Unknown to self and unknown to others

### 4. **Unknown Self**

Unknown to self and unknown to others

## BLOCKS TO SELF DISCLOSURE

- 1- Fear of rejection
- 2- Fear of punishment
- 3- Fear of being talked about behind your back
- 4- Fear of being taken advantage of
- 5- Fear of being laughed at
- 6- Fear of being left alone
- 7- Fear of being labeled as a bad person
- 8- Fear of being accused of bragging
- 9- Fear of knowing yourself

## REWARDS OF SELF DISCLOSURE

- 1- Increased self- knowledge
- 2- Closer intimate relationships
- 3- Improved communication
- 4- Lighter guilt feelings
- 5- Increased awareness of surroundings

## OPTIMAL LEVELS OF SELF DISCLOSURE

### **1-Open Self**

- a- Too large: garrulous, inappropriate blabbermouth
- b- Too small: closed, secretive



## **2-Blind Self**

- a- Too large: oblivious to how you appear in the world
- b- Too small: overanalyzed self-awareness addict

## **3-Hidden Self**

- a- Too large: withdrawn, out of reach
- b- Too small: untrustworthy

## **III- EXPRESSION**

### **TYPES OF EXPRESSION**

1. Observations
2. Thoughts
3. Feelings
4. Needs

### **TYPES OF MESSAGES**

1. Whole messages
2. Partial messages
3. Contaminated messages

### **PREPARING A MESSAGE**

1. Self-awareness
2. Other awareness
3. Place awareness

## EFFECTIVE EXPRESSION

1. Open and direct
2. Immediate
3. Clear
  - a- Statement, not a question
  - b- Congruent
  - c- No double messages
  - d- Clear wants and feelings
  - e- No mixing of observations and thoughts
  - f- One topic at a time
4. Straight
5. Supportive

Do not use the following tactics:

- a- Labels
- b- Sarcasm
- c- Dragging up the past
- d- Negative comparisons
- e- Judgmental “you messages”
- f- Threats

## ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

### BODY MOVEMENTS

1. Facial expression
2. Gestures
  - a- Arms and hands
  - b- Legs and feet
3. Posture and breathing

### SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Intimate distance ( 0-18")
2. Personal distance (1.5' - 4')
3. Social distance (4' - 12')
4. Public distance(12'-20')

## PARALANGUAGE AD METAMESSAGES

### ELEMENTS OF PARALANGUAGE

1. *Pitch*: high, low
2. *Resonance*: heavy vocal cords – deep, full voice; thin vocal cords – thin, high voice
3. *Articulation*: slurred to clear, decisive pronunciation
4. *Tempo*: fast, slow
5. *Volume*: loud, soft
6. *Rhythm*: emphasis

### METAMESSAGES

Communicates the attitudes and feelings of the speaker

1. *Rhythm*: emphasis on a word to make a metamessage
2. *Pitch*

3. *Verbal modifiers*: like certainly, only, merely, sure, just, etc...

### COPING WITH METAMESSAGES

1. Repeat the message over in your mind, listening to rhythm and pitch, noticing any verbal modifiers
2. Say what you think the metamessage is out loud, and ask if that is what the person really thinks or feels.

## TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS

### PARENT, CHILD AND ADULT MESSAGES

1. *Parent*: punitive or supportive
2. *Child*: irresponsible, curious, crying, complaining, victim
3. *Adult*: responsible, independent, decision-maker, mature, direct, aware

### KEEPING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS CLEAN

1. Know the ego state from which you are communicating
2. Know the ego state to which you are sending your message
3. Be sensitive to the *child* in others, protect that *child* and recognize the “not- okay” burden that it must carry
4. Protect your own *child*. Keep it safely tucked away when others are angry or attacking
5. Do not use the *punitive parent* to communicate. No one wants to hear it, and people are likely to react by trying to hook your *child* with “not- okay” attacks.  
When appropriate, use your *supportive parent*, or rely on your *adult*.
6. Solve problems and conflicts with your *adult* only. Listen to your *parent* and to your *child*, but communicate using your *adult* when resolving issues
7. Give your *adult* time to process data. It’s important to sort out what really needs to be said from the impulsive statements your *parent* and *child* may demand that you make

## ASSERTIVENESS

### THREE STYLES OF COMMUNICATION

1. Passive style
2. Aggressive style
3. Assertive style

### ASSERTIVE LISTENING

1. Prepare
2. Listen
3. Acknowledge

### ASSERTIVE EXPRESSION

1. Your perspective of the situation
2. Your feelings about the situation
3. Your wants regarding the situation

### ASSERTIVE RESPONSE TO CRITICISM

1. Acknowledgement
2. Clouding
3. Probing

## COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICTS (FAIR FIGHTING)

### UNFAIR FIGHTING

1. Conflict is awful
2. My needs are more valid than yours
3. Only one can win

### UNFAIR FIGHTING STYLES

1. Bad timing
2. Blaming
3. Too many issues
4. Covering other feelings with anger
5. Impossible demands
6. Threats and ultimatums
7. Escalation

### FAIR FIGHTING

1. Conflict is inevitable
2. Our needs are equally valid
3. We both can win (win/win)

### FAIR FIGHT RULES

1. Set a time and place
2. Pray
3. Christ in the setting
4. State the problem
5. Stick to one issue
6. Express the full range of feelings
7. Propose change
8. Describe consequences
9. Prevent escalation
10. End in agreement, counter proposal or postponement

## COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN

### LISTENING

Blocks (as mentioned before)

Special blocks (power struggle)

1. Ordering
2. Threatening
3. Moralizing
4. Lecturing
5. Ineffective praising
6. Pitying
7. Shaming
8. Interrogating
9. Denying

### EXPRESSING

1. Specificity
2. Immediacy
3. Nonjudgmental
4. Consistency
5. Disclosure and 'I' messages

### JOINT PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Identify and define the conflict
2. Generate possible solutions
3. Evaluate solutions
4. Pick the best solution
5. Implement the decision
6. Evaluate results

### WHEN TO LET GO

### WHEN YOU HAVE TO SAY NO

1. Give a choice
2. Substitute yes for no
3. Give information
4. Accept feelings
5. Explain the problem

## FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS

### FAMILY PATHOLOGY

1. Mind reading
2. Alliances
3. Covert manipulation strategies
  - a- Blaming and judging
  - b- Pulling for guilt
  - c- Pulling for pity
  - d- Blackmail
  - e- Bribery
  - f- Placating
  - g- Turning cold
  - h- Developing symptoms



# COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH LAW AND REGULATIONS FOR FAMILY AFFAIRES

## [Engagement, Marriage, Divorce and Annulment]

### **(1 Timothy 1:5-10)**

*5 "Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, [from] a good conscience, and [from] sincere faith, 6 from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, 7 desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm. 8 But we know that the law [is] good if one uses it lawfully, 9 knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for [the] lawless and insubordinate, for [the] ungodly and for sinners, for [the] unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,..."*

## I. **Engagement**

Mutual arrangement for marriage between a man and a woman for a limited time:

1. Minimum age and guardians
2. Duration
3. Factors which prohibit marriage and engagement and declaration forms
4. Certificate signed by the engaged, priest, guardians and witnesses
5. Financial agreement, dowry and bands
6. Expected time of marriage
7. Announcement of the engagement in the bulletin of the two churches and diocese for one month
8. Termination of engagement: dowry, gifts etc...

## II. **Marriage**

1. continues sacred holy and religious bound or unity which takes place in public as in the engagement between one man and one woman
2. rites of the mystery is performed by a canonized priest authorized by the church in a public ceremony
3. a life long commitment unless it is dissolved or terminated
4. freewill agreement and consent

5. legal age

6. factors that prohibit marriage:

- brother or sister and their offspring (nephew or niece)
- Uncles and Aunts to the father and mother but not their offspring
- Step father, step mother, wife's sisters and husband's brothers
- Wife's mother or grand mother, husband's father and grand father
- Someone who is married(polygamy)
- Someone who was divorced by the church because of adultery
- Certain physical diseases which prohibit marriage
- Some psychiatric disorders which prohibit marriage

7. Marriage certificate:

- Civil or court marriage and marriage license
- Church marriage signed by the 2 spouses, the priest and at least 2 witnesses in front of the congregation attending the ceremony

### III. **Divorce or Dissolution of Marriage**

1. Church marriage:

Death of a spouse

The following are regarded as spiritual death:

1. Adultery: a life style of a repeated full extra marital relationships without repentance
2. Sodomy and perversion in marriage
3. Change of religion
4. Denial of Christ and conversion to another religion

2. Civil divorce in the court, no cause for divorce

**Note:**

Church certificate of remarriage is issued pending the civil divorce. Remarriage is allowed after at least 10 month from physical separation or death of the first spouse.

### IV. **Annulment:**

1. Someone who was pressured to marry against his or her own free will he /she has to inform the church within the first month of marriage.
2. Marriage without the prayers of Coptic orthodox mystery of matrimony or performed by a priest who is not canonized and authorized by the Coptic Orthodox Church.
3. Under age unless the wife is pregnant or one month from legal age.

4. All the blood relatives mentioned in the factors that prohibit marriage.
5. Marriage from someone who still has a valid marriage.
6. Marriage of a Coptic orthodox to someone from another religion.
7. Marriage from someone who is prohibited by the Coptic orthodox church to remarry

***The following are regarded as intentional deceit:***

8. Someone who did not intentionally disclose a psychiatric disorder which was diagnosed before the marriage and it could affect the marital life.
9. Someone who intentionally did not disclose a physical disease which was diagnosed before marriage and could affect marital life.  
(ex. Certain neurological diseases, physical impairment, and endocrine disorders as undescended testicles, absent ovaries, tubes, uterus and cycle, diabetes and other diseases )
10. Inability to perform sexually (ex. impotence or deformed external genital organs).
11. Male or female inhibited sexual desire disorders which was not disclosed before marriage.

12. Intentional deprivation of one spouse from sexual relationship by a spouse who is capable and intentionally avoids sexual encounters.
13. Homosexuality or perversion which was not disclosed before marriage.
14. Fraud, facts or situations or motives or conditions which were intentionally not disclosed to the other spouse who would certainly disagree to marry if these facts were known to him or her.

## **PERSONALITY AND PSYCHO- EMOTIONAL DISORDERS IN MARRIAGE**

### **FIRST: PERSONALITY DISORDERS**

- 1- Paranoid P.D.
- 2- Anti-Social P.D.
- 3- Border-line P.D
- 4- Histrionic P.D.
- 5- Narcissistic P.D.
- 6- Avoidant P.D.
- 7- Dependant P.D.
- 8- Obsessive Compulsive P.D
- 9- Passive Aggressive P.D
- 10- P.M.S Personality Disruption
- 11- Sadistic P.D.
- 12- Self-Defeating P.D
- 13- Multiple Personality Disorder
- 14- Gender Identity Disorder

## **SECOND: PSYCHO-EMOTIONAL DISORDERS**

### **Why understanding Psycho-emotional Disorders is Important?**

- 1- Understanding and suffering
- 2- Annulment of Marriage
- 3- Genetic Inheritance

### **Some of the most common Psycho-emotional Disorders in adults:**

- 1- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- 2- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- 3- Depression
- 4- Manic-Depression Disorder (Bipolar illness)
- 5- Schizophrenia (thought disorder)
- 6- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

#### **Note:**

#3 and #4 are mood disorders



**I. Diagnostic Criteria for Generalized Anxiety Disorder**

- A.** Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive expectation), occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a number of events or activities (such as work or school performance)
- B.** The person finds it difficult to control the worry.
- C.** The anxiety and worry are associated with three (or more) of the following six symptoms (with at least some symptoms present for more days than not for the past six months)
  - ❖ Restlessness or feeling keyed up or on the edge.
  - ❖ Being easily fatigued
  - ❖ Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank
  - ❖ Irritability
  - ❖ Muscle tension
  - ❖ Sleep disturbance (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless unsatisfying sleep)
- D.** The anxiety or worry is not about having a Panic Attack (as in Panic Disorder), being embarrassed in public (as in Social Phobia), being contaminated (as in Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder), being away from home or close relatives (as in Separation Anxiety), gaining weight (as in anorexia Nervosa), having multiple physical complaints (as in Somatization Disorder), or having a serious illness (as in Hypochondriasis), and the anxiety and worry do not occur exclusively during Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.

- E. The anxiety, worry, or physical symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- F. The disturbance is not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism)

## II. **Diagnostic Criteria for Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**

- A. Either obsessions or compulsions:

### **Obsessions as defined by (1), (2), (3), and (4):**

- 1- Recurrent and persistent thoughts, impulses, or images that are experienced, at some time during the disturbance, as intrusive and inappropriate, and that cause marked anxiety or distress.
- 2- The thoughts, impulses, or images are not simply excessive worries about real life problems
- 3- The person attempts to ignore or suppress such thoughts, impulses, or image, or to neutralize them with some other thought or action.
- 4- The person recognizes that the obsessional thoughts, impulses, or images are a product of his or her own mind (not imposed from without as in thought insertion in schizophrenia)

**Compulsion as defined by (1) and (2):**

- 1- Repetitive behavior (e.g. hand washing, ordering, checking) or mental acts (e.g. praying, counting, repeating words silently) that the person feels driven to perform in response to an obsession, or according to rules that must be applied rigidly.
  - 2- The behaviors or mental acts are aimed at preventing or reducing distress or preventing some dreaded event or situation; however, these behaviors or mental acts either are not connected in a realistic way with that they are designed to neutralize or prevent or are clearly excessive.
- B.** At some point during the course of the disorder, the person has recognized that the obsessions or compulsions are excessive or unreasonable.
- C.** The obsessions or compulsions caused marked distress, are time consuming (take more than one hour a day), or significantly interfere with the person's normal routine, occupational, academic functioning, or usual social activities or relationships.
- D.** The disturbance is not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g. a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition.

### III. **Criteria for Major Depression Episode**

**A.** Five (or more) of the following symptoms have been present during the same 2 week period and represent a change from previous functioning; at least one of the symptoms is either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.

1. Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g. feels sad or empty) or observation made by others (e.g. appears tearful).
2. Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day (as indicated by either subjective account or observation made by others)
3. Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (e.g. a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month), or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day.
4. Insomnia or Hypersomnia nearly every day
5. Psychomotor agitation or retardation nearly every day (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings of restlessness or being slowed down)
6. Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day

7. Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick)
  8. Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day (either by subjective account or as observed by others)
  9. Recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide
- B.** The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- C.** The disturbance is not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g. a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition (e.g. Hyperthyroidism).

#### IV. **Diagnostic Criteria for Manic Episode**

- A. A distinct period of abnormally and persistently elevated, expansive, or irritable mood, lasting at least one week (or any duration if hospitalization is necessary).
- B. During the period of mood disturbance, three (or more) of the following symptoms have persisted and have been present to a significant degree:
  - 1. Inflated self-esteem or grandiosity.
  - 2. Decreased need for sleep (e.g. feels rested after only 3 hours of sleep).
  - 3. More talkative than usual or pressure to keep talking.
  - 4. Flight of ideas or subjective experience that thoughts are racing.
  - 5. Distractibility (i.e. attention too easily drawn to unimportant or irrelevant external stimuli).
  - 6. Increase in goal-directed activity (either socially, at work or school, or sexually) or psychomotor agitation.
  - 7. Excessive involvement in pleasurable activities that have a high potential for painful consequences (e.g. engaging unrestrained buying sprees, sexual indiscretions, or foolish business investments)

- C. The mood disturbance is sufficiently severe to cause marked impairment in occupational functioning or usual social activities or relationships with others, or to necessitate hospitalization to prevent harm to self or others, or there are psychotic features.
- D. The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g. a drug of abuse, a medication, or other treatment) or a general medical condition (e.g. Hyperthyroidism)

## V. **Diagnostic Criteria for Schizophrenia**

- A. **Characteristic symptoms:** Two (or more) of the following, each present for a significant portion of time during a one month period (or less if successfully treated):
  - 1. Delusions
  - 2. Hallucinations
  - 3. Disorganized speech (e.g. frequent derailment or incoherence)
  - 4. Grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior
  - 5. Negative symptoms, (i.e. Affective Flattening (reduced expression and body language), Alogia (Poverty of Speech or the inability to speak because of mental deficiency, mental confusion) , or Avolition (Lack of Initiative, desire, motivation, and persistence).

**B. Social/Occupational Dysfunction:**

For a significant portion of the time since the onset of the disturbance, one or more major areas of functioning such as work, interpersonal relations, or self-care are marked below the level achieved prior to the onset (or when the onset is in childhood or adolescence, failure to achieve expected level of interpersonal, academic, or occupational achievement).

**C. Duration:**

Continuous signs of the disturbance persist for at least six month. This six month period must include at least one month of symptoms (or less if successfully treated) that meet Criterion A (i.e. active –phase symptoms) and may include periods of prodromal or residual symptoms. During these prodromal or residual periods, the signs of the disturbance may be manifested by only negative symptoms or two or more symptoms listed in Criterion A present in an attenuated form (e.g. odd beliefs, unusual perceptual experiences)

**D. Substance/General Medical Condition Exclusion:**

The disturbance is not due to the direct physiological affects of a substance (e.g. a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition.



VI. **Diagnostic Criteria for attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

A. Either (1) or (2):

1. Six (or more) of the following symptoms of inattention have persisted for at least six months to a degree that it is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level:

**Inattention**

- a. Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities.
  - b. Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities
  - c. Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
  - d. Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions)
  - e. Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities
  - f. Often avoids, dislikes or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework)
  - g. Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g. toys, school assignments, pencils, books, tools)
  - h. Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli
  - i. Is often forgetful in daily activities
2. Six (or more) of the following symptoms of Hyperactivity-Impulsivity have persisted for at least six months to a degree that is maladaptive or inconvenient with developmental level.

### **Hyperactivity**

- a. Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
- b. Often leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected
- c. Often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feeling of restlessness)
- d. Often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly
- e. Is often “on the go” or often acts as if “driven by a motor”
- f. Often talks excessively

### **Impulsivity**

- g. Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed
- h. Often has difficulty awaiting turn
- i. Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g. butts into conversations or games)

- B.** Some hyperactive-impulsive or inattentive symptoms that caused impairment were present before the age of 7 years.
- C.** Some impairment from the symptoms is present in two or more sittings (e.g. at school [or work] and at home)
- D.** There must be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning.

## **How to use the Program**

- 1- Read the notes of each presentation
- 2- Listen to the presentation in the provided CD and take personal notes.
- 3- After listening to the presentation, answer and discuss with your partner the questions listed below
- 4- Discuss and take advice from your father of confession/ counselor after each presentation

### **1- Mystery of Love**

- 1- How is Christian marriage different from civil marriage?
- 2- How to make your marriage Christian?
- 3- Are you ready to leave?
- 4- Are you ready to cleave?
- 5- What is oneness?

### **2- The Conscience and Mixed Marriages**

- 1- “My son give me your heart” what is the heart?
- 2- Which component is the leader of your life?
- 3- Would you like to improve your conscience?
- 4- Is there a need to work on your sub-conscious?
- 5- What do you think of mixed marriages?

### **3- Choosing a Life Partner**

- 1- Why do you want to marry?
- 2- How about staying single?
- 3- Why do you want to marry this particular person?
- 4- What are your priorities of *the criteria*?
- 5- Could you live without him/her? Is he/she the real gift of God to you?

#### **4 - Dealing with the Past**

- 1- Did you empty your old baggage?
- 2- Do you think that you need a private session with your father of confession/counselor?
- 3- Are you hypersensitive towards the behavior of others, do you fear rejection?
- 4- Do you fear failure of your marriage?
- 5- Did you prepare yourself for separation or divorce?

#### **5- Personality Compatibility**

- 1- Are you primarily Dominant/ Influencing/ Perfectionist/ Serving, did you start working on yourself?
- 2- Do you regard yourself compatible with the personality of your partner?
- 3- Who is your *Biblical model*?
- 4- If you think that you or your partner had a *personality disorder*, please refer to presentation number 15.
- 5- Do you find it difficult or impossible to change your personality?

#### **6- Leadership and Submission**

- 1- Are you a traditional Christian spouse?
- 2- What do you like your marriage to be, *intrinsic* or *utilitarian*?
- 3- Do you have the *Christian criteria* to lead?
- 4- What do you think about submission as it is in Ephesians 5:24?
- 5- Who will be the decision maker in major and minor issues, and how to make yourself ready for a win/win result in every decision?

## **7- Dynamics of the Marital Relationship**

- 1- Are you attracted more towards your spouse or towards the Lord Jesus Christ?
- 2- Do you feel very attracted towards one of the minor five circles outside the 'triunal' relationship?
- 3- What is making it difficult for you to leave in order to cleave?
- 4- Is there a happy medium between "*leave your father and mother*" and "*honor your father and mother*"?
- 5- How to improve the relationship with your in laws?

## **8- Setting Rules for the Marital Relationship**

- 1- Do you have already rules for the different aspects of your marital life? Did you discuss it with your partner?
- 2- Did you work on having a budget?
- 3- Do you have a clear plan to pay off your debts?
- 4- Are you compatible with your spouse in spending/ saving?
- 5- Who will be in charge of the budget, and who will be responsible for managing the area of each 'envelop'?

## **9- Companionship, Marital Needs and Intimacy**

- 1- Do you find in your partner the qualities of a friend and companion? Please discuss with your partner
- 2- If you are married, did you discover the marital needs of your spouse?
- 3- Are you committed to give, forgive and satisfy the needs of your spouse before your own? Please make a covenant with your partner.
- 4- Please discuss with your partner the items mentioned in the intimacy check list.
- 5- Do you believe that marital love and the relationship could be 'rekindled', please discuss with your partner.

## 10- Spirituality and Sexuality

- 1- The two partners are advised to have a covenant and commitment to God in the presence of a father of confession to keep their marital relationship and their home holy and pure.
- 2- Discuss with your partner the sequence of verses 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 and how it relates to your marital life.
- 3- Discuss the vitality of this statement “*God meant the relationship to be enjoyable*”
- 4- Do you have any fear of intimacy? Please discuss with your father of confession/counselor and your partner.
- 5- How do you deal with the myth, misunderstanding, fears and anxiety associated with sexuality during the honeymoon and the marriage?

## 11- Anger and Domestic Violence

- 1- Do you have a short temper or anger problem, please discuss with your partner.
- 2- Are you familiar with *anger management*? Please research it.
- 3- Do you regard yourself a victim of any kind of abuse, please discuss with your partner and/or your father of confession.
- 4- Are you exposed daily to stress? How far you are able to deal with it? Please discuss with your partner.
- 5- Do you like violent sports? Do you like violent or romantic movies, please discuss with your partner.

## 12/13 Communication Skills

- 1- Do you feel stressed during or after communication with your spouse? Please discuss.
- 2- You have any problem in listening and understanding the message of your partner? Please discuss.
- 3- Did you try to use paraphrasing and how far it is helpful in your communication?
- 4- Are you an assertive communicator? And how far you are able to use the non verbal skills?
- 5- What is your style of communication during stress or conflict? Please discuss with your partner.

## **14- Laws of the Church**

- 1- How strict is the laws of the church? Please discuss with your partner.
- 2- Are you committed to the laws of the church? Please discuss.
- 3- Do you think that the church should regulate pre-marital counseling and medical checkup as a prerequisite for wedding?
- 4- What do you think about the reasoning of the church for *divorce*?
- 5- What do you think about the reasoning of the church for *annulment*?

## **15- Personality and Psycho-Emotional Disorders**

- 1- Do you think that you or your partner has signs of ADD or any learning disability?
- 2- If you have in your family any history of psycho-emotional or personality disorder, please discuss with your father of confession.
- 3- Will you be able to deal with any of these disorders if it will develop in the future?
- 4- What is the difference between situational and pathological anxiety/depression? Please discuss with your partner.
- 5- If you or your fiancé is diagnosed by a medical doctor to have any of these disorders, would you change your decision of marriage?

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TO ORDER

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