

Additional Resources For Your Marriage

The materials listed below are often used in premarital and marital counseling. Couples should feel free to use these materials, as needed, to enhance their relationship. In addition, several helpful and easy-to-use personality and relationship inventories are listed below that may be helpful. All of the books and inventories listed below can be obtained by contacting ACCFS at 309-263-5536 or office@accounseling.org.

I. BOOKS (BY TOPIC).

A. Affection and love languages.

Chapman, Gary. *The Five Love Languages*. Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 1995.

Comments: This book is very helpful in teaching couples how to best communicate and express love to each other. The author describes five primary “love languages” and shows how people tend to both give and receive love in different ways. This book is easily readable and is quite practical.

Thomas, Gary. *Cherish: The One Word That Changes Everything for Your Marriage*, 2017.

Comments: This book teaches couples how to enrich their relationship through emotional intimacy. The author includes personal stories, real words examples, and scripture to emphasize his points.

B. Communication and conflict resolution.

Stanley, Scott, Trathen, Daniel, McCain, Savanna, and Bryan, Milt. *A Lasting Promise: A Christian Guide to Fighting for Your Marriage, New and Revised Edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2014.

Comments: This book teaches communication and conflict resolution skills. It helps couples identify types of destructive conflict and teaches how to use the “speaker-listener technique” to deal with areas of misunderstanding. This book can be helpful to teach skills to young couples just starting their relationships and for married couples who are having marital conflict.

Yerkovich, Milan, and Yerkovich, Kay. *How We Love: Discover Your Love Style, Enhance Your Marriage, Expanded Edition*. New York: WaterBrook, 2017.

Comments: This book teaches communication and conflict resolution skills. It helps couples identify their “intimacy imprints” that shape behavior, beliefs, and expectations in marriage. The book shares four types of injured imprints that combine in marriage to create a negative cycle of pain. This book can be helpful to teach practical skills and principles to married couples that find themselves struggling to manage conflict in a healthy way.

Smalley, Gary. *The DNA of Relationships*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2007.

Comments: This book teaches communication and conflict resolution skills. It helps couples identify a destructive relationship dance that characterizes most relationship conflicts. The author offers five practical steps that will lead to healthy interactions. This book can be helpful to teach practical skills and principles to married couples that find themselves struggling to manage conflict in a healthy way.

C. Gender Differences.

Feldhahn, Shaunti. *For Women Only: What You Need to Know about the Inner Lives of Men*. Atlanta: Multnomah, 2004.

Comments: This book deals with what women need to know about the inner lives of men. The author did a survey of hundreds of men to obtain the information for this book. The results, given by topic, can be helpful to any woman who wants to understand her husband better. Informative and practical.

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Feldhahn, Jeff & Shaunti. *For Men Only: A Straightforward Guide to the Inner Lives of Women*. Atlanta: Multnomah, 2006.

Comments: This book deals with what men need to know about the inner lives of women. The author did a survey of hundreds of women to obtain the information for this book. The results, given by topic, can be helpful to any man who wants to understand his wife better. Informative and practical.

D. General marital preparation.

Biehl, Bobb & Cheryl. *Getting to "Really Know" Your Life-Mate-To-Be*. Broadman & Holman, 1996.

Comments: This resource contains approximately 250 questions for engaged couples to ask each other. The questions help the couple learn about each other by ensuring they talk about important topics. While it is a good resource for any engaged couple, it is particularly suited for engaged couples who live a long distance from each other and who spend a significant amount of time talking on the phone.

Parrott, Les & Leslie. *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts, Revised Edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.

Comments: This book provides engaged couples with a good overview of what to expect from marriage and the skills and attributes needed for a successful marriage. It covers a variety of topics including communication, expectations, love styles, gender differences, and couple spirituality. In addition to this book, there are two workbooks, one for men and one for women, which provide the couple with self-tests and exercises to help them apply the material.

E. Finances.

Dayton, Howard. *Money and Marriage God's Way*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2009.

Comments: This book offers practical, biblical principles applied to common financial problems encountered in marriage whether couples are engaged, newly married, or empty nesters. It addresses a number of subjects very relevant to walking as a Christian in today's world.

F. Sexuality.

Wheat, Ed & Gaye. *Intended for Pleasure (4th Edition)*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2010.

Comments: This book is helpful for engaged and married couples who need information about developing Godly, healthy sexual intimacy. It is written from a Christian perspective and is tastefully done.

Gardner, Tim Alan. *Sacred Sex: A Spiritual Celebration of Oneness in Marriage*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook, 2002.

Comments: This book is helpful for married couples who would benefit from a biblical understanding of the higher purpose of marital sex in a way that brings the fulfillment of true oneness. In particular, it may be helpful for those that struggle with distorted thinking about God's design for sex.

Konzen, Jennifer & Timothy., *The Art of Intimate Marriage: A Christian Couple's Guide to Sexual Intimacy*: Konzen Publishing, 2016.

Comments: This 264-page book is a thorough and helpful guide to deepening verbal, relational and sexual intimacy based on God's design. Each chapter ends with questions and exercises couples can do together to integrate the concepts into their relationship. In addition, the author covers many common sexual problems with sensitivity and wisdom.

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G. Prayer Journal.

Christian PREP, Inc., *Like A Tree Planted By The Water: A Prayer Journal For My Marriage*. Christian PREP, Inc., 2009.

Comments: This is a 12 week prayer journal for married couples. Every week begins with a few conceptual seeds related to marriage that are rooted in scripture and can branch out into multiple areas of their life. This provides couples the opportunity to journal and pray together on specific “seeds” taken from scripture. Some of the areas covered include agape love, forgiveness, commitment, thankfulness, and unity.

H. General Marriage Enrichment.

Feldhahn, Shaunti. *The Surprising Secrets of Highly Happy Marriages: The Little Things That Make a Big Difference*.

Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2013.

Comments: This book reveals how being intentional about small, practical helps within marriage can lead to a vibrant relationship. This book is recommended for those seeking to enrich their relationship, but would not be appropriate for couples in distress.

Thomas, Gary. *Sacred Marriage (Reprinted Edition)*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

Comments: This book shows how your marriage can help you deepen your relationship with God. It includes discussion questions for couples and small groups.

II. PERSONALITY INVENTORIES.

Keirsey Temperament Sorter-II (KTS-II)

Description: This personality test is easy to take, score, and interpret. Understanding personality factors helps couples understand their tendencies and preferences for communication and decision making and how they will tend to interact. This instrument is very similar to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) that is available through ACCFS (shown below). The KTS-II identifies several key personality traits such as extraversion, introversion, thinking (logical/analytical), feeling, organized, creative, practical, open ended, etc. There are several ways to obtain this tool:

Option #1: The basic form of this inventory can be taken online for free at: www.keirsey.com. Very helpful, personalized interpretive reports can be purchased online for a fee.

Option #2: Purchase the 16 page workbook: Advisor Team. Temperament Discovery System. Advisor Team Inc., 2004. Available at www.keirsey.com.

Option #3: Purchase the book: Keirsey, David. *Please Understand Me II*. Del Mar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Book Co., 1998.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Step II Form Q

Description: This personality test delivers personalized information on communication, decision-making, dealing change and conflict. The instrument assesses five facets in each of the four personality dichotomies which helps explain the uniqueness of individuals in great detail and serves to identify the differences experienced between two persons of a given type. This inventory is taken online and is available through ACCFS.

Marriage Insights by John Trent, Ministry Insights International. Can be obtained: <http://www.ministryinsights.com>

Description: This inventory is taken online. It takes approximately 10 minutes per person to complete. A 24-page report on individual and relationship strengths is generated. The report provides information about each person's strengths, keys to effectively communicating with each person, overcoming conflict, and facilitating problem solving.

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III. RELATIONSHIP INVENTORIES.

A. Internet-based.

PREPARE/ENRICH by Life Innovations; www.lifeinnovations.org.

Can be obtained by contacting ACCFS.

Description: PREPARE is for engaged couples; ENRICH is for married couples. These inventories provide an objective assessment of a couple's strengths and weaknesses in the following 11 areas: marriage expectations, personality, communication, conflict resolution, finances, leisure activities, sexual expectations, children/parenting, family/friends, roles, and spiritual beliefs. In addition, each partner's personality and family background is assessed.

PREPARE/ENRICH can be completed online. The couple's responses are then computer scored. Results from the online administration are available very shortly after the couple finishes the test. An ACCFS counselor will review the assessment results with the couple.

Couple Checkup, powered by PREPARE-ENRICH

Can be obtained by contacting ACCFS, or online at www.couplecheckup.com.

Description: Couple Checkup is for engaged or married couples. This assessment is similar to PREPARE/ENRICH, but designed in a way that couples can take it on their own. The inventory provides an objective analysis of a couple's strengths and weaknesses in 20 relationship areas.

Deep Love Assessment, powered by Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott

Can be obtained by contacting ACCFS, or online at www.deeplove.com.

Description: Deep Love is for engaged or married couples. This assessment is similar to SYMBIS, but designed in a way that couples can take it on their own. Upon completion, couples will receive a 10 pages report with customized insights and engaging exercises to enrich their relationship.

Love Languages Personal Profile by Gary Chapman; www.5lovelanguages.com.

Can be obtained free of charge online at www.5lovelanguages.com.

Description: This assessment provides husbands and wives with their primary love language or how they tend give and receive love. Additional information about these love languages can be found in Gary Chapman's book, *The Five Love Languages*.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact ACCFS at 309-263-5536 or office@accounseling.org.

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