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RELENTLESSLY PURSUING INTIMACY

This first session begins with an overview of the Relationship Attachment Model (RAM) and its five love links: knowledge, trust, reliance, commitment and sexual touch. Next, the principles of the RAM are explained. A formula for knowing your partner is outlined and described. Healthy communication is a means to the end of developing closeness and intimacy in this first love link: deeply knowing each other.

Session Outline

- 1 Five principles of the RAM
 - 2 Formula for Knowing
 - 3 Talk Time
- Step One: Sharpen Your Skills

HUDDLES

Sharpen Your Skills with Your Partner (*)

Communication skills are the tools of every good relationship. This first step involves the practicing of your ability to understand and validate each other.

Refresh Your Attitude toward Your Partner

Critical and negative attitudes can erode even a great relationship. Strengthen your trust and confidence in your partner by mutually acknowledging and changing these attitudes in the spirit of humility and receptivity, and expressing your appreciation and love for your partner.

Describe Your Desires to Your Partner

Review what you have been doing that strengthens your relationship and identify the things you would like to do to further your closeness and bond.

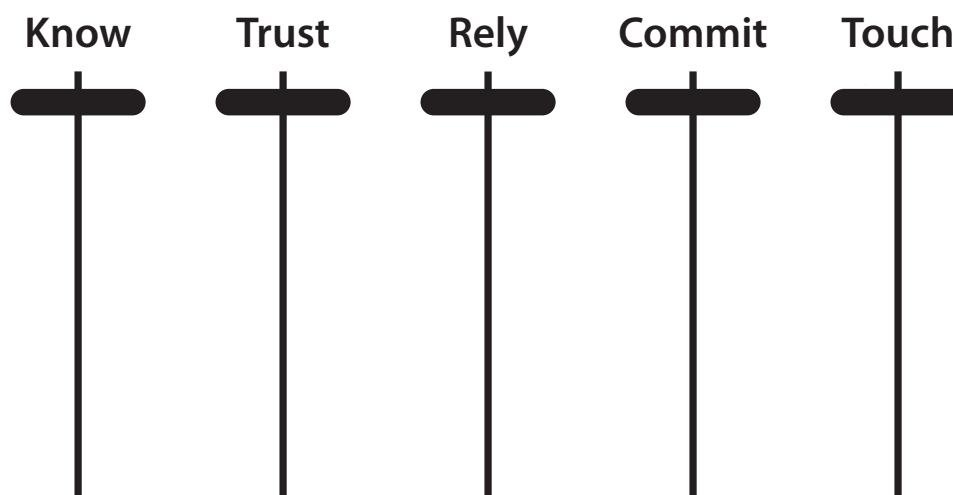
Set Your Dates with Your Partner

Put your desires on the calendar and make a commitment to follow through on fulfilling the needs and wants of your partner.

Five Principles of the RAM

R.A.M.

Relationship Attachment Model



Throughout the following section, please complete the five principles of the RAM.

1 _____

2 _____

If you lower the level of one of the links of the RAM, how will this affect the overall relationship and each of the other four links?

What happens to the other four links when one of the links of the RAM begins to improve and move up?



It is normal to have ups and downs in the closeness of your marriage relationship.

exploring stages of life

3

What are some predictable changes and stages of life that couples face in marriage? How do you imagine that each of these experiences will affect their relationship and the links of the RAM?

4

Why is it so important for both partners to have a “growth-oriented” attitude toward their relationship?

5

Discuss your stage of life and any particular changes or challenges that you are presently experiencing. Adjust the levels of the RAM to represent your relationship at this time.

What are the specific links that you would like to improve in your relationship and what are some general ways you would like to see them grow?

A close-up photograph of a man and a woman smiling warmly at the camera. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right, leaning slightly towards him. They are both looking directly at the viewer with bright, happy expressions.

The Formula for knowing

Fill in the blanks below to complete the formula for *knowing* your partner below.

_____ + _____ + _____ = _____

EXERCISE: SOLER BODY LANGUAGE

Actions speak louder than words! We have all heard this old saying but too often we have not taken it seriously in our marriages. If we could put a hidden camera in your home, what would you look like when your spouse talks to you...would you have eye contact? Would you be doing other things? Would you stay in the same room or would you be distracted? Your body language conveys more of what is in your heart than your words, and your spouse will probably react more to your body language than what you say. Here is a practical exercise on improving your listening by adjusting your body language.

Square Off: Make sure you are facing your spouse (if at all possible). Have your shoulders squared off with your partner's shoulders.

Open Posture: Try to keep your arms and legs unfolded.

Lean Toward Your Partner: Periodically lean forward to close the distance between you and your spouse.

Eye Contact: Part of paying attention to someone speaking is to maintain eye contact. Be sure to look at your spouse as he or she talks.

Relax: Watch your body to make sure that it stays relaxed. Nervous habits like looking at your watch, tapping your fingers, or fidgeting tend to convey an impatience with listening.

Talk time

communication components

- 1 C = Content of message
- 2 O = Other person
- 3 M = Messenger



Examples of Communication Difficulties

- 1 Difficulties with the Content _____

- 2 Difficulties with the Messenger (talking) _____

- 3 Difficulties with the Other (listening) _____

- 4 Combination _____

What is your most common difficulty with communication?

communication components

What would your spouse say is your most common difficulty with communication?

List below list the five ways to achieve balanced communication with your partner.

- 1

- 2

- 3

- 4

- 5

EXERCISE: SUPPORTIVE COMMUNICATION

Good talking in marriage requires that both partners are also good at listening. Too often partners listen just to react, tell their views or give their advice. Good listening starts with getting out of your own world and understanding your partner's world. Great communication makes both partners feel understood in what they are sharing with each other. The ability to make your partner feel known and understood revolves around the ways that you listen. This exercise gives new and deeper meaning to the saying: "I'm all ears!"

Many times all you want from the communication in your relationship is to feel understood and supported. The first three categories of responses tend to convey understanding. However, it is common that partners try to "fix" what is being talked about and respond with the last category. Even though this can be helpful, it should not be the first response a listener gives.

Talk about the following four types of responses and gather examples of what would be said by the listener to convey each response type.

Empathetic: Supportive and sympathetic

Appreciative: Appreciate your spouse and his/her experiences

Reflective: Inquire and ask for more

Suggestive: Advice and problem-solving discussions