

Instructor Helps

The bold type in the grey highlight is the teacher's suggested "script," and additional instructor notes and suggestions are in regular type.



"TIME" This provides you with a suggested amount of time for each major section of the lesson. It is based on a 43-minute class. In order to achieve these timeframes you will have to keep the class very focused. If you have a longer class, double the times and use the range between the two times as an approximate amount of time for each section (e.g. if the time is 10-minutes, then attempt to teach that section somewhere between 10 and 20 minutes).



"DISCUSSION QUESTION" This introduces a discussion question taken from the participant's LINKS Workbook. Suggested points of discussion and additional ideas are presented with the *questions which are written in bold, italicized red print*. Be sure to choose which questions you want to discuss in class and which ones you want to assign for homework BEFORE you teach.



"DIG DEEPER" This indicates a topic that requires more critical thinking of the participants. In some cases, this deeper investigation of a subject is optional.



"MOVIE CLIP" This indicates a place in the session where a movie clip would be fitting. In some instances, the suggested clip is from the LINKS video program.



"TOOLBOX" This references a suggested activity/handout that can be used to increase involvement of the participants, apply the concepts of the session in a practical fashion, and facilitate discussion.



"DEEP THOUGHT" This introduces the proverb that summarizes and closes each session.

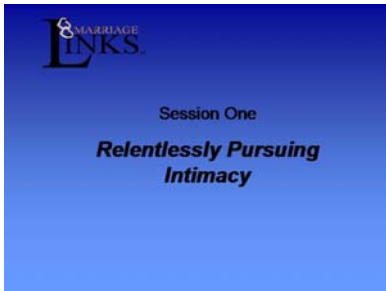
SESSION ONE

RELENTLESSLY PURSUING INTIMACY



cohesion and discussion.

This slide stays on the screen as participants enter and find their seats. Mingle with the class and make sure that everyone has their workbooks and is opened to the first session. Also, if your participants do not have assigned seats, try to keep the seating in your class relatively close so that there is not a lot of empty space. This helps with group

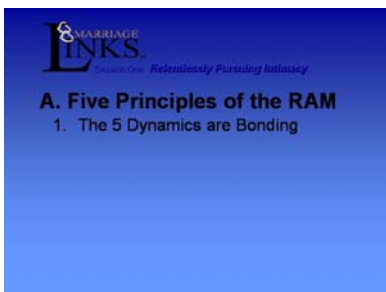


throughout your relationship. A model of intimacy is the core of this program, but you will also learn how to achieve and keep this intimacy by gaining a better understanding and knowledge, learning about the importance of nurturing each other, and sharpening skills of communication and conflict resolution.

Welcome the class as the words are dropping down on the screen. Explain the title: **Welcome to our class- Marriage L.I.N.K.S.** The word "L.I.N.K.S." is an acronym for Lasting Intimacy through Nurturing Knowledge and Skills... and that is what these classes will be about: how you can maintain a strong bond of closeness

A. Five Principles of the RAM

 15 minutes



contributing some feeling of connection and closeness in the relationship. You will want to point to the RAM board as you explain each of the five areas.

Introduce the first session with this slide. Say something like: **This first session provides an overview of the Relationship Attachment Model- which you will come to know as the RAM. Let me introduce this model by walking through five principles of the RAM. The first principle is that each of these five areas are BONDING**



“DIG DEEPER” Although you do not need to explain why this is, the bonding dynamics correspond to five basic aspects of the self: 1) the *sensory self* takes in info through the five senses and contributes the bond of knowing; 2) the *mental self* organizes what you learn from the sensory self and forms mental pictures of people that contribute the bond of trusting; 3) the *emotional self* provides ranges of emotion and emotional needs, contributing the bond of relying. 4) the *relational self* provides the need for social contact and relationships, and contributes the bond of committing; and, 5) the *sexual self* provides the drives and desires for sexual closeness and contributes the bond of sexual touch.

At this point you will briefly explain each of the five bonding dynamics that contribute to the overall feeling of closeness in a relationship.

KNOW: Getting to know someone is bonding. Jokingly ask: **How many of you know your spouse? I bet you know your partner better than anyone. This feeling of knowing your partner is very bonding- and it goes both ways. Feeling known by your spouse is also bonding.** You can use numerous examples from the initial meeting when two partners first get to know each other, to the longevity of a relationship and how deeply those two partners feel that they know and are known by a partner more than anyone else could rival. Openness and feeling known create strong feelings of connection with another person. **A best friend is often described as someone who “knows me better than anyone!” This description implies a strong bond because of the extent of openness. How much more should it be true of marriage partners?**

TRUST: Another description of a best friend is your “most trusted friend.” In other words, the more you trust, the more you feel connected or bonded. I will define trust a little differently than you may be used to- trust is the *mental picture* you have of your spouse. From what you know about your partner, you put together a dynamic mental picture of him or her. The more you know, the more accurate this picture should be... and this picture tells you if you can trust your partner or not. This is why we will refer to trust as the *trust-picture* you develop your partner. You could also think of this as **your opinion of them.** You can use an example imagining your partner is doing when you know where they are but you are not with them. It is as though your mental trust picture fills in the gaps and plays out the image of what they are doing. Another fun example is to ask the class to: **Imagine coming home to a partner who asked a favor of you but which you had forgotten to fulfill. Would you be able to imagine your partner agitated or angry with you? Can you visualize what your partner would say, or how he or she would act? This**

mental trust picture is dynamic and active, playing out like a movie screen in your mind. It produces the expectations you have of your partner. More about this concept is described in Session Two, but, at this point, you are trying to provide the groundwork of understanding the concept of trust.



"DISCUSSION QUESTION" *How can a negative trust-picture of your spouse affect your marriage?* *Ideas:* Because people tend to use their trust-picture to anticipate as well as interpret actions and reactions of those they know, especially those closest to them, having a negative trust-picture could lead to 'looking for the worst' in situations and not allowing room for your partner to have the benefit of the doubt.

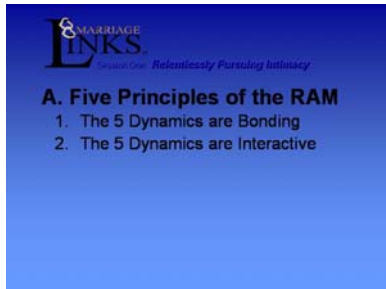
RELY: The third bonding dynamic is reliance. This refers to the *action of trust*. Reliance grows from the ways that you look to your partner to meet your needs, and the ways that your partner also depends on you to meet their needs. You can ask the class for some examples of ways that they depend on each other, and what are some typical needs that are met in a marriage relationship. Some examples would include companionship, support, understanding, fun and recreation.

COMMIT: The fourth bonding dynamic is commitment. This refers to the *definition of ownership or belonging in a relationship*. The extent to which you feel that you belong to your partner and that they belong to you is a measure of the degree of commitment in your relationship. You can clarify the differences between healthy and unhealthy ownership at this point if you have time and the class would benefit from this discussion. Unhealthy ownership usually lacks a respect of the person, resulting in one person losing self in the enmeshment with the other. You could say that one person becomes just an extension of the other, without any sense of identity of their own. Healthy ownership creates a strong feeling of security in the relationship while both individuals are respected and able to function independent of each other. Loyalty to your partner flows from the promises you have made in marriage and the deep feeling that *I belong to you and you belong to me*. The bond that results from this commitment is obvious.



"DISCUSSION QUESTION" *Why is commitment so important in a marriage?* *Ideas:* While commitment is the sense of belonging to a partner or ownership it is also a dimension of obligation to a spouse and a sense of for better or for worse. Through the toughest of times, commitment to a partner can sometimes be the strongest defense.

SEXUAL TOUCH: The final bonding dynamic is sexual touch. Obviously, this is a strong contributor to a feeling of intimacy and closeness in a marriage relationship. The bonding influence of this dynamic is evident even with less intimate types of sexual touch... holding hands, hugging, and cuddling. You can explain more if needed, but Session Five explores this dynamic more extensively.



The second principle is that these five dynamics are interactive. They help to visualize the conflicting ways that a relationship sometimes feels- like, "I am committed to you, but sometimes you are not there for me to depend on." Or, "I know we are really close, but sometimes it seems I don't know you because we have lost touch with

each other."

There is a logical progression to the five bonding dynamics. In other words, one dynamic leads to the next. For instance, what you know about your spouse leads you to decide if you can trust your partner. Your level of trust leads you to decide if you should depend on them to meet your needs. And your commitment is shaken if you know something that bothers you about your partner, or you do not feel that you can trust or rely on them. And sexual involvement feels the most right in marriage when the other dynamics- knowing, trusting, depending and committing are all at a high level.

This is the crux of the R.A.M.- Keep the five bonding dynamics in balance... You want each of the five bonding dynamics to move in balance or harmony with each other. You should illustrate this with the R.A.M. board. Move all five levels up to the top.

The R.A.M. can explain both healthy and unhealthy relationships. This is where you want to be in a marriage relationship- all bonding areas strong. At this point you can move the trust slider down while keeping all of the others high. Do not spend much time describing each of these patterns. Rather, use them to help the class understand more clearly the interaction of the dynamics. This will also set the stage for the last principle- the safe zone of the dynamics.

What would happen if something compromised your trust in your relationship? What effect would this lowered level of trust have on the other five levels. You would wait and guide the class to identifying the fact that the lowered trust would pull down the other levels.