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# SITE NAVIGATION LIFECHANGERS COMMUNITY DR. JOHN VAN EPP P.I.C.K. A PARTNER The Foolproof Heart Without John VAN PREMIUM SUBSCRIPTIONS CONTACT US MEMBER LOG IN Username: UserName Remember Me? Password: Log in Forgotten your password?

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WITH A

The Foolproof Way to Follow Your Heart Without Losing Your Mind

JOHN VAN EPP, Ph.D.

# Welcome To NoJerks.com <u>The Book is Here!!!</u>

How can you tell when you should trust a partner? How can you trust again after your trust has been betrayed? How does a confident feeling of trust develop? These questions highlight some of the perils and pitfalls of determining the measure of trust you should place in a partner. In How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk, Dr. John Van Epp walks you through the development of trust, its relationship to intimacy, and maximizes your potential of finding "the one" by giving you the tools to focus on the crucial characteristics of trust in a loving, lasting relationship.

Read an Excerpt from Chapter 10:
Sketching the Date-Mate Profile
Formerly published in hardback under the title
How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk

Registration is free and only takes a minute. First visit www.nojerks.com and click on the "Sign Up" link, filling in the required information. The next time you visit the site, "log in" by filling in your user name and password. If you purchased the Instructor Packet online then you must take the online certification test. However, if you were trained at a location then you are exempt from taking the online test but be sure to check the "training site" box. In both cases you will receive an email notifying you of your certification number and upgrade within 48 hours.

And be sure to check out the newly published *How to Avoid Falling in Love with a Jerk* book—learn even more by reading additional humorous and fascinating stories, clinical cases and studies about building

healthy relationships and choosing a marriage partner. This book is great for singles and engaged couples to use in their personal lives and parents to use with their kids!

I'll see you on the web!

John Van Epp, Ph. D.

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#### **SECTION ONE**

# The Mechanics of Group Formation & Program Delivery

### **Getting Started: An Overview of the Instructor Manual**

Congratulations! Facilitating a **P.I.C.K** A **PARTNER**.™ class is exciting and adventurous. Best of all, you will learn more by teaching the program than you would if you just attended.

This Instructor Manual is divided into three sections:

#### Section One: The Mechanics of Group Formation and Program Delivery

This first section is designed to provide you with the needed tools to form a class, choose a format, and facilitate discussion around the most important areas.

#### Section Two: The Five Sessions of the PICK Program

This second section is divided into the five sessions. Each session begins with a review of the research and theory that is pertinent to the material in that particular session. Then a detailed lesson plan for that session. The *PICK Discussion Workbook* contains the five sessions for class participants.

#### Section Three: The Faith-Based Presentation (C.-PICK) [OPTIONAL]

This third section can be downloaded from the Instructor Section on www.nojerks.com website and is a faith-based presentation of the five sessions of the PICK program. It follows the same basic outlines of the PICK program, and can be either integrated into the five sessions, or taught independent of them at a different time. However, it is not meant to replace the PICK program sessions, but rather supplement them.

When you lead a class, you do not need to know the answer to every question. Too many times we stress ourselves out trying to make sure we never get stumped. But this is <u>not</u> what a class usually expects. What they DO really want from you is a sincere openness and concern for what they have to share, and a gentle guidance to keep the discussion on track.

The better you understand the R.A.M.™ (Relationship Attachment Model™), the easier it will be for you to instruct a class. Class participants will often want to share their experiences which confirm or validate the material in each session. I highly recommend a discussion period as part of your presentation. The material generates a significant amount of thought and

identification with almost all singles and singles-again of varying ages. I have been exceptionally pleased at the way this program has tended to cross generational gaps. The discussion will personalize the material and help the participants to apply it to their lives.

Do not be afraid of sharing some of your own experiences, or adding some additional discussion questions or activities to the class agenda. Your understanding and confidence in the program will be contagious.

Finally, thank you for your support and involvement in the presentation of the PICK a Partner educational program (aka: *How To Avoid Marrying A Jerk(ette)*<sub>IM</sub>). I have become more and more convinced that singles today need guidance on the slippery slopes of premarital relationships. Accelerated attachments and a lack of clear understanding of what to look for in a prospective partner, mixed with the isolation of most singles in this process have resulted in too many relationship casualties. With your help, singles can learn how to maneuver through the course of their premarital relationships while lessening the risks of injury.

#### Materials in the Instructor Certification Packet

The **PICK A PARTNER**<sup>TM</sup> educational program is a five-session course presented live on the *How To Avoid Marrying A Jerk(ette)*<sup>TM</sup> video series on DVD. Each session is presented in a 2-hour class. The sessions can be expanded to 10 if the instructor chooses. This course can be taught by certified instructors with or without the use of the live video presentation. This *Instructor Manual* provides the background of research and theory for the program, and a detailed lesson plan for each of the sessions. These lesson plans enable the instructor to teach the program with or without the use of the video series.

Your Instructor Certification Packet should include these items.

- 1. Instructor Manual
- 2. Instructor Certification Course: a 3-DVD set
- 3. Power point of the PICK Program
- 4. PICK Educational Program: a 2-DVD
- 5. R.A.M. Board

# Workbooks for Class Participants

There are two workbooks for participants. The first is the *PICK Discussion Workbook*. Instructors should provide each class participant with a *PICK Participant Workbook* which is designed to assist with the outline and content of

#### OVERVIEW OF SESSION ONE

This session provides an overview of the entire program. It begins with an explanation of the key characteristics of a jerk or jerkette. The big picture of the changes in society that mandate the need for an education in partner selection sets the stage for the description of the P.I.C.K. a Partner program. The Relationship Attachment Model® (RAM) is explained by examining five features of the model and how they apply to the building of healthy and unhealthy relationships. The session concludes with a teaser of the five areas to explore in a dating relationship.

#### Goals

- 1. Identify the characteristics of difficult partners in dating relationships.
- 2. Cultivate a belief in the need for partner-selection education.
- 3. Define closeness and intimacy by using the R.A.M.
- 4. Develop an understanding of what makes a relationship safe.
- 5. Differentiate between healthy and unhealthy relationships by using the R.A.M.
- 6. Learn the 90-day probation period and take the time necessary to really get to know a partner.
- 7. Peak curiosity about the five areas to explore (F.A.C.E.S.)

#### Lesson-At-a-Glance

1	. Difficult Partners Come in Both Genders	05 minutes
2	Warning Signs Of Difficult Partners	20 minutes
3	3. Three Changes That Impact Dating	30 minutes
4	. Two Purposes of the P.I.C.K. Program	10 minutes
5	5. How the RAM Explains Relationships	50 minutes
6	5. Five Key Areas To Grow To Know	05 minutes

#### **Material Checklist**

Use the Relationship Attachment Model® (RAM) display board, a power point projector and screen. It is also helpful to have a paper pad and easel to write additional notes and use at small groups. You need markers and 3-5 large pad pages for each small group.

#### **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 2-hour class. You can abbreviate the classes if necessary, but this timeframe allows for discussion, class exercises and interaction.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" This introduces a discussion question taken from the participant's P.I.C.K. 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 P.I.C.K. 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**

#### A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF A GROWING RELATIONSHIP

# 1. Difficult Partners Come in Both Genders © 05 minutes



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



Welcome to our class. Explain the two titles: Welcome to our class. The program we will be studying has two titles: the first is the more formal- the *P.I.C.K. a Partner* Program (or the *P.I.C.K.* Program, for short). The word "P.I.C.K." is an acronym for Premarital Interpersonal Choices & Knowledge... and that is what these classes will be about: what you know and the

choices you make in your dating relationships and your ultimate decision of the person you marry. However, there is another program title that I am sure you have heard, and it is, How To Avoid Falling for A Jerk. Be sure to use the title of the program with just the word "jerk."



Introduce the first session with this slide. Say something like: This first session provides an overview of the two major components of the P.I.C.K. program- these are (first) the five areas to explore in a dating relationship that help to foreshadow what your partner will be like in marriage; and (second) the Relationship

Attachment model, or the R.A.M.

But then tell them: At the very onset of this class, I need to give you a



disclaimer... "jerks" or difficult partners come in both genders.

Continue by saying: This program is not gender specific. Both males AND females can be jerks. In other words, it is about How To Avoid Falling for a Jerk or <u>Jerkette</u>. IF APPROPRIATE, then ask the females in the class: How many of you

have ever known a female and thought to yourself, ughh, what a "\_ You can motion with your hand and pause so that the participants realize the word to which you are referring. Continue with: Although you may not think of the word "jerkette," that is the word we will use in our class. You may want to humorously add, How to Avoid Falling for a "\_ just wouldn't go over real well with some people.

\* \* \* \*

# 2. Warning Signs of Difficult Partners 20 minutes





This program is about a lot more than just avoiding becoming involved with a jerk(ette)... it is about how to build a relationship in a safe way, and in a way that you can really get to know the key areas of your partner so that you won't have any surprises after you marry.

Lets make a list of all of the characteristics of a jerk(ettee). What is one characteristic of someone very difficult to be with in a relationship? Another? Make a list on the board. You are incorporating these two questions in your presentation.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" What are some common patterns of problematic behavior? Ideas: Lying, cheating, extreme defensiveness, abusive behaviors, selfishness, dependencies, etc.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" What is the difference between acting like a jerk(ette) and being a jerk(ette)? Ideas: Basically, being a jerk refers to the persistent resistance to change in some significant problematic area of a

partner's life. Acting like a jerk(ette) occurs when a person acts does or says something hurtful or inappropriate that is inconsistent with their usual behavior.

When done then ask this "sobering" question: How many of you have ever acted like this (point to one of the characteristics on the list? Then point to another and ask again. You can humorously point out that it is the same hands being raised. And after a couple of times, you can say lightheartedly, And we know that those of you who did not raise your hands have this characteristic—and point to "dishonest" or "liar" if it is on the board. So, everyone acts like a jerk at one time or another. We are all flawed and make mistakes or act selfishly- I will be the first one to admit this. However, there are some people who are extremely difficult to be with in a long-term relationship. What is the difference between ACTING like a jerk and BEING a jerk? This second question from the workbook leads the class to immediately see that the core characteristic of a jerk is that he/she has a persistent resistance to change—it is a pattern that keeps resurfacing and the person is not willing to really work at altering this characteristic that keeps upsetting the relationship.

"MOVIE CLIP" At this point you may use a film clip, song or even story to illustrate someone who was very self-centered and always seems to think, "how does this situation affect <u>me</u>?" (if you are certified you will have access to the Instructor Section on the nojerks website for ideas-(www.nojerks.com) and remember that you must obtain written permission to use copyrighted material).

The following questions from the workbook can be used in classroom discussion or you can divide the class into three groups and have each group work on a couple of these questions. It is recommended that you divide the class into groups (these notes will consistently use three table groups as the number although you can have more if needed) so that you can assign activities and discussion questions to smaller groups.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" Why is it important to see yourself from another's perspective? Ideas: This is necessary for empathy, conflict resolution, understanding of your partner's viewpoints; and it requires some nondefensiveness and humility.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" What are the warning signals of somebody who doesn't have this ability? Ideas: You frequently leave a conversation feeling that your partner did not "get" what you were trying to explain; you do not feel supported by your partner; you find that most topics tend to become centered on what they mean and how they will affect your partner.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" What are some emotions you want to have a healthy control over? Ideas: Anger, temper, sensitivity to getting your feelings hurt, defensiveness, and even need for excitement.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" How would you recognize an emotionally immature person? How would you recognize an emotionally restricted person? Ideas: Emotional instability is often masked in the beginning of a relationship. It can even be attractive when it is not understood as something unhealthy. However, over time it becomes apparent that it causes conflicts, misunderstandings, and other relationship difficulties. It is often seen in the patterns of previous relationships as those become known.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" Why are there differences, sometimes, between relationship skills used in the dating process and those used in marriage? Ideas: There are stages in a relationship- often the first is one of infatuation where the each person is "on their best behavior." This may not be intentional, but it usually occurs. Also, the perception of a new partner is often idealized in this first stage.

"DISCUSSION QUESTION" What are some relationship skills essential for a healthy relationship? Ideas: Communication, conflict resolution, problem solving, and intimacy skills.



You can now use the power point to summarize the findings that the class generated about characteristics of a jerk(ette). Let's look at three characteristics of a difficult partner.

Continue with: The first characteristic is that a jerk or jerkette has little insight into how

#### he or she comes across to others, and how their partner really feels.



Explain: The second characteristic is that a jerk(ette) lacks emotional controls or stability. In other words, they are either way up or way down, spiking with extreme emotions... or flat-liners. You know, someone who seems to never have any emotion about anything. You can explain at this point how it is common for someone to date one

type of extreme, then swing to the opposite type in the next relationship because of what they lacked in the prior.



Explain: The third characteristic of a person that is very difficult to be with in a relationship is the lack of basic relationship skills. Tell the participants to check out key indicators like: does your partner ever apologize? Does your partner know how to settle a conflict? Open up? Have the ability to work through a problem and come up

with a solution? Have basic communication and relationship skills?

However, even in a long-term premarital relationship, some negative marital behaviors do not appear because the marriage roles have not yet been activated. For instance, a female partner may not be associated with a mother figure until after the wedding ceremony, and sometimes not until after childbearing. Therefore, if the man has negative experiences with his mother then those influences may not alter the couple's relationship until after their marriage. If they were identified prior to the marriage and discussed, it would lessen the likelihood that those latent influences would affect their marriage.

"TOOLBOX" The following activity is geared to promote some discussion about characteristics that cause problems in relationships. Some people have problem behaviors and personality quirks. And, they may be oblivious to their problems and/or resistant to changing them. Resistance to changing problem patterns is the classic definition of a "jerk(ette)." Does anyone know someone who: (Put these up on board, if desired.)

- Must always be at the center of attention? Only talks about his/herself?
- Lies, manipulates or injures others but seems to have no conscience?

- Is often contemptuous and critical of others?
- Controls others? Often takes advantage of others?
- Demonstrates big and dramatic mood swings for no apparent reason.
- Is easily angered by little things and is always blaming others.
- Seems unable to control impulsive behavior.
- Believes others are out to get him or her.
- Sees him/herself as a helpless victim.
- Puts a negative spin on everything; is wedded to pessimism.
- Acts the chameleon: changing into whomever or whatever he or she believes people want.

Point out that finding yourself in a friendship or relationship with someone like that will not be pleasant. We all know people, or have seen people in the movies, that have been in bad relationships. You wonder why he or she is with this person. Believe it or not, almost everyone can look back and say to him or herself, "Wow, why did I go with that person?"

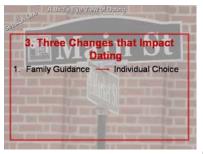
# 3. Three Changes That Impact Dating ( Sometimes 20 minutes )





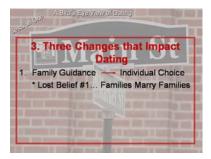
This section builds the basis or rationale for why singles need to be educated in the area of building a relationship and choosing a life partner. Most sections do not have to be power point ledhowever this section is one of the few that is. Explain: I want to take a couple of minutes and answer the question: Why do we need to be

TAUGHT how to choose a marriage partner? You may not realize this but just a few hundred years ago, 80% of all societies had always practiced one type of marriage-partner selection (pause and let the class tell you before you state the answer): arranged marriage. It is only relatively recent that choosing a partner based solely on romantic feelings has become the norm for most cultures. So I would like to sketch three social shifts that have brought this about... and that have created the need to provide singles with the tools to be effective in the endeavor of picking a partner.



As you click on this slide explain: The first social shift is the from a family involvement and guidance to individual, autonomous choice. Families used to be heavily involved in the guidance of choosing a partner. You may want to clarify that you are *not* suggesting that we return to arranged marriages, or even that they were better

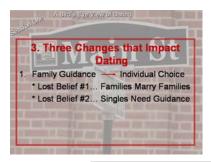
than what we have today. There were two basic beliefs that were held by those who practiced arranged marriages.



The first was that families marry families. In other words, when you fall in love and marry someone, you are also marrying their family and that person is marrying your family. To illustrate, you can ask anyone in the group who is or has been married if they found this to be true. And did they realize this before they married.

You can also mention that there is not just an outside family; but there is also an inside family. The inside family is both genetic and psychological. You can also humorously say that when you fall in love with someone, take a good long look at your partner's father and imagine holding your newborn baby, and looking down and seeing that father's face staring back at you-because the genes of your partner's family will become the genes of your children.

The family within is also psychological. You can explain: We all internalize the dynamics of our families. It is likely that in time, more and more characteristics of our family backgrounds will come out. In the second session, we will examine this much more closely.



The second belief that backed up the need for parents to guide their son or daughter's selection of a mate is the belief that most youth will not consider all of the important areas of a future marriage when they are in love. You can sometimes tease the participants with a humorous sarcastic comment like, "Now isn't that simply

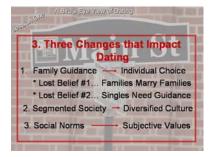
absurd?!" We have moved so far into the outlook that each individual (and only that individual) should choose a partner on their own, that to suggest it may be a good idea to have some guidance (and especially from one's parents)

is perceived more like an insult than help. You could ask the class, "What are some ways that single youth can be benefited by their parents being involved in their consideration of a marriage partner?" You would expect answers like: benefit from their experience, learn from their mistakes, see things that you are overlooking, think of things you may not think of, come up with some ways to test out the person.



The second social shift is the change in our society from being segmented to being diversified. The way that society used to be more segmented was largely in the neighborhoods. For example, it was common for some neighborhoods to be based around nationality (e.g. an Italian neighborhood). This brought people together

who had similar family values, traditions and cultural practices. This increased the likelihood of compatibility when choosing a marriage partner. However, as society has become less segmented and more diversified, this "built-in" compatibility is no longer a part of the fabric of many societies. As a result, there is a greater need for couples to explore this area of compatibility prior to marriage.

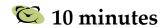


The last major social shift is the change from established social norms to subjective values about dating and marriage. In other words, there used to be a "socially acceptable" way to date and move toward marriage. At this point, you may want to ask the class for some of the common dating practices today that used to be unacceptable.

Included would be premarital sexual relations and cohabitation, the woman asking the man out, and minimum family involvement. Even prolonged courtships (lasting 4 years or more) would have been questioned by many who would have challenged the delay of marriage. It is more acceptable now for each individual to decide how to chart his or her course to marriage. Although this is a freedom, it does put responsibility and pressure upon each individual to make choices that will best prepare him or her for marriage.

In fact, all three of these social shifts have increased the need for each single to know more about how to build a relationship and what will predict marital happiness and success. Singles are more on their own today then ever before. This is why we need to go through a program like this- to gain an education in the school of partner selection.

# 4. Two Purposes of the P.I.C.K. Program 5 10 minutes





In this section, you will summarize the program into two basic aspects of choosing a marriage partner: 1) what you need to know about another person that clearly predicts what they will be like in marriage; and, 2) how to develop a loverelationship in healthy ways so as to avoid unhealthy over-attachments. You can depict these two aspects

in the simple equation that choosing a marriage requires that you use your HEAD and your HEART.

You can illustrate this by citing the common fact that when people who have been dissatisfied in a long-term relationship are interviewed and asked if they saw any signs of their problems in the first 6 months of their relationship, they usually give one of two answers. The first is that they did not see any signs, but they wish that they knew then what they know now. In other words, they lacked a clear understanding of what to look at in their partner that would give them an accurate picture of what that person will be like in marriage (or even a long-term relationship).

The second common answer is that they did see it, but that they overlooked the early warning signs because they were too much... in love. If you wait after the word "much" most times the class will say the words "in love." You can then humorously tell them that they said the right words, just not in the right way... it's "in luuuuuuvvvv."

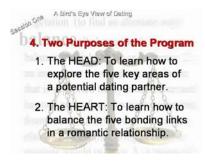
"TOOLBOX" OPTION: READ THE LOVE IS BLIND PAGE IN THE **WORKBOOK** 

These two responses explain the love is blind syndrome- it comes from a lack of knowing what to look for in the prospective partner, or from becoming over-attached to that prospective partner. The entire program can be summarized with two words: HEAD and HEART. You could say that this

> program teaches you how to follow your heart without losing your mind.

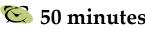
4. Two Purposes of the Program 1. The HEAD: To learn how to explore the five key areas of a potential dating partner. anglaba dev

Therefore, the two purposes of the P.I.C.K. a Partner program are: first, to learn about the five predictive areas to explore in a prospective partner. These are referred to as "predictive" because as you get to know someone in these five areas it helps to predict what that person will be like in a marriage. To get to know these five areas, you must use your HEAD as you build a relationship.



The second purpose of the P.I.C.K. Program is to learn about the five bonding dynamics that create attachments in relationships. These are represented in the Relationship Attachment Model (or, the R.A.M., for short). It is your HEART that generates these five bonding forces that act like the glue in a relationship.

# 5. How the R.A.M. Explains Relationships 50 minutes

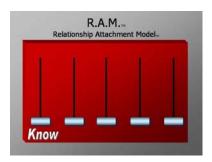




Feature #1: The RAM portrays the five sources of love & closeness

The first feature of these five dynamics is that each one contributes some feeling of connection and closeness in the relationship.

"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. Think of a time when you met someone for the first time and hit it off... if you shared a lot about yourself, or if that person told you all about their