

Marriage Enrichment 09 – Creekside Community Church
Seminar presented by Russ Veenker

I. Introduction¹ – Four Assumptions Pertinent to Marriage
A.

B.

C.

D.

II. Goals

A.

B.

C.

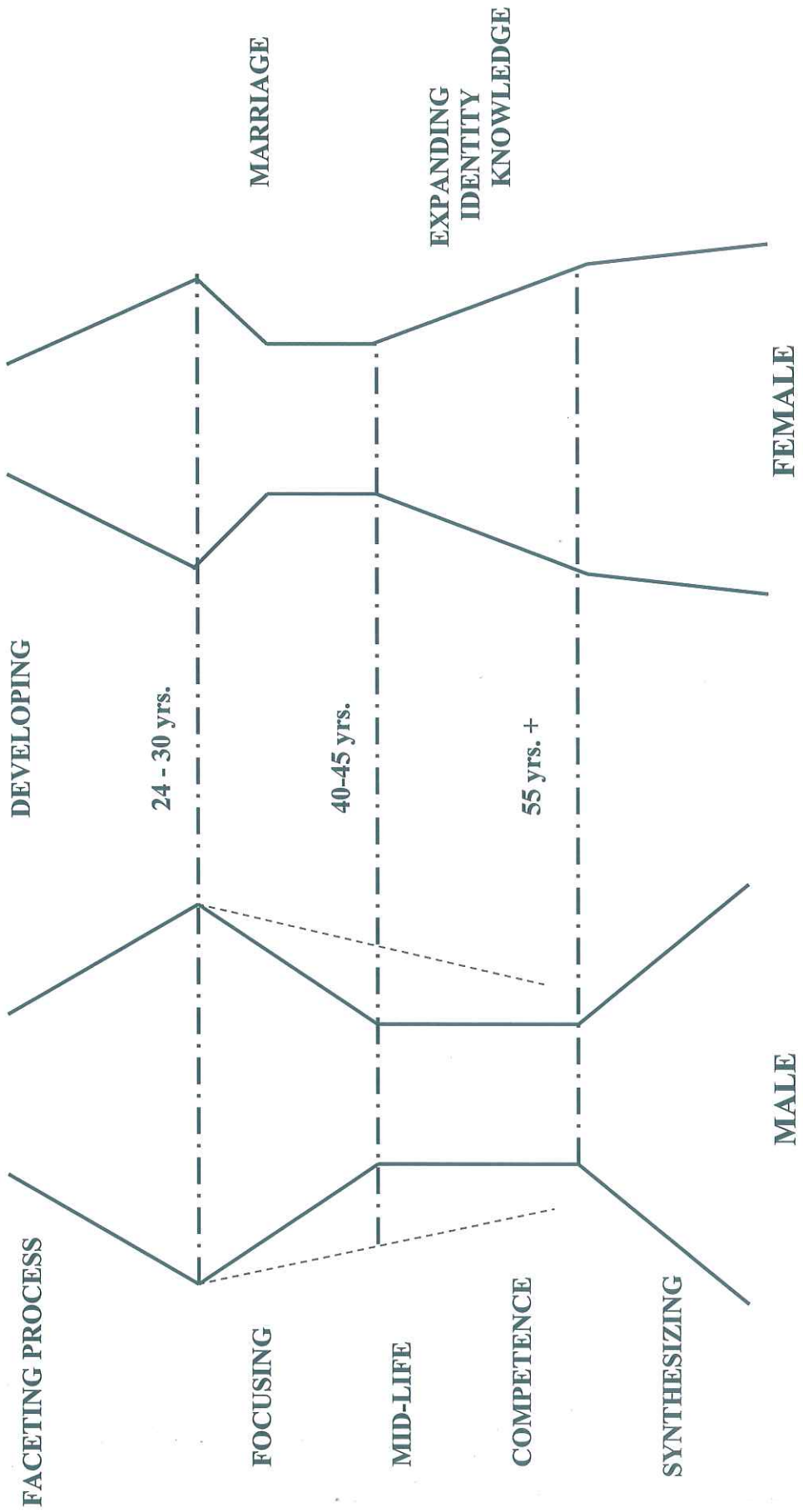
II. Data²

MARRIAGE STATISTICS

- **Of the 2.3 million marriages in 2006, about half (53%) take place in a religious setting.**
- **The average cost of a wedding is \$27,500.**
- **Married households are barely above 50%.** Of the U.S. 111 million households, 52% are now made up of married couples with and without children.
- **25th Wedding Anniversary becoming more rare.** There is less than a 50% chance that couples currently married will reach their 25th anniversary.
- **Divorce Rate continues about 50%.** While the average divorce rate is 50%, it is 40% for first marriage, 60% for second marriages and 73% for third marriages.
- **The seven year itch continues.** Couples separate on an average seven years after marriage and divorce after eight. “starter marriages” becoming the norm.
- **Over 90% of people get married once.** But those marrying are waiting until they are older and they are less likely to remarry following a divorce.
- **Rate of Cohabitation Escalates.** Over 6 million couples now cohabit, a dramatic increase from only 500,000 cohabiting couples in 1970
- **Up and coming Generations: 3 out of 5 people in the church pews are from blended families.**

¹ Four Assumptions based on two sources: Theology of Creation; Fall; Redemption; and Mission in conjunction with the work of James Choung as discussed in the June/July 2008 issue of Christianity Today. See <http://www.christianitytoday.com/outreach/articles/4lawsto4circles.html>.

² Email Newsletter from Prepare/Enrich. Life Innovations, November 7, 2007.



LIFE CYCLES

Marriage Enrichment 09 - Creekside Community Church
Session Two – Meaningful Connection

I. What ends Marriage Relationships?
A. Why do marriages break-up?

B. “How do marriages break up?”
1. the W.I.N.E. Factor

2. Slide 5- RB explain W.I.N.E. (from Stanley, Scott, Daniel Trathen, Savannah McCain, and Milt Bryan. A Lasting Promise, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998

II. The Spiritual Discipline of Speaker-Listener

A.

B. Psalm 19:7ff **Hebrew Parallelism**

C.

(Ephesians 4:25 speak truth and Salutations/Benedictions---grace.)

D. S/L impairs WINE

E. Why important?? EMPATHY research

“Unity forms around mutual care based in empathy. It comes from getting out of your own experience and into the experience of what it is like to be the other person, and then completing the loop by letting them know that you hear them” (Cloud, Henry. Integrity. The Courage to Meet the Demands of Reality. New York, NY: Harper-Collins Publishers, 2006. p61)

The nine benefits of empathy in marriage (frm. Drs. Les and Leslie Parrot, Trading Places, Grand Rapids, MI: 2008, p53-54.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

III. Practicum. Using assertive communication and active listening. (RV couples do two rounds each) *“Acceptance and understanding are emotional phenomena, not intellectual”* Kenneth Boa, Augustine to Freud, Broadman & Holman: Nashville, TN, 2004, p121

A. Make a list of two things you want your partner to do more often.

1.

2.

B. Now, with one of you as the Speaker (using assertive communication “I” statements), express your first desire to your partner.

C. As the Listener, using Active Listening, repeat back—to the Speakers satisfaction—what you hear your partner asserting.

D. Now trade places (the Speaker becomes the Listener) and express your first desire to your partner.

Broken Marriages, “How?”

W

Withdrawal

I

Invalidation

N

Negative Interpretation

E

Escalation

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Session Three – Transformational Conflict

Key concepts: God's redemptive purpose in conflict; Relationships driven by anxiety;
(James 4:1ff; Philippians 4:6ff; 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18)

I. Introduction.

II. Our Condition (damage done by evil...)

III. Our Cure (restoring for better).

A. James 4:1-12; Mt. 7:1-5.

B. (see Anxiety – Fuel for Growth)

C. Equipping: Equipping

1)

2)

IV. Our Caution... Brain function

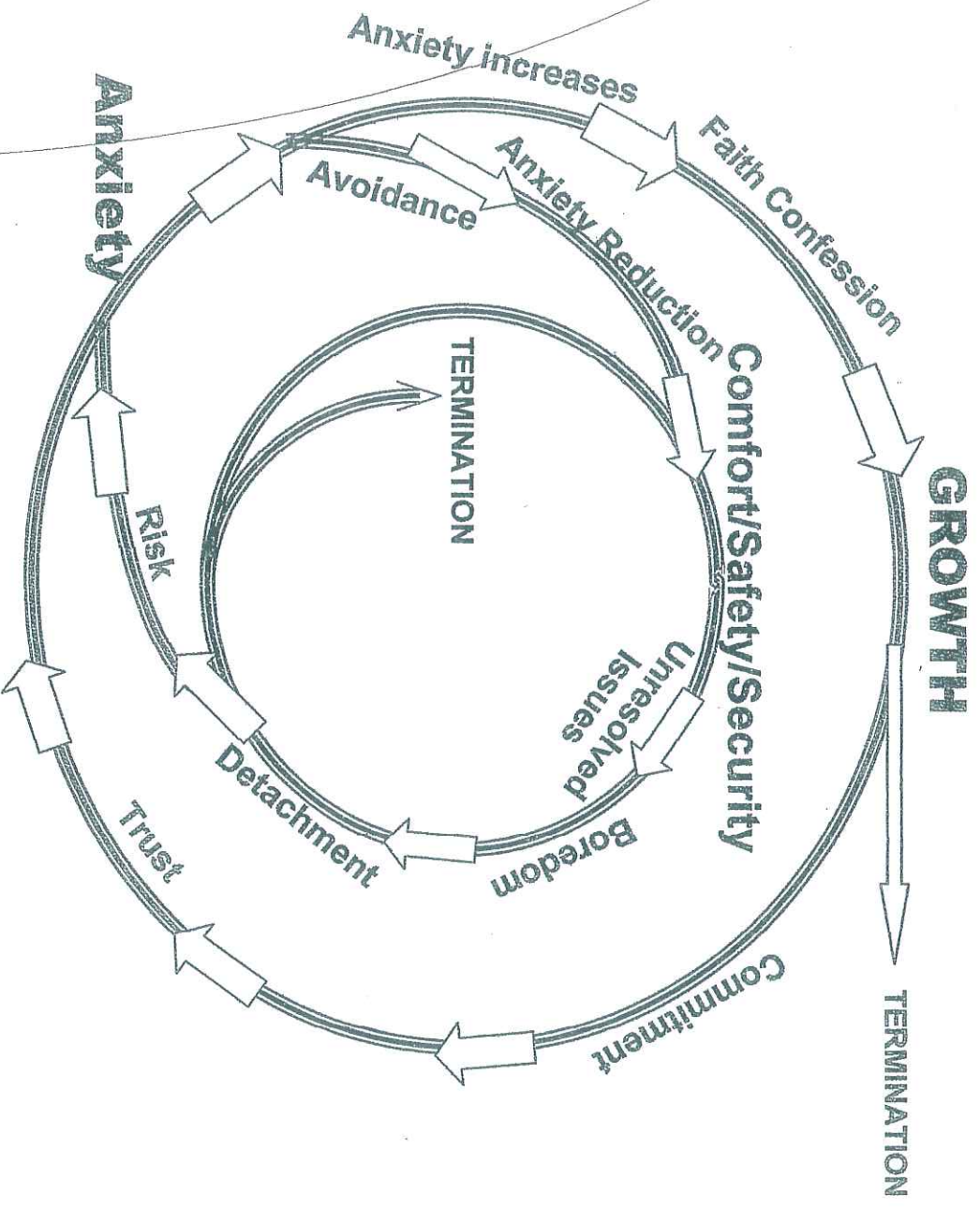
A.

B.

C.

THEREFORE professional counseling is absolute necessity in these situations...

Anxiety – Fuel for Growth and Development



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INSTRUCTIONS: First, each partner is to complete this inventory separately. Second, partners meet together and compare responses to each item in the inventory. Third, identify the areas in your marriage which you would most like to work on. Identify "red flag areas" which would be too threatening to either partner (consider seeing a counselor to help you process these areas).

PART I - RATE EACH ITEM USING THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

1 = VERY OFTEN 2 = OFTEN 3 = SOMETIMES 4 = NEVER

- ___ 1. It is fun and exciting being in this relationship.
- ___ 2. Do you fail to disagree with your partner for fear of eliciting anger or hostility?
- ___ 3. Does your partner complain or feel that you don't understand him/her?
- ___ 4. Do you let your partner know when you are displeased with him/her?
- ___ 5. Do you stand up for your rights in your relationship with our feeling guilty?
- ___ 6. Do you help your partner understand you by expressing how you think?
- ___ 7. Do you help your partner understand you by expressing how you feel?
- ___ 8. Do you help your partner understand you by expressing what you need?
- ___ 9. Do you discuss intimate matters with your partner?
- ___ 10. Do you and your partner talk over pleasant things that happened during the day?
- ___ 11. Do you pretend you are listening when you really have your mind somewhere else?
- ___ 12. Do you discuss spiritual matters with your partner?
- ___ 13. I receive meaningful reinforcement from my partner at appropriate times, in appropriate ways.
- ___ 14. I give meaningful reinforcement to my partner at appropriate times, in appropriate ways.
- ___ 15. When you and your partner are together, do you spend that time on together activities rather than alone activities?

(next page please)

Questions from Jack and Judith Balswick, Strengthening your Family Life: Study Guide (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Bookstore, 1990)50-51.

RATE EACH ITEM USING THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

1= VERY STRONG NEED 2 = STRONG NEED 3 = SOME NEED 4 = LITTLE NEED

- ___ 16. Give me more attention.
- ___ 17. Give me more praise for accomplishments.
- ___ 18. Express more confidence in my ability.
- ___ 19. Spend more time doing things with me.
- ___ 20. Communicate more often that I am an important person.
- ___ 21. Spend more time with me.
- ___ 22. Encourage me to participate more in decision making.
- ___ 23. Have more activities with mutual friends.
- ___ 24. Show me more affection.
- ___ 25. Encourage me to have more freedom.
- ___ 26. Be more sexual toward me.
- ___ 27. Communicate his/her trust in me.
- ___ 28. Interact with me about spiritual matters.
- ___ 29. Take more initiative in the spiritual dimension of our relationship.
- ___ 30. Other (specify)