All families, including singles, benefit from the acceptance, love, and nurture of an extended church family; relationship education and enrichment; and effective support during crises and transitions. Marriage and Family Ministries support personal and spiritual growth, nurturing disciples within the context of relationships. Churches can promote healing of family-of-origin issues, cultivate healthy relationships in all sizes and kinds of families, and provide divorce recovery for children and adults. The breakdown of family life and increasing rates of divorce, unmarried cohabitation, and unwed births in our society contribute to many of our social problems. Therefore we encourage congregations and our communities to offer ministries that

- Nourish all persons to grow toward their God-given potential
- Help persons develop and maintain healthy relationships
- Empower persons to deal with predictable transitions and unexpected crises

This document describes some resources readily available in New England or on the web. Please contact me with specific needs or questions or to share other programs and materials you have found helpful.

Jane P. Ives, 207-797-8930 or janepives@gmail.com

Distributed by:
Office of Congregational Development
New England Conference of the United Methodist Church
Rick McKinley, Director
978-682-7676 ext. 210, rickm@neumc.org
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES RESOURCES
Available in New England
- Annotated and listed in the following categories –

FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES IN GENERAL – p. 3
   Resources for Group Programs and Studies – p. 3
   Books and Other Reading Material – p. 4
   Organizations and Websites – p. 7

FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULT RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION – p. 8
   (includes parenting resources)
   Resources for Group Programs and Studies – p. 8
   Books and Other Reading Material – p. 12
   Organizations and Websites – p. 17

FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION – p. 18
   Resources for Group Programs and Studies – p. 18
   Books and Other Reading Material for Couples – p. 19
   Resources for Pastors, Counselors, and Mentor Couples – p. 21
   Organizations and Websites – p. 23

FOR MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT – p. 24
   Resources for Group Programs and Studies – p. 24
   Books, Tapes, and Other Reading Material for Couples – p. 30
   Resources for Pastors and Other Church Leaders – p. 42
   Organizations and Websites – p. 44

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT – p. 45
   Resources for Group Programs and Studies – p. 45

FOR THOSE IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS:
   CLERGY FAMILIES – Reading list – p. 46
   STEPFAMILIES – p. 49

FOR THOSE IN TRANSITION OR CRISIS – p. 50
   Resources for Group Programs and Studies – p. 50
   Books and Other Reading Material – p. 52
   Organizations and Websites – p. 57
**RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES IN GENERAL**

**RESOURCES FOR GROUP PROGRAMS AND STUDIES**

- **Children of Divorce National Desk** | PBS Video | This 60-minute video documents the terrible effect of our divorce culture on children and advocates for marriage-strengthening initiatives.  
  [NEC]

- **Communities and Congregations** by Richard Marks; **First Things First** by Julie Baumgardner, and **Citizen Marriage** by Bill Doherty. This videotape includes three presentations illustrating how congregations and communities can take responsibility for strengthening marriages and families.  
  [IVES]

  [Webster]

- **Smart Marriages 2009 Conference** | Playback Now DVDs and MP3 disks.  
  [BUST]

  **DVDs:**
  001 Five Love Languages;
  003 Yes, We Can;
  004 Living With Cohabitation;
  005 Generosity and Thrift, Money Habitudes;
  006 I Say a Little Prayer For You;
  007 Mars and Venus in the Bedroom;
  008 Mating in Captivity, Couples Sexual Styles;
  009 Infidelity ing, Close Calls;
  010 Marriage: An Inside Job;
  011 Imago Dialogue Live;
BOOKS AND OTHER READING MATERIAL FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES IN GENERAL

- **Connection: A Self-Care Approach to Conflict Management**, by Bonnie R. Fraser, (2010), 480-278-3702, bonnie@connectionselfcare.com, www.connectionselfcare.com. The author clearly presents the basic concepts of Marshall Rosenberg’s Nonviolent Communication, with examples and exercises that effectively facilitate understanding and skill development. She emphasizes throughout the importance of active self-care and self-awareness in order to improve our communication and conflict management. This text would serve well for group or individual study. Visit the website for sample pages and exercises. [Ives]

- **Counseling African American Marriages and Families**, by Edward P. Wimberly (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1977). The author describes the cultural context which impacts the marriage and family life of African Americans, providing guidance for pastors to work effectively with them. He also provides insights and tools that can enhance a pastor’s work with persons of any ethnic heritage: the use of family systems theory; a narrative approach to theology and Scripture; and an emphasis on the love ethic as the cornerstone of marriage and family life. [BUST]

* **Couples Who Care**, by Jane P. Ives, (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1997, now out-of-print but available for loan or purchase from Jane for $5. each.) A collection of true stories illustrating how married couples in Christian settings can help other couples build enduring, fulfilling marriages. Linked to Scripture with reflection questions for personal or group use, each story provides insights into issues related to marriage preparation, ongoing marriage enrichment, or crisis situations. Brief commentaries discuss theological and theoretical concepts related to marriage and marriage ministries. [Ives]

- **Domestic Violence: What Churches Can Do**, FaithTrust Institute, 2400 N 45th St., Suite 101, Seattle, WA 98103, www.faithtrustinstitute.org, 206-634-1903x23, 877-860-2255. This 20-
minute video provides an overview of the reality of domestic violence and raises awareness of its prevalence, dynamics, and the attitudes and false beliefs that underlie both abusive behavior and the fear of leaving an abusive relationship. The accompanying study guide suggests approaches for helping persons caught in such relationships and steps for congregations to take in order to more effectively minister to such families. “Safety for the woman and her children has to be addressed first. After that has been ensured, ongoing support can best be accomplished by helping the victim find appropriate community resources and providing the support of her faith community as she starts the journey of healing and decision-making for the future. The most helpful support that the congregation can offer to the abuser is to hold him accountable, to support him in taking responsibility for his behavior and recognizing that he has a problem, and to stand by him as he seeks treatment from a specialized batterers’ counseling program.” (Study guide, p.19-20)  

* Family First: Your Step-by-Step Plan for Creating a Phenomenal Family, by Dr. Phil McGraw (NY, NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2004) “Family is even more important today than in generations past, and its erosion is unacceptable. This is a fight we can and must win. This is a fight we will win if we just do our homework and plug in. What I intend to do in Family First is to tell you with great precision what you need to stop doing and what you need to start doing to lead your family with such a pure purpose and power that the competing messages and influences are drowned out.” (Dr. Phil, back cover). He challenges parents to implement the following “Factors for a Phenomenal Family” and spells out in detail how to achieve them: 1) Create a Nurturing and Accepting Family System; 2) Promote Rhythm in Your Family Life; 3) Establish Meaningful Rituals and Traditions; 4) Be Active in Your Communication; and 5) Learn How to Manage a Crisis. Self-assessment quizzes and exercises help parents set goals and work toward them. The thirteen chapters would serve as an excellent resource for a parent support group.  

- Family Ministries: Helping Families Become Centers of Faith Formation, by Mary Jane Pierce Norton (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008). Part of the Guidelines series for United Methodist church leaders, this booklet provides general guidance, specific suggestions, and recommendations for resources for local church family ministries. [Ives]  

- Growing Love in Christian Marriage Pastor’s Manual, (2nd Edition) by Jane P. and S. Clifton Ives, United Methodist Publishing House, 2000, Cokesbury 800-672-1789). This manual provides a theoretical and theological framework for marriage and family ministries. Although the primary focus is on preparing couples for marriage, the text also provides information, ideas, and resources for comprehensive marriage ministries. [Ives][NEC]  

- Manual on How to Create a Marriage Savers Congregation, by Michael J. McManus (Marriage Savers, Inc., 9311 Harrington Dr., Potomac, MD 20854, 301-469-5873, MichaelJMcManus@cs.com , www.marriagesavers.org.) Chapters focus on marriage preparation, marriage enrichment, rebuilding troubled marriages, reconciling the separated,
working with stepfamilies, and organizing a congregation for comprehensive marriage and family ministry. [Webster]

- **Marriage: Just a Piece of Paper?** Video and book edited by Katherine Anderson, Don Browning, and Brian Boyer (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002, 800-253-7521) This companion book to the national PBS documentary of the same name offers a variety of essays on topics related to marriage and divorce in our contemporary culture, interspersed with personal narratives illustrating various themes. Selections analyze how we arrived at our current situation, the effects on children, and directions we might take to improve the quality of family life in the USA. Discussion Guide available. [Webster]

- **Marriage Savers: Helping Your Friends and Family Avoid Divorce**, by Michael J. McManus (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995. The author writes passionately about the church’s need to do all it can to help couples form lasting, healthy marriages and about the necessity for community marriage agreements and reforms in marriage and divorce law. He describes specific programs providing relationship education for the young, effective marriage preparation for engaged couples, enrichment for couples who have been married for a while, and strategies for helping couples in crisis. [Webster]

- **Non-Violent Communication: A Language of Life** (in earlier editions “…Language of Compassion”, by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D. (Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 1999), www.nonviolentcommunication.com. This clear and straightforward text shows how to break patterns of thinking that lead to arguments and anger and how to communicate with mutual respect and understanding. The skills (separating observation from evaluation, taking responsibility for our feelings, making requests instead of demands, and listening empathically) can enhance any relationship. This book works well with groups of individuals whether single or married. A Companion Workbook available at the website provides discussion questions and exercises for individual or group study, and various related books for parents, teachers, community leaders, etc., address specific topics. [Ives]

- **Nurturing Faith in Families: 425 Creative Ideas for Family Ministry**, by Jolene L. Roehlkepartain (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002). Recognizing the vulnerability of families with children to stress and challenge, the author proposes that responsibility for nurturing their faith rests with the entire congregation. This bookcatalogues a wide variety of ideas and resources for becoming a family-nurturing church. [Williams]

- **Why Marriage Matters, Third Edition: Thirty Conclusions from the Social Sciences**, by W. Bradford Wilcox et.al (New York, New York: Institute for American Values, 2011). This 46-page booklet succinctly sums up recent research on marriage and divorce and the impact of current trends on our society. The specific conclusions are summarized in five theme statements: 1) Children are less likely to thrive in cohabiting households, compared to intact,
married families; 2) Family instability is generally bad for children; 3) American family life is becoming increasingly unstable for children; 4) The growing instability of American family life also means that contemporary adults and children are more likely to live in what scholars call “complex households;” and 5) The nation’s retreat from marriage has hit poor and working-class communities with particular force.

[Webster]

ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES IN GENERAL

- **Smart Marriages, www.smartmarriages.com.** This non-denominational, non-partisan, non-sectarian organization offers the most comprehensive source of marriage and family ministry information and resources. For 14 years, ending in 2010, an annual Smart Marriages/Happy Families conference, brought together researchers, program developers, and other experts for plenary sessions, seminars, workshops, and training institutes. At the website, you can order recordings of the presentations made at those conferences, read articles on a variety of relevant topics, check the Directory of Programs for available relationship education courses, and sign up for a free online e-newsletter.

- **United Methodist Marriage and Family Ministries: www.marriagelovepower.net.** This website offers a variety of helps and updates for couples, pastors, and mentor couples, including a Directory of United Methodists trained in a variety of marriage and family programs and a schedule of upcoming events and training opportunities. Check this website for “best practices” articles, resource lists, and other information. Many items on this website are also posted at [http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/intergenerational-family-ministries](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/intergenerational-family-ministries) (search by title or topic)
FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND ADULT RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION
(includes parenting resources)

RESOURCES FOR RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION GROUP PROGRAMS AND STUDIES

- **Active Christian Parenting: Practical Skills for the Preschool to Preteen Years**
  by Michael H. Popkin. Combines skill-based parenting strategies with a focus on Christian values and practice, giving parents the tools they need to improve their parenting skills and foster their children's faith development. 6-session kit for small groups with 2 videos (each 30 min of vignettes), leader's guide, parent's guide (1 included, order 1 per parent) and promotional package. [NEC]

- **Active Parenting, by Michael H. Popkin.** This video-based program for parent education teaches how to be an active parent by understanding your child, instilling courage, developing responsibility, winning cooperation, and becoming a democratic family in action. Comes with handbook, leader's guide, action guide, promotional guide and newsletter.

- **Active Parenting: Teaching, Cooperation, Courage, and Responsibility** by Michael Popkin. Effective program for understanding and leading children, for helping them to thrive and grow. Book is drawn from the video course. Filled with case histories that show how to use the program's techniques. Great guide to building responsive, healthy, and fulfilled family relationships. [NEC]


- **Active Parenting Now in the Faith Community: A Biblical and Theological Guide**, by Freda Gardner, revised by Bruch and Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (Atlanta: Active Parenting Publishers, Inc., 2003) This guide provides a general introduction and specific material for each session of Active Parenting Now, adding religious insights and language to the program described above. Includes reproducible handouts. [Williams]

- **Connections and PREP: Relationships and Marriage**: Interpersonal Relationship Program for Secondary Students (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, revised 2003), 800-695-7975, skills@dibbleinstitute.org, free sample lessons at www.DibbleInstitute.org, see also www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org. Instructor's and Student Manuals provide complete resources for eighteen one-hour sessions for
those in grades 11 to 14, offering practical tools for understanding and making wise decisions about relationships and marriage. The course incorporates materials from PREP dealing with self-awareness, communication, and conflict management and also includes a "marriage game." Although designed for use in public schools, the teachings are clearly compatible with Christian teaching and are easily adapted for use in church settings by adding appropriate worship moments. Lessons may be combined into fewer sessions.

**Created by God: About Human Sexuality for Older Boys and Girls,** by James Ritchie (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009). This updated resource emphasizes a healthy biblical and Christian perspective on human sexuality, relationships, and values for “tweens.” A Leader’s Guide CD-ROM and a DVD provide guidance for planning, promotion, and leading of the program. The Student Book and Parent Guide provide information for individual study, for parent-child discussion, and for group study. Other resources are listed in the back of the Parent Guide. Order additional materials through Cokesbury (800-672-1789).

**Dating and Emotions** (2010) helps thirteen- through seventeen-year-olds learn how relationships develop, how to communicate effectively, how to spot destructive patterns, how to deal with emotions, and other interpersonal skills. Part of The Connections Series, by Charlene R. Kamper (Berkley, California: The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, 1996, 1999, 2004, 2010), which consists of two complete ready-to-teach programs designed to help teens learn skills essential for healthy, fulfilling relationships. The second program, titled Relationships and Marriage, is for young adults aged sixteen through twenty. Intended for use in schools, church youth groups, and other youth organizations, available in both religious and non-religious language, the content is based on current research in family life education. Effective teaching methods incorporate games and exercises to deepen understanding and strengthen skills. The Instructor’s Manual provides complete lesson plans for 15 one-hour sessions, transparency and handout masters, activity and game cards, and a sample student workbook. Order extra student workbooks from The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, California, 94707-0881, 800-695-7975, FAX: 972-226-2824, Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org


**Love U2: Dating Smarts: A Bit More Than Friends for Younger Teens.** The Instructor’s Manual details six one-hour sessions to help youth in grades 5 through 8 explore
attraction, infatuation, rejection, and other aspects of budding relationships. Highly engaging activities teach what to say and do when dating, as well as how to build a good relationship. This is one of the **LoveU Series**: by Marline F. Pearson (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education, 2004), 800-695-7975, skills@dibbleinstitute.org, www.BUILDINGRELATIONSHIPS.org, www.DibbleInstitute.org. These courses may be used separately or in sequence or by combining key lessons from each. They are designed for use in public settings but completely compatible with Christian teachings and easily adapted by adding worship moments before, during, and/or after sessions. Sample lessons available at websites. [Williams]

- **Money Habitudes for Teens: Get a Jump on Your Habits and Attitudes about Money,** by Syble Solomon (LifeWise, 2007, www.moneyhabitudes.com, 888-833-4331). This set of cards may be used by individuals or as part of a group activity to help youth determine the values and attitudes that guide their thoughts and actions in regard to saving, spending, and dealing with debt and money in general. After a card sorting activity, participants discover the challenges and advantages of each financial type (Spontaneous, Status, Giving, Security, Carefree, and/or Planning) and learn ways to work toward a healthy balance. Since differences in attitudes toward and use of money are primary causes of conflict in intimate relationships, teens benefit from increased self-understanding and the ability to discuss differences with others. [Ives]

- **Parenting with Intimacy: Experiencing Great Commandment Love in Your Family,** by David Ferguson, Teresa Ferguson, Paul Warren, and Vicki Warren (Austin, TX: Relationship Press, 1995). This Biblically-based and practical handbook shows parents how to give their children what they really need, heal hurts, respond lovingly to misbehavior, and strengthen family relationships. Each chapter includes exercises and assignments for individuals, couples, or for group study. You can find companion resources (videos, audios, and a teaching curriculum) at www.GREATCOMMANDMENT.NET. [BUST]

- **PICK a Partner: Premarital Interpersonal Choices and Knowledge (How to Avoid Falling in Love With a Jerk),** by John Van Epp, PhD. (1997-2008) This set of 2 DVDs provides five 50-minute presentations of a plan for pacing a relationship and for exploring the key areas that foreshadow what a potential partner will be like in marriage. Participants can write in the accompanying workbook. Magnetic boards illustrate the five aspects of a relationship that need to be built in sequence: knowing, trusting, relying, committing, and sexual touch. The website offers training information, workbooks, and resources for helping singles and singles again to build healthy relationships by using both their heads and their hearts. www.Lovethinks.com. [Williams]

- **Prepare – Enrich – Inspire for Teens,** by Jessica Nixon Poole and Amy Olson-Sigg (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute, 2011). This complete “teach-out-of-the-box” curriculum kit for high school age students includes a three-ring binder with a Leader’s Guide section containing reproducible handouts, scripted lesson plans for ten 60- to 90-minute sessions,
a CD with Instructor’s Kit Resources and Powerpoint slides, and a sample copy of the Student Journal. Based on research from the PREPARE/ENRICH inventories, the lessons focus on self-awareness, love and attraction, dating, families, and marriage and teach the skills necessary for building healthy relationships: communication, conflict resolution, and planning. In addition, optional supplementary materials address topics such as finances, parenthood, and family of origin. Pre- and post-assessments provide measures of student learnings. The materials are flexible enough for use in a variety of settings and formats. For more information and to purchase the Student Journals for each participant, contact the Dibble Institute, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, CA 94707-0881; 800-695-7975, relationshipskills@dibbleinstitute.org or www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org. [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Reel Faith: Where Meaning Meets the Movies, Vol 1, No. 1**, by Ken Carter, Peggy Harris, Scott Grotewold, Tom and Karen Johnson, and Skip Parvin. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001) This guide provides general information on using movies for thoughtful discussions and as aids for teaching and preaching about redemption, relationships, and the meaning of life. This edition contains specific insights and discussion questions for *The Green Mile, Meet the Parents, As Good as it Gets, Notting Hill, Shadowlands, The Shawshank Redemption, Simon Birch, Treasure of the Sierra Madre, It's a Wonderful Life*, and *The Crow*, as well as suggestions for using both current and classic movies, thematic film series, and contrasting/comparing two films on similar themes. [NEC]

- **Teen Relationships and Romance: Skill Sets #1, 50 Group Activities**, by Jessica Nixon Pool and Amy Olson-Sigg (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute, 2011). These activities are designed to “introduce, extend, reinforce, follow up, and/or review topics” covered in other relationship studies or may just be used on their own. Each requires only minimal preparation, may be completed in 10 to 25 minutes, and may be extended by discussion if time allows. [NEC]

- **Things to Know Before You Say “Go:” Powerful Questions to Ask Before You Give Your Heart Away**, by Elizabeth Martindale, Psy.D. (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute, 2011). This attractively packaged set of cards and accompanying Activity Book with reproducible handouts provide a fun and engaging way to explore romantic relationships and make wise decisions about actual or potential partners. Discussions, games, interviews and a variety of interesting activities help young people consider a number of important issues: “Can this person accept things about me I am unable or unwilling to change? “How does this person deal with disappointment and loss?” “Do I like how this person responds when I am hurting or upset?” “Does this person follow through on commitments and obligations?” The cards may also be used for self-evaluation and for clarification of priorities. The Dibble Institute, 800-695-7975, RelationshipSkills@DibbleInstitute.org, www.DibbleInstitute.org [ROLLING RIDGE]

marriage and family are a high priority for their future, but most youthful ideas about marriage reflect not facts, but media messages, street talk, and poor role models. Using popular movies, What’s Reel? provides seven ready-to-teach and fun lessons to help teens compare ideas about marriage with actual research, examine their expectations, become critical observers of media, and identify helpful and problematic behaviors.

[Williams]

BOOKS AND OTHER READING MATERIAL FOR RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION AND PARENTING

- **9 Ways to Bring Out the Best in You and Your Child**, by Maggie Reigh (Kelowna, Canada: Northstone Publishing, 2004, [www.northstone.com](http://www.northstone.com)). The author shows parents how to raise respectful, responsible, and resilient children, while at the same time bringing more life and laughter to their homes. This highly spiritual, easy-to-understand approach emphasizes mutual respect, bringing values to life, mutual empowerment, dealing with feelings, effective communication, encouragement, living harmoniously, loving discipline, and helping children trust their inner guidance.

  [BUST]


- **Active Parenting: Teaching, Cooperation, Courage, and Responsibility** by Michael Popkin. Effective program for understanding and leading children, for helping them to thrive and grow. Book is drawn from the video course. Filled with case histories that show how to use the program's techniques. Great guide to building responsive, healthy, and fulfilled family relationships. [NEC]


- **Boundaries with Kids: How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Children**, by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998) The authors provide guidance for raising your children to take responsibility for their actions, attitudes, and emotions. Readers can learn how to set limits while still being a loving parent, to bring control to an out-of-control family
life, and to define appropriate boundaries and consequences for your children. The last chapter
walks parents through the steps of making a plan, presenting it to the child, negotiating, and
following through.

- **Embracing Parents: How Your Congregation Can Strengthen Families**, by Jolene and
  Eugene Roehlkepartain (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004). The authors describe and
  illustrate how churches can provide for all parents and families a strong web of support
  built around a research-based list of the developmental assets children need to
  experience in order to succeed in life.

* **Guilt-Free Parenting: Escaping the “Perfect Parenting” Trap**, by Robert and Debra
  Bruce and Ellen W. Oldacre (Nashville: Dimensions for Living, 1997) Guilty feelings about
  not being a good-enough parent often lead to overwork, exhaustion, and anxiety. The authors offer
  encouragement and practical help, showing parents how to let go of unrealistic expectations
  and lean on God’s grace. Each chapter includes Biblical support; practical tools; and easy-to-
  apply suggestions for all kinds of families.

- **Home Improvement: The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids**, by Scott Turansky
  and Joanne Miller (Lawrenceville, NJ: National Center for Biblical Parenting, 1996). This
  book provides parents with clear instructions and helpful examples for “Encouraging
  Obedience Without Yelling,” “Making Every Discipline Time Constructive,” “Helping
  Children Make Lasting Changes,” “Communicating Values so Kids Will Listen,” “Dealing
  with Anger in Children,” “Disciplining Consistently Even When You’re Tired,” “Teaching
  Kids to Learn from Life,” and “Approaching Deep-rooted Problems.”
  [BUST]

* **How Full is Your Bucket? Positive Strategies for Work and Life**, by Tom Rath and
  Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D. (New York, Gallup Press, 2004) Using examples from the workplace
  as well as stories about personal relationships, the authors explore the effects of positive words
  and actions on families, health, longevity, worker satisfaction, and productivity. Among the
  strategies they offer for increasing positive feelings is the “drop,” a short specific, individualized
  written note complimenting a person for something.

- **How to Avoid Falling in Love with a Jerk: The Foolproof Way to Follow Your Heart
  The author describes five dynamics that .create the feelings of attachment in every
  relationship: knowledge, trust, reliance, commitment, and sex. Understanding these
  dynamics can help persons avoid forming over-attachments of the heart that can
  override the judgments of the mind. Dr. Van Epp provides the following rule of thumb:
  “The degree or level of each bonding dynamic should never exceed the level of the
  previous.” Participants learn to accurately predict what a person will be like after
  marriage by thoroughly investigating five specific areas (family background, conscience,
compatibility potential, relationship skills, and past relationship patterns). (www.lovethinks.com)

- **How to Have a Real Conversation With Your Teen: Tips for parents from veteran youth workers with teens of their own**, by Ron Habermas and David Olshine (Cincinnati, Ohio: The Standard Publishing Company, 1998). The first part of this book contains four chapters exploring relational styles in families and describing effective approaches for improving communication. Each chapter includes suggestions for individual and group study. The second part of the book offers relevant anecdotes, advice, fresh ideas, helpful reminders, and discussion topics.

- **Packaging Girlhood: Rescuing Our Daughters from Marketers’ Schemes**, by Sharon Lamb, Ed.D. and Lyn Mikel Brown, Ed.D (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2006). The authors describe three messages marketers promote to girls through advertising: looks matter above all else; “thin and sexy” is the ideal; boyfriends and shopping should be the center of their attention. Marketers and advertisers hire psychologists to research what children want and what they respond to, not in order to encourage their healthy development, but to create “brand loyalty” among shoppers, starting at a very young age. In order to counter these messages, Lamb and Brown suggest asking good questions and listening respectfully and reflectively to girls’ responses, rather than doing all the talking. Children and youth will remember what they themselves conclude and verbalize much more vividly than what is said to them.

- **Raising Children Compassionately: Parenting the Nonviolent Communication Way**, by Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D. (Encinitas, CA: Puddledancer Press, 2005). The author urges parents to put compassionate connection first and to use compassionate communication to build a mutually respectful and enriching family lifestyle. Learn how to motivate without threatening punishment or promising reward, listen to really understand, discover the needs underlying behavior or speech, and reduce family conflict. [BUST]

- **Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Kids**, by Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller (Colorado Springs, Waterbrook Press, 2000). The authors show parents how to practice and teach honor in their relationships with their children, describing the beneficial changes honor can bring to bring to family life. Learning to treat each other as special, to do more than is expected, and to maintain a good attitude will also help children get along better in the world. Chapters include discussion questions suitable for individual or group study. Eight Family Together Time activities provide opportunities for families to learn how to practice honor.

- **Sex, Kids, & the Internet: A Workbook for Parents of 21st Century Children**, by Francis M. Knight II (Fort Worth, TX: Knights’ Quest Ministries, 2010). The author describes how
easily persons may inadvertently access porn sites on the internet, as simply as by typing .com instead of .gov, for some domain names; by clicking on a link or “pop-up” that appears, unsolicited; or by going to a familiar site that has been hijacked by pornographers. Free previews and site tours entice viewers and present them with images designed to stimulate their interest and curiosity. Filtering for pornography must take place at the user level. Knight suggests basic household rules and practices to protect young people from predatory sites and individuals and explains how to search a computer, handheld device, or phone for evidence of pornography; set parental controls; and talk to children and youth about use of social networks, posting identifying or incriminating information, and “friending” strangers. Every parent should read this information!

[NEC]

- **Teen Sex Education: The Missing Link**, audiotape discusses the need to help youth see marriage as a worthwhile goal. [Ives]

- **Ten Things Teens Should Know About Marriage** – brochure. Presents marriage as a beneficial goal for teens and offers ten tips to increase chances for a healthy, happy, long-term marriage. Order from The Dibble Institute, 800-695-7975 or on the web at [www.dibbleinstitute.org](http://www.dibbleinstitute.org)

- **The 5 Love Languages of Children**, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2005). The author shows parents how to use with their children the five languages of love: Quality Time, Words of Affirmation, Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. While encouraging use of all five of the love languages, he also explains how to determine which ones communicate best to your child and how to respond to challenging behavior. [BUST]

- **The 5 Love Languages of Teenagers: The Secret to Loving Teens Effectively**, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2010). The author shows parents, grandparents, and others how to effectively interact with teenagers by using the five languages of love: Quality Time, Words of Affirmation, Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. After exploring the particular challenges of the teen years, the author encourages use of all five of the love languages, explains how to determine which ones communicate best to your child, and how to respond to difficult behaviors and situations. [BUST]

* **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People**, by Stephen R. Covey (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1989). By cultivating the “7 Habits,” (“Be Proactive,” “Begin with the End in Mind,” “Put First Things First,” “Think Win/Win,” “Seek First to Understand…,” “Synergize,” “Sharpen the Saw”), individuals can grow in self-mastery and in the ability to build healthy
relationships and to heal hurting or broken relationships. A good study for adult singles, couples, and/or parents.

[BUST]

- **The Art of Loving Well: A Character Education Curriculum for Today’s Teenagers**, Boston University School of Education: The Loving Well Project, 1993. The main text for a literature-based relationship education curriculum, this book offers brief stories, discussion questions, writing assignments, and other activities to stimulate thinking about love, intimacy, and human sexuality. The stories help young people think about emotional experiences and, by considering the behaviors of the literary characters and the consequences of those behaviors, reflect on how they might choose to deal with similar situations in their own lives.

[BUST]

* **The Sacred Search: What if It’s Not About Who You Marry, but Why?** by Gary Thomas (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013) The author urges Christians to base their choice of whether and who to marry on Matthew 6:33: “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness…..” Noting the sad outcomes of marriages based solely on physical attraction and emotional attachment, he advises seeking someone who shares a common sense of purpose, similar values, and a desire to grow in the knowledge and love of God. He offers guidelines for getting to really know the person you are dating and notes that premature sexual involvement may “cement” your relationship to someone who is not a desirable marriage partner. Churches would do well to encourage such in-depth thinking about choosing who to marry – or whether to marry at all. Discussion questions at the end of each chapter make this an excellent resource.

[BUST]

* **The Connected Family**, by David and Claudia Arp (Monroe, Louisiana: Howard Publishing, Inc., 2005) In separate chapters, the authors address seven ways of connecting and provide a number of “projects,” specific simple steps families can take to increase each type of connection: “Spending Time Together,” “Pushing the Positives,” Talking to Each Other – and Really Listening,” “Handling Stress and Disagreements with Grace,” “Working Together and Promoting Responsibility,” “Promoting Spiritual Well-Being,” “Playing and Having Fun Together.” The final chapter, they suggest, might well be the place to start, involving your family in adopting a family motto and in setting family goals.

[BUST]

RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES
• **Active Parenting Publishers**, 1955 Vaughn Road NW, Suite 108, Kennesaw, GA 30144-7808, 800-825-0060, [www.ActiveParenting.com](http://www.ActiveParenting.com) This organization provides a variety of excellent programs for general and specific parenting needs. **Active Parenting Now** is a 6-session curriculum for parents of children ages 5 to 12. **Active Parenting Now in the Faith Community: A Biblical and Theological Guide**, by Freda Gardiner (Atlanta: Active Parenting Publishers, 2003) provides general guidelines and specific suggestions, including handouts, for adapting the above program for faith communities. Other curriculums address the specific concerns of divorced parents, stepfamilies, single parents, parents of teens, etc. In addition to the video curriculums, the catalog lists a number of books for both children and parents addressing a wide range of issues. Visit the website or call to order a catalog.

• **The Dibble Institute for Marriage Education**, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, CA, 94707-0881, 800-695-7975, Relationshipskills@DibbleInstitute.org, [www.DibbleInstitute.org](http://www.DibbleInstitute.org). “The Dibble Institute equips young people with the skills and knowledge they need to develop healthy romantic relationships now and in the future. We will be successful when more children are nurtured and protected by their own parents in a healthy marriage and when more young people make healthy life choices.” At the website you will find curriculum resources and training opportunities for workers with youth. Order helpful brochures for teens. Sign up for monthly e-newsletters to keep abreast of new research and resources. You will also find links to [www.stayteen.org](http://www.stayteen.org), which provides teens with information about relationships and sex in an attractive and fun format, including interactive quizzes and games.

• **The National Center for Biblical Parenting**, 75 Hopatcong Drive, Lawrenceville, NJ 08638-4136, 609-77-8002, 800-771-8334, parent@biblicalparenting.org. Sign up at [www.biblicalparenting.org](http://www.biblicalparenting.org) for free email parenting tips (in English or Spanish) and explore excellent resources such as **Home Improvement: The Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids; Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Kids**; and **Parenting is Heart Work** (Training Manual and audio CDs).

• **WWW. NVCTRAINING.COM** – This website offers both free and fee-based resources, tools, webinars, and teleconferences. Free resources include Weekly NVC Reflections, NVC Training Videos, and Online Classes. For articles about NVC see also [http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/aboutnvc/aboutnvc.htm](http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/aboutnvc/aboutnvc.htm)

**RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION**

**RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION GROUP PROGRAMS AND STUDIES**

• **10 Great Dates Before You Say “I Do,”** by David and Claudia Arp and Curt and Natelle Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003). The authors provide 10 brief chapters
discussing issues relevant for engaged couples. Each chapter has an accompanying guide and exercises for couples to use during a date to share thoughts and feelings about those issues. These conversations are designed to help couples learn to share hopes and expectations, appreciate their differences, communicate and connect, solve problems as a couple, manage money, develop spiritual intimacy, consider roles and plans for a family, and choose an intentional marriage.     [Williams]

• **Money Habitudes: Target Your Habits and Attitudes About Money**, created by Syble Solomon, (LifeWise, 2006, [www.moneyhabitudes.com](http://www.moneyhabitudes.com), 888-833-4331). This set of cards may be used by couples or as part of a group activity to help persons determine the values and attitudes that guide their thoughts and actions in regard to saving, spending, and dealing with debt and money in general. Following a card sort activity, participants discover the challenges and advantages of each financial type (Spontaneous, Status, Giving, Security, Carefree, and/or Planning) and ways to achieve a healthy balance. Since differences in attitudes toward and use of money are a primary cause of conflict in marriage, couples benefit by increased understanding of themselves and each other and by learning to discuss their differences and to make mutually agreeable decisions that take those differences into consideration.     [Bonnie Marden]

• **Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts (SYMBIS): Seven Questions to Ask Before –and After – You Marry Curriculum Kit**, by Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006). This kit includes a Leader’s Guide and DVD with video segments for seven approximately 90-minute sessions for engaged and newlywed couples, plus two additional sessions for use with couples entering into second marriages. In addition, there is one copy each of the Parrott’s expanded and updated book *Saving Your Marriage Before it Starts*, the *Workbook for Men*, the *Workbook for Women*, and the *Saving Your Second Marriage Before It Starts Workbook for Men* and *Workbook for Women*. These materials may be used with groups of couples or by individual couples on their own or with a mentor couple. Additional copies of the book and workbooks may be purchased at [www.RealRelationships.com](http://www.RealRelationships.com) or [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com). Churches may order by calling 800-727-3480; individuals may order from the website.     [ROLLING RIDGE]

• **The First Dance: Managing the People Stress of Wedding Planning**, by William J Doherty, Ph.D. This excellent program addresses both the couple and extended family dynamics of wedding planning and offers guidance for addressing issues in ways that lead to healthy relationships and prevent future problems. The DVD can be viewed by a small group or by a couple in their own home in about two hours, allowing some time for discussion. Learn more at [www.TheFirstDance.com](http://www.TheFirstDance.com).     [NEC]

**BOOKS AND OTHER MARRIAGE PREPARATION READING MATERIAL FOR COUPLES**

• **10 Great Dates Before You Say “I Do,”** by David and Claudia Arp and Curt and Natelle Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003). The authors provide 10 brief chapters discussing issues relevant for engaged couples. Each chapter has an accompanying guide and exercises for couples to use during a date to share thoughts and feelings about those
issues. These conversations are designed to help couples learn to share hopes and expectations, appreciate their differences, communicate and connect, solve problems as a couple, manage money, develop spiritual intimacy, consider roles and plans for a family, and choose an intentional marriage. [NEC]

- **All-in-One Marriage Prep: 75 Experts Share Tips and Wisdom to Help You Get Ready Now**, Susanne M. Alexander (Naples, FL: Barringer, 2010). This comprehensive collection of short articles by various authors is grouped by topic and covers a wide-range of issues for courting, engaged, and newly-wed couples to consider and discuss. Contributors include Claudia and David Arp, John Van Epp, Mark Gungor, Scott Haltzman, Mike McManus, and others. [Marriage Transformation L.L.C., 800-501-6682, www.allinonemarriageprep.com] [BUST]


- **Celebrating Our Differences: Living Two Faiths in One Marriage**, by Mary Helene Rosenbaum and Stanley Ned Rosenbaum (Boston, KY: Ragged Edge Press and Black Bear Productions, Inc., 1992). The authors offer practical advice and resources for interfaith couples and for pastors and rabbis working with them, clearly pointing out the various pitfalls that can take such couples by surprise, so that couples can foresee and discuss potential problems before they arise. [BUST]

- **Growing Love in Christian Marriage Couples' Edition**, by Richard and Joan Hunt, (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2000), Cokesbury 800-672-1789) This companion workbook for the Growing Love in Christian Marriage Pastor's Manual described below provides a pre-marital inventory, information, suggestions, and discussion exercises, along with Scripture passages and other worship resources to be used by a couple on their own or with guidance from a pastor or mentor couple. [Ives]

- **Interfaith Wedding Ceremonies: Samples and Sources**, selected and with an introduction by Joan C. Hawxhurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Dovetail Publishing, 1966). The author discusses issues interfaith couples should consider when planning their wedding, then offers sample ceremonies, excerpts from other ceremonies, and a variety of helpful resources. [BUST]
• **Mixed Matches: How to Create Successful Interracial, Interethnic, and Interfaith Relationships**, by Joel Crohn, Ph.D. (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1995). The author, drawing on years of counseling experience, shows couples in cross-cultural relationships how to approach each other compassionately and negotiate solutions to their cultural and religious differences. This book also offers practical advice on how couples can confront prejudice, deal with in-laws, and help their children develop a sense of identity in a bi-cultural family. [BUST]

• **Take Back Your Wedding: Managing the People Stress of Wedding Planning**, by William J. Doherty, PhD. and Elizabeth Doherty Thomas (2007). The authors address various wedding planning issues, providing resources and sound advice for dealing with them in ways that strengthen family relationships and prevent future problems. This book can help couples and their families clarify expectations, negotiate differences up front, uncover underlying issues that may impact decision-making, avoid predictable conflicts, and manage those conflicts that are unavoidable (pages 6-7). The website [www.thefirstdance.com](http://www.thefirstdance.com) offers additional helps and insights. [BUST] [NEC]

• **Things I Wish I’d Known Before We Got Married**, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2010). Practical wisdom and tips, dispelling the myths, illusions, and expectations that can undermine happiness in marriage. This would be an excellent gift for engaged or newly-wed couples. [BUST]

• **The Interfaith Family Guidebook: Practical Advice for Jewish and Christian Partners**, by Joan C. Hawxhurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Dovetail Publishing, 1988). This book is designed to help interfaith couples respect and appreciate each other’s religious heritage and successfully resolve the many issues they will face in their marriage, such as planning their wedding, raising their children, and celebrating holidays. [BUST]

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION RESOURCES FOR PASTORS, COUNSELORS, AND MENTOR COUPLES**

• **FOCCUS: Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, and Study**, (Omaha, Nebraska: FOCCUS Inc., 1997). Family Life Office, 3214 North 60th Street, Omaha, NE 68104 (402-551-9003), [jatkins@omahaflo.creighton.edu](mailto:jatkins@omahaflo.creighton.edu), [www.foccusinc.com](http://www.foccusinc.com). This inventory provides individualized couple feedback on where each partner stands in regard to topics important to marriage. It is not a predictor of marital success or failure,
but a tool to help couples name and work through issues before marriage. The inventory can be administered to an individual couple or to groups. The act of responding to the questions raises issues for the couple to discuss, even before it is scored. Forms are submitted for scoring, with a small fee. A facilitator uses the report analyzing the couple’s responses to help them reflect on the following topics: Life-Style Expectations, Friends and Interests, Personality Match, Personal Issues, Communication, Problem-Solving, Religion and Values, Parenting Issues, Extended Family Issues, Sexuality Issues, Financial Issues, Readiness Issues, Marriage Covenant, Key Problem Indicators, Family of Origin. Additional questions are available for the following topics, where appropriate: Dual Careers, Interfaith Marriages, Second Marriages, and Cohabiting Couples. FOCCUS is available in several languages, including Braille, and four different versions for Catholic, Christian non-denominational, non-denominational, and learning-disabled persons. Training is strongly recommended. Call or visit the website to locate a facilitator.

- **FOCCUS training for mentor couples.** Steve and Kathy Beirne offer mentor couples training in use of this premarital inventory. Contact them at 207-775-4757, Sbeirne@maine.rr.com

- **Growing Love in Christian Marriage Pastor’s Manual, 2nd Edition** by Jane P. and S. Clifton Ives (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001). The Pastor’s Manual is a marriage preparation and comprehensive marriage and family ministry resource for pastors and other church leaders. In addition to guidelines for using the Growing Love in Christian Marriage Couple’s Edition and for pre-marital counseling, the Pastor’s Manual includes information for establishing a mentor couple ministry, for working with couples in groups, and for providing relationship education for all ages and stages of family life. An annotated list of resources includes organizations, programs, and curriculum materials that may be incorporated into local church and community ministries. An expanded version of this resource list is posted at [www.marriagelovepower.net](http://www.marriagelovepower.net), along with a Directory of Methodist Marriage and Family Ministry leaders and consultants, a Training Model for the use of Growing Love in Christian Marriage, and other helps.
  [Ives][BUST]

- **Interfaith Wedding Ceremonies: Samples and Sources,** selected and with an introduction by Joan C. Hawxhurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Dovetail Publishing, 1966). The author discusses issues interfaith couples should consider when planning their wedding, then offers sample ceremonies, excerpts from other ceremonies, and a variety of helpful resources.  [BUST]

- **Marriage Mentoring: Twelve Conversations,** by Dr. Edward A Gray, LMFT. Dr. Gray has created a unique “12 Conversations” model for marriage mentoring which pairs a younger couple with a more mature couple in a healthy relationship. Couples meet once a month for a year, developing friendship through a guided conversation about marriage, sharing stories about the blessings, realities, and challenges of marriage. The
conversation guides prompt sharing on Mentor couples do not need to be professional counselors or have a “perfect” marriage, but should be willing and able to share in loving and caring ways stories of their own married life and what they have learned through experience in regard to nurturing love, relating to in-laws, playing together, handling money, communicating effectively, solving problems, balancing family and work, raising children, fostering intimacy, planning for the future, and celebrating the holidays. Suggestions for organizing the program, recruiting and training mentors, and providing ongoing support are included in this Discussion Guide and at the website under “Starting Your Program.” You can purchase a *Leadership Training Kit*, complete with training DVDs, a training manual, and sample copies of various specific 12 Conversations guides (*Dating Couples, Health Challenges, Military Couples, Senior to Senior: Life After 60, Caregivers, and Grief and Loss*) at the website and other materials as well. Visit the website [www.12conversations.com](http://www.12conversations.com) or contact Dr. Gray at 901-681-9200 or egra@harding.edu for more information. Also available in Spanish, Korean, and Russian.  

- **Military Marriage Mentoring: Twelve Conversations**, by Dr. Edward A Gray, LMFT, and Leanne Braddock, M.ED., M.A.C. Commander, U.S. Navy, retired (2005). Dr. Gray has created a unique “12 Conversations” model for marriage mentoring which pairs a younger couple with a more mature couple in a healthy relationship. The conversation guides prompt sharing on topics essential to healthy marriages: making affirmations, nurturing love, relating to in-laws, playing together, handling money, communicating effectively, solving problems, balancing family and work, raising children, fostering intimacy, planning for the future, and celebrating the holidays. Specific questions address issues common to military life: moving, deployment, loneliness, and reuniting after separation. Both veterans and active-duty couples could offer practical support to young couples as they face new stages in marriage along with the inherent stresses of military life. You can purchase the *Leadership Training Manual for Military Marriage Mentoring* at the website [www.12conversations.com/military-couples](http://www.12conversations.com/military-couples). You may also contact the authors directly for more information. (Dr. Gray: 901-681-9200. egra@harding.edu; Leanne Braddock: cdro5@midsouth.rr.com)  

- **Opening the Door: A Pastor’s Guide to Addressing Domestic Violence in Premarital Counseling**, by Susan Yarrow Morris (Seattle: Faithtrust Institute, 2006). The author defines domestic violence as “….a pattern of behavior used by one partner in an intimate relationship to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the use of or threat of violence.” (p. 13). She provides a clear understanding of its dynamics and provides specific strategies, questions to ask, and information to share, not only in premarital counseling, but also in ongoing ministry and pastoral care, to prevent domestic violence and intervene when abuse is suspected.  

- **PREPARE/ENRICH** (Minneapolis: Life Innovations, Inc., 1996) Life Innovations, Inc., P.O. Box 190, Minneapolis, MN 55440-0190, 800-331-1661, cs@lifeinnovations.com, www.lifeinnovations.com . This program, now in use by over 50,000 clergy and counselors, including a number of New Englanders, offers relationship inventories for
premarital use (PREPARE), for use with premarital couples who already have children (PREPARE-MC), for use with couples who have been married for a while (ENRICH), and for use with couples over fifty years old (MATE). The goals of the program are to help couples explore their relationship strengths and areas in which they need to grow, while learning communication and conflict-management skills. Couples also receive guidance in considering influences from their families-of-origin; developing a financial plan and budget; and setting personal, couple, and family goals. After submitting the couple’s completed inventories, the counselor or clergyperson receives back a print-out analyzing their strengths and growth areas to discuss, along with the Building a Strong Marriage Workbook. The training, which is required, provides a clear process for feedback sessions with the couple. Available in several languages. Call or visit the website to locate a facilitator; order sample copies of computerized results, payment vouchers, question booklets, answer sheets and other related material; or to inquire regarding training.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES

- **Better Marriages**, formerly Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment (ACME), 800-634-8325, info@bettermarriages.org, www.bettermarriages.org. This ecumenical, non-profit organization, an affiliate organization of the UM General Board of Discipleship, provides resources and training for marriage enrichment and marriage preparation. Better Marriages focuses mainly on helping couples in good marriages achieve their full potential. A leadership training and certification program provides skills for leading various couple events. Members receive a bi-monthly newsletter with schedules of upcoming events, book reviews, and articles addressing marriage issues. Call the office or visit the website to learn about leader couples and events in your area and to sign up for quarterly e-newsletters.

- **Marriage Encounter/Engaged Encounter United Methodist** (an affiliate organization of the UM General Board of Discipleship), www.encounter.org. One of the twelve faith expressions of Worldwide Marriage Encounter, ME/EEUM offers Christian weekend experiences for couples who want to prepare for or enrich their marriages. A team of lay couples and a clergy-spouse couple make a series of presentations. Each presentation encourages participants to look at themselves as individuals, at their relationships with each other, and at their relationship with God, the church, and the world. Following each presentation, husband and wife are given time in the privacy of their own room for personal sharing using the techniques taught during the weekend. No group discussion is required. Post-weekend experiences for nurturing ongoing growth are offered in many local areas. Visit the website above to learn about events scheduled for your area. Visit www.wwme.org or call 800-795-5683 to learn more about Worldwide Marriage Encounter and other faith expressions of this ministry.
• **The Relationship Suite: The Key to Vibrant Long Term Relationships**, by Rachel Moheban, LCSW, [www.relationshipsuite.com](http://www.relationshipsuite.com). At this site, Rachel offers both free and fee-based relationship coaching products and services, effectively combining advice from experts with her own unique insights. You can sign up for the following free resources: weekly email relationship tips, a report on improving communication, a link to an audio presentation on dealing with money problems, and a five-minute relationship assessment quiz. Rachel’s coaching products range from her free starter set, “Three Secret Shortcuts to Bring You to Your Best Relationships” audio and eBook, to her comprehensive [Ultimate Relationship Resolution Program](http://www.relationshipsuite.com), which includes five audio programs with accompanying workbooks (Communication, Anger, Money, Physical Intimacy, and Emotional Intimacy). The workbooks provide a verbatim script of the audio for those who want to follow along while listening to Rachel’s teaching, which includes visualizations and exercises related to each topic. These presentations are suitable for couples, premarital couples, and singles. You may also sign up for occasional teleclasses, individual and couple therapy, corporate counseling, training and employee assistance in English, Spanish, Hebrew and Farsi. You can access Rachel's Facebook blog, tips, and articles by typing “The Relationship Suite” into the Facebook search bar or by clicking on the Facebook symbol at her website.

• [www.thefirstdance.com/](http://www.thefirstdance.com/) This website offers numerous helpful articles and resources for wedding planning and marriage preparation.

---

**RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT**

**MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT RESOURCES FOR GROUP PROGRAMS AND STUDIES**

• **10 Great Dates: Connecting Faith, Love & Marriage**, by Peter and Heather Larson and David and Claudia Arp (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2013) provides a non-
threatening and flexible opportunity for couples to explore and share what is really important to them. Ten chapters address such topics as appreciating our differences, experiencing God, and facing the storms of life. In each chapter, the authors share their thoughts and experiences related to the topic, then offer suggestions for a “Date,” along with two copies of a tear-out worksheet outlining a recommended conversation for the participating couples. Couples are encouraged to read the chapter and fill in their worksheets individually before the date, then to choose a pleasant setting away from distractions in order to focus on the conversation. A “Post-Date Spiritual Discovery” at the end of each chapter suggests ways to build on the conversation. A Leader’s Guide, which may be downloaded free from www.10greatdates.org, offers tips for using this resource as a group study. Couples could be asked to read each chapter and experience the “Date” before each session or, especially if you are offering child care, you could schedule time for private couple “Dates” after the group session, during which they would be asked to fill out their individual worksheets. The Leader’s Guide also suggests ice-breakers, group guidelines, activities, prayers, and group discussion starters.

[ROLLING RIDGE]

- **10 Great Dates for Empty Nesters**, by David and Claudia Arp (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004). The authors provide ten brief chapters discussing issues relevant for empty nest couples. Each chapter has an accompanying guide and exercises for couples to use during a date to share thoughts and feelings about those issues. These conversations are designed to help couples rediscover each other and their relationship, clear the air, reevaluate roles and responsibilities, growth together spiritually, and set goals. Visit www.marriagealive.com to learn about and order a DVD video curriculum *The Second Half of Marriage*, which may be used with groups of couples.

[ROLLING RIDGE]

- **10 Great Dates to Energize Your Marriage Video Kit Updated Edition**, by Claudia and David Arp (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2014). This kit contains two 75-minute videos, featuring ten fun date launches and a Leader’s Guide (on Part Two disk). The kit also includes one copy of the Participant’s book, which includes tear-out dating guide worksheets. Couples come together for the video date launch with its low-key discussion starter; then each couple has time alone to talk during their date. The program could be scheduled one night a week for ten weeks, one night every other week or once a month, or over the course of a weekend retreat. You will need one copy of the *10 Great Dates* book for each participating couple. [Order through Marriage Alive International, Inc., P.O. Box 31408, Knoxville, TN 37930, 888-690-6667, www.marriagealive.com, mailline97@aol.com. Also available through popular booksellers and Cokesbury, 800-672-1789 or www.cokesbury.com ]

[ROLLING RIDGE]

- **10 Great Dates to Revitalize Your Marriage** (Marriage Alive International, Inc., 888-690-6667, www.marriagealive.org ). This video curriculum by Claudia and David Arp offers an opportunity for churches to bring couples together for brief input, then send them off on dates with a framework for discussing particular issues. Cape Elizabeth (ME) UMC has offered this program on a monthly basis, as have Steve and Kathy Beirne.
For more information, contact Steve and Judy Hill (207-799-7202) or Steve and Kathy Beirne (207-775-4757, Sbeirne@maine.rr.com) [Webster]


- **Boundaries in Marriage,** by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan). A Leader’s Guide and DVD with video segments for eight one-hour group sessions helps couples understand the boundaries that can “make or break a relationship.” This Biblically-based material emphasizes how freedom and responsibility help couples grow in their marriages. Relationships are strengthened when the individuals in them understand the consequences of their actions; take responsibility for their own feelings, attitudes, values, and behavior; realize that while they cannot change the other, they can influence the other by changing their own behavior; demonstrate respect for each other; make choices based on love, not on fear; take action to solve problems based on their values, wants, and needs; communicate clearly; and listen compassionately. Leaders for this program are encouraged to read the authors’ book **Boundaries in Marriage,** published in 1999, available from popular and Christian booksellers and from the website, www.cloudtownsend.com, where you will also find other related resources and can sign up for an e-newsletter. [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Conversations for Couples: Ideas for Talking About the Important Things,** (Winston-Salem: Better Marriages, 2010) Also available as an e-book download from the website www.bettermarriages.com. Included in this collection are a variety of exercises that can be used with Marriage Enrichment Groups or individually by couples who have discovered the value of structured conversations for deepening their intimacy and fine-tuning their relationships. Topics include Affirmations, Communication, Anger/Conflict, and Feelings. [ROLLING RIDGE]

- “Couple and the Art of Playing,” by Keith Hackett (Vancouver, WA: ImproveMyRelationship Press, 2006). Instructions and worksheets for a “playshop” that can be offered to a group or used by couples on their own. Permission to duplicate material is restricted to those who purchase this manual, but this sample copy will help you decide if and how you might use the material. [Webster]

- **Dr. Harley’s Basic Concepts for Marriage,** by Willard F. Harley, Jr. and Jennifer Harley Chalmers (2004). This DVD, in less than two hours, presents Dr. Harley’s basic concepts for building and maintaining a happy, fulfilling marriage: The Love Bank, Caring and Romantic Love, Emotional Needs, the Policy of Sexual Exclusivity, the Policy of Undivided Attention, Love ers, the Policy of Radical Honesty, the Policy of Joint Agreement, and Four Guidelines

- **Fireproof Your Marriage: Couple’s Kit**, by Jennifer Dion, (Vista, CA: Outreach, Inc., 2008), 800-991-6011, [www.outreach.com](http://www.outreach.com). This kit contains a six-session DVD, and two Participant’s Guides. The DVD sessions recap briefly (2-5 minutes each) scenes from the *Fireproof* movie. The Participant’s Guides provide discussion questions, scripture references, and exercises for use by couples or small groups. The movie itself is available through video/DVD rental sources, but a special license is required for public showings, other than in a private home. You may purchase the license, which is good for one year, by visiting [www.cvli.com](http://www.cvli.com) or calling 800-991-6011. The cost of the site license, which underwrites Christian filmmaking, is based on average church attendance (for average worship attendance of 95, the license costs $99.). [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Get Going and Grow: An Eight-Month MEG Curriculum** (Better Marriages, formerly The Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, info@bettermarriages.org, [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org), 800-634-8325). The Leaders’ Manual provides guidance for establishing and leading a Marriage Enrichment Group (MEG) and all materials needed for eight months of meetings. [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Growing in Marital Love: Volumes I and II**, by Keith and Marilynn Hamilton, co-founders of Relationship Enrichment by Applying Preventive Principles (REAPP), [www.REAPP.org](http://www.REAPP.org). These materials, based on the work of David and Vera Mace and the Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment (now Better Marriages), provide resources for a dynamic Marriage Enrichment Workshop. The five four-hour sessions incorporate Biblical principles and provide training in effective communication, the creative use of conflict, and a new model for understanding our sexuality. Also available in Spanish, German, and Portuguese. Translation into Arabic, Korean, Afrikaans, Malagasi, French, Bengali, and other languages currently in process. Volume I contains the basic marriage enrichment workshop. Volume II contains a workshop for training facilitating couples (6 sessions, 24 hours), an advanced training workshop for instructor couples (60 hours), and a Pre-marital Workshop (5 sessions, 20 hours). Order through the website (registration required). [NEC]

- **Homebuilders Couple Series: Building Your Marriage**, edited by Dennis Rainey. (Little Rock, AR: Family Life, 2000), 800-FL-TODAY, [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com). Complete material for leading seven sessions of a Biblically-based marriage enrichment program for couples. Leaders’ Notes are included in the back, but you might also want to order *HomeBuilders Leader Guide: Starting and Leading your Couples Group*, which provides valuable insight and information for organizing, preparing, dealing with challenges, and expanding this ministry. You will also want to order books for participants. Other studies, each in a separate book for participants with Leader’s Notes in the back, address topics such as improving communication, building teamwork, mastering money, resolving conflict,
growing together in Christ, building each other’s self-esteem, expressing love, managing pressure, etc. [BUST]

- **Imago Connects: Through Conflict to Connection** (Imago Relationships International, 2006) One-hour DVD program explains and illustrates the Imago Dialogue process, which couples can use to share thoughts and feelings to heal and grow in relationships. This process works in all relationships, but is especially helpful for developing intimacy that can help heal childhood wounds. The *Couple’s Handbook* provides instruction and exercises for couples to use on their own, along with the DVD. The *Facilitator’s Guide for Small Groups* outlines three two-hour sessions. [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Infidelity: What Every Couple Should Know**, by Dr. Willard Harley. This DVD presents a 31-minute excerpt from the Marriage Builders’ Weekend Seminar covering basic principles for understanding, preventing, and recovering from infidelity. Available free from the website [www.marriagebuilders.com](http://www.marriagebuilders.com). [ROLLING RIDGE]

* **Keys to Successful Communication: Your Pathway to Intimacy and Romance in Marriage**, by Jimmy Evans (Family and Marriage Today, P.O. Box 8400, Amarillo, TX, 866-800-3244, 866-800-3244, [www.famtoday.com](http://www.famtoday.com)). In these four Biblically-based audio CDs (45-50 minutes each), Jimmy Evans describes the power of words and the damage caused by ineffective communication habits; teaches principles of effective communication; and provides guidance for establishing a covenantal marriage. Useful for individual or group listening. Reflection questions could be developed for couple or group discussion. [BUST]

- **Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage Small Group Study**, by Mark Gungor (Laugh Your Way America! LLC, 2006). This book and its two DVDs of video clips provide material for twelve 60-90 minute sessions for individual couples or small groups. Mark “uses humor to unravel the complexities of marriage and reveals biblical truths to help husbands and wives gain the knowledge and understanding needed to build healthier, stronger and more fulfilling marriage.” (page 15) Mark deals with gender differences effectively and portrays vividly the different ways men and women handle stress. Each participating individual or couple will need a copy of the study guide which is available at [www.laughyourway.com](http://www.laughyourway.com). [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Marriage: Claiming God’s Promises**, by Jack Gilbert and Nan Zoller (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1998. Complete instructions for eight 90-minute sessions of Scripturally-based marriage enrichment activities. Training is not required, but leaders should be couples who have strong marriages and group leadership skills, who are Christian disciples, and who can comfortably participate in personal sharing. [Webster]

- **Money Habitudes: How to be Rich in Life and Love**, by Jessica Poole with Syble Solomon (Berkeley, CA: The Dibble Institute, 2011). This complete “teach-out-of-the-box” curriculum kit for helping youth discover their attitudes and habits related to money includes a three-ring binder with an Instructor’s Manual, scripted lesson plans
for five 60- to 90- minute lessons, a CD with Powerpoint slides and other resources, a set of Habitude cards for card-sort activities, a sample copy of the Student Journal, and other helps, including interactive games. The cards offer a fun, non-threatening way for participants to consider and discuss their feelings and behaviors in regard to money. Lessons may be taught to a group, or individuals can benefit from use of the materials. Since money is often related to personal feelings of status, power, control, success, security, and self-esteem, discovering these connections can help persons approach financial decision-making more intentionally and can also help resolve interpersonal conflicts over money. For additional information or to purchase the kit and Student Journals for participants, contact the Dibble Institute, P.O. Box 7881, Berkeley, CA 94707-0881; 800-695-7975, relationshipskills@dibbleinstitute.org, or www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org [NEC]

- **Right Steps: Discovering a Better Marriage** (A Self-Guided Course for Couples and Leaders' Manual for group sessions, The Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, 800-634-8325, info@bettermarriages.org, www.bettermarriages.org). Clear directions and all materials needed for four two-hour sessions for couples to use by themselves or for leader couples to use with a group (could be adapted to shorter time frames or for a retreat setting). [Webster]

- **Soul Healing Love – Turning Relationships That Hurt into Relationships That Heal - Couples Toolkit**, by Tom and Beverly Rodgers (Charlotte, NC: The Institute for Soul Healing Love). A 2.5 hour DVD and two workbooks provide insights and activities for a couple who want to work on their marriage or for a counselor who wants to work with a couple or group of couples. The Rodgers share out of their own experience and offer sound insights on the normal stage of love relationships, concepts of soul healing love (soul wounds, reactivity, intentionality), digging deeper to understand our reactivity, and Imago (our subconscious image of how relationships should be). Several unique exercises help couples break through their patterns and habitual responses to deeper understanding and love. [Williams]

- **The Five Love Languages Study Guide**, also available as a free download from the website www.5lovelanguages.com. This booklet offers discussion questions for each of the twelve chapters of Gary Chapman’s book. [Webster]

- **The Marriage Breakthrough**, by Michele Weiner-Davis (Davis Training Corporation, 2004). This 2-DVD set provides six one-hour sessions of a seminar that can be viewed by individuals, couples, and groups. Michele teaches practical skills for communicating more effectively, overcoming conflict, bridging the gender gap, building friendship, and increasing passion. She teaches how to stop playing the “blame game” and how to change your relationship, even if your partner refuses to participate. Michele’s solution-oriented approach, although presented in secular language, is compatible with Christian teaching. Available at www.divorceing.com. [ROLLING RIDGE]
• **The Marriage News You Can Use** (video), (The Governor's Commission on Marriage, 111 State Capitol, Salt Lake City, UT84114, 801-538-1533, mreese@utah.gov, www.UtahMarriage.org). An 18-minute video, available in both English and Spanish versions, presents information and tips for building strong marriages in a humorous and lively manner. Produced by the state of Utah, it is offered free to residents of that state and sells to out-of-staters for $5. It may be duplicated for educational or non-commercial use only. [Webster]

• **Unbreakable: Forging a Marriage of Contentment and Delight**, by Charles Causey and Tony Miltenberger (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014). This seven-session scripture-based interactive guide for couples or groups of couples who want to strengthen and deepen their marriage relationships is based on five core components of love (commitment, kindness, honesty, forgiveness, and sacrifice) The first session, focused on the importance and purpose of marriage, is followed by five sessions addressing each of the core components listed above and a final session focused on sexual intimacy. The readings and exercises help each person in the focus on and take responsibility for his or her own attitudes and behavior, while offering opportunity for the couple to share insights and reflections with each other. In the first session, the "Couple Interactive Exercise" directly teaches "The Responsibility Skill." The fourth session provides instruction and a framework for communicating more effectively, and the fifth session offers a clear outline of steps for practicing forgiveness. If a couple intends to write in the book, they will both need their own copy; or they could share one copy, each recording responses in a separate journal or on sheets of paper. [Webster]

**MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT BOOKS AND TAPES FOR COUPLES**

• **10 Great Dates to Revitalize Your Marriage** (Marriage Alive International, Inc., 888-690-6667, www.marriagealive.org). This video curriculum by Claudia and David offers an opportunity for churches to bring couples together for brief input, then send them off on dates with a framework for discussing particular issues. Cape Elizabeth (ME) UMC has offered this program on a monthly basis, as have Steve and Kathy Beirne. For more information, contact Steve and Judy Hill (207-799-7202) or Steve and Kathy Beirne (207-775-4757, Sbeirne@maine.rr.com) [Webster]

• **10 Great Dates for Empty Nesters**, by David and Claudia Arp (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004). The authors provide ten brief chapters discussing issues relevant for empty nest couples. Each chapter has an accompanying guide and exercises for couples
to use during a date to share thoughts and feelings about those issues. These conversations are designed to help couples rediscover each other and their relationship, clear the air, reevaluate roles and responsibilities, growth together spiritually, and set goals. [Webster]

*10 Lessons to Transform Your Marriage*, by John M. Gottman, Ph.D., Julie Schwartz Gottman, Ph.D., and Joan DeClaire (New York, NY: Random House, 2006). Based on their research using tapes of real couple interactions, the Gottmans learned to predict with 90% accuracy whether a marriage would succeed or fail. Now they have turned this information into an excellent “how-to” book, showing couples how to change their interaction patterns in order to thrive. Explaining the destructive cycle of “Criticize, Defend, Counter-criticize,” the authors show couples how to express their needs without criticizing, express their understanding of and appreciation for each other, share responsibility for finding solutions. Sample dialogues illustrate what works and what does not work in intimate relationships, especially in regard to “Healthy Complaining” and “Healthy Ways to Respond to a Complaint.” Numerous self-assessment quizzes and detailed exercises for changing behavior patterns make this book an effective tool for strengthening marriages. [BUST]

12 Hours to a Great Marriage: A Step-by-Step Guide for Making Love Last, by Howard J. Markman, Scott M. Stanley, Susan L. Blumberg, Natalie H. Jenkins, and Carol Whiteley (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004). Based on the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP®), each chapter in this book covers one of the key ingredients in the program developed by internationally-known researchers from the Center for Marital and Family Studies at the University of Denver. Following clear explanations and examples of positive and negative behaviors, individual and couple exercises show how to apply the concepts and learn new relationship skills. Couples could use this book on their own, or it could serve as “homework” for a couples’ support group. [BUST]

- **Adult Children of Divorced Parents: Making Your Marriage Work**, by Beverly and Tom Rodgers, (San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 2002). Adult children of divorced parents can overcome the negative effects of that experience and improve the odds of marital success by understanding their wounds, breaking out of reactivity patterns, and learning how to help each other heal. The authors write out of their own experience as well as that of couples with whom they have worked, offering Scripture-based insights and exercises. [BUST]

- **A Joyful Meeting: Sexuality in Marriage**, by Drs. Mike and Joyce Grace (St.Paul, Minnesota: International Marriage Encounter, 1980). The authors discuss marital sexuality both from a spiritual viewpoint and with humor. They emphasize the importance of mature love for sexual harmony and share practical advice for overcoming the conflicts that are likely to arise because of sexual differences. [BUST]

which are also presented in *Fighting for Your Marriage*, are linked to Scripture in this book. Based on solid research, this work shows couples how they can make their marriages stronger and happier.]

**All you need is love & other lies about marriage**, by John W. Jacobs (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004). The author clearly replaces common myths with the following truths: 1) Love is not enough for successful marriage; 2) Marital communication is more than honest speech; 3) Change is always possible and little changes can produce big results; 4) You bring your upbringing into your marriage no matter how hard you try not to; 5) An egalitarian marriage often requires difficult negotiations; 6) Children can be a serious threat to a marriage; 7) The “media circus” can sabotage your sexual relationship and your marriage. [BUST]

**And They Were Not Ashamed: Strengthening Marriage through Sexual Fulfillment**, by Laura M. Brotherson (Boise, Idaho: Inspire Book, 2004). “As three books in one, this marriage book, sex book and parenting book: Shines light and truth on the intimate marital relationship, restoring sex to its proper position as ordained of God; Effectively addresses, with self-help solutions, the emotional, spiritual and physical intimacy issues that plague so many marriages; Provides principles and practices to help parents teach and better prepare their children for intimacy and lasting fulfillment in marriage.” (back cover) [BUST]


- **Beat Stress Together**, by Wayne and Mary Sotile (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998). This is the same excellent book as *Marriage Skills for Busy Couples*, listed and described below.

- **Boundaries in Marriage: Understanding the Choices That Make or Break Relationships**, by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999). This Biblically-based material emphasizes how freedom and responsibility can help couples grow in their marriages. Relationships are strengthened when the individuals in them understand the consequences of their actions; take responsibility for their own feelings, attitudes, values, and behavior; realize that while
they cannot change the other, they can influence the other by changing their own behavior; demonstrate respect for each other; make choices based on love, not on fear; take action to solve problems based on their values, wants, and needs; communicate clearly; and listen compassionately.  [BUST]

See also the **Boundaries in Marriage Workbook: Understanding the Choices That Make or Break Relationships** and the **Boundaries in Marriage curriculum kit**, by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), available for purchase at the website [www.cloudtownsend.com](http://www.cloudtownsend.com) and for loan here in New England. Contact [Janepives@gmail.com](mailto:Janepives@gmail.com). A Leader’s Guide and DVD with video segments for eight one-hour group sessions helps couples learn about the boundaries that can “make or break a relationship.”  [BUST]

- **Couples and the Art of Playing: Three Easy and Enjoyable Ways to Nurture and Heal Relationships**, by Keith Hackett (Lincoln, Nebraska: iUniverse, Inc., 2003). The author, a United Methodist pastor and Marriage and Family Therapist, encourages couples to develop playful, creative habits to enrich and strengthen their marriages.  [BUST]

- **Discovering Your Couple Sexual Style**, by Barry W. McCarthy and Emily McCarthy (New York: Routledge, 2009). The authors provide information, a personal assessment tool, exercises, and practical suggestions for couples to energize their relationship by developing their own unique erotic style. By cultivating positive and realistic expectations, understanding the “dimensions of touch,” and learning to communicate clearly with each other, couples can build on the romantic love that drew them together and create an enduring sexual bond.  [BUST]

* **Divorce-Proof Your Marriage**, by Dr. Gary and Barbara Rosberg (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2002) The authors’ “Marriage Map” illustrates the common stages of marriage, with self-assessment check lists for determining where you are in your marital journey. Marriages often drift from the Dream to Disappointment, then to Discouragement. Without intervention, couples may then slide into Distance, Disconnect, Discord, and Divorce, emotional or legal. “Without a plan for divorce-proofing, every marriage is vulnerable to decay.” (page 43) The Rosbergs share out of their own experiences and out of their passion for strengthening marriages and ending the culture of divorce, with its disastrous consequences for children and for society at large. They teach Bible-based principles “for building loving homes and divorce-proofing America’s marriages” and challenge readers to join them in this mission.  [BUST]

- **Do-It-Yourself Marriage Enrichment**, by Warren and Mary Ebinger (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998). The authors provide a chance for couples to enrich their marriages “on their own time, on their own terms, and on their own turf.” Issues include communication, priorities, short-and-long term goals, keeping the spark alive, children, finances, and more. The text includes step-by-step instructions, practical exercises, and devotional materials.  [BUST]
• *Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples*, by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1988). This classic work describes the unconscious needs which lead us to choose our mates and how learned behaviors from childhood lead to conflict; shows how to learn positive ways to meet those needs; and outlines a ten-week course in relationship therapy couples can do on their own. [BUST]

• *His Needs, Her Needs*, by Willard Harley. This audiotape explains how married couples can keep their love alive after the birth of their children by understanding and meeting each other’s needs. [Ives]

• *Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love*, by Sue Johnson (New York: Little, Brown, & Company, 2008). This easy to understand and practical guide for couples stresses the importance of emotional attachment. The seven transforming conversations, which encourage emotional responsiveness vital to healthy, lasting marriages, help couples recognize destructive dialogue patterns, find their emotional “raw spots,” revisit rocky moments, communicate needs, connect and engage with each other, forgive and repair injuries, bond through sex and touch, and keep their love alive. [BUST]


• *Hot Monogamy: Essential Steps to More Passionate, Intimate Lovemaking*, by Dr. Patricia Love and Jo Robinson (New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1994). The author helps couples understand the dynamics of sexual attraction and learn how to talk about sex, resolve differences in desire, enjoy life-long romance, and deepen intimacy. [BUST]

• *How One of You Can Bring the Two of You Together: Breakthrough Strategies to Resolve Your Conflicts and Reignite Your Love*, by Susan Page (NY: Broadway Books, 1997). The author’s insights and suggestions will help both those who feel stuck and frustrated with their relationships and those who, although happy and stable, feel some disillusionment or lack of connection. Page presents a series of "experiments" one person can use, based on 8 specific principles: 1) Act on your own. 2) Do the opposite of what you have been doing. 3) Reframe a power struggle. 4) Enlist your partner's help. 5) Express empathy for your partner's position. 6) Gracefully accept what you can’t change. 7) Ask for what you want. 8) Men: tune in; Women: stop
coaching. Detailed analysis and examples make this approach clearly understandable.

[BUST]

- “How to Use Conflict to Bring You Closer,” (Winston-Salem: Better Marriages, 2010). Also available as an ebook download from www.bettermarriages.org. This workbook for couples provides 11 mini-lessons to use on their own or in a group with other couples and a 12th activity for assessing their progress and planning for future growth. Each lesson provides an activity to help them practice what they have learned. Using this resource can help couples learn to manage conflict without hurting each other or their relationship and to discover the growth-potential of the conflict which is inevitable in any intimate relationship.

[Webster]

- If We’re So In Love, Why Aren’t We Happy?: Using Spiritual Principles to Solve Real Problems and Restore Your Passion, by Susan Page (NY: Harmony Books, 2002). By focusing on loving each other, in a spirit of good will, couples can build a true spiritual partnership. The author's insights and "experiments" can be utilized by both or by just one party in the relationship.

[BUST]


[Ives]

- Keeping the Love You Find: A Personal Guide, by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. (New York: Atria Books, 1992). The author provides information and exercises to help readers deepen their understanding of who they are and what they long for in their relationships and then to learn the skills to make behavior changes needed in order to achieve an intention, “conscious” relationship.

[BUST]

- Lo que el necesita, lo que ella necesita, (Spanish language edition of His Needs, Her Needs: Building An Affair-Proof Marriage), by Willard F. Harley, Jr. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming H. Revell, 1994). Based on the simple premise that husbands and wives can find lifelong happiness in marriage by committing themselves to meet each other’s needs, this book offers information and exercises to help couples deepen their understanding of each other and intentionally behave in ways that will nourish the relationship. The author explains that with every encounter we affect each other positively or negatively, making deposits in or withdrawals from each other’s “Love Bank.” The author also clarifies the dynamics that may make spouses vulnerable to the temptation of an affair and offers strategies for healing relationships damaged by infidelity.

[BUST]
* Love and Anger in Marriage, by David Mace (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982). In this classic guide to a healthy marriage, the author describes the physiological process by which a threat perceived by one or more of our five senses triggers physical reactions, sometimes even before we are consciously aware of it. “Anger, therefore, is a spontaneous response, below the level of the conscious mind, to a danger signal, real or imagined. At the incipient stage it is entirely outside my control. I am not responsible for it, but only for how I respond to it.” (p. 32-33) Both venting and suppressing anger can harm a relationship and the persons in it. Only by processing the anger in a pro-active attempt to discover its causes and make adjustments can the persons involved find solutions that will strengthen and deepen a relationship.


* Love and Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs, by Emerson Eggerichs, (Colorado Springs: Integrity Publishers, 2004). Writing from a Christian perspective and frequently quoting Scripture, the author makes a clear case for the importance of honoring the primary needs of women and men. He identifies the “Crazy Cycle” (she reacts to a perceived lack of love and he reacts to a perceived lack of respect) and recommends clear steps to move toward closeness and a mutually satisfying relationship. [BUST]

* The Love and Respect Workbook: For Couples, Individuals or Groups, by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs with Fritz Ridenour (Thomas Nelson, 2005). This workbook is designed for use along with Dr. Eggerichs’ groundbreaking book, Love and Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs (Thomas Nelson, 2004). For each chapter or section of the book, this workbook provides questions to be answered by the husband, by the wife, and by the couple together. Reflecting on the material, on relevant Scripture passages, and on their own experiences in the marriage can help couples apply the concepts and break out of the “Crazy Cycle” that ensues when the primary needs for love and respect are not met. [BUST]

* Marriage Skills for Busy Couples: How to Avoid Supercouple Syndrome (formerly titled Supercouple Syndrome), by Wayne M. Sotile and Mary O. Sotile, M.A. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998). The authors challenge the myths and behavior patterns that cause stress and burnout and show busy couples how to “use their relationships as havens from outside demands,...create appropriate boundaries, take time out to have fun, and nurture their partners by noticing everyday accomplishments.”(page x) [BUST]
• **Love for All Seasons: Eight Ways to Nurture Intimacy**, by John Trent, Ph.D. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). The author uses the Song of Songs as a framework for describing eight specific ways couples can deepen their emotional and spiritual bond. A study guide provides suggestions for self-assessment and discussion. [BUST]


• **Pure Gold: Encouraging Character Qualities in Marriage**, by Susanne M. Alexander, with Craig A. Farnsworth and John S. Miller (Cleveland, OH: Marriage Transformation LLC, 2005). The middle section of this book presents 56 positive character traits, listed alphabetically from *acceptance* and *assertiveness* to *wisdom*, each of which is discussed in a two-page format for deepened understanding, self-assessment, and goal setting. The first section of the book addresses issues related to character development and transformation, and the third section provides exercises for couple use. Couples could use this material for self-study; or a group, such as a Sunday School class, could use it for weekly lessons. [216-383-9943, 800-501-6682, staff@marriagetransformation.com, www.marriagetransformation.com] [BUST] [Ives]

• **Rekindling Desire: A Step-by-Step program to Help Low-Sex and No-Sex Marriages**, by Barry and Emily McCarthy (New York: Burnner and Routledge, 2003). Inhibited sexual desire and discrepancies in sexual desire damage marital intimacy and can drain joy from a marriage. The authors provide information for understanding and strategies for addressing these issues. [Ives]

* **Relationship Repair for Couples: A Customer Service Approach to Minimizing Conflict and Creating Lasting Love in Your Relationships**, by Dr. Stephanie Welland Knarr, PhD, LCMFT (Omaha, NE: Heartland East Publishing, 2015). The author urges couples to model their relationship maintenance and repair practices after the customer service counters found in most business establishments. Just as customers need to know where they can take their complaints, with confidence that they will be heard and their dissatisfactions resolved, husbands and wives also need to know that they will receive attentive concern from each other when disappointed or hurt or unhappy. Making complaints may sound like a negative behavior, but in fact demonstrates commitment to the relationship and a desire to make it work. Dr. Stephanie gives clear directions for expressing a complaint in a way less likely to trigger defensiveness, and she provides helpful guidance for responding positively to complaints as well. [BUST]

• **Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?** by Gary Thomas (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House,
The author invites readers to view marriage as a spiritual discipline through which persons can come to know God more fully and intimately. Marriage teaches us to love and to respect others, exposes our sin, and encourages us to develop perseverance, forgiveness, and the ability to embrace differences.

- **Staying Connected in Your Marriage: Daily Reflections and Dialogue**, by Al Francis Lacki. (Troy Michigan: Uplift Enterprises, 2000). Designed to foster both individual and relationship growth, these daily selections are for individual reading and reflection, followed by couple dialogue and sharing. [Contact at P.O. Box 1612, Troy, Michigan, 48099-1612, 248-362-3340, uplift@ameritech.net.]

- **Supercouple Syndrome: How Overworked Couples Can Beat Stress Together**, by Wayne M. Sotile and Mary O. Sotile, M.A. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998). The authors challenge the myths and behavior patterns that cause stress and burnout and show busy couples how to “use their relationships as havens from outside demands, take time out to have fun, and nurture their partners,” (page x)

- **Surrendering to Marriage: Husbands, Wives, and Other Imperfections**, by Iris Krasnow (New York: Hyperion, 2001). The author cuts through the mythology and unrealistic expectations surrounding marriage to show readers that: “The best we can do for our children, and for ourselves, is to make our own marriages go the distance, weathering waves of sadness, even rage, because we know that our grit and perseverance are going to pay off hugely in the end.” She shares the testimony of senior citizens who say “they are more in love than ever with the partner they married a half-century ago. It is not a love of lust and infatuation. It is the deepest of love, built over time, through joy and tragedy.” (pages 5, 6)

- **Sustaining Love: Healing and Growth in the Passages of Marriage**, by David Augsberger (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1988). The author outlines four stages of marriage: The Dream, The Disillusionment, The Discovery, and The Depth, describing how to successfully negotiate these challenging transitions. Especially dangerous, of course, is the Disillusionment Stage, when the excitement of new love wears off and couples face who they really are and how they really relate. Not only is this stage inevitable, but it can also provide a doorway to deeper discovery and depth in the relationship.

- **Talk to Me: How to Create Positive Loving Communication**, by Steven and Catherine Martin (Williamsville, NY: Positive Publishing, 1997) This easy read documents how a
relationship can be changed by one person taking responsibility for how she or he talks to and relates to the other. It is so easy to slide into negativity, instead of working in a positive way for the changes you want. The authors outline and provide examples of the kind of talk that breaks through defensive patterns and wins cooperation instead of causing defensiveness. By applying the “Four Guidelines for Positive Communication” (Understanding, Kindness, Honesty, and Respect), couples can prevent harming their relationship and can repair and heal it as needed. The chapter on stress is very insightful and should help couples related to each other in ways that minimize rather than exacerbate stress.

- **Talking and Listening Together: Couple Communication I**, by Sherod Miller, Ph.D., Phyllis A. Miller, Ph.D., Elam W. Nunnally, Ph.D., and Daniel B. Wackman, Ph.D. (Littleton, Colorado: Interpersonal Communication Programs, Inc., 1991). This text/workbook, which accompanies the Couple Communication I program, deals with self-awareness, caring about your partner, resolving conflicts, and choosing communication styles for talking and listening.


- **The Couple’s Comfort Book: A Creative Guide for Renewing Passion, Pleasure, & Commitment**, by Jennifer Louden (HarperSanFrancisco, 1994). Jennifer Louden offers a generous assortment of ideas, exercises, rituals and other activities for nurturing a relationship and building a strong and intimate connection. Each chapter addresses a specific action, detailing when it might be helpful, defining it and explaining what it entails, describing what you will need (amount of time and any supplies), providing clear directions for carrying it out, and recommending books for further exploration. The explanatory material teaches vital relationship concepts, such as intentionality, self-care, accepting differences, clear and honest communication, and sharing responsibilities. Couples could take turns choosing a chapter from the Table of Contents or use the “Comfort at a Glance” chart in the middle of the book to decide which activity to focus on at any given time.

- **The Dance of Anger: A Woman’s Guide to Changing the Patterns of Intimate Relationships** by Harriet Goldhor Lerner, Ph.D. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985). “Close relationships are akin to circular dances, in which the behavior of each partner provokes and maintains the behavior of the other.” (p. 12) This book helps the reader clarify her feelings, learn to communicate them effectively, and interrupt negative patterns in relationships, not only with her husband, but also with children, parents, and others.
• **The Essential Humility of Marriage: Honoring the Third Identity in Couple Therapy**, by Terry D. Hargrave, Ph.D. (Phoenix, AZ: Zeig, Tucker, & Theisen, Inc., 2000). The author provides therapy guidelines, strategies, and exercises for helping couples strengthen the vital “us” relationship that is at the heart of a marriage. [BUST]

• **The Five Languages of Apology**, by Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2006). The author identifies five languages of apology: Expressing Regret, Accepting Responsibility, Making Restitution, Genuinely Repenting, and Requesting Forgiveness. By understanding and using the Apology Language or Languages that are most important to each other, couples can more effectively repair and heal their relationship. [BUST]

• **The Five Love Languages: The Secret to Love That Lasts**, by Gary Chapman (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2010). The author identifies five languages of love: Quality Time, Words of Affirmation, Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch. By learning to speak and understand these unique languages of love, persons can more effectively communicate love and feel more truly loved as well. (see study guide in section for group studies, above) [BUST]

• **The Five Secrets of Marriage from the Heart**, by Jack Rosenblum and Corinne Dugas (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing, LLC, 2006) Through the engaging story of a couple whose marriage is in crisis, the authors explain and illustrate five keys to strengthening and/or healing a relationship. This easy-to-read, well-grounded book would be an excellent gift for couples or resource for a study group. [BUST]

• **The Good Couple Life: A 12-Month Guide to Enriching Your Marriage**, by Lynn Balster Liontos and Demetri Liontos (Winston-Salem, NC: Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, Inc., 1982). Each chapter explores a different topic in depth, providing sound advice, discussion questions, and exercises to help couples apply the principles to their own relationship. This would make a good study guide for individual couples or a group meeting regularly. [BUST]

• **The Heart of Commitment: Compelling Research that Reveals the Secrets of a Lifelong, Intimate Marriage**, by Scott Stanley, Ph.D. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998). Research shows that couples dedicated to each other and to their relationship are happier and enjoy a deeper relationship with each other. The author of this Scripturally-based book explores ways to preserve or restore commitment in a marriage. [BUST]
• The Intimate Enemy: How to Fight Fair in Love and Marriage, by George R. Back and Peter Wyden (New York: Avon Books, 1968). In this insightful classic, the authors describe how to avoid or stop “gunnysacking,” the practice of holding on to grievances instead of expressing them, which sabotages intimacy and creates distance in relationships.

[COLBY]

• The Power of Commitment: A Guide to Active, Lifelong Love, by Scott M. Stanley (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass 2005). The author offers practical and spiritual guidance to help couples understand commitment, handle everyday pressures, deal with the pain of disappointment and unfulfilled hopes, overcome extramarital attractions, and transform “me versus you” to “we” thinking in order to experience the joy of lifelong devotion and loyalty.

[BUST]

• The Surprising Way to a Stronger Marriage: How the Power of One Changes Everything, by Michael and Amy Smalley (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2010). The authors describe how one spouse, strengthened by God and Biblical principles, can bring about positive change and growth in a marriage. The authors emphasize the importance of taking responsibility for your own emotions and reactions, focusing on what you want to have happen, and repairing hurts by asking your spouse what he/she needs in order to heal. A Study Guide in the back of the book provides scripture and discussion questions for each of the eighteen chapters.

[BUST]

• Venus on Fire, Mars on Ice: Hormonal Balance-The Key to Life, Love, and Energy, by John Gray, Ph.D., (Coquitlan, BC: Mind Publishing, Inc., 2010. The author discusses how hormonal differences affect male and female behaviors and reactions to stress. While men tend to withdraw under stress, women become more anxious and driven. Increased levels of testosterone reduce stress in men, while women’s stress is eased by increased levels of oxytocin. By understanding, accepting, and respecting these differences, couples can reduce tension and build more satisfying relationships.

[BUST]

• You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation, by Deborah Tannen, Ph.D. (New York, Ballentine Books, 1990). The author analyzes how boys and girls develop different perspectives and communication styles because of differences in how they are raised. By trying to see things from the other’s perspective, rather than reacting negatively, men and women can prevent these differences from undermining their relationships.

[BUST]

• Why Mars and Venus Collide: Improving Relationship by Understanding How Men and Women Cope Differently With Stress, by John Gray, Ph.D, (New York: Harper, 2008). The author expands on male/female differences, drawing on brain scan research to clarify how men and women react differently to stress and often misunderstand each
other. He offers clear, concrete steps to prevent and heal the conflicts that arise from such misunderstandings.

[BUST]

- **Why Talking is Not Enough: Eight Loving Actions that Will Transform Your Marriage**
  by Susan Page (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint, 2006). The author encourages individuals and couples to treat their relationships as spiritual disciplines, practicing acceptance, compassion, restraint, and kindness. By focusing on loving each other, in a spirit of good will, couples can build a true spiritual partnership. The author’s insights and “experiments” can be utilized by both or by just one party in the relationship.

[MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT RESOURCES FOR PASTORS AND OTHER CHURCH LEADERS]

- **Close Companions: The Marriage Enrichment Handbook**, by David R. Mace (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1982). The author describes the new companionship model for marriage brought about by changes in our society; the skills couples need in order to make this model work; and strategies for providing marriage preparation, enrichment, and therapy. [purchase at www.bettermarriages.org] [Ives]

- **ENRICH/MATE** – Relationship inventory for couples who have been married for a while and for those over 50 years old. **PREPARE/ENRICH** (Minneapolis: Life Innovations, Inc., 1996) Life Innovations, Inc., P.O. Box 190, Minneapolis, MN 55440-0190, 800-331-1661, cs@lifeinnovations.com, www.lifeinnovations.com. This program, now in use by over 50,000 clergy and counselors, including a number of New Englanders, offers relationship inventories for premarital use (PREPARE), for use with premarital couples who already have children (PREPARE-MC), for use with couples who have been married for a while (ENRICH), and for use with couples over fifty years old (MATE). The goals of the program are to help couples explore their relationship strengths and areas in which they need to grow, while learning communication and conflict-management skills. Couples also receive guidance in considering influences from their families-of-origin; developing a financial plan and budget; and setting personal, couple, and family goals. After submitting the couple’s completed inventories, the counselor or clergyperson receives back a print-out analyzing their strengths and growth areas to discuss, along with the **Building a Strong Marriage Workbook**. The training, which is required, provides a clear process for feedback sessions with the couple. Available in several languages. Call or visit the website to locate a facilitator; order sample copies of computerized results, payment vouchers, question booklets, answer sheets and other related material; or to inquire regarding training.
• **Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: A Guide to Brief Therapy**, by Everett L. Worthington, Jr. (Downers Grove, Illinois, 1999). This is an excellent handbook for those who want to help couples build stronger, healthier marriages. The author presents faith-based concepts and strategies, specific interventions for various challenges, and guidance for nurturing real change in ten sessions or less.  

• "*Marriage Enrichment Groups: A How-To Guide for Leaders*" (Winston-Salem, NC: Better Marriages, 2010). May also be purchased as an ebook download from the website, [www.bettermarriages.org](http://www.bettermarriages.org). This booklet explains why Marriage Enrichment Groups are valuable and how to organize and lead one. Clear guidelines for leaders to share with participants and instructions for different types of group interactions equip anyone with group leadership skills to start and maintain this vital ministry.  

• **REFOCCUS (Relationship Enrichment Facilitating Open Couple Communication).**  
A variation on the FOCCUS inventor for use with married couples. Five relationship areas are assessed: Marriage as a Process, Intimacy, Compatibility, Communication, and Commitment. Couples may use this material on their own or in a group. A manual for facilitators is available, along with scoring software and a video program titled “Loving Your Marriage.” (Omaha, Nebraska: FOCCUS Inc., 1997). Family Life Office, 3214 North 60th Street, Omaha, NE 68104 (402-551-9003), jatkins@omahaflo.creighton.edu, [www.foccusinc.com](http://www.foccusinc.com). This inventory provides individualized couple feedback on where each partner stands in regard to topics important to marriage. It is not a predictor of marital success or failure, but a tool to help couples name and work through issues before marriage. The inventory can be administered to an individual couple or to groups. The act of responding to the questions raises issues for the couple to discuss, even before it is scored. Forms are submitted for scoring, with a small fee. A facilitator uses the report analyzing the couple’s responses to help them reflect on the following topics: Life-Style Expectations, Friends and Interests, Personality Match, Personal Issues, Communication, Problem-Solving, Religion and Values, Parenting Issues, Extended Family Issues, Sexuality Issues, Financial Issues, Readiness Issues, Marriage Covenant, Key Problem Indicators, Family of Origin. Additional questions are available for the following topics, where appropriate: Dual Careers, Interfaith Marriages, Second Marriages, and Cohabiting Couples. FOCCUS is available in several languages, including Braille, and four different versions for Catholic, Christian non-denominational, non-denominational, and learning-disabled persons. Training is strongly recommended. Call or visit the website to locate a facilitator.  

Part 4 focuses on such recent developments as new approaches to therapy, utilizing mentor couples, and working to change the social climate for marriage. 

MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES

- **Better Marriages**, formerly Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment (ACME), 800-634-8325, info@bettermarriages.org, www.bettermarriages.org. This ecumenical, non-profit organization, an affiliate organization of the UM General Board of Discipleship, provides resources and training for marriage enrichment and marriage preparation. Better Marriages focuses mainly on helping couples in good marriages achieve their full potential. A leadership training and certification program provides skills for leading various couple events. Members receive a bi-monthly newsletter with schedules of upcoming events, book reviews, and articles addressing marriage issues. Call the office or visit the website to learn about leader couples and events in your area and to sign up for quarterly e-newsletters.

- **Marriage Encounter/Engaged Encounter United Methodist** (an affiliate organization of the UM General Board of Discipleship), www.encounter.org. One of the twelve faith expressions of Worldwide Marriage Encounter, ME/EEUM offers Christian weekend experiences for couples who want to prepare for or enrich their marriages. A team of lay couples and a clergy-spouse couple make a series of presentations. Each presentation encourages participants to look at themselves as individuals, at their relationships with each other, and at their relationship with God, the church, and the world. Following each presentation, husband and wife are given time in the privacy of their own room for personal sharing using the techniques taught during the weekend. No group discussion is required. Post-weekend experiences for nurturing ongoing growth are offered in many local areas. Visit the website above to learn about events scheduled for your area. Visit www.wwme.org or call 800-795-5683 to learn more about Worldwide Marriage Encounter and other faith expressions of this ministry.

- **My Marriage Coach**, www.mymarriagecoach.com. Jay Tenney, an ordained United Methodist pastor in the North Georgia Conference, developed this website out of his extensive experiences counseling and coaching couples to provide a place where couples can go to evaluate and strengthen their marriages. For only $9.95, couples can sign on, respond to a series of questions individually or together, and instantly receive a two-page "Coaching Report" which they can view online or print. Each report provides a list of the strengths and weaknesses of the marriage, an overall marriage score, and a list of recommended resources. Couples can follow up on their own by reading and discussing the suggested resources, or they can share the report with a pastor, mentor couple, or counselor. MyMarriageCoach.com is not intended for couples whose marriages are in crisis and results should not be interpreted as a substitute for marriage counseling. Individuals and couples
using the site are encouraged to discuss coaching reports, profiles and recommended resources with professional counselors or pastors.

- **The Relationship Suite: The Key to Vibrant Long Term Relationships**, by Rachel Moheban, LCSW, [www.relationshipsuite.com](http://www.relationshipsuite.com). At this site, Rachel offers both free and fee-based relationship coaching products and services, effectively combining advice from experts with her own unique insights. You can sign up for the following free resources: weekly email relationship tips, a report on improving communication, a link to an audio presentation on dealing with money problems, and a five-minute relationship assessment quiz. Rachel’s coaching products range from her free starter set, “Three Secret Shortcuts to Bring You to Your Best Relationships“ audio and eBook, to her comprehensive Ultimate Relationship Resolution Program, which includes five audio programs with accompanying workbooks (Communication, Anger, Money, Physical Intimacy, and Emotional Intimacy). The workbooks provide a verbatim script of the audio for those who want to follow along while listening to Rachel’s teaching, which includes visualizations and exercises related to each topic. These presentations are suitable for couples, premarital couples, and singles. You may also sign up for occasional teleclasses, individual and couple therapy, corporate counseling, training and employee assistance in English, Spanish, Hebrew and Farsi. You can access Rachel's Facebook blog, tips, and articles by typing “The Relationship Suite“ into the Facebook search bar or by clicking on the Facebook symbol at her website.

**FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT**

**RESOURCES FOR PROGRAMS AND GROUP STUDIES**

- **Family Enrichment Workshop: Activities and Exercises to Strengthen Family Relationships** (Marriage Enrichment, Inc., 2004; 800-726-7474, mewinfo@yahoo.com). This notebook provides everything needed for a three-part intergenerational experience (perhaps Friday evening, Saturday a.m., and Saturday afternoon, for example) for families of all configurations. Participants learn and practice effective communication skills, identify individual and family strengths, and develop action plans to increase loving behaviors.
  [WILLIAMS]

- **Growing in our Family Relations: Volume I: Manual for the Family Enrichment Workshop**, by Keith E. and Marilynn L. Hamilton (2010), This faith-based workshop is designed to help persons grow personally and in their family relationships through five 4½-hour sessions for up to twenty-five participants, led by two facilitators. Participants may include any family of one or two parents and their children of any age. Based on the process, methodology, and techniques of Better Marriages (formerly the Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment) and on the work of Drs. David and Vera Mace, the workshop teachings combine Biblical principles and transcultural preventive principles with opportunities for guided practice in their application. Materials may be downloaded from the website as a
gift from the authors and used by anyone with some leadership experience and a commitment to work with families. Training and certification information is available in the authors’ Basic Training Workshop for Singles (Vol.II) and Advanced Training Workshop introductory pages (also available at the website Download page). In these workshop sessions, participants will develop a supportive community, assess their family relationships, and learn and apply new skills (communication, creative use of conflict, and understanding ourselves and our roles in the family).

MINISTRY RESOURCES FOR THOSE IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS – CLERGY FAMILIES – Reading List

- **Clergy Commuter Marriages: Living Apart, Staying Together**, by Tom Mattick with Marilyn Mattick (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2013). The author shares what he learned when he accepted an appointment 150 miles away from his wife’s work, requiring them to live apart for two years. He offers practical advice for making such a decision, creating a second home, planning for visits, developing rituals for parting and reuniting, and adjusting to living together again afterwards. His wife shares her point of view as well.  

- **Clergy Couples in Crisis: The Impact of Stress on Pastoral Marriages**, by Dean Merrill (Waco, TX: World Books Publisher, 1985). Although some of the expectations encountered by pastors and their families have softened since the publication of this book, the author presents helpful insights based on case studies, showing the effects of internal and external stresses and - in most cases - how couples learned to heal and strengthen their relationships and deal more effectively with their situations. In most instances, learning to share openly and honestly with each other was key to their recovery.

- **Families in Ministry: How to Thrive—Not Just Survive** by Andreas and Angela Frész (Dresden, Germany: Golden Gate Ventures GmbH, 2009). The authors share out of their own experience as a family in ministry and include testimonies from other ministry families from all over the world. Addressing a wide range of issues, they offer sound theological reflection and practical advice on setting a family vision and priorities,
communicating love, integrating God into family life, overcoming stress and crises, managing differences and conflicts, and dealing with challenges specific to families in ministry. This book could be used to facilitate a course spread out over eight sessions or could serve as a helpful resource to individual families. Particularly useful are the clear guidelines for Spouse Dialogue and/or Group Discussion and for Family Activity related to material in the text. Order through YWAM Publishing, www.ywampublishing.com, 800-922-2143. See also www.families-in-ministry.com for more information. [BUST]

- **Healthy Clergy, Wounded Healers: Their Families and Their Ministries**, by Roberta Chapin Walmsley and Adair T. Lummis (Church Publishing Inc., 1997). The authors draw on the Family Systems Theory work of Murray Bowen and Edwin Friedman, who applied it to churches. While they agree that clergy and their families may function better when they understand some of their struggles as common to ministry, they also caution against overemphasizing this perspective to the point that pastors, their spouses, and their children abandon responsibility for managing their lives and blame the congregation or conference for their problems. The healthiest pastors and spouses seem to be those who effectively set boundaries between their relationship with the church and their family. [BUST]

- **Life in the Fish Bowl: Everyday Challenges of Pastors and Their Families**, by F. Belton Joyner, Jr. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006). “A solid family life will help pastors focus and attentively minister to the needs of their congregation. Pastors often struggle with conflicting expectations. The most painful of these conflicts is between the expectations of their congregations and the needs of their families. They must, at the same moment, be available to parishioners and carve out private family time. Belton Joyner knows that often the best therapy for pastors caught in this dilemma is to laugh at it. With humorous illustrations and light-hearted straight talk, he helps pastors understand their own family dynamics, the role their families play in the life of the church, and how to be an effective minister of the gospel AND a responsible spouse and parent, all at the same time.” (back cover) [BUST]

- **The Pastor’s Family: Shepherd Your Family through the Challenges of Pastoral Ministry**, by Brian Croft and Cara Croft (Zondervan, 2013). The authors address the problem of expectations – not just those held by others, but also those of the pastor and spouse themselves. Internal needs for approval and success may become idols tempting the pastor to neglect his/her family, which the authors declare actually dishonors God. This book contains deep wisdom and practical advice for faithfully balancing family and congregational life. [BUST]

- **The Pastor’s Wife**, by Jennifer Alee (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010). This engaging novel explores a clergy marriage that failed early on because of unreasonable expectations and poor communication. Brought back together six years later by the
requirements of a deceased parishioner’s will, the pastor and his estranged wife rediscover each other, realize the part each played in their marital failure, and heal their relationship. Throughout the story, the author touches on issues common to clergy families: clergy preoccupation with the problems of other families to the neglect of their own; parsonage stresses (the feeling of living in someone else’s home); congregational expectations that ignore the individuality of clergy family members; and lack of private time. The author also portrays common marital difficulties such as failure to communicate honestly about expectations and needs, to accept individual differences and negotiate ways to accommodate them, to build mutual trust; and to connect emotionally.

[BUST]

- **The Winds of Promise: Building and Maintaining Strong Clergy Families**, by Anne E. Streaty Wimberly and Edward Powell Wimberly (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2007). The authors share out of their own experiences growing up in clergy families and forming their own. Using a story-telling approach, they offer hope and tools for dealing with the challenges of moving, meeting expectations, making family life count, “meaning-making” while living in the public eye, and managing difficult life events. [BUST]

- **What’s Happening to Clergy Marriages?** by David and Vera Mace (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980). This classic, written by founders of the marriage enrichment movement, grew out of two studies they conducted in the late 70s. The book contains lists of advantages and disadvantages generated by participants in the studies along with practical advice for dealing with the pressures of time, moving, and financial stress. The Maces present a companionship model for marriage, as opposed to the old hierarchical one generally accepted before the rise of democracy, and assert that the spouse’s calling must carry as much weight as the calling of the pastor. The authors also propose that in regard to vocation, the call of a clergy person and spouse to bear witness to Christian marriage may be even more important than the call to serve a church. [BUST]

**MINISTRY RESOURCES FOR THOSE IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS – STEPFAMILIES**

- **Building a Successful Stepfamily: How Churches Can Help**, by Ron Deal. This audiotape outlines the challenges facing stepfamilies and describes how churches can provide a supportive ministry. [Ives]

- **Smart Stepfamilies** (formerly Successful Stepfamilies) [www.smartstepfamilies.com](http://www.smartstepfamilies.com)
  Visit the website of this organization, which features works by Ron Deal, an expert in
this field, to sign up for a free e-newsletter, find conferences and events, read articles and book reviews, and view videos.

• **Strengthening Your Stepfamily**, by Elizabeth Einstein, M.A., and Linda Albert, Ph.D. (Atascadero, CA: Impact Publishers, 2006). The authors clearly outline the typical stages of adjustment for stepfamilies and offer practical approaches to help them move from unrealistic expectations to acceptance of and healthy adjustment to their new reality. Interspersed with the sixteen very readable chapters are eight Stepfamily Workshop sessions, making this book a highly effective tool for stepfamily support groups.

• **The Smart Step-Family: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family**, by Ron L. Deal (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002. The author provides guidance for recognizing the unique personality and place of each family member, dealing with the everyday challenges of step-parenting and stepchildren relationships, communicating effectively with ex-spouses, honoring families of origin while developing new traditions, and taking time to grow stepfamilies slowly instead of expecting instant results. He emphasizes the spiritual needs of stepfamilies and teaches how to help them rediscover a redemptive God who “loves, forgives, and provides strength and direction for the journey” (p. 51). Discussion questions at the end of each chapter could be used in small groups or by couples on their own to learn how to adjust expectations, deal with the common pitfalls of stepfamilies, and cope with special situations.

**MINISTRY RESOURCES FOR THOSE IN TRANSITION OR CRISIS**

**RESOURCES FOR GROUP PROGRAMS AND STUDIES**

• **Beyond the Broken Heart: A Journey Through Grief Program Kit**, by Julie Yarbrough (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012). This attractive program package contains a Leader Guide with information for organizing, preparing for, and leading an 8-week grief support and ministry group; a DVD with 8 video segments, 9 to 12 minutes each, one for each session of
the program; one copy of the participant book with a chapter for each of the 8 sessions; one copy of a daily devotional book for participants; and one copy of a pocket-size booklet for participants. You will also find material for two supplementary sessions: "Grief at the Holidays" and "Peace of Mind: Financial Management for Life." The content is well-grounded theologically and Scripture-based, and the Leader Guide offers many flexible options for adapting the program to a specific situation. [NEC]

- **Choosing Wisely Before You Divorce** (Church Initiative, P.O. Box 1739, Wake Forest, NC 27588-1739, 800-489-7778, info@divorcecare.org, www.divorcecare.org) This is a five-video session resource designed to help couples thinking about divorce reconsider their decision and redirect their efforts toward restoring their marriage. The program presents the spiritual, physical, emotional, and financial impact of divorce on families and on children in particular. It does not attempt to get at the underlying problems of a particular marriage, but attempts to stop the rapid momentum that develops when a couple begins to consider divorce. The Couple's Kit includes video sessions, two participant workbooks, and a facilitator's guide. The ministry edition includes the video. [WILLIAMS]

- **DivorceCare Starter Kit**, (Church Initiative, P.O. Box 1739, Wake Forest, NC 27588-1739, 800-489-7778, info@divorcecare.org, www.divorcecare.org. A Biblically-based resource for a divorce recovery ministry, this Kit includes a Leader's Guide, Participant's Workbook, and five DVDs. The DVDs present teaching segments for 13 group sessions and three leadership training sessions. The Leader's Guide provides guidance and resources for an ongoing program so that separated and divorced persons always have a place to turn. [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Living Fully, Dying Well**, by Rueben Job (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006) This eight-session study for small groups includes a book for the leader, a participant’s book, and a DVD with eight approximately 10-minute video presentations and three additional stand-alone lessons - accessible by computer with a DVD-rom drive - for adults and teens. Each chapter of the leader’s book contains, in addition to the content of the participant’s book, scripture, prayers, discussion questions, and a summary of the video presentation. Chapter titles are as follows: “Living Fully,” “Theology of Aging,” “Our Culture’s View of Again,” “Finding Purpose and Meaning in Life,” “Getting it All Together,” “Dying Well,” “What Happens When We Die,” and “How Then Shall We Live?” The three additional lessons on the DVD are “Dying Well” and “Living and Dying” for adults and a “Reel to Real” youth lesson based on the film “My Life.” Although the booklets described in the back of the Leader’s guide are now out-of-print, similar titles can be found through such sources as Carenotes (AbbeyPress, www.onecaringplace.com, 800-325-2511).

- **Marriage 911: First Response**, by Joe and Michelle Williams (National Institute of Marriage, 2007). This Christ-centered 12-week program helps persons who are in troubled marriages or who desire a stronger relationship to place their focus and energy into self-healing through the use of a workbook and with the assistance of a support partner. The Marriage 911: First Response Workbook and the Marriage 911: First
Response Support Partner Handbook provide clear directions to develop health and wholeness. [National Institute of Marriage, 250 Lakewood Drive, Hollister, MO 65672, 417-335-5882, www.nationalmarriage.com] [ROLLING RIDGE]

- **Single & Parenting: Hard Work, Real Hope** (Lake Forest, NC: Church Initiative, 2011)
  This “teach-out-of-the-box” curriculum kit provides a Leader’s Guide, Participant’s Workbook, set of DVDs, and promotional brochures and flyers. Detailed information is provided for organizing and promoting this experience, which consists of 13 two-hour sessions blending Biblical teaching with practical advice, and for recruiting leaders and using the training module on one of the DVDs. The Leader’s Guide suggests offering the 13 sessions three times in a given year, since participants can enter the program at any time in the cycle, providing frequent points of entry for single parents seeking support. You will need to purchase a workbook for each participant ($15. each at www.singleandparenting.org), where you will also find extensive helps and resources. You can reach a consultant by phone during normal working hours. [ROLLING RIDGE]

*The Third Option* (Syracuse, NY: Family Life Education, Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, 1988). This on-going program of peer ministry and relationship education combines three dynamics: a support group, "sharing" couples, and workshops on relationship skills. The first hour of the weekly meeting offers orientation for newcomers and support group sharing for those already in the program. The second hour offers a 30-minute workshop on one of 14 topics, which continually recycle so that participants can come in at any time. The Third Option Manual, which contains the complete program and all needed materials, is sold only to non-profit organizations willing to offer this program free to the public. A professional counselor should be available for occasional screening of "sharing couples" and consultation as needed. Contact Pat Ennis at (315) 472-6728, or e-mail pat@thethirdoption.com, or visit www.thethirdoption.com. [BUST]

BOOKS AND OTHER READING MATERIAL FOR THOSE IN CRISIS OR TRANSITION

- **Adult Children of Divorced Parents: Making Your Marriage Work**, by Beverly and Tom Rodgers, (San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 2002). Adult children of divorced parents can overcome the negative effects of that experience and improve the odds of marital success by understanding their wounds, breaking out of reactivity patterns, and learning how to help each other heal. The authors write out of their own experience and
of couples with whom they have worked, offering Scripture-based insights and exercises. [BUST]

- **Affair-Proofing Your Marriage: Preventive Maintenance for Christian Couples**, by Norman and Ann Bales (Atlanta: CarePoint Ministries, 2007). The authors share honestly and humbly out of their own experience with and recovery from infidelity, providing a workbook that could be used by couples or by groups of couples to affair-proof their marriages. [BUST]

- **A Journey Through Grief: Life Beyond the Broken Heart**, by Julie Yarbrough (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012). Small enough to fit in a purse or pocket, this booklet offers comfort and guidance to those dealing with the loss of a loved one. [NEC]

- **Becoming Parents: Exploring the Bonds Between Mothers, Fathers, and Their Infants**, by Judith A. Feeney, Lydia Hohaus, Patricia Noller, and Richard P. Alexander (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001). The authors explore issues and challenges that arise as couples transition to parenthood, based on a study they conducted with a variety of couples. They discuss attachment theory and dynamics, division of household tasks, and other matters that influence adjustment to parenthood. [BUST]

- **Beyond the Broken Heart: A Journey Through Grief**, by Julie Yarbrough (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012). This participant’s book for the study by the same name (reviewed above) could also be read independently. The author weaves together stories from her own experience of the death of her husband with sound information on healing the grief process, Scripture-based insights, and reflection questions. [NEC]

- **Beyond the Broken Heart: A Journey Through Grief: Daily Devotions for Your Grief Journey**, by Julie Yarbrough (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012). The author provides a year’s worth of daily devotions, each containing a Scripture passage, a thoughtful insight, a prayer, and an assurance. Included in the program kit described above. [NEC]
insight, a prayer, and an assurance. Included in the program kit described above. [NEC]

- **Children of Divorce: Change Your Odds** Audiotape by Beverly and Tom Rodgers describes the difficulties children of divorce bring to marriage that increase the likelihood of failure in their own marriages. Sound guidance for overcoming these problems. [Ives]

- **Couples Who Cope: Sustaining Love in Difficult Times**, by Jane P. Ives (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1999, out of print). True stories explore how adversity affects marriage and how couples can cope with family crises, separation caused by career demands, relationship breakdown, illness of a spouse, and death. The stories are linked to scripture, with reflection questions and commentaries related to each theme, along with six "toolbox" pages discussing relationship skills. The book contains a leader’s guide for up to eighteen study sessions and a list of related resources. [NEC]


- **Every Heart Restored: A Wife’s Guide to Healing in the Wake of a Husband’s Sexual Sin**, by Fred and Brenda Stoeker, with Mike Yorkey (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2010). Guidance for wives whose husbands are addicted to pornography and sex and struggling for sexual purity. [BUST]

- **Fragile Families**, by Dion, Jones, and Carlson. This audiotape dramatically presents the problems encountered by families struggling with poverty, separation, and other circumstances which leave them vulnerable. [Ives]

- **Healing from Divorce: 28 Days of Prayer**, by Mary Lou Redding (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2013) Mary Lou Redding offers 28 daily meditations for guidance through a small part — perhaps the beginning -- of a healing journey, which she affirms will likely take much longer than that. Reflecting on her own experiences, she acknowledges the devastation of believing that her divorce marked her as a failure and impaired both her Christian witness and her ability to serve. She shares her joy in coming to understand God’s grace “....not as something we earn by being good but as healing love that comes to us precisely because of our brokenness and inability to be the persons God created us to be.” Each selection begins with a brief reading from the Bible, followed by a single verse, a story and commentary, a prayer, and a reflection suggestion. The mediations are grouped by week, with titles reflecting the progression of focus: “Broken Hearts,
Broken Dreams,” “The Road to Freedom – Forgiving,” “The Buck Starts Here,” and “A Whole New Ball Game.” The content is stunningly honest and wise, as the author reveals her true feelings during this challenging time in her life and describes practices that helped her both cope and grow. [BUST]

*High Five: Love Never Fails: 5 Key Principles for The Forever Family, by Ron, Catherine, and Brandon Tijerina (2013) The authors share the five principles they learned that saved their family when they were undergoing a very difficult situation. Ron served 15 years in prison for a crime that he did not commit. Although they suffered deeply, they were determined not to let the experience destroy them. This book provides many insights into the prison experience as well as wisdom for strengthening your family, whatever your circumstances. [BUST]

• *How Can I Forgive You? The Courage to Forgive, the Freedom Not To*, by Janis Abrahms Spring, Ph.D. with Michael Spring (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004). The author describes the benefits of forgiveness and the dangers of “cheap” or inauthentic forgiveness. She provides guidance for two processes: 1) acceptance (when the offender is unwilling or unable to make amends, and 2) genuine forgiveness (when the offender participates in the effort to repair and heal the relationship). Her instructions are designed to help persons make peace with themselves and with others. [BUST]

*Mrs. Hunter’s Happy Death: Lessons on Living from People Preparing to Die, by John Fanestill (New York: Doubleday, 2006). The author, inspired by reading accounts of the “ritual of happy dying” and by witnessing persons approaching death with grace and uplifted spirits, discusses the spiritual practices – prayer, reflection, caring for others, and more – that seem to help make such an experience possible. [BUST]

• *My Husband’s Affair Became the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me*, by Anne Bercht, Brian Bercht, and Danielle Bercht (Victoria, B.C., Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2004). Devastated by her husband’s unexpected announcement that he was in love with another woman, the author embarked on a tumultuous emotional journey, vacillating between despair and determination. [BUST]

• *Not “Just Friends”: Rebuilding Trust and Recovering Your Sanity After Infidelity*, by Shirley P. Glass, Ph.D. with Jean Coppock Staeheli (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2003). Understanding how easily friendships can slide down the “slippery slope” to infatuation can help couples prevent affairs and to recover if they do occur. Maintaining “windows” within the marital relationship and “walls” with those who could threaten the marriage is the first of seven tips by the author, who also provides insight into infidelity’s traumatic effects and the steps necessary for recovery. [BUST]
• **Not Just Friends: The New Crisis of Infidelity**, by Shirley P. Glass, Ph.D. This audiotape summarizes the concepts and ideas in the author’s book, described above. [IVES]

• **Private Lies: Infidelity and the Betrayal of Intimacy**, by Frank Pittman (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989). The author shares experiences of infidelity in real life and in literature and provides numerous case studies from his counseling practice, including a wide variety of behaviors and attitudes. He describes romantic affairs as “temporary insanity” and concludes with an affirmation of monogamy and practical suggestions for maintaining fidelity. [BUST]

• **Stop Walking on Eggshells: Taking Back Your Life When Someone You Care About Has Borderline Personality Disorder**, by Paul T. Mason, M.S. and Randi Kreger (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 1998). The authors explore emotionally abusive and controlling behaviors by persons with low self-esteem and fear of failure, as well as the impact of those behaviors on spouses, children, and others. This supportive guide shows readers how to make sense of their situations, take back control of their lives, heal their wounds, and protect themselves and others from further damage. [BUST]


• **The Smart Stepmom**, by Ron Deal and Laura Petherbridge (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 2009). The authors use their personal and professional skills and experiences to provide stepmothers with the information, attitudes, and skills to succeed in what is rapidly becoming the most common family form in the United States of America. The text provides clear analysis and helpful strategies for dealing with various pitfalls and challenges in ways that will help stepmoms not only survive, but thrive. [BUST]

• **The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce**, by Judith Wallerstein and **Generation at Risk**, by Paul Amato. This videotape contains two presentations that document the effects on individuals and on our society of our epidemic of family breakdown. [IVES]

• **Thinking Divorce? Think Again: 7 Realities You Need to Know**, by Lorie D. Fowlke (Fowlken Press, 2004). The author, a divorce lawyer, states that although she has dealt with cases in which divorce was obviously the only appropriate course of action, she has seen many other couples who could have salvaged their families if they had “...directed
the time, money and energy they spent on divorce litigation toward re-establishing their relationship and saving their marriage…” She spells out and presents case studies to illustrate the effects of divorce on couples’ finances, lifestyle, employment, children, extended family, and society in general. She concludes, “…if you now think divorce could be a devastating upheaval that may not bring you the joy, peace, or relief that you are seeking, keep thinking.” (p. 99) Visit www.thinkingdivorce.com to order the book and DVD and to download a Divorce Quiz, a Children’s Bill of Rights, Divorce Resources, and a document describing Alternatives to Divorce Litigation. [BUST]

- **This is Not the Story You Think it Is...: A Season of Unlikely Happiness**, by Laura Munson (New York: G,P. Putnam’s Sons, 2010). This memoir tells how one woman dealt with her husband’s mid-life crisis announcement that he did not love her anymore. With the help of a good therapist, a stack of books, and the release she found in journaling, she gave him the space he needed, took responsibility for her own happiness, and changed the behaviors that alienated him. The author shares candidly and poignantly her inner struggle and conflicting emotions throughout these months of pain and uncertainty, learning not to base her happiness on things outside her control. [BUST]

- **When Good People Have Affairs: Inside the Hearts and Minds of People in Two Relationships**, by Mira Kirshenbaum (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2008). The author explores how good people may unintentionally drift into affairs, often because someone else seems to offer something missing from their lives, and the overwhelming pain, confusion, and anxiety they experience. She offers guidance for such persons and their spouses to sort out their feelings and make decisions that will lead to growth and happiness. [BUST]

- **When “I Do” Becomes “I Don’t”: Practical Steps for Healing During Separation and Divorce**, by Laura Petherbridge (David C. Cook Publishers, 2008). The author shares practical answers to the challenges of divorce, based on her own experience and her ministry of care for those grieving the loss of a marriage. “How do I find where I belong when I no longer know my identity?” “If my spouse asks for forgiveness, should I go back?” “How do I figure out a budget on my own?” “How do I reenter the workplace after years of staying home?” “How will I know when it’s a good time to date again?” “Will I ever be happy again?” This book includes reflection and discussion questions after each chapter and guidelines for those who love someone who is getting a divorce. [BUST]

- **Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain**, by William M. Struthers (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009. The author, a Christian neuroscientist and researcher, explores various aspects of pornography’s effects on sexual behavior and intimacy. He describes the healing process as sanctification, making daily decisions to see the image of God in each person, appreciate women without “consuming” them, and move “beyond objectification to real relationship, presence and intimacy” (p. 189). He lists helpful books and websites at the back of the book. [BUST]
• Yes, Your Marriage Can Be Saved: Twelve Truths for Rescuing Your Relationship, by Joe and Michelle Williams (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2007). Sharing openly their own experience of a very rocky marriage, the authors describe what they learned and how they changed over time. They now lead a marriage reconciliation ministry (Marriage 911). The twelve chapters include discussion questions and insights about how the church can help couples, especially by providing same-gender support groups and partners.

• You Don’t Have to Take It Anymore: Turn Your Resentful, Angry, or Emotionally Abusive Relationship into a Compassionate, Loving One, by Steven Stosny, PhD (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2006). The author, who is acclaimed for his CompassionPower program for verbally and emotionally abusive persons and their families, provides information for understanding the dynamics and impact of such abuse and for taking action to change and heal the relationships and persons involved. This text, an excellent resource for individuals, couples, and small groups, provides instruction for healing the wounds from emotional abuse, for regulating feelings so as to avoid abusive words and behavior, and for reconnecting in a relationship – or for determining that a relationship is beyond repair.

ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES FOR MINISTRIES WITH THOSE IN CRISIS, TRANSITION, OR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

• Retrouvaille: A Lifeline for Troubled Marriages, 800-470-2230, www.retrouvaille.org. Weekend retreats with follow-up sessions in the following months, led by couples who have been to the brink of divorce themselves. Participants hear the stories of pain, reconciliation, and healing from the presenter couples and learn tools and receive encouragement to deepen their understanding of themselves and each other and to reestablish communication and rebuild their relationship.