

National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Technical Assistance Webinar

Tuesday November 16, 2010 ~ 2:00 – 3:45 PM (ET)

Integrating Healthy Marriage Skills in Responsible Fatherhood Programs

Facilitator:

Nigel Vann: Senior Director of Training & Technical Assistance,
National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

Presenters:

Erik Vecere, M.S., Vice President of National Programming, National
Fatherhood Initiative (NFI), Pittsburgh, PA

Gerardo Valles, M.A., Responsible Fatherhood Program Manager,
Education Service Center Region 19 Head Start, El Paso, TX

Seth Eisenberg, President and CEO, PAIRS Foundation, Weston, FL



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Integrating Healthy Marriage Skills in Responsible Fatherhood Programs

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National Fatherhood Initiative
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Research on the Value of HM Skills in RF Programs

- Framing it around **what's best for kids** vs. what are my rights and what makes me happy
- The formula for father involvement: $P=M+L$
- Participation = Motivation + Location
- Motivation – Where dads are not motivated to be involved fathers and programs are not motivated to help them
- Location – When dads and programming for dads are not in the right places



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Research on the Value of HM Skills in RF Programs

- The mothers who lived with the fathers, including those cohabiting but not married, gave overwhelmingly high marks to fathers, while those mothers not living with the fathers reported, on average, negative views.
- The mothers not living with the fathers reported very low satisfaction with the fathers who had taken on new romantic, marital, or stepfather relationships. With each additional relationship or responsibility, the survey shows, these mothers were progressively less satisfied with the fathers' parenting.
 - » *Mama Says Survey of Mothers, 2009*, National Fatherhood Initiative. Available for free download at:
<http://www.fatherhood.org/research>



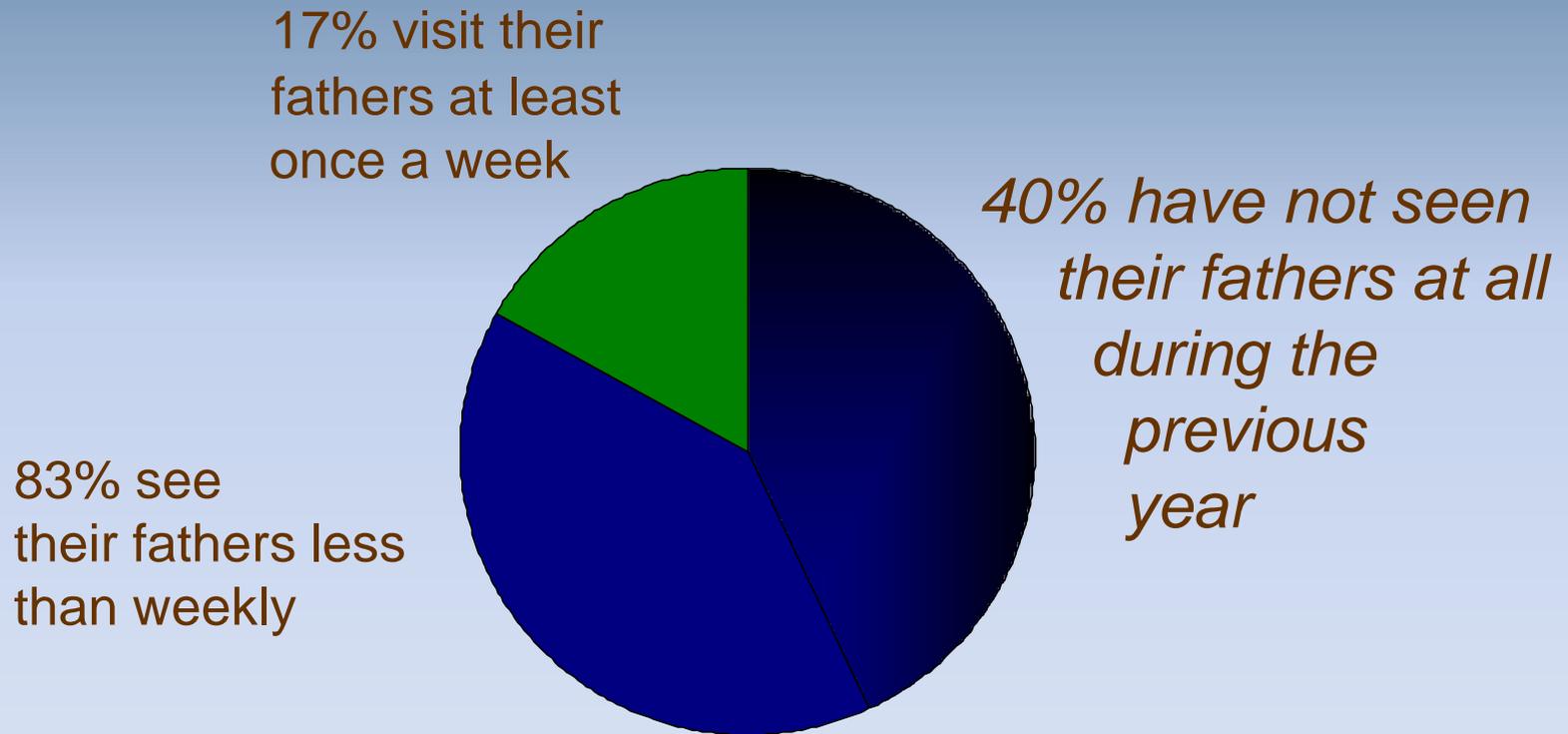
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Research on the Value of HM Skills in RF Programs

Children in Father-Absent Homes



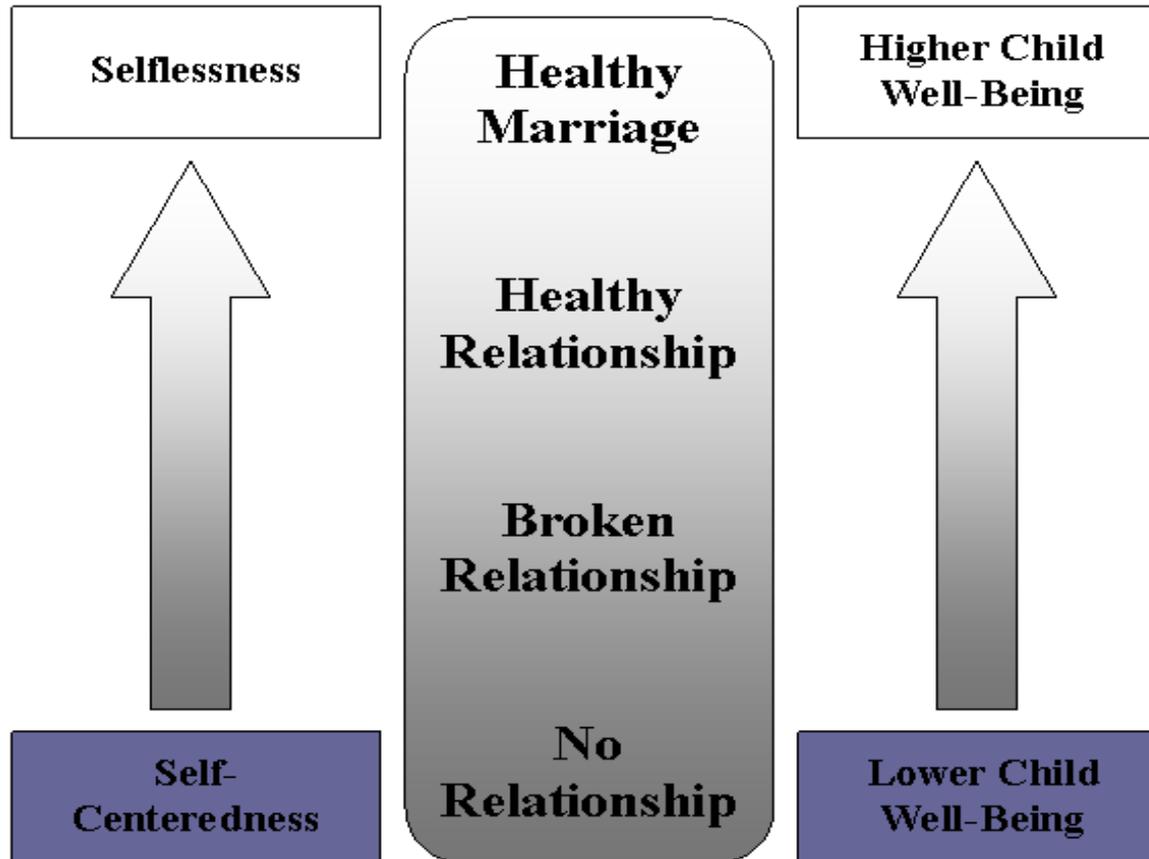
Source: Stewart, S. (2003). Nonresident Parenting and Adolescent Adjustment: The Quality of Nonresident Father-Child Interaction. *Journal of Family Issues*, 24, pp. 217-244.



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Relationships With Children Involved



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Research on the Value of HM Skills in RF Programs

- Qualitative, longitudinal, and now intervention research findings indicate that a man's capacity to fulfill his role(s) as father is embedded in his relationship with the child's mother.
- Programs that are effective at strengthening the relationship between parents who live together have been found to increase fathers' involvement in parenting.
- For parents who are no longer together, the link is even stronger.
- Fatherhood programs have found it difficult to change fathers' involvement with their children other than child support payments.

» Cowan, et al. *Policies That Strengthen Fatherhood and Family Relationship*, MDRC, April 2010



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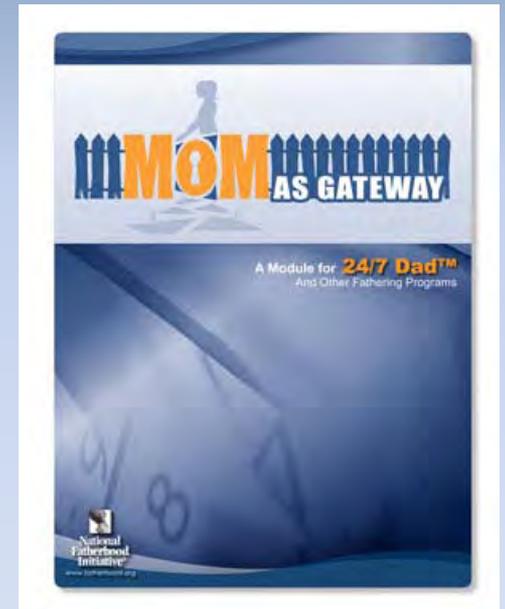


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Tools for Applying Research Findings

- 3 Sessions that moms go through
 - The Role of the Gatekeeper
 - Power & Control in Relationships Between Men & Women
 - Minimize Excessive Gatekeeping



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Research on the Value of HM Skills in RF Programs

- Almost all young men in the Parents Fair Share program saw themselves as marrying someday, perhaps the mother of their child, but often described themselves as too young to “settle down.”
- The older men faced substantial struggles when they tried to reconnect with their children after years of living apart.

» Cowan, et al. *Policies That Strengthen Fatherhood and Family Relationship*, MDRC, April 2010

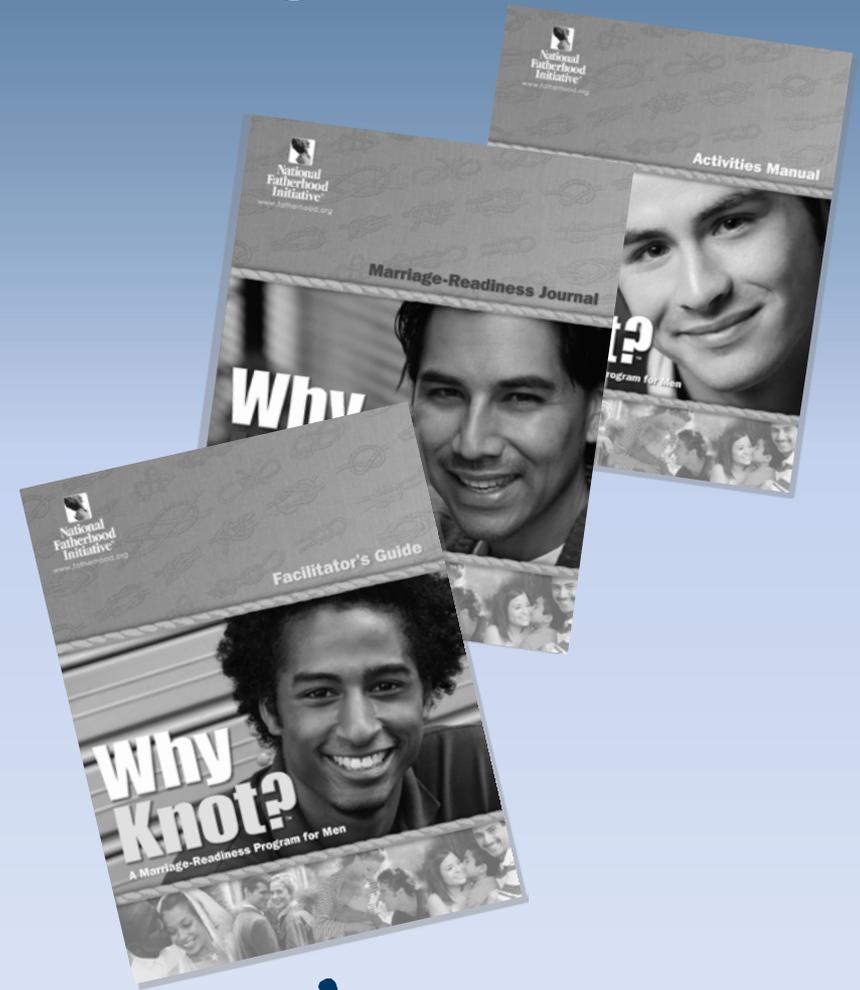


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Tools for Applying Research Findings

- Marriage Readiness, Marriage Model, and Fear
- The Benefits of Marriage and Marriage History
- The Perfect Wife and Commitment
- The Ideal Husband and Personal Responsibility
- The Ideal Marriage Versus Cohabitation
- Marriage Resources and Closing



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Integrating HM Skills in RF Programs vs. Traditional HM Programs

Responsible Fatherhood

- How to communicate with child's mom
- Increase level of involvement with his child
- Teach men how to apply relationship education skills to all relationships, including employment
- Enrich co-parental relationships
- Increase child support

Healthy Marriage

- How to communicate with spouse/partner
- (Increase level of involvement with his child)
- Develop conflict resolution skills
- Provide financial management tools
- Couple-to-couple mentoring



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Integrating HM Skills in RF Programs vs. Traditional HM Programs

- RF programs tend to have different target audiences than HM programs, which affects the methodology
 - Typically, fatherhood programming is conducted with fathers who have little or no relationship with their child's mom
 - Fatherhood programming is delivered to individual men and not couples
 - Some fatherhood programs are targeting expectant/new fathers as an opportunity to intervene at a “magic moment”



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Promoting Optimal Parenting Skills (POPS): A Comprehensive Approach To Responsible Fatherhood

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Theory

The theoretical approach to the (POPS) Promoting Optimal Parenting Skills project is based on Maslow's Hierarchy of human motivational needs.



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Delivery Approach

Case Management

- Identification
- Planning
- Intervention
- Follow-up
- Evaluation



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This project focuses on the development and support of the following basic roles that fathers undertake

- Individuals
- Spouses
- Parents
- Citizens



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Overall Project Management

- **Goal 1:** To implement an innovative, county wide, multi-year, service model for fatherhood education and outreach activities targeting the Head Start Program.



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Identity Formation

- **Goal 2**: To provide fathers a comprehensive educational program focused on their personal development as individuals.

- I AS A MAN



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Marriage and Relationship Building

- **Goal 3:** To provide fathers a comprehensive educational program focused on the development of knowledge and skills critical to maintaining a healthy and fulfilling marriage.

- I AS A SPOUSE



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Parenting Skills

- **Goal 4:** To provide fathers a comprehensive educational program focused on the development of knowledge and skills critical to being a responsible parent.
- I AS A PARENT



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Economic Stability

- **Goal 5:** To provide fathers with knowledge and skills critical to the achievement of economic stability.

- I AS A PROVIDER



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Curricula

- **Within my Reach**
Marline Pearson, M.A.
Scott M. Stanley, Ph. D
Galena H. Kline
PREP Inc.
- **Within Our Reach**
Howard M. Stanley
Natalie H. Jenkins
Galena K. Rhoades
- **Fatherhood Development**
Pamela Wilson, MSW
Jeffrey M. Johnson, Ph. D.



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**Engaging and
Empowering Men
through Marriage
and Relationship
Education**

Voices from the Field

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November 16, 2010



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Emotional Literacy

A Unique Approach Based on Social and Emotional Learning

“A set of skills, including control of one’s impulses, self-motivation, empathy and social competence in interpersonal relationships.”

Daniel Goleman
Emotional Intelligence



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Voices from the Field

Empowering Intimate Relationships

PAIRS is an acronym for “Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills.” The PAIRS Foundation was established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1983 to develop, research and deliver marriage and relationship education. PAIRS range of programs are significantly based on the work of key contributors, including:

- Dr. Daniel Casriel**

Recognized deprivation of biological need for bonding as root cause of marital distress.

- Virginia Satir**

Impact of family systems and communication styles.

- George Bach**

Need for constructive processes for conflict resolution.

- Lori Gordon**

Emotional literacy, empathy, and skills as building blocks to marital stability, resiliency, and fulfillment.



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Relationship Road Map

The Logic of Emotion and Bonding

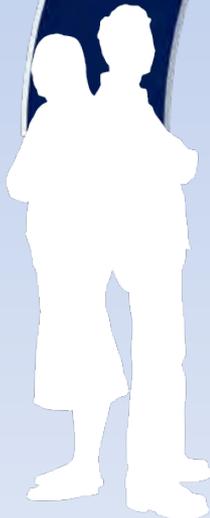
**DIS-EASE
DISTRESS
DISTRUST
UNHAPPINESS
PAIN
DANGER
FEAR/ANGER**

**BIOLOGICALLY
BASED NEEDS**
Air – Food – Water – Shelter

**EASE
EU-STRESS
TRUST
HAPPINESS
PLEASURE
DESIRE
LOVE**

BONDING

(Emotional Openness/Physical Closeness)

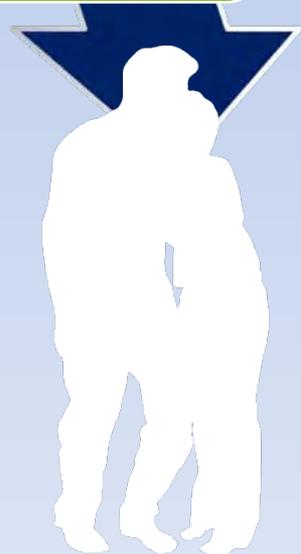


SYMPTOMS OF UNHAPPINESS

Illness, Fatigue
Depression
Rigidity of Personality
Constriction, Isolation
Closed, Guarded,
Wary
Anti-Social Behavior
Range of Addictions

SIGNS OF HAPPINESS

Health, Energy
Well Being
Flexibility
Creativity
Open, Sharing
Personal
Responsibility
Capacity for Intimacy



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Practical, Usable Skills

Daily Temperature Reading

- **Appreciations**
- **New Information**
- **Puzzles**
- **Concerns with Recommendations**
- **Wishes, Hopes, Dreams**



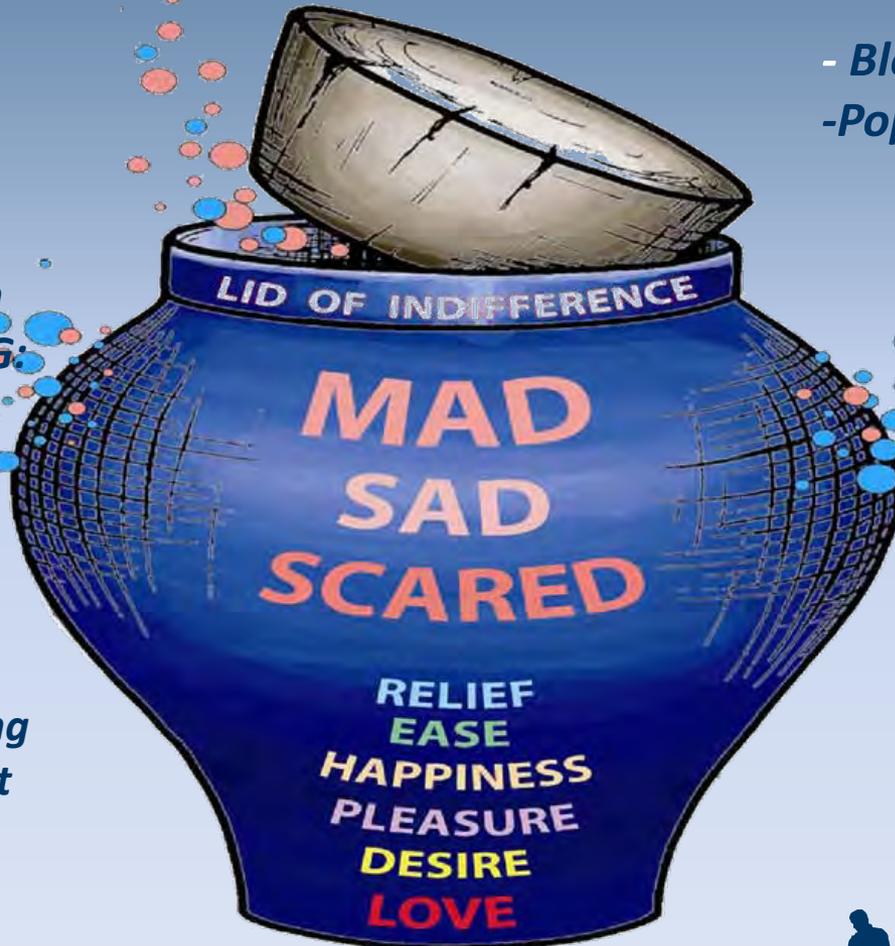
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Emotional Understanding



- *Blowing your Top*
- *Popping Your Cork*

Leaks Through
DIRTY FIGHTING:

Sarcasm
Ridiculing
Threatening
Accusing
Labeling
Taunting
Laughing At

Leaks Through
DIRTY FIGHTING:

Assuming
Sneering
Contempt
Ignoring
Blaming
Stonewalling



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Voices from the Field

Research & Evaluation (N = 419 Men)

Six to 12 Months After Nine Hour Essentials Class:

- 95% improvement in communication;
- 94% improvement in overall relationship satisfaction;
- 93% improvement in regularly sharing appreciations;
- 93% percent improvement resolving conflicts;
- 89% percent improvement in confide emotions;
- 84% reported improvement in sex lives.



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Voices from the Field

Research & Evaluation (N = 103 High Distress)

Effective Intervention for Highly Distressed Couples:

- 77% of participants in the highest risk category showed significant improvement that was sustained six months after the training concluded;
- For participants in the high risk range prior to training, scores improved after six months for 79% of men and 74% of women;
- 47% of participants who measured in the high risk group prior to training jumped to the highest level of relationship pleasure and satisfaction six months after completing classes.



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Voices from the Field

Recruiting Men for MRE

- After Deployment (Guard, Veterans)
- Childbirth Classes
- Prisoner Re-Entry
- Job Training
- High Schools
- Community Colleges
- Neighborhood Associations
- Faith-Based (Churches, Synagogues)
- Internet Marketing
- Online Classes



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Voices from the Field Engaging Men

- Online
- In Person
- Key Messages
 - Nothing's Broken
 - No Scare Tactics
 - Focus on Their Values
 - Every Interaction is Safe
 - Education not Therapy
 - A Logical Approach
 - Practical, Usable Skills
 - Always Invite, Never Inflict



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Voices from the Field

Process of Enrollment

Through enrollment, a person is empowered to see an opportunity, and in doing so intentionally chooses to take an action that would be of benefit and is consistent with a core commitment.

1. Establish Relatedness
2. Speak the Possibility
3. Seize the Opportunity
4. Extend the Invitation
5. Complete the Enrollment Cycle



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Voices from the Field

Embracing Prevention

The Definition of Insanity

“Doing the same things over and expecting different results.”

~ Benjamin Franklin



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