

BUILDING YOUR MARRIAGE IN THE MIDST OF STRESS
A MARRIAGE SEMINAR/WORKSHOP

by

JERRY E. PARK, M.A. L.P.C.
"Counseling and Coaching with Christ in Mind!"
Transformational Leadership Coach
Licensed Professional Counselor
International Coach Trainer

Contact Information

Transformational Leadership Coaching and Training at Home Office - [757] 479-0839

www.transformationalcoaching.com

Counseling at EDEN COUNSELING CENTER - [757] 466-3336

www.edencounseling.com

Email Address - jerrypa3@cs.com

BUILDING YOUR MARRIAGE IN THE MIDST OF STRESS

REGENT UNIVERSITY / CENTER FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

A MARRIAGE SEMINAR/WORKSHOP

JERRY E. PARK, M.A., L.P.C./PRESENTER

INTRODUCTION - [10 mins.]

__Personal Introduction

- Review Highlights of Professional Bio - [1 min.]
- Testimony of Building My Marriage in the Midst of Stress as a Regent Student - [3 mins.]
 - Personal stress/Attention seeking - Pray, Hear and Obey God

__Overview of Seminar - [1 min.]

__Corporate Prayer for Seminar – [1 min.]

__"Ice-Breaker" Activity

- Share 3 things:

- 1 name(s),
 - 2 how long married,
 - 3 two words (beginning with 1st letter of last name) that describe what you want more and less of in your marriage **in the midst of stress.**
- Participants Prepare Answers - [1 min.]
 - Participants share corporately – [3 mins.]

SEMINAR PRESENTATION

Assessing Your Marriage - [10 mins.]

__Self-Assessment of Marriage

- Separately rate quality of marriage **under stress** using a 0-10 Rating Scale - [1 min.]
- Share ratings and reasons with partner/peer - [2 min. / 1 min. each]

__Listing of Stressors

- Individual reflection/listing of stressors (rank order) - [3 min. reflection/writing]
- Read list and reasons with partner/peer – [2 min. – 1 min. each]
- Corporate survey of general areas of stress - [2 min.]

Stabilizing Your Marriage (Presentation) - [5 mins.]

__Get Confidential Professional/Pastoral Counseling

- Essential to for the following:

- Addictions/compulsive behaviors (drugs/alcohol, sexual/pornography, food, etc.).
- Mental Health Disorders – Mood, Anxiety, ADHD, Impulse Control, Personality.
 - list symptoms of major Diagnoses – (Assessment handout).
- Recurrent or Significant Physical, Sexual, and/or Verbal Aggression - list behaviors.
- Contact your pastor, speak to me later, or call me at Eden Counseling Center with any questions (it's confidential).

BUILDING YOUR MARRIAGE IN THE MIDST OF STRESS - Cont'd.

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Healing Your Marriage - [20 mins.]

__Making Peace with your Partner

- Peace Maker's Pledge - (*Ken Sande handout*) – [5 mins.]
 - The FOUR G's - A Commitment to Biblical Resolution
- The 3 R's – [5 mins.]
 - *Reflection* - pray and write out offenses ("....any wicked way", "1st go and make it right")
 - *Reconciliation* – "Submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee."
 - Submit: Confess, repent, ask God and spouse for forgiveness, grant and receive forgiveness - (*Ken Sande handout*).
 - Resist: Renounce sin, break its power/influence, command spiritual influences to depart, and ask God to replace with the opposite attributes.
 - *Restoration* - verbalize specific commitments to necessary actions and follow through.

__Partners/Peers Practice Resolution through Reflection/Reconciliation/Restoration

- Individual reflective prayer and journaling to hear/write what God reveals – [5 mins.]
- Confess, repent, ask for and receive forgiveness, etc., and make specific commitments to change - [5 mins. – 2 1/2 mins. each]

Protecting Your Marriage - 1 Cor. 13 - "Love always protects." - [40 mins.]

__Role Play Communication the Wrong Way – *Demonstrate/Debrief* - [5 mins.]

__Conflict Management and Effective Communication Guidelines - (*handout*) - [10 mins.]

- *Like having a picnic in a garden?* - *Describe*

__Role Playing Guidelines – *Demonstrate/Debrief* - [5 mins.]

__Partners/Peers Practice Guidelines - [20 mins.]

- Partners/peers practice guidelines (resolve easy marriage-related stressor, if possible).

Enhancing Your Marriage - [25 mins.]

__Five Love Languages - (*handout*)

- Explain Love Languages and using of chart – [5 mins.]
- Partners identify own and partner's Love Languages – [5 mins.]
- Partners share/discuss expressive and receptive love languages - [10 mins.]

__Setting a Goal for Your Marriage - [2 min.]

- *The quality of our marriage under stress will be ___+ almost always (___% of the time), and otherwise no less than___. (0 = worst ever, 5 = so-so, 10 = best imagined)*

__Making a Plan to Succeed - [3 mins.]

- Participants write a commitment to a list of specific things that will be done to achieve the goal.

MARRIAGE SELF-ASSESSMENT

RATE YOUR MARRIAGE AS IT HAS BEEN OVERALL, MOST OF THE TIME, LATELY.
(ASK YOUR SPOUSE TO DO THE SAME):

0-10 Rating Scale

- 10 = can't imagine it being better
- 5 = so, so – not good but not bad - blah
- 0 = when it was at it's worst

MY RATING: _____

MY REASONS: _____

Now find out your partner's rating and reasons, and share yours too.....

MY PARTNER'S RATING: _____

MY PARTNER'S REASONS: _____

=====

STRESSORS LIST

- 1st - LIST THE CURRENT STRESSORS IN YOUR LIFE.
- 2nd - RANK ORDER THEM ON THE LEFT (ASK YOUR SPOUSE TO DO THE SAME).

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

JERRY E. PARK, M.A., L.P.C.

If done well, managing a conflict with effective communication could be much more pleasant.

IMAGINE RESOLVING YOUR CONFLICTS MORE LIKE **HAVING A PICNIC IN A GARDEN:**

STEP #1 - Build a BRIDGE to your spouse to cross over the raging river (the conflict).

- Make sure both sides of the bridge are attached.

- a) First - do **The 3 T's** - Agree on **Topic** and **Timing** before you **Talk**. Both must be ready to follow all the guidelines below before talking about an issue of potential conflict, i.e. ask spouse, "Can we **talk about this topic at this time?**"
- b) If not agreed upon, the declining spouse must offer an alternate topic or time to talk.

STEP #2 - PRAY before your meal.

- Do NOT try to be self-sufficient. Ask for God's blessing, just like before your family meal.

STEP #3 - Give your spouse a SANDWICH after crossing bridge.

- The Sandwich Approach is a +, -, + presentation of your concern.

- a) First - make the sandwich by saying some positive things (*bread*).
[Actually research says on the average people need 5 positives for every 1 negative.]
- b) Second - present concern using an "**I-Statement**" - (*the meat*).
Here's the basic "*I-Statement*" outline - the "negative" part of the sandwich:

"I feel _____ (emotion words not opinions - **Feelings**)
about _____ (circumstances - **Facts**)
because _____ (reasons - values, needs, background, beliefs, etc.)
and I prefer _____ (positive reframe of concern - solution alternative)."

- c) Then say some positive things again (*more bread*).

A sample "*I-Statement*" -

"I feel really disappointed (*emotion words - feelings*)
about you staying busy all night (*circumstances - facts*)
because I'm feeling lonely and that our marriage is drifting (*reasons*)
and I prefer we at least spend some quality time together each evening (*positive reframe*)."

Conflict Management and Effective Communication - Cont'd.

- Jerry E. Park, M.A., L.P.C.

STEP #4 - Sit and LISTEN using **E.V.E.** (Echo/Validate/Empathize) before responding.

- "No one cares what you think 'til they think that you care."
- a) **Echo** - reflect back the "I-Statement" - **The 2 F's** - **Feelings** and **Facts**.
 - "So what I hear you saying is, you feel ____ about ____ because ____ and you prefer _____. Is that right?"
 - The listener does **The 2 C's** - **Clarifies** and **Confirm**.
- b) **Validate** - give validity to partner's feelings based on his/her reasons.
 - "I can understand you feeling _____, based on your reasons_____."
- c) **Empathize** - express genuine caring concern.
 - "I'm sorry about that. I'm willing to try to do something about that."
 - Now is a great time to engage in **The 3 R's** of Resolution - **Reflection**, **Reconciliation**, and **Restoration**.

STEP #5 - Call a TRUCE - Wave the white flag (napkin)!

- a) If the conflict management is at a 5 and moving down to a 4 on the 0-10 Anger Scale below.....**STOP TALKING!** - go to different "cool down" locations and talk later.

Anger Scale

- 10 = full agreement, very peaceful and respectful with loving feelings,
- ~ (9-6 be aware of rapid increase of anger and call TRUCE immediately!)
- 5 = controlled intensity internalized but staying within the guidelines (**DANGER!**)
CALL TRUCE before declining further!
- 4 = cutting each other off or raising voices (should have called TRUCE first),
- 3 = name calling,
- 2 = aggression toward property,
- 1 = threat of violence,
- 0 = violence

- Brain Research

Research says the pre-frontal lobe, the "**executive functioner**", basically shuts down during times of elevated stress. Trying to reason and problem solve is greatly hindered and relatively ineffective. After cooling down, you can try again, but if the process fails a second time, don't get a 3rd strike. Get help instead.

- Alternate Problem Solving Technique

When stalemated - try the no-debating, **BRAINSTORMING TECHNIQUE**. Each partner contributes to a list of several possible solutions in addition to "pet solutions", without any editorial comments. The list is then voted on and any suggestion getting only one vote is eliminated. Those getting two votes become the newly agreed upon solutions to be tried.

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PEACEMAKER'S PLEDGE

A COMMITMENT TO BIBLICAL RESOLUTION

As people reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe that we are called to respond to conflict in a way that is remarkably different from the way the world deals with conflict.¹ We also believe that conflict provides opportunities to glorify God, serve other people, and grow to be like Christ.² Therefore, in response to God's love and in reliance on his grace, we commit ourselves to respond to conflict according to the following principles:

THE FOUR G'S -

Glorify God — Instead of focusing on our own desires or dwelling on what others may do, we will rejoice in the Lord and bring him praise by depending on his forgiveness, wisdom, power, and love, as we seek to faithfully obey his commands and maintain a loving, merciful, and forgiving attitude.³

Get the Log out of Your Eye — Instead of blaming others for a conflict or resisting correction, we will trust in God's mercy and take responsibility for our own contribution to conflicts—confessing our sins to those we have wronged, asking God to help us change any attitudes and habits that lead to conflict, and seeking to repair any harm we have caused.⁴

Gently Restore — Instead of pretending that conflict doesn't exist or talking about others behind their backs, we will overlook minor offenses or we will talk personally and graciously with those whose offenses seem too serious to overlook, seeking to restore them rather than condemn them. When a conflict with a Christian brother or sister cannot be resolved in private, we will ask others in the body of Christ to help us settle the matter in a biblical manner.⁵

Go and be reconciled — Instead of accepting premature compromise or allowing relationships to wither, we will actively pursue genuine peace and reconciliation—forgiving others as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us, and seeking just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences.⁶

By God's grace, we will apply these principles as a matter of stewardship, realizing that conflict is an assignment, not an accident. We will remember that success in God's eyes is not a matter of specific results, but of faithful, dependent obedience. And we will pray that our service as peacemakers will bring praise to our Lord and lead others to know His infinite love.⁷

¹ Matt. 5:9; Luke 6:27-36; Gal. 5:19-26.

² Rom. 8:28-29; 1 Cor. 10:31-11:1; James 1:2-4.

³ Ps. 37:1-6; Mark 11:25; John 14:15; Rom. 12:17-21; 1 Cor. 10:31; Phil. 4:2-9; Col. 3:1-4; James 3:17-18; 4:1-3; 1 Peter 2:12.

⁴ Prov. 28:13; Matt. 7:3-5; Luke 19:8; Col. 3:5-14; 1 John 1:8-9.

⁵ Prov. 19:11; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:29; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; James 5:9.

⁶ Matt. 5:23-24; 6:12; 7:12; Eph. 4:1-3, 32; Phil. 2:3-4.

⁷ Matt. 25:14-21; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:18; 1 Peter 2:19; 4:19.

Adapted from The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict. © 1997, 2003 by Ken Sande. All Rights Reserved.

SEVEN A'S OF CONFESSION

- 1- **Address** everyone involved (All those whom you affected)
- 2- **Avoid** if, but, and maybe (Do not try to excuse your wrongs)
- 3- **Admit** specifically (Both attitudes and actions)
- 4- **Acknowledge** the hurt (Express sorrow for hurting someone)
- 5- **Accept** the consequences (Such as making restitution)
- 6- **Alter** your behavior (Change your attitudes and actions)
- 7- **Ask** for forgiveness

See Matthew 7:3-5; 1 John 1:8-9; Proverbs 28:13.

FOUR PROMISES OF FORGIVENESS

- 1- "I will not dwell on this incident."
- 2- "I will not bring up this incident again and use it against you."
- 3- "I will not talk to others about this incident."
- 4- "I will not let this incident stand between us or hinder our personal relationship."

Taken from The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict, by Ken Sande (Updated Edition, Baker Books, 2003).

FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES

- 1 **Gift Giving**
- 2 **Quality Time**
- 3 **Acts of Service**
- 4 **Physical Affection**
- 5 **Words of Affirmation**

DIRECTIONS:

Identify and write down the number of yours and your partner's most expressive and most receptive love language(s), putting them in rank order if more than one for each category [i.e. expressive - 2, 4, 3]. Write the number of what you think your partner's love languages are on the "my guess" line in parentheses for each category. You will write your partner's answers for their own identified love languages on their line above your guess when you share your answers later.

	EXPRESSIVE	RECEPTIVE
Mine	_____	_____
Spouse's	_____ (_____) my guess	_____ (_____) my guess

Specific Plans For **What I Will Do** About This:

Specific Plans For **What We Will Do** About This:

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PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY

Professional Overview

Jerry is a seasoned professional having served in a wide variety of people-helping roles since 1974. Educated, trained and experienced in the fields of psychology, counseling, theology, leadership and coaching, Jerry brings to his coaching and counseling relationships a genuine Christian love and a high level of maturity, wisdom, and spiritual gifting. Jerry has a *uniquely* qualified combination of skill-sets that is a vital asset to current and emerging leaders, other professionals, and individuals of all walks of life seeking greater healing, transformation and achievement.

Special Qualifications

Whether you need help in identifying and changing plateaued or entrenched patterns of performance, overcoming known or disguised hindrances, or clarifying and achieving new and far-reaching goals, Jerry offers loyal commitment, helpful insight, and skill interventions to help see you through. He will authentically care about you with the highest standards of ethics, maintain your confidentiality, and effectively assist you in the process of personal discovery, healing, transformation and achievement of your goals, all while having fun and some laughs along the way.

Personal Background

Jerry and his wife, Wendy, have been married and serving their family, church, and community together since 1981. They have three children from teenage to young adulthood, all with foreign missions experience and artistic talent. They are from upstate New York and have been residing in Virginia Beach, Virginia since 1986. Jerry has also lived in Boston and has a successful academic and athletic background. He has been a Christian since 1979 and is a member and leader at NEWLIFE PROVIDENCE CHURCH - [www.newlifeprovidence.com], a transethnic community of believers.

Coaching Experience

As a trained *Transformational Leadership Coach and International Coach Trainer* with TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP COACHING - [www.transformationalcoaching.com], Jerry has been coaching and training pastors, church leaders and professionals. Jerry is also coaching professionals and others in areas of personal, professional, and ministry development both privately and in affiliation with VANGUARD MINISTRIES - [www.vanguardministries.com].

Counseling Experience

Jerry has been serving as a professional counselor since 1989. He is currently affiliated with EDEN COUNSELING CENTER - [www.edencounseling.com], a private Christian counseling practice, providing high quality counseling services for adults, marriages and families, children and adolescents, executives, pastors and other church leaders. Jerry is a speaker, presenter and facilitator for seminars, workshops and retreats. He also has secondary affiliation with *Child and Family Services of Eastern Virginia* - [www.childandfamilyservices.org]. Jerry is a trained and experienced in Theophostic ministry - a Biblical, Christ-centered and Spirit-led prayer process promoting renewal of the mind, emotional healing, and personal transformation. His approach to counseling is a classical, traditional one with a Spiritual dynamic that significantly enhances the effectiveness the counseling relationship and process with his clients.

Passions

Jerry's passions are:

- 1- Helping his family know and glorify God with their lives.
- 2- Helping individuals, couples and families overcome the kingdom of darkness.
- 3- Helping Christians grow, prosper in, and aggressively advance the Kingdom of God.
- 4- Helping in the restoration of the church and the completion of her mission in history.

Credentials

- Master of Arts in Counseling - Regent University, with additional training in Biblical Studies.
- Bachelors of Arts in Psychology - State University of New York [S.U.N.Y.]
- Licensed Professional Counselor - Licensed with the Commonwealth of Virginia since 1993.
- TLC Trained Transformational Leadership Coach and International Coach Trainer - since 2003.
- Certified in Basic Principles of Theophostic Ministry - since 2003.

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Please give us your [feedback](#).