

Owner:



Online Marriage Mentor Certification Journal

CONNECTING
COUPLES
TO BUILD
BETTER
MARRIAGES

www.MarriageMentorSite.com

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Journal Suggestions

This Journal accompanies our online certification program. As you'll see, it's pretty intuitive. Most of the exercises have you answer a few questions on your own and then discuss them with your spouse.

Here are a few suggestions to help you get the most out of this experience:

- **Make it a date night.** Many couples like to connect each lesson with a fun dinner and a movie that pertains to that session's content. We've made it easy for you. The Appendix of this Journal provides some ready-made date ideas to accompany each lesson.
- **Set aside about 35 to 45 minutes for each of the lessons.** You'll get the most out of this training if you do the lesson all at once, rather than in little bits here and there. When entering text in the boxes, sometimes the text goes beyond the box. To get the info to print, you can shrink the font to see it.
- **Consider doing these lessons with other couples.** While just the two of you can certainly do the training on your own, we want you to know it can be fun to experience the training with others if you like.
- **Be fully present.** Okay, this is a bit obvious but it's an important reminder. You'll do better by turning off your phones, shutting down email, and focusing on each other as you explore the content.

With every good wish and prayer,



Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott





Lesson 1

The Big Picture



Lesson 1 Discussion Notes:

Enter Notes Here



Lesson 1 Exercise 1 (5 min): Exploring Potential Fears



Individual Journaling

Write down some thoughts you have about the following two sentences:

- As I begin this training, my greatest fear is...

- As we begin this training together, I am guessing my spouse's greatest fear is...

Note: You'll have a chance to explore your answers together after viewing a video.



For Discussion:

Compare your journal entries with your spouse.

- Are the responses your spouse gave what you expected? Why or why not?
- Do you now know something new about each other that you didn't know before?

Lesson 1 Exercise 2 (5 min): Define Marriage Mentoring



Individual Journaling

- Write your own dictionary definition of Marriage Mentoring.

- Briefly, write down three or four personal qualities that you think will benefit you as a marriage mentor.

- Name a personal quality about your spouse that you believe will make him/her a good marriage mentor.



For Discussion:

Share your definition of Marriage Mentoring with your spouse.

- How similar is your definition to your spouse's definition?
- How similar are both of your definitions to ours?



Lesson 1 Exercise 3 (10 min): Your Marriage Mentors



Individual Journaling

Take a few moments to write down names of the people who have shaped or influenced your marriage in significant ways.

NAME	INFLUENCE

NOTES:



For Discussion:

Put your heads together as a couple to actually build the list of couples who have significantly influenced your marriage relationship.

Next to their names, write a single phrase or two that captures how they have positively influenced your marriage.

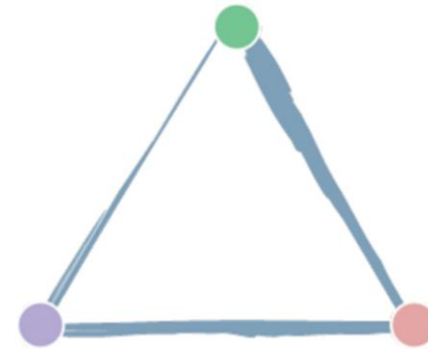
Lesson 1 Exercise 4 (5 min): Marriage Mentoring Triad



Individual Journaling

Place a number in each corner of the triangle to represent your personal percentage of interest in mentoring each of the three categories.

Maximizing %:



Preparing %:

Repairing %:



For Discussion:

- How do your percentages compare with your spouse?
- Do you both lean most naturally toward one group over the others?
- Briefly, discuss why you lean toward the category which you gave the highest percentage.



A Couple of Reminders

DATENIGHT IDEAS

Did you make a “date” out of Lesson 1? If not, you may want to consider doing so with some of the 6 upcoming Lessons. Here is a link to the great Date Night Ideas we have prepared for you. We hope you enjoy.

[link to [Date Night](#) Ideas]



MarriageMentorSite.com

We hope you set the official Marriage Mentoring Web site (<http://marriagementorsite.com>) as a favorite in your web browser. As you progress through your certification, you will see links to the marriage mentor site and to the book store on LesandLeslie.com. We want you to become familiar with the Marriage Mentor Site so you can take advantage of the free downloads, great content and most of all: It is the access point to the Couple-to-Couple Club. This online club is the official community for all our certified Marriage Mentors. We hope to see a lot of each other on this site once you complete this training.





Lesson 2

Building Rapport and Walking in Another Couple's Shoes



Lesson 2 Discussion Notes:

Enter notes here



Lesson 2 Exercise 1 (5 min): Defining Rapport



Individual Journaling

Write down any words that come to mind when you think of 'rapport'. Don't edit yourself. It requires several words to convey what the word 'rapport' really means.



For Discussion:

Compare your descriptors with your spouse.

- How do your descriptors compare?

Lesson 2 Exercise 2 (9 min): Staying Credible



Individual Journaling

Think of one of the most credible people you know.

- Check the seven qualities that you feel best apply.
- Check two qualities that make your spouse credible in your eyes.

<input type="checkbox"/> Able	<input type="checkbox"/> Helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Rational	<input type="checkbox"/> Tender
<input type="checkbox"/> Calm	<input type="checkbox"/> Honest	<input type="checkbox"/> Realistic	<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful
<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate	<input type="checkbox"/> Intentional	<input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed	<input type="checkbox"/> Trusting
<input type="checkbox"/> Confident	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledgeable	<input type="checkbox"/> Reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerable
<input type="checkbox"/> Dependable	<input type="checkbox"/> Mature	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-aware	<input type="checkbox"/> Others...
<input type="checkbox"/> Educated	<input type="checkbox"/> Observant	<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive	
<input type="checkbox"/> Focused	<input type="checkbox"/> Organized	<input type="checkbox"/> Sincere	
<input type="checkbox"/> Giving	<input type="checkbox"/> Principled	<input type="checkbox"/> Skillful	
<input type="checkbox"/> Grounded	<input type="checkbox"/> Questioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Stable	



For Discussion:

Compare your list of qualities with each other.

- Did you choose similar qualities even if you were describing different people? Share with each other the two qualities from your list that you appreciate about each other and why.
- Find two qualities that the two of you would like to hone in on a little more to be more credible marriage mentors. How might you cultivate these qualities to be more credible?



Lesson 2 Exercise 3 (6 min): Meeting Another's Need

The essence of New Testament compassion is the recognition of and concern for another person's need and appropriate action to meet that need.



Individual Journaling

Read these Bible passages and write down what these verses communicate about empathy and compassion for another person.

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." *Matthew 9:36-38 NIV*

Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him. *Matthew 20:34 NIV*

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. *2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV*



For Discussion:

- *Discuss together what especially stood out as you read these Bible passages.*
- How do these Biblical examples specifically relate to your role as a marriage mentor?





Lesson 3

Working as a Team and Agreeing on Outcomes



Lesson 3 Discussion Notes:

Enter notes here



Lesson 3 Exercise 1 (5 min): What Makes a Good Team?



Individual Journaling

Consider a specific experience where teamwork with your spouse especially shines through. Is it disciplining your kids, planning a vacation, decorating your home, throwing a dinner party, doing errands on a Saturday, making the bed, cleaning the house, navigating traffic? You get the idea...

Jot down one or two areas where you work well together as a team.

Next and this might be a bit painful, note an area or two where you don't make the best teammates. (Yes, every couple has these areas.)



For Discussion:

Now compare notes.

- Do the two of you see your ability to work together as a team in the same way?
- Most importantly, what can you learn about your ability to work as a team from this exercise?

Lesson 3 Exercise 2 (8 min): The Differences between Men and Women



Individual Journaling

What are the fundamental differences between men and women?

- List three or four differences as best you can.



For Discussion:

Now compare your list of gender distinctions with your spouse's list.

- How are they similar?
- How are they different?



Lesson 3 Exercise 3 (8 min):

What Are Your Individual Strengths as Mentors?



Individual Journaling

Write down 4 interpersonal strengths you appreciate about your spouse and believe will enhance your Marriage Mentoring teamwork.

Now consider specific examples when your spouse has demonstrated each of these strengths you listed.



For Discussion:

Share your list of strengths with each other and the specific occasions you have witnessed these strengths.

- The only rule about this exercise is that the spouse hearing the strengths can respond with only two words: “Thank you.”

Lesson 3 Exercise 4 (5 min):

Setting Your Personal Boundaries as a Couple



Individual Journaling

For this exercise, we want to encourage you to think through realistically: What are we willing to give?

- When is the best time for you to meet with your mentorees? During a week night? Weekends?

- For how many sessions can you meet with your mentorees?

- Where would you like to meet with your mentorees? In your home? In a restaurant? Over a meal?



For Discussion:

This, of course, is a discussion for just the two of you to explore before you meet with your mentorees and sometimes even after you get to know them.

- Take a moment now to discuss your personal boundaries as a couple to these questions.





Lesson 4

Asking Meaningful Questions and Listening Aggressively

 Lesson 4 Discussion Notes:

Enter notes here



Lesson 4 Exercise 1 (3 min): What Makes a Question Meaningful?



Individual Journaling

Write down 4 interpersonal strengths you appreciate about your spouse and believe will enhance your Marriage Mentoring teamwork.

- How would you complete this sentence?
A meaningful question....

Jot down what you believe makes a meaningful question.



For Discussion:

Take some time to discuss your answers with each other.

- Were your answers similar?
- *Why or why not?*

Lesson 4 Exercise 2 (3 min): Why Are Your Ears Most Likely to Be Persuasive?



Individual Journaling

Here is a list of the six most common barriers to effective listening. Stack rank, from 1- 6, how much each one of these barriers is likely to keep you from listening the way you would like.

1 = most likely to keep you from listening well

Rank	
	Distractions: Telephone, television, pager and all the rest.
	Defensiveness: Perceiving a comment as a criticism.
	Closed-mindedness: Not being open to other's opinions and ideas.
	Projection: Attributing your own thoughts and feelings to another person. (<i>Believing 'he's the one who's angry,' when you're the one hot under the collar</i>).
	Assumption: Drawing conclusions about the meaning or intention of what is said before you truly understand it.
	Pride: Thinking you have little to learn from the other person.



For Discussion:

Ask your spouse for feedback on how you ranked these barriers to listening well.

- What did you learn about yourself as a listener from your soul mate?





Lesson 5

Fielding Questions and Telling Your Stories



Lesson 5 Discussion Notes:

Enter notes here



Lesson 5 Exercise 1 (8 min): What Could They Ask?



Individual Journaling

Topics that your mentorees might bring up during a marriage mentoring conversation.

Which topics, listed below, heighten your anxiety level? (1 = Feeling the most secure, 5 = Feeling the most anxious). Place 'X' to right of number.

- Questions about Communicating Better

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Resolving Arguments and Conflict

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Handling Emotions like Anger or Resentment

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Career Directions and Charting a Future

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about the Differences Between the Genders

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about In-Law Issues

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Money Management and Debt

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Sexual Issues

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Spiritual Matters

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Parenting and Discipline Issues

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious

- Questions about Your Own Marriage Relationship

Feeling Secure > 1 2 3 4 5 < Feeling Anxious



For Discussion:

Share with your spouse the areas about which you feel most anxious. Do you have any in common?



Lesson 5 Exercise 2 (5 min): Once Upon a Time



Individual Journaling

Write the name of a favorite childhood story plus a couple of specific reasons why it still stays with you.
One of my favorite stories is:

The reasons I remember this story are because:



For Discussion:

Share your favorite stories with each other; and why you like these stories.

Talk about how you can use these stories when mentoring other couples.

Lesson 5 Exercise 3 (20 min): Telling Your Stories



Individual Journaling

List 3 stories from your marriage that may be helpful in mentoring other couples?

A few points to remember:

- Keep in mind that your story is not about you. It's about your mentorees.
- Poke fun at yourself. Your mentorees will enjoy knowing that you're not perfect.
- Tell stories sparingly. While storytelling is essential to marriage mentoring, it's not the goal.
- Your stories are spontaneous and relevant to what you are discussing.
- You both tell a story together; freely interrupting each other to be sure your mentorees see both sides.



For Discussion:

Share your stories; and talk about how you can use them when mentoring other couples.

Talk through the following tips and how they might be helpful in telling your stories.





Lesson 6

Praying Together and Staying Sharp



Lesson 6 Discussion Notes:

Enter notes here



Lesson 6 Exercise 1 (4 min):

Is Prayer Your Steering Wheel or Your Spare Tire?

Lesson 6 Exercise 2 (6 min):

Do You Pray What I Pray?

Notes



For Discussion:

Take a moment to discuss with your spouse these four questions:

1. Did your mom and dad pray together?
2. How would you describe your personal prayer life?
3. Do you ever feel like you treat prayer as a spare tire (only for emergencies) instead of a steering wheel (the guiding power of your life)?
4. How do you feel about praying with your mentorees?



Individual Journaling

Some people feel uncomfortable about praying aloud with others. This isn't an indication of their spiritual maturity or fervor. It typically has more to do with how they are hardwired for social interactions. Be honest and rate yourself on this continuum:

Quite Uncomfortable > 1 2 3 4 5 < Eager to do so



For Discussion:

Talk about your self-rating with your spouse.

- Why do you feel the way you do? There is no 'right' ranking. This is simply a time of honest sharing about your comfort level with public prayer in this setting.
- Consider how you might most effectively pray with your mentorees. Typically, this is done near the end of a mentoring session when you simply ask your mentorees, "Can we pray together?" Suggestions for other ways to ask for prayer requests:
 - As you review this past week, what are you most thankful for in your partner?
 - What's a pressure point the two of you are likely to encounter in your upcoming week?
 - What is one positive and concrete action for improving your marriage that you'd like to take this week?
- Talk briefly with your spouse as to whether these questions might work for your style as a couple. Why or why not?



Lesson 6 Exercise 3 (6 min): Making Your Mundane Moments Count



Individual Journaling

Below is a list of common moments, times when we are likely to connect with each other as spouses. They also are times that too often slip right by even the most dedicated marriage mentors without much thought of intention. Consider each item and rate how well you do each of these common moments.

- Saying good morning as you start your day...

Not Very Well > 1 2 3 4 5 < Extremely Well

- Saying thanks for the common things each day...

Not Very Well > 1 2 3 4 5 < Extremely Well

- Saying I understand...

Not Very Well > 1 2 3 4 5 < Extremely Well

- Saying I love you...

Not Very Well > 1 2 3 4 5 < Extremely Well

- Saying hello when you greet each other at the end of a workday...

Not Very Well > 1 2 3 4 5 < Extremely Well



For Discussion:

Explore the items that you ranked 4 or less.

- Discuss with your spouse what you can do to be more intentional during these common moments.
- Focus on making these moments more meaningful this next week.
- See if your spouse notices a difference.





Lesson 7

Being Yourself and Spotting Red Flags



Lesson 7 Discussion Notes:

Enter notes here



Lesson 7 Exercise 1 (5 min): Let's Get Real



Individual Journaling

Who is the most authentic, genuine, real person you know? Consider someone who you know now or have known in the past. Your spouse or another close family member is excluded from the running. Write the person's name here:

One of the most authentic people I know is...
What makes this person authentic to you?



For Discussion:

Share with your spouse why the person you wrote down in your Journal seems authentic to you.

- What is it about the person that makes you feel they are so genuine?
- Do both of you have similar concepts of what makes a person authentic and genuine?
- What did you learn about authenticity and being genuine by having this conversation?

Lesson 7 Exercise 2 (10 min): Taking Off Your Masks



Individual Journaling

We have listed three areas where you are most likely to wear a mask. Place a mark on this rating scale when and if you wear a mask. (If you would like to substitute an area that is more appropriate to your situation, feel free.)

- I wear masks at work...

Almost never > 1 2 3 4 5 < Very Often

- I wear masks at home...

Almost never > 1 2 3 4 5 < Very Often

- I wear masks at church...

Almost never > 1 2 3 4 5 < Very Often



For Discussion:

Now take a moment to review your responses with your spouse.

- If any of your answers are between 3 and 5, describe the kinds of masks you wear and with whom.
- Determine together which of your masks serves a helpful function.
- Which of your masks may be interfering with your ability to cultivate healthy relationships?
- What can you do to discard these unhealthy masks?



Lesson 7 Exercise 3 (6 min): When to Take Action



Individual Journaling

Carefully, read over the list of Red Flags for Mentorees so that you are aware when a mentoree may be dealing with an issue that requires the help of a professional. Since you are probably not already mentoring a couple, the point of this exercise is to simply be aware of the questions to consider if you ever suspect one of your mentorees needs help.

Is one of your mentorees...

- Painfully silent for long periods and withdrawn socially (even with his or her spouse)?
- Quitting a job for no rational reason or making other sudden unexplainable decisions?
- Obsessed with exercise and diet to the point that you think she (rarely does this occur in males) might have an eating disorder?
- Practicing any form of self-mutilation in the form of cuts or burns?
- Showing an excessive fear of a particular family member, other relative, or family friend?
- Having serious problems with sleep, such as insomnia, repeated wakefulness at night, frequent nightmares, or sleeping too much?

Does one of your mentorees...

- Have long periods of feeling worthless, helpless, guilty, or lethargic? Does he or she suffer from depression?
- Blow up with anger? Is he or she a threat to someone's physical well-being, especially the fiancée or spouse and children?
- Report hearing voices that others do not hear? Does he or she hallucinate or is he or she out of touch with reality?
- Have morbid thoughts, talk about death a lot? Is he or she suicidal?
- Drive while drinking? Do you suspect a problem with excessive drinking or drug use?
- Experience relatively brief periods of intense anxiety? Does he or she suffer from panic attacks?

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of every possible issue that may require professional help, but it covers the most common issues.

For more information, please refer to the Red Flags for Mentorees download on our website: <http://marriagementorsite.com> or *The Complete Guide to Marriage Mentoring*, pages 199-203.

Now read through the list with your spouse and briefly strategize how you might proceed if one of your mentorees displayed any of these symptoms.





Lesson 8

Certification and Next Steps



Lesson 8 Discussion Notes:

Enter notes here



Lesson 8 Exercise 1 (5 min): Which Track Do You Lean Into?

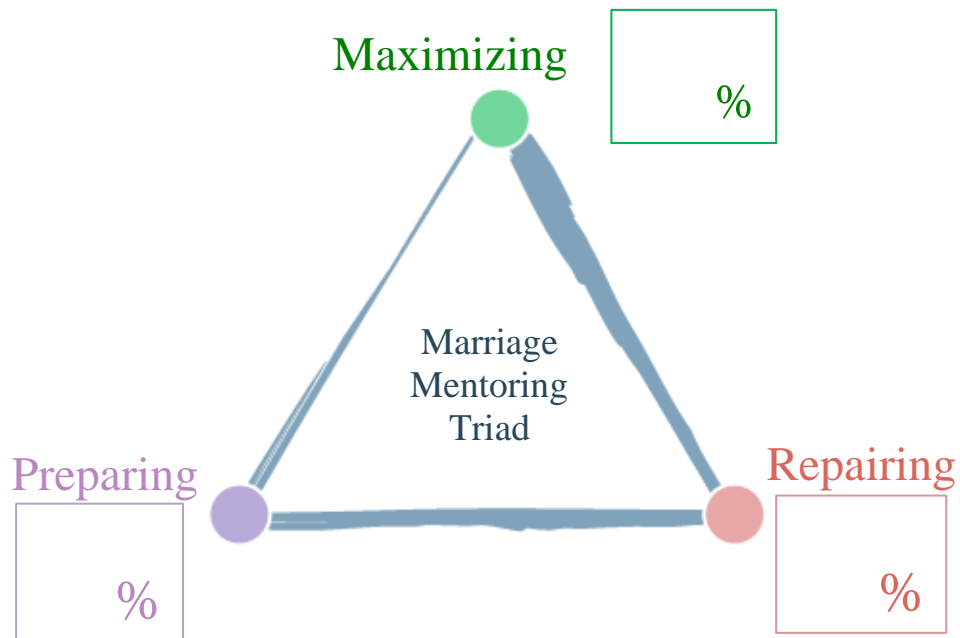
Lesson 8 Exercise 2 (8 min): Getting Creative



For Discussion:

Where are you best gifted to be Marriage Mentors?
As you did in Lesson 1, place a number in each corner of the triangle to represent your personal percentage of interest in mentoring each of the three categories.
The difference this time is that you are determining which track you lean into with your spouse, not as an individual.

By the way, if one of the three marriage tracks does not seem to be a clear 'winner', that's okay. This is merely a tool for helping you to determine where your particular passion for mentoring might be.



For Discussion:

This exercise is designed to get you thinking about what your combined personalities will do for a mentoring relationship. Complete these sentence-stems together as a couple:

- Because of our unique personalities, our marriage mentoring sessions are sure to include...
- Because of our unique personalities, our marriage mentoring sessions are sure to probably never include...

Notes



DATE NIGHT

Make It a Date – Lesson 1

The Big Picture

Question: If a rooster laid an egg on top of a barn, which way would it roll? Any idea? Answer: Neither, roosters don't lay eggs. Did you get it right? If so, you're looking at the "big picture." Regardless, we hope you got a "big picture" view of Marriage Mentoring in this lesson. And if you're making a date of it, you might consider one of these two classic stories to compliment your evening. Both are likely to generate a good discussion.



Movie Recommendation #1

Kramer vs. Kramer

(Drama; 104 Min; 1979; PG)

Ted is a career-driven yuppie whose wife leaves him and their 6-year-old son. As he adjusts to life as a full-time dad, she comes to reclaim the boy.



Talk About It

- What were some signs you observed that this marriage was in trouble?
- How might a positive support system, like Marriage Mentors, be able to help this couple find tools to save this marriage?



Movie Recommendation #2

Pride and Prejudice

(Drama, Romance; 130 Min; 2005; PG)

In this retelling of Jane Austen's novel set in 19th-century England, Mrs. Bennet hopes to marry her daughters to prosperous gentlemen.



Talk About It

- Why did Elizabeth misinterpret Darcy's honorable intentions?
- How might Marriage Mentors be able to help Elizabeth and Darcy better understand each other's communication style?



Menu Idea:

If you're not ordering out for pizza or Chinese to complete your date night, consider scrambling things up with a little egg dish. Eggs are so simple – and when prepared correctly, they can be so tasty (even for dinner). That's why you might consider this recipe for Spanish Eggs. Whatever you choose, we hope you have a great eggsperience (sorry, we couldn't resist).

[Recipe](#): *Spanish Eggs* – 1 hour preparation and cooking time:



DATE NIGHT

Make It a Date – Lesson 2

Building Rapport and Walking in Another Couple's Shoes

Let's lighten it up a little. The two movie recommendations for this date are both romantic comedies. And they're both a great compliment to this lesson's skills – especially walking in another's shoes (quite literally, in both cases). You're sure to enjoy the conversations they generate.



Movie Recommendation #1

While You Were Sleeping

(Romantic Comedy; 105 Min; 1995; PG)

Lucy is infatuated with a man she's never talked to. His family ends up embracing her when she visits him in the hospital.



Talk About It

- Peter's family immediately embraced Lucy – building instant rapport. How would you feel if you were in her shoes and why?
- What was it that caused Lucy to move from loneliness to the ability to build relationships?



Movie Recommendation #2

What Women Want

(Romantic Comedy; 127 Min; 2000; PG-13)

After a freak accident, Nick can hear the thoughts of every woman around him. He learned he can connect easily with women who he knows their thoughts.



Talk About It

- Would you want to know what people of the opposite sex are thinking?
- What advantages and disadvantages would that give you?
- What did Nick learn by being able to read women's thoughts?



Menu Idea:

Our friends, Scott and Susan, were sailing in Alaska when a boat next to them caught eighteen delicious halibut. They shared their fresh catch with all the fellow boaters nearby, including Scott and Susan. Instant *rapport* was established as a result. This halibut recipe is simple to prepare, delicious and healthy. And if you want to see how it can help build rapport, make it a double date and share it with another couple!

Recipe: *Potato Crusted Halibut* – 1 hour preparation and cooking time



Make It a Date – Lesson 3

Working as a Team and Agreeing on Outcomes

What will it be – a little action or a little drama? Either way, you're in for a great evening of entertainment and a little more opportunity to explore working as a team. This skill is so essential to being effective as a mentoring couple. Unity and agreement are qualities your mentorees will pick up on quickly.



Movie Recommendation #1

The Incredibles

(Animated, Action, Comedy; 127 Min; 2004; PG)

Former superheros Bob and Helen Parr are living average, anonymous lives when Bob, formerly known as Mr. Incredible, yearns for the "glory days." He jumps at the opportunity to be part of a top secret assignment – but it is a trap. They must work together to save their family and the world.



Talk About It

- Violet says to Dash, "Mom and Dad's life could be in danger. Or worse ... their marriage!" As a culture do we grasp the truth in this statement?
- What does the movie communicate about unity in marriage and working as a team?



Movie Recommendation #2

Cinderella Man

(Biography/Drama; 145 Min; 2005; PG-13)

This true story of Depression-era boxer James Braddock depicts what happens when he loses all his possessions in the market crash of 1929 and returns to the ring to feed his family. He becomes a symbol of hope and perseverance and he literally fights for his family.



Talk About It

- Why did the life of James and Mae Braddock become such an inspiration to the country?
- What does it reveal about how a couple can face tough times?
- What does it say about agreeing on outcomes and striving to meet goals?



Menu Idea:

Here's an opportunity for the two of you to *work together as a team*. After all, that's what this lesson is all about. We recommend that one of you make the sauce while the other prepares the filling. By the way, you can substitute some purchased Salsa Verde for the homemade sauce to save time – but you'll have to "agree on that outcome."

Recipe: *Sweet Potato and Black Bean Enchiladas* – 1 hour prep and cooking time



DATE NIGHT

Make It a Date – Lesson 4

Asking Meaningful Questions and Listening Aggressively

Can you hear me now? It's one thing to hear and quite another to listen. But once you get a lock on listening aggressively, and you couple it with asking meaningful questions, you'll never have a dull moment when it comes to marriage mentoring. And your two movie recommendations tonight will surely underscore their value.



Movie Recommendation #1

City Slickers

(Adventure/Comedy; 112 Min; 1991; PG-13)

Four middle-aged guys, having midlife crises, experience an action-packed, two-week cattle drive from New Mexico to Colorado. They meet Curley, a weathered trail boss who challenges one of them to find the “one thing” in life that matters.



Talk About It

- If Curly stuck his gnarled finger in your face and asked you to identify your “one thing” that matters most, what would it be? Why?
- In what ways might Curly's question technique work and not work when it comes to marriage mentoring?



Movie Recommendation #2

My Big Fat Greek Wedding

(Romantic Comedy; 95 Min; 2002; PG)

Toula is expected to marry a Greek man. But she meets Ian, a non-Greek, and falls in love. As they plan their wedding, Ian, Toula, and their families learn to understand and appreciate what makes each of them unique.



Talk About It

- What examples of miscommunication and misunderstanding did you see in the movie?
- What would have happened if they had listened to each other with more intention?



Menu Idea:

If you ask a person in Sioux City, Iowa about the Original Sloppy Joe Sandwich, they're likely to tell you that it was invented by a cook named Joe at a cafe in their fine city. Turns out that Joe knew how to not only *ask* his customers what they wanted – he listened aggressively. And we have this feel-good, comfort sandwich as a result. Bring a big napkin and plan for plenty of conversation. This meal takes very little preparation.

Recipe: *Simple Sloppy Joes* – 30 Min prep and cooking time



DATE NIGHT

Make It a Date – Lesson 5

Fielding Questions and Telling your Stories

As you learned in this lesson, you don't need to be intimidated by any question your mentorees might throw at you. And our two movie recommendations tonight will help you explore this a bit further. But mostly, they'll make you laugh. If you haven't seen *Father of the Bride*, it's our first pick for you.



Movie Recommendation #1

Father of the Bride

(Comedy; 105 Min; 1991; PG)

George and Nina are surprised when their daughter announces her engagement. George becomes stubborn and irrational about it all. He is unwilling to face the fact that his little girl is now a woman. As the planning progresses, George begins to accept his future son-in-law.

Talk About It

- George has a tough time relaxing as his daughter becomes engaged. What's keeping him from being supportive; and how would things have gone differently for him if he had?
- What is the difference between 'fielding questions' and avoiding questions?



Movie Recommendation #2

The Family Man

(Comedy/Fantasy; 125 Min; 2000; PG-13)

Jack Campbell, an investment broker, has it all: fast car, fast career track, gorgeous girlfriend. But one day, he wakes up to the life that might have been if he hadn't broken up with his college sweetheart. His new life is a completely different story.

Talk About It

- This movie tells the story of two different sets of values. How do your own values play into the stories you two might use in your marriage mentoring efforts?
- Do you have a story that depicts a tough choice the two of you have had to make?



Menu Idea:

This recipe is a fun option because it can be cooked on the barbeque (or in the oven). It is a delicious recipe to serve with friends and share an evening together telling stories. Oh, and what's that? Does it take much time? That's a good question. This recipe requires placing chicken pieces in marinade up to 12 hours before you plan to cook the chicken.

Recipe: *Grilled Raspberry Chicken* – 1 hour prep and cooking time



DATE NIGHT

Make It a Date – Lesson 6 *Praying Together and Staying Sharp*

For some couples, these two skills can be the most challenging. You've already completed the exercises in this lesson, but these movie recommendations will now take your discussions to a new level. Enjoy!



Movie Recommendation #1

Facing the Giants

(Drama; 111 Min; 2006; PG)

Grant Taylor has never had a winning season as a coach. Overwhelmed by failure and defeat, he cries out to God and decides to lead his team in a new way.



Talk About It

- Grant and Brooke face several large stresses: job difficulties, infertility and a faith crisis. How did you feel about how each reacted to them?
- How do you think prayer impacted their relationship?



Movie Recommendation #2

Joe Versus the Volcano

(Allegorical Fantasy; 100 Min; 1990; PG)

Joe, a downtrodden copywriter and hypochondriac, is diagnosed with a terminal "brain cloud." Because Joe doesn't have long to live, a businessman hires Joe to throw himself into a volcano to appease the gods. Joe's adventure changes his life.



Talk About It

- How is Joe's life at the beginning of the movie like the lives of other people you know – and may mentor?
- Do you have a sense of adventure, together as a couple, as you think about mentoring other couples?
- What will you do to "live in constant, total amazement" (Patricia's phrase in the movie)?



Menu Idea:

You need a good sharp knife for this recipe. Traditionally, people use stones to sharpen knives. But, you don't need a stone. Something as soft as a leather strap can be used to give a razor-sharp edge to a good quality knife. The same is true for a good marriage. Staying sharp is often easier than you might think. Now, get to it. Chop, chop!

[Recipe](#): *Asian Chopped Chicken Salad* – 1 hour prep and cooking time



DATE NIGHT

Make It a Date – Lesson 7 *Being Yourself and Spotting Red Flags*

Ahh. Doesn't it feel good to just relax and be yourselves. Why not dedicate tonight's date to just that? And while you're at it, how about taking what you learned in today's lesson and drive it home with one of these two flicks. They're both good. Which one fits your mood – a little laughter or a fantastic biography? Either one is sure to get you talking.



Movie Recommendation #1

Shrek

(Animation/Comedy; 90 Min; 2001; PG)

The hero, Shrek, is an ill-tempered ogre; and Princess Fiona is not all she appears to be. The story is about self-acceptance and how beauty comes in many different forms.



Talk About It

- What gave Shrek the courage to take off his mask and be himself?
- What is it about Shrek that makes him genuine?



Movie Recommendation #2

Beautiful Mind

(Biography/Drama; 135 Min; 2001; PG-13)

Bio-pic of the famed mathematician, John Nash, and his life-long struggles with mental health. Nash enrolled as a graduate student at Princeton in 1948. Overtime, John begins to lose his grip on reality.



Talk About It

- What were some early signs of John's mental instability?
- How did others help or hurt John as they interacted with him?



Menu Idea:

Get this! Americans consume approximately 2.5 billion bowls of the top three Campbell's soups each year. Amazing, isn't it? Well, this soup recipe is a wonderfully fresh and healthy ...but if you like, you can prepare the meal from your favorite can of soup and spend the extra time just being yourself!

Recipe: *Hearty Garden Patch Soup* – 1 hour prep and cooking time



About Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott

Les and Leslie are #1 New York Times best-selling authors. They are a husband-and-wife team who not only share the same name, but the same passion for helping others builds healthy relationships. In 1991, the Parrotts founded the Center for Relationship Development on the campus of Seattle Pacific University - a groundbreaking program dedicated to teaching the basics of good relationships.

Married in 1984, the Parrotts bring real-life examples to their speaking platform. Their professional training - Leslie as a marriage and family therapist, and Les as a clinical psychologist - ensures a presentation that is grounded, insightful and cutting-edge. Les and Leslie are master communicators. They are entertaining, thought-provoking and immeasurably practical. One minute you'll be laughing and the next you'll sit still in silence as they open your eyes to how you can make your relationships all they were meant to be.

Each year Les and Leslie speak all across America and often include Europe and Asia on their speaking tours. Their audiences include a wide array of venues, from churches to Fortune 500 company board rooms. The Governor of Oklahoma appointed the Parrotts as the first ever statewide Marriage Ambassadors. Authorities have called upon Les and Leslie to provide on-site support in the aftermath of worldwide disasters such as Ground Zero and Chernobyl. The Commander of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, invited them to assist his soldiers with re-entry into family life upon returning from Iraq.

Their books have sold over one million copies in more than two dozen languages, and include best-selling and Gold-medallion winner *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts*. Other popular titles include *The Control Freak*, *I Love You More*, *Becoming Soul Mates*, *Relationships, Questions Couples Ask*, *Shoulda Woulda Coulda*, and *High-Maintenance Relationships*.

Special Marriage Mentor Website Information

- a) Marriage Mentoring Downloads: <http://www.marriagementorsite.com/downloads/index.html>
- b) Assessments: <http://www.lesandleslie.com/#> (click on "Assessments" on the upper drop down menu)
- c) Video on Demand: <http://www.marriagementorsite.com/resources/video-q--a-for-marriage-mentors.html>
- d) Marriage Mentor Webinars: <http://www.mentorcommunitysite.com/>
- e) Newsletters: <http://www.mentorcommunitysite.com/>
- f) Community Interaction: <http://www.mentorcommunitysite.com/>

Books and Resources for Marriage Mentors

- a) Marriage Mentor Book Store: <http://store.lesandleslie.com/index.php?route=product/category&path=68>
- b) The Complete Guide to Marriage Mentoring:
 - i) Marriage Mentor Training Manual for Wives
 - ii) Marriage Mentor Training Manual for Husbands
 - iii) The Complete Resource Kit For Marriage Mentoring

