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**USING INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOTAPE TO TEACH COUPLES
COMMUNICATION, CONFLICT-RESOLUTION,
AND PROBLEM-SOLVING**

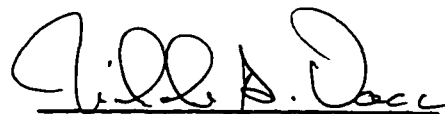
by

Larry C. Willett

**A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy**

Greensboro, 1996

Approved by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William A. Dacc", is written over a horizontal line.

Dissertation Advisor

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**WILLETT, LARRY C., Ph.D. Using Instructional Videotape To Teach Couples Communication, Conflict-resolution, And Problem-solving. (1996)
Directed by Dr. Nicholas A. Vacc. 188 pp.**

Strong support for the relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction has been demonstrated by numerous researchers including Boland and Follingstad (1986), Henry (1973), Murphy and Mendelson (1973), Navran (1967), and Satir (1964). Though instructional videotape has been utilized in empirical studies in other professions such as business management, nursing, and parent-training, little research has been done to examine the use of instructional videotape to increase the effectiveness of marital satisfaction for couples in counseling and in couples who are not in counseling. An instructional videotape was designed and created to teach communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills to couples.

Variables examined included marital satisfaction, communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills learned from the instructional videotape, and satisfaction with counseling. Instruments used included the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Relationship Skills Checklist, and the Client Satisfaction Scale.

Subjects consisted of couples who came for counseling at three independent counseling centers and a group of couples, not in counseling, who were obtained through church groups. Subjects were randomly assigned to view the instructional videotape or listen to a cassette of recorded music. Couples completed pretests at the beginning of the study and posttests six weeks later. Differences between the pretest and posttest scores were examined to compare couples who used the videotape with couples who did not use the videotape on the variables of interest.

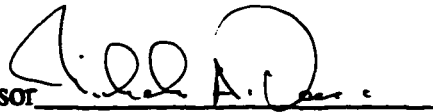
The marital satisfaction of couples in counseling who used the instructional videotape increased significantly in comparison to couples in counseling who did not

use the instructional videotape, but no differences in marital satisfaction existed for couples who were not in counseling, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory. Differences in marital satisfaction between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape were insignificant for couples in counseling and couples not in counseling, as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. There were no significant differences in knowledge of communication between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist. Data from the Client Satisfaction Scale, which measured couples' satisfaction with counseling, was insufficient for statistical analyses. Standard error scores were significantly different across treatment means, particularly for couples in counseling.



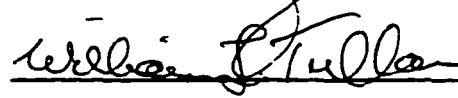
APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of
The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Dissertation Advisor



Committee Members

November 18, 1996

Date of Acceptance by Committee

November 18, 1996

Date of Final Oral Examination

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Strong support for the relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction has been demonstrated by numerous researchers including Boland and Follingstad (1986), Henry (1973), Murphy and Mendelson (1973), Navran (1967), and Satir (1964). Other skills that correlate with marital adjustment are problem-solving (Harrell & Guerney, 1976) and decision making (Stuart, 1976). Jacobson and Holtzworth-Munroe (1986) stressed that regardless of the degree to which couples are attracted to each other, they need more than attraction to help them communicate and resolve conflicts that occur in their marriages. They need skills that will equip them with the ability to solve problems and provide support for one another (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986).

Research has demonstrated that a difference exists in the communication and problem-solving skills of distressed and non-distressed couples (Baucom & Adams, 1987; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986). Distressed couples may tend to avoid conflict altogether, thus increasing the level of frustration and hostility. Additionally, distressed couples may discuss areas of conflict in an aversive way that prevents resolution and increases the level of anger and resentment. As the number of unresolved problems and the level of marital distress increase, marital satisfaction decreases (Christensen & Shenk, 1991). This change results in eventual dissolution of the marital relationship and, in many cases, the family for nearly 50% of all marriages (National Center for Health Statistics, 1987)

As marital distress reaches intensity, couples seek help from mental health professionals. However, the number of married couples who recognize the value of early intervention is usually small, and most will seek help only when the level

of stress has increased beyond their ability to cope. As a result, many mental health professionals find themselves faced with the difficult task of working with couples to lower the level of hostility about unresolved conflict situations and attempting to equip the couples with new tools for communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving. These counseling goals usually take place within the time frame of one to one and one-half hours per week for an average of 10 to 12 weeks. The financial cost to a couple for counseling can range from \$300 to more than \$1000, depending on the number of counseling sessions. Unlike most mental health counseling, which is often partially covered by third-party payers, few insurance programs consider marital counseling a coverable item. As a way to increase counseling effectiveness, time-efficient methods need to be examined. There is a need for resources that can be utilized to facilitate the "equipping process" for couples to learn the necessary skills required to increase marital satisfaction.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of incorporating into the marital counseling process an instructional videotape that is designed to teach and model communication skills, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving. According to Guerney (1977), who developed a couples communication program known as Relationship Enhancement, communication skills involve both listening skills as well as speaking skills. In Relationship Enhancement, these skills are known as empathic responding and expressing, respectively. Developing both sets of skills is essential for couples to communicate effectively (Guerney, 1977).

Due to limitations in the small number of counselors who participated in the study and the number of subjects who volunteered for the original regimen, a second group of subjects was included that consisted of couples who were not seeking counseling. Though the second group was drawn from a different source than the first, the purpose of the

intervention was similar: to examine the efficacy of using an instructional videotape intervention to teach married couples communication and problem-solving skills with the desired effect being an increase in marital satisfaction. A by-product of incorporating this group was to examine the effectiveness of using instructional videotape as a preventive intervention to enhance the communication and problem-solving skills of couples who were not seeking counseling.

Videotaped instruction has been shown through numerous studies to be a highly effective instructional tool. Hudson, Doyle, and Venezia (1991) found videotapes to be significantly more effective than written materials in teaching communication skills to high school students. In a study that involved teaching new parenting skills to parents of children with significant behavior problems, Webster-Stratton (1992) found videotape instruction alone to be nearly as effective as combining videotape with group discussion, and more effective than group discussion alone. In addition to the impact on learning, videotape instruction was found to be a cost effective means for parenting instruction as well (Webster-Stratton, 1992).

Karanian (1986) reported that videotape instruction and feedback was effective in helping engineering students apply communication theory to job interviews. Nelms, Jones, and Gray (1993) indicated that videotape instruction was an effective means by which communication skills and caring behaviors could be learned by nursing students. The implications of the results of Nelms et al's. research are particularly important to marital counseling since marital satisfaction cannot be reduced to a set of skills such as communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving, although these skills appear essential. Schumm, Barnes, Bollman, Jurich, and Bugaighis (1985) found that simply increasing the amount of self-disclosure between spouses without including the factor of positive regard decreased marital satisfaction if self-disclosure became negative in content. If caring behaviors can be learned successfully by videotape instruction, as shown by

Nelms et al. (1993), perhaps spouses' positive regard for each other, as well as relationship-enhancing skills, can also be taught and learned through the use of videotape instruction.

Significance of the Problem

Several instructional cassettes and videotapes are available that are designed to teach communication skills. However, there is a notable lack of reported studies that have subjected instructional videotapes to the objective scrutiny of empirical research, although communication programs have been shown to be effective in teaching relationship building skills to couples. Two communication training programs, the Communication Skills Workshop (CSW) and the Couples Communication Program (CCP), were compared in a study to determine their effectiveness in teaching communication skills (Witkin, Edleson, Rose, & Hall, 1983). Couples in both groups showed significant increases in positive verbal and nonverbal communication and decreases in negative verbal and nonverbal communication compared to a waiting-list control group. However, neither of the programs examined in the study were designed to include videotape instruction.

While videotape instruction has been shown to be effective in teaching skills in other professions such as management (Mills & Pace, 1989), engineering (Karanian, 1986), and nursing (Nelms et al., 1993), only one study utilized videotape technology to teach relationship-enhancing skills to couples (Cleaver, 1987). Videotape instruction has been shown to be a cost effective means for teaching essential skills. Yet, there is an absence of researched videotaped instructional programs available to professional counselors working with couples.

The correlation between relationship-enhancing skills such as communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving has been shown to be significant. Yet, the process of integrating these into marital counseling is often difficult and time consuming. Follingstad (1988) stated that addressing a couple's skills deficit is one of eight crucial phases in the

marital counseling process. Addressing couples' skills deficits in a manner that is time-efficient and effective would be helpful to the entire counseling process.

Statement of the Problem and Questions

This study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of including an instructional videotape intervention to teach communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills to couples engaged in marital counseling and to those who are not in counseling. The specific research questions of interest were as follows:

1. Do couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills from an instructional videotape, as an adjunct to marital counseling, learn those skills better than couples who do not use an instructional videotape?
2. Do couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills by using an instructional videotape increase their level of marital satisfaction more than couples who do not use the instructional videotape?
3. Do couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills by using an instructional videotape in addition to counseling experience a higher level of client satisfaction with counseling than couples who do not use instructional videotape?
4. Do couples not in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills by using an instructional videotape increase their knowledge and use of those skills as compared to couples not in counseling who do not use an instructional videotape?
5. Do couples not in counseling who learn communication and problem-solving skills by using an instructional videotape increase their level of marital satisfaction more than couples not in counseling and do not use an instructional videotape?

Definition of Terms

In order to insure an accurate examination of the research questions, the following definitions are provided:

Marriage Counseling--The process during which couples contract with a paid professional counselor for a series of one-hour sessions. Sessions are oriented around (a) determining the concerns within the relationship, (b) facilitating the resolution of conflicts between spouses, and (c) evaluating a couple's relationship skills and equipping them with more effective skills such as communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving.

Couple--A legally married man and woman with no specific age or duration of marriage relationship.

Couples in counseling--Couples who have engaged the contracted services of a paid helping professional such as a licensed professional counselor, psychologist, marital therapist, or social worker.

Couples not in counseling--Couples who have not engaged the contracted services of a paid helping professional such as a licensed professional counselor, psychologist, marital therapist, or social worker.

Instructional Videotape--A videotape containing a recorded program designed to teach communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving to couples engaged in marital counseling. Each instructional videotape consists of two parts: teaching (i.e., communication, conflict-resolution, or problem-solving) and modeling, using a trained couple to demonstrate the skills on the videotape.

Communication Skills--The ability to verbally and non-verbally transfer and use thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of one's spouse and the issues that are being mutually experienced.

Conflict-resolution--The process a couple incorporates which utilizes communication skills including expressing and listening to discuss conflict areas constructively and reach viable solutions (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986).

Problem-solving--The process by which a couple discusses a problem area in their relationship, generates possible solutions, and arrives at a mutually satisfying resolution to the problem (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986).

Organization of the Study

The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter I includes an introduction to the examination of using a videotape for increasing marital satisfaction, need for and purpose of the study, statement of the problem, and definition of terms. Chapter II, examines the literature concerning the link between marital satisfaction and relationship skills of communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution. Information is included about (a) the effectiveness of instructional videotape and modeling from research in other fields, (b) two marital counseling models that describe the phases of the marriage counseling process, and (c) the communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills to be taught. Presented in Chapter III are the research hypotheses and information regarding the subjects, procedures to be followed, instruments to be used, and data analyses. Chapter IV reports the study's results including a presentation of descriptive data and statistical analysis along with a discussion of those results. Finally, Chapter V includes a summary of the study including implications for counselors, suggestions for further research, and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of utilizing an instructional videotape to teach couples more effective communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills for improving counseling and achieving satisfaction with their marriage. Although there are currently several instructional videotapes available for couples, little research has been conducted concerning their effectiveness. In addition, there are few studies designed to examine the effect of using videotape instruction as an intervention strategy in marital counseling. As a result, there is a need to empirically test the effectiveness of teaching communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills to married couples using instructional videotapes, with the objective being an increase in the couple's level of overall marital satisfaction.

Organization of the Literature Review

The literature review for this study covers five areas and is organized as follows:

1. Examining the correlation between marital satisfaction and the skills of communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution.
2. Reviewing two models of marital counseling that outline the stages of the counseling process and the objectives of each stage.
3. Examining the viability of using a videotape as an instructional intervention in marital counseling.
4. Examining, from social learning theory, the effectiveness of using models on the instructional videotape to facilitate the process of learning relationship-building skills.

5. Review of effective models for teaching communication, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.

Communication, Conflict-Resolution, Problem-Solving,
and Marital Satisfaction

Yelsma (1984) reported that a general consensus exists among practitioners and theorists concerning the importance of effective communication in developing and maintaining marital satisfaction. Several authors including Henry (1973), Murphy and Mendelson (1973), Navran (1967), and Satir (1964) found the presence of a strong positive relationship between effective marital communication and marital adjustment. Beck and Jones (1973) and Taylor (1967) reported that faulty marital communication is frequently viewed as a major source of relationship difficulty. Yelsma's (1984) research, which compared happily married couples to couples engaged in counseling, found that the happily married couples differed significantly in verbal communication, nonverbal communication, and marital adjustment. Using a discriminant function analysis procedure, 16 of 25 statements relating to communication significantly discriminated happily married couples from those seeking counseling for relationship difficulties. These items included statements such as, "...talk over pleasant things that happen during the day...", "...do not express emotions by sulking or pouting...", and "...talk over most things in their marriage..." (Yelsma, 1984). Yelsma's examination of self-perception and perception of spouse's communication behaviors revealed that when patterns of either perceptual distortion or ineffective communication were allowed to continue over time, marital satisfaction was likely to deteriorate.

According to Markman (1981), distress which develops later in marriage can be consistently predicted by the use of ineffective communication and problem-solving skills that are present prior to, or early in the marital relationship. Furthermore, Markman reported that (a) dysfunctional communication patterns tend to precede the development of

marital problems and (b) later marital distress is identifiable in early couple interaction patterns. In a five-year longitudinal study, Markman (1981) examined the relationship between a couple's communication patterns and marital satisfaction prior to marriage and five years after marriage. A correlation coefficient of .59 between measurements taken at these two times suggested that couples who indicated more positive premarital communication reported a greater level of marital satisfaction five years later. Markman concluded that his findings were consistent with a social learning approach to marital counseling; a relationship exists between communication and problem-solving deficits and the development and maintenance of marital problems.

Communication patterns have been empirically shown to be much better predictors of future marital satisfaction than are factors such as couple compatibility (Markman, Floyd, Stanley, & Storaasli, 1988). Furthermore, Markman et al. (1988) concluded that overcoming incompatibility through communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution is much more important for a couple than whether they are compatible or not. Kelly, Huston, and Cate (1985) reported that effective relationship maintenance skills were more highly correlated with relationship satisfaction than interpersonal factors such as being in love and ambivalence in the decision to marry.

In a longitudinal study which included teaching communication and problem-solving skills to pre-married couples, Markman et al. (1988) examined the relationship between these skills and marital satisfaction. Using measures of relationship satisfaction, problem intensity, and communication impact as dependent variables, results indicated that experimental couples were able to learn the skills and maintain or improve levels of relationship functioning and satisfaction. In a three-year follow up, the control group couples, who used no skills training, evidenced either no change or declines in levels of marital and relationship satisfaction. Additionally, control group couples indicated a greater increase in problem intensity and sexual dissatisfaction over time than did experimental

couples. Another unexpected finding was the striking difference in dissolution rate of the marital relationships between the control group and the experimental group. At the time of the three-year follow up, 24% of the control-group couples had dissolved their relationships compared to 5% of couples who had been taught communication and problem-solving skills during the study. Markman et al. (1988) concluded that skill-based intervention programs may help couples maintain relationship positivity and may reduce the probability of relationship dissolution. In the Markman et al., (1988) research, couples were taught important skills prior to the development of serious marital conflict and the resulting negative emotions and perceptions. The researchers cautioned that motivation to learn may have been higher for couples who used instruction early in their relationship than for couples who experienced serious marital conflict prior to a skills-based intervention strategy.

Glander, Locke, and Leonard (1987) utilized the Marital Satisfaction Inventory to measure the effects of the Couple Communication Program which focuses on improving competence in interpersonal communication. In the Couple Communication Program, couples learn to attend to their interaction patterns, levels of awareness, and skills to change those patterns. The Marital Satisfaction Inventory consists of 280 items that are designed to measure 11 scales including Conventionalization, Global Distress with the Relationship, Affective Communication, Problem-Solving Communication, Time Together, Financial Concerns, Sexual Dissatisfaction, Role Orientation, Perceptions of Distress from Families of Origin, Dissatisfaction and Disappointment with Children, and Conflict over Childrearing Practices. Couples were measured with the Marital Satisfaction Inventory prior to and after being exposed to the Couple Communication Program, a highly structured workshop that involved four three-hour sessions and once-a-week meetings for one month. Comparison of pretesting and post-testing results revealed changes in the participant level of marital satisfaction, with some changes being significant such as the Problem-Solving

Communication scale. Other scales that revealed important changes were the Affective Communication scale and the Conventionalization Scale which indicated a more positive view of the relationships.

Witkin, Edleson, Rose, and Hall (1983) compared the Couples Communication Program with the Communication Skills Workshop using the Marital Adjustment Scale to measure marital satisfaction. Volunteer couples were randomly assigned to either the Couples Communication Program, the Communication Skills Workshop, or a waiting-list control group. The Communication Skills Workshop, which utilizes a group format with couples meeting for six two-hour sessions, was designed to improve relationship satisfaction through improved communication and problem-solving skills. Instructional methods for both the Couples Communication Program and the Communication Skills Workshop are similar, incorporating didactic presentations, modeling, role playing, and behavior rehearsals. Measurement instruments used in addition to the Marital Adjustment scale were the Areas of Change Questionnaire, the Marital Communication Inventory, and the Marital Interaction Coding System. Results indicated that the Couples Communication Program couples experienced a significant increase in nonverbal positive messages and a decrease in both verbal and non-verbal negative messages compared to the Communication Skills Workshop and the waiting-list control group. However, for the Communication Skills Workshop couples, negative verbal messages decreased significantly in frequency as compared to the waiting-list couples. Though the Couples Communication Program produced greater changes in some areas of couple communication, both the Couples Communication Program and the Communication Skills Workshop effectively increased couple's communication skills when compared with the control group.

Schumm, Barnes, Bollman, Jurich, and Bugaighis (1985) examined the relationship between marital satisfaction and self-disclosure, an important component of communication. Their findings indicated that working only to improve communication may not be sufficient

for increasing marital satisfaction. They found this to be true when the increase in communication included an increase in negative communication. Results of their research indicated that communication should be used by couples to facilitate an increase in mutual trust and positive regard. Schumm et al. (1985) stated that, for marital satisfaction to improve, skills-based training should include a focus on communication and problem-solving and a strategy of facilitating positive regard. The relationship between self-disclosure and marital satisfaction remained positive until self-disclosure became heavily laden with negative messages, at which time self-disclosure became an ineffective intervention strategy. Schumm et al. (1985) concluded that the relationship between self-disclosure and marital satisfaction could be described statistically with a curvilinear model. An interaction existed between the amount and quality of self-disclosure; as self-disclosure increased, satisfaction increased unless the quality of self-disclosure became more negative which resulted in a decrease in positive regard and marital satisfaction (Schumm et al., 1985).

Jacquart (1988) examined the relationship between categories of leisure time, communication (couple interaction) and marital satisfaction. Findings indicated that the level of marital satisfaction decreased as couples engaged in leisure with low to moderate amounts of communication. Conversely, greater marital satisfaction was correlated with greater participation in high-joint-leisure (high interaction). An important finding to emerge from this study was that leisure time contributes significantly to the quality of a relationship when a high level of perceived communication exists. Jacquart (1988) concluded that "...the family (or couple) that plays together, stays together...if they have a great deal of communication while they play" (p. 76).

Christensen and Shenk (1991) examined the relationship among communication, conflict, psychological distance, and marital distress for couples in one of three groups: non-distressed couples, clinic couples, and divorcing couples. The combined distressed

couples (i.e. clinic and divorcing) evidenced significantly poorer communication and reported greater differences in their desire for psychological distance than did the non-distressed couples. Couples with greater differences in their desire for psychological closeness were defined as more incompatible. The researchers indicated that greater incompatibility required better communication skills to overcome the incompatibility. As distressed couples attempted to communicate ineffectively, their differences were exacerbated, their communication skills continued to deteriorate, and their desire for psychological distance tended to increase (Christensen & Shenk, 1991).

The link between marital satisfaction and conflict-resolution has been the focus of numerous studies over the past few years. Several studies compared communication patterns of happily married couples with those of distressed couples and found significant differences between the two groups (Christensen, 1988; Guthrie & Noller, 1988). Schaap (1988) found that distressed couples reported more destructive communication behaviors and conflict avoidance than did non-distressed couples. While distressed and non-distressed couples reportedly dealt with the same conflict areas, distressed couples had more frequent conflicts and spent significantly more time in conflict, but tended to avoid conflict more than did non-distressed couples. Areas of more intense conflict were communication, sexuality, and dispositional characteristics of the partner. Similarly, Jacobson and Holtzworth-Munroe (1986) reported that skill deficiencies in distressed couples are especially evident in the strategies they use for dealing with conflict.

Worthington (1990) identified an important difference between marital stability and marital satisfaction. Marital stability results from a sense of commitment to the relationship whereas marital quality (satisfaction) relates more to intimacy, communication, conflict-resolution, and the degree to which spouses' actions and words result in painful emotions. While a couple may have a relatively stable marriage, this level of marital satisfaction could be low. Worthington (1990) indicated that the couple must work to enhance their

communication and conflict-resolution skills if the quality of the marital relationship is to improve.

Jacobson and Holtzworth-Munroe (1986) reported that distressed couples appear to be particularly deficient in strategies to be used in resolving conflict. Conflict-resolution and problem-solving are highly specialized forms of communication which are most often taught after couples have mastered basic listening and expressive skills. Therefore, their Social Learning-Cognitive model (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986) includes a highly structured format consisting of specific concepts to learn, rules to follow, and a structure for discussing problems.

In a manual designed for a marital counseling workshop, Jacobson (1987) stated that couples who are able to learn an effective strategy for problem-solving and to make necessary changes in their relationship when needed, tend to enjoy a flexible, satisfying relationship. Though problem-solving and conflict-resolution are less spontaneous and relaxing than other forms of communication, couples who become proficient at these skills often learn to enjoy the process and tend to be drawn closer as a result. Conversely, studies have shown that distressed couples exhibit more negative behaviors during problem-solving interactions than do non-distressed couples (Baucom, Notarius, Burnett, & Haefner, 1990; Weiss & Heyman, 1990). Negative behaviors that inhibit distressed couples' successful problem-solving include criticisms, verbal put-downs, denial of responsibility, and blaming. In addition, distressed couples tend to reciprocate their spouse's negative behavior more than non-distressed couples. This particular behavior pattern, which has been termed "negative reciprocity", is based on social learning/behavior exchange theory (Jacobson & Margolin, 1979).

Levenson and Gottman (1983, 1985) examined a pattern of marital interaction based on negative reciprocity. As distressed wives increased their negativity in an attempt to see that their concerns were addressed, husbands tended to de-escalate the level of intensity by

withdrawing. In other studies, Gottman (1979) and Thomas (1977) reported that dysfunctional interaction patterns of complaint-counter complaint and complaint-disagreement were utilized more frequently by distressed couples than by non-distressed couples.

Behaviors that contribute positively to problem-solving are referred to as constructive engagement (Sayers, Baucom, Sher, Weiss, & Heyman, 1991). Constructive engagement is a process that increases the likelihood that couples will discuss and resolve their problems, thereby potentially increasing their level of marital satisfaction. One example of constructive engagement that has been found to correlate with fewer marital problems is negotiation. Specific behaviors that contribute to an increase in a couple's distress level are selective ignoring of problems and resignation (Menaghan 1982).

Sabourin, Laporte, and Wright (1990) reported that non-distressed couples expressed a greater level of problem-solving confidence, were less likely to avoid problem-solving activities, and incorporated more effective strategies to control their behavior. Similarly, Alberts (1989) found that, although well-adjusted couples occasionally engaged in ineffective problem-solving behavior, they engaged more often in effective behavior than did distressed couples.

Finally, Christian, O'Leary, and Vivian (1994) examined the relationship between problem-solving skills, marital discord, and depressive symptomatology. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale, the Problem-Solving Inventory, and the Beck Depression Scale were utilized to measure marital satisfaction/discord, problem-solving self-appraisal, and level of depressive symptomatology, respectively. Results indicated the presence of a statistically significant relationship between problem-solving ability (self-appraised) and marital discord. In addition, for men and women, lower problem-solving ability was predictive of depressive symptomatology after the variance due to marital discord was removed in the partial correlation analyses. From this research, it is evident that, when spouses perceive

themselves as ineffective problem solvers, there is a greater likelihood of depressive symptoms and marital discord.

Summary

From a careful examination of the available literature, it is clear that there exists a significant relationship between couple's communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills and their level of marital satisfaction. These relationship skills were reported to be effective in overcoming couple incompatibility. Further, the literature reveals that a deficit of communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills early in the relationship can accurately predict the presence of greater marital problems later. However, most important from an examination of the literature is the fact that these skills can be taught to couples to significantly improve their level of marital satisfaction.

Models of Marital Counseling

Fallingstad (1988) and others (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986) have shown the importance of following a model as a way of conceptualizing and treating married couples. Using a model as an overall framework allows counselors from any theoretical framework to consider important questions that may occur during counseling. Counseling in the absence of a model designed to consider difficulties which may occur could result in interventions being inappropriate or ineffective.

Fallingstad's Model

According to Follingstad (1988), there is an advantage in focusing on the process level of psychotherapy when considering the sequence of events in marital counseling. Understanding a typical flow of marital counseling would enable counselors, regardless of their theoretical perspective, to design interventions that would be sensitive to factors present at various stages of therapy. Steps in Follingstad's flow-chart model (see Appendix A) are not meant to be rigid. Rather, they are intended to be an overall guide to salient difficulties that may occur at various stages in marital counseling. As reported by

Follingstad, couples may be at one stage and, as a particular issue arises, regress to a previous stage in their interactions.

The first phase in Follingstad's model examines each spouse's commitment to the marriage. If either spouse lacks sufficient commitment to the relationship, efforts to produce harmony or work on particular skills may fail. The counselor must also determine if either spouse is involved in a relationship outside the marriage. In addition, each spouse may have desires or prerequisites for remaining in the relationship which should be discussed.

At the second stage in Follingstad's model, couples must determine if, in addition to being committed to the relationship, they desire to work on the marriage. At times, couples may believe that having to work on a marriage is incompatible with their preconceptions of what a romantic relationship should be like. Follingstad (1988) stated that resistance to working on a relationship may be due to factors such as fear of changes in the balance of power, fear of the unknown, fear of greater damage to one's self-esteem, and beliefs that one's spouse should do all the changing. At an early stage in the counseling process, a discussion about the factors that might create resistance to change could prevent a later failure of counseling interventions (Follingstad, 1988).

During the third phase in Follingstad's model, the counselor should determine if there are aversive actions which would tend to block communication from being established. Examples of behaviors that would inhibit progress in counseling are (a) turning every statement into a power struggle and (b) placing blame on the other person. Such destructive behaviors make it more unlikely that partners will let their guard down long enough to engage in more positive interactions.

Phase four consists of examining the underlying beliefs which might motivate spouses to resist or sabotage certain changes or assignments. These include beliefs about roles of males and females in a marriage, how rules are determined, and the amount of

independence that is acceptable in the marriage. Important functions or purposes that certain behaviors fulfill for individuals are often supported by the belief systems. If particular behaviors are problematic, the needs that motivate those behaviors may be met in another manner, resulting in a decrease in the destructive behavior.

During the fifth phase, relationship skills such as communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving are assessed. If these skills are inadequate, as is often the case, interventions are incorporated that are designed to help the couple resolve their problems more efficiently. Follingstad (1988) indicated that to reinforce skills training, couples are often given homework assignments with instructions to report back to the counselor as to the effectiveness of the assignment. Phase six assesses the need for skills training in other areas such as parenting and the couple's sexual relationship. Occasionally, there are couples who may be able to begin counseling at the point of skills training. However, for most couples, beginning at this level does not produce significant changes in the marital system and movement back to a previous stage becomes necessary.

Step seven utilizes the skills training included in steps five and six to address specific conflict areas such as child rearing, in-law relationships, finances, and career issues. Problem-solving techniques, such as compromise and negotiation, are particularly important skills to be learned at this phase. These skills are built on communication skills taught in previous steps. Couples are encouraged to engage in brainstorming to generate creative solutions to problems that would previously have resulted in serious conflict.

The final step in Follingstad's model, relationship enhancement, relies on the effectiveness of the work accomplished in the prior steps. Relationship enhancement includes planned time together and positive spontaneous experiences shared together. Couples at this stage of counseling will often explore new activities to engage in together as their avoidance of joint time decreases.

Social Learning-Cognitive Model

A similar model to Fallingstad is that of Jacobson and Holtzworth-Munroe, known as Social Learning-Cognitive Model, which incorporates many of the same activities, but with fewer stages or phases being delineated (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986). During the first stage, the focus is on assessment and evaluation of the couple's relationship. Assessment, in this model, is distinguished from counseling, although the assessment phase may be therapeutic. Important questions to be answered during this phase include (a) Is marriage counseling the appropriate step to take? and (b) What are the problems contained in the relationship and the goals of therapy? Since the emphasis is on collecting information rather than on specific counseling interventions while in the assessment phase, couples are told not to expect improvement in the relationship.

Specific approaches to gathering valuable information about the couple include a variety of self-report questionnaires, conjoint and individual interviews, daily data collection by spouses at home, and a careful assessment of communication patterns (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986). As details about the couple are gathered, emphasis is placed on relational strengths as well as weaknesses. Jacobson and Holtzworth-Munroe (1986) recognize the fact that a possible outcome of the assessment phase is not to enter therapy. This may occur if the counselor determines that therapy is not in the best interest of one or both spouses.

During the second phase of treatment, the counselor presents feedback to the couple on the assessment process, their strengths and weaknesses, and presents a proposed treatment plan to be agreed upon by the counselor and couple. In the Jacobson-Holtzworth-Munroe model, therapy begins only after the treatment plan has been agreed upon.

Following this, the counselor and couple begin to focus on initiating and increasing positive behavior. These interventions are primarily short-term, designed to create immediate effects on the relationship. These interventions typically consist of assignments

to be accomplished at home. Following the implementation of interventions, the counselor uses feedback from the couple regarding the homework assignment. According to the success or failure on the homework assignment, couples either move on to the next step or, with the help of the counselor, address the difficulties experienced with the assignment. Skills necessary to extend these benefits over time are de-emphasized during this phase.

According to Jacobson and Holtzworth-Munroe (1986), the fourth phase of treatment, the skill acquisition phase, consumes the bulk of the counseling process. During this stage, communication skills, especially problem-solving skills, as well as other relationship skills, are taught using psycho educational techniques such as modeling and role play. Sessions are highly structured and the counselor is generally more directive.

During the final phase, generalization and maintenance, strategies are designed to help spouses sustain new skills and assume increasing responsibility for the management of their relationship. In the Social Learning-Cognitive Model, formal termination is de-emphasized. The couple-counselor relationship is considered ongoing, with periodic follow-up visits expected (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986).

Summary

From the preceding examination of two models of marital counseling, it appears that there is a stage in the marital counseling process when the introduction of a specific intervention such as teaching relationship-enhancing skills would be reasonable. If the intervention were to be incorporated early in the therapeutic sequence (i.e. perhaps prior to an accurate assessment or before determining the couple's commitment to the marital relationship) failure could be due more to timing than to the intervention.

Use of Instructional Videotape

Though little information was found relating to the use of instructional videotape in marital counseling, examination of literature in other professions yielded numerous instances in which videotape was used effectively for instruction. This section on

videotape instruction is organized as follows: (a) The use of videotape instruction in various professions, including marital counseling, (b) The long-term sustained effects of videotape instruction, (c) Utilizing videotape instruction along with prompting, practice and feedback, and (d) Timing of implementation of videotape instruction.

Use of Instructional Videotape in Professions

There are several characteristics in videotape technology that make it ideal for use in the behavioral sciences. This is particularly true when instructional videotape is applied to social skills training (Hosford & Mills, 1983). Videotape produces a visual and auditory record which may be played conveniently again and again. Hosford and Mills (1983) indicated that, according to research on information-processing in the human brain, the capability, in video, of presenting simultaneously a visual picture of an object along with the printed and spoken name, results in a much more rapid and effective learning process.

Though little research has been conducted in the use of videotape in marital counseling, with the exception of filming couple's interactions to provide feedback, videotape has been employed successfully in several other fields. In a study utilizing videotapes to teach communication to engineering students, Karanian (1986) reported that many students often had difficulty comprehending the practical value in theoretical concepts of communication. Incorporating videotapes allowed the student's interests to be engaged in a more concrete manner. In this study, a videotape was created to demonstrate the important relationship between communication and conducting a successful job interview. Goals for students included increasing understanding of the verbal and non-verbal cues in communication and understanding the obstacles that exist in patterns of communication. Karanian (1986) reported that using videotape-instruction and feedback provided an important link between theory and practice in communication. The design of the study included a theory phase where concepts and models of communication were discussed including verbal and

nonverbal cues in communication, and a videotape phase during which role play and feedback were components in the practical application of theoretical concepts.

Although there are few studies reported that apply instructional-videotape to teaching couples more effective relationship-enhancing skills, one such study found the intervention to be successful. Cleaver (1987) examined the effectiveness of using instructional videotape to teach communication and problem-solving skills to couples in the context of a marriage enrichment program. Twenty-two couples were randomly assigned to either the experimental group or the control group. Couples in the experimental group were taught communication and negotiation skills by a facilitator utilizing videotape. The control-group couples were taught the same skills without the use of the videotape. The videotape format consisted of instruction on listening to content and feeling, speaking, and negotiating followed by models incorporating these principles in role-play situations. After viewing the videotape, couples practiced the principles they had seen while being supervised by a facilitator.

Cleaver's (1987) stated purpose of the research was not to establish the impact of acquisition of these skills on marital satisfaction, but to examine the efficacy of teaching communication and problem-solving skills to couples using an instructional videotape. Rating scales that assessed the actual skills learned were employed to determine the effectiveness of the videotape instruction. Cleaver utilized a nine-point rating scale to measure listening skills, speaking skills, and problem-solving skills using the variables of acceptance, accuracy, and constructive suggestions, respectively. Videotapes of couples engaging in the communication and problem-solving process before and after the enrichment program were evaluated by trained raters using behavioral rating scales. Cleaver (1987) found that the ability of both the experimental and control groups to use communication skills more effectively increased as a result of the intervention with a tendency for greater improvement by the experimental group. At the two-month follow-up

sessions, measurements indicated that maintenance of communication skills tended to be greater for the experimental group, which utilized videotape, than they were for the control group.

Nelms, Jones, and Gray (1993) investigated the feasibility of using instructional videotape to teach essential caring behaviors to nursing students. Because opportunities for live role modeling were somewhat limited and difficult to plan, a patient care scenario was created, videotaped using professional actors, and shown to nursing students. Nelms et al.(1993) stated that the goal of nurse education is twofold; nurses must learn a body of professional knowledge and acquire nurse caring behaviors and attitudes. Thus, nurse education, as with marital counseling, should take into consideration the cognitive teaching of various skills and focus on attitudes such as caring and positive regard. Results of the Nelms et al.(1993) research indicated that, although caring was difficult to depict in a rehearsed videotape, students gained much from the tape, including important skills and a heightened sensitivity to essential caring behaviors.

In addition to teaching caring behaviors to nursing students and communication skills to engineering students, videotape instruction has been used successfully to help teach effective parenting skills. Webster-Stratton, Kolpacoff, and Hollinsworth (1988) compared three different approaches of teaching parenting skills to parents of children with conduct problems. These approaches included (a) therapist-led group discussion of videotape modeling treatment, (b) individually administered videotape modeling treatment, and (c) group discussion of parenting treatment. Dependent variables of interest were child behavior problems, social behaviors, and amount of corporal punishment used by parents. Treatment approaches were compared to each other and to a waiting-list control group. Results indicated that the two groups that utilized the videotape modeling treatment were effective, with the therapist-led discussion group being the most effective. However, when costs of treatment were considered, the intervention utilizing videotape modeling without

group discussion proved to be most advantageous. The individually administered instructional videotape involved no therapist time, required half the weekly time commitment from parents than required by therapist-led discussion groups, yet yielded nearly the same results. In addition, the individually administered instructional videotape offered an opportunity for privacy, flexible scheduling, and self-pacing (Webster-Stratton et al, 1988).

Long-term Effects of Instructional Videotape

As with any marital counseling intervention, the long-term sustained effects of videotaped instruction are of significant interest. Though the immediate response to a therapeutic strategy may be positive, counselors are equally interested in the long-term effect on the relationship. Although clients' methods of working with stress and conflict may be immediately more congruent to that presented and modeled on a tape, will clients default to more familiar, but less effective behaviors after a period of time. Webster-Stratton (1982) addressed this question in a study that examined the residual effect of a parent-training videotape at a one-year follow-up after the initial intervention. Parents of children with behavioral problems were taught new skills to use in responding to their children's undesirable behaviors. Though there were statistically significant positive changes in behavioral variables of interest from pre- to post-treatment, the changes from post-treatment to one year follow up were no greater than could have occurred by chance alone. Results of the study indicated that a year after the initial intervention with the videotaped parenting instruction, parents continued to incorporate the skills they learned and perceived a continued reduction in the intensity of their child's behavior problems.

Instructional Videotape With Prompting, Practice and Feedback

Johnson (1968) utilized videotape along with prompting, practice, and corrective feedback to improve beginning teachers' ability to observe pupil performance in the classroom. Subjects consisted of eighty-four beginning teachers who were candidates for

credentialing, randomly selected from students enrolled in a 1966 summer session course at the University of California, Los Angeles. Using a table of random numbers, subjects were assigned to one of four experimental groups. Group I subjects viewed an instructional videotape which consisted of 21 brief scenes of pupil-teacher interaction, ranging from elementary to college-level classroom. In addition, these subjects were given a program booklet which provided instructions, intermittent prompting, practice, and feedback. Group II subjects viewed the same videotape and were given a program booklet resembling the one given to group I, but without prompting, practice or feedback. Instead, Group II subjects were instructed to: a) view the scene, b) think about the scene, and c) record any thoughts that occurred to them. Group III subjects listened to a tape recording on how to be skillful observers of desirable pupil behavior. Subjects in Group IV, the control group, were shown techniques for producing overhead projection materials. Following the instructional phase, all subjects were shown a new videotape with directions to look for a) behavior pupils were engaging in, b) behavior being praised by the teacher, and c) behavior being requested by the teacher.

Results of the study indicated that the mean of Group I scores differed significantly from all other groups. However, the mean of Group II, using videotape without prompting, practice or feedback, did not differ significantly from the control group or from Group III. Johnson (1968) concluded that utilizing videotape, along with prompting, practice, and feedback, was the most effective learning approach. Without the additional variables of prompts, practice, and feedback, videotape instruction was no more effective in teaching than using audio tapes or no treatment at all.

Timing of Implementation of Instructional Videotape

As reported in Johnson's (1968) research, prompting subjects to look for specific behaviors by using printed material along with the videotape was shown to be a significant factor in the learning process. Another variable to consider is timing, or the point in the

counseling process when a specific intervention will be most effective. Studies indicate that there is a phase during the marriage counseling process when spouse's relationship skills are assessed (Follingstad, 1988; Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986). When these skills are deficient, interventions are incorporated to increase the couple's ability to communicate, solve problems, and resolve conflicts in their relationship. Because these skills require learning, an intervention using instructional videotapes could be incorporated at this stage.

An important issue to consider with videotape instruction, as with any counseling intervention, is the degree to which the emotions present in a couple's relationship will determine the effectiveness of a particular intervention. Couples who are experiencing tremendous anger and whose relationship is seriously adversarial, may not be at a stage where they could watch a videotape and communicate with each other without provoking a serious conflict. There is also the possibility of one or both partners sabotaging the therapeutic intervention. For this reason, an intervention using instructional videotape to teach communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution should be introduced after couples' commitment to the marriage and desire to work on the relationship has been assessed (Follingstad, 1988; Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986).

Using Behavior Modeling To Teach Communication Skills

Mills and Pace (1989) reported that behavior modeling has been shown to be highly effective in teaching communication skills. In business management, behavior modeling has been used successfully to teach a wide assortment of essential skills (Orpen, 1985). Research in several disciplines, including experimental psychology and counseling settings, indicates that one of the most powerful forms of human learning is imitation or observational learning and modeling (Hosford & Mills, 1983). Humans determine whether the models they observe are being rewarded or punished for particular behaviors. Behaviors that are perceived to be rewarded are likely to be incorporated into the observer's

own repertoire of behavior. Conversely, Bandura (1977) stated that behaviors can be reduced or extinguished through modeling. Undesirable behaviors are ignored, unrewarded or punished through the modeling process.

Modeling can be based on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory which incorporates five important steps: modeling, retention, behavior rehearsal, feedback, and transfer of learning. The desired skills are incorporated in the modeling process through role-play situations utilizing videotape or live models to show the learner a correct procedure to imitate. In their research which investigated the use of videotape feedback and modeling in teaching communication skills, Mills and Pace (1985) focused on the following set of actions as essential to effective communication: (a) begin without a bias, (b) show interest and warmth in what the other person is saying, (c) paraphrase content and reflect feelings, (d) ask questions to clarify what you have heard, and (e) summarize content and feelings. Mills and Pace (1985) found that extended behavior rehearsal and feedback are essential to effectively change communication patterns. Over-learning, a process of intense practice with the intent of learning new behaviors and unlearning old, ineffective communication patterns that are deeply ingrained, is important in changing communication patterns as well. Without this unlearning process, clients are likely to revert to old communication patterns, particularly during times of stress (Mills & Pace, 1989).

Behavior modeling was incorporated as an important component in a majority of the research that included videotape-instruction (Cleaver, 1987; Nelms, Jones, & Gray, 1993; O'Dell, Mahoney, Horton, & Turner, 1979). Hosford and Mills (1983) stated that to maximize observational learning, models should be carefully chosen to enhance the acquisition of new behaviors. In general, models should be:

1. similar to clients in age, gender, race, attitudes, and background.
2. presented as having similar problems and concerns as the client.
3. generally high in prestige.

4. relatively but not significantly higher in competence.
5. observed to be rewarded for their appropriate behavior.
6. presented as warm and friendly.
7. be physically attractive

According to Hosford and Mills (1983), the social learning process may be separated into two general phases: (a) cognitive acquisition of the desired behavior and (b) translation of "cognitive representations" into actual performance by the observer. Evidence from research seems to suggest that the cognitive and behavioral systems are somewhat independent of each other. As a result, behavior that is learned cognitively may not affect daily behavior without translating the cognitions into actual performance. Hence, Hosford and Mills (1983) also indicated that to enhance performance and generalization, it is important to:

1. present multiple models.
2. reinforce the client for observing the model and summarizing the main aspects of the presentation.
3. reinforce the client for imitation of the model.
4. provide incentives for performance in natural settings.
5. follow up with client after intervention.

Interventions for Teaching Communication,

Problem-solving and Conflict-resolution

Relationship Enhancement

A technique for teaching communication that has affected the work of several researchers (Jacobson & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1986; Sayers, Baucom, Sher, Weiss & Heyman, 1991) is Relationship Enhancement, which was developed by Guerney (1977) (See Appendix B). Relationship Enhancement principles are designed to teach skills and attitudes which would enable spouses to relate to each other in ways that will increase

satisfaction of emotional and functional needs. The process by which Relationship Enhancement skills are taught includes three phases: (a) explanation of the rationale behind the skills, (b) demonstration of the skills, and (c) coaching participants in the use of the skills.

Guernsey (1977) designed Relationship Enhancement to consist of four basic sets of communication skills referred to as "modes". For the present study, however, only the first three modes will be considered: expresser mode, empathic mode, and mode switching. Incorporating the term mode rather than role is intentional and indicates that these skills represent sets of behavior to be learned rather than roles to be artificially or insincerely acted out. In each of the modes, the importance of attitudes and skills is emphasized.

The Behavioral Exchange Program

Studies comparing happily married couples to distressed couples indicate that these couples do not differ in their conflict issues or in the order in which the problems are ranked as to importance. Rather, couples differ in their ability to successfully resolve issues. Spouses who are able to resolve their problems and conflicts are more likely to report their marriages as happy. In contrast, couples who are unable to come to a mutual resolution in most conflict areas tend to experience greater tension and hostility and, as a result, report a greater level of global dissatisfaction with their relationships (Harrell & Guernsey, 1976).

Harrell and Guernsey (1976) proposed a model of conflict-resolution that has its theoretical foundation in social exchange theory, problem-solving, and principles of reinforcement. This model, the Behavioral Exchange Program (See Appendix C), is based on two important propositions. First, a successful relationship may occur when (a) each spouse possesses equitable resources that are valued by the other spouse, and (b) there is a high rate of equitable reciprocity or exchange of resources between spouses. Second, when the rate of reciprocity of the resources is perceived to be inequitable, conflict is likely

to develop in an attempt to reinstate the equitable exchange. The Behavioral Exchange Program is particularly useful to this study due to the fact that it was designed to be a process for conflict-resolution that is based on a model of problem-solving. Guerney and Harrell's model recognizes the fact that, in many cases, couples' conflicts are related to problems they have been unable to resolve in a mutually satisfying manner.

Summary

The literature suggests that videotape instruction is effective in teaching parenting skills, training nurses, and developing communication skills in engineering students. Also, utilizing behavior modeling in conjunction with instructional videotape has been shown to be a useful method of developing new and more appropriate behaviors.

The literature supports the idea that in marital counseling, relationship skills such as communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving are directly related to marital satisfaction in couples. Couples who are more effective at communicating and resolving their problems report higher levels of marital satisfaction and less distress than do couples whose skills are not as well developed. Further, studies have shown that these skills have been successfully taught to couples in a marital enrichment format (Cleaver, 1987). However, little has been written about the effectiveness of combining instruction with behavior-modeling on videotape to teach relationship skills for couples who have sought marital counseling. The purpose of this study was to investigate the potential effectiveness of an instructional videotape designed to teach communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving to couples who are engaged in marital counseling and as a preventive intervention to couples who are not engaged in counseling.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

As supported by the literature, couples with a high level of marital satisfaction are able to communicate well, solve problems, and resolve conflict situations effectively. Couples experiencing higher levels of marital distress are less able to resolve relationship problems due to poor communication skills, a deficit that is often present early in the relationship. These problems with marital relationship skills have been addressed in various formats including marriage enrichment (Cleaver, 1987), couple's workshops (Glander et al., 1987), and group marital counseling. One instructional technique that has been used successfully to teach communication skills in contexts such as business management and nursing is the use of videotapes. However, the use of an instructional videotape to teach communication skills, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving to couples who are in counseling and to couples who are not in counseling has not been adequately addressed empirically. In this chapter, the design and methodology for examining the effectiveness of using instructional videotape with couples is presented. Also included are the research hypotheses, a description of participants, procedures, instruments to be utilized, and a description of the statistical procedures to be used in the data analysis.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:

1. Couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of an instructional videotape will learn those skills better than will couples who do not use the instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist.

2. Couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist, will have a higher level of marital satisfaction, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, than will other couples in counseling who do not use the instructional videotape.
3. Couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills in counseling through the use of instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist, will have a higher level of client satisfaction with counseling, as measured by the Client Satisfaction Scale, than will couples in counseling who do not use the instructional videotape.
4. Couples not in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of an instructional videotape will improve their knowledge and use of those skills as compared to couples not in counseling who do not use the instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist.
5. Couples not in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist, will have a higher level of marital satisfaction than will couples who are not in counseling and who do not use the instructional videotape as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Participants

The population studied was couples of convenience who agreed to participate in the study. The couples had to agree to complete the entire regimen including the pre- and posttest research packet containing a consent form, demographic information form, and test materials.

Couples in Counseling

Participants in the counseling group were married couples who came for help at three independent counseling centers in Greensboro including The Presbyterian Counseling Center, Ragan and Associates, and a licensed professional counselor in individual practice. The total population studied in the counseling group included eight couples, four in the experimental group and four in the control group. Couples were asked to complete a demographic form requesting their age, race, education, income level, number of years married, whether they had been previously married, and whether they had used previous counseling. Seven of these couples were Caucasian and one was African American. The mean age for male and female participants in the group that did not use the videotape was 33.25 ($SD = 5.0$) and 32.25 ($SD = 5.13$) years of age, respectively. In the group that did use the instructional videotape, males averaged 40.5 ($SD = 7.32$) years in age, while females averaged 38.5 ($SD = 6.61$) years. The mean number of years married for couples in the counseling group was 7.75 ($SD = 6.07$) for the group that did not use the videotape and 15.0 ($SD = 8.12$) years for the group who used the videotape. Of the total number of males in the counseling group, none had been previously married, while 33% of the females had been married before. Approximately 33% of couples in the counseling group had experienced prior counseling. See Table 1 for a description of the couples in counseling.

Couples Not in Counseling

The group of couples who were not in counseling were subjects who volunteered from churches in the piedmont area of North Carolina including the Grace Community Church, Friendly Hills Presbyterian Church, and Muirs Chapel United Methodist Church in Greensboro, and the Mount Herman Baptist Church in Durham. Couples from each church were invited to participate in the study. Participants completed the same

Table 1

Description of Participants for Age, Race, Education, Income, Length of Marriage, Whether Previously Married, and Previously in Counseling, for Males (M) and Females (F).

Descriptive Factor	In counseling				Not in counseling			
	Videotape (n=4)		No videotape (n=4)		Videotape (n=21)		No videotape (n=17)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Age in years								
20 to 29	1	1	0	1	2	3	2	4
30 to 39	3	3	2	2	6	12	6	8
40 to 49	0	0	1	1	12	6	6	4
50 and over	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
Race								
Caucasian	3	3	4	4	20	20	17	17
African American	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Education								
High school degree	2	2	0	1	9	8	5	6
College degree	1	1	3	2	8	10	7	8
Graduate degree	0	0	0	0	4	2	5	3
Income^a								
< \$25,000	1	2	0	2	4	8	0	11
\$25,000-49,000	2	0	0	0	5	6	5	1
\$50,000-100,000	0	0	2	0	4	0	7	0
\$100,000+	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Previously married^a								
Yes	0	1	0	1	7	6	5	5
No	3	2	3	2	14	14	12	12
Previous counseling^a								
Yes	2	2	0	0	13	9	11	11
No	1	1	3	3	8	11	6	6

^a Data omitted on some demographic forms.

demographic form as the counseling group, requesting age, race, education, income level, number of years married, whether they had been previously married, and whether they had used previous counseling. A total of 40 couples volunteered for the study; 39 Caucasian couples and one African American couple. The mean age for males was 40.8 ($SD = 8.2$)

years for the group who used the videotape and 38.9 ($SD = 8.2$) years for the couples who did not use the videotape. Females in the group receiving the videotape averaged 36.7 ($SD = 7.82$) years in age while, for females in the group who did not use the videotape, the mean age was 36.52 with a standard deviation of 7.53 years. Table 1 presents a description of couples not in counseling. Thirty-one percent of males indicated having been previously married, while approximately 30% of females reported a prior marriage. Sixty-three percent and 68% of males and females, respectively, indicated having experienced previous counseling. Of the 40 couples not seeking counseling who began the study, 36 couples completed the study while four couples dropped out. Table 1 presents a complete description of couples not in counseling.

Instrumentation

The variables of interest for this study included (a) marital satisfaction, (b) communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills learned from the instructional videotape and practiced in the relationship, and (c) client satisfaction with the videotape and with progress in counseling. Instruments used in measuring these variables of interest were the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, The Relationship Skills Checklist, and the Client Satisfaction Scale, respectively.

The Marital Satisfaction Inventory

The Marital Satisfaction Inventory (see Appendix D) is purported to be one of the best inventories designed to globally evaluate the level of satisfaction in a marriage (Waring, 1985). Dixon (1985) reported that the Marital Satisfaction Inventory is one of the preferred instruments among the many assessment tools currently being used in the field of marital counseling and with research in marriage counseling due to its careful psychometric development and continued use in published research.

The Marital Satisfaction Inventory, which is a self-report instrument, takes between 30 and 45 minutes to complete and contains 11 scales: Conventionalization (CNV), Global

Distress (GDS), Affective Communication (AFC), Problem-Solving Communication (PSC), Time Together (TTO), Disagreement About Finances (FIN), Sexual Dissatisfaction (SEX), Role Orientation (ROR), Family History of Distress (FAM), Dissatisfaction With Children (DSC), and Conflict Over Childrearing (CCR). It consists of 280 true-false items to which spouses respond independently. Couples with children are instructed to respond to all 280 items on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory while spouses who have no children answer only the first 239 statements. For the purposes of this study, only the first 239 questions were used. Scales for Dissatisfaction With Children and Conflict Over Childrearing were excluded from the study since many couples had no children and to shorten the length of the test-taking time for couples.

Each scale consists of 15 to 43 items. The Conventionalization scale, which was designed as a validity scale, is comprised of 21 items evaluating the couple's tendency to answer in a socially desirable direction. Higher scores on the Conventionalization Scale indicate possible denial of marital problems or a tendency to idealize the relationship. The Conventionalization (CNV) subscale was not included in the analyses since it is used primarily as a scale of validity. General unhappiness and dissatisfaction with the marital relationship are measured by the Global Distress Scale which consists of 43 items.

A separate score is provided for each scale, and spouses' scores are plotted and displayed on the same graph for a visual comparison. Scales on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory are designed so that higher scores indicate higher levels of marital dysfunction. An exception to this pattern is the Role Orientation Scale; a higher score on this scale indicates a more nontraditional view of marital and parental roles.

Norms for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, which are separate for men and women, were derived from the scores of 332 husbands and 328 wives. The coefficient for internal consistency of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory was reported by Snyder and Regts (1982) to be between .87 and .95. Dixon (1985) reported the internal consistency coefficient to be

between .80 and .97, with a mean coefficient of .88. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of internal consistency for individual subscales range from .80 for Dissatisfaction With Children (DSC) to .97 on the scale that measures Global Distress (GDS) (Snyder, 1992).

Over an average interval of six weeks, test-retest reliability coefficients ranged from .84 to .94 with the mean correlation being .89 (Dixon, 1985). According to Snyder (1992), coefficients of test-retest reliability for individual scales ranged from .84 on Affective Communication (AFC) to .94 on Family History of Distress (FAM).

In addition to a form to profile results, the Marital Satisfaction Inventory publishes a computer software for personal computer use that generates an in-depth report based on the answers given by the respondents. Participating counselors used a computer-generated report for each couple after the pretests had been completed.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (see appendix E), developed by Spanier (1976), has been widely used in research applications (Stuart, 1985). The Dyadic Adjustment Scale consists of 32 items designed to be converted to T scores for standard comparisons. These 32 items were drawn from a pool of 300 test items. Two test groups of couples, to whom 200 of the original 300 test items were submitted, form the norms against which couples' responses are evaluated. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale was reduced to 32 items as a result of the test group's responses to these 200 questions. Budd and Heilman (1985) indicated that one limitation of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale lies in the fact that the group of couples on which the instrument was normed was quite homogeneous. However, several subsequent studies have reported normative scores with various populations, although these studies have not been used to establish norms (Bud & Heilman, 1985).

Stuart (1985) reported alpha reliabilities of .90 and above and test-retest reliability of .96 after a period of 11 weeks. Spanier (1989) reported alpha reliability coefficients for individual subscales to be .90 for Dyadic Consensus, .94 for Dyadic Satisfaction, .73 for

Affectional Expression, and .86 for Dyadic Cohesion. According to Spanier (1976), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale consistently discriminates between well-adjusted and distressed couples and has been incorporated in a number of studies where it was found to reflect changes due to marital counseling (Baucom & Hoffman, 1986).

Possible individual spouse scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale range from 0 to 151, with higher scores indicating a greater level of dyadic adjustment and satisfaction. Floyd and Markman (1983) placed the cutoff point between distressed and non-distressed couples at 100. In a study that examined couples' problem-solving self-appraisal, Sabourin, Laporte, and Wright (1990) used the couple's combined average score on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale as the index of marital distress. With this approach, combined average scores would fall between 0 and 302. Using the same scoring technique as Sabourin, Alberts (1989) reported that adjusted couples had a mean combined score on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale of 242.5 while distressed couples scored a mean of 191.5.

According to Budd and Heilman (1985), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale is pragmatic, which contributes to its continuing popularity as a research and assessment instrument. The instrument takes approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete with an equally brief scoring process. Wording of questions is brief, clear, and applicable to a diversity of couples (Budd & Heilman, 1985). In addition to the total adjustment score, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale yields four subscales: Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, and Affectional Expression.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

The Relationship Skills Checklist (see appendix F), developed for this study by the author, is designed to measure (a) spouses' knowledge of various communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills and (b) the degree to which couples perceive that they incorporate those skills in their relationship. Items on the Relationship Skills Checklist are based on principles taught in Relationship Enhancement and the Behavioral

Exchange Program, which are the models for communication and conflict-resolution/problem-solving utilized in the instructional videotape. Questions on the Relationship Skills Checklist appear in the same sequence that items are presented in the instructional videotape, with items relating to communication appearing first, followed by items regarding problem-solving.

Spouses respond separately to a series of 54 statements about communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills. Of these 54 statements, 20 items relate to spouses' knowledge of communication and problem-solving, 14 relate to self-perceived use of the skills being taught, 14 relate to the perceived degree to which one's spouse incorporates the skills, and six questions relate to skills being used by both spouses simultaneously, such as negotiation. After reading the statements, couples select a number from one to 10 on a Likert-type scale that most accurately describes their knowledge of communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills, based on the models being taught, and the degree to which they incorporate those skills in the relationship. Scores on the Relationship Skills Checklist are determined by summing spouses overall responses on each item. In addition to a total individual score, subscales consist of (a) knowledge of communication/problem-solving skills subscale, (b) communication/problem-solving skills self-perception subscale, (c) communication/problem-solving skills spouse-perception subscale, and (d) communication/problem-solving skills relational-perception subscale.

The Relationship Skills Checklist was subjected to two forms of psychometric examination, content validity and internal consistency reliability. In order to establish content validity, seven co-workers and academic peers of the author were given a copy of information on the theoretical models being taught along with a copy of the following: (a) the instructional-videotape, (b) The Relationship Skills Checklist, and (c) the couple handouts. A separate form, the Content Validity Form (see Appendix G), consisted of a series of statements designed to determine if items included in the Relationship Skills

Checklist adequately sampled information contained in the models of communication and problem-solving. Peer-raters responded to the statements by circling a number on a five-point Likert-type scale indicating the degree to which they perceived that the salient points in the models were sampled by the instrument. Circling a one indicated that the rater perceived the point to be poorly sampled while a five indicated that the theoretical principle was clearly sampled. On a five-point scale, raters averaged approximately four and one half, revealing a high level of agreement suggesting that the test questions adequately sampled the content of the information included in the theoretical models of communication and problem-solving.

A study of internal consistency reliability was conducted using scores from 30 married couples from the author's church who volunteered to complete the Relationship Skills Checklist. Results of this study produced reliability coefficients (Crombach's Alpha) of .83, .76, .78, and .82 for the subscales of (a) knowledge of communication/problem-solving skills (b) communication/ problem-solving skills self-perception, (c) communication/problem-solving skills spouse-perception, and (d) communication/problem-solving skills relational-perception, respectively. As a result of this study, a number of questions were determined to be worded in a way that was confusing. Wording on these items was changed to minimize confusion to readers as well as to increase correlation between these items and the subscale totals.

The Client Satisfaction Scale

The Client Satisfaction Scale (Forms A and B) (see Appendix H and J), developed by the author, is a simple questionnaire designed to measure subjects' satisfaction with the counseling they used and with the materials they were given. The scales consist of 12 questions on form A (experimental group) and 10 questions on form B (control group). On both forms, the first nine questions are identical and refer to satisfaction with counseling, change in marital communication and problem-solving effectiveness, and level

of marital conflict. On all questions, couples respond to statements using a Likert-type scale from one to 10, indicating level of agreement with the questions, with one being disagreement and 10 being agreement. Form A includes three additional questions for couples to rate the videotape and written materials they used. Additionally on form A, experimental couples are asked to respond to subjective questions regarding the helpfulness of the videotape to their relationship and the quality of its content.

The Marriage Satisfaction Index

The Marriage Satisfaction Index (see Appendix J) is a simple three question form for couples to subjectively rate the perceived improvement in their relationship on a weekly basis. Areas of interest in improvement examined in the Marriage Satisfaction Index include (1) global positive or negative emotions in the relationship, (2) perceived ability to communicate, and (3) level of stress and tension in the relationship. Together, couples rate their perception of these three areas of their relationship using a five point rating scale.

Scale of Communication Instruction

From the review of the literature, it is evident that most marital counseling will, at some point in the process, include instruction in communication skills. In order to control for this as a source of variance, The Scale of Communication Instruction (see Appendix K) was designed for use with couples in the counseling group. On this form, counselors indicated the amount of time in number of minutes spent working with couples on communication skills during each marital counseling session along with the total length of the session. Instruction time was recorded for couples who used the videotape and for couples who did not use the videotape. The Scale of Communication Instruction was completed after each session for all couples. By dividing the amount of time spent instructing couples in communication by the total session time, a percentage of time spent in communication instruction could be calculated for each couple in the counseling group.

The Scale of Communication Instruction was used only with couples in the counseling group.

The Couple Response Form

The Couple Response Form (Appendix L) was designed for use by couples who were not in counseling who viewed the videotape. The form consisted of five objective questions and three subjective response statements designed for couples to rate the videotape and how they perceived it affected their ability to communicate and resolve problems.

The Instructional Videotape

Information presented on the instructional videotape is based on the principles included in Relationship Enhancement and The Behavioral Exchange Program, the instructional models incorporated in the study. The videotape is divided into four fifteen minute segments, designed for experimental couples to view once per week for a period of four weeks. Each segment of the tape is divided into two sections including teaching of specific skills followed by a couple modeling those skills.

In the same study conducted to establish the content validity (see Appendix G) of the Relationship Skills Checklist, co-workers and academic peers of the author rated the content of the instructional-videotape to determine if it was teaching what it was designed to teach. The study examined the monologue and the modeling sections of the videotape. Raters responded to a series of statements based on information from Relationship Enhancement and The Behavioral Exchange Program. Using a 5-point Likert-type scale, peer-raters indicated whether they perceived that the videotape clearly taught and modeled the important points included in the models of communication and problem-solving. With a rating of five indicating maximum clarity, scores on the monologue and modeling section averaged 4.93 and 4.72, respectively. Based on these results, peer-raters agreed that the tape clearly taught and modeled what it was designed for.

The script for the videotape (see Appendix M) was written by the author and recorded at the studio facilities located in the Learning Resources Center at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro. Staff at the Learning Resources center edited the tape and produced the final copy. Actors in the videotape were friends of the author, with drama training, who graciously volunteered their services.

Procedures

Subjects in this study were 48 volunteers from the piedmont region of North Carolina, eight of whom were seeking counseling for marital issues and 40 of whom were not in counseling. Subjects were obtained from two populations, couples in counseling and couples not in counseling.

Couples in Counseling

Through phone contact or in person, 25 counselors were invited to participate in the study. Counselors who agreed to participate were interviewed in person, at which time each received a packet of material that included (a) a description of the study and the instructions for the counselor (see Appendix N), (b) a copy of the videotape along with instructions for its use, (c) copies of all printed material for couples, (d) all necessary test forms and forms to collect demographic information along with instructions for the use of each form, and (e) materials designed for a simple randomization process to separate couples into experimental and control groups. At this time, the benefits of the study for counselors and their clients were explained.

For counselors to participate in the study they must have reported that they incorporated a cognitive-behavioral model of marital counseling in their work. A Participating Counselor Form (see Appendix O) was completed by all counselors, requesting information about their location of practice, academic degree, primary practice identity, and counseling experience. Counselors were asked to review the instructional videotape and couple handouts to become familiar with their content and format. Couples

were counseled in the usual manner in which the counselor functioned. Counselors were instructed to complete the Scale of Communication Instruction after each counseling session for all couples indicating the total length of the session and the approximate amount of time spent discussing communication or training couples in communication skills. Couples who contacted the participating counselors and who agreed to be included in the study completed the Couple Demographic Form (see Appendix P) and a Consent Form (see Appendix Q). All participating couples were randomly assigned to a group who used the videotape or the group who did not use the videotape.

Though 21 counselors agreed to participate in the study, only three actually involved clients in the process. A total of eight client couples, four couples who used the videotape and four who did not use the videotape, volunteered and completed the study. Due to the small number of couples who volunteered, two counselors worked only one couple. Only one counselor involved enough couples to work with groups of couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape.

Couples in the group who did not use the videotape were given a cassette tape containing four fifteen-minute segments of instrumental music with instructions to listen together to one tape segment per week. Couples randomly placed in the group who used the videotape began watching the instructional videotape after their first or second appointment. These couples were instructed to view one episode of the videotape each week for a period of four weeks. Couples were instructed to watch the tape at the counselor's office or at home, depending on the preference of the couple and the counselor. Each videotape segment consisted of a teaching section followed by a trained couple modeling the behavioral principles being taught. Couples in the group who used the videotape were given printed handouts (see Appendix R) which consisted of information regarding specific communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution behaviors couples were to look for in the modeled situations. Couples who used the videotape were

instructed to read the handout accompanying a particular segment of the videotape prior to watching the segment. After viewing the tape segments, couples discussed the material presented using the questions provided. According to Johnson (1968), utilizing prompts in the form of written material, along with an instructional videotape, causes participants to be aware of specific behaviors of interest rather than being distracted by other unimportant behaviors or stimuli. In addition, couples who used the videotape answered a series of review questions. The review questions, The Relationship Skills Checklist Review Questions (see Appendix S), consist of the Relationship Skills Checklist divided into four sections that refer to specific material taught in each segment of the videotape. Couples answered questions that referred to the video segment they watched the previous week. As couples who used the videotape completed their weekly assignments, they were asked to complete the Couple Activity Form (see Appendix T), indicating that they had complied with that week's assignment.

At the end of the first or second counseling session, couples who agreed to participate in the study were asked to complete the Relationship Skills Checklist, the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Couples were allowed to complete the instruments in the counselor's office or at home. Answer sheets were scored promptly and returned to counselors for use in the counseling process.

All couples were also instructed to rate their improvement on a weekly basis using a subjective rating scale, the Marriage Satisfaction Index (see Appendix J). Areas of interest in improvement included global positive feelings in the relationship, perceived communication improvement, and level of stress in the marital relationship.

After approximately four to six weeks, when couples had completed the videotape or cassette tape sequence, they again took the Relationship Skills Checklist, The Marital Satisfaction Inventory, and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Couples Not in Counseling

Due to the limitations in acquiring couples from counselors, a second group of couples was included who were not seeking counseling. Individuals in three different churches were notified of the research and invited to participate in the study. A total of 40 couples agreed to participate. The first couple to volunteer was randomly assigned to the group who used the videotape or the group who did not use the videotape. Thereafter, couples were alternately assigned to groups according to the order in which they volunteered. Materials and directions for the study were delivered to subjects by mail or in person, depending upon their location. Participants began the study as soon as they used the materials. Couples who were not in counseling completed the same forms as did the couples in counseling, with the exception of the Client Satisfaction Form, since this form was designed to measure satisfaction with counseling. Rather, couples not in counseling and who used the videotape completed the Couple Response Form .

Couples who were randomly assigned to use the videotape received a packet containing a demographic form, a consent form, all test materials, the Relationship Skills Checklist Instructions and Information, the Marriage Satisfaction Index, the Couple Activity Form, the Couple Response Form, and a copy of the instructional videotape. Couples who used the videotape began viewing the instructional videotape upon receiving the materials, with instructions to watch one segment each week. Prior to watching each videotape segment, the couples who used the videotape were instructed to read the section of the Relationship Skills Checklist that referred to that week's segment. Beginning with the second week, couples answered items on the Relationship Skills Checklist Review Questions that referred to the previous week's videotape segment. The couples who used the videotape were instructed to complete the Couple Activity Form weekly, indicating compliance with assignments. When couples who used the videotape had viewed all segments of the videotape, they completed the Couple Response Form.

Couples who did not use the videotape were mailed a packet containing a demographic form, a consent form, all test materials, a letter of instruction, and the cassette tape of recorded instrumental music. Couples who did not use the videotape were instructed to listen to 15 minutes of music weekly for four weeks. Both groups of couples answered questions on the Marriage Satisfaction Index once a week.

Couples who were not in counseling were instructed to complete and return by mail the pretest materials including the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist. Test materials were returned in a pre-addressed and pre-stamped envelope, along with the demographic form and the consent form. At the end of the study, completed post test materials, including the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist, were returned by mail. Couples in the group who were not in counseling were informed that they would be allowed an opportunity to have their test results explained at the conclusion of the research.

Data Analysis

Using the SAS statistical package, descriptive statistics for dependent variables were calculated. Means and standard error of the mean scores for differences between posttests and pretests were calculated for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, The Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist for all couples in the study. Differences between pretest and posttest scores for all dependent variables were calculated by subtracting pretest scores from posttest scores. These difference means, rather than the test scores, were then examined in the multivariate and univariate analyses.

In order to test the study hypotheses, the following statistical analyses were conducted. A multivariate analysis of variance was calculated to test for overall differences between groups (i.e., used or did not use the instructional videotape), between counselor (i.e., couples in counseling and couples not in counseling), and to test for interaction between group and counselor. For those multivariate tests yielding a significant F-ratio,

univariate analyses of variance were conducted to determine which dependent variable difference means were significantly different. Least-squares means procedures were conducted where the multivariate F-statistics were significant ($p < .05$) in order to determine which treatment means were different for which responses.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, the research hypotheses are examined and results of the statistical analyses are reported including descriptive statistics for the dependent variables, the results of the multivariate and univariate analyses of variance, and least-squares means analyses. Dependent variables for the study included scores from the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist. Independent variables consisted of group (i.e., used or did not use the instructional videotape), and counselor (i.e., in counseling or not in counseling). Not integral to the study, yet also examined and reported was participants' satisfaction with the intervention materials. The results are presented in the following sections: descriptive data on the dependent variables, examination of the full model, the research hypotheses, and participant satisfaction. Measures of participant satisfaction included the Client Satisfaction Scale (Form A for couples in counseling who used the videotape and Form B for couples in counseling who did not use the videotape), and the Couple Response Form, completed by couples not in counseling who used the videotape.

Descriptive Data on the Dependent Variables

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the dependent variables, including means and standard error scores for differences between pretest and posttest scores for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist. Descriptive statistics are presented for the couples in counseling who used the videotape, couples in counseling who did not use the videotape, couples not in counseling who used the videotape, and couples not in counseling who did not use the videotape. All differences

Table 2

Means and Standard Error of the Means for Differences Between Pretest and Posttest Scores for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and Relationship Skills Checklist, for Males (M) and Females (F).

Instrument	In Counseling				Not in Counseling			
	Videotape (n=4)		No Videotape (n=4)		Videotape (n=18)		No Videotape (n=18)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Marital Satisfaction Inventory								
Mean ^a	-43.75	-46.75	-2.67	1.67	-5.33	-6.33	-0.22	-3.44
SE	19.24	25.28	2.60	0.88	3.09	3.27	2.63	3.87
Dyadic Adjustment Scale								
Mean ^b	4.75	11.50	11.33	13.33	3.89	3.00	-2.27	0.39
SE	12.79	5.04	6.84	7.96	2.20	1.16	1.42	1.98
Relationship Skills Checklist								
Mean ^c	43.75	41.00	43.33	57.67	21.28	26.11	5.27	6.72
SE	30.55	36.96	15.21	36.76	7.01	7.50	5.27	5.83

^aNegative values indicate improvement on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory.

^bPositive values indicate improvement on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

^cPositive values indicate improvement on the Relationship Skills Checklist.

Note. All means are difference means, calculated by subtracting pretest scores from posttest scores.

between pretest and posttest scores were calculated by subtracting pretest scores from posttest scores.

An examination of the data in Table 2 suggests several important observations that are relevant to the study results. First, the mean scores for husbands and wives in the counseling group who watched the videotape are much higher than the means of husbands and wives in counseling who did not watch the videotape and the means of both groups of couples who were not in counseling, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory.

For the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, negative differences between pretests and posttests are an indication of improvement in marital satisfaction since scores decrease as marital satisfaction increases. In addition, the Marital Satisfaction Inventory standard error scores for husbands and wives in the counseling group who watched the videotape are much higher than the standard error scores of (a) husbands and wives in counseling who did not watch the videotape, and (b) both groups of couples who were not in counseling. Marital Satisfaction Inventory standard error scores for those couples who were in counseling who did not view the videotape are more similar to the standard error scores of both groups of couples who were not in counseling. Large differences in the standard error is likely a result of the small number of couples who were in counseling as well as the variability of test scores. This appears to be particularly true for those couples in counseling who viewed the videotape. As a result, compliance with the assumption of homogeneity of variance may be questionable. Therefore, results of the multivariate and univariate analyses should be viewed with caution, especially when attempting to generalize the results. Concerns regarding internal and external validity of the results will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter V. However, even with the comparatively large standard error scores, the substantial difference that exists between the means for couples in counseling who used the videotape and those of couples in counseling who did not use the videotape is worth examining.

Differences in means for couples on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale appear to be affected more by whether or not couples were in counseling than by whether or not they viewed the videotape. Mean differences between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape are relatively small. For those couples who were not in counseling, the means for males who viewed the videotape, females who viewed the videotape, males who did not view the videotape, and females who did not view the videotape were 3.89 ($SE = 2.20$), 3.00 ($SE = 1.16$), -2.27 ($SE = 1.42$), and 0.39 ($SE = 1.98$), respectively. In

comparison, means and standard error scores for couples who were in counseling were 4.75 ($SE = 12.79$), 11.50 ($SE = 5.04$), 11.33 ($SE = 6.84$), and 13.33 ($SE = 7.96$) for males who viewed the videotape, females who viewed the videotape, males who did not view the videotape, and females who did not view the videotape, respectively. As with the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, a difference existed between the standard errors for couples who were in counseling and couples who were not in counseling, though not as large as that for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory.

An examination of the mean scores for the Relationship Skills Checklist suggests the following observations. For couples who were in counseling, the differences between the means of couples who watched the videotape and those couples who did not watch the videotape were small. Mean scores for husbands and wives who used the videotape were 43.75 ($SE = 30.55$) and 41.00 ($SE = 36.96$), respectively, while the means for husbands and wives in counseling who did not use the videotape were 43.33 ($SE = 15.21$) and 57.67 ($SE = 36.76$), respectively. For those couples who were not in counseling, the differences between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape were greater than were the differences for couples who were in counseling. Mean and standard error scores for couples who were not in counseling and who watched the videotape were 21.28 ($SE = 7.01$) and 26.11 ($SE = 7.50$) for males and females, respectively. For males and females who were not in counseling and who did not use the videotape, these scores were 5.27 ($SE = 5.27$) and 6.72 ($SE = 5.83$), respectively. Based on an increase in the mean score from posttest to pretest for couples who were not in counseling and who viewed the videotape, these couples increased their knowledge or use of communication and problem-solving skills more than did the couples who were not in counseling and who did not use the videotape. Again, the differences in standard error scores across the treatment level means brings into question compliance with the assumption of homogeneity of variance.

Examination of the Full Model

Multivariate and univariate analyses of variance tests for studying the research hypotheses were conducted utilizing a 2 x 2 model consisting of the independent variables counselor (i.e., in counseling or not in counseling), group (i.e., used or did not use the instructional videotape), interaction between counselor and group, and time. The variable time was initially included in the model in an attempt to control for variability that might occur due to differences in the amount of time counselors spent instructing couples in communication skills. Data for the variable time were taken from the Scale of Communication Instruction, on which counselors recorded the amount of time spent during a counseling session teaching communication skills to couples. These data were then converted to a percentage by dividing the time spent teaching by the total session time. Couples who were not in counseling were assigned a value of zero, since they experienced no teaching time. The response variables in the full model consisted of differences between posttests and presets scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist.

The multivariate analysis indicated that time and counselor were highly correlated, since only couples in counseling were assigned a non-zero value for time. In addition, the Scale of Communication Instruction was not completed for every couple. As a result not every counseling couple received a non-zero value for time. Therefore, time was dropped from the model leaving counselor, group, and the interaction between counselor and group. The research hypotheses were examined by conducting multivariate, univariate, and least-squares means analyses based on this model.

Examination of the Research Hypotheses

This section presents the research hypotheses as addressed and evaluated based on the appropriate statistical analyses of the research model of counselor, group, and the

interaction between counselor and group. The hypotheses are presented and discussed according to the sequence in which they were listed in Chapter III.

Communication, Conflict-resolution, and Problem-Solving Skills

Hypothesis one indicated that couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of an instructional videotape will learn those skills better than will couples who do not use the instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist. To test the first hypothesis, the main effect of group (i.e., used or did not use the instructional videotape), was examined along with the effect group had on the treatment means for the Relationship Skills Checklist. Results of the first multivariate analysis of variance procedure, which examined the full model, indicated an overall difference in treatment means due to the interaction between group and counselor. A Wilks' Lambda exact F-statistic of $F(6, 34) = 6.5998, p < 0.001$, which was used to test the null hypothesis of no overall counselor-group interaction effect, proved to be significant; at least two of the treatment means were different for at least one of the response variables. Based on these findings, a series of univariate analysis of variance tests were conducted to determine which responses were different as a result of the interaction between counselor and group. These tests indicated that the pretest and posttest means on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory for males and females were significantly different. $F(1, 39) = 7.62, p < 0.01$, and $F(1,32) = 7.49, p < 0.01$, respectively. The interactions between counselor and group for the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Relationship Skills Checklist were not significant for husbands and wives. Scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory were removed from the model in order to test for the main effect of group on the treatment means for the Relationship Skills Checklist. The resulting 2 x 2 model, which consisted of counselor (i.e., in counseling or not in counseling), group (i.e., used or did not use the instructional videotape), scores on the Relationship Skills Checklist, and scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, was examined with a multivariate

analysis. As determined by the Wilks' Lambda exact F-statistic, no overall difference in treatment means existed due to group [$F(4, 37) = .7775, p = 0.5469$]. There were no significant mean differences between couples in counseling who used the videotape and those who did not use the videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist.

Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis two posited that couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist, will have a higher level of marital satisfaction, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, than will other couples in counseling who do not use the instructional videotape. The multivariate analysis of variance of the full model yielded a Wilks' Lambda exact F-statistic, $F(6, 34) = 6.5998, p < 0.01$, indicating the presence of at least two different treatment means due to the interaction between counselor and group. Based on the univariate analysis of variance tests, at least two means for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory proved to be significantly different ($p < .01$). Results of the multivariate analysis of variance least-squares means testing the 2 x 2 model containing the independent variables counselor, group, and the counselor-group interaction for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (see Table 3), indicated that the difference means for husbands and wives in the counseling group who used the instructional videotape were higher than the difference means for husbands and wives in the counseling group who did not use the videotape ($p < .01$). Couples in counseling who used the videotape indicated a greater increase in marital satisfaction than did couples in counseling who did not use the videotape. The univariate analysis of variance test for scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale indicated no difference ($p < .05$) between the means of husbands and wives in counseling who used the videotape and those who did not use the videotape.

Table 3

Least-squares Means Testing the Counselor-Group Interaction for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory.

Condition	LSMean (SE)	Not in Counseling		In Counseling	
		Without Videotape	With Videotape	Without Videotape	With Videotape
Husbands					
Not in counseling without videotape	-0.2222 (3.687)	-	0.3330	0.8034	0.0001**
Not in counseling with videotape	-5.3333 (3.686)	-	-	0.7860	0.0001**
In counseling without videotape	-2.6667 (9.031)	-	-	-	0.0014**
In counseling with videotape	-43.7500 (7.821)	-	-	-	-
Wives					
Not in counseling without videotape	-3.4444 (4.705)	-	0.6666	0.6836	0.0003**
Not in counseling with videotape	-6.3333 (4.705)	-	-	0.5242	0.0007**
In counseling without videotape	-1.6667 (11.525)	-	-	-	0.0029**
In counseling with videotape	-46.7500 (9.981)	-	-	-	-

Note. Negative difference means for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory indicate improvement.

Note. P-values are for finding a greater $|T|$ HO: LSMean (i) = LSMean (j).

**p < .01

Client Satisfaction With Counseling

The third hypothesis proposed that couples in counseling who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills in counseling through the use of an instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist, will have a higher level of client satisfaction with counseling than will couples in counseling who do

no use the instructional videotape, as measured by the Client Satisfaction Scale. The original strategy for evaluating this hypothesis was to compare the first seven questions on the Client Satisfaction Scale (the questions were identical for Forms A and B), with an analysis of variance in an effort to detect differences in the level of satisfaction with counseling that might exist between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape. However, due to difficulties in acquiring sufficient participant couples who were in counseling, three problems occurred that made this hypothesis impossible to evaluate as intended. Only 3 of the 21 counselors who agreed to participate in the study actually involved couples in the research process, resulting in a low number of participant couples. Two of the three counselors worked with only one participating couple. As a result, two counselors worked with only one treatment level, rather than with couples who used the videotape and with couples who did not use the videotape. In addition, several of the couples in counseling who participated in the research did not complete the Client Satisfaction Scale. Due to these difficulties, there was not sufficient data to analyze the information by using inferential statistics.

Couples Not in Counseling and Communication and Problem-Solving Skills

The fourth hypothesis was similar to the first in that it examined communication and problem-solving information actually learned by participants. This hypothesis posed that couples who are not in counseling and who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of an instructional videotape, will improve their knowledge and use of those skills as compared to couples who are not in counseling and who do not use the instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist. As with the first hypothesis, the 2 x 2 model consisting of counselor and group was examined with a multivariate analysis. For the main effect of group, the Wilks' Lambda exact F-statistic, testing the null hypothesis of no overall difference in treatment means due to group, proved to be insignificant indicating the absence of any significant

mean differences ($p < .05$) between those couples who were not in counseling who used the videotape and those who were not in counseling and who did not use the videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist.

Couples Not in Counseling and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis five stated that couples who are not in counseling and who learn communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving skills through the use of an instructional videotape, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist, will have a higher level of marital satisfaction than will couples who are not in counseling and who do not use the instructional videotape, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Though there was a significant difference between couples in counseling who used the videotape and couples in counseling who did not use the videotape, based on the least-squares means data presented in Table 3 for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, no differences existed for husbands or wives between the means of those participants who were not in counseling and who did not use the videotape and those who were not in counseling and who did use the videotape. In addition, results of the univariate analysis of variance examining the reduced model indicated no significant difference between couples not in counseling who used the videotape and couples not in counseling who did not use the videotape, as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Couples in Counseling Compared With Couples Not in Counseling

To test the main effect of counselor, the counselor-group interaction was removed from the model along with scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, leaving counselor, group, scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and scores on the Relationship Skills Checklist. The main effect of group was removed from the model, since the Wilks' Lambda exact F-statistic was insignificant for the overall group effect. A multivariate test of the main effect of counselor yielded an exact F-statistic of $F(4,37) = 3.5582$, $p < 0.05$, indicating at least two different treatment means between couples who were in counseling

and couples who were not in counseling for at least one of the responses. Univariate analyses of variance were performed for scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Relationship Skills Checklist to determine which dependent variable means were significantly different due to the main effect of counselor.

Significant F-ratios were found in the univariate tests for the main effect of counselor for husbands' difference means on the Relationship Skills Checklist , $F(1, 40) = 5.89$, $p < 0.05$, wives' difference means on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale , $F(1, 40) = 11.32$, $p < 0.01$, and wives' difference means on the Relationship Skills Checklist , $F(1, 40) = 4.37$, $p < 0.05$. The F-ratio for the husbands' difference means on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale proved to be statistically insignificant in testing the main effect of counselor. A multivariate least-squares means test was performed in order to determine which response means were significantly different due to the effect of counselor. The reduced model, consisting of counselor and scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Relationship skills Checklist, was tested using a multivariate analysis of variance least-squares means test. Table 4 presents response means that differed as a result of the main effect of counselor. Significant differences are presented in terms of the probability of finding a greater value. The main effect of counselor ignored whether couples were viewing the videotape or not and examined only mean differences that were attributable to whether couples were or were not in counseling. The least-squares means test for this main effect indicated the presence of several significantly different means. A significant difference ($p < .01$) existed between scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale for wives who were not in counseling and wives who were in counseling; marital satisfaction for wives who were in counseling increased more from pretest to posttest than did marital satisfaction for wives who were not in counseling, as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Differences on

Table 4

Least-Squares Means Testing the Main Effect of Counselor for the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Relationship Skills Checklist.

Spouse	Not in Counseling	In Counseling	Pr > T
	LS Mean (SE)	LS Mean (SE)	
Dyadic Adjustment Scale			
Husbands	0.8055 (1.787)	7.2767 (4.059)	0.1524
Wives	1.6944 (1.270)	12.1500 (2.885)	0.0019**
Relationship Skills Checklist			
Husbands	13.2778 (5.036)	42.6067 (11.440)	0.0240*
Wives	16.4167 (6.123)	47.1700 (13.909)	0.0497*

* p < .05

** p < .01

Note. P-values are for finding a greater |T| HO: LSMean (i) = LSMean (j).

the Relationship Skills Checklist that could be attributed to the main effect of counselor were significant for both husbands and wives. The difference mean for husbands who were in counseling was significantly higher ($p < .05$) than the difference mean for husbands who were not in counseling. This difference for wives was also significant ($p < .05$); the difference mean for wives who were in counseling was significantly higher than the difference mean for wives who were not in counseling, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist.

Change in Marital Satisfaction Over Time

A total of 35 couples completed the Marriage Satisfaction Index, 18 who used the videotape and 17 who did not use the videotape. Once each week for four weeks, couples responded to statements on the Marriage Satisfaction Index by circling a number between 1

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for the Marriage Satisfaction Index.

Statement	Videotape (n = 18)				No Videotape (n = 17)			
	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4
	<u>M</u> (SD)	<u>M</u> (SD)	<u>M</u> (SD)	<u>M</u> (SD)	<u>M</u> (SD)	<u>M</u> (SD)	<u>M</u> (SD)	<u>M</u> (SD)
Overall, the feelings in our marriage are ^a	4.2 (0.8)	4.0 (0.7)	4.2 (0.8)	4.5 (0.6)	4.2 (0.5)	4.2 (0.6)	4.1 (0.7)	4.1 (0.6)
In general, we are communicating ^b	3.6 (0.9)	3.6 (0.9)	4.0 (0.9)	4.2 (0.7)	3.9 (0.9)	3.7 (1.0)	3.6 (1.0)	3.9 (0.9)
The stress and tension in our marriage is ^c	2.5 (1.2)	2.5 (1.3)	2.6 (1.2)	2.0 (1.1)	2.3 (1.1)	2.4 (1.1)	2.9 (1.1)	2.5 (1.0)

^aFor this statement, 1 = Negative, 5 = Positive.

^bFor this statement, 1 = Poorly, 5 = Well.

^cFor this statement, 1 = Low, 5 = High.

and 5. The Marriage Satisfaction Index' statements, means, and standard deviations are presented in Table 5. A multivariate repeated-measures analysis tested the null hypothesis of no between-subjects effect over time for any of the questions. Results indicated that no difference existed over time between the group who used the videotape and the group who did not use the videotape, whether in counseling or not in counseling, as measured by the Marriage Satisfaction Index.

Participant Satisfaction With The Intervention Materials

Participant satisfaction with the videotape and handouts was examined although it was not integral to the study results. At the end of the study, couples in counseling who used the videotape and handouts completed the Client Satisfaction Scale while couples not in

counseling who used the videotape and handouts completed the Couple Response Form. Both groups of couples' responses are discussed in this section.

Couples in Counseling

Although data from the Client Satisfaction Scale (Forms A and B) were insufficient to be analyzed by inferential statistics, the means and standard deviations were calculated for answers to questions that referred to the materials utilized by the group in counseling who used the videotape (See Table 6). Relatively high scores from this scale, combined with an improvement in marital satisfaction for couples in counseling, reinforces the conclusion that the videotape intervention was effective in the counseling setting. In addition, the Client Satisfaction Scale contained three subjective statements regarding the videotape and handouts (see Appendix U). Participants' responses to these statements affirmed their positive experience with the videotape.

Couples Not in Counseling

Couples not in counseling who used the instructional videotape responded to questions on the Couple Response Form by selecting a number on a 10-point Likert-type scale where 1 indicated disagreement with statements about the videotape and materials and 10 indicated agreement with the statements. Means and standard deviations scores for the questions on the Couple Response Form are presented in Table 6. Question means ranged between 7.80 ($SD = 1.98$) and 8.90 ($SD = 0.87$). Generally, higher mean scores and lower standard deviations indicated a consistently higher level of approval of the materials among the couples who used the videotape and completed the Couple Response Form.

Summary of Results

Means and standard error scores were calculated for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist. Means and standard error scores for couples in counseling who used the videotape were significantly higher

Table 6**Means and Standard Deviations for the Client Satisfaction Scale (Form A) for Couples in Counseling and the Couple Response Form for Couples Not in Counseling.**

Statement	Population Sample		
	N	Mean	SD
In Counseling: The Client Satisfaction Scale (Form A)			
The materials we were given were helpful in learning to communicate and solve problems.	4	7.67	0.58
Watching the couple on the videotape talk with each other helped us understand what was being taught.	4	7.67	0.57
The handouts we read before watching each part of the videotape were helpful to us.	4	7.67	1.53
We believe that the videotape could be helpful to other couples.	4	7.33	1.15
Not in Counseling: The Couple Response Form			
As a result of the videotape series, we have been able to communicate better with each other.	10	7.90	1.29
We found the videotape series and materials to be interesting and helpful.	10	8.50	1.35
We feel that we are better able to resolve some problems since we started the videotape series.	10	8.40	1.50
We feel less tension in our relationship than we did before we started the videotape series.	10	7.80	1.98
We would like to recommend the communication materials to other couples.	10	8.90	0.87

^aTen couples who used the videotape completed and returned the Couple Response Form, with only one per couple.
Note. All answers to the Client Satisfaction Scale and the Couple Response Form are on a 10-point Likert-type where 1 = disagree and 10 = agree.

than the means and standard error scores for couples in counseling who did not use the videotape and for both groups of couples who were not in counseling, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory. Significant mean differences for the Dyadic Adjustment Scale existed between couples who were in counseling and couples who were not in

counseling. Differences between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape were insignificant, as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. For the Relationship Skills Checklist, differences between means for couples in counseling who used the videotape and couples in counseling who did not use the videotape were not significant. However, the means for couples in counseling were significantly different from the means of couples who were not in counseling. Standard error scores across the treatment levels were significantly different for some of the response variables.

Based on multivariate and univariate analyses of variance tests, there was no overall effect of group for the Relationship Skills Checklist. There were significant differences ($p < .01$) between means for couples in counseling who used the videotape and couples in counseling who did not use the videotape as stated in hypothesis two, and measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory. Couples in counseling who viewed the videotape increased their level of marital satisfaction more than couples in counseling who did not view the videotape, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory. Differences in means for the Dyadic Adjustment Scale existed between couples who were in counseling and couples who were not in counseling rather than between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape. Insufficient data existed for conducting an analysis of variance with scores on the Client Satisfaction Scale to determine a meaningful difference in client satisfaction between couples in counseling who used the videotape and couples in counseling who did not use the videotape. However, couples' objective and subjective responses to questions on the Client Satisfaction Scale indicated a relatively high level of satisfaction with the videotape and handout materials. There were no significant group differences for any of the dependent variables, with the exception of scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory for couples in counseling. F-ratios for differences between couples not in counseling who used the videotape and couples not in counseling who did

not use the videotape, were not significant for scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, or Relationship Skills Checklist.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The connection between marital satisfaction and marital relationship skills such as communication and problem-solving has been demonstrated by numerous researchers and educators including Boland and Follingstad (1986), Henry (1973), Murphy and Mendelson (1973), Navran (1967), and Satir (1964). The literature suggests that, if couples improve their relationship skills through increased communication and problem-solving skills, their level of marital satisfaction would likely increase. Cleaver (1987) used instructional videotapes to teach communication skills to couples in a marriage enrichment format. Videotape instruction has been shown to be effective in teaching skills in other professions such as management (Mills & Pace, 1989) and engineering (Karanian, 1986), and in helping parents of children with behavioral problems (Webster-Stratton, Kolpacoff, & Hollinsworth, 1988).

Based on reported research in professions other than counseling, there appeared to be justification for examining the use of videotapes to aid couples in developing skills in communicating and problem-solving. The purpose of this study was to develop and empirically test an instructional videotape, designed specifically for the purpose of combining instruction on communication and problem-solving skills with behavior modeling as an approach to improving marital satisfaction and marital relationships.

For purposes of this research investigation the instructional videotape was developed based on the Relationship Enhancement model of couple communication (Guerney 1977) and the Behavioral Exchange Program (Harrell & Guerney, 1976), which is a method of problem-solving for couples based on social exchange theory. Conflict situations similar to those experienced by most couples were dramatized by a couple modeling effective

communication and problem-solving behaviors. These interactions were recorded along with a teaching monologue which presented the principles and techniques of communication and problem-solving. Handouts were developed with material designed to reinforce the principles that were taught on the videotape. In addition, the Relationship Skills Checklist, a communication and problem-solving inventory based on the Relationship Enhancement model and the Behavioral Exchange Program, was developed for the study to test couples' knowledge of communication skills and the degree to which they perceived these skills were being utilized in their relationships.

Summary

This section summarizes and interprets the study results including the affect of the videotape on marital satisfaction and communication and problem-solving skills. The discussion includes an evaluation of the Relationship Skills Checklist as an instrument to measure couples' communication and problem-solving skills.

Marital Satisfaction

A multivariate analysis of variance test for counselor (i.e., in counseling or not in counseling), group (i.e., used or did not use the videotape), and the interaction between counselor and group indicated that there was a significance difference in mean scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory for husbands and wives in counseling who used the videotape and husbands and wives in counseling who did not use the videotape. The analysis established that this difference occurred as a result of the interaction between counselor and group. For couples in counseling who used the videotape, there was a significant decrease in the score on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory from pretest to posttest, indicating an increase in marital satisfaction. This increase in marital satisfaction did not exist for the remaining couples.

Based on the significant improvement in marital satisfaction, it appeared that the instructional videotape intervention combined with marital counseling was effective for

couples. However, due to the small number of participants and the relatively large standard error, generalizations of these results must be made with caution. For couples who were not in counseling, the videotape intervention clearly did not produce a meaningful increase in marital satisfaction. A rationale that might account for this is the fact that couples who were not in counseling scored much lower on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory pretest than did couples who were in counseling. Analysis of variance tests calculated on pretest scores determined that, although no differences existed between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape, there were significant differences ($p < .01$) between couples who were in counseling and those who were not in counseling as measured by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist. Couples who were not in counseling tended to have much less marital instability than couples in counseling, as evidenced by their lower pretest scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory. As a result, there was less opportunity for change that could be measured by the instrument. Another explanation for the difference in improvement between couples in counseling and those who were not in counseling is the possibility that couples in counseling who used the videotape were being encouraged during their sessions by their counselor to utilize the techniques they had learned from the videotape in their homework assignments. Couples who were not in counseling may have watched the videotape segments on a weekly basis without actually integrating the principles in their communication and problem-solving behaviors. Additionally, without a counselor to coach their efforts at utilizing new skills, couples may have been hesitant to attempt techniques taught on the videotape. For couples in counseling, processing the information in counseling sessions could likely have reinforced learning as well as affirmed a couple's confidence in the use of new skills. This might result in a greater degree of change in communication and problem-solving behaviors for those couples in counseling who used the videotape. There are two further reasons that might explain the lack of

change in marital satisfaction for couples who were not in counseling. First, the amount of time that passed from pretest to posttest might not have been sufficient enough for a change in behavior and perceived change in behavior to occur that would be measurable by the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Second, the skills and techniques taught on the videotape or the situations dramatized may not have been powerful enough to provide couples with effective new skills, particularly in the absence of a counselor.

Since there was no interaction effect for the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, the interaction was removed from the model in order to analyze the main effects of counselor and group upon the remaining dependent variables. The results suggested that there was no meaningful difference between couples who used the videotape and those couples who did not use the videotape, regardless of whether the couples were in counseling or not, as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. The only significant difference detected by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale occurred between wives who were in counseling and wives who were not in counseling. In general, wives in counseling increased their level of marital satisfaction significantly more than wives not in counseling, as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. These results suggested that, from the wife's point of view, either the counseling experienced by couples was effective or the couples who were not in counseling had much less opportunity to improve than couples who were in counseling. Failure of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale to detect any meaningful increase in marital satisfaction, as indicated by scores on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, may be that the inventory is a much longer, more thorough, and possibly a more sensitive instrument for measuring change. Additionally, items on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale may not be as closely related to communication and problem-solving as some items on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory. Also, the time period that passed from pretest to posttest may not have been sufficient to detect a change as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Communication and Problem-Solving Skills (The Relationship Skills Checklist)

Two of the hypotheses stated that couples who used the videotape would experience a greater increase in their knowledge and utilization of communication and problem-solving skills through the use of an instructional videotape than would couples who did not use the videotape. The results established that there was no statistically significant difference between these two groups of couples. However, the test developed for this study to measure increase in communication and problem-solving knowledge and skills was statistically sound enough to detect a significant counselor effect. That is, couples who were in counseling, whether they used the videotape or not, increased their scores on the Relationship Skills Checklist more than couples who were not in counseling. As with the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, this may have been due partly to the fact that couples who were not in counseling had much less opportunity to improve on their scores since they had high pretest scores. Additionally, as was true with the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, the Relationship Skills Checklist measured a significant difference between couples who were in counseling and couples who were not in counseling, according to the analysis of variance tests calculated using the pretest scores. These results suggest that the Relationship Skills Checklist could have potential for measuring couples' relationship skills and for helping counselors determine a course of remedial training in communication and problem-solving skills.

Implications for Counselors

The results of this study are significant to the counseling profession. This section evaluates the effectiveness of the videotape and handouts based on the study results, and discusses the potential value of the intervention in marital counseling.

The Instructional Videotape and Handouts

Fallingstads' (1988) flow-chart model emphasized that the process of marital counseling consists of several important steps, one of which is evaluating and improving

couples' relationship skills. When couples decide to come for counseling, they generally are in tremendous conflict and desperate for help. Often, marital counseling can be confusing and frustrating for couples as well as for the counselor. Research has indicated that these couples often lack important skills to communicate and resolve their problems. As a result, the amount of work to be accomplished in counseling can be overwhelming for the counselor. Marital counselors need effective materials for couples to use along with counseling, to develop their ability to communicate and resolve problems. In addition, couples who do not perceive the level of stress in their relationship as severe enough to seek professional help, need a reliable and effective intervention that can be used at home. Videotape instruction has been shown to be an effective tool for teaching various types of skills and an instructional videotape can provide home work for couples to accomplish in the private. As couples learn new skills, they can practice under the supervision and direction of their counselor. In this study, couples in counseling who used the videotape showed more improvement in marital satisfaction than couples in counseling who did not use the videotape. Based on their answers to the Client Satisfaction Scale (see Table 6 & Appendix U), couples in counseling who used the videotape perceived the materials to be helpful in learning communication and problem-solving skills. Seeing steps to effective communication and problem-solving carefully outlined was helpful to some couples. Other couples were encouraged and helped by watching the couple on the videotape model communication skills. Couples identified the dramatizations as "...real-life situations." which helped them "to be aware of problems that we need to work on without attacking each other." Couples' perception of the videotape as helpful and realistic is essential to the affect it has on their marriages.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

The results of this study indicated a significant difference between couples who were in counseling and couples who were not in counseling for marital satisfaction, as measured by

the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and communication and problem-solving skills, as measured by the Relationship Skills Checklist. These tests verified that the Relationship Skills Checklist was statistically sound enough to distinguish between distressed and non-distressed couples, as did the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Based on these findings, it would appear that the Relationship Skills Checklist could be a valuable instrument for counselors to assess couples' needs for training in communication and problem-solving skills.

Suggestions for Further Research

The following section discusses the research difficulties that emerged and includes suggestions for further research, based on the study results.

Subject Mortality and Consumer Resistance

Numerous difficulties occurred in this study that severely limited the number of participating couples who were in counseling. Twenty-three counselors were presented with the study materials, most of whom enthusiastically accepted the invitation to participate. However, as the study progressed, difficulties emerged. First, it appeared that some counselors, all of whom volunteered to participate in the study, made little effort to include couples in the study. In some cases, counselors reported that couples declined to participate because they were already too busy or refused to spend the extra time required to participate. Other counselors reported that many of their couples were simply too dysfunctional or combative to participate. Most of these difficulties appeared to be related to either consumer resistance to research or the severe nature of many couples' difficulties.

To protect client confidentiality, no attempt was made to contact couples who were in counseling. As a result, controlling the research process became extremely difficult. Couples would procrastinate in their assignments and subject mortality accounted for the loss of several participating couples. Some couples would begin the research only to drop out of counseling prematurely or refuse to complete the assignments and posttests when the

level of stress had decreased. Participating couples who were not in counseling were more accessible yet often difficult to motivate in completing assignments.

Recommendations For Further Testing of The Research Materials

Further research needs to be done in testing the videotape materials with couples in counseling as well as couples not in counseling. Based on the research in marital counseling, there is conclusive evidence of the connection between marital satisfaction and communication and problem-solving skills, and the effectiveness of using instructional videotape. The videotape and handout materials used in this study need to be tested with a larger number of couples who perceive a need for improvement in their relationship, yet are not in counseling. To accomplish this, volunteer couples from several sources could be screened with a test similar to the Marital Satisfaction Inventory. Predetermined cut-off scores could be used to select couples whose relationships are in need of help.

There also is a need for further development of the Relationship Skills Checklist. Prior to this research, a study of internal reliability was conducted for the checklist which determined that some items were confusing and needed to be rewritten. Statements that could be interpreted differently by different individuals were reworded to elicit responses that were more consistent with the subscale totals. Further analysis indicated that the changes resulted in sufficiently high internal reliability for using the checklist in the present research. However, further development should consist of a study of test-retest reliability and split-half reliability, as well as correlational study between the Relationship Skills Checklist and a similar test with well documented-psychometric features. Though the Relationship Skills Checklist detected a significant difference between couples who were in counseling and couples who were not in counseling, further development could only increase its usefulness and reliability to counselors.

Finally, though the videotape seemed to be generally well received by couples in counseling and couples not in counseling, further study and development should be

pursued. Failure of the videotape to produce more significant changes in knowledge and utilization of communication and problem-solving skills could be a result of the models of communication and problem-solving used as the basis for the instruction. Future videotapes could be designed based on models of communication with more powerful and effective skills. In addition, dialogue scripts could be written that might more clearly depict the communication and problem-solving skills being utilized by the modeling couple. Also, a different videotape could be produced that would be more effective with couples not in counseling since many the dynamics of their relationships may be very different from those of couples in counseling.

Limitations to the Study

There are several important limitations to be considered in the interpretation and application of the results of the study. First, the original design of this study was to examine the effects of the videotape on couples who were in counseling. A power study was conducted to determine the optimum number of subjects for inclusion in the study, based on a reasonable effect size for each marital instrument and a desired alpha level ($p < .05$) for rejecting the null hypotheses. Results of the power study indicated the need for a minimum of 40 couples. Data from the pilot study (see Appendix V) suggested that each counselor would average approximately three to four couples. Based on these results, 21 counselors should have produced a minimum of 40 participating couples. That was not the case. As a result of the low number of participants, especially those couples who were in counseling, the power of the study was seriously reduced and homogeneity of variance among participants could not be assumed. Therefore, one of the limitations of the study is being able to generalize the results to other populations of couples.

A second limitation is that, although the couples in counseling were randomly assigned to the group who used the videotape or the group who did not use the videotape, neither the counseling centers and their locations nor the counselors who participated were chosen at

random. One counselor worked with six of the eight couples who participated. Therefore, the results could vary with other counselors and at counseling centers in other locations.

A third limitation of the study relates to characteristics of the additional population of couples who were invited to participate in the study. Many of the couples were friends or acquaintances of the researcher, who volunteered to participate in the study. These couples' pretest scores on average were significantly higher than those of couples who were in counseling, indicating a high degree of marital satisfaction in their relationships. Couples' scores on marital instruments used in this study could vary significantly from scores of couples from other populations.

A fourth limitation may exist due to the level of verbal ability and reading comprehension required to benefit from the handouts. During the counselor recruiting process, one or two counselors stated that the materials were too sophisticated and technical for the ability of their client population. This seemed to be particularly true of facilities where client fees were publicly subsidized or funded. Therefore, these materials may not be appropriate for every client population, and the results may not be valid. In addition, due to the reliance upon videotape and reading comprehension, the materials may be inappropriate for use by individuals who have a sight or hearing impairment.

A fifth limitation relates to the theoretical model underlying the videotape intervention. Models for the communication and problem-solving skills, which were cognitive-behaviorally oriented, included Relationship Enhancement (Guerney, 1977) and the Behavioral Exchange Program (Harrell & Guerney, 1976). To participate in the study, counselors were required to utilize a cognitive-behavioral approach to counseling. For other theoretical orientations such as psychodynamic, the study materials may not be as appropriate and results could differ significantly.

A sixth limitation is the reliance on the Relationship Skills Checklist which was developed for this study to test couples' knowledge and use of communication and

problem-solving skills. Though the instrument was examined for content validity and internal consistency reliability, further development and testing needs to be done in order to insure greater validity and reliability. A second concern and limitation regarding the Relationship Skills Checklist is that marital satisfaction increased significantly for couples in counseling without an accompanying significant increase in scores on the Relationship Skills Checklist. As a result, the assumption that the videotape materials accounted for the increase in marital satisfaction may not be accurate, although couples who did not use the videotape increased significantly less in marital satisfaction than did couples who used the videotape. There were other participant forms developed for use in this study such as the Client Satisfaction Scale, Marriage Satisfaction Index, and Couple Response Form that were not examined psychometrically. Though data from these forms were not included in the inferential statistics, with the exception of the repeated-measures analysis, the results should be interpreted with caution.

Other limitations that influence interpretation of the results of this study relate to various internal validity concerns. First, because the study required several weeks to complete, maturation is a concern. Some couples who procrastinated in their assignments took longer to complete the study material than other more diligent couples. A second validity concern is test practice. Scores on the posttest may have been influenced by the couples' experience in taking the pretest.

Conclusion

It was concluded from previous research that couples who use effective communication and problem-solving skills will likely experience improved marital satisfaction. The current study investigated the efficacy of teaching effective communication and problem-solving skills to couples through the use of an instructional videotape. For couples in counseling who used the videotape, the level of marital satisfaction increased more than that of couples in counseling who did not use the videotape, as measured by the Marital Satisfaction

Inventory. However, for participants not in counseling, there were no differences in marital satisfaction between couples who used the videotape and couples who did not use the videotape.

Further research is necessary in the following areas. Factors related to marital satisfaction, in addition to communication and problem-solving skills, need to be explored and evaluated in research. More effective and powerful models for communication and problem-solving should be investigated and developed into videotape interventions. Finally, the Relationship Skills Checklist, designed for the study to measure communication and problem-solving skills, needs further development to increase its reliability and usefulness in a counseling setting.

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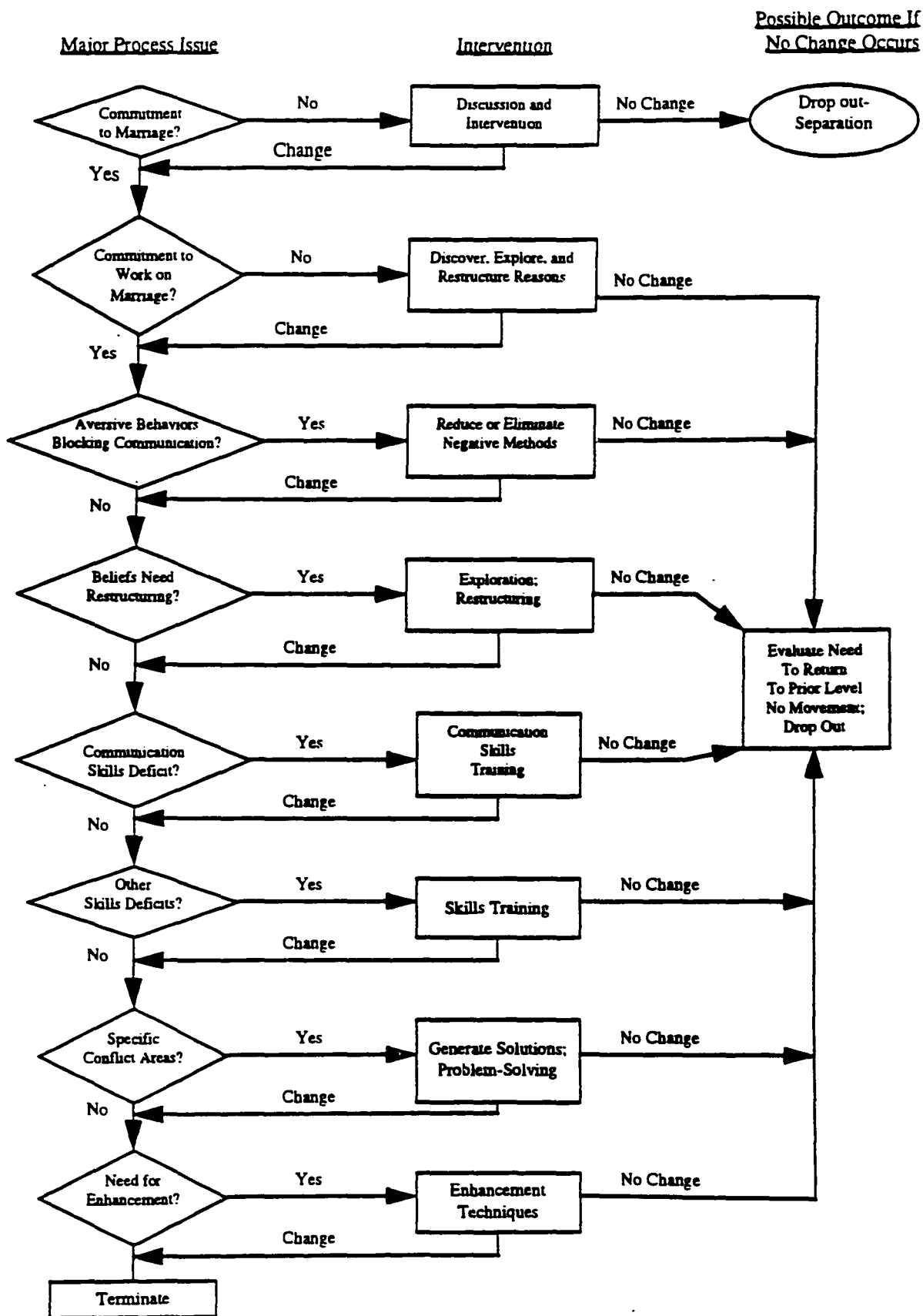
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Appendix A
Adaptation of Fallingstad's Flow Chart

Adaptation of Fallingstad's Flow chart



Appendix B
Relationship Enhancement

Relationship Enhancement

The Expresser Mode.

In the expresser mode, spouses are instructed to make statements strictly in terms of their own perceptions of events and their own feelings and value judgments. Clients are discouraged from making objective statements about the nature of certain situations and from concluding what the other person's motivations or character are. The first rule of the expresser mode, then, is to state things in a way that reflects the subjectivity of perceptions and judgments. Guerney (1977) believes that making subjective statements encourages spouses to respond to each other's perceptions of things rather than being almost forced to argue with statements as if they were fact.

The second guideline in the expresser mode is designed to discourage an argumentative response. Expressers state things subjectively from their own perspective in terms of how they feel about the issue. These feelings might include fear, concern, anger, or sadness. Guerney believes that including an expression of feelings may have an effect on the listener's response. Rather than defensiveness, feelings of concern or sympathy may be elicited.

The third rule is to strive to include in expresser statements the positive aspect of the situation. The objective of this guideline is to make one's spouse aware of the positive feelings, judgments, and thoughts that underlie concerns or anger. According to Guerney, if there were no positive expectations and feelings about spouses, they would not be bothered by each other's undesirable behaviors and comments.

The fourth guideline for the expresser is specificity. Spouses are instructed to be specific in two ways: (a) to describe situations in terms of observable, concrete behaviors and (b) to be specific as to time or occasion and place of an occurrence rather than generalizing. Being specific discourages the use of destructive over generalizations such as

"you always" and "you never" (Guernsey, 1977). In addition, the credibility of the expresser is increased when specific behaviors and details of time or place are included.

The fifth principle is designed to encourage the expresser to focus on the interpersonal component of the relationship. The objective for the expresser is to communicate to his/her spouse the positive feelings and improvements in the relationship that would likely occur if desired behavioral changes were made. This principle goes beyond simply pointing out undesirable behaviors in a negative way. It suggests specific solutions that would improve the relationship in general, and focuses on the desirable emotions that are likely to replace negative feelings as a result.

The sixth and final guideline for the expresser is to attempt to respond to the other person in an empathic way while at the same time expressing one's own feelings about an issue. This requires purposely working to view the issue from the spouse's perspective to the degree that is possible. If there are particular behaviors being requested, expressers are to try to consider what would be involved for the other person to make those changes and what difficulties and sacrifices would exist for the spouse who is being asked to change.

The Empathic Mode.

In Relationship Enhancement, the spouse who is listening to the expresser is said to be in the empathic mode and becomes an empathic responder. Guernsey (1977) considers this skill to be similar to Roger's (1951) concept of reflective listening. When in the empathic mode, spouses focus on respect, consideration, and attempting to understand and value the expresser rather than on agreeing with each other. The attitude adopted by the empathic responder is as important as the skills to be learned. Even when the listener totally disagrees with the expresser, the most constructive attitude is, "...I can best help my partner, myself, and our relationship by completely understanding how my partner does perceive the situation and how he/she does feel" (Guernsey, 1977, p. 27). The empathic responder refrains from interrupting or contradicting by reminding him/herself that there

will be an opportunity to take the role of the expresser. The responder concentrates on using elements such as tone of voice and non-verbal expressions to convey to the expresser that they are being understood and valued.

According to Guerney, there are several things to exclude when in the empathic mode:

1. The empathic responder refrains from asking questions. Often, asking questions serves to move the conversation in the direction desired by the responder rather than the expresser. Such questions are best reserved for use when the roles are reversed. This allows the one speaking to have complete control over the flow of the conversation while in the expresser mode.
2. While in the responder mode, spouses are not to share their own feelings, opinions, or viewpoints. These may be expressed when the roles are switched and the responder becomes the expresser.
3. The responder must not attempt to interpret or re-interpret what is being expressed by the partner. This includes adding one's own reasoning to that of the expresser, attempting to make connections between events, or between feelings and events for the expresser.
4. When one's spouse is the expresser, making suggestions about how they could solve a problem or alter a situation should be avoided as well. The message often conveyed is that the responder is more invested in solving their spouse's problem than in understanding their feelings and perceptions.
5. Finally, and most important, the responder is to refrain from making judgments about what the expresser has said.

Guernsey believes that when empathic responders follow these guidelines, expressers will be more likely to risk being open and honest about their needs and feelings.

Mode Switching

In Guerney's model of communication, the third set of skills to be learned by couples is mode switching, facilitating transitions from expresser to responder or vice versa.

Switching from the expresser mode to the responder mode becomes appropriate under two specific circumstances. First, mode switching is appropriate when one partner desires to know how his/her partner feels about a particular issue or what suggestions they might have for resolving a specific problem situation. Second, changing to the responder mode is appropriate when the major thoughts and feelings regarding a certain issue have been expressed, and all important points have been made.

According to Guerney (1977), there are three major circumstances under which a transition from empathic responder to expresser becomes appropriate. The first two are directly related to the occasions mentioned previously for switching from expresser to responder. First, switching from responder to expresser is appropriate when one's spouse has repeated the same information about thoughts and feelings more than once. However a pre-requisite should be carefully satisfied before switching modes. The responder should be certain that his/her empathic responses have successfully captured "the deepest" perceptions and feelings in the expresser's communication. This is accomplished by summarizing and reflecting the thoughts and feelings that have been expressed as a means of checking for accuracy.

Second, switching from responder to expresser becomes appropriate when a spouse has something to say which might influence the other spouse's perceptions in a favorable way, or needs to be said in order to keep the communication focused on the problem.

Finally, the third situation when a transition becomes appropriate is when the responder's thoughts and feelings can no longer be contained without disrupting his/her ability to be empathic to the expresser. Guerney (1977) also believes that, as communication begins to focus on specific steps and plans for resolving an issue, frequent

mode switching is appropriate in order for spouses to more quickly know each other's reactions to particular suggestions.

Appendix C
The Behavioral-Exchange Program

The Behavioral-Exchange Program

The Behavioral-Exchange Program consists of nine steps which form a framework designed to equip couples with the tools for effective conflict resolution. The first step, listening carefully, is based on several of the principles already outlined in the communication process. During this phase, couples are taught to summarize the content of their spouse's message to ensure accuracy and understanding. Accusing or blaming statements, which tend to exacerbate conflict, are replaced with expressions of one's own opinions and feelings about the issue.

The objective in the second step is for couples to locate an issue that is of importance to both spouses. In the Behavioral-Exchange Program, an issue is defined as behavior(s) occurring in the relationship that both partners desire to see changed and which both spouses perceive would improve the relationship as a result. An important emphasis in the Behavioral-Exchange Program is on the concept of "our issue" rather than "your" issue (Harrell & Guerney, 1976). When couples conceive of conflict in this way, they tend to understand the reciprocal impact they have on each other's behavior. Because the problem exists due to their mutual input, their mutual efforts toward behavioral changes are needed to improve the situation. During the communication process, couples are encouraged to be very specific, using behavioral terminology.

Step three is built logically on the preceding step; if "we" have a problem, then there is probably something "I" am doing to perpetuate that problem. Couples are taught to examine what they might be doing, behaviorally, that creates input into the problem. Step three is particularly important for two reasons: (a) when partners hear their spouse take responsibility for their own actions, they are often encouraged to cooperate in the negotiation process and (b) targeting very specific behaviors that contribute to the problem allows partners to know exactly what they need to change in order to resolve an issue.

As couples identify behaviors that tend to perpetuate the problem, they are faced with the task of finding appropriate alternative behaviors. The objective in step four is for couples to generate several alternatives to the undesirable behaviors. Finding more than one alternative is important for two reasons. First, if spouses have more than one alternative, they are more likely to find a behavioral change that is acceptable. Secondly, generating several alternatives encourages the couple to think with greater flexibility, thus avoiding "either-or" ultimatums that often characterize conflict issues. As with step three, couples are encouraged to verbalize alternatives in specific behavioral terms.

During step four, spouses suggest several alternatives without stopping to evaluate each one. This is intentional in the Behavioral-Exchange Program because it encourages couples to focus on generating several possible behaviors without becoming distracted by focusing on one particular alternative. When spouses stop to evaluate each suggestion, they may easily become preoccupied with why a particular alternative was unacceptable. This could result in a sense of rejection for the spouse who suggested the alternative. Therefore, step five is designed for the purpose of evaluating each of the alternatives suggested during step four. The positive and negative points for each alternative are examined as well as what would be required from each spouse for changes to occur and what the results of those changes might be.

In step six, each spouse selects one alternative behavior from the list generated in step four to substitute for a behavior that has been mutually determined to contribute to the maintenance of the conflict. Couples are encouraged to focus on behavioral changes that will require equal time and effort on the part of both spouses. Similar to step three, this step is based on the rationale that, just as spouses contribute mutually to the presence and maintenance of a conflict issue, they have the responsibility of mutually contributing to the solution.

During step seven, couples evaluate the specifics of making the changes agreed upon in step six. This involves determining who will do what, when, where, and how often, as well as what occurs when one spouse fails to follow through on agreed changes.

Discussing these important questions is designed to minimize misunderstandings as behavioral changes are implemented. In the Behavioral-Exchange Program, couples are encouraged to record the conditions of the behavior exchange in the form of a contract. Bonuses for success and penalties for failure may be identified and mutually agreed upon by spouses as possible incentives for behavioral changes. However, one spouse's bonus should not be designed in such a way as to constitute a penalty for the other spouse.

The final two steps of the Behavioral-Exchange Program are implementation of the behavioral exchange and re negotiation of the contract. Couples are encouraged to continue the new behavior patterns for at least a week, even if at first they may seem uncomfortable and difficult. Behavioral exchanges that appear to have particularly successful outcomes should be recorded as well as those exchanges that failed. Re negotiation consists of spouses re-examining their contract to determine what changes, if any, need to be made to ensure a more successful exchange. Flexibility inherent in this step encourages spouses to select other alternatives that might prove to facilitate a more successful conflict resolution.

Appendix D
The Marital Satisfaction Inventory

Marital Satisfaction Inventory (MSI)

Administration Booklet

Douglas K. Snyder, Ph.D.

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Directions

This inventory consists of numbered statements. Read each statement and decide whether it is true or false when applied to you.

Mark your answers on the special Answer Sheet provided. If a statement is true or mostly true when applied to you, blacken the circle labeled **(T)**. If a statement is false or not usually true when applied to you, blacken the circle labeled **(F)**. Answer each item to the best of your ability. In the example, statement 10 is marked as being true and statement 11 is marked as being false.

Example		
	T	F
10	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

In marking your answers on the Answer Sheet, *be sure that the number of the statement agrees with the number on the Answer Sheet.* Your marks should be dark and should completely fill the circle. Carefully erase any answer you wish to change. Do not make any marks in this booklet.

1. I believe our marriage is reasonably happy.
2. My spouse almost always responds with understanding to my mood at a given moment.
3. Our marriage has never been in difficulty because of financial concerns.
4. The husband should be the head of the family.
5. I had a very happy home life.
6. There are some things my spouse and I just can't talk about.
7. Our sex life is entirely satisfactory.
8. I have never thought of my spouse or myself as needing marital counseling.
9. My spouse and I don't have much in common to talk about.
10. It is sometimes easier to confide in a friend than in my spouse.
11. Our income is sufficient to meet my necessary expenses.
12. My spouse and I often remain silent for long periods when we are angry with one another.
13. A preschool child is likely to suffer if the mother works.
14. I am quite happily married.
15. My spouse has never been sexually unfaithful.
16. My spouse and I enjoy doing things together.
17. The members of my family were always very close to each other.
18. My spouse and I need to improve the way we settle our differences.
19. My spouse has no common sense when it comes to money.
20. I have never felt better in my marriage than I do now.
21. Sometimes my spouse just can't understand the way I feel.
22. A husband should take equal responsibility for feeding and clothing the children.
23. The one thing my spouse and I don't really fully discuss is sex.
24. My spouse does not take criticism as a personal attack.
25. Every new thing I have learned about my mate has pleased me.
26. All the marriages on my side of the family appear to be quite successful.
27. My mate rarely does things that make me angry.
28. My spouse is forever checking up on how I spend our money.
29. Our arguments often end with an exchange of insults.
30. Most women are better off in their own home than in a job or profession.
31. My spouse occasionally is unable to become sufficiently aroused for us to have satisfactory intercourse.
32. I wish my spouse would confide in me more.

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33. There are some important issues in our marriage that need to be resolved.
34. My spouse and I spend a good deal of time together in many different kinds of play and recreation.
35. There are times when my mate does things that make me unhappy.
36. My spouse frequently misinterprets the way I really feel when we are arguing.
37. Serious financial concerns are not likely to destroy our marriage.
38. Some things are too upsetting to discuss even with my spouse.
39. Two married persons should be able to get along better than my mate and I.
40. My spouse sometimes likes to engage in sexual practices to which I object.
41. I am quite satisfied with the amount of time my spouse and I spend in leisure.
42. During an argument with my spouse, each of us airs our feelings completely.
43. There are some things about my mate that I do not like.
44. A woman should take her husband's last name after marriage.
45. My spouse and I seem to have little in common when we are not busy with social activities.
46. I've gotten more out of marriage than I expected.
47. When upset, my spouse sometimes does a lot of little things just to annoy me.
48. I have never been sexually unfaithful to my spouse.
49. I feel as though we outlive our financial means.
50. Some equality in marriage is a good thing, but by and large, the husband ought to have the main say-so in family matters.
51. My spouse feels free to express openly strong feelings of sadness.
52. At times I have very much wanted to leave my spouse.
53. My childhood was probably happier than most.
54. My spouse has no difficulty accepting criticism.
55. Our marriage has never been in trouble because of our sexual relationship.
56. My mate and I seldom have major disagreements.
57. My spouse and I frequently sit down and talk about pleasant things that have happened during the day.
58. If a child gets sick and the wife works, the husband should be just as willing as she is to stay home from work and take care of the child.
59. My mate completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.
60. Frequently when we argue, my spouse and I seem to go over and over the same old things.
61. I trust my spouse with our money completely.

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62. I have important needs in my marriage that are not being met.
63. My parents' marriage would be a good example to follow for any married couple.
64. My spouse can usually tell what kind of day I've had without even asking.
65. My spouse and I rarely have sexual intercourse.
66. When my spouse and I disagree, my spouse helps us to find alternatives acceptable to both of us.
67. I am fairly satisfied with the way my spouse and I spend our available free time.
68. I have wondered, on several occasions, whether my marriage would end in divorce.
69. If a mother of young children works, it should be only while the family needs the money.
70. There is never a moment that I do not feel "head over heels" in love with my mate.
71. My spouse has never taken pleasure in hurting me personally.
72. My spouse and I rarely argue about money.
73. There are some sexual behaviors I would like but which my spouse doesn't seem to enjoy.
74. My spouse is so touchy on some subjects that I can't even mention them.
75. My marriage has been disappointing in several ways.
76. My spouse and I rarely go for walks together.
77. Basically, most men still desire nurturant and "traditional" women.
78. It is unusual for my spouse to openly express strong feelings of tenderness.
79. There are some things about my mate that I would change if I could.
80. There are some serious difficulties in our marriage.
81. My spouse often fails to understand my point of view on things.
82. My spouse is sometimes overly modest or prudish in his (her) attitude toward sex.
83. Our financial future seems quite secure.
84. Women who want to remove the word "obey" from the marriage service don't understand what it means to be a wife.
85. Whenever I'm feeling sad, my spouse makes me feel loved and happy again.
86. My marriage could be much happier than it is.
87. My spouse and I seem to get carried away in an argument and say things we don't really mean.
88. I have never regretted my marriage, not even for a moment.
89. My parents' marriage was happier than most.
90. I nearly always gain complete sexual satisfaction from intercourse with my spouse.
91. My spouse keeps most of his (her) feelings inside.
92. The future of our marriage is too uncertain to make any serious plans.

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93. Our daily life is full of interesting things to do together.
94. When my spouse and I have differences of opinion, we sit down and discuss them.
95. The most important thing for a woman is to be a good wife and mother.
96. I confide in my mate about everything.
97. I had a very unhappy childhood.
98. My marriage is less happy than the very successful ones.
99. I would like to improve the quality of our sexual relationship.
100. My spouse is pretty good when it comes to saving money.
101. A lot of arguments with my spouse seem to be about trivia.
102. There are some things about my marriage that do not entirely please me.
103. My spouse can always be trusted with everything I tell him (her).
104. Even when I am with my spouse I feel lonely much of the time.
105. My spouse readily admits an error when he (she) has been wrong.
106. My spouse seems to enjoy sex as much as I do.
107. It is often hard for my spouse and me to discuss our finances without getting upset with each other.
108. Only in emergencies should the wife contribute to the financial support of the family.
109. The unhappiest moments of my life are often caused by my marriage.
110. My spouse takes quite seriously my feelings and thoughts about an issue.
111. My spouse doesn't take enough time to do some of the things I'd like to do.
112. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my mate.
113. My spouse and I communicate very little simply through the exchange of glances.
114. I have never felt our marital difficulties were piling up so high that we could not overcome them.
115. I would prefer to have intercourse more frequently than we do now.
116. My spouse often insists on getting his (her) own way regardless of what I may want.
117. My spouse is a very good manager of finances.
118. A woman should be able to choose a career outside the home just as her husband does.
119. It seems that we used to have more fun than we do now.
120. There have been moments of great happiness in my marriage.
121. My mate has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.
122. My parents had very few quarrels.
123. I sometimes am reluctant to express disagreement with my spouse for fear that he (she) will get angry.

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124. My spouse has too little regard sometimes for my sexual satisfaction.
125. My spouse and I argue nearly all the time.
126. I wish my spouse shared a few more of my interests.
127. My spouse does many different things to show me that he (she) loves me.
128. A major role of the wife should be that of housekeeper.
129. Minor disagreements with my spouse often end up in big arguments.
130. My spouse and I nearly always agree on how frequently to have intercourse.
131. I might be happier if I weren't married.
132. Sometimes I feel as though my spouse doesn't really need me.
133. My spouse doesn't seem to understand the importance of putting money into savings.
134. A woman's place is in the home.
135. I feel sometimes like my spouse is "lecturing" at me.
136. I get pretty discouraged about my marriage sometimes.
137. We are as well adjusted as any two persons in this world can be.
138. Our sexual relationship does not lack at all in variety.
139. My spouse and I seem able to go for days sometimes without settling our differences.
140. The recreational and leisure life of my spouse and myself appears to be meeting both our needs quite well.
141. My spouse does many things to please me.
142. Sometimes I wonder just how much my spouse really does love me.
143. My parents never really understood me.
144. When arguing, we manage quite well to restrict our focus to the important issues.
145. A wife should not have to give up her job when it interferes with her husband's career.
146. I am somewhat dissatisfied with how my spouse and I talk about better ways of pleasing each other sexually.
147. My spouse and I are happier than most couples I know.
148. Trying to work out a family budget makes more trouble with my spouse than it is worth.
149. I feel free to express openly strong feelings of sadness to my spouse.
150. We get angry with each other sometimes.
151. My spouse sometimes seems intent upon changing some aspect of my personality.
152. I am thoroughly committed to remaining in my present marriage.
153. My spouse likes to share his (her) leisure time with me.
154. I wish sometimes my spouse would take more initiative in our sexual relations.
155. Whenever he (she) is feeling down, my spouse comes to me for support.

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156. My spouse often complains that I don't understand him (her).
157. I usually feel that my marriage is worthwhile.
158. A husband and wife should share responsibility for housework if both work outside the home.
159. My spouse doesn't always appreciate the importance of keeping good financial records.
160. I have never seriously considered having an affair.
161. In most matters, my spouse understands what I'm trying to say.
162. My spouse and I enjoy the same types of amusement.
163. My mate rarely does things that make me unhappy.
164. I'm not sure my spouse has ever really loved me.
165. My parents didn't communicate with each other as well as they should have.
166. My spouse seems committed to settling our differences.
167. I enjoy sexual intercourse with my spouse.
168. I am certain our decision to get married was the right one.
169. I might have been happier had I married somebody else.
170. When I'm upset, my spouse usually understands why, even without my telling him (her).
171. Earning the family income is primarily the responsibility of the husband.
172. My spouse sometimes buys too much on credit.
173. My spouse desires intercourse too frequently.
174. I have known very little unhappiness in my marriage.
175. I sometimes am reluctant to discuss certain things with my spouse because I'm afraid I might hurt his (her) feelings.
176. My mate occasionally makes me feel miserable.
177. The responsibilities of motherhood are a full-time job.
178. I sometimes avoid telling my spouse things that put me in a bad light.
179. My marriage is as successful as any I know.
180. I often wonder what it would be like to have intercourse with someone other than my spouse.
181. My spouse and I decide together the manner in which the family income is to be spent.
182. Even when angry with me, my spouse is able to appreciate my viewpoints.
183. I was very anxious as a young person to get away from my family.
184. I spend at least one hour each day in an activity with my spouse.
185. The good things in my marriage seem to far outweigh the bad.
186. I don't think any couple could live together with greater harmony than my mate and I.

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187. A lot of our arguments seem to end in depressing stalemates.
188. I am sometimes unhappy with our sexual relationship.
189. A wife's career is of equal importance to her husband's.
190. My spouse has much difficulty keeping our checkbook balanced.
191. My spouse and I have never come close to separation or divorce.
192. My spouse sometimes seems to spend more time with his (her) friends than with me.
193. My marriage could be happier than it is.
194. I often wondered whether my parents' marriage would end in divorce.
195. Our arguments frequently end up with one of us feeling hurt or crying.
196. We seem to do more arguing than a couple should.
197. My spouse sometimes shows too little enthusiasm for sex.
198. Just when I need it the most, my spouse makes me feel important.
199. A woman should expect her husband to help with the housework.
200. My spouse buys too many things without consulting with me first.
201. During our marriage, my spouse and I have always talked things over.
202. About the only time I'm with my spouse is at meals and bedtime.
203. I believe that our marriage is as pleasant as that of most people I know.
204. I certainly hope our marriage turns out better than the marriages of some of my relatives.
205. There are times when I wonder if I made the best of all possible choices.
206. Talking about sexual performance with my spouse is not difficult.
207. My spouse and I are often unable to disagree with one another without losing our tempers.
208. My spouse is often too concerned with financial matters.
209. If it weren't for fear of hurting my mate, I might leave him (her).
210. There should be more day-care centers and nursery schools so that more mothers of young children could work.
211. My mate and I understand each other completely.
212. My spouse and I sometimes enjoy just sitting down and doing things together.
213. We could have many fewer marital difficulties if our family income were larger.
214. My spouse rarely nags me.
215. I would like my spouse to express a little more tenderness during intercourse.
216. I think my marriage is less happy than most marriages.
217. When disagreements arise they are always settled in a peaceful, fair, and democratic manner.
218. I am apt to hide my feelings in some things, to the extent that my spouse may hurt me without his (her) knowing it.

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219. Before marrying, I was quite eager to leave home.
220. My spouse's feelings are too easily hurt.
221. My marriage is an unhappy one.
222. Where a family lives should depend mostly on the husband's job.
223. My spouse invests money wisely.
224. My spouse rarely refuses intercourse when I desire it.
225. We sometimes seem unable to settle calmly even our minor differences.
226. I have often considered asking my spouse to go with me to seek marital counseling.
227. We just don't get the chance to do as much together any more.
228. My marriage is not a perfect success.
229. It's only natural for a man to be bothered if his wife makes more money than he does.
230. My spouse doesn't take me seriously enough sometimes.
231. Frankly, our marriage has not been successful.
232. My spouse and I almost always discuss things together before making an important decision.
233. There is nothing I would like to change about our sex life.
234. My parents loved each other.
235. Such things as laundry, cleaning, and child care are primarily the wife's responsibility.
236. My spouse seems to enjoy just being with me.
237. There are many things about my marriage that please me.
238. There is a great deal of love and affection expressed in our marriage.
239. My marriage has been very satisfying.

Couples WITHOUT CHILDREN should STOP here.

Appendix E
The Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Name: _____ Sex: M F Marital Status: _____ Age: _____

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list. Circle the star under one answer for each item.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
2. Matters of recreation.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
3. Religious matters.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
4. Demonstrations of affection.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
5. Friends.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
6. Sex relations.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior).....	•	•	•	•	•	•
8. Philosophy of life.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
11. Amount of time spent together.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
12. Making major decisions.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
13. Household tasks.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
14. Leisure time interests and activities.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
15. Career decisions.....	•	•	•	•	•	•

	All The Time	Most Of The Time	More Often Than Not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or termination of your relationship?.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
19. Do you confide in your mate?.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
20. Do you ever regret that you married (or lived together)?.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
22. How often do you and your mate get on each others' nerves?.....	•	•	•	•	•	•

	Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23. Do you kiss your mate?.....	•	•	•	•	•

	All Of Them	Most Of Them	Some Of Them	Very Few Of Them	None Of Them
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?.....	•	•	•	•	•

How often do the following occur between you and your mate?	Never	Less Than Once A Month	Once Or Twice A Month	Once Or Twice A Week	Once A Day	More Often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
26. Laugh together.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
27. Calmly discuss something.....	•	•	•	•	•	•
28. Work together on a project.....	•	•	•	•	•	•

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree or disagree. Indicate if either item caused differences of opinions or were problems in the past few weeks.

	Yes	No
29. Being too tired for sex.....	•	•
30. Not showing love.....	•	•

31. The stars on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Circle the star above the phrase which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship? Circle the letter for one statement.

- A. I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
- B. I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
- C. I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
- D. It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
- E. It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
- F. My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

Appendix F
The Relationship Skills Checklist

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Name _____

Counselor _____

Date ____/____/____

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Name _____ Date ___/___/___ Counselor _____

Directions: Please read the following statements and circle the number that best describes how much you agree with the statement.

Communication

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1. When spouses discuss a problem, it is better to share feelings and viewpoints rather than just state the facts. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 1a. When we discuss problems, I share my feelings and thoughts more than I state facts. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 1b. When my spouse and I discuss problems, s/he shares more about feelings and thoughts rather than facts. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| | | | |
| 2. Sharing specific feelings such as fear, hurt, or anger can improve communication. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2a. I usually do not talk about my feeling of hurt or anger when we discuss a problem.. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2b. My spouse seldom talks about his/her feelings when we talk about a problem. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| | | | |
| 3. Spouses often have positive feelings and desires beneath their hurt and anger that should be shared. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3a. I don't share positive emotions or desires that are beneath my hurt and anger. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3b. My spouse tells me when there are positive feelings beneath his/her hurt or anger. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| | | | |
| 4. When discussing problems, spouses shouldn't use statements with "You always..." or "You never..." | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4a. When we argue, I use statements with, "You always... or "You never..." | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4b. My spouse doesn't use statements with "You always or "You never..." | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| | | | |
| 5. When spouses change annoying behaviors, pleasant feelings will often replace negative ones. Discussing these is important. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5a. I let my spouse know of the positive emotions I will feel if certain behaviors change. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5b. My spouse does not tell me that s/he will have positive emotions if I change annoying behaviors. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |

Please continue to the next page.

6.	One should consider the difficulty or sacrifice involved for their spouse to change behaviors.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
6a.	I don't consider the difficulty or sacrifice when I ask my spouse to change a behavior.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
6b.	My spouse is considerate of the difficulty when s/he asks me to change behaviors.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
7.	Agreeing is not as important as an attitude of consideration and respect toward each other's viewpoint.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
7a.	When we disagree, I am considerate of my spouse's viewpoint and feelings.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
7b.	My spouse is not considerate of my viewpoint or feelings when we disagree.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
8.	Interrupting by asking questions and sharing your viewpoint when a spouse is talking helps communication.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
8a.	When my spouse discusses our problems, I sometimes interrupt and share my own viewpoint.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
8b.	When I talk about our problems, my spouse listens without interrupting to ask questions or share his/her viewpoint.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
9.	Interpreting a spouse's message or telling him/her how he/she ought to feel is helpful to communication.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
9a.	I often interpret my spouse's messages and suggest emotions I think s/he should feel.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
9b.	When I am talking, my spouse will try to interpret my messages and suggest how I should feel.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
10.	Solving a spouse's problem is as important as listening to his/her thoughts and feelings.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
10a.	I help my spouse solve problems more than I listen.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
10b.	My spouse thinks it is more important to help me solve a problem than listen to my feelings.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
11.	Telling a spouse that his/her thoughts and feelings are silly or ridiculous hinders communication.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
11a.	My spouse tells me that my thoughts and feelings are silly or ridiculous.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
11b.	I tell my spouse if I think his/her thoughts or feelings are silly or ridiculous.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
12.	It is important that spouses know how to change from talking to being the listener.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
12a.	We change smoothly from being the talker to being the listener without interrupting or controlling the conversation.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
Please continue to the next page.													

Problem-solving/Conflict-resolution

1. Couples who are able to communicate well solve problems better.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
1a. My spouse and I can communicate and resolve our conflicts.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
2. Couples who express their own feelings and thoughts rather than blame and accuse are better problem solvers.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
2a. I communicate my own thoughts and feelings rather than blame and accuse my spouse.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
2b. My spouse will often blame and accuse me rather than share his/her feelings and thoughts.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
3. Both spouses need to change to resolve most marital problems.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
3a. I recognize and change behaviors that contribute to our marital problems.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
3b. My spouse sees and changes behaviors that contribute to our marital problems.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
4. It helps when both spouses find different ways to act to solve problems.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
4a. My spouse and I list changes we could make in our behaviors that could help solve a problem.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
5. When changes in behavior become necessary, spouses should understand how difficult changing will be.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
5a. When I ask my spouse to change a behavior, I consider how difficult it will be for him/her.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
5b. I know my spouse considers the difficulty when s/he asks me to change a behavior.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
6. When making changes, it helps to decide when, where, and how often they will take place.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
6a. We decide who will change, when, and how often the change will take place.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
7. When changes are agreed on, after a week or two spouses should check to see if they are helping.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
7a. When we agree to changes, later on we decide if those changes are helping us.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
8. When changes in behavior are not helping, don't give up, find some other changes to try.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree
8a. When we see that a change isn't working, we often just become frustrated and quit trying.	Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree

Appendix G
The Content Validity Form

The Content Validity Form

Directions: As an expert reviewer, you have been given four items. These consist of (1) an explanation of Relationship Enhancement and The Behavioral Exchange Program, (2) a set labeled "Couple Handouts", 3) a copy of the instructional-videotape, and 4) The Relationship Skills Checklist.

As you review items two through four, please rate the following:

1. The degree to which the points included in the models of communication and problem-solving are taught clearly and represented adequately in the couple handouts.
2. The degree to which the points included in the models of communication and problem-solving are taught clearly and represented adequately in the monologue section of each videotape segment.
3. The degree to which the points included in the models of communication and problem-solving are taught clearly and represented clearly and effectively in the modeling section of each videotape segment.
4. The degree to which the points included in the models of communication and problem-solving are tested adequately in the instrument you have received.

After each question you will see four five-point Likert scales allowing you to rate each point covered in the models according to the four areas mentioned above. Please circle the number of your choice on each scale. If the Likert scale does not apply to a particular area, write "NA" next to the particular scale for that area.

Communication

Relationship Enhancement

Expresser Mode

1. Make statements in terms of how you see things and how you feel about an important issue.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

2. State things in terms of your specific feelings such as concern, fear, anger, hurt or sadness.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

3. When making statements, include the positive feelings, judgments, and thoughts that underlie your emotions.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

4. Be specific as to the time of occurrence of a particular behavior your spouse does that upsets you and which you would like to see changed. When describing the occurrence of the behavior, avoid phrases such as "You always" and "You never" since these words sound accusing and often result in a defensive reaction.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

5. Rather than simply criticizing the behavior that upsets you in a negative manner, point out the pleasant emotions that would likely replace your negative feelings if the changes you asked for were to occur.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

6. While requesting that your spouse change particular behaviors, consider how difficult those changes might be and what they might have to give up to make the desired changes.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

Empathic Responder Mode

1. An attitude of consideration, respect, and understanding is as important to the empathic mode as the skills to be learned and practiced. The most important thing is not to agree with each other, but to help the other person feel that they have been understood.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

2. Empathic mode guidelines consist primarily of avoiding the following behaviors:

- a. Asking questions while the expresser is speaking. This often serves to move the conversation in the desired direction of the responder rather than the expresser.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

- b. Sharing your own feelings, opinions, and viewpoints while in the empathic mode, unless requested to do so by the expresser.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

- c. Attempting to interpret or reinterpret what the expresser has said or suggesting that the expresser feels certain emotions they do not feel.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

- d. Making suggestions as to how the expresser could solve their problem unless requested to do so.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

- e. Making judgmental statements about what the expresser has said.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

Mode Switching

The following are guidelines for switching from expresser to empathic responder:

1. When the expresser desires to know how his/her partner feels about a particular issue or what suggestions they might have for resolving a specific problem or situation.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

2. When the expresser is satisfied that the major thoughts and feelings regarding a certain issue have been communicated and reasonably understood.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

Switching from **empathic responder** to **expresser** is appropriate in the following circumstances:

1. When one's spouse has repeated the same information about thoughts and feelings more than once and the empathic expresser feels that their thoughts and feelings have been understood by the responder. To ensure this, the responder should summarize and repeat back to the expresser the thoughts and feelings that have been expressed as a means of checking for accuracy.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

2. When one spouse (the empathic responder) has something to say which might influence the other person's perceptions in a favorable way, or needs to be said in order to keep the communication focused on the problem.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

3. When the responder's thoughts and feelings can no longer be contained without disrupting his/her ability to be understanding to the expresser. This requires careful consideration in order that it does not become simply an opportunity to capture control of the conversation.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

The Behavioral Exchange Program

1. Incorporate the communication principles learned in Relationship Enhancement.
 - a. Summarize the content of your spouse's message to ensure your accurate understanding of their perspective and feelings.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

- b. Replace accusing or blaming statements with expressions of your own perceptions and feelings about the issue.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

2. Assume mutual responsibility for "our problem" rather than "your problem". Understand that when one person acts a certain destructive way, it becomes a "trigger" for the other person's equally harmful behavior.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

3. Understand that if "we" have a problem, then there is probably something "I" am doing to allow that problem to continue being a problem.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

4. Identify destructive behaviors that tend to perpetuate the problem or allow the problem to continue being a problem. Think of several alternative behaviors to replace those that have been determined to contribute to the conflict. At this point, do not stop to evaluate any of the alternatives. Evaluating at this point may become negative and serve to confuse the process of suggesting new behaviors.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

5. Step five consists of carefully evaluating the positive and negative points for each alternative behavior (from step four), as well as what would be required from each spouse for changes to occur, and what the results of those changes might be.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

6. Each spouse is to select one alternative behavior from the list developed in step four to substitute for a behavior that has been determined to contribute to the problem. Behaviors selected should be ones which both spouses agree could improve the situation.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

7. Evaluate the specifics of making the changes agreed upon in step six. Who will do what? When? Where? How often? What will occur when one spouse fails to follow through on changes that have been agreed to? This step is a type of contract designed to help keep misunderstandings from occurring as spouses try the new behaviors.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

8. Try each agreed-upon behavioral change for at least a week. Record behavioral exchanges that appear to have a particularly successful outcome.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

9. After a period of time (one to two weeks), re-examine the contract to determine if any changes need to be made to ensure a more successful exchange. Select other alternatives to replace those that have had a negative effect or no effect.

Couple Handouts:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Monologue Section:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Couple Modeling:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear
Testing:	Not Clear	1	2	3	4	5	Very Clear

Appendix H
The Client Satisfaction Scale
(Form A)

Client Satisfaction Scale

Listed below is a series of statements about the counseling you have received during the last few weeks. As a couple, please read each statement and decide how much you agree with the statements.

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|
| 1. We felt that the counseling we received was effective and helpful. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 2. Since starting our counseling we have been able to communicate better with each other. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 3. We feel that we are better able to resolve some problems since we starting our counseling. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 4. We feel less tension in our relationship than we did before we started counseling | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 5. We are able to feel more pleasant emotions toward each other than we did before our counseling. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 6. We would have no problem recommending the counseling we received to another couple. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 7. The materials we were given were helpful in learning to communicate and solve problems. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 8. Watching the couple on the videotape talk with each other helped us understand what was being taught. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 9. The handouts we read before watching each part of the videotape were helpful to us. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 10. We believe that the videotape could be helpful to other couples. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |

Please share your thoughts in response to these statements:.

1. The most helpful thing about the videotape was:

2. Watching the couple discuss a problem on the tape was helpful because:

3. Along with the tape, the handouts helped us in the following way:

Appendix I
Client Satisfaction Scale
(Form B)

Client Satisfaction Scale

Listed below is a series of statements about the counseling you have received during the last few weeks. As a couple, please read each statement and decide how much you agree with the statements.

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|--------------|
| 1. We felt that the counseling we received was effective and helpful. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 2. Since starting our counseling we have been able to communicate better with each other. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 3. We feel that we are better able to resolve some problems since we starting our counseling. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 4. We feel less tension in our relationship than we did before we started counseling | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 5. We are able to feel more pleasant emotions toward each other than we did before our counseling. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 6. We would have no problem recommending the counseling we received to another couple. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 7. The materials we were given were helpful in learning to communicate and solve problems. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |

Appendix J
Marriage Satisfaction Index

Marriage Satisfaction Index

Counselor _____

Couple Id. _____

Each week, as a couple, please answer the following simple questions by circling the number between 1 and 5 that seems most accurate for the week indicated. Please answer the questions on the same of day of the week for weeks one through four of the study.

	Week #:	1	2	3	4
1. Overall, the feelings in our marriage are:	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive
	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1
	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
2. In general, we are communicating:	Well	Well	Well	Well	Well
	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1
	Poorly	Poorly	Poorly	Poorly	Poorly
3. The stress and tension in our marriage is:	High	High	High	High	High
	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	4
	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1	1
	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

Appendix K
Scale of Communication Instruction

Scale of Communication Instruction

Instructions: Counselors, please indicate on this form the approximate number of minutes that you spent with this couple during this session working on their communication skills. Please include any activity that could be considered applicable to training in communication skills.

Couple _____

Counselor _____ Session _____

Amount of time= _____ minutes.

Appendix L
The Couple Response Form

Couple Response Form

Please share your thoughts in response to these statements:.

1. The most helpful thing about the videotape was:
2. Watching the couple discuss a problem on the tape was helpful because:
3. Along with the tape, the handouts helped us in the following way:

Appendix M
Script for the Videotape

Script for the Videotape

Introduction to instructional videotape:

Studies have shown that, in marriage, there is a direct relationship between marital satisfaction and couples' ability to communicate effectively. Through healthy communication, spouses are more likely to feel understood and valued, conflicts are more often resolved, and problems are more likely to be solved in a timely and mutually satisfying manner.

The videotape you have been given as an important part of your marriage counseling contains four 20-minute segments. Each 20-minute section will be divided into approximately 10 to 15 minutes of teaching on a specific area of communication followed by a couple applying the principles. Concerns presented by the models are similar to those experienced in all marriages. Though your areas of conflict may be somewhat different from those depicted by the model couple, the focus of the tape is on the processes of communication and conflict resolution rather than on any particular problem area.

You also have been given material to read that accompanies each section of the videotape. It is extremely important that you both read the material before watching each segment. The printed material contains the same subject matter that will be covered during each teaching section and will offer an important preview of the information presented. Immediately after watching each segment, refer to the appropriate handout as you discuss the way in which each couple attempted to follow the communication guidelines.

It is very important that you watch each 20-minute segment together, allowing no interruptions. To accomplish this, please select a time to watch the videotape, as a couple, which will minimize the possibility of distractions.

Segment I

Introduction to Segment I: During the first 20-minute segment of your videotape, we will be focusing on learning to communicate with each other. Studies have consistently

revealed that couples who learn to communicate well tend to enjoy a higher level of satisfaction in their relationships. The principles taught in this segment will form the basis for conflict resolution and problem solving, which will be covered later. Pay close attention because the more you learn from this section, the better equipped you will be for later segments.

The principles for communication we will be studying are known as Relationship Enhancement. In Relationship Enhancement, there are several extremely important guidelines which, if learned and practiced, virtually guarantee that you will improve your communication as an individual and as a couple. However, they require a higher level of discipline and maturity than many couples experience.

Relationship Enhancement:

In Relationship Enhancement, there are three roles, or modes, that both of you will experience. These include the expresser mode, the empathic mode, and mode switching. As you probably have already guessed, you are in the expresser mode when you are the one doing most of the talking. The other person, the listener, would be in the empathic mode. Mode switching is the learned ability to know when and how, as a couple, to exchange roles to maximize communication. In the absence of mode switching, or when spouses change roles abruptly, communication may begin to fail.

In each of the three modes, there are guidelines which must be followed for the communication to be effective.

The expresser mode:

In the expresser mode, the first guideline is to make statements in terms of your own subjective perceptions and feelings. Stating things as if they were a fact often results in the listener becoming defensive. In relationships, couples view situations differently due to their different perspectives. In other words, there is one set of facts, but, often, two subjective viewpoints of those facts. In Relationship Enhancement, the focus is on

understanding each other's viewpoint rather than stating the facts. To accomplish this, spouses find it helpful to begin statements with, "I feel like..", "It seems to me...", or "In my opinion..."

The second guideline follows directly from the first. Statements in the expresser mode are always made in terms of how you feel about an issue. These feelings may include concern, fear, anger, hurt, or sadness. Often, including one's feelings about an issue helps the listener better understand the intensity of a specific statement. Rather than responding defensively, the listener may experience feelings of concern or even empathy. Examples of statements made following this guideline may begin with, "I feel angry about...", "It frightens me when...", or "I'm concerned about..."

The third rule in Relationship Enhancement encourages the expresser to include his or her positive feelings, judgments and thoughts that underlie the concern or anger. Without these positive feelings and expectations, there would likely be no cause for anger or concern. For example, a wife concerned about her husband's long work hours might express her feelings as, "Spending time together has always been such an important part of our relationship, and it frightens me when we have so little time together."

Often, when one spouse is commenting on a particular issue, they will use such all-inclusive words as, "You always..." or "You never..." Statements that begin in this way usually elicit a defensive reaction. To avoid this, the fourth guideline for the expresser is to be specific as to a particular, observable undesirable behavior and time of occurrence of that behavior.

The fifth principle in Relationship Enhancement encourages the expresser to move beyond simply pointing out the undesirable behavior in a negative or critical manner. The expresser, in addition to requesting changes, attempts to point out the desirable emotions that would likely replace negative feelings were changes to occur.

The sixth and final guideline for the expresser is to respond to the other person in an empathic way while at the same time expressing their own feelings. For the expresser, this involves considering what difficulties and sacrifices might exist for the other person to make the requested changes.

Introduction to Couple Modeling Communication:

Now that we have discussed the basic principles involved in becoming an effective expresser, for the next 10 to 15 minutes you will see a couple, like you, work to incorporate some of these principles in their communication. As you watch, notice how the expresser attempts to follow the guidelines of the expresser mode and how this effects the conversation.

Relationship Enhancement: The expresser mode.

Situation: In this session, a wife has decided to confront her husband about his pattern of correcting her in social settings. She feels embarrassed and childlike when he corrects her.

Wife: "Jim, there is something I'm concerned about and I'd like to talk to you. You may not be aware, but something you often do bothers me."

Husband: "I can tell that whatever it is really upsets you."

Wife: "It seems that you often correct me when we are with other people and it is embarrasses me. I feel like a little kid being corrected by her father. I love our time with our friends and I'd like to just relax and have a good time, but I don't feel like I can."

Husband: "I don't see what you are talking about. 'I embarrass you?'"

Wife: "OK,- a couple of nights ago when we were with William and Sue, we were telling them about our vacation. I mispronounced the name of the restaurant we went to and you corrected me. To me, it wasn't that important, but the way you corrected me made it sound like you thought I was really dumb for pronouncing the name that way. It embarrassed me, and I think William and Sue were uncomfortable."

Husband: "I didn't realize that it embarrassed you. I just thought it was important that if we were going to tell them about our vacation, we should at least pronounce the name right"

Wife: "I just don't enjoy being embarrassed like that. Sometimes I hesitate to say much when we are with our friends because I'm afraid that you will correct me. I know we both enjoy our friendships and I'd feel much more relaxed knowing you weren't going to correct me. I know that pronouncing words correctly and being accurate is more important to you than it is to me. If you think it is that important, maybe you could wait until we're alone. Or maybe if you felt that correcting me was really important, you could do it in a way that didn't seem so sarcastic. I think I'd enjoy being with you and our friends more if I didn't think you would embarrass me."

Segment II

Introduction: In this segment, we will continue our discussion of the communication process known as Relationship Enhancement. As mentioned in the first segment, in Relationship Enhancement, communication is divided into three roles, or modes. In the previous session, you were taught the principles to apply while in the expresser mode. This segment will cover the other two modes, the empathic mode and mode switching.

Relationship Enhancement. The empathic mode:

Though the empathic mode involves listening, it consists of much more. In this mode, as suggested by the term "empathic", the attitude of consideration, respect, and understanding is as important as the skills to be learned and practiced. Even when you as the empathic responder completely disagree with the expresser, the most constructive attitude to adopt is, "I can best help my partner, myself, and our relationship by completely understanding how my partner perceives the situation and how he/she feels." Tone of voice and non-verbal expressions are utilized by the empathic responder to convey the message to the expresser that they are being understood and valued.

In the empathic mode, guidelines consist primarily of behaviors to be avoided by the empathic responder. First, the empathic responder avoids asking questions while the expresser is speaking. Often, questions serve to move the conversation in the desired direction of the responder rather than the expresser. It is important for the expresser to have control over the flow of the conversation while in the expresser mode. Asking questions should be reserved for when the roles are reversed through mode switching.

Second, empathic responders should refrain from sharing their own feelings, opinions, and viewpoints while in the empathic mode, unless requested to do so by the expresser. These may be shared when the roles have been switched.

The third guideline is designed to discourage the responder from attempting to interpret or reinterpret what the expresser has said. This includes adding one's own reasoning to that of the expresser or suggesting that the expresser feels certain emotions they do not feel.

A mistake couples often make in their communication is feeling compelled to solve each other's problems. The fourth guideline when in the empathic responder mode is to avoid making suggestions about how the expresser could solve a problem, unless requested by the expresser. The message often conveyed is that the responder is more invested in solving their spouse's problem than in understanding their feelings and perception.

Finally, the empathic responder must refrain from making judgments about what the expresser has said. Statements such as, "That's ridiculous.", "How could you possibly feel that way?", or "That sounds crazy to me." often result in the expresser feeling that their viewpoint has been discredited.

Introduction to Couple Modeling Communication:

Now that we have discussed the basic principles involved in becoming an effective empathic responder, for the next 10 to 15 minutes you will see a couple, like you, attempt to incorporate some of these principles in their communication. As you watch, pay close

attention to the ways in which each person attempts to stay within the guidelines of their particular mode.

When in the empathic mode, the emphasis is on working to understand the expresser and exclude particular behaviors that would inhibit conflict resolution or tend to increase the level of conflict. In this scene, a young couple, married only for about a year, is discussing a concern the husband has with his wife. The husband often feels compared with the wife's father, to whom the wife felt very close and deeply admired him for his mechanical abilities to "fix anything". To the wife, her father seemed to always know the right thing to do.

In this modeling segment, two interactions, involving the same problem situation, will be shown. During the first interaction, the wife, who is the responder, includes several responses that will virtually guarantee an increase in the tension and the conflict level. In the second interaction, the wife responds in a way that is congruent with the principles taught in Relationship Enhancement's empathic mode. Pay close attention to the difference in these two interactions and in the different reactions in the husband.

Relationship Enhancement: The empathic mode.

Husband: "Honey, I just wanted to let you know that I might be a little late coming home today. I need to take the car by to have the oil changed. It should only take about thirty minutes or so."

Wife: "I really hate having to spend money on things like that. You know, I remember when I was at home, dad would do that himself. He said that doing it himself saved money that we could use on other things. I always thought it was so neat the way he could do almost anything."

Husband: "You know, that's not the first time you have told me about all the abilities your father had and how they saved money. Your dad really is a great guy, but when you keep

bringing up his abilities and the way he used to do things, I feel like you don't approve of me and the way I do things."

Wife: Well, I just don't understand why you won't take a course in mechanics at the community college. Bill told you the other day that he'd be glad to come over and show you how to change the oil. I just think you either don't want to learn anything new or you're afraid you can't do it."

Husband: "I don't feel that way at all, how in the world could you say that. Not only are you comparing me to your dad, now its Bill. Why can't you just let me be myself and just be satisfied with that. It seems like you're never satisfied with anything I do. You're always wanting me to change to be like somebody else."

Wife: "Well, I think you're just being stubborn. You're never willing to even try to learn something new."

Husband: "I don't know why I even try to discuss this with you. You seem to have your mind made up about how things should be. Like I said, I'll be home a little late tonight. Good-bye!"

Empathic mode, second interaction:

Husband: "Honey, I just wanted to let you know that I might be a little late coming home today. I need to take the car by to have the oil changed. It should only take about thirty minutes or so."

Wife: "I really hate having to spend money on things like that. You know, I remember when I was at home, dad would do that himself. He said that doing it himself saved money that we could use on other things. I always thought it was so neat the way he could do almost anything."

Husband: "You know, that's not the first time you have told me about all the things your father could do and how they saved money. Your dad really is a great guy, but when you

keep bringing up his abilities and the way he used to do things, I feel like you don't approve of me and the way I do things.

Wife: "I'm really not trying to compare you to him or put you down. I just don't like spending money for things you could learn to do yourself. But I know you don't agree with me."

Husband: "No I really don't. I didn't grow up doing all that stuff myself or watching my father do it. He worked hard and would rather pay someone else and use his time doing things he enjoyed doing, and I feel the same way. I make a good salary and I would rather pay somebody else. And besides, with my mechanical ability, I could wind up breaking something that I'd just have to pay to have fixed. When things like this happen, I feel like you just don't respect me like you did your father."

Wife: "I don't think I respect you less because you're not mechanically inclined. But I can see how you might feel that way, like I was comparing you to my dad."

Husband: "I just feel that when things like this come up, I would appreciate it if you wouldn't get so upset about the money we spend on repairs or maintenance. I think I'm a responsible person. I may not do it myself, but I usually see that it gets done. I guess that, after watching your dad do all those repairs himself, it seems to you that I'm wasting money, but it would mean a lot to me if you'd try to understand my feelings about this."

Mode Switching: Instructional segment.

In Relationship Enhancement, the third set of communication skills to learn is mode switching. As suggested by the term, mode switching is the ability to make smooth transitions from expresser to empathic responder, or vice-versa. When couples do not know how to facilitate this transition, communication may easily become a monologue, or even worse, a series of interruptions.

In mode switching, there are two possible transitions, switching from expresser to empathic responder or from empathic responder to expresser. There are two specific

circumstances when switching from expresser to empathic responder becomes appropriate. First, switching from the expresser mode to the responder mode is timely when one partner desires to know how his/her partner feels about a particular issue or what suggestions they might have for resolving a specific problem or situation. Second, changing to the responder mode is appropriate when the major thoughts and feelings regarding a certain issue have been expressed, and all important points have been made.

Switching from the empathic responder to expresser becomes appropriate under three main circumstances. First, switching from responder to expresser is called for when one's spouse has repeated the same information about thoughts and feelings more than once. However, the responder should be certain that his/her empathic responses have successfully captured the expresser's deepest perceptions and feelings. To help ensure this, responders should summarize and reflect back to the expresser the thoughts and feelings that have been expressed as a means of checking for accuracy.

Second, switching from responder to expresser becomes appropriate when one spouse has something to say which might influence the other person's perceptions in a favorable way, or needs to be said in order to keep the communication focused on the problem.

Finally, the third situation when a transition becomes appropriate is when the responder's thoughts and feelings can no longer be contained without disrupting his/her ability to be empathic to the expresser. In addition, as communication begins to focus on specific steps in resolving an issue, more frequent mode switching allows spouses to more quickly know each other's reactions to particular suggestions. However, this will be discussed thoroughly in a later segment.

Mode Switching: Couple modeling.

Situation: Bill and Sue have been married for 12 years, with a reasonably well-adjusted relationship. For the first eight years of their marriage, Bill worked in retail as a store manager. Four years ago, he decided to go out on his own and start his own business.

Since cash flow was very tight at first, Sue worked with him without expecting to receive a salary. As the business grew, more employees were added and Sue began to earn a salary equivalent to the other employees. When a personality conflict developed between Sue and Steve, the store manager, Bill found himself torn between the two relationships, especially since he tended to avoid conflict anyway.

In this dialogue, the focus is on how the couple purposely work to shift modes from expresser to responder and vice versa.

Sue: (At home after work) "Bill, I'm sick and tired of the way Steve acts toward me, like I'm nothing more than the janitor. I've talked to you about this before and every time, it seems like you do absolutely nothing about it. You know, I get the feeling that it would upset you more to lose Steve than me. I'm afraid if something isn't done about this, I'm gonna either have to quit or it's going to hurt our marriage."

Bill: "Look, you've brought this up several times and every time I tell you the same thing. Steve has his faults, but he is a great store manager and I'm afraid if I lose him, it would really hurt our business. Why can't you just try harder to ignore him?"

Sue: "You don't seem to understand, I feel like this is coming between us. I think Steve knows that you hesitate to say anything to him, so he talks to me like I'm stupid. I'm really angry because it seems to me that you are more concerned with keeping Steve happy and avoiding conflict with him than with our relationship. That's what really hurts! I know how much you hate conflict and you're concerned that he might get angry and quit. But do you have any other suggestions because, in my opinion, something is going to have to change?"

Bill: "Well I really don't mean for it to seem like I'm more concerned about losing Steve, but I guess I can see how it comes across that way to you. When I don't confront him, it may seem like I'm trying to protect him or just ignore what's going on."

Sue: "In all honesty, that's exactly how it seems."

Bill: "Well, I think some of the problems may have started when I first hired Steve. It wasn't easy for you at first to have to answer to him. Maybe some of his attitude toward you started then. Even though you've accepted him as manager now, I think he still resents the things that happened right after he was first hired. I'm not trying to put the blame on you or say that he is right for the way he is acting, but I think that may be some of the problem now."

Sue: "Let me try to get this straight. What you're saying is that part of the problem now has to do with my attitude toward Steve when he first became manager. I can see how that could be true, but we have got to figure out how to do something about this before things get worse at work and here at home. I don't wanna quit, and I know Steve is a good manager, but you're going to have to do something. I'm getting to the place where I don't enjoy working at the store anymore and I'm beginning to resent it."

Bill: "I do understand how you feel, and I know, as much as I'd like for it to, the problem won't just go away. Tomorrow, I'll talk to Steve and set up a time for the three of us to have a conference next week. We'll try to work things out between you two, and if we can't, we're gonna have to look for another answer."

Sue: "Thanks hon, that would mean a lot to me if we could do that. I know this is hard and I appreciate you doing it."

Tape Segment III

Introduction: Many experts in the field of marital counseling have shown that couples who possess the ability to resolve conflicts and solve problems experience higher levels of satisfaction with their relationships. In fact, research has shown that the ability to resolve differences is more critical to the marriage than is couple compatibility. Effectively resolving conflicts enables couples to overcome many of their areas of incompatibility and helps to keep negative emotions, such as hostility, at a manageable level.

In the third and fourth segments of your instructional videotape, we will be discussing tools for you, as a couple, to use in resolving your conflicts through an effective process for problem-solving. The model you will be learning is based on a social-learning approach and is known as the Behavioral-Exchange Program, developed by Harrell and Guernsey. The Behavioral-Exchange Program consists of nine important steps, with each step having a clear objective. Since there are several steps in this program, with each step being crucial to successful problem-solving, the last two segments of the videotape will be devoted to learning these principles. It is important to remember that the effectiveness of the Behavioral-Exchange Program is based on the principles of communication you learned in the first two videotape segments.

The Behavioral-Exchange Program:

If you have incorporated the principles learned in the first two segments of your videotape, you are now well-equipped for step one in the Behavioral-Exchange Program. The focus at this point is on summarizing the content of your spouse's message to ensure your accurate understanding of their perspective and feelings. Replace accusing or blaming statements with expressions of your own opinions and feelings about the issue, as you were taught in Relationship Enhancement.

The second step in the Behavioral-Exchange Program recognizes the fact that, in most cases, both spouses contribute in some way to the existence and maintenance of most problems in their relationship. The emphasis is upon "our problem" rather than "your problem". When couples conceive of conflict in this way, they tend to understand the reciprocal impact they have on each other's behavior. If the problem exists due to their mutual input, their mutual efforts toward behavioral changes will be needed to improve the situation.

The third step in the Behavioral-Exchange Program builds logically on the preceding step; if "we" have a problem, then there is probably something "I" am doing to perpetuate

that problem. In this step, it is extremely important that each spouse examine what they might be doing that creates input into the problem. This step is important for two reasons. First, when partners hear their spouses take responsibility for their own actions, they are often encouraged to cooperate in the negotiation process. Secondly, targeting very specific behaviors that contribute to the problem allows partners to know exactly what they need to change in order to resolve an issue.

As you identify behaviors that tend to perpetuate the problem, you are faced with the task of finding appropriate alternative behaviors. In step four, the task is for both of you to generate several alternative behaviors to replace those that have been determined to contribute to the problem. It is important for two reasons to find more than one alternative. First, if spouses have more than one alternative, they are more likely to find a behavioral change that is acceptable. Secondly, generating several alternatives encourages couples to think with greater flexibility. As with step three, alternatives are to be verbalized in specific behavioral terms. It is important, at this time, to avoid becoming preoccupied with evaluating any of the alternatives that are suggested.

Introduction to Couple Modeling The Behavioral Exchange Program:

During the next 10 minutes, you will be watching a couple using the first four principles of the Behavioral-Exchange Program as they attempt to communicate about a problem area in their relationship. As you watch, pay particularly close attention to how they work to incorporate the guidelines which include 1) incorporating the communication principles taught in Relationship Enhancement, 2.) reframing the problem as "our problem" rather than "yours", 3) taking responsibility for behaviors that contribute to the problem, and 4) generating several possible alternative behaviors.

Situation: The couple in this segment, Bob and Diane, who have been married for a year and a half, were both married once before. Bob has two sons from the previous marriage. Diane has a daughter from her previous marriage. The conflict that has arisen is that Bob's

two sons have refused to recognize Diane's authority as their parent. When Bob is not around, they are belligerent and disrespectful. Bob has often changed the disciplinary consequences the boys received from Diane when they misbehaved. At the same time, Diane has become so angry and frustrated, she has begun to yell and scream and criticize much of what the boys do, particularly jobs they do around the house such as cleaning up.

Diane: (Bob has just come home from work and Diane meets him at the door) "I have had it with those boys of yours! From now on, I'm not telling them to do one more thing."

Bob: "Can't I even get in the door and relax before I have to here all this again? All there is around here is arguing and conflict. What the heck is the problem now?"

Diane: "I really don't ask them to do that much around the house. They just have to clean up their rooms and do a couple of chores. I get so frustrated because I ask them to do something and they just ignore me, like I never said anything. I want to get along with them and have a good relationship, but they make it impossible. It's like they just hate me."

Bob: "I can tell you are upset, I guess this is something we've needed to talk about for a while now."

Diane: "I just feel like if we could figure out how to solve this, it would help our whole family be happier. I'm just afraid that, if we don't, it could effect our marriage. I'm already beginning to feel some anger toward you and I think some of my frustration and impatience with the guys is coming from that. They probably feel like nothing they do pleases me."

Bob: "I'm not sure I understand why you're angry at me, but I'm willing to listen. What does your anger at the boys have to do with me?"

Diane: "They just don't respect my authority when I ask them to do something, or when they ask to do something and I say no. I feel like the way you respond sometimes just makes things worse. Like last week, I asked them to clean their rooms, and they completely ignored me. So, I told them that the swimming party this Friday was off. But

when you came home, they asked you if they could go, and you told them they could if they cleaned their rooms. I just want you to understand, I feel like it looks to them as if my authority means nothing. when that happens, I get angry at you and take it out on them."

Bob: "Sometimes, I don't even realize that I do that. I guess I still feel guilty for what they had to go through during the divorce. I know it was hard for them to adjust to you, not because of you, but because the divorce was so hard on them. I guess there have been a lot of times when I just made matters worse by letting them get by with things."

Diane: "Well, I think we know what the problem is and what we both do that makes it worse. Now, what are we going to do about it? I think it would help if I worked on praising the boys more when they do a good job and maybe being a little more patient with them, too."

Bob: "You know, I didn't really see 'til now how all these problems were connected. I think the thing that I could do that would help the most is to support you when you discipline the boys. And what if I let them know that I won't tolerate them being inconsiderate and that they're gonna be disciplined if they are."

Diane: "Would it help for them to go to a counselor to talk about the divorce? They might not want to, but it couldn't hurt. In fact, counseling might be good for the whole family. Our problems aren't that big yet, but if we don't take care of them now, they could be."

Bob: "Well, even if they don't want to go to a counselor, if we could just sit down and talk as a family, and just try to be honest with each other. I'd be willing to try that."

Diane: "That reminds me, I saw an ad the other day on public TV. There was this video tape about "blended families" - you know - families like ours. It talked about the problems families like ours might have. We could see if the library has the tape or we could order it and maybe watch it together."

Bob: And you know, we could start planning to do some things together. It's been a while since we did some things just for fun.

Diane: Well, you know, the biggest part of the time I have with the boys is here at home. And lately it seems like it's all been spent arguing. Maybe what I need to do is plan some special time with just the boys and me while you're at work."

Tape Segment IV

The Behavioral-Exchange Program, Part II:

During the fourth step of the Behavioral-Exchange Program, the task was to develop several alternative behaviors to replace those behaviors that had been mutually determined to contribute to the problem. As these behaviors were generated, it was important not to become distracted by stopping to evaluate each suggestion. However, during step five of the process, the focus is on evaluating each of the alternative behaviors that were generated during step four. The positive and negative points for each alternative should be examined as well as what would be required from each spouse for changes to occur, and what the results of those changes might be.

In step six, each spouse is to select one alternative behavior from the list that was generated previously to substitute for a behavior that has been determined to contribute to the maintenance of the conflict. The alternative behaviors should be ones which both spouses agree could potentially improve the situation. It is important to focus on behavioral changes that will require equal time and effort on the part of both spouses. This step is based on the rationale that, just as you both contribute mutually to the presence and maintenance of the conflict issue, you have the responsibility of mutually contributing to the solution.

Step seven is designed to encourage you to evaluate the specifics of making the changes agreed upon in step six. This involves determining who will do what, when, where, and how often, as well as what occurs when one spouse fails to follow through on changes that both spouses have agreed to. This step is a type of contract designed to minimize the possibility for misunderstandings to occur as the behavioral changes are implemented.

Bonuses for success and penalties for failure may be identified and mutually agreed upon as possible incentives for behavioral changes. However, one spouse's bonus should not be designed in such a way as to constitute a penalty for the other person.

The final two steps of the Behavioral-Exchange Program are implementation of the behavioral exchange and re negotiation of the contract. Though new behavior patterns may at first seem uncomfortable and difficult to implement, they should be tried for at least a week. Behavioral exchanges that appear to have particularly successful outcomes should be recorded as well as those exchanges that failed.

The last step, re negotiation, consists of spouses re-examining the contract to determine if any changes need to be made to ensure a more successful exchange. The flexibility inherent in this step is designed to encourage spouses to select other alternatives that might prove to facilitate a more successful conflict resolution.

As you watch this segment, it is important to remember that the effectiveness of the Behavioral-Exchange Program is based on the principles of communication you learned in the first two videotape segments.

Couple modeling the Behavioral-Exchange Program, Part II:

Scenario: In this modeling session, we will rejoin Bob and Diane at the point where they have each suggested several alternatives to help address their family problem.

Bob: "I have an idea, why don't we make a list of all the suggestions we made and go through them one at a time. We could talk about what each one would involve".

Diane: "That's a great idea, let me get some paper and a pencil. (Comes back with paper and pencil) Okay, the first thing I said was - giving the boys more praise when they do a good job. Then they could see that I don't just criticize them all the time. And when they need discipline, I can try to do it without getting so angry or yelling. The hardest part would be if they just ignore what I am saying or if they give me a hard time about it."

Bob: "I know that wouldn't be easy to do all the time, but that would be great. That reminds me, I said I needed to be more supportive of you. When I come home and the boys tell me about an argument that you all have had, before I say anything, I'll talk to you and find out what happened. Then we can decide what the discipline should be. That way, they'll know that they can't use us against each other to get what they want. It's not gonna be easy, but I'm willing to try. "

Diane: "Maybe, for now, it might be better for us to try the family conference and the videotape rather than trying to get the guys to go to counseling. They might get the idea that we think that they're the problem. Tomorrow I'll see if the library has the tape, and if not, I'll go ahead and order it."

Bob: "How about if we plan a time to talk as a family - tomorrow night. I'll come home a little early so we can cook some hamburgers. Then maybe we could play a game and then talk. We've just gotta be careful that it doesn't turn into an argument."

Diane: "OK, what if we have everybody sit down and make a list of things they think would help. Then we could talk about them."

Bob: "We could try some of the things for a few weeks and see how it goes. How about if we agree to talk again in three weeks. We can look at what we're doing to see if everybody feels like it's helping.."

Diane: "That's a good idea. If one suggestion hasn't helped or isn't working well, we could look at the list again and maybe add some other possibilities. If, over the next few weeks, you see me becoming negative or critical, you have my permission to remind me."

Diane: "And you to can tell me if you don't think I'm supporting you with the boys."

Appendix N
Instructions To Counselors

Instructions To Counselors

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. As a counselor, the input and feedback of colleagues is invaluable to my practice as I'm sure it is to yours.

These instructions are included to help your experience in this study be more enjoyable and to minimize any confusion you might experience. The packet you have received includes a copy/copies of the following items in order:

1. Instructions To Counselors (the form you are now reading)
2. Couple Demographic Form.
3. Client Satisfaction Scale.(Form A & B).
4. Participating Counselor Information Form.
5. Consent to Participate in Research Form.
6. Copies (2) of the Relationship Skills Checklist.
7. Copies (2) of the Relationship Skills Checklist Review Questions.
8. Copy of the Relationship Skills Checklist Instructions and Information.
7. Marital Satisfaction Inventory Administration Booklet.
8. Copies (2) of the answer sheet for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory.
9. Copies (2) of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS).
10. Instructional videotape, Relationship Skills.
11. Cassette tape containing four 15 minutes segments of instrumental music.
12. Couple Activity Form.
13. Copies of the Marriage Satisfaction Index form.
14. Copies of the Marital Relationship Problem Index
15. Copies of the Scale of Communication Instruction

Research Instructions:

1. As couples agree to participate in the study, randomly assign them to the experimental or control group. This will occur after you have explained the study to them. In your packet is an envelope containing several small pieces of paper marked with the number 1 or 2. For the first couple who agrees to participate, simply draw one piece of paper from the envelope. If the number is "1", then that couple is placed in the experimental group, to receive the videotape. The next couple would then be placed in the control group, and so on. If the number drawn is "2", the first couple is placed

in the control group, and the next couple is assigned to the experimental conditions. Please use the following criteria for couple screening.

- a. Couples are married.
 - b. Neither spouse qualifies for a DSM III-R (or IV) Axis I or II diagnosis, with the exception of Adjustment Disorder or mild depression/dysthymia.
 - c. Spouses are reasonably committed to the relationship.
 - d. There is no violence present in the home.
2. Couples will begin participating in the research after the first or second session, when the above criteria have been established.
 3. After the first or second session, but **before** beginning the intervention, all couples will complete the following instruments:
 - a. The Marital Satisfaction Inventory.
 - b. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale.
 - c. The Relationship Skills Checklist.
Note: For the above, there are two copies included. Both spouses will complete the forms separately.
 - d. The Consent To Participate in Research Form.
 - e. The Couple Demographic Form.
 4. You will complete the Participating Counselor Information Form and the Marital Relationship Problem Index (for each participating couple).
 5. Once all instruments have been completed, experimental-group couples will begin watching the instructional videotape. Once per week, they will view a segment of the videotape following the instructions included.
 6. One week after viewing the first videotape segment, experimental-group couples will individually complete the review question that refer to the segment they watched the previous week. This process will continue until the final set of review questions are completed.
 7. During the session that follows each segment of the videotape, ask the experimental-group couples to give you feedback on the content of the videotape segment they watched prior to that session.
 8. After the first or second session, in the control group will be instructed to listen, once per week, to 15 minutes of instrumental music together, undisturbed. Let these couples know that this assignment is very important to their counseling process.

9. For all couples, please complete the Scale of Communication Instruction after each session indicating the amount of time spent discussing or working on communication skills.
10. Please see that all test forms and demographic information is completed according to instructions.
11. Have experimental couples complete the Couple Activity Form weekly and have all couples complete the Marriage Satisfaction Index together each week.
12. After experimental-group couples have seen the final installment of the instructional videotape (segment IV) and the control-group couples have listened to all four segments of the instrumental music tape, please have all couples complete the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Relationship Skills Checklist again, along with the appropriate Client Satisfaction Scale form (a=Experimental, b=Control).
13. Have couples return the MSI Administration Booklet along with all answer forms and keep them together in a packet for each couple. **Please see that couple names, and your name where applicable, appear on all forms in order that they are clearly identifiable.**
14. When couples complete the videotape and the cassette of music, please see that they are returned for other couples to use. In addition, see that none of the materials are copied, including the videotape.

Appendix O
Participating Counselor
Information Form

Participating Counselor Information Form

Counselor's Name: _____

Organization's Name: _____

Counselor's Degree: Master's Degree ___

Doctorate ___

Primary Practice Identity: Licensed Counselor _____

Licensed Psychologist _____

Licensed Social Worker _____

Other _____

Counselor's Experience: Two to four years ___

Four to six years ___

More than six years ___ (Please give number)

Counselor's Theoretical Framework:

Psychodynamic ___

Reality Therapy ___

Cognitive-Behavioral ___

Object-Relations ___

Other(specify) _____

Appendix P
Couple Demographic Form

Couple Demographic Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Counseling Facility: _____

Counselor: _____

Years Married: _____

Husband

Wife

Age _____

Age _____

Race _____

Race _____

Previously married?

Previously married?

Yes ___ No ___

Yes ___ No ___

Previous counseling?

Previous counseling?

Yes ___ No ___

Yes ___ No ___

Children: Yes ___ No ___

Children: Yes ___ No ___

Ages _____

Ages _____

Educational level

Educational level:

Less than

Less than

High School _____

High School _____

High School _____

High School _____

College 1 2 3 4

College 1 2 3 4

Graduate Deg. _____

Graduate Deg. _____

Income level _____

Income level _____

Appendix Q
Consent to Participate In Research Form

Consent to Participate In Research Form

We, as a couple, consent to participate in this research. We clearly understand that any information gained from tests will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will be used for no purpose other than to benefit our marital counseling and for the purpose of this research project. We agree to allow the scores from tests taken during this study to be used for the purpose of completing this research project and for the purpose of facilitating our counseling process. Our participation in this project is completely voluntary and we have not been coerced in any way by our counselor or by the researcher.

Husband

Wife

Appendix R
Relationship Skills Checklist
Instructions and Information

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Instructions and Information

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Instructions To Couples

Introduction: Seeking marital counseling was a wise choice. Many couples having marital problems continue to suffer in silence as their relationships are damaged, sometimes beyond repair.

The videotape and handouts you have received are an important part of your counseling process. Please follow the instructions carefully to obtain full benefits from the materials.

1. Choose a time to watch the videotape once per week, midway between your counseling appointments. Each segment of the tape will require about 45 minutes, including the time needed to read and discuss the materials. Complete one segment each week.
2. Choose a time when you are least likely to be disturbed.
3. At the beginning of the tape, there is a short introduction prior to Segment I. After viewing the introduction, you will be instructed to read the handout for Segment I. Read the handout before viewing Segment I. When a Segment I is over, stop the tape and discuss the questions at the end of the handout.
4. As you discuss the tape, it is best not to attempt to apply the concepts to your own problem areas at this time. You may want to do that with the help of your counselor. Do not use any of the teaching material or the situations that were modeled to point out what your spouse is doing wrong!
5. Proceed through the videotape using the instructions given for Segment I, viewing one more segment each week. Read the handout that corresponds to a given tape segment before watching that segment. After viewing the section, discuss the questions at the end of the handout.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Relationship Enhancement Guidelines Segment #1

Note: It is important that you both read these guidelines before beginning Segment I of your videotape.

Introduction: Relationship Enhancement is a method of learning to communicate as husband and wife in a way that will help you to express feelings more clearly and become more understanding of each other's thoughts and feelings. In Relationship Enhancement, you will experience three roles, or modes. This segment of the videotape is about the expresser role. Being the expresser simply means that you are the person doing the talking for the moment.

In the expresser role, follow the guidelines listed below:

1. Make statements in terms of how you see them and how you feel about an important issue.
Examples: "I feel like...", "It seems to me...", or "In my opinion..."
2. State things in terms of your specific feelings such as concern, fear, anger, hurt, or sadness.
Examples: "I feel angry about...", "It frightens me when..." or "I feel hurt when..."
3. When making statements, include the positive feelings, judgments, and thoughts that underlie your emotions.
Example: "I feel hurt and angry when I don't hear from you because your phone calls are always one of the highlights of my day."
4. Be specific as to when a particular behavior occurs that upsets you that you would like to see changed. When describing the occurrence of the behavior, avoid phrases such as "You always" and "You never". These words sound accusing and often result in a defensive reaction.
Example: "It upsets me when I come home and the first thing I hear is what has gone wrong in your day".
5. Rather than simply criticizing the behavior that upsets you, point out the pleasant response you would probably have if the changes you asked for were to occur.
Example: "I think that, if at first you greeted me in a way that let me know you missed me and were glad to see me rather than sharing with me all the day's problems, I would feel more relaxed, less aggravated, and more able to hear your feelings about things that have upset you."
6. While requesting changes in particular behaviors, consider how difficult those changes might be and what your spouse might have to give up to make the desired changes.
Example: "I know that when I get home, you need someone to share your frustrations with. When you have so much to say, it's difficult not to let that be the first thing you want to talk about. But it would mean a lot to me if I could have a few moments to relax before we talk about things that have upset you."

Continue to the next page.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Instructions for videotape: In the videotape segment you are about to watch, these points will be covered in the teaching section. Then a couple will act out a situation involving a problem area. In this scene, the wife is the expresser, talking with her husband about a habit he has that upsets her. As you watch, note how she attempts to follow the guidelines listed above.

After you complete this segment of the videotape, please use the questions listed below as a guide for your discussion of the conversation you watched.

Note: As soon as you both have carefully read the above material, turn on the VCR and view Segment I of the videotape together.

Discussion Guide:

Please use these questions as a guide for your discussion of the videotape couple's conversation. Do not attempt to relate the guidelines to one of your own problem areas at this time. Since there are no right or wrong answers, it is important that you allow each other the opportunity of sharing your viewpoints.

1. How were the guidelines for the expresser role followed during the conversation?
2. How did following these guidelines help in this situation?
3. What could have happened in this conversation had the guidelines not been followed by the expresser (the wife)?
4. What would be the hardest thing about following these guidelines in a similar situation?

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Relationship Enhancement Guidelines Segment #2a

Note: It is important that both spouses read this handout before beginning Segment II of your videotape.

Introduction: Another role you will experience in Relationship Enhancement is called the empathic role. Empathic comes from the word "empathy", which, in the old Greek language, means "affection". The word now means to understand another person's feelings. Therefore, when you are in the empathic role you are listening and responding in a very special way. The following guidelines are important when you are the empathic responder:

1. An attitude of consideration, respect, and understanding is as important to the empathic mode as are the skills to be learned and practiced. The most important thing is to help the other person feel that they have been understood, whether or not you agree with each other.
2. Empathic mode guidelines consist mostly of avoiding the following behaviors:
 - a. Asking questions while the expresser is speaking. This often serves to move the conversation in the direction the responder wants it to go. **Examples:** Responses to avoid often begin with "Why don't you...", "Why couldn't you...", or "Why did you..."
 - b. Sharing your own feelings, opinions, and viewpoints while in the empathic mode, unless asked to do so by the expresser. **Examples:** When the other person is the expresser, avoid a response such as, "I think you're seeing this thing from the wrong viewpoint."
 - c. Attempting to interpret or reinterpret what the expresser has said or suggest that the expresser feels certain things s/he may not feel. **Example:** A response such as "I really think what you are feeling is... rather than..." suggests to the other person that you are trying to tell him/her how to feel rather than understand him/her.
 - d. Making suggestions as to how the s/he could solve his/her problem unless requested to do so. **Example:** Avoid a response like "What I think you should do is..." unless s/he has asked for your help.
 - e. Making judgmental statements about what the expresser has said. **Examples:** Avoid statements such as "That's ridiculous.", "That sounds crazy to me.", or "How could you possibly feel that way."

Continue to the next page.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Instructions for videotape: In the videotape segment you are about to watch, these points will be covered in the teaching section. Then, a couple will act out a situation involving a problem area. In this scene, the husband is the expresser and the wife is the empathic responder. As you will see, there are two different conversations shown about the same problem. However, in the first conversation, the wife, who is the empathic responder, does not follow the important guidelines listed above. In the second modeling segment, the guidelines are followed. As you watch, note how the wife's responses affect the conversation in both situations.

Please use the questions below as a guide for your discussion after completing this segment.

Note: As soon as you both have carefully read the above material, turn on the VCR and view Segment II of the videotape together.

Discussion Guide:

Please use these questions as a guide for your discussion of the videotape couple's conversation. Do not try to relate the guidelines to one of your own problem areas at this time. Since there are no right or wrong answers, it is important that you allow each other the opportunity of sharing your viewpoints.

1. In the first conversation, which of the guidelines above were ignored?
2. How did ignoring the guidelines effect the situation?
3. In the second scene, how did the wife follow the guidelines in the empathic responder mode and how did it affect the conversation?
4. How did the husband try to follow the guidelines of the expresser role?

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Relationship Enhancement Guidelines Handout #2b

Note: Please read this handout after the second modeling segment on the empathic responder mode, before the teaching on mode switching.

Introduction: The third set of Relationship Enhancement communication skills to learn is role switching. Role switching is the ability to change smoothly from being the expresser to being the empathic responder, or vice-versa. When couples do not know how to make this change, communication often becomes nothing more than one person doing all the talking, or even worse, a series of frustrating interruptions.

In role switching, there are two possible types of role change, switching from expresser to empathic responder or from empathic responder to expresser.

The following are guidelines for switching from expresser to empathic responder:

1. When the expresser desires to know how his/her partner feels about an issue or what suggestions s/he might have for resolving a specific problem or situation.
2. When the expresser is satisfied that s/he has communicated the major thoughts and feelings regarding a certain issue and that s/he has been reasonably understood

Switching from empathic responder to expresser is appropriate in the following circumstances:

1. When one's spouse has repeated the same information about thoughts and feelings more than once and the empathic expresser feels that his/her thoughts and feelings have been understood. To ensure this, the responder should summarize and repeat back to the expresser the thoughts and feelings s/he has expressed to check for accuracy.
Example: When summarizing what you have understood the expresser to say, it is helpful to begin by saying something like, "What I think I understand you to be saying is..." or "I want to understand you, is this what you are trying to say...?"
2. When one's spouse (the empathic responder) has something to say which might influence the other person's thoughts in a favorable way, or needs to be said in order to keep the discussion focused on the problem.
3. When the responder's thoughts and feelings can no longer be contained without disrupting his/her ability to be understanding to the expresser. This requires careful consideration in order that it does not become simply an opportunity to take control of the conversation.

Continue to the next page.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Instructions for videotape: In this videotape segment, which is part two of Segment II, these points are covered in the teaching section. Then, a couple will act out a situation involving a problem area. In this scene, the wife will begin in the expresser mode, talking with her husband, who begins as the empathic responder, about a problem that has developed at work. As the conversation continues, however, it will become necessary for the roles to change to help the flow of communication and understanding. Note how the roles change and how this effects the conversation.

After you complete this segment of the videotape, please use the questions listed below as a guide for your discussion of the conversation you watched.

Note: As soon as you both have carefully read the above material, turn on the VCR and view the remainder of Segment II of the videotape.

Discussion Guide:

Please use these questions as a guide for your discussion of the videotape couple's conversation. Do not attempt to relate the guidelines to one of your own problem areas at this time. Since there are no right or wrong answers, it is important that you allow each other the opportunity of sharing your viewpoints.

1. Which of the guidelines for the expresser mode were followed during the conversation?
2. Which of the guidelines for the empathic responder mode were followed?
3. What could have happened in this conversation had these guidelines not been followed?
4. In what ways did the couple follow the guidelines of role switching that helped them to change roles? Did this seem to help them understand each other and begin to find a solution to the problem?

The Relationship Skills Checklist

The Behavioral-Exchange Program Segment #3

Note: It is important that you both read this handout before beginning segment III of your videotape.

Introduction: Research has shown that a couple's ability to resolve conflicts and solve problems is more important to marital satisfaction than is compatibility. In this section of the videotape, you will be learning a method of problem-solving known as the Behavioral-Exchange Program. You will be learning to "exchange" behaviors that produce negative results for behaviors that could increase the level of satisfaction with your marriage.

The following are important guidelines to use in problem-solving as a couple:

1. Use the communication principles you learned in Relationship Enhancement.
 - a. Summarize the content of your spouse's message to be sure you understand his/her thoughts and feelings.
Example: "What I think you are saying and feeling is... Is that accurate? If not, help me clarify it."
 - b. Replace accusing or blaming statements with expressions of your own perceptions and feelings about the issue.
Example: Rather than saying "You make me so angry when..." Begin the statement with "I feel very angry about..."
2. Take responsibility for "our problem" rather than "your problem". Understand that when one person acts in a destructive way, it may become a "trigger" for the other person's equally harmful behavior.
3. Understand that if "we" have a problem, then there is probably something "I" am doing to allow that problem to continue being a problem.
4. Identify destructive behaviors that tend to allow the problem to continue being a problem. Think of several different behaviors to replace those that cause the conflict. At this point, do not stop to evaluate any of the alternatives. Evaluating at this point may become negative and serve to confuse the process of suggesting new behaviors.

Note: As soon as you both have carefully read through the above material, turn on the VCR and view Segment III of the videotape.

Continue to the next page.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Instructions for videotape: In segment III of the videotape, the guidelines above will be covered in the teaching section. Following this, a couple will act out a situation involving a problem area. In this scene, you will meet a husband and wife who are part of a blended family, that is, they have children from previous marriages. The problem that has developed is between the wife and her husband's children. However, the conflict directly involves the husband. As the conversation begins, the wife is the expresser. As you watch, take note of two things, 1) How the couple continues to follow the guidelines in Relationship Enhancement, and 2) How they attempt to follow the steps listed above in problem-solving.

After you complete this segment of the videotape, please use the questions listed below as a guide for your discussion of the conversation you watched.

Note: As soon as you both have carefully read the above material, turn on the VCR and view Segment III of the videotape.

Discussion Guide:

Please use these questions as a guide for your discussion of the videotape couple's conversation. Do not attempt to relate the guidelines to one of your own problem areas at this time. Since there are no right or wrong answers, it is important that you allow each other the opportunity of sharing your viewpoints.

1. Which of the guidelines for the expresser mode and the empathic responder mode did the couple follow during the conversation?
2. Were the principles of mode switching important to this conversation?
3. In what ways did the couple follow the guidelines of the Behavioral-Exchange Program? What might have happened had they not followed these steps?
4. Did this seem to help them not only in resolving the problem, but in understanding and valuing each other in the process of resolution?

The Relationship Skills Checklist

The Behavioral Exchange Program Segment #4

Note: It is important that you both read this handout before beginning segment IV of your videotape.

Introduction: In the previous videotape section, we began a study of a method of problem-solving known as The Behavioral-Exchange program. The first segment covered the first four steps. The following are guidelines for the remaining five steps:

5. In Step five, carefully evaluate the positive and negative points for each alternative behavior (from step four). Determine what would be required from each spouse for changes to occur, and what the results of those changes might be.
Example: Questions to answer when evaluating new behaviors include,
 - 1) How difficult would the new behaviors be?
 - 2) Would there be costs in terms of time or money?
 - 3) Would something important have to be given up in order to change the behavior?
 - 4) What could be the positive results of those changes?
6. Each spouse should select another behavior from the list developed in step four to substitute for a behavior that adds to the problem. Behaviors selected should be ones which both spouses agree could improve the situation.
7. Evaluate the specifics of making the changes agreed upon in step six. Who will do what? When? Where? and How often? What will occur when one spouse fails to follow through on changes that have been agreed to? This step is a type of contract designed to help keep misunderstandings from occurring as spouses try the new behaviors.
8. Try each agreed upon behavior change for at least a week. Record behavior changes that appear to have a particularly successful outcome. Words of appreciation for positive changes are important and encourage new behaviors to continue.
9. After a period of time (one to two weeks), re-examine the contract to determine if any changes need to be made to ensure a more successful exchange. Select other behaviors to replace those that have had a negative effect or no effect.

Note: As soon as you both have carefully read through the above material, turn on the VCR and view Section IV of the videotape.

Continue to the next page.

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Instructions for videotape: In Segment IV of the videotape, the above points will be covered in the teaching section. Following this, a couple will act out a situation involving a problem area. In this scene, the couple who began the process of problem-resolution in Segment III will continue through the last five steps of the Behavioral-Exchange program. As you recall, a problem had developed between the wife and her husband's children. As you watch the second part of the Behavioral-Exchange Program, take note of two things, 1) How the couple continues to follow the Relationship Enhancement guidelines, and 2) How they attempt to follow steps five through nine, listed above, in problem-solving. After you complete this segment of the videotape, please use the questions listed below as a guide for your discussion of the conversation you watched.

Note: As soon as you both have carefully read the above material, turn on the VCR and view Segment IV of the videotape.

Discussion Guide:

Please use these questions as a guide for your discussion of the videotape couple's conversation. Do not attempt to relate the guidelines to one of your own problem areas at this time. Since there are no right or wrong answers, it is important that you allow each other the opportunity of sharing your viewpoints.

1. Which of the guidelines for the expresser mode and the empathic responder mode did the couple follow during the conversation?
2. In what way was it helpful for each spouse to try other behaviors for those that contributed to the problem?
3. Without following the steps in the Behavioral-Exchange Program, how might this situation have turned out differently.?
4. Though changing certain behaviors is hard, what are the benefits?

Appendix S
Relationship Skills Checklist
Review Questions

The Relationship Skills Checklist

Review Questions

Name _____

Counselor _____

Date ___/___/___

Instructional Videotape — Review Questions: #1

Name _____ Date ___/___/___ Counselor _____

Directions: Please read the following statements and circle the number that best describes how much you agree with the statement. These questions refer to the first section of your video tape.

Communication

- | | | | |
|---|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 1. When discussing problems, it helps to share feelings and viewpoints more than stating facts. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 1a. When we discuss problems, I share my feelings and thoughts more than I state facts. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 1b. When my spouse and I discuss problems, s/he shares more about feelings and thoughts rather than facts. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2. Sharing specific feelings such as fear, hurt, or anger can improve communication. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2a. I usually do not say I am fearful, hurt, or angry when we discuss a problem. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2b. My spouse seldom talks about his/her feelings when we discuss a problems. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3. Spouses often have positive feelings beneath their hurt and anger that should be shared. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3a. I don't share positive emotions that are beneath my hurt and anger. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3b. My spouse tells me when there are positive feelings beneath his/her hurt or anger. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4. When discussing problems, spouses shouldn't begin statements with "You always..." or "You never..." | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4a. When we argue, I begin some statements with, "You always..." or "You never..." | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4b. My spouse seldom begins statements with "You always or "You never..." | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5. When spouses change annoying behaviors, pleasant feelings will often replace negative ones. Discussing these is important. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5a. I let my spouse know of the positive emotions I will feel if certain behaviors change. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5b. My spouse does not tell me that s/he will have positive emotions if I change annoying behaviors. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 6. One should consider the difficulty or sacrifice involved for their spouse to change behaviors. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 6a. I don't consider the difficulty or sacrifice when I ask my spouse to change a behavior. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 6b. My spouse is considerate of the difficulty when s/he asks me to change behaviors. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |

Please continue to the next page.

Instructional Videotape — Review Questions: #2

Name _____ Date ____/____/____ Counselor _____

Directions: Please read the following statements and circle the number between 1 and 10 that best describes how much you disagree or agree with the statement. These questions refer to the second section of your instructional videotape.

- | | | | |
|---|----------|----------------------|-------|
| 1. Agreeing is not as important as an attitude of consideration and respect toward each other's viewpoint. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 1a. When we disagree, I am considerate of my spouse's viewpoint and feelings. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 1b. My spouse is not considerate of my viewpoint or feelings when we disagree. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2. Asking questions and sharing your viewpoint when a spouse is talking helps communication. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2a. When my spouse discusses our problems, I ask questions and share my own viewpoint. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 2b. When I talk about our problems, my spouse listens without asking questions and sharing his/her viewpoint unless invited to. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3. Interpreting a spouse's message or suggesting that s/he feels certain things is helpful to communication. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3a. I often interpret my spouse's messages and suggest emotions I think s/he is feeling. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 3b. When I am talking, my spouse will try to interpret my messages and suggest how I should feel. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4. Helping a spouse solve a problem is as important as listening to his/her thoughts and feelings. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4a. I help my spouse solve problems more than I listen. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 4b. My spouse thinks it is more important to help me solve a problem than listen to my feelings. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5. Telling a spouse that his/her thoughts and feelings are silly or ridiculous hinders communication. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5a. My spouse tells me that my thoughts and feelings are silly or ridiculous. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 5b. I tell my spouse if I think his/her thoughts or feelings are silly or ridiculous. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 6. It is important that spouses know how to change from talking to being the listener. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |
| 6a. We change smoothly from being the talker to being the listener without interrupting or controlling the conversation. | Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Agree |

Please continue to the next page.

Instructional Videotape — Review Questions: #3

Name _____ Date ____/____/____ Counselor _____

Directions: Please read the following statements and circle the number between 1 and 10 that best describes how much you disagree or agree with the statement. These questions refer to the third section of your instructional videotape.

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|
| 1. Couples who are able to communicate well will be more effective in resolving their conflicts. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 1a. My spouse and I are able to communicate well which helps us resolve our conflicts. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 2. Couples who express their own feelings and perceptions rather than blaming and accusing are better problem solvers. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 2a. I communicate my own perceptions and feelings rather than say blaming and accusing things to my spouse. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 2b. My spouse will often blame and accuse me rather than share his/her own feelings and perceptions. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 3. Both spouses will need to change to resolve most marital problems. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 3a. Something I am doing contributes to our marital problems and I usually change my problem behaviors and attitudes. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 3b. My spouse knows that he/she contributes to our marital problems and he/she makes changes that will help. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 4. If both spouses contribute to marital problems, they can find alternative ways to act that would help resolve the problem. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 4a. My spouse and I will make a list of changes we could make in our behaviors that could help solve a problem. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |

Instructional Videotape — Review Questions: #4

Name _____ Date ____/____/____ Counselor _____

Directions: Please read the following statements and circle the number between 1 and 10 that best describes how much you disagree or agree with the statement. These questions refer to the fourth section of your instructional videotape.

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|
| 1. When changes in behavior become necessary, spouses should understand how difficult changing will be. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 1a. When I ask my spouse to change a behavior, I consider how difficult it will be for him/her. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 1b. I know my spouse considers the difficulty when s/he asks me to change a behavior. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 2. When making agreed upon changes, it should be decided when, where, and how often changes will take place. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 2a. We usually decide who will change, when it will happen, and how often the change will take place. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 3. When changes are agreed on, after a week or two check to see if they are helping. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 3a. When we have agree to changes, we will take time to re-examine later to see if those changes are helping us. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 4. When changes in behavior are not helping, couples should not give up, but find some other change in behavior to try. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |
| 4a. When we see that a change isn't working, we will often just become frustrated and quit trying. | Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Agree |

Appendix T
Couple Activity Check-off Form

Couple Activity Check-off Form

The materials you have received as a part of your counseling will be helpful if you use them as instructed. Often, couples find that their time escapes them unless they carefully plan and set aside adequate amounts of time to use the materials. This activity check-off sheet has been provided for your benefit. Each time you complete part of the planned assignments for the week, please check off on that activity, **sign and date** the form for that week, and show the form to your counselor at the beginning of each appointment.

	Reviewed Questions	Read Handouts	Watched Videotape	Discussed Questions
Week #1	_____	_____	_____	_____
			_____ Couple Signature	
Week #2	_____ (#1)	_____	_____	_____
			_____ Couple Signature	
Week #3	_____ (#2)	_____	_____	_____
			_____ Couple Signature	
Week #4	_____ (#3)	_____	_____	_____
			_____ Couple Signature	
Week #5	_____ (#4)			
			_____ Couple Signature	

Appendix U
Subjective Responses to the
Client Satisfaction Scale

**Subjective Responses to the
Client Satisfaction Scale**

Question #1: The most helpful thing about the videotape was:

Responses:

1. "The outlining of specific steps in effective communicating."
2. "Being able to see the couple discuss issues and talk through them."

Question #2: Watching the couple discuss a problem on the tape was helpful because:

Responses:

1. "We could see the ideas being used."
2. "It showed how to phrase questions and concerns when communicating with your spouse."
3. "Demonstrated material in the handouts."
4. "The conflicts were real-life situations."

Question #3: Along with the tape, the handouts helped us in the following way:

Responses:

1. "To go over the previous weeks."
2. "To be aware of problems that we need to work on without attacking each other."
3. "Reinforced material."

Appendix V
Summary of the Pilot Study

Summary of the Pilot Study

Prior to undertaking the larger project, a pilot study was conducted in order to test the instruments incorporated, the instructional videotape, the instructional information provided for the counselors and couples, and the statistical processes. Couples who participated in the pilot study came for counseling to two independent centers in Greensboro, North Carolina. Though several counselors were contacted, only two participated in the project. A total of ten couples began the study, while only five completed all the steps, including the posttests. Loss of five couples was due to several reasons including an unexpected hospitalization, moving out of town, and failure to complete all instruments.

Due to the small number of couples who participated in the study, the statistical approach, an analysis of variance, did not reveal results of any significance for the variables of interest. The experimental group consisted of three couples while the control-group was made up of two couples.

The main purpose of the pilot study was to determine if any changes would be necessary in the instruments, the instructions, or the videotape. In addition, the statistical program was tested to determine if it would run, given a sufficiently large sample size. In light of these objectives, the pilot project proved to be extremely helpful learning process. As a result of the pilot project, the following objectives were accomplished:

1. The statistical program created for the project ran without problems and was determined to be appropriate for the data analysis, given a large enough sample size.
2. Given the number of couples who completed the study using two counselors, it was determined that a total of 12 counselors would be needed in order to complete the larger study with a minimum of thirty to forty couples. These counselors have been contacted and have agreed to participate in the study.
3. Instruments and information created for the study, including The Relationship Skills Checklist and Review Questions, The Relationship Skills Checklist Instructions and

Information, and the Counselor Instructions were redesigned to be more visually inviting, with several changes to simplify wording.

4. A serious problem in the statistical design was discovered and corrected. Experimental and control group couples were completing the Relationship Skills Checklist posttest at different times and in different forms, resulting in a confounding variable. As a result of the pilot study, this problem was discovered and corrected for the large study. All couples will complete the Relationship Skills Checklist at the same time in the sequence and in the same form.
5. An additional T-test involving the pretests for all instruments was added in order to determine if there were any significant differences with regard to the variables of interest between experimental-group and control-group couples prior to beginning the videotape intervention.
6. For the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, a special computer software designed to produce an interpretive report was purchased by the researcher. A computer-generated analysis of each couple's scores will be printed and sent to counselors to be used in the marital counseling process.
7. In order to create an incentive for couples to participate, it was determined that couples who participated in the study and complied with time and activity requirements will be eligible to win a cash-prize of \$50. In addition, participating counselors will receive a gift of appreciation at the end of the study.