Couples Enhancement Workshop

DP 012 - Developmental Intervention

By

Reuben Garcia and Helen Kjolby

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DP 012 Developmental

Couples Enhancement Workshop

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Drawing from diverse theoretical approaches such as object relations, gestalt, family systems and cognitive-behavioral theory, this workshop helps couples identify strengths, formulate specific goals for enhanced intimacy and commitment, develop better communication and confrontation skills, and achieve greater awareness of current needs and dynamics in their relationships.

GOALS: To develop awareness of self, partner and the relationship; to provide opportunity for practice and development of interpersonal skills; and to apply these insights and skills as an enhancement of the relationship

TARGET: Designed for normally functioning heterosexual couples with an extended relationship, this group has not yet been used for homosexual couples or in mixed groups. Applicability would depend upon receptivity of group members and leaders' preparation and experience in working with both types of couples.

STAFF: Leaders: one male, one female, both able to model a healthy working relationship

SIZE: Four to six couples

LENGTH: Four 3-hour weekly sessions

OTHER: Those committed for less than three months may not have clarified their relationship enough to benefit.

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COUPLES ENHANCEMENT WORKSHOP
A manual for Group Leaders

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COUPLES ENHANCEMENT WORKSHOP

INTRODUCTION

According to Sternberg (1988), there are three important components in the development of a healthy romantic relationship: passion, intimacy, and commitment. In our culture, couples often experience difficulties with one of these components. This workshop intends to help couples focus on these and other areas of their relationship. The workshop has been created for couples where at least one of the partners is a college student. The ages of participating couples and the duration of the relationship may vary.

GOALS

This workshop has been designed: 1) to develop an awareness of oneself, the partner, and the relationship; 2) to provide couples an opportunity to practice and develop interpersonal skills; and 3) to apply these insights and skills to further enhance the relationship.

GROUP DESIGN

This workshop is designed to be an intensive, semi-structured experience for participants. The purpose of the workshop is to intervene at the preventive and developmental level rather than at a remedial or psychotherapeutic level. It consists of 4 weekly sessions, each 3 hours long. This group is ideally suited for 3 to 6 couples.
The workshop should be conducted by a male and a female co-leader. The co-leaders should be able to model for the participants a healthy working relationship. Pregroup screening interviews should be conducted for the following reasons:

(1) to ascertain a minimal level of commitment to the relationship for at least three months prior to the workshop,

(2) to insure a minimal level of participation and full attendance at all of the workshop meetings,

(3) to clarify participants' questions and expectations of the workshop, and

(4) to screen out individuals for whom the workshop is inappropriate.
EVALUATION

Participants will be provided with many opportunities to informally assess themselves and their relationship with their partners. Exercises which involve formal assessment include those adapted from:

(1) Relationship Vision Exercise (Hendrix, 1988)
(2) Relationship Assessment Exercise (Blouch; from D. Peterson)
(3) Assessment of Relationship Types (from Sternberg, 1988)
(4) Imago Work-up Exercise (Hendrix, 1988)
(5) Intimacy Style Assessment (Pierson)
(6) Written group evaluations

MATERIALS

Much of the information provided in the four sessions was adapted from books that are also recommended to participants. These can include but are not limited to:

SESSION OUTLINES

SESSION I

OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION
(1) Individual introductions: participants state their names and expectations for the workshop.
(2) Co-leader introductions.
(3) Discuss goals for the workshop.
(4) Discuss expectations for participants and ground rules:
   - full attendance, active participation
   - review meeting times and format of workshop
   - obtain verbal commitment to relationship for duration of workshop
   - define rules for confidentiality
(5) Couple's Introduction Exercise: participants introduce partners.
(6) Discuss agenda for the first session.

RELATIONSHIP AWARENESS EXERCISES
(7) Guided Imagery Exercise: visualization of ideal love relationship and actual beginning and development of current relationship with partner.
(8) Hendrix's Relationship Vision Exercise: participants list how their current relationship could be ideal; Goal- to help participants further clarify and share with their partner the perceived potential for the relationship.
(9) Lecture on Sternberg's theory of love relationships: Goal- awareness of the 3 major components of love relationships.
(10) Self-assessment of Relationship Type Exercise (Sternberg): Goal-awareness of how self and partner perceive the current and ideal relationship with partner along Sternberg's 3 dimensions.

HOMEWORK

(11) Blouch's Relationship Assessment Exercise: (adapted from D. Peterman)
SESSION 2

OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

(1) Discuss homework; one partner summarizes the couple's experience and the couple identifies strengths and goals of the relationship.

(2) Co-leaders summarize couples' goals and the group clarifies which goals can be addressed.

(3) Discuss agenda for the second session.

AWARENESS AND SKILL BUILDING EXERCISES

(4) Hendrix's Childhood Wounds Imagery Exercise: Goal- to identify the nature of early relationships and their effects on current needs in the relationship.

(5) Hendrix's Imago Work-up Exercise: couples complete the exercise individually and discuss in group.

(6) Lecture on Attachment Theory; participants then discuss how their own attachment styles affect the current relationship with their partner.

(7) Communication Skills Development: handouts for paraphrasing and reflection of feelings; exercises in which members practice good communication and listening skills.

HOMEWORK

(8) Participants practice communication skills with partner in discussing goals for the relationship.
SESSION 3

OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION
(1) Discuss homework: one partner summarizes what they learned from the homework; co-leaders introduce power and control dynamics in relationships and have couples relate to their decision making process.
(2) Discuss agenda for the third session.

AWARENESS AND SKILL BUILDING EXERCISES
(3) Mirroring Exercise: Couples take turns leading and following; group discussion.
(4) Lecture/Discussion on power and control dynamics: co-leaders discuss origins and effects on relationships, focusing on Attachment theory and Gestalt theory; these themes are related to the development of relationships from idealization through disillusionment.
(5) Fair Fighting Exercise: handouts; group exercise; group discussion.
(6) Sculpture Exercise: members take turns creating human sculptures with their partner characterizing how they perceive the relationship; Goal- to help partners clarify how power is allocated in the relationship.

HOMEWORK
(7) Behavioral Change Request List: Goal- to help partners learn how to share power.
SESSION 4

OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

(1) Discuss homework and past week's experiences.
(2) Discuss agenda for the last session.

RELATIONSHIP EVALUATION AND REVIEW

(3) Intimacy Style Assessment Exercise: Goal- to clarify participants' ability to be intimate with their partners.
(4) Lecture on defining intimacy and autonomy: couples discuss and define their relationship along these dimensions.
(5) Gender Stereotypes Exercise: group activity.
(6) Workshop Review: Each couple shares their experience of the workshop; couples have the opportunity to provide each other with feedback regarding perceived strengths and weaknesses; couples are helped to define future and continuing goals for their relationships.
(7) Couples provide feedback to co-leaders of their experience of the workshop (oral); Group Evaluations (written).
SESSION FORMAT OVERVIEW

SESSION 1

OBJECTIVES
- provide the opportunity for participants to get acquainted with one another
- provide a highly structured environment with minimal self-disclosure in order to facilitate a beginning level of trust within the group
- provide the opportunity for participants to begin assessing their current relationship and to establish explicit goals for the relationship
- assessment and goal-setting is accomplished through:
  (1) developing awareness of the needs couples bring to the relationship and how the current relationship deviates from the ideal,
  (2) participants beginning to explicitly state their goals for the relationship with each other and with the group, and
  (3) participants gaining some understanding of the basic elements comprising love relationships and applying this understanding to how they and their partners conceptualize their relationship.

INTRODUCTION (approximately 45 minutes)
(1) Individual introductions: Participants individually state their name and the expectations they have for how the workshop will improve their relationship.
(2) Co-leader introductions: Co-leaders should have some background and experience in working with couples and should express this to the group, as well as discussing a little about their own experience in relationships.

Establishing expertise is initially important to encourage members' trust in the co-leaders and to increase members' expectations that the workshop will be helpful to them.

(3) Discussion of goals for the workshop: Co-leaders should explain the purpose of the workshop as being oriented towards enhancement of the relationship as opposed to being a therapy group. They should also explain that the workshop is geared towards education, skills development, and insight as tools to improve the quality of the relationship and will be conducted in a semi-structured environment.

While the co-leaders may elect to modify and add material to accommodate individual needs, the primary focus of the workshop is on the growth of the relationship and will not focus on individual problems per se.

(4) Clarify expectations for participants and ground rules: Co-leaders should review the meeting times and duration of the workshop and give a general overview of the topics to be covered at each meeting. Participants are expected to give verbal consent: 1) to attend all sessions, 2) to commit to the relationship for the duration of the workshop, and 3) to be willing to fully participate in the workshop. It should be stated that participants have freedom in deciding how much they will self-disclose and are expected to keep all information confidential.
(5) Couple's Introduction Exercise: This time participants will be able to introduce themselves to the group as a couple. This exercise gives participants an opportunity to begin assessing their current relationship and share this information with others. Participants take turns introducing their partner to the group and stating one thing they especially like about their partner and one thing they would like to change about their partner. After participants have all introduced their partners, each has an opportunity to disclose their reactions to their partners' introductions.

(6) Discuss the agenda for the first session.

RELATIONSHIP AWARENESS EXERCISES

(7) Guided Imagery Exercise: (20 minutes) A co-leader will spend 10 to 15 minutes guiding members through a visualization exercise. First allow a minute for members to get comfortable, dim the lights, and suggest members close their eyes. In this exercise, members are asked to first visualize how they idealized a love relationship before they met their current partner and to recall how the relationship progressed, keeping in mind how they idealize a love relationship.

When the imagery is complete, members are encouraged to share with the group the feelings this exercise generated for them and to compare their idealization of a love relationship with their current relationship.

(8) Hendrix's Relationship Vision Exercise: (45-60 minutes; see Appendix A) The goal of this exercise is to help partners further visualize, clarify and express to their partners how they perceive the full potential of their relationship.
Participants individually write a list of at least ten sentences describing how their current relationship would be ideally. Requiring at least ten sentences reduces the possibility that members will not thoroughly think through their goals. Partners then privately share with each other their lists and underline the sentences they share in common. Members then share with the group the similarities and differences they found between themselves and their partners. Sentences partners have in common are used as a basis for establishing common goals for the relationship.

(9) Lecture on Sternberg's Theory of love relationships: (5-10 minutes) The goal of this discussion is to provide members with awareness of the three major components of a love relationship which are passion, intimacy, and commitment. Sternberg's eight relationship types are also described (liking, infatuated love, empty love, romantic love, companionate love, fatuous love, consummate love, and non love).

(10) Self-assessment of Relationship Type (Sternberg): (20-30 minutes) This exercise gives members the opportunity to apply their understanding of Sternberg's theory to their relationship with the partner and to become aware of discrepancies between partners in how the relationship is viewed as well as between how the ideal and the real relationship with the partner is perceived.

On a blackboard, four triangles are drawn for each couple representing the ideal relationship, the current relationship, the goal for the current relationship, and the perception of how the partner views the relationship, respectively. With the three corners of each
triangle representing the passion, intimacy, and commitment components of a love relationship, each member of the couple plots a point on each triangle to represent the perceived balance of the three components in that relationship category.

For instance, if a member perceives the current relationship as being composed of both passion and intimacy, but no commitment, he or she would place a point on the side of the triangle between the passion and intimacy corners. After all couples have completed the exercise, members discuss their reactions to what they have found out about themselves and their partner and the similarities and differences between them in their perceptions of their real and ideal relationship.

**HOMEWORK**

(11) Blouch’s Relationship Assessment Exercise: (adapted from D. Peterman)

(See Appendix B) Participants are given the homework exercise and ground rules are discussed.
SESSION 2

OBJECTIVES
- opportunity for participants and co-leaders to further clarify strengths and goals for each couple
- participants will gain insight into how their early relationships have influenced their choice of partner and their current conscious and unconscious needs and dynamics in the relationship with their partner
- opportunity to gain some understanding of the process of attachment and how partners' attachment styles influence their current relationship
- development of good communication skills as a basis for enhancing intimacy in the relationship

INTRODUCTION (20 minutes)
(1) Discuss relationship assessment exercise homework: Couples spend five or ten minutes discussing with each other what they learned from the homework and decide which one of them will present a summary of their experience to the group. The partner presenting this information to the group must also identify two or three strengths the couple possesses and two to five goals for the relationship.

Co-leaders list on a blackboard the strengths and goals of each couple as they are stated by the members. The purpose of this exercise is to complete initial assessment of goals for each couple and
to provide the opportunity for co-leaders to gain some useful diagnostic information about how each couple makes joint decisions.

(2) Co-leaders summarize couples' goals and clarify with the group by mutual consensus which goals can and will be covered within the scope of the workshop. At this point, the co-leaders have the opportunity to decide if and how the agenda for the remaining sessions should be modified to take into account members' needs and to ensure that members will be invested in achieving the goals they have established for themselves.

(3) Discuss the agenda for the second session.

**AWARENESS AND SKILL BUILDING EXERCISES**

(4) Hendrix's Childhood Wounds Imagery Exercise: (20-30 minutes)

In this guided imagery, one of the co-leaders will have participants visualize themselves when they were children in interactions with their parents. Members will be asked to remember what needs they had as children that were fulfilled and which needs were unfulfilled by parents. After the exercise, members are asked to discuss what they recalled and the accompanying feelings they experience in remembering these events.

(5) Hendrix's Imago Work-up Exercise: (30-45 minutes; See Appendix C)

The goal of this exercise is for members to gain some awareness of how unconscious needs and dynamics from early relationships affect their current relationship. Members individually complete this exercise on paper. They are asked to create a composite of all the positive and negative traits of parents and
significant others in their childhoods. They are also asked to circle those traits which have had the most impact on them.

When completed, members discuss in the group their perceptions of how fulfilled and unfulfilled needs in childhood may have affected current needs in the relationship with the partner and they are asked to compare how the partner is similar or different to their "Imago".

(6) Lecture on Attachment Theory (15 minutes; discussion of three types of attachment- secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant): After 5-10 minutes of giving information describing the three types of attachment and how they affect love relationships, participants discuss their own attachment styles and how they affect the current relationship with the partner.

(7) Communication Skills development: (30-45 minutes)
Participants are given handouts (see Appendix D) pertaining to feedback, paraphrasing, and reflection of feelings. The information in the handouts and the importance of developing good communication skills to facilitate understanding and intimacy in the relationship are emphasized. Members then participate in two exercises in order to have the opportunity to practice their communication skills with their partner.

In the first exercise, partners take five minutes each to share their current feelings with the partner. The partner receiving the information is instructed to practice paraphrasing and reflecting feeling and not to respond in any other way. In the second exercise, partners take turns sharing with each other their childhood frustrations and satisfactions, and similarities and differences in
their current experiences with their partners, each responding to the other with paraphrasing and reflection of feeling. During these two exercises, co-leaders may move around among the couples to see how they are doing and offer feedback if needed.

**HOMEWORK**

(8) Participants are asked to take thirty minutes on their own to practice their communication skills with their partner by discussing their wishes for what they and their partner can specifically do to achieve their relationship goals and give each other constructive feedback.
SESSION 3

OBJECTIVES
- provide participants with an awareness of power and control dynamics within a relationship
- help participants understand how relationships progress through time
- provide participants with an opportunity to develop skills in managing conflicts within their relationship

INTRODUCTION (15 minutes)
(1) Discuss communication skills homework: Couples are given 5 minutes to review their homework assignment with their partner. The goal of this activity is listening, and being able to share any emotional or "hot thoughts" felt while listening. Each couple chooses a spokesperson to share with the rest of the group a summary of their homework and any "hot thoughts" experienced. Several questions are posed to the group members to further process the homework.

1. How were the decisions made regarding the homework? Who initiated the assignment, at home and in the group?
2. Who played the leader? Who usually does?
3. How difficult was it to listen when your partner was sharing?
4. How did you feel about the content expressed by your partner?

(2) Discuss the agenda for the third session.
(3) Mirroring Exercise: (20 minutes) This non-verbal exercise focuses on helping participants identify how they share leadership. The couples disperse themselves around the room with partners facing each other. They are told to decide who will initiate physical movements and who will follow. The passive partner mirrors the movements of the active partner. After two minutes the partners are told to reverse roles. After another two minute period, the couples are told to continue mirroring but that leadership is not to be verbally decided. Do not allow a break in mirroring and continue the exercise for at least three minutes.

Discussion centers around the ease or difficulty of leading and/or following. Also discuss the responses of the couples to taking responsibility for leadership. Determine the degree to which couples were able to share leadership and leadership responsibilities.

(4) Lecture/Discussion on power and control struggles in relationships: (20 minutes) Co-leaders present a 10 minute lecture and discussion on the dynamics of power and control in relationships (eg. struggling with our partner leads to frustration in us when wishing that our partner would think, feel, and be more like us. What first attracts us to our partner later becomes an irritant.) Partners are asked to think of an example where each was attracted to something in particular about the partner which later turned out to be annoying or repulsive:

Attachment theory as it relates to romantic relationships states that we have a wish to find someone who will make us complete,
leading us to search for a person who will give us what we need or do not have (idealized person).

Gestalt theory states that unowned or repressed aspects of ourselves are projected onto others in relationships. Over time, we similarly wish or try to repress those qualities or characteristics in others which are unacceptable aspects of ourselves.

The process of disillusionment occurs when we realize that this person can not complete us, make us whole, or be exactly how we want them to be. Participants are asked to give examples of disillusionment they have experienced in the relationship with their partner.

(5) Fair Fighting Exercise: (45 minutes) Groundwork, or rules for fair fighting, first need to be established. Participants discuss how they perceive fair fighting (to clear myths members may have). Ask members to also define anger and whether they feel it is good or bad. State that anger can be a signal or opportunity to express to one's partner one's needs or requests. Distribute the Fair Fighting handout (See Appendix E). Rules for fair fighting include using "I" statements, no accusing or "hitting below the belt", and taking ownership for needs and what each can do to improve their situation. In this exercise, each partner has the opportunity to ask for changes that may help the relationship while also recognizing the partner has a right to refuse any request.

Utilizing the "Rules for the Fair Fight" (See Appendix F), one couple can volunteer to try the exercise. The others are evenly divided to serve as consultants to each member of the volunteering couple. Consultants then give feedback to each member between
"rounds". Co-leaders act as referees and determine when the members of the volunteering couple did or did not fight fairly. The exercise is then discussed in the group.

(6) Sculpture Exercise: (30-45 minutes) This exercise is useful in assessing power and dependency in relationships. Members take turns placing their partners and themselves in a position similar to a sculpture, either stationary or mobile. First the task is described and time is given for consideration. Partners then take turns building sculptures.

After each person has placed both himself/herself and his/her partner in a sculpted position, the group members provide descriptions of the sculpture followed by the sculpting person's description of the sculpture. Processing should also include the passive partner's feelings and reactions.

Modification of the exercise: If couples have already begun to become familiar with one another, each couple can be sculpted by the remaining couples according to how the others perceive the participating couple. This gives each couple useful information as to how others see them in their relationship.

HOMEWORK

(7) Behavior Change Request List: To help couples begin sharing power, they are each asked to make a list of behavioral changes they would like for the partner to make. The list should be varied on difficulty. Participants pick a request from their partner's request list each day and perform that request for the partner, regardless of the partner's behaviors. (Option: Fair fighting exercise.)
SESSION 4

OBJECTIVES
- to provide participants with an awareness of the importance of intimacy and autonomy for each partner in the relationship
- help participants assess their intimacy style
- identify gender stereotypes and myths brought into the relationship to increase flexibility within couples
- review accomplishments and assess future goals
- assess and evaluate the workshop

INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)
(1) Discuss the homework and the previous week's experiences.
(2) Discuss the agenda for the last session.

RELATIONSHIP EVALUATION AND REVIEW
(3) Intimacy Style Assessment Exercise: (30-40 minutes; See Appendix G) Couples individually complete and score the questionnaire. Couples share their findings with each other and discuss these with the group.
(4) Lecture/Discussion defining intimacy: (20 minutes) Defining intimacy and how couples achieve it can also be presented to provide some basic information to stimulate thinking and involvement. Some main points are listed below. However, leaders can supplement the outline with their particular ideas about healthy intimacy.

Intimacy, at its most basic level, is a closeness between two persons. Ingredients which foster intimacy include risk, trust,
openness and goodwill. Intimacy involves all kinds of relationships from sexual-emotional-love relationships to student-teacher, doctor-patient, priest-parishioner, friend-friend, co-workers, etc.

Often in romantic relationships, intimacy has been connected to fusing with another individual. This often means giving up one’s individual identity. It can also mean living through the partner to a great extent. Modern day definitions of intimacy would proclaim fusion to be a less preferred style of intimacy. Modern day intimacy posits a more independent, yet reciprocal, interaction between two people which fosters separate identities between them.

It is also important to understand that intimacy permits and fosters time for aloneness for partners. This type of aloneness allows for self-reflection and is to be distinguished from isolation. Isolation is a style of relating/non-relating which separates an individual so much that he/she is unable to participate in a reciprocal relationship.

(5) Gender Stereotypes Exercise: (20-30 minutes) The group divides into a separate group of men and a group of women. Each group discusses their perceptions of men and women in general, creating a list of both positive and negative traits or characteristics to describe each gender. Each group then elects a spokesperson to present to the other group the lists they have created. Discussion should include having couples identify ways in which they and their partner fit these descriptions and ways in which they do not fit these descriptions or do not wish to fit them.

(6) Review: (20-30 minutes) Co-leaders review each week’s general topic and main points are discussed to clarify any questions. Couples take turns sharing their experiences and giving each other feedback.
regarding how they've changed in the relationship and how they've seen other couples change. Co-leaders should also express their perceptions of the changes each couple has made and make suggestions for goals each couple can continue to pursue.

(7) Feedback: (20 minutes) Couples have the opportunity to provide feedback to the co-leaders regarding what was useful about the workshop and what improvements or modifications they believe would be helpful. After participants have given verbal evaluations, they are provided with evaluation forms (See Appendix G) in order to give co-leaders written feedback as well.
APPENDIX A

RELATIONSHIP VISION EXERCISE

(45-60 minutes)

Directions:

Working separately, write a series of short sentences describing how you envision your ideal relationship with your partner. Write only positive sentences, which include qualities you already have that you want to keep and qualities that you would like to have. Keep sentences in the present tense.

Share your sentences with your partner. Underline sentences you both share in common. Add to your list any items your partner wrote that you agree with. Circle the two items that are most important to you.

Now create a single relationship vision for the two of you. Be sure to include items that are most important to both of you. If you disagree on any of the items, either try to create a compromise statement or omit it from you list. Keep this list in a convenient location for both of you to refer to each week.

Adapted from Harville Hendrix's "Getting The Love You Want", 1988.
APPENDIX B
COUPLES RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

The objective of this exercise is to have partners systematically take stock of their relationship by sharing a structured sequence of perceptions, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and fantasies about each other and their manner of relating. The participants should gain a clearer image of how they are faring in their relationship and come to some agreement as to what is working well in their interaction and what requires some modification. Come to the next workshop session prepared to share your relationship strengths and developmental needs.

A variety of interpersonal skills will be involved if you are to carry out this exercise successfully. Since the other person is giving you valuable feedback and disclosing aspects of himself or herself, you should employ your listening skills to the fullest. Because the exercise generates self-disclosure, partners should work to provide non-judgmental, supportive feedback. Finally, if you and the other person fully involve yourselves in the experience, there are certainly going to be elements of encounter and confrontation as you share intensely positive and negative feelings you have toward each other and your relationship.

INSTRUCTIONS

Time Required

If you are really taking this exercise seriously, you will need at least two hours to complete it. Try to do it all at one sitting.

Setting

Arrange to carry out the relationship assessment exercise in a quiet place, where other people, loud music, telephone calls, etc., will not intrude. Sit face-to-face, close enough to touch each other.

Procedure

The following ground rules should be agreed upon:

A. Be honest, but remember that you take on responsibility for the reaction your openness produces in the other person.

B. Each partner is to respond to each item before continuing.

C. The statements should be completed in the order they appear. Skip an item only if both of you feel that your experience together has not yielded any thoughts or feelings about the issue at hand.

D. Stop the exercise if either partner becomes obviously uncomfortable or anxious. Try to talk over the source of such feelings, and continue if and when this seems appropriate.

Turn to the next page and begin.
1. The way I feel about doing this exercise with you is ...
2. A behavior of yours which seems childlike (innocent, delightful) to me is ...
3. I am most proud of you and happy to be known as your (friend, wife, husband, etc.) when you ...
4. A behavior of yours which seems childish (immature) to me is ...
5. In all the time we have known each other, I think I felt the closest to you the time when ...
6. I think the times I feel most distant from you are when ...
7. A thing you did recently that made me feel really good toward you was ...
8. The most angry I've been with you recently was when ...
9. Something I've had trouble sharing with you recently is ...
10. A time when I saw you do what I thought was a really nice thing for another person was ...
11. A time when I saw you do something which seemed to show a lack of concern for someone else's feelings was ...
12. A time when you really didn't seem to be aware of my needs was ...
13. A thing I sometimes find myself wanting from you in our relationship and I don't seem to get is ...
14. Right this minute I am feeling ...
15. My feelings about the way we relate to each other physically are ...
16. If we could go anywhere we wanted together, the place I would like to go with you is ...
17. Something I seem to seek out in other relationships that I don't find in ours is ... 
18. I think we would get along better if I would change my ... 
19. It seems to me you are most happy when ... 
20. A way in which we seem very different is ... 
21. We seem very much alike in our ... 
22. A quality of yours I wish I had is ... 
23. The habit you have that irritates me the most is ... 
24. What I would like to do with you right this minute is ... 
25. I was most aware of your concern for me when ... 
26. If I could change one thing in our relationship right now it would be ... 
27. We seem to be the most comfortable and free with each other when ... 
28. The times I least want to be with you are when ... 
29. I feel we are getting better at ... 
30. The way I feel about your body is ... 
31. A thing about me that I feel you don't fully understand or accept is ... 
32. The thing about you that is most precious to me is ... 
33. What I have learned about you as a result of doing this exercise is... 
34. What I have learned about our relationship as a result of doing this exercise is... 
35. The aspect of our relationship I think we should work the hardest is ...
APPENDIX C
IMAGO WORK-UP EXERCISE
(30-45 minutes)

Directions:

Draw a large circle on a piece of paper. On the top half of the circle list all the positive characteristics of those who strongly influenced you while you were growing up. Use simple phrases to describe your caretakers as you remember them when you were young.

On the bottom half of the circle similarly list the negative traits of these important people. Then circle the positive and negative traits that seem to affect you most.

This composite list, Hendrix calls your "Imago". This can be used to help you identify important childhood influences which may affect your current needs and perceptions of your partner.

Adapted from Harville Hendrix's "Getting the Love You Want", 1988.
Paraphrasing is a method of restating your partner's basic message in similar, but usually fewer, words. The main purpose of paraphrasing is to check out your understanding of what your partner has said. You are also communicating that you are trying to understand his/her basic message.

Paraphrasing attempts to feed back to your partner the essence of what he/she has just said, putting it into more simple, precise, and culturally relevant wording. When paraphrasing, you should avoid adding your own ideas. Usually the paraphrase is content-related, although it can include feelings if these are an important part of your partner's message.

The following are some good examples of accurate paraphrasing:

PARTNER: "I really think he is a very nice guy. He's so thoughtful, sensitive and kind."
YOU: "You like him very much then."

PARTNER: "I'm really concerned about taking a part time job. I need the money, but I'm afraid I'll flunk out if I have to work."
YOU: "You're concerned about money but feel a job may interfere with your studies."

PARTNER: "I don't know about him. One moment he's nice as can be, and the next minute he's a real jerk."
YOU: "He's pretty inconsistent."

Used in this manner, paraphrasing can be used to clarify confusing content, tie a number of recent comments together, highlight issues by stating them more concisely, and to check one's perceptions.

REFLECTION OF FEELINGS

One way to assist someone in expressing his/her concerns and to develop a situation is to demonstrate that you understand the experience the person is relating. A significant part of demonstrating understanding is in listening for and responding to the feelings of that person. By demonstrating to the person that you can accurately identify his or her experience, that you can sense (at least partially) the world as the person is feeling and seeing it, you can facilitate his/her awareness and self-understanding.

Being sensitive to and responding to the feelings being expressed, rather than attending solely to the content of what the person says is the "reflection of feeling" skill with which we are presently concerned. What the person is saying is most often the "content" portion of the message being communicated. How the person says what he/she says often communicates the "feeling" portion of the message. Tone and quality of voice, rate of speech, facial expression and gestures, etc., are all clues to the feelings of the person and must be identified by the interviewer.
For you to be able to respond to feelings, it appears that you need to demonstrate that you have:

1. **Empathy**- the ability to identify another person's experience in terms of perception and feeling.

2. **Respect**- the ability to allow another person his or her own uniqueness by communicating "it's alright for you to be the way you are even though you are different from me."

3. **Genuineness**- a sincere commitment to be helpful and facilitative.

In the following example, notice how one response indicates an understanding of the person's attitudes, feelings, and reactions, while the more typical responses do not.

**Example:**
"I guess I'll either take the class over or find something I can substitute for it... but I'll probably just flunk it too."

   a. "Are you sure you couldn't get an incomplete in the course?"
   b. "What other courses have you considered to replace the one you are flunking?"
   c. "You feel very frustrated and upset."

Adapted from workshops conducted by University Counseling Centers as Northern Illinois University and Colorado State University.
APPENDIX E

FAIR FIGHTING

How to get the other person to fight fairly

1. Open communication is essential. It helps to avoid blaming and interrogating.
2. Express your hurt feelings along with your anger so you will be more easily heard.
3. Don’t forget to express positive feelings toward the person or about something that he or she has done.
4. Ask the person to remind you if you break a rule. Also, be willing to acknowledge when you do break a rule.
5. When confronting your partner about breaking a rule, make "I" statements about what you would like your partner to do.
6. Model the behavior that you want from your partner.

APPENDIX F
THE FAIR FIGHT

Purpose:
To practice fighting constructively.

Directions:
One couple with a real concern volunteers for the exercise. Each member of the couple chooses at least two advisors from the group. Co-leaders serve as judges and referees.

The fight is divided into three-minute rounds with three minutes between rounds. Couples can only consult with advisors between rounds. At the end of each round, the judges designate the winner, or the participant who does the most to strengthen the relationship. Both participants can win. Breaking any of the fair fight rules constitutes a foul.

Rules:
1. Only 1 issue can be fought over.
2. No "hitting below the belt", name calling, generalizing, or "overkill".
3. Observe the six fair fighting rules listed in Appendix E.
Goals for each round:

Round 1- The complainer states his or her problem, the resulting feelings, and makes a request of the receiver. The receiver communicates understanding of what the complainer has said.

Round 2- The receiver then states his or her position and either offers an acceptance of the proposal or makes a counter proposal. The complainer then paraphrases.

Rounds continue until both partners agree about what areas have been agreed upon and disagreed upon.

APPENDIX G

INTIMACY STYLE ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

This inventory provides each participant with his/her particular style of intimacy. For each statement, the participant places a checkmark in the appropriate column, indicating whether the statement applies to him/her often, sometimes, or rarely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFTEN</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
<th>RARELY</th>
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1. I give clear messages to people about how much involvement I want.

2. I feel free to give to and receive from people I'm close to.

3. I spend too much time with people.

4. I can't seem to express myself.

5. When my lover is angry with me I get worried.

6. Other people seem to have more friends than I do which bothers me.

7. People demand too much of me.

8. I am worried about losing my lover even though there is no reason to be worried.
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9. I realize that one person can't meet all of my intimacy needs.
10. I often think that the person I'm close to should be responsible for me.
11. I am a loveable and loving person.
12. People tell me I am too demanding.
13. I feel close with people.
14. I say "no" to my lover's, friends', and family's requests when I need more space or time.
15. I seem to give in too much when I get close.
16. It's a real effort for me to get out and meet people.
17. I take time to be alone when I need to do so.
18. I am often anxious when I'm around people that I'm attracted to.
19. I feel isolated much of the time.
20. I get very lonely.
21. I often have trouble getting away from people.
22. I need/want more friends.
23. When I am not in an intimate relationship I feel bad about myself.
24. When I am not in a primary relationship I am sad and depressed.
25. I make friends easily.
26. People don't understand me.
27. People seem like strangers to me.
28. I talk freely about my personal self with others.
29. I often feel responsible for the person I get close to.
30. When someone I'm close to says "no" to me I feel rejected.
31. I can be alone and feel okay about myself.
32. Once someone declines to do something with me I assume that they are not interested in me.
33. I have sufficient friends.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>OFTEN</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
<th>RARELY</th>
<th>34. I feel out of contact with people.</th>
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<td>35. I want and value a primary relationship.</td>
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<td>36. I can't get close to people.</td>
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INTIMACY STYLE ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEET

Instructions
Score responses as follows: 3 for each "often" response
2 for each "sometimes" response
1 for each "rarely" response

Place the appropriate score in the blank below which corresponds to the number of the item on the Intimacy Style Assessment. Example:
If you responded "often" to item #24 on the Intimacy Assessment, place a 3 in blank #24 below.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>F</th>
<th></th>
<th>IS</th>
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<th>IN</th>
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**Interpretation Guide**

The "F" scale is an indicator of a tendency toward a fusion style of intimacy. It could also be seen as a measure of dependency in a relationship. The higher your score is here, the more dependent you are in relationships.

The "IN" scale is an indicator of a tendency toward an interdependent style of intimacy. In general an interdependent style of intimacy is the most desirable style. An individual who is capable of interdependence is able to establish a sense of relatedness that permits and fosters reciprocity yet maintains a separate identity that permits him/her to act autonomously.

The "IS" scale is an indicator of a tendency toward an isolation style of intimacy. In its extreme form an individual maintains such a high sense of separateness that he/she is unable to participate in a reciprocal relationship.

No one fits neatly into any one style of intimacy throughout life. As events impinge on us we react in self-protective ways thus moving to fusion or isolation modes of intimacy. Interdependence usually requires some amount of personal security as well as faith in the other. 36 points are possible within each scale. The scale on which you scored highest is reflective of your predominant intimacy style. This scale is not a scientifically verified instrument so it should not be over-interpreted. It can provide you with an indication of the way you tend to react in intimate relationships at the present time so that you can identify strengths as well as qualities you might like to change.

Adapted from Jerome S. Pierson and Josie Black
GROUP EVALUATION

Name of Group: ____________________________ Number: ____________

Group Leaders: ____________________________ Date: ____________

I. SOME INFORMATION ABOUT YOU:

A. Sex: ___ Female ___ Male

B. Age: ___

C. Previous Counseling Experience: ___ Group ___ Individual ___ None

II. SOME INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR REFERRAL TO GROUP:

A. Who referred you to group? ___ intake counselor ___ individual counselor ___ psychiatrist
   ___ another group leader ___ self

B. Describe your thoughts at time of referral about being referred to a group (i.e. I preferred group counseling, or I was apprehensive but thought I could benefit, or I didn't like the idea but my counselor wanted me to, etc.).

III. Please rate each item. Mark the number that best describes your degree of agreement with each statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral/Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
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<td>(4)</td>
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A. PERSONAL CHANGE: Rate yourself now compared to when you first came to the Counseling Center.

1. I feel better about myself. 1 2 3 4 5
2. I relate better with others. 1 2 3 4 5
3. I deal more effectively with my problems. 1 2 3 4 5
4. I think more clearly. 1 2 3 4 5
5. I express my feelings more easily. 1 2 3 4 5
6. I understand myself better. 1 2 3 4 5
7. I have developed new ideas and thoughts about myself. 1 2 3 4 5
8. I have changed my behavior in ways that satisfy me. 1 2 3 4 5
9. I have been successful in meeting my personal goals. 1 2 3 4 5
B. IMPRESSIONS OF YOUR PRE-GROUP EXPERIENCE:

1. I knew why my counselor recommended a group to me.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
2. I was told by the group leader(s) how a group of this type generally works.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
3. I was told by the group leader(s) how I might use the group productively.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
4. I was told about the importance of confidentiality and attendance.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
5. I was helped in identifying issues and establishing goals for myself.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5

C. IMPRESSIONS OF YOUR GROUP LEADER(S):

1. I think the group leader(s) accepted me.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
2. I think the group leader(s) understood my problem.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
3. My group leader(s) communicated well with me.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
4. My group leader(s) was (were) effective.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
5. My group leader(s) helped me cope with my problems.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
6. My group leader(s) encouraged me to take risks.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
7. My group leader(s) helped me express myself more directly and clearly.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
8. My group leaders seemed to work well together.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5

D. IMPRESSIONS OF YOUR GROUP EXPERIENCE:

1. Overall, this group was helpful in meeting my personal goals.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
2. The group helped me to think about me and my concerns in different ways.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
3. The group had a good balance of support and challenge.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
4. The feedback from group members was helpful.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5
5. If I were seeking help again, I'd return to group counseling.  
   Agree | Strongly | Agree | Neutral/Undecided | Disagree | Disagree Strongly
   1     | 2        | 3     | 4                 | 5

IV. What was the most significant or important aspect of this group for you?
V. Did fees for services affect your use of group services in any way? Please comment.

VI. Please write any additional comments on the following subjects, using the reverse side if needed.

A. The progress you made:

B. Your group leader(s):

C. The other group members:

D. The Counseling Center

E. Other: