

LINKS 9.0 PnP

When you use the video clips of Dr. John & Dr. Morgan, then think of it like you are team teaching. The video clips will teach many sections, while you will teach a few sections. You will also summarize what was explained in each video clip with the outline from the power point, and lead all of the class discussions and explain the small group discussions and activities. Be sure to prepare by watching each video clip and adjust your notes to provide introductions to the clip and transitions from the clip back to the outline in the power point. The following notes summarize the content of each session and how to integrate the video clips. For your organization, the different topic sections of each session are outlined.

SESSION ONE (RAM & KNOW)

SECTION 1: LEARNING TO USE THE RAM

1. INTRO TO COURSE & RAM: What makes this course easy to learn is that the entire course is an expansion of this model...in fact, the outline of our sessions are the five "links" of the RAM.

VIDEO CLIP#1: (09:06 minutes) Introduction of Dr. John and Dr. Morgan and overview of RAM

2. FIVE PRINCIPLES of the RAM: Politely Prompt to write in workbooks

The first point was covered in the video so use this as a quick summary and then have the class answer the two workbook questions under the second point. These are also on the ppt slide.

1. Picture of your relationship & what creates loving feelings—briefly describe each of the five links emphasizing that they contribute closeness, connection and love.

2. One thing leads to another—Use the 2 discussion questions to point out if one level lowers (like know; trust—affects others. 2nd question is "hope"—when one improves it will also pull on the others to move up. Explain that couples come to this class/retreat with different "profiles" on the RAM—but if through this class you work to improve just one link in your relationship it will create a momentum influencing the others.

3. Enough of a good thing is never enough— Prompt to write in question under #3: EVER EXTENDING HORIZON POINTS. Explain this is the benefit of going through these changes...always have more to appreciate and learn about each other.

VIDEO CLIP#2: (06:21 minutes) the 3 Laws of relationships and the RAM

Before showing clip prompt to write in book under questions #3 the three Laws described in the video.

After this clip it is good to get your class to engage in some class discussion. Do this by **LIST ON BOARD:** What is ONE NORMAL thing that we often face over the course of marriage that will definitely shift the levels of the RAM? (kids; deployment; empty nest)—Have volunteers show some changes on RAM. Then you can quickly review and make sure they were able to write in workbooks the three laws and descriptions: 1) Law of Diminishing Returns: IT IS NORMAL TO BECOME IMBALANCED IN OUR RELATIONSHIP; 2) Law of Slow Leaks: THE DANGER IS NOT BECOMING IMBALANCED,

BUT STAYING IMBALANCED (*slow leaks lead to big blowouts or a flat relationship; and relationships are NOT self-correcting*); 3) Law of Frequent Realignments: THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIP/MARRIAGE IS TO REGULARLY BALANCE YOUR IMBALANCES.

These last two points are more like a summary of what they learned about their relationship and the way the RAM can help them. You move through these two questions fairly quickly.

4. Never stop giving and growing—Ask the question under #4:—what happens if you stop giving and growing together?

5. A picture of a healthy relationship—This is what a healthy relationship looks like—regularly balancing your imbalances. This is a good time to mention that they will have one main “take away” after this class is through: A format to meet regularly for HUDDLES (read first 2 paragraphs at end of session (p12) in workbook that describe a huddle.

3. SMALL GROUPS: Discuss last question under #5 privately in 30-60 seconds using mini-RAMs.

SECTION 2: KNOW (COMMUNICATION & CONFLICTS)

4. STAY IN THE KNOW. Transition with RAM slide. **THREE T’S.** Discuss 2 questions with class.

VIDEO CLIP#3: (04:25 minutes) couple interviews about communication. OPEN communication. This is new to the 9.0 version and is not in previous version workbooks/power points.

5. COMMUNICATION 3 PARTS: Briefly explain 3 parts of communication and expand with asking class to generate examples of difficulties in each of the three communication parts. Then review OPEN aspects of communication. Then discuss importance of Other (listening). Do #6

6. BODY LANGUAGE— Ask for 2 volunteers—one talks and other doesn’t but shows best example of worst listener’s body language. After, class describes characteristics. SOLER in workbook.

VIDEO CLIP#4: (07:57 minutes) 6 SKILLS for open communication & graceful conflict resolution. This is new to the 9.0 version and is not in previous version workbooks/power points.

7. REVIEW 6 SKILLS: 1. Genuine Humility 2. Respectful Assertiveness 3. Active Listening **ACTIVITY: LISTENING/RESTATING EXERCISE (READ SHARPEN SKILLS)- COUPLES TAKE TURNS AT TABLES.** Afterward briefly process. 4. Mutual Affirmations 5. Meaningful Apologies 6. Forgiving Closure.

8. Summarize Session One.

SESSION TWO (TRUST)

SECTION 1: ATTITUDES OF TRUST

Quick review of 3 Laws for running relationships—this continue to repeat through course.

1. CLASS DISCUSSION: WHAT IS TRUST: List class ideas in two columns—often most ideas are about “trustworthy” so afterward, write this title over 1 column and “act of trust” over 2nd. Explain issues of being trustworthy and dealing with broken trust will be covered in 2nd half of this session. Start with “act” of trust (belief, faith, confidence in partner). Trust a positive belief in a partner—the feeling of confidence based on the opinion or “attitude” you hold of your partner.

VIDEO CLIP #1 (08:28 MINUTES): Review of Communication, Definition of trust, Couple interviews about pet peeves

2. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: “So let’s go into this a little deeper...

- **Why is your attitude so important?** actions come from attitude.
- **PET PEEVES DISCUSSION QUESTION:** List on board pet peeves (NOTHING SERIOUS/have fun).
- **DISCUSSION QUESTION: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ATTITUDE?** Drive home that each partner is responsible although partners usually blame: “I would not be in a bad attitude if...”
- **WHY CAN YOUR ATTITUDE CHANGE SO QUICKLY?** Ask couples, “Who could put your partner in a “bad attitude” in 10 secs or less?”

3. ATTITUDES & “PERCEPTION”- Show “perceptual shifting” pictures and emphasize: *WHAT I FOCUS ON CHANGES THE PARTNER I SEE (IN MY MIND).*

- Show ppt slide on good, bad & ugly. Then slide on You live with a partner in the home... apply concept to how we have shifting attitudes or trust pictures of our spouse. And getting into a bad attitude happens when you hyperfocus on a negative.
- Show slide, the danger is not getting into a bad attitude but staying.

SECTION 2: RESENTMENT & RESPECT

VIDEO CLIP #2 (04:43 MINUTES): The steps to becoming resentful and then rebuilding respect

4. ACTIVITY: STAGES OF BECOMING RESENTFUL: Divide class into TWO GROUPS: Grp1: Path to Resentment; Grp2: Path Back to Respect. Summarize w/ ppt slides after each group presents.

5. SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: Expressing What is in your Heart- couples face each other in table groups and take turns telling what they appreciate about their partner. Now you transition from partner in head (relationship *within*) to partner in home (relationship *between*)

SECTION 3: CONFLICT RESOLUTION PLAN

6. **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:** Ask class ONE EXTREME way couples handle conflicts. Then expand list on board and then ask for EXTREME OPPOSITE way and again expand list on board. Then explain ASSERTIVE AFFIRMERS—next activity builds on resentment/respect activity.

7. **SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: Rules for Resolving Conflicts and DRAW PICTURE** describing STEPS from CONFLICT TO RESOLUTION (builds on previous activity). Group presentations of PICTURES.

8. **BRIEFLY EXPLAIN 4 STEPS OF APOLOGIES**

SECTION 4: RECONCILING MAJOR BREAKDOWNS OF TRUST

12. **MAJOR BREAKDOWNS OF TRUST:** Introduce this last section with sober acknowledgement that sometimes couples face broken trust... if work through it in healthy ways, there is HOPE. Also, ask for couples to not share publicly any major breaks of trust to protect their privacy.

13. Use **FLIP CHART** to generate these lists from the class. Use the following headings.

- **CAUSES OF BROKEN TRUST:** Just collect and write down what class shouts out—no elaborate
- **IMPACT OF BROKEN TRUST:** What is the impact of discovering a broken trust. If “shock” not mentioned first, leave a little space at top. Most answers will be under 2nd heading, storm: SHOCK, STORM... ask class: what is the 3-letter word that is asked over and over (why?), SEARCH, SEQUEL—Now you say there are two major tasks in reconciliation, forgiving & rebuilding trust. Introduce the next video clip.

VIDEO CLIP #3 (03:44 MINUTES): Forgiveness & Rebuilding Trust

15. Briefly explain the **FOCUS, ORDER, & SOURCE** to show **DIFFERENCES** between Forgiveness & Rebuilding trust

17. **SUMMARY OF TRUST ISSUES: ATTITUDE-FOCUS ON POSITIVES; CONFLICTS: APOLOGIES & CONFLICT PICTURES; MAJOR CRISES OF TRUST-HOPE for RECONCILING WITH FORGIVENESS AND REBUILDING TRUST.**

SESSION THREE (RELY)

SECTION 1: QUALITIES OF RELY (C.A.R.E.)

1. Ask class: What does it mean to rely? What are some ways that you rely on your partner?

VIDEO CLIP #1 (04:58 MINUTES): Review of S1 & S2; Quality of being reliable: CARE. This is new to the 9.0 version and is not in previous workbooks/power points.

2. **SMALL GROUP or CLASS DISCUSSION:** Review the 4 qualities of being reliable: Consistent, Available, Responsive & Engaged. Use the question from the power point (and in 9.0 workbook) for either class or small group discussion and then process their answers in class. What are some examples of your own mental load, and ways you can apply the qualities of CARE both to understand and support your partner and their mental load?

3. **SMALL GROUP or CLASS DISCUSSION:** Read the question from the power point (in the 9.0 workbook) and collect ideas from the class or have them answer this in small groups and then process their answers in class: There are times when your normal routine will change or new responsibilities will be added. Discuss some of the common obstacles to revisiting the division of responsibilities and brainstorm solutions to every obstacle.

SECTION 2: DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES & FINANCES

4. **COUPLE ACTIVITY:** Have couples work on exercises: **1. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES.** Couples work alone on their own at tables to define their responsibilities and identify any conflicts they have over shared roles. **2. FINANCES.** If couples have difficulty with either of these areas of "working together" then they can ask help from their table group. If still unsure of what to do, then they can ask for your assistance.

SECTION 3: BEING A CONNOISSEUR OF YOUR PARTNER

5. **EXPLAIN BALANCED VERSUS BALANCING APPROACH:** Remind couples that slow leaks lead to big blowouts. The danger is not in becoming imbalanced, but in not balancing your imbalances.

VIDEO CLIP #2 (04:40MINUTES): Action of Reliability; interviews of couples talking about their differences and needs, be a connoisseur of partner and golden rule; setting up the top ten list.

6. **Be your partner's connoisseur.** Use the question for class discussion (rather than small group discussion); This question is new to the 9.0 workbook.

TOP TEN LIST: Divide class between men and women. Men work on presenting the "Top ten list of what women want/need from men." Women list and prioritize the top 10 list of what men want/need from women. Afterwards, have each group share their top ten list. Keep strict rule of no class corrections or criticisms. After a group presents, have those listening share what they appreciate about the list.

7. **Workbook top ten activities that promote togetherness.** You can give brief descriptions or ask class to give 1-3 examples as you talk through them. This is not major teaching time, just a helpful list for couples to use in their huddles and incorporate in their personal top10 list.

SECTION 4: HUDDLES

VIDEO CLIP #3 (06:01 MINUTES): Review of the 3 laws; description of the steps of huddles.

8. THE VIDEO EXPLAINED HUDDLES. There is a further description in the workbook (page 48). Have couples practice having a HUDDLE—Steps 1 and 2 should be done fairly quickly (a look back at their last week or two). But when they get to step three (RELY), this should be the **PRIMARY FOCUS** of what they do in this huddle... **Personalize Their Own Top 10 List:** Couples should review the two top ten lists from the two group presentations along with the workbook top 10 activities, and then write out their own top ten list. They can do this individually and then share their lists, or together... whatever is their personal preference. Have couples include the last two discussion questions from page 31 in their workbook in their huddles-- activities couples lose track of; 2-3 activities to plan in upcoming weeks. Steps four and five of the huddle should be done quickly, like how they did steps 1 and 2.

9. Process the huddles assignment by having 2-3 couples share something that they were planning to do in the upcoming weeks (the 2nd workbook question). You can also ask how they did in making their top ten list, and what it was like to follow the format of the huddle with the RAM. This is your session wrap up so keep it moving fairly quickly and keep it positive.

SESSION FOUR (COMMIT)

SECTION 1: INTRO & PRACTICING THE PRESENCE OF PARTNER

1. DISCUSSION QUESTION: List words associated with commitment
2. Ppt slide: Commitment is essentially a lasting promise (a covenant); this promise prompts perseverance, making your partner a priority; and practicing the presence of your partner.

VIDEO CLIP #1 (02:27 MINUTES): COMMITMENT

2. Review study of overlap between love and commitment. Love and commitment share common attributes.
3. PRACTICING THE PRESENCE. Ask the question from the workbook/ppt: What are some ways that you can strengthen the feeling of your partner being with you even though you are apart?
4. SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: Ask couples to share with their small groups ways that they have practiced the presence of each other while separated.

SECTION 2: RESILIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE FROM COMMITMENT

5. PROMISE OF COMMITMENT: This slide introduces concept of the lasting promise that produces perseverance. Begin with pointing out that when the other links of the RAM drop or when facing rough terrain then commitment becomes the lead dog on the sled of your marriage.

VIDEO CLIP #2 (09:51 MINUTES): COMMITMENT PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES. INTERVIEW WITH PERSEVERING WIFE.

6. RESILIENCY MODEL OF COMMITMENT:

Commitment produces the perseverance through the turbulent times that develops a resilient spirit and a resilient marriage.

Walk through the stages of the RESILIENCY MODEL

- **COHESION: Routine** (creatures of habit; disruptions open doors for positive changes)
- *For better or for worse, routines have a built-in resistance to change!*
- **DESTABILIZATION: A time of testing** (pain can also prompt positive changes)
Until the pain of your ruts exceeds the pain of change, PATTERNS USUALLY REMAIN.
- **MOBILIZATION: Getting it together** (PERSONAL, RELATIONAL AND COMMUNITY/SOCIAL RESOURCES)
- **ADAPTATION: New beginnings** (3 STEPS: Assess what to attain & retain; Foster meaningful relationships; Establish new routine)

Commitment transforms hardships into building blocks for positive changes in your relationship

7. SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: "Share with couples in small group a difficult time when commitment brought you through, a time you believe you were successfully

resilient. Try and apply any or all of the steps in EXERCISE: CATCHING YOUR SECOND WIND. As a couple, you were able to:

- Cleaned out some bad habits.
- Established some new habits.
- Form new connections that foster(ed) meaningful relationships.
- Found a positive way of looking at the hardships that you have worked through (or are still working through).

SECTION 3: PRIORITY OF COMMITMENT

8. WRITE COMMITMENT VOWS: From this day forward I promise.... Challenge couples to begin with promising to have regular HUDDLES for the next 6 months. Then have them include promises that they come up with in the answer to the two workbook/ppt questions. What are some daily promises you make to your partner? What is something you can do to improve your success rate at fulfilling these daily promises?

SESSION FIVE (TOUCH)

SECTION 1: SEXUAL DRIVES, AROUSAL & BIOLOGY OF BONDING

Introduce this topic of touch by pointing out that there are many loving types of touch: affectionate touch, supportive touch, fun + playful touch, flirtatious touch, and sexual touch.

1. DISCUSSION QUESTION: What is most common sexual conflict most couples experience? Survey says: Frequency of sexual relations is still most common conflict couples have. What are some reasons this is so prevalent?

VIDEO CLIP #1 (09:12 MINUTES): INTRODUCTION TO BONDING POWER OF TOUCH. COUPLES INTERVIEWS. OXYTOCIN & BIOLOGY OF BONDING. TOPICS: SEXUAL AROUSAL, INFLUENCES ON FREQUENCY OF SEXUAL INTIMACY, SEX DRIVE DIFFERENCES & DEFINITIONS OF TERMS: SEX DRIVE: Frequency of desire for sexual activity without participation. **SEXUAL AROUSAL:** Feeling of sexual stimulation from touching, sensory stimulation and thoughts. **THE INTERACTION BETWEEN DRIVE AND AROUSAL. THE CHALLENGES OF HIGHER AND LOWER DRIVES.**

2. SUMMARIZE THE VIDEO VERY QUICKLY WITH THE CHART ON THE PPT SLIDE (WORKBOOK PG 45).

3. THINGS IN LIFE CAN IMPACT YOUR DRIVE OR AROUSAL. MAKE LIST OF REASONS WHY SOMEONE EXPERIENCES CHANGES AND LOSSES OF DRIVE AND/OR AROUSAL. Use this as an opportunity to suggest seeking medical evaluation if there is an ongoing loss of drive or arousal.

4. NEXT SLIDE: SUMMARIZE THE COUPLE'S PRIVATE DISCUSSION BY DESCRIBING THE CHALLENGE OF LO DRIVES AND THE CHALLENGE OF HI DRIVES. AROUSAL FOR HI DRIVE IS FROM THE 5 SENSES BUT LO DRIVE IS AROUSED FROM PARTICIPATION.

5. COUPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: Have couples discuss privately the five discussion questions and fill out the chart. Q1: Describe own sex drive. Q2: What creates feelings of arousal for you? Q3: How do you meet each other's needs, especially when needs are different? Q4: If hi drive, how good are you at meeting the nonsexual needs of spouse? Q5: If you are lo drive, how good are you at meeting the sexual needs of spouse? **CHART:** Write down both sexual and nonsexual activities that help set the mood or context for sexual closeness.

SECTION 2: ROMANCE & ANTICIPATING SEXUAL INTIMACY

6. USE THE CHART IN THE PPT TO TRANSITION TO ROMANCE. Often, those with higher drives associate sexual intimacy with romance, while those with lower drives think of romance apart from sexual intimacy.

VIDEO CLIP #2 (01:16 MINUTES): THIS SHORT VIDEO CLIP INTRODUCES THE IMPORTANCE OF ROMANCE IN MARRIAGE AND ALSO HOW SEXUAL INTIMACY CAN BE AFFECTED BY RELATIONAL STRUGGLES INDICATED BY LOWER LEVELS ON THE RAM.

7. ROMANCE IS NOT SAME AS SEX. Romance is about feeling special; a shared experience; a sense of beauty and closeness. **Use the workbook/ppt question to engage in class discussion.**

8. SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: Making Love without Sex Have couples share in their small groups their favorite romantic experiences. Then privately talk through romantic plans that will either be mutually satisfying or romantic activities that each would like.

9. PROCESS FAVORITE ROMANTIC EXPERIENCES: Have people introduce couples from table and share “best practices” with romantic experiences.

10. ANTICIPATION OF SEXUAL ACTIVITY: Finish the chart by pointing out that those with a high drive tend to view sexual refusals as rejections and experience the sexual relationship as a strong source of emotional bonding.

SECTION 3: DISCUSSION POINTS

11. DISCUSSION POINTS:1. Both partners (esp low drives) need to initiate sometimes; 2. Both (esp high drives) need to not always be looking for the green light; 3. Both (esp low drives) need acceptable times to say “not now”; 4. Both (esp high drives) need to find acceptable ways to initiate; 5. If there are frequent refusals then the reasons need to be discussed and understood; 6. Sometimes sex can be enjoyed without intercourse or climax.

VIDEO CLIP #3 (03:19 MINUTES): CONCLUSION TO THIS SESSION AND ENTIRE SERIES. REVIEWS THE LAWS OF RELATIONSHIPS AND IMPORTANCE OF USING RAM IN HUDDLES TO REGULARLY SET SMALL RELATIONSHIP GOALS.

SECTION 4: CONCLUSION & RENEWING OF COMMITMENT

12. CONCLUSION TO COURSE: Review RAM and two major principles of course: 1. It is normal to become imbalanced. 2. It is essential to regularly balance your imbalances. **HUDDLES:** five steps. End with the renewing of commitment and couples sharing their written promises to each other.