

Overview of PICK Sessions and which ACF category is addressed in each session.

Session 1: A bird's eye view of dating. The first session begins with a working definition of a "difficult partner" and the rationale for the necessity of romantic-partner selection education. The Relationship Attachment Model (RAM) is explained and used to describe unhealthy and healthy relationships. The five key areas to explore in a dating relationship are introduced (FACES). These five areas: family background, attitudes and actions of the conscience, compatibility potential, examples of other relationships, and relationship skills, have been shown throughout research to be predictive of what a person will be like in a relationship and ultimately as a future partner in marriage. These areas are covered in more detail in sessions 2 and 3, therefore just a brief glimpse is provided in session 1.

Session 2: You can't marry Jethro without gettin' the Clampetts. This session examines the first two areas to explore in a dating relationship: the family background and attitudes and actions of the conscience. The dynamics of childhood and family of origin experiences greatly shapes the roles you fulfill in dating and ultimately in marriage. How you express anger, affection, intimacy, and your expectations of and feelings toward someone you date are greatly affected by this area. In addition, the conscience is formed by the internalization of many of these same developmental experiences. Much of how a person acts and his/her ability to demonstrate empathy in a relationship and especially a marriage is related to the maturity and functioning of his/her conscience. This session explains what the conscience is and provides practical examples of how to measure it.

Session 3: The ingredients of a lasting relationship. This session explains and illustrates the last three areas that are important to get to know about a partner: compatibility potential, examples of other relationships, and relationship skills. The first area, compatibility potential, is explored and the most important aspects of compatibility are described. The next predictive area, understanding the patterns of a person's other relationships, is vital because history often repeats itself. The final area is the strength of relationship skills. The emphasis in this section is on communication and conflict resolution techniques. In the context of the Relationship Attachment Model, these complete the five key areas to explore in the first bonding dynamic...what you need to know about someone that will help you to understand what that person will be like in a relationship and someday, a marriage.

Session 4: Why is it that "expectations lead to disappointments". In this session, trust and reliance, the second and third relationship dynamics are examined. Trust is described as the confidence you feel in someone from your belief or opinion in him/her. As you come to know this person better, you have more knowledge and experiences on which to form this opinion. Your opinion or belief in someone becomes a major source for your confidence and expectations. Reliance, the third dynamic bond, refers to the act of depending up on someone to meet certain personal, emotional, or physical needs you may have. This session helps you to examine your own needs and emotional management. In a relationship if your partner meets your needs in positive ways, then your "trust opinion" is altered and your feelings of trust increase. This change prompts you to "rely" on the person again in more meaningful ways. These two areas form the second and third relationship dynamics of the RAM.

Session 5: Put the horse before the cart. In session 5, the last two relationship dynamics of the RAM are examined. The first, commitment, refers to the "extent you have given yourself to the person with whom you are in a relationship." Low levels of commitment are indicated by descriptions of the relationship as "just friends" or "just dating". High levels of commitment are reflected in more exclusive terms such as "couple" or "engagement". The major components of commitment and the marriage are explored along with the ways that commitment can be entrapping. The last bonding dynamics, affection and sexual expression describes the role of physical touch in a dating relationship. Cohabitation, premarital abstinence, and premarital sex are compared in their effects on the dating relationship and one's future marriage. Logical and research-based suggestions are presented for maintaining clear sexual boundaries as a relationship grows, while building a healthy foundations for a future marriage that lasts a lifetime.

ACF strongly encourages that curriculum may focus on areas such as:

- Communication skills; **SESSION 3**
- Awareness of the components of healthy relationships; **SESSION 1-5**
- Empathy and emotional understanding; **SESSION 2 & SESSION 4=UNDERSTANDING/IMPROVING HOW EMOTIONS HOW HANDLED**
- Conflict resolution, management and problem-solving skills; **SESSION 3**

- Knowledge of the benefits of marriage; **SESSION 1**
- Affection and intimacy; **SESSION 2; SESSION 5**
- Expression and discussion of negotiation skills; **SESSION 3; ARGUABLY THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PROGRAM**
- Self-esteem building and assertiveness; **SESSION 3 & SESSION 4 (AS PART OF COMMUNICATION/CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS & SESSION 4 AS PART OF EXPRESSING NEEDS)**
- Financial management;
- Stress and anger management;
- Parenting skills;
- Domestic violence;
- Child maltreatment.