**Marriage Enrichment Session Seven**

**Relationship Development (1)**

**Introduction**

A. The satisfying marriage

1. What are the secrets of making this dream reality?

a. the typical answers

b. the Biblical answers

● understanding masculine vs. feminine

● nurturing each other

● axle and wheel-bearing

B. Are *unconditional love and respect* equal partners?

1. They are not equal but sequential

a. Unconditional love is *first and fundamental*

b. Unconditional respect is *second and derivative*

2. Why important to emphasize this?

a. to combat *spousal abuse* (domestic abuse)

● domestic abuse is defined as the *husband’s*

*deliberate, ongoing, systematic, relentless destruction of his wife, soul, body or both*

● no husband is to *command* or *coerce* submission

C. The *axle – wheel-bearing* analogy

1. both needed to make the *wheel turn*

2. the wheel pictures *communication within relationship*

a. without good communication, the wheel will move ahead

3. The wheel of communication has *five lug-nuts*

a. conflict resolution

b. charity

c. choices

d. compromise solutions

e. connection

D. The wheel is *not for sale!*

**I. What is Communication?**

A. Communication is *a connection between husband/wife* that transfers **positive energy** into the relationship

1. A dysfunctional connection creates *negative energy*

a. hinders *growth – intimacy – trust – excitement –*

*passion* in relationship

b. also spills over into children – spiritual life

2. God confirms the importance of *communication*

a. compare content and order of Eph. 4 and 5

b. Eph. 4 on *useful connections* in communication

● Speak the truth lovingly (Eph. 4:15)

● Speak the truth honestly (Eph. 4:25)

● Speak the truth edifyingly (Eph. 4:29)

● Speak the truth gently (Eph. 4:31-32)

B. Communication is the connection that ***builds*** or ***destroys***

by *what* is transferred *into* the relationship

1. What is transferred in a connection?

a. thoughts, feelings, ideas, needs, desires, fears,

pains, ideals, expectations, appreciation, respect, admiration, affection

2. It only transfers if the receptor is (still) receptive

C. Communication is *a connection that has several aspects*

1. The aspect of *spoken words*  7 %

2. The aspect of *tone of voice* 38 %

a. Tone communicates 7 x more than words

b. Tone of voice transfers positivity or negativity

● examples of *positive*

● example of *negative*

3. The aspect of *non-verbal (body) language*  55%

a. all actions speak louder than words

b. facial expressions

4. If the three aspects aren’t matching, there is no

connection that transfers positive energy

**II. Keys to good connection in communication**

1.Recognize that we males and females speak

& hear **the** **same words** differently

a. The meaning of man’s vs. woman’s silence

b. The meaning of a man’s vs. woman’s talking

c. The style of man’s talk vs. woman’s talk

2. Recognize that most martial conflicts are mostly

based on *mis-communication*

a. either *information is lacking*

or *information is wrongly interpreted*

3. Recognize main obstacles for good connection

a. Defensiveness

b. Pre-judging (Prov. 18:13)

c. Gun-powder words – scolding (G: barking)

d. Interruption

e. Wrong timing

f. Unresolved issues

h. Blame shifting

4. Recognize that “silence” can be one of the most

vicious and destructive communications

5. Recognize the influence of your “self-talk”

a. self-talk is the message you tell yourself

about how you perceive reality

b. self-talk becomes main source of reaction to

events, persons and their behaviors

Conclusions

**Home Construction Exercises[[1]](#footnote-1)**

1. As you read this list of harshness in communication

(words, attitudes, motives, non-verbal language), evaluate whether there are major there are major communications problems in your marriage.

\_\_ Unwillingness to grant requests made by your spouse

\_\_ Granting requests begrudgingly or with complaint

\_\_ Refusing to allow the wife to appeal (or question) decisions

\_\_ Fussing about neglect of domestic performance without sincerely offering assistance

\_\_ Responding to each other in discourteous or condescending ways

\_\_ Having a critical, condemnatory, judgmental attitude toward each other

\_\_ Making demands of each other that are unrealistic and lopsided

\_\_ Being intolerant of non-sinful but annoying habits

\_\_ Prohibiting the wife from doing anything without their express knowledge of consent

\_\_ Micro-managing every aspect of each other’s responsibilities

2. **Biblical Communications Inventory**

Use the scale to score your communication. Do you

own first and then your spouse; then compare and adjust!

Rating scale Points

Hardly Ever 5

Seldom 4

Sometimes 3

Frequently 2

Almost always 1

1. I use ***words***that are inappropriate when I talk with you.

2. I use ***angry* *facial expressions***when I talk with you.

3. I do not ***look*** at you when I talk to you.

4. I do not ***touch*** you lovingly.

5. I ***blow-up*** (ventilate) my anger when I speak with you.

6. I ***clam up*** anger (internalize) instead of talking it out.

7. I ***interrupt*** you when you speak.

8. I am ***inattentive*** when you are talking with me.

9. I judge your ***motives*** without asking you about them.

10.I seem ***uninterested*** when you want to talk with me.

11.I use ***sweeping generalizations***when I speak.

12. I hold ***grudges*** even after you have asked forgiveness.

13. I **blame shift or excuse** my behavior.

14. I do ***not ask*** for forgiveness.

15. I ***resurrect*** old incidences in new arguments.

16. I ***use gun powder*** words.

17. I ***put you down*** with my communications

18. I ***do not make*** every effort to ***resolve conflicts*.**

19. I have not ***sought help***from others as I should

because I am proud.

20. I use ***silence*** to dominate you.

3. Practice communicating ***non-verbally*** the following emotions, attitudes, issues. Of course, don’t tell the other person what you are trying to communicate or when you are trying to do so. Be alerted to each other in this month by this assignment in which you purposefully try to communicate non-verbally.

Love Anger Doubt

Happiness Frustration Disappointment

Peace Admiration Thankfulness

Fear Anxiety Hurt

Confidence Caution Discouragement

Praise Respect Joy

1. Both exercises are adapted from Lou Priolo [↑](#footnote-ref-1)