

COMMUNICATION AND PLANNING

***Get in sync
by having weekly
Family Meetings***



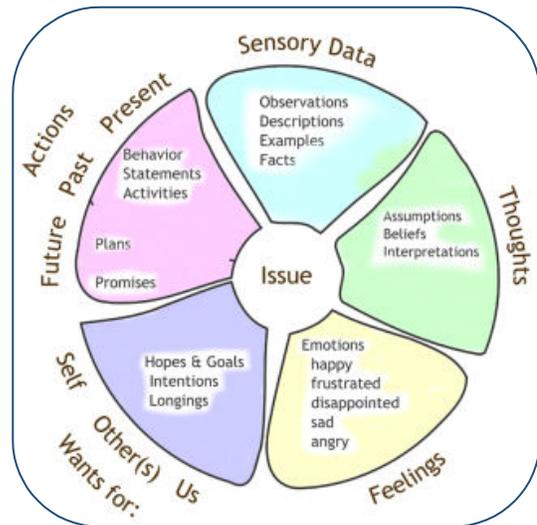
1. Set a date and time each week to get together to talk over what the next week has in store.
2. Go over appointments for the week.
3. Talk about bills that are due this week and how much you will pay on each bill.
4. Determine the needs each of you have and what they will cost.
5. Determine which need you can pay for this week and which need will have to wait till next week.
6. Plan the menu for the week so that grocery shopping for your meals and needs can be planned.
7. Plan a date night.
8. Go over any miscommunication from the past week. It is best to get bumps and misunderstandings out in the open so that they can be discussed and resolved quickly. Ignoring them builds up stress.
9. If there is a problem, pray over it together and patiently talk things out.
10. Discuss birthdays, anniversary, events and vacation planning.
11. Compare your progress on the personal, couple, and family goals that each of you has for the year.

Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

(Philippians 2:2-3)

LEARNING MORE ABOUT EACH OTHER

Communication using the Awareness Wheel



The Awareness Wheel is a tool to help you and your spouse to discuss an issue completely.

1. Take an issue and you place it in the middle of the Awareness Wheel. You start with the Sensory Data section. This area is to find out the facts on the issue.
2. Next you go through the thoughts section which covers, assumptions, beliefs, interpretations, expectations, evaluations and opinions. This area is designed for you to hear each other's thinking.
3. Now you proceed to the Feelings sections. This section helps you understand the emotional attachments that this issue has for each of you. If the issue was shoes, most men do not realize the amount of emotion that can be attached to a pair of shoes. If the issue is the man's old car that he had since he was a teen, now the emotions and memories is large.
4. In part 4 we start to switch gears to the wants, but with a twist. We look at the issue not just from our point of view, but what we want for us as the couple and for others. This brings the understanding of an issue to a much better clarity. So many times we don't understand all the people we have in mind for this issue. We get to hear long term goals, intentions, longings and dreams. This is very powerful stuff that each of us need to handle with a great deal of care.
Before we take on part 5, Actions, it is a good thing to review parts one through four.
5. Now we are ready to open part 5. We look at past, present and future actions that are involved with the issue. Please note that first we examine the behavior, the statements, the activities, and the accomplishments that each of you have done on this issue. Next we take up the plans, proposals and promises on this issue. Now we are ready to determine what we will do for the present and the future.

Through this exercise the couple comes to a complete understanding of the issue and what it means to them. You get to hear each other out in a constructive manner. By the time the action is determined you will have heard each other out, understood how each other's opinion, and be able to move forward on the issue together.

*Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding,
for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold.*

{Proverbs 3:12-14}

DREAMS ON A BUDGET

Planning ways to reach your goals by managing your money



Couples often have arguments about money and spending. In the first five years of marriage about 60% of couples file for divorce or bankruptcy. How can we bring an organized way to bring peace to the budgeting process so both men and women can pull in the same direction?

The answer is for couples to work together to define and agree on shared goals (what & when) for themselves, for each other, and for their family. Setting goals and budgeting is so important because it gives direction on how you will work together to use your money. But before talking about money, the couple needs to understand each other's goals and desires for their life.

- Start out with each person determining their personal goals for the next year or 5 years.
- Once that is done, you can determine your common goals for your lives as a couple.
- The final step is to determine the goals for your family. This may include future children, your parents or grandparents. Maybe in the discussion one of you will say, "I would like to buy grandma's house and fix it up. I have so many memories of that house and I love the neighborhood." Maybe you didn't know your wife had that dream before. How would a statement like that change the way you would budget money?

Consider attending a budget training program, like Financial Peace University, to help you: identify and focus your goals; realistically consider your income, routine expenses, and needs for extra or emergency expenses. With this good understanding of what you want to do and what you have to work with, you can come up with a plan that will allow you to work together toward your goals for yourself, your marriage, and your family.

*Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:
If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.
Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-11)*

STRENGTHENING YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Apology and Forgiveness



It is hard to go forward in a relationship if there is hurt and wounds that aren't healing. All of us say things that we regret. We all make mistakes. We all get too full of ourselves and trample on each other's feelings or trust. So how are we going to bring healing, so that our spouse doesn't become bitter or hopeless? How do we say "I am sorry" in a way that is meaningful to our spouse?

All of us have heard a person say, "He isn't sincere in his apology. I won't accept it." Yikes! Now what are you going to do? Each person has his or her own system that makes an apology sincere. It is important that you tell each other what makes an apology sincere.

One person will consider an apology sincere if you describe how you hurt that person.

Another person will consider an apology sincere if you take responsibility and don't make excuses.

A different person may consider an apology sincere if you take actions to fix or undo damage or hurt that was caused. An example is "I am sorry I broke your chainsaw. Here is a new one to replace it."

Yet another person will only consider an apology to be sincere if you talk about the steps that have been taken to not repeat the mistake or action that caused the hurt.

Our Lord tells us plainly in His Word that each of us take the lead and not wait to apologize. Once you realize that you did something wrong, go deal with it. Don't wait and hope your spouse will forget what happened. Your spouse is the closest and most dear person to you. Show your sorrow over the hurt you have caused them. Ask for forgiveness. Yes, use the words too. It is important.

It is also very important that once a person asks for forgiveness, that we say the words that show that we forgive them. These words are necessary so the hurt and the guilt can be released. Peace and love can return to the relationship.

*Bear with each other and forgive one another
if any of you has a grievance against someone.*

Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

*And over all these virtues put on love,
which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

(Colossians 3:13-14)

GOD CREATED MARRIAGE WITH YOUR HAPPINESS IN MIND

A wedding is for a day.
A marriage is for a lifetime.



Weddings are exciting times and a new marriage brings the hope of shared joy and support as you face new experiences with your new husband or wife. All things are possible and the promise of your future can be joyful and even thrilling. Unfortunately, we all also know people whose marriages just didn't "work out." How do you improve your odds in a world where so many marriages are not happy, or even fail?

*'A man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife,
and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh.
What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.'* (Mark 10:7-9)

Do Jesus' words above make you think of a tennis doubles or two-man rowing team? Being part of a winning team almost always involves putting your team's success ahead of your own feelings and short-term desires. Life is busy and stressful, and knowing what is needed for the team (your marriage) to be successful can be difficult during our busy lives. God created marriage for us, and following His plan for our happiness seems like it would be the best, but it is very difficult to focus on the satisfaction of your partner and the success of your marriage team in a world that honors the needs and desires of "self" first.

Marriage is a part of God's plan for our happiness, but it will be strongest when you add the other gifts that He gives us. That is what churches are supposed to be about. Being part of a good church will help you understand God's plan for your happiness. Personal attention from a guide that knows the way (a pastor) - and advice from folks that have "been there, done that, and got the T-shirt" (members) - can help you through the rough times. It also a joy to know that others in your church "team" care about you and are praying for you. Support and comfort from a loving church is the gift that God has given to give us joy during the good times and help during the hard times.

May we suggest that you consider visiting us at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church. You can get more information about us online (crossofchristlc.net or on Facebook) or by calling Pastor Jim Connell at 915-740-7714. Or just visit us any Sunday morning at 2540 El Paseo at 10:00 a.m. Delicious homemade food is provided by our members after the service, followed by an informal Bible class for adults and Sunday School for the kids. We'd love for you to visit us.

*Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

(Psalm 37:4)



*Love God.
Love Our
Neighbor.
Make
Disciples.*

Cross of Christ Lutheran Church

2540 EL PASEO, LAS CRUCES, NM

Worship: Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

www.crossofchristlc.net or on Facebook

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