PreMarriage Class

St. John’s Cathedral Counselling Service
Caring for the community since 1977
Don’t ever stop dating your wife and don’t ever stop flirting with your husband.
Marriage and Love: 
A Little Bit of History

Until the 18th century, marriage was primarily seen as an "arranged" relationship for often times political, economic and/or societal benefits. Some even argued marriage was seen as an exchange of property first and foremost (the dowry system in India or Japan for example), with the securing of a lineage as probably the second motivating force behind marriages (the arranged marriages of certain royal families across Europe for example). However, not all arranged marriages before the 18th century were without aspects of love, romance and wedding ceremony traditions that we still see today.
Marriage and Love:
A Little Bit of History con’t

For example, did you know that “tying the knot” came about during the great Roman Empire period where husbands had fun untying the knot from the girdle of their wife?

Gifts at bridal showers started in 17th century Japan with the bride opening her gifts above her head in a traditional Japanese parasol whereby the gifts were showered down upon her.

The white wedding dress was made popular by Anne of Brittany in 1499, stag parties initiated by Spartan soldiers in the 6th century B.C., and the Italians during the medieval times believed that a diamond in the engagement ring was made from the flames of love.

Egyptians as early as the 12th century exchanged shoes after wedding ceremonies to wish farewell to the married couple long before the more modern tradition of tying shoes and other objects on the back of the married couple’s honeymoon car.

Our wedding was many years ago. The celebration continues to this day.
Gene Perret
Marriage and Love:
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The emotion of “love” has always been a universal human factor for marriage since the beginning of humankind, but it wasn’t until the mid to late 18th century where it finally became a key reason for wanting to spend a lifetime with another. For example, Duke William IX of Aquitaine (first of the troubadours) started the social practice of courtly love, a love that showed passion and romance through song and poems to win the heart of a woman for marriage.

The French in 1696 wrote of duty love in The Bachelor’s Directory, directing the husband “If she (the wife) loves you, you cannot without ingratitude forbear to love her,” and the Puritan divine Benjamin Wadsworth around the same period proclaimed that “The Great God commands thee to love her ... How vile then are those who don’t love their wives.” Subsequently, as societies became more civilized, modern and open to sexuality and expressing emotions, we have now discovered other forms of love that sometimes lead to marriage: agape love, philo love, unconditional love, physical love, emotional love, unselfish love, puppy love, friendship love, enduring love, romantic love and others.

At St. John’s Cathedral Counselling Service would like to propose another love, a love we believe can strengthen and sustain a partnership for a lifetime; a kind love. Kindness in almost all relationships has been seen as one of the key factors in lifelong relationships. We invite couples to come and spend time with us in our pre-marital counselling to learn more about a kind love to ensure an ever lasting love.
Love is born through the giving of kindness.

Inderjeet Singh Rajpal
Pre-Marital Program Overview

Our Pre-Marital Program has two key themes:

i) **Prevention** and ii) **Resilience**; which when combined formulates our marital well-being model we teach all our couples.

The Prevention part of the program focuses on helping couples improve upon communication, conflict resolution, work-life-marriage integration, marital stage changes, relationship stress, and "healthy marital recipes."

Resilience, the second part of the program, provides couples with a wonderful, enriching and easy-to-understand model on how couples can sustain the romance and enhance their longevity factors. Couples will learn how to persevere through the various life-marital stages in life so their overall marriage, family and individual well-being is preserved.
Part A: Prevention Track

1. Communication skills: how we listen, how we talk, vocabulary choices, positive interruptions and healthy nags;
   Goal: to reduce the chances of a conflict (resolving things peacefully) becoming an argument (delaying resolution due to anger and fighting)

2. Conflict resolution: difference between a conflict and an argument, types of conflicts, ways to interact in a conflict, post conflict healing;
   Goal: to ensure couples see conflict as a means to learn and remain close

3. Marital (life) stages: exploring the challenges and opportunities in the six marital stages, understanding physical and psychological changes with the stage changes;
   Goal: to increase the sense of certainty and self-control over life during change

4. Relationship stress: defining two areas of relationship stress, stress management strategies, accommodating instead of compromising, loss versus change;
   Goal: to find ways to heal and nurture the self and others in times of strain

5. Healthy marital recipes: exciting topics in areas of brain science and how we can employ brain and body recipes for well-being, exploring the positive psychology model for well-being
   Goal: to enhance mindfulness for overall well-being
Part B: Resilience Track

1. **Relationship models:** define the 6 types of marriages, learn about effective parenting, balancing friends, family and others, describe the happy and desire elements of marriage; Goal: to develop realistic expectations and decrease conflict

2. **Intimacy:** explore the five key intimacy areas of marriage, understanding the difference and similarities of sexuality versus sensuality, intimate love versus activity love, intimacy changes with aging and children; Goal: to better understand how to sustain intimacy over a lifetime

3. **Identity:** keeping the I as you become a We, understanding the scarf’s we wear (status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, fairness), career brain (achievement) versus family brain (attachment); Goal: to learn how to validate each other and strengthen the “we”

4. **Well-being:** happy life versus the good life, being positive (thankfulness) in a marriage and being optimistic (perseverance) in marriage, materialism (meeting basic needs) and materialistic (satisfying transitional wants); Goal: to develop a healthy lifestyle that nurtures love and kindness

5. **Values and Expectations:** defining values that guide relationship enrichment, clarifying expectations (with the self and others), integrating values within cross-cultural relationships, highlighting 5 basic life skills for well-being; Goal: to ensure the marriage has a clear sense of purpose and meaning that supports other areas of life
A forever love is realized through:

Know yourself
Be yourself
Trust yourself
Love yourself.
Enrollment Details

Our Caring Facilitators
St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service Executive Director developed and oversees the Pre-Marital Program who has over 30 years of experience counselling couples from various cultures and backgrounds in family and marriage. Our pre-marital counsellors are qualified with master’s degree achievements in relationship, family and marriage and many years of experience. The program is mixed with humor, learning, sharing, reaffirmation of the value family and marriage brings to happiness, and numerous handouts for future reference.

Medium of Instruction/Materials
English, Spanish, French, Japanese, Cantonese and Mandarin.

Certificate of Completion
Upon completion of the Pre-Marital Program, all participants receive a beautiful Certificate of Completion and a supporting letter from our Executive Director that is recognized by most religions and faiths. Couples should contact their wedding minister to ensure the program at St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service is accepted.

Enrollee
The Pre-Marital Program is conducted on a couple only basis, it is not done in a small group format as seen in the comedy film License to Wed starring Robin Williams. Our Pre-Marital Program is open for persons, of all faiths and religions and/or for those who are not religious or have a faith.
Enrollment Details

Tailor made
Our pre-marital program can also be designed to meet the requirements of your church and clergy in most instances.

Appointment Times
Sessions can be conducted daytime, evenings and week-ends. Special arrangements can be made for Sunday sessions.

Venue
St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service - On Hing Building - Central Hong Kong

Registration
Email your request for more information and/or to enroll in the Pre-Marital Program at info@sjcshk.com or call us on 2525 7207.

Payment
We accept cash, cheque, EPS and/or credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express).

Pre-Marital Program Fees
Fees are based on a sliding fee scale. Standard number of sessions for Pre-Marital program are ten (10) but actual number of sessions required for completion depend on various factors, to be discussed at initial session.
We would like to take this moment to wish you both a lifetime of kindness, intimacy, good health, laughter and growth in your upcoming marriage.

Dr Mark and all the counsellors and staff at St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service
LORD, let our vows remain
safely in our heart.
The love that we known
let it not depart.
 Teach us to stand together
to face the world’s demands . . .
Remind us that marriage takes
two pair of loving hands.

Amen
Contact Details for Fun and Learning

with our

Pre-Marital Program

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