

Premarital Counseling: Marriage and Family Therapy

Assignment 2 – Reflection Paper

Professor: Michelle S. Park

Esther Oliveira

Book: A Lasting Promise: A Christian Guide to Fighting for Your Marriage

The Art of Communication

Cliché Conversation. The term **originates from the French language** and refers to the clicking sound made by metal printing plates used to create the same symbol repeatedly. Like a bell on the top of a Church that repeats itself, people get so used to it that they don't hear it anymore from time to time. This type of conversation is a common scenario in our daily lives. We ask each other all the time, "How are you?", "Do you think it is going to rain today?" "I like your hat" Cliché conversations are the most common communication among couples. They are just interested to know how their days went and what happened. Their daily communication is very superficial. It is well-mannered and polite, but nobody genuinely engages in a mindful conversation.

Couples often like to talk about somebody else's problems and life. What happened with the neighbors who left the oven on and burned their dinner? Do you think Sally will bring her mother to live with her? They usually talk about what happened to their mother or sister, but they don't talk about themselves. They typically talk about the news around the world and climate change, the hurricane in Louisiana that left many without water and power for days. The couple talks about others and their distress, but they don't say anything about themselves.

Communication is vital to enriching, nurturing, and establishing a solid relationship. When talking, giving full attention to your spouse is fundamental for understanding what the other person is saying. The telephone has become a part of their body for many people, and disconnecting it during conversations is vital. But it is fundamental and essential for the person talking to receive total attention. Dialogue is between two people talking about the same subject to express and communicate their feelings, thoughts, and opinions. It is very frustrating if you are trying to dialogue with someone on their phone, watching television, or doing something else simultaneously. If you want the other person to pay attention to what you are saying, you should do the same. Body language and tone of voice are tools everyone uses to express to the other person how important what they are saying is. To better communicate, we must give the person talking our full undivided attention.

Communication will be fluent, positive, and constructive when couples pay attention to each other and are willing to open up and talk about themselves. Both parties must intend to understand what is being said and be able to share their thoughts and feelings without being interrupted, corrected, or criticized. The words should be chosen with understanding to empower and not blame the other person. Using the right words to encourage your spouse to talk to you is fundamental. Communication is a process where couples need to learn the way to speak and listen to accept each other.

Spouses should communicate their ideas, feelings, and opinions without fearing rejection. Husbands and wives should encourage each other to express themselves during communication. Communication should be free from critical approaches and derogatory words; instead, show each other interest in what they are saying. Partners should show that the ideas and feelings of each other are important. One way to show that is by listening to understand and choosing the

right words to answer without a judgmental attitude. Encourage your partner to be confident enough to step out and have a real conversation. Stay focused in the conversation to respond to the other person with understanding and assurance with your body language that you are participating.

When an individual focuses on the qualities of the other and expresses that in words and attitudes, it will help and encourage communication to flow. Words of encouragement and affirmation bring security and harmony into a family and God's presence into the relationship. You are affirming to the other person that God created them to fulfill a purpose in life. Words of encouragement instead of negativity will help communication grow and promote intimacy in the home. Words of affirmation and gratitude showing how much the other person contributes to the family and the relationship promote a secure environment for the kids and constructive communication.

Husbands and wives are different from each other, and that makes them unique, which can be a tremendous challenge for communication. However, couples must learn to use their differences to build relationships, not tear them apart; I have learned through our classes that my ministry counseling couples must start in my marriage, my family, my husband, and my sons. Partners should be open about their marriage dissatisfactions and look for solutions together. When communication flows in the house with love and compassion, it brings the other person to have a real and honest relationship, not intending to transform or mold the other person into somebody else. Talking about each other differences is a way to promote change while avoiding accusations and blaming. Spouses should work together as a team looking for solutions. Husband and wives should see their differences, not as a negative but instead look at the differences as a way to strengthen the relationship.

Spouses should have time to talk about their differences and disagreements. A specific day or time on the weekend should be set aside to discuss areas that need to be worked on in their relationship. Ignoring the problems does not solve them; on the contrary, sometimes, it will amplify them. The conversation should focus on the issue to have a solution and a plan of execution. Together in agreement with each other, even if the other person has a different point of view, they should work for the family's health and a closer relationship. A healthy relationship always will require forgiveness, love, and respect for each other. This is where my husband and I always work through our differences to promote better and healthy communication in our house. When our points of view differ from each other, we agree to do what is best for our family. When a couple deals with disagreements, the intention is not to prove who is wrong or right but to solve the issue with success. Throughout our class, I have learned that husbands and wives always have disputes because they are imperfect people; they should allow themselves to make mistakes, be humble to recognize them and look for strategies to improve.

Married couples need to have a bigger picture than that of themselves. Many problems they will face as a team are sometimes generated by their families of origin. They result from a mother or father who may not have known how to communicate in a healthy, solid, and respectful way. Sometimes the accusation, pointing fingers, or attacking the other person was what they had seen their parents do. In the Prepare/Enrich training class, I have learned how important it is to understand and not need to repeat our parent's errors and mistakes. Marriage is where husbands and wives learn together to build their relationship and family. Sometimes learning from someone else's mistakes is a better way to avoid them.

Although everybody has a past, God allows us to write our history. A great tool that God has given us as a couple is the blessing of forgiveness. When we admit that we made a mistake and did not try to cover it up or blame somebody else or the circumstances around us but recognize our fault, we must plant a seed of forgiveness in our relationship. Forgiveness is not a choice but a commandment from God to us. When couples realize that and act in total obedience, they permit God to heal their hearts, soul, mind, and relationship. When couples recognize their errors, they put God first in obedience believing in His sovereignty in us and through us. That brings healing into our family.

Admitting faults and assuming responsibility for mistakes asking for forgiveness and reconciliation, the marriage walks toward cure and restoration. Verbalizing and asking for forgiveness is an invitation to the Holy Spirit to work on the relationship, bringing healing and restoration. When God is the center, the marriage will be successful. When the foundation is a Rock Named Jesus, that house will prevail in the middle of the storms of life because its foundation is unshakeable.

References:

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