

Section 4

Relational Self-Help Practice Exercises for Lifelong Learning of Couples and Families

Couples

Premarital Preparation
Sexual Motivation
Relational Quality: Part 1
Relational Quality: Part 2
Relational Quality: Part 3
Relationship Styles

Families

Foster/Adoptive Care
Planned Parenting

Couples

Premarital Preparation

We prepare for life through education. We even prepare for a driving license through education. Yet we often assume that being married or entering a relationship will take place naturally, without preparation. Marriage is one of the most responsible roles of our lives, but getting married and becoming a partner is expected to happen without any effort on our part. The purpose of this practice exercises is to help you learn more about why you want to get married or become a couple at this time. It is hoped that identifying these reasons will allow you to have a better relationship.

Practice Exercise 1. Reason for Marriage (or Living Together)

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to explore the reasons why you want to get married or live together now. Question No. 1 should be completed by each partner independently of the other. It would be extremely self-defeating if the couple worked together on answering this question. After you have completed answering it, get together with your partner to discuss how each of you has answered it.

1. Why do you want to get married? Rank-order the goals listed below according to your reasons for getting married. Rank as No. 1 the most important reason for marrying your partner now, rank as No. 2 the second most important reason, and so on; mark as N/A (not applicable) the reasons that may not apply to you at all. Try to rank-order at least ten reasons. Make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h in advance to compare, contrast, and spend your answers. Make sure to keep notes of your meeting.

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Combined</i>
a. I want to make my partner happy	_____	_____	_____
b. I want to make myself happy	_____	_____	_____
c. I cannot think of life without my partner	_____	_____	_____
d. I love my partner and I cannot think of spending my life with anybody else	_____	_____	_____
e. He or she is the most wonderful person in the world	_____	_____	_____
f. Isn't "being in love" a good reason?	_____	_____	_____
g. I love having sex with my partner	_____	_____	_____
h. I need the love I get from my partner	_____	_____	_____
i. I want to discuss the rest of my life with my partner	_____	_____	_____
j. I love my partner for the security that this relationship gives me	_____	_____	_____
k. To escape painful family relationships	_____	_____	_____
l. This seems the right time	_____	_____	_____
m. We have to marry because we are expecting a child	_____	_____	_____
n. Our families arranged it	_____	_____	_____
o. To fulfill a promise	_____	_____	_____
p. All our friends are getting married	_____	_____	_____
q. My biological clock is ticking and I need to have a child	_____	_____	_____
r. My religion requires marriage for sex	_____	_____	_____
s. My father caught us having sex and now he wants us to get married	_____	_____	_____
t. I caught a sexually transmitted disease from my partner and it would be hard to find other partners	_____	_____	_____
u. My horoscope said that this time is right	_____	_____	_____

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Combined</i>
v. Our children wanted us to get married	_____	_____	_____
w. My partner is terminally ill and wants to provide for me after death	_____	_____	_____
x. My parents will disown me if I do not provide them with a legal grandchild	_____	_____	_____
y. I want to marry an American citizen to become an American myself	_____	_____	_____
z. Write your own reason for marrying: (_____)	_____	_____	_____

2. Now that you have finished with the rank-order, explain why you ranked the reasons for marrying the way you did.

3. Compare and contrast your rank-order with the rank-order of your partner. Add both rank-orders in the middle column and give your combined rankings to whoever is helping you with this practice exercises.

Homework: During the coming week, think about the rank-order you have completed, the rank-order completed by your partner, and whether the combined rank-order obtained from you both represents a useful way to proceed with this practice exercises. If you have any misgivings about your and your partner's rank-orders, or your combined rank-order, discuss them with your partner and with the professional who is helping you with this practice exercises.

Standard Practice Exercise for Marital Preparation

Practice Exercise No. _____ Reason _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand in greater detail how the reason listed above is linked to your wanting to get married now.

1. When did you become aware of this reason? Check which age applies:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| a. In preschool | _____ | d. In high school | _____ |
| b. In elementary school | _____ | e. In college | _____ |
| c. In middle school | _____ | f. In graduate school | _____ |

2. How did you become aware of this reason? Tell as much as you possibly can:

3. How has this reason helped you in the present?

4. How much do you want this reason to help you in the future?

5. Now that you have completed this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you felt about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. I did not like it at all. I want to quit this practice exercises. | _____ |
| b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with this practice exercises. | _____ |
| c. I liked it and I want to go on with this practice exercises. | _____ |
| d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercises years ago. | _____ |
| e. I liked it so much that I wish all couples planning to get married could get a practice exercises like this to work on before they get married. | _____ |

6. Discuss your answers with whoever has given you this practice exercises.

Homework: During the next few days, think of how you could either give up this reason if it is negative for you and your partner, or change it to have a

positive effect on you and your partner. Write down what you want to do about this reason.

Concluding Follow-Up Form for Marital Preparation

Name_____Sex_____Date_____

The purpose of this form is to review whether this practice exercises was helpful to you.

1. Please select the answer that fits how you feel about this practice exercises:

a. I did not like working on this practice exercises at all. I wish I never saw it. _____

b. I did not like this practice exercises at all, but I am glad I got to work on it. _____

c. I am delighted I got a chance to work on this practice exercises. _____

d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercises, but I wish all premarital couples had a chance to work on it. _____
2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercises? Please check the answer that applies to you:

a. Not helpful at all _____

b. Somewhat helpful _____

c. Helpful _____

d. Very helpful _____
3. Which practice exercise did you like best? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

Reasons	Rank-orders		
	Yours	Partner's	Subtracted
a. I want to make my partner happy	_____	_____	_____
b. I want to make myself happy	_____	_____	_____
c. I cannot think of life without my partner	_____	_____	_____
d. I love my partner and I cannot think of spending my life with anybody else	_____	_____	_____

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Subtracted</i>
e. He or she is the most wonderful person in the world	_____	_____	_____
f. Isn't "being in love" a good reason?	_____	_____	_____
g. I love having sex with my partner	_____	_____	_____
h. I need the love I get from my partner	_____	_____	_____
i. I want to discuss the rest of my life with my partner	_____	_____	_____
j. For the security that this relationship gives me	_____	_____	_____
k. To escape painful family relationships	_____	_____	_____
l. This seems the right time	_____	_____	_____
m. We have to marry because we are expecting a child	_____	_____	_____
n. Our families arranged it	_____	_____	_____
o. To fulfill a promise	_____	_____	_____
p. All our friends are getting married	_____	_____	_____
q. My biological clock is ticking and I need to have a child	_____	_____	_____
r. My religion requires marriage for sex	_____	_____	_____
s. My father caught us having sex and now he wants us to get married	_____	_____	_____
t. I caught a sexually transmitted disease from my partner and it would be hard to find other partners	_____	_____	_____
u. My horoscope said that this time is right	_____	_____	_____
v. Our children wanted us to get married	_____	_____	_____
w. My partner is terminally ill and wants to provide for me after death	_____	_____	_____
x. My parents will disown me if I do not provide them with a legal grandchild	_____	_____	_____
y. I want to marry an American citizen to become an American myself	_____	_____	_____
z. Write your own reason for wanting to marry now rather than later:	_____	_____	_____
(_____)	_____	_____	_____
Total discrepancy score	_____	_____	_____

4. Write why you ranked the practice exercises the way you did.

5. After completing item 4, discuss your rank-orders with your partner and write them in the column next to your rank-orders. Discuss similarities and differences in your rank-orders. In this case, however, instead of adding your scores, you will need to subtract your rank-order from the rank-orders of your partner, even if a minus number results. Add all these scores at the bottom of the table and discuss with each other the meaning of this total discrepancy score. You can use differences between yourselves to enhance the relationship or you can use the same differences to sabotage it. The choice is yours.
6. Please write any comments that might improve this practice exercises.

Sexual Motivation

The purpose of this practice exercises is to help you understand your motivations about sex and sexuality and possibly improve your sexual relationship with your partner, either in marriage or in a committed couple relationship.

Answer each practice exercise individually and get together with your partner at preset, predetermined times (at least 24 h ahead) to discuss your completed practice exercises for no longer than 1 h. If you get upset during this time, end the discussion and make another appointment for another time at least 24 h ahead.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Sexual Motives

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you define more clearly your motivation for sex and sexuality. Most couples need to know and discuss this motivation about their relationships. Make sure that you understand and discuss with each other the meaning of each item that makes up this practice exercise.

1. Below are listed various sexual motives that cover a range of possibilities. If you have a motive not found in this list, add it at the end (there is room for additional features). Define each motive, and give two examples of how that motive is shown concretely in your relationship. Feel free to use a dictionary; it may help you in the process of defining these motives.

*Motives and Definitions**Examples*

a. Affirmation _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
b. Intimacy _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
c. Pleasure _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
d. Peer influence _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
e. Insecurity _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
f. Coping _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
g. Partner's power _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
h. Expression of worth _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____

i.	Relief from stress _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
j.	Procreation _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
k.	Enhance power _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
l.	To feel valued _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
m.	Nurturance _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
n.	Lust _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
o.	To say you have done it _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
p.	To fit in better _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____
q.	To make partner love you more _____	Example 1 _____
	_____	_____
	_____	Example 2 _____
	_____	_____

<i>Motive</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Joint</i>
g. Partner's power	_____	_____	_____
h. Expression of worth	_____	_____	_____
i. Relief from stress	_____	_____	_____
j. Procreation	_____	_____	_____
k. Enhance power	_____	_____	_____
l. To feel valued	_____	_____	_____
m. Nurturance	_____	_____	_____
n. Lust	_____	_____	_____
o. To say you have done	_____	_____	_____
p. To fit in better	_____	_____	_____
q. To make partner love you more	_____	_____	_____
r. Short-term avoidance of emotions	_____	_____	_____
s. To brag about it	_____	_____	_____
t. Curiosity	_____	_____	_____
u. A motive not listed above	_____	_____	_____
v. A motive not listed above	_____	_____	_____
w. A motive not listed above	_____	_____	_____

3. Why did you rank-order these motives the way you did?

Homework: During the coming week, make an appointment with your partner and go over your definitions and your rank-orders. Record your partner's rank-orders in the appropriate column and add both to achieve a joint rank-order. Take notes of your discussion while you are discussing (comparing and contrasting) your answers. Give your completed practice exercises and your notes to the professional who is assisting you with this practice exercises. If you are completing these practice exercises on your own, without professional help, make sure to keep your notes for future reference.

Whatever joint rank-order you agree on will determine the order of future practice exercises. The next practice exercise should be given the title of the motive that has been rated jointly as No. 1. After that practice exercise, the other practice exercises should follow the joint rank-order given above.

Standard Practice Exercise for Sexual Motivation

Practice Exercise No. _____ Title: _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the sexual motive listed in the title:

1. How did this motive start? Please explain in detail.

2. How often does this sexual motive take place? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this sexual motive come about? Do you remember how it started? Check which answer fits best:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. As we met for the first time | _____ |
| b. During courtship or while dating | _____ |
| c. Before marriage or before we started living together | _____ |
| d. During the honeymoon or as we were moving in together | _____ |
| e. Right after the honeymoon or right after we moved in together | _____ |
| f. A few months after the marriage or after we moved in together | _____ |
| g. 1 year after the marriage or when we moved in together | _____ |
| h. Years after marriage or when we moved in together | _____ |

5. Please explain further:

6. What does this sexual motive get you? Please explain:

7. Give three specific examples of how this sexual motive might be helpful to you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this sexual motive might be hurtful to you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

9. Give three specific examples of how this sexual motive might be helpful to those you love and who love you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

10. Give three specific examples of how this sexual motive might be hurtful to those you love and who love you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week, plan to think about this motive, whether it belongs to you or not, or remind your partner to think about it if it belongs to him or her. Make sure this thinking is repeated at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.), at least three times. Write down what happened in detail.

In case you wonder why this motive should be thought about, keep in mind that if you or your partner think about it, whoever thinks about it will acquire the power to end it, if you want to.

For each time you think about this motive, make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- a. How did your thinking about this motive start?

- b. What followed?
- c. How did it end?
- d. What did this thinking get you or your partner?

Time 1 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 2 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

d. _____

Check which of the following shows what you got out of this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Write down how you feel about this homework practice exercise and what you got out of it.

Final Follow-Up Form for Sexual Motivation

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review whether the practice exercises in this practice exercises were helpful to you.

- Which answer best fits how you feel about this practice exercises?
 - I did not like working on this practice exercises at all. I wish I never saw it. _____
 - I did not like this practice exercises, but I am glad I got to work on. _____
 - I am happy I got a chance to work on it. _____
 - I am not only delighted about this practice exercises, but I wish all partners could discuss their sexual motivation. _____
- How helpful was it to work on this practice exercises? Please check the answer that applies to you:

a. Not helpful at all	_____	c. Helpful	_____
b. Somewhat helpful	_____	d. Very helpful	_____
- Which practice exercise did you like best that was the most helpful to you? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

- c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercises. _____
 - d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercises earlier. _____
 - e. I liked it so much that I wish all couples could get something like this practice exercises to work on. _____
7. How could this practice exercises be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercises.

Relational Quality: Part 1

The purpose of this practice exercises is to improve your relationship with your partner, either in marriage or in a committed couple relationship. Answer each practice exercise individually and get together with your partner at preset, predetermined times (at least 24 h ahead) to discuss your completed practice exercises for no longer than 1 h. If you get upset during this time, end the discussion and make another appointment for another time at least 24 h ahead.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Relational Quality

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you define more clearly the nature and quality of your relationship with your partner. Make sure that you understand and discuss with each other the meaning of each feature that is included in this practice exercise.

1. Below are listed various features that cover a range of possibilities in a relationship. If you have a feature not found in this list, add it at the end (there is room for additional features). Define each feature and give two examples of how that feature is shown concretely in your relationship.

Features and Definitions

Examples

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| a. Taking time for each other _____ | Example 1 _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | Example 2 _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

- b. Talking with each other _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- c. Empathy _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- d. Listening to each other _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- e. Taking an interest in partner _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- f. Consideration _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- g. Openness _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- h. Affection _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- i. Paying attention to partner _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- j. Understanding _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

k. Safety _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

l. Honesty _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

m. Being there for each other _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

n. Mutual respect _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

o. Trust _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

p. Discussing everything _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

q. Love _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

r. Displaying emotions _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

s. Tenderness _____ Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

t. Accepting partner _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
u. Fidelity _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
v. Looking forward to seeing each other _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
w. Longing for each other _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
x. Dependability _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
y. Forgiveness _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
z. A feature not listed above (specify) _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
aa. A feature not listed above (specify) _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____

2. Now that you have defined the meaning of each feature, you need to rank-order those features according to how important they are to you in this relationship in the column “Yours.” Rank as No 1 the feature that is the most important to you, rank as No. 2 the feature that is next in importance, and so on; mark as 0 the

features that are not important to you at all, and mark as N/A the features that do not apply to your relationship.

<i>Features</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Joint</i>
a. Taking time for each other	_____	_____	_____
b. Talking with each other	_____	_____	_____
c. Empathy	_____	_____	_____
d. Listening to each other	_____	_____	_____
e. Taking an interest in partner	_____	_____	_____
f. Consideration	_____	_____	_____
g. Openness	_____	_____	_____
h. Affection	_____	_____	_____
i. Paying attention to partner	_____	_____	_____
j. Understanding	_____	_____	_____
k. Safety	_____	_____	_____
l. Honesty	_____	_____	_____
m. Being there for each other	_____	_____	_____
n. Mutual respect	_____	_____	_____
o. Trust	_____	_____	_____
p. Discussing everything	_____	_____	_____
q. Love	_____	_____	_____
r. Displaying emotions	_____	_____	_____
s. Tenderness	_____	_____	_____
t. Accepting partner	_____	_____	_____
u. Fidelity	_____	_____	_____
v. Looking forward to seeing each other	_____	_____	_____
w. Longing for each other	_____	_____	_____
x. Dependability	_____	_____	_____
y. Forgiveness	_____	_____	_____
z. A feature not listed above	_____	_____	_____
aa. A feature not listed above	_____	_____	_____

3. Why did you rank-order these features the way you did?

Homework: During the coming week, make an appointment with your partner and go over your definitions and your rank-orders. Record your partner's rank-orders in the appropriate column and add both to achieve a joint rank-order.

Take notes of your discussion while you are comparing and contrasting your answers. Keep your completed practice exercises and, if you work with a professional

who is assisting you with this practice exercises, discuss these notes with her or him in addition to discussing copies of your completed practice exercises.

Note: Whatever joint rank-order you agree on will determine the order of future practice exercises. However, you need to decide whether you want to work on practice exercises where there are the greatest discrepancies in your rankings or whether you want to work on practice exercises where there is the least discrepancy.

Consequently, based on your decision, the next practice exercise should be given the title of the joint feature that has been rated either as No. 1 or as one lower in your joint rank-order. After that practice exercise, all other practice exercises should follow the joint rank-order you have agreed on, either from the top or from the bottom of your rank-orders.

Standard Practice Exercise for Features of Relational Quality (Parts One, Two, and Three)

Practice Exercise No. _____ Feature: _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the feature listed in the title.

1. How did this feature start? Please explain in detail.

2. How often does this feature take place in your relationship? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this feature come about? Do you remember when it started? Check which answer fits best:

- a. As we met for the first time _____
- b. During courtship or while dating _____
- c. Before marriage or before we started living together _____
- d. During the honeymoon or as we were moving in together _____
- e. Right after the honeymoon or right after we moved in together _____
- f. A few months after the marriage or after we moved in together _____
- g. 1 year after the marriage or when we moved in together _____
- h. Years after marriage or when we moved in together _____

5. Please explain further:

6. What does this feature get you? Please explain.

7. Give three specific examples of how this feature is helpful to you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this feature is helpful to your partner.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week, plan to repeat this feature, if it belongs to you, or remind your partner to repeat it if it belongs to him or her. Make sure it is repeated at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.), at least three times. Write down what happened in detail. In case you wonder why this feature should be started, keep in mind that if you or your partner start it, whoever starts it will acquire the power to end it. This power should strengthen your relationship.

For each time make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- a. How did it start?
- b. What followed?
- c. How did it end?
- d. What did this behavior get you or your partner?

Time 1 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 2 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Check which of the following shows what you got out of this practice exercise:

- a. Completely useless

- b. Somewhat useless

- c. So-so

- d. Somewhat useful

- e. Extremely useful

Write down how you feel about this homework practice exercise and what you got out of it.

Final Follow-Up Form for Relational Quality (Parts 1–3)

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review whether the practice exercises in this practice exercises were helpful to you.

1. Which answer best fits how you feel about this practice exercises?

a. I did not like working on this practice exercises at all. I wish I never saw it.

b. I did not like this practice exercises, but I am glad I got to work on.

c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this.

d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercises, but I wish all couples could get it.

2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercises? Please check the answer that applies to you:

a. Not helpful at all

b. Somewhat helpful

c. Helpful

d. Very helpful

3. Which practice exercise did you like best and that was the most helpful to you? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as 0 the ones you did not like at all, and mark as N/A the ones that did not apply to you.

Features	Rank-orders		
	Yours	Partner's	Joint
a. Taking time for each other	_____	_____	_____
b. Talking with each other	_____	_____	_____
c. Empathy	_____	_____	_____
d. Listening to each other	_____	_____	_____

<i>Features</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Joint</i>
e. Taking an interest in partner	_____	_____	_____
f. Consideration	_____	_____	_____
g. Openness	_____	_____	_____
h. Affection	_____	_____	_____
i. Paying attention to partner	_____	_____	_____
j. Understanding	_____	_____	_____
k. Safety	_____	_____	_____
l. Honesty	_____	_____	_____
m. Being there for each other	_____	_____	_____
n. Mutual respect	_____	_____	_____
o. Trust	_____	_____	_____
p. Discussing everything	_____	_____	_____
q. Love	_____	_____	_____
r. Displaying emotions	_____	_____	_____
s. Tenderness	_____	_____	_____
t. Accepting partner	_____	_____	_____
u. Fidelity	_____	_____	_____
v. Looking forward to seeing each other	_____	_____	_____
w. Longing for each other	_____	_____	_____
x. Dependability	_____	_____	_____
y. Forgiveness	_____	_____	_____
z. A feature not listed above	_____	_____	_____
aa. A feature not listed above	_____	_____	_____

4. Explain why you rank-ordered the practice exercises the way you did.

5. Make an appointment with your partner and write down in the appropriate column your partner's rank-orders. Discuss (compare and contrast) whatever differences you may find in your individual rank-orders. Add both columns and compare your joint rank-orders with the rank-orders given in your first practice exercise. Are there any changes in your rank-orders, and if there are, why? If there are no changes, why? Please explain.

6. After completion of this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you felt about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:
- a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never saw this stupid practice exercises. _____
 - b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with another practice exercises. _____
 - c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercises. _____
 - d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercises earlier. _____
 - e. I liked it so much that I wish all couples could get something like this practice exercises to work on. _____
7. How could this practice exercises be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercises.

Relational Quality: Part 2

The purpose of this practice exercises is to improve your relationship with your partner, either in marriage or in a committed couple relationship. Answer each practice exercise individually and get together with your partner at preset, predetermined times (at least 24 h ahead) to discuss your completed practice exercises for no longer than 1 h. If you get upset during this time, end the discussion and make another appointment for another time at least 24 h ahead.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Relational Quality

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you define more clearly the nature and quality of your relationship. Make sure that you understand and discuss with each other the meaning of each feature that is included in this practice exercise.

1. Below are listed various features that cover a range of possibilities in a relationship. If you have a feature not found in this list, add it at the end (there is room for additional features). Define each feature and give two examples of how that feature is shown concretely in your relationship.

Features and Definitions

Examples

a. Support	Example 1
	Example 2
b. Knowing partner	Example 1
	Example 2
c. Friendship	Example 1
	Example 2
d. Running the household together	Example 1
	Example 2
e. Similarities	Example 1
	Example 2
f. Mutual goals	Example 1
	Example 2
g. Similar interests	Example 1
	Example 2
h. Only a few quarrels	Example 1
	Example 2
i. Mutual friends	Example 1
	Example 2

- j. Common activities _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- k. Harmony _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- l. Security _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- m. Similar beliefs _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- n. Deferring to partner's wishes _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- o. Helping one another _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- p. Spending as much time together as possible _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- q. Solving problems together _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- r. Willingness to compromise _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

s. Autonomy _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
t. Maintaining individuality _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
u. Independence _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
v. Having and allowing for freedom _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
w. A feature not listed above (specify) _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
x. A feature not listed above (specify) _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____

2. Now that you have defined the meaning of each feature, rank-order these features according to how important they are to you in this relationship in the column “Yours.” Rank as No. 1 the feature that is the most important to you, rank as No. 2 the feature that is next in importance, and so on; mark as 0 the features that may not be important to you at all, and mark as N/A the features that do not apply to your relationship.

Features	Rank-orders		
	Yours	Partner's	Joint
a. Support	_____	_____	_____
b. Knowing partner	_____	_____	_____
c. Friendship	_____	_____	_____
d. Running the household together	_____	_____	_____
e. Similarities	_____	_____	_____

<i>Features</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Joint</i>
f. Mutual goals	_____	_____	_____
g. Similar interests	_____	_____	_____
h. Only a few quarrels	_____	_____	_____
i. Mutual friends	_____	_____	_____
j. Common activities	_____	_____	_____
k. Harmony	_____	_____	_____
l. Security	_____	_____	_____
m. Similar beliefs	_____	_____	_____
n. Deferring to partner's wishes	_____	_____	_____
o. Helping one another	_____	_____	_____
p. Spending as much time together as possible	_____	_____	_____
q. Solving problems together	_____	_____	_____
r. Willingness to compromise	_____	_____	_____
s. Autonomy	_____	_____	_____
t. Maintaining individuality	_____	_____	_____
u. Independence	_____	_____	_____
v. Having and allowing for freedom	_____	_____	_____
w. A feature not listed above(_____)	_____	_____	_____
x. A feature not listed above (_____)	_____	_____	_____

3. Why did you rank-order these features the way you did?

Homework: During the coming week, make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h in advance and go over your definitions and your rank-orders. Record your partner's rank-orders in the appropriate column and add both to achieve a Joint rank-order.

Take notes of your discussion while you are comparing and contrasting your answers. Keep your completed practice exercises and, if you work with a professional who is assisting you with this practice exercises, discuss those notes with her or him in addition to discussing your completed practice exercises.

Note: Whatever joint rank-order you agree on will determine the order of future practice exercises. However, you need to decide whether you want to work on practice exercises where there are the greatest discrepancies in your rankings or whether you want to work on practice exercises where there is the least discrepancy.

Consequently, based on your decision, the next practice exercise should be given the title of the joint feature that has been rated either as No. 1 or as one lower in your joint rank-order. After that practice exercise, all other practice exercises should follow the joint rank-order you have agreed on, either from the top or from the bottom of your rank-orders.

Concluding Follow-Up Form for Relational Quality

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review whether the practice exercises in this practice exercises were helpful to you.

1. Which answer best fits how you feel about this practice exercises?
- a. I did not like working on this practice exercises at all. I wish I never saw it.

b. I did not like this practice exercises, but I am glad I got to work on. _____

c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this. _____

d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercises, but I wish all couples could use it. _____
2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercises? Please check the answer that applies to you:
- a. Not helpful at all _____

b. Somewhat helpful _____

c. Helpful _____

d. Very helpful _____
3. Which practice exercise did you like best and that was the most helpful to you? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as 0 the ones you did not like at all, and mark as N/A the ones that did not apply to you.

Features	Rank-Orders		
	Yours	Partner's	Joint
a. Support	_____	_____	_____
b. Knowing partner	_____	_____	_____
c. Friendship	_____	_____	_____
d. Running the household together	_____	_____	_____
e. Similarities	_____	_____	_____
f. Mutual goals	_____	_____	_____
g. Similar interests	_____	_____	_____
h. Only a few quarrels	_____	_____	_____
i. Mutual friends	_____	_____	_____
j. Common activities	_____	_____	_____
k. Harmony	_____	_____	_____
l. Security	_____	_____	_____
m. Similar beliefs	_____	_____	_____
n. Deferring to partner's wishes	_____	_____	_____
o. Helping one another	_____	_____	_____
p. Spending as much time together as possible	_____	_____	_____

*Features**Rank-Orders**Yours**Partner's**Joint*

- q. Solving problems together
- r. Willingness to compromise
- s. Autonomy
- t. Maintaining individuality
- u. Independence
- v. Having and allowing for freedom
- w. A feature not listed above
(_____)
- x. A feature not listed above
(_____)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4. Explain why you rank-ordered the practice exercises the way you did.

5. Make an appointment with your partner and write down in the appropriate column your partner's rank-orders. Discuss (compare and contrast) whatever differences you may find in your individual rank-orders. Add both columns and compare your joint rank-orders from the rank-orders made in your first-practice exercise. Are there any changes in your rank-orders, and if there are, why? If there are no changes, why? Please explain.

6. After completion of this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you felt about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:

- a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never saw this stupid practice exercises. _____
- b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with another practice exercises. _____
- c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercises. _____
- d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercises earlier. _____

- e. I liked it so much that I wish all couples could get something like this practice exercises to work on. _____
7. How could this practice exercises be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercises.

Relational Quality: Part 3

The purpose of this practice exercises is to improve your relationship with your partner, either in marriage or in a committed couple relationship. Answer each practice exercise individually and get together with your partner at preset, predetermined times (at least 24 h ahead) to discuss your completed practice exercises for no longer than 1 h. If you get upset during this time, end the discussion and make another appointment for another time at least 24 h ahead.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Relational Quality

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you define more clearly the nature and quality of your relationship. Make sure that you understand and discuss with each other the meaning of each feature that is included in this practice exercise.

1. Below are listed various features that cover a range of possibilities in a relationship. If you have a feature not found in this list, add it at the end (there is room for additional features). Define each feature and give two examples of how that feature is shown concretely in your relationship.

Features and Definitions

Examples

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| a. One's own friends _____ | Example 1 _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | Example 2 _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| b. Willingness to discuss friends _____ | Example 1 _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | Example 2 _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

- c. Willingness to argue when necessary Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- d. Tolerance _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- e. Equality _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- f. Flexibility _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- g. Different interests _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- h. Humor _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- i. No dominance _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- j. Arguments _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- k. Responsibility _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

l. Not taking each other for granted	Example 1
	Example 2
m. Sexuality	Example 1
	Example 2
n. Sexual harmony	Example 1
	Example 2
o. Sexual satisfaction	Example 1
	Example 2
p. Physical contact	Example 1
	Example 2
q. Having fun	Example 1
	Example 2
r. A feature not listed above (specify)	Example 1
	Example 2
s. A feature not listed above (specify)	Example 1
	Example 2

2. Now that you have defined the meaning of each feature, rank-order these features according to how important they are to you in this relationship in the column “Yours.” Rank as No 1 the feature that is the most important to you, rank as No. 2 the feature that is next in importance, and so on; mark as 0 the features that are not important to you at all, and mark as N/A the features that do not apply to your relationship.

<i>Features</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Joint</i>
a. One's own friends	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
b. Willingness to discuss friends	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
c. Willingness to argue when necessary	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
d. Tolerance	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
e. Equality	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
f. Flexibility	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
g. Different interests	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
h. Humor	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
i. No dominance	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
j. Arguments	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
k. Responsibility	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
l. Not taking each other for granted	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
m. Sexuality	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
n. Sexual harmony	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
o. Sexual satisfaction	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
p. Physical contact	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
q. Having fun	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
r. A feature not listed above (<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
s. A feature not listed above (<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

3. Why did you rank-order these features the way you did?

Homework: During the coming week, make an appointment with your partner and go over your definitions and your rank-orders. Record your partner's rank-orders in the appropriate column and add both to achieve a joint rank-order.

Take notes of your discussion while you are comparing and contrasting your answers. Keep your completed practice exercises and, if you work with a professional who is assisting you with this practice exercises, discuss these notes with her or him in addition to discussing copies of your completed practice exercises.

Note: Whatever joint rank-order you agree on will determine the order of future practice exercises. However, you need to decide whether you want to work on practice exercises where there are the greatest discrepancies in your rankings or whether you want to work on practice exercises where there is the least discrepancy.

Consequently, based on your decision, the next practice exercise should be given the title of the joint feature that has been rated either as No. 1 or as one lower in your joint rank-order. After that practice exercise, all other practice exercises should follow the joint rank-order you have agreed on, either from the top or from the bottom of your rank-orders.

Concluding Follow-Up Form for Relational Quality

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review whether the practice exercises in this practice exercises were helpful to you.

1. Which answer fits how you feel about this practice exercises?
 - a. I did not like working on this practice exercises at all. I wish I never saw it. _____
 - b. I did not like this practice exercises, but I am glad I got to work on. _____
 - c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this. _____
 - d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercises, but I wish all husbands who use abusive or violent thinking could get it. _____

2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercises? Please check the answer that applies to you:

a. Not helpful at all _____	c. Helpful _____
b. Somewhat helpful _____	d. Very helpful _____

3. Which practice exercise did you like best and that was the most helpful to you? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as 0 the ones you did not like at all, and mark as N/A the ones that did not apply to you.

Features

Rank-orders

	<i>Yours</i>	<i>Partner's</i>	<i>Joint</i>
a. One's own friends	_____	_____	_____
b. Willingness to discuss friends	_____	_____	_____
c. Willingness to argue when necessary	_____	_____	_____
d. Tolerance	_____	_____	_____
e. Equality	_____	_____	_____
f. Flexibility	_____	_____	_____
g. Different interests	_____	_____	_____
h. Humor	_____	_____	_____
i. No dominance	_____	_____	_____
j. Arguments	_____	_____	_____
k. Responsibility	_____	_____	_____
l. Not taking each other for granted	_____	_____	_____
m. Sexuality	_____	_____	_____
n. Sexual harmony	_____	_____	_____
o. Sexual satisfaction	_____	_____	_____
p. Physical contact	_____	_____	_____
q. Having fun	_____	_____	_____

*Features**Rank-orders**Yours**Partner's**Joint*

- r. A feature not listed above

(_____)

- s. A feature not listed above

(_____)

4. Explain why you rank-ordered the practice exercises the way you did.

5. Make an appointment with your partner and write down in the appropriate column your partner's rank-orders. Discuss (compare and contrast) whatever differences you may find in your individual rank-orders. Add both columns and compare your joint rank-orders with the rank-orders made in your first practice exercise. Are there any changes in your rank-orders, and if there are, why? If there are no changes, why? Please explain.

6. After completion of this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you felt about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:

- a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never saw this stupid practice exercises. _____
- b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with another practice exercises. _____
- c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercises. _____
- d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercises earlier. _____
- e. I liked it so much that I wish all couples could get something like this practice exercises to work on. _____

7. How could this practice exercises be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercises.

Relationship Styles

The purpose of this practice exercises is to help you become more aware of the many styles that are found in intimate relationships.

Practice Exercise 1. Understanding Relationship Styles

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you understand various types of relationship styles.

- There are 16 types of styles in intimate relationships. Define each pair of words according to what it means to you; you can use a dictionary or consult your partner, a relative, a friend, or a mental health professional. Please add two examples of your own to make sure that you understood these definitions.

Definitions of Relationship Styles

Examples

a. Empty/absent _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

b. Participant/sharing _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

c. Solitary/reserved _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- d. Tenacious/egocentric _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- e. Docile/surrendering _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- f. Altruist/involved _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- g. Mysterious/ambiguous _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- h. Collaborative/mediator _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- i. Abstract/unpredictable _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- j. Sharing/innovative _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- k. Rebel/antagonist _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

- l. Dominant/dictatorial _____ Example 1 _____

_____ Example 2 _____

m. Two-faced/false-altruist _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
n. Unpredictable/altruist _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
o. Inconclusive/disorganized _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
p. Confused/chaotic _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____

2. Now that you understand various types of relationship styles, it is important to find out how they apply to you. Rank-order them according to how much they apply to you. Rank as No. 1 the style that applies to you the most, rank as No. 2 the style that applies to you next, and so on; mark as N/A the styles that do not apply to you. If you have trouble ranking these styles, ask your partner to help you, and make yourself available to help your partner with his or her rankings. Often, others can see us more accurately than we can.

Styles	Rank-orders			
	First	Partner ¹	Other ²	Final
a. Empty/absent	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Participant/sharing	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Solitary/reserved	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Tenacious/egocentric	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Docile/surrendering	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Altruist/involved	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Mysterious/ambiguous	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. Collaborative/mediator	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Abstract/unpredictable	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. Sharing/innovative	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. Rebel/antagonist	_____	_____	_____	_____
l. Dominant/dictatorial	_____	_____	_____	_____
m. Two-faced/false-altruist	_____	_____	_____	_____

¹Indicate here who your partner (or relative) is:_____.

²Indicate here who "other" is:_____.

<i>Styles</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>			
	<i>First</i>	<i>Partner¹</i>	<i>Other²</i>	<i>Final</i>
o. Unpredictable/altruist	_____	_____	_____	_____
p. Inconclusive/ disorganized	_____	_____	_____	_____
r. Confused/chaotic	_____	_____	_____	_____

3. Write or type this list on a separate sheet of paper and give it to your partner, relative, or friend, without their seeing your rank-orders. Ask your partner, relative, or friend to rank-order how these styles apply to you.
4. Now you need to ask another person who knows you very well (parents, siblings, relatives, close friends) to rank-order these styles as they apply to you, using the column "Other." To make sure that this rank-order is independent of yours, type or write this list on a separate sheet of paper.

Homework: During the next week, compare and contrast your rank-order with the other two rank-orders and write down (under "Final") how you would re-rank these styles on the basis of the feedback you received from your partner and from the other person.

Standard Practice Exercise for Relational Styles

Practice Exercise No. _____ Adjectives: _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the relationship style described by the two adjectives listed in the title above.

1. How does the style described by these adjectives apply to you? Please explain in detail.

2. How often do you feel like the style described by the adjectives listed above?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did the style described by these adjectives come about? Do you remember when you started it? Check which answer fits best:

- a. When I was a child (younger than 5 years of age) _____
- b. When I was in elementary school _____
- c. When I was in middle school _____
- d. When I was in high school _____
- e. After high school _____
- f. Any other time _____

5. Please explain further:

6. Was the style described by these adjectives acceptable or unacceptable? Why? Please explain.

7. Give three specific examples of how the style described by these adjectives affects you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week, plan to repeat the style described by these adjectives at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.) on at least 3 days (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday). If you can start it, you can stop it. Write down what happened in detail. For each time you start this style, make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- (a) How did you start it?
- (b) What followed?
- (c) How did it end?
- (d) What did the style described by these adjectives get you?

Time 1 (write the time you started_____)

- a.

- b.

- c.

- d.

Time 2 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Please check which of the following shows how you feel about this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Explain in greater detail how you feel about this practice exercise and what you got out of it.

Concluding Feedback Form for Relational Styles

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review whether this practice exercises was helpful to you or not.

1. Please check the answer that best fits how you feel about this practice exercises:
- a. I did not like working on this practice exercises at all. I wish I never saw it.

b. I did not like this practice exercises at all, but I am glad I got to work on it.

c. I am delighted I got a chance to work on this practice exercises.

d. I am not only delighted about working on this practice exercises, but I wish all people with relational problems had a chance to work on it.
2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercises? Please check the answer that applies to you:
- a. Not helpful at all

b. Somewhat helpful

c. Helpful

d. Very helpful
3. Which practice exercise did you like best? Please rank-order the practice exercises. Rank as No. 1 the one you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or that did not apply to you.

Styles	Rank-orders			
	First	Partner	Other	Final
a. Empty/absent	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Participant/sharing	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Solitary/reserved	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Tenacious/egocentric	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Docile/surrendering	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Altruist/involved	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Mysterious/ambiguous	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. Collaborative/mediator	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Abstract/unpredictable	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. Sharing/innovative	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. Rebel/antagonist	_____	_____	_____	_____
l. Dominant/dictatorial	_____	_____	_____	_____

Styles	Rank-orders			
	First	Partner	Other	Final
m. Two-faced/false-altruist	_____	_____	_____	_____
o. Unpredictable/altruist	_____	_____	_____	_____
p. Inconclusive/disorganized	_____	_____	_____	_____
r. Confused/chaotic	_____	_____	_____	_____

4. Now ask your partner, relative, or friend (Partner) as well as another person (Other) to rank-order these styles. Write down their rank-orders and then calculate the final rank-order that represents whether you paid attention to these other opinions.

5. Sometimes what we like most is not necessarily the most helpful. Rank the practice exercises according to their helpfulness to you. Rank as No. 1 the most helpful, rank as No. 2 the next most helpful, and so on, down to the least helpful practice exercise; mark as N/A the practice exercises that did not apply to you.

Styles	Rank-order	Styles	Rank-order
a. Empty/absent	_____	i. Abstract/unpredictable	_____
b. Participant/sharing	_____	j. Sharing/innovative	_____
c. Solitary/reserved	_____	k. Rebel/antagonist	_____
d. Tenacious/egocentric	_____	l. Dominant/dictatorial	_____
e. Docile/surrendering	_____	m. Two-faced/false-altruist	_____
f. Altruist/involved	_____	o. Unpredictable/altruist	_____
g. Mysterious/ambiguous	_____	p. Inconclusive/ disorganized	_____
h. Collaborative/mediator	_____	r. Confused/chaotic	_____

6. Please feel free to write any comments that might improve this practice exercises.

Families

Foster/Adoptive Care

The purpose of this practice exercises is to help potential foster/adoptive parents prepare for caring for their foster or adoptive child(ren).

Practice Exercise 1. Learning to Think Like a Foster/Adoptive Parent

Name_____Sex_____Date_____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you think like an adoptive/foster parent.

Be sure that the numbers and letters in your answer sheets match those in these practice exercises.

1. This is a list of the most commonly asked questions about foster or adoptive care. Answer these questions to the best of your ability even if you have to guess. After you have completed your answers, discuss them and their implications with your partner.

- a. Question for the natural family:

- i. Why did we lose our child?

- ii. Will they give him/her back?

- iii. Could we keep in touch with him/her?

- iv. Would foster/adoptive care help us too?

- b. Question for the foster/adoptive child:

- i. Who are these foster people?

ii. What can I do now?

iii. What can I not do?

iv. What do they expect from me?

v. What do they think about me?

vi. Who can I rely on?

vii. What will my family think about me?

viii. Will they accept me or reject?

ix. What have I done to deserve this?

c. Question for the foster or adoptive parents:

i. Are we fit for this experience?

ii. Have we got enough strength?

iii. How can we get to know him/her, his/her habits, and his/her difficulties?

iv. How can we raise him/her?

v. What will our natural children say about the ways the foster child is different? Will they become friends with the foster child?

vi. What will happen if we become too fond of him/her?

vii. What will we do if his/her family pesters or bothers us?

d. Questions for the natural children of foster or adoptive parents:

i. Is s/he taking my space away?

ii. What will s/he demand from us?

iii. Is s/he being a pest?

iv. Can we live now as before?

v. Will my parents love me as much as before?

e. Questions for the extended family of foster/adoptive parents:

i. Have they got enough strength to deal with this child?

ii. Will this child turn out to be as rejected as he or she may seem?

- iii. What will happen when the child goes back to his/her family, will s/he be worse off?

- f. Questions for social workers:

- i. Is this experience worth the trouble?

- ii. Is this family right for this child?

- iii. How long will the child stay in this house?

- iv. How will the natural parents behave?

- v. In which way can we help all of them?

2. In your opinion, are there other important questions? Write as many questions you can think of that were not contained in the above list.

3. Go back to the list above and reread carefully all the questions most asked by foster/adoptive parents.

a. What questions did you ask yourself before reading these questions? Write out at least three new ones:

i. Question 1

ii. Question 2

iii. Question 3

b. What questions are new to you, questions that you wonder about?

c. Are there other questions that would be worth asking?

4. After your have discussed your answers with those of your partner, answer the following questions:

a. Did you answer all the questions listed above?

- b. Which questions did your partner answer differently from you?

- c. What questions did you answer that your partner did not? (Put a question mark beside them.)

- d. What question are not yet answered? (Put an asterisk beside them.)

- e. Summarize in a few words what you feel about the prospect of becoming foster/adoptive parents.

5. Which people do you think are most troublesome in facing a foster/adoptive situation? Rank them from the most troublesome (No. 1) to the least troublesome (No. 7 or 8):

<i>People</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>
Natural family	<hr/>
Foster child	<hr/>
Our children	<hr/>
Our extended family	<hr/>
Neighbors	<hr/>
Friends	<hr/>
Social workers	<hr/>
Other (specify _____)	<hr/>

6. Where would you put yourselves in the above ranking?

7. What could you say or give to people who are in more trouble than you?

8. What do you wish to receive from people who are in less trouble than you?

Homework:

1. Who would you like to talk about foster/adoptive care with:
 - a. Your children
 - b. Your parents
 - c. Your relatives
 - d. Your neighbors
 - e. Your friends
 - f. Your coworkers
 - g. Other (specify_____)
2. Schedule a meeting with as many people listed above as possible. Set the specific time (date and hour) and arrange the proper accommodations. Open the discussion in this way: "Both my partner and I would like to hear your views about foster/adoptive care. Before embarking on such a difficult responsibility we would like to hear from all of you because, without your support, we may not want to start on this journey."
3. Keep notes on the discussion. Bring these notes to the next training session.

Practice Exercise 2. Foster or Adoptive Child Checkup

Name_____ Sex_____ Date_____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help foster/adoptive children to connect effectively with their foster or adoptive parents. The child is the main subject of this experience. The natural parents, if they are effective parents, know their children well; they saw them from birth, they named them, they have watched them day by

day, they saw them through highs and lows. They love them as much as anyone can love. However, they may not be able to take care of them as well as you might. Foster/adoptive parents need to acquire their information, if at all possible, so that they can enter into the relationship with the child by knowing beforehand his/her situation, in order to show their love to this child. Since this is an important part of the process, we need to work on a “foster/adoptive child checkup.”

1. What do you wish to know about a child before she/he comes into your home? We need to consider first the age of the child.

- a. Family relationships with preschool children: Think about a daily family situation, for example, suppertime. What would a child do in this situation? There are many possibilities, but choose three typical ones. Cite the child's age or age range _____. Write down some typical child's behaviors for the age stated above.

- i. How would his/her parents react?

- ii. Now place the same child into another family (i.e., in the family of the parents' friends, but not the child's friends). How would s/he behave?

- iii. How would the adults react or exert parental responsibilities?

- b. Family relationships with elementary school children. Think about the same situation, but with an elementary school child. Cite the child's age or age range _____.

- i. Some typical child's behaviors:

ii. How would his/her parents react?

iii. Some behaviors of the same child in a different family:

iv. The response of the adults with parental duties:

c. Family relationships with teenagers

Apply the same situation to a teenager. Cite the teenager's age or age range
_____.

i. Some typical teenager's behaviors:

ii. How would his/her parents react?

iii. Some behaviors of the same teenager in a different family:

iv. The response of the adults with parental duties:

- d. Child's behavior in an unknown family

2. Think again about the child's behavior and the parents'/adults' response. Specify the age and sex of the child_____.

- i. Some typical child's behaviors:

- ii. How would his/her parents react?

- iii. Some behaviors of the same child in a different family:

3. Questions for adults with parental duties: A foster or adoptive child, coming into a family, behaves as any child would who is put into a strange situation, at least until s/he becomes accustomed to living in that family without anxieties and fears.

- a. What would you feel if you were in the same situation?

- b. What would you think if you were in the same situation?

- c. What would you do if you were in the same situation?

4. Foster/adoptive child's behaviors

There is no such thing as a “normal” child. Children have different personalities, feelings, and habits, resulting from their past experiences. A foster/adoptive child usually has had a more difficult past than most other children. His/her natural family has had more troubles than most other families. The child may have lived apart from his/her natural family for a long time.

- a. Maybe s/he has not acquired habits that, for most children of the same age, we consider important. Considering the child's age and sex, write your thoughts about the habits listed below:

i. Body care

ii. Eating and drinking

iii. Playing/leisure time

iv. School/work

v. Relating to others

vi. Other (specify) _____

- b. The child may have acquired some negative habits. Consider those listed below and add others, if necessary. Rank them from the most troublesome (No. 1) to the least troublesome (No. 6).

Negative Habits

Rank-order

- i. Temper tantrum
- ii. Stealing
- iii. Smoking
- iv. Fighting
- v. Lying
- vi. Other (specify)

- c. She could have: such as the following:

Rank-order

- i. Bad eyesight
- ii. Faulty hearing
- iii. Stuttering
- iv. Emotional or mental troubles
- v. Learning disabilities
- vi. Poor memory
- vii. Lack of concentration/attention
- viii. Hyperactivity
- List other possible handicaps:
- ix. _____
- x. _____

- d. Write your reasons for ranking the negative habits and handicaps they way you did.

5. Consider gender differences: Specify the child's age and sex _____. Suppose the child demonstrates some behaviors among those listed in item 4.

- a. Make up a worst-case scenario for what your reactions would be to it.

- b. Do you feel you could accept a child with these qualities? Is there full agreement between you and your partner?

- c. How would you try to find a solution to any problem arising with the child?

6. The meaning of behavior

In dealing with relationships between the foster/adoptive child and foster/adoptive parents, we have to consider the following possibilities

- a. The child behaves in certain ways because
- i. S/he does not know how to behave differently
 - ii. S/he does not want to behave differently
 - iii. S/he wants the opposite from what you want
- b. Why do these behaviors take place? Discuss these possibilities and others, and write down your conclusions.

7. Any parent, whether natural, adoptive, or foster, has to keep in mind positive rather than negative reactions to the child's behavior or misbehavior:

- a. A constant positive feeling: the child must have the experience of feeling wanted and loved
- b. A realistic view of the level of skill necessary for the child's age, that is, what he/she can have, make, hold, spend, etc.
- c. What do you think about these issues?

Homework: What will you do to cope with potential problems? Will you two parent the child as individuals or will you parent as a couple? This is a very important issue that needs a great deal of thought and discussion because foster/adoptive care requires much more energy and thought than caring for natural children. In what ways is it possible to cope with potential difficulties? Keep notes of your discussion. Bring these notes to the next training session.

Practice Exercise 3. Foster/Adoptive Care: Needs and Demands

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to review some aspects of foster or adoptive care in order to increase your effectiveness as parents. The foster/adoptive child is not responsible for the foster/adoptive family's satisfaction. This child needs a positive family experience.

1. It is necessary to combine the child's needs with the emotional availability of his/her caregivers.

- a. What do the words “emotional availability” mean to you?

- b. Are you able to be emotionally available to each other? How?

- c. Are you able to be emotionally available to others? List as many people as you can think of with whom you have been emotionally available in the past, including your natural children (if any).

- d. If you are unable to be emotionally available to yourselves as individuals and to each other as a couple, you may need to reconsider undergoing the experience of foster/adoption care. If there is a problem here, discuss it with your trainer or professional helper.

2. In addition to emotional availability, there are a host of other issues you need to become aware of. Here is a range of possibilities in foster/adoptive care:
- a. Temporary custodianship for just some weeks or months because of serious emergencies in the child's natural family.
 - b. Foster care experience after the child has grown in an institution or in another foster family, and a positive family experience is important before facing life without such an experience.
 - c. Foster care before a reintroduction to his/her natural family. This reintroduction depends on the nature of the disturbance in the natural family, such as: physical, psychiatric, financial, legal, etc.
 - d. Foster care awaiting court decision for adoption. Adoption is not a prospect for the foster family.
 - f. Foster care as preadoptive step. This represents the first step toward adoption after all legal formalities and court decision have been taken into consideration.
 - g. Discuss the implications of these possibilities with your partner, close friend, or professional helper.
 - h. Consider any other possibility not listed above.

3. Which of these foster/adoptive care possibilities are you considering and why?

4. Which of these possibilities are you excluding and why?

5. Write down the advantages and disadvantages of each age range for a foster/adoptive child:

- a. Toddler to nursery school

b. Kindergarten

c. Elementary school

d. Middle school

e. High school

f. Which age do you consider suitable for a foster child in your home and why?

g. Which age do you exclude and why?

h. How did you decide on a suitable age?

7. Do you prefer a boy or a girl?

a. What are the reasons for your preference?

- b. Which disadvantages do you think you could handle with a child of the other sex?

- c. What do your children (if you have any) think about the foster child's sex and why?

- d. What do your relatives/friends/neighbors think about this issue?

8. What do you think about the child's race or ethnic origin?

- a. What do you prefer and what do you exclude? Why?

- b. What do think your children, relatives, or neighbors may feel about this issue and why?

9. Which health conditions in the foster/adoptive child's do you exclude and why?

10. Which psychological and emotional troubles (in the foster child) you do not want or feel able to face and why?

11. Foster/adoptive care is not a bank transaction; nevertheless, this service is expensive and requires money. Which of the following financial conditions do you think is the most appropriate, keeping in mind your financial situation?

- a. No financial reward _____
- b. Money needed for hospital treatment _____
- c. Money needed for school assistance _____
- d. Money needed for board and room _____
- e. Money needed for college education _____
- f. The money provided by welfare will be sufficient to cover our _____
expenses for this child
- g. Explain your choices:

- h. Write down what you will need in terms of future expenses for this child until s/he reaches 18 years of age.

12. Family foster/adoptive care is a service connected with social services. Below are some possible relationships with these services:

- a. A mental health helper will visit you every week _____
- b. A mental health helper will visit you every month _____
- c. A mental health helper will be at your disposal every time you _____
need help
- d. A mental health helper will participate to your family _____
conference
- e. A mental health helper will communicate all information, _____
even if not in person
- f. What other type of relationship with the mental health helper would you like? Why?

-
-
-
- g. Which would be your preference and why?

-
-
-
- h. Which of these possibilities do you think are most suitable to your situation and why?

Homework: Family foster/adoptive care represents a complex endeavor, with many requirements and responsibilities. It may or it may not offer many nourishing advantages to the family. Plan a family meeting to discuss issues presented in this or previous practice exercises. Keep notes of the discussion. Bring these notes to the next training session.

Practice Exercise 4. The Skills of Adoptive/Foster Parents

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to stress that adoptive/foster children require an extra dose of understanding, patience, and forbearance.

1. As we have stressed, the child is the main subject of the foster/adoptive care experience. Of course, foster parents are just as important! Their skills are not so different from those of natural parents' skills. Nevertheless, it is important to stress some specific aspects of the foster/adoptive care experience. Write down some skills you think are important in parenting children.

2. Now that you have listed these skills rank them in terms of their importance to you and to the child. Rank the most important as No. 1, rank the next most important as No. 2, and so on, until you have ranked all these skills in order of importance.

3. Explain the reasons for your ranking order.

4. If you have natural children, you know some of their friends.

- a. Do you use the same skills with them that you use with your children?

- b. What is the difference between skills used with your children and the skills you use with their friends?

5. How about the foster/adoptive child?

- a. Are the skills needed for your children the same as the skills needed for a foster/adoptive child? Why?

- b. How are the skills necessary for your children different from skills necessary for the foster/adoptive child?

- c. What skills are they?

6. A good foster parent should be able to:

- a. Put him/herself in the child's shoes
b. Understand the child's needs
c. Stress the child's positive aspects
d. Respect the child's individuality

7. Are these skills in your list?

- a. Which of these skills do you feel you have? Why?

- b. Which of these skills do you not have? Why?

- c. Do you agree about the importance of these skills? Why?

8. When foster/adoptive parents have to manage their natural children and their foster child together, the situation can become difficult. Paying attention to the natural children can be seen as preference by the foster/adoptive child and vice versa.

- a. What do you think about this possibility?

- b. How do you plan to deal with this possibility?

9. Below is a list of suggestions to avoid possible preferences or conflicts about problem behaviors:

- a. Consider the age of each child.
- b. Explain your position in advance and give some reasons for it.
- c. Clarify the relationship between the specific situation or context and how adults as well as children need to behave accordingly.
- d. Pay attention to sex differences.
- e. Forbid any criticism about the topic of parental preference.
- f. Debrief the children periodically by arranging regular family conferences.

10. Rebut and respond to any verbal expression of preference or any other complaint by writing the complaint down and informing the child(ren) that this topic will be dealt with in a family meeting after discussion with your partner.

11. Do what you said you will do and after discussion with your partner develop a plan of how to deal with the issue after negotiation with family members in a preset family meeting.

12. There will be moments of stress from the beginning. The foster/adoptive child can provoke serious problems because she:

- a. Is depressed
- b. May want to be sent home
- c. Feels uneasy and unhappy
- d. May test the limits of your acceptance capacity by wanting to see whether you can express unconditional love
- e. May feel rejected by your children and may want to test whether there are parental preferences
- f. Needs to be asked for reasons why s/he behaved the way s/he did; very likely s/he will not know or will make up an excuse that many or may not be relevant to the situation at hand

13. Regardless of the child's behavior, it is your choice whether you want to react immediately to the child's (mis)behavior or whether you can keep your council, avoid reacting, and remain in charge. Reacting may mean exploding in the face of an unusual or deviant situation. It is more conducive to keep cool and ask for information before responding. Extreme reacting may border on child abuse, which should be avoided at all costs. Conducive behavior means taking stock of the situation, obtaining all the possible information, and processing it with your partner and/or trainer or professional helper before responding to the child.

a. Give as many examples of reactive behavior as you can.

b. Give as many examples of conducive behavior as you can.

c. Which behavior offers more positive solutions? Why?

14. To help you reach a conducive rather than reactive level of parenting, consider the following suggestions for increasing skills in stress management. This is a partial list, and you and your partner need to develop a plan on how to deal with various situations that will come up (see Homework).

- a. Minimize disruptive behaviors (if they do not require the immediate intervention of social services or the police) by giving the child alternative and more positive ways of responding.
- b. Distinguish actions from feelings.
- c. Do not put down or ridicule inappropriate behaviors.
- d. Debrief the initial or previous agreement by asking for further information and whether the child has understood what was expected of him or her.
- e. Do not threaten corporal punishment.
- f. Do not threaten moral punishment or rejection.
- g. Do not preach to the child.

- h. Distinguish what is relevant from what is not; discuss these possibilities at length.
- i. Schedule a family meeting at least 24 h in advance. The planned-parenting practice exercises shown below may be helpful in this regard.
- j. Write down other types of management that have helped lower the stress in your family.

Homework: Review the parenting skills listed above and choose the three or four you think are the most important for the child's sake. With your partner's help, develop a detailed plan for parenting the child in for the next few weeks.

Practice Exercise 5. The Foster/Adoptive Child Is Not an Orphan

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to stress that the adoptive/foster child comes into the new family with baggage from past relationships that is going to impinge on and affect new relationships.

1. The child does not came alone into a foster/adoptive family. S/he brings complex relationships with other people. Consider the relationships that have been important in determining the foster/adoptive child's life. These relationships are the basis for the child's personal identity, even though there might have been difficulties, tensions, and pain. If foster/adoptive parents do not consider these relationships, they risk repeating the same kind of relationship problems with the child.
2. Get information about his or her natural family. The child may still be a member of that family, if not legally, then emotionally This family has affected most of the (positive or negative) development of this child. To know more about the child's natural family is a consistent part of knowing more about the child. If you have obtained this information, what are the chances of:
 - a. Success?
 - b. Failure?
 - c. Be realistic in writing down what these chances will be.

3. If the child was removed from his/her natural home, very likely it was due to problems. Consider what these problems could have been:
 - a. Chronic poverty, with an event that put the family in an emergency situation
 - b. Alcohol or drug addiction
 - c. Physical abuse

- i. Beatings
 - ii. Scolding
 - iii. Burning
 - iv. Wounds
 - d. Sexual abuse or molestation
 - i. Oral intercourse
 - ii. Anal intercourse
 - e. A neglectful situation in fundamental life needs
 - f. Verbal abuse
 - i. Blaming
 - ii. Put-downs
 - iii. Criticisms
 - iv. Scolding
 - v. Name calling
- 4. Did you know other families in similar situations?
 - a. What reactions did you have to these abusive behaviors?

 - b. Is there something about these behaviors to understand before condemning them?

 - c. Write down some positive aspects of families like these.

- 5. Is separation from the family worse than abuse? The child may have gotten used to negative behaviors! Maybe s/he feels more pain about the separation than about abusive treatment.

a. Most likely, his/her feelings are despair and abandonment.

i. Did you ever feel something similar? Describe the situation.

ii. In what way did you overcome the situation?

b. A child can feel angry about being abandoned.

i. Did you feel abandoned in the presence of your children or relatives?

ii. How long did you feel this way?

iii. Could you control and bear it?

c. If a child sees a new environment that contrasts drastically from the former, the child may feel loyalty conflict: "If I do this, will I receive love from my family? If I behave in different way, what will the foster family say?" This loyalty conflict may lead to passivity, indecision, and an incapacity to do anything.

i. Did you ever experience such a feeling?

- ii. How long did you feel this way?

- iii. How is it possible to overcome it?

6. Write down your possible solutions for overcoming a loyalty conflict.

7. Continuity of intimate relationships is very important. Foster/adoptive families must learn to respect the history and origins of foster children and love them without owning them.

- a. Do you agree?

- b. How is it possible to do this?

8. The relationships between foster/adoptive and natural families need to be viewed as a possible reality. The child's natural family may want to visit the child's foster home. They may want to arrange visit with their child outside of the foster home. One needs to consider the circumstances, and foster/adoptive parents may need to consult with appropriate authorities or social services. These visits may represent the key element in bringing together the families as well as in terminating the parental rights. These visits may be the main tool for overcoming many issues already considered in previous sessions. If they are possible, plans should be prepared to deal with them.

- a. Preparation of the natural parents: They need to complete a training program appropriate to their needs and level of functioning. This training could be found in the planned-parenting practice exercises that follows this one.
 - b. Foster parents will need to:
 - a. Talk with the foster child concerning the meaning of these visits
 - b. Talk with their own children and relatives
 - c. Set up a time and place for the visit, and arrange any legal forms required
 - d. Manage these visits in a way that will be positive for all, especially for the child
9. What strategies could you use to deal with these visits?
 - a. After the visit of the natural parents, discuss it with the child or a social worker; focus on the behaviors and attitudes of:
 - a. The foster/adoptive parents
 - b. The natural children and relatives
 - c. The foster child
 - d. The natural parents of the child
10. To put home visits in perspective, the discussion should ask:
 - a. What did we learn, so that the next visit can be more positive than this one?

 - b. Is the discussion compatible with our lifestyle?

 - c. What can we do differently next time?

11. The Achilles' heel of a visit from the natural parents can found in behaviors to which the child may react with negative feelings. For example, talking to the natural parents about the child's arrival in the foster family, you can say: "Our children welcomed him/her with open arms! We hope they will became good friends." But the natural mother may hear that you are criticizing her, and proclaim in response: "But we always loved him/her!" Thus, the foster/adoptive parents must be careful not to say anything that will sound critical of the natural parents or suggest that they do not love the child. Thus, any possibly invidious comparison needs to be avoided.

12. Foster/adoptive parents can intervene in different ways. Prepare a variety of worst-case scenarios and consider how to respond to them if they arise. Think of at least one scenario for each of the following possibilities:
- Jealousy
 - Hostility or aggressiveness
 - Exploitation
 - Indifference

Homework: Review the natural parents' attitudes and possible behaviors and then answer this question: If these attitudes and behaviors were ours, what would happen? Keep notes on the discussion. Bring these notes to the next training session.

Practice Exercise 6. The Foster/Adoptive Child vs. Your Own Children

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand the inevitable conflicts that may arise between natural and adoptive/foster children.

- The foster/adoptive child faces new parents as well as new children, both in your home and in school.
 - Discuss with your natural children the possible availability of your family for foster children. Write down your children's reactions, positive and negative, and discuss them with the children and in another meeting with your partner or professional trainer or helper.

- You need to explore your natural children's feelings about the foster/adoptive child. Below are reactions that your children may have toward receiving in your home a foster/adoptive child:

- S/he is a stranger. S/he is not a member of our family.

- S/he does not have our habits.

iii. We don't know him/her and we do not want to.

iv. S/he is the enemy; s/he is too big, too little, bad, a bully, etc.

v. S/he does not talk much or do things like we do.

vi. S/he is a rival for our parents' love; s/he stole our parents from us.

vii. S/he demands too much attention from our parents that we need and want for ourselves.

viii. S/he is a pest; s/he occupies our room, breaks our toys, plays with our things.

ix. S/he is a sponger; s/he eats up all the food that belongs to us.

- x. S/he is our little slave; s/he should do what we want; s/he must do what we tell her/him.

2. Discuss all of your children's stated objections, as well as others that they may not express directly in words.

- a. Ask yourself why do they have these feelings?

- b. Whatever their feelings may be, assume that your children feel insecure about your loving them.

- c. You need to ask yourself what behavior on your part has rendered your children so insecure.

- d. You need to answer this question before you are able to consider foster/adoptive care, since the foster/adoptive child will need a double dose of security because, chances are, s/he will be an even more insecure child than your own children.

- e. Discuss the issue of security-insecurity with your partner. How secure or insecure were you about your parents' love?

- f. If either one of you was insecure, how do you expect to give security either to your children or to a foster/adoptive child?

3. After this discussion, practice finding positive aspects in:

- a. Your partner/friend

- b. Your own children

- c. The foster/adoptive child

3. Complaints may be voiced not only from your children about the foster/adoptive child, but also from either parent because you both might be worried about the influence of this child on your children. Rank-order the behaviors that may become sources of conflict between you and the foster/adoptive child. Rank as No. 1 the greatest potential source of conflict that worries you the most, rank as No. 2 the next potential source of conflict, and so on, until you have ranked all potential sources of conflict.

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>
a. Inappropriate habits in general (does not bathe or does not practice personal hygiene)	<hr/>
b. Does not brush his/her teeth	<hr/>
c. Eats with hands	<hr/>
d. Throws temper tantrums	<hr/>
e. Disobeys requests	<hr/>
f. Inclined to steal	<hr/>
g. Smokes	<hr/>
h. Has had premature sexual experiences	<hr/>
i. Tells lies	<hr/>

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>
j. Uses foul language	_____
k. Is aggressive and hostile	_____
l. Other worrisome behavior (specify)	_____
m. Other worrisome behavior (specify)	_____

4. In trying to help the child, below are some choices that might help you deal with undesirable behaviors:
- a. Speak to your own children about these behaviors.
 - b. Explain to the foster child that these behaviors are unacceptable, giving the reason for their unacceptability.
 - c. Tell the child what consequences may follow unacceptable behavior.
 - d. Make sure that these consequences have been thought through and are not made up on the spur of the moment or out of anger or frustration. Discuss these consequences with your partner before discussing them with the children, both your own and the foster/adoptive child. Discuss the pros and cons for each choice with your partner, writing them down.
 - e. Make sure that these consequences follow naturally from the unacceptable behavior. Discuss them also with your trainer or professional helper.
 - f. Make sure that these consequences are applied with care, troublesome thoughts, consideration, and compassion, and that they apply to your own children as much as to the foster/adoptive child.
5. What are some opportunities for increasing the pros and reducing the cons of the child's behavior?
- a. If have no plan, develop one. (See the planned-parenting practice exercises.)
 - b. A poor plan can be improved.
6. Another aspect of foster/adoptive family care to take into account troublesome thoughts the possible impact (influence) that this child might have on your children. Write down all the possible influences that this child could have on your own children. Compare and contrast your list with the list made up by your partner. Make up a master list from both. For each troublesome thoughts write one or two ways of dealing with it.

Homework: Decide whether you want to parent with a plan or without a plan. If you have no plan, you do not need to parent anybody. (See the planned-parenting practice exercises.)

1. If you have no plan but want to develop one, do so with the help of your partner, other parents, friends, or a professional helper. Part of this plan would contain troublesome thoughts written in response to item 6.

2. Review the main point of this lesson and then write down some notes for a possible discussion with all the children in a preset family meeting.
3. If at all possible, hold this family meeting and write down a detailed summary of what occurred, keeping notes of what went on. Bring these notes to the next training session.

Practice Exercise 7. A Welcome Plan

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help to prepare a plan to welcome to your home the new adoptive/foster child.

1. This practice exercise puts together various ideas that have emerged during this training program. Structure a possible plan to receive the foster/adaptive child in your home. Let us suppose that your preparation is completed. Your availability as foster/adoptive parents has been positively evaluated by social services. There are no formal or legal obstacles or unforeseen events. Consider this situation:
 - a. It is Monday afternoon. You receive a call from a social worker whom you know, who says. "There is a child who needs to be received in a family, because his father, an alcoholic, is in jail and his mother has been hospitalized in an emergency this morning for an contagious illness. He does not have any relatives locally. He does not present any particular problems, but he does not do too well in school. This emergency could last up to 6 months. We think that your family could be a good placement for this child. What do you think? If you are favorably disposed, this child could visit with you as early as Wednesday evening. I will give you more details if you accept. We would like, if possible, for the child to be received by next weekend." Given the sex, age, and ethnic origin of the child, draw up a plan for receiving the child:
 - a. People to meet:
 - i. Social worker
 - ii. The child
 - iii. The lawyer
 - iv. Ask if there other people who will be present (i.e., newspaper, police, etc.)
 - b. Information to ask about
 - c. Agreements to sign

- d. Preparation of family members
 - i. What to say
 - ii. What to ask
 - iii. What not to say
 - iv. What not to ask
 - v. What to do
 - vi. What not to do
 - e. Preparation of people outside the immediate family (relatives, in-laws, siblings, extended family members, neighbors, friends, clergyman)
 - i. What to say
 - ii. What to ask
 - iii. What not to say
 - iv. What not to ask
 - v. What to do
 - vi. What not to do
2. Things to prepare:
- a. Bed and space for belongings
 - b. Schedule for driving the child to the doctor, social services, school, etc.
 - c. Extra food
 - d. Extra clothing if necessary
3. Plan for the weekend by considering some possibilities for receiving the child:
- a. Where to pick him up
 - b. Will the social worker bring him to your home?
 - c. Prepare a party with neighbor children of the same age
 - d. Ask neighbors to come to welcome the child
 - e. Structure the weekend with activities as well as rest periods
 - f. Invite friends who are involved in your support group
 - g. Invite relatives who are part of your support group
4. Review these possibilities and then choose which of them seem attractive to you. Consider the possibility that the child may be very shy, very fearful, or very tired and upset. Consequently, discuss your plans with the social worker who is acquainted with the natural family and the child.
5. In considering all the possibilities listed above, talk with your partner about the pros and cons of each possibility, considering the information about the child given to you by the social worker.
6. Which possibility is the most advantageous?

7. Unforeseen events can arise. To prepare yourself for them, suppose that you receive a call from the social worker, who says, "There are some unforeseen circumstances that will make it impossible for the child to be placed in your home. Tomorrow evening I'll explain more."

a. What will be your reaction? Why? To whom will you express it and how?

b. What will you say to your family?

c. What will you say to your neighbors and friends?

d. Will you express your disappointment to the social worker?

e. Will you be available as foster/adoptive parent in the future?

Homework: During the coming week, discuss with your partner whether you still want to consider becoming foster/adoptive parents or not. What are the pros and cons of becoming one? Bring your conclusions to the training session.

Concluding Feedback Form

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review what has been learned from this series of homework practice exercises. Now that you have completed this practice exercises, please respond to the following questions concerning the use of written homework practice exercises.

- Rank-order the homework practice exercises according to their usefulness in developing an effective introduction to foster/adoptive family care. Rank the most useful practice exercise as No. 1, rank the next most useful as No. 2, and so on, ranking the least useful as 7.

*Practice Exercises**Rank-order*

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Learning to think like a foster/adoptive parent | _____ |
| b. Foster/adoptive child checkup | _____ |
| c. Foster/adoptive care: needs and demands | _____ |
| d. Foster/adoptive parenting skills | _____ |
| e. The foster/adoptive child is not an orphan | _____ |
| f. Foster/adoptive child vs. one's own children? | _____ |
| g. A welcome plan | _____ |
- How useful was this practice exercises to help you prepare as a foster/adoptive parent?

a. Very useful	_____	d. Slightly useful	_____
b. Quite useful	_____	e. Not useful at all	_____
c. Somewhat useful	_____		
 - How useful did you find this practice exercises in improving your relationship with your partner?

a. Very useful	_____	d. Slightly useful	_____
b. Quite useful	_____	e. Not useful at all	_____
c. Somewhat useful	_____		
 - How useful was this practice exercises in increasing your potential for foster/adoptive care?

a. Very useful	_____	d. Slightly useful	_____
b. Quite useful	_____	e. Not useful at all	_____
c. Somewhat useful	_____		
 - How useful was this practice exercises in helping you decide whether you want to be considered for foster/adoptive care?

a. Very useful	_____	d. Slightly useful	_____
b. Quite useful	_____	e. Not useful at all	_____
c. Somewhat useful	_____		

6. Using your own words, what did you find useful about this practice exercises?

7. How could this practice exercises be improved? Your suggestions will be welcome and appreciated.

Planning Parenthood

Note to professional helpers: The purpose of this practice exercises is to reduce cumbersome and abstract models, derived from a developmental, contextual competence theory (L'Abate, 2005, 2006), to concrete and specific practice exercises to be used as homework to evaluate interactively, rather than statically, as in test instruments, models, and the theory behind them. As most sources have demonstrated, parenting and parenting preparation are crucial to personality development of the child. These skills have become even more crucial given the increase of nontraditional family structures, which, no matter their composition or level of functioning, will need to have parents exercising these skills. Note that there are other theory-derived practice exercises that deal with parts of the theory, such as (1) depression, (2) negotiation, (3) intimacy, (4) selfhood, and (5) identity. The depression practice exercises (L'Abate, 1986) contains the drama triangle, the distance regulation triangle, and the paradoxical prescription of depression positively reframed as a "friend." The negotiation practice exercises (1986) was patterned after the ERAAwC (Emotionality, Rationality, Activity, Awareness, and Context) model, and contains practice exercises about the ARC (Abusive/Apathetic, Reactive/Repetitive Conductive/Creative) and resources exchanged models. The intimacy practice exercises (1986) contains practice exercises about seeing the good in self and intimate others, caring, forgiveness, and three practice exercises about sharing of hurts. The identity practice exercises, located in (section 3) contains about a variety of self-definitions that are not contained in the selfhood model. The selfhood model is represented in two separate practice exercises about receiving importance from self-attributes and from intimate others.

By the same token, there are theory-related and theory-independent practice exercises that are, however, in some way or another conceptually related to the models of the theory. They could be compared with this one and other practice exercises,

or other parenting skills programs. What would happen when a parenting program taking place face to face through talk between parents and professionals is compared with this practice exercises administered at a distance through the Internet, with a minimum of face-to-face talk between parents and professionals?

Responsible professionals should be aware of and follow the ethical and professional guidelines of their respective national and state organizations, and should obtain from participants a signed informed consent form. Also, they should conduct a structured or unstructured screening interview and administer a battery of tests relating to the level of individual, couple, or multirelational functioning, as well as a baseline parenting inventory to evaluate the level of parenting skills present in prospective or actual parent(s) before administering this practice exercises. These tests and parenting inventories should be readministered after completion of the practice exercises, and, ideally, 6 months or even 1 year after completion.

Make sure that partners, parents, caregivers, and single parents complete these practice exercises at specific, preset, predetermined times, ideally always in the same place. The purpose of stressing the same place and time in practice exercises is to teach parents to become regular and predictable in how they are going to complete the practice exercises in this practice exercises. Perhaps this regularity may generalize to other parts of their parenting and of their relationships. It would help the process of homework practice exercises if families were taught from the outset how to be together, how to say how much they love each other, and how to communicate nonverbally through hugging, holding, and cuddling.

Practice Exercise 1. The Purpose of This Practice exercises

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

A practice exercises consists of written homework practice exercises to be completed by partners, parents, or single parents who want to improve their parenting skills according to a positive plan. Rather than reacting to your children immediately and with no forethought, without thinking about the consequences of your or your children's actions, the purpose of this practice exercises is to make you think about what you are doing as an individual, as a partner, and as a parent. If you do not have a partner, perhaps you can enlist the help of a caring friend, or use the professional who is administering this practice exercises to you as a sounding board and a source of support and feedback.

The reason for calling this practice exercises “planned parenting” stems from the fact that responsible and responsive parenting does not come about automatically in a vacuum. Parenting is too serious, important, and responsible an activity to assume that we can parent our children without learning any skills. The only parenting skills we know usually are those we learned from our parents. If our parents' skills were in some ways defective or incomplete, we are doomed to repeat their mistakes. Parenting, to be effective, needs to be planned carefully and sensitively.

1. What do you want to get from working on the practice exercises of this practice exercises? Check all that apply:
 - a. I want to improve my skills as a parent. _____
 - b. I would like to plan what I do with my children, rather than simply respond or react to them. _____
 - c. I am so limited in my parenting skills that I can use any help I can get. _____
 - d. My parents were not models of parenting skills, and I hope I can improve on what they did. _____
 - e. My parenting background was so erratic and unplanned that I need to become more consistent and more positive in my parenting skills. _____
 - f. I have read many books on parenting, but none gave me a hands-on experience of really working interactively with down-to-earth practice exercises. _____
 - g. My parents were so abusive that I need to make sure I do not repeat the mistakes they made. _____
 - h. Parenting is too important to think that one can learn it without thinking and learning more about it. _____
 - i. Parenting is the most important skill one needs to learn in life. _____
 - j. My parenting skills definitely need improvement. _____
 - k. Any other reason not listed above (state what it is) _____

2. In your own words, write what you plan to get out of working on the practice exercises of this practice exercises.

3. What kind of parenting experience have you had so far? Please describe in detail, from your past family of origin to the present family of procreation.

Homework: During the coming week, write down all the hurts that you experienced as a child that were related to your parents' parenting mistakes. Write only for exactly 15 minute a day for 4 days in a row. Make sure to write always at the same preset times and predetermined place.

After you have finished, discuss these hurts with your partner by setting an appointment at least 24 h in advance. Take notes during your discussion. If you do not have either a partner or a friend to discuss your notes with, discuss them with the professional who is administering these practice exercises.

Practice Exercise 2. The Ability to Love and to Parent

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

Parenting skills do not grow in a vacuum automatically. They develop from how love and responsibility are experienced and expressed in one's family of origin and in one's family of procreation, your family now.

The purpose of this practice exercise is to make you aware of how love is shown through different types of parenting, allowing you then to choose how to show and discuss love with your children and what kind of parenting you want to learn and practice. By improving your parenting skills, you will also be able to show your love for your children in more constructive and positive ways than you might have followed heretofore.

1. Answer the following questions in detail.
 - a. Describe the love and parenting in your family of origin.
 - i. How was love shown in your family of origin?

- ii. How was affection shown in your family of origin?

- iii. How do you show love in your family now?

- iv. How do you show affection in your family now?

- v. How do you feel about love and parenting being part of the same process?

- b. There are three major types of parenting that will be explained below:
- i. Abusive–apathetic or neglectful (AA)
 - ii. Reactive–repetitive (RR)
 - iii. Creative–conductive (CC)
2. Characteristics of abusive–apathetic (AA, neglectful) parenting: an abusive or neglectful parent usually denies being abusive or neglectful:
- a. Using immediate physical punishment, like hitting, yelling, spanking with a switch or belt, throwing things, sexual abuse, or kicking
 - b. Using verbal punishment, like name calling, screaming, raging, etc.
 - c. Specific examples of verbal AA parenting:
 - i. Bringing up past errors or misdeeds on the part of the child: “I remember what you did (or did not do) 2 years ago.”
 - ii. Blackmail: “If you don't do this or that, I will do this or that to you.”
 - iii. Bribery: “I will give you something if you do or do not do something.”
 - iv. Blaming: “It's all your fault.”
 - v. Reading someone else's mind: “I know what you want to do and I know how and why you want to do it.”
 - vi. Ultimatums: “If you do not do this right away, I will do this to you!”
 - vii. Avoidance of any consequences for the child's behavior, or the consequences are angrily (through tantrums) or extremely enforced in an inconsistent fashion.
 - viii. Going from one extreme of abuse to another extreme of making up for the abuse, as in asking for forgiveness, promising to change what the parent has said or done, buying gifts to make up, or allowing the child to do or have whatever the child wants, sometimes going from one extreme of punishment to another extreme of letting the child do or get what he or she wants.
 - ix. Setting no limits on the child and letting the child do whatever he or she wants.
 - x. Favoring one child over another.
 - xi. Denial of the abuse or belittling the strength or the damage of abusive or neglectful parenting on the child, let alone the parent.
 - xii. Being addicted to alcohol, drugs, food, or medication.

xiii. Repeating without stop the deadly triangle composed of three parts – victim, rescuer or savior, and persecutor – in which each member of the family plays three parts or roles well.

- (a) The victim is usually the one who feels tormented, put upon, or blamed, collecting all the real, perceived, or imagined hurts that have been received from another intimate, who is perceived as the persecutor. The victim feels innocent of any blamed misdeed or feels that the persecutor is unfair or not justified in punishing and abusing.
- (b) The persecutor is the one who blames, hits, yells, and abuses another intimate, the victim, without regard to the consequences of his or her actions.
- (c) The savior or rescuer is the one who comes in between, intervenes, and supposedly protects the victim from the cruel persecutor. Since most intimates play these parts well, this deadly triangle tends to repeat itself from one generation to another. Children repeat the same roles/parts that were played by their parents. Most mental illness develops from this triangle. This is why this triangle is deadly.
- (d) How does this triangle apply to your experience? Check a choice that applies to you:

- (i) A great deal _____
- (ii) Somewhat _____
- (iii) Not at all _____

3. Characteristics of reactive-repetitive (RR) parenting: A reactive parent repeats himself or herself without getting the desired behavior from the child.

- a. Immediacy, that is, doing quickly whatever seems to be in the best, immediate interest of the child or of the parent, without thinking about possible consequences of what has been done or said. As a result the undesirable behavior on the child's part keeps on repeating itself without a stop.
- b. Acting right away to deal with the child without consulting the partner or anybody else.
- c. Not setting any limits on the child, by letting the child do whatever he or she wants to do or giving the child whatever he or she wants.
- d. Protecting and shielding the child from experiencing the natural consequences of his or her actions.
- e. Trusting the child's word rather than the word of authorities (police, teachers, doctors).
- f. Rescuing the child from whatever trouble the child may have created.
- g. Thinking that "unconditional love" without any limits will make the child happier, more self-reliant, or more independent.
- h. Exaggerating the good in the child and ignoring potentially negative aspects of the child's behavior.

- i. Giving the child toys, money, and clothes without limit, rather than giving affection with firm, consistent limits to the child's behavior.
- j. Putting responsibility for the child's behavior on others (teachers, peers, doctors, friends, neighbors) rather than on the child.
- k. Taking on too much responsibility and faulting oneself for the child's behavior rather than faulting the child.
- l. Making the child dependent on the parent by taking away the child's initiative except through short-cuts, such as giving into the child's immediate wishes.
- m. Wanting to become the child's best friend, and allowing the child to become the parent's confidant. These positions leads to role confusion and identity conflicts in the child.
- n. Playing the distance–resolution triangle, consisting of pursuer, distancer, and regulator parts or roles, where intimates play all three parts in different areas of their lives. For instance, one could be a sexual pursuer but an emotional distancer. By the same token, a regulator in one area could play the other parts in another area.
 - i. The pursuer seeks, approaches, and wants to get close physically and emotionally to another intimate.
 - ii. The distancer avoids getting close and wants to be left alone, rejecting the advances of the pursuer.
 - iii. The regulator switches from one part to another. For instance, “I want (need, like) your helpGo away, your help did not do me any good.”
How does this triangle apply to your experience? Check a choice that applies to you:
 - (a) A great deal _____
 - (b) Somewhat _____
 - (c) Not at all _____

4. Characteristics of creative–conductive, planned parenting:

A caring, creative, and conductive³ parent

- a. Thinks before he or she acts or reacts with the child.
- b. Discuss any parenting problem with one's partner, parent, close friend, or professional before taking action.
- c. Plans ahead what to do or say before doing it or saying it.
- d. Does not confuse or become confused by mixing “unconditional love” with “planned parenting.”
- e. Takes time and makes time to spend time with the child at every opportunity.
- f. Stresses what it is rather than what “should,” “could,” or “must” be.

³A conductor is a leader who does not get angry during confrontations but who follows an orchestrated score or a thought-out plan rather than acting and reacting, at the spur of the moment, to the child's behavior haphazardly and inconsistently. A conductor thinks before acting. A conductor leads rather than reacts.

- g. Stresses the child's strengths rather than the child's weaknesses.
- h. Does not use the child to satisfy his or her own self-centered needs or wants.
- i. Models how to express and discuss painful and pleasurable emotions in a nonjudgmental way.
- j. Models how to delay immediate gratification for more important, future goals.
- k. Helps the child distinguish between immediate needs, desires, and delayed wants and goals.
- l. Lives and helps the child live in the present and not in the past.
- m. Knows one's self limits and helps the child discover his or her own strengths and become aware of his or her limits.
- n. Helps the child become aware of and respect differences in self and others, not allowing scapegoating on others but assuming responsibility for his or her behavior.
- o. Is consistent in saying what he or she means and what he or she does.
- p. Allows the child to grow up and be autonomous according to his or her rights.

Homework: During this coming week, review the characteristics of parenting listed above. Pick those that are familiar to you and that are part of your past and present experience, and write about them in great detail, 15 minute a day, for 4 days in a row.

If you pick either the drama or distance triangles, or both, write about how they have affected your life and your parenting skills.

After the 4 days of writing, discuss your writing with your partner at a preset time and place, planned at least 24 h ahead. Make sure you take notes of your discussion. If you do not have a partner, discuss your writing with a friend. Whether you have a partner or not, discuss your writing and discussion notes with a professional helper.

Practice Exercise 3. Who Am I? Who Do I Want to Be?

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you clarify who you are as an individual, as a partner, as a parent, and as a child of a parent; how you developed into the person you are now; and whether you want to improve on who you are now.

1. Write about how you feel about yourself and how you developed these feelings.

2. Write about how close you were to those who took care of you as you grew up.

3. There are at least six ways we develop as we grow up:
- a. Symbiotically means that you lived to satisfy your parents' needs and not your own: "I cannot live without you!" This way produces extreme dependency on the child, to the point that the child cannot separate from the caregiver. In extremes, this way produces either complete dependence or complete alienation (or both) in the child.
 - b. Sameness means that your parents required blind and uncritical conformity to their wishes and behaviors: "Be exactly like me and do exactly what I want you to do and you will be all right." This way is bound to produce either dependency, on one hand, or rebellion and oppositeness, on the other.
 - c. Similarity means that your parents did not demand conformity to their behaviors but modeled for you desirable and positive behavior worthy of being followed. This way gives enough room to the child to grow in his or her ways without constraints from the parents.
 - d. Differentness means that your parents gave you the freedom to be different from them and from others without going to extremes of nonconformity or rebellion. This way allows the child to be creative and free to develop his or her best abilities.
 - e. Oppositeness means that you chose to be the opposite of what your parents required of you, and in so doing, by rebelling, you likely chose to conform to the rules and behavior of another group that similarly rebelled against the norms of their parents and of society. This way can produce extremely rebellious children who are also very conforming to the rules and guidelines of a fringe or borderline group.
 - f. Alienation means that you grew up completely separated from your parents as well as from society. This way produces the highest probability of criminal or severely problematic behavior.
4. Rate yourself on a three-point scale in how you define yourself according to the six ways defined above with persons listed below:

Symbiosis = 3

Sameness = 2

Similarity = 1

Differentness = 1

Oppositeness = 2

Alienated = 3

- a. With your mother _____
- b. With your father _____
- c. With your siblings _____
- d. With your peers _____
- e. With your friends _____
- f. With your present partner _____
- g. With your past partners _____
- h. With your teacher(s) _____
- i. With anybody else who is not listed above: identify () _____

6. Why did you rate yourself the way you did? Please explain.

Homework: In the coming week, write how you grew up according to the six ways that make us develop into who we are. Write 15 minute a day for 4 days in a row and meet by appointment with your partner, a friend, or a professional to discuss your writing. Keep notes on your discussion.

Practice Exercise 4. Me as Parent to My Child

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to explore how you define yourself with your child according to the six ways you developed as an individual, as a partner, and as a parent. Please answer all these questions:

1. Symbiosis:

- a. Are you raising your child as a symbiotic expression of your needs? If yes, why? If no, why not?
- b. Is the child fulfilling your unrequited dreams or wishes? For instance, do you want the child to be a movie star or performer because you wanted (and failed) to be a movie star or a performer?
- c. Will you be able to live without the child, once your child is grown up and leaves your home?
- d. Are you letting this child become independent or do you want for the child to always be dependent on you?

2. Sameness:

- a. Do you want your child to follow your rules and requests blindly without discussion, without allowing him or her to make up his or her mind about anything?

- b. Do you require uncritical conformity to your wishes and rules, as it was perhaps required during your growing up?
 - c. Do you want your child to be a carbon copy of you?
 - d. What makes you think that your way of thinking and behaving is correct or constructive? How do you know you are “right?”
 - e. Is more important to you to be “right” or to be close to your child (or to your partner for this matter)?
3. Similarity:
- a. Do you model desirable behavior for your child in ways that allow him or her to follow your example rather than always being told what to do?
 - b. Do you give your child enough leeway to follow your example rather than to do or say what you do or say?
 - c. Do you show the child what to do or say rather than telling him or her what to do or say?
4. Differentness:
- a. Do you allow your child the freedom to be different without being considered weird or inappropriate?
 - b. Do you strengthen his or her creativity by encouraging it directly or indirectly?
 - c. What are you doing to encourage his or her creativity?
5. Oppositeness:
- a. How did your child's rebellion and oppositeness come about?
 - b. What did you do that forced your child to do the opposite of what you do or say?
 - c. How do you know he or she is oppositional to you?
6. Alienation:
- a. What is it about your parenting practices as parents and as partners that brought about this complete separation from you (and your partner)?
 - b. Why do you think your child is now alienated from you?

Homework: Answer in writing each set of questions one at a time, perhaps one a day for 1 day in a row. If you have a partner, discuss each other's answers, keeping notes of what you have talked about. If you do not have a partner, discuss your answers with the professional who administering these practice exercises.

Practice Exercise 5. Selfhood

Name_____ Sex_____ Date_____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you define yourself even further by learning about how importance was expressed and discussed in your family of origin, as well as how importance is expressed and discussed now in your present family. Importance means showing troublesome thoughts and care toward both self and intimate others, such as parents, partner, child, siblings, teachers, or friends.

1. There are four major ways in which importance can be expressed toward self and intimate others:
 - a. Importance, troublesome thoughts, and care are expressed positively toward self and others: "We are both important. We both must win." This way leads to a position called self-fulness. Parenting here means working things out with your child in ways in which you both win. You as a parent are authoritative (firm and consistent) in your parenting stance. This is one way to create a responsible, creative child.
 - b. Importance is expressed positively toward self but negatively toward others: "I am important but you are not. I win, you lose." This way leads to a position called selfishness. Parenting here means you put on your child the weight of your authority and demand blind and uncritical conformity and obedience from the child without any backtalk or disobedience. This is one way to create either a bully and a rebel or a very dependent and fearful individual.
 - c. Importance is expressed negatively toward self but positively toward others: "I am not important and you are more important than I am. You win, I lose." This way leads to a position called selflessness. Parenting here means that you let the child permissively win at your expense, and you are unable to set clear and firm limits to the child's behavior. This is one way to create a spoiled, pampered child.
 - d. Importance is expressed negatively toward both self and others: "Neither one of us is important. Neither one of us is going to win." This way leads to a position called no-self. Parenting here means that neither you nor the child will win, without limits but with inconsistent and contradictory extremes from one destructive behavior to another, or from one permissive behavior to another, leading to eventual alienation and separation from each other. This is the way to create a confused, mixed up, and alienated child.

2. Family of origin. Answer the following questions about your family of origin:

a. How did your mother express or deny her importance to herself and others?

b. How did your father express or deny his importance to himself and others?

c. How did any of your siblings express or deny their importance to themselves and others?

d. How did anybody else in your family of origin express or deny importance to oneself and others?

e. How do you express your importance with your parents?

f. How do you express your importance with your siblings?

g. How do you express your importance with other family members, such as in-laws and extended family members?

3. Present family:

- a. How do you express your importance with your partner?

- b. How do you express your importance with your child?

- c. How do you express your importance with your friends?

- d. How do you express your importance with anybody else?

4. Your children:

- a. How did you teach your children that they are important without putting anybody else down, or winning at someone else's expense?
- b. What do you need to do to teach your children that they are important but do not need to do it at anybody else's expense?

5. Yourself:

- a. How did you acquire a sense of self-importance, if any?

- b. What qualities in yourself make you feel important?

- c. Who, among all the people mentioned above, helped you gain a sense of self-importance?

- d. What qualities in yourself make you feel unimportant, if any?

- e. Who, among all the people mentioned above, did not help and, indeed, tried to make you feel unimportant?

Homework: In the coming week, spend at least 20 minute a day answering the questions asked in this practice exercise. Compare and discuss your answers with your partner at a preset time and place, keeping notes on what you discussed. If you do not have a partner, discuss your answers with a professional helper.

Practice Exercise 6. Priorities

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to learn more about your priorities, that is, what is most important to you and to those who love you.

- Rank-order the importance to you of the persons listed below. Rank as No. 1 the person who is most important to you, rank as No. 2 the person who is next in importance, and so on, down to the person who might not be as important to you as the others.

People Important to You

Rank-order

- | | |
|----------------|-------|
| a. Grandparent | _____ |
| b. Mother | _____ |
| c. Father | _____ |
| d. Siblings | _____ |
| e. Self | _____ |
| f. Partner | _____ |
| g. Child(ren) | _____ |

- h. Relative (specify _____) _____
- i. Friend _____
- j. Coworker _____
- k. Classmate _____
- l. Any other person (specify _____) _____

2. Why did you rank-order these persons the way you did?

3. Rank-order the following roles according to their importance to you:

- a. Bread winner _____
- b. Homemaker _____
- c. Supporter _____
- d. Rule maker _____
- e. Parent _____
- f. Partner _____
- g. Employer _____
- h. Employee _____

4. Why did you rank-ordered these roles the way you did?

5. On a scale of 1–5, where 1 is extremely unimportant and 5 is extremely important, rate the following resources available to you on how important they are to you:

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>
a. Being and feeling important	_____
b. Being intimate emotionally	_____
c. Performing	_____
d. Being informed	_____
e. Money	_____
f. Goods/possessions	_____

6. Why did you rate these resources the way you did?

7. The triangle of living: What we exchange in life – presence, performance, production.

- a. Importance together with intimacy constitute presence, being emotionally available to those you love and who love you. This is the base of the triangle. If this base is narrow, the other two sides of the triangle tend to become longer and larger. Too long or too large a base of presence is another extreme that leads to passivity and neglect of self and intimate others. Finding a balance among the three sides of the triangle is the most difficult task of our lives.
- b. Services together with information constitute performance, doing something to survive/enjoy. If and when performance is greater than presence, as in perfectionism, workholism, or drivenness, then presence suffers and problems develop.
- c. Money together with goods and possessions constitute production, having the wherewithal to survive financially and enjoy life. However, if production becomes exaggerated, as in hoarding, being a packrat, or developing an obsession with making money or accumulating things, then presence is decreased and problems develop.

8. Write how you feel about each of these modalities of exchange and how important they are to you.

9. On a scale of 1–5, where 1 is extremely unimportant and 5 is extremely important, rate the following channels of communication within yourself and with other resources available to you on how important they are to you:

- a. Feelings and emotions, leading to whom one gets close to or distant from, that is, presence _____
- b. Reason and logic, leading to how fast or slow one will behave _____
- c. Activities and actions, leading to stress on performance/
production with lessened consideration about being together
with loved ones _____

- d. Awareness and reflection, that is, thinking about the consequences of one's actions or activities that provide feedback to your feelings and thinking, changing the whole process _____
 - e. Context and surroundings, being aware of one's feelings, thinking, and actions, and the behavior of loved ones and nonintimates _____
10. Why did you rate these channels of communication in the way you did? Please explain.

Homework: During the coming week, spend at least 20 minute a day answering the questions in this practice exercise. Compare and discuss your answers with your partner and with a professional helper. Make sure you keep notes on all your discussions.

Practice Exercise 7. Sharing Hurts and Achieving Closeness

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you get closer to the people who love you and whom you love.

Answer all these questions.

1. Crying: Go back to Practice Exercise No. 1, and recall what you wrote about whatever past hurts you may have received as a result of parenting.

- a. Were you able to cry about these past hurts?

- b. Why were you able to cry and, if not, why were you not able to cry?

- c. Did you ever see your parents cry together?

- d. What happened when one parent cried? What did the other parent do?

- e. Have you and your partner cried together? When and why?

- f. When is the last time you cried?

- g. What reactions did you get from others when you cried?

2. Affection:

- a. How affectionate were your parents and how did they show their affection?

- b. How affectionate are you with your partner and vice versa?

- c. How affectionate are you with your children?

3. Sharing hurts and fears of being hurt:

- a. How did your family of origin discuss its hurts?

- b. How does your present family discuss its hurts?

- c. If hurts are not discussed constructively, how is happiness going to be discussed?

4. Forgiveness of errors

- a. How was forgiveness expressed in your family of origin?

- b. Who forgave whom and what was forgiven?

- c. How is forgiveness expressed now in your present family?

d. Who forgives whom and for what?

e. Are you able to forgive yourself, or do you need to be perfect?

f. Can you accept being imperfect, or do you need to perform and produce to consider yourself perfect?

g. How about the members of your family? Do they need to perform and produce to be accepted?

Homework: During the coming week, take about 15–20 minute a day to answer all the questions asked above. Once you have finished, discuss your answers with your partner at a preset time and place. Keep notes on your discussion, and discuss them with the professional helper who is administering these practice exercises to you. If you are a single parent, discuss your answer with a trusted friend who is willing and able to work with you on these practice exercises, as well as with your professional helper.

Practice Exercise 8. Setting Boundaries/Limits

Name_____Sex_____Date_____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you set limits and boundaries for yourself and your children.

1. What do limits and boundaries mean to you? Please give a definition of limits and boundaries and give two examples of what these terms mean to you.

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

2. Why are limits and boundaries important?

3. How were limits and boundaries set for you as you were growing up?

4. Are you able to set limits and boundaries for yourself? How? In what areas of your life?

5. Are you able to set limits and boundaries for your partner? If yes, why? If no, why not?

6. How do you set limits for your child?

- a. Are you successful? If yes, why? If no, why not?

- b. Are you able to say no to you child clearly and firmly, sticking to it without feeling guilty?

7. Do you set limits for the child by yourself or with the help of your partner? How?

8. Have you and your partner discussed how you are going to set limits for your child together?

9. If you do not have a partner, have you enlisted someone else to help you set limits for your child?

10. If you are not successful in setting limits for your child now, how successful will you be in the future?

11. If and when your child pushes the limits, how does he or she do it?

12. What can you and your partner do to set realistic, consistent, firm, and positive limits for your child?

13. Agree with your partner beforehand (if you have one) that from now on any request made at the last minute by your children is met by an automatic no. Any request made of one parent, when the other parent is absent, is met by a qualified no, adding, "Your [father, mother] and I will discuss it and we will let you know." If the child persists with the request, say, without anger or feelings, "The more you repeat this request, the longer it will take for your [father, mother] and I to make a decision about it." Give two examples of how you dealt with immediate requests from your child in the past and how you are handling them now.

Example 1:

Example 2:

14. If you are a single parent, any last minute request should be met with an automatic no, adding: "I will think about it and I will let you know when and what I decide about this request." If the child persists with the request, say, without anger or feelings, "The more you repeat this request, the longer it will take me to make a decision about it." Give two examples of how you have handled this problem in the past and how you are handling it now.

Example 1:

Example 2:

15. What are the long-term consequences to the child of satisfying his or her immediate requests and decreasing the joint power and decision making of the parents by separating them in the process? What about a single parent's authority and decision making? The child will learn to think that the parent will always satisfy all his or her needs without thinking about the long-term outcome of this process.

Please comment:

Homework: After you have completed your answers to the questions raised in this practice exercise, discuss them with your partner by setting an appointment 24 h ahead in the same place you usually meet. An exception to this homework are points 13 and 14. Give at least two examples of how your child tries to have his or her own way to making requests at the last minute and from one parent alone when the other parent is absent. Keep in mind that your child will test the limits of your resolve, especially if past requests were immediately satisfied.

Practice Exercise 9. Solving Problems Together

Name_____Sex_____Date_____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to learn to solve problems with your partner, if you have one, and your child. Solving problems is a skill that needs to be practiced continually, lest you forget how important this skill is to help you, your child, and your family.

1. “Problems in the family are not solved on the spur of the moment.” Please comment on this statement. Why is it correct or incorrect?

2. “Problems in the family are not solved when anyone in the family is upset, depressed, or angry.” Please comment on this statement. Why is it correct or incorrect?

3. “Problems in the family are solved by appointment, by making time to sit down face to face and talk about what the problem is and how it can be solved and resolved responsibly and sensitively by planned problem solving.” Please comment on this statement. Why is it correct or incorrect?

4. How to solve problems in the family:

- a. Make an appointment for the whole family at least 24 h ahead at a time that is agreeable to every one. Do not make more than one appointment a week. Ideally, once-a-month family meetings would be appropriate.
- b. Make sure that the meeting does not last longer than 1 h. Set a timer or alarm clock. If the meeting risks going over the 1 h limit, set the time for another appointment 24 h ahead. By the same token, if tempers are too strong and nothing is being accomplished, set the time for another appointment, if and when tempers cool down.
- c. Decide who should be in charge of the meeting and who should keep notes on what is being discussed at each meeting, including the date of the meeting. If you or your partner are in charge of the meeting, make sure that you alternate being in charge from one meeting to another. If you are a single parent, then you are in charge. The child must not be in charge under any condition; you, the parent, are in charge, but the child can take the notes if he or she wants to. The child, however, does have one vote if he or she contributes to the process of problem solving.
- d. You may get resistance to the idea of a meeting at an appointed time. The one in the family who feels a possible loss of power may want to sabotage the process. This resistance will need to be met in terms of what other choices are available to the family. How can the family solve its problems otherwise? Can anyone come up with a better choice? Then the choice for the resistant family members is whether he or she wants to solve family problems or not. This resistance also says something about how this family member was allowed to be powerful without taking responsibility for the family's welfare.
- e. To break the ice, it would help the whole family climate if some levity were added, not during family meetings but during the main evening meal. For instance, you could ask family members, including yourself, to tell a joke or relate a funny incident or story. A quarter could be painted red and given to whoever, by consensus, told the funniest joke, story, or event. This quarter would circulate around as funny stories, jokes, or events are brought to the table. If there are disagreements about who should get the quarter, use this disagreement to call for a family meeting.

- f. Even though family meetings should not take place more often than once a month, family members should be allowed to call a family meeting for special emergencies or important issues that cannot wait until the next family meeting. Even emergency or special meetings should be scheduled 24 h ahead, unless it is a matter of life or death.
- g. Once these prerequisites have been taken care of and the meeting has started, begin by asking everyone to raise any troublesome thoughts or worries. Start to model how an issue or problem should be addressed.
- h. Make a list of all these troublesome thoughts and talk about how they should be ranked in terms of importance to each family member. If one troublesome thought, issue, or problem raised by one family member is ranked first, then other issues raised by another member should be ranked second and third, and so on, to make sure that everyone is heard. Then another troublesome thought by the same family member who raised issue No. 1 is rated fourth, and so on. Make sure that all this information is recorded for future meetings.
- i. Make sure that everyone is allowed to talk without interruption. If a family member keeps interrupting and cannot be silent, that problem must be ranked as No. 1 over the other problems.
- j. Allow everyone to speak in a sequence that is reversed from one time to another. For instance, if the parents speak first, then the sequence should follow the ages of the children. Once this sequence is followed, the next discussion should start with youngest member speaking first and the parents speaking last.
- k. Start a sequence by expressing your feelings about the problem, using the personal pronoun "I" and starting a sentence with: "I feel (am concerned, worried, etc.) about this problem." Make sure you say how you feel and not how you think about solving the problem. Allow everyone else to do the same. Feelings first, no thinking and no actions at this point.
- l. Once a troublesome thought, issue, or problem is agreed upon and rank-ordered by everyone in the family, allow everyone to suggest possible solutions, making sure that all the pros and cons about each suggestion are fully expressed: thinking only at this point. Record all suggestions with the name of the one who made them.
- m. After a full discussion of the pros and cons is completed, select which course of action seems the most feasible and agreeable to all the members of the family. If necessary and agreeable to all family members, have each member sign this document.
- n. Suggest that this course of action will be followed for a predetermined period of time (e.g., 4 weeks, 3 months) and monitored, by keeping notes week by week, and future once-a-month family meetings will be held to see that the plan is fully implemented and that the desired results were obtained. Feedback and reflection at this point are important.
- o. If the process does not seem to work within 4 weeks, discuss why it did not work, and what needs to be corrected, or consider an alternative course of action. Still feedback and reflection are offered with an awareness of the context of the problem solving.

- p. At the end of each meeting, make sure to hug each family member, and, looking members of the family in the eyes, tell them how much you love them. If appropriate, thank them for their contribution to the family meeting. However, do not play favorites. You either praise everybody or do not praise at all: "I really appreciate how all of us worked together to solve our problems."

Homework: Make sure that the meaning and implications of the foregoing statements are discussed thoroughly over a period of weeks.

Concluding Follow-Up Feedback Form

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to evaluate the usefulness of all the work you have been doing in the last several weeks.

1. What are your reactions to the whole practice exercises. Choose which answer best reflects how you feel about the whole process:
 - a. This practice exercises was a complete waste of my time and energy. I could have gotten more information from the Internet or from my neighbor. _____
 - b. The practice exercises was okay, but no big deal. _____
 - c. I liked working on the practice exercises but it was a lot of work. _____
 - d. I enjoyed working on the practice exercises of this practice e exercises and I learned a great deal from them. _____
 - e. Not only did I enjoy working on the practice exercises of this practice exercises, but I think that all parents should learn all the many skills necessary to parent through planning. _____
2. Below there is a list of all the practice exercises in this practice exercises. Rank-order them according to how useful they were to you. Rank as No. 1 the most useful practice exercise, rank as No. 2 the second most useful practice exercise, and so on, until all practice exercises have been ranked.

<i>Titles of Practice Exercises</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>
1. Purpose of this practice exercises	_____
2. The ability to love and to parent	_____
3. Who am I? Who do I want to be	_____
4. Me as parent to my child	_____
5. Selfhood	_____
6. Priorities	_____
7. Sharing hurts and achieving closeness	_____
8. Setting boundaries	_____
9. Solving problems together	_____

3. Why did you rank-order the practice exercises the way you did?

4. Feel free to comment and give whatever suggestions you have to improve this practice exercises.
