



CORE MANUAL

The Faithful House:

CORE MODULE MANUAL AND FERTILITY AWARENESS METHODS

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES IN COLLABORATION WITH MATERNAL LIFE UGANDA



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Foreword to The Faithful House

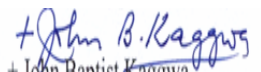
Marriage is the first institution that God made and is the foundation of the family. The family is both the center of God's love and the basic unit of the Church and of the nation. God's plan and desire is to see that all human beings are brought up in good and stable families. To neglect the family is to take away life. The neglect of family life has resulted in different problems and challenges for our communities. Many marriages are under attack in different ways. Now, more than ever, there is a need for special attention to the family in today's society. Among those challenges and difficulties are HIV and AIDS and the great pain and suffering they bring to couples and families.

The Faithful House is a clear and compelling response to these challenges. *The Faithful House* underscores the importance of abstinence and faithfulness in building strong and committed marriages and healthy families. In turn, these marriages and families become foundational in creating "civilizations of love," which define authentic human progress.

The Faithful House program is intended for young people and married couples. The program emphasizes chastity and faithfulness, before and during marriage, as proven ways of reducing HIV infections.

Couples should attend the program together to benefit maximally from the process of *The Faithful House*. This program offers couples the opportunity to build their marriage for their own good and the good of their families. Further, this program will allow couples to extend help to other couples. This opportunity is especially important in the context of the challenges presented by HIV and so many other issues affecting families.

This approach, along with the training manual, promises to have wide application throughout Africa, offering individuals, couples, churches and dioceses a practical and accessible means of promoting HIV risk avoidance. I therefore recommend all people to study and apply *The Faithful House* in order to bring about positive change in marriages, families, communities and nations.


+ John Baptist Kaggwa
BISHOP OF MASAKA,
Uganda, East Africa.

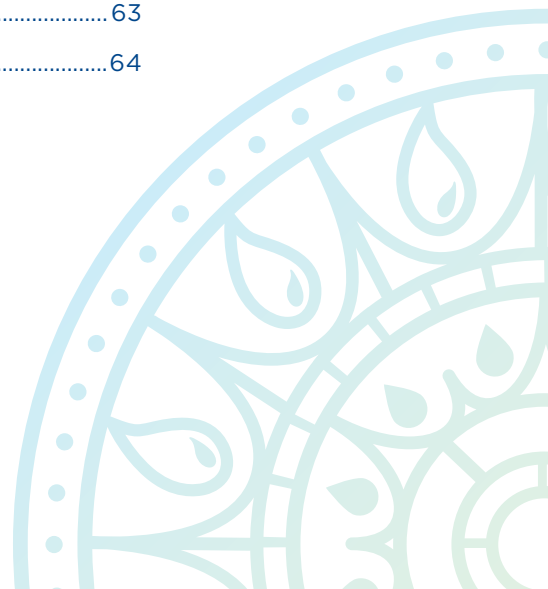
Acknowledgments

The Faithful House (TFH) training manual has come about through the hard work and advocacy of Catholic Relief Services, which engaged the consultants Maternal Life Uganda and Maternal Life International to develop this curriculum. Over the course of six years, CRS adapted *The Faithful House* to include content addressing family household strengthening in maternal and child health, agriculture, and economic strengthening. Drawing on the technical assistance and financial support of the Institute of Reproductive Health, this version establishes the path for addressing the challenges of unmet need for birth spacing through the addition of guidance on simple fertility awareness methods. CRS manuscript reviewers—Senior Technical Advisors Leia Isanhart and Sister Pauline Acayo—provided important insight and content clarity through final edits to the NPP Handbook.

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Introduction to *the Faithful House*

Welcome to *The Faithful House Core Module Manual*! We are most grateful for your presence. Through teaching *The Faithful House* you are making a vital contribution to the health and well-being of individuals, couples and families.

The late Holy Father John Paul II said, “As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live.” In saying this, he was expressing how very important it is that we build strong and intact families. Having strong and intact families is in turn dependent on having strong and healthy marriages. In fact, marriage and family are so tied together that we could say, “As marriage goes, so does society.” We know from looking around that a strong marriage can help bring health, stability and even prosperity to a family. We also know that the opposite is true; without the strength and support of a good marriage, a family is more vulnerable to sickness, to poverty and to hunger.

The Faithful House is an essential step in building a strong marriage and family. It is part of an effort of “family evangelization,” a family-focused initiative for human and social development. Through the implementation of *The Faithful House*, we want to see thousands of families empowered with social, spiritual, moral, material and relational tools that will help them in the realization of authentic integral human development.

“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15)

USING THE FAITHFUL HOUSE CORE MODULE MANUAL

The *Faithful House Core Module Manual* is to be used as a guide in presenting the Faithful House program. We want to emphasize how extremely important this manual is; it is your best friend in the facilitation process. If you know the material in the manual well, your job will be much easier. After you have accumulated a great deal of experience, perhaps you can stray from the manual. However, for now we would emphasize, “Know the manual and stick to the manual.”

STRUCTURE OF THE MANUAL

The manual begins with a foreword and acknowledgment from those who have contributed to the development of the Faithful House program. The manual then outlines the five modules that form the Faithful House program. These five modules divide the program as follows:

- Module One: *The Frame of The Faithful House*
- Module Two: *Completing The Faithful House*
- Module Three: *Living in a Faithful House*
- Module Four: *Challenges Within a Faithful House*
- Module Five: *Fertility Awareness Methods (FAM)*

Within each module there are between five and eight sessions. The sessions represent a specific topic within the module.

Each session within a module begins with an outline of objectives for the facilitator. After the listing of the objectives, there is a picture of the part of the house to be discussed. The presentation and discussion of that part of the house is then presented in three steps.

STEP ONE: Gathering views/ideas from the participants

In step one, the facilitator begins by showing a picture of the part of the house to be discussed. Then, guided by the **General Questions** in the manual, the facilitators ask the participants for their thoughts and ideas. Using discretion, the facilitators will adapt these questions to the local context. In this way, the facilitator is gathering views and ideas from the participants about the topic at hand. As the facilitator, your task is to ensure that there is good input and discussion in regard to the picture and **General Questions**.

Please note that although most of the sessions begin with a picture and general questions, a few sessions begin with role play. The role play is intended to help stimulate questions and discussions in regard to the particular topic and should be developed to address the **Session Objectives**.

STEP TWO: Supplementing views and ideas

In step two, the facilitator critiques and builds on the responses of the participants by using the training manual, personal experiences and other appropriate information. Facilitators should know this material well so they can comfortably present it. Initially, facilitators may prepare short notes as reminders, but with time they should be able to present it from memory.

STEP THREE: Life application

In step three, participants are to discuss the **Couple Time** questions to prepare them for homework and further reflection. Unlike in **Step One**, in which the discussion is held with the whole class, the **Couple Time** questions in **Step Three** are to be reflected on and discussed by the individual couples. Thus, they need to separate themselves from the other couples to talk in private. Since some couples may be illiterate, the facilitator must read each question aloud and make sure couples hear and understand the questions. Once couples have had an opportunity to discuss the **Life Application** questions, the facilitator calls the class together and summarizes the session, with feedback from the couples about what they have learned, and hears the decisions they have made about behaviors they plan to adopt.

BEGINNING AND ENDING THE MODULES

In addition to the three-step process with each session, the manual contains information about beginning and ending an entire module. Specifically, each module begins with an introduction involving a welcome, a prayer and several review questions. There are also specific questions for couples, which offer couples an opportunity to present feedback about the **Life Application** questions.

Each module ends with an invitation for feedback from the participants about the module, asking what was good and what could be improved. The facilitator then announces the times and venue for the next module while creating a sense of anticipation for the upcoming module.

OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE MANUAL

FACILITATOR INFORMATION BOXES

In the manual, there are boxes that contain specific information and reminders for the facilitator(s). Some of the boxes contain information that may be helpful in supplementing the discussion and other boxes contain information to help keep the sessions on track.

APPENDIXES

The last section of the manual contains several appendixes that further supplement and support the Faithful House program. Several of these appendixes will be used during the course, and facilitators will use others to follow up after couples have completed *The Faithful House*.

STRUCTURE OF THE WORKSHOP

You must consider three specific challenges as you plan for *The Faithful House* Couple Workshop:

1. The challenge of time
2. The challenge of resources
3. The challenge of literacy.

As a facilitating team, you will have to work with those involved in planning the Faithful House program to ensure that each of these challenges is addressed.

CHALLENGE ONE: TIME

The Faithful House is ideally delivered over a five-day time frame. Five days enables couples to participate in all of the sessions and fully process the information during “couple time.” However, in some settings, it may not be possible for couples to attend for this length of time, so the program must be adapted. Our experience has been that couples generally are only able to allocate three consecutive days to the workshop. We recommend that after the workshop couples meet together monthly in support groups in order to continue with on-going discussions.

The following are some suggestions to address the challenge of time:

1. Examine the tables below, which provide an overview of which sessions should be covered in either three-day or five-day formats. Be sure to factor this into your planning.
2. To the extent possible, preliminary items should be completed before the workshop begins. For example, if couples are taking a pretest, arrange for this to be completed ahead of time.
3. The program *does not* have to be given on consecutive days. Some parishes have presented the program over a series of two-hour sessions—for example, on Sundays after church services or Mass.
4. Allow for additional sessions to be completed in small groups after completion of the main body of the workshop.
5. Avoid cutting out or significantly reducing couple time, because this is key to the process of the Faithful House program.

NOTE: *The three-day session cuts out “The Purposes of Marriage” and “Two Paths from the House.” In the three-day format there generally would not be time for additional sessions.*

THREE-DAY TFH/FERTILITY AWARENESS METHOD COUPLE WORKSHOP TIMETABLE

DAY	ITEM	TIME
One (morning)	Welcome and Introduction (Including Opening Ceremony)	30 minutes beneficiary
One (morning)	Expectations and Norms of Behavior	30 minutes
One (morning)	The Foundation	1 hour 30 minutes
One (morning)	1 st Pillar of True Love	1 hour 15 minutes
One (afternoon)	2 nd Pillar of Faithfulness	1 hour
One (afternoon)	3 rd Pillar of Respect	1 hour
One (afternoon)	4 th Pillar of Communication	1 and a half hours
One (afternoon)	Recap and Evaluation of Day One	20 minutes
Two (morning)	Recap and Questions	20 minutes
Two (morning)	The Walls of Our Values	1 hour
Two (morning)	The Door	1 hour
Two (morning)	The Windows	1½ hour
Two (afternoon)	The Roof of Consciousness	1 hour
Two (afternoon)	Marriage Bed and Banquet	1 hour
Two (afternoon)	Two Paths	30 minutes
Two (afternoon)	Recap and Evaluation of Day Two	20 minutes
Three (morning)	Recap and Questions	20 minutes
Three (morning)	Culture and Houses Around Us	30 minutes (couple time – at home)
Three (morning)	Broken Houses	30 minutes
Three (morning)	God's House of Mercy	30 minutes
Three (morning)	NFP Method Review & Couple Preparation for NFP Checklist	1 hour
LUNCH	Couple discussion selection of FAM	1hour
Three (afternoon)	2 Day and Standard Day Methods Group Counseling	2 ½ hours (couples choose the FAM counseling session they want to attend)
Three (afternoon)	Small Group Formation and Follow-up	15 minutes
Three (afternoon)	Closing Ceremony	30 minutes

CHALLENGE TWO: RESOURCES

To the degree possible, the Faithful House program managers have tried to ensure that facilitators have manuals and teaching aids. However, in some circumstances there will not be enough manuals or formal teaching aids. Thus, facilitators must be flexible and innovative in their presentation. Here are several ideas that have been used by other facilitators:

1. Have a local artist draw out the main components of *The Faithful House*.
2. Be sure to have at least flip chart paper available, to illustrate the very basic components of *The Faithful House*.
3. Be as visual as possible: For example, when you talk about the foundation, have a shovel or pick to demonstrate digging the foundation. Have some posts or poles for the pillar; mud blocks for the walls; and thatch for the roof. Even if they are not complete, these visual cues help spark couples' interest.

CHALLENGE THREE: LITERACY

Couples may vary in their literacy levels. In many situations, English will be their second language. Where there is a wide variation in literacy levels, the flow of the program can be difficult to maintain. To help negotiate the differing levels of literacy, facilitators can consider the following:

1. During preparation, see if you can have the basic concepts of *The Faithful House* translated into the local language.
2. Offer post-workshop or evening sessions to recap the main points in the local language.
3. Try to arrange a translator for couples who are less literate. Translators could also serve as mentors in small groups after the completion of the program.
4. If the whole program is being translated, you will have to examine your timetable and see what is realistic to cover during the actual workshop and what may need to be completed in follow-up sessions.

COUPLE MENTORS AND TRANSLATORS

Conducting a successful Faithful House workshop requires more than just a facilitating couple. The program can be greatly enhanced by the presence of other couples who provide different forms of service. For example, experienced couples can serve as mentors and translators, sitting with participant couples during break or at meals. They can help them with questions, especially if English is not their first language. Mentor and translator couples can also support couples in small-group follow-up sessions.

Other couples may assist with meal preparation, lodging and in preparing any special events or church services. The experience of the participant couples will be enriched by the active participation of couples who have already completed The Faithful House. As the adage says, "Many hands make for light work."



1. Module One: The Frame of *The Faithful House*

1.1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *The Faithful House: Building Strong Marriages to Affirm Life and Avoid Risk*. Through *The Faithful House* you will realize the blessings of a loving and lasting marriage and you will learn how to avoid HIV and also how to help your children receive the same blessings.

As we discuss *The Faithful House*, we will need your input and your ideas. As we go through each component of the house, we will follow a three-step process.

1. The first step consists of **Gathering Views**. In this step, we will show you a picture of what we are about to discuss. We will then ask you a few questions to gather your thoughts on the picture and what it represents.
2. The second step consists of **Supplementing Views**. In this step, the facilitators add other ideas to the ones you have presented. In this way, we hope to complete our understanding of the picture.
3. The third step consists of **Life Application**. In this step, the facilitators ask you as couples to reflect on and discuss with each other one or more **Couple Time** questions about the topic. After the reflection, the facilitator will summarize that topic and move on to the next.

Our hope is that the three-step process of **Gathering Views**, **Supplementing Views**, and **Life Application** will allow for a meaningful and thorough discussion of *The Faithful House*. By the end of the three-step process, couples should have a good understanding of the topic and how it applies to their lives and to their marriages.

NOTE: So the participants can gain as much as possible from the program, the facilitators should help them develop group norms and guidelines such as:

1. Commitment to attend all sessions.
2. Turning cell phones off or putting them in silent mode.
3. Respecting others' opinions.
4. Appointing a timekeeper to enable the program to stay on track.

If the facilitators think it is appropriate, he or she can suggest that the husband introduces the wife, and vice versa. Depending on the context, the facilitators can ask couples where they are from and what they hope to learn from the program (expectations).

1.2 WHY A FAITHFUL HOUSE?

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify the importance of a house.
- List different parts of a house.
- Distinguish between a physical house and a marriage house.

One of the first things you will need to do as a married couple is to build a house. This house may be made of bricks, stone, cement or mud. The roof may be made of tiles, iron sheets or grass thatch. As you build this house, you will want to make it special. With time, we hope the house will become a home with children and fond memories of your shared life together.

Although we often think and plan in great detail about the physical house we will live in, we may neglect something far more important—the kind of marriage house we will build. In building a marriage house, we have to prepare, plan and work together just as we have to prepare, plan and work together to build a physical house. As we build our marriage house, we have to consider very important questions:

1. What is the importance of a physical house?
2. What are the different features of a marriage house?

Just as it is important that we construct our physical houses well, it is important that we construct our marriage houses well. A well-constructed marriage house will enable our marriages to be strong and our families to flourish.

Keeping in mind the comparison of a physical house with a marriage house, we will examine each component of the house and how it is to be constructed in accordance with God's plan.

1.3 THE FOUNDATION OF THE FAITHFUL HOUSE

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the foundation for a strong and healthy marriage.
- Identify God as the foundation of marriage.
- Realize that many marriages may be built on the “wrong foundation.”

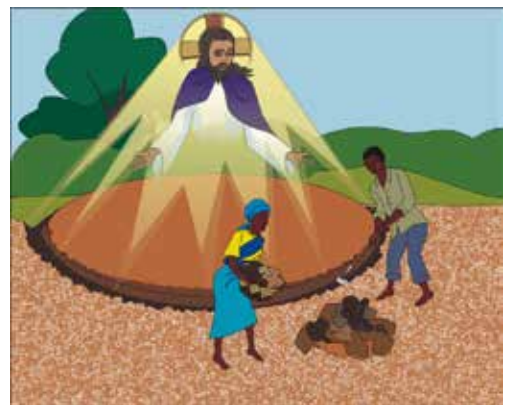
STEP ONE: Gathering views on the foundation

General Questions

1. When you want to build a good house, what would you consider important to have and why?



NOTE: The parts of the house, including the foundation, pillars, walls, windows and roof should come up in the answers. If they don't, the facilitators should probe further — for example, by asking the class to name the different components of a house.



NOTE: The facilitators choose and give the most appropriate questions to the participants for group discussion, followed by presentations.

2. Looking at the situation in our society today, what is the foundation of most marriages?
3. What are the different types of marriages in our society and what is the foundation of each?
4. What problems would you see if a couple did not build a marriage house on a foundation of God?
5. What are the advantages of making God the foundation of our marriages?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on the foundation

The strongest and most basic part of a house is its **foundation**. If the foundation of the house is strong, it can support the remainder of the house, while resisting the wind, the rain and forces of nature. If the foundation of the house is strong, the rest of the house can be constructed properly. Its pillars will be straight, its walls thick and its roof even. Yet if the foundation of the house is weak, eventually it will sag and crumble. A house without a strong foundation will not be safe to live in.

The foundation of *The Faithful House* is God and His great love. It is God who ordained the sacrament of marriage, sealing the unity of husband and wife with his own divine seal. "God blessed them..." (Genesis 1:28). The sacramental nature of marriage means that we must build our houses as God intended and not how man and woman alone might intend it (Psalm 127:1).

With a sacramental understanding of marriage, we realize that a husband and wife are to be co-builders of the house, working with God to build a house strong and worthy of His love. With a sacramental foundation, we realize that our married lives are not just physical lives, but spiritual lives and community lives as well. The house built on God and the sacrament of marriage is "... Like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock" (Matthew 7:24-25).

STEPS: Life application on the foundation

Couple Time

1. What is our marriage like today in relation to God?
2. What steps will we take as a couple to make God the foundation of our marriage?

NOTE: Depending on the responses to the **General Questions**, facilitators may want to bring out further ideas by asking these questions:

1. What are the benefits and risks of trial marriages? (These are also known as cohabitation or "come-we-stay" partnerships.)
2. How do Church marriages compare with trial marriages?

NOTE: The facilitators thank the participants for their responses and insights. Prepare them for the next session and remind them to keep in mind the following:

- The image of the foundation of a Faithful House is God.
- Marriage is a sacrament and husband and wife are co-builders of the marriage house.
- Even if your relationship is not currently built on the foundation of God, God always awaits with his love and mercy to help you build a Faithful House.

1.4. THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE FAITHFUL HOUSE

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify the spiritual pillars of *The Faithful House*.
- Recognize the importance of the pillars in *The Faithful House*.
- Examine their own marriages to see what pillars need to be strengthened.

Rising from the foundation of the house are four strong pillars. These pillars give the house strength and allow its walls to be laid and its roof connected. If these pillars are well placed, the house will be strong and long lasting. Yet, without these pillars, the house will collapse.

The four pillars of *The Faithful House* are:

1. True love
2. Faithfulness
3. Respect for human life and dignity
4. Communication with God and with one another.

With these four pillars grounded in God, a Faithful House takes shape as a house that will be sturdy, strong and lasting. Yet, without these pillars, the House will collapse. As the picture indicates, the husband and wife are co-builders and they have to work together in order to build a Faithful House. We will now look at these pillars one by one.



NOTE: The facilitators lead the participants through an exercise of identifying the four pillars. **General Questions** that could be used:

1. After building the foundation, what is the next step in building a Faithful House?

Once the participants mention pillars, the facilitator proceeds to mention the functions of pillars in the physical house, as in the picture above.

2. What are these pillars in the Faithful House?

The facilitators evaluate the participants' answers and lead them to identify the four pillars noted below.

1.4.1. PILLAR ONE: TRUE LOVE

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the characteristics of true love.
- Distinguish true love from false love.
- Understand why love and sex are not equivalent.
- Commit themselves to true love in their marriages.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on true love

General Questions

1. How do people understand love in our society today?
2. What is true love and how is it different from false love?
3. What are the practical ways of expressing love to each other?
4. What are the obstacles that hinder couples from experiencing true love?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on true love

Pillar one of the house is **true love**. True love is the kind of love that Christ gave to us; it is complete, total and self-giving. It is the kind of love that Jesus shared with us in these words: "This is my commandment: Love one another as I love you" (John 15:12-13). This view of love runs throughout the Bible. For example, consider what Saint Paul said of love: "Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated. It is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury. It does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13: 4-7).

The Biblical view of love is much different from many of our cultural understandings of love. Many think that love is sex and sex is love. Others think that love is simply about our feelings. At times you may feel like loving and other times you might not feel like loving. To add to this confusion, it's important to note that true love is much greater than sex and true love is more than just a feeling. To better understand true love, we can contrast true love with false love.

True love that forms the pillar of marriage is a deep, abiding commitment between a husband and wife in which there is sincere, total, self-giving love of one spouse for the other! True love seeks the other's good; it is selfless; it welcomes happiness; and it endures suffering.



The Pillar of True Love

NOTE: Facilitators can use the following table to help participants distinguish the characteristics of true love from false love.

TRUE LOVE	FALSE LOVE
Founded in God	Founded in self
Directed to God and others	Directed to self
Respects the other	Uses the other
Attraction with commitment	Attraction without commitment
Responsible	Irresponsible
Unconditional	Conditional
Self-control	Lacking self-control
Patient	Impatient
Based in the whole person	Based in lust or infatuation
Faithful	Adulterous
Mutual sexual satisfaction	Selfish sexual gratification

NOTE: Facilitators may supplement the discussion on true love by using these Scriptural quotes: 1 John 4:7-16; John 13:34.

STEP THREE: Life applications on true love

Couple Time

1. What are some practical ways of expressing true love to my partner?
2. What are the ways in which true love is currently being expressed?
3. How do I want my partner to express true love to me?
4. In our marriage, where is true love lacking and where has false love taken over?
5. Is God still the center of our love?

Husbands and wives, as co-builders with God, are meant to give themselves completely and unselfishly to each other as Christ did. To symbolize the pillar of true love, we have emblazoned a crucifix. The cross reminds us to "Love one another as Christ has loved us."

NOTE: The facilitator thanks the participants for their responses and insights and recaps how important this first pillar of true love is: Christ has given Himself completely and unselfishly to each of us.

1.4.2. PILLAR TWO: FAITHFULNESS

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Define what faithfulness in marriage means.
- Understand the consequences (physical, marital and spiritual) of unfaithfulness.
- Commit themselves to establishing or re-establishing faithfulness as fundamental to their marriage.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on faithfulness

General Questions

1. What are the factors that lead to unfaithfulness in marriage?
2. How does society react to unfaithfulness in marriage?
3. What factors, if practiced, would enhance faithfulness in marriage?
4. Why is it important for married couples to remain faithful to each other?
5. What are the consequences of unfaithfulness?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on faithfulness

Faithfulness of a husband to his wife and vice versa reflects trust, openness and honesty in a marriage and this mirrors the faithfulness of God to His people. To be faithful in marriage is to share your bodies only with each other. Having sex outside of marriage breaks the bond of faithfulness. This break in the marriage bond not only leads to the collapse of the Faithful House; it also opens our houses to HIV and AIDS.

To be faithful is to realize that God made us different from animals. For example, a male goat can have sex with many female goats; a rooster may mate with many hens. But God's will for humans is to have one wife and one husband in a monogamous relationship. "...Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother



and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate" (Matthew 19:4-6); This faithful relationship is what allows us to build a strong and healthy marriage to affirm life and avoid risks.

As we work to be faithful, we have to be aware that there are many influences, actions and attitudes that can break our faithfulness. For example, friends who are engaged in sexual relationships outside of marriage, or sexually explicit images on television or on the internet may influence a person to be unfaithful. In the African context, infertility or the desire for a male child may lead to unfaithfulness if a spouse tries to fulfill these goals outside of the marriage. Finally, a person who has been unfaithful in the past may be tempted to return to old ways.

Despite these influences and temptations, we must know how much God desires our faithfulness. He wants nothing more than for us to be faithful to Him and to our spouses. If we have been unfaithful, God's love still persists and still beckons to us, "Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God. For gracious and merciful is He, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment" (Joel 2:12-13).

NOTE: There may be different cultural or local understandings of the meaning of faithfulness. To ensure a uniform understanding of faithfulness, the facilitator can ask the group to define faithfulness and to share the word or words in the local language that best express what faithfulness is. After this is done, the facilitator can share these examples to illustrate the importance of a proper understanding of faithfulness:

1. Culturally, there may be different standards of faithfulness for men and women. An unfaithful woman may be called a "whore"; an unfaithful man may be called a "player."
2. Unfaithfulness may be excused by circumstances, such as infertility, or in extreme economic hardship, when a woman sleeps with a man in exchange for food or money.
3. Faithfulness may be falsely defined in the eye of the beholder. For example, some might attribute faithfulness to a man who gives his wife most of his time, attention and money and gives his girlfriend less time, attention and money.

The group can share other examples. The facilitator should then summarize and emphasize the importance of faithfulness as "mutual, continual, consistent, lifelong monogamy."

NOTE: Facilitators may supplement the discussion on faithfulness by referencing Proverbs 5:1-5 and Malachi 2:14-16. The desired point to be drawn by the facilitator is the warning against unfaithfulness or adultery.

STEP THREE: Life application on faithfulness

Couple Time

1. What would I do if my partner were unfaithful in marriage?
2. What can I do to be a faithful partner?

1.4.3. PILLAR THREE: RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE AND DIGNITY

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Define what it means to have respect for one's spouse.
- Define what it means to have respect for human life and dignity in society.
- Understand the consequences of disrespect in marriage and in society.
- Commit themselves to furthering respect in their marriages and in society.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on human life and dignity

General Questions

1. How do couples show respect for one another?
2. What are the consequences of disrespect in a marriage?
3. How does a person, especially a spouse, feel when his or her dignity has been violated?
4. What are ways in which our society today violates human life and dignity?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on human life and dignity

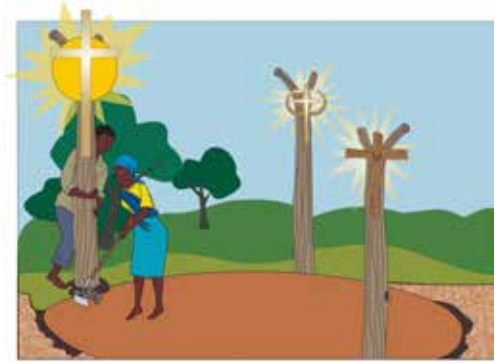
Pillar Three of *The Faithful House* is the **respect** we hold for the life and dignity of our spouses and for human life. This life and dignity comes from God, who created human beings in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:27).

What does respect mean? It means first of all that a husband or wife is a person and not a thing. In your house you may have many things: cooking pots, tables, chairs, pictures, maybe even a television. Outside of your house you may have many things: cows, goats, plants and vegetables. Yet both inside and outside, all of these objects are thing — they can be bought or sold; they can be thrown away when they are no longer of use.

Your spouse is different. Your spouse is a person, possessing an infinite value and dignity. You cannot treat a person the same way you treat a thing. A person is not to be abused or disposed of when he or she is no longer felt to be useful. People have an infinite spiritual value that should never be compromised.

To see your husband or wife as a person is to see him or her as “the lovely one” and recognize in him/her a brilliance that shines like the sun. Your spouse is to be beloved, worthy of your deepest love and respect.

Without this respect, we see serious problems in our society. What do you think of a husband who comes home drunk, wakes up his wife, and forces her to have sex with him? Is he treating her as a person or a thing? What do you think about a husband



or wife who has sex with another person outside of the marriage? What do you think about domestic abuse or violence in which a person physically, psychologically and verbally assaults his or her spouse? In a time of HIV and AIDS, to respect your spouse as a beloved person is to realize that you would never risk infecting him or her by your decisions and your behavior. *If you truly respect the life and dignity of your spouse then you would never risk causing him/her disease or harm.*

In addition to respecting the life and dignity of our spouses, we must also look at issues in our society that threaten the life and dignity of any person. Among these issues are: abortion, human sacrifice, euthanasia, artificial means of birth control, forced marriage and male superiority and dominance.

- The practice of abortion is a tragic and sad destruction of innocent human life. Abortion not only kills an unborn child, but ultimately harms the woman who has aborted. In our society we must work to build a culture of life in which there is enough love for both a mother and her unborn baby.
- The practice of artificial means of birth control — coils, condoms or contraceptive injections — cuts us off from the life-giving impulse of God. At times, such methods of birth control work by preventing an early pregnancy from attaching to the mother's womb.
- The practice of euthanasia deliberately ends the life of the terminally ill or those who are very elderly. Euthanasia is now legal in certain places in the western world and reflects a disturbing trend in which humans at the ends of their lives are viewed with little value.

STEP THREE: Life application on human life and dignity

Couple Time

1. Read Genesis 1:27. Having learned that my spouse is made in the image of God, does this change my view of him or her? Why?
2. How can we show respect for each other's dignity every day?
3. As we examine our marriages, our families and our communities, how can we better create an environment of respect for human life and dignity?

NOTE: *The facilitator thanks the participants for their comments and insights.*

*In the **third pillar**, a husband and wife realize how important it is that they respect each other throughout their lives. Through respect, they learn to value one another as beautiful and worthy people and not as things or objects. Through respect, they avoid anything that would harm or disrespect the other, like gossiping, heavy drinking, adultery or abuse.*

To symbolize this respect, we have emblazoned the third pillar with an image of the sun, as a reminder to couples that they should continually see one another as people "shining like the sun." This sun should shine not only on our spouses, but on all people: the unborn, the sick, the handicapped and the elderly, for all are made in the image of God

1.4.4. PILLAR FOUR: COMMUNICATION

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Understand the importance of communication in marriage.
- Describe the relationship between **vertical** and **horizontal** communication.
- Recognize areas in marriage that are difficult to discuss.
- Commit themselves to improved communication in their marriages.



The Pillar of Communication

STEP ONE: Gathering views on communication

The session on communication is introduced by two contrasting role plays. In the first role play, a couple has good communication with each other and with their children. In the second role play, a couple has poor communication skills with each other and their children.

General Questions

1. What are the qualities and benefits of good communication in marriage?
2. What are the consequences of lack of communication?
3. As a couple, what areas do we find difficult to share?

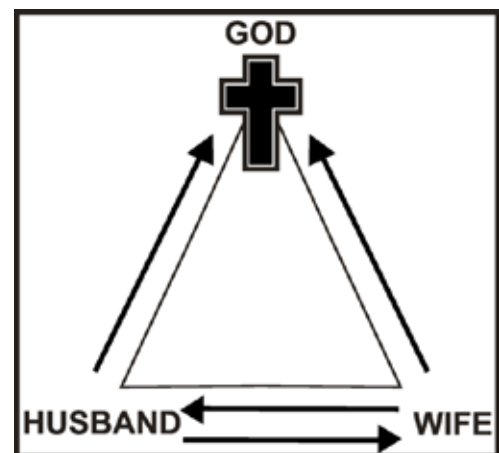
STEP TWO: Supplementing views on communication

The fourth pillar, **communication**, is very important. Communication is both verbal and nonverbal and involves two levels: vertical and horizontal.

Vertical: The vertical dimension is our communication with God. It is important to maintain this relationship through personal prayer, through praying together as a couple and through mutual forgiveness.

Horizontal: The horizontal dimension is communication between husband and wife in the course of their day-to-day lives. This horizontal communication involves empathy, attentive listening, compassion, sharing compliments, openness, transparency and spending time together.

The vertical and horizontal dimensions of communication cannot be separated. One complements the other, as the following diagram illustrates.



NOTE: The more the couple draws toward God, the better their communication and growth in other aspects of life. If they move in the opposite direction (away from God), they also widen the gap between themselves.

If a couple does not pray and cultivate their relationship with God, the gap between them widens. Conversely, if a couple prays and cultivates their relationship with God, they grow closer to each other. In this way, a couple that prays together strengthens their Faithful House (Mathew 18:19–20). In turn, the prayer life of the couple forms the basis of family prayer, giving life to the saying, “The family that prays together stays together” (Father Peter Peyton, CSC).

In addition to containing a vertical and a horizontal dimension, communication is an art that involves a two-way process of prudent giving and receiving.

1. **Giving:** Giving refers to our willingness to share with our spouses the little and big things that are part of our day-to-day life together. Through this giving you are sharing the deepest part of yourself and not withholding information or concerns.
2. **Receiving:** Receiving refers to your willingness and ability to listen. This is often where communication breaks down, as one spouse says, “He or she will not listen to me.” To love your spouse is to listen to him or her! This listening should be done respectfully and prudently.

Both in giving and in receiving, couples must have **honesty** at the heart of their communication. Therefore a husband and wife must be truthful with each other. They should not lie or hide things from one another. In turn, honesty in marriage will lead to honesty in family life, so children can learn to be honest.

Communication is an ongoing challenge. There are many areas in life that couples do not easily share: money, health, sex, time, last will and testament, children, relatives and their relationships with God. This could be because of different personalities, fear of rejection, a lack of trust and a lack of independence. Thus, we have to work hard to build this fourth pillar of communication, recognizing how decisive it is for the well-being of the Faithful House.

NOTE: Facilitators may supplement the discussion on communication by presenting scriptural passages from Genesis 2:25 (openness and transparency) and Ephesians 4:25 (speaking the truth in love).

STEP THREE: Life application on communication

Couple Time

1. What areas of my life do I find difficult to freely share with my spouse, and what am I going to do about it?
2. When my spouse is communicating with me, am I a good listener? What can I do to improve my listening abilities?
3. Are there areas in which I have not been honest with my spouse? How can I change that, in order to be completely honest in the future?

NOTE: The facilitators thank the participants for their responses and insights.

The fourth pillar of communication is very important. Many marriages in our society are breaking down because of poor communication. If we have been failing in our communication in marriage, we must look to the cross to rebuild it.

We see that in the cross, there are both vertical and horizontal dimensions, representing our communication with God and our communication with our spouse. Just as in the cross itself, the vertical and horizontal dimensions of communication cannot be separated. Finally, as we look to the cross emblazoned on pillar four, let us know that to love our spouses is to listen to them with the same great love and sensitivity with which Jesus listened to each of His followers.

NOTE: The facilitator gives out the evaluation forms (see Appendix Five). He or she asks participant couples to set aside at least one hour when they will have time, space and privacy to talk to one another. The next meeting date, place and time are announced. During this time, the participants are encouraged to further discuss the questions they were given during the sessions.

Finally, the participants should be put in a mood of anticipation for the next session.

2. Module Two: Completing *The Faithful House*

NOTE: The facilitator begins with a welcome, a prayer and a recap of Module One. Participants are asked to briefly comment on the main themes of Module One:

1. Who is primarily responsible for the construction and maintenance of the Faithful House?
2. What is the foundation of the Faithful House?
3. What are the four pillars of the Faithful House?
4. Were you able to spend time talking about the questions we left you with?
5. What part of your Faithful House needs the most work?
6. Is there anything that you are doing differently in your relationship with each other after having learned about the frame of the Faithful House?

The facilitator then notes that in Module Two, they are going to add to the framework of the Faithful House so that by the end of the module, their houses will be complete.

2.1 THE WALLS OF THE FAITHFUL HOUSE

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify the current societal values for marriage
- Decide to choose Christian values for their families
- Understand and apply the five priorities/values to their own lives.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on walls of the Faithful House

General Questions

- What priorities should a couple have in order to build a strong wall?
- What do people value most in their marriages? Why?
- What values do you think God wants us to build into the walls of the Faithful House?



NOTE: The facilitators should ask the participants to imagine what the next stage of building is and lead them to mention the walls of the Faithful House and their function.

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on walls of the Faithful House

The supplemental material is introduced by a role play in which a couple walks into the room with their clothes on backward. The woman has her bra over her blouse and her slip over her dress; the man has his shirt over his coat and his socks over his shoes. The facilitator asks the participants, “What do you notice about how the couple is dressed?”

Then the facilitator draws upon the remarks to point out what happens when a couple gets their priorities mixed up. Even though none of the items the couple is wearing is wrong, when they are not applied in the right order, they are less effective. The same holds true with our priorities.

Having built the foundation and the four pillars, we now want to fill in the frame of the house by adding the walls. The walls represent the values held in a marriage. Your values protect the house, keeping inside what is most important and keeping outside what is harmful or destructive. A value is a belief or a principle that you treasure. Your values reflect your priorities and guide your decisions and your behavior. **If you value something—if it is a priority—then you will dedicate time, money and energy to it and treasure it.** In a Christian marriage, there are five values that must be properly ordered in your life. These priorities are:

1. God
2. Spouse
3. Children
4. Job
5. Others: Parents, relatives, friends, church service, hobbies, politics etc.

In any society, a great deal of pain emerges if these five values are out of order. For example, a person’s job becomes more important than his or her relationship with God or spouse, or “other people” become more important than one’s spouse and children. Just as you should not put your shoes on before your socks, a man should not put his friends ahead of his children. And, just as a woman can’t put her blouse on before her bra, she shouldn’t put her in-laws ahead of her marriage. It is a constant challenge for a married couple to keep these five values in the proper order!

STEP THREE: Life application on walls of the Faithful House

Couple Time

1. As we examine our priorities, are we following the order of God, spouse, children, job and other? If not, what is out of order?
2. Are we suffering in our marriage and family life because our values are out of order?
3. What must we do differently to put our values in the proper order?

NOTE: The facilitators can ask the participants if any of them would like to share with the group the values they have identified.

After a brief discussion, the facilitator concludes, “It is important for a married couple and a family to name their values and to live by them. These values are to reflect the priorities of our Christian lives and Christian marriages. Taught and lived well, the values of our houses will be passed on to our children, who in turn will build houses that are pleasing to the Lord.”

2.2 THE DOOR THAT OPENS

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Tell the significance of the door that opens to positive influences and closes to negative influences in the Faithful House.
- Define authority, responsibility and accountability as they relate to the door of the Faithful House.
- Understand how authority, responsibility and accountability are realized and exercised in a Christian marriage.



STEP ONE: Gathering views on the open door

NOTE: This session, the door, is introduced by dividing the participants into four groups, with each of the groups responsible for the following:

1. Group one (composed of couples): Role-play the husband holding all of the power and authority in the house.
2. Group two (composed of couples): Role-play the wife holding all of the power and authority in the house.
3. Group three (composed of men only): Write down all of the jobs and tasks, small and large, that women are responsible for in the house.
4. Group four (composed of women only): Write down all of the jobs and tasks, small and large, that men are responsible for in the house.

General Questions

The facilitators help list and analyze the responses from each of the groups. The following general questions will help in enlisting commentary:

1. What problems will the first couple likely experience?
2. What problems will the second couple likely experience?
3. What does the list of the jobs and tasks tell us about roles and responsibilities in the house?
4. Who do you think is carrying the heavier load in regard to the daily jobs and tasks of the house?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on the open door

In a house, the door allows people to enter and to leave. Through the door of your marriage house, both positive and negative influences may enter. As a couple makes decisions about opening and closing the door, they must come to agree about three key areas in their marriage: authority, responsibility and accountability (1 Timothy 5:8).

- **Authority:** Is it the husband or the wife who has authority to open and close the door? Or is it both?
- **Responsibility:** Who is responsible for ensuring that what enters the Faithful House is consistent with the values of the couple and family?

Note: After discussing these questions, the facilitators can provide the following information.

- **Accountability:** How are husband and wife to honor the authority and responsibility they invest in each other?

The issues of authority, responsibility and accountability are very difficult ones in our society. In traditional African society, women were often given no authority; only the man could decide to open or close the door. Yet, with Jesus, things have changed.

We are to be new men and new women in the light of the Gospel. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). Indeed, if the love of Christ has become the center of a couple’s marriage, both husband and wife share together in authority, responsibility and accountability. Although the Scripture tells us that the husband is the head of the house, it does so while saying that he is to “care for his wife as he would for his own body.”

In telling wives “to be subject to your husbands as to the Lord,” the submission has a context; both spouses are subjecting to each other out of reverence for Christ. The submission of a wife to her husband is only true and only possible because he is offering himself to her and they are both offering themselves to Christ (Ephesians 5:21–26).

In exercising authority, the couple has to exercise mutual reverence for one another and make decisions together with oneness of purpose. Both of them must open the door and hide nothing from the other.

Each couple will learn how this is realized in their day-to-day lives. They might agree that the wife is responsible for the early education of their children, and the husband is responsible for the production of cash crops. They might decide how any extra money will be spent.

Yet in all decisions, there is a new dynamic at work—the love of Christ that penetrates to the heart of who the husband is for the wife and who the wife is for the husband. In the dynamic of Christ’s love, couples learn how to reach consensus, to share roles and responsibilities and to be accountable to each other. This accountability extends to all areas of their lives including time usage, money and friends.

STEP THREE: Life application on the open door

Couple Time

1. What influences should we say “yes” and “no” to in our Faithful Houses?
2. What are your roles and responsibilities to your partner and what do you expect from him or her?
3. Does our authority and responsibility reflect what the Gospel intends for a married couple? How?
4. How do I account for money, time and friends?

NOTE: *The facilitators thank the participants for their responses.*

In this session, we have discussed how important it is for couples to understand and exercise authority, responsibility and accountability in a Christian way. As they do so, they can make wise and loving decisions about what to let in and what to keep out of their Faithful Houses.

2.3 WINDOWS OF LIGHT AND FORGIVENESS

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Recognize the windows of the Faithful House as windows of light and forgiveness.
- Experience the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation in their marriages.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on the windows

General Questions

1. What hinders couples from exercising forgiveness?
2. What common conflicts do couples face? Demonstrate in a role play.
3. What are the consequences of not forgiving?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on the windows

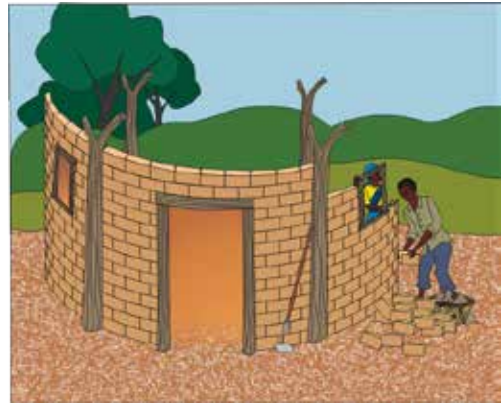
The windows of the house open it to the light and sun. Without windows, the house would be dark and cold and no one would want to live in it. These **windows of light** let in the fresh air of forgiveness and reconciliation. When these windows are put in place, the soft warm light of the sun enters and removes the darkness that has gathered in our hearts and homes.

As we consider these windows, we realize that each and every one of us sins and “all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Thus, each person must be willing to take to heart the words of the Lord’s Prayer, “and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Mathew 6:12). As we look to the light and grace of the window of forgiveness, we should know that Jesus practiced, taught and commanded forgiveness many times in the New Testament. Jesus has shown us that only in forgiving others and in accepting forgiveness can the light in our houses be restored (cf. Mathew 6:14-15).

In addition to the light coming from the windows of forgiveness, we must look to the light that enters through repentance. Repentance means to “turn away from sin and dedicate one’s self to a changed life.” Through our sincere repentance in prayer, any sin, including the sins of adultery and fornication, are forgiven. As we come to God in repentance, He “tosses our sins behind his back” and sets us on a new path. In the grace of forgiveness, we, like the woman caught in the act of adultery, are asked by God to “Go, [and] from now on do not sin anymore” (John 8:11).

In honoring God’s gift of forgiveness and reconciliation, spouses should also forgive and reconcile with each other. Once reconciled, they should not reject or nag one another, but work to be a new creation in Christ Jesus.

This can happen in many ways. For example, for Catholics the grace of repentance and forgiveness is realized in a special way through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Coming before a priest to confess sins and receive absolution can bring about a profound healing. One should not be afraid or ashamed. God awaits, begging for you to come and receive the graces of His mercy!



NOTE: The facilitator leads the participants in considering these two questions:

1. What is the role of a window in a house?
2. If there is no window in a house, what is the house like?

NOTE: The facilitator leads the couple to identify the importance of forgiveness in marriage.

STEP THREE: Life application on the windows

NOTE: This is an appropriate time for facilitators to encourage couples to open the windows of forgiveness through repentance and seek reconciliation. The facilitator should carefully and thoughtfully lay out the following steps in the process:

- 1. Step One:** I look deep into my own heart to see where I have sinned and where I have contributed to conflicts in my marriage. This step involves examining myself—not blaming God, or my spouse or others.
- 2. Step Two:** I pray to God for sincerity of desire, that God may take my desire for forgiveness and healing, and open my eyes completely to my sins and failings.
- 3. Step Three:** I ask with all of my heart for forgiveness from God and from those I have harmed, especially my spouse.
- 4. Step Four:** I pray to God for the strength and love to forgive those who have wronged me, especially my spouse. (On a practical level, we need to reconcile with our spouses in order to restore our relationships and live in harmony.)
- 5. Step Five:** Having sincerely searched my heart and reflected on my actions, I acknowledge and repent of my sins and pray for the strength not to sin again.

Remember: “Where sin increased, graced overflowed all the more”
(Romans 5:20)

Couple Time

- 1.** For what actions would I like to be forgiven by my spouse?
- 2.** For what actions would I like to forgive my spouse?
- 3.** Ask God to bring to mind anybody you are finding hard to forgive, including yourself, your spouse, a neighbor, relatives, in-laws, institutions, organizations, etc., and decide by God's grace to forgive them.

The facilitator concludes by giving out the evaluation forms (see Appendix Five). He or she asks participant couples to set aside at least one hour when they will have time, space and privacy to talk to one another. The next meeting date, place and time are announced. During this time, the participants are encouraged to further discuss the questions they were given during the sessions. The participants should be put in a mood of anticipation for the next session.

NOTE: The facilitator thanks the participants for their responses.

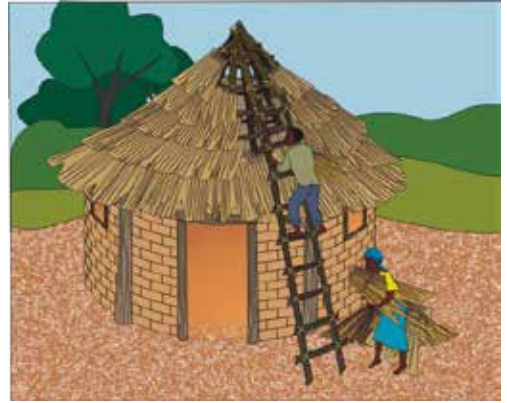
Through our discussions, we realize how important it is to have windows of forgiveness and reconciliation in our houses. It is a guarantee in marriage that there will be problems and difficulties—small ones and big ones. Only the light and grace shining through the windows of forgiveness and reconciliation can allow our houses to be redeemed. Let us always keep these windows open!

2.4 THE ROOF OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Session Objectives

By the end of this session participants should be able to:

- Understand the importance of a roof to both our physical and marriage houses.
- Understand human consciousness as a deep, loving awareness of God and others.
- Understand human consciousness and its importance in preventing HIV and AIDS.



NOTE: The facilitator begins with these two questions.

1. As you look at the house with its foundation, four pillars, walls, door and windows, what is missing?
2. Without a roof, what will happen to the house?

*With these questions the facilitator should lead the participants to an understanding that without a roof, the house is incomplete. In the same way, a person who does not use his or her mind is incomplete. The fullest use of our minds is found in our capacity for **consciousness**, a concept we will discuss in detail.*

STEP ONE: Gathering views on the roof of consciousness

General Questions

1. How are human beings different from animals?
2. What factors can influence our human consciousness and subsequently our behavior?
3. As you look around, do you think most people are acting out of consciousness when it comes to their sexual behavior?

NOTE: Some of the answers for question two will include: witchcraft, money, condoms, alcohol and media. The facilitator discusses how these affect our consciousness.

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on the roof of consciousness

The house is missing a roof! Without a roof, those living inside are unprotected. The protection offered by the roof is especially important in a time of HIV and AIDS. If HIV enters our houses, it will bring death and despair and the houses will never be the same.

The roof that will complete and protect the Faithful House is our **human consciousness**. This consciousness is a gift to us from God. It is the roof that will shelter us from harm, including the harm that can come to us from HIV.

Consciousness is our deep, loving awareness of God, of others and of things around us. When we were baptized, we “put on the mind of Jesus Christ.” The mind of Jesus has at its core this deep, loving awareness. Unlike animals that act out of instinct, we humans can act out of our consciousness.

As Christians, we are to act out of the consciousness of Christ. Thus, in the fullness of our humanity, redeemed by the mind of Jesus, we can make decisions based on our

deep, loving awareness of God and of others, and not just on our instincts, our lust or our desires.

There is a second component to consciousness, our human capacity “to know, to love and to act.” If we compare the human person with an animal, we can say that humans are creatures of consciousness whereas animals are creatures of instinct. If a dog is hungry, it will go and eat. If a female dog is in heat it will mate with a male dog. The actions of animals are pre-programmed and directed to their needs. Humans need not act out of instinct. They can act out of consciousness. They can use their free will and their minds to ponder and make decisions that are not simply instinctual. They can use their consciousness to protect themselves and their families in this time of HIV and AIDS.

NOTE: The facilitator should ask everyone to say, “Human consciousness is our capacity to know, to love and to act.”

If we look carefully at the HIV and AIDS crisis, we realize that it is a crisis of consciousness. Many people are acting out of instinct or ignorance or need instead of out of a deep, loving awareness of God and others. Without this deep, loving awareness, people will continue to act in ways that put them at risk, and the HIV and AIDS crisis will continue.

In a time of HIV and AIDS, to act in deep, loving awareness of God and others is to be completely faithful to your spouse. If you stray outside of this consciousness and sleep with someone else, you may turn your Faithful House into a house of suffering. Your consciousness, in which you are completely faithful to your spouse and he or she is completely faithful to you, reflects the deep, loving awareness of God and others that protects you from HIV and AIDS.

“And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart” (Luke 2:19).

How will we remember to act out of our consciousness, our deep, loving awareness of God and others? Perhaps we can learn from these few words from the Gospel of Luke. Mary carried with her memories of Jesus; they were always with her and they shaped her “knowing, acting and loving.” Can we do the same?

Think about having to carry something, be it firewood on your head or pails of water in your hand. As you carry something, you are aware of it — you feel its weight and presence.

We are each to “carry our consciousness.” We are to be aware that inside of our hearts we always have this capacity to know, to act and to love. Unlike a load of firewood or a pail of water, we never want to set down our consciousness in the face of temptation or want.

As you “carry your consciousness” on life’s journey, you will make good decisions. Like Mary, you will be acting out of the memory and the treasure of Jesus, and his consciousness will become your own.



STEP THREE: Life application on the roof of consciousness

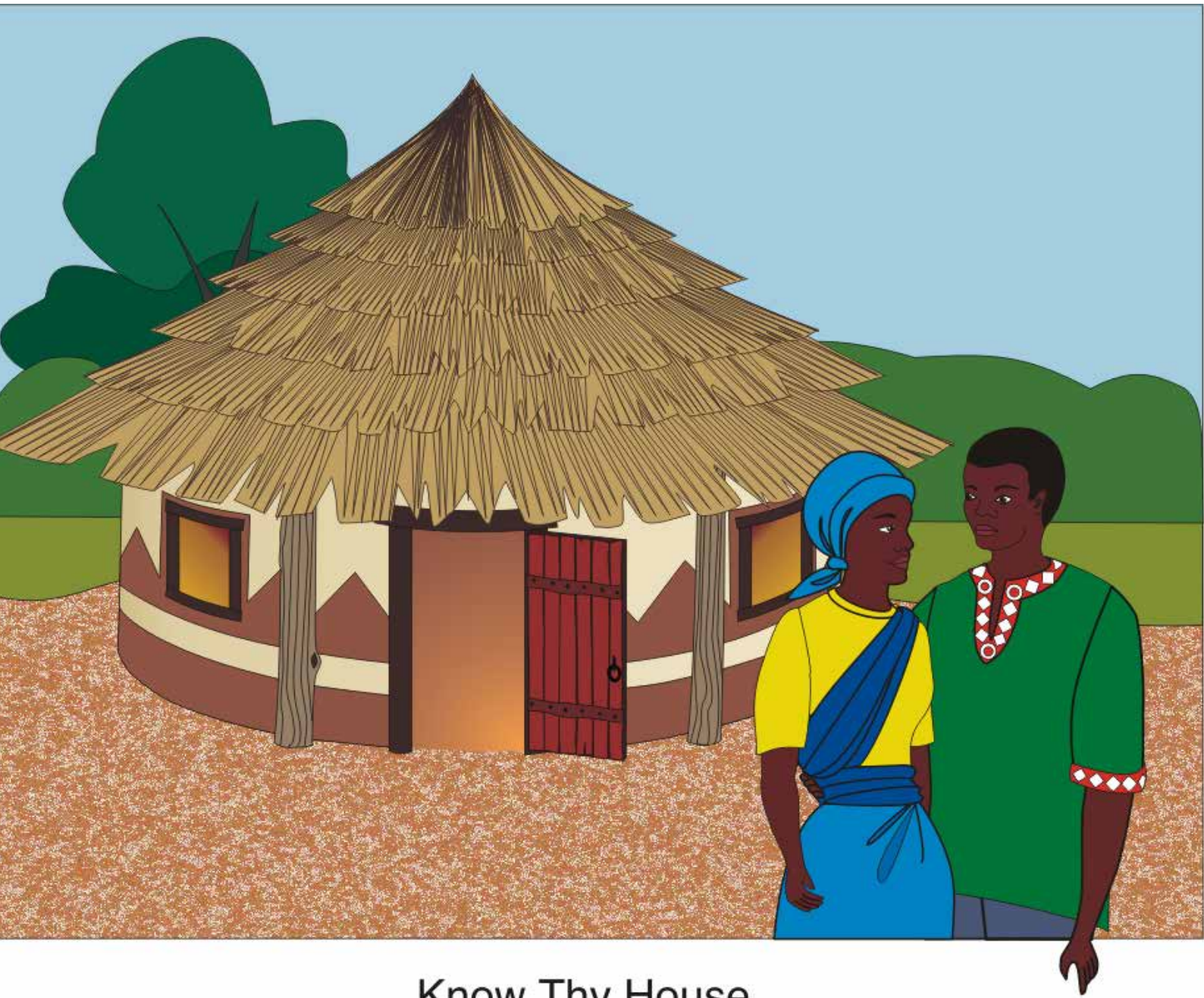
Couple Time

1. What factors have helped to form your consciousness?
2. Can you think of a time when you wished you had acted more out of consciousness?
3. How will you better use your consciousness in order to strengthen your marriage?

NOTE: *The facilitators thank the participants for their responses.*

In this session we learned how important our consciousness is in protecting our Faithful Houses. By knowing, loving and acting in faithfulness to each other, we can always keep HIV out of our Faithful Houses. Let us always “carry our consciousness” in our hearts and let it shape our decisions and our actions.





Know Thy House

3. Module Three: Living Within a Faithful House

NOTE: *The facilitator begins with a welcome, a prayer and a recap of Module Two. He or she briefly reviews the Faithful House components, beginning with a foundation in God and ending with the windows of light and forgiveness. The facilitator can then allow couples to share their experiences using the following questions:*

1. What are the five important values and priorities that make up the walls of our houses?
2. Did anyone discuss in more detail whether their values/priorities are in the proper order?
3. Did anyone discuss the door of your Faithful House and to what it should be closed and opened?
4. Did anyone re-examine and discuss authority and responsibility in relation to the door of your house?
5. Did anyone think more about what consciousness is and how important consciousness is in a time of AIDS?
6. Did any couples talk about the need to open a window of forgiveness and reconciliation in their marriages?
7. Has anyone decided to get an HIV test? How did you make that decision?

After the review of Module Two, the facilitator introduces Module Three: “Now that we have built the Faithful House, we want to discuss how we are to live within it.”

3.1 THE MARRIAGE BED

Session Objectives

By the end of this session the participants should be able to:

- Tell the significance of the marriage bed in the Faithful House.
- Recognize the sacredness of sex in marriage.
- Tell the importance of a couple being open and willing to share their sexual lives and concerns with each other.



The Marriage Bed

STEP ONE: Gathering views on the marriage bed

The session is introduced by asking the group two questions:

1. What does the marriage bed symbolize?
2. What are the purposes of the marriage bed in the life of the couple?

The facilitator then divides the participants into groups of men and women. The men are given this question:

- “What do we, as men, do that hinders or minimizes satisfaction for our wives in the marriage bed?”

The women are given this question:

- “What do we, as women, do that hinders or minimizes satisfaction for our husbands in the marriage bed?”

The facilitator then asks the groups to share and discuss their responses. The discussion can be supplemented by asking a final follow-up question:

- How are men and women different in their attitudes, responses and behaviors in regard to sex?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on the marriage bed

The marriage bed is where you will sleep together and make love with each other. Although we may be comfortable talking about building our houses, we may not be as comfortable talking with each other about our marriage beds and sexual lives. Yet, especially in a time of AIDS, we must be willing to do so.

If you have constructed your house well, the marriage bed will be a special place for you. However, if you have not constructed your house well—if it lacks a foundation in God, if it lacks pillars of love or respect or if there is not a deep, loving awareness of God and each other—then your marriage bed will be troubled.

The marriage bed holds a special place in your house. In fact, it is so special that we say it is placed on “holy ground.” It is placed on holy ground because when a couple makes love with each other, their union—their becoming one flesh—is holy. What do we mean by this?

- Sexual union is holy because a couple opens their bodies to create a child with God. They become co-creators with God.

- Sexual union is holy because a husband and wife affirm with their bodies the goodness of their spouses. They renew a deep, loving awareness of God and of each other.
- Sexual union is holy because it is part of God’s divine and sacramental plan for a husband and wife.

The holiness of sexual union should make us pause. Many in our culture think of sex in casual, “exterior” terms, as if they could have sex with different people without any problems. This attitude betrays the marriage bed and undervalues the “interior” dimension of sex that is to be holy and to be shared only between husband and wife, “until death do you part.”

A couple who enters the marriage bed with respect for each other’s dignity and with an understanding of the goodness of their bodies and the sacramental nature of marriage should be open to discussing their sexual lives. They should not hide what may be troubling them.

For example, a wife may find that she is too tired for sex because she gets little help or support from her husband in caring for the children. She should discuss this with him. Perhaps a woman or man may find that she or he is not sexually satisfied. The man may say he cannot keep an erection or a woman may say she cannot have an orgasm (a climax). Other problem areas include poor communication, high expectations from the spouse or comparisons with previous partners. Although it may be difficult to talk about these things, a couple—knowing that their bodies are good and their union together is good—should discuss such issues if they arise.

3.2 THE MARRIAGE BANQUET

The practical dimension of making love can be further appreciated through an understanding of the “marriage banquet,” in which making love is compared with a banquet and involves the same steps of invitation, preparation, feasting and gratitude. If a couple can understand these steps, their sexual lives can be more satisfying. At the outset, we must note that often men and women view the banquet differently. Men are looking immediately at the food and the feasting whereas women are much more sensitive to the preparation of the meal and ensuring that there is a proper invitation and expression of thanks!



INVITATION

A couple must learn to communicate about inviting one another to the marriage banquet. How will either the husband or wife learn to convey in a loving way that he or she would like to make love? What factors make the invitation desirable and what factors make the invitation undesirable? For example, at a given time, there may be fatigue or fear of pregnancy. A woman may be menstruating and not be comfortable with intercourse. Or there may be concern about the door being open or the presence of children. All of this must be considered as the husband invites the wife or the wife invites the husband. The invitation should be mutual. Both husband and wife should learn to communicate their intentions in kind, affectionate and sensitive ways.

PREPARATION

A couple must learn to prepare for the banquet in a manner pleasing for both spouses.

- Preparation involves bodily cleanliness; you need to clean up thoroughly, brush your mouth and teeth, wash your nose, earlobes, breasts, genital areas, vagina/penis, cut your nails, shave unwanted hair or whiskers.
- Preparation involves preparing your soul. Look at what conflicts need to be resolved and if a window of forgiveness must be opened, ask for God's grace to be pleasing and satisfying to one another.
- Preparation involves the right time and place. Be in a clean environment. Create a space where you can walk together or sit together or even bathe together. Talk about your partner's needs and desires. Let there be emotional intimacy before genital intimacy.

NOTE: The facilitator can supplement the presentation by turning to the Old Testament Song of Songs, 5:10-16, 7:1-9. If there is a couple, the first part (Song of Songs, 5:10-16) is read by the wife and the last part by the husband.

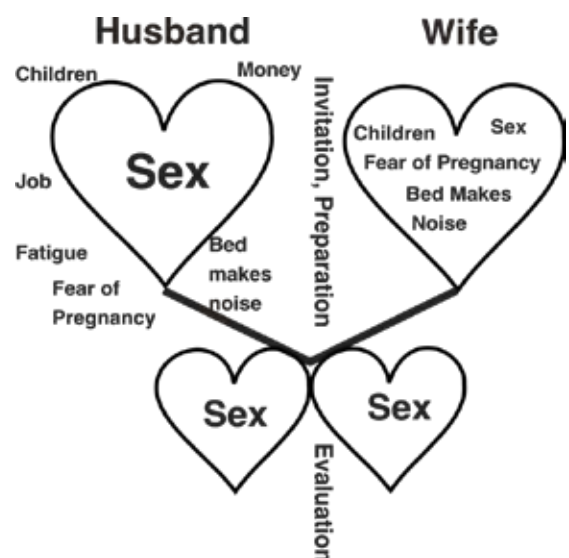
FEASTING

The act of sexual intercourse should be done with deep awareness of each other. The couple should be attentive to signs of excitement and arousal. They should focus not just on pleasing themselves, but also on pleasing the other. They should be attentive to the signs of orgasm. Most of the time, the husband will reach the climax before his wife. Then, he must do his best to ensure she is also satisfied. As at a banquet, one should observe good manners; one should not simply gorge oneself and forget about how others are faring. With time and with deep awareness of God and the body of your spouse, you will learn from each other what is pleasing and satisfying.

GRATITUDE AND EVALUATION

The sexual act and climaxing do not represent the end of the banquet. Can you imagine if, at a banquet, everyone ran out of the room as they finished eating, not stopping to thank the hosts? Rather, there should be time for gratitude in which a husband and wife thank each other for this special time together and for having shared with one another the deepest part of themselves. The couple can clean each other if needed, and discuss in a kind and sensitive way any problems with the sexual act. Finally, with deep, loving awareness of God and each other, they should offer a prayer of thanksgiving.

NOTE: The illustration below shows how differently men and women often feel before the sexual act.



STEP THREE: Life application on the marriage bed

Couple Time

1. Is anything lacking in our marriage bed? What can we do about it?
2. How can we make our sexual lives as a couple better? What should we do differently in regard to:
 - Inviting one another
 - Preparing ourselves
 - Feasting
 - Gratitude
3. What turns you on/off sexually? Have you communicated to your spouse the parts that arouse you sexually? If not, why not?

NOTE: We realize that talking about the marriage bed and our sexual lives is not easy. Yet sex is a gift from God to us and is very much a part of who we are as people. Our challenge is to see sex as God intended it: as beautiful, as sacramental, as an image of His life-giving union. As we go forward, we ask God to help us see our sexual lives in a new light. We ask God to redeem what is broken in our marriage beds, so that it may be pleasing to Him.

3.3 THE PURPOSES OF MARRIAGE

Session Objectives

By the end of this session participants should:

- Identify the three fundamental purposes of marriage
- Respect the cultural, family and religious influences on the purposes of marriage

STEP ONE: Gathering views on the purpose of marriage

General Questions

1. What is the purpose of marriage in traditional culture?
2. What is the purpose of Christian marriage?
3. If a couple cannot have children, is their marriage still valid?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on the purpose of marriage

As a man and woman prepare to enter into marriage, they must consider the fundamental purposes of marriage. Are they coming together to build a house for children, for companionship, for continuation of their clan or family life or for economic reasons? What about having sex? Is it just for children? Or is it just for pleasure and intimacy?

There may be many different answers to these questions.

In many traditional African cultures, the primary purpose of marriage and sex is to beget children so that the clan or family will continue. That is why it has been said that, "A man is a father before he is a husband and a woman a mother before she is a wife."



In the West, the opposite is happening in many places. Men and women cohabit or get married primarily for companionship, including sexual intimacy, and children are often secondary. Many couples choose not to have any children, or only one or two children.

What is correct? Should marriage and sex in marriage primarily be for life-giving through having children? Or should marriage and sex be primarily for lovemaking?

In fact, there are three purposes of marriage:

1. Procreation and education of children
2. The unity of the spouses
3. The right ordering of sexual desire.

A couple that truly loves and truly is open to life is an image of God's being, for God is at once a love maker and a life-giver. Even if no children come, a couple that truly loves, and is open to life, reflects God's own being.

Marriage also serves to rightly order our sexual desires.

The sexual urge God gave to us is very good, yet the sexual urge cannot run wild, with men and women having sex with whomever they want. Rather, in and through marriage, a couple's sexual urge fits into God's plan—a plan where sex leads to the right ordering of sexual desire through the unity of the spouses and the procreation of children.

It well may be that there are other valid reasons for marriage, including economic security and ensuring that the life of the community, both living and dead, continues in the life of the couple and their children. However, we cannot let these reasons supersede the three primary purposes of marriage.

NOTE: *If available, the facilitators can show a picture of people's behavior from the appendix that illustrates the kind of things that result when there is not a right ordering of sexual desire.*

STEP THREE: Life application on the purpose of marriage

Couple Time

1. As a couple, how do we see our marriage? Is it primarily for children, for companionship or both?
2. What other purposes does our marriage have?
3. What parts of our marriage may have lost their purposes and need to be improved?
4. In our marriage, are we open to the gift of children? Have we worked to raise our children well so that they have a strong faith and good character?
5. Have we rightly ordered our sexual desires so that we respect each other and find joy and meaning in our sexual lives?

In conclusion, the facilitator notes that the problem of infertility is raised in this session. The facilitator should add, "Many couples bear the pain and suffering of infertility. A marriage without children is just as valid as a marriage blessed by children. In a future session we will talk more about the challenges of The Faithful House when a couple experiences infertility."



4. Module Four: Challenges Within *The Faithful House*

NOTE: The facilitator begins with a welcome and a prayer. He or she briefly reviews the information from Module Three by asking the couples the following questions:

1. Did you find it easier to talk about sex after our last session?
2. What do we mean by the marriage bed? Did anyone discuss it further?
3. What are the four steps of the marriage banquet?
4. What do you think the purposes of marriage are?
5. Why is it important to have sexual self-control?
6. What are cultural values and practices that help with sexual self-control?
7. What do we mean by the idea of chastity?

After the review of Module Three, the facilitator then introduces Module Four, as noted below.

4.1 CULTURE AND THE HOUSES AROUND US

Session Objectives

By the end of this session participants should be able to:

- Realize the influence of culture on their Faithful Houses.
- Identify cultural and modern influences that pose a risk to the Faithful House.
- Identify cultural and modern influences that affirm life and avoid risk to the Faithful House.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on culture and the houses around us

General Questions

1. What are the cultural and modern influences (knowledge, attitudes, practices and behaviors) around you that will decrease the risk of acquiring HIV and AIDS?
2. What are the cultural and modern influences (knowledge, attitudes, practices and behaviors) around you that will increase the risk of acquiring HIV and AIDS?
3. If time allows, role-play an example of a cultural or modern influence.



STEP TWO: Supplementing views on culture and the houses around us

Our houses don't stand alone. They are influenced by the houses around them. One of the deepest influences on our houses comes from the culture around us. The role of culture is especially important in a time of HIV and AIDS. There may be cultural practices and traditions that put our house at risk of acquiring HIV infection and there may be values and traditions within our culture that can help protect us against HIV and AIDS. Therefore, cultures must be carefully examined to discover their influence on the values, behaviors and the lifestyles of *The Faithful House*.

These are some of the specific cultural influences that relate to AIDS:

Houses in which cultural or modern values or practices increase HIV risk:

- Widow inheritance and purification
- Women proving their fertility before marriage by having a child
- Men proving their manhood by having sex before marriage
- Seeing women as property or objects instead of people
- Pornography on the internet or on TV

Houses in which cultural values or practices decrease HIV risk:

- Teaching and supporting chastity in young men and women
- Emphasizing respect for the dignity of women
- Dressing modestly
- Fathers involved with teaching their children to be chaste
- Attending church
- Associating with other couples and families that share your values
- Seeking spiritual support

STEP THREE: Life application on culture and the houses around us

Couple Time

1. If there were one thing that you could change in your culture to decrease the risk of HIV, what would that be? What are you going to do about it as an individual?

What positive, cultural and modern influences can you encourage in your marriage, family and community that will help decrease the spread of HIV?

NOTE: *The facilitator thanks participants for their contributions.*

In summary, as we work to ensure that our houses are safe, we must be aware of how our culture can either negatively or positively influence our own houses. In order to counteract the negative influence of certain cultural values and practices, we must be sure that our own values and beliefs are strong and not broken down. We must also realize that through our example and through our faith we can positively influence culture so that it helps promote the life and dignity of all people as well as reducing HIV risk.

4.2 BROKEN HOUSES

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Understand factors that may lead to the breakdown of our Faithful Houses
- Understand how breakdown of our Faithful Houses increases our risk of HIV transmission both in and outside of our family.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on broken houses

General Questions

1. What do you see that is different about this house?
2. What factors can lead to the breakdown of our houses?
3. What are the consequences of our houses breaking down? What can happen to the husband or wife? What can happen to the children?
4. In our society, what do you think are the three most common causes of houses breaking down?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on broken houses

As much as possible, we would want our Faithful Houses to be perfect. Yet because of the reality of sin, all of our houses are broken to some degree. Our challenge is to identify where such breaks occur and ask ourselves how we can repair them.

Some of the causes of breakage in our Faithful Houses may be excessive alcohol use, relatives, house helpers, friends, in-laws, bad company, poverty and poor stewardship.

The excessive use of alcohol is a very big threat to our Faithful Houses because it makes it more likely that the man or woman may sleep with others outside of the marriage, increasing the chances for HIV infection.

STEP THREE: Life application on broken houses

Couple Time

1. What is the difference between this house and the Faithful House you have built?
2. What things are threatening to break down our Faithful Houses? What are we going to do about it?

NOTE: After hearing the responses, the facilitator can summarize what leads to broken houses. Some of the causes that will be noted include excessive alcohol use, relatives, house helpers, abuse, in-laws, bad company, poverty and poor stewardship.

At this time the facilitator will have to make a decision about how to proceed. The facilitator can continue to the next session (God's House of Mercy), or there may be a need for more detailed discussion of either alcohol use or domestic abuse, and the facilitator would present these sessions in their entirety.



4.2.1 BROKEN HOUSES: ALCOHOL



STEP ONE: Gathering views on alcohol and broken houses

1. What do you see happening in the picture?
2. Is alcohol a problem in your society?
3. Is there any relationship between alcohol use and HIV?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on alcohol and broken houses

As we can see, the consequences of alcohol use are many. They range from promiscuity to setting a bad example for children. Alcoholism can lead to poverty, to abuse and to family breakdown. With alcoholism, “the drink” becomes the first priority, more important than God, than one’s spouse, one’s children and one’s job.

With alcohol use, there is a greater chance of unfaithfulness and a person may be less likely to adhere to antiretroviral therapy and health-care treatment recommendations. Excessive alcohol use can be a means of denial in which a person does not want to confront the reality that he or she is HIV positive.

We don’t want alcohol to control you. Rather, we want you to be your own person and be free of the burden of excessive alcohol use. As part of this, we hope that rebuilding your house through programs such as *The Faithful House* will create a home environment where couples enjoy each other and there is less desire to seek outside company.

NOTE: If the facilitator feels alcohol use is a significant problem in the community, this topic can be explored further by a small-group discussion. The women are asked to list the effects of alcohol on their marriages and families. The men are asked to list why men drink in their community.

For those who struggle with excessive alcohol use, we urge you to seek the help of a spiritual or professional counselor. There are support groups and treatment approaches that emphasize the importance of a higher power in freeing oneself from alcoholism.

STEP THREE: Life application on alcohol and broken houses

Couple Time

1. Do either of us have a problem with excessive alcohol use?
2. If one of us does, what factors lead to heavy drinking?
3. What have been the consequences of excessive alcohol use on our marriage and family?
4. Do we want to work together to fix the part of our house broken by alcohol?
5. Who should we ask to help us in this decision to seek treatment and stop alcohol use?

4.2.2 BROKEN HOUSES: DOMESTIC ABUSE



Session Objectives

- To bring to light the reality of domestic abuse or violence
- To bring healing to situations in which abuse or violence is occurring.

STEP ONE: Gathering views on domestic abuse and broken houses

General Questions

1. What do you see happening in the picture?
2. What do we mean by domestic abuse?
3. What kinds of domestic abuse exist in society?
4. Who commits abuse: men to women, women to men?
5. What factors lead to husbands abusing their wives?
6. What factors lead to wives abusing their husbands?

STEP TWO: Supplementing views on domestic abuse and broken houses



As you have described, there are many kinds of abuse: domestic violence, sexual abuse, verbal abuse and abuse by neglect. All of these are great wrongs in our societies.

We know from studies that approximately 85 percent of the time, violence is perpetuated on women by men. There is absolutely no justification for this in Christianity or other faiths' traditions. Beginning with Genesis, Scripture teaches that women and men are created in God's image. Jesus himself always respected the human dignity of women.

Sadly, some men may have learned that abuse is acceptable based on their own upbringing or cultural belief system. In some circumstances, their fathers may have abused their mothers. For some men, deep frustrations may arise from the sense that they have failed as providers. We also know that there is a great overlap between alcohol and drug use and domestic violence. Similarly, a woman may take her own frustrations out on her husband. She may feel he has failed her as a spouse, as a father or as a provider. Abuse can take the form of any violent, coercive, forceful, neglectful, insulting or threatening act, or word, inflicted by one member of a family or household on another. Violence is not only a physical act. It can be verbal or psychological as well. Finally, abuse can be sexual, such as when sex is forced or coerced.

How do we fix this broken house? How do we get beyond the pain of being abused by our spouse or the violent behaviors of inflicting abuse on our spouse and move toward a new way of being with each other?

- **Forgiveness:** Forgiveness is to be understood by both the perpetrator of the abuse and the victim of the abuse. The person who is the abuser must be truly repentant and committed to never abuse again. He or she may likely need further counseling

and spiritual guidance in order to handle anger and frustration.

Victims of abuse must realize that forgiveness is not forgetting the abuse or pretending that it did not happen. Neither is possible for the victim. Forgiveness is **NOT** permission to repeat the abuse. Rather, forgiveness means that the victim chooses to continue to work toward healing in the relationship and at the same time resolves not to tolerate further abuse.

- **True Understanding:** An abused woman or man may see his or her suffering as just punishment for a past deed for which he or she feels guilty. He or she may try to explain suffering by saying that it is “God’s will” or “God’s way of teaching me a lesson.” This image of a harsh, cruel God who allows such abuse is wrong. God is mercy! Jesus consistently helped suffering men and women. When we consider the woman with the hemorrhage (Mark 5:25–34) or the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1–11), God’s love for us and desire for our well-being is obvious. God wants an end to the abuse and healing from any abuse that has occurred.

Abuse also must be brought out into the light. Although we may feel ashamed or embarrassed about sharing these ugly facts about our private lives, it is important to tell a spiritual shepherd, a priest, a trusted friend or a family life counselor. You are not the only person in your church in this situation, so for your sake as well as the sake of others, bring an abusive relationship to light.

- **Transformation:** Our journey as disciples of Christ is one of on-going transformation. We change and grow so that, over time, we conform ourselves closer to the mind and heart of Jesus. Thus, with the grace of God, we can move from abuse to respect, from violence to nonviolence, from neglect of one another to deep and abiding care for each other. In this transformation, we confront ourselves and ask God to give us the strength to end any behaviors and attitudes that lead to abuse: anger, alcohol, impatience or jealousy. What may seem impossible for us is possible with God.

Please know that the broken house of abuse can be repaired. It may require outside help, even professional assistance or counseling. However, as the house is repaired, you will realize a great peace and happiness!

STEP THREE: Life application on domestic abuse and broken houses

Couple Time

1. Has there been abuse in our marriage?
2. How can we end any abuse and restore the well-being of our house?
3. How can we help others in our family and community confront, heal and end domestic abuse?

4.3 GOD'S HOUSE OF MERCY

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, the participants should be able to:

- Understand and appreciate God's House of Mercy, which is open to all.
- Realize our own need for God's mercy.
- Recognize how our Faithful Houses will be part of God's House of Mercy.

As we close our final session, we ask you to imagine one more house, a house bigger and more beautiful than any house you have ever seen. This house has room for every single person in the universe! This house welcomes with an open door a married couple working each day to be faithful to each other. This house welcomes a couple that has been bearing pain of different kinds in their marriage. And this house welcomes those who are HIV positive and those who are sick and dying of AIDS.

As you enter this glorious house, the host will greet you. He will kiss your hand and give you a new robe. As you enter further, he will lead you to a banquet room where guests are feasting on very fine food. On entering this house, any pain or guilt or suffering you are carrying is lifted from you and you are warm, free and loved.

My people, you have entered God's House of Mercy. You have been greeted and welcomed and escorted by Jesus the Son. No matter what your sin and what your circumstance, God stands waiting, begging for you to enter His House of Mercy.

All of us need to enter this House of Mercy. We enter this house through our prayers and through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. No sin is bigger than God's House of Mercy. If we accept his gift of mercy, He can redeem our lives; we change our sinful ways and we can again live as God intended, one with Him and one in Him.

As we think back to our meetings, we have come a long way in building our Faithful Houses. **We end in the very place where we began—in God's love and mercy.** Our challenge is to become more and more aware of this love and mercy, which may enter and infuse our own houses. This is what God truly intended when he said, "Love one another as I have loved you." Build your houses with the same great love with which I have built my own.

Let us close with a prayer, calling to mind God's infinite mercy:

"Lord, as we build our own Faithful Houses, we turn to the house you have shared with us, your house of love and divine mercy. In your house, we are always granted refuge. In your house, we find the strength to follow your son, Jesus. He who was most chaste, he who was most good, he who bore all things for love of us. As we have found love and mercy in you, may we be loving and merciful with one another so that in all ways your house may shine in our very own (John 15:12)." In Jesus' name we pray."

Amen.



NOTE: In this session, the facilitator should lead the participants to a mood of prayer, allowing time for reflection and reconciliation between couples. If possible, the Sacrament of Reconciliation should be available. The facilitator may light a candle or have a crucifix to symbolize the presence of God. Read aloud: Luke 15:20-24; Isaiah 1:18. The facilitator emphasizes that there is no sin that God cannot forgive and forget.

5. Module Five: Fertility Awareness Methods

NOTE:

Planning one's family can begin very simply, with a conversation between a husband and wife. While access to high quality health services, trained providers, and community awareness are all critical to helping couples achieve healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies, decisions about the wellbeing of the family begin at home. Recognizing the life-saving benefits of healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has created a new approach to simultaneously strengthen the couple relationship and expand access to modern and effective natural family planning i.e. fertility awareness-based, family planning methods (FAM). Under the technical guidance of the Institute for Reproductive Health (IRH) at Georgetown University, CRS has incorporated the FAM module into TFH manual in order to improve FAM utilization. Specially, this manual links enhanced couple communication (TFH) skills with guidance on FAM services, particularly the Standard Days Method® (SDM) and TwoDay Method® (2DM).

How to organize this section

This section of the workshop will be divided into three activity areas, Introduction to Fertility Awareness-based Methods, Couple time for Reflection and Learning your Fertility Awareness-based Methods.

- 5.1** Introduction to Fertility Awareness-based Methods, Couple time for Reflection and Learning your Fertility Awareness-based Methods. : In a plenary session the facilitator will explain the FAM methods to all the couples. This will provide the couple with the facts about each of the methods and ask questions.
- 5.2** Couple time for reflection: During the lunch break the couple will be able to discuss privately and make a joint decision around the method most appropriate for them.
- 5.3** Learning your Fertility Awareness-based Method: after lunch the couple will attend the FAM technical session (either SDM or 2DM) where they will receive instructions and ask questions on how to apply the fertility awareness method they have selected.

5.1 INTRODUCTION TO FERTILITY AWARENESS-BASED METHODS

Session Objectives:

At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the characteristics of the SDM and 2DM
- Explain how SDM works with CycleBeads®
- Explain how the 2DM works
- Explain the requirements for SDM and 2DM

STEP ONE: Gathering views on family planning

General Questions

- Whose responsibility is reproductive knowledge and family planning choices?
- How do you feel right now about having children, or postponing pregnancy?
- What level of agreement and/or commitment do you both have about waiting to have children or planning a pregnancy soon?

NOTE: The facilitators choose and give the most appropriate questions to the participants for group discussion, followed by presentations.

STEP TWO: Understanding fertility awareness method options

Natural methods of family planning help individuals achieve their reproductive goals to either prevent or achieve a pregnancy by:

- Tracking the menstrual cycle days and avoiding or having intercourse during the fertile window; or
- Observing and tracking a woman's signs of fertility and avoiding or having intercourse on her fertile days

NOTE: Provide an overview of FAM, the different options available and their effectiveness.

Methods such as the Billings Ovulation Method and the Sympto-thermal Method are modern methods that have been available for many years. In addition to these older methods, Fertility Awareness Methods (FAM) have been developed and are scientifically tested and very effective. In the last decade, two new, simple, effective FAM methods—Standard Days Method®, TwoDay Method®--were developed and tested by Georgetown University's Institute for Reproductive Health.

While Billings and Sympto-thermal methods are very effective when used correctly always, in typical use, which is what is in real life conditions, they have a higher failure rate. This is generally due to the level of human error involved in using the method but also the level of complexity in teaching, learning and using these methods.



SDM is was tested in studies and found to be 95% effective preventing pregnancy when always used correctly and 88% in typical use, and TwoDay was found to be 96% effective when always used correctly and 86% in typical use. Compared to Billings with 95% effectiveness with perfect use and 78% with typical use.

Failure Rates of User-Directed Methods

*Percentage of women who became pregnant 1 st year of use	Correct Use	Typical Use
OCs	.3	8
Condom	2	15
**TwoDay Method	4	13
***Standard Days Method	5	12
Diaphragm	6	16
Spermicides	18	29
No Method	85	85
Symptothermal Method	2-5	18-22
Billings Ovulation Method	3-5	20-22

*Adapted from Contraceptive Technology, 18th edition, 2004

**Source: Arévalo et al. Fertility & Sterility, October 2004

***Source: Arévalo et al. Contraception, 2002

A. UNDERSTANDING STANDARD DAYS METHOD

The Standard Days Method identifies days 8 – 19 of the menstrual cycle as the fertile days, when there is a significant probability of pregnancy. On all the other days of the cycle, pregnancy is unlikely. The method works best for women who have cycles between 26 and 32 days long.

Therefore, to use the Standard Days Method to prevent pregnancy, couples avoid sex from day 8 through day 19 of each cycle. On all the other cycle days, they can have sex.

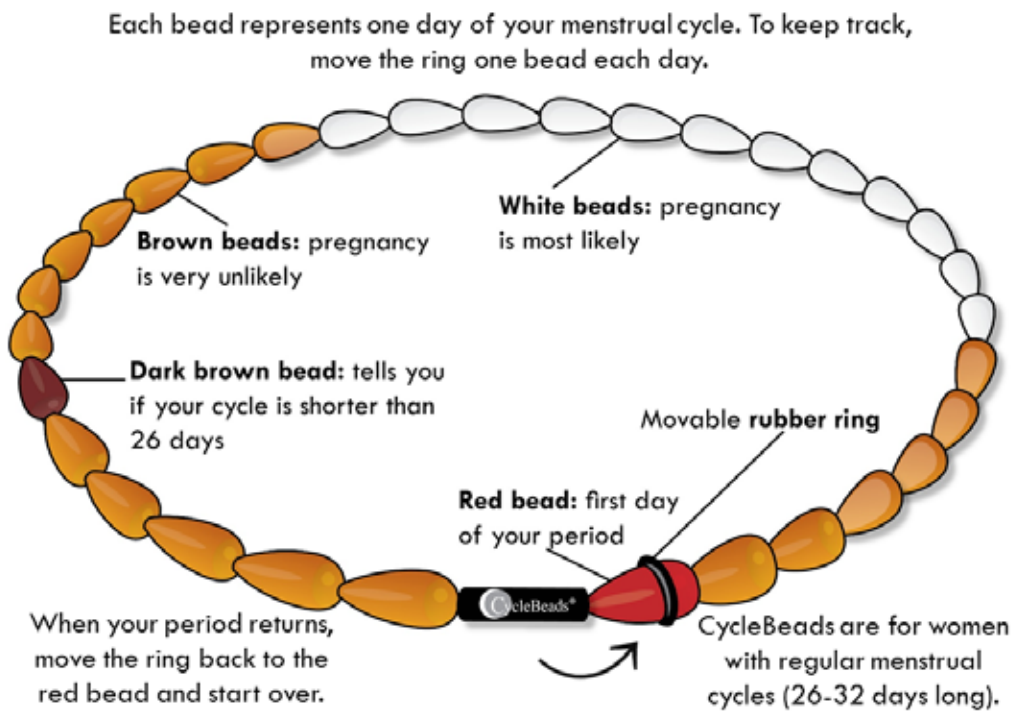
To plan pregnancy, the Standard Days Method can help a couple identify the days to have intercourse. While the fertile phase identified by SDM is not narrow enough to identify more precisely the peak days of fertility, it is a first step for couples to identify if when to time intercourse.

WHAT ARE CYCLEBEADS?

The Standard Days Method is used with CycleBeads®, a color-coded string of beads to help a woman

- Track her cycle days
- Know when she is fertile
- Monitor her cycle length

Many people also find that CycleBeads as a visual tool has helped gain the husband's support to use the method, as he can see when the woman is on a fertile day. It also has served to facilitate communication of the couple regarding how to handle the fertile phase.



- CycleBeads represent the menstrual cycle
- There are 32 beads, each representing a day of the cycle
- The red bead represents the first day of menstruation - which also is the first day of the cycle
- The brown beads represent when pregnancy is very unlikely
- The white beads represent fertile days when a woman can get pregnant
- A moveable rubber ring is used to mark each day
- The cylinder, with an arrow, indicates the direction in which the ring should be moved
- The darker brown bead helps you know if your period came on time.

Note: Explain to the participants how CycleBeads work by demonstrating with the tool.

HOW TO USE CYCLEBEADS?

- To use CycleBeads you put this ring (*indicate ring*) on the red bead the day you get your period. Then each day after that you move the ring forward, one bead per day, in the direction of the arrow. Move the ring even on days when you're having your menstrual bleeding (or monthly bleeding).
- When the ring is on the red bead or a brown bead, you are on a day when it is very unlikely to get pregnant if you have sex.
- When the ring is on a white bead, you are on a day when pregnancy is very likely. To prevent pregnancy do not have sex on these white-bead days.
- Most women will get their periods somewhere in this area (*indicate days between dark brown bead and last bead*) and when they do they simply move the ring forward to the red bead and start the process over.

CHECKING THAT CYCLES ARE IN RANGE

Because this method works best for women with cycles between 26 and 32 days long, there is a darker bead to let you know if you have a shorter cycle (*indicate darker bead*). If you get your period before reaching this dark brown bead, your cycle is shorter than 26 days and this may not be as effective for you. There are also 32 beads here so if you don't get your period by the day after the ring is put on the last bead, your cycles may be longer than 32 days and again, this method may not be as effective for you. The medical recommendation is that if you have a cycle outside this range more than once in a given year that you use a different family planning method.

To help you know if you have moved the ring daily, always mark the first day of your period on a calendar. That way, if you ever forget if you have moved the ring, you can check your calendar to see when your period came. Starting with the first bead, count how many days have passed since your period started and place the ring on the bead for today.

The instructions that accompany the beads in the packaging includes a section that describes this information. Point to it when explaining these to the client. She can review them at home with her husband.

WHO CAN USE SDM?

The SDM is intended for women who meet certain criteria.

- **The majority of her cycles should be between 26 and 32 days.** Women who get their periods about once a month fall within this range.
- **She and her husband should be able to avoid having sex on days 8 to 19 of her cycle.** The collaboration of the husband is extremely important for the successful use of the method. He needs to understand and accept that on days 8-19 of each cycle, they will not have intercourse.

If either member of the couple is exposed to the risk of sexually transmitted infections, the Standard Days Method, as well as most other methods of family planning, will not protect against these infections.

Breastfeeding and postpartum women must wait until their cycles become regular again and have had at least four periods with their most recent two periods about a month apart. If a woman is unable to start the SDM right away, she can use CycleBeads to track her cycle length.

Women who have recently used the 3-month injection, the pill, implant, or patch must wait until they've had 3 periods that are about a month apart (2 cycles between 26 and 32-day range).

B. UNDERSTANDING TWODAY METHOD

The TwoDay Method uses cervical secretions as the indicator of fertility.

What are cervical secretions? Apart from menstruation, something else comes down during their cycle. Although they have noticed their secretions at some point, many do not pay attention to them or know their significance. Women generally feel secretions when they are present in larger amounts. When they learn to use this method, however, they become more attuned to them and can detect them even when they are present in small quantities.

A woman pays attention each day to the presence or absence of secretions. However, she does *not* need to interpret the types or quality of secretions.

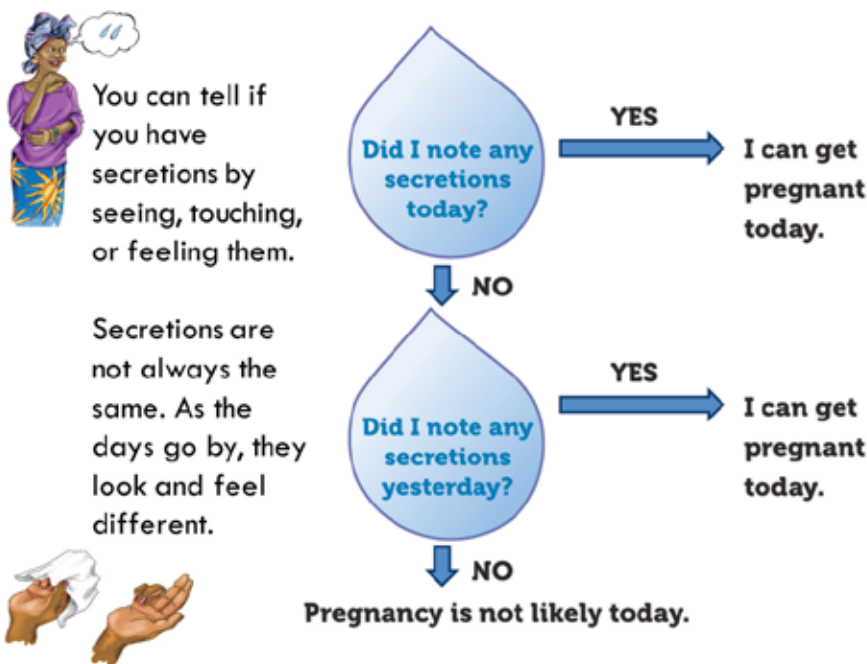
A woman using TwoDay Method checks for cervical secretions at least twice a day.

If she notices secretions of ANY type either today or yesterday she considers herself fertile.

Secretions either today or yesterday means you ARE fertile TODAY

Two consecutive days without secretions means you are NOT fertile today.

To prevent pregnancy the couple does not have sex on the days she can get pregnant.



WHO CAN USE TWODAY METHOD?

The TwoDay Method is intended for women who meet certain criteria:

- The woman's secretions should be healthy. This is to say, they shouldn't be itchy, painful or smell bad.
- She should be able to check for secretions at least twice a day in the afternoon and evening.

- The couple must be in agreement on avoiding intercourse on her fertile days, when she can become pregnant.

Women can use this method regardless of the length of their cycles, and the method can be started at any time in the cycle.

5.2 COUPLE TIME FOR REFLECTION

NOTE:

Couples sit as a couple and discuss which method they will select

EC Trainers prepare two rooms – one room to present group teaching on SDM and one room to present group teaching on the TwoDay. Each EC Trainer Couple will prepare a session

After lunch, The EC Trainer presents brief(1 minute) overview of each method

Couples are requested to choose either SDM or 2DM

Couples are directed to the rooms where each of these methods will be provided in a group session

Couple time:

- Do we want to have another child soon?
- What benefits do you anticipate from using a fertility awareness-based method of family planning?
- What challenges do you anticipate from using a fertility awareness-based method?
- What changes in attitude or relationship may you need to make in order to practice a fertility awareness-based method?
- Which family planning method will work best for us?

5.3 LEARNING YOUR FERTILITY AWARENESS-BASED METHOD

5.3.1 LEARNING THE STANDARD DAYS METHOD® WITH CYCLEBEADS

Note: During this session the facilitator will review the SDM information that was presented in the morning session. The participants will be encouraged to ask questions particularly around the practical application of this method. At the end of the session the participants should feel confident about using this method. The participants should also leave with all the materials they will need to successfully apply the method in their home.

Standard Days Method (SDM) identifies days 8 – 19 of the menstrual cycle as the fertile days, when there is a significant probability of pregnancy. On all the other days of the cycle, pregnancy is unlikely. The method works best for women who have cycles between 26 and 32 days long.

To use SDM to prevent pregnancy, couples avoid sex from day 8 through day 19 of each cycle. On all the other cycle days, pregnancy is very unlikely.

To use SDM to plan a pregnancy, SDM can help a couple identify the days to have intercourse. While the fertile phase identified by SDM is not narrow enough to identify more precisely the peak days of fertility, it is a first step for couples to identify when to time intercourse, if they want a pregnancy.

WHAT ARE CYCLEBEADS?

SDM is used with CycleBeads®, a color-coded string of beads to help a woman

- Track her cycle days
- Know when she is fertile
- Monitor her cycle length

Many people also find that CycleBeads are an important factor in gaining the husband's support to use the method. It is very visual - he can literally see when the woman is on a fertile day. It also has served to facilitate communication of the couple regarding how to handle the fertile phase.



Note: Explain to the participants how CycleBeads work by demonstrating with the tool. At this point also give a set of Cycle Beads to participants to practice along with the instructor.

- CycleBeads represent the menstrual cycle
- There are 32 beads, each representing a day of the cycle

- The red bead represents the first day of menstruation – which also is the first day of the cycle
- The brown beads represent when pregnancy is very unlikely
- The white beads represent fertile days when a woman can get pregnant
- A moveable rubber ring is used to mark each day
- The cylinder, with an arrow, indicates the direction in which the ring should be moved
- The darker brown bead helps you know if your period came on time.

HOW TO USE CYCLEBEADS

- To use CycleBeads you put this ring (*indicate ring*) on the red bead the day you get your period. Then each day after that you move the ring forward, one bead per day, in the direction of the arrow. Move the ring even on days when you're having your menstrual bleeding (or monthly bleeding).
- When the ring is on the red bead or a brown bead, you are on a day when it is very unlikely to get pregnant if you have sex.
- When the ring is on a white bead, you are on a day when pregnancy is very likely. To prevent pregnancy do not have sex on these white-bead days.
- Most women will get their periods somewhere in this area (*indicate days between dark brown bead and last bead*) and when they do they simply move the ring forward to the red bead and start the process over.
- Because this method works best for women with cycles between 26 and 32 days long, there is a darker bead to let you know if you have a shorter cycle (*indicate darker bead*). If you get your period before reaching this dark brown bead, your cycle is shorter than 26 days and this may not be as effective for you. There are also 32 beads here so if you don't get your period by the day after the ring is put on the last bead, your cycles may be longer than 32 days and again, this method may not be as effective for you. The medical recommendation is that if you have a cycle outside this range more than once in a given year you will not be able to use this method.
- To help you know if you have moved the ring daily, always mark the first day of your period on a calendar. That way, if you ever forget if you have moved the ring, you can check your calendar to see when your period came. Starting with the first bead, count how many days have passed since your period started and place the ring on the bead for today.

The instructions that accompany the beads in the packaging includes a section that describes this information. Point to it when explaining these to the client. She can review them at home with her husband.

WHO CAN USE SDM?

The SDM is intended for women who meet certain criteria.

- **The majority of her cycles should be between 26 and 32 days.** Women who get their periods about once a month fall within this range.
- **She and her husband should be able to avoid having sex on days 8 to 19 of her cycle.** The collaboration of the husband is extremely important for the successful use of the method. He needs to understand and accept that on days 8-19 of each cycle, they will not have intercourse.

If either member of the couple is exposed to the risk of sexually transmitted infections, the Standard Days Method, as well as most other methods of family planning, will not protect against these infections.

Breastfeeding and postpartum women must wait until their cycles become regular again and have had at least four periods with their most recent two periods about a month apart. If a woman is unable to start the SDM right away, she can use CycleBeads to track her cycle length.

Women who have recently used the 3-month injection, the pill, implant, or patch must wait until they've had 3 periods that are about a month apart (2 cycles between 26 and 32-day range).

HOW DO YOU MONITOR YOUR CYCLE LENGTH?

- It is important for women to monitor their periods regularity over time.
- Periods must always come between darker brown bead and last bead.
- If period comes early (before darker brown bead) or late (does not start the day after the last bead) more than once in a year, switch to another method.

Note to facilitator:

The script for how CycleBeads work demonstration mention how a woman can continue to monitor that her periods come on time. However, emphasis on this aspect is critical to ensure the method is appropriate for her in the future. While a woman's cycle may be within the correct range to use the Standard Days Method, it is possible that over time her cycles may change. Thus, she needs to continue to know that her periods should always come between the dark brown bead and the last brown bead (*show that section of the necklace*).

To the extent possible avoid language about "needing to have cycles within 26 to 32-day range". Rather, show on the necklace when she must get her periods to know they're coming on time and be able to have this method work for her. Explain that:

- If you start your period before you put the ring on the DARK BROWN bead, it means it has come too soon to use the method.
- If you have not started your period by the day after you put the ring on the last BROWN bead, it means your period is too late to use this method.
- Contact your provider if you have more than one cycle out of range.

WHEN CAN YOU START USING CYCLEBEADS?

- Women who know when their last period started can **use the SDM right away**. They simply count on the calendar to see which day of their cycle they are on and put the ring on the corresponding bead.
- Women who do not remember that date can **begin the SDM when their next period starts**. While she waits for her period to start, she should not have sex until she's able to start using the method.

WHEN SHOULD YOU RETURN TO THE PROVIDER?

You should return if:

- If your period starts before placing ring on the darker brown bead (short cycle) or if your period did not start after moving ring to the last brown bead (long cycle)
- If you/your spouse are having difficulty handling the fertile days
- If your period has not returned and you think you might be pregnant
- If you would like to stop using the method

Couple time:

- Do you believe that abstinence during the fertile days will be a struggle for you?
- For the woman: How will you let your spouse know that you are fertile?
- For the man: What efforts can you make to determine a woman's fertility/infertility before the woman needs to take the initiative?

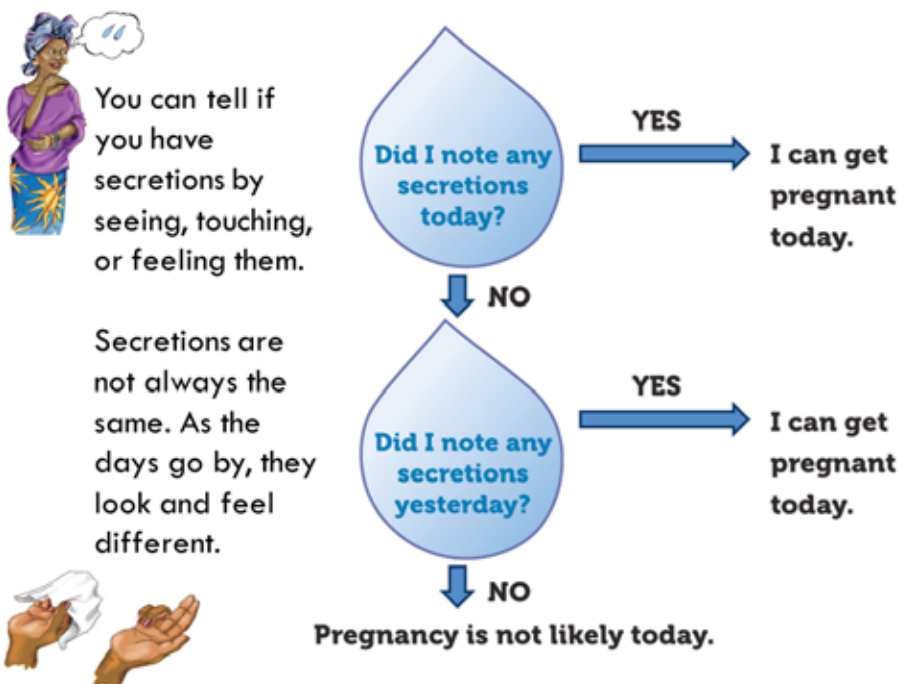
Note: Ask participants to turn to the person next to them and take turns explaining each other how to use CycleBeads relying on the instructional insert.

5.3.2 LEARNING THE TWODAY METHOD®

Note: During this session the facilitator will review the TwoDay Method information that was presented in the morning session. The participants will be encouraged to ask questions particularly around the practical application of this method. At the end of the session the participants should feel confident about using this method. The participants should also leave with all the materials they will need to successfully apply the method in their home.

The TwoDay Method uses cervical secretions as the indicator of fertility. A woman's body produces secretions. Secretions are a sign of fertility and can be seen and felt on the woman's genitals. The days that a woman has secretions are the days she can become pregnant.

A woman pays attention each day to the presence or absence of secretions. However, she does *not* need to interpret the types or quality of secretions.



HOW DOES THE TWODAY METHOD WORK?

TwoDay method identifies a woman's fertile day's based on the absence or presence of secretions today and yesterday. By checking for secretions each day she will know if she is on a fertile day or not the woman asks herself two questions every day:

Did I note any secretions TODAY?

Did I note any secretions YESTERDAY?

If she noted secretions **of any type** today or yesterday, she is potentially fertile TODAY, and should not have sex today. The couple abstains on these days to avoid pregnancy.

If she did **not** note any secretions today OR yesterday (two consecutive dry days), her probability of pregnancy today is very low, so she can have sex today.

And the NEXT DAY she ask herself the same questions.

Let me repeat in more detail: She asks herself:

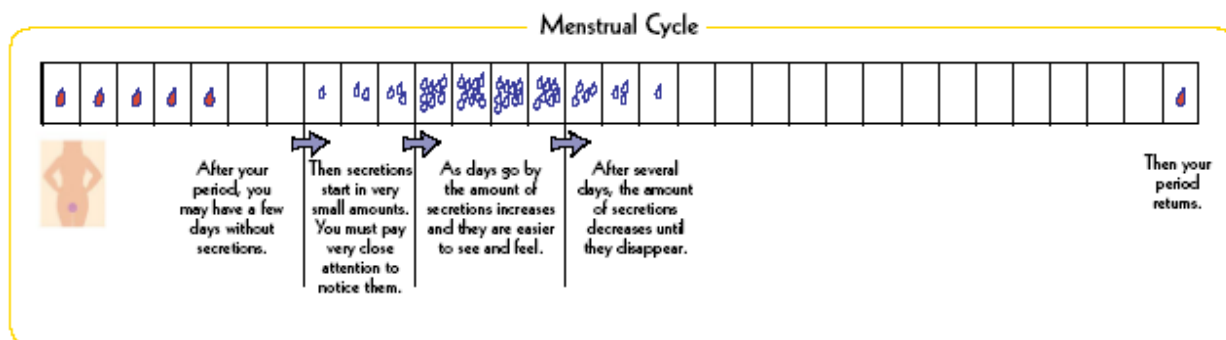
- Did I note secretions today? If the answer is yes, then she can get pregnant today.
- If the answer is no, she then asks: Did I note secretions yesterday? If the answer is yes, then she can get pregnant today.
- If the answer is no, then pregnancy is very unlikely because she had no secretions today or yesterday.

By avoiding sex on the days identified as fertile days, the couple can prevent a pregnancy.

HOW TO MONITOR SECTIONS

Women are generally aware that, apart from menstruation, something else comes down during their cycle. Although they have noticed their secretions at some point, many do not pay attention to them or know their significance. Women generally feel secretions when they are present in larger amounts. When they learn to use this method, however, they become more attuned to them and can detect them even when they are present in small quantities.

Since this method is based on secretions that appear during the woman's menstrual cycle, it is important to understand the menstrual cycle; when it starts and ends, how and when secretions appear and how they change as the days pass. This explanation is important because it serves as the foundation for explaining the standard pattern of secretions.



HOW SECRETIONS HAPPEN:

- After menstruation, there may be a few days without secretions.
- Then, secretions start in very small amounts. Later, as days go by, the amount of secretions increases.
- Once secretions start, they continue for several days in a row.
- After several days, the amount of secretions decreases until they disappear
- Then, menstruation starts again.

When secretions start (a few days after menstruation), they come down in very small amounts so the woman has to pay very close attention to see or feel them.

Secretions are not always the same. Secretions change in quantity and look different. ANY secretion indicates that a woman is fertile.

HOW TO CHECK FOR SECRETIONS

A woman can tell if she has secretions by looking for, touching or feeling them. She should check for secretions at least twice a day starting at noon.

She can **see them** or **touch them** when she goes to the bathroom by:

- Wiping herself before urinating,
- Looking for traces on her underwear; or
- Touching her genitals with clean fingers.



She can also pay attention to whether she feels moisture in her genital area.

She can do this without interrupting her daily activities. As she becomes more familiar with her body and secretions, this will become easier.

MARKING SECRETIONS

To help remember if she had secretions, a woman marks on a card. The purpose of the Client Marking Card is to help the woman keep a record of her secretions and know when to contact the teacher. With the Client Marking Card, a woman can easily remember whether she had secretions today or yesterday, identify her fertile days and know her menstrual cycle and pattern of secretions.

To use the Card, the woman must:

- Mark the Card every night before going to bed.
- Use the following symbols to mark the Card: ● ○ ✕
- Mark the full circle the days she has her period ●
- Mark the empty circle the days she does not have secretions ○
- Mark an X on the days she has secretions ✕

Note: Hand out marking cards to each couple and go through the instructions.

- Record the date she started her period in the space provided. She should mark on a new column every time she starts her period.

Look for the day of the week that she begins using the method and start marking on that day.

She can become pregnant TODAY if she had secretions today OR yesterday, i.e., if she marked an X either for today or yesterday (see red box in client card). She should not have sex today if she wants to avoid pregnancy.

If she is menstruating or if she did not have secretions today AND yesterday, i.e., if she marked either type of circle for yesterday and today (two days in a row with circles), today pregnancy is unlikely (see green box).

If she forgets to check herself during the day or can't remember if she had secretions, she must consider it as a day with secretions and mark it with an X.

If the woman has completed a column on the Client Marking Card and her period has not returned, ask her to continue marking on a new column. She will need to switch again to a new column when her period starts.

WHO CAN USE TWODAY METHOD?

The TwoDay Method is intended for women who meet certain criteria:

- The woman's secretions should be healthy. This is to say, they shouldn't be itchy, painful or smell bad.
- She should be able to check for secretions at least twice a day in the afternoon and evening.
- The couple must be in agreement on avoiding intercourse on her fertile days, when she can become pregnant.

Women can use this method regardless of the length of their cycles, and the method can be started at any time in the cycle.

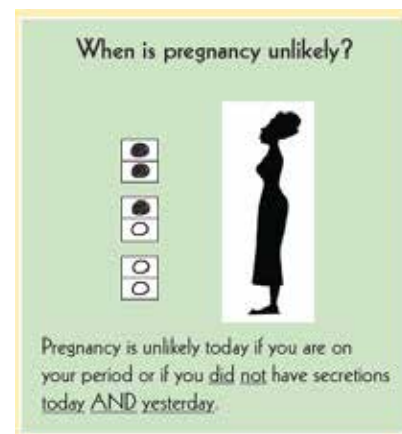
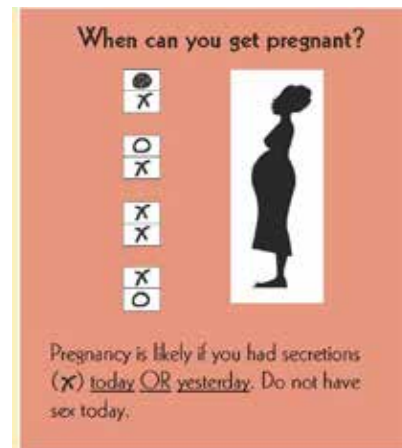
Some situations can affect the number of days a woman has with secretions. These include:

- Women who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding may experience more days with secretions
- Women who recently used a hormonal may also experience more or fewer days of secretions

WHEN SHOULD YOU RETURN TO YOUR FAM PROVIDER?

You should return if:

- If you had less than 5 days or more than 14 days with secretions
- If you have secretions that smell, itch or are accompanied by pain.
- Secretions of this type are not healthy and may indicate an infection.



- If you/your husband is having difficulty handling the fertile days
- If your period has not returned and you think you might be pregnant
- If you would like to use another method

Couple time:

- Do you believe that abstinence during the fertile days will be a struggle for you?
- For the woman: How will you let your spouse know that you are fertile?
- For the man: What efforts can you make to determine a woman’s fertility/infertility before the woman needs to take the initiative?

5.4 FORMATION OF ON-GOING SUPPORT GROUPS

These are small groups of three to five couples who have completed *The Faithful House* program. This small number of couples allows each member to have adequate time to share. It is better to divide these people by geographical location—that is, by parish, subparish or village.

The members of the small groups should meet at least once a month for two hours. They should meet in one another’s homes on a rotating basis.

Activities should include:

1. Praying together
2. Sharing how they have been living after the Faithful House program (the joys and challenges)
3. Mutual support and encouragement
4. Expanding on the talks given in the Faithful House program (Different speakers can be invited to address these topics.)
5. Sharing on other issues related to marriage and family life (family health, child spacing challenges and success, income generation activities, nutrition, children education and development, etc.)

NOTE: Care should be taken to observe time, and couples should understand that strict confidentiality must be observed.

MEALS

Big feasts should be avoided because some members may fear having the group in their homes. In general, it is better to avoid eating because:

- Some members may spend most of the time preparing meals instead of sharing with the group.
- Some members of the group might be reluctant to accept guests because they wouldn’t know what to feed the group.

However, once in a while the group can eat together, with each couple bringing a dish (packed food). In this way, no burden is placed on the host couple.

5.5 CLOSING OF MODULE FOUR AND *THE FAITHFUL HOUSE* PROGRAM

Once the physical house has been built, it is not the end of our work. We must continually care for the house to ensure it is clean and maintained. The same is true with our Faithful House. It requires ongoing work and maintenance. Thus, while we are formally concluding the sessions on *The Faithful House*, we want you to keep working to maintain and strengthen your houses.

All of us must take the basics of what we have learned and build on them. Let us be changed by the knowledge we have accumulated in building a Faithful House and make an about turn. If we did not pray before, let us pray now. If we did not respect our spouses before, let us begin to respect them now. If we were not faithful before, let us be faithful now.

In these ways and others we may take into our hearts the words of Saint Paul: “I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6).

Some of you may be interested in forming small groups or associations that can support one another in living a faithful married life. These groups and associations can help ensure that couples surround themselves with families and houses that share the same values. These associations can also be a source of support and wisdom in addressing the problems and challenges of married and family life.

The program should be concluded with a simple celebration. *The Faithful House* celebration could take the form of a Mass, sharing a meal, lighting candles and renewal of marriage vows. The couples can also be invited to honor each other before other couples and share how they have benefited from the program.

NOTE: Facilitators should introduce the idea of support groups (see Appendix Two) and urge participants to form such groups in this manner.

NOTE: The facilitator must evaluate the program. (See the Evaluation Form in Appendix Five.)



Appendices



APPENDIX 1: THE FAITHFUL HOUSE & FERTILITY AWARENESS METHODS

PRE / POST TEST (CHOOSE ONE) QUESTIONNAIRE

Date:

Location:

Your Name:

Spouse:

Note: Please complete this questionnaire to help us understand your knowledge at the start of the workshop. Circle the correct response. If you have any questions, please ask the facilitator.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU. PLEASE ANSWER OR CIRCLE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

1	Gender	1. Male 2. Female	
2	How old are you? Years	
3	Are you married or cohabitating (living together)?	1. Yes 2. No (if no, skip to question 6)	
4	Type of marriage	1. Cohabiting 2. Church marriage 3. Civil marriage 4. Other	88. Don't know 99. No Response
5	For how long have you been married?Years	
6	What is the highest level of education you have attained?	1. No formal education 2. Primary 3. Vocational 4. Secondary 5. University 6. Others	88. Don't know 99. No Response
7	What is your religion?	1. Christian a. Catholic b. Protestant 2. Muslim 3. Traditional religion 4. Other religion 5. None	88. Don't know 99. No Response
8	Do you attend religious services/ activities? If no,	1. Yes 2. No	
9	If you attend religious activities, how frequently do you attend religious services/activities?	1. Daily 2. Weekly 3. 2-3 times a month 4. Monthly 5. Yearly 6. Don't attend religious services	88. Don't know 99. No Response
10	Do you have children?	1. Yes 2. No	
11	Apart from the Faithful House training, have you ever attended any other training about faithfulness in marriage/family life?	1. Yes 2. No	88. Don't know 99. No Response

Here are some statements about your family life. Please circle how much you personally agree with each statement. Do you: Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3)Neither agree nor disagree 4) Agree, 5) Strongly Agree			
12	I can discuss sexual issues with my partner freely?	1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	88. Don't know 99. No Response
13	I can safely share information and control over financial resources with my partner?	1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	88. Don't know 99. No response
14	I can discuss family financial issues freely (income, expenditure, borrowing etc.) with my partner?	1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	88. Don't know 99. No Response
15	My spouse and I can decide together when to have children?	1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	88. Don't know 99. No Response
16	The views of the extended family members (mother-in-law, sister-in-law etc) must be taken into consideration when deciding how many children my partner and I should have?	1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	88. Don't know 99. No Response
17	I can freely discuss issues about our extended families with my partner	1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	88. Don't know 99. No Response
18	My spouse and I can decide together when to have sex?	1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	88. Don't know 99. No Response

Your responses and comments will help us improve future trainings; as well as assess how much knowledge you have acquired in attending the training.

Please mark your rating on each item below using this scale:

1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neither agree or disagree 4. Agree or 5. Strongly agree

STATEMENT	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
19 Faith in God is essential to building a strong marriage.	1	2	3	4	5
20 Having sex outside of marriage can strengthen the bond of faithfulness.	1	2	3	4	5
21 It is acceptable for the husband to demand sex from his wife under all circumstances because it is her duty.	1	2	3	4	5
22 It is acceptable for a husband to physically hit his partner if she does not fulfill his expectations.	1	2	3	4	5
23 A woman must listen to her husband for good communication in a marriage.	1	2	3	4	5
24 There are secrets that men and women need to keep to themselves and not share with their spouses.	1	2	3	4	5
25 Marriage is a sacrament, and husband and wife are co-builders of the marriage relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
26 Husband and wives need to share information about income, borrowing and spending and make purchase decisions together.	1	2	3	4	5
27 Excessive alcohol use is one of the factors that lead to broken houses.	1	2	3	4	5
28 Sometimes social engagements have the same priority as one's spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
29 Extended family has the same priority as my spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
30 Children are more important than a job.	1	2	3	4	5
31 A husband must listen and discuss important family decisions with his wife to strengthen a marriage.	1	2	3	4	5
32 Respect means listening to one's spouse and sharing decision making about important issues.	1	2	3	4	5

Please rate the extent to which you know the following: 4) VERY WELL, 3) ADEQUATELY, 2) SOMEWHAT or 1) POORLY.				
STATEMENT	VERY WELL	ADEQUATELY	SOMEWHAT	POORLY
MEN only - I know the dates of my partner's last menstrual period.	4	3	2	1
I know how CycleBeads work.	4	3	2	1
My partner knows how CycleBeads work.	4	3	2	1
I know how to chart fertility days on a calendar using the Two-Day Method.	4	3	2	1
My partner knows how to chart fertility days on a calendar using Two-Day Method.	4	3	2	1
I feel my partner supports me in using our natural family planning method.	4	3	2	1
I feel my partner understands our natural family planning method.	4	3	2	1
My partner has the skills necessary to abstain from sex on fertile days.	4	3	2	1
I have the skills necessary to abstain from sex on fertile days.	4	3	2	1
WOMEN only - I can communicate to my spouse that I am fertile.	4	3	2	1
MEN only - I can find out if my spouse is fertile.	4	3	2	1
My partner and I are committed to wait to have children or plan a pregnancy soon.	4	3	2	1
What benefits do you anticipate from using a natural family planning method? (describe them)	1			
	2			
	3			
And do you anticipate any challenges? Do any aspects of natural family planning worry you? If so, which aspects? (describe them)	1			
	2			
	3			

Thank you for your help to complete this questionnaire!

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT WORKSHOP EVALUATION

TFH & FAM WORKSHOP

Location:

Date:

Please complete this form using the following rating for each statement.

4 - VERY, 3 - ADEQUATELY, 2 - SOMEWHAT, or 1 - NOT (poor). Circle the number to complete each statement.

NO.	STATEMENT	VERY	ADEQUATELY	SOMEWHAT	NOT
1	The physical environment was _____ helpful for learning.	4	3	2	1
2	Instructors presented the information _____ simply and clearly.	4	3	2	1
3	Content was _____ relevant to the workshop objectives.	4	3	2	1
4	The teaching methods used were _____ helpful for me to learn.	4	3	2	1
5	Language and vocabulary was _____ appropriate.	4	3	2	1
6	Handout materials were _____ useful.	4	3	2	1
7	The use of flipchart was _____ helpful to use.	4	3	2	1
8	I will be _____ able to use the information in my life.	4	3	2	1
9	The workshop length (number of days) was _____ appropriate for the content.	4	3	2	1
10	The facilitator's were _____ skilled in teaching the content in the workshop.	4	3	2	1

11. What topic or aspect of this workshop was the most valuable to you?

12. What suggestions do you have for future training workshops?

13. Any other comments?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!



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