**national
healthy marriage
resource center**

Marriage Mentoring

How-To Guide

December 2009

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Background

Marriage mentoring is a marriage education strategy that pairs an experienced couple alongside a younger couple to help them navigate through the ups and downs of their relationship. The amount of time the two couples stay connected varies, but generally averages six to twelve months. A successful mentor relationship can last informally for years.

This type of mentoring has been used in the faith community with great success for several decades. As part of a marriage ministry or premarital preparation program, churches often take on the responsibility of nurturing younger couples. As a part of this program, they train veteran couples who show a willingness to serve other couples in this capacity.

Some of the necessary ingredients for launching and sustaining a successful marriage mentoring program outside of a church setting include:

- Identification of committed and passionate mentor couples
- On-going access to young couples
- A trusted source for referrals
- A curriculum or guide to support mentoring sessions
- A training plan for mentor couples
- A mechanism for accountability

Building on these lessons, this How-To Guide is designed to highlight issues to consider when designing and implementing a secular marriage mentoring program.

> It is not necessary to recruit couples who have been married for ten years and have a "perfect" relationship. But you do need solid couples who are recognized in your community as a good "team."

Mentor Couples
Recruiting Mentor Couples

Finding volunteer mentor couples may be challenging. It is not necessary to recruit couples who have been married for ten years and have a "perfect" relationship. But you do need solid couples who are recognized in your community as a good "team."   It may require casting a wide net in order to find the dedicated mentor couples your program needs. It is unlikely that all your mentor couples will be found from one source or in one location.

Use personal networks to recruit mentor couples. The credibility of your program rests on the quality of your mentor couples. You may want to talk with trusted community leaders about couples they know. When reaching out to community leaders ask about couples who do things together; have been married for at least five years; who have experienced some challenges together (job loss, parenting, etc.); or are of different ethnic/faith/racial backgrounds. For example, couples who volunteer at a soup kitchen, are active in a school or church community, or are foster parents can make great mentoring candidates.

Couples will likely be surprised or honored to be invited to be marriage mentors. However, couples should be made aware that there is an application and a matching process so not all who apply will be accepted. Informing people of this up front may decrease the possibility of hurt feelings, which could affect your program's ability to receive referrals in the future.

Selecting Mentor Couples

Similar to the importance of selecting good marriage educators, identifying "the right" mentor couples is essential to program success. Many practitioners familiar with mentoring programs recommend utilizing couples who specialize in certain areas, like those who specialize in working with engaged couples or with distressed couples. On the surface this may appear simple enough but there is much to consider. Programs should establish procedures for screening and selecting mentor couples. The *Mentor Application Form - Appendix 1*, is designed to help practitioners navigate through this screening process.

Screening potential mentor couples takes time to ensure they are in a healthy place. If the couple does not demonstrate a healthy marriage, their participation can be a hindrance rather than a help. You may want to ask the couple about any significant setbacks (including financial, emotional, etc.) they have encountered in their marriage and how they overcame them.

Ask them:
- How they handle conflict as a couple
- What their attitudes and beliefs about marriage, living together, child rearing, and divorce are
- How they handle interactions with people who do not share their attitudes and beliefs
- What is the motivation of each partner to mentor another couple

You want to discern that the primary motivation for them to participate as a mentor couple is *not* to help their own marriage. Some programs may have a self-assessment tool that helps mentor couples determine if they

will be a good fit for your program (see *Appendix 2* for a sample: note this is for a faith-based program). Another consideration is to conduct background checks. This will ensure there is no undisclosed illegal activity involving the mentor couple on file. Conducting background checks is particularly important since couples may be meeting in people's homes (and around children).

The following list is not exhaustive but it does identify some of the key characteristics successful mentors must have.

- *Teach by example*. Mentor couples should practice what they teach, and be able to share particular skills that helped them through difficult situations.
- *Be non-judgmental*. Couples being mentored (referred to as "mentees") may reveal something with which the mentor couple may not agree. The mentor couple must be able to respond appropriately in such a situation.
- *Establish healthy boundaries*. Mentors are not marriage counselors, surrogate parents or grandparents, or "on call" for every little crisis the couple encounters.
- *Be committed*. Mentor couples must be reliable and have the ability to follow through on their commitment. Establish timelines and sign agreements to designate the commitment of the mentor couple.
- *Demonstrate a passion for helping other couples*. Mentor couples should illustrate a genuine desire to help others.
- *Be willing to participate in training and use program resources*. Your program should have a mandatory mentor couple training program. Remember that training is not just an up-front, one-time event. It is on-going and mentors must commit to participate in all program training.

Mentee Couples
Recruiting Mentee Couples

Recruiting mentee couples can be the most difficult part of a mentoring program.   Marriage mentoring experts, Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott use a marriage mentoring triad to depict the three common areas where mentors can be useful. These categories help program operators identify the types of couples they are recruiting as mentees.

1. Engaged and newlywed couples who are *preparing* for marriage. Mentors can help these couples build a solid foundation by helping them navigate through the critical first years when a couple's level of commitment and perseverance are really tested.
2. *Repairing* targets couples who are experiencing various types of distress. These couples can benefit from a fresh perspective,

> Recruiting mentee couples can be the most difficult part of a mentoring program. In order to have a successful marriage mentoring program, you must have referral sources that are safe and non-threatening. The best referrals come from actual couples who have had a successful experience with the mentoring program. Find a creative way to keep these graduates connected with your program.

neutrality and emphasis on the power of "we," a strength couples have a tendency to forget over time or perhaps never learned.

3. Enriching marriages that are already stable is called *maximizing* and serves to encourage couples who are doing well to continue moving in the right direction.

Source: Parrott, L. and Parrott, L., The Complete Guide to Marriage Mentoring: Connecting Couples to Build Better Marriages; The Foundation for Healthy Relationships, Zondervan, 2005

(For ideas on addressing the specific topics described above, see Appendix 3.)

In order to have a successful marriage mentoring program, you must have referral sources that are safe and non-threatening. The best referrals come from actual couples who have had a successful experience with the mentoring program. Find a creative way to keep these graduates connected with your program. Encourage them to refer family and friends. Consider issuing referral stipends for every couple who completes the mentoring program.

There may also be programs in your community who are interested in having couples/parents access mentors. Align your program with organizations that can help you recruit, such as:

- *Early Head Start and Head Start*. These programs provide early childhood education services to low-income families. Many of these programs include parenting, fatherhood and marriage/relationship education workshops/supports that promote family well-being. Building on the research that strong, healthy marriages are positive for children, this may be a partnership opportunity.
- *First responder agencies* such as police, fire and EMTs. High pressure vocations can place increased strain on marital relationships. The exposure to marriage education followed by one-on-one marriage mentoring may be a service that these departments have been looking to provide their employees. In these settings, consider recruiting mentor couples who are retired officers or EMTs who have common life experiences.
- *Churches/Houses of Worship*. Some faith establishments are seeking professional services for couples who wish to be married in their venue. Mentoring is an appropriate and personalized strategy to meet this goal.
- *Schools*. This may be a better strategy with private schools than public schools, but parents of a child having problems (developmentally, emotionally or scholastically) are likely to experience additional strain on their relationship. These couples could be referred by a school counselor or psychologist for a mentoring program to learn skills that will strengthen their relationship.

When talking about the mentoring program to potential referral partners, make it a priority to educate their staff about *what* marriage mentoring is, what *topics* will be discussed, and how it *benefits* couples and families. Take time to meet the people at each partnering site and make personal connections. Encourage mentor couples to get to know them as well. Staff members are much more likely to refer parents/couples to someone

they personally know. These relationships are valuable to your program and it's well worth investing the time to connect program partners with mentor couples.

When a couple is referred to your program, educate them about what the program is and is not; openly discuss the expectations of the program (such as duration and activities); and invite them to apply. The application process does not have to be complex, but you do want to gather key pieces of information about the couple that will help match them with an appropriate mentor couple. Similarly, the application process helps program administrators determine who is truly interested in services. *Appendix 4* is a sample *Mentee Application Form*.

Program Administration

Crucial to mentor programs are the program guidelines. These guidelines should outline expectations and cover topics for discussion, location and frequency of meetings, tracking of time (and mileage or expenses if relevant), and training requirements.

- Conduct mentor/mentee meetings **on neutral ground** in order to ensure a safe and non-threatening atmosphere in which couples can share openly. Each couple's setting preference may vary, but the goal is to provide a comfortable atmosphere. The home of a mentor couple is generally considered an ideal place to meet, although you must assess the liability issues that this may entail.
- Develop a system for **tracking hours** and hold the mentor couple accountable for addressing specific topics each time they meet with their mentee couple.
- Create a process to **request a change of mentor couple** in the event that the assigned mentor and mentee relationship isn't a good match.

Your overall program budget will determine whether mentor couples can receive compensation or not. Child care can be a barrier for mentee couples, so if it is in your budget, arrange to cover these costs. The nature of the mentoring format drastically skews the cost per unit. You cannot use the same system for mentor couples as workshop facilitators that receive compensation for teaching multiple couples simultaneously. If there is no money available to pay the mentor couple, you may want to provide a small allowance for refreshments or food in the event the meetings occur over coffee, breakfast, lunch or dinner. You may also want to consider reimbursing them for mileage.
Be honest and upfront with your mentor couples as you discuss this topic.

Selecting Curriculum

There are numerous marriage education curricula designed specifically for marriage mentoring. Although many of these are faith-based, common topics are keys to successful marriages – forgiveness, solving problems, communication, conflict resolution and commitment. A curriculum (or book) provides structure to

your mentoring program. It guides the mentoring couple by providing topics to cover and skills to impart.

There are also on-line assessment tools available that couples can take that will emphasize areas of opportunity for skills strengthening. Your mentor couples can recommend that their mentees use these assessments. The results can then help guide the mentors' approach.

Program administrators should review the curricula available and select what is right for your program. Things to consider include:

- *Where are mentee couples in their relationship?* There are various resources for engaged couples, recently married couples, expectant couples, military couples and those experiencing challenges in their relationship.
- *Culture and life experiences*. In working with couples of varying cultural and ethnic backgrounds, mentor couples may need to adapt or supplement the curriculum with materials and/or examples that are culturally relevant. This also applies to distinctive life experiences such as those of military and refugee families.
- *Learning style*. Curricula engage couples in various ways. Some include quizzes and self-assessment tools, others have discussion starters, some teach specific skills that can be practiced, and others provide information for couples to put to use. Think about the target audience and the program's ability to offer on-line tools, videos, books, worksheets, etc. when considering how best to teach the couples you serve.
- *Cost*. Training costs, mentor couple costs and materials provided to the mentee couples may influence your curriculum selection.

Creating and Implementing Your Training Plan

Many programs may develop their own curriculum training based on the resources used. Curriculum training, even when not required by the curriculum developer, can standardize your mentoring program. It is an opportunity for mentor couples to share stories that may underscore key concepts and for the program administrator to establish and implement program goals.

Your training plan will be determined by which curriculum your program ultimately selects. Training and preparation to utilize some curricula is available on-line at no charge. A benefit of these curricula is that a great deal of information can be obtained quickly and absorbed by program staff and mentor couples at a nominal cost. The downside is that there is no trained professional available to answer real time questions and provide on-going support. Regardless of what you choose, each partner in your mentor couple should be trained in the same way. Some curricula may require a one-day or multi-day training led by a professional trainer. Training costs for this model can be hundreds of dollars per couple and training may only be offered on select days at select locations.

Have a pool of resources available for your mentors. Regardless of the curriculum selected, program administrators should develop a training program for all mentor couples. Training components should include:

- *Curriculum*: The objective of curriculum training is to standardize what is "taught" or shared during

mentoring sessions. Marriage mentors should feel confident with the material your program uses. Training is an opportunity to discuss and clarify key concepts and coach mentors on how to discuss difficult topics with couples (like finances and parenting).

- *Boundaries*: Mentor couples are there to support mentee couples — not to be their personal counselors, lend money or babysit. Help them set boundaries by training them how to respond to personal questions and how to set limits within the mentor/mentee relationship. Similarly, both couples have a role in the success of the relationship. This may be difficult for mentor couples, as they are likely to feel responsible for the success of the mentoring. If a mentor/mentee relationship "doesn't click" mentor couples should be coached not to take it personally.
- *Program Procedures & Protocols*: Make sure your mentors understand the general program procedures. They should also be able to demonstrate an understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Train them to collect evaluation data, make referrals, and other tasks (as needed) for the population they are serving.
- *Family Violence*: Based on state law, your mentor couples may be mandatory reporters of child abuse. Your program should also educate mentor couples on domestic violence (many people think it is just physical abuse)and how to respond and/or appropriately refer an individual for services. Make sure they understand how to recognize red flags that may indicate abuse.

Training is an on-going commitment. Organize skills training for mentors periodically to discuss common problems and celebrate successes. It is also helpful to have a pool of resources available for additional training including DVDs, books and/or CDs. To further their knowledge, mentors should participate in training/discussions with the program administrator and/or other mentor couples. You might also consider creating a blog to exchange information and offer encouragement for mentor couples. Additionally, this will help you maintain quality control and standardize the program within your mentor base.

Managing a Program

Program success is related to:

1. The quality of mentoring relationships
2. The quality of the materials used
3. The way mentor couples communicate material to mentees
4. The connection between couples
5. Meeting program expectations and goals

As a program administrator, your program is best served by policies and procedures that will manage couple relationships, monitor the use of program materials, and measure program outcomes. Set clear objectives for mentor couples up front. This can include the number of

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couples they are expected to mentor; the number of training hours they are expected to complete; and their conduct. Because program services are delivered one-on-one, written communication and program goals are necessary to ensure that mentee couples are receiving comparable services, regardless of the mentor couple.

Program administrators need to ensure the connection between the mentor and mentee couples. Protocols should be set in place for the purpose of matching couples as well as allowing either couple to exit the relationship, without being placed in an awkward position. Although you want them to be accountable for certain things (such as sharing communication strategies) there are limits to their accountability. For example:

1. *You can't teach the unwilling*. The mentee couple must believe in the value of the mentoring relationship. You can ensure this as much as possible during the selection process.
2. *Mentors are responsible for sharing their experience and following the program, not for the success of the mentee couple*. Mentors have no control over the results of their guidance. They can only be expected to guide and encourage the mentee couple by teaching skills and sharing experiences.
3. *Matching*. Couples should be matched by common history. This can include step-family backgrounds, a stay-at-home parent, a traveling parent, special needs children, etc. As the program operator, you are responsible for trying to match couples and set realistic expectations for the relationship. For example, mentee couples should not expect to become best friends with their mentor couple; it may happen, but it may not.

As a program administrator, it is important to obtain feedback as to how the marriage mentoring sessions are progressing. An easy way to receive feedback is to provide a confidential survey that can be completed on-line, or provide a self-addressed envelope that can be mailed directly to program administrators (this will help mentees feel comfortable offering feedback since they are not giving the mentor couple the evaluation directly). See *Appendix 5 — Mentee Feedback Form and Appendix 6 — Mentor Feedback Form* as samples.

To assess how key relationship education skills are being learned, a skill-based evaluation can also be administered. *Appendix 7* is a sample evaluation designed by the curriculum developer for Marriage Garden. Additionally, a skill-based evaluation can be used as a pre- and post-mentoring assessment to measure change over the duration of the mentoring relationship.

Conclusion

Marriage mentoring has been effective in the church setting for years where there is a natural setting for pairing mentor and mentee couples. Successful secular marriage mentoring programs are elusive and very little information is available in the form of promising practices to support such an endeavor. However, we do know that program administration is essential to a successful marriage mentoring program. Key program components should include protocols for recruiting, matching and managing mentor relationships; additionally, effective communication and clear expectations are important to successful mentoring relationships.

The National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC) would like to thank Ervin Lucero and Courtney Harrison, MPA of the Resource Center for their contributions to this How-To Guide. This is

Additional Resources

The following NHMRC resources were created for marriage educators, however many of the themes and tips may also be applied to mentor couples and mentoring programs.

NHMRC Tip Sheet: Characteristics of Successful Marriage Educators http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/docs/successfulme1.pdf

NHMRC Tip Sheet: When an Incentive Isn't an Incentive http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/docs/whenanincentiveisntanincentive.pdf

NHMRC Tip Sheet: My Relationship Isn't Perfect – How Can I Be a Marriage Educator? http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/docs/myrelationshipisntperfect.pdf

NHMRC Tip Sheet: Personal and Professional Boundaries for Marriage Educators http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/docs/personalandprofessionalboundaries.pdf

NHMRC How-To Guide: Hiring Marriage Educators for Your Healthy Marriage Program http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/docs/personalandprofessionalboundaries.pdf

NHMRC Domestic Violence Resources: http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/about/domesticviolence.cfm
Gray, LFMT, E. A Marriage Program - Marriage Mentoring: Twelve Conversations

Parrott, L. and Parrott, L., The Complete Guide to Marriage Mentoring: Connecting Couples to Build Better Marriages; The Foundation for Healthy Relationships, Zondervan, 2005

Parrott, L. 51 Creative Ideas for Marriage Mentors; The Foundation for Healthy Relationships, Zondervan, 2006

Johnson, E., How to be an Effective Mentor," *Leadership Journal* (spring 2000).

Miriam Around and Samuel L. Pauker, *The First year of Marriage* (New York: Warner Books, 1987)

J.J. Gottman and N. Silver, The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work (New York: Crown 1999)

Hunt, R.A., Hof, L. and DeMaria, R., Marriage Enrichment: Preparation, Mentoring and Outreach, Taylor and Francis, Brunner/Mazel, 1998.

On-line Mentoring Resources, consulted for the development of this guide include:
www.marriagementorsite.com
www.12conversations.com
www.arfamilies.org/family_life/marriage/default.htm

Appendix 1: SAMPLE Marriage Mentor Application Form

To be completed by EACH partner

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

How long at current address: _____

If less than three years please provide previous address: _____

City: _____State: _____ Zip: _____

Length of time at this address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Number of years married: _____ Anniversary Date: _____

Children (please note by gender and ages):

Sons:	(ages) ____, ____, ____	(names)	_____
Daughters:	(ages) ____, ____, ____	(names)	_____
Stepsons:	(ages) ____, ____, ____	(names)	_____
Stepdaughters:	(ages) ____, ____, ____	(names)	_____
Grandchildren:	(ages) ____, ____, ____	(names)	_____

Favorite memory as a couple: _____

_____

What was the biggest crisis that you overcame as a couple and how did you resolve it: _____

_____

_____

Why do you want to become a marriage mentor? _____

_____

Do you have any specific scheduling issues that may impact your availability? _____

_____

Appendix 2. Sample Mentoring Self-Assessment

THE COMPLETE SITE FOR MARRIAGE MENTORS
Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott

connecting couples to build better marriages

"Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott have produced an important guide for both pastors and mentoring couples. They are national pioneers of the new field of marriage mentoring."
– MICHAEL J. McMANUS, AUTHOR OF MARRIAGE SAVERS

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Marriage Mentoring Self-Assessment

1. I am highly motivated to be effective as a marriage mentor. ◯ Yes ◯ No

2. My spouse is highly motivated to be an effective marriage mentor. ◯ Yes ◯ No

3. I would say our own marriage is relatively happy and healthy and I believe we have a lot to offer a less experienced couple. ◯ Yes ◯ No

4. Marriage mentoring is similar to being "mom and dad" to a mentoree couple. ◯ True ◯ False

5. "Maximizing" is one of the three "tracks" of marriage mentoring outlined in the "mentor triad." ◯ True ◯ False

6. The "boomerang effect" refers to the benefit received by marriage mentors when meeting with their mentorees. ◯ True ◯ False

7. Building rapport with your mentoree couple is of little importance for effective mentoring. ◯ True ◯ False

8. Plugging your mentoree couple into a small group study is a great way to augment your mentoring efforts. ◯ True ◯ False

9. The Bible provides no examples of mentoring relationships. ◯ True ◯ False

10. Credibility is an important ingredient for establishing rapport with your mentoree couple. ◯ True ◯ False

11. Empathy and sympathy are the same things. ◯ True ◯ False

12. Understanding your unique strengths as individuals is an important part of working as a team together. ◯ True ◯ False

13. When you set goals to meet with your mentoree couple, the more specific and the more attainable, the better. ◯ True ◯ False

14. More important than listening to your mentorees is making sure that your advice is heard by your mentorees. ◯ True ◯ False

15. One of the ways mentorees are likely to feel that you aren't listening to them is when you are distracted. ◯ True ◯ False

16. When you "listen with the third ear" you are listening for feelings beneath the words. ◯ True ◯ False

17. The training program shows you an easy way to answer nearly any question a mentoree throws at you – even if you don't know the answer. ◯ True ◯ False

18. Knowing how to effectively "tell your story" is a key skill for marriage mentors. ◯ True ◯ False

19. There's a right and a wrong way of praying in a mentoring session. ◯ True ◯ False

20. Who you are – both individually and as a couple – is one of the most powerful "lessons" you will ever teach your mentorees. That's why it's essential to stay sharp. ◯ True ◯ False

21. If you have to "fake it" to look good as a marriage mentor, do so. ◯ True ◯ False

22. I've failed as a marriage mentor if they present an issue that I don't know how to handle. ◯ True ◯ False

23. Being a marriage mentor means being "on call" for our mentorees. ◯ True ◯ False

24. It's important to make your mentorees think you never fight or have disagreements. ◯ True ◯ False

25. Agreeing on outcomes is important for the mentoring process. ◯ True ◯ False

[Score My Assessment]

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Source: http://www.marriagementorsite.com/downloads/MM-assessment.php

Appendix 3: Mentoring Topics Based on Mentee Couple Needs

Preparing Foundational factors that will determine levels of marital satisfaction over time	Repairing Factors or challenges couples may be facing simultaneously (often several simultaneously)	Maximizing Fine tuning the foundational factors to achieve even greater marital satisfaction
Establishing marital roles and responsibilities	Issues of rejection, abandonment, fear, anger or acceptance	Reinforcing marital roles and responsibilities
Providing emotional fulfillment and support for each other	Addictions like alcohol, drugs, pornography, gambling or shopping	Refining emotional fulfillment and support for each other
Adjusting personal habits so they are complementary	Overcoming a natural disaster, unemployment or major financial crisis	Refining personal habits so they are complementary
Making sexual adjustments to fulfill each other's needs	Surviving infidelity	Refining sexual adjustments to fulfill each other's needs
Establishing family and employment priorities	Financial strain	Maintaining family and employment priorities
Developing effective communication and conflict resolution skills	Coping with infertility	Refining effective communication and conflict resolution skills
Managing budgetary and financial matters	Dealing with loss	Managing budgetary and financial matters
Establishing and maintaining relationships with friends and extended family	Parenting stepchildren	Managing relationships with friends and extended family
Participating in and connecting with the larger community	Middle-age crisis	Managing connections with the larger community

Source: The Complete Guide to Marriage Mentoring by Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott

Appendix 4: SAMPLE Marriage Mentee Application Form

To be completed by EACH partner

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Marital Status (please circle): Engaged   Married   Remarried

Wedding/Anniversary Date: _____

Children (please note by gender and ages):

Sons: (ages) ____, ____, ____   (names) _____

Daughters: (ages) ____, ____, ____   (names) _____

Stepsons: (ages) ____, ____, ____   (names) _____

Stepdaughters: (ages) ____, ____, ____   (names) _____

Grandchildren: (ages) ____, ____, ____   (names) _____

Favorite memory as a couple: _____
_____

Do you have any specific scheduling issues that may impact your availability? _____
_____

How would you rate your marriage/relationship?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

In need of repair   Wonderful

What are you hoping a marriage mentor will do for your marriage? _____
_____

Appendix 5: SAMPLE Marriage Mentee Feedback Form

Thanks for taking a moment to fill out this form. It is very helpful to our mentoring program to know how your mentor meetings are going. This form is a means of gathering this information.

Date: _____

Mentee Couple's Names: _____

Mentor Couple's Names: _____

What is the primary focus of your mentoring experience?

  ☐ Preparing for marriage   ☐ Strengthening our marriage

How many times have you met with your mentor couple? _____

Where do you usually meet? _____

In general, how helpful is this mentoring relationship?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not Helpful   Very Helpful

How confident are you in your mentor's ability to help you?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not Confident   Very Confident

What would you like us to know about your mentoring experience so far? _____
_____
_____

Would you like someone in our office to contact you for any reason? If so, please explain and provide your contact information. _____
_____
_____

Thank you for providing us with this information

Appendix 6: SAMPLE Marriage Mentor Feedback Form

Thanks for taking a moment to fill out this form. It is very helpful to our mentoring program to know how your mentor meetings are going. This form is a means of gathering this information.

Date: _____

Mentor Couple's Names: _____

Mentee Couple's Names: _____

What is the primary focus of your mentoring experience?

☐ Preparing for marriage   ☐ Strengthening our marriage

How many times have you met with your mentee couple? _____

Where do you usually meet? _____

In general, how would you describe your mentoring relationship with this couple?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not Helpful   Very Helpful

How helpful do you think your mentoring is to this couple?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
Not Confident   Very Confident

What's the toughest part about mentoring this couple? _____
_____
_____

Have you referred the couple for additional services/counseling?   YES   NO

What could we do to make your mentoring process better? _____
_____
_____

What would you like us to know about your mentoring experience with this couple? _____
_____

Thank you for providing us with this information

Appendix 7: SAMPLE Program Evaluation

http://www.arfamilies.org/family_life/
marriage/default.htm

Uf**A** UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
Cooperative Extension Service

Marriage Garden Evaluation

Your feedback is very important to us. Please take a few minutes to answer some questions about the *Marriage Garden* program. Your answers and the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.
Instructions: This form will be electronically scored, so please mark the desired answer by <u>filling in</u> the circle with a dark pencil or pen like this: "●". Do not "X" or "✔" the circles.

A. Please rate your <u>understanding of the following relationship issues</u> both <u>BEFORE</u> and <u>AFTER</u> participating in a *Marriage Garden* workshop and/or reading through the *Marriage Garden* materials:	<u>BEFORE</u> participating in The Marriage Garden workshop and/or reading the materials:					<u>AFTER</u> participating in The Marriage Garden workshop and/or reading the materials:				
	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	A Lot	Not Applicable	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	A Lot	Not Applicable
1. Commitment (making & honoring promises)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. Growth (expanding/using your strengths)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. Nurturing (doing the work of loving)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. Understanding (cultivating compassion for partner)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. Solving (turning differences into blessings)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. Serving (giving back to partner/ community)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③	④	⑤

B. As a result of participating in a *Marriage Garden* workshop and/or reading through the *Marriage Garden* materials:

	Strong Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My knowledge of healthy marriage relationships has increased.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. My skills as a spouse/partner are likely to increase.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. I have a desire to be a better spouse/partner.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. I will change (improve on) at least one relationship strengthening behavior or practice.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. I think my relationship with my spouse/partner is likely to improve.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. I would recommend this program to family and friends.	①	②	③	④	⑤

C. How satisfied are you with…

	Extremely Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Mixed	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
1. your *marriage*?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
2. your *relationship* with your spouse?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
3. your husband or wife as a *spouse*?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

D. Do you intend to do anything differently as a result of participating in the *Marriage Garden* training and/or reading through the *Marriage Garden* materials?

○ Yes

○ No

If "Yes," please describe: _____

_____

E. Demographic Questions:

1. What is your age? _____

2. I am: (Fill in ONE)   ○ Male   ○ Female

3. I am Hispanic/Latino: (Fill in ONE)   ○ Yes   ○ No

4. My race is: (Fill in ONE):

○ Black/African-American   ○ White
○ Native-American   ○ Unknown
○ Asian-American   ○ Bi-racial/Other

5. My highest education level is: (Fill in ONE)

○ Not a H.S. graduate   ○ Associate Degree   ○ Graduate Degree
○ H.S. graduate   ○ Bachelor's Degree

6. E-mail address (for a brief follow-up evaluation): _____

For Office Use Only

Dosage (hours): ○ 1-2   ○ 3-4   ○ 5-6   ○ 7-8   Presenter:
Setting: Date:

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture, and County Governments Cooperating

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