



Building Healthy Marriages Through 12 Conversations About Marriages That Work

San Francisco 2008

Smart Marriages
Conference

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www.12Conversations.com

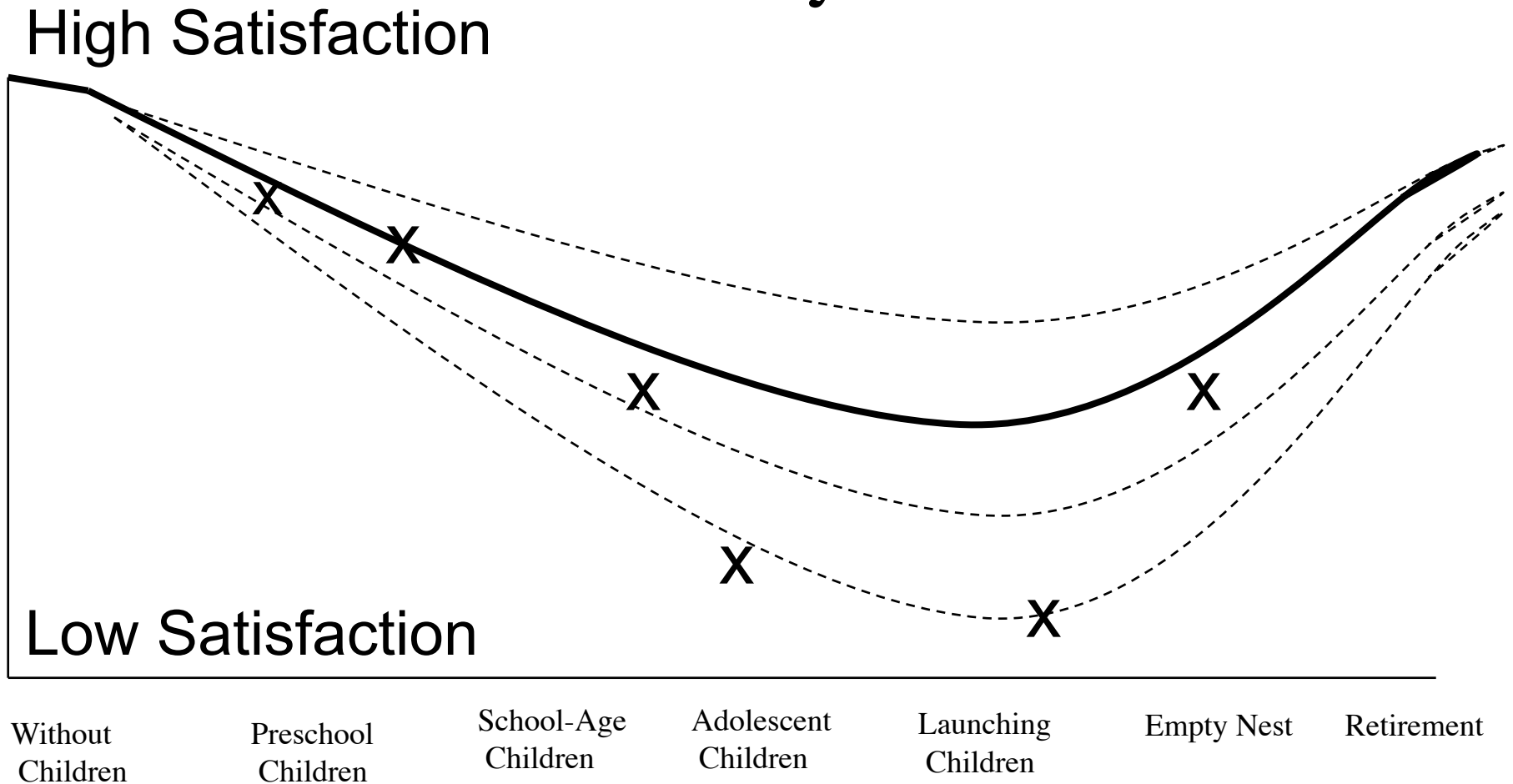
First Marriage Divorce Statistics

- 1/5 of all first marriages are disrupted by either separation or divorce in the first five years.
- After 10 years, 1/3 of all first marriages are disrupted by either separation or divorce.

Published by the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).


From Bramlett, MD and Mosher, WD. *Cohabitation, Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the United States*. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(22). 2002.

Marriage Satisfaction Across the Life Cycle



4 Types of Marriage Education / Growth Programs

Counseling Focus - Formal - High Structure

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- Inventory-Driven / Relationship Analysis / Exercises
Prepare/Enrich, Prepare to Last, FOCCUS, Relate
 - Classes / Workshops
PICK, Active Relationships, Third Option, Retrovaille, PAIRS, Family Wellness, Connections, Dynamic Marriage, Ultimate Relationships, PREP
 - Lay Counseling-Determine Needs-Address Problems, Teach Skills
Parrotts, Ruhnke, Benson, McLain
 - Narrative / Life Experiences - Stories - Shared Wisdom
Marriage Mentoring: 12 Conversations & Mentoring for Dating Couples

Friendship Focus - Informal - Low Structure

Marriage Growth “Transportation”

Counseling Focus - Formal - High Structure
Truck / inventories



Bus / classes
workshops



Pickup truck / lay counselors



Sports
Story tellers
12 Conversations



Friendship Focus - Informal - Low Structure



“The Marriage Movement”

- 1950s - the beginnings of Marriage and Family Therapy - paradigm of systemic care - a sort of revolution in the care of individuals in the context of their relationships
- 1990s - new emphasis on outreach, prevention and education for healthy relationships
- Researchers - John Gottman, Howard Markman & Scott Stanley -PREP, David Olsen - Prepare Enrich

“The Marriage Movement”

- Diane Solee - 1996 founded the Coalition for Marriage, Family, & Couples Education -- San Francisco 2008
- Grassroots marriage movement: concerned citizens, therapists, social workers, teachers, researchers, legislators. . .
- 2006 \$ 135,000,000 + in Federal grants from the ACF (Administration for Children and Families)
 - Community marriage initiatives
 - Marriage education programs
 - Parenting education
 - Fatherhood initiatives

Our Concept for Mentoring



- Proactive - start marriage encouragement & conversations before there are major problems
- Simple - for the average healthy couple in the church or community to do without technical training necessary
- Fun - eating and sharing stories with an encouraging purpose - Engaging men. . .
- Practical - support for couples as they face new stages & adjustments in marriage

How Marriage Mentoring: 12 Conversations Works

- Mentor couples meet once a month for about an hour and a half of conversation. (Like a “double-date with an intentional purpose.)
- Informal settings - relaxed & comfortable - such as a home, a favorite restaurant, or a coffee shop.
- 12 Conversations topics
- This is a friendship / relationship, not a “class.”
This is a mutual story telling, narrative approach.
- We remember stories.

Design of MM: 12 Conversations

- Successful role models
 - Vs. assessment / counseling model
- Narrative / stories of marriage growth
 - Vs. teaching / lecture
- Emphasis on oral tradition
 - Vs. psychological experts
- Simple mentor training for mentor couples
- Beta testing of questions . . .

The 12 Topics Are:

1. Thankfulness
2. Healthy Marriage Habits:
3. In-law Relationships: Making Our Life Together
4. Recreation and Playfulness
5. Money in Marriage
6. Communication
7. Problem Solving
8. Balancing Acts: Marriage, Family, Community, and Work
9. Children
10. Friendship, Closeness, and Intimacy
11. Planning for Our Future
12. Celebrating the Holidays

Mentoring Program Materials

Order at www.12Conversations.com

901-681-9200

- **Leadership Kit – Teach-out-of –the-box**
Everything you need to train mentors & launch your marriage mentoring program - 2 DVDs & CD included
- **Training manuals - Community, Faith-based, Military, Spanish, & International editions available**
- **Conversation guides**
 - Marriage Mentoring
 - Mentoring for Dating Couples
 - Senior Citizens Mentoring: 12 Conversations for Active Living