

Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program – (PREP)

Many couples are as committed as ever to having a successful, happy relationship, but sometimes they find attaining that goal difficult. Often they lack the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the relationship they really want. PREP is for couples interested in strengthening their marriage by improving their communication and problem-solving skills.

PREP has been developed through extensive research on marriage, experience with couples' therapy, and with running previous versions of PREP. The program is designed to teach couples communication skills and ground rules for handling conflict and promoting intimacy, with the aim of preventing future marital problems and divorce.

PREP is based on over twenty-five years of research, funded in part by the National Institute of Mental Health, indicating that the past predictor of divorce is destructive styles of arguing. It is not that other things do not predict, but how couples communicate and handle conflict is both a powerful predictor and it is changeable behavior. Therefore, PREP emphasizes constructive arguing techniques that allow males and females to adjust their communication styles and achieve more positive and intimate communication. Other key topics include expectations, commitment, friendship, fun, sensuality, and spiritual/religious factors. Specifically, PREP is designed to address the following topics:

- How to communicate better and solve problems
- How to handle disagreements and conflict
- How to promote a sense of working as a team
- Why men and women communicate differently
- How to keep friendship, fun, and intimacy alive
- How to strengthen your commitment to each other

The primary goal of PREP is to provide an educational experience for couples that will enable them to increase their communication and problem solving skills, skills associated with effective marital functioning and the prevention of future marital distress.

For additional information, including upcoming PREP dates, contact the Chaplain's office at (703) 614-9280.

