

Skating to Where the Puck is Going to Be

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&
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- I have included some panels here that I did not use during the presentation. I think the points will be fairly obvious and leave them in for further detail for those so interested.
- These notes will make the most sense when accompanied by the audio or DVD of my talk at Smart Marriages.



Where *I Think* the Puck Is Going



Where the Puck is Going

- Variation in People and Models
- Addressing the Greatest Challenge We Face
- Fathers, Marriage, and Children
- Deeper Meaning and Motivation
- Sequence and Risk



Variation in People and Models

Three Examples of the Complexity

Variation in Starting Points with Individuals and Couples

- Vygotsky and scaffolding concept

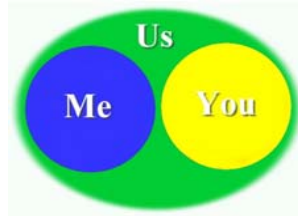


Cultural, Regional, Language Differences

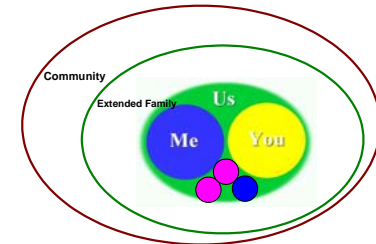
For Example:
Diversity of Hispanic, Latina, Latino

- Language
- Immigration history (country of original immigration) and generation
- Degree of acculturation
- Degree of traditionalism/role expectations
- Staggered migration
- Cohesion and independence

Couple and Personal Identity:
Is there a Universal?



Family Identity



Children by Different Partners

- Step Families
- "Multiple Partner Fertility"
– Prof. Ron Mincy and the Fragile Families Research Project

Addressing the Greatest
Challenge We Face



"Isn't it time some real financial support was made available for the growth and development of truly healthy and happy marriages?"

David Mace, 1982

Who Can You Reach
and How?

- Couples?
- Individuals?
- Two step model

Fathers, Marriage,
and Children

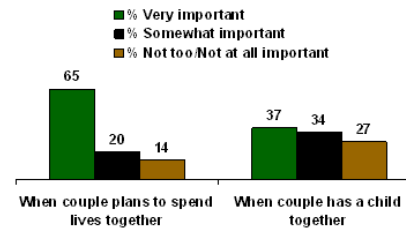


Frank Pittman
(from his 2002 plenary)

“The only thing a man can do that a woman can’t is be a father. It is our central function.”

Gallop Poll, May 2006

Importance of Marrying in Each Situation



Deeper Meaning and Motivation

In a paper coming out
in the next year,
we focus on this trend.

Frank Fincham,
Florida State University
Scott Stanley
University of Denver
Steven Beach
University of Georgia

- I have included the references from this paper, that will be out next year, at the end of these notes.

Movements in the Focus of Researchers

- Fields of marital research moving well beyond a focus on merely:
 - Satisfaction
 - Communication
 - Conflict
- Conflict and communication have enjoyed a particularly strong focus for several decades.

Conflict Matters Much

- Risk for a major depressive episode
- Alcohol problems
- Immunological and cardiovascular problems
- Marital distress and divorce
- Poorer parenting
- Poorer child adjustment

Communication *IS* really
Important—especially listening.

Moving Toward . . .

- Positive Dynamics
- Deeper Meaning and Motivation
- Transformative Processes

Taking Center Stage (just some examples)

- Commitment
- Attachment (security and insecurity)
- Forgiveness
- Sacrifice
- Religious and spiritual dynamics
- Support between partners
- Community connectedness and context

Commitment

Let's Look at Some Acronyms

- PDA
- PDC

ADRC

Acronym Decoding Resource Center

- PDA is a lot less informative than PDC.

Sacrifice

Religious and Spiritual Connection

ProSAAM

Program for Strong African American Marriages

- Steven Beach
- Velma McBride Murry
- Lily McNair
- Frank Fincham
- Tera Hurt
- Perdeta Weatherspoon
- Rev. Kenneth R. Board
- Jerry L. Alexander
- Elder Terris Thomas

Assurance: A Meta Construct Suggested by Frank Fincham

- A fundamental ingredient needed in a successful marriage or any other close relationship; a *deep seated, felt assurance* that one can rely on the relationship.
- A blending of commitment, trust, security, emotional safety, and confidence.

Frank Pittman (2002 Talk)

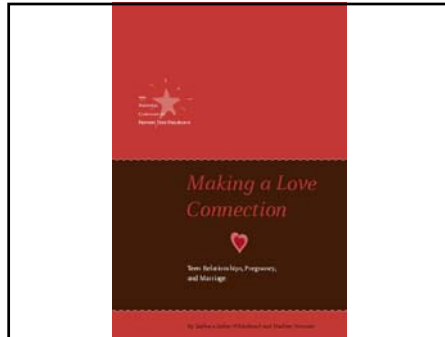
“ . . . marriage is our last best chance to grow up. Marriage with all of it's constant humbling incidents is the best hope we have of ever coming to believe that we're good enough to be loved and that we don't have to pretend to be somebody else.”

- People want more than merely to be happy.
- People need happiness based on meaning.



Sequence and Risk

- Sequence Matters, reflected in various current efforts:
 - Whitehead and Pearson, Success Sequence
 - Van Epp, “Pick a Partner”
 - Our “Within My Reach” curriculum

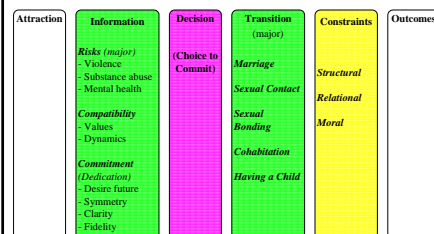


Based on William Galston's Observation

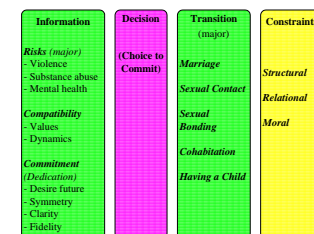
- To avoid poverty in the U. S.
 - Finish high school
 - Wait until 20s to get married
 - Do not have children until you are married

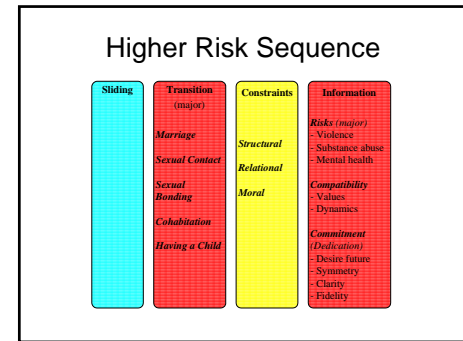
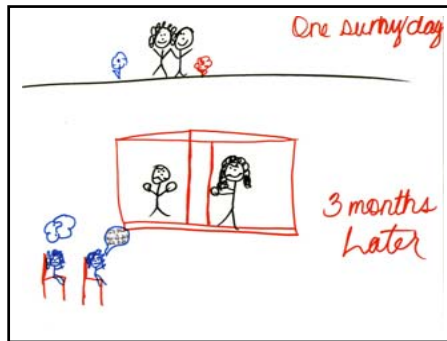
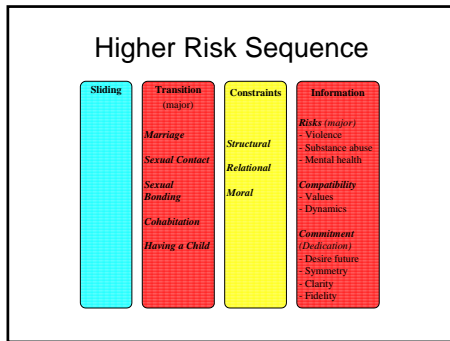
- Departing from the sequence greatly increases the risk for the individual to experience poverty.
- A child born to an unmarried teen mother who has not finished high school is 9 times more likely to be in poverty.

A Solid Sequence



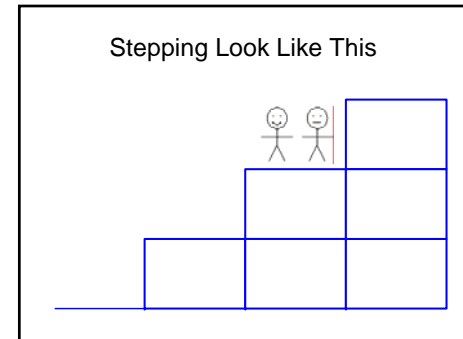
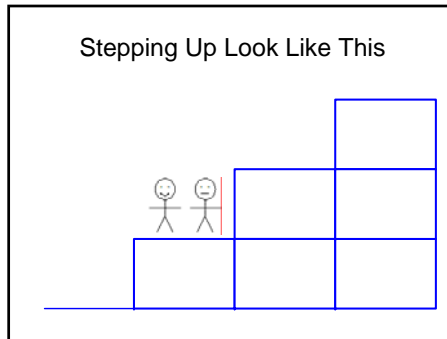
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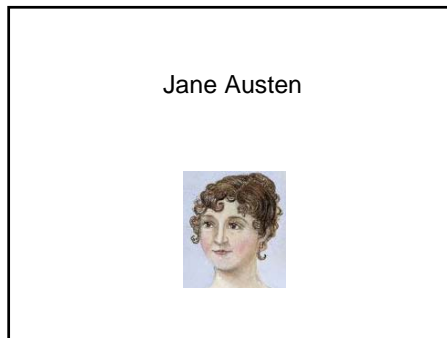


The Deconstruction of Steps and Stages

- There used to be various stages of relationship development that were *emblematic* of advancing commitment.
- People like Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, me, and others believe the loss has implications.



The Law of Large Numbers



"How quick come the reasons for approving what we like!"

Jane Austen, Persuasion

Austen Men Known Well, Only Over Time

- Pride and Prejudice George Wickham
 Fitzwilliam Darcy
- Sense and Sensibility John Willoughby
 Colonel Brandon
- Mansfield Park Henry Crawford
 Edmund Bertrum
- Emma Frank Churchill
- Persuasion William Elliot

Pride and Prejudice

The Central Characters

- Central Women
– Elizabeth, Jane, & Charlotte
- Central Men
– Charles Bingley, Fitzwilliam Darcy,
& George Wickham

Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice:
Elizabeth and Charlotte about Jane and Bingley

Elizabeth:

"She has known him only a fortnight. She danced four dances with him at Meryton; she saw him one morning at his own house, and has since dined in company with him four times. This is not quite enough to make her understand his character."

Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice:
Elizabeth and Charlotte about Jane and Bingley

Charlotte:

"Well, I wish Jane success with all my heart; and if she were married to him to-morrow, I should think she had as good a chance of happiness as if she were to be studying his character for a twelvemonth. Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance." (before you get married)

Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice:
Elizabeth and Charlotte about Jane and Bingley

Charlotte:

"If the dispositions of the parties are ever so well known to each other, or ever so similar before-hand, it does not advance their felicity in the least. They always contrive to grow sufficiently unlike afterwards to have their share of vexation; and it is better to know as little as possible of the defects of the person with whom you are to pass your life."

Jane Austen: Price and Prejudice
Elizabeth to her aunt

Jane:

"... At present I am not in love with Mr. Wickham; no, I certainly am not. But he is, beyond all comparison, the most agreeable man I ever saw -- and if he becomes really attached to me -- I believe it will be better that he should not. I see the imprudence of it. . . . In short, my dear aunt, I should be very sorry to be the means of making any of you unhappy; . . .

Jane Austen: Price and Prejudice
Elizabeth to her aunt

Jane:

. . . but since we see every day that where there is affection, young people are seldom withheld by immediate want of fortune from entering into engagements with each other, how can I promise to be wiser than so many of my fellow creatures if I am tempted, or how am I even to know that it would be wisdom to resist? All that I can promise you, therefore, is not to be in a hurry."

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Jane and Elizabeth Discuss Decoding Men

Jane:

"We must not be so ready to fancy ourselves intentionally injured. We must not expect a lively young man to be always so guarded and circumspect. It is very often nothing but our own vanity that deceives us. Women fancy admiration means more than it does."

Elizabeth:

"And men take care that they should."

Jane and Elizabeth Discuss Decoding Men

Jane:

If it is designedly done, they cannot be justified; but I have no idea of there being so much design in the world as some persons imagine.

Jane and Elizabeth Discuss Decoding Men

Elizabeth:

I am far from attributing any part of Mr. Bingley's conduct to design, . . . but without scheming to do wrong, or to make others unhappy, there may be error, and there may be misery. Thoughtlessness, want of attention to other people's feelings, and want of resolution, will do the business.

Leo Tolstoy

- The Novella: "Family Happiness"
- I did not cover this point in my talk, but this novella is available on the web, and it is a wonderful description of how passionate love turns into a deeper, family encompassing love over time. (or can)
- David Brooks wrote a wonderful editorial about this, which is likely available on the web still. Try:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/01/opinion/01brooks.html?ex=1267419600&en=e65e4d64024275ff&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland>

Let's Talk

www.PREPinc.com

www.WithinMyReach.com

- Scott M. Stanley is a research professor at the University of Denver.
- He is also a founder and owner of the PREP companies, founded for the dissemination of research-based, educational tools for individuals and couples interested in succeeding in marriage.