

How to Use Before "I Do" - Preparing for the Full Marriage Experience



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Before "I Do" is an interactive work book to help today's engaged, pre-engaged and newlywed couples discover the practical insights, Scriptural principles, and must-have relationship skills so they can experience all marriage has to offer. The book is laid out into eight major sections, and each section is divided into seven days of activity.

- **The first five days are designed for individual work** and personal introspection. Each day teaches or reveals a single concept, skill or idea. (approx. 10-15 minutes per day)
- **The sixth day is designed for the couple to get together and share** what they have learned, as well as discuss some questions. (approx. 60-90 minutes together for discussion)
- **The seventh day is reserved for the couple's time with a Marriage Investor** (clergy, counselor, mentor couple, small group leader) to further discuss what they learned and explore practical and/or Scriptural application of the material. (approx. 60-75 minutes)

CLERGY/COUPLE-TO-COUPLE

Before "I Do" relieves the pressure from clergy and mentors, and transfers the relationship-building responsibility to the couple. Pastors and mentor couples facilitate discussion, rather than lead a Relationships 101 crash course.

- Encourage couple to complete The Couple Check-Up, Prepare, or FOCCUS relationship inventory.
- Assign six to eight sections to the couple.
- Meet once a week, twice a month, or once a month.
- Require couples to complete individual exercises and the discussion questions prior to meeting.
- Ask couple about highlights of the section, questions or concerns that arose, and then review main topics from section. (If inventory used, be prepared with topic results).

CLASS SETTING

Before "I Do" allows couples to touch-and-feel what they hear in the premarital class. Quickly and easily, the book helps create a dynamic, out-of-class experience that supplements the didactic, in-class instruction.

- Provide schedule for attendees to help them track which section needs to be completed before each class.
- Meet once a week or every other week.
- Require couples to complete the individual exercises and the discussion questions of a section prior to class.
- Speak about an overview of the upcoming section, or teach about a key concept in the section couples just completed.
- Facilitate discussion with class attendees regarding personal lessons learned, and relationship-building highlights.

LONG DISTANCE

Before "I Do" eliminates distance as an obstacle for effective premarital education. It works well whether the couple is in the same location, but miles away from a Marriage Investor, or long distance from one another.

- Encourage couple to complete The Couple Check-Up, or online version of Prepare.
- Assign six to eight sections to the couple.
- Arrange phone conferences for once or twice a month.
- Require couple to complete individual exercises and the discussion questions (by phone) before phone conference.
- Ask couple about highlights of the section, questions or concerns that arose, and then review main topics from section. (If inventory used, be prepared with topic results).

SMALL GROUPS

Before "I Do" fosters helpful and enlightening small group discussions. Because the book empowers its readers, individually and as a couple, couples engage in the small group topic at a deeper, more informed level.

- Encourage couple to complete The Couple Check-Up, Prepare, or FOCCUS relationship inventory.
- Assign six to eight sections to the couples, and require completion of individual exercises and discussion questions prior to small group meeting.
- Meet once a week, twice a month, or once a month.
- Ask couples about highlights of the section, questions that arose, and then review main topics from section.
- Meet with couples privately to review inventory results.

Get more about *Before "I Do"* & *The Couple Check-Up* at www.FullMarriageExperience.com