



# **BUILDING HEALTHY MARRIAGES**

**Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors**

# OBJECTIVES

## Participants will learn to:

- Define a healthy marriage
- Develop tools to create a healthy marriage
- Maintain a healthy marriage
- Deal with conflict in the marriage
- Maintain personal boundaries



# AGENDA

- Definition of a Healthy Marriage
- Building a Healthy Marriage
- Communication Skills
- Negotiation
- Conflict Resolution
- In Conclusion
- Summary



# DEFINITION OF A HEALTHY MARRIAGE

- Mutual respect
- Mutual trust
- Open communication
- Acceptance of each other - just the way you are
- Respect for personal boundaries





# BUILDING A HEALTHY MARRIAGE

- Develop a context for the marriage
- Identify what you have to give in a marriage
- Become part of a group that promotes positive interactions between members
- Work on communication skills
- Learn effective ways to deal with conflict



# BUILDING A HEALTHY MARRIAGE

CONTINUED

- Build and enrich the marital friendship
- Identify and honor values, ideals and goals of each other, the relationship, the family
- Take the time to increase intimacy – both emotional and sexual
- Create rituals that celebrate the marriage, the family, and connect you to the community



# COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Be attentive to what is said
- Clarify understanding
- Listen for the feelings being communicated
- Notice body language
- Avoid mental rehearsal of your response while the other person is talking
- Use “I” messages when you do respond



# NEGOTIATION

- Figure out how to meet the needs of the other person without losing sight of your own goals or needs
- Create a “win-win” attitude and solutions
- Seek consensus, be willing to compromise
- Avoid power struggles





# CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Roadblocks to success - Criticism, contempt, defensiveness, stubbornness, overwhelming emotions

## Helpful solutions

- Accept that some conflict is normal
- Not all problems are solvable
- Agree to work with each other on what you can do
- Attack the problem not each other



# IN CONCLUSION

- Respect each other's differences
- Be open and non-defensive in listening to each other's thoughts and feelings
- Exhibit appropriate trust toward each other
- Recognize you can't change each other
- Regularly assess yourself for areas that you can improve upon



# SUMMARY

- Part of creating a healthy marriage is developing a mutual respect and trust for each other
- Learning how to communicate is important and takes practice
- It's important to work on the friendship in addition to the romantic aspects of the relationship – a marriage needs to be built on more than just romance





**QUESTIONS?**



# RESOURCES

- Military Community Services
- Chaplain and Local Clergy
- Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
- TRICARE [www.Tricare.mil](http://www.Tricare.mil)
- Behavioral Health Services







**THANK YOU**

