



MATRI-MONEY

Money and Marriage

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors

OBJECTIVES

- Explore emotional connections to money matters
- Learn how to set goals with your partner
- Learn to communicate effectively



AGENDA

- Exploring Emotional Connections
- Hidden Issues
- Understanding Your Own Emotional Issues about Money
- Understanding Each Others' Emotional Issues about Money
- Goals: General Goal Setting
- Financial goal Setting
- General Communication Tips
- Speaker/Listener Technique



EXPLORING EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS

Problems with money are often emotionally-charged.

- Conflicts about money are the most common cause of divorce
- Top argument starter for couples of all ages and stages of marriage
- Finances are one of the hardest issues for couples to communicate about



HIDDEN ISSUES

- Problem (Precipitating event that starts the argument)
 - Underlying emotional issues
 - Deeper hidden issues
- Example: an event sparks an argument (ie: over draft fees were accrued due to not properly recording all ATM transactions)



UNDERSTANDING YOUR OWN EMOTIONAL ISSUES ABOUT MONEY

1. What was your family of origin's attitude / habits about money?
2. What are your emotional triggers for spending?
3. What does money mean to you?



UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER'S EMOTIONAL ISSUES ABOUT MONEY



- Share money “issues” with spouse
- Learn to speak one another’s language:
 - What do you hear when spouse says, “Money is tight.”
 - What do you hear when spouse asks “What was the money spent on?”



UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER'S EMOTIONAL ISSUES ABOUT MONEY

CONTINUED

- Do you have equal responsibility in the financial paperwork, decision-making?
- Are you completely honest with one another about finances, spending? Is there withheld information or minimization?
- Clarify expectations about money
- Unrealized, unspoken expectations usually lead to frustration, resentment (better to realize and talk about them).



GOALS: GENERAL GOAL SETTING

- Goal = “a dream with a due date”
- Immediate needs, short-term goals, long-term goals
- Needs vs. wants
- State goals in a positive manner (what to do instead of what not to do)
- Break the goal down into specific, measurable steps.
- Only set goals for things that are within your control.



FINANCIAL GOAL SETTING

- Develop a specific plan for budget, debt pay-off, savings.
- Define and agree on ground rules that allow some discretionary spending for both partners and some limits for both (when does a major purchase require input and/or agreement from your partner? How much can be spent without accounting for it?)
- Ask for “expert” help if you need it.



GENERAL COMMUNICATION TIPS

- Schedule the discussion, choosing a good time and place.
- Be calm, clear, direct, and stay connected.
- Full participation from both partners is needed (both give input, priorities)
- Focus on each other's strengths.
- Work together as a team.



SPEAKER/LISTENER TECHNIQUE



Objective: to understand and be understood

- Follow rules and don't go off course
- Don't bring up ancient history
- Practice this technique, even if it feels silly



SPEAKER/LISTENER TECHNIQUE: PRACTICE

- State your viewpoint using “I” message.
- Avoid personal attacks or blaming.
- Speak for yourself.
- Summarize / paraphrase the other party’s viewpoint.
- Give feedback, clarification on whether you’ve been understood.
- Keep your goals in mind.
- Work as a team.
- Brainstorm creative solutions.
- Assign tasks or actions that need to be taken.
- Schedule a follow-up.



SPEAKER/LISTENER TECHNIQUE: CONVERSATION STARTERS

- “I wonder if we could...”
- “I’m concerned about...”
- “I’d like to see us be able to...”
- “I get nervous when...”
- “One of my financial goals is to...”
- “Where would you like to be in ___ years?”
- “What do you think about...?”



SUMMARY

- Be aware of your issues with money
- Set financial goals together and make a money plan
- Use effective communication methods
- Solve problems as a team





QUESTIONS?



RESOURCES

- Military Family Support Services
- Chaplain and local clergy
- Behavioral Health Services
- www.militaryonesource.com 1-800-342-9647
- TRICARE www.Tricare.mil
- Military & Family Life Consultant



REFERENCES

- “How to Talk About Money Issues In Marriage,” by C.Crock, www.ehow.com/
- “The One Secret to Money in Marriage,” www.youneedabudget.com
- “Marriage and Money – The Budget Meeting,” www.thehappyrock.com





THANK YOU