

## **Web-Based Marriage Education for Foster, Kinship, and Adoptive Couples**

Richard J. Delaney, Ph.D.

Phase II Final Progress Report  
A Small Business Innovation Research Grant  
from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities  
Grant #5 R44 MD005197-04

Project Period: 09/30/2009 - 07/31/2014

to  
Northwest Media, Inc.  
326 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Eugene, OR 97401

This report is an unpublished manuscript submitted in partial fulfillment  
of requirements for closing out the above project.  
October 30, 2014

Suggested Reference: Delaney, R. J. (2014). *Web-based marriage education for foster, kinship, and adoptive couples (Phase II)*. Retrieved from Northwest Media, Inc. website: <http://northwestmedia.com/research/PREP-II.pdf>

## **A. General Scientific and Technological Aims**

The purpose of this project is to develop and evaluate a specialized online version of a marital education program for foster, kinship, and adoptive parents. The program, called Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP), is a well-researched, effective, and widely used curriculum that has also been adapted for use with special populations such as religious couples in the Armed Forces and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. Foster, kinship, and adoptive couples comprise a unique group of families that face extraordinary challenges that can, and do, have a large impact on a marriage. These challenges may include trying to manage very disturbed child behavior problems stemming from abuse and neglect; dealing with the authority and inherent discontinuities of the care system; balancing the child's needs for access to and protection from birth parents, and constantly changing family dynamics.

Adjusting to these realities is critical to maintaining a healthy marriage, protecting the family, and preserving the foster or adoptive placement. Marital education, especially at key points of transition, such as when a child is placed, could provide these couples with much needed social-communication skills to avoid negative interaction patterns and the ability to bring their expectations into a healthy and consensual framework. But standard family contexts and dynamics for intervention do not generalize to these couples.

We propose developing a version of the PREP training that specifically addresses the needs of this population. We plan on delivering the program online, through FosterParentCollege.com, a training venue developed by Northwest Media that is enjoying widespread use by individual parents and agencies. The innovative format of this training does not require formal class time scheduling; rather, it is a self-regulated course. We fit the training to this preferred format because of the necessary convenience it offers to our parents whose daytime schedules are full.

The proposed PREP training will consist of 15 modules, or lectures. In Phase I we developed the first two modules from the PREP program on Communication Danger Signs and Talking Without Fighting (the Take-A-Break and Speaker-Listener Techniques). Findings in Phase I provided strong support for the efficacy of the online version with this population. Foster, adoptive, and kinship parents made significant gains in relevant knowledge and in perceptions of their own communication skills. Other findings pointed to incipient changes in behaviors. Viewers also gave the online training very high ratings in satisfaction and had no apparent difficulties with using the technology.

In Phase II we will produce another 13 modules from the program, which will include the following topics: Understanding Filters; Events, Issues, and Hidden Issues; Expectations; Making Effective Communication Statements; Fun; Problem Solving; Friendship; Ground Rules – Keys To A Great Relationship; Core Belief Systems; The Sensual/Sexual Relationship; Forgiveness; Commitment. In addition, we will include a supplemental module from PREP on stress and relaxation. We will evaluate the complete program with a national sample of 100 foster, adoptive, and kinship couples on measures of knowledge, communication and conflict management skills, a variety of indicators of a healthy marriage, and parent and child adjustment. The recruitment of subjects and the implementation and testing of the training intervention will all be done online.

Phase II activity will include the following milestones:

- 1) Build instructional content for the modules. This will include refining training objectives; building a flow chart of the training sequences; writing treatments and scripts for the multimedia pieces, which will be reviewed by experts on PREP (Drs. Markman and Stanley) and foster care and cultural competence (Dr. Coakley).

- 2) Produce storyboards and animatics of the content.
- 3) Produce audio and visual elements for the site content. This will include narrative instructional segments, interactive follow-up exercises, and an interactive coaching journal.
- 4) Alpha test the modules with foster, adoptive, and kinship couples in focus groups to refine the site's elements and functionality.
- 5) Write and pilot test the knowledge measure on the modules (all other outcome measures are standardized).
- 6) Produce the website material. This will include flow charting the training material to fit in with the FPC website, developing the look for the modules, programming the pages and databases, and creating a captioning option for viewers with special educational needs.
- 7) Conduct an online evaluation study with a national sample of foster, kinship, and adoptive parents. The study will measure pre-post outcomes on content knowledge, communication skills, a variety of marital adjustment outcomes, and user satisfaction and site usability.

## **B. Phase II Research Activities**

### Product Development

In Phase I we developed the first two modules from the PREP program on Communication Danger Signs and Talking Without Fighting (the Take-A-Break and Speaker-Listener Techniques). In Phase II, with the guidance of the PREP designers, we started with the most current version of the PREP materials and reorganized the 15 units of instruction we originally proposed into 10 units, and then added a supplemental unit on stress and relaxation using yoga techniques.

The workshop sessions begin with an entertaining, person-on-the-street interview of couples addressing difficult-to-discuss issues about friendship and love in their relationship. This is followed by a narrative instructional portion using an interview format and scenarios for modeling skills, along with supportive coaching by the program hosts to clarify skills, and dynamic interactive exercises to place emphasis on concepts. Each training module ends with an entertaining review of concepts taught in the session by a standup comedian. Overall, the design provides viewers with abundant opportunities to practice skills, and a journal to help them express their feelings and to process and apply skills and concepts to new events with a personal and confidential resource.

The media materials were developed in several stages by the development team, which included Richard Delaney, PI and co-writer; Lee White, Producer and co-writer; and several research assistants. The production team (including Keith Qiao Jin, multimedia programmer; William Haldane, videographer, multimedia designer and editor; and Kris Hansen, web graphic designer) was assembled.

To begin the process, the development team worked with the content experts, Drs. Howard Markman and Scott Stanley from PREP, Inc. to outline and build a flow chart of the specific points to be presented and identify case scenarios to be used. A multimedia script was developed in draft form that also included exercises and supplemental printable material. The script was reviewed and edited by the PREP content experts. The revised script was passed to the production team for a series of processes, including audio scratch track recording and the wireframe assembly of the multimedia sequences prior to the production phase.

In the production phase, talent was hired for both images and voices. All recordings were made and assembled. Using Flash technology, the audio and visual elements were assembled and programmed as a draft version with the draft form of the interactive exercises. This created

a pilot version of the product that was shown to the content experts. After feedback was received from the content experts, the final revisions were made, and handouts were written and finalized. Due to the content size, we had the programming engineer, Qiao Jin, adapt the content to a streaming format, and he added a proprietary, previously designed online private journal for each viewer. The research team developed and tested the intervention knowledge questions and worked with the programmer to modify our web-based database management program for the study and to post the study measures.

We did not create a captioning option as planned, because with Flash technology, captioning wasn't feasible; instead, we produced a printable viewer guide to the content for each of the online training modules.

Instead of using parent focus groups, we relied on content reviews from the PREP experts and their research assistants.

When the study is completed and we move into Phase III, providers and individuals will be able access the finished product online by subscription at [www.FosterParentCollege.com](http://www.FosterParentCollege.com) (FPC), Northwest Media's web-based professional training resource.

#### Pilot Tests of Knowledge Measure

A pool of 52 multiple-choice items was written and prepared by the research team that reflected the full range of knowledge from the training program, with a balanced representation of items across all units. The items were then reviewed by the project consultants and modifications were considered and made according to their suggestions. We pilot tested the questionnaire online with 22 female foster, kinship, and/or adoptive parents, all of whom were married or in a committed relationship, with a mean age of 43.7 years. Parents were recruited online through FPC. Ethnically, the sample was 9% Hispanic; racially, 86% were White and 14% were Black. The results showed that 26 items were too easy (more than 80% got each of them correct). Of those items, one was dropped and the others were further reviewed and revised, for a total of 51 items. This version of the questionnaire was pilot tested with a sample of 20 foster, kinship, and/or adoptive parents—17 females and 3 males, all married or in a committed relationship, with a mean age of 46.7 years. Parents for this pilot test were also recruited online through FPC. Ethnically, the sample was 90% Not Hispanic and 10% Unknown; racially, 95% were White and 5% were Black. Seven of the items were too easy, based on the same criterion (more than 80% correct responses). Four of those items were dropped, leaving 47 items in the final version of the questionnaire.

#### Technical Specifications

In order to achieve the level of interactive education and data tracking needed, we used a collection of technologies on both the server and client side, based on their reliability, robustness, and cost.

To host the web pages, we built and are maintaining a server running CentOS 5 as our operating system and Apache 2.0 as our web server. We are storing data, retrieving data, and managing user sessions on the server with a server side programming language called Java 1.4. As a data repository we are using PostgreSQL database v. 8.0. Our servers are hosted in an industry-leading data center. We continuously update our server software to ensure their network security. The servers are connected to the Internet via minimum T1 connection, which provides us with sufficient bandwidth to handle multiple concurrent users watching educational movies, viewing course material, or completing online assessments.

Clients can use web browsers such as Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, and Chrome to view the materials. Course materials are delivered using HTML with Javascript (the client scripting language), Adobe Flash Player for animation and interactivity, and video streaming.

For streaming, we use the Wowza Stream Engine software on the server side to facilitate the delivery.

### Project Evaluation

In Phase II we evaluated the entire PREP workshop for foster, adoptive, and kinship couples. The aim of the evaluation was to determine whether participants in the intervention group demonstrated significant gains in communication skills, relationship satisfaction, individual psychological functioning, and parenting skills, compared with a wait-list control group. These differences were evaluated immediately following the intervention period. A 3-month follow-up trial was also planned but was still to be conducted at the time this report was being written. We anticipate that it will be completed within the next 3 months.

#### Participants and Procedure

Foster, adoptive, and kinship couples were recruited to participate in the online study via an emailed announcement and invitation from FPC. Potential subjects were selected from Northwest Media's database of parents who had used FPC, and invitations were sent in waves as needed, starting with the 1,500 most recent users of the site. Another 2,000 email invitations were sent in each of three successive waves, for a total of 7,500 invitations. Recruitment continued until enough couples had been enrolled that we would be likely to achieve our target sample size of 100 couples, taking attrition into account.

Those interested in study participation were instructed to click on a link in their invitation email to go to the study website, where they learned more about the study and filled out an application and a brief screening questionnaire to determine their eligibility. To qualify for the study, both partners in the couple had to be at least 21 years old; as a couple, they had to be married or in a committed relationship and currently providing foster, adoptive, or kinship care for a child; both had to be willing to commit up to 10 hours over the following 2 weeks to complete the study and willing to return to the site in 3 months for the follow-up study; they had to have a computer and high-speed internet connection in their home; and they had to have separate email accounts for purposes of individually viewing the online workshop and confidentially completing the study questionnaires.

Once a couple's eligibility was established, each partner was sent a separate email containing a unique link to the study site to be used throughout the study. When participants clicked on that link for the first time, they were presented with the study consent form. To control for extraneous sources of variability as well as threats to internal validity, participants who consented were automatically and randomly assigned to either the treatment group for the online marriage education workshop being evaluated or the wait-list control group. Those in the treatment group viewed the workshop and completed a set of questionnaires before and after viewing the workshop. Those in the control group completed the same questionnaires (except for the impact and satisfaction questionnaire completed by treatment group participants at posttest) within the same 2-week timeframe as the treatment group, but did not view the workshop. Control group participants will be given the opportunity to view the workshop free of charge following their completion of the follow-up assessment.

Participation in the study was voluntary; when both partners in a couple had completed the pre- and posttest assessments, the couple received a \$50 eGift card from Amazon.com or \$50 from PayPal (their choice). Each individual in the treatment group also received a certificate of completion from FPC for 8 hours of online training; individuals in the control group will receive a certificate of completion from FPC for 8 hours of online training if they view the workshop after completing the follow-up study.

### Measures

We made the following changes to the measures originally proposed: 1) The Knowledge Questionnaire, which was developed in-house and tested for face validity, was dropped after all because adding another 47 items to the long list of measures would have exceeded a reasonable demand on parents' time; it was also considered of lesser importance in testing the effectiveness of the training. 2) The original measure on Forgiveness was combined with the Commitment and Forgiveness questionnaire since that is the way PREP researchers currently use it. 3) We reduced the number of items in various measures, with the advice of the developers of PREP, to help further reduce the demand on subjects. 4) We added the Relationship Distress Scale, also at the suggestion of the developers of PREP. 5) We dropped the Child Behavior Questionnaire because it was considered ancillary to assessing the effectiveness of the training.

### Covariates

#### *Background Information.*

Project staff developed a 14-item background information questionnaire with questions on participants' age, gender, type of resource parent, race, ethnicity, education, resource parenting experience, marriage history, and religiosity.

### Pre/Post Indices of Intervention Effectiveness Grouped by Hypothesis Testing

#### I. Communication Skills

- *Communication Danger Signs Scale* (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2010). An 8-item scale designed to assess "danger signs" (i.e., patterns indicative of marital problems) in interaction and thought such as escalation, invalidation, and withdrawal. Various forms of this measure have demonstrated excellent reliability and validity in a variety of studies (Johnson et al., 2002; Stanley, Allen et al., in press; Stanley et al., 2002; Stanley et al., 2001). For example, in a preliminary study of U. S. Army couples, reliability (coefficient alpha) for this measure was .90, and the measure showed significant changes post BSRF (Stanley, Markman, & Whitton, 2002).
- *The Communication Skills Test* (Saiz & Jenkins, 1995). Consists of 32 questions about various negative and positive communication patterns, answered on a 7-point Likert scale. Based on factor analyses of the items and reliability analyses, subscales were formed for use here from the larger pool of items used in other research (e.g., Stanley et al., 2001). In a preliminary study, coefficient alphas for the scales in a U.S. Army sample were: validation (.76), time out use (.76), escalation (.87), paraphrasing use (.82), withdrawal (.78), and invalidation by partner (.86; Stanley, Markman, Saiz et al., 2003). Further, several of these scales showed improvement subsequent to BSRF (Stanley, Markman, Saiz et al., 2003). For the current study, a 10-item version of the questionnaire was used, and a single communication skills scale was created, with higher scores indicating more skills.
- *Conflict Management & Support Skills* (Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2013, Unpublished). Four scales were created from 19 True/False items in this measure: Destructive Conflict and its obverse, Handling Conflict Well; Being Critical; and Support.
- *Conflict Tactics Scale* (Straus et al., 1996). Comprised of 20 items tapping "minor" and "severe" psychological and physical aggression against a partner and by a partner. Items are on an 8-point scale which allows respondents

to specify how often the behavior occurred, from never to more than 20 times in the past year.

## II. Relationship Quality

- *Positive Connections* (Markman, 2000).  
Consists of 10 questions used by PREP researchers to assess the ways that couples are maintaining positive aspects of the relationship. Questions assess the friendship, fun, felt support, and sensual/sexual relationship of the couple, answered on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Example questions include “We regularly have great conversations where we just talk as good friends,” “We have a satisfying sensual or sexual relationship,” “My partner supports me and my personal goals,” and “We have a lot of fun together.” PREP researchers have found internal consistency of .86 in their FSP sample and that this measure covaried over time in expected directions with general relationship quality as well as observed negativity and positivity of marital interaction.
- *Global Marital Satisfaction*.  
A version of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) was used as a measure of marital satisfaction. The DAS is widely used. For this study, we used a 3-item version.
- *Commitment & Forgiveness Inventory* (Stanley & Markman, 1992).  
Three scales were created from the 21 items in this inventory: Dedication Commitment (14 items), Constraint Commitment (2 items), and Forgiveness (4 items). The measure’s remaining item is a stand-alone indicator of feeling controlled.
- *Divorce Proneness*.  
An abbreviated form of the Marital Instability Index (MII; Booth, Johnson, & Edwards, 1983) was used to assess thoughts or steps towards divorce or ending a committed relationship. This form was extracted by Booth et al. (1983) based on items that best predicted the entire MII, and showed good internal consistency. The MII correlates highly with several known predictors of divorce and separation, such as parental marital dissolution (Booth et al., 1983).
- *Confidence Scale* (Stanley, Hoyer, & Trathen, 1994).  
A 10-item scale which measures a person’s level of confidence that the couple can handle what’s in their future and stay together. It has shown significant promise in various studies (e.g., Trathen, 1995; Stanley et al., 2001). In a preliminary study, reliability (coefficient alpha) for this measure in a sample of U.S. Army participants was .88, and scores significantly improved post BSRF (Stanley, Markman, Saiz et al., 2003).
- *Relationship Distress Scale* (Stanley, Markman, & Whitton, 2002).  
This 10-item True/False questionnaire is a measure of relationship distress, with higher scores indicating greater distress.

## III. Individual Functioning

- *The Brief Symptom Inventory* (Derogatis, 1993).  
A 20-item version of the BSI (focused on items indicating symptoms of depression) was used. The measure asks participants to indicate how much they have felt each item in the past week on a 4-point Likert scale. This measure has demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity (Derogatis, 1993; Derogatis & Savitz, 2000).

## IV. Parenting Skills

- *The Parenting Alliance Measure* (Abidin & Brunner, 1995).  
An inventory that provides an indication of the degree to which parents perceive themselves to be in a cooperative, communicative, and mutually respectful alliance for the care of their

children. Originally, items were phrased in terms of “my child’s other parent” (e.g., My child’s other parent and I are a good team); we changed this wording to “spouse/partner” so that individuals who have children from another relationship would not reference the biological parent. All items are answered on a Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Abidin and Brunner found high internal consistency ( $\alpha = .97$ ) for this measure and significant correlations with measures of marital distress and parenting style. A 5-item version of this measure was used in the current study.

#### V. Satisfaction

- *Impact of and Satisfaction with the Workshop*

A 21-item questionnaire developed in-house about participants’ experience with the *It’s My Marriage!* workshop. The first 12 items tapped the impact of the workshop on study participants and their satisfaction with it. Participants responded to statements on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Additional items asked participants how much they enjoyed various aspects of the workshop, also on a 7-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).

#### Sample

The study sample included 141 individual foster, adoptive, and kinship parents who completed the pre- and posttest assessments—64 in the treatment group and 77 in the control group. (Although we originally planned to analyze couples data, for purposes of the final report we are reporting on individual-level data. Later, when more couples have completed the posttest and follow-up assessment, the data will be reanalyzed at the couples level.) Of the 141 study participants, 56% were female and 44% were male, with a mean age of 46.6 years. Racially, the sample was 89% White, 7% Black, and 4% more than one race; ethnically, 7% of the sample identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, 92% as Not Hispanic or Latino, and 1% as Unknown.

#### Hypotheses

The study addressed information about group differences in four key constructs from pre- to posttest. With respect to the measures, we tested the following hypotheses:

- I. Intervention group participants will display significant improvements in *communication skills and conflict* management, as measured by: The Communication Danger Signs Scale, The Communication Skills Test, Conflict Tactics Scale, and Conflict Management & Support Skills.
- II. Intervention group participants will display significant increases in *relationship quality*, as measured by: Positive Connections, Global Marital Satisfaction, Commitment & Forgiveness Inventory, Divorce Proneness, Confidence Scale, and Relationship Distress Scale.
- III. Intervention group participants will display significant improvements in *individual functioning*, as measured by: The Brief Symptom Inventory.
- IV. Intervention group participants will experience significant improvements in *parenting skills*, as measured by: The Parenting Alliance Measure
- V. In addition, we hypothesized that intervention group participants would demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the online PREP workshop, as measured by: The Impact and Satisfaction Questionnaire.

## Results

### Analyses for Pretest to Posttest Assessment

Descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) were analyzed to show the participants' average responses for each outcome measure at pretest and posttest within the Treatment group and Control group, as shown in Table 1.

Repeated Measures ANOVAs were performed separately on each of the outcome measures to test for differences by treatment group and time (pre/post). The interaction term for group by time would test whether the intervention group improved significantly more than the control group on each measure.

The only measure with a significant interaction term in favor of the program was Marital Satisfaction ( $F(1,139)=4.96, p=0.028$ ), which gives evidence that the Treatment group did improve significantly more than the Control group for that measure. The Treatment group increased from a Mean of 6.19 to 6.36 (on the 7-point scale), where the Control group remained similar from pretest ( $M=6.29$ ) to posttest ( $M=6.26$ ).

There was also a significant interaction for Conflict Tactics (Self) ( $F(1,138)=5.35, p=0.022$ ); however, it was in the unexpected direction, where participants in the Control group decreased more than those in the Treatment group. The interaction terms were not significant for Total and Partner Conflict Tactics, but there was an overall decrease (averaging across groups) for Total ( $F(1,139)=8.56, p=0.004$ ), Partner ( $F(1,139)=6.92, p=0.010$ ), and Self ( $F(1,139)=5.61, p=.019$ ), where the Control participants were observed to decrease more than those in the Treatment group (although only significantly more for Self).

Another significant interaction in the unexpected direction was for Destructive Conflict Management ( $F(1,139)=4.02, p=0.047$ ), where all participants decreased on average ( $F(1,139)=8.49, p=.004$ ), but the Control group decreased significantly more than the Treatment group. Results are identical but reversed for "Handling well" in Conflict Management which are reverse-codes of scores on "Destructive."

Depression scores decreased significantly for the participants overall ( $F(1,139)=7.38, p=0.007$ ). The participants in the Treatment group decreased from a Mean of .35 to .29, and the participants in the Control group decreased from a Mean of .40 to .33.

### User Satisfaction

Treatment group participants completed the *Impact and Satisfaction* Questionnaire at posttest. The Means of nine of the 12 items were 6.00 or higher; the Means of two more were between 5.00 and 6.00; and the Mean of the final item was 4.95. The three statements with which subjects expressed the strongest agreement related to investing more time in their relationship ( $M=6.53$ ); confidence and comfort with their partner ( $M=6.47$ ); and working cooperatively with their partner ( $M=6.44$ ). Three of these first 12 questions tapped viewers' overall satisfaction with the workshop, and the Means of these items were also high: "I am satisfied with my experiences in the *It's My Marriage!* workshop" ( $M=6.23$ ); "I found the *It's My Marriage!* workshop helpful for my relationship" ( $M=6.14$ ); and "I would recommend the *It's My Marriage!* workshop to a friend" ( $M=6.19$ ). A scale was constructed from all 12 items, and the Mean on it was 6.01.

An additional four items asked respondents to rank on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*) how much they "enjoyed" different aspects of the workshop. The Means on these items were somewhat lower, but still moderate to high, ranging from 4.45 to 5.94.

The final item in this questionnaire was an open-ended one, asking respondents to share any comments or suggestions they might have for the producers of the workshop. Here are a few typical positive examples: "I think the online format was helpful for our busy lives." "This

workshop should be required for all foster parents before children enter their home.” “A fantastic resource for foster parents. It is so easy to get wrapped up in the kids that we forget to take care of our relationship.” Sprinkled in with the majority of positive responses were some criticisms about the production/script level and the content. One of the lengthier negative comments was: “Get rid of the comedy segments, it adds to much time with no value. At least change the dress of the actors, as it felt very scripted and rushed through production for them to be wearing the same clothes for the whole course. The notebook isn't a useful tool for me as a male. I think females are more likely to use this.”

### Summary of Results and Discussion

In Phase II we successfully completed the development and production of a 10-unit series of the PREP marriage program that was adapted for online use by foster, kinship, and adoptive caregivers. There were no notable technical issues for the online training, systemically or for individual users. The program was met with very high levels of satisfaction. Most notable were that spouses felt like they were investing more time in their relationship, were more confident and comfortable with their partner, and were working more cooperatively with their partner. These qualitative indices corresponded with the central finding of the study: a significant increase in marital satisfaction—typically the most important and most difficult outcome to show change in other PREP studies. That being said, the rest of the findings were disappointing, and a couple of scales were significant only for the control group. However, at the time of this report these findings are not yet conclusive. Even though we had suitable numbers for our sample to conclude the project, we are allowing those already enrolled in the study but still in progress additional time so they can complete it. We are especially encouraging individuals whose partner has completed to also complete, so that we will have data on more couples. When the sample is therefore larger, we will rerun the analyses and include, most importantly, couples as the unit of analysis. We will also explore the data for differences by gender over time and treatment group. These analyses may help clarify our findings. We do feel a sense that, overall, participants may not have had sufficient time to process the training more extensively. Study participants were married on average for close to 18 years and viewed the curriculum over a period of 2 weeks—a very short amount of time to expect significant relationship change for individuals in a long-term marriage. Both the results and participant comments point to the need to allow access to the materials over a longer period of time. In the commercial version, therefore, viewers will be given access for a longer period of time. We may also suggest points during the workshop for partners to discuss the training with each other. These changes would likely deepen users' involvement and processing of the material, which we think is crucial for producing greater relationship enhancement.

Table 1  
*Means of All Outcome Variables at Pre- and Posttest for Treatment and Control Groups*

	Study Group							
	Treatment Group				Control Group			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Communication Skills Test	5.10	1.23	5.03	1.28	4.98	1.09	5.12	1.14
Relationship Dynamics	1.45	.36	1.46	.38	1.50	.37	1.42	.35
Positive Connections	5.99	.91	6.05	.97	5.91	.93	5.94	1.16
Global Marital Satisfaction	6.19	.88	* 6.36	.86	6.29	.94	6.26	1.09
Conflict Tactics (Total)	10.75	11.38	9.98	10.71	13.64	10.83	11.19	10.31
Conflict Tactics (Partner)	5.17	6.73	4.41	5.09	6.66	5.62	5.72	5.79
Conflict Tactics (Self)	5.62	5.63	5.52	6.54	6.87	5.53	+ 5.53	5.23
Commitment & Forgiveness (Dedication)	88.20	7.90	87.58	10.33	89.52	8.90	89.10	9.41
Commitment & Forgiveness (Constraint)	1.33	.79	1.31	.99	1.31	.87	1.29	.84
Commitment & Forgiveness (Forgiveness)	5.78	.86	5.71	.95	5.77	.82	5.89	.87
Confidence Scale	6.61	.60	6.63	.68	6.56	.79	6.61	.83
Conflict Management (Destructive)	2.83	3.57	2.67	3.46	2.74	3.39	+ 1.90	2.70
Conflict Management (Handling Well)	12.17	3.57	12.33	3.46	12.26	3.39	13.10	2.70
Conflict Management (Critical)	3.52	2.44	3.83	2.84	3.67	2.24	3.61	2.35
Conflict Management (Supportive)	9.00	1.56	9.16	1.48	8.94	1.40	9.19	1.16
Brief Symptom Inventory (Depression)	.35	.37	* .29	.27	.40	.45	+ .33	.43
Relationship Distress Scale	2.22	2.52	1.95	2.44	2.16	2.53	2.16	2.49
Parenting Alliance Scale	6.17	.81	6.18	.95	6.18	.95	6.17	.92

\*  $p < .05$  (significant for the treatment group)

+  $p < .05$  (significant for the control group)