

NEW MEXICO MARRIAGES FIRST PROJECT PRESENTS:

MARRIAGE LIFE LINE!



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Upcoming Events to Plan for:

- **Marriage Enrichment Mentor Training**, Saturday, June 16, 2007 from 9 am to 1 pm. Call to Register (891-1846)
- **Premarital Class**, Saturday, July 28, 2007. 9 am - 5 pm. Call to Register (891-1846)
- **Marriage Enrichment Class**, Saturday, July 28, 2007. 9 am - 4 pm. Call to Register (891-1846)
- **"A Romantic Night Out of This World" Event**, September 22, 2007, 6:30 pm, Park Plaza Hotel in Albuquerque. Call to Register (891-1846)

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SUMMER IS A TIME FOR INVESTING IN YOUR MARRIAGE!

(Written by Rebecca Holland)

Summer is a time for families to spend time together enjoying the outdoors and going on vacations. It is a time for camping, hiking, swimming, sitting on the patio and playing at the park. Most families look at summer as a time to getaway and relieve some stress. However, this isn't always true for a marriage. If couples aren't careful, summer can be a time where stress is added to their relationship. With children in soccer and swimming lessons and with school out of session, many couples find their days full of activities and chores that seem to never end. That is why it is imperative for couples to realize that summer is also a time to connect with each other and place emphasis on the marriage relationship.

Going on a "couple getaway" is a perfect plan to enhance a marriage. It is a proactive investment in a marriage that helps couples emotionally and physically recharge their relationship. Now, maybe you are reading this article and you are saying to yourself, "Yah, right, us getaway? We can't even fit in a date night let alone a weekend together!" That is precisely why you need to plan a getaway and not just expect it to happen. Many couples think that the opportunity to spend time together will "just happen." That is one of the biggest deceptions in a marriage. Time together doesn't just happen - it has to be planned!

A couple getaway is a great way to escape the pressures at work, demands of people and the responsibilities of home life. **AND**, it doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive - it can be as simple as shipping the kids off to a friend's house and turning your own home into a romantic retreat! Whether you have little extra money or plenty to spend, there are always ways to "getaway" and spend time together.

This edition of "**Marriage Life Line**" is going to provide you with many different ideas for couple getaways, family activities, and simple ideas for spicing up your marriage this summer. In addition, we are going to talk about having a "summer marriage" and how summer marriages are characterized by feelings of happiness, satisfaction, accomplishment, connection, and fun. Summer marriages reap the benefits of hard work spent learning to understand each other and to work together as a team to see the dreams of "spring" fulfilled. We hope you will take advantage of some of these ideas and invest in your relationship. You won't be sorry you did!



“SUMMER LOVIN’”

"Copyright (2006) (Gary D. Chapman, PhD). Reprinted from **Marriage Partnership.**"



Joy Quote

“Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.”

Thich Nhat Hanh



Nothing tastes better than a vine-ripened tomato in the middle of summer. Summer is when the gardener reaps the benefits of what was planted and nurtured in the spring. Summer marriages are characterized by feelings of happiness, satisfaction, accomplishment, connection, and fun. Life is beautiful. We're reaping the benefits of our hard efforts to understand each other and to work together as a team to see the dreams of spring fulfilled. While the initial excitement may have waned, our sense of connection has deepened. We have fewer misunderstandings, but when we do, resolutions come more quickly. We may or may not have reached our financial goals. We may or may not have children. We may have good health or poor health. Our occupation may be satisfying or frustrating. But if our marriage is in the summer season, we'll share a deep sense of commitment and satisfaction, secure in each other's love.

Summer marriages are much like flowers: they're beautiful, but they must be watered. Couples who are successful at having an extended season of summer in their marriage have learned to maintain what they've attained. Almost without exception, couples who say their marriage is in the summer season also say they have a desire to continue growing. Candace, who's been married to Tim for five years, says, "I'm living with my best friend. I really enjoy it. But I realize we must continue to nurture the romantic part of the relationship. Otherwise, the busyness will push us apart."

Beware of yellow jackets

Yellow jackets live in underground nests. If you get too close to the door of their castle, you'll be attacked. Yellow jackets are analogous to those unresolved conflicts that nest beneath the surface of our daily lives. While we might be in the summer of marriage - enjoying life together, watching the flowers bloom, doing a bit of weeding around the edges of our relationship - there's another, unseen, level of our relationship: an underground nest where we've pushed our unresolved issues. When one spouse ventures too close to the door of the nest, the yellow jackets come flying out and we find ourselves arguing in the middle of summer. Ultimately, you must take time to deal with these issues or your summer marriage may quickly turn to winter.

Creating and Sustaining

What are the actions that create and sustain a summer marriage?

Constructive communication.

Communication that fosters understanding and resolves conflict. Jeremy and Ruth, married 30 years, are in a summer season. "When we married," Ruth told me, "we had the traditional vows but privately, we had some extra vows that we try to live by. One is an open-door policy. We agree that if anything is bothering one of us, the other wants to be approached to talk about it. We've gone through some real problems over the years, but we've talked our way through each of them." Why is communication so important? Because it's the process by which spouses get to know each other and learn to work together as a team.

Grant each other freedom to be different.

While differences are inevitable, they don't have to be divisive. Couples who desire to continue in summer will consciously give each other the freedom to think, feel, and react differently. Lauren and Dean are both in a second marriage. Dean said, "Both of us learned from our previous marriages that if couples don't accept differences, they'll spend the bulk of their time fighting. We agreed that we'd rather be lovers than fighters, so we give each other the freedom to be different." Learning to accept those things your spouse cannot or will not change is key to keeping the flowers of a summer marriage blooming.

Focus on spiritual growth.

Many couples have indicated that the most significant factor in their ability to have a summer marriage is that they've found ways to stimulate spiritual growth. It makes sense that couples who seek to learn from spiritual principles would have the best possible marriages. Research indicates this is true. Keep your marriage growing spiritually and you'll enjoy the flowers of a summer marriage.

HITCHIN' EM UP!

(Written by Michael Holland)



New Mexico Marriages First has held a series of Premarital and Marriage Mentoring Classes over the past few months. Classes were held at the Pueblo of Jemez as well as locations in Rio Rancho and Albuquerque. The Marriage Mentoring classes trained couples who are currently in stable marriages to work with couples who are engaged or considering marriage. Other Mentor Couples were also trained to work with couples who may be experiencing difficulties in their relationships. Mentor Couples went through 8 hours of training and will participate in on-going classes to boost their skills in working with couples. The Mentor Couples learned various techniques for helping to build the communication and bonding

skills of couples. The Mentor Couples are excited to begin working with couples throughout the community. One of the newly trained Mentor Couples had this to say about the training: *"We believe that families in our community will become healthier and grow in their relationships."* Another Mentor Couple said this: *"We are excited about the implementation of this program with couples. We wish we would have had something like this when we were engaged!"* The Premarital Classes were exciting and full of



lots of interaction and questions. Attendees learned a lot about themselves and each other. Each class was full of fun and laughter as each couple learned about new and creative ways to build their relationship into the marriage of their dreams. Communication was a topic that was covered in depth throughout the class, and couples learned how to use the differences in how men and women communicate to strengthen and build their relationships. Other topics that were taught included: Problem Solving, Dealing with Conflict and Resolving Anger, Healing Hurts and Building Trust, Handling Finances, and How to Have a Great Sex



Life. One couple who attended had this to say about the classes: *"This was a real eye-opener. It made us really understand what a marriage is about, what we will face, and how communication and trust will build a good marriage."* Another couple said: *"We felt confident and positive when we left the class and went home to talk about what we had learned."*



For more information about marriage classes or to become a Mentor Couple, please call the NMMFP at (505) 891-1846.

New Mexico Marriages First Project (NMMFP) exists to:
Provide culturally appropriate marriage education, marriage enrichment projects, and programs that explore positive relationship models for married couples, engaged couples, couples interested in marriage and teenagers thus strengthening marriage and reducing the incidence of divorce.

DOES YOUR MARRIAGE NEED A LAUGH?



The NMMFP Motto:
"I Do! I Did? I Will . . . For LIFE!"
www.NMFamilyCouncil.org



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Contact NMMFP if you
would like to schedule a
marriage event in your
community!!

www.NMFamilyCouncil.org

Joy Quote

*“We choose our
joys and sorrows
long before we
experience them!”*

**Kahlil
Gibran**

WHAT’S HAPPENING AT THE NEW MEXICO MARRIAGES FIRST PROJECT?

(Written by Michael Holland)

Ever since the inception of the project in October 2006, the NMMFP has hit the ground running! The ability to provide so many opportunities and services to couples who are married or seeking marriage has been such an honor. It’s important for couples to know that in most cases, the NMMFP services are free of charge and provide valuable relationship skills education that can positively enrich any relationship. Heading into the summer, the NMMFP will be offering a variety of premarital, marriage enrichment, and mentoring classes as well as focusing on our big marriage enrichment event to be held in September. Check out the article below that tells a bit about the event and check out the calendar of events on page 5 of the newsletter that lists the upcoming premarital, marriage enrichment and mentoring classes that will be held in July and August. Also in September, the NMMFP will be joining the other Healthy Marriage Demonstration Grants in New Mexico and participating in the New Mexico State Fair parade by sponsoring a float that will promote healthy marriages in our communities. Check out all of the NMMFP happenings at our website. Sign up for events and classes today so your spot will be held!

“A ROMANTIC EVENING OUT OF THIS WORLD”

(Written by Leonie Oliva)

On Saturday September 22, 2007, the New Mexico Marriages First Project will host a “Romantic Evening Out of This World”! The event, to be held at the Park Plaza Hotel Ballroom (2500 Carlisle Blvd. Albuquerque), includes a three course dinner, dancing, free childcare and educational comedy from Kenn Kington (who was a huge hit at the Romance and Roses marriage enrichment event in February 2007). The evening will star the internationally renowned performer and speaker for the “Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus” message - Michael Najarian - who will tell the secrets of how to succeed in an “inter-planetary” love affair and what to do when Venus and Mars collide!

As John Gray’s appointed ambassador for the Venus/Mars message, Michael speaks across the world and has a one man show based on the phenomenal best-selling book “Men are from Mars, Woman are from Venus,” written by John Gray. Tickets to this amazing evening are an unbeatable value at only \$10 per couple and are limited to the first 250 couples who sign up. Why not treat your spouse to a night to remember - laugh, listen, learn and love while you enjoy fine food, music and world class performers! The event starts at 6.30 pm and free parking is provided at the Park Plaza. Tickets go on sale in June.

Don’t miss this incredible opportunity! For further details and to purchase tickets call (505) 891-1846 or check the web site: www.nmfamilycouncil.org

HUSBANDS ARE HEROS CANCELLED!

We regret to announce that “Husbands Are Heros” has been cancelled. This event was scheduled for June 16th in Haynes Park. Due to a number of circumstances, we are unable to hold this event at this time. We hope you will mark your calendars for our next event scheduled for September 22, 2007: A Romantic Evening Out of This World!

WWW.NMFMFAMILYCOUNCIL.ORG

CALENDAR OF MARRIAGE EVENTS

June 2007

"Husbands Are Heros" Event Cancelled.

NMSU Family Wellness Program - June 2007 onwards, This is a brand new program in the Albuquerque area. Classes are **FREE**, and are being offered at three different locations (Mountainside Church, West Mesa Community Center and Mesa Verde Community Center). Classes meet one evening a week from 5.30pm to 8 pm, and a light meal is provided for families attending. The program runs for 12 weeks. All families are welcome to participate in enhancing communication and listening skills, parenting techniques and overall family wellness. Children eight and older participate in class with parents, and **FREE** childcare is provided to children seven and younger. Further classes are scheduled to begin in September 2007. For further details and to enroll, please contact Kristina or Leslie (NMSU Strengthening Families Initiative) at 332-3765.

NMMFP Marriage Enrichment Mentor Training, June 16th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Contact New Mexico Marriages First, 1207 Golf Course Road, Suite E, Rio Rancho, New Mexico to Register (505-891-1846) **FREE!!**

Father's Day - June 17, 2007

July 2007

NMMFP Premarital Education Class, Saturday, July 28th. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Contact New Mexico Marriages First, 1207 Golf Course Road, Suite E, Rio Rancho, New Mexico to Register (505-891-1846) **FREE!!**

NMMFP Marriage Enrichment Class, Saturday, July 28th. 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Contact New Mexico Marriages First, 1207 Golf Course Road, Suite E, Rio Rancho, New Mexico to Register (505-891-1846) **FREE!!**

August 2007

NMMFP Premarital Mentor Training, August 11th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Contact New Mexico Marriages First, 1207 Golf Course Road, Suite E, Rio Rancho, New Mexico to Register (505-891-1846) **FREE!!**

September 2007

Healthy Marriages presents "Empower Your Relationship," a seminar by Dr. David Olson, the founder of PREPARE/ENRICH, a widely used and highly effective premarital and marital program for couples who want to build their relationship potential. **Saturday, September 15th, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, University of New Mexico, Main Campus at Central & University Student Union Building, Ballroom A & B.**

Seminar free of charge! Register at Healthy Marriages (505) 842-5300 Ext. 104.

Call and ask about our other services!

"Romantic Evening Out of This World" sponsored by the NMMFP. Saturday, September 22nd, at the Park Plaza Hotel in Albuquerque. **The event includes a three course dinner, dancing, free childcare and educational comedy** from Kenn Kington. The evening will star the internationally renowned performer and speaker for the "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus" message - Michael Najarian. **\$10.00 per couple for the first 250 couples who sign up and pay!** Registration begins in June 2007.

Call 505-891-1846 to register.

PROTECTING FUN ACTIVITIES FROM CONFLICT

(Used with Permission from Dr. Greg Smalley, Smalley Relationship Center, January 13, 2003)

"Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life; for this is your reward in life ..." This encouragement was written around the year 935 B.C. Even thousands of years ago, King Solomon realized the importance of spending time enjoying your spouse. Current research supports this same mandate. Marital research experts Dr. Scott Stanley and Dr. Howard Markman conducted a survey to discover what creates a "strong" relationship. To their surprise, the amount of fun couples had together emerged as the strongest factor in understanding overall marital happiness.

If it's important to enjoy our mate, how do we protect our fun time? My wife, Erin, and I learned how to protect fun experiences the hard way. During a marital date, we had made plans to spend the day at Disneyland. Before entering the park, we decided to save money by eating at a nearby Subway. In the midst of stuffing my mouth with a foot-long sub, somehow I managed to bring up a very sensitive issue, and an argument erupted. As the conflict escalated, we moved our "discussion" out into the car hoping to resolve the dispute without the entire restaurant watching. Unfortunately the privacy didn't help. Having no desire to spend the day walking around the "happiest place on earth" together, we drove home in silence. Because it took the entire day to resolve the argument, Erin and I were sick that we ruined our Disneyland date.

Erin and I did the exact thing that you should never do while having fun. We allowed conflict to infiltrate into our enjoyment. When conflict or sensitive issues invade our recreation, it's like throwing a red shirt into the washer with our white clothes. Even though it's only one small shirt, it can destroy an entire load of laundry by turning it pink. Likewise, even though you may be discussing only one tiny issue, if allowed to enter into your relaxation, the entire experience can be damaged.

Conflict can be destructive to your recreation because it intensifies emotions. As this happens, it becomes difficult to relax and enjoy each other. If this pattern occurs too often, your mate may lose the desire to do fun things because the experience ends up turning "pink." When Erin and I started to argue in Subway, we should have done something to stop the process. Instead of allowing anger and hurt feelings to take over, we needed to set a boundary by calling a TIME-OUT!

Before your enjoyment is destroyed, I encourage you to interrupt arguments or sensitive discussions by agreeing to talk about the issue at a different time. In other words, reschedule the conversation when you can provide the necessary attention it deserves. By not allowing conflict to harm you recreation you are sending a very important message. The statement you're conveying is that protecting your relationship is more important than impulsively arguing about a problem. Therefore, in order to build a strong relationship - as King Solomon mandated - we must be able to enjoy life with the ones we love.

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Leonie Oliva,
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Enthusiasm Quote

“It's faith in something and enthusiasm for something that makes a life worth living.”

**Oliver Wendell
Holmes**



SUMMER FUN: GET OUT AND ABOUT TOGETHER!

(Written by Leonie Oliva)

Summer is here, and whether or not you have vacations planned, it's a great time to get out and about in the local area, to explore, enjoy the weather and have some fun with your spouse! If you need a little motivation – the good news is that this need not take much planning or cost much money. It is often the case that we do not explore the place we live nearly as well as our vacation destinations – as residents we do not always “see” our home town through the same eyes as a tourist who is actively looking to discover all the best opportunities, places and activities to pack in to the short vacation period. Maybe there are some local places or activities that you have overlooked or have always wanted to see but never quite got around to it!

Why not make this summer the time to do it by making time for some “summer dates” with your spouse. The importance of time together as a couple, to relax and get away from the stresses and strains of everyday life and to just have fun together, should not be underestimated. It is vital to maintaining, or recapturing, the passion or “buzz” of the early years of marriage or dating. Work commitments and children can obviously make finding time difficult, but if you persevere and make sure your schedules give you some “couple time” then boredom or “same old routine” will not be a feature of your relationship.

The key is to find things that you will both enjoy equally – while hiking up a wildlife trail for a picnic may be your idea of heaven, it may not be your partner's “dream date” – so plan your dates considerately. If you cannot both agree on what would be a great date, take turns to pick something that really appeals to each of you – and think of each date as a gift to each other.

Here are some ideas for fun “time outs” this summer in Albuquerque and the surrounding area:

1. **Sandia Tramway:** A trip on the world's largest aerial tramway takes you a distance of 2.7 miles above canyons and spectacular terrain to the Sandia Peak viewing platform. Go for the dramatic sunset. There are restaurants at the top and base or take a picnic. Information at www.sandiapeak.com or call (505) 856 7325.
2. **Rio Grande Botanic Gardens:** Wander through the beautiful Rio Grande Botanic Gardens - an oasis in the desert with 36 acres of native and exotic plants and a butterfly pavilion. Information at www.cabq.gov/biopark/garden or call (505) 768 2000.
3. **Isotopes Game:** If you enjoy sports, a fun and inexpensive way to spend a summer afternoon is to buy a berm ticket to an Isotopes game. Berm tickets are only \$5 and you can only buy them on the day of the game. Information at www.albuquerquebaseball.com or call (505) 924 2255.
4. **UNM Art Museum:** Art lovers can enjoy New Mexico's largest collection of fine art works from artists including Picasso and O'Keefe. Admission is free. Information at <http://unmartmuseum.unm.edu/> or call (505) 277 4001.
5. **Casa San Ysidro:** Take a tour of the Albuquerque Museum's historic Casa San Ysidro in the village of Corrales. The historic house dates from the 1870s and there is also a recreation of a 19th century rancho. Tour times and information at www.cabq.gov/museum/history/casatour.html (505) 898 3915. The village of Corrales also has some interesting shops and restaurants to visit.
6. **Explore the Great Outdoors:** New Mexico has 34 State Parks offering a wide range of hiking trails, lakes, canyons, forests and camp sites. So why not go back to nature and camp out for the night? Information on locations, fees, permits, etc. at www.nmparks.com or call (505) 476 3355.
7. **Santa Fe Markets:** The 56th Annual Traditional Spanish Market will take place on the Santa Fe Plaza on July 28 & 29 featuring handcrafted traditional arts by 250 local Hispanic artists plus music, art demonstrations and regional food. Information at www.spanishmarket.org/ or call (505) 982 2226. The Santa Fe Indian Market will take place on the Santa Fe Plaza on August 18 & 19 and features works by some 1200 artists from around 100 tribes. Information at www.swaia.org or call (505) 983 5220.
8. **Hot Air Ballooning:** Albuquerque is the ballooning capital of the world, so for an exhilarating bird's eye view of the City and New Mexico terrain why not take an early morning balloon ride. For information on ballooning and other activities in Albuquerque, go to www.itsatrip.org/activities



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**Your Summer Marriage
Life Line Newsletter
Is Inside!**

To:

**Mark Your Calendar and Plan to Attend
“A Romantic Evening Out of This World”
on September 22, 2007!
Call to Register!! (505) 891-1846**

www.NMFamilyCouncil.org