

# PRE-MARRIAGE PREPARATION – A INVESTMENT IN MARRIAGE FOR LIFE

## PRE-MARRIAGE PREPARATION -- MORE THAN A LUXURY !!!

In these days of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, marriage has become more difficult than it was in the past, mainly because persons are expecting more out of it. Marriage is expected to bring in a high yield in terms of relationship fulfillment and satisfaction. ***“Marriage is for love and love means happiness. We’ve got to be happy in marriage, or else!”*** That’s today’s philosophy.

Yet, happiness eludes most couples in marriage as they face changing expectations, different needs, stressful crises, conflicting feelings and priorities, life stage adjustments, demanding childcare needs, unexpected eldercare needs, and so forth. Consequently, far too many persons feel they are failing to find in their marriages the expected relationship satisfaction and an abundance of affirmation. When they feel this failure and are confronted with a sense of helplessness, and perhaps then they may realize that a more intensive pre—marriage preparation could have perhaps prepared them much better for confronting these challenges and avoiding unpleasant outcomes.

Since no persons are immune from such stresses in life which spill over into their couple relationship, the wise ones will take every advantage to equip and empower themselves for making their forthcoming marriage fulfilling and satisfying? This kind of pre-marriage preparation is not about a committed time to discuss the wedding ceremony, music, liturgy, rehearsal, and so forth. Rather this ***“pre-marriage” preparation***, rather than ***“pre-wedding” preparation***, is about each partner in the forthcoming marriage and their relationship in marriage.

This pre-marriage preparation program is not merely a matter of identifying individual existing strengths and growth areas but also relationship ones. This type of marriage preparation is a process designed to promote the conscious growth of each person for a marriage relationship – that’s its paramount aim. This pre-marriage preparation is by no means, as yet, all that it should be. Yet, by use of this pre-marriage experience a vast amount of needless rejection, aloneness, conflict, personal misery, and social disintegration can be avoided, which impacts the vast majority of those in first marriages in their first five years journey, and then nearly 60% of the time one partner secures a divorce.

***“Pre-marriage” preparation is not a luxury today!*** It is indeed a most needed experience for every couple planning to share the rest of their lives together and expecting that journey to be personally fulfilling and satisfying. This preparation experience for your marriage just may be for you individually, and as a couple, that ***edge of difference*** which could enable you to avoid years of an unhappy marriage and/or a divorce, and instead turn your difficulties and struggles into growth experiences — together!

A wise person once stated the profoundly obvious: **“You don’t know what you don’t know.”** Isn’t it true: If you *know* that which you *don’t know*, then this *known* would not be *something you don’t know*?

At the risk of over-simplifying, most persons can be classified in one of two categories: (1<sup>st</sup>) Those who don’t know what they don’t know, and don’t want to know more; they just want to stay in their comfort zone, not to be made uncomfortable with greater information, confirmed research data, factual details, or the truth;

(2<sup>nd</sup>) Those who don’t know what they don’t know, and strongly desire to learn everything they can about all things that are important and impact their lives. These persons want to close that ignorance gap between the known and unknown on matters that affect their lives personally and those special to them.

### THE PRE-MARRIAGE PREPARATION EXPERIENCE PROCESS

**First**, you will have an opportunity to **briefly tell your life story** — in chronological sequence — to your mate-to-be, reviewing the major emotional and relational highlights that have shaped you into the person you are today, using the Life History Inventory. **Second**, there is the **data gathering phase** in which several assessment questionnaires are completed at home and returned. From these once scored, you will be able to get an in-depth perspective on the strengths and growth edges each individual as well as identifying probable areas of difficulty and conflict which are most likely to arise within the first five years of your marriage. Various statistically valid and reliable testing assessments provide invaluable information for conscious absorptions for the years ahead. **Third**, there will be an opportunity to **identify the helpful resources** within and around you that you can effectively use to transform such difficulties and conflicts into growth opportunities. **Fourth**, you will **be presented important educational information** regarding: communication research impacting relationships, sound theories on the growth journey in marriages, danger signals when a marriage gets in trouble, introduced to the faith stages of development of individuals, opportunities to learn what constitutes (a) disowning behaviors, (b) alienating behavior patterns, and selected (c) dysfunctional symptoms for individuals [and families] which affect one out of three individuals between 15-54 years of age in any given 12-month period.

#### 1. The Data Gathering Phase: [one hour]

Several data gathering questionnaires are expected to be answered by the couple identifying their perceptions about themselves and their mate. The assessment questionnaires are the following:

- **A Life History Inventory**
- **A Pre-marriage Questionnaire**
- **Health Stress & Concerns Questionnaire** – 2 each: one on self, one on mate
- **Preferred Qualities in Life** – A Review
- **The Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis** – 2 each: [similar to HSCQ]
- **Prepare** – A Pre-marriage Relationship Analysis
- **Measures of Psychosocial Development Analysis**

**First session**

Upon receipt of a couple's registration for the Pre-marriage Preparation experience, a private one-hour couple session with Chaplain Roy Nash will be scheduled and the above questionnaires will be given to the couple with appropriate instructions for completing these items in their home(s) and at their convenience. Once they have been returned and the scoring is completed, the additional sessions will be scheduled for the three following phases.

**2. The Assessment Interpretation Phase: [two - four hours]**

During these two sessions of two-hour each with Chaplain Nash, the results of the data-gathering phase will be shared with the couple. He will interpret the data of individual questionnaires, and also in correlation with the other assessment instruments, focus upon the strengths and growth edges of each individual and the marital relationship. Also provided there will be several summary reports of the information gathered from the questionnaires for the couple to keep.

**3. The Research and Theoretical Sharing Phase: [4 hours]**

During these two sessions, two-hours each, Chaplain Nash will share research pertinent to personal communication, two profound theoretical concepts regarding individual living and the marriage journey throughout life, review the data from the Life History Inventory and its relevance to their relationship, identify the danger signals of a marriage in trouble, present the concept of "Spiritual Energies," and introduce the power of setting written goals and objectives for their marriage.

**4. The Objective Setting Phase: [two hours]**

During this two-hour session with Chaplain Nash, the focus will be to identify and review from all the gathered assessment data the specific objectives for the marriage and for each individual for the years ahead. To conclude the Pre-Marriage Preparation experience Chaplain Nash will offer recommendations as well as a bibliography of beneficial resources such as books, tapes, and videos to further enrich and nurture growth in the couple's individual lives and marriage journey.

**Who Can Benefit From The Pre-Marriage Preparation Experience ?**

**1<sup>st</sup>** - This experience is designed primarily for engaged couples prior to their marriage. It is expected that engaged couples will begin this experience no later than six months prior to the date of their wedding ceremony.

**2<sup>nd</sup>** – Newly married couples of less than one-year, who have already begun the major lifelong committed journey and who have rather quickly begun to discover numerous, troubling, stressful, and difficult challenges within their relationship, can benefit from this Pre-marriage Preparation experience. With some slight modifications this experience can assist them to regain some solid footing for their marriage journey together toward a relationship growing toward fulfillment and satisfaction.

**TIME INVESTMENT TO BE EXPECTED**

The average amount of private time needed to invest in the Pre-marriage Preparation experience is approximately 8-10 hours, and approximately 6-8 hours are spent in sessions with the assessment consultant/therapist, totaling between 14-17 hours. All sessions will be held in Chaplain Roy Nash's office at 5004 Eagle Ridge, Springfield, IL.

**THE FINANCIAL INVESTMENT**

Although the Pre-Marriage Preparation experience involves the payment of fees for the professional services of a consulting certified and licensed Marriage & Family Therapist and Pastoral Counselor, ***this experience needs to be seen as a financial investment in one's marriage for the future rather than a wedding expense surrounding the wedding days.***

The anticipated returns are not expected to be gained in a financial way. However, if attorney fees for marriage dissolution were incurred, this may generate a great financial return involving thousands of dollars saved if a divorce were prevented. Primarily, the expected benefits are gained in the enrichment and personal satisfaction within the couple's relationship. Therefore, this fee is not generated upon what this experience might be personally worth for a couple, yet that could be an interesting thought to explore: What would it be worth in dollars to invest in one's marriage relationship in hopes of avoiding divorce, or what would a couple be willing to spend in dollars to salvage a severely injured relationship?

This financial investment is based upon an hourly time rate and the assessment testing costs involved by the consultant/therapist. The breakdown of this financial investment is as follows, providing two optional packages from which to choose:

**THE COMPREHENSIVE INVESTMENT PACKAGE:**

<b>Registration Fee:</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>
[ submitted with registration to cover use of the assessment materials ]	
<b>Assessment Testing Fees: [comprehensive testing]</b>	<b>500</b>
[to cover the costs of scoring the assessment materials ]	
<b>Consultation Fee</b>	<b>580</b>
[ 5 sessions: 7-8 hours: submitted at first session ]	
<b>Total Marriage Assessment Fee</b>	<b>\$ 1,100</b>

**THE ECONOMY INVESTMENT PACKAGE:**

<b>Registration Fee:</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>
[ submitted with registration to cover use of the assessment materials ]	
<b>Assessment Testing Fees: [one test only]</b>	<b>205</b>
[to cover the costs of scoring the assessment materials ]	
<b>Consultation Fee</b>	<b>475</b>
[ 5 sessions: 6-7 hours: submitted at first session ]	
<b>Total Marriage Assessment Fee</b>	<b>\$ 700</b>

THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

Some persons may think these investment expenses in one's marriage-for-a-lifetime are high dollars. Yet, actually they are not. Think on these thoughts:

Average Wedding Expenses:

Here are some typical average weddings expenses for a 2-3 day event. This data comes from [www.CostsofWedding.com](http://www.CostsofWedding.com) as the "U.S. Average Wedding Costs":

	<u>Average:</u>
Stationary Invitations/Thank You Notes	\$ 881
Bouquets & other Flowers	2,048
Photography & Video	3,836
Music	991
Ceremony	2,627
Attendants' Gifts & Favors	1,166
Jewelry	2,148
Wedding Party Attire	2,710
Transportation	426
Wedding Reception	<u>14,737</u>

**Grand Total for average U.S. couples\* \$ 28,800\***

\* You should note that wedding cost can vary widely and this is just an estimate of what couples will likely spend based on our research at The Wedding Report.

# On average, Illinois couples will spend \$26,210 for their wedding in Springfield IL. This does not include cost for products and services listed in the Additional Items section. Results based on our research and responses from other married users of this site. Source: [www.CostsofWeddings.com](http://www.CostsofWeddings.com).

WHO IS THE PRE-MARRIAGE PREPARATION CONSULTANT/THERAPIST ?

**Chaplain Roy B. Nash** is a certified and licensed Pastoral Counselor and Marriage and Family Therapist who has practiced both in several group mental health outpatient settings and in a solo private practice setting. He was certified in 1976 by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors and by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, in 1978 by the Association for Professional Chaplains, and in 2000 by the American Association of Integrative Medicine. He has been active in a Pastoral Care and Counseling endorsed specialized ministry by the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries of The United Methodist Church since 1981.

Prior to his full-time commitment to counseling and therapy, Chaplain Nash devoted 13 years full-time to a specialized ministry in higher education in Louisiana and 12 years full-time to the initial establishment and directorship of the professional chaplain's program at Memorial Medical Center in Springfield, Illinois. Pastoral counseling and therapy were an active part of these ministries covering 25 years.

He received a Masters of Divinity degree in 1965 from the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, has been an ordained United Methodist minister since 1965. Chaplain Nash has been married since June 1963 and has two adult children and two grandchildren. For more information, visit [www.roynash.com](http://www.roynash.com).

**PRE-MARRIAGE PREPARATION REGISTRATION FORM**

Bride \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Groom \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address / City / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Phones: Res \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Phones: Res \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

The **Pre-Marriage Preparation Registration Fee** of **\$20**, payable to "**Roy B. Nash**", is to be enclosed with this Registration Form and mailed to: **Roy B. Nash, LMFT, LCPC, BELIEF-FOCUSED CARE & HEALING, 5004 Eagle Ridge, Springfield, IL 62707-7830**. If anyone has questions or if additional information is needed, first visit Chaplain Nash's web site at [www.roynash.com](http://www.roynash.com). If the needed information is not located on the web site, then you are invited to send an email to [roynash@springnet1.com](mailto:roynash@springnet1.com), or to phone him at **217-415-2978**.

**Quotation of the Day** – *New York Times*, July 13, 2002

**"Paying off these weddings is going to take a heck of a lot longer than the few hours the party lasted, maybe longer than the marriage lasts."**  
[HOWARD S. DVORKIN](#), president of *Consolidated Credit Counseling Services*.