

What is Marriage Moments?

It's a unique new marriage enrichment program designed to help couples understand and prepare for the changes that may come in their relationship as they become parents. It includes a **video** and corresponding **activities book** that couples can go through during a **prenatal class** and/or on their own **at home**. The program incorporates a model of marital quality developed by Dr. Blaine Fowers of the University of Miami, emphasizing the virtues of partnership, friendship, generosity, fairness, and loyalty.

Why is Marriage Moments?

- The quality and stability of marriages are key factors in individual well-being for both adults and children.
- The transition to parenthood is a critical point in marriage—couples who adjust poorly to the relationship challenges that accompany a new baby have a greater risk for distress and divorce.
- Most couples are much better prepared to give birth to their baby than they are for the changes that will come in their relationship when they do.
- Prenatal classes are an ideal place to provide couples with information that can help ease relationship adjustments.

What is the future of Marriage Moments?

The program is currently in pilot testing through the Intermountain Health Care System Prenatal Education Program to determine its effectiveness. We anticipate that it will be a successful program that could easily be adopted by other hospital systems and programs or organizations that work with families making the transition to parenthood. The program was designed to strengthen any couple's relationship, whether or not they are married. Because it is mostly a self-administered program, it requires no training to implement and can be given to couples to work on at home, or adapted to any kind of classroom or group setting. We are exploring the feasibility of integrating *Marriage Moments* into new parent, home visiting programs, such as "Success by Six." In addition, we will be seeking funding to develop a Spanish-language version of the program.



MARRIAGE

STRENGTHENING YOUR MARRIAGE

MOMENTS

AS YOU BECOME PARENTS

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Introduction: *The What, Why, Who, and How of Marriage Moments*

PART 1: Lessons & Activities

More Than A Feeling: *Introducing Marital Virtues*

More Than Fun: *The Marital Virtue of Friendship*

More Than Giving: *The Marital Virtue of Generosity*

More Than Equality: *The Marital Virtue of Fairness*

More Than Commitment: *The Marital Virtue of Loyalty*

PART 2: Additional Information

More Than A Couple: *Changes to Your Relationship When the Baby Comes*

More Than Your Marriage: *Reaching Out To Other Couples*

More Than You Can Handle: *Important Information to Know When You Think Your Marriage Might Be In Trouble*

More Resources To Strengthen Your Marriage

Program Evaluation

Marriage Moments is currently being evaluated using a quasi-experimental research design comparing a control group of 50 couples to 100 couples in two treatment groups who receive differing “dosages” of the program:

Group 1: “Self-dose” or “Passive Treatment”
(couples receive the video and activities book, but do not participate in the program as part of their prenatal class)

Group 2: “Regular Dose” or “Active Treatment”
(couples receive the video and activities book as part of their prenatal class where they are introduced to the content and encouraged to use the materials)

Repeated measures will include self- and spouse-reports of:

- Marital Virtues
- Marital Communication & Problem Solving Behavior
- Marital Quality
- Adjustment to the Transition to Parenthood
- Maternal Depression
- Infant Adjustment

The research will contribute to the knowledge base in marriage education by addressing three important questions:

- 1- Can marriage education during the transition to parenthood strengthen marriages and fortify them against common problems at this stressful stage of the family life cycle?
- 2- Can a curriculum focused on marriage virtues strengthen marriages as well as or even better than traditional marriage education curricula focused on developing communication and problem solving skills?
- 3- Can a low-level, self administered intervention with minimum or no classroom instruction strengthen marriages about as well as traditional intense marriage intervention programs?