

The Advanced Workshop participants' characteristics are reviewed with the following list:

Age Range: The participants' age range may be extreme, from the mid-twenties to early seventies.

Sex distribution: The participants' will be both men and women, about equal participation between both men and women.

Nature and range of educational background: Most of the participants will have at least a master's degree, either a Master of Divinity or a Masters in some mental health or counseling field. Some pastors will not have the Master of Divinity degree, since their denomination or church affiliation will only require a certificate or a degree from a Bible College. The participants will mostly represent clergy and mental health professionals; some participants may be "lay persons" who attend as "Lay Mentor Couples."

Reason(s) for attending course: The participants want to improve their knowledge and skill with the Life Innovations, Inc. materials. Some participants will seek the Advanced Workshop for personal reasons, as well as for professional advancement. I would be naïve to think that each participant is not at least expecting some personal benefit for his or her own marriage/relationship by attending the Advanced Workshop.

Attitude about course attendance: The participants voluntarily register for the Advanced Workshop. I expect a positive attitude about course attendance; however, some participants who favor a (religious) conservative worldview may dislike the "secular perspective" of the Advanced Workshop. They may attend simply to gain the basic resources, and ignore the "secular" research.

Biases, prejudices, beliefs: See above. Each participant will have their own expectations for what they hope to gain from the Advanced Workshop. Some may seek skill in Feedback to the couple, while others may seek the ideas for the “Creating a Caring Community of Couples.” The participants will represent a broad perspective of religious beliefs: some mental health professionals may be agnostic/atheists, while the clergy will vary from conservative to liberal. The participants may be Christian, Jewish, or even Islamic. Several items in the Advanced Workshop may challenge the religiously conservative participants: the equalitarian bias in the Life Innovations, Inc. resources for male and female role relationships; the results that 50% of Traditional Couples reported abuse between the man and the woman, and the PREPARE-CC (Cohabiting Couples) inventory may challenge the religiously conservative participant. The participants will value family and the sacredness of marriage, or at least the importance of a couple having a healthy couple relationship. Both the mental health professionals and the clergy may hold prejudices against each other-- mental health professionals seeing clergy as unqualified to use the Life Innovations, Inc. resources, and clergy seeing mental health counselors as “secular humanists.” Additionally, marriage and family therapists may hold a bias against mental health professionals and clergy, seeing them as unqualified to use the Life Innovations, Inc. resources. The mental health professionals and counselors may see clergy who wish to use these resources as persons who are taking potential clients from them.

Typical hobbies and other spare-time activities: The typical hobbies and spare-time interests for the participants will be as varied as the number of participants.

Interests in life other than hobbies: The participants will have an interest in helping people, especially couples. They will likely have an interest in community health as well as peoples' health. Again, the participants' interests will be as broad as the number of participants.

Need-gratifiers (i.e., what would reward them?) The participants would be rewarded if they are complemented for their desire to improve their skills with couple counseling, as well as their commitment to family health. The participants would be rewarded if their professional status were recognized. A goal in the Advanced Workshop would be to have the mental health professionals and the clergy acknowledge each other's professional status and accreditations, rather than hold a bias against each other.

Physical characteristics: The participants' physical characteristics will be varied.

Reading ability: Most of the participants will have a higher than average reading ability, since most participants will hold a master's degree.

Terminology or topics to be avoided: The topics of religion need to be addressed with respect, since participants will represent the full continuum of religious opinions and values.

Organizational membership: The participants will be members of religious bodies, denominations, and professional organizations (mental health, counseling, and civic)

Specific prerequisite and entry-level skills already learned: All the participants will have completed the initial PREPARE/ENRICH Counselor Workshop (Version

2000). The participants must have completed the initial workshop at least six months (a 14 day leeway) prior to registering for the Advanced Workshop. Thus, participants will have a working knowledge of the Life Innovations, Inc. materials. The most important prerequisite knowledge for the performance objectives of the Advanced Workshop will be reviewed at the beginning of the Advanced Workshop. Mental health professionals and marriage and family therapists will have more knowledge that is specific in counseling than the clergy. However, many clergy will have a good foundation in non-directive counseling and perhaps systems theory.

END.