



MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS ENRICHMENT

OVERVIEW of a program based on Love, Honesty,
and Hope

THE MOST SACRED INSTITUTION IN THE CHURCH: THE HOME

The chapel, the stake center and the temple are sacred as they contribute to the building of the most sacred institution in the Church – the home – and to the blessing of the most sacred relationships in the Church, the family.

ELDER BOYD K. PACKER

General Conference April 2012



One of the most
valuable things you can
do for your

is have a strong, loving,
honest relationship
with your spouse.



Creating and
maintaining a stable,
loving marriage is not
only Gospel Doctrine

—

It **IS** the
Gospel In Action!

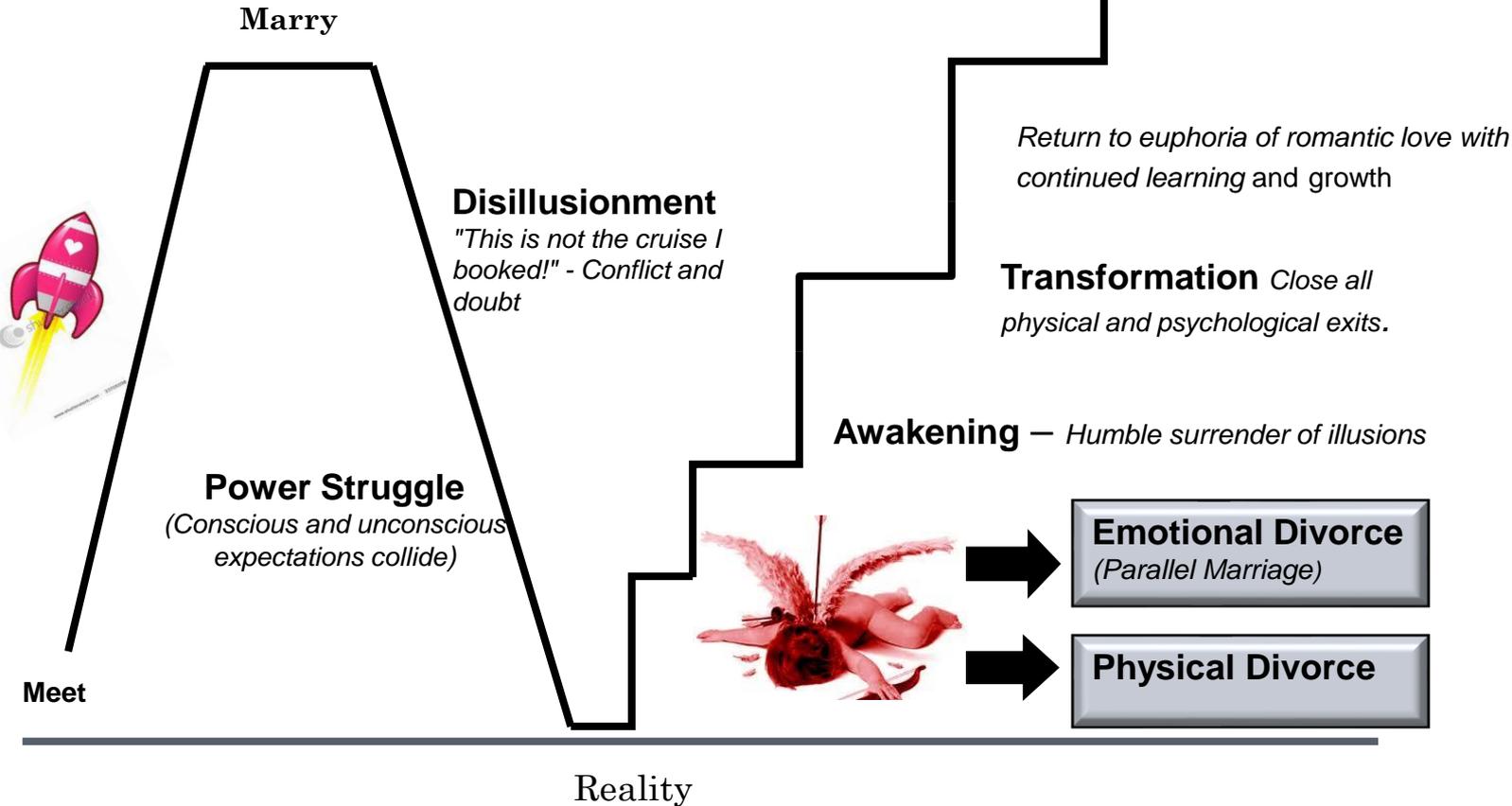


The Psychological Journey of Marriage

Source : Laura Brotherson "And They Were Not Ashamed"

Romantic Love
Chemical Reaction - Honeymoon Stage
Sense of Wholeness

Real Love: Love without Illusion



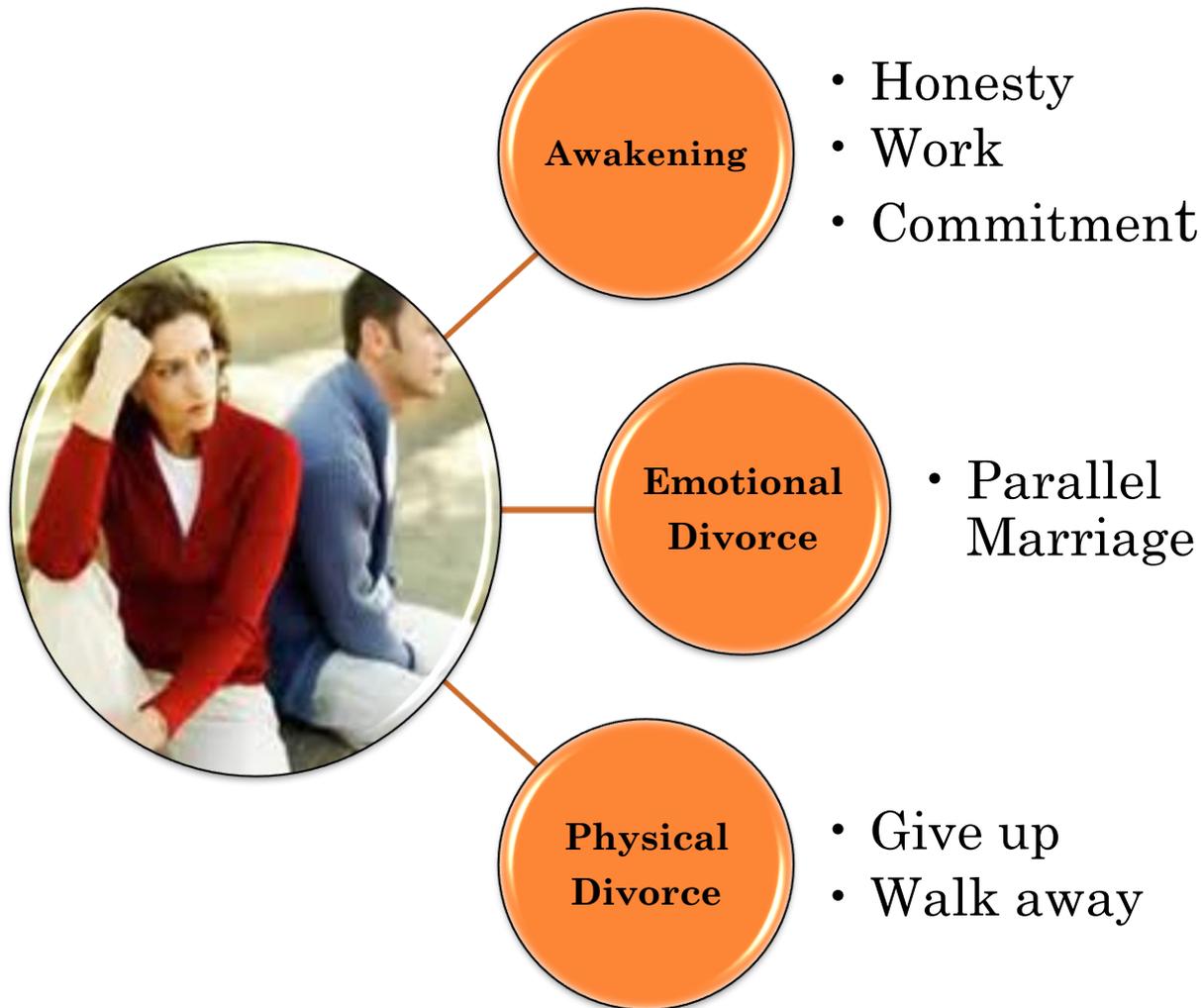
“Marriage will show your immaturity and selfishness faster than anything on earth. You either grow up or grow apart...

It's your choice.”

Dr. Jennifer Finlayson-Fife



EVERYONE MAKES A CHOICE:



WHAT IS PARALLEL MARRIAGE?

● Emotional Distance

- Little creativity
- Feel more comfortable in social circles than alone together
- Frequent unresolved frustration
- Lack of playfulness
- Minimized communication
- Conversations mostly of facts and utility
- Stress when discussing relationship
- Have several taboo topics
- Loss of vitality in marriage

● Physical Distance

- Diminished non-sexual tender touch
- Little or no passionate kissing
- Infrequent and or perfunctory sexual encounters
- Frequent sexual dissatisfaction of one or both partners
- Separate bed times



THIS PROGRAM CAN HELP BREAK PARALLEL MARRIAGE GRIDLOCK

- Tools to honestly assess your present situation
 - Increase self awareness: our authentic self
 - Identify the underlying fears and desires that motivate us
 - Understand the reasons for marital gridlock
- Build hope
 - Believe that God wants your marital happiness
 - Learn from the successes of others
 - Experience progress in multiple areas of your marriage
- Create a sympathetic, safe environment for growth
 - Provide real-life answers and tools
 - Recommend outside resources



OUR CONVENTIONAL CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE IS FLAWED

- What most people think: “Marriage is about finding someone who will make me happy”
 - No one can “make” you happy; it is mainly a choice
 - That is not your spouse’s job
 - Prevents us from doing the hard work we need to do to understand ourselves
- New paradigm of marriage:
 - An opportunity for growth as individuals and couples
 - A process for learning how to achieve a mature yet passionate love relationship
 - New and everlasting covenant is about growth and progress
- Marriage is a “people growing machine”
 - David Schnarch



A good marriage is not smooth, and marriage is not reducible to a set of skills. People have difficulty with intimacy because they're supposed to. It's not something to be "solved" and avoided. Problems are the drive-wheels and grindstones of intimate relationships. If we use relationships properly they make us grow into adults, capable of intense intimacy.

Dr. David Schnarch PhD



WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IF YOU COMMIT

○ Change

- Incremental – one thing builds on another
- Unexpected benefits in all parts of your marriage

○ New fields of conflict

- A natural part of the growth process
- Leads us to make necessary change

○ Growth

- Mutual respect
- A better understanding of who you are and who your spouse is
- Vastly improved ability to communicate

○ Passion

- Re-ignite romance and physical intimacy



WHAT IF MY SPOUSE WON'T COOPERATE?

You can unilaterally change your marriage by:

- Letting go of unrealistic, controlling, and self-defeating behaviors
- Understanding your needs, motivations and insecurities
- Learning to make changes and requests from the best in you
- Forgiving yourself, your spouse, and your marriage for not being “perfect”
- Being aware that your spouse may not be comfortable with this change, and may even resist, but not giving up



WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

○ Assess your own marriage

- What is working and what is not?
- What problems seem intractable?
- How much stress do you have in communicating with your spouse about problems?



○ Resolve to not settle for parallel marriage or divorce

- See conflicts and problems as indicators that growth can now occur
- Believe that it can get better – because it can!

○ Start learning, talking, and changing

- Attend a class if offered in your ward
- Look at the materials posted online at www.loveunparalleled.com
- Study the suggested resources with your spouse, or alone if necessary
- Make time to discuss important issues with your spouse
- Seek spiritual guidance for your own marriage



MORE ABOUT THE NEW PARADIGM

- Problems and conflict are an unavoidable part of marriage – it doesn't mean you married the wrong person
- A good relationship is not defined by absence of overt conflict, but instead by growth and deepening intimacy
 - Celestial marriage is about eternal progress - not eternal stasis
- The first step in improving our marriage is understanding ourselves
- In reaching our authentic selves we can see the changes we need to make in our marriage
- Growth always requires some discomfort and frequently engenders some conflicts
- True intimacy can happen only when we reveal our authentic selves to our spouse
- A strong marriage involves emotional, physical and spiritual intimacy

