

TOBET4ENGAGED

A Christ-Centered Guide
to Happy Marriages

Theology of the Body Marriage Preparation

FACILITATOR GUIDE



TOBET

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY
EVANGELIZATION TEAM

Created by Monica A. Ashour, MTS; M Hum
The Theology of the Body Evangelization Team, Inc.

How to Use the Facilitator Guide

This Facilitator Guide (FG) is designed to help you convey ideas from the *Theology of the Body Marriage Preparation* (TOBMP) book and its accompanying Presentation Slideshow (PS). The FG corresponds perfectly to TOBMP and with the PS, except please notice that Slides 2-14 are all on page 1 of the book. Slides 21, 23, and 24 are elaborations to help flesh out pages 6-7. Slides 63-66 are Potential Battleground Issues, the same as page 38.

- ▼ **SECTION**
TOBMP page
Slide Thumbnails
- ▼ **Guiding Principles**
Memory Triggers
for the essentials
- ▼ **Note:** Deeper insights
and caveats to include
or jargon to avoid

This book is directed to YOU! Any time we say, "Share a story" or "Have them discuss..." we are addressing you, the facilitator.

THE WONDER OF MARRIAGE

Page 4

Seeing: Man with Eyes and Woman with Heart

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Guys are physically-charged ("with the eyes")
- ✓ Ladies are emotionally-charged ("with the heart")
- ✓ Complementarity—It is wondrous that the sexes are unique!

Note: Couples chatting with those nearby is SO crucial. It makes them feel more comfortable. Do not skip this. 6-8 minutes for 3-4 couples.

Sample Story

Christina gives a story about her parents' description of their first meeting, which illustrates perfectly seeing with the eyes and with the heart. "...Still after 40 years marriage, Dad says, 'Your mom was so hot! Still is! I knew I wanted to be with her forever.' Mom says, 'Your father has such a good heart. I knew from the beginning he cared so much about me.'"

Presentation

1. Show **SEEING: MAN/WOMAN**
2. Share **STORY OF ATTRACTION**
3. Men are physically charged, and women are emotionally charged. Not that guys don't have emotions or ladies don't have sexual desire, but that **primary** motivations are **biologically** different.
4. We are **complementary** of each other (spelled with and "e" not "i"), meaning that we go together.
5. **TABLE SHARING** Have couples share with those closest to them about how they first met.
6. **LARGE GROUP SHARING** Volunteer your neighbor (or yourself) for the best story shared.

◀ **Sample Story** Stories are key! This is how Jesus taught—a proven success! When we fall into "instructional mode" instead of storytelling, couples are less receptive. Real-life stories bring the content of the TOB diagrams to life, help the couples relate to the presenters as persons, and enable the couples to envision the guiding principles affecting their own future marriage. Feel free to use the stories we provide, or substitute your own. If have questions about using your story, or want help fitting it to the Guiding Principles, email or call Monica Ashour, at mashour@tobet.org or 972-849-6543 to be put in touch with an experienced facilitator.

▲ **Presentation** gives you a step-by-step instruction for what to say or do, based on what has worked in our experience. Perhaps you will come up with other ideas—we encourage you to "own" your presentation, but make sure you cover the Guiding Principles, which reflect the content in TOB.

Present to the engaged couples in "chunks." That is, several slides of PS are similar in content and thus should be grouped together. (Ex. Pages 10-11; 12-13; 14-15; 16-18; 26-29, etc.). Such cohesiveness helps the couple to grasp concepts better and moves the presentation along; going slide-by-slide in a detailed manner makes for a very long day. Get to the gist, especially through stories. TOBMP is not meant to be understood in one sitting. Each participant gets a book to take home and ponder.



Time to **TELL A STORY**



Time to **SWITCH SLIDES**



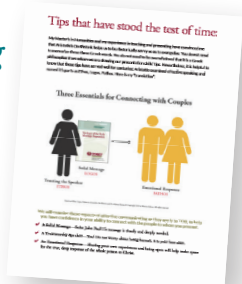
Time for **SHARING**

Italicized text can be read verbatim.

Take advantage of these Additional Resources

Tips on Presenting

Helps you reach the couples with general principles of presenting.



Outlines of the Day

Provides suggestions for the best use of time, whether you have 7 hours (one day or two nights) or 3 days of marriage preparation.

Tough Issues

Goes more deeply into the theology of culturally difficult questions, such as Pornography, Abortion, Contraception, Sterilization, and In Vitro Fertilization.

Page 2

A note from the members of TOBET:

The content presented in this book is primarily from Pope Saint John Paul II's teachings—the Theology of the Body and other works—but also from the personal experiences of the members of TOBET (Theology of the Body Evangelization Team) as we have interacted with the words of the Holy Father in our lives. Each of us in his or her own way has been shown the beauty of marriage through the life-changing, breath-taking love of the Theology of the Body. This teaching has shown us the magnitude of what it means to be a married person, especially in the true wonder of sexuality and the depth of meaning of marital intercourse.

We are from different walks of life, of different ethnicities, and have come to our appreciation of the Theology of the Body through different trials. We all are sinners, yet we continue to repent and live as best we can. Some of us are celibates. Some of us were hooked on pornography. Some of us were in co-dependent relationships. Some of us had children out of wedlock. Some of us realized each one has repressed sexual desire. Some of us are recovering alcoholics and drug addicts. Some of us are divorced. Some of us were vegetarians. Some of us published up men at bars. Some of us contracepted. Some of us

We share our these teachings with you not in a judgmental way, but with the intention of giving you the truth which has helped us. Knowing our brokenness, we begged God for Mercy. Finally, we allowed His Mercy and Healing to break through. This came with a personal encounter with Christ and His Church—which mainly happened because we heard the message of the Theology of the Body. It changed our lives.

This program was designed by us sinners for sinners...in need of mercy, forgiveness, and grace...continually striving to be the best we can be. It is based on our experience before receiving healing, as well as after Christ touched our lives through the Theology of the Body, giving us hope and healing. Our intention is to give you tools to help you and your future marriage and family.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ This program was made by sinners.
- ✓ The facilitators are not perfect.
- ✓ TOB can help you have a happy, healthy marriage & family life.
- ✓ Adam and Eve loved perfectly before the Fall.
- ✓ We all struggle with selfishness, but Jesus can help us to love.
- ✓ Our goal is heaven, the union of God with all of us.

General Principles of TOB

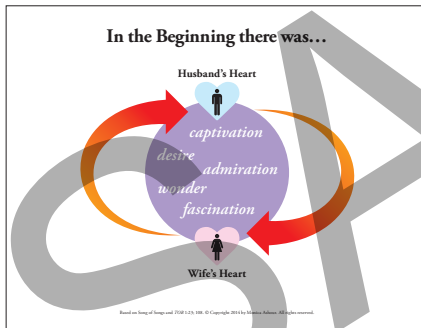
Pope St. John Paul gave 133 small talks from 1979 to 1984 known as the Theology of the Body. It is a Scriptural reflection on what it means to be human. We can't know who we are unless we know first, our roots—before the Fall of Adam and Eve, second, where we are headed—union with God in heaven, and lastly, our state now—we are fallen, but Jesus' redemption can heal us. We are made for love. Our bodies tell us that.

Presentation

- ➔ 1. Show ***WE ARE ON YOUR SIDE**. Say something like, *We are regular people. Our marriage isn't perfect, but TOB helped us make it better. It gives the "why's" behind the "what's" of Catholic teachings about love, and it's changing peoples lives. We want to share that with you.*
2. Please turn to page 2 and silently read the emboldened paragraph which starts with, "We are from different walks of life." (Pause)
3. Who are we to judge? Please know that St. John Paul says that the Church's teachings are not a condemnation, but an INVITATION to a life of freedom for lasting love.
- 🧠 4. Share **GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF TOB**
5. We hope this program challenges you & renews your love.

THE WONDER OF MARRIAGE

Page 3



Guiding Principles

- ✓ Eros=Captivation and fascination and wonder
- ✓ Erotic love is God-given, and thus, good.

Note: For now, avoid discussing attraction as temptation to sin because of concupiscence. Focus on the role of sexual desire in initiating love. We will cover the fact that we are fallen later, but be upbeat right now. They are in love!

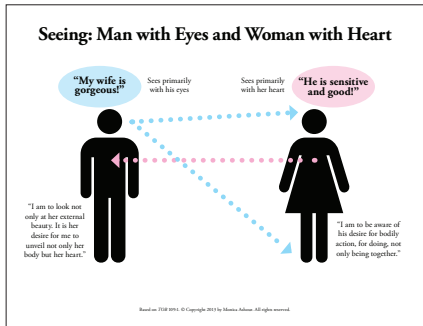
Sample Story

Clare saw him drive up...She had to take a deep breath; he was so handsome! She had known Randy in college when they were good friends, but they'd parted ways after graduation. They decided to rekindle their friendship, meeting half way between the two towns where they each lived. Randy was captivated by Clare's beauty and she was more than worth the drive. But their relationship didn't stop with that captivation. They've been married for years and say they love each other more and more every day!

Presentation

- ➔ 1. Show ***OUTLINE OF STRUCTURE**
We will cover the 4 F's of Free, full, faithful, and fruitful throughout the day, but first...
- ➔ 2. Show **IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS...**
ah, the Wonder of Marriage!
Isn't it awesome to fall in love?!
- 🧠 3. Share **A STORY OF WHEN YOU KNEW YOU WERE IN LOVE**
4. *Mutual Fascination is a key principle for Saint John Paul regarding marriage. He speaks of the wonder of attraction. Far from the Church being down on erotic love—we like it! Attraction is GOOD and necessary, but we know it is not enough on its own.*
5. *Have you ever thought about the words, "I'm in love"? It shows love is **bigger** than you—like a pond where you are in the water, soaked in love! It's bigger than you both!*

Page 4



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Page 5

What is Love?	
What Real Love Is	Superficial Understanding of Love
Free Gifts	Entitlement
Sacrifice	Fun times only
Decision	Feeling
Journey	Easy-weather friend
Totally in	When it feels good
Forgiveness	Expecting perfection

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Being “in love” is awesome.
- ✓ True love is deeper than “being in love.”
- ✓ Real love is a decision of the will.

Note: Being “in love” is good—it is what first draws us. Help them distinguish the good feeling of being “in love” from the decision “to love.”

Presentation

1. Show **WHAT IS LOVE?** and let them silently read the chart
2. Relate this to Pope Francis’ comments of our “throw-away culture” (where we use and discard things) —and how this attitude is applied even to people and relationships.
3. Note last row—Forgiveness vs. Expecting Perfection. *It was not an accident that our Lord gives the command to forgive 70 times 7 times, your spouse (and you!) being the ones most in need of forgiving and being forgiven...over and over.*
4. Share **A STORY OF IDEALIZED LOVE VS REAL LOVE**

Sample Story

Ladies, your fiancée is your Knight-in-Shining-Armor in a sense. Go ahead, give him a kiss! (Pause) But, Disney and Hollywood do not depict the hardships, the frustrations, the conflict, and the need for forgiveness that true love can withstand. True love is a team sport, with both giving their all, even when it doesn’t feel good. We can follow the instruction of Disney’s Jasmine: “Follow your heart!” if we understand that the truth of following our hearts is not the **feeling** of love but the **decision** to love, through thick and thin.