

FOCCUS

FACILITATING OPEN COUPLE COMMUNICATION, UNDERSTANDING AND STUDY

FOCCUS is a self-diagnostic inventory designed to help couples learn more about themselves and their unique relationship. It is not a test nor meant as a predictor of success or failure in marriage. It is a tool to help couples name and work through issues before marriage.

FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study) provides individualized couple feedback on where each partner stands in regard to topic areas important to marriage. The results of the inventory point to issues that may need to be addressed.

FOCCUS is designed to be used at three levels. The first level occurs when the individuals read and respond to the **FOCCUS** statements and when the couple subsequently discusses what they think and feel about the topics. This first level discussion is done before they receive the report of results. Preliminary thinking and sorting occurs during this time. Couples need a minimum of several days for this kind of personal discussion before they work with the report of their **FOCCUS** results. Time spent at this first level prepares the couple for the more problematic areas to be discussed at the second level; it often cuts down the processing time needed later with the facilitator.

The second level of use for **FOCCUS** occurs with the help of a facilitator. Using the couple report, the facilitator works with the couple to look at patterns in their responses, discuss issues and problem solve.

The third level of **FOCCUS** use involves referrals of two kinds. The first kind of referral is not needed by every couple and is specialized assistance. The second referral is to educational or skills training programs which build on the awareness couples have after completing the first two levels of **FOCCUS** use. These educational and training programs are recommended for all.

The **FOCCUS** content covers the range of elements necessary for a successful marriage. Additional content for special needs is included for dual career, interfaith and cohabiting couples.

FOCCUS reflects the values and ideals of marriage as sacred. It is user-friendly for both engaged couples and for those helping to prepare them for marriage.

It is required that all engaged couples complete the **FOCCUS** process, preferably prior to attending Engaged Encounter. Please contact the marriage ministry or family life office at your parish to begin the process.