

SARATOGA  
FEDERATED  
CHURCH

WELCOME EVERYONE!



# MARRIAGE INTENSIVE WORKSHOP

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*What has surprised you the most about the challenges of married life?*

“When we first got married, I thought I was good at communicating, but no one prepared me for how different it was to communicate with a wife.”

“How little stuff can become big stuff so quickly.”

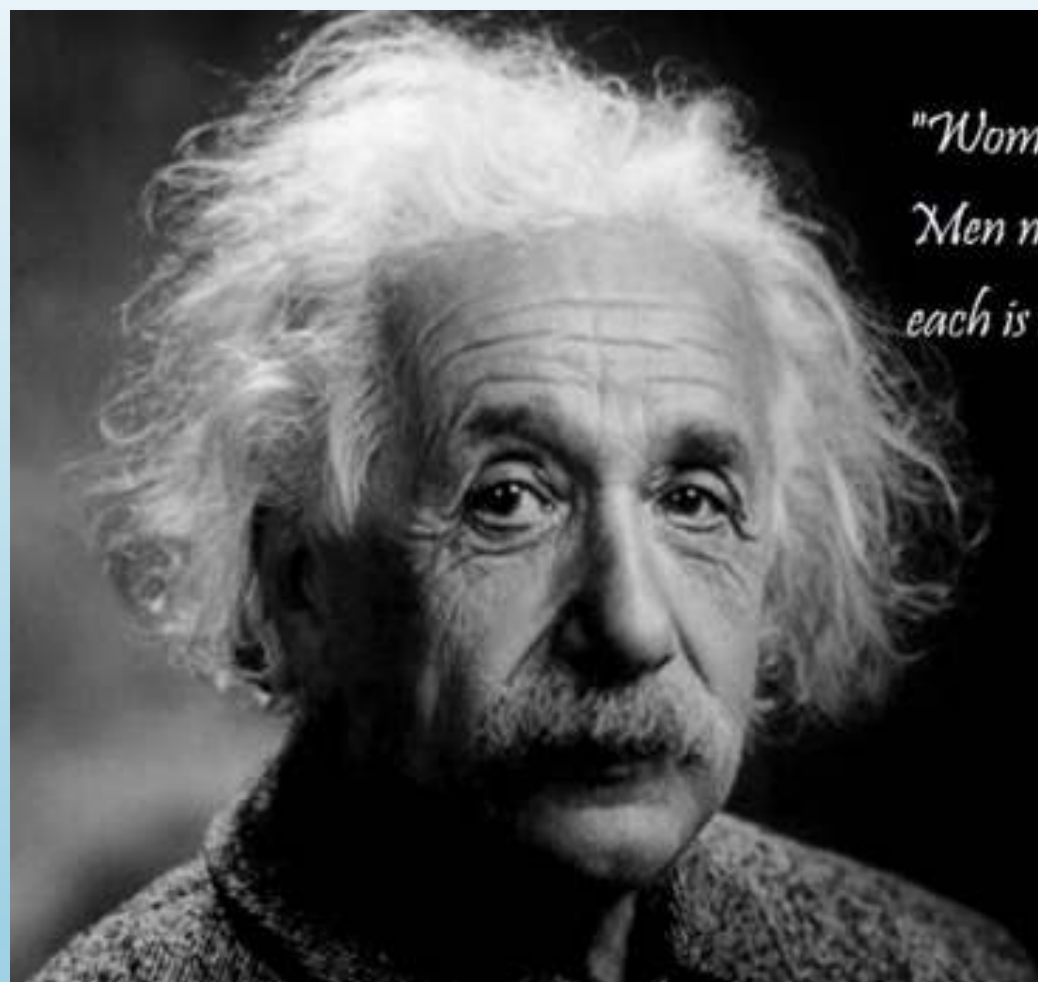
“How much the daily grind chips away at romance.”

“Marriage has revealed to me how selfish I am and how deeply my actions, or lack thereof, can affect my husband.”

# John Gottman Study

- 69% of problems are perpetual
- Only 31% are solvable

Goal: Be able to talk about the problem without damaging relationship



*"Women marry men hoping they will change.  
Men marry women hoping they will not. So  
each is inevitably disappointed."*

*Albert Einstein*

# THE HUMAN BRAIN IN CONFLICT

Equipped with a fear response that urges us to fight, flee or freeze

As children, we developed “protectors” to cope with our fear of rejection, harm or loss

When our mate triggers our fear responses, our protectors jump in to ensure our safety

It is nearly impossible to resolve problems or be empathic when you get triggered by your mate or “hijacked” by your emotional brain

# Benefits of Identifying Childhood Feelings and Protectors:

- **Clarity** about the origins of your way of relating.
- Develop **compassion for yourself**.
- **Acknowledge** your hurt and seek forgiveness for your behavior.
- **Empowered** to make new choices in the future.
- **Compassion for your mate**



# FIRST STEP – TAKE AN INSIDE LOOK

“The purposes of a person’s heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out.”

*Proverbs 20:5*

# Becoming Self-Aware

1. Identify your protectors



The way  
I'm  
reacting

What I'm  
feeling

What I'm  
believing

My  
protector  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Reaction:**  
**Disapproval**

**Feeling:**  
**Fear**

**Belief:**  
**This needs  
to be done  
perfectly**

**My  
protector:**  
**Critical**

# PROTECTORS

Avoider

Pleaser

Controller

Passivity

Analyst

Judge

Joker

Planner

Anxiety

Perfectionist

Accuser

Caretaker

Victim

Anger

Skeptic

Striver

# Becoming Self-Aware & Compassionate:

1. Identify your protectors
2. Offer yourself compassion
3. Offer compassion to your mate

# Individual Exercise:

## Exploring My Protectors

# Couple Time



# Open-Hearted Communication: The Couples Dialogue

# Couple Time: Open-Hearted Communication

## Our Marriage Vision

We speak kindly to one another.

We are affectionate.

We laugh together

We enjoy sex.

We make collaborative decisions.

We take time to notice our protectors during or after a conflict.

We stay in daily contact if one of us is away.

We nurture our spiritual lives.

We respect each other's extended families.

# Couple Time: Our Marriage Vision

“I receive you as God’s gift to me and  
as a change agent in my life for the  
rest of my life.”

Foreword by  
Milan and Kay Yerkovich  
authors of *How We Love*

# making love last

divorce-proofing your young marriage



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