2000

Case Study of a Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for the Problem of Marital Division of Labor

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Department of Psychology

A CASE STUDY OF A COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION
FOR THE PROBLEM OF
MARITAL DIVISION OF LABOR

by Lily Woo Bollinger

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Psychology

June, 2000

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This is to certify that the thesis presented to us by Lily Woo Bollinger on the 25th day of June, 2000, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology, has been examined and is acceptable in both scholarship and literary quality.

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Abstract

This clinical dissertation concerns an evaluation of a Cognitive-Behavioral Marital Therapy intervention designed to help resolve the issue of division of household labor and thereby increase marital satisfaction.

There were six ninety-minute group marital sessions. There were 3 couples in the group. The sessions contained interventions to increase communication skills, problem-solving skills and raise empathy for the spouse who did more chores.

The case study couple’s score indicated that the husband had a higher level of marital satisfaction. The wife’s final score indicated a small increase in marital satisfaction. Both had an increased score in being more self-centered.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, the author especially wishes to gratefully express appreciation to her husband, Michael, for all his unfailing emotional support and undertaking the many tasks that made the writing of this dissertation possible. This author deeply thanks Dr. Robert DiTomasso for his guidance, wisdom, and comments made with gentleness and tact from the beginning and throughout the entire dissertation. Additional appreciation is expressed to Dr. Katherine Miller and Dr. Barton Singer for their comments and critical reading of the manuscript in the various stages.

I would like to thank all the couples who volunteered to participate in my project. I am indebted to Ann Piccioni for her careful videotaping of the sessions and to Paula Speicker for her help in preparing for the oral defense. I also wish to express appreciation to Diane Hattrick for her help in the editing of the dissertation.

It would be very remiss of me not say a special thank you to my Internship Supervisor, Dr. Bruce Banford, who volunteered to read the dissertation in stages and offered valuable input, and who provided ongoing support and encouragement throughout the process.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It has been estimated that as many as 50% of marriages end in divorce (Rosenzweig & Daily, 1989). One issue known to cause marital conflict is the division of household labor. Division of household labor is defined as who is responsible for specific chores in maintaining the cleanliness inside the home. The importance of this construct is evidenced by its inclusion in well-known measures of marital functioning. These instruments Fisher and include the Dominance/Accommodation Scale (Hoskins, 1986), the Dual Employed Coping Scales (McCubbin & Thompson, 1991), the Dual-Career Family Scale (Pendleton & Paloma, 1980), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), the Equity/Inequity Scale (Traupman, Petersen, Ultnæ, & Hatfield, 1981), and the Life Distress Inventory (Thomas & Yoshioka, 1993). The inclusion of the division of household labor in all these inventories appears to indicate that this is a very important issue for couples in distress and is an important issue in marital therapy.

Marital therapy is a process aimed at helping distressed couples by providing conjoint psychotherapy which addresses relationship concerns. Jacobson, Waldron, and Moore (1980) characterized distressed couples as having
significant problems in communication, repeated negative interactions (criticism, arguing, and fighting), and the inability to resolve problems.

Marital conflict around the division of household labor has been selected for this case study. The Cognitive Behavioral manual for the Division of Household Labor (MDHL) was created to help resolve this particular problem in a couples group therapy setting. The husband and wife selected for the case study have argued numerous times in their 26 years of marriage about the division of household labor. They were committed to finding a resolution to end this problem and to improve the quality of their marriage.

PRESENTING PROBLEM

This study was advertised for couples interested in participating in the evaluation of a group therapy intervention designed to help equalize the division of household labor in their marriages. There were three couples in the initial group. The couples shared issue of unequal division of household labor was a common problem.

The husband of the first couple was 63 and the wife was 80 years old. This was their second marriage for both and they had been married 18 months. He was divorced and she was a widow. He was currently working. She was a retiree. The second husband and wife were both divorced prior to their 12
year marriage to each other. She worked and he was retired. The third couple was selected for the case study for a number of reasons. The primary reason was that they were in their first marriage of 26 ½ years.

Since they did not have a divorce in their history, carry over of emotional pain or baggage from a previous marriage to their current relationship was not probable. It was also expected that after 26 years of marriage, this couple had some experience and skills in working out conflicts. The case study marital partners were also selected based on their responses during the initial interview. They reported that they were highly motivated to resolve their problems, valued their relationship, and would follow through with homework assignments that were part of the protocol. They also reported they had never considered divorce as an option. Finally, both were working, which added to the conflict about how household chores were distributed between them. In order to evaluate whether the treatment protocol was effective, it was followed as written with the three couples in the marital group therapy.

The case marital partners had their initial interview for group selection on May 11, 1999. They presented two interwoven problems. The first problem was communication issues. The husband reported difficulty in verbalizing his
feelings. The second involved the communication of who took what responsibility for what in the division of household labor. They reported this issue was a source of verbal disagreement and marital distress.

The case study couple's DSM-IV diagnosis is as follows:

Axis I: 309.9 (Adjustment Disorder, unspecified)
Axis II: V71.09 (no diagnosis)
Axis III: None
Axis IV: Problems related to social environment
          (their marital issue of division of household labor)
Axis V: 85 (good functioning in all areas)

DEMOGRAPHICS

In summary, the couple selected for the study is a middle aged, middle class, white couple married for over 26 years. This is a first-time marriage for both individuals. The husband was 46 years-old and the wife was 45 years-old. The husband had a bachelor's degree and was an accountant. The wife had an associate's degree and was employed with a major corporation ensuring government regulations are met within the company. They had two daughters, a 22 year-old and a 17 year-old. The daughters are graduated from college and high school respectively. The younger daughter was
planning to start college the following fall. Both daughters were living at home during the summer.

The case study couple reported communication difficulties and specific problems surrounding the division of household labor. They currently discussed their disagreements repeatedly, but with no sign of resolution. They also reported that there were no incidents of violence during their disagreements. They were committed to their relationship and motivated to resolve their problems. Both reported no anticipated life changes at the time of the group therapy sessions. Both rated their motivation level for the study as a ten (rating was one to ten with ten being the highest level of motivation.)

Their medical histories indicated good health. The husband wore glasses. He had oral surgery in 1996 and after that time, no other surgery. He was taking no prescribed medication. The wife had allergies and was taking prescribed medication for symptom relief. She did not take any other prescribed medications. She had no history of any surgery. Neither of them smoked or drank.

**HISTORY OF DISORDER**

Their psychiatric history was unremarkable. The wife had past counseling for only two sessions regarding an issue
with one of her daughters. The issue was resolved. Neither had ever been a patient in a psychiatric unit.

In 26 years of marriage, these partners reported they had never contemplated divorce as an option. They presented as a single unit. Whatever one spouse wanted to do, the other spouse agreed to. The wife had originally wanted to participate in the group therapy. She volunteered for both of them before she even asked her husband. He later agreed to do so and said that usually whatever one wanted to do was agreeable to the other. Whatever one spouse answered in response to a posed question, the other spouse typically echoed. Observation of the nonverbal behavior revealed that before either spouse answered any questions they routinely looked at the other spouse. This pattern may have possibly indicated reluctance to offend or anger the other spouse by what was said. Their overall congruence in responses might also indicate that their relationship may have components of symbiotically-enmeshment. Bader and Pearson, (1988, p.145), define the "symbiotically-enmeshed couple." (as developmentally at the initial stage of a relationship when both people are very invested in becoming a single unit.) This investment may be so strong that neither is willing to disagree with the other to the extent that they will do anything for the relationship. This type of relationship is
distinguished by high levels of passivity and accommodation in relating to each other, discouraging the verbalization of feelings that may differ from the feelings of the other spouse. In this study both spouses reported that the issue of division of household labor and communication were small marital problems. Nonetheless, they exhibited high levels of motivation to solve the problems.

COMPILATION, DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT DATA

This case study was an AB experimental design format (Campbell & Stanley, 1963.) The three couples were administered the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), and the Dominance/Accommodation Scale (D/AS) instruments and a Household of Division Labor Conflict Survey prior to the intervention. These were re-administered at the conclusion of the group therapy.

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE (DAS) (See Appendix C)

The scores for the DAS were divided into four subscales.

The DyCon (dyadic consensus) subscale assessed how much the partners agreed in the following areas: family finances, recreational activities, religious issues, friends, sexual relations, appropriate behaviors, life philosophy, how to handle in-laws, what they believe is important, quantity of time spent together, critical decision making, division of
household labor, amusement, entertainments and decisions about career ambitions.

The DySat (dyadic satisfaction) subscale included questions about the following: how frequently the couple considered divorce, exited the house after a fight, how they rated the quality of their relationship, whether they self-disclose to one another, are sorry they married, how much they argued, annoyed each other, and how they rated the level of happiness in their marriage.

In the DyCoh (Dyadic cohesion) category, the partners were asked how frequently they kissed, pursued outside activities together, dialogued about arousing ideas, laughed together, were able to talk calmly with one another, and shared activities together. They also rated the level of marital happiness.

In the DyAff (dyadic affection) the partners' responses to questions in the subscale concerned the areas of affectionate expressions between them, whether they agreed on the amount of sexual activity between them, etc., considered the other spouse to be too tired to have sex, and whether the spouse showed love.

**DOMINANCE/ACCOMMODATION SCALE (D/A)** (See Appendix D)

The two D/AS subscales measured two factors:
Factor 1 measures how much more rigid, more self-centered, and less aware of the other’s needs a given spouse is. Factor 2 measures how accommodating, flexible, and thinking a given spouse is regarding the couple’s needs as opposed to his or her individual needs.

THE HOUSEHOLD DIVISION OF LABOR CONFLICT SURVEY (HDLCS)

See Appendix E

The HDLCS examined two concerns. The first area examined whether a spouse’s gender role expectations changed as a result of this intervention. These second area considered whether there was more sexual activity after this intervention, compared to pre-intervention activity.

See Table 1 for the marital partners pre-intervention scores.

The couple was having sex twice a month.

The hospital where this study was being conducted threatened to close the Outpatient Psychological Program after the study began. As a result it was necessary to provide treatment in massed fashion. Because the group therapy was expedited and lasted 3 weeks instead of 6 weeks, the husband and wife were called after a week had passed (this allowed enough time for the New Contract to be fulfilled), 3 weeks later, and then 5 weeks later. They were questioned by telephone on issues related specifically to
marital satisfaction and the amount of their sexual activity.

**CLINICAL SUMMARY**

This was the first marriage for the husband and wife. They had been married 26 1/2 years. They were both medically healthy and did not use drugs, alcohol or cigarettes. Both were very active participants in their church and involved with their children. It was clear that they were committed to their marriage and wanted to enhance its quality. They were in mild distress due to some difficulties in problem-solving and communication. The issue surrounding the division of household labor created a clear problem in an otherwise happy marriage. Prior to the intervention, both rated themselves as extremely happy with their marriage and had indicated that they had never considered divorce. This level of happiness is unusual. Because the partners were already happily married, there was a limit how much more satisfaction they could ultimately engineer. Due to a possible ceiling effect (Campbell & Stanley, 1979), their satisfaction level was limited in how much it might be increased. Both also rated their motivation level as a 10 (10 being the highest level) prior to participating in the group therapy. The partners also appeared to have components
of being symbiotically-enmeshed. Disagreeing with one another was very threatening for both of them.

FORMULATION AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PROBLEM

The marital partners studied lived a healthy life style and reported being very committed to their marriage. They had a high motivation for preserving the relationship and improving its quality. They both expressed anxiety when not agreeing with the other spouse. This anxiety could conceivably cause a problem if they internally disagreed with one other but outwardly agreed. It might lead to hidden resentments. The prompting of a little more separation and individuation might be beneficial.

This couple exhibited a number of unrealistic beliefs (beliefs that had no reality base). Both husband and wife believed being angry is dangerous. The husband believed that if he allowed himself to be angry, he would lose control and become violent. There had been no history of this ever happening. They believed that disagreement in front of the two daughters meant there was a possibility of divorce. Divorce is clearly not an option for either spouse. The wife tried very hard to read her husband’s mind and was frustrated she was unsuccessful. She believed that since he would not verbalize what he wanted, she should be able to read his mind. The husband’s reluctance to verbalize his
preferences was based on trying to keep his wife happy. He believed that if he were to disagree, she would become angry and leave him. They had been married 26 years and when she had been angry with him, it has lasted ten minutes and she never left him.

They both believed that if you give your word (in this case agreeing to be in the group therapy) you should follow through. Not unexpectedly, they attended and participated in all the sessions. This degree of commitment to follow through in what had been agreed upon is a strength. Since they were able to come to agreement on the changes they wanted to make in their marriage, they were likely to commit themselves to the process.

The husband and wife presented communication issues, one of which was the division of household labor. Learning to communicate more openly was an important item on their agenda. They clearly wanted to learn to discuss this issue with better resolution.

In summary, the formulation revealed a happily married couple experiencing mild distress related to the division of household labor. These partners exhibited a pattern of avoiding conflict and acquiescing to each others' request. They both verbalized communication issues around the fact that the husband was reluctant to articulate his needs and
desires. The wife, on the other hand found trying to guess what he wanted to be a fruitless experience. They were highly motivated to enhance the quality of their marital relationship, improve communication, and resolve the issue of division of household labor.

GOALS FOR THE THERAPY

The goals for therapy in this instance were aimed at increasing satisfaction with the division of household labor and communication.

The following goals were agreed upon by this couple:

1) to improve communication about their individual needs;
2) to increase empathy for each other regarding division of household labor;
3) to improve their ability to problem solve issues related to division of household labor.

By achieving these three goals, marital power might become more equalized, gender-role expectation more flexible, and the division of household labor more equalized. As a result, marital satisfaction will increase.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR MANUAL FOR THE DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR (CBMDHL)

Goals for the presented sessions were written in the protocol manual CBMDHL (See Appendix A): In this section the
goals for each session of the group treatment are reviewed. Each group therapy session had specific goals. They are as follows:

SESSION ONE (5/25/99)

Goals for this session were to introduce the group members to each other and to help them develop rapport and feelings of connectedness with one another. The second goal was to determine which specific household tasks caused conflicts (problem definition).

SESSION TWO (6/1/99)

Goals and tasks for this session involved introducing the concept of completing homework assignments. The homework assigned in Session One was designed to increase empathy for the spouse who did more tasks. This assignment also required the couples to fill out a Time Journal form. The second goal was to help the couple learn about what their schemas (belief systems) were and how they were derived. The cognitive interventions used in this session taught the couples to begin to increase their problem-solving skills. Some of these problem-solving skills included teaching them to make Pro and Con lists, creating Options and Alternative Lists, and Decastrophizing (prepare for the worst).

SESSION 3 (6/6/99)
The main goal of this session was to get the couples to agree to a role reversal. The spouse who did not usually do as much household labor was to complete an agreed upon task. The goal was to increase both empathy and appreciation for the spouse who usually did these tasks.

SESSION 4 (6/8/99)

The goal for this session was to enhance communication skills. The group exercises were designed to teach the participants better ways to verbalize requests.

SESSION 5 (6/13/99)

This session’s goal was to have the couple fill out a new contract for the division of household labor. This contract committed the spouse who usually did fewer tasks to do at least one additional one.

SESSION 6 (6/15/99)

The new contract was evaluated in this session to see if there was appropriate follow through. Because this was the last session, the group was asked for feedback about the group experience and assessment instruments were administered again to see if there were any changes in the scores.

INTERVENTIONS:

The cognitive model of therapy posits that thoughts, feelings, and behavior are interdependent. Cognition is
considered critical in the model and can impact on the quality of a couple's marital satisfaction. In order to enhance marital quality, it is important to use interventions that will change and address the unrealistic thoughts, beliefs, and assumptions of a couple as well as the interaction (behavior) and emotional responses. Partners of their relationship may hold irrational beliefs about a variety of aspects including how household labor is divided. These beliefs may fuel behavior change and feelings that create mental distortion (Freeman & Oster, 1998).

Baucom and Epstein (1990) reported that an inability to communicate is a common complaint among couples. Behavior Marital Therapy (BMT) is a treatment designed to teach communication skills to couples in distressed relationships. BMT approaches the communication problem with regard to a number of factors, including the amount of information exchanged, how detailed and explicit the communication process is and whether it increases or decreases marital conflict. The protocol is specifically designed to enhance communication.

Quinn and Carter (1988) increased self-esteem through assertiveness training by teaching clients interpersonal relationship skills, such as encouraging directness in
communicating one's needs. Teaching assertiveness along with communication skills is implemented in this current manual.

Follette and Jacobson (1990) combined communication and problem solving for both the husband and wife under the assumption that communication training leads to effective problem solving. Problem solving is necessary to learn in order for partners to accomplish explicit agreements about their relationship issues. When marriages are healthy, partners discover skills which enable them to communicate and solve their conflicts (Napier, 1988).

Teaching partners how to solve problems is an important part of the protocol. Teaching partners to solve problems entails helping them change their perspectives by identifying the mistaken beliefs which are causing them much pain and conflict. The current treatment manual includes a task that will help couples identify distorted beliefs related to the division of household chores by understanding the origin of those beliefs. The task also helps couples examine whether or not the beliefs are still valid. Once distorted beliefs or thinking related to the division of household labor have been identified, the protocol focuses on readjusting these beliefs.

The interventions of Freeman and Oster (1998) correct distorted beliefs and thinking. For example, couples are
asked to examine the advantages and disadvantages of continuing this pattern of division of household labor. A critical issue concerns whether the problems related to division of household labor are fueled by the pattern of behavior. Couples are also asked to examine the evidence for unrealistic beliefs. The spouse who does not undertake many household chores may have no concept about how long it really takes to perform a household task. Education about the actual time it takes to complete such tasks may increase a sense of empathy and a willingness to assist with the household chores. One way to accomplish this is to have the spouse examine the evidence for his or her belief about how long a chore takes. This data can be used to restructure his or her thinking about the fairness of the division of household labor. Motivating a couple to more equally divide household tasks may offer the benefit of more time for mutual enjoyment.

In the Cognitive Behavior Manual for Division of Household Labor, couples are also asked to examine the pros and cons of who performs specific chores and of changing chore assignments. After evaluating the pros and cons, there may or may not be more reasons to divide the household labor more equally. Considering options and alternatives to the present distribution of chores is also encouraged.
Couples are also encouraged to decastrophize beliefs which undermine change. This method serves as a way to lessen the apprehension that the worst will happen. Preparation to handle potential explosive reactions can be achieved by asking, "What is the worst that could happen if Spouse 2 did some of the chores that he or she doesn't do now?" The couples can be asked to generate their negative fantasies about what might happen, the probability of the worst fantasy occurring, and how things would be different if it did occur. Finally, partners are asked to fantasize about what might happen if they shared chores.

In summary, the above described cognitive interventions are designed to restructure unrealistic beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions contributory to distress.

At the same time, couples need to change the behavior that causes conflict or distress in the relationship. BMT has the core asserts that the behavior between spouses is formed, strengthened, weakened, and changed by environmental events that involve the other spouse. How spouses act towards one another determines whether the interaction is either satisfying or distressing. The reaction a spouse receives from performing a particular behavior will either increase or decrease that behavior (Holtzworth-Munroe & Jacobson, 1991). Regarding marital conflicts related to the
divison household labor, both spouses would need to evaluate their conflict contributory behaviors and develop alternative, empathic, and task-oriented behaviors in order to decrease marital distress. The partners need to enhance communication skills and problem solving skill.

Increased empathy for the spouse who does more chores is also important. One way to increase empathy is through role reversal (Baucom & Epstein, 1990). Having each of the spouses assume the role of the other helps sensitize them to the viewpoint of the other.

RATIONALE FOR THE INTERVENTIONS

All of the interventions suggested in the Cognitive Behavioral Manual for the Division of Household Labor are aimed at increasing marital satisfaction. Each intervention is grounded in and derived from cognitive behavioral marital therapy.

This protocol contains interventions specifically modified and created for a couples group. The advantages of using a group therapy model are as follows:

1) Each member Participating in a group creates a sense of hopefulness.

2) Hearing other group members discuss similar feelings helps one feel that one’s problems are not so unusual.
3) Group members can help each other develop more socialization skills.

4) Becoming part of a group provides members with feelings of connectedness.

5) Groups provide members with a place to vent feelings (Yalom, 1975).


Secondly, assigning homework is an intervention used in cognitive and behavioral marital therapy, helps promote progress between sessions. Whatever was prescribed in the session can be reinforced through the homework assignments. The homework assignment may help by increasing empathy for the spouse who does more housework (such as in role reversal). Homework is an integral part of treatment. Burns and Auerbach (1992), Edelman and Chambliss (1995), Leung and Heimber (1996), and Startup and Edmond (1994), have indicated that compliance with homework assignments promotes treatment success.
Cognitive behavioral approaches to marital therapy comprise several fundamental characteristics. First, goal relationships improve when both spouses are able to verbalizes their individual needs, and specifically what is needed from their spouse (emotional, physical, task-wise, etc.) This ability to express what each one needs helps both spouses to understand the other spouse’s needs. They can also learn to agree on a way to meet each others’ desires or request. Second, it is assumed that the best way to get the other spouse to change behavior is by changing their own behavior first. Third, the best way to contain undesirable behavior is to replace it with a more mutually beneficial one. Finally, the goal is to use the least irritating methods with the highest potential of getting the desired results (Stuart, 1998).

Teaching cognitive and behavioral interventions (such as teaching how to do a pro and con list, options and alternatives, decatastrophizing, role reversal, and enhancing communication skills and problem solving skills) will help balance the distribution of marital power and cognitively restructure thinking about gender-role expectation. As a result, these interventions may help to equalize the division of household labor.

Currently, there are no research studies on changing gender-role expectations.

LEGAL OR ETHICAL ISSUES ENCOUNTERED IN SESSIONS

The only ethical issue with this case study is that of confidentiality. All references to the participants are by initials only (H was for husband and W was for wife.) The psychologist input is under P. All the raw data and any information collected about the couple is kept in a locked cabinet with the investigator possessing the only key.
One of the participants was adamant about not being videotaped. She finally consented when she was assured that the person who was hired to videotape was sensitive and committed to confidentiality. The investigator also told her that this person would be the only one to view the tapes and would be the only one to type the data from them.

**ISSUES INVOLVING CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

All the couples in this study were middle class Caucasians. It should be mentioned that the psychologist conducting the doctoral project is Chinese American and this may have possibly influenced some of the group members' expectations.

**ANNOTATED DATA**

This intervention was presented in a group therapy format. Three couples in the study met for six sessions participating in the interventions written in The Cognitive Behavioral Manual for Division of Household Labor (this will be referred to as the protocol.) There were two sessions per week, 90 minutes in length.

In reviewing the videotapes of the sessions, it was clear by observing their body language that the participants studied listened carefully to all that was said. They followed through with the homework assignments and returned all the required forms.
Chapter 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

When a couple cannot resolve a marital conflict about a specific issue, there is a frequent pattern of demand and withdraw interactions. In other words, the first spouse tries to get the second spouse to discuss the issue and the second spouse withdraws (Kluver, Heesink & Van De Vliert, 1997). This behavior increases the partners’ anger towards each other and does not lead to any mutual agreement.

Marital therapy is a process aimed at helping distressed couples by providing conjoint psychotherapy that addresses relationship concerns. Jacobson, Waldron, and Moore (1980) conducted a study with 14 couples concerning reactivity to behaviors that were either appealing or disturbing. This process helped develop their theoretical framework for what characterized distressed couples. First, the behavioral interchange rate was low. These husbands and wives had little interaction with each other and lived parallel lives, even though they lived in the same house. This situation resulted in both spouses feeling isolated and depressed. These marital partners concluded that marriage was lonely and ostracizing.
Second, confrontational behavior was at an elevated rate. The distressed relationship was characterized by the partners' frequent arguments and quarrels about each other's behaviors. This pattern often resulted in feelings of mutual hurt and increased distrust. The couples believed that nothing could be negotiated and that whoever fought the hardest, won.

Third, these spouses exchanged many negative behaviors. They may try to one up the other, or pay back the other person for behaving in a hurtful way. The result was a vicious cycle, whereby painful behaviors is repeated to the other person. For example, no matter what one spouse did, the other may find fault with the way the household chore was done. Both partners were defensive and angry and neither wanted to change their behavior because each wanted to win. Also changing the defensive behavior to a less negative stance might make one more vulnerable.

Fourth, these couples shared minimal leisure time activities. They complained that they had different interests and did many recreational activities without their spouses. If asked when the last time was that they participated in an activity together, they would have difficulty answering. Failure to share leisure activities, have fun, and laugh together often resulted in resentment.
The partners might wonder why they ever married. With few good memories, it became harder for them to communicate in a kinder fashion or negotiate compromises.

Finally, these couples lacked skills in communication and problem solving and typically argued repetitively about the same issues with no satisfactory resolution. These couples had difficulty compromising on issues on which they differed and had difficulty both listening and verbalizing needs or requests. Their communication often ended either in arguments or when one partner did not respond to the other's conversation. Both felt unimportant to the other and neither felt valued. Both had a lack of hope in finding solutions to what they thought were unresolvable issues. Their desire to stay together was lowered.

Johnson and O'Leary (1996) studied 82 husbands and wives who were asked to fill out daily checklists of their spouse's behavior using either a standardized assessment method or individualized assessment. Their responses indicated that individualized measures of marital satisfaction were useful in differentiating between couples who were not distressed couples who were distressed. The spouses daily behaviors impacted on the level of marital satisfaction. When the daily behaviors were positive, marital satisfaction was high and when they were negative,
marital satisfaction was low. One problem with this study is that the ethnicity, ages, socioeconomic status, length of time of marriage and number of marriage were not mentioned or specified.

In summation, distressed partners' problems are characterized by their inability to come to a mutually satisfactory resolution about their concerns. The case study couple in the current study lacked skills in communication and problem-solving. They have usually argued or discussed the same issues repeatedly without any mutually satisfactory resolution. They needed the intervention of an objective professional person. This is often one of the main reasons a couple comes into a psychologist's office (Baucom & Epstein, 1990). In marital therapy, the psychologist teaches the couple how to communicate, negotiate, reframe the interpretation of their spouse's behavior, and change their own behaviors. If both parties are reasonably invested in maintaining the marriage, then both parties are more receptive to therapeutic interventions. In order for marital therapy to be successful, both parties must be willing to change some of their own behavior and ultimately compromise. In some cases, marital therapy sessions may result in the couple deciding that divorce is their only option.
This case study suggests that marital satisfaction is a combination of marital power, gender-role expectation and division of household labor (MS=MP+GRE+DHL.) The Cognitive Behavioral Manual for Division of Household Labor was designed as an intervention to help equalize the division of household labor. By changing this important component of the relationship it was assumed that the marital power and gender-role expectation will also change. In other words, changing the division of household labor should also influence the other two ingredients: how marital power is shared and what the expectant gender-role expectations are.

The following literature review will examine each of these three factors marital satisfaction: marital power, gender-role expectation, and the division of household labor. By demonstrating how these three components are interwoven, it will become clearer how changing one of the components changes the other components and ultimately effects the level of marital satisfaction.

**MARITAL POWER**

Power is defined as the capability to execute authority and influence (Davis, 1973). In marital power, the spouse who has power is the one who can influence and execute authority. The spouse who cannot influence and execute power is the spouse not in power. If both spouses are not happy
with the division of marital power, marital stress and conflict often results.

Marital power is one factor that effects the division of household labor. The spouse with the greater marital power has the ability to persuade the other spouse to do more of the household chores (Crosby, 1989.) If the other spouse does not feel that the division of household labor is fair, marital satisfaction will be lower. The following studies imply that marital power affects marital satisfaction.

Marital satisfaction is found to be highest in egalitarian relationships (Whisman & Jacobson, 1990.) Mashal (1985) studied marital power (how partners shared cooperative leadership) and its correlation with marital satisfaction with 20 couples. There was a positive correlation between joint authority and mutual satisfaction. Greater shared power between parties appears to result in greater marital satisfaction. The issue of division of household labor (who decides who does what) may indicate who has the power and who does not have the power.

Bagarozzi (1990) investigated the effect of unequal power on marriages. When the power was unequal, there was a spouse with more power and a spouse with less power. The less empowered spouses in this study tended to develop
psychiatric symptoms. If the power was equally shared there was more of a tendency for neither spouse to have symptoms. In other words, where there is disproportionate power there is more potential to have serious problems.

The partner with more marital power has the ability to persuade the other. In some research, marital power is defined by the division of household labor. The spouse who does fewer chores has more power. Another indicator of marital power is how a conflict is resolved. For example, if the conflict about the division of household labor is resolved in favor of one spouse and not the other, the spouse who did not get what she or he wanted will see the conflict resolution positive. This spouse has power. The spouse who did not get what he or she wanted will perceive the outcome of the conflict as negative. That spouse will also perceive herself or himself self as having minimal or no power. The idea that the division of household labor may reflect inequity of power distribution in the relationship has been studied by Baxter, (1992), Bielby, (1993), Booth, (1994), Charles and Hopflinger, (1992), and Hossain and Roopnarine, (1993.) These researchers concluded the boundary was much clearer for men to do fewer household chores if they had paid work hours, while women were
expected to do the same amount of household chores regardless of their paid work hours.

Pyke (1994) defined the spouse with marital power as the person who made more decisions in the marriage, had more success in making changes, and was more able to talk about sensitive issues. This implies that the opposite is true for the spouse without marital power.

Madanes (1981), in her book *Strategic Family Therapy*, wrote about the issue of marital power. She too felt that power imbalance was detrimental to marital satisfaction. Madanes wrote that many symptoms (such as depression or physical symptoms) are metaphors for power imbalance. Madanes proposed that how power is shared or not shared between partners significantly affects the quality of the marriage. In her book, Madanes discussed her observations of her past marital cases, and how they indicated that the way a couple divided responsibilities and arranged hierarchies of those areas impacted on the marital satisfaction, negatively or positively. The more power was perceived as equal between partners, the fewer negative symptoms resulted.

In the last twenty years, there has been considerable research concerning the division of household labor and how the resulted unequal division of the chores has ended in
many marital conflicts (Baxter, 1992, Bielby, 1993, Greenstein, 1995, and Kluver, Heesink, & Van De Vliert, 1997). All these investigators have made the observation that couples fight about who does what chores and how many chores are done by which spouse. Not only was the actual division of the chores a catalyst for marital arguments, but the wives' perception of fairness was also a catalyst. A study that addressed the wives' perception of fairness in division of household labor was done by Blair (1992), Mederer (1993) and Perry-Jenkins and Fold (1994). In these studies, if the wives felt that the division of household labor was unfair, there was more marital discord. Data from the 1976 National Survey of Family Violence involving 2,143 married couples, demonstrated that satisfaction with the division of household chores was moderately related to both spouses' marital satisfaction (Suitor, 1991).

Wives were frustrated by the fact that even if they worked for pay outside the home, it did not increase participation from husbands in doing more household work. Komte (1989) writes that husbands of women who worked outside the home did not increase their household chore participation. The wives still did most of the household chores. These women were not contented and there was marital conflict when they tried to encourage their husbands to
participate in doing more chores. Their attempts, in general were unsuccessful because the husbands refused to change their positions. Again, this demonstrates that the ability to influence within the marriage is defined by who has the power.

Marital issues can result in one or both spouses becoming depressed. Ross, Mirowsky, and Huber (1983) explored marital issues around spouses' depression. These couples reported that husbands were upset when wives worked outside the home for pay against spousal preferences. The implication here is that husbands expected their wives not to work, if that was the husband's desire. Furthermore, wives' depressions were high when both worked and husbands did not participate in an equal amount of housework. Both causes of depression had to do with the unequal division of marital power. The way to handle behavioral issues is to discover ways to change the behavior so the other spouse is less depressed.

An interesting observation reported by Nye & Nye (1976) was that most American wives who had the financial ability to hire someone to do household chores would hire someone. This may imply that the wives did the chores they liked and the husband may have refused to do those other chores, so
someone was hired to do them. It may also imply that refusing to do those chores means you have more power.

Calasanti and Bailey (1991) hypothesized that division of household labor was allocated on the basis of who had more power. Simply put, the partner with more power will have fewer household chores.

I propose that the division of household labor may be a metaphor for how marital power is expressed in a couple's relationship. In synopsis, the way the division of household labor is represented is an indicator of who has power. The spouse in power is the one who has the ability to persuade the other spouse to do more of the household tasks. If the division of household labor is not divided equally enough for both husband and wife to perceive they each have equal power, the result will be marital conflict and distress. Table 5 summarizes the details of the studies previously cited.
GENDER-ROLE EXPECTATION AND THE DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR

In addition to marital power, gender-role expectation influences how the division of household labor is determined and ultimately impacts on marital satisfaction.

Shelton (1996) discussed a theoretical approach that examined how gender-role expectation was the basis of marital power conflict. For example, in the division of household labor, women are expected to be responsible for doing more household chores. Gender-based issues also indicated that the spouse who made more money (which was usually the man) had more power and would therefore do fewer household chores. Gender-role expectation included what each spouse felt was the responsibility of the woman or the man. For example, women were expected to clean house and men were expected to do yard work. Since cleaning house was a more regularly performed task, this resulting division of household labor had a negative impact on the level of marital satisfaction for women.

Pertaining to Shelton’s theoretical approach, there are symbolic meanings of housework related to gender role. It was culturally defined and accepted that women should be good mothers and wives. A wife’s responsibility was to do enough housework to comply with the expectation of the husband. The husband in return was allowed to critique what
she had done (Ferree, 1990). This implies that the husband had more marital power since he was able to not only divide the household responsibilities but also appraise how it was done.

The results of the National Survey of Families and Household in 1988 indicated the following: (a) women performed twice as much household labor as men and (b) men and women did different kinds of chores (Blair & Lichter, 1991; Dermo & Cook, 1993; Coltrane, 1992; Folk, 1994; Masako & Coltrane, 1992; Pittman & Blanchard, 1996; Presser, 1994; Sanchez, 1994; Sanchez, 1996; and Ward, 1993).

Sanchez (1996) suggested that the efforts men put into doing household chores were strong influences for both men’s and women’s perception of fairness. The National Survey of Children (with 1004 married couples) recorded that the vast majority of traditional female chores washing dinner dishes, cooking, cleaning house, were done by women. Only about 1/5 of the husbands were full participants in doing these chores (Starles, 1994).

Almeida, Maggs, and Galambos (1993) investigated the effects of salaried wives working outside the home and how their status as paid workers affected their proportional household labor. They sent out questionnaires to 104 dual earner families in February and August 1988 and February
1989. The results showed that wives who worked longer hours outside the home still performed a higher percentage of the chores than their husbands. Presland and Antill (1987) also conducted a survey with 104 married couples on different areas of marital concern. The division of household labor issue again revealed that women do more household chores than men, whether they had paid employment or not. Coltrane (1992) also suggested that wives who are paid workers do less housework and their husbands did not do more. Husbands in the past have said that wives have more time to do housework. The fact that a woman may be employed for money did not keep her from becoming primarily responsible for the children and tasks around the house (Noor, 1997).

Ball, Cowan, and Cowan (1995) examined gender-linked power differences in marital communication. They looked at which spouse could power problem solve because that spouse had the marital power. They interviewed 27 couples and found that women had power in bringing up the issues, while the men held more power in solving those issues. Their research highlighted the need to understand the spouse's perception of gender-linked power. This knowledge was used in designing the intervention manual of this present case study.

Bittman and Lovejoy's (1993) study of 65 heterosexual couples showed that men perceived that they did more chores
than they actually did, and their wives completed less chores than the husbands thought she did. Even after this estimation, it was clear in this study that men did 50% fewer household chores than their wives. There were a number of explanations for this percentage. Men in this study reported that their wives’ standards of cleanliness were much higher than theirs and that the husbands were much more tolerant of dirt and messes. This implied that their wives were irrational in their intolerance of dirt and mess and they were more demanding than the men in their standard of cleanliness. Other men claimed the reason they did less was that their wives loved straightening and cleaning.

Pina and Bengston (1993) suggested that the wife’s view of the husband’s assistance with the household chores was affected by her perception of other qualities of the marriage. This includes her view of marital power and gender-role expectation and the status of the employment of each. If the wife had a more egalitarian view of marriage, then she would not feel comfortable with an unequal division of marital power. Wives in the study felt they had less support and less help.

This arbitrary division of household labor due to gender-role expectation impacts negatively on the quality and in some cases success of the marriage. Jacobson (1986)
states that the methods spouses use to decide who has what role and the compromises that are reasonable and fair for both, determines the failure or success of a marriage. Therefore, an arbitrary role assignment in the division of household labor will impact negatively on the property and in some cases the success of a marriage.

Both spouses were more likely to be depressed when they completed more household chores because of original distortions of gender-role expectation (McHale and Crouter, 1992).

The literature review on gender-role expectation and division of household labor appears to indicate that women are culturally expected to do more household labor than men whether the women worked for money or not. The status of cleaning house was reported to be low because when there was money available, a house cleaner was hired. If the status of household labor is regarded as low and women do more of it, it implies they have less status and less marital power. The research also shows that egalitarian marriages with shared power had more marital satisfaction. Thus, this lack of equal division of household labor due to gender-role expectation might cause a lower level of marital satisfaction. See Table 6 for summary of studies correlating gender-role expectation and division of household labor.
In reviewing all the literature, it appears that marital power, gender role expectation, and division of household labor are interwoven and together all three appear to affect marital satisfaction. If one or more of the components is viewed as unequal, then the level of marital satisfaction may be lower than if the division was more equal. This case study will evaluate an intervention on the component concerning division of household labor. If this division is more equal, then it in turn might also affect marital power and gender-role expectation.
CHAPTER 3

ANNOTATED DATA FROM VIDEO TAPE

For purposes of clarification, the husband's statements are labeled as "H", the wife is "W", and the psychologist is "P" and any statements from another group member directed to either spouse are labeled "G." In addition, "S" and "K" are the names of H and W's daughters.

The highlights from what the case study couple dialogued in each session are presented. The interventions made by the investigator (psychologist) are written in parenthesis.

SESSION ONE

The first task for this session as described in the protocol of the Cognitive Behavior Manual for Division of Household Labor (CBMDHL) is to introduce the group members to each other and help them begin to develop rapport and connection with one another. The second task was to determine which chores cause conflicts between them.

The psychologist had already described to the couples the advantages of group therapy as written in the CBMDHL.

W: I'm ___. We have been married 27 years and um I think we have a good marriage, but, I'm always looking for ways to really improve the communication. Sometimes I think I tend
to hold things in because I don't want H to get defensive or whatever so I think this will be good and help our marriage.

P: Thank you (I want to reinforce participation so I follow the protocol and thank the participant. I am also concerned that H might be feeling defensive so I listen carefully to what he says next.)

H: I am married to W. Um, I've always had the problem with communicating properly so I am looking forward to seeing if this will help. (W is smiling at husband as he is saying this.)

P: Thank you for the courageous contribution. That was difficult to share and so I thank you. (Again, I want H to keep participating so I not only thank him but acknowledge he has taken a risk in self disclosure. This will encourage him to take more risks later in the session.)

P: Does anyone else share G's feelings of wanting to do other things besides the household chores? (I begin to help the group feel connected by asking if this is a common feeling about doing household chores; this couple responds by laughing.)

W: Every time I want to get up and do all that, and the bathrooms have to be clean, I would rather do other things.
P: Uh huh (nodding)
(later in the session)
P: Please look at this form called *Household Chores*. What I would like each of you to do is talk to each other about which chore you dislike the most. I have added blank spaces in case I may have missed some chores. Feel free to fill in the blank spaces. The most conflicted chore will be listed as number one and the least conflicted will be number five. (I am following protocol.)
(While the other two couples are asking for clarification, this couple has begun to talk among themselves and start writing. Periodically, they would laugh at something the other one said.)
P: You have to ask for what you want. Even if it seems obvious to you what needs to be done, it may not be for your spouse. (I say this to prepare the couple for enhancing their communication skills.)
(later in the session)
P: I thought we could take a few minutes, if you don't mind, for everyone to share what they wrote. You might find you share similar complaints to what others have written.
W: Well, we put for our most conflicted chore, scrubbing the floors, and it's because I have asked H to take that on as a weekly responsibility. If it gets done once a month we're probably lucky (H laughs at this and nods) and I still have to remind him to do that. That is probably the biggest problem chore, and we don't, we don't argue, it just builds up as resentment in me. All he knows, this is something that needs to be done. Because I've asked him to do this on a weekly basis and even then it doesn't get done. I know he works long hours and is involved in our church and everything.

P: (I have noticed her looking a little anxiously at H while saying this, and I don't want her to withdraw her request so I ask her to be more specific in verbalizing her fears behind the request.) Can I ask you what it is that you are thinking of when you have to ask him repeatedly?

W: What I am thinking, well I guess I am thinking that if he doesn't do it, I am going to have to do it myself and I don't want to have to do that also.

P: Okay.

W: Because most of the inside work I do myself and that's okay. But it's just something I'd prefer he do because
it's much easier for him to do it and he does a much better job than I do. I've told him that too.

P: Okay, so he's physically stronger?

W: Yeah, he is physically stronger and for some reason I always seem to miss a spot on the floor. I think it's because I don't wear my glasses (group laughs, so does H) when I mop the floors, so I miss spots and he always wears his glasses so he can see better.

G: Are we allowed to ask questions as we go along? (The couple nods yes.) Are you talking scrubbing? Wet mopping?

H: Mop with a sponge mop.

G: Oh, I see with a mop, I thought you were talking about getting down on your hands and knees and scrubbing.

H: No, it's just mopping. Yeah, it's a matter of just doing it. Ha! Ha!

P: I don't know, I don't want to make you too uncomfortable, do you have any other feelings that go along with that? (I am trying to make her aware of her emotional feelings to H not hearing her.)

W: I don't, I don't think so, I just resent that he won't just do it.

P: I guess what I am looking for, is if you feel like he has really heard you?
W: No, I think he's heard me (laughter.) He just finds other things to do, like, it's not important to him.

P: Okay, that's what I am getting at. Wouldn't it be nice that since it is important to you it would be a little more important to him?

W: Yes.

P: When we begin talking about communication concerning chores, there's a lot of symbolism. There is nothing like being heard. For example, if you said you liked a certain food and you came home at the end of the day and it's served, what you said mattered. It's not just I heard what you said but behaviorally it is also followed through and done. (I am making a connection between behavior and hearing what was said.) That will increase your positive feelings toward each other. Now, how do you feel when she keeps reminding you to mop?

H: Usually it...just okay, fine I will do it. But, usually, it's not a high priority to me. It's not a high priority because usually I'm thinking of this, a lot of different things, my mind is going in 91 directions and it's not at the top. Most of the time, I prefer, if W wants me to do something to tell me. Because most of the time I know, I do not think of, you know, think of things like that. But if we are having
company, then she has everything in her mind, it's the easiest thing. She plans everything out for what needs to be done and let's me know what I can do to help.

W: And he does, he asks what needs to be done. He's very good at that.

H: Because I don't know everything that she had planned and what order she wants things done. So the only way I am going to know what she wants done or properly is by her telling me this needs to be done at this point.

P: Okay, so now she does ask you to do the floors. Do you usually do it?

H: Yeah I. . . (I need to clarify the issue so I say.)

P: So the issue is to remind you.

H: Yes, the issue is to remind me. When she reminds me it gets done.

W: Yes and I think the big issue is, he just doesn't think housework is important. He can tolerate more dust than I can, and I am not a real neat person. I can live with dust, I can live with cat hair on the carpet. There reaches a point where it needs to be done, it's just that it's not important to him that things are neat and picked up, that's something not considered important. I would love to have somebody come in and do the bathrooms and kitchen every other week. It's just, he
kind of brushes me off, it's not important to him. Whereas getting someone to mow the lawn, he went out and hired someone and we're spending money, our money from our checking money, to do the lawn. And if I want someone to do the house, why it would have to come out of my paycheck or I'd have to figure some way to pay them. Whether the house is clean or not, I guess is not a high priority.

P: Can you share what. .. no finish sharing. I'll want to comment and I'll get back to what the research shows. (I almost got away from the current focus so I backtrack.) What was the second chore?

W: The second one was to clean bathrooms.

H: It's basically scrubbing the shower stalls, you need that once in a while. Ha! Ha!

P: What's once in a while? (I am role modeling what it is to be specific.)

H: Well, we do use the spray to try, like you do after each shower . . .

P: Right (I'm nodding).

H: But it's still tends to build up or I'm sometimes forgetful and always knowing, it usually goes about once a month and before it gets . . .

W: Yeah, before it gets yeah . . .
H: Gets a really good scrub.

W: I would like to have it done more, but I don't, that's to my detriment I don't ask him more often. Because it's just, but nobody else sees it but us, you know it's just our bathroom. So I can live without him doing that, so I don't ask. Every once in a while it gets to the point where I see that it has to get done.

H: It gets done. We do have our little bathroom, luckily. Our main bathroom in our house, I have two girls in the house and they use that bathroom, it's their responsibility.

G: Adult?

W: Yeah, adult.

G: You mean they are all grown children?

H: Yeah.

W: Eighteen and twenty-two. The rest of the bathroom I'll clean, wipe the sink, scrub the toilets, sweep the floor, whatever. It's the more harder physical labor that I'd like him to do. That was two. Three was wash windows.

H: Oh . . .

W: Like, that doesn't get done. It gets done as often, you know we both work full time . . . We both work long hours but washing the windows is something, if I ask
him to again, he's real good about doing it. But it just kinda gets pushed off to the side. It doesn't get done as often as I would like it to be done. For he was washing the car. That is also something even after I've asked, was it a couple of weeks ago?

H: Yeah, we did it recently.

W: He resented it, there was stuff he wanted to do instead, type of church work.

H: Um hm.

W: I said fine, it's okay, you don't have to do it. I think he thought I resented it. You know, that the girls and I were out there. He came out and I said "look, just do the vacuuming and go back into the house." And I was okay with that, he thought I was more upset than I was about washing the car.

P: Is she right?

H: Yeah, they wanted me out there and so I came out there and took care of vacuuming the cars.

W: And he pouted.

G: You don't ever go to a car wash there?

W: We have, but our money is very tight, ah . . .

G: Oh.

H: It's cheaper to do it ourselves.
G: Yeah, but time is such a factor, a huge factor. You guys don't have time to wash a car.

W: Well, that's why ours doesn't get done, so it's been a year.

H: Probably.

W: And the last one is the ironing.

H & W: Ha! Ha!.

W: I don't like to iron and a lot of the shirts he wears are a lot of broadcloth shirts. And that's about the only thing if I have to, other than my quilting, I love to iron fabric which he finds very ironic. But most of his shirts are broadcloth so I make sure I take them right out of the dryer and hang them up. For some reason, we bought him some nice shirts and the nicer shirts are cotton and so I hang them up but they still need ironing, and they end up kinda staying in the sewing/laundry room for weeks on end. Until he says "you know I'd really like to wear my nice new suit and the nice new shirt that goes with it." So then I do it.

H: Yes.

P: Is that something you would like him to do?

W: No . . .I don't think so, because I think I can do a better job (all three of us laugh.)
H: She's probably, it's probably true there.

P: So, we have the factor that you can do a better job ironing his shirts? (I am beginning to role model considering options and alternatives.)

W: Yeah, he's never ironed, that's the only thing he can do; he can function well by himself in the house; we've often said that if anything were to happen to me he can function without any problem; I would probably have more trouble functioning without him but the one thing he's never done is iron.

H: Um (nodding).

P: (looking at husband) Did you never iron?

H: Um, Yeah, I've been around clothes a bit.

W: Yeah, I don't do laundry anymore, I don't do the ironing.

P: Okay. (I'm thinking that this couple is pretty balanced in how they divide some of their household tasks). In any of these discussions they've had the feelings that go with it; does any of this ring a bell? (I am encouraging the group to connect with their similar feelings.)

G: Yes, if my husband has things that are a hundred percent cotton, we know who's fault that is . . . mine! And it's true, if you are busy, it gets pushed behind.
Do you know what I do if I have to do something I don't like to do? I do other things I like at the same time such as listen to music I like; I iron during my favorite time of day . . .

P: (I feel we are getting a little tangential so I bring the group back to the protocol focus.) It's really important to find out what chores are really disliked by one of you more than the other so you can start negotiating and compromising who does what . . .

P: (looking at W) I did want to address what you said earlier. (It's time to address the research findings that suggests household chores have low status. This is done to begin to create empathy for the spouse who does more chores.) A lot of the research talks about the quote, unquote status of housework. They say that quite honestly if money were not a problem most people would hire someone to clean house for them. And the fact that you would hire out some one to clean house or mow the lawn for them says what kind of status these chores have. It is implied that if you could, you would have someone else do it for you. They also say in the more traditional marriages and homes that things were more role-defined, such as, men mow the lawn and take trash out and the women do a lot of the indoor housework.
(The first session was closed by praising the couples for beginning the group process and summarizing what was said. The couples' strength in their willingness to risk in their sharing and participating was praised. Their sense of humor and ability to laugh was also affirmed and reinforced. The couples were asked if they felt comfortable after this session. All agreed. One couple said they felt very comfortable and there would be no arguments on the way home. CBMDHL Protocol for session one was followed.)

SESSION 2

The tasks for this session in the CBMDHL protocol were to introduce the couples to the concept of homework assignments and give the first homework assignment. The first assignment is to have the couple fill out the Time Journal form. Another task is to help the couples each learn where and how their beliefs (schema) developed about who did what household chores. There will also be several cognitive interventions introduced through filling out different forms. These forms are called Pro and Con List and Options and Alternatives. They will also be taught how to decatastrophize (lessen the fear of possible anger from their spouse.)
(Session opens with psychologist asking the group what happened during the time apart?)

W: He actually vacuumed the den without my asking. You should have seen the cat hair!

(Every one is laughing.)

H: You know it was getting warmer and the cats . . . you know were . . .

P: Shedding?

H: Yes and it was too much hair.

W: Yeah and without my asking him too.

H: No.

W: I thanked him for it. (H nods and smiles as she says this.)

P: H, not to pick on you, what made you decide to vacuum the rug? (I want to find out what caused this change.)

H: I was just tired of seeing all the cat hair around.

P: That's interesting because I'm wondering, didn't it really bother you (looking at W) as much as it did him?

W: It did and I had mentioned it when everybody was in the living room. Cause supposedly, our older daughter, I had really asked her to do it. And uh, that was suppose to be a reminder to her I don't know, if subconsciously it had kind of connected.
H: No, I knew she was supposed to do it which was why I had made a comment later when she was around. That I thought somebody was supposedly to have done this.

W: She went "oops" but it was bothering me, but not enough for me to get up and do it. It was my three-day weekend and I wasn't going to spend my time vacuuming.

H: At that point, she was doing the dishes.

W: Yeah, S.

H: S was doing dishes and it was her turn to do dishes. If one cooks the other does dishes, that's how we always divide that end. I knew she was in the kitchen and I saw and thought I've got to do it. Both girls I think had already gone down stairs. And besides it needed to be done. So I went through the whole room.

P: Now, are the girls going to be staying home? (I am exploring this as an option for further possible division of household labor.)

W: Um hum, well one, our younger daughter is going off to college in the fall but our older one is now home, and she's very good at doing things if you ask her to do it but she doesn't see anything.

P: You have to increase her sensitivity to it, to what is going on. (I say this to also help increase his sensitivity level.)
W: Yes, yes, yes, definitely.

P: But if she doesn't see it and you ask or it sounds like you asked her and she forgot?

W: Yes, but I didn't ask her to do it right then. I made the mistake of saying to S on Monday, would you do this? Because I think it was Sunday and I, you know, I don't like to ask people to do things most of the time on Sunday. And I said do it tomorrow and she forgot which is normal for S. She's very bright but inside kind of . . .

H: Common sense is not there.

P: So if you had put a note up to remind her on the bathroom mirror? (This is the start of teaching them problem-solving.)

W: Yeah, yeah, we normally leave notes on the kitchen table by the donut, she would have remembered, yeah. yeah.

P: Would you have remembered?

H: What?

P: If she had left a note on the kitchen table?

H: If she left, I would have done it because we leave notes for each other all the time if we need things done. Because, usually she's out of the house before me in the morning. And if she thinks if anything needs to
be done during the day she writes notes and I take it with me and get things done, if it's something outside the home. (This couple has just provided a problem-solving option for themselves.) When you make a request you need to say, please do this now or if it is for a later date, write a note to remind them. Put a note on the kitchen table. But W still does not like to ask and is really pleased when the task is done without request...may need to work on her getting more comfortable with asking and getting him to notice more what needs to be done.)

G: You say you have two daughters. Do they help in the household chores?

W: Yes, if we ask they help, and their bathroom is the area they know they have to do. Other than that we have to ask. Tonight, we left everything on the table and said "Daddy and I have to leave, you do the dishes." We know when we get home everything will be cleaned off and the, uh, dishes will be done. The older daughter has only been home a month so we haven't sat down with her and told her what needs to be done.

G: Do your children know you are here?

H & W: Uh, huh

P: What did they say?
W: Uh, they really didn't say very much. I don't think they really understood.

P: What you actually did without me explaining anything to you was what we call homework. (I now introduce the concept of homework assignments.) All of you have had children and we know that when they are in school you're in a learning situation, a certain portion of the learning is assigning homework. It reinforces the learning and helps focus it. One of the things we do in this type of therapy which I practice, and it is called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, is to give homework assignments to reinforce what ever is taught. And there's been a lot of research where they find that people who do practice what is done in the session will achieve more success with what we are trying to work on in here today. Without question, it's going to involve some time. Actually, how much time depends on each couple. One of the things that I really want you to do is pick out a chore you would really like your spouse to do. It's a chore you're currently doing yourself. For example, it could be scrubbing floors or doing the dishes. The spouse who currently doesn't do that chore is to sit, clock the time and watch that person do it. As they clock and watch that person do it, one of the
things I want them to be is very sensitive and aware of how much time does it take, how much effort does it take, and do they have any internal thoughts about watching their spouse do this particular assignment? And the results can vary. It can be anything from "Boy that takes a long time!, I had no idea it takes that long to do it, to I certainly don't want to get stuck doing that because it takes a deal of time, or it may have many details, or it may take more physical strength!" It could be any of these reasons. Or it could be that some people have a way of making things look very effortless. So when you come home everything is done and there's really no concept of how much effort went into that even if you discuss it with your spouse. Like you were saying before, W, hey it's a three day weekend and I don't get those very often. I'm really tired from work and really don't want to clean this weekend." Then again you might look around and say "that rug is really starting to look bad so there are things that I really need to catch up on." Yet, if you verbalize part of that during the homework assignment to your spouse, that is important information for the other spouse to hear. This is not to get your other spouse to do the chore, but to make them aware of how
much effort you put into it. They may also listen to your internal dialogue which is saying "I’m tired, my back hurts, I have a headache, my sinuses are killing me, whatever is going on, but I really need to get this done." Sometimes it doesn't sound like a lot of time, until you actually watch someone do it and you observe all the motions that it takes and you see actually how long and how much effort is involved. My goal in this is to have you really appreciate how much effort goes into the thinking process. You know it's not always a great thing to run out and do this particular household task but that is something I want you to do between now and when we meet again. Please use the form called Time Journal. Please record your name and date, and bring the form back with you next time. (I realize that I may have pushed a little too hard in saying they may develop empathy while watching the other spouse (experimental bias), but I’ll wait and see what happens.) (Only one of the other couples needed some clarification about the assignment. This couple repeated the assignment in their own words and that let me know they understood it.)

P: I am going to have you talk among yourselves. Remember that chore list you filled out the last time that
listed which chores you disliked the most? Decide which chore you are going to use. (This couple begins immediately to look at the forms and talk among themselves.)

P: I want you to pick a day, time, and particular chore to use for this assignment. You are going to write down what time you started watching the chore and what time it ended. Then you are going to write down the feelings and thoughts that you had while watching your spouse complete the chore. Again, you might have had thoughts such as "Wow, I had no idea it took so long or so much effort went into doing it" That's the kind of thoughts and feelings I want you to write in the bottom section of the form. Until we put ourselves in some one else's shoes and understand what that's like, we can't be sympathetic about it. So, why don't you take a few minutes to select your chore. You don't have to pick the most controversial chore, you can pick a more comfortable one. Discuss among yourselves what you want to do.

G: Is there a specific time we need to spend doing the chore?

P: There is no mandatory amount of time.
(In reviewing the video tape, this couple is able to quickly decide which chore they want to chose and are able to select a time to begin the assignment. They do not seem to have as much discussion as the other two couples and finish first.)

P: I want to make sure everyone understands what this assignment is...so if you don't mind, I want each of you to share what you are going to do. (I have just role modeled clear communication.)

W: I'm going to scrub the kitchen floor. We decided Saturday evening after we eat dinner (H is nodding agreement.) That way everyone will be out of the kitchen.

H: Yeah, and I get a half hour of time. Ha! Ha!

W: And I get to iron his shirts. Ha! Ha!

G: That's something you don't like to do?

W: I don't like to do it, but I'll do it.

P: So what are you going to do? You're going to watch W do this (H nods yes.)

P: So you are going to be recording your own thoughts and feelings?

H: Uh, huh.

P: It doesn't matter what your thoughts and feelings are, just whatever you are thinking and feeling at that
moment you should write down when we reverse roles and he is ironing (H is nodding he understands.)

W: What I am thinking as he is ironing I write down.

P: (I am thinking she is going into the next session which involves role reversal task but as long as they are so motivated, I flow with it.) Yes, actually what you are doing is an extended homework assignment, which is fine, not everyone has to do that. I guess what you are trying to do is understand how the other person thinks about a particular chore (both nod yes.) That's okay, so you're going to watch her do floors for half an hour and then you're going to watch him iron for half an hour? (again both H & W nod in agreement.) (I am role modeling clear communication again by repeating the assignment.) Okay, you may have to copy that form or I can do it for you before you leave.

P: This is probably the longest homework assignment I will give. Again the purpose is to help each of you be more empathic to what the other spouse has been doing, to acknowledge the time and effort it takes, even if they are very good at doing it. It might make you a little more open to helping the other spouse.

P: The next thing is something another group member alluded to in the last session.
History has a lot to do with our belief system. (I now tell the story of how to cook the roast written in the manual.) Some beliefs are handed generation to generation, some may be through television programs like *Leave it to Beaver*, where Mom is running around doing everything and then watching what your parents did or did not do. Who did most of the household chores? Or you may have seen roles clearly defined, like if you are a woman, you do this and if you are a man you do that. Men do the lawn and maintenance, and women do all the inside housework. Much of how we run our lives is based on a belief system. So what I'd like you to do is take a look at the form labeled When You Were Growing Up, Who Did What Chores? (Protocol is followed as I explain how to fill out the form.)

(H and W begin to fill out the form fairly quickly and they both laugh and smile as they fill out this form.)

H: Most on that list, almost all M (Mom's), neither for certain things, most of the ones on the other side mostly D (Dad's).

P: Ok, so there was basically a lot of indoor household stuff.

H: Yeah, it was done by my mother, because she did not work outside the home.
P: That's an important factor. Okay.

H: In our home, once our parents got married, my mother did not work outside the home.

P: Okay, so that was an agreement?

H: I'm assuming, I don't know how that was decided but my dad made enough money and worked overtime if needed, plus did weekend jobs, part time, so my mother did not have to work. My mother still does the inside work.

P: So where do you think you fall in terms of what you think women should be doing or in particular, W?

H: In this way, I know I do not go totally with that, I'm willing to do anything that needs to be done, growing up my mom did most of the stuff but my father was willing to do whatever my mother asked him to do. (This is good information, I make note of this mentally; it means this husband might be more open to doing more household chores since he saw it modeled by his dad.)

P: Okay, so that's pretty much from where you are from?

H: Where I come from is, I've seen my father willing to do anything for my mother and that I maintain, I'm willing to do anything, whatever is needed or that she asks for.

P: Is that right? (W is nodding.)

W: Yeah, yeah that's right.
P: So how about yours?

W: Well, I think, mine may be skewed. I don't think that my memory is right, because I don't remember my mother doing much of anything. I remember being a little girl and my mother having a maid come and clean and cook and all that when I was real little. And then my memory seems to kinda of skip to the later years. I don't remember my mother doing anything, my father cooked and my father cleaned what little they did. My natural tendency is that I am not more of a housekeeper myself. Because my parents were not good at all and as they got older they couldn't do as much and do less and less, it probably influenced by view on housework. My father did almost everything on the list that I do, I remember my father doing about everything, even though he had a full time job. My mother did work out of the house also.

P: So then, would your expectation be that men should do more?

W: I felt like my father was doing more than he should.

P: So then you would want more equal?

W: Yes, fifty percent.

G: So your mother worked outside of the house when you were very little?
W: Yes, since I was about uh, seven or eight. My father did not make a lot of money. He would have a store and then he was out of work for a couple of years. So my mother just worked.

G: They shared economically?

W: Yeah.

(The other couples share that their backgrounds were fairly traditional, that the mothers did most of the household chores and men worked outside. The mothers were also full-time homemakers.)

P: So we have all discussed the different family rules in who does what housework, whether it is Dad or Mom. Who is going to do what is affected by what they experienced as a child growing up? (later)

P: (I am now ready to begin teaching some cognitive restructuring as written in the protocol manual.) One of the things that helps couples get out of a stuck position is understanding what would be a gain or loss. Let's look at the next page, at the form called Pro and Con List. All I want you to do is look at this and put down any chore you have conflict about. Then I want you to do both sides of the fence. And as an example, we can do this together. Ok, if he does this chore, here you can fill in the blank whatever chore that it is you
are looking at, whether it's mopping the floor, etc. In everything there is an advantage and disadvantage (pro and con) and so what you want to do is look at which side has more statements on its side. So on the pro side, write down whatever advantages there are for the other spouse to do the chore and on the con side write what the disadvantages there are in that spouse doing it. For example, a con might be, he takes longer and the pro might be he is physically stronger and can do the chore more easily.

(The couples are writing and filling out the forms. There are no questions or comments.)

P: Again, there's no right or wrong answer. Okay, did you understand the homework assignment? (I am making sure the couples clearly understand the assignment.)

W: I think so, we talked again about scrubbing the floors. I guess when we finished we talked about um, if he were to do that, I would feel heard and respected. And then there would be less fights about it even though we really don't fight but . . .

H: Discussions.

W: Discussions or resentments about it. And I guess that the stuff on the cons, I guess we didn't really come with any because it doesn't take more time for him to
do it. He certainly can physically do it, at least from my point of view.

P: Would it make you angry if she were to ask you or you had to do it?

H: No, no (shakes his head negatively.)

P: No? What if you had a lot of stuff to do for your church and you have to scrub the floor?

H: It gets done (laughter follows this comment.)

W: But, but would you feel annoyed? (I am pushing for his real feelings because I suspect he can’t really be that compliant about it.)

H: I'm planning, if there was a lot of other things that I knew I needed to get it done, it would be a lower priority than maybe some of the other things I felt needed to get done. But if she asks...

W: But you would get annoyed if I asked you have some stuff . . .

H: Yeah, yeah if there was something else in the way . . .

P: Would this get in the way of you hesitating to ask if you had a lot of stuff to do? If you really, really wanted him to do something? (I want her to see where her reluctance to ask comes from, so I emphasize this.)

W: Yeah, I probably would hesitate and just do it myself.

P: But then would you be annoyed with him for . . .
W: Yes. Yes. (H and W both laugh.) The problem is knowing when he is annoyed about something because he does not say. If I'm not looking at his face, he gets like a sulky expression on it and that's the only way I know, it may come out three weeks later. He may blow up over something totally different and then we'll, it will finally come out that he was annoyed having to do something or whatever . . .

H: Or whatever . . .

P: What makes it hard for you to let W know at that moment that you are annoyed and don't want to do it this minute and . . .

H: She will, uh, agree one hundred per cent that I just tend to have a problem expressing myself . . .

P: Do you think she will be upset?

H: Sometime I think some of it, sometimes I think I just don't want to get her upset, because I don't like seeing her upset, ha . . . it's . . .

P: (This is an important admission so I'll encourage more discussion on it.) Hold it, when she gets upset, what do you think? What's going on internally when you see her upset?

H: It bothers me because I don't like to see her upset.
P: Because it means what . . . (I keep assisting him to look at his feelings.)

H: Well, I think keeping her happy with me . . .

P: If she's unhappy that means . . . (I'm still pushing him.)

H: It sometimes makes life . . . intolerable, we kid about, we see signs in different places that "if Mama's not happy, nobody's happy." That is the situation at home, she is definitely more vocal about things that I am. She lets us know if anything's bothering her.

W: He doesn't like to yell, except when we've, I've pushed him absolutely to the limit. And I don't know that I have done that. It may not happen for a couple of weeks, he doesn't like to argue. He will not let me get everything out, he just walks around.

H: And I'll, I think some of this is coming up. I don't remember much. My mother to this day is a constant worrier, and let everybody know she's worried and states her opinion. My dad just keeps his mouth shut. Ha! Ha!

P: Now, when your mother worries and expresses her opinion, how is everybody supposed to react? (I want him to make the connection from where his beliefs and behaviors came from.)
H: Well, usually everybody caters to exactly what she wants and pussy foots around her.

W: And he still does . . .

H: Yeah. Ha! Ha!

P: So it's very uncomfortable when she does this?

H: Yes (nods.)

P: Just as uncomfortable when you and W?

H: Yes, I think that's the way she is, W is nothing like my mother. My mother is an extreme, W is not like that. When I was home, I didn't like seeing my mother upset. And I think my father didn't like seeing her upset, and he denied it. Seeing his lack of reaction most of the time, I think that is the way I react. I don't react, I don't like seeing things get into confrontations. And I am not sure fully why, I do not like getting into real confrontations.

P: (I want him to explore this fear of confrontations.) Sometimes couples are intimidated by confrontations because it has so much meaning. There are some people who will say "wow, if we have really got into a fight that means our marriage has very serious cracks. Or if he or she is really constantly annoyed with me it might mean the end," that may or may not make sense?

H: It's uh . . .
P: Sometimes children are afraid of getting angry and being angry is very scary.

H: It's, uh, we've been married almost 27 years. I can only think of a couple of cases where I really blew my stack and I thought, "it doesn't make me feel good..."

P: What does it make you think of yourself? (This is important that he understand what being angry means to him.)

H: I guess some of the things I think is I want to keep her happy. You see what happens on TV, you see people getting angry and physically strike out. Some times I don't know my own strength. I did a little roughhousing with the kids when they were little and I lose track of what strength I do have. There are certain areas that I have that are very strong so I am very careful and I have not struck out in anger.

P: Are you afraid if you become really angry?

H: Yeah, if something really made me snap and I physically struck out, it could cause damage that I would not be willing to see, I have never spanked either of my kids.

P: Because of that fear?

H: Yes, with that. They would feel it. I did minor hurts enough in just roughhousing. I just don't want to get
to the point where I could possibly strike out. Even when I was at home, with respect on that point, but at home most of the time, I think it was my mother doing it than my father. Well, like with my sister, my dad just had to give her a certain look and that stopped her immediately. My dad is still a very quiet person. He set that kind of example and that is where I am. I'm trying to be better at, which W agrees and both my girls agree, that is an area that I need to work on is being able to better express my feelings.

P: You can express feelings, as long as they are anger?

H: Yes, I can do that. I fully, I don't fully know why but this just seems to be a more, I'm always a bit more laid back. Because my personality, in fact, just let things roll off my back. It takes things a while to get to a point where I'll do something.

P: (I want to reassure him, that his awareness of his own physical strength and fear of becoming physical in anger are preventatives to it happening.) Let me just share with you, because I would like you to be comfortable. H, the fact that you are so aware, and are so afraid of your own anger becoming physical is a safeguard against that happening. But there is some place in the middle from not saying anything to getting
completely physical. (I am having him consider another option or alternative.) One of the things that actually does help a marriage and certainly after 27 years you seem very committed and you seem very happy with each other, is being able to say when you're not so happy about certain things. And know the relationship is not going to fall apart and it would be perfectly okay. If, for example, she wanted you to scrub the floors and you have a lot going on at work and a lot of church work that really has to get done. It would be perfectly okay to say "I really would like to help you out but this is a really bad week and I've been feeling really overwhelmed by all the demands put on me. You know I can't do it this week but I will write it in my appointment book and I will do it next week." (I just modeled an alternative response and presented it in an unoffensive manner.) "Is there any way you can wait a week?" Because, then you are letting her know you're not rejecting her, you're not rejecting doing that particular household task, but you are letting her know you are feeling stressed. She knows that you are just not hearing her and blowing her off.

H: There is something to that . . .
W: I'm reminded when the car wash incident happened, he said he was busy. I said "fine, the girls and I are going outside." You felt so guilty that you, even though you didn't want to come outside, you still came outside. And I kept trying to tell you "it's okay" but I think you thought that I really didn't feel that way, so that when you . . .

P: Can you gauge how she's feeling? (He nods.) Or do you kind of guess and make it worse than it is?

H: Ha! Ha! Some days uh, sometimes uh, I tend to maybe over react where she actually is, I think that her feelings are worse than what they really . . .

W: It's like the time we wanted or I wanted to go down to my mother's and we had a couple of other things to do. I'm trying to remember, and you didn't want to go but you wouldn't come out and say it. And I kept saying "it's okay," otherwise K and I came up with a different plan so we could get everything in that needed to be done. And I kept saying "Is that all right with you? Is that all right with you? If you don't want to do that . . . It just took forever to get that out of him. He wanted to do this instead of that, so that, everything was fine. So we knew that wasn't what he wanted to do, yet we couldn't make any alternative
plans. I think he was afraid of saying it “look I really don't want to do this,” immediately. It would have saved everybody a lot of angina (both laugh at this.)

P: You know this might be a good place to start. (H is nodding in agreement.) It really is okay to say no. Of course there are certainly many more palatable ways you can say it. (I am encouraging H to be more direct with what he wants.)

H: Yes.

P: And we are going to discuss that in the communication section. But I think it’s important that since you really have very honestly looked at this and talked about it, you realize how it feels when you are displeasing someone. Now you can really gauge to what point it is okay with the other spouse. You know I think the other aspect is that you really know each other well. Have you ever known her to really say it's okay when it wasn't?

W: Ha! Ha!

H: (shrugs) I uh, that's very difficult to say, I can't think of . . .

W: I think you tell by the tone of my voice if I go “well all right” (reluctant tone in her voice) there's a big
difference between saying “it's okay” and “don't worry about it.”

H: Yeah, yeah, yeah, she, her tone of voice does say a lot.

P: Well, you know even if he does say he is really stressed out, it's okay. You might say “well I'm disappointed because I just can't stand the way the floors look.” You can say that and it doesn't mean you have to scrub, but you can say “how about if we get this and this done, then I'll do the floor?” A lot of marriages use negotiation. So the next form is called Options and Alternatives. This is what you were talking about before. What we're looking at is there are many roads to Rome, and there are many ways to do this. I think if you are willing to brainstorm and look and see how you can do this, you will find agreement. Is there any way we can make this more acceptable? When children are real young and you have to give them certain pills and they are not easy to swallow, you don't push it down their throats. You might crush it up and mix it with applesauce. Then they take it that way because it is less difficult to swallow because the applesauce is surrounding the pill. So here are some suggestions of possible options and alternatives to that particular
chore. You know there are certainly other ideas you can create. You might even have a friendly contest to see who does the chore faster? (Protocol is being followed.) You can alternate the weeks of who does this chore by saying, “you can do it this week and I'll do it next week,” or whatever. It’s always good to talk about a chore that neither one of you is too crazy about and offer a reward. I really encourage that. A reward could be time together or if you work together and do well, you could go to dinner, or go out to a movie. The other reality is if one person feels that they have to do all the chores and becomes exhausted, you know that when it comes time to do something fun, there won’t be any energy. Then you won’t want to spend that time together. So when you do the assignment, I want you to take a look at what are the other options or alternatives that you choose to make it a little more appealing. You may come up with crazy ideas while you brainstorm that together. It may mean each one of you has to do it once a month or another party does it. If you have one daughter at home, pay her to do it. It might be worth it. If she is going to stay home and you are not going to charge her rent, you could also make that part of the rent agreement.
(Prior to ending the session, I make sure each couple understands the assignment by asking them to repeat it in their own words. (Protocol has been followed for this session.)

SESSION 3

The protocol of this session is to have the couples agree to reverse roles. The spouse who does not usually do a particular chore will do that chore. The purpose of this session is to create more empathy from the spouse who does not usually perform the chore towards the spouse who usually does it.

P: So how did it go for you?

W: All right.

H: I had feelings as I watched her doing the floors and she watched me do the ironing; I felt that there were easier ways of doing it. She moved the bucket when she did one place and then when she did another place...

G: So you were criticizing her activity?

W: No, he didn't, he didn't say a word.

H: I just sat there and then questioned what I wrote down on feelings. I didn't say a word, our kitchen is so small. You can put the pail in one spot and take two or three steps and you're near to any part of the kitchen. No matter where it was, I felt like I should have been
the one to do it, because that was suppose to be my job. Those were my feelings on that.

P: (I am following protocol.) This session is called role reversal. It's something we've been discussing. Much of the time, we don't have an appreciation for what people do until you step into their shoes. That's the first part and it's done by watching the person do the chore. In your case, it's watching your spouse scrubbing the floors and seeing how you feel about watching your spouse do that particular chore. The second part is to flip that around so that it does become your responsibility for the time. Whatever you decide, each of you should negotiate to the point where you do it without her asking, and you see how that feels. The assumption is that this is your chore and you have to do it because if you don't do it, she might not want to do it or you might have to go and ask her, "W do you mind doing it? I'm really busy or whatever." By stepping into the other person's world, even though it might be temporary, it is a way to get at your thought and emotional processes and see how you feel seeing some one else doing it. (At this point I tell the group about the chapter in Arnold Lazarus' book called the Myths of Marriage, the chapter is on good wives do
laundry and husband do household repairs. It ties into gender role expectation. This is in the protocol.) If someone goes into another’s home and it's a mess, people usually think "boy is she a slob!" It is expected that the woman is responsible for the cleaning. What most couples can manage may not be a big change but a small change.

H&W: Yes, yes (Both are nodding.)

P: So it may be (I'm looking at H) that if you are feeling overloaded you may tell her, but you may need to give her a final date or time you could complete the chore. So it doesn't become another grinding thing added to the list, and that it would be okay. And she can say, “now that I know you are stressed, so this would not be a good time to get you to do this chore.” We can respect each other's limitations. We all have them. I don't care how anyone seems, we only have so much energy and we only have so much time. We have only so many priorities that can be accomplished, and the clearer you are with each other, the easier it will be to divide those chores. You can also ask and say “look it doesn't have to be done this moment. How about within the next week before next Friday? So would that be less stressful for you?”
H: Yeah, yeah, most of the time we do, W usually doesn't want it done this second.

P: What kind of time frame does she want?

H: Usually at dinner, she wants something done that evening, sometimes before I go to bed, that kind of thing. Most of the time it isn't too bad, the problem is that much of the time my memory is too short. I get into this and I'm suppose to do that and that is where I think most of the problems lies is. I should immediately do it, but usually it's because I'm doing something else. Sometimes it could be I'm really not doing anything but I forget by the time that day comes.

P: Would you like her to remind you?

H: Well . . . most of the time she does (both laugh at this.) And that sometimes gets me irritable.

W: That's when he says I'm nagging him. (I am thinking, use this situation to show them how to problem solve.)

P: Is there any way you could think of that she could remind you without you thinking it's nagging?

H: Well, what we probably need to do is put a note some place where I know I would see it. Taping it in a very obvious place would remind me. If I wrote the note,
it works better for me. Then, if I have something to do, I write the note myself, I will remember it better than someone just telling me to do something.

W: Even if he never sees the note again, it's just writing it down helps him remember.

H: Yeah, sometimes it's just taking that effort and time to write it down because there are many times there are things I need to do during the day. And I write it down on paper and that paper never comes out of my pocket until I get home. But I've got everything done because that effort of actually writing it puts it into the mind stronger than if saying or me saying "I need to do this."

W: Sometimes, I interpret that if he doesn't do what I ask him, it is because he is not really thinking about it. If I ask him to do something, it just bounces off the top of his head, it doesn't register . . .

H: It goes in one ear and out the other . . . ha ha.

W: Ha! Ha! It doesn't sink in, he really is not consciously making an effort to remember. When he writes it down, he is consciously making an effort to remember it, and there's the note again.

P: So would it be okay if W approached you with a sticky Post-It or an index card and pencil? Would you be
willing to write it down? (Both are laughing and he is nodding.)

H: In most cases, I think that would work. Well, as in all cases it depends on what the current situation is. If we are at home, there would be no problem, I would just do it. If we're some place else, we're out, and she comes up with the reminder, that may bother me. Most of the times things she wants me to do, normally are at home.

W: Yeah, I was going to say, I usually ask you at home...

P: So . . .

H: That would work.

P: So not at dinner at a restaurant?

H: No.

P: So if you're both home together and she brought that index card or Post-It and pencil for you to write it down, would that be okay?

H: Yeah (nodding.)

W: Okay (both laugh).

W: Am I going to do that? I guess the only thing I am thinking is if we're both sitting down, that means I have to get up and get a piece of paper and pencil, which takes more effort on my part which, I guess is
only fair. (I hear some potential problems so I continue the process of problem-solving.)

P: Let's look into some options or alternatives to that?

H: I'm just trying to think of places where there's no paper around . . .

W: Yeah, there's usually some paper . . .

H: Where we spend most of our time at the kitchen table, where we have a pen and paper, we have a holder for messages or if we're down in the den . . .

W: Watching television there's always pen and pencil around because our younger daughter has the school board or I have the paper work covering the main table. We have stuff from church, our computer is downstairs and if I am doing paperwork the coffee table is sitting there almost always with a pen or pencil and there's always some kind of paper where it could be, it could be . . .

W: Yeah.

P: Can you think of a place you'd like to be and plan ahead and make sure that . . .?

W: Probably our living room, because even in our bedroom right by the bed is the phone.
H: Yeah, and we have paper right there, or we'd be in the living room and you walk about ten feet and you'd be in the kitchen.

P: Is there a place in the living room where you could have a pencil and paper?

W: Yes, in the living room we have a table that has a drawer we could put pencil and paper in . . .

H: Yeah . . .

P: Yes, because I think the less of an ordeal you make it on each other the more likely it's going to work. (Both H and W nod agreement on this.)

P: Anything else to help you remember?

H: That's one thing that does help me remember more, nothing else that I can think of . . .

P: The only other thing that I suggest that works with varying degrees of success (I am continuing to encourage them to consider other options and alternatives) is you can get a jar and put little pieces of paper into it that have things written that you want completed. Periodically you can take a look at the jar and say "well! she wanted me to do this!" Once you've complete the job, you can throw the piece of paper away.
W: What we have found works, at work I seem to do my most creative thinking, and I take three by five cards and I'll have a "me list" and a "he list" for the weekend. It makes him feel good to cross things off as he's done stuff, sometimes we've found that . . .

H: un huh (agreeing and nodding)

P: So is that okay with you?

H: Yeah, yeah because then there are things I know need to be done. Most of the time, she's got the things she wants done. She either has to tell me or have it written what needs to be done. I always try to get things done, what needs to be done whatever. But most of the time, W is the one that decides on what needs to be done.

P: Do you ever disagree with her?

H: I don't think so. The general stuff needs to be done, like cleaning, but if it's major work like the maintenance, I enjoy doing those chores. We have several jobs that need to be done, it's just a matter of time or money whether we do or we don't them.

P: On the "to do" list, is there a certain number of chores you'd like to have done?
W: Well, eventually, all that, but I don't put a time limit, whereas in the past this has to be done at some point . . .

P: So you don't have ten things that have to be done by...

W: No, no.

P: The other thing is when you have that list, it's ok to ask for modifications. If you have ten things to do on the list, you can ask for the pecking order on what do you want done first?

H: Un huh, I've done that.

P: Okay.

H: Our priorities may be different, I let her tell me what she wants done.

P: Okay, that sounds good. We have pretty much covered all potential problems. Several other communication skills will be covered in our next session which will involve teaching how to negotiate. I appreciate your honesty. Some of this was difficult to talk about, but I believe that couples can remain strong even if it is very uncomfortable to talk about certain things because the other spouse might become angry. (I am encouraging and reinforcing H to keep sharing and not to withdraw.) It's also important to remember that those feelings are very transitional. It's one thing to say "Oh no, my
wife is going to be angry with me,” and it's another to put it in perspective and say “okay, I need to remember how long it lasts, maybe an hour? That it is not enough to damage the relationship because he or she will soften over time and the solution will usually present itself.” It's important to remember not that you fight, but rather how you fight and if you are able to resolve it. Anger is very transitional. So if you are able to lower your fear of her anger, you can let her know how you really feel. You're afraid of offending her and you don't say anything until later. It's now more annoying. Also, if she says “it's okay,” you need to know it is okay because you are always available to do a whole bunch of chores. But, in this particular time and situation, it truly is ok not to be able to do them. But you should not say it's okay if it's not. (Both H and W are nodding and agreeing.)

H: In our house, we are not allowed to have fights, my daughter would get too upset.

W: Yeah, it funny how she reacts. There are so many parents who are divorced, she is just so afraid that if we fight that we'll get divorced. (Here is another problem that contributes to the fear of disagreeing or fighting. I need to help them rethink this.)
P: The only thing is that it's important to teach your kids that we can fight and it will still be all right.

W: That's what we try to teach our kids but they will say "it's okay, it's okay, just don't fight." She's now eighteen, she still gets fearful if I raise my voice, I think because she has seen so much.

H: Marriage, pain and divorce, it's hard for kids.

P: It might be helpful if you were to allow yourselves to fight, not a huge fight but a small one where you can say "ok, how can we resolve this." It's going to be important for her to see that an argument doesn't mean you have to decide which parent you want to live with (I am also trying to impress upon them their own cognitive distortion about fighting leading to divorce or meaning the marriage has serious problems.) Actually, I knew a couple many years ago who claimed they had not fought for 15 years. What had happened was, she was never allowed to disagree with him. I can only imagine the amount of hostility and resentment that accumulated. It really is okay to disagree without feeling your marriage is in trouble. If a couple is really committed to marriage they are able to work things out. It's important for you to know when he is really stressed, and for you to know that when she gets
angry, it passes. Believe me. Why don't you do an experiment and the next time she gets angry, clock how long she stays is angry? (I am doing a cognitive intervention called examine the evidence.) It may feel like a long time, just clock it, it may be 10 minutes, or half an hour, but it is not a permanent state.

H: I can tell right now, the last time she was upset ...

P: How long was she upset?

H: Oh, probably 8 or 10 minutes.

P: And then?

H: We were talking fine later.

P: That should reassure you that it's not headed for divorce. (I say this because I want her to also reassure him.)

W: And I'm still here and not going anywhere.

H: Have been for 26 ½ years.

P: And it doesn't sound like she's going anywhere.

H: I don't think so (smiling.)

P: Okay, any questions from any one before we end?

(There are no questions so the session ends.) (Protocol has been followed for this session too).
SESSION 4

The protocol for this session is to teach the couples how to negotiate and compromise. This involved teaching communication skills.

(The participants have been asked if they did the homework assignment and reversed roles for a particular chore).

W: I had a hard time keeping my mouth shut when I watched him do the ironing. First you do the collar, then the sleeves, then the body. I felt sorry for him because he was trying so hard to do it right but he had never really watched me. So, he really didn't know how to do it.

H: I had ironed two shirts.

W: I wanted to tell him "don't forget the starch," but I figured, they were his shirts and if he didn't use starch, I could live with that. But I think I'd rather iron because I know how to do it.

P: So then both of you really have the same kind of feelings?

W: Yeah, yeah.

P: Watching someone else do it, that it was really easier if you did it. What I heard was you were kind of
sympathetic to watching each other do that chore and when you did the opposite chore.
(The other spouses shared their role reversals and they too felt sympathetic toward the spouse they watched).
P: Did you two have anything to add?
W: No.
H: Only what we discussed earlier.
But you feel like your feelings were very different afterwards? That you might not be as upset if W asks or reminds you? (I am checking to see if increased empathy will lessen his annoyance about her reminding him).
H: No, no, it's just a matter of remembering.
P: So, are there ways she can help you remember?
H: Well, there are ways we are using to help me remember.
P: So there are ways to help you remember and not be upset?
H: Yes, yes.
(Later in the session, the problem of the chore taking a lot of time and becoming overwhelming comes up.) (I want to give the couple another perspective about time, maybe rethink how they can do the task differently and increase their problem-solving skills.)
P: You know, I read this incredible story about a physician who wanted to remodel his bathroom, but he
knew his schedule would never allow him to have a lot of time at one sitting. So, he decided that every day he would give himself fifteen minutes to work on the bathroom. If he had more time, than he took it. It took him one year to complete the remodeling. He broke the big job down into little pieces and made it more manageable. That is something you can do for yourself when you feel overwhelmed.

G: Yes, that reminds me of a classmate who once told me that when you have a 10-page paper to do, tell your self that you will do just 1-page a day no matter what and in 10 days it will be done.

P: Okay, tonight we are going to talk about another important thing that has to do with communication. This is going to be an interesting session, we are going to work on negotiating and compromising. Actually, I think you all have already made movements in that direction. (I am doing some self-fulfilling prophecy. By saying they have begun to do this, I am encouraging further movement.) Many people from my observations unwittingly sabotage themselves by doing one or two things. Either they don't ask or assume the husband or wife should know what they want because it is so obvious, they can't miss the cues. But when they do,
they get really angry that what they want doesn't happen. The second thing is that by the time they do ask, they are kind of afraid their request will be turned down or that they have upset their spouses. So they end up asking for what they want really aggressively. What happens then, is the spouse or wife goes on the defensive. So instead of saying "all right, can we talk about it?" one will say, "all right, it's your problem, you want this and I don't, what's the difference?" One of the things that's going to be important is for people to learn to communicate. First I would like to have a volunteer from this group to show how not to communicate. I would like the rest of you to watch and see all the things that I am going to do wrong. (I am encouraging the group to give feedback together and to see if they see the example of behaviors that sabotage communication.) Any volunteers?

G: I'll volunteer.

P: (In a very angry tone of voice) I can't believe I have to ask you again! You never listen to me! (As I talk, my body posture is hostile and my arms are waving wildly.)

G: Didn't I just do that last week?
P: Last week I asked you to do that yesterday! You never hear me! Your job has always been more important than me! Everyone else is more important than me!

G: When I come home, dear, I am so tired. I am open to suggestions.

P: I work too! You know, you come home, hit the news, have the fan blowing and here I am running around like a chicken without a head in the kitchen! You don't even offer to help me!

G: You want more take out? We could have Chinese or we could . . .

P: You're just not listening to me!

P: Okay, what did you hear wrong about my communication?

G: I heard a lot of accusations.

P: Good, what else?

G: You never do this, you never do that.

G: Yeah, the absolutes, never, always.

G: Yes those are nasty words..

G: Your whole affect is something else.

P: Anything else?

G: You were coming at her and attacking her.

G: I think it was a good pizza night and you ought to have stopped on the way home. (Everyone laughs.)
P: I know we were role playing, but how did you feel at your end?

G: I thought you were aggravated and must have had a hard day at work. I would have said "stop right now and sit down. I will go get pizza."

P: Were you angry with me?

G: No. (I am thinking oops wrong answer, I wanted her to say she was angry with me. Let me think of a way to compensate for this.)

W: I would have said, "at least let me talk" you were overwhelming and overbearing.

P: Good.

G: You would have come at me if I had been that way!

G: Well, that's because you are retired, she works full time and had a hard day of work, it's a good night for pizza.

P: Very good, so you picked up my physical stance as undesirable, and that was sort of how I felt. You also picked up my tone and volume of voice. I did absolutes: "you always, you never," because once you say that, you know what? People just shut down and they don't hear another word after that. The fact I didn't let G get a word in edgewise means that I'm going to force the issue. She may be sympathetic because she can identify
with my being tired, but most people would say "you
think I am helping you out? Forget it, I'm out of here
or go take a pill or get a drink" (laughter greets
this.) Or they might say "calm down." Many people end
up sabotaging themselves when they communicate. I have
couples who come in and they are very serious when they
tell me how they talk to each other. I had a couple
tell me that when they talk to each other, one would be
at one end of the house and the other spouse at the
other end. They were screaming at each other. Needless
to say, if they aren't even in the same room, there are
words the other person listening may not have heard. So
I say the first rule of thumb is to at least be in the
same room. For some people, one spouse will be upstairs
and the other down stairs, and they'll communicate. Of
course, there are words missed with that. Some people
will say they have conversations. The TV is blaring and
they are saying "Yes dear, I'm listening." Well, they
are not, because if the TV is on, the stereo is on, or
the radio is going on, it doesn't really matter,
because half of you are listening to that electronic
equipment and the other half is halfheartedly listening
to what your spouse has to say. The other factor is if
you get really involved with the computer or Internet.
I don't know how many of you have computers, you ever try to compete with a computer game? If you are really engrossed in winning that game you will not listen to what your spouse has to say. Finally, when you're reading the newspaper like this (I hold a binder in front of my face) and the partner is trying to talk and you are going "I hear every word that you say."

There's no way anyone is going to believe that! Now, if you were to talk to G this way (I turn my body so the back of my head faces her) "So how was your day? It must have been really tough today" and I never looked at her, there's really no way she could feel I was that interested in her day. What ever I am doing, if I don't stop everything and listen, she would feel whatever she had to say wasn't that important. When couples say "you always and you never," it is not true. It may be seven out of eight times a request is not heard or reacted to behaviorally. But there is that one time that is quickly forgotten when the other times are repeatedly are not heard and not followed.

G: It's like those multiple choice test, never pick the answer that has "always or never."

P: Okay, I'd like you to turn two pages over and I want you to take a couple of minutes to fill out the form
Ways to Sabotage Communication, which is what we talked about (Protocol is being followed.) Just take a couple minutes between the two of you to talk about some things you may have been doing all along and never realized it has never helped with the communication. Then we are going to talk about ways to make communication more effective. (While another couple asks questions about the task, this couple begins to immediately work on their form.)

W: We do this one.

H: Yeah, we do. We may be trying to start to say something and if someone else is talking I'm not going to hear you.

W: I think about the only one that I really do is number five, which is read a book or paper when you talk.

H: Un huh.

P: Okay, why don't we take a few minutes and share with each other what you have written.

W: We really have two. I tend to expect H to read my mind and I'm learning that I need to verbalize what I want. I think I have gotten better at that . . .

H: Yeah, yeah.

W: I think I have gotten better at asking. The other thing is when I'm reading the paper or a book, when I come
home from work, the other will want to say something, it will be a constant "Oh by the way up and down." (The group laughs as W acts out picking up reading material and putting it back down several times.) So that's me, we both try to make an effort . . .

H: It usually happens when I come home, she's in the kitchen trying to fix dinner and I may have some things to say. Now I may say them. But when she's busy trying to do the cooking, that's not the time to do it. So we try to wait until we sit down to dinner. But when my younger daughter is there, we don't get a chance to talk . . .

W: She's a talker, yeah K is a talker.

H: Yes, she definite . . .

P: So she runs the conversation?

W: Yes she does, every once in while, if there's a space—oooh quick! You know we try to jump in. (Both laugh at this.)

H: In this session we are talking posturing, rolling the eyes, we sometimes tend to when she's talking . . . but between us no.

W: And one of the things we were talking about, I very consciously try not to do is saying "you never or you
always." I guess having gone to marriage enrichment was one of the things that stuck in our mind, always say "I feel or I would like" or something like that and never, never say "you always or you never . . ."

H: Yeah.

W: Yeah, that's one of the few things that has stuck with me.

P: Really you'll find that if you approach things like that concretely, people are more likely to join. Instead of saying "wow, look at all the work we have to do, we're not going to have any time to sleep or anything," and saying "this is great, this is wonderful, we're going to get this done, that's fantastic," everyone gets a little motivated to get the job done.

(Later in the session after the others have shared their list: one of the other couples said that they also had the problem with reading while the spouse was talking.)

P: One of the things I did on the next page, I just did an example of how to make a request, and it really does sound like most of you are beyond this point. But I think anything can be approached and said positively for the sake of the marriage. For the sake of the
relationship, I think it is always going to be better heard if they say "I am glad we're talking, this marriage is important to me." Sometimes when people don't hear each other, they tend to think that the marriage isn't very important to the other person. But if you preface something with "This marriage is very important to me; I don't want to upset or disturb our harmony," and whatever, this would be where the other person would say "Well, what's going on? What is it that you want?" So one of the things I created was a form and it's called Optimum Asking. (I am following protocol.) I'd like for each couple to go over the form. There are key parts in asking. For example, in my last job, I worked for a woman who had a new baby, and she was clearly in conflict about whether to work or stay home. Every Monday morning, she was a bear when she came in. We all learned not to ask her for anything until the afternoon, when she had time to make the transition to being at work from leaving the baby at home. We learned to communicate our vacation requests or day off in the afternoon. But the same thing is also true for couples. There are going to be situations better for asking and people will be more open to communicate. So what I tried to do is think about what
some of those conditions might be. There are two sheets, one for each of you. You might find out things you didn't know about the other spouse. I know that for certain people if they are hungry, that's a real bad time to ask them. Certain people are morning people, first thing in the morning. Other people, don't try talking to them until midnight. I think it would be good for you to interview each other. The questions and answers will give you some guidelines.

(As the couple begins to read the form, both laugh, watching their body language on the video, one sees a lot of agreement with what the other one answers, their facial expressions remain friendly.)

?: Is everybody finished? Take your time and have conversation. (A few moments later)

?: Okay, why don't we share some of the answers. Who would like to go first?

?: We'll go first, um I said I was in a better mood at night, and I think that's because I'm up before the alarm goes off at 4:45 a.m. and I'm up and out of the house by 6 a.m. (as I hear this I am even more impressed she is part of this group. It is a real commitment to marriage to be willing to sacrifice sleep to come and attend the group. She is really motivated!)
After I'm home weekends and evenings, I'm in a better mood then if I'm still awake. After a meal, I respond better because just because I feel more comfortable. When asked to do a chore, I would prefer a more flexible time, I am an organized person. It gives me more flexibility. I usually don't need to be reminded, I can remember things like that and you can ask me to do a few chores. The question when is the worst time to ask, H's first response is about once a month for about a week. (I am concerned about the possible gender put down because of the PMS statement and will address it.) But the actual answer is after time is after work, even my girls know when I come home from work, they don't even say hello when I come in.

P: I know that PMS is a joke with some men but it is a physiological thing for women.

H: Oh I know, I fully understand what it is like being married to her as long as I have and have two daughters. I know and I grew up in a house with three women, I have two sisters and no brothers, it pays to know that situation for me.

P: Okay.

H: So . . .
P: That's really okay, but one might say "wow, that's 25% of the month" and after so many years have stretched out, you might be a little more reactionary. But it's okay to factor that in to the timing.

H: Yeah, I know, I definitely step back on most things. Let me get through that week and then we are fine.

P: Okay, all right, that's good knowledge.

H: And for me it's also better mood at night, the mornings, anymore it's just a matter of getting up, knowing I have to get to work. After a meal you just feel more comfortable, having a full stomach, definitely having a flexible deadline but I need a reminder . . . ha ha . . .

P: Did you talk about how you can be reminded?

W: I guess we talked about writing a note or remember not to say "don't forget you were going to do this" I have to find the right time you know, to say it.

H: I can handle about two chores. Between my job and with others who have jobs.

P: You have to have an honest answer.

H: I always have a number of things going on at work, so at home I can do it. And then the worst time is right after work. Usually it works out because of the timing, W has already had her time to relax by the time I come
home. Usually it works out, I get home and dinner is being put on the table and I sit down and eat and I am fine.

P: So you like that.

H: That's fine, I sit down and eat or else I read the paper.

W: That's fine.

P: So you know that he needs time to decompress?

H: Yes, we both need time to decompress but she takes a little longer to unwind than I do. But she usually has the time, but with the overtime she's working it's harder, then the other problem is the 45 minute ride she has. I have a five minute ride.

P: That's long.

H: It's a stress day and a stress drive home, I'm back there, I'm not there bothering her when she gets home.

P: Are you driving home during the rush hour?

W: Sometimes when I work overtime especially if leave between 5 and 6, if I can take off one hour earlier, in the morning when I leave earlier, it takes half an hour it's right of___ boulevard right at the outskirts.

G: How far is it?

H: Over 20 miles each way
(The others share their answers to what helps makes their communication more optimum.)

H: Between working and both of us are active in our church with different ways and . . .

W: Sometimes about all we'll do is say good morning and at night it's about all we'll get to do, we'd like to be in bed by ten.

H: Yeah, she gets up really early to go to work. I get up basically when she's done with her morning preparations. We may have a few minutes in the same room but, we share one bathroom. In the mornings we know it's not going to be good for talking. She's out of the house by 6 a.m. I'm done getting ready little after 6 a.m. and I'm at work before 7 everyday. If we're lucky, she can be out of work by 3 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 4 p.m. A typical work day for me, ends at 5:30 p.m. Luckily, I'm only 5 minutes from home. That saves me time, I get to sit down and eat dinner. Then one of us goes here or there, our daughter is still in high school and there are activities there we attend. We always look forward to the weekends, many times it is the only time to get things done around the house that we need to get done.

P: So, there's a lot to do?
H: Yeah, this past Saturday it was non stop around the house. We went to church there was a show and there was a meeting at church. It was just . . . those kind of weekends . . .

P: That much activity must take a lot of energy. Monday morning you arrive at work still tired?

H: Yeah.

P: I do think it is important in a couple's relationship that they have some kind of shared activity, whether it's gardening or crafts, or listening to music. It doesn't matter, just as long and each of you has a good time. It is important that you take the time to relax and enjoy each other's company. Because, if you are always tired and it's an effort to move your lips, let alone control your tone and quality, it becomes a real effort to... I do encourage couples to take some time to relax together. (The group laughs at this and so do I, realizing with my current schedule I am unable to role model this at this time!) It could be dinner out together. The nice thing about dinner, is you don't have to prepare. You don't go to the grocery store to buy the food, cook it, and do the dishes. There are no phones and you can enjoy each other's conversation and
relax. You can use that time to discuss things you normally have a difficult time finding time to talk.

H: We had a situation Saturday, both our girls were out and we had a chance to go to the movies. That was really nice because we don't get to that very often. We were out and had a nice evening out. We know we need that.

P: I do encourage couples to think about their marriage as plants, if you forget to water it, it dies. Plants food periodically, they may need sun light, they may need rotation so all the sides of the plant get some exposure to the sun. People amaze me, I will ask a couple when was the last time you brought your wife flowers? They will laugh because they can't remember when they did and they only remember that it was the day they got married and that was 20 years ago! I will ask the wife when was the last evening you made a candlelight dinner for your husband and wore a nightgown to it? They can't remember that either. Or I'll make it more basic and ask when was the last time the two of you went out dinner without the children. When they can't answer that question, I know there are problems. It is an indicator of the priority of their marriage. You don't have to go to an expensive
restaurant, it can be pizza. This is a way of saying to your spouse "you are really important to me and I need this time with you." When you have all these other pieces into the foundation, that will make communication more easier and more effective. You will have better feelings towards each other. You will have happy memories to balance out the more difficult times. This will help the communicate be more courteous, tender, and enable you to hear each other better.

(Session ended with the group asking for their homework assignment, I really didn't have one but decided since they had followed through with all the other assignments, I would give them a fun assignment one and told them to go out to dinner together before we met again. I realized I had scheduled a pleasurable activity for them. They were very enthused about this assignment. The protocol for this session has been followed.)

SESSION 5:

The task for this session is to have each couple agree to fill out a new contract for the division of household labor.

P: Did you all enjoy your homework assignment? (There was a chorus of yes and laughter from the group.)
W: We went out after Church to eat and were asked by another couple to join them. (I'm thinking "great, they got sabotaged" but decide to see how they perceived it.)

P: Was that okay?

W: Yes, it actually was, we don't get to go out with others very much either. But, we didn't get to talk among ourselves.

H: But it was nice just getting out.

P: Okay, good. (I have to remember Rome wasn't built in a day and as long as it was good for them, this could be a good first step.) Again, what is important is to build up some good memories.

P: Has anyone tried the exercises we discussed?

G: For example?

P: Remember we talked about what time it would be good to communicate, how many chores you could ask for, and was it better to ask before or after a meal?

W: I think we hardly saw each other.

H: Ha! Ha!

W: You were out Tuesday and Thursday, we hardly saw each other.

P: The only thing I didn't talk about in the role play, but it was implied, was the delivery of the request.
Some people are so uncomfortable asking, that makes them more vulnerable. "What's wrong with me that I need to ask my partner to help?" They might feel a little defensive or feel this obviously needs to be done. So by the time they get around to asking they are feeling very angry so their request may come off a little sarcastic. They may sound a little defensive. It is important that when we ask, we realize that our tone and the words we use can determine if we our request are taken seriously. Most of the time if you say "I'm really overwhelmed, could you help me out, I need for you to do this." The other person will be more open to hearing it. If you say something like (with anger and gritted teeth) "Do you mind turning off the TV?" Well, forget it. By then, the other person doesn't want to hear the rest of your request. If you can say this with a lack of blame or criticism, it is better received. Some people are not good about handling supplications it or are forgetful. The way you ask has much impact as to how it is received.

P: One thing that stuck me out of one of our sessions (I am looking at H as I speak) was that no matter what happened, we never just never let Mom get mad!

H: Ha! Ha!
That's really so uncomfortable for you?

Usually if W is not feeling good, we usually walk around egg shells with my mother. There are certain things you just don't bother telling her just because of the kind of person she is. It's just that she's a big worrier and does get upset easily.

She is so sensitive if you just make a comment that she'll . . .

What kind of comments?

Well, I remember from years ago, it had something to do with our older daughter having a problem and she was going to a speech therapist. She felt my mother-in-law was criticizing her, not criticizing her, but telling her she shouldn't be doing this. You should be doing it this way. It finally got to her so she said to H, "Could you please say something to Grandma to not say that, I realize that I've got a problem?" And H said something nicely to his mother and she just burst out crying saying, "I had this problem and I didn't want her to go through this" so you just really have to be careful what you say to her.

She told you something important. She had the same problem and she feels guilty her genes got passed on to her granddaughter. It may be feelings she doesn't know
about or may not be in touch with. (I am trying to reframe his thinking about his mother, when she gets upset, that it was because of her own guilt, not because of what he said).

H: I can remember once not that long ago they had been away and they had called me. They called me, in fact it was 9:30 p.m. at night. When I called my voice wasn't real sweet to her, it was the end of a busy day, I talked with a little twist to my voice. A week later, she had gotten real upset with me the tone that I had used. It wasn't intentional, I think it came as "well you've been calling me anyway" and just the way I did it, pissed her off. I know that you have to be very careful there. I don't like having W upset, I know there are times I have to make sure that we don't get her upset.

P: Do you think W reacts as strongly as your mom? (I am trying to get him to differentiate between his wife and his mother.)

H: No, no, it's not that, it's just that if she's not feeling well and you go and try to talk to her, she will sometimes bang at you, right?

W: Um (nods in agreement).

P: You mean feeling physically, stressed wise or what?
H: It may be a combination of this and that. Usually not one thing, it's just a build up. (As a typical day can be.) You come home and multiple things have bothered you.

P: Okay, again that idea is in the Optimum Asking Form, know if your spouse has had a rough day. Stay away. That is not a good time to ask. And that's fine because we all have moments like that where we'd prefer the world to leave us alone. But I think, it is also important because one of the requests W made earlier, was her hope that you could be more open with your feelings.

H: Yeah, I know have a problem with that, I don't know why, but there are things in me that are very hard to express.

P: (I am going to try to connect his fear of wife or mom becoming angry with his reluctance to talk.) You know, you just shared an important piece about your Mom, you know when you feel you constantly walk on eggshell, inside you are saying "if I say this to her, she'll get upset, if I say this to her will she get worried?" Whatever it is, by the time you get through all that, it's better not to say anything. (I am now thinking of a way to reframe his mother's behavior to help
desensitize him to her being angry and having it also apply to his interactions with his wife.)

H: Uh huh.

P: You have been conditioned over time to speak very careful or say nothing. But what W has said is, it would be helpful to the marriage, allow her to know how you feel.

H: I know, I hear from her and especially my younger daughter, she doesn't have any problems expressing her feelings. (We laugh at this.)

P: Do you envy that sometimes?

H: Yes, cause she is, whatever is on her mind, she lets you know.

P: The other thing about your mom is and she would be horrified to hear this said, regards her behavior. The way she controls other people's behavior, and stops you from saying something she doesn't want to hear, is very subtle. This way people can say, "oh she's just high strung." So after you filter out what is all right to say, it does keep you quiet. But you'll find that if you can be like a fly on the wall, she's fine, she's okay, she can hang on. (H's body language on the video is of someone listening carefully.)
H: Even so, you can hear things weeks down the road, constantly, for her, it is constant worry. And with us, most the family is in the general area. It's better and healthier that she lives a distance.

G: My mother lives 3000 miles away and that's a good distance, that's why they make Hallmark cards (the group laughs.)

P: Today, if you look in your folders, we are going to review what we have done and draw up a new contract for the division of household labor. (This is the next intervention in the protocol.) It's title the New Contract for the Division of Household Labor. You have actually started to do this among yourselves. I would like you to take some time now and discuss the form between yourselves. Get very specific with each other about what you'd like to do. I realize you only have a day to complete this assignment so it may continue after we are done. (The group therapy session was granted permission to expedite the amount of sessions per week, so the group met on Tuesday and Sundays for 3 weeks). While you talk among yourselves, remember the process concerning your feelings during the role reversal assignment. Some of you felt you could accomplish chore quicker, gained more physical strength
or created an easier way to do it. Now, when you discuss how you wish to write up the contract, remember, the spouse who chooses to take on a new chore is not to be criticized nor have the chore done over. Rather, they are to receive sincere praise and appreciation. So take a few minutes and talk about the specific chore or chores. The spouse who doesn't perform that chore needs to commit to doing it.

G: That sounds pretty one-sided.

P: (I am thinking “oh oh” but he’s right so I agree.) Well, it is, the reason we are all here is to help divide the household chores more equally.

G: Oh. Okay.

(Again, this husband and wife have no questions and have begun to discuss the contract between them and begin writing. They are the first ones to complete their contract with each other.)

P: All right, has everyone shared what they written on their contract? (I am making sure that the communication between couples is very clear.) The spouse requesting the additional chores asks the other spouse for the specifics as they understand it. By explaining it to one another, both spouses can clarify whether “that is correct or it's not.” In
communication, I always encourage people to say. (I am
giving an example of clear directives- to help the
couples remember to be articulate.) "In another words
you want this, and repeat in your own words the
request." So if anything gets left out the other spouse
can say "Please don't forget to do this."

H: My job is to do two things. I will be doing one, the
kitchen floor, that's a topic and what needs to be
done. It should be done once a week. But that should be
done once a week or every two weeks. The other is our
shower stall, getting it wiped and scrubbed down from
whatever builds up. And to get the tile floors, that
they need to be mopped up about once a week.

P: What is an acceptable time frame for you to do this
chore?

H: Every week or two, some of these things need it every
week, or two but . . .

W: As long as it's within two weeks, it's okay.

P: And you know, each of you have discussed how it should
be done.

W: Yeah, and I am happy with the way he does it.

P: Now, I know it's hard for you to express your feelings,
are you really okay with this? (I am modeling for W-
how to encourage H to share his real feelings.)
H: Yeah, yeah, this is not a problem, this need to get done. At times that shower stall needs muscle power, just due to the nature of my size...

P: (I am presenting another option.) By the way, Black and Decker makes a tool, it's battery operated, it's a scrub brush meant to be used in cleaning the bathrooms. It has brushes that rotate. You don't need to invest in one but it is another option.

W: Yeah, our friend N has one.

H: We don't need to do that, I'll just use muscle power.

P: Okay, how long do you think it will take you to do these chores in terms of time minutes? hours? (I am again role modeling crystal clear communication.)

H: Between those two things, no more than an hour, fifteen minutes to do the kitchen floor. It also depends on how often it's done, whether it's once a week or every two weeks. The bathroom should only be half hour at a time. Mainly because the size of the room, they are small.

P: So you are really okay with this?

H: Oh yes (nodding.)

(The other couples share their contract with the group.)
P: (I am trouble shooting, preparing the couple for possible reasons why it might not get done.) I really don't want the contract between the two of you to get so rigid that if something serious comes up, such as, you get sick and you can't honor it for that week, you can still discuss it and come up with another deadline. (This is my way of keeping communication open.) You might discuss what the two of you agree would be valid reason to set the deadline aside. It need to be taken seriously and honored as much as possible. It's also important to consider that for someone who has a more flexible deadline, it can be just as painful for them to be forced to a deadline as it is for the other person to see the deadline not honored. It is important to respect both styles of doing things, because there are pluses for either side. (This is said to help the couple respect their differences.) Don't forget to also fill in the form called Behavioral Collection Data and fill in part that has you write your feelings as you watched your spouse do the chores listed in the contract. (I end the session, again asking for any questions or clarification needed. There are none. Protocol has been followed.)
SESSION 6:

There are several tasks that need to be accomplished in this last session according to the protocol. The first is to evaluate the results of the new contract. I am aware that due to the fact we only had a day apart between sessions, I am not sure how many couples had time to fulfill the contract. If any couple did, and the contract did not work out, we will take time to renegotiate a contract. The second task is to ask for feedback about these sessions and find out if any couples found them helpful. I also want to know what can be added to improve this intervention or what should be deleted. The next task is for the couples to take the same marital inventories and the household survey again.

P: Did anyone have questions or comments about the new contract?

H: We didn't, the only thing, was I going to remember to do this? We discussed it and decided the best place was to put the paper down on my desk where I would see it.

W: We went out last night so we didn't have time to do it.

P: So it depends on your mood. How will you (looking at W) know what is his mood?

H: Ha! Ha! I don't know that.

P: No seriously, you have to give her some cue cards.

H: Usually, I think she can tell.
W: Yeah, after 26 six years.

H: If I am not in a good mood, she sees it, and the same if she's not in a good mood, I see it.

W: Like we discussed, evening after dinner is the best time and we are not in a hurry to go anywhere.

H: At this point, we know it will be on Saturday evening. Because our evenings are busy. On our way here, she mentioned that there is something else that needs be done on Thursday.

P: So if you are not rushing anywhere and have time, it is a factor. (This helps them to pin point what helps communication be successful.)

H: Yes, Yes.

P: The other thing that is helpful is to cue your spouse. In addition to leaving a note, if you have an answering machine, and you know they arrive home before you do, leave her a message. For example, if you have had a rough day you might say "I had a rough day, so if I am a little short, you know it's not you." If your spouse is upset, the first internal reaction people have is "what did I do?" You might not be able to come up with anything but you are sure you did something.

W: One of things we'll say to each other after dinner is done "how was your day?"
H: Yeah, at mid day we'll call and ask each other how the day is going.

P: When you tell some one you've had a bad day, you are also asking for some TLC (tender loving care).

G: I came to this group for the main reason of getting my husband to clean out his office. He started after the group started. And I finished it before tonight.

P: What I would like, if you don't mind, is to go around the room and ask each of you what you learned, what you didn't like, even if it was totally negative; that's okay. If there are additional topics you think should be added, let me know. If there are subjects to be deleted I would like that information too. I need this feedback in case I do this intervention again with another group.

G: The thing I liked most was hearing some of the struggles of the other couples because it was kind of validating that other people have these same kind of little problems. It was helpful to hear when you come home from work you need some time to debrief. I'm the same way. And hearing other couples also struggling with household chores that was good to hear. I really enjoyed hearing about other people's particular chores. One of my friends who actually is not messy has someone
to clean for her (the group laughs). It was really helpful to hear how other people resolved their struggles. (This validates the benefits of group marital therapy.)

P: So, it helped you to know you are not alone.

G: Yeah, that you are not the only one to have this struggle.

P: Well, the research shows that is one of the top problems couples argue about.

G: I appreciate what my wife said. It seems that what was troubling to her. The mess was resolved. But I am reminded of her enormous emotion tied up with my messes. She is obviously very angry about it. This is happily an atypical thing in our lives. I became terribly aware in a new way of the bilingual of my mess. And now that the mess is cleaned, hopefully by tomorrow, it will be as if it didn't exist. She's happy. I became newly aware of how painful it was for her.

P: So the group was helpful to you in that?

G: Yes it was. I think we have begun a process.

W: I am really glad we came and it has really helped us. Because I noticed this weekend because H couldn't work outside, he was at his desk and filing things in the
file cabinet. I had mentioned it before a long time ago, and had not brought it up again. And he and was filing it. (Group laughs.) I felt good that my asking was responded to behaviorally. I have this new awareness or appreciation for him doing it. I say to him "That was really great! I want to kiss you for it," whereas before I would have said "that's nice" or I wouldn't have said anything at all or asked him to do something else. So I think these sessions awakened a new awareness of other things he does.

G: So you knew without her asking?

H: Well, in previous years the filing had been building up, we would take the files that had been building in the drawer and put it in a bag and file it upstairs. You have to keep receipts for so many years in case of audit. It was because of these classes, it made me more aware of the things that I need to do. It is my area, I'm the one who pays the bills so I need to keep it neat there. I've enjoyed keeping the filing under control. This has made me more aware what needs to be done or things W needs to have done. A lot of areas, she needs to let me know what she needs help. I don't always see what needs to be done. She needs to ask me for help. Or else I'll ask what needs to be done.
W: I think I am more willing to ask whereas before I thought he needed to see it needed and to do it. Now I know there are things he doesn't see, so I'll just ask him to do it.

P: I would like to make an observation about your body language. I noticed that in the last session and again tonight, that both of you are holding hands, it's appears that you have developed a little more closeness.

W: We have, we've been able to talk about more things, H has been communicating more!

P: Hey H that's great! (Every one laughs in support.)

H: I know it's hard for me, it's an area that my eyes are now opened to that I need to do things.

P: So now you know that W wants to hear your thoughts and they are valuable to her.

G: I really liked the role reversal. It made me aware of how she feels. This was good. I didn't know my messes affected her this way. But it helps get moving in a direction.

G: I think the group has been good. I consider it an act of God.

P: What?

G: Wow.
G: I mean things don't happen accidently, that we are part of this group.

G: Did you ever have anything like this group experience?

G: No, I haven't.

P: Are there any areas you think I should skip or increase in content?

G: I liked the gentle way you led this group and I have been part of many groups. The way you led makes for psychological safety. There are things you need to say, and you say them gently.

G: I agree.

G: Thinking about what our mom did and our dad did really told the story. It was a long time ago. There is so much we do like our parents that we swear we won't do as adults, and here I am doing it.

P: There are many little habits we pick up and carry into our adult lives. I think for a marriage it is healthy to have a partnership and to share in tasks and decisions.

W: I think when we were talking about our parents was when I was growing up, my father did everything and my mother asked for a lot. I never wanted to be like my mother.
P: It's scary but most people are afraid of being similar to a parent whose traits they dislike.

G: You could even throw in the "Super mom" role, where we feel we should be doing everything. It's a lot of pressure.

(After this discussion, I then administer the marital inventories and surveys again. When they are done I close the group with words of thanks for their faithful attendance and follow through with the homework assignments. Protocol has been followed in its entirety.)

**HOMEWORK USED IN THERAPY**

Enclosed on Appendix B.
OUTCOME OF TREATMENT

Husband’s results and discussion:

See Table 3 for Post-Intervention scores and graphs for results of husband. In comparing the pre-intervention and post-intervention score of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale scores, the husband’s scores increased in Satisfaction and Cohesiveness. The score for Consensus decreased and the Affection Score was the same. The decreased score for Consensus may indicate there may be other areas of disagreement other than the issue of division of household labor. Or it may indicate that now the husband was given permission to express his needs, he may feel free to agree less.

In general, the husband’s scores indicate an increase in marital satisfaction post intervention. These scores may indicate that the more equal division of household labor did increase the level of marital satisfaction.

In the Dominance/Accommodation Scale, his score on Factor 1 increased indicating that he became more rigid and less concerned about his wife’s needs. His score on Factor 2 indicated decreased concern for his partner’s needs. As noted in the annotated data and the initial interview, this husband was very invested in accommodating his wife. He was very anxious about disagreeing with his wife or having her
become angry with him. Perhaps he was so invested in meeting her concerns that his needs were either left out or forgotten. If this is the case, now that the husband has learned his wife wants to know his real feelings, he can express them. Even if his needs don’t agree with hers, she made it clear she wanted to know what he wanted. This made his needs more important. It affords him an opportunity to verbalize what is good for him. This may cause the increase in his higher marital satisfaction score as well as his higher Factor 1 score. He also reported in the last session that he was pleased with becoming more aware of what his wife needed from him, being more comfortable with her anger and being able to verbalize his needs.

Wife’s results and discussion:

See Table 4 for Post-Intervention scores and graphs of wife’s scores. In comparing the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of the Dyadic Adjustment Scales the wife’s scores on Satisfaction and Cohesiveness increased. This may indicate that she felt more emotionally connected to her husband due to his communicating more openly with her. The level of marital satisfaction level increased. Her Consensus score decreased, which may indicate that the issue of division of household labor was either not resolved completely or that there are other issues of disagreement.
It may also indicate that once she was allowed to verbalize what she wanted, she might agree less. Her Affection score remained the same as did the husband’s score on Affection.

The Wife’s scores on the Dyadic Satisfaction showed a small increase in marital satisfaction, a larger increase a week later, a drop back to the original satisfaction level, and in the final questioning a small increase from the pre-intervention score. These scores may indicate the honeymoon may have wore off or she was cautiously waiting to see if the change would last. She may also have another issue that has not been resolved. Her original level of satisfaction indicated she rated her marriage as extremely happy and her small increase may also be the result of the ceiling effect (Campbell & Stanley, 1979).

Her scores on the Dominance/Accommodation Scale show an increase in Factor 1 and a decrease in Factor 2 on the D/AS. This too was similar to the husband’s score. Her increase in Factor 1 indicates an increase in rigidity and being more aware of her individual needs. Her decrease in Factor 2 indicates less awareness of her spouse’s needs. The wife was also similar to the husband in that she felt the need to appease him. In her annotated data and final session she verbalized that she was happy with him communicating more and wanted to know if he disagreed with her. This, in
turn, may have allowed her to accommodate him less and make her needs known. This appeared to help increase her marital satisfaction, though not to the degree that the husbands' was increased.

Later Results

See Table 5 and Appendix C for Later results scores for husband and wife. The scores taken a week later of the husband's DYSat increased by twelve points. Two weeks later it decreased by 2 points. Five weeks later in dropped another point. However, the DySat increased by 8 points from the starting score. The wife's DySat score increased by 6 point a week later. Three weeks later it decreased by 6 points and five weeks later it increased by 2 points. Her initial score was increased by 2 points. The increased scores of both partners is not large, but this is married couple who initially rated their marriage as extremely happy. Both partners agreed that sexual activity had increased 200% and both attributed it to being on vacation.
SUMMARY OF CASE STUDY

The focus of this clinical dissertation concerns an evaluation of a cognitive behavioral marital therapy intervention designed to help resolve the issue of division of household labor and thereby increase marital satisfaction.

Research suggests that there is a 50% rate of divorce in the country. The literature for behavior marital therapy has elucidated the criteria for couples in relationship distress. One characteristic about distressed couples is the number of unresolved conflicts. In other words, these would be partners who had frequent arguments about each other's behaviors. As these arguments are not resolved in a satisfactory manner for each spouse, it implies a lack of skills in either negotiating or problem-solving skills.

Examining the body of research, it appears that marital satisfaction is composed of marital power, gender-role expectation and division of Household Labor (MS=MP+GRE+DHL.) Therefore, it is speculated that a more equal division of household labor will impact on marital power and gender-role expectation, making them more equal. This will result in a higher level of satisfaction.

In marriages, couples fight about different issues. In a number of marital assessment inventories, there are
repeated questions about the division of household labor. The repetition of these questions indicates that this is an important issue. The research studies report many couples being asked to respond to survey questions about their feelings and attitudes about the division of household labor. At this time, there are no studies that researched any intervention to resolve this problem.

This investigator has created an intervention in the form of a the Cognitive Behavioral Manual for the Division of Household Labor to be used in group therapy format. Research is supportive of the success of both behavior marital and cognitive behavioral marital therapy. This manual has incorporated interventions from both behavior marital and cognitive behavioral marital therapy. Research is also supportive of group marital therapy.

The initial study consisted of three couples who were members of two local churches. All three couples had issues with the division of household labor. The husband and wife selected for the case study were chosen based on their answers in the initial interview. They were committed to their marriage (divorce was never an option for them) and were highly motivated to complete the group sessions. They lived a very healthy lifestyle (no smoking, drinking, or
drugs) and had no significant history of psychiatric problems. They were in their first marriage, married for 26 years. They have two daughters who live at home. One graduated from college and has a teaching job. The other graduated from high school and has begun college. They rated their marriage as extremely happy. It should be noted that this couple displayed some enmeshed-symbiotic behavior (too much closeness and not much separation and individuation).

The couples were given two marital assessment inventories (The Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Dominance/Accommodation Scale) and a Household Division of Labor Conflict Marital Survey to fill out prior to the intervention and again post-intervention. The spouses rated their marriage as extremely happy and they had a high score in accommodation.

All together there were a total of 6 sessions, each session lasting 90 minutes long. All the sessions were videotaped. Confidentiality was maintained by giving each couple a number. All the raw data was kept locked in a cabinet with the investigator having the only key.

Each of the six sessions followed the protocol manual as it was written. The sessions contained interventions to increase communication skills, problem-solving skills, and empathy for the spouse who usually did more chores. The
sessions also had homework assignments which were all completed.

In the last session the same marital assessment instruments and survey were re-administered. Due to the necessity for expedited sessions (two session in one week rather than one session a week), parts of the marital satisfaction questions from the Dyadic Adjustment Scale were asked of the case study couple one week post-intervention, three weeks post-intervention, and again five weeks, post-intervention. The final score five weeks, post-intervention indicated that the husband had a higher level of marital satisfaction and an increased score in being more self-centered. The wife's final score indicated a small increase in marital satisfaction, and like her husband an increased score in being more self-centered.
CHAPTER 4
PROPOSED EMPIRICAL STUDY

III. Statement of the problem

The research literature review supports the idea that the issue of division of household labor between couples is a frequent source of marital distress. The fighting usually revolves around the fact that the wife does more household labor, even if both spouses work and the wife wants the husband to do more chores. Fighting between couples adds stress to marriage and may lower marital satisfaction (Crosby, 1989; Mashal, 1985). This dissertation proposes that the division of household labor is a metaphor for marital power and gender-role expectation and that all three influence marital satisfaction.

The purpose of the study is to evaluate whether a particular cognitive behaviorally marital intervention can help the couples equalize the division of household labor and in turn increase marital satisfaction. The literature is filled with discussions about the issue of how household labor is divided as revealed in the surveys of couples. However, there has been no case study of treatment for this problem, probably due to the lack of an intervention designed to address this specific issue.
marital satisfaction, then a more equal division of household chores should help increase the level of marital satisfaction.

Related research (See literature review section)

Specific hypothesis

The following hypotheses are offered:

Hypothesis 1

In the treatment group, as a result of this program, post-test scores on the Household of Labor Division Conflict Survey will show a statistically significant increase when compared to pre-test scores. The post-test scores for the treatment group will be significantly higher than for the control group.

Hypothesis 2

As a result of this intervention, on post-test the experimental group will show significantly less rigidity in gender-role expectations as measured by the Household of Labor Division Conflict Survey when compared to the results of their pre-test using the same instrument. They will also show significantly less rigidity than members of the control group.

Hypothesis 3

The experimental group will achieve a statistically significant increase in scores on the post-test of the DAS
in all four factors evaluated by that tool in comparison to their pre-test scores. Also the scores of the experimental group on post-test will be significantly higher than the scores of the control group.

Hypothesis 4

The experimental group will achieve a statistically significant decrease in scores on the post-test of Factor 1 of the D/AS in comparison to the pre-test scores. Also, the scores of the experimental group on post-test will be significantly lower than the scores of the control group.

Hypothesis 5

The experimental group will achieve a statistically significant increase in scores on the post-test scores. Also, the scores of the experimental group on post-test will be significantly higher than the scores of the control group.

Methods

Description of subject population:

This study is designed to evaluate a group treatment protocol designed to enhance marital satisfaction by equalizing the division of labor. The literature review discusses the unequal division of household labor between heterosexual couples. Therefore, this study is intended for use with heterosexual couples with some healthy function in
their marriages. Couples who have severe ongoing addictive illness and psychotic symptoms would not be good candidates for this group therapy. Couples with domestic violence issues might also have difficulty in trying to equalize marital power. If the partner who does fewer chores becomes angry at being asked to do more household labor, this might cause violence in these couples. They too, would not be good candidates for this group therapy. The couples should be at least 21 years old. They should be committed to and motivated to enhance the quality their relationships.

Volunteers will be sought by placing advertising with local churches and synagogues. Therefore, interviewing prospective participants for the initial study this researcher will see happily married couples involved in local churches or synagogues who report with the division of household labor. The study will be presented as a marriage enrichment training program which may lower both defensiveness and anxiety and increase willingness to participate. There should be 60 couples divided into groups of 3 to 5 couples. Thirty of the couples will comprise a 6 week waiting list control group. The other 30 couples will begin the group therapy marital intervention as soon as there are enough couples to make groups of 3 to 5 couples.

Overview of research design
The research design is randomly assigned pre-test post-test control group design format (Campbell and Stanley, 1963).

**Description of measures**

All the couples interviewed will be administered three marital instruments both pre and post intervention. These instruments were chosen based on their validity and reliability. They also had questions related to division of household labor that were related to perception of power.

**Measures**

The Dominance/Accommodation Scale examines who is in control in the relationship. The Dominance/Accommodation Scale measures which partner perceives her/himself as accommodating or dominant. As the division of household labor is more equalized, the difference between the accommodating partner and the dominant partner should decrease. Many of the research articles indicate that the person who is in control is the one who divides the household responsibilities.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale is a good measure of marital satisfaction and will indicate whether the satisfaction level increases as the division of household labor is perceived to be more equally divided.
There is also a short survey questionnaire. The Household Division of Labor Conflict Survey that asks about change in sexual activity and thinking regarding gender role.

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) (Spanier, 1976).

This is a 32-item instrument designed to measure the perception of the quality of a relationship between partners that are living together or married. The DAS was originally normed on a scale of 218 married persons and 94 divorced persons. Factor analysis shows that the instrument measures four areas: dyadic satisfaction (DS), dyadic cohesion (Dcoh), dyadic consensus (Dcon), and affectional expression (AE). The higher the score the higher level of satisfaction. The total score of the DAS has an internal consistency of alpha at .96. The subscales contain the following internal consistency: DS = .94, Dcoh = .81, Dcon = .90 and AE = .73 of internal consistently.

Dominance/Accommodation Scale (D/AS) (Hoskins, 1986). This is a 37-item instrument designed to measure dominance and accommodation in interpersonal relationships especially within couples and families. The D/AS was normed on 78 couples with a mean age of 39 and a mean of 11.6 years in the relationship 78% had college or graduate education and 87% were professional. Hoskins (1986) defines dominance as
trying to control one's environment as in verbalization of opinions, choices, or perspectives in a behavioral or verbal manner that tends to intensely influence or focus the behavior of the partner. The partner who scores higher on dominance would be perceived as the controlling one. The one who accepts the criticism and blame even when it is not appropriate, or is self-effacing, is seen as higher in accommodation. The D/AS has two factors or subscales: a) the self-referent accommodation and b) couple referent accommodation. A higher score on the first factor indicates a tendency to accommodate the partner and a lower score indicates self-assertion. A higher score on the second factor indicates that the partner discerns little cognizance of his or her own needs. The total possible score for this factor is 80. Scores in the midrange for Factor 1 and Factor 2 indicate that this couple has a functional and satisfying relationship. The D/AS has a reliability with an overall alpha of .84. Factor 1 has an alpha of .79 and Factor 2 has an alpha of .65.

The Household Division of Labor Conflict Survey by (Bollinger, 1999).

This is a thirteen-item survey designed to see whether gender-role expectation will change as a result of the
intervention. It also designed to measure the amount of sexual activity.

**Procedures utilized**

The intervention for this case study is designed for 3 to 5 couples in a group psychotherapy format. The intervention is designed to have 6 sessions, 90 minutes each over a 6-week time period. There is a written step-by-step manual (for both the participants and the psychologist) with tasks assigned to enhance problem solving skills, increase communication skills, and develop new empathy towards the spouse who usually does more of the household labor. There will be 60 husbands and wives between the ages of 21 years and up and they should be committed to their marriages. The couples should not be in severe distress. They should have been married at least 3 years. There should be 30 couples in a 6-week waiting list control group. The other 30 couples will receive the group therapy marital intervention. The subjects will be randomly assigned to group. All the couples from both groups will be administered the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Dominance/Accommodation Scale, and the Household Division of Labor Conflict Survey. The treatment group will use the interventions outlined in the protocol manual CBMDHL. The test groups will have the group sessions scheduled once a week for 6 weeks. The waiting list control
group will not receive treatment for 6 weeks. The two instruments will be administered again to all the couples after six weeks. The pre-intervention and post-intervention assessment scores can be used to see whether the interventions were successful in bringing about a higher level of marital satisfaction as measured by the DYAS and an increase in score on the D/AS and the increased number of tasks undertaken by the spouse who did fewer tasks prior to treatment.

Results

Plan for statistical analysis

The randomly assigned pre-test post-test group design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) will be used. The statistics uses will be paired t-test pre-intervention and post-intervention assessment scores and a T-test comparing the treatment group and the control group at post-test.

Anticipated results

The marital satisfaction score on DAS should increase, Factor 1 of the D/AS score should decrease, and Factor 2 of the D/AS score should increase. The gender-role expectation should change to a more flexible expectation.

Limitations of the Study

There are a number of limitations with case studies:
1. The changes in behavior can be explained in many ways other than just the intervention.

2. This study's generalizability may be limited with regard to other types of situations or subjects.

3. There is considerable dependence on anecdotal information.

4. The couples in this study will be all Caucasian. The fact that no minority couples will be involved may limit generalizability to ethnic minority groups.

5. The Psychologist is Chinese American, which may affect the generalizability of the results.

6. All three couples will be middle class socioeconomically, and this may limit generalizability of the study.

7. All three couples will be involved with their church which may also limit generalizability.

References

(In the reference section of the dissertation).

Appendices

(In the appendix section of the dissertation).
References


Appendix A

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL MANUAL FOR DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR (CBMDHL)

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Lily W. Bollinger, M.Ed.
PURPOSE:

Marital therapy can be both challenging and rewarding work. Couples fight about a number of issues. One such issue is about who does what chores at home. The Manual for the Division of Household Labor (MDHL) was developed for heterosexual couples who have issues about the division of household labor. The conflicts that center around who does what chores around the house are often metaphors for marital power. The conflicts are thought by some researchers to be expressions of perceived unequal division of power. The spouse who does more household chores is usually the one perceived as having less power. Chore assignment may also be the result of gender role assignment and expectations. Using this manual can help couples equalize the division of household labor and perhaps promote the perception of more equal power. This will result in fewer arguments and an increased level of marital satisfaction as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and an increase in score on Factor 2 on the Dominance/Accommodation Scale. The Household Survey should indicate changes in thinking about gender role expectation and increase in sexual activity.

AIMS:

The MDHL aims at training couples to increase their problem solving skills and change behavior, thereby reducing
the number of conflicts on the division of household labor. You will help couples accomplish this by teaching them how to divide the household chores in a more equitable manner, by using enhanced communication skills and increased empathy for the position of the spouse who does more of the chores. This will result in increased time available needed for couple activities. It will also create a more egalitarian marriage. This modern view of marriage has more of a partnership orientation and team spirit, providing increased levels of marital satisfaction in both parties.

APPLICATIONS:

The CMDHL is meant to be used in group setting of 3 to 5 couples. It has been used in an outpatient mental health setting.

PROCEDURE

Selection of appropriate group members is important in order to enhance positive outcomes. Prior to beginning group therapy, you must carefully screen and select the member of the group. Yalom (1975) has several helpful suggestions that may be incorporated in the selection of the group. He suggest that patients who are paranoid, brain damaged, exceedingly narcissistic, suicidal, hypochondriacal, acutely psychotic, antisocial, addicted to alcohol, or drugs would not be good candidates for group therapy. As this
intervention will focus on a limited number of sessions, there is a possibility of a high drop out rate. The more careful the screening, the less the risk of attrition. For this particular group, one of the changes has to do with the attitude towards gender role expectation. Therefore, heterosexual couples were chosen for this group therapy.

The type of patients appropriate for this group are heterosexual couples whose conflicts have not intensified to the point that they have consulted an attorney to begin divorce proceedings. Couples whose marriages are bitterly fought and end in violence are also not good candidates for this group. Prior to advertising for group members, the ad needs to be approved by the appropriate approval committee. Local hospitals, churches or synagogues, and other outpatient mental health agencies are good places to advertise. The advertisements needs to ask the future patients to call for information and to arrange for an initial appointment.

In the initial screening Yalom (1975) suggests that the patient be asked if there are any potential life changes. Changes can include, but are not limited to, parents who are terminally ill and may die, transportation problems, change in jobs, relocation, and so on.
Once the couples begin to call in, you need to have the secretary or answering machine take the telephone numbers so the psychologist can return the call. By returning the calls promptly, you lower the risk of people losing interest. Schedule an appointment for the couple to be seen together for a pre-screening session. Tell them they need to plan for an hour to an hour and a half for the interview.

Ask questions from the Initial Interview form. The couple will fill out the Medical History Form and take the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), Dominance/Accommodation Scale, and the Household Division of Labor Survey. Once you have this information, tell them they will be notified as to whether the group therapy would be appropriate for them in the near future.
Initial Interview Questions

Names__________________________________________________________

Date__________________________________________________________

Address_______________________________________________________

Husband's Age____________________________

Wife's Age______________________________

Husband's ethnic background__________________________

Wife's ethnic background________________________

Husband's Occupation________________________________________

Wife's Occupation__________________________________________

Husband's Education________________________________________

Wife's Education___________________________________________

Phone #

Wife: (H)_________________(Wk)__________________________

Fax #________________________

Husband: (H)_________________(Wk)________________________

Fax #_____________________

1) Where did you hear about this research study?
   Church__ Paper__ Internet__ Hospital__ A friend__

2) Are you willing to be part of this research project?
   Yes__ No__

3) How long have you been married? ____Yrs.
Wife: # Marriage____

Husband: # Marriage____

4) Are you considering divorce?  Yes____ No____

5) Why are you interested in participating in this study?
Husband: __________________________________________

____________________________________________________

Wife: ____________________________________________

____________________________________________________

6) Are there any impending life changes?  Yes____ No____

What are they?

____________________________________________________

7) This is a serious study, it will take __ sessions, each session lasting 90 minutes. Are you willing to make the time commitment?  Yes__ No__

8) This group therapy will require the participants to do homework assignments outside of the session, this can take anywhere from a couple hours to a few minutes a week. Are you willing to do this?  Yes____ No____

9) Have you ever participated in a group therapy before?  Yes____ No____

10) Do you have your own reliable transportation?  Yes____ No____
11) On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest level of motivation to complete these sessions, how would you rate your level of motivation?

Husband____  Wife____

12) How do you resolve current disagreements? (Please check all that apply)

A) ____ We discuss the disagreements repeatedly for hours.

B) ____ We yell at each other.

C) ____ We throw things.

D) ____ We sometimes have physical violence when things get too heated.
Medical History

All information will be held in strictest confidence. No real names will be used in the report.

Name__________________________

Have you ever had: Have you been treat for this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
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<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<td>Stroke</td>
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<td>Joint pain</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Where was the cancer?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nervous breakdown</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seizures</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Back problems</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye problems</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing problems</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head injury</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date__________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequent headaches</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating Disorder</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Have you had any surgeries? Yes  No
Date:________________

____________________________________
Date:________________

____________________________________
Date:________________

What medications are you taking?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How much do you drink?  once a week  2-3 times a week
 daily  once a month  once every few months
 once every year

How much do you smoke? less than a pack a day  a pack a day  more than a pack a day do not smoke

Have you ever been in counseling or therapy before? Yes  No
Date:________________

____________________________________
Date:________________

____________________________________
Date:________________

Have you ever been an inpatient in a psychiatric unit? Yes  No
Date________________

Have you ever been an inpatient in a medical unit? Yes  No
Date________________
After screening and selecting the group participants, select a start date. Notify the group members. You might want to have a back up list in case one or more of the first five couples you select is unable to make the commitment be a group member. You are now ready to begin the group therapy.

Working with the manual will help couples increase their problem solving skills and change their behaviors in ways that will promote the perception of equalized power in their relationships. This manual must be followed step-by-step as it is written. Again, the hypothesis is that more equal division of household labor will result in increased marital satisfaction as measured by increased scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, an increase in Factor 2 of the Dominance/Accommodation Scale, changes in gender role expectation and increased sexual activity.

The following tasks will assist the couples in making this possible. For purposes of clarification the spouse who does less housework will be referred to as Spouse 1 and the other spouse will be referred to as Spouse 2.
SESSION 1

TASK 1: ESTABLISHING RAPPORT

A. Goal is:

You need to explain to the couples the benefits of group therapy. You can begin by saying "couples who meet in a group setting have many advantages. For example, in a group setting you can have these benefits:

1) Groups implant hope and each member can both share information and learn from the other members.
2) Hearing other group members discuss similar feelings help you feel that your problems are not so unusual.
3) Group members can help each other develop more socialization skills.
4) Being part of a group will provide members with feelings of connectedness.
5) Group will provide members with a place to vent feelings (Yalom, 1975).

For this reason it is necessary to have rapport with one another."

B. Possible Barriers:

You need to say to the couples: "You may feel defensive about even being here or you are here because your spouse put some pressure on you to come. But please keep in mind, this group is not for the purpose of
blaming or criticizing but to enhance your marriage. As we continue with this process, if you can be patient and approach this as a way to have an even better relationship, you may find you will enjoy this experience."

C. Means of implementation

1) State: "Each couple needs to receive many kudos for participating in this group. It is difficult to change or admit that one's relationship could use some work, but you have and this is a sign of strength. It also means you care about your marriage, another strength. You can be proud of your commitment to the marriage."

2) Say "This group is here to help you enhance your marital satisfaction. One way that will happen is by each of you learning to enhance your communication skills and increase your ability to problem solve, in this case around the issue of the division of household labor. I would like each of you to introduce yourself and share a little about yourself. Feel free to share whatever feels comfortable. I hope you will use this special time to the best advantage." By you speaking first
you both model and help guide the members to a more comfortable level of sharing.

3) Continue; "thank you for participating. Each of you has something worthwhile to contribute. There is no such thing as having nothing worthwhile to say. Everyone has something to say that will help."

4) Observe the body language of the group members. If you see a defensive posture (i.e., sitting in a tense position, frowning, rolling eyes), acknowledge "what is being said will be difficult to hear, but it will be helpful for you to hear it."

5) Make sure you have eye contact with each participant as they speak.

D. Evidence of Attainment:

1) Each participant begins to share, not just once, but several times. There may be laughter.

2) Body posturing will become less defensive. Their body posture will look more relaxed.
**TASK 2: DETERMINE WHICH CHORES CAUSE CONFLICT**

A. **Goal:** Discover which chores are problematic for each couple.

B. **Possible Barriers:**

"This task may be difficult. You may be concerned, this could be the beginning of the end. It could start arguments. A spouse could refuse to come back for the next session. In an extreme situation, one spouse may walk out and leave. It is important to stay with the task."

C. **Means of implementing:**

1) Share with the couples your rationale for doing this task. You might want to say something like: "You need to have a clear understanding of what the problem is in order to fix it. The more clearly you can describe your situation (in terms of how much time and effort) and the more information you provide, the more accurately an appropriate treatment plan can be created. This is the reason we need to find out which chores are the problematic ones for each of you. It will be a guide to the treatment that will work."

2) "Some of you may be concerned about the possibility that discussing which chores you fight
about may stir up conflict. The only way we can address the problem is to increase awareness. Again, the purpose of doing this task is to understand. So bear with this and don't be afraid or defensive."

3) "Even if there are a number of chores that can cause conflict, don't let that intimidate you, we need to deal with this one step at a time or one chore at time."

4) Have each spouse go over the list of chores on the Household Chores form on the following page for 15 minutes. They can rank them in order of which chores create the most conflict.

5) Have the group members discuss their rankings. Having common conflict chores can help the group bond and not feel so alone.

D. Evidence of attainment:
The couples each have checked their list. Be sure to collect the lists in order to use them in a later session.
**Household Chores**

Couple's Name ______________________ Date __________

Please pick out the five chores that you have the most disagreements about and rank them in order from 1-5. (#1 being the most conflicted and five being the least conflicted.)

| __ | Set table for meals | __ | Balance check book |
| __ | Spring cleaning | __ | Pick up dry cleaning |
| __ | Cooking | __ | Pay bills |
| __ | Dishes | __ | Pick up in general |
| __ | Clean kitchen up after dishes | __ | Change bed linens |
| __ | Laundry | __ | Make reservations |
| __ | Ironing | __ | Washing car |
| __ | Vacuuming | __ | Grocery shop |
| __ | Scrub floors | __ | Call baby sitter |
| __ | Clean bathrooms | __ | Mowing lawn |
| __ | Take out trash | | |
| __ | General pickup | | |
| __ | Wash windows | | |
| __ | Mowing lawn | | |
| __ | Shopping | | |
| __ | Polish furniture with oil | | |
| __ | Pet care | | |
SESSION 2

TASK 3  HAVE COUPLE FILL OUT TIME JOURNAL

A) Goal:

Let the members know very clearly and energetically how important it is that each of them do the homework assignment. You can make the analogy of their children doing homework between classes. Tell them it is an integral part of treatment. Talk about research done by Burns & Auerbach (1993), Edelman & Chambliss, (1995), Leung & Heimberg (1996), and Startup & Edmond (1994), tell them all this research indicated that compliance with homework assignments enhances treatment success. Tell them they need to consider that:

1) the psychologist can only meet with you once a week for 90 minutes.

2) There are a great number of hours between sessions.

3) The homework assignments serve two purposes: to help enhance the treatment process and help keep the couples on track by continually working on the marital issues.

4) Reinforce with the couple the need to do homework assignments between sessions. This can be done by asking the couple "what are you willing to do to improve the marital relationship? Are you willing to do homework assignments? These are tasks that we will talk
about together to see what is feasible at home. Your input is important in selecting the tasks."

B. Possible barriers:

1) The couple may feel it takes too long to do the assignment.

2) The couple may not have enough motivation to do it.

C. Means of implementing:

1) Emphasize again that doing homework is a vital part of treatment that will make the treatment even more effective for the couple. Doing the homework accomplishes the goal more quickly.

2) You might say "this particular task will be the most time consuming in this group training. Please don't get discouraged and give up. If you persist you, you will reap the benefits of a rewarding relationship."

3) Give each couple a Time Journal sheet. Spouse 2 needs to carefully record the amount of time it takes Spouse 1 to do the chores that are problematic for them. They cannot accept a reported amount of time, they must be there to see the chore done. This is not a punishment but an information gathering assignment. The rationale
for this assignment is to help develop respect and appreciation for both the time and skill it takes to complete these chores. This will begin the process of cognitive therapy for cognitive restructuring. This is called "examine the evidence."

4) Present the directions clearly and concisely to avoid misinterpretation. Ask the couples to tell you what the homework assignment is in their own words.

5) State "each of you will bring back the completed Time Journal sheets next week so we can talk about them together and share information. You will need to select the chores that are listed on the previous page. Begin with the 1 chore that causes the most problem. If you can realistically record one chore, that is fine. But you must report the time it takes at least for one chore."

6) Tell the couples " I would also like you to record the feelings you had while watching the spouse do the chore. You may experience a range of feelings:

"Wow, I didn't know it took so long!" (surprise)
"I sure don't want to get stuck doing that!" (dislike, disquiet)
"I had no idea that required so much effort or strength" (guilt)
"I didn't know it required so much coordination" (surprise)
...whatever the feelings, please be honest and write them down. Use as many lines as needed.

7) "We will now take a few minutes for each couple to talk among themselves and decide how and when it is most feasible to schedule this."

Evidence of attainment:

1) A plan by end of session.

2) A completed Time Journal the following week.
### Time Journal

Name _____________________________  Date _____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>Stop Time</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

Feelings and Thoughts Spouse 2 had about watching Spouse 1 doing the chores:

1) ____________________________________________

2) ____________________________________________

3) ____________________________________________

4) ____________________________________________
TASK 4  ASSESS BELIEFS ABOUT HOUSEHOLD CHORES

A.

1) Goals

a) Have the group share the feelings that Spouse 2 had while watching and recording Time Journal.

b) Find out what effects the intergenerational schema (beliefs and rules for living).

2) Means of implementing:

a) "We have no idea how much family history influences our belief system (schema), even though it may not be applicable to the present time. There is a story about several generations of women who followed an old family recipe for making roast beef. They seasoned it the same way and then cut off a piece of before cooking it. One day the youngest woman asked her mother why she always cut a piece off the roast. Her mother didn’t know so they called and asked her grandmother, who said “I cut the piece off because my pan was too small to hold the whole roast.” One questioned why you needed to cut off a part of the roast as part of the preparation process until a current generation member asked her grandmother why one needed to cut off a piece of the roast. The reason a piece was
cut off was that the original roast cooker had a pan that was too small to hold the full size of the roast! In this case, the schema was: in order to make this roast the family way, you needed to cut a piece off prior to baking it. Schema are very important and may only need to be changed. Schemas (beliefs) are the rules you grew up with that make up the rules you live by. Some examples of schemas in the division of household labor may be: women always do all the housework or most of it; it is a woman's role to do laundry, they like to do it; women are supposed to be great cooks; men don't do dusting or vacuuming: men are too busy with their jobs to help out; even if both husband and wife work, women should still do more housework.

2) "Both of you please out form called When You Were Growing Up, Who Did Which Chores?

3) The list below contains questions that address your belief system:

a) What did you hear or see from your dad about who did what chores?

b) What did you hear or see from your mother about who did what chores?
c) What did the television and media tell you about gender role expectation on the division of household labor?

d) What did you see or hear about how your neighbors divided their chores?

e) What are the advantages and disadvantages of continuing this? (marital conflict? no free time to play? an exhausted spouse who has no energy to play?)

f) Both of you examine the evidence for how long the chore takes to perform. Remember the assignment where you filled out the Time Journal diary? Could this chore time be divided so you would have more free time to have fun? Many spouses who don't share in the housework complain that all their spouse does is clean house. By keeping the Time Journal or doing a role reversal they can see or experience how long it really takes to do the chore.

g) What are the pros and cons related to who did which chore? What are the pros and
cons of changing the chore assignment? Maybe one spouse might be better at one kind of chore than the other or have a preference for it. Perhaps, one spouse is more physically capable of doing a heavier chore? Is it possible that there is a particular chore that one spouse dislikes much he or she take a longer time to do it (i.e., clean the bathroom.) Perhaps a spouse is not physically strong enough to move the vacuum cleaner around. It may not be a physical drain for the other spouse to do it. Please fill out Pro and Con List Example.

e) What are the options and alternatives to this chore assignment? Really brainstorm on this and get as creative as you can. For example, could you create a good-natured contest to see who is faster and still does an adequate job? Maybe, if you both disliked a particular chore you could arrange a schedule where one does it one week and the other does it the next week? Maybe you can create a behavior modification plan where there is a defined reward for doing the chore. It would be
optimal for the reward to benefit both spouses. A reward could include using the free time to engage in an activity both enjoy: dinner out, a movie, etc. Please fill out form called **Options and Alternatives.**

i) Decatastrophosize (lessen the fear of the worst happening) potential explosive reactions by asking, "What is the worse that could happen if Spouse 2 did some of the conflict causing chores that he or she doesn't now? Is there a fear that Spouse 2 will end up doing all the work? Does saying yes to doing that task mean giving up all your power? Does this mean losing all your power and becoming a wimp?"

j) Ask the couple to fantasize their concerns about what might happen if they did share chores. If we share our chores then. . . At this point, the group members will be asked to voice fears they have that can be either real, absurd or even silly. Some possible fears might include:

"people might think I'm not in charge any more"
"I am henpecked"
"Spouse 1 needs to do it, my mother did it, if she knew I did it she'd roll over in her grave and I'd might feel guilty that my partner is so different from how I was raised"
"If Spouse 1 doesn't continue to do all the housework, does it mean I am no longer loved and cared for?"

D. Evidence of attainment

1) Completed forms.
When you were growing up, who did which chores?

Name_______________________________________ Date________________________

Please use M for Mother, D for Dad and S for Shared by both and N for neither.

____ Set table for meals ______ Watching the children

____ Cooking ____________________________ Call baby sitter when

____ Dishes _____________________________ planning an evening out.

____ Make reservations _____________________ Take out trash

____ Clean kitchen up ______________________ Household maintenance &

____ Grocery Shopping ______________________ repairs

____ General pickup _________________________ Shoveled snow

____ Laundry ______________________________ Wash windows

____ Ironing _______________________________ Yard Work

____ Balance check book _____________________ Car repairs

____ Vacuuming ______________________________ Washed the cars

____ Scrub floors ______ Feel free to add any chores:

____ Clean bathrooms _________________________

____ Dust _________________________________

____ Polish furniture with oil _______________________

____ Change bed linens ________________________

____ Pet care _________________________________

____ Pay bills ________________________________

____ Pick up dry cleaning _______________________

____ General pick up ___________________________
Example of Pro and Con List

Name ___________________________ Date ______________________

Women respond here:
Indicate here a chore husband might do __________
Please which pros and cons apply if he did this chore.

PRO
___ It would take less time than if I did it.
___ It would be easier for him strength.
___ He would do the chore more quickly.
___ I would feel heard and respected.

CON
___ It would take more time than if I did it.
___ He can’t physically do the chore.
___ He’ll get angry about having to do the chore.
___

Men respond here:
Pros
___ She will feel heard and respected
___ There will be less fights about this.
___ It takes me less time doing the chore
___ We would have more free time.

Cons
___ I lose some free time.
___ I will be angry about doing this chore.
Options and Alternatives Form

Name ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Name of Chore _______________________

Please check each possible option and alternative for reducing conflict about this chore. Feel free to add your own to the list. Please check the options you think might work for you or are willing to try.

- Have a friendly contest to see who does which chore faster.
- Alternate weeks for who does which chore.
- Have a defined reward for doing the chore such as:
  - dinner out
  - seeing a movie
  - plan a romantic night together
  - __________________________
  - __________________________
  - __________________________
  - __________________________
SESSION 3

TASK 5 ROLE REVERSAL

A. Goal: Get Spouse 1 and Spouse 2 to change roles

B. Possible barriers:
   1) Spouse 1 may sabotage Spouse 2.
   2) Spouse 2 may not be willing to change.

C. Means of Implementation
   1) Address barriers by emphasizing again that homework assignments are important to reaching the goal. It is also important to follow through on the assignment exactly as it is given.
   2) Emphasize how important it is to complete the homework assignment no matter how difficult or inconvenient it is.
   3) Review the Arnold Lazarus' *Myths of Marriage* pertaining to the chapter on *Good Husbands Do Household Repairs and Good Wives Do Laundry.* Psychologist, needs to emphasize to the group that Arnold Lazarus is a world famous and renowned psychologist.
   4) Ask for the group's reactions to the chapter.
   5) Ask for the group to verbalize fears and reluctance about role reversal. Address the fears one by one.
   Again, remember this is not a punishment or pay back,
this is for information gathering and to help you understand each other better.

6) You return the completed forms the couples filled out in previous session on which chores caused conflicts.

7) Spouse 1 asks Spouse 2 which of the chores he or she would be willing to do for the next week. Encourage Spouse 2 to select the least noxious of the chores to begin with. Use the Hierarchy of Chores form to help select the easier chores to do first.

8) Spouse 1 is to put a second check mark next to the chores from the hierarchy if Spouse 2 completed the task.

D. Evidence of attainment: The completed forms are returned.
Hierarchy of Chores

Name ___________________________ Date ________________________

List the least difficult chore to the most difficult chore:

1) ________________________________

2) ________________________________

3) ________________________________

4) ________________________________

5) ________________________________

6) ________________________________

7) ________________________________
SESSION 4

TASK 6 TEACHING THE COUPLES HOW TO NEGOTIATE AND COMPROMISE

A. Goals: Teach communication skills.

B. Possible Barriers

1) The couples may get defensive.

2) The skills may look arduous and tedious.

C. Means of implementing:

1) The psychologist begins the session by saying "many people unwittingly sabotage themselves by how they ask or don't ask. They may ask too aggressively or take short cuts in asking.

2) A volunteer will be asked by the psychologist to role play on how not to ask for something. You are not expected to be perfect actors or actresses. But role playing will help you and the others see what specific communication skills you need. Have couples critique, tactfully, what went wrong and that affected the communication negatively. Give couples Ways To Sabotage Communication form.

3) In order to maximize communication potential, here are some suggestions that increase the chances of both talking and being heard:

a) The couple should have no distractions.
b) The television, computer and the stereo should be turned off.

c) Children should be in bed or playing outside. They should be told that mom and dad are talking for a few minutes and not to interrupt.

d) The couple should sit facing each other, making eye contact when they speak.

e) The tone and volume of their voices should be quiet, not loud, sarcastic or threatening.

f) All statements should be made with "I need ___ from you". No accusation, no stating of "you never, or you always..." (Jacobson & Christensen, 1996.).

4) This would be a good time to have the couples separate into a Spouse 1 group and Spouse 2 group. Have the Spouse 1s share the 5 chores they are most frequently asked to perform. The Spouse 2s are to discuss the 5 most common excuses they hear from their spouse is why they should not do the chores.

5) The group reconvenes and shares what was discussed. Hopefully there will be laughter as this is discussed.
6) Provide each couple with the form called Example of Good Communication: Asking and Responding.

7) Role playing will help demonstrate as well as trouble shoot in the practice sessions. Ask one of the volunteers to be a participant with you in the role play.

8) Have the couples join together and share what was discussed.

9) The couples will practice with each other.

10) The couples will fill out the form called Optimum Asking.

D. Evidence of attainment: Direct observation by psychologist.
Ways to Sabotage Communication

1) Talk to each other while in different rooms.
2) Expect your spouse to read your mind.
3) Have the television on.
4) Have the stereo on.
5) Read the paper or a book while your spouse is speaking to you.
6) Start your requests with:
   You never ________________
7) Start your requests with
   You always ________________
8) Speak to your spouse in a loud tone of voice.
9) Have offensive posturing (dirty looks, hands on hip, rolling your eyes) as you speak.
Example of Communicating a Request

Partner I: I am glad we are talking. This marriage is important to me. I want us to get along better. I feel sad that we seem so far apart. I would like more time for us to have fun. If you can share more of the household chores that would free me up to have time for us. I would like to do . . .

Partner II: I am not sure I can do all these tasks. Can we compromise? I would like to do . . .

(Jacobson & Christensen, 1996)
6) When is the worst time to ask?

7) Any other suggestions?
SESSION 5

TASK 7  HAVE COUPLES FILL OUT NEW CONTRACT FOR DIVISION OF

HOUSEHOLD LABOR.

A. Goal: Have couple fill out form called New Contract according to their new compromises.

B. Means of implementation

1) We are now ready to create a New Contract on division of household chores.

2) "Keep in mind that it is possible that some of you may unwittingly sabotage yourselves. For example, one of you might not let your spouse do the chore, or you may want the chore done exactly how you do it or you may re-do it. Even though the temptation is strong to do any of the above, if you can resist, the goal will be reached more quickly and easily."

3) "Again, let me emphasize how important it is to do homework assignments. You have done them faithfully. Keep up the good work. It is really important that both of you make an attempt to do this homework assignment."

4) "Each of you will receive the form called New Contract. Take some time to discuss how you both would like to fill out the contract."
5) "Are there are any questions or concerns about the contract? It is important that both of you agree on how the chore is to be done."

6) "Spouse 2, please pick the chores that create less conflict between you two.

7) Have spouses fill out the New Contract form

8) Hand Spouse 1 the form called Behavioral Data Collection which Spouse 1 is to fill out as Spouse 2 does the agreed upon chores.

8) Please follow through with the New Contract and Behavioral Data Collection.

D. Evidence of attainment: Both forms are filled out and signed by the participants.
NEW CONTRACT

Date__________________

Spouse 2 Signs this part:

I ______________ agree that during the week of ______________ I will do these household chores:

____________________

____________________

____________________

with a pleasant attitude.

Spouse 1 signs this part:

I ______________ agree that during the week of ______________ I will praise and thank my spouse with sincerity for all the chores that my spouse _____________ has done. I will not criticize how the chore was done, nor will I redo the chore.
Behavioral Collection Data

Name________________________________ Date__________________________

During the week of ________________________

These chores were agreed upon by my spouse and I:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Chore</th>
<th>Done?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My feelings towards my spouse this past week as I watched him or her do additional chores:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
SESSION 6

EVALUATE RESULTS OF NEW CONTRACT ACCORDING TO

BEHAVIORAL COLLECTION DATA

A. Goals:

1) Determine how well the assignment was done. "You have put forth an effort, this is to be commended. Let's look at how well the contracts were fulfilled." If they were not fulfilled, help the couple to modify the contract accordingly.

2) Summarize and ask for feedback about the group therapy experience.

3) If there is time, administer the marital inventories and household survey that you gave prior to the intervention.

B. Check if:

1) Spouse 1 may have helped Spouse 2 by doing the chore first.

2) Spouse 1 may have criticized how Spouse 2 did the chore.

3) Were the chores too hard?

4) Was it an issue of bad timing (such as too many social commitments that weekend? Flu? other negative events?)
3) Based on the barriers, refine the original contract.

B. Means of implementation

1) Encourage the couple. "Rome was not built in a day." One step at a time and the important thing is that you try again. You made a good effort; don't be discouraged. Try again."

2) Encourage them to make smaller or more realistic changes.


D. Evidence of Attainment

1) Forms are filled out and New Contract is fulfilled.

2) Scores on the marital instruments are higher than the baseline scores.
APPENDIX B

SAMPLE OF RETURNED FORMS.
**Hierarchy of Chores**

Couple's Name — **H & W**

Please pick out the top five chores that you have disagreements about and rank them in the order of 1-5; #1 being the more conflicted and five being the least conflicted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Chore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Scrub floors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clean bathrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Laundry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ironing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pick up dry cleaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change bed linens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make reservations for activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washing Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call baby sitter if planning an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take out trash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General pickup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wash windows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mow lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pay bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pet care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balance check book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pick up in general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Time Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>Stop Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/5</td>
<td>Ironing</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>7:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/5</td>
<td>Scrub Kitchen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feelings and Thoughts Spouse 1 had about watching Spouse 2 doing the chores:

1) He looks awkward.

2) It's difficult keeping my mouth shut; not pointing out how normally I iron, he just thinks I'm lazy.

3) He never washed the clothes but he's trying so hard to do a good job.

4)
# Time Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>Stop Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/15</td>
<td>Ironing</td>
<td>6:45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/15</td>
<td>Scrub-Flors</td>
<td>6:15</td>
<td>7:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feelings and Thoughts Spouse 1 had about watch Spouse 2 doing the chores:

1) She's making more work by moving the bucket instead of putting it at the end of the room.
2) I should have been doing it.
When you were growing up, who did which Chores?

| Name: H & W | Date: 6/1/99 |

Please use M for Mother, D for Dad and S for Shared by both and N for neither.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chore Description</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set table for meals</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishes</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean kitchen up after dishes</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Shopping</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironing</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacuuming</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrub floors</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean bathrooms</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dust</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish furniture with oil</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pet care</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay bills</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance check book</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick up in general</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick up dry cleaning</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change bed linens</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching the children</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call baby sitter if planning an</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evening out</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take out trash</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General pickup</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash windows</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yard Work</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household maintenance &amp; repairs</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoveled snow</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washed the cars</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car repairs</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make reservations for activity</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feel free to add any chores:
When you were growing up, who did which Chores?

Name: W ______________________ Date: 6/1/99

Please use M for Mother, D for Dad and S for Shared by both and N for neither.

- Set table for meals
- Cooking
- Dishes
- Make reservations for activity
- Clean kitchen up after dishes
- Grocery Shopping
- Laundry
- Ironing
- Vacuuming
- Scrub floors
- Clean bathrooms
- Dust
- Change bed linens
- Pet care
- Pay bills
- Balance check book
- Pick up in general
- Pick up dry cleaning
- Watching the children
- Call baby sitter if planning an evening out.
- Take out trash
- Household maintenance & repairs
- General pickup
- Wash windows
- Yard Work
- Car repairs
- Shoveled snow
- Washed the cars
- Polish furniture with oil

Feel free to add any missed chores

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________
1) Talk to each other in different rooms.

2) Expect your spouse to mind read.

3) Have the television on.

4) Have the stereo on.

5) Read the paper or a book while your spouse is speaking to you.

6) Start your requests with:

   You never __________________________

7) Start your requests with

   You always _________________________

8) Speak to your spouse in loud tone of voice.

9) Have offensive posturing (dirty looks, hands on hip, rolling your eyes) as you speak.
Optimum Asking

Name: ___________________________ Date: 6/8/99

Below are a list of preference questions. The answer to these questions are important for teaching one another how to set the atmosphere for good communication.

1) Are you in a better mood in the
   - Morning
   - Afternoon
   - Night

2) Do you respond better
   - Before a meal
   - After a meal

3) When asked to do a chore would you prefer
   - A definite deadline
   - A more flexible deadline (such as some time today, this week, this month)

4) If you are given a flexible deadline, do you need to be reminded?
   - Yes
   - No

5) How many chore requests are acceptable for your spouse to ask you in one setting?
   - 1
   - 2
6) When is the worst time to ask you?  
Morning after Work

7) Any other suggestions?
Below are a list of preference questions. The answer to these questions are important for teaching one another how to set the atmosphere for good communication.

1) Are you mood in the
   _ Mornin
   _ After
   _ Night

2) Do you respond better
   _ Before a meal
   _ After a meal

3) When asked to do a chore would you prefer
   _ A definite dead line
   _ A more flexible dead line (such as some time today, this week, this month)

4) If you are given a flexible dead line, do you need to be reminded?
   _ Yes
   _ No

5) How many chore requests are acceptable for your spouse to ask you in one setting?
   _ 1
   _ 2
3

more than 4

6) When is the worst time to ask you?
   
   right after work

7) Any other suggestions?
Example of Pro and Con List

Name: H & W  Date: 6/3/99

For the woman:

If he does this chore (fill in particular chore). Please mark that which applies. Please feel free to add to the list.

PRO

- Takes less time for my him.
- He has for strength.
- He does the chore more quickly.
- I will feel heard and respected.
- There will be less fights about this.

CON

- Takes more time.
- Can't physically do the chore.
- He'll get angry having to do the chore.
- He will do a sloppy job.

For the man:

- She will feel heard and respected.
- There will be less fights about this.
- It takes me more time
- I lose some free time.
- I will be angry about doing...
We will have more free time to do this chore.
Example of Pro and Con List

For the woman:

If he does this chore (fill in particular chore). Please mark that which applies. Please feel free to add to the list.

PRO

- Takes less time for my him.
- He has for strength.
- He does the chore more quickly.
- I will feel heard and respected.
- There will be less fights about this.

CON

- Takes more time.
- Can't physically do the chore.
- He'll get angry having to do the chore.
- He will do a sloppy job.

For the man:

- She will feel heard and respected.
- There will be less fights about this.
- It takes me more time

- I lose some free time.
- I will be angry about doing
We will have more free time
to do this chore.
Options and Alternatives Form

Name: [Name]

Name of Chore: [Chore]

Please check what applies to your possible options and alternative to this chore. Feel free to add your own to the list.

- Have a friendly contest to see who does what chore faster.
- Alternate weeks for who does what chore.
- Have a defined reward for doing the chore such as:
  - dinner out
  - seeing a movie
  - plan a romantic night together
  - [Other]
  - [Other]
3) Based on the barriers, refine the original contract.

B. Means of implementation

1) Encourage the couple. "Rome was not built in a day." One step at a time and the important thing is that you try again. You made a good effort; don't be discouraged. Try again.

2) Encourage them to make smaller or more realistic changes.


D. Evidence of Attainment

1) Forms are filled out and New Contract is fulfilled.

2) Scores on the marital instruments are higher than the baseline scores.
APPENDIX C

**Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)**

(Graham B. Spanier, 1976)

Many persons have disagreements with their relationships. Please indicate below the appropriate extent of the agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

- 5 = Always agree
- 4 = Almost always agree
- 3 = Occasionally disagree
- 2 = Frequently disagree
- 1 = Almost always disagree
- 0 = Always disagree

1. Handling family finances
2. Matters of recreation
3. Religious matters
4. Demonstration of affection
5. Friends
6. Sex relations
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)
8. Philosophy of life
9. Ways of dealing with in-laws
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important
11. Amount of time spent together
12. Making major decisions
13. Household tasks
14. Leisure time activities
15. Career decisions

Please indicate below approximately how often the following items occur between you and your partner.

1= All the time
2= Most of the time
3= More often than not
4= Occasionally
5= Rarely
6= Never

16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating the relationship.

17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?

18. In general, how often do things between you and your partner are going well.

19. Do you confide in your mate?
20. Do you ever regret you married (or lived together?)

21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?

22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"

23. Do you kiss your mate?

Every day  Almost every day  Occasionally  Rarely  Never

24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

All of them  Most of them  Some of them  Very few  None of them

25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas.

26. Laugh together.

27. Calmly discuss something

28. Work together on a project.
There are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Circle yes or no)

29. Yes No Being too tired for sex.
30. Yes No Not showing love.

31. The numbers on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy" represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the number that best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Extremely Fairly A little Happy Very Extremely Perfect
Unhappy Unhappy Unhappy Happy Happy
APPENDIX D

The Dominance Accommodation Scale

Carol Noll Hoskins, PhD

New York University

On the following pages you will find a series of sentences that describe feelings about your relationship to your partner. Please read each sentence carefully and respond according to how you feel in general. Please mark all the items.

A rating scale is provided for your response. An example of how to use the scale to indicate your true feeling is provided below. Your first reaction is best. There are no right or wrong answers.

EXAMPLE

I find it is better if I don’t interfere with how my partner manages money.

SA  A  U  D  SD

If you circle SA
It means you **Strongly agree**

If you circle **A**
It means you **Agree**

If you circle **U**
It means you are **Undecided**.

If you circle **D**
It means **Disagree**
1. I know my partner takes me seriously when I am concerned about conditions in today’s world.

2. Even if I could sleep late, I usually get up because my partner wants me to.

3. When I need help from my partner in the house, I insist on it.

4. My partner is good about getting together with my friends even though he (she) may not like them as well as I do.

5. I usually give in for the sake of peace if my partner explains why he (she) thinks my views are wrong.

6. I insist on having my say about how much free time we spend with friends.

7. If my partner wakes me up, I try to be pleasant even if I don’t feel that way.

8. Even though my partner has work to do, I know he (she) will put it aside if I need to have time together.

9. When it is my partner’s turn to clean up after dinner, I don’t do it.

10. If my partner didn’t understand my need to have some money of my own, I wouldn’t make an issue over it.

11. I try to go along with my partner’s ideas for weekend activities even if I have other thoughts.
12. We spend money according to whether we both agree that we can afford it.

13. If I feel like eating before my partner gets home, I do.

14. My partner usually decides when it is time for us to call it a day.

15. My partner considers my interests as much as his (hers) when planning for leisure time.

16. If I don’t have to be up in the morning, I expect my partner to get going by himself(herself).

17. When we disagree over some aspect of our sex life, I express my views.

18. When our ideas for the weekend are different, I say so.

19. When I make plans with my friends, my partner will adjust his (her) schedule.

20. If my partner is late getting home, he(she) can get his (her) own dinner.

21. If my partner awakens me when I want to sleep, I let him (her) know about it.

22. Because our basic values are similar, I am satisfied with our lifestyle.

23. If my partner makes love in a way that I find disagreeable, I don’t go along with it.

24. When I let my partner know I need to be close, I know he (she) will take time for it.

25. Even though I can tell when my partner wants sex, I don’t feel I have to accommodate him (her).

26. I don’t quit what I am doing and go to bed just because my partner is ready.
27. My partner doesn’t seriously consider my worries about social conditions.

28. I try to maintain friendships even if my partner isn’t interested.

29. If my partner objects to my telling a waitress that she charged too little, I don’t do it.

30. My partner’s interests come first when planning leisure time.

31. When we disagree on what to eat, my partner gives in as much as I do.

32. I prefer to back off if my partner doesn’t respond to me sexually.

33. I am comfortable talking about life and its meaning with my partner because he (she) shows respect for my beliefs.

34. If I need to be close, can’t count on my partner to put other demands aside.

35. I feel obligated to serve dinner even if my partner is late.

36. I am often reluctant to spend money without consulting my partner.

37. Even if I get hungry before my partner gets home, I feel better if I wait.
APPENDIX E

Household Division of Labor Conflict Survey

Name ___________________________ Date __________________

Please use the following scale to answer these questions:
0= never
1= sometimes
2= often
3= very often

1) ___ Women should clean house and men should do the outside yard and maintenance work.
2) ___ One reason I got married was so my spouse could do the household chores.
3) ___ I believe my spouse’s standard of cleanliness is too high.
4) ___ My spouse does nothing at home.
5) ___ My spouse takes so long to do any chore, it’s quicker if I do it myself.
6) ___ My spouse says he will do the chore and never gets around to doing it.
7) ___ If my spouse does the chore, he does it so poorly I have to re-do it.
8) ___ I am angry at my spouse for not sharing in household chores.
9) ___ We have sex
   ___ more than once a week
   ___ twice a month
   ___ once a month
   ___ a few times a year.
10) We fight about household chores
    ___ more than once a week
    ___ twice a month
    ___ once a month
    ___ a few times a year.

Please answer these questions in addition to the ones above only after you have completed the program:
11) This group experience has changed my view on gender role.
    ___ Not at all ___ A Little ___ Somewhat ___ Yes ___ Very much so
12) This group training has help my marriage.
   ___ Not at all ___ A Little ___ Somewhat ___ Yes ___ Very much so

13) The homework assignments were helpful to our marriage.
   ___ Not at all ___ A Little ___ Somewhat ___ Yes ___ Very much so
Table 1. Pre-intervention Scores for Husband and Wife

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DyCoh</th>
<th>DySat</th>
<th>DyCoh</th>
<th>DyAff</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hus.</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wif.</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>62</td>
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</table>
Table 2  Post-intervention Scores for Husband and Wife

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DyCoh</th>
<th>DySat</th>
<th>DyCoh</th>
<th>DyAff</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hus.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>53</td>
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</table>
Table 3 Later results of Husband Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>DySat</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Week Later</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2X a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Weeks Later</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2X a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Weeks Later</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Increased by 200% (on vacation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DySat</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Week Later</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2X a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Weeks Later</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2 X a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Weeks Later</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>200% (on vacation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 Summary of the Studies that Correlate Marital Power and Marital Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Critique of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bagarrozi, 1990 | 42 married Caucasian Couples    | Survey  | Spousal Inventory of Desired Changes    | Less powerful spouse is more likely to develop psychiatric Symptoms | No minority groups represented  
                                                             and Relationship Barriers                          | No ages reported  
<pre><code>                                                                                              | No mention of number of years married or number marriages                                                                 |
                                                                                              | This can cause problems with generalizability                                                  |
</code></pre>
<p>| Baxter, 1992    | 831 survey respondents, married or defacto relationship | Survey  | Regression analysis                     | Men who worked longer hours outside the home worked can less in the home | No mention of ethnicity, ages number of marriages. This cause problems with generalizability |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Critique of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blair, 1992</td>
<td>3190 couples</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Small percentage of couples share any real gender similarity/parallel tasks</td>
<td>No mention made of ethnicity, ages, number of marriages, this can cause problems with generalizability</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Families and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Households</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1988</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Booth, 1994</td>
<td>1298 married persons 55</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Longitudinal</td>
<td>Inequity of marital power as seen by division of household labor</td>
<td>No mention of ethnicity, ages, number of marriages. Telephone interviews can cause initial responses that may be different if given an opportunity to read the question before responding. Can cause problems with generalizability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and younger</td>
<td>interviews</td>
<td>study of</td>
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<td>Source</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calasanti and Bailey</td>
<td>U.S. - 422 couples</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Regression analysis</td>
<td>The Socialist feminine group used in study may give insights into how inequities in the home are maintained.</td>
<td>No ethnic minority cultural, no mention of ages, number of marriages, may cause problems with generalizability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Bailey 1991</td>
<td>Sweden-483</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles and Hopfinger,</td>
<td>622 couples married 0-10 years in Germany and France and parts of Sweden</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Dependent variable for regression-analysis scale measuring men's participation dish-washing, laundry, shopping cooking and cleaning</td>
<td>Demand/response capacity hypothesis-dummy variable includes children, number of hours per week paid employment for husband and wife and number of rooms in home household labor as being fair. Perception of division of</td>
<td>No ethnic minority groups used in study, no mention of ages, number of marriages, cultural specificity may limit generalizability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source</td>
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<td>Measures</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Critique of Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Komter, 1989</td>
<td>60 couples ages 20-55 with children living at home</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview conducted with men and women separately.</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Latent power played more of role in lower socioeconomic classes</td>
<td>No mention made of how many couples fit into the SES category, this can cause problems with generalizability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madanes, 1982</td>
<td>3 couples</td>
<td>Clinical case studies</td>
<td>Patient report and clinical observation</td>
<td>How a couple divided responsibilities and arranged hierarchies of these areas impacted on satisfaction marital</td>
<td>The results are based on client report but not strict research methodology. Results may be questionable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Subjects</td>
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<td>Critique of Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mederer,</td>
<td>359 couples median age is 44,</td>
<td>19 item Self-report</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wives accomplished the bulk of the housework</td>
<td>No ethnicity of couples is mentioned. This may limit generalizability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>number of years married is 19,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women with more education and income do less labor than women with lower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81% in their first marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>education and lower total family income.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyke,</td>
<td>70 divorced individuals who</td>
<td>Comparative Self-report method interview data</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spouse with marital power is defined as who makes the decisions, has</td>
<td>No couples are represented in this study, this can cause problems with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>remained single.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>more success in making changes, and is more successful in talking about</td>
<td>generalizability for couples</td>
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<td></td>
<td>sensitive issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Critique of Study</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Mirowsky, and Huber 1983</td>
<td>809 adults</td>
<td>Telephone survey</td>
<td>Self-report of English-speaking residents</td>
<td>Measures sense of control, job qualities, autonomy, earning, authority, family context-housework</td>
<td>Average sense of control is greater with people with paying jobs than those without. Differences increase with greater job autonomy. Women who has lower salaries, lower autonomy, more responsibility of housework, negated any positive association with employment and sense of autonomy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whisman and Jacobson, 1990</td>
<td>54 couples, 31 were distressed, 23 were non-distressed</td>
<td>(1) Dyadic Self-report Adjustment Scale (2) Verbal Content Coding System</td>
<td>The greater the power inequity between the partners prior to marital therapy, the greater they benefitted from therapy as indicated by marital satisfaction scores.</td>
<td>No mention of ethnicity, age, length of marriage number of marriage this can cause problems with generalizability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 Summary of Studies Correlating Gender-role Expectation and Division of Household Labor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Critique of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almeida, Maggs, and Galambos, 1993</td>
<td>104 Canadian dual earning couples</td>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>Longitudinal study of families</td>
<td>Wives who worked longer hours still performed a higher percentage of the chores than did the husbands</td>
<td>This study was culture specific and may not be generalizable to different ethnic groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball, Cowan, and Cowan, 1995</td>
<td>27 couples- 18 with children 19 undecided about having children</td>
<td>Transcribed audio taped accounts of questionnaires</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Wives raised issues earlier, greater tolerance for conflict in division of household labor but less for husband’s domination in conversation</td>
<td>Ethnicity of couples not defined, ages not mentioned, length and number of marriage, this can cause problems with generalizability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Critique of Study</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bittman and Lovejoy, 1993</td>
<td>65 Australian heterosexual couples</td>
<td>1983 Australian Values study</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Men perceived they did more chores than they actually did and wives completed fewer chores than the husbands thought they did. One explanation was men were more tolerant of dirt.</td>
<td>This is an ethnic specific study and may not be generalizable to other ethnic groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blair and Lichter, 1991</td>
<td>3190 couples</td>
<td>National Survey of Families and Households 1988</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>There is still a small percentage of couples who share any real gender similarity/parallel tasks</td>
<td>No mention made of ethnic groups, age length of marriage, number marriages. This can cause problems with generalizability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coltrane, 1992</td>
<td>766 subjects 28 yrs, and older</td>
<td>National Survey of Families and Households 1988</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>A wife's ideals and marital power allow her to do less around the house and encourage the husband to do more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dermo and Cook, 1993</td>
<td>2528 mothers</td>
<td>National Survey of Families and Households 1988</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Mothers spend 40-44 hours per week on household labor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No description of subjects (couple, married, number of marriage, length of marriage, ethnicity), this can cause problems with generalizability
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masako and Coltrane 1992</td>
<td>640 subjects</td>
<td>National Survey of Families and Households 1988</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Husbands contribute 21% of couple’s total time devoted to housework, the money the wife made, the more housework the husband did. No description of the subjects couple? married? number and length of marriage? ethnicity?) This can cause problems with generalizability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McHale and Crouter, 1992</td>
<td>153 couples with school age children</td>
<td>Home Interviews Women Scales 1) Attitudes Towards 2) The Marriage Opinion Questionnaire 3) Aspects of Married Life 4) Conflict Scale of Relationships</td>
<td>Self-Report</td>
<td>When either the husband or wife did more household chores based upon gender-role expectation, that spouse was more depressed. No description of number and length of marriage, ethnicity) This can cause problems with generalizability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pina and Bengston, 1993</td>
<td>144 primarily white working to middle class married women - married 15.6 yrs.</td>
<td>1) Satisfaction with help and support from husbands 2) Frequency of husband wanting too much help and support 3) Marital quality 4) Depression</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Household labor inequity was significantly associated with four out of may seven happiness outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressler, 1994</td>
<td>13,017 men and women age 19 and over</td>
<td>National Survey of Families and Households 1988</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>There were modest increases of husbands' participation in household labor, this may result from growing diversity in employment schedules among American workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanchez, 1996</td>
<td>4153 couples</td>
<td>National Survey of Families and Households 1988</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>Division of time availability and labor do have effects on the individual's perception of fairness, both assess the contributions of their partners, the daily demanding, repetitive housework is most important in determining fairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starles, 1994</td>
<td>2000 children</td>
<td>National Survey of Children 1981</td>
<td>Self-report</td>
<td>One fifth of husbands are fully involved in household labor tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>