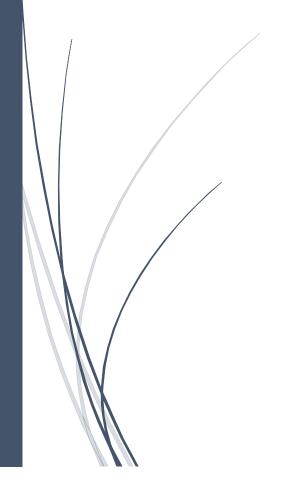
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Engaging with re engage:

A Study of Watermark
Community Church's
16-Session Marriage Intervention
Program – re|engage



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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to examine the effectiveness of relengage, a 16-session marital intervention originating out of Watermark Community Church in Dallas, Texas. Relengage has testimonial evidence of success, but no empirical evidence to date. Previous research in the field suggests that community-level marriage interventions have an impact on divorce rates, and leads to the hypothesis that ratings of marital quality will improve after participation in relengage. Additional research leads to the second hypothesis, that greater reliance on God will be linked to more positive marital outcomes, and that oneness and community involvement will have a significant impact on marital quality. A mixed-method design is used where current relengage participants are surveyed, archived audio testimonies of previous program participants are reviewed, and an in-person field study of relengage is conducted by the primary researcher. Data from each of these three sources is compiled to gain the best possible understanding of the effect of relengage on marital quality. Significant improvement in marital ratings was found from before participation in relengage to after. Further, being unified with one's spouse, finding support in community, and looking to God for strength were three specific behaviors that showed significant growth over the course of relengage participation and that were correlated with higher marital quality.

Introduction

The divorce rate in America is high; while exact statistics are argued, there is wide agreement that at least one-third of first marriages end in divorce, and rates of divorce in the Church are comparable to American national averages (Smith, 2010; Stanly, 2015; & Glass & Levchak, 2014). There is some evidence that couples who are more active in their faith may divorce at a lower rate; however, those who identify as Christians but are not active in their faith do not experience this same benefit and may, in fact, experience the opposite effect (Stanton, 2011). Additionally, many couples who choose to stay together are still dissatisfied and wishing for more from their marriages (Barnes, 2015). It is clear that marriages in America are in need of help. Watermark Community Church and their relengage program seek to address the marital needs contemporary couples have, focusing on what it takes to rebuild and strengthen marriages. Relengage is a marital enrichment program that originated in Watermark Community Church. According to Robert Green (personal communication, September 1, 2016), the Director of Watermark Resources and one of the national leaders of relengage, the program was originally launched in 2006 with pilots loosely based off an idea from a successful Celebrate Recovery ministry within Watermark. At that time, there were 24 weekly sessions.

Over time, the program was refined and arrived at its current 16-session state by 2012 when other churches across the country began to pick up the program as well (R. Green, personal communication, September 1, 2016). At Watermark, and most other churches offering re|engage, the program is conducted in a small-group setting and costs a nominal, one-time fee for participants. Re|engage claims high rates of success in helping marriages; a number of testimonies from couples who have completed the program substantiate this claim.

Unfortunately, solid empirical research has yet to corroborate this assertion. That is the purpose

of this project. Hope for the Hurting Home is investigating re|engage as an outside party to determine how their results match up with other contemporary research and what conclusions and applications can be added to the pool of current research from these findings.

Literature Review

In order to guide the present research study in a meaningful direction, it is important to first examine the existing, relevant marriage literature. Research by Birch, Weed, and Olsen (2004) has indicated that communities fare better when divorce is at a minimum. Because of this they note a recent push to strengthen marriages at the community level with what have been called "Community Marriage Initiatives." These are simply community-level programs that seek to strengthen marriages (Birch, Weed, & Olsen, 2004). Doherty and Anderson (2004) have also conducted research in this arena, and report that Community Marriage Initiatives got their start in the 1970s and have had periods of success and participation as well as periods of apparent disinterest since then. Their research also indicates there are currently a number of Community Marriage Initiatives throughout the United States – led by lay-people both inside and outside the church community – that are well established and have received attention across the nation. One present difficulty for these programs is in obtaining funding and participants as both of these are heavily dependent on performance outcomes (Doherty & Anderson, 2004).

Another difficulty in studying Community Marriage Initiatives is the presence of many possible confounding variables when studying community-level interventions. However, the study by Birch, Weed, and Olsen (2004) revealed that when counties in America with Community Marriage Initiatives were compared to counties without such programs, those counties that implemented Community Marriage Initiatives showed a more rapid decline in divorce rates. They also found some evidence that counties with a higher than average

percentage of religious individuals tended to see even greater effects of Community Marriage Initiatives. Therefore, while it seems there is precedent for believing a community-level marital intervention such as re|engage might be effective, there is also reason to believe more research is needed in order to determine its effectiveness.

It is important to also turn to the faith component of re|engage and look again to the existing literature to determine what importance faith might have in marital interventions. One study by Wolfinger and Wilcox (2008) found that both men and women experience higher relationship quality when men regularly attend church and participate in religious activities; the same was not found for women attending church regularly. In the same study, researchers found religious participation was more predictive of relationship quality than almost every other sociodemographic factor among the urban poor. Marital status was the only factor more predictive of relationship quality among this population (Wolfinger & Wilcox, 2008).

Not only has religious attendance and participation been found to be impactful on marital quality, but specific behaviors associated with religious teachings have been shown to have an impact. In studying religious, middle-aged couples, Lambert and Dollahite (2006) found religious practices helped couples prevent and resolve conflict as well as work toward relational reconciliation when necessary. One way they found religion to be specifically helpful was in providing couples with a shared vision and purpose. This, along with positive relational virtues instilled in couples through religious participation, helped reduce and prevent marital conflict. In the same study, it was found that when conflict did arise in these couples, teachings from Scripture, prayer, and attendance of religious services were the three primary activities cited as helping couples resolve marital conflict. Lambert and Dollahite noted praying together as

opposed to each partner praying individually was especially helpful and once conflict was resolved, religious involvement was beneficial in helping to reconcile relationships.

Another study seconds the idea from Lambert and Dollahite (2006) that couples with a shared vision and purpose tend to have better marital quality. In this study, Marks (2008) noted African American families now have lower marriage rates and higher divorce rates than other segments of the population. Marks discovered several stressors that are particularly prominent in the lives of African American families that may be unique to that population. However, Marks also found several beneficial factors that exist in strong, lasting African American marriages despite the added stresses. Seeing one's spouse as a "teammate" and someone to go through challenges with is one of the factors present in these enduring African American marriages — being united to face hardship together. Having a strong faith and praying to God for help with difficulties was also a theme in lasting African American marriages (Marks, 2008).

Knowing there is precedent for believing the faith component of re|engage will be beneficial to marriages, there is one additional aspect of the program that needs to be considered – the focus on connecting couples in struggling marriages to their community. The idea of reaching out to help marriages at the community level has been considered, but the idea of plugging those healthy marriages back into a community to help them stay strong is another piece to consider. A research study by Goodwin and Cramer (2000) addresses that idea. They report people of South Asian decent are the largest minority group in Britain and they have some unique cultural practices – marriage and family customs particularly are different from the majority British culture. Because of this, Goodwin and Cramer were interested to study marriages within this portion of the population to determine where their success stems from. One of the places they found couples drew the most strength from in these marriages was from their

family and friends within their community. This study reported South Asian culture as very collectivistic with a high value on marriage. Because of this, families and friends are very involved in one another's marriages, offering support and help but also reminding couples of their responsibilities within the marriage. Couples in this community who remain connected to others in their community experience relational support and marital benefits (Goodwin & Cramer, 2000).

After examining the existing literature, researchers in the present study see precedent to believe re|engage contains several components of an effective Community Marriage Initiative, but also see the necessity of additional research to better understand if and how re|engage truly is effective. Based on previous research, it is hypothesized that couples who participate in re|engage will report improvement in their marital quality after completion of the program. It is further hypothesized that greater reliance on God will be linked to more positive marital outcomes, and that oneness and community involvement will have a significant impact on marital quality.

Method

Participants

Three hundred fifty-three individuals were recruited for participation in the present research through their involvement with re|engage closed groups at Watermark Community Church in Dallas, Texas. Of these 353 individuals, 128 couples (256 individuals) chose to submit data together. There were an additional 97 individuals who submitted data alone as their spouses chose not to participate in the research. These participants ranged in age from 19 to 70 and represented various ethnicities. 80.5% were Caucasian, 8.5% Hispanic, 3.1% Asian, 2.8% African American, and 5.1% identified as other. The education levels of these participants also

varied from having completed some high school to achieving Doctorate degrees. Marriages represented ranged from 1 to 44 years together at the time of participation. 209 (59.2%) of the participants were attendees of Watermark Community Church, while the remaining 144 (40.8%) were either non-church attenders or attendees of other churches in the area. For the purpose of this study, a Watermark attendee was operationally defined as an individual who self-identified Watermark Community Church as the primary church they attend and who self-reported an attendance frequency of "nearly every week" or more often.

Materials

Pre and post paper-and-pencil surveys were administered to participants. Each of these surveys consisted of demographic questions, marriage-related questions developed by researchers based on current marriage and cultural research, and the *Marital Happiness Scale* (Booth & Amato, 2009). Copies of the pre- and post-surveys are in the appendices.

Procedure

Each week when couples come to relengage, they begin by attending a "large group" meeting where a couple who has already been through the program shares their story. When the large group ends, couples who recently joined the program go to "open groups" where they participate in group discussions and are introduced to key program principles. Couples attend the open group as long as they want before joining a smaller "closed group." Each closed group meets for 16 sessions before going through a program graduation. According to program leaders, the time from the first week a couple shows up until they graduate from the program is generally about five to six months. Relengage staff has noted about two out of ten couples decide not to return after coming to check relengage out; of the eight couples that do return, about five of them typically stay with the program long enough to join and participate in a closed group. While the

couples who chose not to participate in re|engage closed groups were not formally surveyed, re|engage leaders report that the time commitment and schedule are one factor that leads some couples to decide against participating. Other reasons couples choose not to participate include a major life change like a move or pregnancy, being uncomfortable with the small group format, or only one spouse being ready to commit to working on the marriage. Once couples commit to joining closed groups though, re|engage leaders cite a 97% completion rate from that point (R. Green, personal communication, September 1, 2016).

During the first meeting of each closed group, individuals were recruited for participation in the present research study. Participation in the research was entirely voluntary. Those who chose to participate completed a pre-survey during this first closed group meeting. During the celebration at the conclusion of each closed group, all individuals who completed pre-surveys were also given post-surveys to complete. These surveys were then compared to one another and changes in marriages from before beginning the program to after completion of re|engage were examined.

Additionally, the primary researcher and her husband participated in one of the closed groups as part of a field study for this project. For 24 weeks, the researcher spent one evening per week participating in on-site relengage programming with her husband where she observed and took notes on each session noting themes that arose in people's stories of healing.

Finally, Watermark Community Church provided researchers with access to online audio testimonies of both participants and facilitators sharing their stories of how their marriages were healed by the power of God and impacted by their participation in relengage. There were 137 online audio testimonies, representing the stories – and updates – of 75 couples. Thirty-three of those couples participated in relengage; those 33 couples' testimonies were coded and analyzed

for recurring themes. A universal coding model was created by the primary researcher for this project. Initial coding themes were created at the onset of this project to help guide the collection of field study data. After the field study portion of the project was completed and all testimonials were reviewed, coding themes were further refined before any formal qualitative coding began. At that time a conventional content qualitative analysis was conducted. Information obtained through surveys, field study, and video interviews were all combined to produce the clearest possible picture of the impact and effectiveness of relengage.

Research Design

A mixed-method design was utilized in studying re|engage where naturalistic observation and pre- and post-surveys were both used to collect data on the effectiveness of this program.

The significant amount of qualitative data obtained from the primary researcher's field study as a re|engage participant and analysis of audio testimonies of other couples supplemented quantitative data gathered through pre- and post-surveys. Together this information yielded a comprehensive picture of Watermark Community Church's re|engage program.

Results

The vast majority of participants, 96.9% to be precise, strongly agreed (81.9%) or agreed (15%) that they would recommend relengage to others. Looking more closely at what specific changes might have led to so many individuals endorsing relengage, researchers found several important things. When asked to rate their marriage on a scale of 1 to 10 prior to participating in relengage, the mean response was 4.9 (SD = 2.4). On the same question after relengage, the mean response was 6.7 (SD = 2.4). When compared using a paired-samples t-test at a 95% confidence level, the mean difference of 1.8 is statistically significant (SD = 2.5). The Marital Happiness Scale was administered as a portion of both the pre- and post-surveys. With a 22.7 (SD = 5.5)

mean score before re|engage and a 26.5 (SD = 5.0) mean score after participation, the 3.8 (SD = 4.3) point mean improvement is statistically significant at a 95% confidence level. Additionally, after participation in re|engage 92.4% of individuals cited their marriage as somewhat (36%) or greatly (56.4%) improved. These reports of improvement support the hypothesis that individuals who participated in re|engage would report higher marital quality after participation. The increase in self-reported marital ratings and improvement in scores on the Marital Happiness Scale from before re|engage to after also supports this hypothesis.

Further investigation revealed a large number of behaviors that changed significantly from before participation in re|engage to after. Several behaviors were also strongly tied to the qualitative research. In general the qualitative research of couples who testified to the positive impact they believe re|engage had on their marriage yielded several salient themes tied to marital improvement: selflessness, accepting ownership for one's share in marital problems, working as a team, growing relationships with God, God's healing intervention, God's grace and forgiveness, the importance of staying connected to a supportive community and being known, looking to God for the strength to work on one's marriage, and the presence of severe marital or personal issues. Those themes from the qualitative research that aligned with significant changes from pre to post in the survey data are consistent with hypothesized changes and are analyzed further.

Individuals were asked how often they looked to God for the strength needed to work on their marriage (all the time, most of the time, more often than not, occasionally, rarely, never). The pre-survey average response was 2.2 (SD = 1.1), consistent with a response of "most of the time," and the post-survey average response was 1.8 (SD = 0.9), consistent with a response of "all the time." The mean change from pre to post for each individual was 0.4 (SD = 1) which is

statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This behavior of looking to God for the strength to work on one's marriage was not correlated with participants' 1-10 rating of their marriage at the time of pre-survey, but was correlated with the 1-10 rating at the time of post-survey [r(334) = .11, p < .05]. Greater reliance on God was hypothesized to be related to more positive marital outcomes; that hypothesis is supported by not only the quantitative results but also the qualitative data.

Participants were also asked how often they stay connected to those in their community who can help keep their relationship strong, using the same response options. Self-report of this behavior at the time of pre-survey yielded a mean of 3.4 (SD = 1.5), consistent with a response of "more often than not." At the time of post-survey, the mean response of participants was 2.8 (SD = 1.4), consistent with a response of "most of the time." At the 95% confidence level, the mean change of 0.5 (SD = 1.5) is statistically significant. This behavior of staying connected to those in the community who can help keep a relationship strong was correlated with participants' 1-10 rating of their marriage at both the time of pre-survey [r(340) = .30, p < .01] and post-survey [r(330) = .17, p < .01]. Existing literature suggested connection to a supportive community as a benefit to marriage, and researchers hypothesized that would be the case for relengage participants as well. That hypothesis is supported.

Individuals participating in this research were also asked to what extent they agreed that they and their spouse were unified on the things that really mattered (strongly disagree, disagree, no opinion, agree, strongly agree). The pre-survey average response was 3.8 (SD = 1.1), consistent with a response of "no opinion," and the post-survey average response was 4.2 (SD = 1), consistent with a response of "agree." The mean change from pre to post for each participant was 0.4 (SD = 1.1) which is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This behavior of

being unified on things that matter was strongly correlated with participants' 1-10 rating of their marriage at both the time of pre-survey [r(336) = .36, p < .01] and post-survey [r(333) = .48, p < .01]. Researchers hypothesized – based on support from existing literature – couples who exhibited teamwork and oneness, being unified, would see more positive marital outcomes. That hypothesis is supported.

Concerning the qualitative data from the field study, the nine primary themes mentioned above stood out in this portion of the research as well. Of those nine themes, selflessness and personal responsibility were the most prominent throughout the field study. During this portion of the research, gaining insight into one's spouse's perspective and accepting incompatibility were two additional themes that stood out that were not accounted for in other segments of the research.

Discussion

The vast majority of participants in re|engage claimed their marriage was at least somewhat better at the end of the program than it was when they started, and over half reported their marriage to be greatly improved after participating in re|engage. This self-report of improvement over 16 sessions combined with an average increase of 1.8 points when asked to rate the quality of one's marriage both before and after participation in re|engage on a 10-point rating scale is strong evidence of a connection between marital improvement and participation in re|engage. Not only were marriages seen to improve, but participants' happiness in regards to their marriages increased by several points. This increase in happiness regarding one's marriage is very important as it increases motivation for couples to continue investing in their marital relationship.

Further exploration indicated three behaviors significantly correlated with improved marital ratings after re|engage. Those three behaviors were looking to God for the strength to work on one's marriage, staying connected to others who can help keep one's marriage strong, and being unified with one's spouse on the things that really matter. The connection of each of these behaviors with improved marital ratings supports the existing literature that shows strong faith and religious participation, oneness with one's spouse, and remaining connected to a supportive community benefit marriage relationships. Knowing each of these behaviors has been shown to have a significant correlation with increased marital ratings not just generally, but also within re|engage couples is important information to have. This allows program leaders the opportunity to emphasize the importance of these behaviors to their participants and hopefully find even more success helping couples strengthen their marriages. Because these three behaviors are already part of re|engage curriculum, program leaders do not have to make significant changes to their approach in order to maximize the effects couples see, they can simply make sure to stress the significance of these behaviors throughout their teaching.

While looking to God for the strength to work on one's marriage – an active faith – was correlated with higher marital ratings both before and after participation in re|engage, the strength of the correlation interestingly – while still statistically significant – was weaker after re|engage than it was before. Researchers have identified two possible explanations for this result. First, it is possible some participants were already looking to God for the strength to work on their marriage very often before starting re|engage. It is possible that is even how they ended up in attendance of a faith-based program to begin with. For these people, though their rating of their marriage had room to improve, it is possible that their response to the frequency they sought God's strength to work on their marriage did not have room to report improvement on the

survey. A second possible explanation as to why the correlation between how frequently participants look to God for the strength to work on their marriage and their overall rating of their marriage was weaker after re|engage is that people may not have fully understood what it meant to look to God for strength prior to participating in re|engage. Perhaps they desired God's help but were not equipped with tangible tools for seeking that help. If this were the case for some people in the sample, it is possible pre-survey responses for this item are falsely inflated while post-survey responses are more accurate.

The qualitative testimony analysis and field study data added extra depth to this study and confirmed the importance of each of the three behaviors that have been discussed. Looking to God for strength to work on one's marriage, staying connected to a supportive community, and being unified with one's spouse were all noted as important in the qualitative data as well. Prior to participation in relengage, the testimonies indicated many participants had a self-focused perspective, while after participating in the program they were more likely to view themselves and their spouses as a team and seek to approach problems together. Also, prior to relengage, many couples saw the importance of being connected to a community – and may have even been connected to one – but very few were truly, deeply invested in and transparent with the communities they were a part of until after participating in relengage. This change supports the existing research by Goodwin and Cramer (2000) which suggests being surrounded by friends and family who can support couples in their marriages as well as hold them accountable is important for a healthy marriage. Finally, before participating in relengage, many people relied on their own strength and wisdom to address problems in their marriages. Throughout the program individuals began to realize they were not alone and could look to God for the wisdom and strength they needed.

Other qualitative findings were important as well. Participants were likely to view themselves as victims in their marriages before re|engage, but after many were able to see their own contributions to their marital problems as well. Couples reported being able to feel God's grace and forgiveness and witnessed God's healing intervention in their marriages after participating in re|engage even though very significant personal or marital issues like addictions, abuse, chronic sickness, or infertility were present in almost every marriage represented in the archival testimonies. These findings did not have corresponding survey questions to substantiate them quantitatively at this time, but they will be important to look at and ask individuals about specifically in future research.

Strengths

The primary strength of this research project is the length of re|engage which provides sufficient time between pre- and post-testing so as to decrease the likelihood that changes in participant responses are an emotional reaction to the message. Changes over several months and 16 sessions are more likely to be sustainable changes in behavior than changes that might be reported after a shorter program. Another strength of this research is the sample size; 353 participants is a sufficient group to draw meaningful conclusions from. For both of these reasons – the length of the program and the size of the sample – researchers can feel confident that marital changes that have been noted in connection with re|engage are lasting changes.

The opportunity to collect data from individuals who completed re|engage with a wide variety of group leaders ensures a more accurate portrayal of the entire program than if only participants from one closed group had been surveyed. Also, the chance for the primary researcher to be personally involved in one closed group is a strength of this project. That added insight into re|engage provided an understanding for how the program works that would not have

been present without being able to witness the program firsthand. This opportunity also helped identify important themes and focus the rest of the research in a meaningful direction.

Limitations

This research is limited in scope for several reasons. The ethnic make-up of this sample is primarily Caucasian, so the applications may not be directly applicable to a more diverse population. Additionally, the majority of participants in this research report regularly attending church (19.6% more than once a week, 44% every week, 25.6% nearly every week, 6.8% two to three times per month, 4% once a month or less frequently). Others who are less religious may respond differently to relengage programming. Finally, the education level of this sample is higher than that of the general population of Texas; in this study 45.6% of participants were college graduates and 29.2% had education beyond that while state averages are 22.6% with a Bachelor's or Associate's Degree and 7.9% with more advanced education (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems). Because of this, further research is needed to ensure the results found with this sample apply as strongly to a more representative sample of the Texas population.

Beyond limitations related to the sample, the fact that re|engage is a 16-session program opens participants up to the possibility of being influenced by more possible confounding variables than they would be during participation in a shorter program. One possible confounding variable that could have significant effects on participants' responses is participation in marital counseling or other marriage training programs during re|engage. This confounding variable was tested for, and 84.6% of participants reported receiving no help with their marriage other than re|engage during their participation.

The strength of the correlation between participants' 1-10 scores rating the quality of their marriage relationship and their responses to how often they stayed connected to others in their community who can help keep their relationship strong decreased from pre-survey to post. With the way the question was worded, people who were already connected to a community prior to beginning re|engage did not have a way to report growth in that area. Different wording of that item to allow for relational growth within one's community would benefit future research on this topic.

An additional limitation of the present study was the difficulty in tracking respondents and getting responses to post surveys. With surveys being anonymous and completed in-person, it is possible individuals made mistakes in recording their identifying information, which prevented researchers from being able to match their pre and post-surveys. It is also possible not all participants were present at either the initial session where the pre-survey was completed or the end-of-program celebration where the post-survey was completed. Both of these factors and potentially other unidentified causes led to having to exclude some individuals from the research.

Ideas for Further Research

Presently 137 churches offer re|engage with more than 80 additional churches in the planning, preparation, or pre-launch stages (R. Green, personal communication, September 1, 2016). Further research should seek to study re|engage across a number of these locations to determine the consistency of the program across locations as well as the success of it in the various contexts represented by each of the different churches offering the program.

As the sample of this study was not overly diverse, future research into other locations where relengage is present could intentionally look into locations with greater diversity.

Enrolling more couples of minority ethnicities would also be beneficial in better understanding

the effectiveness of re|engage. This would help understand if this program is equally effective in different cultural contexts as well as different physical locations. Additionally, offering re|engage in a non-Christian setting to draw in more people who are not regular church attenders would benefit the research by giving an idea of whether concepts taught in re|engage are equally helpful and applicable in the marriages of couples who classify themselves as less religious.

Another arena for further research on relengage is on the impact the program has on the churches who house it. Watermark Community Church (2016) cites six ways churches can benefit from adopting relengage into their congregation. These six ways are: preventing staff burnout and fatigue by creating a clear path for counseling couples, creating service opportunities for members of the local church, attracting couples to the church who may not attend a church if they were not brought in for marital help, providing an avenue to make disciples, boosting children's and students' ministries as those can grow when marriages and families are healthier, and adding authenticity to the church. Each of these claims is supported by testimonies of church staff and members but not yet substantiated by empirical research evidence. Further research could look into the many different churches where relengage is now present and officially study the effects the program has had on these participating churches.

Finally, there is important research yet to be completed within the current project. This article outlines the primary findings from the research. However, husbands' and wives' responses have yet to be paired and studied, and there are many more analyses to conduct with the already collected data, connections and correlations to be found, and lessons to be learned. Among the relationships researchers still want to explore are: the impact on marital quality of viewing marriage as a responsibility instead of a right, the connection between addictions and marital happiness, the effect an active faith in God has on the quality of one's marriage, and the

themes that were present in the qualitative research but not yet substantiated in the quantitative results. Exploration of each of these relationships will add valuable research and insights to the existing literature and provide valuable feedback to re|engage and other similar community marriage initiatives across the country.

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Appendix A

re|engage Pre-Survey







Please provide the following information to be used for coding purposes to protect your identi	ty. To ensure
confidentiality, your identifying information will be saved in a different location than your sur	vey responses.
Anniversary (m/d	/y):
State Married	l Terri

Anniversary (m/d/y):	100 %
State MarriedIn:	NO 25 100
Gender:	
Date:	on or in

INFORMED CONSENT

I am informed that this study involves research conducted by Hope for the Hurting Home (a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of marriages) in agreement with Watermark Community Church. This study is led by Amanda Boyd, PhD. I understand that its primary purpose is to study the effectiveness of various marital programs.

Privacy: I understand that my identity as a participant in this study will be kept in strict confidence within legal limits and that no information that identifies me in any way will be released to anyone outside of Amanda Boyd, PhD, and Kelsey Timm at Hope for the Hurting Home and Susan Cox, and Bethany Phillips at Watermark Community Church.

Risks: Survey questions related to individuals' marriages may be considered personal. Thus, I may see my marriage in a different light after completing this assessment. Watermark staff is available to discuss this with me if the need arises.

Benefits: Although I may not directly benefit from this study, my participation in this project benefits individuals and organizations as we seek to better understand what makes marriage programs optimally successful.

Voluntary Nature of Participation: I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study before submission of the final set of responses without penalty or loss of services that I am currently receiving or may receive in the future. This survey includes items about my marriage relationship, and personal views. I understand completing this survey will take approximately 15 minutes of my time.

Support and Contact Information: My questions may be directed to Guide Source, Attn: Dr. Amanda Boyd, Maple Bank Building – Suite 280, 11660 Theater Drive North, Champlin, MN 55316 or aboyd @hopeforthehurtinghome.com

By signing this, I am agreeing that I have read this form and understand what it says. I am 18 years or older and voluntarily agree to participate in this research project.

Printed First and Last Name	Signature	Date

Please provide the following information to be used for coding purposes to protect your identity. 1. Age: ______ years Anniversary (m/d/y): _ State Married In: Gender: Which of the following best describes your education level? Date: __ Some High School Some college College graduate HS Graduate or GED Graduate school or advanced professional training Post HS Training 3. Which of the following best describes your ethnicity? Caucasian/White African American/Black Native American Hispanic/Latino Pacific Islander Middle Eastern Asian East Indian Other (please specify) _ Two or more races 4. How long have you been married to your current spouse? _______ 5. How many times have you been married? Once ■ Twice Three or more times Did you live with anyone prior to marriage? Yes, my spouse and Hived together before marriage Yes, before marriage Hived with more than one significant other(s) 7. What is your current marital status? Married Separated Divorced If legally married, please choose that option that best fits your intentions regarding the future of your marital situation. Not planning to divorce my spouse Uncertain about divorcing my spouse Planning to divorce my spouse/in the process of divorcing my spouse. 9. Which of the following best describes your current family situation? No children We have one or more children together and do not have step-children We have no children together but do have one or more step-children. We have one or more children together and have one or more step-children 10. Aside from PREMARITAL counseling and/or this program you are in, have you been involved in any other type of couples counseling in the past pertaining to your relationship with your spouse? (check all that apply) Attended 1-2 class(es)/workshop(s) Attended 3 or more workshops/classes Received 1-4 couples counseling session(s) Received 5 or more couples counseling sessions

Have seen numerous couples counselors
Other (please specify) ______

11. What is	your religion	ous affiliation	n (frany)?_	-2	***) (=	12 13 31			
12. What is	the name (of the church	n you identi	fy with or m	nost commo	nly atten	d?	- 3- 4: - 3:		
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14. All thin	gs consider	ed, why did	you choose	e to enroll in	the releng	age prog	ram now?		- 100 - 100 100 - 100	
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Comparing your marri			iage					
getting better, staying	the same, or getti	ng worse?			Mani	- D#	Not too	NI-t -
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Would you say the fee	elings of love you h	have for your spou	ise are.		on on ig	along	ou ong	Г
extremely strong, very								
not strong at all?			- 2			91 3		
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My family	$ \vdash$		H		_			\perp
My church			H			100		H
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God (higher power)				83.			- 6	
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17. This set of questions is about how you currently feel regarding your marital relationship.

	time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
I think fondly of my spouse when I am not with him/her.						
My spouse and I are able to forgive one another.						
I focus on being a better mate, regardless of whether my spouse is doing the same.						
We stay connected to those in our community who can help make our relationship strong.						
I look to God (higher power) for the strength I need to work on my marriage.						
My spouse and I pray together.	1117					
DO YOU SEE UIVOIGE AS AN OPHONION YOU!						
Do you see divorce as an option for you? Yes No Conly in cases of_ Please rate your level of agreement with each of the			3 0 0		3 2 -	-12-77
Yes No Only in cases of_		nts below.	Strongly			Strongly
Yes No Only in cases of_		nts below.	Strongly	isagree Agr		Strongly agree
Yes No Only in cases of_	ne staterne	nts below. !	Strongly			
Yes No Only in cases of_ Please rate your level of agreement with each of the life of the	ne staterne	nts below. !	Strongly			

Appendix B re|engage Post-Survey



In partnership with:



		l for coding purposes to prote saved in a different location	
15-0.		Ann	niversary (m/d/y): State Married In: Gender: Date:
INFORMED CONSENT			
to enhancing the quality of man	riages) in agreement with Wa	y Hope for the Hurting Home (a na atermark Community Church, This fectiveness of various marital prog	study is led by Amanda Boyd,
no information that identifies m	e in any way will be released	s study will be kept in strict confick to anyone outside of Amanda Bo nillips at Watermark Community C	yd, PhD, and Kelsey Timm at
		ay be considered personal. Thus, staff is available to discuss this wi	
		, my participation in this project be marriage programs optimally succ	
of the final set of responses wit	hout penalty or loss of servic y marriage relationship, and p	refuse to participate or withdraw es that I am currently receiving or personal views. I understand comp	
		directed to Guide Source, Attn: Di , MN 55316 or aboyd @hopeforth	
By signing this, I am agreeing t agree to participate in this rese		d understand what it says. I am 18	years or older and voluntarily
Printed First and Last Name	Signature	Date	<u> </u>

Please provide the following information to be used for coding purposes to protect your identity.

7 Impared to b		9 10 d the program,
7 Impared to b	8 before you starte	ng best). What 9 10 d the program,
7 Impared to b	8 before you starte	9 10 d the program,
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your marria	35 38 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 30	are a result of your
3	ckall that ap	n your marriage that you feel

	uring your involvement in re engage, did you participate in any ot use? (check all that apply)	her type o	f couples (counseling p	rogram wi	th your
	None					
0	Attended 1 or more class(es)/workshop(s)					
1	Received 1-4 couples counseling session(s)					
	Received 5 or more couples counseling sessions					
1	Other (please specify)	5.778				
		22 23	28 82 83		20	38435
	Here are some different aspects of married life. For each one, ple	ease indica	ate whethe	er you are ve	ry happy,	pretty happy
_	or not too happy with this aspect of your marriage.					
1			Very happ	y Pretty h	арру Мо	ot too happy
369	How happy are you with the amount of understanding you receiv your spouse?	e from]	
	How happy are you with the amount of love and affection you rec	eive?]	
	How happy are you with the extent to which you and your spouse agree about things?	9			1	
	How happy are you with your sexual relationship?				1	
- [How happy are you with your spouse as someone who takes car	e of	\neg		1	a
	things around the house?				-88	_
	How happy are you with your spouse as someone to do things w	ith?				
- [How happy are you with your spouse's faithfulness to you?				ĺ	
	Taking all thingstogether, how would you describe your marriage	9?			i	
354		•				
10.	This set of questions is about how you currently feel regarding	g your ma	rital relatio	onship.		
Ī			Better	Sam	ne N	lot as good
	Compared to other marriages you know about, do you think your			100	T	
	marriage is better than most, about the same as most, or not as a	good	_		-38	94
ł	as most?	Getting	p better	Staying the	same Gr	etting worse
- 6	Comparing your marriage to three years ago , is your marriage		, DOLLON			
	getting better, staying the same, or getting worse?]			
		Extremel strong	y Very strong	Pretty strong	Not too strong	Not strong at all
	Would you say the feelings of love you have for your spouse					
	are extremely strong, very strong, pretty strong, not too strong, or not strong at all?	6-8	- 10 1			88 TS
250	(430)		. A.S.	80.	90	\$0°.

		Stror disag		No ee opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
I am partly responsible for the problems my experience in our marriage.	spouse and l					
experience in our marriage. I believe that my marriage will get better with	ntime.					
I have hope that my spouse and I can rebuil our marriage.		en 📙				
My spouse and I are unified on the things th	at really matter	· 🔲				
In regard to my religious beliefs: I am free to that which is helpful and leave behind that w uncomfortable.						
Thave a responsibility to honor my vows reg happiness.	ardless of my					
		Not at all committed	Not very committed	Unsure C	ommitted	Highly committe
How would you describe your own level of c your marriage at the present time?						
How would you describe your spouse's leve commitment to your marriage at the present						
	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Ithink fondly of my spouse when I am not with him/her.						
My spouse and I are able to forgive one another.						
I focus on being a better mate, regardless of whether my spouse is doing the same.						
We stay connected to those in our community who can help make our relationship strong.						
Hook to God (higher power) for the strength I need to work on my marriage.						
My spouse and I pray together.						
Ifeel a responsibility to work on my marriag	e, as I have a d	duty to				
Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewha disagree		9	Strongly disagree
My spouse					ľ	alougico
My family						
My church						
My community	H					
God (higher power)			100			

13. Do you see divorce as an option for you? Yes Only in cases of	86 185 155	98 - 90 - 0	- <u>Kali 184</u>	55 48 - 5 8
14. Which option best describes your program attendance? Attended all sessions Mssed one session Mssed two sessions Mssed three or more sessions Other (please specify)				
15. Which option best describes your completion of homework/assignments Completed all assignments Completed most assignments Completed some Completed few assignments Other (please specify)	ents during the	e program?		
16. Please rate your level of agreement with each of the statements below				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Ifeel I have a problem with alcohol I consider myself to have a problem with drug abuse (this includes prescription drugs)				
Ifeel I have a problem with pornography I consider myself to have a sexual addiction (an unusually intense sex drive or an obsession with sex)				
17. Please check all of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the following which you feel may have had a negation of the f	ative impact o	n your relation	nship with y	our spouse.

W	ATERMARK COMMUNITY CHURCH					
CONSENT TO CONTACT						
Please provide the following informa confidentiality, your identifying info	ation to be used for coding purposes to protect your identity. To ensure rmation will be saved in a different location than your survey responses.					
	Anniversary (d/m/y):					
	State MarriedIn:					
	Gender: Date:					
Watermark Community Church invit	es you to paticipate in re engage follow-up surveys. These surveys will be					
brief and will not be more frequent t no longer wish to be contacted to par	h an one survey in approximatley a six month time span. If at any point you rticipate in surveys, email us at					
marriagesurvey@hopeforthehurting	<u>chome.com</u> to withdraw your name from our contact list. The purpose of					
그렇게 하면 보면 보이 가게 하는 이용에 그리자를 되어 가게 되었다. 아이를 하게 되었다면 하게 되었다면 하는 이번에 되었다.	ouples' relationships continue to change over time. All follow-up surveys uting Home with permission from Watermark Community Church.					
If you agree to participate in follow-u	φ surveys:					
Please write legibly and provide com	plete contact information.					
1. First and Last Name:	*					
2 E-mail Address:	-					
3. Home Phone:	Can we leave a message?					
4. Cell Phone:	Can we leave a message?					