

## **MARITAL BONDING**

### **Rules**

1. Refrain from any and all physical or sexual contact until prescribed.
2. Do not tease or mention anything of a physical or sexual nature.
3. Respect any and all boundaries. Security is important.
4. Define where the bonding activity is to take place, i.e., bedroom, etc.
5. Limit the bonding activity to the agreed upon place.
6. Set at least three 20-minute sessions for each level and activity.
7. Stop if the activity in any way becomes threatening or uncomfortable.
8. If you stop, no explanation is required and it is not a failure.
9. Wait until the next counseling session to go any farther in the process.
10. Always make each step a matter of prayer.

### **Steps**

1. Make yourself comfortable. Pray first. Set aside twenty uninterrupted minutes. Encourage conversation. *Hold hands.* Nothing more at this level. **Stop if you become uncomfortable at any time!**
2. Have the husband put his arm around the wife. Nothing more, nothing else. All other rules apply as above. Again you need at least three twenty minute uninterrupted sessions at this level.
3. First kiss. With his arm around her, the husband may kiss his wife with her permission during the three twenty minute sessions. Please remember to keep the kisses short and sweet. We are not going for passion at this level, but for comfort and security. If at any time either of you become uncomfortable during this step, stop or wait until the next session to talk about it before going further.
4. At this level, the husband may now put both arms around his wife with her permission. Again, her comfort and security is of utmost important. It is frequently at this level that the wife becomes most uncomfortable and feels this is a cue to further sexual behavior. She may feel trapped. Stop if she does and examine what is happening.
5. Extended kissing begins at this level. Set the timer for kissing to begin at 4 five-minute intervals. The kissing can become more passionate, but needs to stop at 30 seconds. Thirty seconds is a long kiss. The wife or husband may become uncomfortable. Stop if either one does. We are now deepening the passion or eros in the relationship.
6. Hands can now be used to explore the upper part of the body with the exception of no genital contact. Fully clothed shoulder rubs are excellent at this level. Continue the kissing with increasing frequency. Remember, conversation is equally important. Do not forget to focus on your spouse. He or she is the reason you are engaged in this process. **If you are not married, you need to stop at this point and focus on emotional and not physical intimacy!**