

Course Description:

Within My Reach is an evidence-based curriculum teaching participants skills that will increase their odds of success in life. The lessons taught will help them reach their goals, by developing Healthy Relationships and applying Conflict Resolution tools. When what they consider to be their **most important relationships**, especially romantic relationships, tend to be troubled the possibility of success in every other aspect of life can be derailed... their goals, school, job, finances, friendships, and especially if they are a parent or have a parent in a troubled relationship, then raising children and parenting are deeply affected.

Within My Reach units will cover:

- Identifying factors of Healthy Relationships
- Recognizing the different types of Safety's in relationships
- Making wise clear choices when it matters the most
- Learning tips and what questions to ask when we are considering our most important relationships
- Discovering their strengths and weakness, in order to know what to build on and what areas need improvement
- Identifying and recognizing dangerous communication patterns
- Where conflict begins and how to stop, reduce, and exit dangerous communication patterns
- Learning Speaker Listener Technique and applying it
- Understanding distrust and knowing the traits that help make forgiveness concrete. Also recognizing that forgiveness is not always possible or healthy
- Looking at the dynamics of fatherhood, stepfamilies, and co-parenting, and how the effect they can have on relationships
- Discovering that making tough decisions is possible and can be done when you have the right tools and skills

Virtually all people have aspirations for happy, healthy, and stable relationships. Within My Reach teaches skills that are applicable and can be implemented in every relationship dynamic. They are a must for any Healthy Relationship (friends, neighbors, co-workers, children, and partners).

Within My Reach 12-Week Course Description and Curriculum Outline

Curriculum Outline:

Week 1: The State of Relationships Today & Healthy Relationships

- Participants will begin this unit by writing their visions or goals. When they have a clear vision of what they want it is easier to make good Decisions to meet their goals. They will also discuss the state of relationships today and explore the four Safety's that evidence-based research has proven to be present in all Healthy Relationships.

Week 2: Sliding vs. Deciding

- Participants will be focusing on Sliding vs. Deciding. They will be discussing when it's OK to Slide through moments when they have a choice, and when it's worth their time and energy to slow down, think, and make a clear conscious decision. Sliding vs. Deciding will help them recognize how they may have ended up in some of life's difficult situations as well. Mastering this skill will be a foundation for making choices that will get them to their end goals.
 - This will include:
 - Discussing the emotional downfalls of "Sliding" into who they have sex with.
 - Discussing the possible consequences and constraints that come from that "Slide".
 - Discussing the constraints from "Sliding" into who they choose to live with.

Week 3: Smart Love

- Introduce The Seven Principles of Smart Love. Information will be provided about why infatuation occurs and why it is a fun, but risky state. The Seven Principles of Smart Love are designed to guide decisions concerning whether a relationship is healthy or not. There will be an activity to examine our own relationships and also practice applying the Principles.

Week 4: Knowing Yourself First

- Participants will learn more about who they are. There will be a fun personality test that can help them identify their strengths and weaknesses. Knowing those traits can help guide them in making positive changes in their lives. The personality test is fun and light, but also provides information about how different personalities can affect relationships. When they know their dominant traits, they can begin to see what they contribute to their relationships and which can help them make wise relationship decisions.
- Family background patterns will also be evaluated. There are no other relationships that shape who they are as much as family relationships do. Families shape them and their expectations, for both good and bad, and influence how they relate to other people. Participants will have a chance to consider their own backgrounds and what they would like to carry on as well as what they would like to do differently in their own families.

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Week 5: Making Your Own Decisions

- Expectations can be a major source of conflict, so learning about them is important! In this unit participants will be exploring expectations and whether they are realistic or not. They will also discuss how to understand and deal with expectations in relationships. The model used to explore expectations has been used successfully for many years. It is one of the most powerful ways for people to understand disappointments in relationships and gives an important window on how to think about making decisions in them.

Week 6: Dangerous Patterns in Relationships

- Conflict Resolution will be introduced in this unit and participants will focus on Communication Danger Signs. There are four specific Communication Danger Signs that are easily identifiable. These patterns are very destructive and can seriously damage the Safety's in all relationships (Physical, Emotional, Commitment, and Community).
- They will also discuss inter-partner violence and distinguish between violence that spills over from poorly managed conflict and violence that is part of a pattern of threatening or controlling behavior.
 - This will also include:
 - Inviting Victim Advocates to talk with participants

Week 7: Where Conflict Begins

- Participants will be focusing on where conflict begins. They will learn that there are often deeper Hidden Issues (things like feeling cared for, being respected, having trust, or being in control) and how these issues trigger arguments over things that might otherwise seem trivial. They will learn crucial signs that will help us recognize when there is a Hidden Issue to be dealt with. Recognizing and talking about Hidden Issues often helps to have less conflict overall and will help them feel more connected in any relationship. Participants will also discuss how important it is to keep children safe from unhealthy conflict and ways to do that.

Week 8: Smart Communication

- Participants will learn about their brains and why they react the way they do when they are in danger, both physical and emotional. They will also learn ways to combat Communication Danger Signs by using XYZ Statements and Time Outs. They will practice using XYZ Statements about something negative, like a complaint, and something positive, like praising another person.

Week 9: The Speaker Listener Technique

- There will be a brief summary of everything participants have learned about communication before learning and practicing the essential communication skill Speaker Listener Technique. When people use Speaker Listener Technique, they are able to talk about the Issues that underlie Events. Being able to master this skill will also increase their Emotional Safety. They will be able to use this technique with friends, coworkers, children, parents, and partners.

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Week 10: Infidelity, Distrust, and Forgiveness

- Participants will discuss Infidelity, Distrust, and Forgiveness. Although these topics may not apply to them, they are important to discuss. The aim is to help them consider behaviors they are willing to tolerate and the standard to which they hold themselves. They will also talk about how, while forgiveness is important for most people, restoration of the relationship should depend on the actual transgression and the level of responsibility that the offender has taken. They will discuss this process and the typical traits of forgiveness.

Week 11: Commitment, Why it Matters

- Participants will discuss the two sides of commitment... "wanting to be committed" vs. "having to be committed" to help them recognize what commitment means in a Healthy Relationship. Sacrificing in relationships and recognizing if it is positive vs. negative will be discussed as well. They will also be given a chance to practice the Speaker Listener Technique.

Week 12: Step Families & Co-parenting, Making Tough Decisions, and Reaching Into Your Future

- Can be broken into 3 separate units.
- Although some of this unit may not apply to participants, it is still information that can provide useful knowledge. Everyone knows someone with these particular dynamics... Participants will discuss specific suggestions about how to use the skills and strategies they've been learning to help make stepfamilies and co-parenting work. The acknowledgment of the importance of fatherhood will be addressed as well.
- They will also discuss making the tough decisions in their lives—Like whether or not to stay in a relationship or if it is a good idea to move on.
- Lastly, they will talk about the future. They have come full circle in many ways and they will revisit their visions.