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**Lynne Z. Gold-Bikin**  
**Testimony of August 20, 1996 on behalf**  
**of the Pennsylvania Bar Association opposing**  
**Legislative Bill No. 2562 and No. 2003**

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Lynne Z. Gold-Bikin  
Testimony of August 20, 1996  
Opposing House Bills 2562 and 2003  
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Good afternoon. Thank you for the privilege of addressing this committee on this most important issue. I am Lynne Gold-Bikin, former Chair of the American Bar Association Family Law Section, the largest group of Divorce Lawyers in the world. As a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Family Law Section, I speak to you here today on behalf of that Section to oppose the removal of the current no-fault divorce grounds for divorce.

In my 20 years of practice as a divorce lawyer, I have practiced under both the existing Divorce Code and the prior Act in which there were no grounds permitting a no-fault divorce. Let me take you back to life before July 1, 1980. Unhappy couples, couples with an abusive partner, marriages in which one partner had a girlfriend or boyfriend on the side, they had all separated and were living in separate households. Spouses were leaving Pennsylvania for a friendly environment to get an out-of-state divorce decree. Chihuahua, Mexico; the Dominican Republic; Reno, Nevada: Are these names familiar to you? They are to me - that's where people fled, established their domicile, and got their divorce, even over the objections of the Pennsylvania husband or wife.

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Abandoned wives and children were left with no property, no support, and in limbo. Children had little or no relationships with the absent parent. The fact that there were no grounds permitting a no-fault divorce did not keep these couples together, nor were their children protected.

Who are we kidding? Unhappy people do not stay together, regardless of the law. There is no "scarlet letter" in the 1990's. If a partner falls in love with someone else, they leave the marriage and move across town to move in with their lover. There is no societal disgrace. If a woman is abused, she gets a Protection from Abuse Act Order and puts the abuser out of the home. If one partner is gay, they may relocate or, worse yet, bring their partner home. If one partner is a philanderer with a "zipper problem" should the other party maintain this empty marriage and risk herpes or AIDS? If one partner is emotionally abusing the other, is this something he or she should have to live with? Or worse, should the children be exposed to this? What are we talking about here? By forcing couples to litigate their grounds for divorce, this will not save marriages. People did not work harder to save their marriages before the Divorce Code of

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1980 and they will not work harder to save bad marriages if these Sections are deleted from the Code.

Let me explain the potential results of this well-meaning but misguided adventure. Taking no-fault divorce out of the Code or even making it more difficult to get, will result in forcing couples to litigate their grounds, a process that not only could take days in Court, but in some cases, weeks. The cost of litigation, of course, falls on clients. But what does it do to the judicial system? If Masters are to hear these matters, how much will we have to pay them if we decide to allow them to hear the litigation? Ultimately, the cases will reach the Judges; how many more Judges is this legislature willing to appoint and pay to handle the overload of judicial time?

You might wonder why the divorce lawyers are so opposed to this legislation. This will potentially make us rich. Each case will now take on additional weeks of trial which only benefits the lawyers and certainly does not benefit the families.

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And, keep in mind, this litigation requires that a record be made; do we want the children to ultimately have access to this testimony? Do we want the children to hear the negative things that each parent says about the other? Does anyone really believe that one or the other of the parents will not tell the children their side of the story to try to get them aligned on their side and get their loyalty? These are the very same children we are ostensibly trying to protect.

Additionally, since there is no equitable distribution without the grounds first being established for divorce, this will leave the partner without the property in limbo. The partner with the property can leave, taking the property, and there is no judicial intervention possible to protect the spouse who opposed the divorce but cannot now get a distribution of this very same property. If we force people to flee the state to find happiness or, at least in their minds, peace, we have done more damage to this so-called "dysfunctional family" than allowing the one who wishes to leave to get that divorce.

If the concern is with the impact of divorce on children, let me share a few things with you: Divorce does not end a family - it reorganizes it - to mother and children; and father and children. Divorce is not what harms the children - it's the

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parents who harm the children; by putting them in the middle of the process, parents will tell their lawyers that of course they share the letters from their lawyers with the children since it involves the children. Parents use the children as message carriers ("You tell your father that if I don't get my check this week, he can't see you next weekend") or as spies (was your mother's boyfriend over there this weekend?) or worse, parents attempt to turn the children against the other parent. How does forcing parents, who air their dirty linen in public, ever benefit the children?

So what should we be doing? We all agree that divorce is not good for children, parents, society or the legislative budget. But, I respectfully suggest that the answer is not looking at the end of the unhappy marriage but the beginning, or even before the beginning, of the marriage. So let me share with you some solutions that may contribute to the answer that I believe we all seek and that may permit legislative intervention:

1. The Maryland Legislature has been discussing a longer waiting period to receive a marriage license, perhaps a 60 day wait, unless there is proof of a good pre-marital counselling program. And, why not? We

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require training and education before we allow people to drive; should we demand less to allow them to marry?

2. The American Bar Association has been concerned with the large percentage of marriages that end in divorce and has also sought a solution. We believe that the proper focus must be before people make their lifetime choices, not after, and have developed such a course to be taught to high school juniors and seniors. This course is called PARTNERS.

3. I am attaching a copy of the overview and the first lesson to my written testimony along with a brochure so that this committee can see what is possible. This course is a joint effort between lawyers across the country and the teachers in high schools. It is purchased by the lawyers who give four hours of their time to help teach students about family law. The course itself teaches students about proper ways to communicate to enhance relationships rather than to destroy them. Teaching them about family law as well as budgeting, caring for children, and factors that they should consider before choosing their





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For those who say that divorce is "easy", we suggest that you sit in our offices and watch how painful and difficult the process is. People spend a large percentage of what they have accumulated during their lives together to battle over equitable distribution, alimony, alimony *pendente lite*, child and spousal support, and custody. The divorce process can take years to complete in court but a lifetime to emotionally withstand. Let's not add to the pain and trauma of this personal decision by forcing a spouse who wants a divorce from what may appear to be a legally-faultless spouse, to stay in an abusive, loveless situation or, leave Pennsylvania and family. The choices are difficult enough; but to require people to pay thousands of dollars in the court system to end a loveless marriage does not seem the appropriate way to go. It certainly does not help the children.

Please, don't send us back to the 1970's - before the state enabled people to divorce with dignity. This potential legislation is not a solution - it recreates the problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts.

**T**  
eaching

Teenagers

the

Relationship

Skills that

Maintain

Marriage



**American Bar Association  
FAMILY LAW SECTION**  
750 N. Lake Shore Drive  
Chicago, IL 60611

For more information,  
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**A Curriculum Adjunct to Teach Family Law  
and Relationship Skills**  
A PROJECT OF THE  
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S FUND FOR JUSTICE AND EDUCATION  
Sponsored by the **FA** FAMILY LAW SECTION

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all of all marriages end in divorce. People blame financial pressures, job problems, childcare challenges. But the real problem isn't the stress. It's how a couple handles it — what they expect from each other, how they communicate, how they resolve conflicts.

That's why PARTNERS for

Students was designed: to give high school teenagers a firsthand understanding of the challenges in a marriage before they marry. It teaches the relationship skills essential to creating a lasting partnership. The PARTNERS goal is to help people realize that when couples work together to build a healthy relationship, the joys and benefits of marriage will prevail.

# The Purpose of Partners

*It's a prevention...  
...that's...  
they're doing  
this so we don't get  
divorced. Finally,  
society realizes it  
has to do some-  
thing.*

A 17-year-old female student.



*My folks are not together, live with my dad. My parents would have benefited from a program like this.*

A 17-year-old male student

ALL NEBS for Students is a self-contained, 10-week course designed to fit most high school curriculums. It teaches the communication and negotiation skills needed to resolve common relationship problems.

Scenarios include responsibility sharing (who cooks if both are tired?); family income (who decides how money is spent?); child care (who stays home from work if the baby-sitter is sick?); parental expectations (what happens when the honeymoon is over?); and domestic violence (how do you draw the line during a disagreement?).

Sessions begin with a young working couple who have a child and face a com-

mon difficulty: Ultimately, their differences lead one partner to consider divorce. A visit with an attorney is enacted, in which the couple learns what the hard realities of a marital breakup actually are.

## The Partners Curriculum

The course instructors help students identify the real source of conflict and point out how existing communication patterns fuel it. They then teach alternative approaches which students practice through roleplaying. Students are encouraged to utilize the communication skills they have learned in their daily lives. Additionally, students are shown how to budget for real life in their own communities, and also learn about family law and how it impacts upon their lives. Local teachers coordinate the assigned class discussion and homework provided in the PARTNERS curriculum guide that accompanies the course. Local attorneys have also consent with the classes to clarify how divorce, child custody, support and related family law issues are handled in their particular states.

## Partners Nationwide

PARTNERS is gaining national recognition. Good Morning America featured it during a week-long series on education. The Phil Donahue Show featured it, as well, inviting two students who have taken the course as guests on the talk show. The Wall Street Journal, Parade Magazine, The New York Times and ABC-TV all carried stories on the high school program. Numerous local newspapers and television stations have also covered PARTNERS.

One hundred schools in nine states subscribed to the initial PARTNERS program. It has originally taught in five, 30-minute sessions, broadcast live via satellite to high schools around the country by a distance-learning network. The course has now been professionally retaped by Victor/Harper Productions, and is available after December 15, 1995 as a self-contained, five-tape course with a

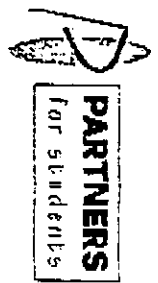
curriculum guide for teachers and students



**It's You have to try and compromise.**

**This told me how to go about it.**

A 17 year old female student.



The PARTNERS Program was designed for junior and senior high school students. It has been used to support social studies, health, psychology, sociology, home economics and business law curriculums.

## Curriculum Highlights

### Choosing A Mate

PARTNERS teaches students how common misconceptions can lead to inappropriate mate selection. It helps students determine the key qualities they prefer in a mate and how to avoid selecting someone with incompatible personality traits.

### Communication — The Key To Success

PARTNERS teaches students how communication and negotiation skills differ between the sexes as well as how stress can alter communication styles and impact on a relationship. It helps students learn specific productive communication techniques and the art of "fair fighting."

### Managing Stress in A Relationship

PARTNERS teaches students how a couple can work together to manage the stresses of daily life and negotiate the resulting differences of opinion. It helps students understand how issues such as financial and job pressures, children, illness, etc. effect the individual as well as the marriage. And students learn the importance of maintaining an independent sense of self-worth in a relationship.

*For I thought this*

*was such a great idea*

*that I worked with my local school board to bring the program to my*

*community's high school. P.P.*

*An ABA Family Law Section Member*



## Curriculum Sponsors

PARTNERS for students was jointly developed and produced by a group of professional organizations that recognized the importance of teaching young people the skills they needed to prevent divorce before marital decisions were made. The curriculum was based on educational and counseling models of instruction. PARTNERS is produced by:

### American Bar Association, Family Law Section (ABA/FLS)

Drawing on the expertise of its 13,000 members nationwide, the ABA/FLS brought to PARTNERS an in-depth knowledge about why couples divorce and the incentives that might keep couples together. ABA/FLS members, having seen the wide-reaching and devastating effects of divorce, are committed to finding alternative ways to preserve the institution of marriage.

### The PAIRS Foundation

PAIRS (Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills) is a non-profit foundation that has provided programs nationwide to teach adults the relationship skills critical to successful partnerships. PAIRS adapted their specific relationship building and maintenance techniques for high school students.

PARTNERS was developed in cooperation with Pennsylvania State University, Ohio University, The National Education Association and The National Association of School Board Directors.

*It'd venture to say that probably one third of my clients could have prevented their divorces, had they entered their relationships with the communication and negotiation skills PARTNERS teaches.*

A Divorce Attorney

*My students are recognizing some of their own short-comings, and PARTNERS is helping them learn the communication skills they need to resolve conflicts.*

A Local Teacher

## How to Get Partners

all the American Bar Association's Family Law Section at 4129 988-5603. The Section can help you obtain the videotapes for the ten-week program for a fee of just \$400.

Bornays, law firms, bar associations, concerned citizens and civic groups may sponsor PARTNERS in their local high schools through the ABAYLAS

Adopt A School program. For more information, please call the ABA at (312) 988-5603.

If you are a corporation, foundation, or other organization seeking to charitably benefit our public future, please call the ABA at (312) 988-5584 for more information about the PARTNERS Sponsorship program.

Partners is a project of the ABA Fund for Justice and Education, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charity. Gifts to the FLE are tax-deductible as charitable contributions to the full extent allowed by law.

## How to Sponsor Partners

**PARTNERS CURRICULUM MANUAL FOR TEACHERS**

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### Overview

Thank you for participating in the PARTNERS Program of the Family Law Section of the American Bar Association. PARTNERS is a unique program for high school students, blending together education on family law and communication skills. We know that you and your students will find it be a valuable educational experience. The American Bar Association, Family Law Section believes that the PARTNERS Program will help young people in making appropriate lifetime choices and maintaining their relationships. It will also, it is hoped, reduce the rate of divorce in this country for our future generations,

PARTNERS teaches students about the legal system as it impacts on marriages, families, and children. It also teaches basic communication skills that are essential to building strong relationships that can withstand the normal stresses of the daily interaction of family life.

In the years between 1960 and 1980, 40% of all first marriages ended in divorce. Currently, approximately 50% of all marriages end in divorce. This does not mean that 50% of all people get divorced but rather it relates only to the number of actual marriages. Some people marry more than once and, if their subsequent marriages fail, it results in increasing this statistic. More than 1,000,000 children annually will be touched by divorce and the problems related to the separation of their parents. These statistics were the highest in any industrialized country in the world.

The American Bar Association, Family Law Section (ABA/FLS) has created this program in the hope that it will improve the quality of family life and reduce the number of families that disintegrate. The Family Law Section consists of family lawyers from around the nation. Through PARTNERS, the Family Law Section brings its vast reservoir of experience in working with families in reorganization in an attempt to stem the tide of divorces.

This particular Program was created using caucasian participants. Future programs will reflect African American and Hispanic families. There is no attempt to imply that all families communicate in this fashion and it is hoped that the students, in their exercises, will utilize their own vocabulary or jargon in practicing these communication skills.

The ABA/FLS has enlisted the help of the PAIRS FOUNDATION and their concepts. The PAIRS FOUNDATION is an organization developed to teach couples better ways of positive communication. In study after study, their communication techniques have been shown to improve relationships. We thank them for sharing their materials. However, the ABA/FLS is solely responsible for this curriculum.

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We hope that you and your students' participation in PARTNERS will help improve the Program. We welcome you as PARTNERS in our efforts, and welcome your feedback and critiques.

**Organization of this Manual**

The purpose of this Manual is to provide you with the information you need to help your students participate in PARTNERS.

This Manual is organized as follows:

- (1) definition of overall curriculum objectives for PARTNERS;
- (2) an overview of the Curriculum's organization and structure;
- (3) an overall summary of the PARTNERS Curriculum including a description of the general structure of each PARTNERS video segment and classroom activities that follow;
- (4) an overview of preparation you should undertake before teaching the PARTNERS Curriculum;
- (5) an overview of tasks and assignments for your students;
- (6) a Unit by Unit breakdown of the PARTNERS Curriculum, including transcripts of portions of the videotape for the particular Unit and detailed curriculum objectives and assignments for each Unit; and
- (8) suggestions for further reading.

An additional section of additional discussion topics, if appropriate in your school district, is added at the end of this Manual for additional discussion. We base this list on experiences with the pilot program phases of PARTNERS. The ABA/FLS recognizes that some of these topics may be inappropriate for some school districts and strongly suggests that each teacher consult their school policies or principals before leading discussions on these topics. A balanced presentation covering all sides of these topics is essential. The listing of these additional topics should in no way imply that the ABA/FLS takes any position on the topics listed; they are suggested as areas of discussion that may be of interest to various students. Future editions of this Manual will contain more material on these discussion topics.

**PARTNERS Curriculum Objectives**

In general, the Curriculum Objectives of PARTNERS are:

- A. to provide students with practical information to help them make informed choices about their life partner and the obligations such choices create;

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- B. to expose students to the legal system for dissolving marriages and those identifiable problems that often lead to divorce/marital dissolution and the impact of marital dissolution on the participants and their children;
- C. to teach students the importance of positive communications styles in a relationship and the destructive impact of negative communication styles, as well as the ways that negative styles can lead to the dissolution of relationships and marriages.

#### **Organization of PARTNERS**

PARTNERS is a ten week curriculum. The PARTNERS videotape contains five Units. Each Unit is planned for two classroom hours of fifty minutes each. Each Unit builds on the proceeding ones.

Each Unit consists of one in-class video tape, approximately twenty minutes in duration, with discussions of one aspect of family law and a lesson in one communication skill. The PARTNERS Unit also includes additional in-class activities on the same day on which the video is shown for the remainder of the class hour. Each videotape segment ends with a homework assignment for the following week when a videotape is not shown.

The curriculum is designed so that each videotape will be followed, in the following class, by a discussion hour. The second part of each unit is a class discussion and activity hour on the week following the videotape showing. This second class completes the unit. These sessions are based on the homework assignment on the videotape. They also include a role for a volunteer lawyer from your local community to help the students understand the family law concepts which were discussed on the previous week's videotape.

Additionally, there are suggested discussion topics which tie in to each subject and may be used, if appropriate for your school and your community.

The ABA/FLS or your State Bar Association will help you make arrangements for this attorney-consultant for your class. We plan to have this attorney contact you to make arrangements to appear in your classroom on both the weeks of the video sessions as well as the week between the video sessions, if you desire, to act as a legal resource to your students and aid them in the legal aspects of their homework assignments.

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**Structure of each PARTNERS Videotape Segment**

Each video tape segment of the PARTNERS program includes:

- (1) a general introduction and orientation to the Program and the particular Unit;
- (2) a description by a matrimonial lawyer of the basic legal concepts to be discussed in each Unit;
- (3) an example of negative communication between Jim and Liz, a young couple with a baby who have been married for two years. The negative communication is about an issue in Jim and Liz's married life. The negative communication results in either Jim or Liz consulting a divorce lawyer who poses an important question for the client to think about relating to the legal topic of the Unit;
- (4) an analysis by a communications expert of the problems in Jim and Liz's communication and discussion of techniques of how to make the communication better suited to preserving their relationship;
- (5) a demonstration by Jim and Liz of how to incorporate the communications skill into the topic about which their communication broke down in the first segment;
- (6) a summary of the Unit and the assignment for the next week.

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**Curriculum Summary**

**Unit I:**

**Legal concept:** the marriage contract and grounds for divorce/dissolution.

**Communications concept:** the "Talking Tips" and the art of listening.

**Unit II:**

**Legal concept:** the obligation to support children of the marriage and, possibly, a dependent spouse

**communications concept:** The Fair Fight for change.

**Unit III:**

**Legal concept:** responsibility for children of the marriage; custody; residential placement; visitation and the right to make decisions concerning the child's care and education.

**Communications concept:** The "Anger Release" tool: expressing anger safely when it is not about your partner.

**Unit IV:**

**Legal concept:** Domestic violence - protection of an abused spouse, remedies, impact on children, penalties for violence

**Communications concept:** Anger: assertive expression; appropriate responses to violence or threat of violence.

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**Unit V:**

**Legal concept:** What are the chief causes of the breakup of marriages? A discussion about expectations of marriages. How to pick a mate; challenging ones expectations of marriage.

**Communications concept:** Daily Sharing - The Temperature Reading; Choosing a Mate; Challenging Expectations of Marriage.

**Activities in the Classroom after the Video**

Following the video, the students will engage in activities in the classroom for approximately another 25 minutes. The post-video activities are described in the Curriculum Guide to the particular Unit.

**Activities in the Classroom  
for the Week after the Video**

The activities for the class session in the Unit following the video are described in the Curriculum Guide to the particular Unit.

**Teacher Preparation**

In preparation for teaching PARTNERS, we suggest that you read this entire Curriculum Manual and review the PARTNERS videotape. We estimate that the entire preparation time should be no more than five hours. We make suggestions for additional readings at the end of the Manual should you feel the need for more preparation.

You will, of course, have to arrange for a Television set and a VCR to show the PARTNERS videotape segments for five classes.

We suggest you plan out the discussion topics for the non-video weeks consistent with the policies of your school district.

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In addition, we suggest that you may want to alert your guidance counselor in anticipation of individual students that may need additional support as a result of issues that are surfaced in these programs.

Finally, we suggest that you contact the lawyer-volunteer who will participate in your class to discuss what his or her role will be.

#### **Student Preparation**

Each student should keep a journal in which they can keep a record of their own personal responses and what they have learned from each session. We suggest you view these journals as personal diaries and do not grade or review them.

In some of the specific sessions students will be assigned specific homework such as gathering information from the newspaper about living expenses or salaries for jobs. They will also be doing some research on the legal system's response to family problems. These assignments facilitate specific exercises that the students will undertake in the classroom. You should treat students who do not complete these assignments as unprepared and in the same manner as any other homework assignment.

#### **Group Organization**

Divide your students into mixed sex groups of four or five. The same group will work together for all ten weeks of FARTNERS. It will probably be helpful to maintain the same groups each week so that they can work together on the exercises.



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**PARTNERS Unit I: "It's Not My Job" and Other Marital Myths.**

**I. Curriculum objectives**

- A. **Family law objective:** To begin an overview of family law in the United States with a discussion of marriage as a legal contract, the interests of the State in maintaining that contract, and the grounds for divorce in your state.
- B. **Communication skills objective:** To teach students how to develop communication skills; and skills of conflict resolution and how to disagree about issues that arise in a relationship in a positive manner without placating or blaming by using the "Talking Tips".

**II. Information and skills conveyed in Unit I**

Through Unit I students will:

- A. **Learn the following information about family law:**

1. **Question:** What, if anything, does the State require before issuing a marriage license?

**Answer:**

- a. age -- most states require people who want to get married without the consent of their parents to be 18 or older
- b. blood-tests -- for certain kinds of venereal diseases

2. **Question:** Can any person marry any other person?

**Answer:**

- a. close relatives cannot marry each other (incest restrictions)
- b. a person cannot have more than one spouse at a time (bigamy restrictions) (Not true in all other cultures)

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3. Question: What if the couple is unhappy? How do they end the marriage?

Answer:

- a. in the United States we regard the right to marry as close to a basic civil right because of its importance to individual fulfillment and happiness
  - b. the state is an interested party to dissolving a marriage contract (divorce) and sets terms and conditions on it, particularly to protect children;
  - c. each state has different standards for determining when a divorce can occur called "grounds";
  - d. we do not have a single national divorce law. Rather each state sets its own grounds for divorce;
  - e. grounds can be grouped into two general categories:
    - (1) fault (e.g. adultery, cruel and inhuman treatment) and
    - (2) no-fault (e.g. irreconcilable differences or mutual consent)
4. Question: what are the grounds for divorce in your state?

Answer: Each State makes their own laws. The students should consult with the lawyer assigned to the class.

**B. Learn the following communication skills:**

1. Talking Tips - learn to communicate your feelings rather than to criticize your partner.
2. Learn to actively listen to the feelings of your partner. Practice repeating what your partner has said. This may seem artificial (it is), but when the communication breaks down, it is a good structure to fall back on to get back on track.

classroom exercises on use of Talking Tips, active listening, and feedback -- 10 minutes

A. A male and a female student in the group should assume:

1. He:

- a. He and She have been dating for six months.
- b. He has an after-school job and makes \$75 per week, but must contribute \$40 per week to his household.
- c. He has noticed that whenever He and She go out, he is always the one who pays all of the expenses of the excursion.
- d. He is frustrated by the fact that She never offers to contribute to the cost of their dating, but has never told her about this.

2. She:

- a. She also has a part time job after school and She makes \$40 per week.
- b. She uses the money for buying her personal items.
- c. She has always assumed that when a boy and girl date, the boy pays.

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B. Negotiate the following two issues:

1. whether or not she should contribute to the cost of their dating
2. if she is to contribute, would that be in money or are there other ways she can contribute to offset his financial contributions.

C. The students should assume that they do not agree on these issues and that they have never discussed this before.

D. Have two students negotiate one of the two issues for 4 minutes using the Talking Tips and active listening. Then have the other students in the group critique the negotiators for 2 minutes. Now, allow the critiquers to negotiate the same assignment, and have the other two students critique. These roles are interchangeable and the one who pays does not always have to be the male.

1. The critique should be positive.
2. Students should be encouraged to provide specific, concrete suggestions as to what should and should not have occurred.

E. Communications guidelines:

The Talking Tips helps us level about certain feelings or issues when we feel overwhelmed by anger, hurt, or fear or we are confused. The Talking Tips helps fine tune your thoughts and feelings and talk about them in a non-threatening way.

Be specific about what is on your mind.

Make positive rather than negative statements.

Explain yourself.

Give the listener a chance to understand your point of view.

Make "I" statements instead of "You" statements.

Make "I" statements instead of "We" statements.

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Make "I" statements instead of asking questions.

Eliminate "always" and "never" from your statements.

Take turns.

Each person takes a turn being the speaker while the other is the listener. The listener's job is to repeat back to the speaker what he or she hears.

Remember, the purpose of these tools is to increase your trust, reduce fear and minimize the chance of uninhibited emotions like we saw in the first scene with Jim and Liz. The tools slow down communication and help us hear and listen to each other.

**V. Homework assignments**

These homework assignments are on the videotape. We repeat them here for you and your students convenience.

- A. Ask the students to write in their journals words they now will use if they are upset about the way someone they care about treats them; also their thoughts and feelings. Advise the students that no one will see these journals; that they may write a lot or a little and they may write every day or as frequently or infrequently as they choose.
- B. Ask the students to find out what the grounds for divorce are in your state (a lawyer consultant will be available to your class for this purpose) Have them also ask the questions set forth on page 8 of this manual.
- C. Assign the students to look in their local newspapers for apartments for rent, coupons for food costs, interest rates, cost of used automobiles and used furniture, as well as want ads for jobs. The next week we will be talking about who decides how money will be spent in the relationship, how much it costs to live independently and the art of "fighting fair".
- D. Practice "Talking Tips" at home and with your class partner. Try it at home with your family or your friends.

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VI. Non-video class in Unit 1

The lawyer-volunteer should attend for this class. At this time, the students can ask the lawyer questions about the assignment. The lawyer will discuss grounds for divorce in the state as well as jurisdictional requirements for marriage, and the laws of consanguinity.

- A. Discuss with the lawyer assigned to the class the following information about divorce in your state.
  1. Grounds for divorce;
  2. Degrees of consanguinity (who may or may not marry);
  3. Requirements for obtaining license;
  4. Jurisdictional requirements (when you can and cannot file for divorce in this state and who get a license in the State)
- B. Discuss the "Talking Tips" and whether any one would like to share experiences from their journal?
  1. Who has tried to use them with friends or family? Success?
  2. "Active" listening - does it help?
- C. Try this hypothetical in groups of 4 to practice the "Talking Tips".
  1. He:
    - a. He and She head the committee for the school dance. This requires a series of responsibilities, including appointing the remainder of the committee, planning the theme and the decorations, and designing the flyers, among other tasks.
    - b. He assumes that She will do all of the preparation for the event, since His job, soccer practice (or other activity) takes up most of his extra time.

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- c. He knows how talented She is and is pleased that He can delegate this responsibility to Her.
2. She:
- a. She is overwhelmed with school work, Her after school responsibilities, and Her responsibilities at home.
- b. She likes to do a good job in whatever She undertakes, but would never have agreed to take this co-chairmanship if He had not agreed to do the job with Her.
- c. This is not the first time that He has expected Her to shoulder all of the responsibilities of a joint assignment.
- d. She is feeling that He is taking advantage of Her good nature but has never said this to Him.
3. Assume that the couple does not agree on this subject and negotiate how they will resolve this problem between them.
- D. Begin a budget discussion. What is the going rate for apartments in the area. What about the cost of used cars? Clothing? Construct a list of expenses that the class believes a couple, living on their own, would incur. What do they think it would cost to have a one bedroom apartment in the area? Could they afford a car? How about auto insurance? Health insurance?
- E. Next week, with the use of a budget form, they will begin to fill in actual numbers. It might be a shock.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

LYNNE Z. GOLD-BIKIN  
516 DEKALE STREET  
P.O. BOX 869  
NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 19404  
(215) 272-5555

- I. PARTNER IN CHARGE, FAMILY LAW DEPARTMENT  
WOLF, BLOCK, SCHORR & SOLIS-COHEN 6/96 to Present
- II. MANAGING PARTNER, GOLD-BIKIN, CLIFFORD & YOUNG 1982 to 6/96
- III. AMERICAN ACADEMY OF MATRIMONIAL LAWYERS:  
Fellow of the AAML since (1984)  
Governor - Board of Governors, 1994  
Committee Activities  
A. By-Law Committee Member (1989)  
B. Chairman - Economics of Law Practice (1990 - 1991)  
C. Admissions Committee Member (1991 - Present)
- IV. AMERICAN LAW INSTITUTE  
Member  
Advisor to the Family Law Project: 1990 - Present
- V. AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION  
A. Family Law Section Activities:  
1. Chair ABA/Family Law Section (1994 - 1995)  
2. Member, Task Force on Domestic Violence (1994)  
3. Commissioner - ABA Commission on Domestic Violence  
4. Chair-Elect ABA/Family Law Section (1993 - 1994)  
5. Vice-Chair ABA/Family Law Section (1992 - 1993)  
6. Secretary ABA/Family Law Section (1991 - 1992)  
7. Parliamentarian, ABA/Family Law Section (1990 to 1991)



8. Editorial Board, Family Law Advocate (1989 to Present)
9. Boalt Hall Conference Invitee (1992)
10. Wingspread Invitee (1986)
11. National Membership Chair, ABA/Family Law Section (1988 to 1989)
12. Executive Member, Mediation and Arbitration Committee, ABA/Family Law Section (1983 to 1985)
13. Producer - Film "Avoiding Malpractice in Family Law" (1987)
14. Chair of ABA/Family Law Section "Scope and Correlation" (1987 to 1988)
15. Standing Committee Member - ABA Child Support Project Committee (1985 to Present)
16. ABA/Family Law Section Council Member (1982 to 1989)
17. Chairman Domestic Violence Committee (1979 to 1983)
18. Pennsylvania Membership Chairman (1978 to 1979)
19. Developed The PARTNERS Program as an educational program of the ABA Family Law Section

**B. CLE Programs for the ABA and Organized Bar Association:**

1. 1992 (S.F.) Men Speak/Women Speak
2. 1991 (Atlanta) Custody Litigation Children Held Hostage Programming and Brainwashing of Children
3. 1991 (Atlanta) "Hot Tips"
4. 1991 (Atlanta) Child Support
5. 1990 (Chicago) "Hot Tips"
6. 1989 (Hawaii) "Hot Tips"
7. 1989 (Hawaii) Handling the Big Case (ABA)
8. Pennsylvania Trial Lawyer's Association "New Divorce Code Amendments"
9. 1988 (Toronto) Comparative Cross Examination (ABA)

10. 1987 (San Francisco) Comparative Cross Examination (ABA)
11. 1987 (New Orleans) How to Avoid Malpractice (ABA)
12. 1987 (Tucson) Applying the Rules of Evidence in Family Law Cases (DLI)
13. 1986 (New York) "How to Avoid Malpractice" (ABA)
14. 1986 (Vail) Evidentiary Issues in Divorce Cases: A Trial Demonstration Expert Witnesses (DLI)
15. 1985 (Orlando) Negotiating Joint Custody Agreements and Grandparent Visitation (DLI)
16. 1985 (Orlando) "What Every Family Law Practitioner Needs to Know about the Bankruptcy Code" (DLI)
17. 1985 (London) Mock Trial on Custody
18. 1985 (Washington, D.C.) Child Support Guidelines
19. 1984 (Philadelphia) New Tax Law (PESI)
20. 1984 (Vail) Negotiating Joint Custody Agreements (DLI)
21. 1984 (Chicago) Adoption (ABA)
22. 1982 (San Francisco) "Anatomy of a Marital Agreement" (ABA)
23. 1981 (New Orleans) Program on Family Courts (ABA)
24. 1980 (Hawaii) Joint Program with Young Lawyers on Child and Spouse Abuse (ABA)
25. 1979 (Dallas) Program on Domestic Violence (ABA)

C. Other American Bar Association Activities:

1. Sections:

a. Law Student Division

- (1) Law Student Division/American Bar Association, III Circuit Governor (1974 - 1975)
- (2) President, Law Student Division/American Bar Association (1975 - 1976)

- b. Young Lawyers Section  
Member, Long Range Planning Committee (1976 - 1978)
  - c. Section on Legal Economics  
Co-Chairman, New Lawyers in Practice Committee (1976 - 1979)  
"Rainmakers" (1990)
  - d. Litigation Section  
Vice Chairman, Family Law Committee (1988 - 1990)
2. ABA Committee Appointments:
- a. Committee on Special Limitations of Attorneys Fees; (Appointed by President, Justin Stanley 1976 - 1979)
  - b. Standing Committee on Forum Committees (Appointed by President Robert McCrate 1987 - 1990)
  - c. Standing Committee on Professional Discipline (Appointed by President John J. Curtin, Jr. 1990 - 1993)
  - d. Task Force, Domestic Violence (1994)
  - e. Commission on Domestic Violence (1995)
3. House of Delegates: Delegate at Large (1996-99)

VI. PENNSYLVANIA BAR ASSOCIATION, FAMILY LAW SECTION ACTIVITIES:

- A. Family Law Section Activities
- 1. Council Member (1980 - 1988)
  - 2. Chairman, Domestic Violence Committee (1979 - 1983)
  - 3. Chairman, Custody Committee (1983 - 1984)
  - 4. Chairman, Arbitration Mediation Committee (1984 - 1985)
  - 5. Co-Chairman, Custody Committee (1986 - 1987)
  - 6. Program Chairman (1988 - 1989)

- B. Other PBA Activities
  - 1. Member - Committee on Specialization (1990)
  - 2. Program - Surogacy (1988)

VII. MONTGOMERY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES:

- A. Board of Directors (1992 - Present)
- B. Family Law Committee, Chair (1983 - 1985)
- C. Legal Directory, Chair (1986 - 1988)
- D. Long Range Planning Committee (1988 - 1989)
- E. Bench Bar Committee (1990 - present)

VIII. PENNSYLVANIA TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES:

Chairman, Family Law Litigation Section (1988 - 1990)

IX. PENNSYLVANIA FUTURE COMMISSION ON JUSTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

X. JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

Member of the Advisory Committee on Domestic Relations Law

XI. CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

ACTIVITIES FOR PENNSYLVANIA BAR INSTITUTE:

- A. Basic Legal Practice Course - Course Planner (1980 - 1991)
- B. Advanced Family Law Seminars (1977 - Present) (Approximately two per year)

XII. TEACHING:

- A. Temple Law School - Adjunct Professor - Family Law (1978 - 1979)
- B. Temple Law School - Adjunct Professor - Family Law (1979 to 1989) - Graduate Program
- C. Institute for Paralegal Training - Instructor in Family Law (1977 - 1980; 1983 - 1984)
- D. Villanova Law School, Continuing Legal Education Courses (1983 - 1985)
- E. Dickinson Law Forum (1980 - 1986)

- F. Family Law Section, Trial Advocacy Institute (NITA Trainer) (1989 - present)
- G. State Department sponsored trip to Russia to work with Domestic Violence Workers and Parliament on Domestic Violence Statutes. Gave Seminars and training to workers on Domestic Violence.

XIII. ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS:

A. Books

- 1. Divorce Practice Handbook  
Published (MICHIE) August, 1994
- 2. Pennsylvania Marital Agreements,  
Published (PESI) August, 1984
- 3. Family Law and Practice, "Modification of Matrimonial Determinations" (Chapter 52)  
Published 1985
- 4. Contemporary Matrimonial Law Issues
  - a. "Bifurcated Divorces" Copyright 1985
  - b. "Bankruptcy Intervenes" Copyright 1985
- 5. Introduction to Children Held Hostage Programming and Brainwashing Children (1992)

B. Professional Journals

- 1. Villanova Law Review:  
1980 - "Pennsylvania's New Divorce Code"
- 2. Pennsylvania Law Journal - Reporter:
  - a. October 3, 1983 - "Bankruptcy supersedes Distribution"
  - b. April 18, 1988 - "New State Divorce Code Provides Radical Changes"
- 3. The Legal Intelligencer:
  - a. October, 1983 - "Bankruptcy Takes Precedence over Equitable Distribution"
  - b. November, 1988 - "Goodwill in Practice"

- c. December, 1988 - "Old v. New Divorce Code"
- d. January, 1989 - "Adoption"
- 4. American Journal of Family Law:
  - Spring, 1987 - "Bankruptcy in Divorce: Protecting the Bankrupt spouse"
- 5. The Compleat Lawyer:
  - a. Winter, 1984 - "Who Wins"
  - b. Summer, 1985 - "The Greatest Asset of All"
  - c. Spring 1987 - "How to Win the most Child Support for your Client"
- 6. The Family Advocate:
  - a. 1985 - "Herpes"
  - b. 1988 - "Defining Income is the Key to Effective Lawyering"
- 7. Fairshare:  
(Contributing Editor - Support 1988 - Present)
  - a. March, 1984 - "Bankruptcy"
  - b. November, 1984 - "Bifurcation"
  - c. August, 1985 - "Malpractice"
  - d. September, 1986 - "Practicing with Guidelines"
  - e. March, 1987 - "Pennsylvania: Trend Toward Trial Judge Discretion Affects Trial Strategy"
  - f. 1987 - Tax Returns - The 1040 Corporate Return, Partnership Return
  - g. 1988 - Guidelines
  - h. 1989 - Pennsylvania Law
  - i. August, 1990 - Cross-Examination of Psychiatrist
- 8. TRIAL:
  - June, 1986 - "Domestic Torts"

9. Successful Woman:

- a. Nov/Dec 1985 - "The Special Challenges of Dual Career Families"
- b. May/June 1986 - "The Pre-Nuptial Agreement"

C. Editorial Boards/Magazines

1. Practical Lawyer 1987 to present
2. Family Advocate 1989-present
3. The Pennsylvania Family Lawyer, Associate Editor (1980 - 1984)
4. Fairshare 1992 to present

XIV. ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE BAR:

- A. President's Council - Albright College (1982 - 1990)
- B. Villanova Law School - Class Representative (1983 - 1990)
- C. Federation of Allied Jewish Appeal - Co-Chairman; Family Law Division, Lawyer's Division (1985 - 1990)
- D. Upper Merion Township - Member: Park and Recreation Commission (1989 - present) Vice-Chair (1992 - 1990)
- E. Montgomery County Commission on Women and Families (1992 - Present)
- F. Pennsylvania Bar Association Commission on Women (1993 - Present)

XV. MEMBERSHIPS:

- A. Fellow, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers
- B. Fellow, International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers
- C. Fellow, Pennsylvania Bar Foundation
- D. Fellow, American Bar Foundation
- E. Member, American Bar Association
- F. Member, Pennsylvania Bar Association
- G. Member, Montgomery Bar Association

- H. Member, Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association
- I. Member, National Association of Woman Lawyers

XVI. HONORS AWARDED

- A. One of "Five Wonderful Women" Honored by The Women's Center of Montgomery County (Law Award); April 1996
- B. Baccalaureate speaker and recipient of Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree by Albright College; May 1996
- C. Nominated to the Pennsylvania Honor Roll of Women; March 1996

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