CHAPTER 14: FAMILIES, LIFESTYLES, AND PARENTING

Objective’s for Today’s Class:
Adult Lifestyles

Adults today choose many lifestyles and form many types of families
- They live alone
- They cohabit
- They marry
- They divorce
- They remarry
- They live with someone of the same sex

Single Adults
- There has been a dramatic rise in the percentage of single adults
- What are the advantages of being single?
- What are the disadvantages of being single?

Should You Get Married?
What are five reasons not to get married?
What are five reasons to get married?

Cohabitation: Living together in a sexual relationship without being married
- Researchers have found:
  - No differences in marital quality between individuals who cohabitated and those who did not
  - That cohabitation is not good for a marriage

What Do You Really Know About Marriage?
Let’s take the Marriage Quiz
Typical Marrying Age
- In France, the average groom is 30 and the average bride is 28.
- In Canada, the average groom is 29 and the average bride is 27.
- In the United States, the average age for grooms is 27 and for brides is 26.

The First Year Of Marriage
- Husbands and wives gradually feel less “in love” and pleased with married life.
- Why?
  - A sharp drop in time spent talking to one another.
  - A sharp drop in doing things that brought each other pleasure (saying “I love you” or doing things to make each other laugh).
  - Leisure pursuits giving way to household tasks and chores.

After the First Year
- Couples whose relationships endure generally report that they love each other more than they did earlier.
  - Commitment may be the aspect of love that determines whether a relationship survives.

Marital Satisfaction
- More men than women report being happily married.
  - Simply being married is associated with gains in men’s mental and physical health.
- For women, relationship quality has a greater impact on mental health.
  - As a result, women suffer more than men when a marriage has problems.
  - Women feel particularly dissatisfied when the demands of husband, children, housework, and career are overwhelming.
  - Women are more willing to evaluate a relationship as unsatisfying and try to work on it.
  - Men more often withdraw from conflict.

Keeping Love Alive
1. Make time for your relationship.
2. Tell your partner of your love.
3. Be available to your partner in times of need.
5. Show an interest in important aspects of your partner’s life.
6. Confide in your partner.
7. Forgive minor offenses, and try to understand major offenses.

What Happens When the Marriage Doesn’t Work?

Factors Related to Marital Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Happy Marriage</th>
<th>Unhappy Marriage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family backgrounds</td>
<td>Partners similar in SES, education, religion, and age</td>
<td>Partners very different in SES, education, religion, and age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age at marriage</td>
<td>After age 23</td>
<td>Before age 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of courtship</td>
<td>At least 6 months</td>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing of first pregnancy</td>
<td>After first year of marriage</td>
<td>Before or within first year of marriage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship to extended family</td>
<td>Warm and positive</td>
<td>Negative, wish to maintain distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital patterns in extended family</td>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>Unstable, frequent separations and divorces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and employment status</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Insecure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality characteristics</td>
<td>Emotionally positive; good conflict-resolution skills</td>
<td>Emotionally negative and impulsive; poor conflict-resolution skills</td>
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Divorce Rates

- The United States has one of the highest rates in the world
  - In 2000 and 2001, there were about 4 divorces per 1000 people
- About 43% of first marriages end in separation or divorce within 15 years
- About 90% of separated couples go on to divorce within 5 years

What Couples are More Likely to End Their Marriage?

- Teenagers have high divorce rates
- Couples with less education and income
- Couples who live together prior to marriage
- Couples who have divorced parents
- Couples who become pregnant or bear a child before marriage
- Couples who have stepchildren in the home or have no children

Reasons for Divorce in Middle- and Late-Adulthood

- For Women:
  - Verbal, physical, or emotional abuse
  - Alcohol and drug abuse
  - Cheating
- For Men:
  - No obvious problems – just fell out of love
  - Cheating
  - Different values, lifestyles

Should You Get Divorced?

What impact does it have on the individuals involved?

Do Divorced Adults Get Remarried?

On average, divorced adults remarry within 4 years after their divorce (with men doing this sooner than women)
How do Homosexual Relationships Compare to Heterosexual Relationships?

Gay and Lesbian Couples...

- Are similar in their satisfactions, loves, joys, and conflicts to heterosexual couples
  - Just like heterosexual couples, gay and lesbian adults need to find the balance of romantic love, affection, autonomy, and equality

- Are creating families that include children
  - Researchers have found that children growing up in gay or lesbian families are just as popular with their peers and have no differences in adjustment or mental health as compared to children in heterosexual families

Next Class

- Chapter 14 – Families, Lifestyles, and Parenting Continued...
  - Please read about Parenting