

Knowing Yourself

Overview

This lesson introduces a fundamental concept of *Love Notes*, namely, that good relationships start with the individual. It stresses the importance of better understanding and developing one's self as a key to healthy relationships. This lesson provides two engaging ways to assist young people in discovering more about themselves, including their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as what influences their behaviors. Greater self-awareness empowers youth to make decisions and acquire needed skills to achieve greater success with relationships of all kinds.

The *Primary Colors Personality Tool* offers a window into knowing oneself. While there is nothing scientific about a personality style assessment, it can offer valuable insights about personal strengths as well as challenge areas. We are using the *Primary Colors Personality Tool*, developed by Dawn Billings, because it helps individuals understand their personality tendencies in different contexts (e.g. with a romantic partner, at work, and when under stress). Awareness of personality style can also increase tolerance for differences while helping people use their personality style differences creatively and constructively in relationships of all kinds—at work, with partners, family, or friends.

The *Sorting Baggage* activity is an empowering way to explore the kinds of experiences from the past that can affect one's relationships and behaviors today. The activities are designed to help youth—many who have had adverse childhood experiences—make meaning of their past. A workbook questionnaire follows the *Sorting Baggage* activity in order to assist each youth in examining the patterns experienced in his or her own family(ies) of origin. After filling out the questionnaire privately, participants are encouraged to identify what they feel are positive and negative patterns for families. They then are asked to identify which patterns they want to leave behind and which

they want to work to establish for their own lives. These activities and discussions will help highlight the kinds of behaviors that help children, relationships, and families to flourish. For young parents, it offers a tool to examine and identify patterns that can help their child.

Goals

- Learn that good relationships start with an understanding of one's self.
- Use knowledge of personality style for one's growth and appreciate the influence of personality style on relationships.
- Gain an understanding that past experiences affect present choices and future decisions.
- Become aware of the positive and/or negative baggage we bring from our pasts and how it can affect relationships.
- Realize that people tend to repeat the same patterns learned in their families or react to the patterns in opposite ways.
- Encourage youth to identify patterns they want to carry forward or work to change.
- Understand that one's past does not define one's destiny.

Lesson at a Glance

2.1 **Good Relationships Start with You** (5 minutes)

2.2 **Understanding My Personality Style** (25 minutes)

Activities: *Primary Colors Personality Tool; Dealing with Extreme Tendencies*

2.3 **Examining Family of Origin** (25 minutes)

Activities: *Sorting Baggage; Examining Family Patterns; Legacy of Abuse and Childhood Hurts* discussion; *Music Activity*

Trusted Adult Connection



Materials Checklist

Resources:

- 2a. *Baggage* activity cards (class set): (**Locate colored activity cards in the back of the manual.**) Cut. Duplicate masters can be downloaded at DibbleInstitute.org/LN4.
- 2b. *Dealing With My Extremes* worksheet. **Locate at the end of the lesson, pgs. 44–45.** Duplicate one per person.
- 2c. *Trusted Adult Connection* (pg. 46)

Materials:

- Lesson 2 PowerPoint slideshow and all duplicate masters for activity cards are digital downloads that come with the curriculum. Easy-to-follow directions are found at DibbleInstitute.org/LN4.
- Three lunch bags or small gift bags
- Pencils/pens for completing the *Primary Colors Personality Tool* booklet
- *Primary Colors Personality Tool* booklets. Sample found in the binder pocket. Order in bulk for your participants from The Dibble Institute, 1-800-695-7975.
- Music Video: *No More Drama*, by Mary J. Blige (hyperlinked inside PowerPoint slide). Other possibilities: *Starting Over*, by Mackelmore, or *Not Afraid*, by Eminem.

Workbook Application:

- *Baggage from the Past* (pgs. 2–4)



Preparation

- ✓ View the PowerPoint slideshow and notes below each slide. Pay special attention to the slides on the *Primary Colors Personality Tool*, which offers instructions on how to fill in the questionnaire.
- ✓ One sample of the *Primary Colors Personality Tool* is included with your instructor manual. Packets of 10 can be ordered for participants from The Dibble Institute.

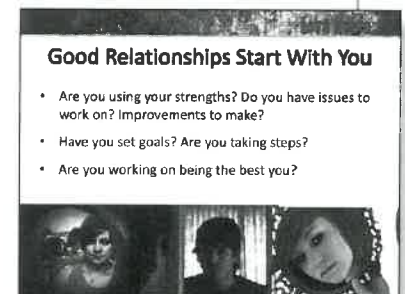
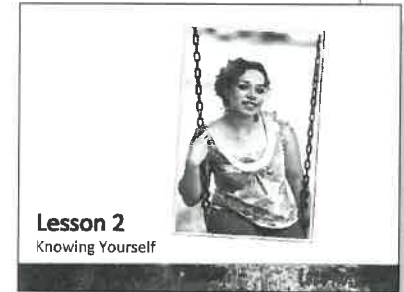
- ✓ Review the *Primary Colors Personality Tool* carefully to be familiar with each color. It is recommended the instructor individually complete one before teaching. Carefully review the section on centered and extreme expressions of one's personality style. The lesson provides information on the *Primary Colors Personality Tool* frameworks to assist the instructor. For more information, watch the YouTube video, *The Why behind Six Colors Primary Colors Personality Test*, by Dawn Billings ([Youtube.com/watch?t=1709&v=Yj5T_sNmWcc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=1709&v=Yj5T_sNmWcc)). Another useful page on personality tendencies when under stress is www.primarycolorspersonality.com.
- ✓ Duplicate *Dealing With My Extremes* (Resource 2b, pgs. 44–45). Run back to back. One per person.
- ✓ Duplicate *Trusted Adult Connection* (Resource 2c, pg. 46). Cut in half. One per teen.
- ✓ Label each lunch or gift bag: one with the word “positive,” another with “negative,” and the other with “could be either.”
- ✓ Locate the colored card stock *Baggage* activity cards (Resource 2a) in the back of the manual. Cut up. Read the cards beforehand and select.
- ✓ Review the *Baggage from the Past* questionnaire in the workbook (pgs. 2–4) to prepare for the group discussion.
- ✓ Preview *No More Drama*, by Mary J. Blige. There is a link to YouTube in the PowerPoint slides. Other song options will be included: *Starting Over*—Mackelmore, *Not Afraid*—Eminem.
- ✓ Select music to play at the start of the session.

5 minutes

SECTION 2.1**Good Relationships Start with You**

This lesson begins with a short introduction on the importance of knowing oneself and learning that good relationships start with you. **(PP)**

- ❖ *This is a program to help you acquire knowledge and skills for developing healthy relationships.*
- ❖ *Sometimes subconsciously we might think that if the right person came along, we'd have a great relationship and everything else would fall into place.*
- ❖ *Well, that is a myth because finding and keeping good relationships really starts with you.*
- ❖ *Truth is, the healthier you are—the more you've worked to develop yourself—the healthier your relationships are likely to be.*
- ❖ *And it all starts with knowing yourself: knowing your strengths, as well as your weaknesses, and understanding how your past has influenced who you are today. **(PP)***
- ❖ *For example, do you have issues to work on? Changes to make? Have you set goals and are you working towards them? Are you heading towards who you want to be?*
- ❖ *In this session, you'll have the opportunity to learn more about yourself—particularly your personality style and how your past experiences have influenced you.*
- ❖ *Personality style and past experiences often operate subconsciously, but they definitely influence our behaviors. They also color our perceptions and expectations when it comes to relationships.*
- ❖ *The more you understand yourself, the more you can make decisions and take steps to develop yourself that put you on the path to healthy relationships and a good future.*



SECTION 2.2

Understanding My Personality Style

- *Primary Colors Personality Tool* booklets
- Resource 2b: *Dealing With My Extremes* (pgs. 44–45)
- Pencils/Pens

25 minutes

This section begins with an introduction to personality styles. It offers each participant a *Primary Colors Personality Tool* to assess his or her style. This unique tool, rather than categorizing people as either/or with regards to personality styles, stresses that individuals are a blend of their primary colors. Participants will be able to acknowledge and take pride in their own strengths and qualities, as well as identify some of their challenge areas. It includes an exploration of how personality tendencies can fluctuate in different contexts (e.g. work, romantic or family relationships), as well as how more negative tendencies of any style can come out when one is under stress. Awareness of personality style can aid youth in understanding themselves and others and help them have greater success in their relationships.

Introduce with a brief hook activity: (PP)

- ❖ *I would like everyone to take out a pen or pencil and write your full name using the opposite hand you normally write with.*

Pause. Ask how it felt and looked. Participants will inevitably say it felt awkward, uncomfortable, and their writing did not look very good. Make these points:

- ❖ *This exercise demonstrates what personality style is like. There are different styles (just like being left or right handed) and your style is how you show up best.*
- ❖ **(PP)** *Your personality style influences how you see things, how you make decisions, how you are energized, what motivates you, how you act, and much more. It's what feels natural to you.*

What's Your Personality Style?



Different People, Different Styles

- Each person has a way of:
 1. learning; taking in information
 2. working; organizing their life
 3. getting energized; being with other people
 4. making decisions
- No one style is better than another.

❖ *No one personality style is better than another. Each style has qualities that show up in behavior to make a person unique and effective. But each style also has its extremes, which often come out when under stress. These extremes are harmful to you and your relationships. More on that later.*

❖ **(PP)** *Why learn about personality style? Because most people are unaware of how personality style impacts behaviors and relationships. Each person believes their way of being, doing, seeing things, and making decisions is the right and only way.*

❖ **Example:** *If you are lost, will you stop and ask for directions? How many just find directions on their phone and figure it out? One thinks, "I'll just stop and ask." The other thinks, "How helpless is that? I can just look at Google Maps on my cell."*

- *How many tend to be punctual versus habitually late?*
- *Who's a peacemaker?*
- *Who's a take-charge person?*
- *Are you outgoing and talkative, or more reserved, preferring to think things through before talking?*
- *Do you get energized from lots of action, variety, and talking to others? How many feel too much socializing and too many activities drain your energy?*
- *Who thrives on change and spontaneity versus preferring structure and predictability?*
- *How many of you are realists and get irritated by those who seem to always be talking about possibilities?*

❖ **(PP)** *Those are examples of personality style differences. Without knowing about style, you tend to get irritated by people who see things or do things differently than you. Each style has its own strengths and its own pitfalls or shortcomings. If you know about personality style, you can work on negative or extreme tendencies that can come out when you are angry, insecure, or under stress, so you can be more successful in your relationships*

Why Learn About Personality Style?

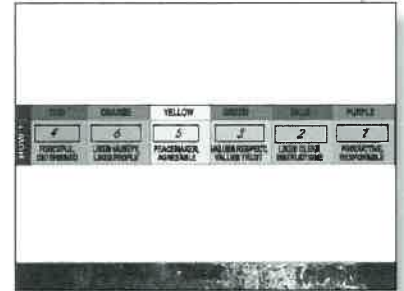
- Without knowing about style, you assume your way is the right way and the only way.
- You are irritated by people with different styles, and it creates relationship conflict.
- Each style has its own strengths & its own shortcomings.

WHAT COLOR ARE YOU

What are your Strengths? Weaknesses?

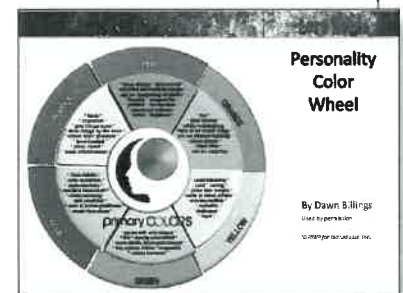
Activity: Primary Colors Personality Tool

Pass out the *Primary Colors Personality Tool* booklets and pencils. Point out that the validity of this tool in giving them insights about their personality style depends on checking the responses that correspond with what they *really are like*, not what they think they should be or want to be. Ask participants to note there are seven horizontal rows of different colored boxes. **Instructor note:** Use the PowerPoint slide to show how to fill in or give clear verbal instructions. **(PP)**



Directions and Pointers: Participants must go across horizontally for row one and rank each box. #6 indicates “most like me” and #1 “least like me.” Instruct them to decide which box (pair of words) is most like them and give it a #6. Then they should decide which pair of words is least like them and give it a #1. Then they can rank the remaining boxes. It’s most important to mark #6 and #5 correctly. These are their primary and secondary colors. Sometimes participants can get hung up on which is #3 or #4 or #2 in the ranking. Tell participants not to stress over the middle ones, but to pay closest attention to what they feel are their top two colors *and* which is least like them (#1, #2). Instruct them to use pencils with erasers.

When they have finished ranking each row across, they are to tally up their points by adding the columns going down vertically. For example, add up all numbers going down the red category and then the orange column, and so forth. They then turn the page and record their numbers in boxes along the top. They will then see what their primary colors are. Instruct them to read about their primary and secondary colors on the color wheel on pg. 2. Some may have the same score for the top two. **(PP)**



Understanding Your Colors: Troubleshooting

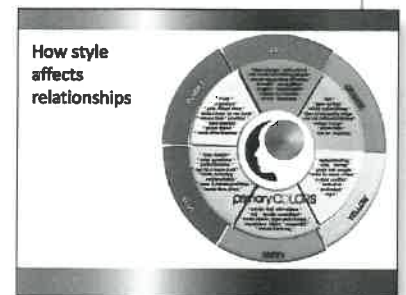
- ❖ *If the words describing your top color don't seem to fit you, don't worry. Sometimes people rank according to how they'd like to be, not as they really are, or they simply overthink it.*

For example, maybe you're red (6), but you don't like that word "forceful" in the first row. But if you are honest with yourself, you may appear that way to some.

- ❖ *A good way to check is to read the descriptive words in the wheel for your top color or colors. If they really don't fit you, read the other colors and determine which color or colors describe you best.*
- ❖ *Your primary color (top color) will show how you are most likely to show up in life. However, your secondary color (the next one) will tell you how your primary color is softened, blended, rounded, intensified, or expanded.*
- ❖ *Your lowest color gives you information about what you will hate doing, or have the most difficulty understanding and accepting in others. Your lowest color is what is most unlike you.*
- ❖ *If you have time, put youth with the same colors together to see who has similar personalities. Have each youth check three words that describe their strengths best.*

How Style Affects Relationships

- ❖ **(PP) Personality style differences can create conflict.** *Without knowing about and appreciating style differences, you typically believe your way is the right way or the only way. Those who do not share your style easily irritate you, whether it's in your romantic or family relationships or with friends and peers at school.*
- ❖ *But personality style teaches the basic point that for all our good qualities, we all still have weaknesses, pitfalls, or challenges. There are qualities we can stand to develop or tone down. No one style is better than the others.*



Challenge participants to look back at the wheel on the second page and read about their lowest numbered color. Offer the following example:

- ❖ *For example, take orange and blue. While some of an orange's great strengths are taking risks, seizing opportunities, being high-energy, and inspiring others, an orange personality style might be more effective if she or he worked on developing a few of the blue's strengths, like being more organized, focused, and paying attention to details.*

Relationship Pitfalls: Instruct participants to go to pgs. 3 and 4 to find their primary color and read about some common relationship pitfalls. Ask them to put a check by the ones they recognize in themselves. Then instruct them to look at their secondary color and do the same. Point out that being aware is the first step in positive personal development.

Ask them to jot down two behaviors they can work on to address their relationship pitfalls. For example, "If I am **orange** I can practice better listening. I can slow down a bit and allow others to be engaged and involved rather than hogging the show."

Discuss how understanding personality style can help relationships.

- ❖ *In relationships of any kind, rather than being irritated by how a person does something or if they don't see things as you do, challenge yourself to appreciate his or her strengths. He or she may be strong where you are weak. Be aware of how people with different styles can balance and help each other, whether it's a romantic or family relationship or at work. They may bring things to the table that you lack and vice versa.*
- ❖ *In romantic relationships, learn about each other's style. It is one way to discover more about each other. Keep in mind a rich blend of similarities and differences can draw us together. The important questions are:*
 - *Can you appreciate your differences?*
 - *Can your differences work together and balance each other? For example, you might be a very organized, easy-going person who got attracted to the live wire, spontaneous type.*
 - *Think about how your partner's strengths might bring balance and help you be a better person.*
- ❖ *We all have strengths and we all have weaknesses. When people learn about each other's style, they can appreciate each other better and use those styles productively.*
- ❖ *Remember, we each see the world through a different colored lens.*

Personality Tendencies When Under Stress

- ❖ **(PP)** *When we are calm, stable, and feeling fine, the positive aspects of our primary colors come out in our behaviors and help us be successful.*
- ❖ *But when angry, insecure, or under stress, the extremes of our personality tendencies can come out in our behaviors and cause problems.*
- ❖ *These extreme tendencies of our primary colors can be destructive and damaging to our relationships.*
- ❖ *Some people lose jobs and/or personal relationships because their extreme tendencies go unchecked.*
- ❖ *In the workplace, those extreme tendencies of one's personality style can lead to an inability to work and get along with others, communicate effectively, and problem-solve.*
- ❖ *To become more effective and successful in relationships at work and in life in general, it is important to become aware of your primary colors' extreme tendencies and then take steps to reduce them.*
- ❖ *The goal is to increase your positive or centered tendencies and to decrease your negative or extreme tendencies.*

Your Extreme and Centered Tendencies

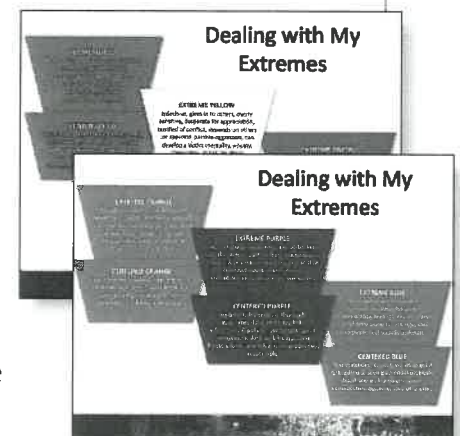
- Personality style tendencies can fluctuate in different contexts:
 - **Centered:** When you are secure, happy, calm, feeling good, your positive centered qualities shine. These help you be your best self.
 - VS.
 - **Extreme:** When you are angry, stressed, feeling inadequate, insecure, your extremes come out. These can be damaging and destructive in your relationships.

Activity: Dealing with Extreme Tendencies

Pass out Resource 2b, *Dealing With My Extremes* (pgs. 44–45).

Ask participants to focus on their primary color(s) and to study the descriptive words regarding their color's centered tendencies and then their extreme tendencies. Instructor should read aloud each one. **(PP)**

After reading the descriptions of centered and extremes for each color, ask participants to fill out the worksheet. **Note:** This can be assigned as homework to save class time.

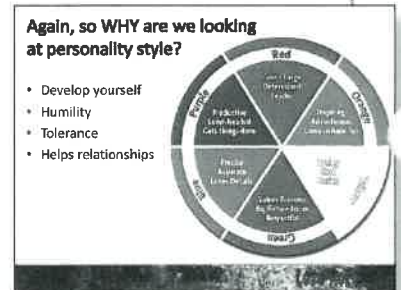


Point out that the worksheet asks them to identify at least two behaviors or steps they can take to work on reducing their extremes.

- ❖ *For example, if you are a strong red, you may decide to work on taking a pause and thinking about how to more gently raise an issue with someone at work. You might work on asking other people for their opinions versus just charging forth with yours. You might make a point of offering others more words of appreciation.*
- ❖ *If you are a yellow, you might work on assertiveness—standing up for yourself—putting what you think or need on the table and knowing your needs or concerns count. You might work on overcoming your fear of conflict.*

(PP) Conclude by restating why we are learning about personality style.

- ❖ *Develop yourself: appreciate your strengths. Deal with extremes.*
- ❖ *Humility: Your way is not the only way or best way.*
- ❖ *Tolerance: We all bring different strengths to the table.*
- ❖ *Helps relationships: Use differences positively rather than be irritated by different styles.*



SECTION 2.3

Examining Family of Origin

- Three labeled lunch or gift bags
- Music Video: *No More Drama*, by Mary J. Blige
- Resource 2a: *Baggage* activity cards
- Resource 2c: *Trusted Adult Connection* (pg. 46)
- Workbook: *Baggage from the Past* (pgs. 2–4)

25 minutes

This section helps participants learn more about themselves by examining their own past experiences while growing up. The first activity involves sorting examples of the kind of experiences that can influence how a person is today. Descriptive baggage cards are placed in different bags labeled “positive,” “negative,” or “could-be-either.” This activity encourages participants to determine which cards are positive or negative and which activities either helped or created challenges and problems. The questionnaire that follows will help participants examine family patterns they experienced growing up. Then participants can decide which patterns to keep and which patterns to work to change.

Note: A number of youth have had adverse childhood experiences, some very traumatic. Many youth in corrections, foster care, or substance abuse programs have never had their early experiences addressed or even acknowledged. The activities in this section are designed to help youth make meaning of their past, understand themselves better, and to empower them to make positive choices on the patterns they want for their future and future families. Referring to the film *Antwone Fisher* is especially relevant to this lesson. If there is a way to have your teens view this film (in or outside of session) it will deepen their understanding.

Introduce this topic with the following points: (PP)

- ❖ *Has anyone ever heard of the phrase, “He’s got a lot of baggage”?*
What do you think it means?

Explain what **baggage** means:

- ❖ *Baggage can mean negative experiences a person brings from the past (previous troubled relationships including family) that cause behaviors, attitudes, issues, or problems that make life more difficult or challenging.*

What Baggage Are You Carrying?



- ❖ *But a person can also bring good baggage. Examples of good baggage can be people or experiences in life that build such things as self-confidence, trust, a positive attitude, skills and talents, or an ability to relate well with others. These might come from a close family member, mentor, drug-free friend, or a host of other experiences or people.*
- ❖ *Let's do a game to better understand what this means and why it's important to examine your baggage.*

Activity: Sorting Baggage

Place three bags labeled respectively “positive,” “negative,” and “could-be-either” on a table in front of the group. Select and shuffle the *Baggage* activity cards you will use (Resource 2a).

(PP) State that these cards represent a type of baggage someone could bring into a relationship. They describe experiences, behaviors, and attitudes. Announce their task is to decide if it is **positive** baggage or **negative** baggage, or whether it **could-be-either**.



Ask for two volunteers to come up to read aloud the cards you've chosen to use. As each one takes turns reading a card aloud, he/she pauses while the group decides which bag it belongs in. If there isn't agreement, it automatically goes into the **could-be-either** bag. Engage discussion by asking the group to say why they chose positive or negative, or how it could be either.

Note: Be sure to pass out the “History of Family Violence” card. It is a great discussion piece that illustrates the message because everyone will likely put it in the **negative** baggage bag. Be sure to ask the following:

- ❖ *Is there any way growing up in a family with a history of violence could be turned into good baggage?*

If they don't come up with it on their own, remind them that sometimes we *repeat* and sometimes we *react* to negative baggage. Ask them how a person might turn their experience into something positive for their future life.

This is a great opportunity to mention that Antwone Fisher did not want to repeat his experience of childhood abuse. But he needed help to understand, to heal, and to learn new ways to live without repeating the past.

Note: For the **could-be-either** cards and even the **negative** cards, pause and discuss under what circumstances or how it could be turned into something good. **Be sure to point out how negative baggage is not destiny.** Discuss and ask for examples about the circumstances in which it might be turned into good baggage. For example, if one's older sister got into drugs and a younger sibling saw the consequences, she might firmly decide not to go there.

Concluding points to make after the *Sorting Baggage* activity:

- ❖ *Examine your own baggage to help you know yourself better and what to focus on in terms of your own development.*
- ❖ **(PP)** *Imagine that entering a relationship is like going on a trip. You can choose what to pack and what to leave behind.*
- ❖ *Baggage concerns are a reason to take it slowly before getting too serious with someone.*
- ❖ *No one comes into a relationship as an empty slate. In a relationship, it is important to get to know more about a partner's past experiences, family, and relationships.*
- ❖ **Caution:** *Do not share sensitive baggage with a person until you know the person a while and deem they are trustworthy.*
- ❖ *Some **baggage** makes it hard to have a healthy relationship or be successful in getting along with others in the workplace and holding a job. Each person must take responsibility to acknowledge and address their own **baggage**.*

What to pack—or leave behind?



Activity: Examining Family Patterns

Have participants turn to the *Baggage from the Past* questionnaire in the workbook (pgs. 2–4). **(PP)**



The Powerful Influence of Families We Grew Up In

What patterns are positive?
What patterns do you not want to repeat?

Introduce the questionnaire with these points:

1. *Our families influence us more than we would ever suspect. It's our heaviest baggage, for better or worse. We learn lessons, roles, and unspoken rules that shape our behaviors and feelings. It influences such things as how we expect to be treated, whether we trust or distrust, how close we like to be with a partner, what feelings or emotions are okay or not okay to express, how to speak up or keep the peace, and how to handle stress or anger. Things such as our expectations, sense of responsibility, self-discipline or lack thereof, what's romantic, our image of family life, and more are shaped by our family(ies) of origin.*
2. *Most families are neither perfect nor completely dysfunctional (well, some are). Everyone needs to examine the patterns he or she experienced in his or her family. Each person needs to determine what is/was positive or negative. What patterns do you want to carry into your future? What patterns do you not want to repeat?*
3. **(PP)** *People tend to **repeat** the same patterns or **react** in totally opposite ways. Either can be problematic without a self-examination.*
 - *For example, let's say your parent ran your home as a dictatorship, with extremely harsh punishment. You never really stopped to examine it. You might **repeat** the same behavior with your children.*
 - *Let's say there was a ton of screaming and shouting in your family. You might **react** and do just the opposite—keeping quiet, never arguing, always agreeing to keep the peace—in your relationships. This could put you at risk of being walked all over, taken for granted, or even abused.*
 - *Repeating or doing the exact opposite may not be healthy for you or for your child.*
4. *In order to have power to **define your own future**, it is critical to examine your family of origin patterns. You can decide what to take and what to leave behind. Plenty of young parents say, "I can do better than my parent(s)." The good news is a person can, with self-awareness and with conscious effort, become the kind of person or the kind of parent he or she wants to be.*

Most families are neither perfect nor completely dysfunctional!



Whether the experiences are good or bad, people tend to **REPEAT** the same patterns of behavior or **REACT** in the opposite way... both can be helpful or harmful.

Workbook Application

Read the directions aloud to the group from the workbook. Ask participants to read through the statements and check the response that comes closest to describing what they experienced in their family.

When they are done, ask them to go back over and check the patterns they do not want to repeat and the positive patterns they want most for their lives. Instruct them to write these down on pg. 4 of the workbook. **(PP)**

For more discussion: Ask participants to identify the three patterns they think are most important for healthy families. Discuss the varied responses to help paint a vision of healthy family patterns for everyone in the group. This discussion is important for young people to draw from, especially if they did not have positive family patterns. Finally, ask them to identify the most harmful patterns.

Workbook: Baggage from the Past



1. Examine patterns.
2. Decide what to keep, and what to change.
3. Work to create the healthy patterns you want for your future.
4. In a relationship, learn about each other's family patterns.

Discussion: Legacy of Abuse and Childhood Hurts

(PP) The final question in the workbook on neglect and abuse is vitally important to discuss. Neglect and abuse questions will most likely come up as you discuss destructive family patterns. It is important to engage a discussion about how having experienced abuse, abandonment, or neglect in childhood might affect a person.

Continue with these points:

- ❖ *If anyone has been hurt by parents or close adults, it's vital to examine the hurt or the situation with a caring and wise adult, just like Antwone did with Denzel Washington.*
- ❖ *Not healing past hurts can cause difficulties in all future relationships.*
- ❖ *In some cases, people who have been hurt may be wary of relationships or getting close in general. They have a hard time trusting anyone—even good people.*

Important to Examine Childhood Hurts



- When deeply hurt by those who were supposed to love and protect:
- a person may be afraid of trusting or getting close;
 - or may be drawn to intense and rocky relationships seeking love and security in all the wrong places.
 - A person can be less aware of dangerous people & relationships.
 - Accustomed to being treated poorly, the cycle can be repeated.

- ❖ *Still others with difficult histories may find themselves involved in intense and rocky relationships. Given their histories, they look desperately for love and acceptance, but often find themselves with partners who repeat the hurt.*
- ❖ *When people have been deeply hurt by parents or other adults, they are sometimes less aware of dangerous people or relationships. They've become used to people treating them poorly.*
- ❖ *Sadly, some of their relationship choices can be with people who hurt them and their children.*
- ❖ *This is one of the heartbreaking truths about abuse and other childhood hurts. It can repeat itself from one generation to the next because one comes to expect it is normal or acceptable, or because it is hard to recognize abuse or warning signs when they occur.*

Read aloud these empowering words: **(PP)**

- ❖ *Everyone deserves to be loved, safe, and respected.*
- ❖ *We cannot change the past, but we can learn from it.*
- ❖ *We can make safer and wiser decisions today to protect ourselves and future children we may have.*

Everyone is worth protecting and deserves to be loved, safe, and respected.



We cannot change the past, but we can learn from it and make safer and wiser decisions for our futures.

Note: It is important to let participants know you are available if anyone wants to talk privately. Let them know there are folks who are very helpful and who may have gone through a healing process themselves. Have referrals or contacts.

Final word on the *Baggage from the Past* questionnaire: Be sure to point out how important it is for couples who are serious to discuss each other's family patterns and determine together which patterns they want to work to establish for their own lives.

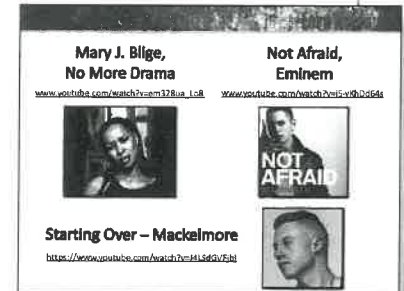
For parents not together, but co-parenting:

- ❖ *This exercise is vital. It is important to discuss what you want your child to experience. Talk to each other about which patterns will help your child and which patterns could harm your child.*
- ❖ *Commit to improving your ability to communicate and handle conflict so you will be able to work together for the sake of your child.*

Music Activity

(PP) Play the music video by Mary J. Blige, *No More Drama*. The message of the song is positive in terms of “I’m done. I’m done doing this any more, accepting this anymore.” That message pertains to abusive relationships, drugs, and crime. It is visually explicit, but with a powerfully positive message of leaving negative baggage behind. The past is not one’s destiny. One can decide to change and work to develop more positive patterns.

Other possible song choices are *Not Afraid*, by Eminem, and *Starting Over*, by Mackelmore. Both music videos are powerful, with a message of recovery—deciding to turn around. There are clean versions (i.e. no swear words), but they lack the visuals. Preview and decide what to use.



Trusted Adult Connection

(PP) Pass out the TAC assignment, Resource 2c (pg. 46).
Announce they can pick from two options.

Option One: *Share the results of the Primary Colors Personality Tool activity with your trusted adult (TA). Pick out the words in the wheel you feel describe you best. Discuss a couple of your relationship pitfalls and one or two of your extremes that need awareness and work. See if your TA can identify the color that best represent him or her.*

Option Two: *Refer to Baggage from the Past, pgs. 2 to 4 in the workbook: Tell your TA which pattern you have identified that you really want in your future individual and family life. If comfortable, share one negative pattern you want to leave behind.*

Trusted Adult Connection

Option One: Pick out the words in the *COLORS* wheel you feel describe you best. Discuss a couple of your relationship pitfalls and one or two of your extremes that need some work. See if your TA can identify the color that best represents him or her.

Option Two: Drawing from the workbook exercise on *Baggage*, discuss with your TA one or two patterns you have identified that you really want in your future individual and family life. If comfortable, share one negative pattern you want to leave behind.

Dealing With My Extremes

EXTREME RED

Bully, arrogant, dominating, offensive, controlling, power-driven, can have a big temper, intimidating, cut-throat competitive, winning is everything, my way or the highway

CENTERED RED

Takes charge, determined, strong-willed, self-assured, natural leader, decisive, well-respected, expects excellence, takes action, strong competitor, no excuses, values individual effort

EXTREME YELLOW

Indecisive, gives in to others, overly sensitive, desperate for appreciation, terrified of conflict, depends on others for approval, passive-aggressive, can develop a victim mentality, whiny, complainer, at risk for abuse

CENTERED YELLOW

Values people & relationships, kind, Each individual is important, accepting, caring, family-first, devoted, adoring, inclusive, loves to serve, loyal, loving, forgiving

EXTREME GREEN

Insistent on social justice, judgmental, dogmatic, intolerant, can adhere to an obsessive doctrine he/she rigidly upholds, committed to extremes

CENTERED GREEN

Cares deeply about social responsibility, values fairness, idealistic, sees big picture, tolerant, hopeful, deeply committed, sincere, purposeful, reverent, honoring, thoughtful

EXTREME ORANGE

Impulsive, sarcastic, so direct can wound with words, immature, doesn't consider consequences, self-absorbed, manipulative, craves attention, irresponsible, extreme pursuit of pleasure, prone to addiction

CENTERED ORANGE

Spontaneous, creative, inspiring, gifted entertainer, life of party, thinks outside the box, great communicator, loves adventure, fun-loving, funny, encouraging, likable.

EXTREME PURPLE

Micro-manages, rules must not be broken, results more important than relationships, policies & procedures more important than individual needs, tunnel vision, unavailable, risk becoming a workaholic

CENTERED PURPLE

Organized, dependable, thorough, gets things done, level-headed, values rules & policies, competent, great management skills, task-focused, self-directed, loves to teach & train, productive, responsible

EXTREME BLUE

Perfectionist, procrastinator, compulsive, struggles with communicating feelings, needs a great deal of time alone to recharge, can sometimes feel socially awkward

CENTERED BLUE

Asks questions, curious, wants to get it right, gifted at seeing potential problems, detail-oriented, problem-solver, introspective, accurate, careful, precise

To be more successful in life, strive to increase your centered tendencies and to reduce your extreme tendencies.

Dealing With My Extremes

Who am I at work or at school when I am feeling angry, insecure, betrayed, stressed, controlled, powerless, or tired?

What extreme tendencies of my primary color(s) come out in my behaviors that have caused problems? Look at the colors diagram to identify which ones.

Recall an occasion when your extremes came out at work and then write down two steps or behaviors you can work on to reduce your extremes.

1.

2.

Who am I when I am with my partner, family members, or friends when I am feeling angry, insecure, betrayed, stressed, controlled, powerless, or tired?

What extreme tendencies of my primary color(s) come out in my behaviors that have caused problems? Look at the extremes/centered diagram to identify which ones.

Recall an occasion when your extremes came out in a close relationship and write down two steps or behaviors you can work on to reduce your extremes.

1.

2.

Trusted Adult Connection COLORS or Baggage

Choose one of the options below to do with your trusted adult:

Option One: Pick out the words in the COLORS wheel you feel describe you best. Discuss a couple of your relationship pitfalls and a few of your extremes that need some work. See if your TA can identify the color that best represents him or her.

Option Two: Drawing from the workbook exercise on Baggage, discuss with your TA one or two patterns you have identified that you really want in your future individual and family life. If comfortable, share one negative pattern you want to leave behind.

Signature and any comment on the activity: _____

-----cut line-----

Trusted Adult Connection COLORS or Baggage

Choose one of the options below to do with your trusted adult:

Option One: Pick out the words in the COLORS wheel you feel describe you best. Discuss a couple of your relationship pitfalls and a few of your extremes that need some work. See if your TA can identify the color that best represents him or her.

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Signature and any comment on the activity:: _____