



## M. E. FOR COUPLES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Here we hope to help couples who are dealing with obstacles to participating in Marriage Encounter Online, such as couples who:

- Have careers which require extended periods of separation, crazy work schedules, hospitalization, etc.
- One or both are in the military.
- One or both are incarcerated.
- Are blind or unable to read or to write.
- Have any other reason.

We want Marriage Encounter to be available to all couples who want to enrich their marriage. It will be more difficult, but it has been done. For 20 years, couples who are separated by incarceration have been making The Inmates Marriage Encounter By Mail, using the T.I.M.E. book.

Following are step-by-step suggestions to help you overcome your limitations.

### **PRESENTATION:**

- A. If you both have access to computers most of the time, read the presentations and get copies of the handouts directly. On busy days, downloading the next Presentation and handout on your electronic device (iPod) to read later.
- B. If only one has access to a computer,

plan to make a copy of each Presentation and send it to your spouse.

- C. If neither of you has access to computers (like a third-party wanting to help a couple) copy the Presentations and send them to both spouses.
- D. If you are blind or unable to read, ask someone to read the Presentations to you. (Someday we hope to have all Presentations on video.)

### **PERSONAL REFLECTION:**

- A. Type and send your PR electronically.
- B. Write your PR and mail it. (Include a copy of the next Presentation if your spouse will need it from you.)
- C. If you can't write well, to make notes (or drawings), then speak your PR over the phone or into a recorder.

**TIP:** If you have a picture of your spouse, keep it handy as you correspond.

Before writing, ask the Lord to be with you as you write, to keep focused and to be open and honest.

Start by identifying the question or handout you're responding to, and briefly tell your spouse about your day. This not only brings your spouse up on any news, it also reveals where you're coming from as you write.

### **COUPLE DIALOGUE:**

Take the same CD technique couples use in person, only do it by mail, phone, email or other electronic method.

After you read your spouse's letter twice, reach out to "take on" each other's feelings and sincerely try to understand. For a time, put yourself "in their shoes."

**Dialogue By Mail.** Check out your impressions. You can do this by rewriting what your spouse has said in your own words and sending it to him/her to be sure you understand exactly what meaning was intended. If you are confused, write back and, in a gentle way, ask for a clearer explanation.

You may have a few questions to help clarify what you have read. These questions and re-phrasings make up the main part of your dialogue, so give it serious thought.

Then it's time to move on to the next Presentation. There may be areas you want to go back to, but move on for now. Chances are the Marriage Encounter will address the same topic later in a new way.

For more information on TIME By Mail:  
[www.prisonmarriageministry.org](http://www.prisonmarriageministry.org)