Intimacy
After reaching the far side, Tonga cut the bridge—sending the outraged suburbanites into the river below. Their idol was now his ... as well as its curse.
Intimacy-Not for the Faint Hearted

• Real Intimacy-Achieving unity of heart, mind, and body is very rare.
  – Physical Intimacy-not sex, rather the complete unity of the body
  – Emotional Intimacy-not empathy, rather the complete understanding of another’s heart
  – Intellectual Intimacy-not knowledge, rather the complete sharing of intelligence.
  – Most relationships do not achieve all three, some get two, more get one, many get none.
  – Analogy of learning to be a musician or an athlete, not just playing a song or a sport.
    • Years of practice to go beyond techniques to being able to put your soul into the music or the physical endeavor
    • Talent is relevant but all people can learn to do something musically or physically that allows them to express their emotions and their intellect.
Intimacy

• Five necessary conditions that must exist to establish and maintain Intimacy:
  — Belief & Knowledge: Leading to commitment
  — Slow Pace: Leading to regular uninterrupted time
  — Privacy/Boundaries: Leading to safety and trust
  — Risk
  — Sustained Effort
Intimacy

• Belief & knowledge leading to commitment:
  — How have modern beliefs about relationships undermined our commitment?
  • Destiny or True Love leads to a focus on temporary relationships rather than enduring commitment
  • Primary preoccupation is with ourselves: Freedom outweighs community, connection, charity.
  • Wealth = Success. What I gain is what I am.
  • Who Tells our Relationship Stories Today?
    — Example of the Inuit
  — What is the antidote to this relationship poison?

True Doctrine about Marriage
Intimacy

• To Strengthen Belief and Commitment Go Back to True Doctrine about Marriage:

• What are the unique doctrines and practices of the church that might result in different marriage relationships than those of other faiths or those unaffiliated with a religion?

• “Oh, you’re that family church.”

• “I love my family. I also love my church because it helps me love my family better.”
Intimacy

• To Strengthen Belief and Commitment Go Back to True Doctrine about Marriage:

• “Marriage was the basis for human exaltation. To those sealed by the priesthood, the promises were startling… The great godly power was procreation, the continuation of seed. The ultimate social order of heaven was familial… To be exalted, men and women must be bound together… The marriage revelation culminated the emergence of family theology. More than any other previous revelation, this one put family first.” Richard Bushman, Rough Stone Rolling. Pg 443-445.
Intimacy

• To Strengthen Belief and Commitment Go Back to True Doctrine about Marriage:

The Wedding Dance

Betrothal-to make a pledge to unite in wedlock with a partner.

Wedlock-”Wed”-to pledge or promise, “Lock”-a gift or offering in the form of a play or dance.

Marriage then is redeeming the pledge made at the betrothal by uniting a man and woman in a dance of intimacy for the rest of their lives.

The wedding dance of the Latter Day Saints is very unique as the dance is first experienced between the individual and God and only then, only after the individual has been “encircled in the arms of His love,” The Embrace, is she or he ready to engage in the wedding dance with another human.
Intimacy

- To Strengthen Belief and Commitment Go Back to True Doctrine about Marriage:

The LDS Wedding Dance

The unique pattern then of LDS doctrine and practice is that a person has to be worthy of a relationship with God to be worthy of a relationship with a spouse. While common marriage is the right of any person regardless of conduct or spiritual worthiness, eternal temple marriage, the singular type of marriage discussed and taught in the church, is available only to those who have made serious covenants to raise their lives to a higher level of conduct. This practice and doctrine are likely the most unique and distinguishing features of our faith and the implications on marriage and family life are profound.
Intimacy

- To Strengthen Belief and Commitment Go Back to True Doctrine about Marriage:
- Does this unique LDS Wedding Dance Work? Does it Change our Relationships for the Better?
Importance of Marriage
Conservative Sexual Attitudes

Before taking her out, Charlene’s dates were required to take a brief vocabulary lesson.
Who to Date and Marry

Percentage of Couples who are Dating and Marrying within their Faith

LDS
Catholic
Protestant
Jewish

Hi
Low
When to Move in Together

Percentage of Couples who are Cohabiting Prior to Marriage
Number of Sexual Partners

- LDS* (High: 1, Low: 6)
- Catholic* (High: 5, Low: 9)
- Protestant* (High: 5, Low: 9)
- Jewish* (High: 9, Low: 1)
- Islamic (High: 6, Low: 1)
- None* (High: 6, Low: 1)
Timing of Sexual Relations

- **2 Years**
- **1 Year**
- **1/2 Year**
- **1-2 Months**
- **2 Weeks**
- **1st Date**

After Marriage
Positive Communication

“My mother is in trouble. She’s eating with her drake overhead? You ever tried it?”

[Bar chart showing positive communication across different religious groups and the categories of high and low communication.]
Sexual Quality

- LDS*
- Catholic*
- Protestant*
- Jewish
- Islamic*
- None

Legend:
- High
- Low
Relationship Satisfaction

- LDS*
- Catholic*
- Protestant*
- Jewish*
- Islamic*
- None

- High
- Low
Intimacy

- To Strengthen Belief and Commitment Go Back to True Doctrine about Marriage:

- Does this unique LDS Wedding Dance Work? Does it Change our Relationships for the Better?

- Our Faith Matters in Positive and Negative Ways
  - Positive-We have significantly stronger relational attitudes that support relational decisions that help form a good foundation for marriage.
  - It appears our relationally oriented doctrines and practices are working for the majority of our church members. We are more relationally focused than people in other Abrahamic faiths and the nonreligious.
  - Negative-When our connection to our religion is weak it is more likely that we will be worse off, in terms of our relationships, than most other people in most other religions or the nonreligious. Why?

- What is the direction of causality? Does our lower religiosity lead to worse relationships or worse relationships lead to lower faith?
- The participants’ parents’ marriage was the variable most strongly associated with lower religiosity.
- Perhaps religious first aid needs to be applied when our relationships are strained.
Intimacy

• Slow Pace: leading to regular uninterrupted time.

• Constant Partial Attention
  — The Dragon at the Dinner Table
    • 33% decline in number of families eating together
    • 36% have answered a cell phone during a wedding
    • 10% have answered a phone in church
    • 16% during sex
    • Recent studies suggest youth spend virtually all of their waking time texting, on the internet, watching television, video games or using other devices-Equivalent to 11 hours a day- because of multitasking.
    • Heaviest users do worse in school, are more likely to be obese, have poorer social skills, are more depressed.
    • The areas of our brain that help with social skills may be becoming underdeveloped.
    • Multitasking reduces our accuracy in decision-making by about 50%.
Intimacy

• Slow Pace: leading to regular uninterrupted time.
  − Technology reduces the need for others: Alone together
    − Technology is a way of organizing the universe so that man does not have to experience it- Max Frisch
  − Consider how we use our time in the choices we make in viewing television, playing video games, surfing the Internet, or reading books or magazines. Of course it is good to view wholesome entertainment or to obtain interesting information. But not everything of that sort is worth the portion of our life we give to obtain it. Some things are better, and others are best. When the Lord told us to seek learning, He said, "Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom" (D&C 88:118; emphasis added). Dallen H. Oaks Oct 2007

It is one evidence that men are unacquainted with the principle of godliness, to behold the contraction of feeling and lack of charity… How precious are the souls of men! The nearer we get to our Heavenly Father, the more are we disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls: We feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders, and cast their sins behind our backs-Joseph Smith (pg 60 Joseph Smith the Prophet, by Truman Madsen).
Intimacy

• Slow Pace: leading to regular uninterrupted time.

“Please be careful of becoming so immersed and engrossed in pixels, texting, ear buds, twittering, online social networking, and potentially addictive uses of media and the Internet that you fail to recognize the importance of your physical body and miss the richness of person-to-person communication.” Elder Bednar

• Speed is the preference of all modern technology

Speed kills!

What can you do to resist the preferences of our modern gods?

What would be your top 5 ways to resist the negative effects of technology in our relationships?
Intimacy

• Privacy/Boundaries: leading to safety and trust
  • Threats:
    − Exhibitionism: To disclose personal details or exhibit our private physical self to others before we could realistically trust them, for the purpose of gain
    − Voyeurism: To watch, read, or listen to the personal disclosures or exhibitions of the physical self of others as a form of entertainment or a substitution for legitimate intimacy.
    − Every instance of either reduces opportunities and capacities for real intimacy- “Cleave unto her/him and none else.” Divided passion equals inability to cleave.
    − Reduces our ability to understand pacing: When to share what with whom
      • Too much sharing too early or too guarded for too long
    − Negatively influences body images—especially of women
  − Primary Focus on Sex:
    • 10 steps to incredible sex
    • Orgasm equals intimacy
    • Physical technique=intimacy
    • Perfect bodies=intimacy
    It does not work because humans have brains & emotions!
Intimacy

• Five necessary conditions that must exist to establish and maintain Intimacy:
  — Risk
  — Sustained Effort
Schnarch’s Comfort/Growth Cycle

- What leads a person out of the comfort cycle? NG
- Almost all couples spend most of their time in the comfort cycle. Short bursts in the growth cycle
- If one person risks the other has no choice but to spend a least a little time in the growth cycle
- Avoidance is the natural tendency-overused it leads to termination
- Anxiety is the result of risk. A person’s capacity for managing anxiety is central.
  - Chronic and Acute Anxiety
  - Goal: Learning to manage anxiety enough so growth can be achieved.
- Commitment is key-Your commitment to the relationship has to be stronger than your commitment to your personal views