Couple Checkup™

Group Program Leader's Guide

www.couplecheckup.com

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COUPLE CHECKUP LEADER'S GUIDE

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We want to thank you for you interest in using the Couple Checkup with groups of couples. This online tool is designed to be flexible, affordable, convenient, and relevant for couples at every stage of their relationship.

The online Couple Checkup will automatically customize itself to meet the stage (dating, engaged, or married) and structure (cohabiting, children, stepfamilies, older couples) of each couple. In combination with the Couple Checkup Discussion Guide, this program is designed to:

- Help couples celebrate their strengths and identify their growth areas.
- Encourage couples to dialogue about their relationship in meaningful and productive ways.
- Increase practical relationship skills in Communication, Conflict Resolution, Closeness, Flexibility and Financial Management.
- Increase their understanding of multiple relationship issues including Personality Issues, Affection & Sex, Spiritual Beliefs, Roles, Expectations and Family of Origin issues.

The Couple Checkup can be used either in group settings or by individual couples. The Couple Checkup and Discussion Guide can be used as a complete program or in conjunction with other curriculum. Because the assessment is based on valid and reliable scales and items, it is also ideal for research purposes.

The process starts with each individual taking the online assessment. After both partners have completed their inventory, they can immediately print their Couple Checkup Report and an extensive Discussion Guide. These documents are delivered as PDF files which can be opened and viewed with a computer, saved, printed, or emailed by the couple. Couples are also given the option to forward a copy of their results to another individual such as a group leader, pastor, mentor, or counselor.

Group Leaders can also access a Summary Report for the couples predefined as part of their group. Groups can range from very small (5-6 couples) to entire congregations or large events. This process is described later in this Leader's Guide.

PREPARE/ENRICH is the Foundation for the Couple Checkup

Over 3 million couples have taken the popular and highly effective PREPARE/ENRICH Program nationally. The goal of the program has been to build stronger marriages. It has been used by over 100,000 counselors, clergy, and mentors with premarital and married couples. National studies have demonstrated that the program is highly effective in helping couples develop their strengths and overcoming ongoing issues.

This Couple Checkup is based on the PREPARE/ENRICH Program. The major difference is that the Couple Checkup is shorter, and the Report goes directly back to the couple, rather than to a professional counselor or pastor. As such, it provides couples with a wealth of useful information about how to improve their relationship.

Materials

The Couple Checkup can be purchased with a credit card or pre-purchased voucher code on our secure website.

This fee covers the administration, scoring and material costs of the:

- Online Administration of Inventory
- Couple Checkup Report (17-21 pages)
- Discussion Guide (27 pages)

Leaders can access:

- The Leader's Guide (free)
- Online Group Summaries (free)
- Small Group Study Guide, church-based resource (free)

While the typical payment method involves a credit card transaction, it is also possible to pre-purchase voucher codes and take advantage of volume discounts for larger groups. Check the bookstore for rates.

Special arrangements can be made to help coordinate large events, community initiatives, or Church-wide assessments. Call (800) 331-1661 to learn more about volume discounts and special voucher code options.

Setting up a Group Leader Account

A unique feature of the Couple Checkup is that you can produce a group summary report on groups with 5 or more couples of the same relationship stage (i.e. 5 dating, 5 engaged, or 5 married couples). The 5 couple minimum protects the privacy of any one couple in your group since the summary only reports average scores across the entire group, with no personally identifiable information. There is no extra cost involved for a leader to produce this summary.

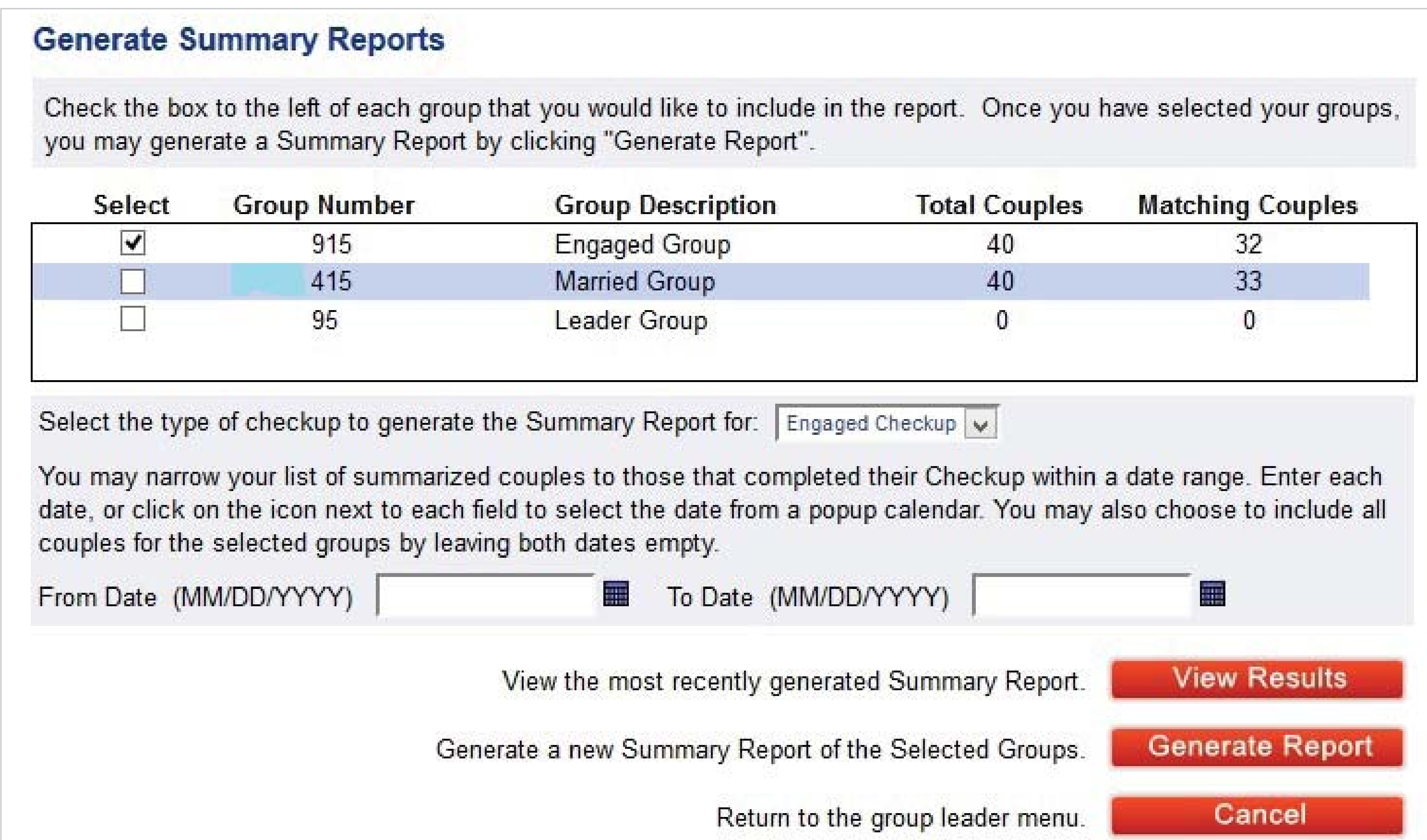
- **Create a Group Leader Account**
    1. From the website, click on **Group Leader Login**
    2. Click **Create an Account**
    3. Establish an Account number and Password **to Login to your Account**

- **Generating Group Summaries**
    1. Login to your account and click **Create a Group** to assign a number and group description for each of your group(s).
    2. **Give this Group Code to all of the couples in your group.** There is a place for couples to enter this code on the **View Results** page of the website once they have both completed their Checkup. If couples do not enter this number, they will not appear in your group summary. They can login later to a completed account, even after they've finished and printed their report, to enter the group number.

3. Once 5 or more couples have taken their assessments and entered the group code, you will be able to generate a Group Summary by clicking on **Summary Reports** when logged in to your group account.
    a. Select the group(s) for your report (see box below)
    b. Select Couple Types from the drop-down menu (Dating, Engaged or Married).
    c. You can specify a date range, or leave the date range blank.
    d. Click Generate Report

4. You can generate a Summary Report several times, but you may only want to print a copy after all couples have completed the Checkup.

- **Group Leader Section on Website**
  Once you are logged into your Group Leader Account, you can also update your account information, update (change or delete) your groups, or create new groups.



Generate Summary Reports

Check the box to the left of each group that you would like to include in the report. Once you have selected your groups, you may generate a Summary Report by clicking "Generate Report".

Select	Group Number	Group Description	Total Couples	Matching Couples
☑	915	Engaged Group	40	32
☐	415	Married Group	40	33
☐	95	Leader Group	0	0

Select the type of checkup to generate the Summary Report for: Engaged Checkup

You may narrow your list of summarized couples to those that completed their Checkup within a date range. Enter each date, or click on the icon next to each field to select the date from a popup calendar. You may also choose to include all couples for the selected groups by leaving both dates empty.

From Date (MM/DD/YYYY) To Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

View the most recently generated Summary Report. View Results

Generate a new Summary Report of the Selected Groups. Generate Report

Return to the group leader menu. Cancel

Helping Couples Take their Couple Checkup

The Couple Checkup is designed to be very user friendly, but it is helpful if you understand the process in case your couples have questions. It may even be a good idea for you and your partner to take the Couple Checkup to become acquainted with the process and materials.

Unless you are planning on producing a Group Summary Report or using voucher codes, there is no set-up required by the leader. The only thing required of a group leader is telling couples to go to the website and take their inventory.

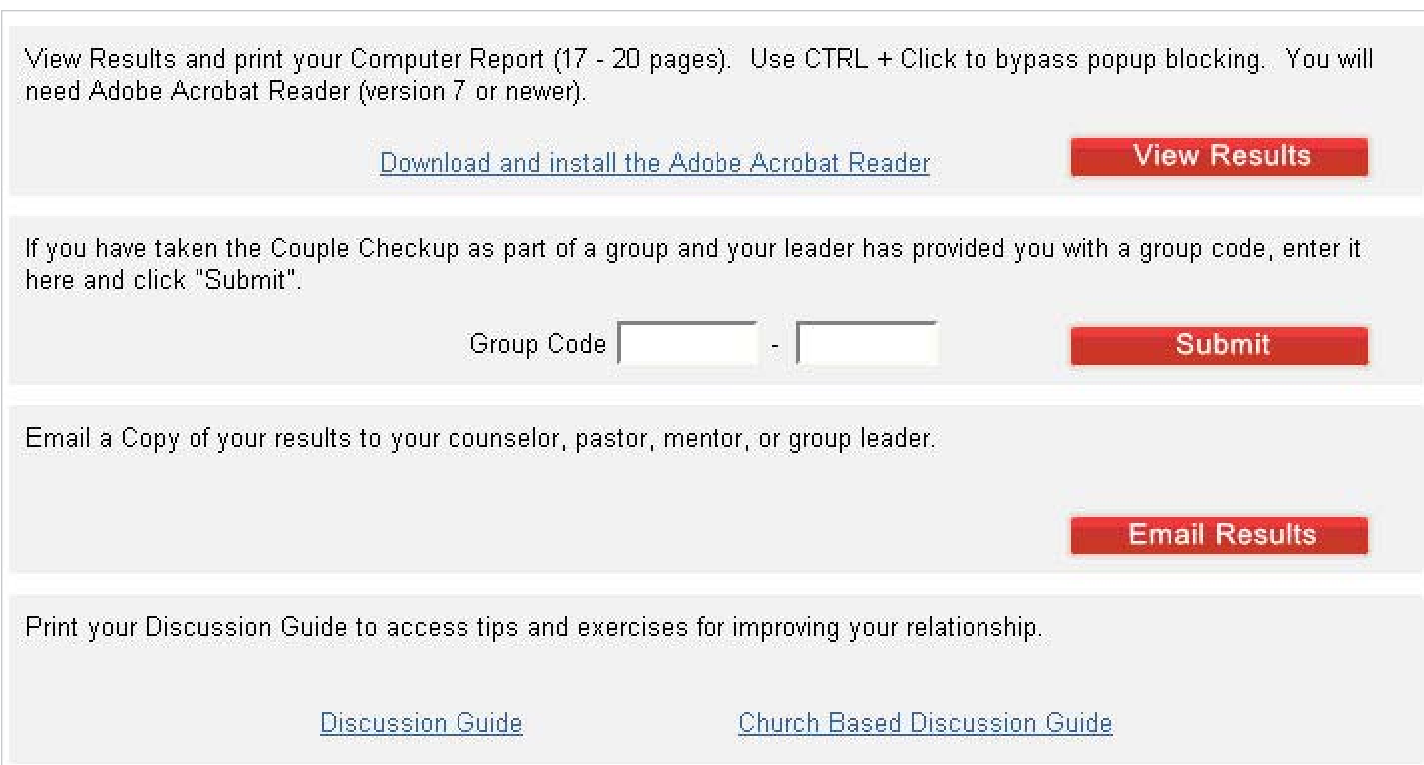
Creating a Couple Account

Typically, an individual arrives at the website to begin a Couple Checkup for their relationship. This first person creates the account and establishes the **usernames and password.** They enter the **payment or voucher code.** This individual will also answer the background questions that automatically customize the inventory for their unique relationship.

The Couple Checkup website will assign a unique **Account Number** to each couple. This number must be saved along with the password entered by the person who set up the account. These two pieces of information are required to login and take the inventory, and must also be used by the second partner to login and complete their portion of the Couple Checkup.

Login & View Results

The second person receives the login information from their partner (account number and password) and bypasses the account creation process by simply clicking Login. Once this individual has completed their portion of the Couple Checkup, they are ready to view their results and will automatically be taken to the View Results page on the website.



Complete Directions for Couples

First Person creates the Couple Account and completes their Checkup

- **Step 1:** Review / Accept the Terms and Conditions
- **Step 2: Enter Payment:** Credit Card or Voucher Code if provided by leader
  - **Voucher Code:** _________-_________-_________
- **Step 3:** Type in **first name or nickname and email** for each person (names are printed on the report)
- **Step 4:** Create your own password
- **Step 5:** Press Continue to create your account. Your account ID and password will be emailed.

Second Person can Login to the Couple Account and complete their Checkup

- **Step 1: Login** from the main page
- **Step 2:** Enter Account Number and Password received from your partner
- **Step 3:** Complete your Couple Checkup

Once the second person is finished, you'll be at the **View Results** page

- Click **View Results** to open and print your report
- Enter a **Group Code** if provided by leader ______ - _______
- **Email a copy of your report** to someone else (optional)
- Print a **Discussion Guide** for yourself and your partner

Questions? Click the **Contact Us** link.

Materials Needed for Group

1. Couple Checkup Report: Couples should each take the Couple Checkup and print a copy of their report which can be brought to the group session. Since the report goes directly back to the couple, group leaders who want to review individual results will need to request that couples either print them an extra copy or email a copy of their report. Set this expectation from the beginning if this is your intention as the group leader.

2. Discussion Guides for Couple: *Each individual should have their own copy of a Discussion Guide.* Couples can print these from the View Results section of the Couple Checkup website, or leaders can print and handout copies of the Discussion Guide when the group first meets. There is also a "Church-Based" version of the Discussion Guide with biblical references inserted.

3. Group Summary for Leader: As the group leader, make sure you login to the Group Leader section of the website and print your summary report. (Remember: at least 5 couples of the same relationship stage must be in your group to produce a summary report).

Discussion Guide Topics

The Discussion Guides have 11 core topics, as well as supplemental categories for sharing strength and growth areas and setting goals. The same Discussion Guide can be used by couples at any relationship stage: dating, engaged or married. The Discussion Guide combines educational information, relationship exercises, and guided discussions all designed to help couples reflect on their Couple Checkup results and grow as they gain understanding and learn new skills.

Core Categories

1. Communication
2. Conflict Resolution
3. Financial Management
4. Leisure Activities
5. Sex and Affection
6. Relationship Roles
7. Spiritual Beliefs
8. Love and Marriage Expectations
9. Children and Parenting
10. Closeness and Flexibility
11. Personality

Session Flow

Each category in the Discussion Guide can be covered in sessions of 60-90 minutes. Below is a recommended way to take your group through each topic area.

- Welcome (5 minutes)
- Introduce the topic (8 minutes)
- Share Group Summary Results (5 minutes)
- Explain the Exercise (5 minutes)
- Couple Dialogue (15-20 minutes)
  - Couples review their Checkup results
  - Couples complete the exercise(s)
- Group Discussion (15 minutes)
- (optional) Assign Homework

Welcome: Greet group members as they arrive. Help them find the name tags, refreshments, and their seats. Make sure your meeting room is clearly marked with signs directing people to the correct location. Identify restrooms and give directions to group.

Make sure they have their Discussion Guides with them. **It is a good idea for leaders to print extra copies of the pages for the Couple Exercises for that session.**

Introducing the Topic: Leaders can review the introductory comments in the Discussion Guide for each session. It is also a good idea to share a bit of your own personal story on the topic.

- What have you learned in your own relationship?
- What did you notice in your family growing up?
- Do you have a humorous story about the topic?

Appropriate self-disclosure can help the couples in your group feel more comfortable and increase their willingness to be open.

Share Group Summary Results: Review what percent of the group fell into the strength, possible strength, or growth area. Share how the men and women in the group compared to one another. Review some of the overall agreement and disagreement items for that topic. This helps couples know where they stand, and often normalizes their own experience of the Couple Checkup report.

Explain the Exercise: Read the directions for the exercise in the Discussion Guide and make sure couples understand what they are to do.

Couple Dialogue: Encourage couples to start by reviewing their own Couple Checkup report on the topic for that session. Next, have them do the exercise and discuss the questions in the Discussion Guide. Couples should have this discussion apart from the rest of the group. Allow them to move to different areas of the room or building to give them more privacy. Leader's can roam around and be available to answer questions and provide encouragement.

Group Discussion: Bring couples back together for a group discussion. Be prepared with open ended questions, like the list below, to help foster discussion.

- Did anything you heard or experienced in this session really stand out for you?
- What did the session provide that might strengthen your relationship in this area?
- What was it like doing the exercise with your partner?
- Do you have any additional thoughts or reactions to the topic or exercises?
- Is there anything you've seen or heard that you disagree with?
- Are there any questions your brought that weren't answered?

Homework: You have the option of suggesting homework between sessions. One option is to consider what was covered in the current session that you want couples to continue practicing at home (i.e., practice assertiveness and active listening for 10 minutes each day this week). Another option is to look forward to the next session and consider if there are things that would be helpful to complete in preparation for the next topic (i.e., encourage couples to complete their budget worksheet prior to the financial management session).

Role of Leader as Facilitator

The goal of the group leader should be to facilitate the learning process for each couple in the group. To accomplish this, leaders will want to do the following:

- Provide caring, attentive leadership.
- Provide clear descriptions of the program guidelines.
- Keep the group focused and on schedule.
- Provide illustrations of program topics.
- Facilitate couple learning through the various exercises.
- Facilitate group learning through group sharing and discussion.
- Share personal experiences, as appropriate.

Tips for Running a Successful Program

- Greet each couple individually before the session, if possible, and welcome them to the workshop.
- Provide name tags for all participants at each session.
- It is a nice touch to provide refreshments (water, soda, coffee, and/or other snacks).
- Provide a clean and inviting environment.
- Consider offering child-care to help increase attendance.
- Take time for introductions.
- Review the Ground Rules for the group.
- Stay organized and keep the group on target.
- Start on time and stick to the schedule; this promotes mutual respect.
- Encourage participants to ask questions. In responding, be sure to restate each question and to keep answers concise and relevant.
- Exercise good group facilitation skills. Give everyone a chance; no individual or participant couple should dominate the session(s).
- Encourage participants to take breaks as needed (e.g., visit the rest rooms). In the case of weekend programs, breaks for meals and time for stretching will need to be incorporated.
- Allow time at the end of each session for participants to briefly share their reactions to the session.
- At the conclusion of the program, be sure to have participants complete program evaluations.

Suggested Ground Rules

1. **Everything shared in the group is confidential.**
   Confidentiality means not sharing or discussing any information learned in the group with anyone other than your partner.

2. **All sharing with other couples in the group is voluntary.**
   Once a couple has shared with their partner, there is the opportunity for discussion with other couples in the group. This is a gradual process that will increase as the level of trust improves. Individuals and couples should never feel forced to share with the group.

3. **When sharing in the group, speak for yourself and not your partner.**
   Each person should speak for themselves and not for their partner. One way to remember this idea is to make "I" statements rather than "we" statements. For example, it is acceptable to say "I feel" or "I think" but not "We believe."

4. **Before sharing about your couple relationship, first "check it out" with your partner.**
   Persons should specifically ask their partner before sharing something personal about their relationship. Individuals should check to see if their partner also feels comfortable about having the information shared with others in the group.

5. **The goal of the group is to learn and to have fun together.**
   The group experience with other couples is designed so that you can learn from each other and to also have fun together. Because much of the information is personal, it will create some positive tension that can facilitate humorous situations. This sharing and learning together will help build a sense of community.

