

Case study: final

Psychology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Chris and Olympia are a middle aged African-American couple that have been married no longer than 5 Years. Having successfully completed the necessary assessment to generate each spouse's unique positive agreement (PCA) results and core scales, it has been brought to my attention that this couples best categorized as a Conflicted Couple. What that indicates is that Chris and Olympia are not experiencing a high or even moderate level of satisfaction in their relationship and commonly struggle with multiple areas in their relationship.

In an effort to improve their relationship, I will evaluate their assessment by highlighting key areas of strength and weakness, studying their personality conflicts from a SCOPE perspective, and ultimately develop a ministry plan that should serve as a road map to have Chris and Olympia arrive at a point where they are growing together. Key Areas (Strengths and Weaknesses) Commencing with the weaknesses, their core scale evaluation lists ten scales and of them four are listed as growth areas and two as possible growth areas.

That indicates an area in their relationship where growth must be exhibited in order for them to advance as a couple. One of the affected areas is communication which received a PCA score of zero. Though Chris feels that there is little need to be concerned about the family communication, Olympia does not believe that there are many strengths in the family communication. Further it appears Chris is significantly more open than Olympia is when it comes to communicating feelings. The results of their relationship dynamics suggest that some contributory factors in the communication weakness may be Olympia's high level of avoidance.

Avoidance refers to the lack of direct acknowledgement or confrontation of a issue between her and her partner. Moreover Olympia also scored low on the dynamic of assertiveness. This is a contributory factor in the lack of strength in communication in their relationship. However the often occurrence of abuse in Olympia's past may be reason for her avoidance and unwillingness to openly speak and share her feelings. Chris isn't just willing to express his thoughts however he's good at it as well. Which accounts for why he believes there is little reason for concern.

It appears there is much ground to be covered in the area of communication to first bring about a better understanding to Chris that it is a task for two that includes listening as much as it does expressing your own feelings. Olympia is concerned about the communication when she is not communicating well. Improvement in her willingness to open up should allow her and Chris to advance in this area. The core scale of conflict resolution evaluates a couple's ability to discuss and resolve differences. This scale, is directly related to communication.

The results of this core scale suggest both Chris and Olympia feel as if their issues that they have, at times never get resolved. Further both strongly agree that they engage in very serious dispute over small or unimportant issues. Another dynamic that both Chris and Olympia scored high in was in the dynamic of partner dominance. Though Chris scored slightly higher than his wife Olympia, they both feel that their partner is trying to take control of or manage their life. This can be very contributory to the low PCA score in the scale of conflict resolution.

Whenever the couple experiences a dispute if both are only interested in forcing their views on each other or they both interpret each other as controlling, they may become defensive and something small can escalate quickly. Similarly to communication, conflict resolution is a two person task in a marriage. Chris may need to be sensitive to his wife's past of being abused and how it may effect her opening up. When it comes to the core scale of partner style and habits the couple again scarred a PCA result of zero. They are both very concerned about the personality traits and habits they observe in each other.

Both have witnessed a withdrawn or unhappy demeanor in each other. They equally feel, based on the report, that their partner is controlling. Both also have been embarrassed by their partner's behavior as well. This is the type of scale that will weigh easily on the two aforementioned scales. The couple's ability to effectively communicate and resolve differences may not cause them to like each other's habits more but a compromise can be reached that may bring about a greater sense of satisfaction in each other's style and habits.

A final weakness, and a large one as well, is in the area of forgiveness. What is positive is that the both feel closer wafter they work through a disappointment. There are constant grudges being held and Chris and Olympia feel that they have a hard time letting go of past hurts or disappointments. Some contributory factors to this are a combination of lack of effective communication, conflict resolution, with the relationship dynamics of partner dominance, assertiveness, avoidance, and self confidence can contribute to the lack of forgiveness.

Chris's self confidence dynamic returned a result of very high. There is a possibility that he may be over confident where as Olympia's result in self confidence is moderate. Respectively Chris Strongly agrees that Olympia has hard time forgiving while Olympia simply agrees that Chris has the same issue. In contrast this couple has some strengths that ought to be highlighted as well that can work to their benefit such as Their Sexual relationship. This cores scale returned the highest PCA result score and is the couple's strongest point. There are few concerns here.

Chris and Olympia together feel that there is a satisfactory amount of openness to talk about sex and it is fulfilling. The disagreement here lies in the amount of affection Olympia receives is unsatisfactory versus the amount Chris receives. This may be a result of the apparent struggle with pornography Chris is having. He admits to having viewed such material and it is a concern of Olympia's in their relationship. The next strongest core scale lies in their spiritual beliefs. Chris professes to be protestant while Olympia did not disclose her beliefs.

Though they've discussed the importance of Christian faith and there currently is no tension because of spiritual differences, there is a slight difference between between what Chris believes and what Olympia believes. Olympia disagrees with the practice of giving a portion of their income to the church, daily prayer, and active participation in a church as an integral part of their marriage. It is noted that Olympia works from home and makes significantly less than her husband. This fact, may play a part in her reluctance to give to the church.

Some other strengths in Clyde stepfamily parenting. The couple has reached a point of satisfaction regarding how they have been dealing with the complexities of being a stepfamily. Cultural and ethnic issues are another strongpoint whereby the differences in culture do not cause issues in their relationship. Further some possible strengths include financial management and the involvement of family and friends. Much like the aforementioned strengths, there is still room for growth here but the report suggests that this couple is mostly in concurrence in these areas. Personalities

The SCOPE assessment evaluates the characteristics of each person in the couple that leads to consistent patterns of feeling, thinking and behaving. SCOPE being an acronym for Social, Change, Organized, Pleasing, and Emotionally steady. The first aspect of the assessment, social, returned results that show a great disparity between Chris and his wife Olympia. Chris scored high in this area which implies he is very extroverted, outgoing, and enjoys being the center of attention. Olympia however, her results suggest that she is more introverted and enjoys time alone or with close friends or family.

This disparity may be derived from their family arrangements growing up. Despite the common factors of both Chris and Olympia being the second child in a family that had at least four children, Chris was raised in a suburban area and Olympia comes from a small town. This may be causation for the introverted preference. Olympia's introverted nature may be contributory to the avoidance factor in the marriage. The fact that she is very private and keeps to herself, makes confrontation a weak point of hers.

She is more likely to not deal with an issue directly or hold in her feelings even if it needs to be talked about. Chris being the opposite, an extrovert, allows him to be assertive and share his feelings more openly. This however may be problematic whereby many conversations or arguments are one-sided. This ultimately results in the relationship dynamic of partner dominance being very high. The change aspect of the scope assessment evaluates how open to change the individual is. As it turns out, both Chris and Olympia scored very high in this area. They are both open to change.

Olympia's score was slightly higher than Chris' whereby, per the report, she is the one with the more concerns therefore change is something she is actively seeking for them. This openness to change can be utilized to facilitated and produce growth in areas where the couple is lacking, such as in leisure activities. Changing the current activities and trying something new or even spontaneous if at all possible may bring a greater sense of satisfaction to the area of quality time. Further, a schedule change to promote better time management may provide the same.

The darker side of change is that such great openness to change really may imply that there is great dissatisfaction present. Despite the conflicted category the couple falls into, the both are committed to making their marriage last a lifetime and are open to doing whatever it takes to improve their marriage. On the personality dimension of organized, again Chris and Olympia scored very high. This portion of the assessment evaluates the persons determination and organization in their daily life and work. Chris' score is a little higher than that of Olympia's in this dimension.

Being organized has its benefits when one has a marriage and a family, however if the two are not in sync with the organization there can be conflict. This may be contributory toward the relationship dynamic of partner dominance. One may feel that the other is trying to control or manage the other's life. That is an area Chris and Olympia scored high in as well. There is some benefit to being organized. When it comes to financial management, a core scale that needs growth for this couple, keeping of records and knowing where every dollar is coming from and going to can stimulate growth in their satisfaction of the core scale.

Further recovery of the relationship can be derived in the combination of their high level of openness and their high level of organization. If they work together with compromise they can see greater satisfaction and improvement. The evaluation of how considerate and pleasing the individual is in their real life describes the pleasing portion of the SCOPE assessment. Unlike the previous section, the couple's results, show some disparity here. Chris' score range is that of about twice that of his wife Olympia. He scored high while Olympia score was average.

Chris tends to be optimistic about people. This explains why he may be viewed as trusting, honest, and is cooperative with others. Olympia often may argue about little things especially if she feels her rights have in some way been violated. The great contributor to such a disparity in this personality do mention would be communication and conflict resolution. There may be no compromise being exercised, therefore when it comes to pleasing one another they take a defensive stand holding their own interests in mind.

In terms of recovery of their relationship, until they can improve significantly their communication and conflict resolution, the pleasing dimension may not I'm prove significantly, swiftly, or at all. The final personality dimension in the SCOPE assessment is the Emotionally Steady dimension. This evaluates an individual's tendency to remain calm or relaxed in a situation of distress. Chris scored higher than Olympia in this part of the assessment. This suggests that Chris usually appears unbothered by distressful situations.

In contrast, Olympia appears as though she can handle moderate evils of stress but may suffer negative effects in a very distressful situation. Chris may appear insensitive, or apathetic to a situation because he does not allow situations to bother him or effect him negatively. Olympia may be concerned why Chris may not feel the way she does in a particular high stress situation. Chris may need to be more sympathetic to his wife's feelings and assist or even take control of the situation. This is all in efforts to diffuse any doubt that Olympia may be feeling

because of his lack of outward reaction and to ultimately have them work together and not against each other. Ministry Plan The issues that are being experienced by Chris and his wife Olympia are derived mostly from the differences between them. The couple has done well becoming a step family and they mean well by show of their commitment and openness to improve. Treatment will begin with in church office counseling. The initial part of the plan is to meet with the couple for three to five counseling sessions at a length of no longer than 90 minutes each.

Clients and the clients and the counselor will meet once a week. Each session will serve a slightly different purpose. The first session will be to gain

the couple's initial story. Allowing them to speak one at a time as I provide directives and stimulate a conversation that is controlled, much like Dr. Turvey exemplified in the PREPARE/ENRICH training. This will allow the counselor to understand the mind state of the couple and to see how they communicate. This will also allow each spouse time to listen to each other without interruption or without the listener focussing on a response.

Once all of the issue data is accumulated, the counselor begins to ask probing questions that point towards a solution. These questions may include " has it always been this way? " or " Has there ever been a time when both of you are happiest and not thinking of the problem? " and finally " Can you imagine what life would be like without the problem?. " At the end of the first session a challenge or task would be given to Chris and Olympia. In efforts to improve their communication an exercise or challenge will be given for them to bring back results for the following week.

The second session is a follow up that builds on the first. Making sure to provide them with much biblical perspective as possible. The type of questions asked here will be ones that continue to point towards a solution. This may include " What has improved since the last time we got together? " or " What changes happened that have been helpful?. " At this point the session can go one of three ways. The clients may say that there has been little to great improvement. They may say that things are the same as they've always been and finally they can say things have become worse.

If the clients feel that there has been improvement proliferation of that technique must occur. Promote whatever it is that they might be doing and show them that there is success and that they can improve their marriage by

highlighting any unseen improvements. If there is no change, again, there may indeed be changes it is just that they do not stand out. It may be something as trivial as them having one less fight due to their efforts in trying to improve. If the situation is worse a reevaluation of the goal may be necessary. The third session may be the final session based on the couple's advancement.

If they are doing well the counselor may allow them to continue on their own and follow up with them every two weeks to every month. If not the session will begin to redefine the goal and continue building upon the foundation set by the last two sessions. At this point the counselor would printout that they are advancing just not as quickly as some couple but they will get to their goal. Some couple need to be reminded that marriage isn't a race for the swift but a marathon that takes pacing yourself and time. The fourth session the counselor begins to look for queues that may suggest professional help may be necessary.

No suggestions are made to the couple but if no significant advancements have been made then consideration begins here. If many or most of the elements of the fifth session resemble the first, a need to refer the couple to a professional may be necessary. Conclusion Chris and Olympia have issues that are derived from their personalities and upbringing. It is possible to bring about improvement and greater sense of satisfaction so that they may enjoy their marriage more. Their particular conflicts may last three to four sessions but shouldn't require professional help.