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The Couple to Couple League Approach to Natural Family Planning Instruction

Introduction

The Couple to Couple League teaches the full sympto-thermal method of natural family planning to groups of learner couples through a cadre of well-trained teaching couples. The League, recently endorsed by the Bishops' Pro-Life Committee, will be offering services in approximately 42 states with some 200 teaching couples by the beginning of 1979.

Method Taught

The CCL teaches the observations of the four basic parameters of modern fertility awareness: cervical mucus changes, physical changes in the cervix, changes in the basal temperature levels, and past cycle history. These are used in biologically cross-checking a way for the greatest ease in teaching, learning and using as well as for the greatest effectiveness. Recent Australian statistics comparing the sympto-thermal method with the "ovulation method" confirm the value of recommending the S-T method. Ecological breastfeeding, which is the world's oldest and still most widely used form of natural child spacing, is also taught and recommended by CCL.

CCL Teachers

The CCL teaching couples are themselves users of the S-T-M and have successfully completed the CCL teacher certification program. This is an educational process which assures that CCL teachers will not only be able to do an excellent job of teaching the S-T-M in general but will also be able to assist learner couples with accurate interpretations of their personal charts. Wide experience has shown that it is not necessary for teaching couples to have had medical educations.

Quality Control

From its inception in 1971, the League has been concerned with quality control. This is reflected in its teacher training as well as in its learner education program. Once certified, CCL

teachers use a teaching program provided by CCL Central — slides, notes, and a workbook. CCL Central provides a bi-monthly newsletter to all members and a special in-house memo to all teachers and candidate teachers to keep everyone associated with CCL up-to-date on NFP and related matters.

Value Orientation

In the CCL classes, the learner couples are exposed to the wide range of values that enter into the decision to use only a natural method of conception regulation. These values range from the very practical health concerns about pills and IUD's, to moral concerns about the abortifacient properties of those two methods of birth control, to religious concerns based on the teaching of the Catholic Church. The reaction to this wide range approach has been excellent.

Organizational Concepts

The organizational model is that of a small central headquarters providing teacher training and logistical support for a fairly large group of volunteer teaching couples. In this way, quality control is maintained and costs are held down by the nonduplication of administrative functions. The model has been working very well. Founded in 1971 with one couple and Dr. Konald A. Prem as its medical advisor and with no funds, the organization has progressed steadily. It is now recognized as the premier sympto-thermal program in the United States and is also in the process of expanding internationally, first of all to Ireland.

USCC Pro-Life Committee Endorsement

In recognition of the job it has already done and of its workable plan for bringing a high quality, value-oriented NFP program to every community in the country, the U.S. Bishops' Committee for Population and Pro-Life Activities issued a letter of endorsement in June, 1978.

Inquiries

Inquiries about the establishment of the CCL program in any community should be addressed to Mr. John F. Kippley, Executive Director, Couple to Couple League, P.O. Box 11084, Cincinnati, OH 45211.