

TIME FOR FAMILIES – BUILDING STRONGER FAMILIES COURSE

PT 3: HANDLING MONEY TOGETHER

Client Group:

Prisoners and their partners who have already completed Pt 1: Relationship Module and Pt 2: Parenting Module

Number of Days: 2

Aim of Module:

To support the family relationships of prisoners during the prison sentence and reduce recidivism, by building the couple's relationship skills and increasing competency in handling money issues as a "couple team".

Learning Outcomes:

1. The couple will be able to communicate effectively about how money should be handled and their feelings about money in the context of a prison sentence.
2. The couple will be able to identify their differing ways of handling money in terms of attitudes to materialism, risk and power.
3. The couple will consider and re-evaluate how they share responsibilities for earning, spending, budgeting and saving.
4. The couple will understand the principles of budgeting and practice the skills of developing a simple household budget.
5. The couple will learn how to avoid debt and find out where to get advice to handle debt.
6. The couple will identify some savings strategies and discuss what would be appropriate for them.

Course Outline:

Day One

Introductions – Communicating about money

Revise communication skills teaching from Module 1

- 1) **Communicating about Money** revision about good communication skills but applied to money conversation – looking at bad habits – STOP. (matches outcome 1)
- 2) **Our Money Management** Introduce the concept of the couple discussing and handling money together; firstly looking at how they were taught to handle money as children, and then how they have been handling money since they became a couple. Workbook exercises. (Matches outcomes 1 & 2)
- 3) **Money Character Types** –Understanding how each of them functions with regard to money. Using a quiz to decide their "money type". Couple discussion to enable better understanding of each other and their strengths. (Matches outcomes 1 & 2)
- 4) **The Relationship Journey.** Where we are in the relationship journey will affect income, priorities and support. Couples identify where they are in the journey and there is group discussion about how each stage in life is affected in terms of money management. (Matches outcomes 1-3)
- 5) **How Prison is affecting our Money Management.** The couples look at the differences in earning and decision making that has come about due to the prison sentence. They are encouraged to look at how they can support each other and how they can still manage their family finances as a team. They consider release. Both of them will have changed so they will need to negotiate changes in managing the family finances. They will complete workbook exercises. . (Matches outcomes 1-3)

- 6) **Keeping the show on the road.** This is an introduction to three part budgeting. The first stage is spending awareness. They are shown how to complete a spending record as a group exercise. The couple will discover that they need to start from where they are now. The couples have to complete the spending record as homework and return it at session 2. They will briefly look at the advantages of preparing a budget, which will be explained more fully in Day Two. (Matches outcomes 3 +4)

Conclusion: What have we learned? What are our strengths and our growing points? Ask couples to do some “homework” on spending in order to feed back in next session.

Day Two

Introduction: Revisit some of day one especially about the effect of money stress on the relationship.

- 7) **Talking about our spending.** Group discussion with flip chart on what has already been learned; couple communication exercise on action points. The couple will learn how to use a spending record in the context of planning a budget and learn tips on wise spending. A flip chart will also be used to look at ways money can be saved encouraging group discussion. (Matches Outcomes 3 & 4)
- 8) **Being a team** The couple will discuss why team work helps in managing money. They will identify each other’s strengths. (outcome 3)
- 9) **Three part Budgeting.** They will look at the reasons for household budgeting and the need to agree priorities. They will go back over negotiation and forgiveness skills learned during day two of the BSF course. A couple negotiation exercise will be used, together with group discussion on planning. (Matches Outcomes 2, 3, 5). The couples will complete an example budget before working on their own budget sheet. (Matches Outcomes 3 & 4)
- 10) **Understanding Credit and Debt.** The couple will look at credit and control measures. The couple will gain understanding about working towards being debt free and will be given signposting on where to go for help when in debt. (Matches Outcome 5)
- 11) **Saving for a “Rainy Day” and Summary.** The couple will look at saving strategies and understand the value of them; workbook exercises on this concept will follow and they will again look at the effectiveness of working as a “couple team” rather than trying to manage money alone. (Matches Outcomes 3 & 6)

Conclusion

Evaluation

1. Self efficacy testing before and on completion of Module
2. Couples’ completion of personal budget plan
3. Other informal evaluation as the key outcomes are relational as well as academic
4. Workbooks provide a means of evaluating skills outcomes more formally and linking into budgeting and saving outcomes.