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Marriage and Family 2600-042
Reflection Paper

During this semester I have learned that there are so many aspects to marriage and family issues. I have been married but am divorced and am also widowed. This course gave me many things to consider if I remarry. It gave me insight that I wish I would have had earlier in my life. It also presented issues about the family that I can use in my relationships with my parents, siblings, nieces and nephews. I have made improvements in my life through reading the textbook for this class, *Marriage & Family* by David Knox, 2010 edition, and researching online for answers to the module questions.

I understand the various choices that people make about family life and why it is so difficult to have a clear definition of how to define a family. I believe that people make choices about family life based on many factors such as culture, beliefs, values and family of origin just to name a few.

There are five elements used to define marriage and four types of marriages. The types include a legal contract, an emotional relationship, sexual monogamy, legal responsibility, and announcement ceremonies. The four types of marriage are monogamy, polygamy, polyandry, and pantagamy. Family gender roles have changed since the 1950's. It used to be that women and men played very specific gender roles; nowadays it is more common for the individual to choose their role in life.

An important tool for marriage is communication. Lack of communication or not understanding how men and women communicate can be harmful to a marriage. The textbook defines communication as the process of exchanging information and feelings between two or more people. It is just as important to use good verbal skills as it is to use non-verbal skills, such as good eye contact and body posture to help determine how well you communicate with others. Men and women have very different brain structures. Understanding this shows how different genders react and why men and women have difficulties communicating with each other.

There are many aspects to getting a divorce such as taxes, bank accounts, marital home, any other property owned, possessions, and possible loss of two incomes as well as child custody issues. Being prepared, talking it over and being agreeable as to who gets what will help to make a smoother transaction. However depending on the people involved, the financial redistribution of monetary property can be a nightmare or it can come to a fair resolution.

After taking this class I will be prepared if I ever chose to marry again. I have a lot more knowledge about marriage and family and have learned to look at all aspects before jumping into a situation that would change my life. I feel that this class has given me good information

that will keep me stronger and wiser to handle what may lie ahead. Any direction that I may go could alter my life forever and now I have good tools to examine which direction to take.