MODULE 2 — YOU MARRIED THE WHOLE FAMILY

Understanding Extended Family Systems Worksheet

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete this worksheet individually, then discuss your answers with your spouse. Be honest about what you have observed, not what you wish were true.

1. FAMILY ROLES & RELATIONSHIPS

Who are the significant people in your spouse's extended family (siblings, cousins, grandparents, aunts, uncles)?

What role does your spouse play in the family? Are they the peacemaker? The responsible one? The rebel? The caretaker?

How do siblings and cousins relate to each other? Is there closeness, rivalry, or distance?

2. FAMILY GATHERINGS & TRADITIONS

How often does your spouse's family gather? Who initiates these gatherings?

What happens at family events? Are they joyful, obligatory, tension-filled, or predictable?

Are you expected to attend all gatherings? What happens if you don't?

3. FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

How does the extended family stay connected? Through calls, texts, social media, or in-person visits?

Are there family group chats or group calls that affect your marriage?

How quickly does information spread through the family? Is privacy respected?

4. YOUR SPOUSE'S LOYALTY & OBLIGATION

How strongly does your spouse feel obligated to family members beyond their parents?

Would your spouse cancel plans with you to help a sibling or relative? Under what circumstances?

Do you sense your spouse feels responsible for a family member's emotional wellbeing, success, or happiness?

5. YOUR PLACE IN THE EXTENDED FAMILY

How have extended family members received you? Are you welcomed or viewed as an outsider?

Do extended family members treat you as a true family member, or do you feel like you have to earn your place?

Are there unspoken expectations or 'tests' you feel you need to pass?

KEY REFLECTION: What patterns do you notice about how your spouse relates to extended family?

What concerns, if any, do you have about how extended family involvement might affect your marriage?