***Fight Right: ROE—Rules of Engagement in Relationships***

**1)** "No hitting below the belt" these are the areas of life we know about each other that are private, the places we know will hurt, which we came to know about when we were vulnerable and naked. These private and very personal things about each are not weapons, but treasures hidden in earthen vessels. We will produce after our own kind, so we must be careful what we want to grow.

**2)** "No rabbit punches" the spot of the head/the brain that controls sight, which prevents a person from seeing present and future issues. It's all those past issues, the things we said we put behind us, but we know these things will keep the other person from looking at what is currently happening. We need to value the present and live for the future. However past “punches” and hurts keeps many of stuck there: the past things which we have admitted we didn’t and don’t like. I promise you: Living in houses built by past pain and “hits” will not allow you to move into the Home built by Love.

**3)** "No holding" this when we grab and won't let go...or it could also be with-holding from your partner. When someone says **break:** you are to back up, back off and come back after a set time or "Time-Out" and get back together without holding grudges. We must learn how to put some distance between our words and the person. If you find that either or both of you are not ready to talk in a healthy manner, Time Out is still in. We are to be able to come back “together” in the spirit of agreement to fully discuss the matter in a healthy, healing and productive way. Again, no with-holding: meaning as the bible says that woman’s body is not hers’ but her husband’s and his body is not his but hers’ (See I Cor 7:4-5). Please let me say this: I’m talking sexual abuse or any type of abuse and you use what I’m saying to justify “wrong” behaviors and mistreatment of your spouse (this goes for wives and husbands).

**4)** "No Biting"-no talking about your spouse behind their back, no slanderous comments that will come back to them (back-biting)...we are never to stoop to an animal level while fighting. We will fight, but God says, "Fight Right!" Actually God didn’t scream this, but I did. There are healthy, healing and productive ways to fight that restores and strengthens the marriage, and each individual in the marriage.

These rules are to be discussed in times of peace, when we're not engaged in battle. It's been said, "The best time to prepare for war is during a time of peace." The counselor with couples is a type of "referee"-we're there to remind and to reinforce with couples of the Rules of Engagement. Counselors are unable to be in the home during fights, which is why these rules are discussed in counseling and again during times when the couples are not in the heat of a battle. **(Revealed by God during a counseling session with a couple on June 4, 2014)**