**Topic 1 and 2: Canyon Family Origins Case Study**

When Anne and Clark Canyon attend their first therapy session, you learn the following:

Anne and Clark Canyon have been married for 4 years. Anne is 28 and Clark will be turning 40 next month. Clark has a fourteen-year-old son, Cody, who splits time between living with his dad and Anne, and his mother, Lisa, and her partner Patricia. Lisa and Clark were never married, much to the disappointment of Lisa’s parents, who are devout Catholics. In fact, they met at a bar the night Lisa graduated from college, and conceived Cody that same night. Their relationship has always centered on Cody and they are committed to parenting him to the best of their abilities. Despite the dual-living arrangement, Anne, Clark, and Cody continue to attend mass together and share some holidays as well. Until recently, Lisa and Clark have had limited support. Clark’s parents live 600 miles away and care for his only sibling who is disabled. Lisa’s parents distanced themselves from her when she had a child out of wedlock. When her lesbian relationship with Pat began three years ago, they completely disowned her. Pat has a ten-year-old daughter, Sadie, who spends most of her time with Lisa and Pat. Sadie’s father is incarcerated for domestic violence against her mother, but she is very close to both sets of grandparents who live nearby.

Anne and Clark have a 2-year-old son, Max, and a newborn daughter, Lilly. Currently, Anne is on maternity leave but she plans to return part time to her job as a flight attendant. Anne is the eldest of five children. Her father Eric, who was eleven years older than her mother, left the family when she was 13-years-old and nobody has seen him since. Her mother Daisy did not have an education; she married young, and Eric insisted that she stay at home with the children. When Anne’s father left, Daisy had to work two jobs, which left Anne responsible for caring for her younger siblings. While Anne was at school, her grandmother watched her twin sisters, who were too young for school. Anne walked her other two siblings to and from school every day, then would care for all of her siblings, since her grandmother worked evenings. Anne put herself through college, working in the lab at the hospital where she met Clark, who was there when Cody was getting his tonsils out. She was impressed by how attentive he was to his son; he admired her ambition. They instantly fell in love and were married within six months, immediately following Anne’s college graduation. Clark sells real estate and is most grateful for his flexible schedule, which allows him to spend time with his family. Ten years ago, Anne’s mother married a wonderful man, Harvey, who is fifteen years her senior. They spend their winters in the desert and enjoy the summers in Montana, where Harvey’s children and grandchildren live.

Anne and Clark report several challenges. According to Clark, Anne does not trust him, yet he has never betrayed her. Clark states that Anne “never” trusted him, but that he initially found her frequent calls and texts to be a sign of her affection, not her insecurity, as he feels it is now. Anne admits that she has been known to “jump to conclusions” but states that she has always been “the suspicious type.” She complains that Clark “never answers his phone” and will frequently “ignore” her texts. Clark disputes this and believes it is rude to answer his cell phone while he is with clients. He admits that he is not diligent about checking messages, especially if he is spending time with the children, and insists that Anne is being irrational. Both agree that things are worse when Anne is out of town, traveling for work.

The recent changes in her mood, however, are of added concern. Anne reports feeling increasingly “sad and unmotivated” and is questioning her desire to return to work. She admits feeling lonely and “unfulfilled” at home, and becomes tearful as she shares feelings of guilt. She questions her ability to be a good mother but insists that she loves her children dearly. As she cries, Clark does not attempt to soothe her, but sits with his arms crossed, nonplussed by her emotion. He rolls his eyes as Anne reports feeling “exhausted all the time” then he sarcastically adds, “She’s even too tired to shower most days.” Anne does not respond.

Clark expresses frustration saying he has “given up” trying to help her. He complains that she rejects all of his suggestions, such as Mother’s Day Out at church and stroller exercise classes, yet she won’t come up with her own ideas. Anne claims that Clark is always angry with her. Clark agrees that it is annoying to return home from work to find the house unkempt with no plan for dinner. He admits to getting angry with Anne when she goes straight to bed, leaving him alone to care for both children for the remainder of the evening. On a few occasions, Sadie’s grandparents have offered to help, but Anne refuses to accept their offer. Daisy and Harvey are also concerned, and are planning to help when they return for the winter. Clark fears that their marriage is in serious trouble and can’t help but take Anne’s overall apathy personally. Anne agrees to attend therapy, hoping it will put an end to Clark’s constant complaints.