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**SO**

**YOU**

**WANT**

**TO**

**MARRY**

**A WORKBOOK TO HELP WITH MATE SELECTION  
AND PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE**

**Dee Hadley**

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## INTRODUCTION

After thirty-two years of teaching Seminary and Institute (28 years of Institute), and 50 years as a marriage and family therapist and because of the high divorce rate in America and the growing number of unhappy marriages, I have concluded that the mate selection process in America is not very successful. To help young people be more successful in discovering themselves and their mate, I have put together this material. It is intended to indicate how good your relationship is and not just point out your weaknesses. Nothing in this material is new; it has been said many times in some form or another I may have put them in a different format that may be helpful to you. I take full responsibility for this book's content. It is all based on my personal experience and not on scientific research. It is not intended to be all inclusive; nor is it intended to guarantee marital success. Agreeing with King Benjamin, "*I cannot tell you all the things whereby ye may commit sin; for there are divers ways and means, even so many that I cannot number them*" (Mosiah 4:29), it is also true of the complexity of humans and their relationships. It is impossible to cover all there is to know. Our desire is to help you know each other better, hopefully, prevent a divorce, and help you improve your chances of success and the quality of your marriage.

We must always remember that the only person we can change is ourselves. My friend Dr. Tessa Albert-Warschaw explained, "*a negotiator must realize that his or her behavior won't cause the other person to change miraculously. The real power in negotiation is that you change yourself, and as you do, others around will have to change because you are different. The key is, that by changing yourself, you change the nature of the relationship and the other person has to adjust to the new you.*" The purpose of this book is not to help you develop skills that will change your intended. Rather, it is designed to be a self-improvement program. The objective is to help you assess where you are and give you some tools that will help you, with your intended, more fully enjoy your journey through life. It is, therefore, essential that you look at this material as the chance to discover changes you are willing to make and not focus on the changes you believe your intended should make. The major goal for each of us should be to live a more Christ like life. *What manner of men (and women) ought to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am.*" 3 Nephi 27:27 "*But be ye doers of the word not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" James 1:22. It should be apparent that possessing good character traits, (like Thomas S. Monson) where a Christian Character is exhibited every day and in every aspect of life, is more important than, and will outweigh, any of this material.

Modern marriage is like the hand cart pioneers. How much do you know about the hand cart people who didn't succeed who turned back or quit their journey? It appears that two-character traits lived by those who completed their journey are Commitment and Sacrifice. These character traits, combined with the faith which Nephi defines as "*following the son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God but with real intent*" (2 Nephi 31:13) in each of you are far more important than all of this material. But for us average people, this material may be helpful in our search to know ourselves and our intended spouse.

Experiences like seminary, institute, a mission, or church position are typically indicators of having some good character traits, they do not automatically indicate the quality of our marriage relationships.

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In every part of this book there may be issues that for you personally, that we can't measure, are so important that they will outweigh everything or parts of some things, that you need to discuss with your intended and determine their effect on your relationship.

**A final note:** As you use this work it is not intended to be read like a novel but rather to help you and your intended work on areas that need the most help. You might want to go through it once as an overview. And then choose those parts that will help you the most. Remember in high school, how many times you had to read a chapter before you could pass a test on it. This too requires more than just reading it I would also suggest that you take turns deciding what to work on.

Some sections of this work have more than one chart to study that traits, you may want to use just one of them.

I would also not want to undermine the importance of a great family, quality friends, or a caring and inspired Bishop.

We hope this workbook will help you improve your interpersonal skills and your marriage.

**I wish you a successful and rewarding marriage.**

Dee Hadley

**PS. A very critical element in this whole effort is the assumption that you are honest with yourself and your intended, and are not trying to hide behind deception so your intended will accept you as you want them to think you are, rather than who you really are. It is also imperative that you do not be deceptive to protect your intended's feelings. Most Americans have been taught that catching a good person is more important than being honest and developing a meaningful relationship.**

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***THE INSTITUTION  
OF  
MARRIAGE***

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## **MARRIAGE IS AN ACT OF FAITH**

Marriage is always an act of faith. When we marry, in our covenant, we are really saying, “I will risk my eternal life on you if you will risk your eternal life on me.” Both of you must remember that the wedding is just the beginning of the major part of your life of which you have had little experience. If your marriage lasts as long as President and Sister. Hinkley’s (see below) you will have at least two thirds of your life together. (plus, all eternity). For which you have been preparing all your life. However, in this phase of life, neither of you have had any experience and all of which is unpredictable. No one can predict what circumstances will occur, what new technology will transpire in every part of life, (look at phones or medicine), what it will be like to raise children, what economic or political conditions will exist, what natural disasters may happen (look at the fires, floods, hurricanes and bad weather of late, what your health will be like, or even where you will live) (you may become a Mission President or General Authority).

Of this act of faith, that is marriage, the traditional wedding vows says you promise to be committed for better or worse, in sickness or health, for richer or poorer, until death do us part, A Temple Marriage implies all of these and much more. How well either of you will live this life is unpredictable.

A difficult problem with living by faith is that faith is rarely part of most young adult’s daily life in America today. At school, work and our interactions we have come to rely on scientific research and Intellectuals reasoning so much that it is difficult to make a faith choice for an uncertain future, like marriage. Too many young people want scientific and intellectual evidence that there isn’t someone better out there and the relationship will last a lifetime, that it is extremely difficult to make a choice because it is always an act of faith.

Heavenly Father intended that a man and a woman come together and become “one flesh”. (Mark 10:8) In the celestial kingdom they have to make it together. because neither of them can make it alone. A couple is exalted as a couple, not as an individual. The temple teaches us the prime source of happiness is our posterity, which requires the creation of a family. He expects that a man and a woman with different life experience, talents, skills, interests, personalities, with different economic and intellectual levels, come together as equal partners in a equal, celestial partnership. That each has different, but equally important, with different responsibilities and roles to play. This relationship is difficult to obtain in the modern American society where personal happiness, and individual achievement are our main goals, and where competition is a major component of our character.

The more different your life experiences are the more faith, sacrifice, and adjustment you will need to exhibit. Tom Brady, the quarterback for the New England Patriots, who grew up in an average American family, made \$27,000,000 last year, according to Google, and his wife Gisele Bundchen, a super model, have 3 children., She grew up in Brazil, left home at 14, ended up in New York at 17, spoke no English, but last year made \$45,000,000, according to Google. Besides the challenges of being a man and woman, can you see how much faith and adjustment they would have to make, to be the equals God expects of every couple. Yours marriage will not be that difficult, but ever part of this book is designed to help you develop this equal partnership

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# **INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT AND SISTER HINCKLEY**

## **On Their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary,**

they were asked about the secret to a happy marriage. They had several suggestions – or concepts, which we have turned into questions here.

On a scale of 0 to 10, 0 meaning you really need to work on it and 10 meaning you are very good at it.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Live the Gospel
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Love, appreciate each other
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Develop self-discipline
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Curb temper and tongue
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Look on the bright side of things
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Develop, maintain respect for one another
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Give soft answers
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Speak quietly
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Don't be selfish
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Look after one another
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Develop talents, opportunities of companion
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Recognize differences
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Pay tithing, stay out of debt
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Develop the ability to communicate with each other

You and your intended may want to compare your answers with each other and see how well you agree on your self-concept and the self-concept of your intended spouse.

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## **AMERICAN MYTHS OF MARRIAGE**

The media, in all its forms, has taught us to believe several myths about marriage that have nothing to do with reality. (we haven't covered them all) Learning to overcome these unrealistic expectations that our culture instilled in us about the institution of marriage is essential to any successful relationship.

### **Myth #1: I am not responsible for my happiness**

Most people believe that personal happiness is an inalienable right, and that is the most important value in human behavior and that it should be our primary goal. In reality, the right to personal happiness, however, doesn't make any more sense than the right to be beautiful, a millionaire, or seven feet tall. This concept is compounded by a welfare system that has taught us that it is the responsibility of the government, our parents, our spouse, the world around us, or God to provide us with this personal happiness. This concept or belief has led us to develop the idea that we are not responsible for ourselves or for our happiness. My addiction to tobacco, drugs, pornography or gambling is because my parents were addicts, or because I came from such a dysfunctional family, or I joined a gang and participated in a drive-by shooting. It is always someone else's behavior that is responsible that caused my unhappiness. Since they created my problems; it is also not my responsibility to fix it. My happiness is your responsibility. As a child, my welfare and happiness were the responsibility of my parents. In our marriage, it is my spouse's responsibility to create my happiness. This is tantamount to saying, "I have no free agency, and am a slave of my emotions and the forces around me". Because of this rejection of our agency, we develop a capacity to see the weaknesses in others but have very little success in observing our own weaknesses.

### **Truth #1: Free Agency**

*Free Agency demands that I accept the responsibility for every part of my life, including my feelings and happiness. As President Kimball stated, "Happiness is a state of mind and comes from within".*

### **Myth #2: This happiness comes from self-indulgence**

The narcissistic, "me first", attitude that has become pervasive in America in our recent past, has replaced the self-denial ethic that once ruled American life. We now find people who refuse to deny themselves anything on the idea or strange moral principle that I have a duty to myself and, if marriage doesn't meet my needs, I should look elsewhere. Many schools of thought teach us that it is our life's work to pursue "self-actualization", this means putting Self First! America seems to be living by this concept. This concept has caused most of us to seek the maximum amount of reward with the minimum amount of effort

### **Truth #2: True happiness comes from relationships and sacrifice**

*Self-gratification doesn't seem to lead to a more fulfilling life. In dwelling on their own needs, many Americans discovered that the inner journey brings loneliness and depression. Yet, most researchers, now believe that this focus on our own needs usually leads to depression and feelings of aloneness and seclusion. What these researchers have found is that happiness and peace of mind come from deep and abiding relationships with significant others.*

*True happiness come from close relationships and the sacrifices I make to make those relationships succeed I need to care more about the well-being and happiness of all of God's children (especially my spouse and children) than my own ease of living and personal happiness. Jesus made this sacrifice and tells us to "love one another as I have loved you. (John 13:34)*

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**Myth # 3: Marriage is an arrival instead of a process:**

Another myth we tend to perpetuate is that marriage is an arrival instead of a process. That is, once we have found the "right one" and persuaded them to marry us, following the fairy tails of our youth, we will live happily ever after. We believe that once we have chosen right, all of the work and sacrifice is finished. This idea causes many people to be deceptive and pretend we are someone we are not to catch the "right one".

**Truth #3: Marriage is a process not an arrival:**

*Marriage is a never-ending process instead of an arrival, the act of being married is always an act of faith. (see above) Marriage, like the people in it, is ever changing. The reality is clear, it is not finding "the right one" but becoming a more spiritual and a complete person myself. Therefore, the process is never finished. This is especially true when children come. Good marriages always require hard work and sacrifice. All you need to do to see this concept is to look at to changes you have experienced in the last five or ten years to understand this important concept.*

**Myth #4: Choose the right one and I will live happily ever after.**

We are often taught that there just one that God has chosen for me and if I fast and pray and go to the temple, God will help me find the "right one" so we then will have a life of never ending happiness that is free of conflict. We have been taught to believe the most important key to a successful marriage is finding the "right one", and that God will find the "right one" for us.

**Truth #4: Choosing your mate is a time-consuming and difficult task.**

*If there is a right one, why are there so many failures? The divorce rate and number of unhappy marriages confirm the fallacy of believing that God will choose the right one and we will live happily-ever -after.*

*President Kimball stated, "Soul mates (one and only) are fiction and an illusion; and while every young man and young woman will seek with all diligence and prayerfulness to find a mate with whom life can be most compatible and beautiful, yet it is certain that almost any good man and any good woman can have happiness and a successful marriage if both are willing to pay the price." It appears that the key to lasting marriage is being good and willing to pay the price.*

*In most of the countries of the world, there are very few expectations that one is entitled to personal happiness and almost no expectations for a happy marriage. Some professionals believe that the chances of finding the "right one", using the American system, may be as high as 20,000 to 1.*

**Myth # 5: Love is all we need**

In America, we have come to expect that the emotional high we call "love," has the power to overcome any conflict or any differences that any two people may encounter. It seems that the main goal of this type of "love" is to satisfy our appetites and passions. We have come to expect that "love" will keep us together without any effort or sacrifice. This concept (fallacy) is taught early in life in Hollywood movies such as Snow White and Cinderella and continues in adolescence in movies like Pretty Woman, Sleepless in Seattle, You've Got Mail and The Wedding Planner or in TV programs where, in just an hour, two people have sex, fall in love and in a three-day encounter will live happily-ever-after. There are some older movies like Student Prince and Roman Holiday that have taught that responsibility is to be chosen over strong love feelings. This good feeling tends to make us believe that our "love" will be strong enough to overcome any differences in values, lifestyle, economic conditions or education.

We have also been told that the intensity of the emotion we call “love” is the best way to determine who the right person is to marry. Some research seems to indicate that, in America, as many as 90% of mates are chosen based on the intensity of our “love” emotion.

**Truth #5: Love is ever changing**

*No two people have the same definition of “love”, what causes it or how their “love” should be expressed. The reality is that without a clear understanding of these differences and how our different definitions might be in conflict, two people will usually find that compatibility in their relationship is more difficult and, in fact, may cause love to decline or dissolve altogether.*

*As we suggested in “Truth” #4, life is ever-changing. Ask any couple who has been married for 50 years how their love has changed over their lifetimes and they will tell you a great deal, either positively or negatively. Compatibility in any other area may have a far more lasting emotional effect on a marriage than “love” can create.*

**Myth #6: The importance of physical beauty**

It is true that physical beauty can create an emotional high. The media keeps telling us that the main way you can tell about the quality of someone is by their physical appearance. This is easily seen in the use of beautiful people to sell products.

**Truth #6: Beauty tells us nothing about marriage:**

The most glaring problem with physical beauty is that it is ever changing. How I look at 25 years of age will not be how I look when I am 30, 40, 50, 60, or 70 years of age and so on. Beauty tells us absolutely nothing about the important parts of marriage. When we watch the TV program “Deal or No Deal”, we see 26 beautiful women, but can we assume from their physical beauty, anything about how good a parent they will be, how good they are with money, what their personality is like, or even how good of a lover they will be.

## QUESTIONS ON THE MYTHS

On the following questions, rate how much you believe the question is true on a scale of 0 to 10: 0 meaning not at all true and 10 meaning the question is absolutely true.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How much do you believe or behave as though your intended spouse is responsible for your happiness or unhappiness?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How much does your Intended spouse believe or behave as if you are responsible for their (his/her) happiness or unhappiness?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How much do you believe that happiness is an internal experience (inside yourself), as opposed to your happiness is created by the people in the world around you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. How much do you accept the responsibility for your own happiness?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. How much do you believe love is the driving force of life and will solve all our differences?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How much is your relationship with other people the source of your happiness?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. How much is self-actualization and/or self-indulgence the source of your happiness?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. How much do you believe there is a right person for you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. How much does physical beauty determine who you will date?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. How much do you act like marriage is hard work that is never finished?

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# MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

By Spencer W. Kimball

Honorable, happy and successful marriage is surely the principle goal of every normal person. One who would purposely or neglectfully void its serious implications is not only not normal but is frustrating his own program. There are a few people who marry for spite or marry for wealth or marry on the rebound after having been jilted.

**Marriage is perhaps the most vital of all the decisions and has the most far-reaching effects, it has to do not only with immediate happiness, but also with eternal joys.** It affects not only the two people involved, but their families and particularly their children and their children's children down through the many generations.

In selecting a companion for life and for eternity, certainly the most careful planning and thinking and praying and fasting should be done to be sure that of all the decisions, this one must not be wrong. In true marriage there must be a union of minds and the hearts. Emotions must not wholly determine decisions, but the mind and the heart strengthened by fasting and prayer and serious considerations, will give one a maximum chance of marital happiness.

**Marriage is not easy; is not simple, as evidenced by the ever-mounting divorce rate.** We are grateful that one survey reveals that about 90 percent of the temple marriages hold fast. In spite of the most favorable matings, the evil one still takes a monumental toll and is the cause for many broken homes and frustrated lives. *The divorce itself does not constitute the entire evil, but the very acceptance of divorce as a cure is also a serious sin of this generation.* The fact that a program of pattern is universally accepted is not evidence that it is right. **Marriage never was easy. It may never be. It brings with it sacrifice, sharing and demand for great selflessness. We have come to realize also that the mere performance of a ceremony does not bring happiness and a successful marriage.**

Happiness does not come by pressing a button, as does the electric light; *happiness is a state of mind and comes from within.* It must be earned. It cannot be purchased with money; it cannot be taken for nothing. Some think of happiness as a glamorous life of ease, luxury, and constant thrill; but true marriage is based on a happiness which is more than that, one which comes from giving, serving, sharing, sacrifice and selflessness.

Two people coming from different backgrounds soon learn after the ceremony is preformed that stark reality must be faced. There is no longer a life of fantasy or of make-believe; we must come out of the clouds and put our feet firmly on the earth. Responsibility must be assumed, and new duties must be accepted. **Some personal freedoms must be relinquished, and many adjustment, unselfish adjustments, must be made.**

**One comes to realize very soon after the marriage that the spouse has weaknesses not previously revealed or discovered. The virtues which were constantly magnified during courtship now grow relatively smaller, and the weaknesses which seemed so small and insignificant during courtship now grow to sizable proportions.**

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The hour has come for understanding hearts, for self-appraisal, and for good common sense, reasoning, and planning. **The habits of years now show themselves; the spouse may be stingy or prodigal (extravagant), lazy or industrious, devout or irreligious, may be kind and cooperative or petulant (childishly sulky), and cross, demanding or giving, egotistical or self-effacing. The in-law problem comes closer into focus and the relationship of the spouses to them is again magnified. Often there is a unwillingness to settle down and to assume the heavy responsibilities that immediately are there.**

Through both spouses' working (or going to school), competition (for time, energy, and resources) rather than cooperation enters the family. Two weary workers return home with taut nerves, individual pride, increased independence, and then misunderstandings arise. Little frictions pyramid into monumental ones. Frequently spouses sinfully return to new and old romances, and finally the seemingly inevitable break comes a divorce, with its heartaches, bitterness's, disillusionments, and always scars.

While marriage is difficult, and discordant and frustrated marriages are common, yet real, lasting happiness is possible, and marriage can be more an exultant ecstasy than the human mind can conceive. This is within the reach of every couple, every person. **Soul mates (one and only) are fiction and an illusion; and while every young man and young woman will seek with all diligence and prayerfulness to find a mate with whom life can be most compatible and beautiful, yet it is certain that almost any good man and any good woman can have happiness and a successful marriage if both are willing to pay the price.**

**There is a never-failing formula which will guarantee to every couple a happy and eternal marriage;** but like all formulas, the principal ingredients must not be left out reduced, or limited. The selection before courting and then the continued courting after the marriage process are equally important, but not more important than the marriage itself, the success of which depends upon the two individuals – dot upon one, but two. The formula is simple, the ingredients are few, though there are many amplifications of each.

**First, there must be proper approach toward marriage, which contemplates the selection of a spouse who reaches as nearly as possible.** The pinnacle of perfection in all the matters which are important to the individuals. And then those two parties must come to the alter in the temple realizing that they must work hard toward this successful joint living.

**Second, there must be great unselfishness,** forgetting self and directing all of the family life and all pertaining thereunto to the good of the family, subjugating self.

**Third, there must be continued courting and expression of affection, kindness, and consideration to keep love alive and growing.**

**Fourth, there must be a complete living of the commandments of the Lord as defined in the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

With these ingredients properly mixed and continually kept functioning, it is quite impossible for unhappiness to come, misunderstandings to continue or breaks to occur. Two individuals approaching the marriage altar must realize that to attain the happy marriage which they hope for, they must know that marriage is not a legal coverall, but it means sacrifice, sharing and even a reduction of some personal liberties. It means long hard economizing. It means children who

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bring with them financial burdens, service burdens, care and worry burdens; but it also means the deepest and sweetest emotions of all.

**Every divorce is the result of selfishness** on the part of one or the other or both parties to the marriage contract. Someone is thinking of self-comforts, conveniences, freedoms, luxuries, or ease. Sometimes a wife or husband feel neglected, mistreated, and ignored until he or she wrongly feel justified in adding to the errors. For every friction, there is a cause, and whenever there is unhappiness each should search self to find the cause of at least that portion of the cause which originate in that self.

*BYU Devotional Sept 7, 1976*

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## **WHEN DATING HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL**

1. When I have enough self-confidence that I don't need to spend a lot of time proving that I'm am OK, then I can focus on relationships outside myself.
2. When I feel comfortable interacting with people of both sexes without being self-conscious or feel a need to control the interaction.
3. When I can deal constructively with my sexual feelings, not just indulging them.
4. When I understand and accept my personality and enjoy associating with people of the opposite sex who have a compatible personality rather than just me turned on.
5. When I have developed my value system to the point that I feel secure and am looking for someone who shares my values.
6. When I find real happiness in serving others without expecting to be rewarded for my efforts.
7. When I am more concerned about the welfare and happiness of those, I care about than I am my own self-interest.
8. When I learn to take responsibility for my feeling and actions and am willing to accept the consequences for them.
9. When I have learned to be positive and creative in solving life's problems.
10. When I have learned to use my time effectively in worthwhile pursuits.
11. When I have become wise enough to know perfection is a lifetime process and then some, that none of these principles can be achieved until after a lifetime of marriage.
12. When I have experienced each of the four aspects of dating.
  - a. **Intensity** - When we have dated enough that we know each other deeply in all aspects of life.
  - b. **Extensity** - That I have dated enough different people to know with whom I am most compatible.
  - c. **Range** - That we have seen each other over enough time to really know each other well. If we date every day for fifty-two days, we will know something different than if we date once a week for fifty-two weeks. If all our dates are in the evening, we will know something different than if we only date in the morning. If we miss certain times of the month, we may not know me important aspects of a woman's life.
  - d. **Variety** - When we have been on enough different kinds of dates to really know each other. If all we do is hang out, go to the movies, play tennis, or make out, we have no idea how good most of our relationship will be, except in one or two areas of our lives. A good relationship requires a deeper understanding of each other's personality and participating in a variety of activities while dating will help gain this understanding.

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## **WHAT QUALITY MEN LOOK FOR IN A WOMAN**

**FOR WOMEN** - Rate yourself on each of the following items on a scale of 0 to 10; 0 meaning that you have none of this character trait and 10 meaning you are perfect at it.

### **POSITIVE - What MEN look for in a date, hanging out**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Positive, happy, love of life
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Easy to talk to
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Outgoing, friendly
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Has a testimony, active in the church
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Intelligent
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Has a sense of humor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Acts interested in him, builds him up, thinks well of him
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Has a good is their sense of self-worth, self-confident?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Open and honest, Good communicator
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Attractive, good looking, is in good shape, takes care of her body
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Is active, involved, doesn't waste a lot of time, has a good work ethic
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Compassionate, cares about others

**WOMEN** - Make a list the traits that you scored 7 or higher. These are traits of which you can be proud

### **NEGATIVE - What turns MEN Off**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Phony, fake, dishonest
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No testimony
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Poor personal hygiene
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Selfish, demanding, has to be right, thinks she is God's gift to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Goals and values are different than mine
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Negative, not uplifting
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Shallow personality
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Ugly, fat
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Smokes, drinks, uses drugs
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. No emotional feedback
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Is physically cold
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Vulgar, swears

**WOMEN** - make a list of traits on which you scored 7 or more. These are traits you should be working on.

[Type here]

## **WHAT QUALITY WOMEN LOOK FOR IN A MAN**

**FOR MEN** - Rate yourself on each of the following items on a scale of 0 to 10; 0 meaning that you have none of this character trait and 10 meaning you are perfect at it.

### **POSITIVE - What girls look for in a date. Hanging out**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Easy to talk to
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Honors his priesthood
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Respects her, treats her like a lady
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Is a good communicator
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Honest, has integrity
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Has a good sense of humor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. She feels she is better when she is around him
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Is sensitive to other's feelings, finds joy in serving others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Is self-motivated, takes responsibility
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Is good looking, physically fit
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Has a good sense of self-worth; knows where he is going in life, is ambitious
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The chemistry is there

**Men** - make a list of those traits you scored 7 or more. These are traits should you be proud of.

### **NEGATIVE - What turns girls off**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Doesn't honor his priesthood
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Bad language
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Negative attitude, puts people down, negative humor, rude
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Treats girls like objects, not respectful, comes on too strong
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Plays games
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Goals in life are different than mine, we don't have much in common
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Conceited, selfish, only thinks of himself
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. There is no feeling of love
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Doesn't appeal to me physically
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Poor manners
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Not honest, phony
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Can't carry on a good conversation

**Men-** make a list of these traits you scored 7 or more. These are traits should you be working on.

[Type here]

# WHY PEOPLE DO NOT SUCCEED IN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

1. **Fear of Intimacy**
  - a. **Fear of Disclosure** - If you really knew me you wouldn't like me. Lack of sense of self-worth.
  - b. **Fear of Rejection** - Can I really trust you with my love? I have been hurt too many times to trust anyone.
  - c. **Fear of Repeating Past Failures** - No one really loves me or all they want to do is use me.
2. **Self-Evaluation**
  - a. **Emotional Problems** - I have serious emotional problems that prevent me from developing lasting relationships.
  - b. **Choosing Inappropriately** - I want someone better than I am capable of getting. I only want the ones that don't want me.
  - c. **Interpersonal Skills** - I don't relate well with others. I am too selfish. I don't have the ability to be committed.
  - d. **Poor Relationship Skills** - I get interested too quickly. I go too far physically, too soon.
  - e. **Poor Decision-Making Skills** -- I don't trust my ability to make good decisions. I am insecure, self-conscious, I don't understand myself well. I am anxious, depressed, or satisfied with being single. I am a poor risk taker.
  - f. **It is hard for me to live by faith.** - I need an assurance that it is right.
  - g. **Expect perfection on** – Want better than I am capable of getting.
3. **Expectation of Perfection -- The Right One Syndrome** - I believe there will be no doubt in my mind when I find the "right one". God will tell me who the "right one" is and He won't let me make a mistake. Once I have found the right one, there won't be any conflict; I shouldn't have to work at maintaining the relationship.
  - a. **The Expectation Problem** - I expect you to meet all my expectations. If things are not what I expected them to be, then it must be your fault. I spend too much time dwelling on your weaknesses.
4. **Definition of love**
  - a. **Unrealistic definition** - there is a difference between what I feel and what I expect to feel.
  - b. **Past Experience** - I don't feel the same as I felt in a previous relationship.
  - c. **.I should always feel certain** – I should always feel at peace and feel certain that he/she is right for me.
  - d. **See" LOVE" on page**

[Type here]

[Type here]

# **ASSESSING OUR RELATIONSHIP**

[Type here]

[Type here]

## **ASSESSING WHERE WE ARE**

Since marriage, like life, is an ever-changing process, we will never, in this life, reach Celestial perfection. However, no matter where we are along the journey, the more we participate in the process, the more enjoyable the rest of the journey will be. We all need to begin where we are and create a program that will move us to a better place. As you do this together, you will capture what David R. Mace calls "Your unclaimed riches". (Close Companions, New York, Continuum Publishing Company, 1984, p. 39)

A lady asked, "If there is only a five percent chance of having an intimate relationship and your chances of getting there are 2000 to 1, then why try? The answer is that wherever your relationship is now and however much you can improve it, each step will increase your happiness.

A minister once sent a woman, who had been married three times and had two of her three children born out of wedlock, to me for counseling. He said to me, "She may be about a 5 percent Christian, and maybe all we can do is help her become a 10 percent Christian. But, if we have done that, we may have, at least in some small way, helped her move in a positive direction that should increase her happiness and add to the quality of her life." We should not be discouraged if we have not reached the top, because, for most of us, that will take a lifetime and then some. Remember, the journey should be as interesting and rewarding as the finished product. Each little step should add to our happiness and bring us closer to our goals and strengthen our relationship.

One of the major goals of eternal marriage is the learn to work together to help us both develop a God like character. To accomplish this, we must help each strengthen our strengths and overcome our weaknesses, It is important that we have a weekly summit meeting (discussed later). Part of this process is at the end of each exercise in this book, you need to declare to each other what you are going to work on, and what behavior or thought you want to improve or change. It will help if you take time to write it down and then report your progress each week and each month. Report when you succeed and when you slip.

It is impossible to become perfect all at once so select changes you can have success with. And remember as Pres Benson said, for most of us the change is "imperceptibly slow" (Ensign Oct 1989) so don't give up hope.

Remember your task is not to be judgement or critical but to be a cheer leader for you mate. Also remember that the Lord said that, "he that will not bear chastisement is not worthy of God's kingdom." (136:31)

The rest of this whole book will focus on the quality of your relationship.

[Type here]

## **WARNING SIGNS THAT A RELATIONSHIP IS LEADING TO DISASTER**

In the left column, rate your relationship on a scale of 0 to 10: 0 meaning there is no problem in this area of your relationship, 10 meaning it is very prevalent in your relationship.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. There are a lot of emotional ups and downs in your relationship. Sometimes you feel excited and in love and, other times, you are not sure.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. At the end of the evening, you do not feel good about yourself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Your family and friends don't feel good about your relationship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Your partner tries to separate you from your family and friends. He/she doesn't like your parents or friends and is always criticizing them and is usually putting them down. He/she always wants to be alone with you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Your partner seems to want to own you, he/she is always checking up on you. Makes you account for your time, wants to control what you do and when you do it. Expects you to always be available.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Your partner is not sensitive to your needs and feelings or does not try to help you succeed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Your partner is always trying to change you, especially your values or lifestyle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Your partner comes on physically too quickly and/or too strongly. Wants to spend too much time being physical or do more physically than you want to do or feel is appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Always has to be right, and/or get his/her own way. Never listens to your point of view. The only one entitled to revelation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Your partner has a quick and/or violent temper. Solves most conflicts with anger. Often uses variable abuse or violence to solve problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Your partner is not happy and cheerful. He/she usually looks at the negative side of things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Your partner focuses a lot on your weakness or what you do wrong but wants you to overlook his/her weaknesses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. When things go wrong, it is never his/her fault, even his/her own mistakes. He/she always blames someone or something else for what is not right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Your partner is very unpredictable, has sudden mood swings, a lot of highs and lows.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Your partner's use of time is also unpredictable. Often not on time and not considerate of your time or your interests or projects.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Your partner is often not dependable, but always has an excuse. He/she is often not truthful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Your partner is always going to change, (i.e. be more religious, get a good job, finish school, treat you better, etc.) but never seems to quite get there.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Your partner seems unable to make decisions. Especially puts off committing to your relationship but still wants to be physically active.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. He/she is financially irresponsible. Has a lot of debt.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. He/she doesn't want to spend money on you or take you to worthwhile places.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Your partner does not seem to enjoy serving others especially the underprivileged or serving you or bearing your burdens.

[Type here]

- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. Your partner doesn't have a good work ethic. Can't hold a job, is lazy, spends a lot of time seeking entertainment, watching TV, or playing on the computer, watching sports, movies etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. Your partner is usually sad or unhappy or depressed, never seems to be of good cheer, never looks at the bright, positive side of life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Your partner and you don't share the same religious commitment, or you disagree on religious practices.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. You and your partner have one or more heated discussions every week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. You and your partner have had one disagreement that has become violent.

If your total score is more than 100, or if on three or more questions you score 8 or more, or if any one score is a 10, or you have any score on #25, or #26 you probably should consider finding another relationship.

**AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED THIS WORKSHEET, BEFORE YOU DO ANY THING, PRAY ABOUT IT, TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR PARENTS, YOUR BISHOP OR SOMEONE YOU TRUST TO BE HONEST.**

[Type here]

## **DO WE HAVE A MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP**

**In the middle rate how you feel about your intended on a scale of 1 to 7. Put a circle around the female in your relationship and a square around the male in your relationship**

(the numbers create both the direction and intensity of your feelings)

- |   |               |   |
|---|---------------|---|
| 1. I am concerned about their           | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I am concerned about my own needs               |
| 2. I enjoy as an individual             | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I don't respect them                            |
| 4. I accept their humanness             | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I expect them to be close to perfect            |
| 5. It is easy to overlook their         | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I am troubled by their weaknesses               |
| Weaknesses                              |               |   |
| 6. I enjoy serving them                 | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | It is their responsibility to serve me          |
| 7. I enjoy serving them in secret       | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I want credit for the service I give            |
| 8. We really enjoy each other'          | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | We have a lot of conflict when we are together  |
| 9. We have a lot in common              | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | We have very few interests in common            |
| 10. I feel like we are equal            | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I feel like I am better than they are           |
| 11. They bring the best in me           | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | Around them I tend to be lazy and nonproductive |
| 12. I am upbeat & happy around them     | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I am sad and depressed around them              |
| 13. We have a very stable relationship  | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | There are a lot of ups and downs in our         |
| 14. I can be myself around them         | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I feel like I am never good enough,             |
| 15. Our physical life is an outstanding | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | We cannot agree on our physical life            |
| 16. They are extremely trustworthy      | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I am not sure I can trust them                  |
| 17. I feel safe around them             | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | I fear they are using me                        |
| 18. It is easy to be forgiving          | 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | We hold grudges a lot                           |

Write down the traits each of you marked 6 or 7 and you have some traits that both should be proud of.

Now write down the traits you each marked 1 or 2 and you some things you might work on.

## **ASSESSMENT OF WHERE WE ARE**

[Type here]

**THIS ASSESSMENT IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP. NO ONE QUESTION OR SECTION OF IT OR EVEN ALL OF IT SHOULD DECIDE IF THIS IS THE PERSON YOU SHOULD MARRY. FOLLOW THE SUGGESTION ON THE INVENTORY ABOVE.**

Circle the letter that best describes the current state of your relationship (notice that some letters are skipped. That is on purpose.)

### Relating

1. How long will it have been from your first date until you plan to marry?
  - a. 12 to 18 months
  - b., 6 to 12 months
  - c. 18 to 24 months
  - d. more than 24 months
  - e. less than 6 months.
2. This relationship encourages you to:
  - a. Be better than you are
  - b. Be your best self
  - c. Stay the way you are
  - e. Be less than you want to be
  - f. Do things you really should not do.
3. After you have been together do you feel:
  - a. Elated
  - b. Confident
  - c. Ok
  - d. Uncertain
  - e. Fearful
  - f. Depressed
4. My feelings about our relationship are:
  - a. Positive when we are together and when we are apart
  - c. Positive when we are together but apprehensive when we are apart
  - d. Apprehensive when we are together but positive when we are apart
  - f. Apprehensive whether we are together or apart
5. When we are with other people my fiancée makes me feel:
  - a. Proud and happy
  - b. My choice is Ok
  - c. My choice is fair
  - d. Apologetic
  - e. Angry and ashamed
  - f. I should probably leave them

[Type here]

6. How confident do you feel about your future together?
  - a. Extremely confident
  - b. Quite confident
  - c. Accepting
  - d. Somewhat concerned
  - e. Extremely concerned
7. How does your parents feel about your relationship?
  - a. Excited
  - b. Accepting
  - c. Concerned
  - d. Concerned
  - e. Skeptical
8. How do your siblings feel about your relationship?
  - a. Excited
  - b. Accepting
  - c. Concerned
  - d. Concerned
  - e. Skeptical
- 9.. How do you feel about your future in laws?
  - a. I=m looking forward to being in their family
  - b. We get along fairly well
  - c.. I don=t know them very well
  - d. Mixed feeling about them
  - e. Mildly dislike them
  - f. I dislike them
10. How do your future in-laws feel about your relationship?
  - a. Excited
  - b. Accepting
  - c. Concerned
  - d. Concerned
  - e. Skeptical
11. How do your friends feel about your relationship?
  - a. Excited
  - b. Accepting
  - c. Concerned
  - d. Concerned
  - e. Skeptical
12. With regard to friends, my fiancée and I:
  - a. Share almost all the same friends
  - b. Share a few good friends in common but have some friends that we don=t share
  - c. We have very few friends in common
  - d. I don=t approve of most of their friends
13. My fiancée and I agree on the number of friends we should have
  - a. almost always
  - b. usually
  - c. seldom
  - d. seldom
  - e. almost never
14. The amount of time we should spend with friends

- a. almost always                      d. seldom  
b. usually                                  e. almost never
15. The kinds of activities we should be involved in with our friends.  
a.. almost always                      d, seldom  
b. usually                                  e. almost never
16. Have you considered discontinuing this relationship  
a. Very seldom                          e. Occasionally  
b. Never                                      f. Often
17. Our relationship is:  
a. Generally positive and rewarding d. e. There are a lot of ups and downs  
b. There are a few ups and downs      f. Mostly downs but we love each other
18. My fiancée:  
a. Shows a great deal of concern for my feelings and well being  
c. About half and half  
e. Seems to be more concerned about their own needs and wants
19. Whatever activities I engage in, I feel that my fiancée is:  
a. Extremely supportive in all my activities  
b. Very supportive in some activities but not in others  
d. Is willing to let me do my own thing but is not very supportive  
f. I feel almost no support from them
20. I feel that my fiancée:  
a. Always honest and trustworthy                      d. dishonest if it helps them  
b. Is generally honest and trustworthy                  e. Is frequently dishonest and can=t be trusted
21. The things that are important to me are:  
a. Also important to my fiancée  
b. Somewhat important to my fiancée  
d. Not very important to my fiancée  
f. My fiancée doesn=t care about what is important to me
22. The things I would change about my fiancée are:  
a. Insignificant or very minor

- b. Nothing
- c. There are a few things that bother me quite a bit
- e. There are some major things that bother me

23. List the things you find most attractive about your fiancée

physically \_\_\_\_\_

spiritually \_\_\_\_\_

personality \_\_\_\_\_

24. List the things you would most like to change about your fiancée

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

25. List any irritating or annoying habits your fiancée has

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

26. Are there parts of your life that you don't feel you can share with your fiancée? List them or check them off in your head if you don't want your intended to know. But count them in your score

\_\_\_\_\_

**SCORING**

**A. Relating** Give yourself the following scores for each letter

a. = +3      c. = +1      e. = -2

b = +2

#23 give yourself + 1 for each physical trait up to 5

give yourself + 2 for each spiritual trait up to 5

give yourself + 2 for each personality trait or value up to 5

On # 24, # 25, and # 26, if there are none leave them blank.

#24 give yourself - 1 for each trait you like to change up to 5

#25 give yourself - 1 for each annoying habit up to 5

#26 give yourself - 2 for each part you can't share up to 5

If on relating you scored more than 40 points your relationship is in pretty good shape.

If you ended this section with a negative score you need some serious help.

**It would be helpful if you and your intended took each question and spent some time talking about it. Maybe take 3 or 4 questions a week.**

## **Problem Solving**

1. Who dominates your relationship
  - a. It is shared about equally
  - d. Most of the time you do
  - d. Most of the time they do
2. How often do you have disagreements: (this may not be an argument)
  - b. Once or twice a month
  - d. Never
  - a. Seldom
  - f. Daily
  - c. Weekly
3. When you have disagreements, do you find it:
  - a. Very easy to express your feelings
  - b. Somewhat easy to express your feelings
  - d. Somewhat difficult to express your feelings
  - f. Extremely difficult to express your feelings.
4. When you and your fiancée disagree do you find that:
  - a. It is settled by mutual give and take
  - d. The matter goes unsettled
  - c. You usually give in
  - e. We just don't talk about our differences
  - c. Your fiancée usually gives in
  - f. We have major arguments when we disagree
5. When you have a disagreement:
  - a. We solve the problem and feel closer
  - e. One or both of us holds a grudge for a while
  - b. We take time to think about the problem and then let it go
  - f. There is resentment that lasts a long time
  - d. There is a period of estrangement
6. After a disagreement do you feel:
  - a. Satisfied with the decision
  - d. Dissatisfied.
  - c. Somewhat dissatisfied
  - f. Hurt, ignored or not understood
7. In talking with my fiancée:
  - a. We can talk freely about any topic or feeling
  - c. We can talk about most topics or feelings

d. There are topics or feelings we can't talk about

f. We seldom discuss topics or feelings in depth

8. For questions 8 and 9 on the following issues do you (Place a letter that expresses your feelings)

a. Almost always agree

c. Occasionally disagree

d. Don't know, haven't discussed it

e. Frequently disagree

f. Almost always disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ How to spend our time

\_\_\_\_\_ Friends

\_\_\_\_\_ Work and play habits

\_\_\_\_\_ Family

\_\_\_\_\_ Money matters

\_\_\_\_\_ Order and cleanliness

\_\_\_\_\_ Religion

\_\_\_\_\_ Personal hygiene

\_\_\_\_\_ Education

\_\_\_\_\_ Demonstration of affection

\_\_\_\_\_ Career/job

\_\_\_\_\_ Power - who is the boss

\_\_\_\_\_ Togetherness vs personal time

\_\_\_\_\_ Sports

\_\_\_\_\_ Politics

\_\_\_\_\_ Leisure time

\_\_\_\_\_ Children, how many, when

\_\_\_\_\_ Where to live

\_\_\_\_\_ Service to others

9. When I picture my fiancée in the following roles I feel: (place a letter by each item)

a. Extremely optimistic

b. Somewhat optimistic

d. A little apprehensive

e. Extremely apprehensive

\_\_\_\_\_ A friend

\_\_\_\_\_ Provider

\_\_\_\_\_ A mother or father

\_\_\_\_\_ Companion

\_\_\_\_\_ A lover

\_\_\_\_\_ Confidant

\_\_\_\_\_ Role model

\_\_\_\_\_ Caring person

\_\_\_\_\_ Religious Leader

10. List the specific areas of disagreement that you don't seem to be able to resolve

---

**Scoring**

**B. Problem Solving**

a. = +3    c. = +1    e. = -2

b. = +2    d. = -1    f. = -3

#8 subtract your negative scores from your positive scores, If this is a negative number you should have some concern. If it is 10 or more you should feel really good.

#9 again subtract your negative scores from your positive scores. If this is a negative number you should have some concern. If you don't agree then talk about it.

If the number is a positive 5 or more you are in good shape.

On questions #8 and #9 you might want to discuss both of your answers

#10 give yourself - 2 for each disagreement you can't resolve up to 5

**Use the discussion at the end of relating**

**Activities**

---

1. List the activities you and your fiancée have participated in together in the last six months in order of the number of times you have participated in them and indicate how many times you have participate in each

---

---

---

2. List the activities that you enjoy that your fiancée doesn't

---

---

3 List the activities that your fiancée enjoys that you do

---

**Scoring**

**C. Activities**

#1. Give yourself + 1 for each different activity you have participated in together up to 5

Give yourself - 1 for each activity that you spend a lot of time in is not enjoyed by both of you up to 5

Give yourself - 3 if more than 50% of the time you spent in the same 2 or 3 activities

Give yourself - 3 if you spend more than 20% of your time together being physical, hugging, kissing,

# 2 & #3. Give yourself a 0 if these activities seem to bother either

Give yourself + 1 if you and your fiancée are very supportive of these activities up to 5

Give yourself - 1 if you or your fiancée are irritated by this activity up to 5`

Give yourself - 2 if this activity creates serious conflict for you or your fiancée up to 5

**Again, use the discussion suggestion at the end of Relating**





**ESSENTIAL  
ELEMENTS  
OF  
MARRIAGE**

## **THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF MARRIAGE**

I have come to believe (and I may be wrong) that there are Six Essential Elements in a successful marriage. The Essential Elements is usually expressed in one or more of the Aspects of a Relationship (which follow). **Both the Elements and Aspects are at least, ten times more important than the strength of the emotion of LOVE in determining the lasting success of a marriage**

1. Common Values.
  - b. Compatible Expectations.
  - c. Quality Communication Skills.

- d.** Compatible Personalities.
- e.** Compatible Lifestyle
- f.** Understanding the Differences between Men and Women



# **SHARED VALUES**

**The Importance of Common Values.** Our values are created by the culture we live in, our religion, the region we grew up in, our family, friends and our own emotions. Common values are one of the most important elements in a quality relationship. Some researchers think that common values may be as high as ten times more important than the emotion of love in determining the quality and lasting capacity of a relationship. Common values are the glue that keeps a relationship together through all of life's ups and downs. Our lives are governed by those things we hold to be of value. Our values, and the concepts they are based on, control everything we think and feel.

Shelli says to her husband, "We shouldn't watch television on Sunday because it gets in the way of family togetherness." Mark replies, "If you think I'm not going to watch the Super Bowl this Sunday, you are crazy." In this scenario, their value systems are so different that good communications skills won't resolve the problem. Without judging which is most important, if Shelli and Mark agree that Sunday should be family time and more important than watching the Super Bowl, or if they agree that Sunday is the time to watch football or play golf, they will enjoy the relationship of common values more and there will be less conflict in their relationship.

The activities on which we spend our time and energy are the real expressions of what we honestly value more than what we say. These values are what motivate us to action.

Some men spend so much time at work that their wives feel they value their career more than their marriage and family. The husband would reply that he is only doing it for their family". This is his justification for spending so much time away from home. There is a conflict between his behavior and what he proclaims are his real values. If when he gets home, his desire is to spend the evening watching TV, the difference between his behavior and his expressed values only confirms her position that his family is really not his number one value.

Some women spend so much time caring for their children that their husbands feel as if they are of little value to their wives except as a paycheck. The wife might reply that the children can't care for themselves and her husband can. Although, it may be true that children need help in caring for themselves, this will not make her husband feel more loved.

To illustrate the importance of shared values, we have identified the priorities of two couples below.

## **Couple A**

### Her Priorities

Approval of others

Children

Church Activity

Mother

Marriage

Power

Shopping

### His Priorities

Self-Indulgence

Sex

Job

Money

Status

Leisure

Mate

Since "Couple A" has so few values in common, they are constantly bickering and trying to manipulate their mate into changing value system to be more compatible with their own. Couples with few shared values often experience divorce in marriage or, at best, tolerate a mediocre marriage.

## **Couple B**

### Her Priorities

Mate

Children

Church Activity

Sex

Parents

Leisure

### His Priorities

Mate

Sex

Church Activity

Job

Children

Leisure

Though "Couple B" is not a perfect match, they have two important things going for them. First, because their relationship is the most important value for both of them, they will make the sacrifices necessary to keep their marriage growing. Secondly, their shared values are close enough together that they will usually function on the same wavelength most of the time

## **Real Values vs. Ideal Values**

Another problem that seriously affects the long-term outcome of a relationship, and is especially troublesome in courtship, is the conflict between our ideal values (those we would like to possess) and our real values (those that actually govern our life). Usually during courtship, we want the person we are dating to believe that our ideal values really govern the way we live our life. The problem arises when we get married and find that the real values of our spouse are different than the ideal values he/she seemed to display during courtship. This confusion occurs quite frequently in dating on the internet, where ideal values are easily passed off as real values. This deception can occur when we are describing ourselves intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and/or physically to make ourselves appear better than we really are.

## Relative Strength of Values

When there is a difference in values, what causes the most friction in marriage is how ridged our values are. Values include habits, hobbies, interests, or lifestyle. The less flexible either of us is about our values, the more conflict we will have. Divorce usually occurs when we have values that are more important to us than our spouse or our marriage.

Because our values are often subconscious, it is often difficult to decide on the relative strength of each value, until life forces us to challenge them. We may never be forced to choose between closely related values, so we may never know which values are ultimately more important, and perhaps, we don't really need to know. The distance (or strength) between our number one value and our number two value is often hard to measure. Too many people would like to believe that all their values are equally important.

The mother, who during war, is forced, by the enemy, to decide between her virtue and her children's lives, puts her values to the test. When the husband forces his wife to choose between her marriage and her religion, her values are again put to the test. If she values her religion more than she values her marriage, their marriage will probably end in divorce.

As we noted earlier, when marriage and my children are my most important value then we can live with disagreement on most other values. Your relationship should almost always be more important than whatever the current conflict is about. A good example of valuing something more than marriage occurred when a young man filed for divorce because his wife would not move from her western farm community to New York, where his company offered him a position with a substantial raise. In this example, the wife appears to value her lifestyle and family interaction more than she values her marriage.

After the husband returns from his mission they get married in the temple. After five years and two children he decides to leave the church break the word of wisdom and play golf on Sunday, yet the priority of their marriage is so important that they have worked around their differences and have a reasonably good relationship. A husband is convicted of a business crime and is sent to jail for two years. His loyal wife takes care of their four children and runs their business while he is in jail. The family tries to visit him once a week and when he comes home seem to have an above average relationship..

If you can't agree on your values, or if the strength of your values is far apart, you need to determine how important the differences is to each of you and how willing each of you is to change. Understanding your values and those you share with your intended spouse is where absolute honesty is important. or you will end up in misery.

## VALUES EXERCISE

From the following list, pick out the 10 values that you feel best represent your real values and put an X by them in Column 1. In Column 2, Number the 10 values you selected, i.e., 1-10. Next rate or prioritize each of values on a scale of 0 to 10. When you select your values, try to select them based upon your actual behavior and not your ideal values. The more honest you are with yourself, the better this exercise will be. Both you and your intended can do this exercise and compare the results to see the compatibility you have with each other.

- |       |       |                                 |   |
|-------|-------|---------------------------------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 1. SELF                         | My own needs and wants and doing my own thing.  |
| _____ | _____ | 2. BEING RIGHT                  | My opinions and perceptions must always be right.   |
| _____ | _____ | 3. PRIVACY                      | Being by myself and having a lot of alone time.   |
| _____ | _____ | 4. PEACE                        | Avoiding conflict between us.   |
| _____ | _____ | 5. APPROVAL OF GOD and          | Following Commandments, Prayer (individual and family), Regular Scripture Study.                        |
| _____ | _____ | 6. FORMAL RELIGION              | Being involved in my Church.  |
| _____ | _____ | 7. COMMUNITY                    | Volunteer work, Charitable Service, Politics.   |
| _____ | _____ | 8. MARRIAGE                     | Having a quality marriage.  |
| _____ | _____ | 9. MATE                         | Spouses and Family's Welfare & Happiness.   |
| _____ | _____ | 10. SEX                         | Sexual Stimulation and Intercourse.   |
| _____ | _____ | 11. AFFECTION                   | Non-sexual physical affection is more important than sex.   |
| _____ | _____ | 12. CHILDREN                    | Our children will be most important — How many?   |
| _____ | _____ | 13. FRIENDS                     | My friends will take up a lot of my time.   |
| _____ | _____ | 14. APPROVAL OF OTHERS          | How I appear & what others think of me is important.  |
| _____ | _____ | 15. FAMILY                      | My Parents, Siblings, Grandparents, Extended family.  |
| _____ | _____ | 16. EDUCATION                   | I love learning both formal and informal.   |
| _____ | _____ | 17. CAREER/JOB                  | Career is my top priority including being a home maker.   |
| _____ | _____ | 18. MONEY                       | Setting up a family budget, Planning, controlling and spending Money                                    |
| _____ | _____ | 19. THINGS                      | Material things that money can buy, cars, furniture, home etc.  |
| _____ | _____ | 20. PHYSICAL BODY               | Being physically fit, exercise, looking good.   |
| _____ | _____ | 21. LEISURE ACTIVITIES          | Having Fun, sports (playing or watching), Hobbies, Handicrafts, Hunting, Movies, Skiing, Etc.           |
| _____ | _____ | 22. FINE ARTS                   | Symphony, Theater, Ballet, Art Gallery, Concerts, Etc.  |
| _____ | _____ | 23. STATUS                      | Social Status, having others see me as important.<br>Church Callings, Career, Income, Car, House, Etc.) |
| _____ | _____ | 24. CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONICS | How much time is spent on them. Cell phone, Internet, Games, Watching TV, Work, Social Media,           |

\_\_\_\_\_ 25. ORDER

I need an orderly life, Place for everything and things in their place. Everything must be on a schedule, and on a list.

Make a List of your top 10 values and compare them with your intended's top 10 values. There doesn't have to be a perfect match, but you should have at least 6 of the values on both of your lists, make another list from those 10 values that each of you scored 7 or more. If on this second list, four or more of these values don't match, you need to decide what you are willing to give up, to make your relationship more rewarding.



# UNDERSTAND EXPECTATIONS

Our values create a whole series of expectations for every part of life for each of us. Our unfulfilled expectations are always the biggest source of our personal unhappiness. This is true for every human being. Certainly, conflicting expectations in our marriage is the single biggest source of conflict in our marriage and is the major cause of all divorces in America. Part of the problem is that most studies often say that money is the major cause of divorce causing us not to look at conflicting expectations. However, it is not really money that causes divorce but the conflict of expectations on how to use and manage money that causes divorce. It would appear obvious that coming to understand our own expectations and those of our intended is critical in avoiding conflict and discovering how compatible we are. Our expectations will determine the degree of our happiness and our satisfaction with the quality of our relationships.

Notice how my expectation causes my frustration in this example. If I scrub the kitchen floor with the expectation that when I am through, my wife, in appreciation, will scratch my back, but when we go to bed and I don't get my back scratched, I feel cheated because my expectation was not met. If, however, I scrub the floor because I want to lighten her burden, then whatever happens, I will not be disappointed because I don't have an unfulfilled expectation that can eventually hurt me.

In this example my expectations create my feelings. If my expectation for the report card of my sixth-grade son is all C's and he comes home with all B's, I am thrilled. However, if my expectation is all A's and he comes home with all B's, I am disappointed. Notice that it was not the behavior of my son that caused my unhappiness, because it didn't change. My unhappiness is caused by the change in my expectation. Most people are almost always going to blame their unhappiness on the child's behavior. It is my child's fault, not my difference in expectation.

As we stated, we all have expectations in almost every facet of life, from what we want for breakfast to who should put out the dog at night and everything in between. Everyone has his/her own set of expectations about how life should work and how each partner should behave. Conflicts and unhappiness often will occur in marriage, when there is a gap between my expectations about how my spouse should behave and my spouse's actual behavior.

Because I believe that my expectations are right and reasonable, when they are not met, I feel unfulfilled and unhappy and feel that I am justified in using all of my manipulative skills to get you to change your behavior. I also assume that it is easier for you to change your behavior than for me to change my expectations. Since my spouse's behavior is really an expression of his or her expectations, there is no evidence that it is easier for my spouse to change his or her expectations (behavior) than it is for me to change mine.

For each of us, the more expectations we have and the more rigid they are, the more unhappy we will be and the more stressful our relationship will be when our expectations are not met. The more I expect you to meet my unfulfilled expectations, the more dissatisfaction there will be in our relationship.

Communicating our differences and developing solutions we can agree on, may be a lifetime project. However, it should be apparent that in any close relationship that clarifying and negotiating the differences in our expectations should be one of the major goals of all our communication. If two people are going to spend more than 25,000 days and nights together, the better we are at sharing our expectations and the more willing we are to adjust them, the more rewarding our marriage will be.

Some expectations are almost impossible to give up and some appear to be even more important than the relationship itself. We all probably have expectations which we will not willingly give up or compromise. You might want to make a list of the expectations you have in this category.

A woman expects her husband to respect her and treat her with kindness, but her husband has hit her so many times that she has been in the hospital three times in the last six months. Her safety and the expectation that she should be treated kindly may be more important than her marriage. A great many women in protective shelters keep hoping their husbands will change their behavior without success.

We all also have a whole set of expectations for ourselves. When I expect to be more perfect than I am, and to the degree I am dissatisfied with my performance compared with my expectations for myself, the greater will be my personal unhappiness, and the lower will be the quality of my self-worth. One good way to lower our stress and unhappiness levels is to be more realistic about our own expectations for ourselves.

There are several roles that every husband and wife will expect to have performed by our spouse in their relationship. There are so many roles in life it would be impossible to name them all, and it will take a lifetime and then some to know them well. Partly because throughout life they are forever changing. It is our contention that our expectations of the following roles deserve special consideration about what your expectations are at this point in life.:

- Companion,                    \_\_\_\_\_
- Provider,                    \_\_\_\_\_
- Advisor,                    \_\_\_\_\_
- Helper,                    \_\_\_\_\_
- Father or Mother,            \_\_\_\_\_
- Lover,                    \_\_\_\_\_
- Servant.                    \_\_\_\_\_
- Family Leader                \_\_\_\_\_

Put these expectations in order of their importance to you in column one and then rate you and your intended on each item from 0 to 10, 0 meaning not very important and 10 meaning very important. Understanding each other's expectations in each role will help in your relationship.

**Decide what your expectations are in each role. Then discuss what changes each of you is willing to make in your expectations to enhance your relationship**

For the **Female** in your relationship. When you marry, put these "roles of a husband" in order of their importance to you from 1 to 6 with 1 being the most important. For each role, list three or four examples of behaviors that meet your expectations of what a quality husband would do.

Companion \_\_\_\_\_

Provider \_\_\_\_\_

Priesthood Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Helper (chores) \_\_\_\_\_

Father \_\_\_\_\_

Lover \_\_\_\_\_

Service to me \_\_\_\_\_

Family Leader \_\_\_\_\_

For the **Male** in your relationship. When you marry, put these “roles of a wife” in order of their importance to you from 1 to 6, 1 being the most important. For each role list three or four examples of behaviors that meet your expectations of what a quality wife would do

Companion \_\_\_\_\_

Provider \_\_\_\_\_

Helper (chores) \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Mother \_\_\_\_\_

Service to me \_\_\_\_\_

You might want to make a list of what you think are your intended's expectation are and then have a discussion about your differences.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY COMMUNICATION

Our word communication refers to the process by which someone or something is made common, that is, it is shared. If you tell me a secret, then you and I possess the secret in common. The key to this definition is mutual shared understanding of the intent of the messenger. For this definition to work, I must have a clear understanding of the intent and nature of the message you send me. Too often in marriage, the message you send and the message I receive have little to do with each other.

It takes two to communicate, one who wants their intended to know their real, unabridged, self, and one who wants to know that real self, who will respect and guard that self as best that they can. It means one who is honest and willing to be seen and one who will receive the message with a nonjudgmental open heart. We must be willing to risk being honest and maintain integrity at all costs. This will create an atmosphere of trust that brings both people closer together. You will find that honesty will pay off in the long run.

You must trust that your feelings, when necessary, will be kept confidential. To maintain trust, these revelations must not be used against you. It means they are not brought up in future arguments, or discussions to be used as “ammunition” in defense of my position.

If my desire is to understand you, whom I care deeply about, and want you to know the real me, then quality communication is essential to our relationship. This is especially true if I expect to share a lifetime with you. Communication is the most important **skill** in marriage and no conflict can be resolved without it. As we stated earlier communication skills are often believed to be at least ten times as important as love in determining the lasting quality of a relationship. There are, however, other issues like common values, compatible expectations, and personality that are as important or more important than communication skills. However, none of these issues can work well without clear communication. Poor communication skills are probably one of the most frequent problems marriage counselors deal with.

Jesus taught, that good communication required that we learn to “...*Let us reason together...Let us reason even as a man reasoneth one with another face to face.*” (D&C 50:11). Learning to reason together is the essence of good communication. It requires that both of us see each other’s point clearly without judgement.

## Communication Requires a Willingness to Disclose

One of the main ingredients necessary in any quality relationship is the willingness to disclose and be seen ‘As I really am’; ‘I want you to know the real me’--‘What I feel, think about, dream about, worry about, believe in or value, the things no one else would know unless I shared them. However, it is scary to take off my *protective armor* and let you see my heart and soul and become vulnerable to you. I am afraid that you might use it against me or to control me. Most people do not know how wonderful it is to be in a relationship where you can take off the armor that you have been hiding behind most of your life. There is an exhilaration that occurs when you know my imperfections and you accept me and love me despite them, or maybe because of them.

Since, in our culture, our *mate selection* system is a competitive system, in order to win you, I must sell myself as your best choice. Fearing your rejection, and not trusting you will approve of the real me, I often show you only a censored version of myself. If I am afraid you

will focus on my faults, I will try to make you think I don't have any. Most of us show a censored version of our self until we feel safe in our relationship.

Another serious problem with self-disclosure is there are often parts of me that I am ashamed of, so it is very scary to disclose them to anyone, let alone someone I am in love with. The problem of hiding behind my armor is that it makes me feel as if I am unloved. Since you don't know me, I am not sure that your love is real. Some people go through their whole life without knowing what real love feels like.

Honest Communication is the basis of any healthy relationship. The surprising result of making yourself vulnerable is that this will bring you closer to each other and the feeling of being in love, is amplified.

# THE DEADLY SINS OF COMMUNICATION

## (Barriers to Good Communication)

There are certain character traits and behaviors that make quality communication virtually impossible. We call these the “Deadly Sins of Communication” because they always become barriers to good communication. We probably use all of them occasionally. To help you improve your communication skills, you may want to decide which traits you use and how often you use them.

### 2. **Trusting Our Mind and Emotions to be Our Source of Truth**

Since I am sure my emotions and my intellect are always absolutely correct, then my perceptions also have to be true. When your truth is different than my truth, then you must be wrong. This concept is by far one of the major sources of conflict in most marriages, and is often the source of most anger

Since we trust our minds to be the most accurate source of truth, then our memory must be perfect, and anyone who doesn't see history the way we see it, is obviously wrong. In real life, we really don't know whose memory is most accurate. Serious conflict occurs when we are so ridged in our conviction that our memory is absolutely accurate that I must conclude that your concept of history is automatically incorrect. Even if you can prove that my memory is incorrect, my perception of history will usually forever remain my truth. Because I am right, I must use every tool available to me to convert you.

Since all Americans are creatures of habit, and we have lived with this emotional truth for so long, it almost feels as though it is an inborn trait. Therefore, maybe the best we can hope for, is for each of us to be tentative in our judgement and allow our spouse's' judgement to have as much chance of being true as our own. It will help in communication to remember that whoever is giving the message, at least in his/her mind, believe that his/her feelings, thoughts and behaviors are purposeful, correct, and make sense to him/her; i.e., each of us has a conscious or subconscious reason for our communication. My message is true for me, even if you can't understand or believe it. The man whose body is covered with tattoos, thinks they are beautiful, even if I don't. The man who beats his wife, believes he is only trying to correct her because he loves her. All our intentions make perfect sense to us, even though they may seem ridiculous to everyone else.

Since we learn to pay attention to our own minds and not the minds of others, we seldom develop good listening skills

### 2. **Needing to Win**

Instead of developing a cooperative culture like the Amish people, the Israeli kibbutzim, and many other cultures, we have developed a competitive society, where winning becomes the major goal for most people. From sports to the arts, to academics and all other life's endeavors, we want to be the best. At a young age, even in school, we learn to compete for the best grades. In America, economically, the winners make the most money. This concept spills over into families, where, since my mind is always correct, I need to win the disagreement and prove that I am right. To help me win, I develop a whole series of manipulative behaviors to convert you.

### 3. **Defend and Attack**

Because most of us believe the way we perceive the world is the way it really is and that our feelings are always correct, whenever we disagree, because I am *right*, I must attack your position, which, you must also defend as *right* and, in return, attack my position, etc. When this cycle begins, it is almost impossible to stop without hurting the relationship.

No one can listen and defend at the same time. When I am developing a good defensive response, I don't have time to listen. What is it that makes me believe if I attack you, put you down, blame you, or show you the error of your ways, you will respond with acceptance and love?

We all understand there are times when we are not going to want to communicate well because winning is more important than our relationship at that specific moment. Some days, we are so angry that we don't care what you think or how you feel. None of us is going to perform perfectly all the time. The beauty of life is that when you fall, you can still get up and try again.

#### **4. The Problem of Blame**

In our culture, and especially in our families, we are often taught to solve problems by finding the original source of the problem and blaming that person, who must be punished. The need to blame results in placing us in competition with others, which usually results in a lack of civility towards one another.

This principle is clearly evident in every automobile accident that occurs. Insurance companies want the police to give someone a ticket so they can place blame. In a litigious society, finding fault is so much a part of social interaction that competition is inevitable.

Of course, there are times when blame needs to be assigned. The courts exist to determine if a crime has been committed and who should be punished. The whole legal system exists to assess blame. The problem is that most of us don't possess Solomon's wisdom in assigning blame.

#### **Questions**

**On a scale of 0 to 10, rate yourself on the following questions**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often, when there is conflict in your relationship, are you sure you're right?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often, when you disagree about something that happened in the past, are you sure that your memory is correct and that your intended's memory is wrong?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When there is a disagreement with your intended, how often do you have to defend your position?

#### **2. The Problem of Nagging**

Nagging is when a person harps on a subject or asks a question until he/she gets the answer he/she seeks. Some studies indicate that nagging is the number one complaint husbands have about their wives. One of the negative outcomes of nagging is that the spouse will give in to stop the nagging but resent their spouse.

Nagging can either be positive or negative. For example, Ben doesn't like going to church but Ann thinks church should be an important part of the family. So, Ann explains to Ben, several times, on Saturday why he should set a good example for the children. Ben gives in and goes to church but makes Ann pay for his going by ignoring and not helping Ann for the rest of the day. James is trying to show Terri he loves her by reminding her, several times a day, to take care of her diabetes. Terri becomes annoyed with James and won't fix dinner. Nagging always diminishes the quality of the relationship.

#### **6. Negative Criticism**

Some people have come to believe that the best way to help other people grow is to point out their faults, their weaknesses or sins. They develop a negative critical personality. Negative criticsers

believe that if they make you aware of your failings and short comings that you will automatically change your behavior and love them more.

Rarely is Negative Criticism accepted as intended and, rarely, does it give the result of the desired change in behavior and bring a couple closer together.

## 7. Mindreading

Mindreading is my personal interpretation of your intentions, feelings and/or motives behind the verbal or nonverbal message you send me. We always think that our interpretation of your motives and intentions is correct and so we act as though we are absolutely right even when you tell me I am wrong. Since I trust my mindreads to be more accurate than what you tell me, when you tell me that my mindread isn't what you are thinking or feeling, I do all I can to convince you that my judgment is correct.

For most of us, our mindreads become so ridged that it is almost impossible to change them, even though, the other person, whose motive it is, has told us we are wrong. Some professionals believe that at least 85% of the time our mindreads may not be correct. Mindreading can often have disastrous consequences.

## 8. Editing-the-Message and Lying

Editing-the-message and lying will put up walls that show that vulnerabilities are not to be shared and destroy trust in the relationship. If, when you were a child, you got in trouble or hurt when you told the truth, you learned that it is better to lie. As a result, lying often worked better for you than telling the truth.

For many of us, by the time we are adults, we have practiced lying for so long that it has become a part of our everyday behavior and is a very difficult habit to break.

We often deliberately or accidently edit messages we send by using half-truths, innuendos, or unclear signals or outright lies. When we edit information to control the communication or get our own way, we may be successful in controlling the situation in the short run, but we will always lose in the long run, and we will surely damage our relationship. Often, we come to believe that protecting ourselves, other people, or things we value is far more important than being honest

There are several reasons why we edit messages:

- A. We often use misinformation to *convert* the other person to our way of thinking, or to win the discussion.
- B. We edit the information we are sending to make other people *believe we are different than we really are*. One of the real problems of the mate selection system in America is that it is a competition to get the best mate we can get with what we have to offer. If we feel that what we have to offer is inadequate, we tend to show a potential mate a censored and edited version of ourselves. Some of the reason we may present this edited version of ourselves include the following: "I'm afraid if you really knew me, you may not like me." I have a lifestyle or a habit that I'm not proud of, or is contrary to my values or religion, and I don't think you would want me if you knew about them, so I will hide that part of my life from you. I might have a second life that I don't want you to know about.
- C. Sometimes, *the nature of our relationship* causes us to be dishonest. If I am afraid of conflict, I will usually edit information to avoid conflict. If I fear rejection, or think you won't love me, I will only give that part of the message I think you will not reject.

- D. If I share my deepest feelings with you and then you use them against me, I will be reluctant to continue to share them with you. This kind of deception often occurs when our intended is always reminding us of our weaknesses
- E. Another major form of editing a message is giving our intended *part of a message* and expecting them to understand the rest of the message. "I think you know my motives and feelings well enough to finish the message for me, and act on it accordingly". Then, when you don't act accordingly, I get mad at you. If I must tell all of the message to you, it ruins it, or is more difficult to do.
- F. There are a lot of people who would never see themselves as dishonest but live a life of deception. They believe they have integrity but will use what we call, "*say yes but mean no.*" They lead you to believe (create an expectation in you) that they will do what you ask of them or make a promise, which they don't intentionally or unintentionally do or keep. They may intend to do something when they make a commitment, but it doesn't come to pass. When we don't do what we commit to doing, we create expectations in the mind of our intended that never come to pass. Yet, we don't see ourselves as dishonest. However, the more we create unfulfilled expectations, the more our partners begin to distrust us. Another term for this is "Passive Aggressiveness". Let me tell you what you want to hear, but then, not do it.
- G. Another form of this kind of lying, which most of us don't perceive as lying, is what we call "*add-ons.*" This occurs when we make promises and, then, change our minds without informing the other person of the change. For example, Ann promises Peter she will get the brakes on the car repaired. While on the way to the repair shop, she decides to stop at her mother's house (an add on). Time slips by and she doesn't get the car repaired. Since Peter needs the car for a business meeting the next day and since Ann did not do as expected, he doesn't feel that Ann can be trusted. It should be clear that "*add-ons*" ,though unintended, still create a trust problem.
- H. One of the almost universally accepted forms of deception today is that most people expect you to say what is politically or socially correct Being politically or socially correct, in today's society, is usually far more important than it is to be honest. When I am "politically or socially correct" I never have to be honest as long as I am not offensive.

**g. Anger**

One of the most destructive behaviors that prevents quality communication from occurring is *Anger*. *Anger* is usually a secondary emotion underlying a more important 'primary emotion'. The primary emotion can be a value, expectation or desire that is not met, or a need to be right. The primary emotion creates a more visible and easier emotion to fall back on - *Anger*. We often use *Anger* to deal with the primary emotion of frustration or disappointment. The Primary Emotion can be caused by such things as the loss of a job, serious illness, or our intended won't do what we think they should. Using the secondary emotion of anger to get our own way, to be right, to be obeyed, or to change the other person's behavior, feel respected, or at least to be understood, is viewed as an acceptable solution to our problems.

Some people raise their voices for emphasis, or when they are passionate about something, which is often interpreted by their mate, as being *angry*. In good communication, a couple must understand that a raised voice is not always *anger*. It is very important that you are aware of the impression you are expressing so I interpret the expression correctly. If you are angry, it is very important to understand this, and maintain control of your anger and not allow it to get out of control.

When *anger* turns to violence, it is not only illegal, it is destructive to any relationship. One can never communicate with someone who is angry to the point of acting out in violence. Anyone who

doesn't see the destructive force of *anger* in themselves or accept the responsibility for their behavior, should seek guidance from a professional.

It should be noted that anger may be an acceptable emotion when we see an injustice or mistreatment of other human beings or even animals. How anger should be used is a skill we all need to develop.

### **10. Cell Phones and Social Media:**

There are many, very good things about a cell phone and social media but there are also some very hurtful, negative things. We will only focus on the negative aspects of cell phones and social media as they relate to intimate communication. There are some reports that young people are using their cell phones as many as 6 hours a day and that many people in the same room are texting each other rather than having a face-to-face conversation. The major problem today with cell phone use and social media is that people tend to be less honest in revealing themselves when communicating only by electronic means.

1. People aren't as careful about what they write, as they are in face-to-face conversations.
2. Texting doesn't help us understand someone's personality nor their mood.
3. We often can't understand the tone and/ or context of the message we receive.
4. Cell phones can never tell the intensity of an emotion; Everything from love to anger and every emotion in between.
5. texting doesn't reveal anything about nonverbal messages.
6. If we spend six hours a day on our cell phone, it will limit our social interaction skills.
7. Cell phones don't help us develop skills of face-to-face conflict resolution.
8. Cell phones often give us a distorted concept of reality, an idealized idea of human beings that we can never live up to.
9. Cell phones can be a source of distrust in a relationship if one partner is spending too much time on the cellphone texting when the couple is together.

## The Deadly Sins of Communication Questions - Self

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- 1.\_\_\_\_ When there is a conflict, how often do you blame your intended for the conflict?
- 2.\_\_\_\_ How often do you get mad at your intended when they don't agree with you?
- 6.\_\_\_\_ How often do you need to interrupt your intended to correct them or explain your position?
- 7.\_\_\_\_ Do you on a daily or more often basis feel offended by your intended's behavior?
- 8.\_\_\_\_ How often in a disagreement with your intended do you assume you know what is right or wrong, good or bad, or important or unimportant?
9. \_\_\_\_ How often do you stretch the truth to make your point or get your own way?
- 10\_\_\_\_ How often do you try to make other people see you as different than you really are?
- 11\_\_\_\_ How well do you think you understand who your intended really is?
- 12\_\_\_\_ How much of your thinking, feelings, and behavior do you hide from your intended?
- 13\_\_\_\_ How often do you expect your intended to know how you think and feel without being told?
- 14\_\_\_\_ How often does something come up that changes your behavior so that you don't keep your promise or schedule and don't tell your intended?
- 15\_\_\_\_ How often do you make a commitment to your intended to do something that you don't do?
- 16\_\_\_\_ How often do you think that being deceptive to your intended is necessary and acceptable?
- 17\_\_\_\_ How often do you use a loud voice, or anger, to make your point, control the situation, or get you own way?
- 18 \_\_\_\_ How often do you point out your intended's faults and weaknesses?
- 19\_\_\_\_ How often does a cell phone get in the way of your communication?

Make a list of questions you marked 7 or higher for yourself and compare them with your intended's list for you. The task is not to decide who is right but to improve your communication skills, so don't be defensive, or try to convert your intended. Take turns and don't interrupt. Remember that none of us sees the world exactly the same.

## The Deadly Sins of Communication Questions -Intended

Rate your intended on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often, when there is conflict in your relationship, is your intended sure they are right?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often, when you disagree about something that happened in the past, is your intended sure that their memory is correct and that your memory is wrong?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When there is a disagreement with your intended, how often do they defend their position?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When there is a conflict, how often does your intended blame you for the conflict?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. How often does your intended get mad at you when you don't agree with them?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How often does your intended interrupt you to correct you or explain their position?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. How easily does your intended feel offended by you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. How often, in a disagreement, does your intended let you know that they know what is right or wrong, good or bad, or important or unimportant?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. How often does your intended stretch the truth to make their point or get their own way?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. How often does your intended try to make other people see them as different than they really are?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. How well does your intended think they understand who you really are and are wrong?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. How much of your intended's thinking, feelings, and behavior do you think they hide from you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. How often does your intended expect you to know how they think and feel without being told?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. How often does something come up that changes your intended's behavior so that they don't keep their promise or schedule and don't tell you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. How often does your intended make a commitment to you to do something that they don't do?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. How often does your intended think that being deceptive to you is necessary and acceptable?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. How often does your intended use a loud voice, or anger, to make their point, control the situation, or get their own way?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. How often does your intended point out your faults and weaknesses?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. How does your intended's use of a cell phone cause stress in your relationship?

Make a list of questions you marked 7 or higher for your intended and compare their list they completed for themselves. The task is not to decide who is right but to try to understand why and how each of you see yourself, so don't be defensive, or try to convert your intended. Take turns and don't interrupt. remember that none of us sees the world exactly the way it is.

# THE PHASES OF COMMUNICATION

## (A System of Communication)

There is an approach to communication in intimate relationships that will probably be somewhat different than you have experienced in the past. This approach divides communication into two phases: 1.) the Understanding Phase and 2.) the Resolution Phase. In our culture, a speedy solution is so important that most of us have been taught to ignore the understanding phase of communication in favor of presenting our point of view in the resolution phase. Unfortunately, when results seem to be all that matters, we often only develop skills to solve the problem in our favor and don't develop those communication skills that create lasting relationships.

### GENERAL RULES OF BOTH PHASES OF COMMUNICATION

**Readiness of the Relationship:** Our commitment to the success of our relationship will determine the quality of our communication. We never get our intended's attention if our relationship is strained or we have a high degree of any of the deadly communication sins which results in quality communication rarely taking place. The nature of the relationship will determine if either partner is ready to listen. For example:

1. If she needs some help with the children and he is too busy playing video games to help, she probably is not going to listen.
2. If he is too busy watching football, he won't listen to anything she has to say.
3. If he comes home drunk most nights, she clearly doesn't want to talk.
4. If she spends most of their time together reminding him of his faults, he is preconditioned not to listen.
5. If I put you down, blame you, tell you how you feel, or try to convert you, I am not ready to listen.

As we stated previously, why is it in marriage that we have the silly notion that if we treat someone else negatively, they will respond to us positively?

#### **Process is as important as Content:**

A principle that is absolutely critical for quality communication is: We need to understand that how we process a message is as important as the content of the message. That is, how we say something is as important as what we say.

#### **Communication takes longer than just one conversation:**

We need to be patient and remember that quality communicating usually requires more time and effort than just solving problems. People in loving relationships are more than willing to give their intended the time it takes to present their message and understand their intended's response.

#### **Focus on the issues not on character:**

When we have a conflict with our parents or siblings, we often feel like they are attacking our character, our values, or our intentions rather than trying to achieve mutual understanding. Occasionally, intentionally or unintentionally, we are attacking their integrity or character, which always hurts feelings and causes a defensive reaction to our response. When this process occurs, effective communication never is successful.

However, there are probably times when our character should be questioned, and we really do need chastisement. To avoid character assassination, the best approach is to separate the issue or behavior you are discussing from my character and intention. If both of us can perceive the issue as separate from our relationship, then we will understand that our character and intentions are not being attacked. We will be more successful if we put the issue or problem on the table and talk about it as an object rather than directing our message at the person receiving the message. (Remember that our relationship, thus our covenant with the Lord, should always be far more important than the issue we are discussing.)

A simple approach to this problem can be seen in this example. Just because I did not clean the kitchen to your liking, does not mean that I don't love you. When you correct my behavior by telling me that if I loved you, I would do a better job of cleaning the kitchen, (putting me down), I feel attacked, because I don't think my feelings of love for you have anything to do with how well I clean the kitchen.

**Questions**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you make sure that the understanding phase takes place before you try to solve the problem?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How well do you integrate in your communications the principle of “the way you say something is as important as what you say”?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How often do you understand that Protecting your intended’s feelings is more important than any issue you are talking about?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. How often are you willing to take the time to make sure the communication is clear?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Make a list of activities that you and your intended have that you feel get in the way of good communication.

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# THE UNDERSTANDING PHASE OF COMMUNICATION

***Major Rule:*** *It is absolutely essential that no attempt be made to solve a problem or misunderstanding, during the Understanding Phase of Communication.*

In each phase of communication, there is a *Sender* and a *Receiver*. The *Sender* is sending the information with the intention that they want to be understood. The *Receiver* is trying to listen to and comprehend what the *Sender* is trying to make understood. The intention of both *Sender* and *Receiver* is to make sure they are clear about the information and intentions of the *Sender*. In the *Understanding Phase*, the *Receiver* has a clear understanding of the *Sender's* information and intention, then they reverse roles and the *Receiver* becomes the *Sender* and explains what they understand the information and intentions of the *Sender* to be. The *Sender* then becomes the *Receiver* and acknowledges the report.

The purpose of the *Understanding Phase of Communication* is that the *Sender* wants to clarify their values, intentions, feelings, expectations and/or point of view so that the *Receiver* understands them exactly. When I am the *Sender*, my task is not to try to convert you, make you over, blame you, or put you down, but to help you understand me, who I am, how I feel, and how the world looks from my point of view. In other words, I want you to know the 'real me' and not someone you think I am. Our real world is the world of our mind and our feelings. When this understanding takes place, we will know each other well enough to create a true oneness.

## **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How much do you focus on how you are sending the message, rather than what the message is?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How much more interested are you in a quick resolution to the problem rather than making sure your communication is clear?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How careful are you to deal with issues rather attacking your mate?

## THE ROLE OF THE SENDER:

### **Sending Messages to be Understood**

**Getting Their Attention.** We all assume that you want your intended to understand your message as you intend it. So, you need to make sure you have their attention before you start the conversation. This doesn't mean that we hit them upside the head with a baseball bat. However, it is of little value to start talking if they are not ready to listen. If I am in the middle of the NBA playoff game and my wife starts talking, there is little to no chance that I will hear what she is saying. If my wife is in the middle of a favorite television show and I start talking, she probably won't even know I am talking to her. Sometimes, my wife is talking on the phone and I am reading the paper. If she hangs up and continues to talk as though all I had to do is wait for her to talk to me, I probably won't be listening to her. If I am in the midst of an important project, and she starts yelling from the other end of the house, and, if I think that it is an emergency and I drop everything and run to her aid and all she wanted was for me to help

her find a shoe, this will cause me not to hurry next time. Without their attention, we will never have a meaningful conversation.

The following illustration of this concept demonstrates the importance of making sure you have their attention and being understood:

Marsha reports her feelings to their therapist.

The therapist tells her what he heard.

Jake, her husband, quickly says, "that is not what she said."

The therapist responds, "did I miss something?"

Marsha replies, "that is exactly what I meant."

Marsha turns to Jake and says, "I have told you that a thousand times."

Jake replies, "No you haven't."

Either Marsha didn't have his attention or was not clear or Jake wasn't listening a thousand times.

Questions like the following will help make sure they are listening:

May I ask you something?

Have you got some time?

May I talk to you?

Can I tell you how I feel?

May I ask your opinion?

### **Questions**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How much are you sure you that you have your intended's attention before you send your message?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When you talk, how often are you sure your intended is listening and can hear you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How much of a strain is there in your relationship that makes either of you unwilling to communicate?

### **Be willing to take risks.**

We must take the risk of being seen and, maybe, even misunderstood. Great relationships require continued risk taking to develop the kind of communication that makes for true oneness. We must be willing to disclose our real self, to be seen. What you see is what you get. I want you to know me, not someone you think I am' even if you are not willing to listen. Being open and honest means becoming vulnerable to rejection and criticism. It is amazing how people are usually afraid to take this risk and, thus, cheat themselves out of a marriage that could make a good relationship great.

## Questions

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How willing are you to show your intended your real self?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often do you like your real self?

## Own Your Message

To improve communication, make statements that show you accept responsibility for your feelings and perceptions. Let the other person know that your feelings and perceptions are yours alone and that they may not think or feel the same. You need to make sure that your statements are made in such a way that the other person does not feel responsible for your feelings nor feel hurt, defensive or demeaned. To ensure great communication, I need to tell you how I feel without attacking your character or your intentions. If you feel like I am attacking your character or your intentions, you will automatically become defensive and quit listening to what I have to say and will start thinking up your defense.

To be a clear communicator, I must use specific terms about my feelings and perceptions to let you know that I own them. Statements like these indicate ownership:

“It is probably my fault.....”

“May I ask your opinion....”

“May I tell you how I feel...” “I’m sure I might not see things clearly....”

“Would you consider an idea with me....”

“I know you feel differently, but can we talk about it together?”

“I may be wrong, but could you please listen to my point of view...?”

“I perceive...”

“I feel afraid when...”

“I feel hurt when...”

“I feel warm when ...”

“I feel close when...”

“I’m not sure I’m right, but I perceive...”

“It’s probably my fault, but I feel....”

“I may not understand correctly, but I think...”

“It seems to me...”

“It appears to me...”

“In my opinion...”

“I’m wondering if...”

“I’ve got a problem...”

“This is the way I see it; how do you see it...?”

“I know this is my problem....”

“It’s my belief...”

“It may be unreal for you but....”

“I’m not sure if I’m right, I just know how I feel...”

## **Be Tentative.**

When I make absolute statements or send a message in which there is no possibility of any truth other than mine, there is no chance of a dialogue. Each of us must remember that none of us has a clear vision of reality. Magoun understood this important principle when he wrote, *“Carefully distinguish between your interpretation of the situation and the actual situation. Each of us must realize and accept our lack of complete knowledge in every situation. Any good mind knows that all ideas are relative and only partial truth is possible for anyone.”* F Alexander (Magoun, Love and Marriage, New York, Harper Brothers, 1956, p 82)

Since no one sees the world quite like we do, one of the most important ingredients in successful communication is for all of us to be tentative in our opinions and judgments. We must start with the assumption that the other person will think and feel differently than we do. Making statements like the examples under Own Your Message should help:

### **Questions:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Usually, out of 10 statements that you make - How many statements do you make where it sounds as if you may be wrong?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Usually out of 10 statements you make – How many statements do you make where it sounds as if you are sure that you are correct?

## **Speak with a Soft Voice**

As President Hinckley suggested “Give soft answers, Speak quietly”. *“God’s voice is described as a ‘still small voice of perfect mildness.’”* (Helaman 5:30-31) We have a great deal more success in communicating with those we love when we don’t raise our voices. Sometimes we raise our voice because it is something that we are passionate about or when we want to emphasize a point; however, that won’t help communication if your intended does not understand your intentions. When we raise our voice because we are angry or are trying to win an argument and control someone, it is a misuse of our voice. Raising your voice rarely improves your argument or increases your power. I don’t know of anyone who loves a person or wants to follow them with enthusiasm when they are angry and yelling.

### **Questions**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 With 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How many times a day\_\_\_\_ or week\_\_\_\_ do you raise your voice?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often does your intended raise their voice to win or get their own way?

## **Ask Questions; Don’t Just Make Statements.**

We often make a statement and assume that the other person hears exactly what we said, understood it and accepted it as true. Yet, we don’t know if any of these are true. Including a question with every statement gives you feedback that lets you know that you are understood. When I make statements, and I assume you both understand my statement and agree with it, we haven’t really communicated. The problem is, in all relationships, if I don’t turn statements into questions, I am never sure if the message I wanted you to present is the message you received. If I practice including a

question with every statement, and you respond (provide feedback) with a correct interpretation of my meaning/ intention of the statement, then I am sure that you understand my point of view, and I will know that we are really communicating. For example, let's look at a "conversation" full of statements between a husband and wife:

Jeremy complains because his wife never cooks breakfast. "All we ever have is cold cereal".

Beth responds, "If you would not stay up so late and watch those stupid movies, we could get up early to have breakfast (example #1: blaming him)."

Jeremy says, "If you were a better sex partner, then I would want to go to bed earlier (example #2: blaming her)."

Beth replies, "If you were kinder and helped around the house more, I might feel more like having sex example #3: blaming him)."

Jeremy responds, "If you didn't sit around all day and watch soap operas, you could clean the house by yourself, since you are home all day and I have to work (example #4: blaming her)."

Beth then says, "If you had a job that paid real money instead of just playing office, we would have enough money to buy a decent home (example #5: blaming him)."

So, they continue back and forth with the tactics of defend and attack. In this example, no communication has occurred. Did you notice that they brought up several different subjects and never concluded even one of them? Did you also notice that they are not even discussing breakfast any longer? This is a good example of why it is very beneficial to stay on track.

## **Stay on Track.**

*(Eat the elephant one bite at a time.)* Like the train, we need to stay on track to reach our destination. We need to make sure we stick to the subject at hand until it is clearly understood by both of us. The tendency is often to go off on tangents and get derailed quickly by going from one subject to the next without making sure understanding has occurred at each train station, or subject. Often, the sender covers so many subjects or complaints that the receiver doesn't know which one to talk about. Clearly, if we don't stick to one subject at a time, quality communication becomes very difficult. Although it is important that we give examples of the point we are trying to make, examples can often throw us off track. It is not uncommon that when one person uses an example to make a point, the other person responds to the example by giving a competing example of their own, which is only somewhat related to the issue at hand. The person who sent the original message responds to that example with another example that is only a little bit related to the original. This can go on until the original point is lost completely. Often, the example becomes the focus of the conversation and, again, derails us.

Too many issues presented at once, make tracking impossible. Too often we put so many issues on the table that it becomes difficult to decide which one to respond to. It's important to make sure that the first issue is resolved before moving on. You might want to write down, side issues, for a

later discussion. Presented below are examples of incorrect statements contrasted with more helpful questions to keep us on track for each complaint. (Note: In this example, we have combined both asking questions and tracking). Notice in the following example, they make statements and do a lot of putdowns, Then and ask questions, stay on track,

Jane sits Harry down to give him a verbal list of complaints:

- Statement:* "You never spend time with me!"  
*Question:* "I feel like we don't spend enough time together, would you agree that we don't spend much time together?"
- Statement:* "You are always on the computer or watching sports "  
*Question,* "Do you think you spend a lot of time on the computer and watching sports?"
- Statement:* "We never go out together!"  
*Question:* "Would you like to go to the park with me?"
- Statement:* "You never help around the house! "  
*Question:* "I feel like you are so busy with other things that you don't seem to want to help around the house, am I right?"
- Statement:* "All you want is sex and you are totally not affectionate otherwise."  
*Question:* "Do you think we spend enough time being affectionate without having sex? Can you see that it feels like sex is all you think about?"
- Statement:* "When we have a fight, your solution is to have sex and forget about the problem."  
*Question:* "I have a question. Is it true that whenever we have a conflict, your solution is to have sex? Can you see that that makes me want to reject you?"
- Statement:* "You get mad and yell and then expect me to like you."  
*Question:* "Do you understand that your anger makes me love you less?"
- Statement:* "You never come home on time, so, dinner is always cold, and the kids are angry and being mean to each other."  
*Question:* "Can you see that your being late for dinner means that we have to eat a cold dinner, and this make the children mad at you? I could be wrong, but it appears as if you don't care about them?"

Jane has vented her feelings, but raises so many issues, it is difficult for Harry to decide which of all these problems should be tackled first. We probably need to discuss all of the issue, but we need to discuss them one at a time and ask questions about that issue specifically each time. We need to make sure each of us has a clear understanding of an item by asking questions before we leave each topic. Now let's see what happens when they stay on track:

Jeremy says, “Do you think it would be nice to have something besides cold cereal for breakfast.” (Notice that Jeremy tries to get her attention and starts with getting an agreement on a principle first)

Beth replies, “It feels like you want a big breakfast and that you would like to start the morning together, is that right?” (Notice that Beth reports what she thinks he is communicating using different words and asks a question.)

Jeremy responds with “Yes, it would really make me feel like you care if we could have a more substantial breakfast together.” He lets her know she understood him correctly)

Then Beth replies, “I think I would enjoy that too, (She agrees with the problem then suggests two solutions) if we could work together a little more and, maybe, get up a few minutes earlier, I’d be happy to make a great breakfast for you. Then asks, “are you willing to help some around the house and which solution would you like to work on?” (she ends with a question).

Jeremy replies, “Sure, I want to help you but getting up earlier is going to be hard, but let’s see how it goes”. Can we start tomorrow?” (he ends with a question).

Beth says,” that would be fine”

Another example:

Sara complains, “You really don’t care about me, all you want to do is play golf (both a statement and a put down).” She has no idea how Mark, her husband, feels about her statement or how he will respond. Maybe, she doesn’t care how he feels, so they get into *defend and attack mode*.

Mark is likely to be defensive, saying something like “Golf is more fun than you are.”

However, if Sara asks, “May I tell you how I feel when you are playing golf?” It allows him to respond without being defensive.

Mark says, “Sure!”

Sara tells him, “I feel left out when you are gone so much because I want to be with you. Can you understand my feelings?” (She ends the statement with a question).

This question should make him more willing to listen to her feelings and focus on her needs rather than just thinking up his response. We need to make sure that these questions are what we call *inclusive* questions. These are questions that are intended to include you in my life, to help you understand my feelings and point of view and seek your advice and counsel. They are not intended to blame, put-down, or convert you, but to make sure you have a clear understanding of the world the way I see it.

**Remember that if either or both of you, is selfish or always want your own way nothing will help. Also remember that how you ask a question is as important as the content of the question.**

**These are questions that are designed to convert or get your own way:**

“Don’t you know that all of the studies show that mature people want to be physical?”

“You surely know that the Bible tells us not to swear?”

“If you love the children, you would be home more, wouldn’t you?”

**These are questions which are intended to attack or blame the other person:**

“Can you see that it is your fault that I didn’t get any sleep last night, because you were hogging the covers?”

“Can you see that you are making us late for the thousandth time?”

**These questions are intended as put-downs:**

“You stupid idiot! when are you ever going to learn?”

“When are you going to learn to dress properly?”

“Are you ever going to be as good a husband as our neighbor?”

**These questions are inclusive questions designed to strengthen our relationship:**

“Do you think there is something we might do to help me get a better night’s sleep?”

“Does keeping your room clean matter to you?”

“What might I do to help us be on time?”

“Is it true that this problem is really hard for you?”

“May I ask you a question? What do you consider proper dress for school?”

“What do you think we might do to improve the physical part of our relationship?”

“Do you think you are spending enough time with the children?”

**Inclusive questions are very important when we communicate**

Mother tells fifteen-year-old Katie that she can’t go out with her friends on Saturday night because she didn’t get her homework finished. Katie gets mad at her mother, who Katie thinks, is mean, controlling and doesn’t love her.

If we turn this example into inclusive questions, it may sound like this:

Mother tells her daughter, “Did we make a rule that you couldn’t go out with your friends until you finished your homework?”

Katie says, “Yes”.

Mother asks, “Have you finished your homework?”

Katie answers, “No”.

Mom asks, “What is the rule?”

Katie replies, “That I needed to finish my homework before I could go out.”

Mom says, “Have you kept the rule?”

Katie replies, “No.”

Mom asks, “Then what are you choosing to do?”

Katie asks, "Can't we change the rule just once?"

Mom says, "That was the same thing you wanted to have happen last week, isn't it?"

Katie answers, "Yes".

Mom asks, "What do you think we should do?"

Katie replies, "I guess keep the rule."

Mom says, "Can you see that I don't want you to have to stay home but you have to accept the responsibility for your choices, not me?"

### Questions:

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 With 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How much are you sure you that you have your intended's attention before you send your message?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When you talk, how often are you sure your intended is listening and can hear you, and is not being distracted by TV, or some other activity?

**Be Specific:** Too often, we tend to generalize feelings and statements, especially when we are describing or judging someone else. Using words like *always* and *never* are usually overstated. Generalizations and unsubstantiated opinions should be discounted. Give specific examples of situations that support your feelings or conclusion but, don't give too many topics or the topic gets lost in the examples. We often give examples that cause our intended to become so emotional that they become defensive and quit listening

Gene says that his wife, Joanne "*never* keeps the house clean, or that she is never on time".

Joanne says that Gene "is *always* too busy to help around the house."

Gene says, "She *never* takes care of herself."

Joanne says, "he is *always* eating like a pig."

Notice in these examples, both use *always* and *never* frequently, and is rarely, if ever, accurate. Notice also, that neither of them stays on subject and both are being negative and using insults and attacks to make their point.

These generalizations rarely create harmony.

If Gene would ask Joanne, "Would you agree that the house is messy most of the time?"

Joanne needs to respond without being defensive (which is difficult for most of us) and stick to the subject. "I can see how you see our house as messy" They don't convert each other or solve the problem

At another time, if Joanne were to say, "It seems to me that you are on the computer so much

that you rarely have time to help around the house and it makes me feel as if you don't care much about me, or the family. I may be wrong, but can you understand how I feel? Can you see my point of view?", They should both be ready to engage in discussion.

### **Questions**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often in most conversations, do you generalize using "*always*" and "*never*"?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often does your intended make generalized statements?

### **Be current:**

Make sure you are current on what each of you is thinking and feeling. Five years ago, Rachel told Thomas that "as soon as their youngest child left for college, she was going to divorce him."

Thomas has always lived with the assumption that Rachel was prepared to leave him when their son left for college. When their son left, Thomas asked Rachel "Are you ready to divorce me now that he has left for college?"

Rachel replies, "In the first place, I don't remember saying that but, if I did, it must have been in a moment of anger." "It certainly isn't true now, or I would have left you already."

Thomas has lived with an assumption for five years that he never bothered to address and update the conversation because of his fear Rachel was going to divorce him...

We all need to bring, and keep, our relationship current. Lilliana indicates that she needs to divorce Blake, her husband, because she feels that he doesn't love her.

When asked, "what caused her to believe that he didn't love her?". She replied, "Five years ago, I had a major role in a local play, and you did not even attend. You said that it was because you had to bowl with your bowling team." "So, I knew you didn't love me."

Liliana had been holding a grudge for five years. Emotions that are this old need to be updated. We need to be careful not to use examples that are too old.

Liliana is using data about the problems they were having in their marriage that occurred a few years earlier in a thirty-year marriage. Unless she finds out how he feels today, she can't hold the same fears and concerns based on feelings and events that are several years old. It is crucial that you don't use old examples unless the behavior is a description of current behavior.

### **Questions**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you use examples that are more than six months old?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often do you use examples that are more than a year old?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How often do you bring up past mistakes as "ammo" in arguments?

## **Respond to the Effect of the Message:**

Responding to the effect of the message is, probably, the least used and, yet, one of the most valuable elements in any communication. The *Sender* needs to pay attention to the effect the message is having on the *Receiver* rather than focusing on the intent of his or her message. We should respond to how our message is interpreted rather than trying to continually pound our point home. We must focus on the effect of our message and how the message is being received. Did they hear the message - and get the point as you intended to communicate it? If not, then you need to stop and make sure they hear the clear message you intended to send before continuing with the conversation. Do not allow a “*misunderstanding*” of your message throw the whole conversation off track into the wrong direction.

Hailey intended to say to Ian how much she gets upset with him “when he comes home, sits down to watch television, and ignores everything happening in the home around him.” She wanted him to understand that when he does this, she feels very hurt, because he is not involved, and acts as if he didn’t care about her, or the children.

Ian’s defensive response was, “I have had a hard day at work; I earn the money so you should be grateful and give me some time to relax.” Clearly, the effect of Hailey’s communication caused Ian to respond defensively.

Ian did not receive the intended message she tried to send, which could be cause by several basic communication problems discussed earlier. She did not get his attention and didn’t start the conversation with a question to engage him into the conversation. Ian, needed to not immediately jump on the defensive, and could have responded with a question about “what she was trying to tell him?”

She should respond to Ian’s statement first, then help Ian understand her intent. When Ian’s response doesn’t match Hailey’s intention, then Hailey shouldn’t say, “How come you didn’t understand what I said?” Instead, she should say, “Clearly, you have a right to some time for yourself, so I want you to know I appreciate that. I guess the question I am really asking is, how much do you want to be involved with the family after you come home from work?” Once Ian feels understood, he will be ready to understand her intention.

### ***Questions***

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you stop what you what you are trying to communicate and listen to verify that your message is heard correctly?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often to you stop to consider what is being communicated to you, as the *Listener*, to ensure you heard what is intended to be communicated?

### **Helpful hints when you are the sender.**

- Don’t yell, nag, whine, coerce, manipulate, be judgmental, preach, or lecture.
- Be tactful, considerate, and courteous.
- Use moderation in those areas that you know are sensitive or may be explosive.

- Have a good sense of humor. Life is tough when we take it too seriously.
- Don't be intimidating and don't be intimidated.
- Don't be defensive.
- Remember, there is a difference between expressing feeling and venting emotions.
- If you seem to lose a lot of conflicts because you don't have supporting evidence, or you can't agree on how an incident really happened, it may help to keep a journal of such events.
- Have signals that tell the other person, "now is not the time to talk about it."
- Know when you have pushed too far. Sometimes the best strategy is to agree to disagree.
- Don't appear rushed; allow them time to think; realize it may take time.

## **THE ROLE OF THE RECEIVER**

### **Becoming a Good Listener**

One of the most important parts of communication in any relationship is listening well enough to understand the intentions and assumptions of the sender. If I don't understand what you are trying to let me know, then communication hasn't occurred.

When you are in the role of a receiver (listener), there are some important concepts that you need to practice to facilitate communication.

#### **Listening With Your Ears, Your Mind, and Your Heart.**

King Benjamin taught us that to be a good listener, we must "*open your ears that you may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view.*" (Mosiah 2:8) All good listeners understand that they must not only hear the words that are being said but also must understand the sender's mind and heart. As I run your message through my filter system, I often miss the real intent of what your message is, because my mind is busy processing your message or thinking up my response, that I don't make my mind and heart available to you. When I listen with my ears, my mind, and my heart, I will more often comprehend the intent and the emotions of your message. I am trying to understand how you see the world even if it is not true as I see it.

Remember when you were on the High School Debate Team, you had to be able to defend both sides of the question and you didn't know which side you would explain until you arrived at the competition. We need to practice this concept in our relationship. When I am really listening, I will explain and defend your point of view before I state mine.

#### **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 With 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How well do you listen with your ears, your heart and your mind?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often do you think of your rebuttal rather than listening to the message being presented?

**Be Respectful:**

When in a conversation, you should always expect that your intended will feel, perceive, and think differently than you do. Make sure your questions indicate a respect for, and a protection of, your intended's free agency. Respond to your intended with positive expressions of love, compliments and, praise even when you disagree. Relating happy, past events, makes them more willing to be conciliatory and fair, and keep in mind that you also need to be conciliatory and fair to them. Make sure that you remain calm and even-tempered. This will help both of you communicate more accurately.

***Questions:***

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How respectful and protective are you of your intended's free agency?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When in a discussion, how often do you find you are not listening, and assume you know what is going to be said by your intended?

**Do not interrupt or correct:**

No one can listen to and understand the meaning or intent of a message and interrupt at the same time. If you interrupt, you are only assuming what they are going to say or are thinking of what you need to say to defend your position and, therefore, you can't hear the intended message. Even though you may not believe that your intended is telling the story correctly, leaving out important facts, or that they are not telling the truth, don't interrupt because it is their truth, even it's not what you think is true. We often break into a conversation to correct our intended's account of an experience or to express our view. Correcting always assumes I am right, and you are wrong. We feel that it is our responsibility to make sure the facts of the experience are correct, according to our perception or memory. This approach usually turns into a conflict where each of us is trying to prove who is right. This prevents us from addressing the issue at hand, and the intent of the original conversation is lost. We must always allow the other person to tell the experience in the way they remember it even if they are totally wrong. We need to remember that our truth is only our truth and that our intended's truth is also their truth, even when we differ in what is accurate. There is no evidence to prove whose truth is correct.

***Questions:***

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you interrupt before they have finished what they are saying?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often do you think that your perception is correct if you and your intended don't agree on the facts?

**Be tentative in your judgments:**

As we suggested to the *Sender*, always be tentative on what you think you heard. Trusting our perception to always be absolutely accurate is usually a mistake. As we said earlier, speaking in

absolutes cuts off any chance for discussion or negotiation. Being tentative, gives both of us a chance to see the problem more accurately and understand each other more clearly. Even when you think you know what happened, others may be just as sure that you are wrong. Therefore, it is important that each of you speak as though either of you may not be right. When I am tentative and act as though my observations may be wrong, a civil conversation can take place. Whenever we trust our own interpretation to be the absolute truth and do not respect our intended's right to think differently, we will never be able to have anything better than a mediocre relationship. We must remember that women almost always see and feel things differently than men do, so being tentative is critical.

Look at the difference in perception, when all of the members of a family with five adult children are asked to recount and experience that they had all been through a year ago. Each of them remembered the experience differently and couldn't agree on whose memory was the most correct. This is because each of them ran the experience through their own emotional filter and their own life experiences and, therefore, remember it differently. Most adult children remember their childhood differently than their siblings do, even though they grew up in the same home. When we do not have to be correct and are willing to look at differing points of view, we increase our chances of having great relationships.

Maddy reminds William that, "You told me last night that you would winterize the furnace this morning." William says, "I don't remember saying that." "Yes, you did," Maddy replies. As they argue about who is right, William interrupted her at least several times in the few minutes of their conversation. William is not trying to understand her, but, rather, he is only trying to convert her to his perception of what was, or was not, said.

How do we know whose memory is correct? We absolutely do not know what the truth is. There is also no value in arguing about who is right about a historical event because we usually can't really prove whose truth is absolutely correct. Unless there is more evidence, or we have another witness, we will never know. Usually, like most people, neither Maddy nor William is willing to change their mind. Almost all people live with the assumption that their memory is absolutely correct. Maddy would be better off saying, "No matter what you said last night, what are you willing to do now?"

Tammy corrects the story that Earl is telling because she feels he is leaving out some important information. Earl is so mad at her interrupting him that he doesn't talk to Tammy for the rest of the day. Tammy doesn't understand what he is upset about; she is only trying to be helpful

### **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you present your case as though it is absolutely accurate?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often do you make your intended feel you may be wrong?

### **Verify Your Assumptions:**

Your purpose as the *Receiver* is to let the *Sender* know you understand what they intended you to know. You must keep verifying your assumptions about their message until the *Sender* feels that their intentions are understood. We call this understanding an "Ah-Ha" (the sender feels understood) moment creates a true feeling of oneness. This *Receiver* starts with the attitude that the *Sender* has a good reason for being the way they are and feeling the way they do. They believe that the *Sender's*

point of view is valid, if only I can understand it correctly. This principle assumes that all behavior is purposeful and makes sense from the *Sender's* point of view. "Ah-Ha - you get exactly what I mean."

A good listener pays attention to the non-verbal statements: body language, tone of voice, gestures, etc. Remember, in the Understanding Phase, you are not trying to solve the problem; therefore, you can listen to get an understanding of the message, without necessarily agreeing. It is imperative that you check out your assumptions by asking questions to make certain you are hearing clearly. Always ask open-ended questions that can't be answered with a "Yes", or "No" answer, but requires a more thoughtful answer. What you are really asking is, "Am I understanding or hearing correctly, what you are trying to tell me?" Switching roles and changing your routine can usually provide some additional helpful insights.

Remember when you are the *Receiver*, you are not allowed to present your point of view or your rebuttal until the other person has had an "Ah-Ha" experience that tells them that you understand their intention clearly. Do not just parrot what you hear, but rather, say what you believe is their intent. The best response is to tell the *Sender* how you would feel, if you felt the *Sender's* feelings as though they were your own. You will have your chance. This process, when done well, creates a true feeling of oneness.

### **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do let your intended know that you understand their intent without a one-word answer?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2 How often do you and your intended take time to really understand each other's points of view?

### **Helpful Hints for the Receiver:**

- Don't lose your cool.
- Don't intellectualize.
- Don't be defensive.
- Don't try to place blame.

### **A word of Caution – Don't Say "Yes" When You Mean "No":**

Don't agree to do something that you are not really willing to put the time and energy into to bring it to fruition. This technique, used mostly by men, has an extremely negative effect on marriage. Your intended believes that you are united in your approach to a goal, only to find out that you have little or no interest in achieving it.

### **AN IMPORTANT CONCLUSION TO THE UNDERSTANDING PHASE – ALWAYS SUMMARIZE**

Once you have completed the *Understanding Phase* and both of you have been both the *Sender* and the *Receiver*. You should each summarize what both of you have learned to make sure that you are in agreement on what each of you now understand and what the problem is you are trying to solve. Next, decide how you will use the information to better your life and relationship. If you don't agree on the summarization, then you need to repeat the *Understanding Phase*. It is important that you complete this summery step at the end of the *Understanding Phase* before moving on to the *Resolution Phase*.

## **SUCCESFUL COMMUNICATION REQUIRES PRACTICE –**

Your communication will improve if you practice the *Understanding Phase* of Communication without trying to solve the problem for at least twenty minutes a day for thirty days. Your only task should be to understand each other's point of view, feelings and perceptions. Take turns being the *Sender* for ten minutes and the *Receiver* for ten minutes. When practicing, it will be helpful, if you do not practice on the most volatile issues in your relationship, rather, practice understanding on issues without a great deal of emotional content. To help you in your twenty-minute sessions, you might use some of the issues under **Practice in Understanding** listed at the end of this chapter.

When the *Understanding Phase* is working well, and you have practiced long enough, you can almost always speak for your intended without them saying anything and be fairly accurate because you truly understand who they are.

## **The Resolution Phase of Communication (Learning to Negotiate)**

When two sovereign nations are negotiating for peace, arms reduction, or any other major problem, they must understand and use the basic principles of negotiation. These basic principles are also important in resolving conflicts in a marriage.

### **Importance of Caring:**

As we have stressed before, hopefully, in most marriages each of us cares enough about our partner's welfare and happiness to come to an agreement on a solution. We each also have a desire to create a peaceful resolution to our problem, and we are both willing to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to resolve the issue to our mutual satisfaction. When partners work together with concern for each other's welfare and happiness, it can enhance the joy in the relationship.

### **Principles of Negotiation.**

To be effective in the *Resolution Phase* of Communication. one must develop skills in the basic principles of negotiation. The skills we will focus on are as follows even though this list is surely not all-inclusive. The first five of these skills are critical in intimate communication, so spend most of your time on them.

1. Changing Self
2. Awareness and Respect
3. Making Trade Offs
4. Win/Win
5. Explore the Possibilities
6. Grudges
7. Recording

8. Weekly Meetings
9. Add-ons
10. Obtaining Closure

## 1. **Changing Self:**

We must always remember that the only person we can change is ourselves. As we stated earlier, we usually set out to win the argument by changing the other person's opinion. Since we want to win with the minimum amount of personal sacrifice, we usually use all the manipulative techniques we can come up with to change our intended.

Dr. Tessa Albert-Warschaw saw the futility of this approach and the need to take personal responsibility for solving the problem. She states, "A negotiator must realize that his or her behavior won't cause the other person to change miraculously. The real power in negotiation is that you change, and as you do, others around you will have to change because you're different, but you are the one who has to do it." (Personal Discussion) In a relationship, when I change (positively or negatively), this causes you to have no choice but to also change. I cannot predict the direction of your change, (positive or negative) but it is impossible for you to stay the same.

We, like any nation, must decide what we are willing to sacrifice in order to have a positive resolution of the conflict. A willingness to sacrifice is an important part of every successful endeavor. We can see this concept when we consider our ancestors who gave their earthly possessions and sometimes even their life to make a better life for their children. It is essential that we decide what our sacrifice will be and create a peaceful atmosphere that makes our spouse feel like a winner.

Remember, peace is not the absence of conflict, but the resolution of conflict to the satisfaction of both partners.

### **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 With 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you dwell on what your intended needs to change to solve the problem?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often do you accept the responsibility for the problem?

## 2. **Awareness and Respect:**

The more aware you are of your intended's values, desires, expectations, personality and what brings them happiness, the more acceptable your sacrifice will be. If my intended doesn't want or appreciate, my sacrifice, it will be of little value. It is critical that my intended feels respected, understood and supported. It is important to respect my intended's right to think and feel differently than I do. When this occurs, we will be more capable of resolving issues leading to a mutual understanding and providing more satisfaction. We should always respect our differences and negotiate in good faith. When I think I understand my intended, I should always assume that I may be wrong and check out my interpretation with them verbally.

**Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How well does your intended think you know their desire, wants and tastes?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Have you given your intended a gift or made a sacrifice that they have not enjoyed?

**3. Making Trade Offs:**

A good negotiator understands the quid pro quo (something for something) concept [which means trade-offs]. In every worthwhile endeavor, there are prices to be paid and few bargains gained. The intelligent person learns what it will cost to achieve his or her goal and pays the price with a willing heart. Success in this kind of negotiation obviously demands that a person clarify and prioritize their values and goals and then sacrifice lower priority goals to achieve the more important ones. What do you really want and what are you willing to pay to achieve it? It is important in a good marriage, that we know each other well enough to know what trade-offs will be most productive.

**Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How well have you prioritized your values and goals?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How well have you assessed the effort and price of each goal?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How much do you and your intended agree on your values and goals?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Have you and your intended agreed on the price each of you is willing to pay?

**4. Win-Win:**

The win-win principle states that both of us in a discussion, should feel like a winner at least some of the time. The problem is most people want to win all the time. If I win all the time, I may win every battle and still lose the war (not improve the relationship). If you win every argument, the relationship will begin to deteriorate, and your intended will emotionally move away or withdraw from you. This is true, because, for every winner there must be a loser, and no one likes being a loser all the time.

Like many salespeople, I often treat each negotiation as though it will be the only one, we will ever have, so winning this time is all that counts. However, in most meaningful relationships, we will have to negotiate almost continuously, so it is important that we both feel like we are winning most of the time. It is critical that you be able to show the other person how our solution will benefit your intended as well as it will you. Both of you need to feel that the solution is worth-while. An important ingredient in win-win is the joy of my intended is as rewarding to me as my own winning. *Because this is true, I need to be willing to lose even deliberately.*

**Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How much do you enjoy your intended winning?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How hard do you try to win every disagreement?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How often do you deliberately give in to maintain your relationship?

## 5. **Explore the Possibilities:**

Before you decide on a solution during the *Understanding Phase*, together, you should explore some of the other possible solutions. It helps to think outside the box. Thinking outside of the box cools down emotions and slows down anger. For example, Cindy told her friend that “she didn’t know what to do with her couch-potato husband”. Her friend Lisa replied, “I know, you could kill him.” Cindy said, “No, I couldn’t do that.” Lisa said, “Divorce him!” Cindy said, “I couldn’t do that either.” Lisa suggested, “Quit feeding him.” Cindy said, “I don’t want to do that either.” etc., etc. and the friend ended up saying “simply love him.” Lisa was assuming that the level of frustration that Cindy was feeling as having been escalated to the level of Divorce or feeling as if she should kill him. All Cindy was intending to do with Lisa, was to express her frustration at his being a couch-potato.

We are often so anxious to find a solution that we miss some other rewarding possibilities. When you are feeling anxious and/or frustrated, identify as many solutions as you can; talk about the pros and cons of each. You may want to redefine the problem by stating it in a different way or looking at it from a different angle. Don’t try to resolve the issue until both of you have exhausted all your alternatives.

### **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you look for a quick solution?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How often do you and your intended get in an argument because you haven’t had time to think outside the box?

## 6. **Grudges.**

Holding grudges is of little constructive value. Holding grudges means that you are living in the past or you are not able to forgive. So, don’t keep bringing up past injuries when trying to resolve today’s problem unless today’s problem is the same as the old one. If the same issues are constantly repeated, then clearly your communication system is not working well. If the same issues are brought up more than four or five times, then neither of you seems to be willing to change. Your only interest appears to be trying to convert each other. At that point, you should both sit down and reassess your values and goals or agree to disagree.

### **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do bring up issues that happened more than six months ago?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How easy is it for you to forgive?

## 7. **Recording:**

It is very helpful to keep a record of what is happening, of what works and what doesn't work in your communication. Be specific about your own reactions and those of the other person. A journal will help both of you be more successful the next time you negotiate. When you have several issues to cover, take them one at a time and keep a record of the one you need to talk about later. You may also need to keep a record of things that happen that our intended **can't remember**.

### **Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How well do you keep a journal of your conflicts?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Have you, or your intended, ever recorded your feelings that arise during your discussions?

## 8. **Weekly Meeting**

It is important that you set a time when each person will give a detailed report on their part of the project. You should report what happened, how your experience made you feel, and what you might want to change.

May I suggest what I call a "summit meeting" that you and your intended hold once a week. You need to schedule this meeting at a specific time and place. In your summit meeting, you should go over your calendar, your budget, and your relationship. It is helpful if you save your complaints about each other for the summit meeting, instead of addressing them daily or when you are highly emotional. You should agree not to put each other down or bring up negative things, other than in these meetings, when time is set aside to talk. However, some people, because of the nature of their schedules, need to check in daily. Make sure you also go over your long-term and short-term family, economic and marital goals during your summit meetings. There needs to be as many positive and up lifting statements as negative ones. What went well during the week, what made you feel good or a sacrifice you noticed.

## 9. **Be careful of "add-ons"**

Adding-on (as mentioned before) means that after we make a deal and we are agreed on a plan, you change your part of the plan and what you need to do, without letting me know, or getting an agreement from me. We need to make sure we both understand and agree on the new plan. We may even need to renegotiate the issue. When you create an expectation in my mind, it becomes my truth and I anticipate that it will happen. Sometimes things happen, like an emergency, that we can't control that forces a change of plan. If this happens, you should let me know as soon as possible. When you don't let me know, I'm not sure I can trust you, and that diminishes my faith in you. For example, you promise me that you will pay the cell phone bill and, two weeks later, they turn off my phone. Although you may feel you have a good reason for not paying the bill or you apologize and say, "I'm sorry", my trust in you is still diminished.

## 10. **Obtaining Closure -Complete the Negotiation.**

Most people think that when they have stopped talking, they have received closure (agreement? or consensus?), and that they have completed the negotiation. However, if it isn't clear what each

person will do, or how long it will take you to complete each task - how will you know the project is complete? You have not completed the negotiation process if there are still questions to be answered.

A general agreement does not automatically complete the negotiation process. Often if I say, "I understand", you assume that there is complete agreement; however, there may not be an agreement, and understanding may not have occurred yet. Before you leave a discussion, there should be closure. This means there is an agreement on what process we are going to use, the timetable we will follow, and what we expect the outcome will be. We may also want to decide how much it will cost, and how we will measure success. It also means you have completed the understanding phase of communication.

**Questions:**

Rate yourself on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning never and 10 meaning always.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you take time to create closure, and then find the same discussion arises again, because it was not fully resolved?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Have you taken time to identify issues and track them to complete resolution to where both of you is satisfied with the outcome?

## **Designing a Communication Strategy.**

It is important to design a strategy as a couple on how you will resolve issues. When the rules of negotiation are clear and understood by both of us, there will be more harmony in our marriage. The following strategies might help you communicate better.

**A. Priority of Our Relationship.**

As we indicated before, maintaining our relationship and our love for each other is far more important than whatever the issue is that we are discussing. I need to be willing to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to protect and strengthen our family

**B. Look to Yourself:**

Look for causes and solutions of the conflict within yourself rather than trying to change your (intended?)

You might also look at your family of origin for the antecedents to the problem, and their problem-solving techniques.

**C. Goals:**

Describe the problem or conflict in terms of your predetermined, agreed upon goals. Agreed upon goals eliminate a great deal of conflict. Prior planning helps you keep your cool.

**D. Resources:**

Be willing to get help by mobilizing all available resources including professional people, community resources, and church resources. Don't try to do it all yourself; learn to delegate.

**E. Use the 24-Hour Rule:**

If there is a lot of anger or emotion surrounding the problem, agree to take a break. You must, however, agree to return to the problem within twenty-four or forty-eight hours to continue the discussion.

**F. Multiple Linked:**

Remember that all issues are linked in several different ways. Our attitudes and feelings about other issues affect our response to the issue at hand. The connection between all the different parts of our core is extremely difficult to assess, and yet, they all work together to respond to the current issue.

# **PRACTICE COMMUNICATION QUESTIONS AND SCENARIOS**

The following questions are designed to help you and your intended practice these communication skills. There is no particular order that you should follow. Choose questions that seem interesting to you and your intended. The statements in the second part of this exercise may require more skill than the questions in the first part.

## **Questions:**

- What material possession would you most like to have?
- What is most likely to make you cry?
- What is your greatest strength?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- What do you think heaven is like?
- What things are you most afraid of?
- What is your greatest accomplishment?
- What is something you wish you could do over?
- What are the greatest desires of your heart?
- What would you like to have written on your tombstone?
- How do you feel about your appearance?
- What is your fondest memory?
- What is your biggest disappointment?
- What is your best talent?
- What trait in others bugs you the most?
- How important is religion to you?
- How well do you think you live your religion?
- How do other people feel about you generally?
- What do other people would say is your greatest strength?
- What makes you the most depressed?
- What is your greatest personality weakness?
- How much do you like the work you do?
- What was the most memorable vacation you have been on?
- What habit would you like most to overcome?
- What is your greatest fear?
- How much do your fears govern your life?
- How much do you feel you are the boss in your relationship?
- Where would you like to be in five years?
- How well do you take care of your health?
- How well do you control your temper?
- How well do you get along with others?
- What issues are you afraid to, or reluctant to, share with your intended?
- What would you like most to do in your old age?
- What job do you wish you could have had?

- Who is your favorite person in history other than Jesus?
- Where would be your ideal place to live?
- Would you like to stay in one place or move around?
- How much do you like to travel and where would you like to go?
- What are your most rewarding hobbies?
- What are your favorite foods?
- Who do you like to spend your leisure time with? With whom do you like to spend your leisure time?
- What subjects do you or did you like best in school?
- What subjects do you or did you do best in at school?
- What would you like to change about your intended?
- What is your favorite kind of music?
- What is your favorite kind of movie?
- What animal best describes you?
- What tree best describes you?
- What would you do if you won the \$10,000,000 Sweepstakes?
- Repeated question What is your favorite music, color, meal, movie, movie star, vacation, car, city, sport, material possession? What is your least favorite of each of these?
- What makes you the most happy or unhappy?
- What job would you really like to have?
- Describe what you think is the “good life”.
- What are your best qualities?
- What do you fear most? Repeated question?
- What are your intended’s best qualities?
- Describe what trustworthy means to you.
- When it comes to money, what do you fight about?
- What part of your feelings about religion causes stress in your relationship?
- What part about how your intended spends time bugs you?
- How much does your intended worry about what others think?
- What was your most humiliating experience?
- What is the hardest thing for you to share with your intended?

### Scenarios to discuss:

For each of the scenarios below, each of you play a marriage role and try to make your feelings clear and understood without trying to convert your intended

She wants to go to the symphony; he wants to go to a movie.

When they are at a party, she feels he neglects her; he says he is just enjoying his friend

She wants to go to her parent's home for Thanksgiving; he wants to be with his parents.

- He has a chance for a job in another state; she wants to stay near her family.
- He wants to put his arm around her in public; she doesn't think it is appropriate.
- He likes rated violent action movies; she likes romantic ones.
- Since she works full time, she thinks he should do half of the housework; he feels that the house should be her responsibility.
- She wants him to wear his wedding ring; he doesn't want to.
- He feels she spends all her time with the children and neglects his needs; she feels he is immature and is asking too much.
- He wants to move to the country; she wants to live in the city.
- She complains that all he does when he gets home is watch TV; he feels he has a right to relax.
- He loves to hunt and fish; she can't stand to get dirty.
- He wants to bring his friends home without telling her in advance; she thinks it is rude and inconsiderate.
- He feels meals should be prepared on time; she thinks she should fix meals when she has time.
- She thinks Sundays should be for church and quiet time; he thinks Sunday is a time to play or go water skiing.
- He thinks she should work and help earn the money; she thinks it is more important that she stay home with the kids.
- She wants to go to Disneyland on vacation; he wants to spend this vacation time with his Boy Scouts in the mountains.
- He comes home and gets on the computer while she helps the kids with their homework and gets them ready for bed. She feels unloved and neglected.
- He wants to have sex every night; she thinks once a month is more than enough.
- He thinks that she is so involved in church, PTA, and community programs that she has little time for him.

# COMPATIBLE PERSONALITIES

The dictionary defines personality as the sum total of the physical, mental, emotional, and social characteristics of an individual. By this definition this whole book is an expression of our personality. However, we feel that some traits deserve special attention.

Critical to any relationship is our personality and our assumption about the personality traits of myself and the personality traits I think my spouse should possess.

## ARE YOU A POSITIVE PERSON?

By far the one of the most important personality traits in marriage is to be positive. When everything seems to go wrong and you are discouraged consider how positive Joseph Smith was in the Liberty Jail or the people in Paradise, California. In the worst of times you should still be optimistic and upbeat. No matter how difficult your relationship becomes, you are always your spouse's best cheerleader. You always look for the good in them. We always want God to focus on the good in us no matter how much we sin. Shouldn't we treat our spouse the same way, if we want to become like Heavenly Father? Shouldn't we begin practicing in courtship and marriage?

Rate yourself and your intended on each of the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10. 10 meaning you are almost perfect in this trait and 0 that you have almost none of this trait. In the first column rate yourself and in the second column rate your intended.

- |     |     |  |
|-----|-----|--|
| ___ | ___ | 1. Do you expect that each day will have its ups and downs, but you enjoy the journey? |
| ___ | ___ | 2. Do you get along well with others?  |
| ___ | ___ | 3. Do other people enjoy your company?   |
| ___ | ___ | 4. When you are relaxed and making small talk is your talk positive?                   |
| ___ | ___ | 5. Do you focus on what is right rather than what is wrong?                            |
| ___ | ___ | 6. Do other people enjoy your company?   |
| ___ | ___ | 7. Do you picture yourself as a winner?  |
| ___ | ___ | 8. Are you open to new ideas?  |
| ___ | ___ | 9. Do you ignore petty annoyances?   |
| ___ | ___ | 10. Are you enthusiastic about life?   |
| ___ | ___ | 11. Do you say at least five positive things for every one negative thing you say?     |
| ___ | ___ | 12. Do you get along well with others?   |
| ___ | ___ | 13. Are you motivated rather than defeated by your failure?                            |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Are you eager to start new projects?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Are you anxious to learn new truths?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Do you dwell on the solution rather than the problem?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. When you judge someone incorrectly are you quick to change your mind?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. When you walk into a room, do you feel others are saying good things about you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Do you usually look at the good in others?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Quoting from Jesus, do others see you as a person of "GOOD CHEER"?

Make a list of those items you scored 7 or more for you and your intended, you should feel good about them. Make another list of those items you and your intended that you scored 3 or less (we hope there is nothing on this list), you need to work on them. Compare your lists with of those of your intended and discuss your differences. Choose a couple you would like to work on. A BYU study indicated for good mental health you should give 9 positive responses for every 1 negative message.

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

President Heber J. Grant often quoted the following, "...that which a man persists in doing, he becomes good at not that the nature of the task changes but the ability to do it increases."

Practice is absolutely essential for success in every endeavor.

One of the violinists that was a finalist in the Salute to Youth Program said he practiced seven hours a day

Holly Cook, who was a world class figure skater from Bountiful, said that she had given up her normal teenage years to skate.

Think of the physical exercise you get over your life time in all kinds of ways.

We also spend a great deal of time in mental exercise. If we attend school from Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, we will have spent 13,500 hours in school and that doesn't include time spent doing homework, nor time in college. From this time spent in formal education, we learn how difficult mental growth is without years of exercise.

We all know how important physical and mental exercises are for a quality life. Our Father in Heaven reminds us, even commands us, to remember that the kind of exercise that is most important for eternal life and happiness is **spiritual exercise**. Each of us must take responsibility for our personal spiritual exercise. We can't just depend on the church to do the exercising for us. Nor can we depend on seminary or a mission to get us into the Celestial Kingdom. There is a need for daily spiritual exercise for the rest of our lives.

Years ago, the Army had a series of 12 exercises that the soldiers had to do, 12 times each day. Following the Army's example, may I suggest twelve spiritual exercises we might do each day to strengthen ourselves spiritually and prepare for eternal life?

1. Read and study the Scriptures for at least 15 minutes or read one talk from General Conference
2. Be of good cheer; say something nice to someone when you don't feel like it -- be positive  
Pray at least twice a day
4. Pick out one sin (something you do that you shouldn't do or something you should do that you are not now doing) and work on it for at least 30 days. Then pick another sin to work on.
5. Be forgiving -- Give up a grudge you hold against someone.
6. Work on not judging others
7. Treat others as well as you would treat your own children
8. Let virtue garnish your thoughts unceasingly (think about spiritual things,)
9. Share your testimony with someone, your family, your friends. You might try bearing your testimony during your prayers.
10. Serve someone or some program in secret
11. Be a peacemaker in your home, (control your temper)
12. Look for a chance to minister to someone, even by just saying "hi"

# PEOPLE WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL IN LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

While all the personality traits on this chart are important in creating a successful marriage, some are more important than others. To accommodate this difference, we have developed this chart which will give each trait a numerical score according to which traits we think are most important for lasting relationships. In the left column of the chart, we have given each set of personality traits a power rating of 5 to 3 indicating how important that trait is to successful marriages. In the middle section, rate yourself and your intended on a scale of 5 to 1 on each personality trait. Put a circle around the number that best describes the female in your relationship and a square around the number that best describes the male in your relationship. Multiply each number in the middle section by the power rating in the left column and put that score in the right column. You will have two scores in the right column. The higher your score, the more you possess that personality trait. The closer your scores are the more compatible you are on that trait

Power Rating				Score
5	Accurate self-appraisal, I see myself as most other people see me.	5 4 3 2 1	Most people don't understand or see me as I see myself.	
5	When I make a commitment, I will do everything in my power, and make the sacrifices to bring it to pass.	5 4 3 2 1	If I make a commitment and it is difficult to keep or inconvenient, I probably won't keep it.	
5	I enjoy being responsible for the welfare and happiness of others.	5 4 3 2 1	My needs come first, and I expect others to take care of my needs.	
5	I have a great sense of self-worth. I respect and like who I am	5 4 3 2 1	I don't like myself; I feel inferior. I don't have a positive self-image. I worry about what others think about me.	
5	I have control of my emotions, my appetites and passions	5 4 3 2 1	My emotions, appetites, and passions control my behavior.	
5	I have good communication skills. I easily share my thoughts and feelings.	5 4 3 2 1	I have difficulty sharing my thoughts and feelings. I am rarely understood clearly.	
5	I am trustworthy, dependable, consistent, and honest.	5 4 3 2 1	I am not dependable or consistent. I lie a lot; I say "yes" when I really mean "no".	
5	I am positive and optimistic. I am my friends' cheerleader.	5 4 3 2 1	I am negative and pessimistic. I am critical of my friends.	

4	I am willing to sacrifice for the well-being of others. I consider others' points of view; I enjoy their winning.	5 4 3 2 1	I have to be right; I have to win. I am domineering and dictatorial.	
4	I am tolerant of others' differences. I treat others as equals.	5 4 3 2 1	I am intolerant of those who are different than I am. I am impatient with those who don't think like I do.	
4	I am compassionate and considerate. I care about others' feelings.	5 4 3 2 1	I am self-centered, insensitive & inconsiderate of others' feelings.	
4	I am warm and affectionate	5 4 3 2 1	I am cold, distant, unfeeling	
4	I am adaptable, able to cope	5 4 3 2 1	I am rigid, inflexible, and narrow-minded.	
4	I don't hold grudges, I am forgiving	5 4 3 2 1	I hold grudges, bring up the past, try to get even.	
4	I am religiously very active,	5 4 3 2 1	I am not religious, or I fake being religious.	
3	I can postpone gratification	5 4 3 2 1	I seek immediate gratification.	
3	I am upbeat and of good cheer; I am generally happy, I have a good sense of humor. I am not easily offended.	5 4 3 2 1	I am often depressed and/or moody. I am generally sad; I do not enjoy humor. I am easily offended.	
3	I am slow to anger and never lose control or become violent.	5 4 3 2 1	I get angry quickly and can be violent both verbally and physically.	
3	I am a people person, cooperative, a good team player	5 4 3 2 1	I am a recluse, I am shy, I am passive and quiet.	
3	I have a lot of energy. I have a good work ethic, I enjoy work	5 4 3 2 1	I procrastinate. I am lazy. I avoid work.	
3	I have little concern about what other people think or say	5 4 3 2 1	I seek the approval of others. I worry about what others think of me. I try to impress others.	
3	I like things to be in order, I am methodical and pay attention to detail.	5 4 3 2 1	I am messy, sporadic and a sporadic worker.	

Any trait you score above 12 on the 3 traits in the left column or 16 on the 4 traits or 20 on the 5 traits you should be proud of yourself, if both of you agree. If you scored below 6 on any of the 3 traits, 8 on the 4 traits or 10 on the 5 traits you need to make some serious adjustments in your life and relationship. Make a list, of items that you

scored 4 or 5 for both you and your intended. If there are more than 10 items on this list things look pretty good. Make another list for each of you that you marked 1 or 2. Which gives you some serious concern

## **Traits of People Who are Interpersonally Successful**

Rate yourself on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning you have almost none of this trait and 10 meaning you have a great deal of this trait.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I have an accurate self-appraisal; I see myself as others see me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I can relax and can handle myself well in social situations
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I can make others feel at ease
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I have an even disposition
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I can act appropriately in each situation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I rarely lose control over my emotions and actions
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I like myself enough that I am not afraid to share myself with others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I don't try to hide behind facades
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I don't broadcast my personal problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I am outgoing and enjoy social activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I am not shy or afraid to share with others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I make the most of my physical appearance and dress appropriately
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I am interested in the well-being of others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I find happiness in meeting the needs of others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I am a good listener
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I enjoy being involved in worthwhile service or church projects
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I am warm and affectionate; I enjoy being close to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I do not take myself too seriously, I have a good sense of humor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I am enthusiastic and optimistic about life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I look for and express the positive in others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I enjoy serving in secret
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I am loyal to my friends and find time for them
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I keep confidences
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. I am honest in my dealings with others

- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I work and play well with others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I don't always have to win or be right
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. I enjoy getting to know others and making new friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. The feelings of others are as important to me as my own
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I respect the right of others to feel and act differently than I think they should
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I am aware when another person's feelings are hurt
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. I enjoy seeing others win
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. I do everything I can to avoid hurting others' feelings
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I don't hold grudges
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I am not willing to win by cheating or at the expense of others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. I am patient with the weaknesses of others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. I am upbeat, happy and positive
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. I enjoy people of all ages, old and young
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. I get along well with my parents
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. I enjoy expressing my love to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. I easily forgive someone who has seriously offended me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I dwell on the good points of others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I never pass on gossip
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. I find it easy to confide in others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. I have a few, very close friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. Other people seem to enjoy my company
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. I enjoy a balance between being alone and being with others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. I like to hold positions of status
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. It is easy to be myself around others
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. I get along well with my brothers and sisters
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. I am cooperative in a subordinate role
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. I am humble and compassionate in a superior role
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. I have a great deal of self-confidence
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. I enjoy both small and large groups
- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. I expect to be treated with respect
- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. Other people enjoy working with me.



## Traits of People Who have Little Success in interpersonal Relationships

Rate yourself on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 meaning you have almost none of this trait and 10 meaning you have a great deal of this trait.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I seek immediate gratification
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I am wishy-washy and don't stick by my convictions
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I tend to blame others for my problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I seem to lack self-control
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I fall in love easily and without enough information (at first sight)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I am not well organized and procrastinate a lot
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I am not honest with myself; do not see myself clearly
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I let past failures and sins defeat me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I am fearful of failure or being rejected
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I use old and inappropriate behavior in new situations
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I always have to win and put myself first
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I get angry if people don't agree with me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I always try to get my own way
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I run away from my feelings
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I try to hide my weakness
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I lose my temper easily
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I dwell on other's weaknesses
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I prefer being by myself
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I am a very competitive person
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I worry a great deal what others think of me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I like to be the center of attention
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I often compensate by daydreaming
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I have a lot of acquaintances but few friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. I live a secret life; don't share my feelings
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I have a lot of bad hygiene habits
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I am negative and pessimistic about most things
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. I spend a lot of time watching TV, on a Computer, cell phone etc.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. I don't like myself very much
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I rarely finish projects
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I rarely do my best at anything
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. I am usually late to most activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. I use sex to make people like me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I am radical in religion and politics
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I always have to be right
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. Personal success is the most important thing to me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. I enjoy off colored jokes
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. I am loud and crude
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. People don't seem to understand me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. I hold grudges
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. I am tactless
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I have done or do poorly in school
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I am overly neat and orderly
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. I am shy and submissive
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. I use alcohol, and or drugs
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I am very poor with money
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. I can't keep a job
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. I don't like people who are in authority over me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. I am sloppy or unorthodox in my appearance
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. I am possessive and jealous
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. I get my feelings hurt easily
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. I procrastinate a lot
- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. I worry a great deal about my appearance
- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. I am argumentative and contrary most of the time

Make a list of all your successful traits that you marked 7 or more and you have a list of traits you can be proud of. Make another list of your unsuccessful traits that you marked 7 or more and you have a list of traits you need to work on. Have your intended make a list of how they see you on both scales.

## **MANIPULATIVE BEHAVIORS**

Since we all want to get our own way, from childhood we develop a whole series of manipulative behaviors that we use to control the people in our world. Some are extremely destructive, and others can enhance and build the relationship. Which of the following do you and your spouse use to get your own way or resolve conflicts?

Put a circle around the number that best describes the female in your relationship, and a square around the number that best describes the male in your relationship on the following scale:

1 Almost Never -- 2 Seldom -- 3 Occasionally -- 4 Usually -- 5 Almost Always.

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Managing information, lying, withholding, distorting  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Anger, yelling, name-calling, losing temper   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Deprivation, withholding affection, sex, money  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Denying requests, not being of service, etc.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Putting others down, making others feel guilty, making others feel selfish, using sarcasm, rejecting others | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Intellectualizing, rationalizing  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Arguing, nagging, complaining, griping  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Emotionally withdrawing, suppressing feelings, pouting, clamming up sulking, not caring                     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Blaming, criticizing  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. Crying, acting hurt, offended, "Poor Me"   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Bribing, "You can have it if you," "You owe it to me."   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. Getting support from others, ganging up, calling on authority  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. Leaving, running to mother, withdrawing physically   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14. Ultimatums, commands, there's the door   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. Silence  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 16. Violence   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 17. Taking time to cool off  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 18. Cooperating, showing concern, caring   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 19. Willing to be wrong, apologizing even when you're wrong  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 20. Sharing, tradeoffs, compromise   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 21. Hugs, kisses, affection, etc.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 22. Sensitive awareness, understanding the other person's position   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 23. Positive verbal responses  | 5 4 3 2 1 |

### USING THE INVENTORY

1. Together make a list of those negative behaviors (1 to 16) that you marked 4 or 5 both for yourself and your intended.
2. Next, make a list of those negative behaviors (1 to 16) that your intended marked 4 or 5, both for their self and for you.
3. Now compare the lists you made in questions 1 and 2 above, and create another list of those behaviors that you and your intended agree should be a 4 or 5. You may also want to create a list of your disagreements.
4. Make another list of the positive behaviors (17 to 24) that you marked 4 or 5 both for yourself and your intended.
5. Then, make another list of the positive behaviors (17 to 24) that your intended marked 4 or 5, both for their self and for you.
6. Now compare the lists you made in questions 4 and 5 above, and create a list of those behaviors that you and your intended agree should be a 4 or 5. You may also want to create a list of your disagreements.

Again, each of you should take 10 minutes to discuss how you arrived at your conclusions, (remember again not to interrupt, correct, blame, or put-down). It will be useful if you are able to discuss why each of you perceive your differences without defending yourself or attacking your spouse.





# LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle means how we approach life, what we enjoy doing, and how we spend our time, especially our leisure time. Every society, every religion, every region, every clan, every family, and every person will live a lifestyle that is unique to them alone. In Japan, for example, being a person of honor is highly important. In China, the extended family plays a major role in the lives of all of its members. In the South, eating catfish and grits is a custom. In the Mormon culture, one is not supposed to smoke or drink. In the Cannon family, everyone is expected to be at grandmother's for dinner on every holiday and no excuses are acceptable. Mike loves to hunt, and he expects to take at least a week of his vacation to go hunting no matter what his wife might think. Understanding these differences and working toward a common lifestyle is an important ingredient in all great marriages. Engaged couples probably spend more time and interaction understanding each other's lifestyle than any other part of this book.

No one will have a perfect match, but the closer we match in lifestyle, the less contention we will have. We all know of the couple who have a common lifestyle that they almost seem to act as one and really appear to enjoy their life together. Their individual lifestyles are in harmony with each other. They spend most of their time and energy pursuing activities they both enjoy; they love to square dance, go bowling, work in the yard, travel, go out to dinner and a movie, or even go caving every Saturday. The key is they want to do it together. However, we also know of the couple whose lifestyle is not in harmony; he wants to go fishing, and she wants to go shopping. He wants to watch sports, and she wants him to help around the house. She wants to spend a lot of time together, and he wants to be alone with his computer. She is a workaholic, and he is a couch potato. He likes country music and she likes the symphony. While it is rare that two people will completely have the same lifestyle; the more flexible and willing one is to accept their spouse's lifestyle, the less conflict there will be. The more ridged our lifestyle is. the less rewarding marriage will be. Often, when two people live separate lives in many other parts of their lives, differences in lifestyle won't make much difference. A great deal of conflict or lack thereof will depend on how much together or alone time we agree on.

## Time Inventory

There are 168 hours in a week -- How we spend this time is a major source of bonding or friction in most marriages.

A. In a typical week, with whom do you and your intended spend most of your time?

1. In column 1, write the number of hours you spend in a typical week with each of the people or groups listed.
2. In column 2 write the number of hours you think your intended spends in a typical week with each of the people or groups listed
3. In column 3 check the ones that you think will, cause friction in your relationship.

**A. Relationships and Time:**

1	2	3	
_____	_____	_____	1. Alone
_____	_____	_____	2. With your Intended
_____	_____	_____	3. With your family
_____	_____	_____	4. With co-workers or team members
_____	_____	_____	5. With friends
_____	_____	_____	6. With church members
_____	_____	_____	7. In small groups
_____	_____	_____	8. In large groups

**A. How You Spend Your Time:**

In a typical week, what do you and your intended spend doing, and what activities consume your time?

<p>1. In column 1, pick out 5 activities that take up a lot of your time over which you have no control.                  2. In column 2, using a scale of 0 to 10, pick the 10 activities that you enjoy most and put them in order of their importance to you, 1 being the most important.                  3. In column 3, pick out the 10 activities you think your intended enjoys most and put them in order of their importance to him/her, 1 being the most important.                  4. In column 4, pick out 10 activities that you participate in and your intended doesn't participate in or that they don't like you to participate in.                  5. In column 5, rate how much stress these activities creates in your relationship on a scale of 0 to 10, 0 meaning not at all and 10 meaning a great deal.</p>		Pick 5 Activities that take a lot of your time.	Pick the 10 activities that you enjoy most	Pick the 10 Activities you think your intended enjoys the most	Pick 10 Activities you participate in alone and your intended does not like	Rate how much stress these activities cause in your relationship
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Sleeping					
2	Working for Money					
3	Homework					
4	Exercise					
5	Physical Affection					
7	Family Activities					
8	Car Care					
9	Church Service					
10	Community Service					
11	Politics					
12	Personal Hygiene					
13	Hobbies					
14	Educational Activities					
15	Reading (all kinds)					
16	Writing					
17	Computers/ Social Media					
18	Watching TV, Video Tapes, etc.					
19	On the Phone or Cell Phone					
20	Visiting Others (not family)					
21	Helping Others (not family)					
22	Shopping					
23	Sports Participation					
24	Hunting, Fishing, Camping, Hiking, etc.					
25	Sports, Spectator					
26	Dining Out					
27	Movies					

28	Fine Arts					
29	Plays					
30	Dancing					
31	Travel					
32	Family History					
33	Listening to Music					
34	Meditation					
35	Alcohol, Drugs					
36	Time with Each Other					
37	Other-Make your own list					

## AGREEMENT ON TASTES

Although no two people's tastes, in any part of life, will match perfectly, the more we have tastes in common, the more rewarding our relationship will be. (Remember that this still depends on how ridged your tastes are)

<p>In column 1, indicate how important each activity is to you on a scale of 0 to 10 with 10 meaning it is very important, and 0 meaning the least important.</p> <p>In column 2, indicate how much you and your intended agree or disagree on each activity on a scale of 0 to 10; 10 meaning complete agreement, and 0 meaning complete disagreement.</p> <p>In column 3, multiply the number in column 1 by the number in column 2 to get a Taste score on each activity.</p>		How important each activity is to you on a scale of 0 to 10	How important each activity is to you on a scale of 0 to 10	Multiply the number in column 1 by the number in column 2 to get a Taste score
		1	2	3
1	Music			
2	Movies			
3	Television			
4	Other Entertainment			
5	Sports Participation			
6	Sports Spectator			
7	Cars			
8	Friends			
9	Clothes			
10	Grooming			
11	Vacations			
12	Travel			
13	Hobbies			
14	Food			
15	Conversation			
16	Reading Material			
17	Humor			
18	Affection			
19	Where you live			
20	Home Furnishings			
21	Education			
22	Cleanliness			
23	Other Leisure Activities			
24	Hygiene			
25	Cell Phone			

## Who Takes Care of the Following Tasks in your Home?

Who took care of the following tasks in the home you grew up in, and who do you think should do them in your marriage? How you and your intended answer these questions will have a lot to do with the amount of harmony and peace that will exist in your home.

<p>In column 1, write the number of the person (in the list below) who usually preforms the task in your parents' home. In column 2, write the number of the person you want to preform them in your home.</p> <p>(1) Husband, (2) Wife, (3) Both, (4) Someone other than a family member (servant, nanny, neighbor etc.), (5) No one</p>		Write the number of the person (in the list below) who usually preforms the task in your parents'	Write the number of the person you want to preform them in your
		1	2
1	Who sees that family members get up on time?		
2	Who cleans the house?		
3	Who prepares the meals?		
4	Who decides if you will dine out or do 'take home'?		
5	Who helps the children with money?		
6	Who does the dishes?		
7	Who takes out the garbage?		
8	Who takes care of the pets?		
9	Who cleans the garage?		
10	Who takes care of the yard?		
11	Who fixes broken things: toys, furniture appliances etc.?		
12	Who does the laundry?		
13	Who does the ironing?		
14	Who teaches the children values and makes family rules?		
15	Who enforces the rules or punishes the children?		
16	Who helps the children with their lessons, homework?		
17	Who cares for the children when they are sick?		
18	Who keeps the children's schedule or takes them places?		
19	Who regulates the television?		
20	Who regulates the computer?		
21	Who makes sure the family has prayer, family home evening, Scripture study; church attendance?		
22	Who helps the children with their homework, chores		
23	Who sets the curfew and sees that the children are in bed on time?		
24	Who sees that the children go to bed on time?		
25	Who provides the family with money?		
26	Who pays the bills?		
27	Who shops for groceries, other things needed for the home, etc.?		
28	Who shops for clothes and other necessities?		
29	Who repairs and maintains the family cars?		
30	Who decides what the family will do on holidays and vacations?		

# **MEN AND WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT**

Because of inherent differences and the socialization and conditioning processes of our culture, men and women generally tend to look at life and respond to the world around them differently. It is not a question of who is better or that they need to compete with one another. In fact, in most religious traditions both husband and wife are necessary ingredients in a lifetime team and that neither will function as well alone as they will together.

Many wives and husbands become anxious because they believe that both sexes should think and feel exactly the same. When people recognize that their spouse really is different, they usually feel that it is their task to change their spouse. They often seem to have the attitude that their spouse is the only person in the world who has this specific problem, therefore, their spouse must be changed. They don't realize that most of the people of their spouse's gender often possess the same character trait. When one realizes that their spouse is behaving fairly normally, they can work together in using these gender differences to increase the quality of their relationship.

It is important to remember that the differences between men and women described here or in any of the many books written on the subject are differences on the average. Some women are more masculine than some men, and some men are more feminine than some women. So, if these descriptions don't fit your relationship, don't be anxious, because they are only designed to help you make your marriage better, not to make you feel that you are inferior to or different from others. The courts have now decided that same sex marriage is legal even if God does not agree.

There is also a group of people who believe in unisex, that is that men and women ought to be alike.

It also appears that over the last number of decades, women in America have changed their roles much faster than have men. Women appear to be developing the characteristics usually attributed to men, while men seem reluctant to develop the characteristics generally attributed to women.

On the following list of items, you might want to put your initial by those items that you think best describes how you see yourself and put your intended's initial by those that best describe how you perceive your intended's behavior. Once compiled, help each other decide which traits you need to be more tolerant of and which ones you might want to work on changing. You need to remember that no one knows the total truth but it is clear that men and women don't generally see the truth the same.

## Women

1. Focus on relationships, people and their feelings, seek emotional involvement – people. people
2. Seek identify in relationships
3. Seek to preserve intimacy, avoid isolation.
4. Try to maintain relationships, willing to be dependent.
5. Primary source of success is marriage
6. Seek emotional involvement, intimacy, emotionally intense
7. Enjoy nurturing, being dependent, cared for, protected.
8. Seek approval of others, fears rejection.
9. Are concerned about the social aspects of a situation.
10. Tends to be spiritual.
11. Seek gentleness and kindness.
12. Want to reject violence and try to negotiate.
13. Romantic, sentimental
14. Planners, needs future goals and projects.
15. Affective – more in touch with emotions, expresses feelings.
16. Seek emotional pleasure
17. Deepest fear is being rejected.
18. Are more caring – empathetic.
19. Will change the rules to fit the situation and maintain the relationship
20. Emphasize the personal aspects of attraction.
21. Focus on obligation and sacrifice.
22. Enjoy individual relationships or small groups – fitting in and acceptance is more important than leadership.
23. When emotionally uncomfortable, try to get closer by sharing and reaching consensuses
24. Feel best when she can share problems.
25. See divorce as freedom from an oppressive relationship.

## Men

1. Focus on personal success, where he stands in the social order. Uniforms and ranks – object people
2. Seek identity in accomplishments, subduing the world
3. Seek independence and freedom
4. Exploit relationships, fear losing control.
5. Primary source of success is career
6. Fear emotional involvement, being vulnerable, exposed. Try to protect a fragile ego.
7. Naturally, a protector, conqueror, hunter.
8. Seek to be self-sufficient, to be correct.
9. Are concerned about the utilitarian aspects of a situation.
10. Tend to be more physical.
11. See gentleness as a weakness.
12. Want to win, aggressive, competitive, physical confrontation.
13. Practical, Controlling.
14. Look at the immediate problem.
15. Are cognitive – try to intellectualize emotions, hide feelings.
16. Seek physical pleasure.
17. Deepest fear is being inadequate or incompetent.
18. Are exploratory.
19. Need rules to frame situations to know who is right.
20. Emphasize the visual aspect of attraction.
21. Focus on equality and justice.
22. Enjoy large groups, to be the leader, dominate the conversation.
23. When emotionally uncomfortable or feel attacked, will change the subject, reverse blame or leave.
24. Feel best when he can solve the problem by himself. When he can't, he leaves it and goes to TV, sports, reading, etc.
25. See divorce as freedom from responsibility.

26. Access to status through being friends with the right people.
27. Are aware of social interactions, the social setting.
28. Relationships are held together by talking and sharing secrets.
29. Inclined to play down her expertise.
  
30. Will lose so the other person can win.
31. Want her spouse's help without being asked.
32. Expect him to know what to do.

26. Access to status through achievement and skill.
27. Are less sensitive to social situations.
28. Hold relationships together by activities.
29. When an expert, he tends to show it off, offers opinions, suggestions, and information.
30. Need to win so it is alright for others to lose.
31. Want credit for everything he does to help their spouse.
32. Expect spouse to ask for specific help.



**ASPECTS OF  
A  
RELATIONSHIP**



# ASPECTS OF MARRIAGE

As we mentioned above the Essential Elements of a relationship are usually expressed in one or more of these Aspects of a relationship, and probably in all of them to some degree.

1. Love
2. Physical Intimacy
3. Money
4. In-laws
5. Friends
6. Children
7. Religion
8. Power (who is the boss)?

You and your intended need to discover what each of you thinks and feels about each of these areas. Remember that no couple will have total agreement and that marriage is a lifetime experience that is always growing and changing. So, success in marriage really depends on how willing each of you is to be flexible, sacrifice and change. Don't let love be the only factor.

# UNDERSTANDING LOVE

## Defining Love

There are probably as many uses of the word love as almost any word in the English language. I suppose if we read a hundred books on love, we would end up with a hundred definitions of what love means. We use it in so many different situations. What is the difference between saying "I love my wife, my children, ice cream, sports cars, football, my Boy Scout troop, or my dog"? The difference is that Love may be one of the most difficult words in the English language to define. It may not be so much in the definition of the word love, as in the nature of our relationship with the person, place, or thing that is the object of our love.

If I say, "I love bananas," and if the banana could answer back it would say, "What do you mean you love me, all you want to do is peel me, eat the best, and throw the rest away, and you call that love?" "When I say," I love ice cream," what I might mean is that I want the ice cream to cease to exist as ice cream and begin to exist as a part of me, which is a form of exploitation. When I say, "I love football," I might mean I get a thrill out of playing or watching football, which is a form of self-gratification. When I say, "I love my Boy Scout troop," I might mean that they build my ego, or that I find satisfaction in their service. Love for my dog might mean I enjoy his loyalty, or the fact that he can't talk back. And love in tennis means zero. The love I have for my wife might involve exploitation, possession, self-gratification, ego fulfillment, service, loyalty, and many other things, but hopefully not zero.

Studies indicate that love is most often given in America, as the major reason people give for selecting the person they marry. With a 40 or higher percent divorce rate, and many of the rest of the marriages in the United States not doing all that well, it would appear, that using love as the most important criteria for mate selection hasn't been very successful. The reason this low success rate occurs, is because, we have been taught to believe that everyone defines and experiences the emotion of love in the same way. That is a false assumption. Usually, no two people and, surely men and women, don't define love in the same way, and certainly people from different backgrounds don't have the same definition of love. Since I believe you experience love the way I do, most marriages start out with a handicap in trying to express love to one another, not knowing that our unexplained difference start us out working at cross purposes. These individual definitions create a whole series of expectations about how love should be expressed that most partners have never discussed. If husbands and wives are not in agreement on these expectations of love, they can never have a really successful marriage. The clearest example of our differences can be seen between my expectations on how a loving person should act and how God treats His children,

## In our Culture There Are Two Conflicting Definitions of Love

In the Bible, the words *Love*, and *Charity* come from the same Greek word which is "agae". Agape defines both words as a character trait as is shown in I Corinthians 13 where both charity and Love are used depending on the translation. However, today in English, both words have an entirely different meaning. In the Apple Dictionary today, *Charity* is defined as "*Generous actions or donations to the poor, ill, or helpless. Something given to a person or persons in need.*" Apple's definition of *Love* is "*a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person. Sexual passion or desire*". Notice that neither of Today's definitions is the same as they were used in the Bible. The Bible's definition of love and charity as a character trait is still used by many people, especially religious people. This definition of love as a character trait and not as an emotion is clear when

we see people like President Nelson who expresses his love for the members of the church. Later we will examine how this conflict creates problems in marriage today. In America, we all have and still do, experience these tender and passionate feelings we have for our spouse, our children, grand-children, and friends, In choosing a mate in America the most popular definition of love is “The Emotional/Physical High”, (we will call this definition (“*Self-Seeking love*”). This definition of love is a strong emotion that has little to do with our character. It is rather seen as a means of emotional and physical self-gratification. This feeling of love is by far the most often used reason for mate selection. As we stated earlier, we are in the grip of such a strong emotion that we can do nothing but follow it. The problem with this concept of love is that our emotion of love is only one part of a successful marriage. Other parts of marriage like money, children, religion, values, expectations, or communication skills are equally as important as our emotional high. Since most people are seeking this selfish emotional high with its physical attraction and sexual gratification, it clouds our ability to examine these other critical components of a meaningful relationship. Without these other components, the rewards of Emotional/Physical Love, are not able to endure the vicissitudes of life over time.

This concept of love is made more powerful because almost 100 percent of the media teaches Americans to believe if we love each other enough, we can overcome all our differences. Look at how many movies and TV shows there are where two people from different cultures, social background, education achievement, or economic strata, often in less than a week and some times in an hour, will overcome all their differences by this love. This idea of the power of love is enhanced because the media also stimulates the pleasure portion of our mind at such a young age that it becomes an addiction that is hard to overcome. This physical/emotional “*Self-Seeking Love*” becomes my only interest. In courtship and marriage, we use our intended or spouse to create this emotional reward in us. This causes us to measure the quality of our relationship based on the strength of the emotion you create in me.

We are often using this definition of love when we say “If ye love me you will”, to manipulate you into making me feel this emotional “*Self-Seeking Love*”. Parents often use this concept to control their children. Physical/emotional love is almost always narrow minded and self-rewarding but never lasting or really enjoyable over the long run.

The physical component of “Physical/Emotional Love” is highly addictive and usually becomes highly personal. The idealism of practices like pornography, masturbation, prostitution, and the number of sexual partners many people have, all are only self-indulgent behaviors that have nothing to do with a lasting relationship but to satisfy this emotional high. For most Americans, this concept has turned sex into a selfish, self-indulgent self-rewarding recreational activity. It is also true that for many married people, sex is only a self-gratifying experience.

Some definitions that express this definition of love:

Webster – 1945 addition – *The feeling experienced when one is strongly attached or deeply devoted to another: ardent affection for one of the opposite sex. The object of affection, sweetheart. Strong liking for someone or something; a passionate affection for another person; zero in tennis*

WordPerfect 10, 2001 *an intense feeling of affection; a deep romantic sexual attachment to someone; a great interest and pleasure in something.*

Synonyms --- *have a great affection for; get pleasure from; a strong positive emotional regard for; a deep feeling of sexual desire.*

The Bible definition is “**THE CHARACTER TRAIT OF LOVE.**” We will call this definition (“**Other**

**Seeking Love**) This is the kind of love Mormon called charity or “the pure love of Christ” (Moroni 7:47) and John, the Apostle of *the New Testament*, meant when he said, “God is love”, or “We love Him because he loved us first.” (1John:4)

It appears from this scripture that love is a part of God’s character and has nothing to do with the personality or behavior of those He loves. Jesus said, “If ye love me keep my commandments”. Notice that He did not say, “if you keep my commandments, I will love you”. His love is what He is and has nothing to do with who or what we are. He also said, “As I have loved you, love one another” His love is expressed in His desire to help His children succeed. He is really teaching us that when we love (our intended?) someone the way He loves us, we will do whatever we can to make our (our intended) happy and help them succeed. We will, bear their burdens, and ease their pain. Our major concern will be to guard and enhance their welfare and happiness. This kind of love keeps reminding me that love is an expression of how I treat you, not about what I receive from you. “Other Seeking Love” seems to be a spiritual and emotional high that is more a quiet peace that is longer lasting and more rewarding than the emotional and physical high of “*Self-Seeking love*”. When I have this kind of love, I am not looking for any personal gratification; rather I find great spiritual reward from the act of serving you. The best examples of this “*Other Seeking Love*” in human beings is demonstrated in people like Mother Teresa, in how we feel about our children and especially, by a mother’s love. The amount of time and energy and sacrifice mothers expend for their children is outstanding. This kind of feeling occurs because of their love for their children. This idea is foreign to and cannot be understood by those who have only experienced “*Self-Seeking Love*”. They usually see people like Mother Teresa as missing out on the most rewarding parts of life.

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Some definitions of love that seem to express this character trait of love include the following:

- **Klemer** “An individual is in love when meeting the emotional needs of his beloved becomes an ultimate emotional necessity for him.” (Richard H. Klemer, *Marriage and Family Relationships*, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers 1970, p.77.)
- **Peck** “I define love thus: The will to extend one’s self for the purpose of nurturing one’s own or another’s spiritual growth.” (M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978, p. 81.)
- **Sullivan** “One is in love when the welfare and happiness of one’s beloved is as important or more important to you than your own.”
- **Spencer W. Kimball**: “It is certain that almost any good man and any good women can have happiness and a successful marriage if both are willing to pay the price. This is a character trait that comes from caring about others.
- **Gordon B. Hinckley**: “divine” love is not like that association of the world, which is misnamed love, but which is mostly physical attraction. The love which the Lord speaks is not only physical attraction, but also faith, confidence, understanding, and partnership. It is devotion and companionship, parenthood, common ideals, and standards. It is cleanliness of life and sacrifice and unselfishness. This kind of love never tires nor wanes. It lives on through sickness and sorrow, through prosperity and privation, through accomplishment and disappointment, through time and eternity.
- **Thomas S. Monson**: “Love is the very essence of the gospel. There are many attributes which are manifestations of love, such as kindness, patience, selflessness, understanding, and forgiveness.”

### Here are some Scriptural references to Love:

- John 13:34 “As I (Jesus) have loved you love one another”
- John 14:15 “If ye love me keep my commandments”
- John 15:13 “Greater love hath no man than he who is willing to lay down his life”.
- 1 John 4:8 “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love”
- 1 John 4:19 “we love him, because he loved us first”.
- 2 Ne 26:30 “charity is everlasting love”
- Moro 7:47-48 “charity is the pure love of Christ. Pray that ye may be filled with this love”.
- Alma 38:12 “bridle your passions that ye may filled with love” (notice that Alma states love is different than a passion)
- Moroni and I Corinthians 13 describe Charity
- Matt.22:37-39” Love God with all your heart, soul and mind; and thy neighbor as thy self”.
- Matt. 5:44 “Love your enemies”.
- 4 Ne 1:15 “no contention in the land because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.
- Eph. 5:25 “Husbands, love your wife as Christ loved the church, and gave His life for it”.
- D&C 42:22 “love thy wife with all they heart”.

It ought to be self-evident that from the references above that if two people have developed this “*Other Seeking Love*” they are bound to have an excellent marriage. Because this is true, maybe the best thing that we could do to make our marriages zing is to have a personal development program that includes developing character traits of love or charity described by Paul in I Corinthians 13:4-8 Quoting a modern version of the Bible the describes a charitable person as the following:

### Modern Version of 1 Corinthians 13

1. Is patient, does not get angry easily
2. Is kind, cares about the welfare of others, builds others up
3. Is not jealous, enjoys seeing others win, willing to help others succeed
4. Not boastful, conceited, show off, be the center of attention
5. Is not proud, humble, doesn’t try to be a know it all, thinks he is better than others
6. Not ill-mannered or rude, courteous, respectful
7. Is not selfish, doesn’t always have to be right, get their own way
8. Does not take offense, is not irritable, controls their temper, calm, is a peacemaker
9. Is not resentful, does not keep an account of wrongs done unto them, does not hold grudges. Is not judgmental or prejudiced
10. Does not enjoy evil, takes no pleasure in other’s sins, is not addicted to vices
11. Happy with the truth, has integrity, wants right to win
12. Never gives up, Loyal, turns the other cheek, doesn’t give up when others do
13. Willing to trust the Lord, looks for the good in others
14. Never gives up, is optimistic, seldom bored
15. Endures whatever comes with patience, doesn’t expect life to be easy, accepts life’s trials with honor and poise
16. Love is eternal, it never ends, trust that they will get the into the celestial kingdom

How do you match this “*Pure Love of Christ*”? Which ones do you need to work on?

Though all of us have developed some of the traits of both definitions, there is a great deal of difference between the two kinds of love even though both are highly emotional. “*Self-Seeking Love*” has a highly physical component, as we explained earlier, but is only temporary, and we seek to repeat it as often as possible. “*Other Seeking Love*,” on the other hand, may be less intense, but, because it is a character trait, is more stable and can last a lifetime as seen, in a mother’s love.

Perhaps as one’s love for their spouse matures, it moves from the emotion of love towards the character trait of love.

## **Understanding the intensity of the emotion or how much love there is :**

We usually talk about the intensity of the emotion by stating “how much” we love someone or something. This “how much” love is the major reason most people, in America, use in selecting a mate. They are in the grip of such a strong emotion that they can do nothing but follow it. The difficulty with using intensity, “how much?” to measure love is that it is hard to quantify. How much love is sufficient to make a marriage last a lifetime? Also, can I be sure when I choose at twenty or twenty-five, or thirty years of age that it will endure through the difficulties of life? Ohman suggests, “The intensity of a love affair is no guarantee of its permanence. On the contrary, an intensely felt love may indicate neurotic anxiety, while a less emotional affair may mean greater maturity and self-sufficiency” (as quoted in *You and Marriage*, Peter M. Jordan, ed., New York: Wiley Publishers, 1942, p. 28.) It appears that he is saying that there is no correlation between the amount of “how much?” love with how long it will last. He recognized, seventy years ago, that relying solely on emotions to make serious decisions might not be a wise idea. In fact, the intensity of our emotions may have more to do with our lack of emotional control than it does with the quality of the relationship.

Another problem with the intensity (how much) of our emotion as the sole reason for making decisions is that we can feel the same amount emotional intensity toward many people. If we think about the love we feel toward our intended, our children, our parents, our family members, we are aware that we can love them all with equal intensity. I have a far different kind of relationship with my children, and grandchildren than I do with my wife, and, yet, I love them equally. It should be clear that this kind of love is not an exclusive feeling to only one other person.

It may also be true, that there are many people for whom I feel a high emotion, but who would not make a particularly good marriage partner. Therefore, using the intensity of the emotion of love to make an important decision like choosing a mate may not be a wise decision. This is clear when we hear of a young woman trying to decide who to marry when she has stronger emotions for the street drug dealer who didn’t finish high school than she does for the medical student she is dating,

Perhaps a better criterion for measuring love would be to understand the nature (what creates these emotions) rather than the intensity (how much) of the emotion. What we should consider is, what is it about you that turns me on, and what is the nature of the emotion I am feeling or what is going on inside of me?

**Love isn’t love unless it is expressed in actions (expectations of love)**

It is important to remember that in every marriage there are two definitions of love that may not be in harmony. The definition held by you and the one held by your intended. Our emotional concept of love creates the expectations that tell us what behaviors you must exhibit to create these feelings. We each have our own expectations about what a loving person should do and be, and when our spouse doesn't act the way we expect a loving person should act, we don't feel loved. We subconsciously conclude, that when our spouse says, "I Love You" they will do all of those things necessary to meet our expectations, that will make me have an emotional high. When this doesn't happen, we don't feel loved and question our spouse's love for us. . Most of us show love by doing what our expectations tell us a loving person should do; therefore, we never come to understand the definition of love from our partner's point of view. I have seen couples who have been married more than forty years who have never discussed their expectations about how love should be expressed. Since both partners assume that their definition of love is universally correct and every rational person will agree with them, then their task is to act that way and expect their spouse to respond the same way. However, the partner who does not understand the expectations of love that the other partner assumes is true, will spend most of the rest of their life trying to correct their partner.

There appears to be four sets of expectations for each person's statement of "I love you."

- 1. When I say, "I love you", I have expectations about how I should act. My "I love You"**
- 2. I also have expectations about how I think my spouse should respond to my "I love you."**
- 3. My spouse also has expectations about how they should act,**
- 4. How I should respond to my, "I love you."**

There are also four similar sets of expectations for her, "I love you". What those eight sets of expectations are, and how well they are met, can make or break any marriage and are some of the major causes of most marital unhappiness.

For example, he says, "I love you", his expectation is that he should show his love by being very physical. Therefore, he also expects that her response will be equally as physical. Her expectation is that he will express love by serving her, like taking out the garbage, or cleaning the house. She expects to show him love by serving him, like fixing his favorite meal, or taking care of the kids.

A couple like this, who have been married for twenty years and have not discussed their expectations about how love should be expressed will usually pass each other in the night on the sea of love. They are really speaking two different languages of love in the same marriage. It is as though he was speaking Chinese and she was speaking Russian. He would have been better off taking out the garbage and she is kissing him good night.



# PHYSICAL INTIMACY

Your philosophy of physical intimacy is your behavior and thoughts about your own body and that of your intended. Physical intimacy is far more than just sex. It is a demonstration of love, a tender kiss, holding hands in church, an arm around her in a movie, a hug on coming home, cuddling in bed without sex, a look across the room, and much more.

With the right philosophy of physical intimacy, sex can add significantly to the quality of a relationship or it can create more contention, frustration, disappointment and heartache than any other part of marriage. Often our expectations about what part sex should play in our life is not clear to one or both partners. These expectations always change over time. For example, A woman's desire for sex may change a great deal after having children, depending on how much her drive is motivated by her desire for children. All of life's ever-changing circumstances will affect both of your desire for physical intimacy.

One of the most difficult problems in the physical part of marriage, is that the subconscious mind has no definition of what is morally right or wrong. It only seeks that which is most pleasurable. The media uses sexual stimulation in this part of our brain to entice us to watch a movie or sell a product. This stimulation by the media, starts so early in life, that by the time we are teenagers, it becomes a driving force in most of our lives. It often leads to pornography, self-stimulation (masturbation), which then fosters individual stimulation, rather than with a partner and them as adults, we often only learn to use sex to stimulate this emotional high. Therefore, sex is not an expression of love between two people but a self-stimulation experience. The need for this stimulation is clearly apparent in prostitution, where there is absolutely no meaningful relationship. For the prostitute, it is a job to make good money and the "john" is paying to ejaculate. The emotional high of this pleasure part of our brain is so high that it can thwart the development of many other important factors in marriage.

Western culture with the help of media have changed the very meaning of sexual behavior. Instead of the views expressed on the next page, it has become to be seen as a recreational activity that has nothing to do with an expression of love. When a basketball player can openly brag that he has had over a thousand partners, we can see how the nature of the experience has changed.

When people on a live television talk show find it strange to find a 25-year-old woman who is still a virgin, the shift is clear. One report indicated that as many as 1/3 of high school students thought it was OK to have sex on the first date. One of the worst illusion's pornography has foisted upon our society is the belief that a climax or orgasm, is the ultimate sexual experience. The truth is, especially for women, if nonsexual intimacy develops before sexual intimacy begins, then the quality of the physical relationship will be greatly enhanced. Another myth that is perpetuated is that the quality of sexual experience, is directly correlated with the variety and kind of sexual technique experienced in the marriage. This is only true for those whom sex has become their main source of recreational activity. For them their need. for many partners and an increase in the variety of technique. and it has very little to do with relationships.

To have a loving, successful and long-lasting marriage, you absolutely need to pattern your behavior and philosophy of physical intimacy from the quotes on the next page.

A major source of conflict over physical intimacy is that men and women view it almost entirely from a different perspective. Conflict occurs because both partners believe they see sex

the same way, and therefore, don't commit to a common understanding of what part sex should play in their life. While the following is true of most people, nothing can be true of all people.

Men See their sexual behavior as independent from the rest of the relationship.

Women See their sexual behavior as an extension of the relationship.

Men Their main goal is ejaculation and enticing their partner into having an orgasm.

Women Their main goal is closeness. Sex is designed to enhance the relationship. While an orgasm may be rewarding, for most women, it is not their focus.

Men All physical behavior, hugs, kisses, touches, should lead to intercourse.

Women Often avoid these simple acts because they are not ready for intercourse.

Men Sex is a highly important part of their life, and he is almost always ready.

Women See the psychological atmosphere of the whole day as an important part of sex

Men See sex as a right, and an expression of his manhood.

Women See sex as a gift and an expression of love. Need to feel loved to enjoy sex.

Men After a hard day, want to use sex to relax and escape.

Women After a hard day, want to relax and not think about sex.

# THE CORRECT CONCEPT OF PHYSICAL INTIMACY

## HIGHER FACULTIES AND NOBLER TRAITS -- Joseph F. Smith

“The lawful association of the sexes is ordained of God, not only as the sole means of race perpetuation, but for the development of the higher faculties and nobler traits of human nature which the love inspired companionship of a man and woman alone can insure... Sexual union is lawful in wedlock, and when it is participated in with right intent is honorable and sanctifying.”  
(Improvement Era vol. 20 June 1917)

## MORALITY -- First Presidency

“The Lord’s law of moral conduct is abstinence outside of lawful marriage and fidelity within marriage. Sexual relations is proper only between husband and wife appropriately expressed within the bonds of marriage. Any other sexual contact, including fornication, adultery, and homosexual and lesbian is sinful”. (First President Letter 14 Nov. 1991)

## SEXUAL INTIMACY -- Richard C. Scott

“Any sexual intimacy outside of the bonds of marriage – I mean any intentional contact with the sacred, private parts of another’s body, with or without clothing is sin and is forbidden by God. It is also a transgression to intentionally stimulate these emotions within your own body.”  
(Ensign, Nov. 1994)

## KISSING – Spencer W. Kimball

‘Kissing has been prostituted and has been degenerated to develop and express lust instead of affection, honor and admiration. To kiss in casual dating is asking for trouble. What do kisses mean when given like pretzels or robbed of sacredness?

What is miscalled the soul kiss (French kiss) is an abomination and stirs passions and results in the eventual loss of virtue. Even if timely courtship justifies a kiss, it should be a clean decent sexless one, like the kiss between a mother and a son or a daughter and a father. If the soul kiss (French kiss) with its passion were eliminated from dating, there would be an immediate upswing in chastity and honor, with fewer illegitimate babies, fewer unwed mothers, forced marriages, and fewer unhappy souls. With the absences of the soul kiss (French kiss), necking would be greatly reduced. Its younger sister, petting, would be totally eliminated. Both are abominations in their own right and kind.” (Sydney Australia Area Conference, Feb. 29, 1976)

Then in the area of one of Satan’s most destructive evils, we strongly warn all of our people from childhood to old age to beware of the chains of bondage, suffering and remorse which come from the improper use of the body... No indecent exposure or pornography or other aberrations to defile the mind and spirit. No fondling of bodies, one’s own or that of others, and no sex between persons except in proper marriage relationship. This is positively prohibited by our creator in all places, at all times and we reaffirm it. Even in marriage there can be excesses and distortions. No amount of rationalization to the contrary can satisfy a disappointed Father in Heaven.  
(Conference Report April 1972)

## **INTIMACY IS MORE THAN SEX -- Victor L. Brown Jr.**

“Attempts to build unity from the foundation of sexual compatibility simply have it backwards. Because erotic behaviors are so physically pleasurable, they can be powerfully distorting. Couples, whether married or unmarried, who see each other primarily as instruments of erotic gratification literally ignore personality and character while sensual pleasure dominates.

The couple who first experience premarital, nonsexual intimacy is much more likely to enjoy a full, whole, social, emotional and sexual life after marriage.

It is a sign of serious trouble when a couple physically enjoy each other only in total sexual intercourse. Physical relations should be more about a caress, holding hands, a tender embrace, or a gentle kiss. Often women are cheated out of these tender feelings when all a husband wants is sexual intercourse.

Those who feel that erotic climax is the ultimate sexual experience have bought into one of the shabbiest illusions of our culture. When we embrace either in creative union or in symbolism of it, we expand our sexuality far beyond mere pleasure.” (Human Intimacy pp 111-119)

## **CREATIVE FORCE -- Billy Graham**

“The Bible celebrates sex and its proper use, presenting it as God-created, God-ordained, and God-blessed. It makes plain that God himself implanted the physical magnetism between the sexes for two reasons: for the propagation of the human race, and for the expression of that kind of love between man and wife that makes for true oneness. His command to the first man and wife to be “one flesh” was as important as his command to “be fruitful and multiply.”

The Bible makes plain that evil, when related to sex, means not the use of something inherently corrupt; but the misuse of something pure and good. It teaches clearly that sex can be a wonderful servant but a terrible master; that it can be a creative force more powerful than any other in the fostering of love, companionship and happiness or it can be the most destructive of all of life’s forces”. (Readers Digest, May 1970, p.118)

## **SEX IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT -- S.I. Hayakawa**

“In the current discussions of pornography and obscenity, two things are commonly confused: what sexual behavior means to the participants and what it means to the outside observer. However beautiful or sacred that love relationship may be for the participants, it would have an entirely different significance to a peeping Tom. The sexual behavior is not itself obscene: that quality lies peculiarly in the evaluation of the spectator.

The trouble with sexual intercourse as an object of artistic or literary representation of love is that its meaning is not always apparent in the behavior of the spectator who doesn’t know the motivation of the couple, they are all doing the same thing.” (They are just looking for a selfish physical or emotional turn on) (Readers Digest 1974)

## **MATERIALISTIC EROTICISM (physical comfort through sexual excitement) -- Victor Frankel**

“A materialist eroticism not only makes the partner a possession, but the sex act itself a commodity. This emerges most plainly in prostitution. The psychological dangers of prostitution are less easily guarded against. This is the attitude that takes sex to be a mere means to the end of pleasure – a thoroughly decadent sensualism. Sexuality, which should be the means of

expression for love, is made subservient to the pleasure principle and gratification of the instincts; sexual pleasure, becomes an end in itself.

Degrading sex to mere instinctual gratification and reducing the partner to a mere instinctual object, is likely to block the way to the right kind of love life, in which sex is no more than the expression and no less than the crowning glory of love. When through habituation to prostitutes (or pornography or petting) a young man becomes fixated upon sexual pleasure as an end in itself, his whole future marital life may be damaged. For the lover, the sexual act is the physical expression of a psycho-spiritual union. The really mature person, therefore, will feel sexual desire only when he loves: he will consider sexual relationship only where sex is an expression of love.

It is easier for women than for men to realize this ideal goal of the normal process of maturation. That, of course, is true only as a generalization and under present conditions. For a woman to feel sexual desire only where the physical longing is conjoined with a desire for psycho-spiritual union is the height of normality. Every unspoiled woman knows that this is how she feels. Masturbation is to be sure, is neither a disease nor a cause of disease; rather, it is a sign of disturbed development or misguided attitude toward the love life... It is the problem of a person who is "alone" with his sex drive and, therefore, experiences intense frustration. It sounds as if frustration were necessarily bound up with sexual abstinence. Insofar as a young person suffers from sexual frustration, this an indication that his sex instinct is not yet, or is no longer, subordinated to an erotic tendency and so integrated into the total system of his personal striving." (The Doctor and The Soul," PSYCHOTHERAPY TO LOGOTHERAPY, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1965, p 67.)

### Questions:

Answer the following questions on a scale of 0 to 10 with. 0 meaning the question doesn't express your feelings or behavior 0 and 10 meaning that is exactly I feel and behave.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How clear is your understanding of the differences of how men and women view sex?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How much does the way you view and your practice of physical relationships match Pres. Kimball's definition? (April conf. 1972)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How much do you follow Pres. Kimball's view of kissing? (Australia 1976)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. How much do you feel that your intended wants you to spend more time being physical or going further than you feel comfortable with?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. How much do you feel you practice the law of Chasity?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Multiplying the numbers by 10, what percentage of your time together is physical?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Does your physical relationship crowd out difficulties you may have in your relationship? (kiss and make up)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Have you and your intended discussed each of the concepts in "THE CORRECT CONCEPT OF PHYSICAL INTIMACY"?)



# **MONEY AND MARRIAGE**

## ***YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT MONEY AFFECTS EVERY PART OF YOUR LIFE***

Studies generally indicate that how we think, feel and handle money causes more discord in marriage than any other issue. Therefore, it seems important that you and your intended have some idea about how you deal with money. First, we must understand that there is no correlation between the amount of money we have and the things that money can buy, and the quality of a marriage. All we must do is look at the quality of marriages in poor countries around the world (some of you will have seen this on your mission) and compare their marriages with the divorce rate in modern America. There is some good evidence, that often, financial hardship strengthens a relationship. It may be true that the reclusive couple residing in the mountains and living off the land may be happier than the successful millionaire. I know young people, who find a job that pays minimum wages at a ski resort so they can ski all winter, and they seem to be as happy or happier than those who work 40 or 50 hours a week in an office.

If you talk to a banker or money manager, their main interest is in how well you manage your money. For them, it seems that the bottom line is all that counts: how much you are able to save making sure you have enough for a rainy day, or how much you can leave for your children to fight over after you die. While these ideas are laudable and might be encouraged, they have little to do with the quality of your marriage, depending on your expectations about money.

It is true that money can ease a lot of burdens and make life more comfortable. What causes conflict over money in marriage is a function of many things other than just the amount of money you have. Your lifestyle and personality may be more important than the amount of money you have. Sometimes the stress of money and the hard life really strengthens our character and our dependence on the Lord. The purpose of this section is to help you know how you each feel about and handle money.

No couple will have a perfect match but the more we agree in each of these areas, the less conflict we will have.

Any or all of the following issues about money may create a great deal of friction and frustration or strengthen a good marriage: They include the following:

- 1. PHILOSOPHY OF MONEY,**
- 2. HOW MONEY RELATES TO OUR PERSONALITY,**
- 3. HOW WE MANAGE MONEY**
- 4. THE VALUE WE PLACE ON MONEY**

## **PHILOSOPHY OF MONEY:**

Our philosophy of money is what we think and feel about money. Our adult philosophy of money is usually learned at our mother's knee, and includes: what we perceive the "good life" to be; how important money and the things money can buy are for us; how we earn money; how much time we should spend earning money; what we think about debt and savings, women working; and how it should affect our social status. Disagreement on any or all of these things can create a great deal of frustration in any relationship.

**This part of the inventory should help you look at your philosophy of money.**

On a scale of 0 to 10 rate each statement with 0 meaning you totally don't agree and 10 that you totally agree with the following on how you feel when you think about money.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. One can never have enough money.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Economic status is an important reason for selection of a mate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I get a real rush earning and having money
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I need to have some money in my pocket
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Lack of money is a major source of depression for me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Money should never control our life
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. All major decisions should be made by what economic effect they have
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Money is only a tool to be used to achieve other important goals
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I am willing to postpone what I want until we can afford it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I really don't care about money, or the things money can buy; it has little value to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. It is fine with me if others (family or government) take care of me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The quantity of money has nothing to do with the quality of marriage
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. We should live within our means even if it means going without
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I only desire enough money to take care of my basic needs
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. If it is a bargain, I should purchase it even if I can't afford it
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Once I get a purchase in mind, I can't let go of it
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. The number of children should be determined by the amount of money available.

Make a list of those items in this section that both you and your intended rated 7 or more. Compare your lists and discuss the ones you don't agree on. Make another list of those items where you and your intended have a separation of 5 or more points and discuss them. Decide how much you are willing to change.

On a scale of 0 to 10 rate each of the following statements with 0 meaning you totally don't agree and 10 that you totally agree with the following on how you feel when you think about money.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. My career and education should be the driving force of our life, how and where we live.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. My career should take a back seat to family, church, or leisure
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I will take a job that might not pay much now, but will down the road
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I will take a job that pays well now even if it doesn't have a lot of potential

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The most important career choice is the amount of money it will generate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Enjoying my career (like sales) is more important than the amount of money it generates even if it is not a steady income
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I should pursue my dream (like music or art) even if it doesn't generate much income
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I only want a job that will meet my basic needs so I can play or do other things
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. We should move wherever the best career opportunity is
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Location of living is more important than a career

Make both lists described above in section 1, for this section and discuss the ones you don't agree on and decide how much you are willing to change to become more aligned in the ones you disagree on...

On a scale of 0 to 10 rate each statement below with 0 meaning you totally don't agree and 10 that you totally agree with the following on how you feel when you think about my wife working.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The husband should provide enough so the wife can stay home with the children even if it means taking two or three jobs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. She should not work while the children are young.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. She should only work to help pay for important things like house, car, education, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. We should learn to get along on one income.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. She should work so we can have a better lifestyle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. She should have her own career
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. She should work so he only must work one job
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. She should work so he can stay home

Make a list of those items in this section that both you and your intended rated 7 or more. Compare your lists and discuss the ones you don't agree on. Make another list of those items where you and your intended have a separation of 5 or more points and discuss them. Decide how much you are willing to change.

## **HOW MONEY RELATES TO OUR PERSONALITY**

Because the American culture has placed such high importance on material wealth, it has become not only an indicator of the "good life" but also an indication of who we think is the most important, such as an athlete or an entertainer making 10 to 50 million dollars a year, or a CEO making 25 million dollars a year. Compare these people to the importance of a teacher and how much we pay them. Because we have put such a high value on money, it has become a major factor in the development and the expression of our personality and our sense of self.

This inventory is designed to help you look at how money expresses your personality. Rate each item on a scale of 0 to 10; 0 meaning it has no effect on me and 10 meaning it really expresses who I am.

- \_\_\_ I judge my self-worth by how much my net worth is.
- \_\_\_ I judge my self-worth by how many liquid assets I have.
- \_\_\_ Money can compensate for a lot of insecurity
- \_\_\_ When it comes to money, I have trouble setting limits - (like Christmas)
- \_\_\_ I spend money to fight boredom, anxiety and/or depression
- \_\_\_ I use money to compensate for a bad relationship
- \_\_\_ I am basically self-indulgent
- \_\_\_ I am addicted to spending and have no control over the habit
- \_\_\_ I have a hard time postponing gratification - lack self-control
- \_\_\_ When it comes to money, I am basically irresponsible
- \_\_\_ For me, money problems create a great deal of depression and anxiety
- \_\_\_ For me, spending money and shopping is a major recreational activity
- \_\_\_ I spend more than I can afford on others because it makes me feel important
- \_\_\_ I often spend excessively to punish someone
- \_\_\_ I use money to keep control over our relationship
- \_\_\_ I am very generous with money even to going into debt so you will love me; never turn you down
- \_\_\_ I use money to avoid rejection
- \_\_\_ I always need money in my pocket
- \_\_\_ For me, money compensates for unexpressed anger
- \_\_\_ I keep myself poor or sabotage economic opportunities because I can't cope with success
- \_\_\_ I do not want to be accountable, therefore, I reject a budget
- \_\_\_ I use money to express personal freedom
- \_\_\_ Economically, I am very conservative
- \_\_\_ I am willing to sacrifice economically in the present for the future
- \_\_\_ When it comes to money, I have a lot of self-control
- \_\_\_ Economic security is very important to me
- \_\_\_ Keeping control of money is important to me

- \_\_\_ Getting my own way with money is very important
- \_\_\_ I very seldom balance my bank account
- \_\_\_ I often spend money that I know I don't have - I often use credit cards
- \_\_\_ I am a workaholic / overachiever
- \_\_\_ I often don't finish economic projects
- \_\_\_ I have poor work habits
- \_\_\_ I don't work well with others -- I don't deal well with authority
- \_\_\_ Where I shop is very important (Dillard's, Old Navy, Walmart, Etc.)
- \_\_\_ I hoard money
- \_\_\_ I have to spend my money before I lose it
- \_\_\_ How well I am liked, depends on how I dress

Make a list of those items that each of you rated 7 or more, Compare your lists and discuss the ones you don't agree on. Make another list of those items where you and your intended have a separation of 5 or more points and discuss them.

## HOW WE MANAGE MONEY

When we talk about managing money, we mean who should be in control of dispersing our funds, and how our funds should be accounted for. Answer the following questions.

How and who should control our funds?

1. Who should manage the family funds?  
 Husband \_\_\_ Wife \_\_\_ Both together \_\_\_  
 Each in charge of different parts of the family funds \_\_\_  
 Each have separate income and/or accounts \_\_\_
2. Whose needs or wants should come first?  
 Mine \_\_\_ Spouse's \_\_\_ Children's \_\_\_
3. Who should be in charge of discretionary funds?  
 Me \_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_
4. When we disagree, who should get their own way?  
 Me \_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_ Negotiate \_\_\_ Take turns \_\_\_  
 Depends on what it is \_\_\_
5. Should there be an accounting to each other for the use of our funds?  
 Very Strict accounting \_\_\_ Some discretionary funds \_\_\_ No accounting \_\_\_  
 Strict accounting for either me or my spouse \_\_\_
6. Who should be responsible for the children's funds?

Me\_\_\_\_\_ Spouse\_\_\_\_\_ Together\_\_\_\_\_

7. Should our family follow a budget?

Always\_\_\_\_\_ Usually\_\_\_\_\_ Seldom\_\_\_\_\_ Never\_\_\_\_\_

8. We need to agree on long term spending goals, when we don't who should win?

Home\_\_\_\_\_ Cars\_\_\_\_\_ Education\_\_\_\_\_ Furniture\_\_\_\_\_ Investment\_\_\_\_\_

Retirement\_\_\_\_\_ Emergencies\_\_\_\_\_

My Philosophy of Debt is: Rate each one on a scale of 0 to 10

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Never go into debt for any reason
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Debt is acceptable for essential things such as a home, car, education
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Debt is OK to buy fun things such as clothes, sports, furniture, travel, RV, electronics
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. It is OK to incur debt for everyday living
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Debt is an important part of my financial planning
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. It is OK to extend my debt limit as far as I am able
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Bankruptcy is an acceptable way to handle money

My Philosophy of Savings is: rate each of on a scale of 0 to 10

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The good life is more important, enjoy while you can, don't save
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Save only if there is some left over
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. There should be a balance between spending and saving
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. One should save for things they want
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Better to sacrifice now and have a good life later

## **VALUING MONEY** (What you want to spend your money for)

Conflict on how we want to spend our money can be a major source of contention in almost any marriage. Choose which your priority is and rate 1 to 6

Tithing\_\_\_\_\_ Food\_\_\_\_\_ Rent\_\_\_\_\_, Entertainment\_\_\_\_\_ Children's lessons\_\_\_\_\_ Paying Utilities\_\_\_\_\_.

We are also talking about the quality of the products we buy. He wants to buy a BMW and she thinks a used Ford is fine. He thinks you should never spend more than \$50.00 for a pair of shoes and she would never spend less than \$200.00 for a pair of shoes. On the Game Show The

Price Is Right has valued a pair of shoes or handbag at close the \$1000.00 apiece. At a big event like, The Emmy Awards, some women spend as much as \$5000.00 for a dress.

Where would you, the woman in your relationship, rather shop, if you (the female) had a specific amount of money to spend on clothes? Would you buy one dress at an exclusive boutique, two dresses at Nordstrom's, or Dillard's, four or five dresses at Old Navy or 21, six or seven dresses at Walmart or 10 dresses at the thrift store. Where would you (the male) buy a set of golf clubs? would you spend \$200.00 a club, or \$100.00 at the country club, \$50.00 at the pro-shop, \$20.00 at Walmart or \$5.00 for a used club at Play-It-Again?

Money problems often spill over to other areas of daily life. She hates spending money for the daily newspaper, which she never reads, but she is also angry about the amount of time he spends reading it. He comes home late every night because he feels like work is more important than dinner. She has fixed a good dish that gets cold, so she doesn't want to have sex.

## What I Would Like to Spend Money On

The purpose of this inventory is to discover how you would like to spend money. In a relationship, the priorities change on how you will be spending money. At this stage of your life, this may be new to you, but try this exercise assuming the two of you are making \$60,000 a year and have 2 children. Select these 20 items and prioritize them from 1-20.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Personal --- Make-up, Hair Care, Lunches, Mad Money, Jewelry
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Church --- Tithing, Fast Offering, Other
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Hobbies --- Sports, Hunting, Fishing, Stamps, Sowing, Genealogy
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Leisure --- Exercise, Reading Material, Library, Eating Out,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Entertainment --- TV, Cable, Movies, Concerts, Plays,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Gifts --- Christmas, Birthdays, Other Holidays, Weddings, Friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Children --- Allowance, Sports, Arts, Dancing, Music, College, Loans
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Food, --- Anything you buy at the grocery store or on-line,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Clothes --- Anything you wear
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Career --- Education, License, Continued Education, Other Expenses
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Vacation --- Travel, Weekends,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Transportation --- New, Used, Kind, How Often Change, Monthly Payment, Upkeep (gas, oil, repairs) Public Transportation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Payments --- Automatic Deductions, Loans (including student), Credit Card
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Computer --- New, Monthly Payments, Cell Phone, Server for both
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Insurance --- Home, Life, Car, Health, Umbrella
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Medical--Doctor, Dentist, Hospital, Physical Therapy, Prescriptions
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Savings --- Monthly, Retirement, Investments
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Housing --- Rent, Mortgage, Furniture, Repairs, Yard, Lawn, Taxes
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Community --- Charities, Politics, Other Donations
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Utilities --- Lights, water, heat, sewer

You are never going to have complete agreement on what to spend money for. but you ought to have least 8 of 20 in common and be willing to let your spouse spent so money it the way they want to. The key to this chart is how much you are willing to sacrifice for your spouse's happiness. Disuse your differences.

# RAISING CHILDREN

In your present relationship you may want to talk about how you feel about children in general, and you should. You also should talk about how many children you would like to have. When to start a family, and how you should discipline them. However, there are so many variables that affect children that you can't answer them until you are a parent, that we won't attempt them.

There are, however, some clues in your personality now, that say something about your parenting. I have a granddaughter who really loves children. When we have a family gathering, the first person my great grandchildren seek her out and she loves to spend time with them. Answering the following questions will help you see some of these traits that I learned from her. Rate yourself on a scale of 0 to 10. 0 meaning not at all and 10 meaning a great deal.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ How patient are you when things go wrong?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ How much do you enjoy taking care of an infant? (feeding them, changing dippers, when they are crying etc.)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ How much do you enjoy being around and playing with young children?
4. \_\_\_\_\_ How much do you enjoy interacting with teenagers?
5. \_\_\_\_\_ How well can you handle 3 or 4 children at the same time?

## Three imperatives for quality parenting:

1. **Never make rules you can't or won't enforce.**
2. **Never make promises you can't or won't keep**
3. **Never make threats you can't or won't carry out**

## Some concepts that all quality parents' practice in raising quality children include the following:

1. The most important ingredient in successful parenting is consistency.
2. The next most important ingredient is being a warm and accepting parent.
3. Being positive and supportive, rather than negative and belittling.
4. Rules and discipline need to be firm, clear, and predictable.
5. Parents need to be supportive and respectful of their child's free agency.

## Some patterns of parenting behavior that inhibit the growth of children:

Bribes \* Violence \* Dictatorship \* Sarcasm \* Shaming \* Over-Indulging \*  
Criticism \* Guilt \* Promises \* Not Kept \* Bribes \* Humiliation \* Anger \* Rejection

## From **UNRIGHTEOUS DOMINION**

BY H. BURKE PETERSON

In the order of heaven, the husband has the authority to preside in the home. That issue is not subject to review. How he presides, however, is subject to review and correction... the relationship of a man and a woman should be one of partnership. A husband should not make decrees. Rather he should work with his wife until a joint decision palatable to both is developed.

A man needs to understand that his power to influence his wife or children for good can only come through love, praise, and patience. It can never be brought about by force or coercion...

This power from heaven is the power to bless, to strengthen, to heal, to comfort, to bring peace to a household. To lift and encourage is priesthood power.

The man or woman of Power is one who presides as described in D&C 121: by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness, by meekness, by love unfeigned, by kindness by pure knowledge, without hypocrisy, without guile,

Reproving with sharpness means reproving with clarity, with loving firmness, with serious intent. It does not mean reproving with sarcasm, or with bitterness, or with clenched teeth and raised voices. One who reproves as the Lord has directed, deals in principles, not personalities. He does not attack character or demean an individual, Private reproof is superior to public reproof.

Brigham Young stated, "If you are ever called to chasten a person, never chasten beyond the balm you have within you to bind up... When you have the chastening rod in your hands, ask God to give you wisdom to use it, that you may not use it to the destruction of an individual, but to his salvation,"

### **SOME THINGS FOR PARENTS TO CONSIDER**

1. If the standard by which the quality of a parent is determined is the way the children turn out, God is the worst of all parents.
2. The happiness of children seems to be directly-related to the happiness of their mother.
3. The best way to ensure quality children is to have a quality marriage.
4. Example is still the best teacher.
5. What are your motives and values for yourself, your children, and the immediate action?
6. Our children should not be the object of our own emotional whims.

7. What are our children's motives? All action is purposeful.
8. Parents need to act more and talk less.
9. Parents need to be humble enough to admit their mistakes.
  10. The more organized parents are, the less conflict they will have with their children.
11. Always avoid a power struggle with your children.
12. Create an atmosphere in which your child can tell the truth and express feelings. Often children find that lying is less painful or more rewarding.
  13. We cannot listen to anyone well in the presence of strong emotions.
14. Gaining respect is the best way to gain influence.
15. Good parents learn to respond to the feelings around an event not just the event itself.
16. Children need attention even if they have to get it in the negative way.
17. Discipline without love is tyranny.
18. Rewards and punishment need to be approached from the child's value system.
19. Remember when Jesus cleared the temple, He first took time to braid the whip.
20. Avoid performing tasks that a child can do himself.
21. Remember to use either natural or logical consequences.
22. A misbehaving child is a discouraged child.
23. A broken arm will mend, but a broken ego will last a lifetime.
24. Humiliation is the worst of all forms of punishment, overprotection is next.
25. Punishment may relieve our frustrations, but usually does little for the child.
26. The most important gift you can give your children is your time
27. All comparisons are harmful.
28. Remember to be firm but kind.
29. Children will always respond at their predetermined point of parental frustration.
30. Children need to understand that order is a necessary part of freedom.
31. Freedom does not mean license to do whatever you want without consequences.
32. Never engage in a battle with your children. You will both be losers.
33. Good communication is the key to any good relationship. Learn to negotiate.
34. Remember that your child's position makes sense from his point of view.

35. Like building anything of great value, great children take time and energy.
36. A harmonious home is the best of all environments for children to grow in.
37. Children will treat their mother the way their father treats her.
38. Anger is a manipulative behavior that is often used to make up for a poor self-image.
39. Family traditions and rituals give children a sense of stability.
40. Children need to have realistic expectations
41. Having family goals in writing provides children with a common purpose.
42. Parents should not make work seem like drudgery.
43. One parent should not run interference for the other parent
44. Children develop better when parents don't use the exact same discipline methods.
45. Respect has to be won (earned?), it cannot be demanded

# IN-LAWS

In-laws can be a great source of happiness or a great source of conflict and misery and probably everything in between. When a couple gets along well with both sets of in-laws, their marriage will be at least 50% happier than those where there is discord with in-laws. When there is discord with both in-laws only about 20% have a happy marriage. In-laws are reported to be a major cause of divorce in very new marriages. Patterns and relationships, you have developed over more than twenty years won't disappear with a wedding ceremony. You also can't expect two people who have lived their lifestyle for fifty years, to change quickly.

- Make sure you don't expect your in-laws, or your intended to behave the way you have become used to in your family. The more ridged your expectations, lifestyle and behavior are, the more conflict there will be in your relationship. Be willing to sacrifice your own desires to make your in-laws feel comfortable.
- The closer friends both sets of parents are, the more they will add to the quality of life. The more activities you can invite them to, that do not push either of their stress buttons, the better your marriage will feel.
- Mothers and daughters are very close friends and they often share most of life's problems. However, you need to be careful with information that your intended feels should stay between the two of you. It is always hurtful if your mother uses the information against your intended later. You also need to be careful not to follow you mother's counsel, if intended or unintended, it will emotionally separate you and your husband. Mothers often face a crisis when children leave home. To regain their lost sense of importance, they often try to control their child's time. If your intended lives with their parents the change, when you marry, may become more difficult. It will be painful, but she needs to create a new life. You can't always be the source of her self-worth.
- If one or the other in-law is inflexible or has to be right, or control your life, you need to restrict the amount of time you spend with them. The spouse whose parents they are needs to inform their parents of the conflict and suggest some behaviors that might improve the relationship.
- The principle is always true that the spouse whose parents they are needs to always be the one who deals with sensitive topics.
- Don't blame your personality or martial problems on the In-laws. If you hate conflict or are a poor decision maker, there will probably be a lot of stress that has nothing to do with your in-laws. Sometimes, a parent is reluctant to give up their control over the children which can create stress when the child doesn't want to confront their parent.
- Often a parent is better at arguing or is more articulate than you are. When this is true, you need to request a timeout to think about what you really want to say. It also helps to implement the communication skills we wrote about in this workbook.
- If your mate and your marriage are your first priority, then your parents need to know that if they try to make you chose, they will lose.
- Occasionally, you would rather fight with your spouse than with your parents or in-laws. When you blame your spouse, your marriage suffers.
- When there is a major change in your lifestyle, like a change of religion or a habit that you never wanted to do, while you lived with them that they demanded you adhere to, This lifestyle change can foster a lot of anxiety. Let them know that you are going to exercise your free agency.
- Some relationships become so fractured that we have to discontinue the relationship

**Questions:**

**On a scale of 0 to 10, rate your future in-law on the following questions:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How much does the family habits of your intended cause you stress?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How well do you like your future in-laws?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How much do you have trouble with either of your future in-laws?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Are you prepared to put your intended before your family?

## FRIENDS AND OUR RELATIONSHIP

One of the major causes of conflict in a marriage is how each partner feels and deals with their friends. The nature of those relationships, the time spent with friends, and the nature of the activities each partner participates in with their friends contribute to the level of conflict in a marriage. Clearly, your own total nature of your relation mentioned in this book, will affect how much conflict friends will cause in your relationship. For example, Sam doesn't like Sara being gone three nights a week with her friends and Sara doesn't like Sam going to the bar for beers every night after work, and we could go on. The following might help you see where friends may contribute to the stress on your relationship

These questions might help you have starting points of conversation about friends. One scale of 0 to 10, rate your friendships on each of the following questions.

Self    Intended

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    1.    We are each other's best friend: We don't need many additional friends

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    2.    What percentage of your friends do you share in common (divide the % by 10 to get your score)?

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    3.    How much do you and your intended agree on the amount of time each of you should spend with your friends?

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    4.    How much do you and your intended agree on the kind of activities you should participate in with your friends? (Make a list of activities that are especially bothersome)

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    5.    How many friends do you or your intended have that one of you does not approve of?

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    6.    How much does associating with your friends cause stress on your relationship?

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    7.    How much do the activities you participate in with your friends create stress on your relationship?

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    8.    How much does the material status of your friends cause stress on your marriage?

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    9.    How much do the lifestyles of your cause stress on your relationship?

\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_    10.    How much do your friends try to change the nature of your relationship? (trying to interfere with, or control your marriage. Often using guilt to control you)

**Do not count question #1**, Each of you make a list of questions in each column that each of you scored 7 or more. Compare your scores; if there is a difference in your scores of 3 or more on any question, you should have a serious discussion about them. If there are 4 or more questions with differences of 3 or more, you need to know each other better. If on 3 or more questions either of you scored 9 or 10, friends can be a serious problem in your marriage. Remember, that a strong relationship in the rest of your marriage can outweigh conflict that may be caused by friends. However, love alone won't fix them.

# HOW WE PRACTICE RELIGION

As we indicated in the beginning of this material, if you are keeping your covenants, have developed the character trait of God's kind of love, and follow Presidents Kimball's and Hinkley's advice we quoted, and are willing to follow the suggestions of the current prophet, you are on your way to a successful marriage and this workbook won't matter a whole lot. So, this section will not be very long because we have Prophets and Scriptures to teach us what we should do. We also have inspired Bishops and teachers to instruct us. That having been said, religious conflict involves far more than do we belong to the same church, or that one or both of us have served a mission. The strength of your commitment and how you choose to practice your religion can cause a great deal of conflict in marriage. For example, Henry believes the husband should always decide how much and when to pay tithing. Sally wants to pay tithing as soon as they get the money, and Henry wants to wait until the end of the year. Lois and George can't agree on what they should do on Sunday. Bob doesn't like going to the temple and Mary wants to go once a week. Sam hates to read anything, so he doesn't want to read the scriptures. And so, we could go on forever.

Some questions you ought to consider:

On the following questions, answer them on how you feel on a scale of 0 to 10. 0 meaning none and 10 meaning totally.

- \_\_\_ 1. How strong do consider your testimony?
- \_\_\_ 2. How strong do you consider your intended's testimony?
- \_\_\_ 3. Do you agree on attending the full block every Sunday?
- \_\_\_ 4. Do you agree on when it is acceptable to miss church?
- \_\_\_ 5. Do you agree on what do on Sunday?  
\_\_\_TV, \_\_\_computer, \_\_\_cell phone, \_\_\_shopping, \_\_\_sports \_\_\_sleeping,  
\_\_\_visiting, \_\_\_gospel study, \_\_\_go for a ride, \_\_\_hike, \_\_\_bike, \_\_\_work in  
the yard. \_\_\_other activities?
- \_\_\_ 6. Do you agree on how much, when and how to pay tithing?
- \_\_\_ 7. Do you agree on when and how often to have family prayer?
- \_\_\_ 8. Do you attend and do you agree on how often to attend the temple?
- \_\_\_ 9. Do you agree on the kind and amount of time that should be spent on scripture study, reading the general conference report, and other church material including the church's website?
- \_\_\_ 10. Do you agree on the kind and amount of church service?
- \_\_\_ 11. Do you put all of God's children's needs before yourself?
- \_\_\_ 12. Are you supportive of your intended's calling?
- \_\_\_ 13. Do you have a compatible religious personality?  
\_\_\_Charity \_\_\_ kindness, \_\_\_forgiving, \_\_\_sacrifice, \_\_\_patience, etc,



# WHO HAS THE POWER IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Controlling what happens in a marriage, such as, what we do with our time, how our money is spent, how the children are raised, and who gets their own way, can become a major source of conflict between a husband and wife. In most marriages, one partner usually has most of the control of all aspects of the relationship. Therefore, understanding who has the power in a relationship and how they maintain it, is important to the success of a relationship. Who has the power in a relationship can create a great deal of conflict, frustration, and unhappiness in any relationship.

**Certainly not all, but a few of the reasons one partner has more power include the following:**

1. When one partner is less committed to the relationship, they will have more power
2. Power is often controlled if one partner has serious emotional problems, alcohol or drug problems.
3. In some cultures, one sex (gender?) has absolute power by tradition or religious commitment.
4. One who has to always be right or win, usually won't give up until they get their way. The spouse gives in rather than continuing the fight, which can go on for hours. The loser often feels trapped.
5. One who has control of the economic resources will control the spending of money to maintain power. Often, the spouse with no salable skills or education, feels they have no place to go.
6. One who has a dual personality. They can be kind and caring and giving, or they can be angry and violent. Typically, after they have been angry, they will promise to be good. The spouse usually gives up hope.
7. One who uses anger and violence to win by creating fear in their spouse. They create conflict which their spouse wants to avoid.
8. The children can create who has the power. One may threaten to take the children from their spouse. Sometimes one will punish the children or indulge them to control their spouse.
10. One is more articulate and better with words, so their spouse can never feel like they can win.
11. One may be a quick thinker, so their spouse, who needs time to think about their answers, always ses.

**And many more**

Looking at your relationship, answer the following questions: If you are satisfied with the division of authority in your relationship then this ought to help you feel good in this part of your relationship.

- \_\_\_ 1. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often do you get your own way?
- \_\_\_ 2. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often does your intended get their own way?
- \_\_\_ 3. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often are important issues left unresolved because you can't agree?
- \_\_\_ 4. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often is there mutual give and take? (neither of you get all you want but you both feel good about the decision)?
- \_\_\_ 5. On a scale of 0 to 10, when there is a disagreement, how often do you give in when you can't agree?
- \_\_\_ 6. On a scale of 0 to 10, when there is a disagreement, how often does your intended give in when you can't agree?
- \_\_\_ 7. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often are disagreements left unresolved?

- \_\_\_8. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often do you agree on what spheres of authority each of you should have?
- \_\_\_9. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often does who has authority cause conflict?
- \_\_\_10. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often do you give in that your intended is unaware of?
- \_\_\_11. On a scale of 0 to 10, how important is it that you be right or win?
- \_\_\_12. On a scale of 0 to 10, how willing are you to back down from a position to enhance your marriage?
- \_\_\_13. On a scale of 0 to 10, how much do you give in because of fear of rejection or abandonment?
- \_\_\_14. On a scale of 0 to 10, do you use anger or violence to get your way?
- \_\_\_15. On a scale of 0 to 10, how articulate or persuasive are you? Can you out argue your intended?
- \_\_\_16. On a scale of 0 to 10, how much do you try to intellectualize every disagreement?
- \_\_\_17. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often do you give in to avoid conflict?
- \_\_\_18. On a scale of 0 to 10, how often are you unhappy because you feel like your intended has to always win?

### **SPHERES OF AUTHORITY**

The conflict can be reduced by sharing power, which we call “spheres of authority” Who is in charge of what areas of your relationship. This makes a marriage more workable. When people divide up responsibilities according to areas of expertise, areas of interests, differences in lifestyle, or who has the time and opportunity to accomplish the task, people work better together. For example, she may be better with money than he is, and he might be better at keeping the house clean.

On a scale of 0 to 10, rate how much each of you control each of these areas of your relationship in the columns marked male and female. 0 meaning no control and 10 meaning total control. In column mark conflict, on the same scale, how much conflict is there in your relationship about who should be in charge in each of the following areas.

	Male	Female	Conflict
1. General Decisions	___	___	___
2. Money Matters	___	___	___
3. Demonstration of Affection	___	___	___
4. Raising Children	___	___	___
5. Religious Matters	___	___	___
6. Household Matters	___	___	___

7. Leisure Activities	___	___	___
8. Personal Interests	___	___	___
9. Social Activity, Friends	___	___	___
10. The Use of Time	___	___	___

**Finely as the Savior said, “Come let us reason together as one man reasons with another.” D&C 50:10-12. Our whole goal is working together to becoming one as the Father and Son are one.**