

# Fiance'/Fiancee' Communication

## Awareness Checklist

Be sure to talk about these things with your partner **BEFORE** you marry. Chances are you may be surprised by what you learn. If you are not sure about how to start, try using one of the 5-Ws (who, what, why, when, where, and sometimes how?).

**CAUTION: don't discuss these items with your partner unless you sincerely want to assume the risks of discovering what he or she is truly like.**

### **MONEY MATTERS:**

- who controls checkbook?
- does fiancé' budget/do you?
- disposable income,
  - what is a need vs. want
  - have things or possessions
  - do things or experiences?
- personal cash, how much to each?

### **CAREERS:**

- college/training
  - who supports whom and when?
  - whose career takes precedence?

### **CHILDREN:**

- spacing, who decides?                      -birth control?
- discipline styles?                              -allowance, work ethic?
- gender roles?                                      -religious training of children?
- father-mother roles?

### **EXTENDED FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS:**

- holidays
- "ours," intimate versus everyone's knowledge?
- boundaries marriage and extended?
- dealing with differences of opinion?

### **HOUSEHOLD:**

- cleaning, what and when?
- division of inside and outside tasks?
- child care?

### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

- arguments resolution?                      -hurt feelings?
- expression of emotions?                      -expressing needs and wants?
- listening?

### **INTIMACY:**

- techniques?                                      -taboos or "no ways?"
- self-awareness?                                      -what does intimacy mean to relationship?
- parent's perspectives on intimacy?
- what is intimate and what is public information?
- PDA, public display of affection?

### **WEDDING PLANS:**

- what does or doesn't he, she want (I want)?
- traditions, rituals, honeymoon and financing?

# Marital Anxiety Attitudes Assessment

In this assessment think about your perceptions of marriage as they currently exist. If married try to think back on how you felt before you married. Answer T=True if the item is true for you and F=False if false. Consult the scoring key after having completed the assessment.

1. T/F I hope to marry in the next few years
2. T/F Marriage is a very risky thing
3. T/F I get scared every time someone close to me divorces
4. T/F I don't want to give up dating different people
5. T/F I am concerned that after the honeymoon is over, we will not get along so well
6. T/F I am concerned that I won't really be able to trust my spouse to be faithful to me
7. T/F Getting married means being stuck with the same sexual partner
8. T/F Way too many marriages end up in divorce
9. T/F I look forward to the deeper levels of intimacy that occur in marriage
10. T/F I am afraid that my spouse will get sloppy and unattractive over time
11. T/F Most people can't tell what their marriage partner will really be like after the wedding
12. T/F My spouse will probably respect me over the years
13. T/F I don't want to have arguments when I marry
14. T/F I am afraid that someday I might get divorced
15. T/F Marriage has too many problems built into it
16. T/F Marriage means being stuck with the same person forever
17. T/F Marriage is really a constant power struggle
18. T/F If I marry, my personal growth will be stifled
19. T/F Marriage will enhance my career plans
20. T/F In marriage, needs such as love, friendship, and sex are met better than when single
21. T/F It doesn't take much to break up a marriage
22. T/F Marriage commitments are overwhelming
23. T/F Financial support of a marriage and family is extremely costly
24. T/F Children are an enormous responsibility
25. T/F Married people don't have a lot of fun
26. T/F I'll never find my ideal mate
27. T/F Many factors beyond our control lead to marital break up
28. T/F Marriage means an eventual loss of passion and sensuality
29. T/F Marriage facilitates more time shared with the one you love
30. T/F Marriage provides emotional security and togetherness

**Scoring Key: 1-F,2-T,3-T,4-T,5-T,6-T,7-T,8-T,9-F,10-T,11-T,12-F,13-T,14-T,15-T,16-T,17-T,18-T,19-F,20-F,21-T,22-T,23-T,24-T,25-T,26-T,27-T,28-T,29-F,30-F.** Give yourself 1 point for each correct answer. This assessment is biased toward marital anxiety. A higher score indicates more anxiety or concern about marriage. Marital anxiety explains, in part, the higher median age at marriage in the U.S. Discuss your concerns with your partner, family, or friend. What is their reaction to your concerns? What are their concerns? Do you think your concerns might change over time?

Do the findings from this assessment accurately reflect you, your expectations, and your life experience? Why?