

Marriage • Parenting • Spiritual Growth • Sexuality • Relationships • Mental Health
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a resource in:

Marriage

Topic Areas For Couples Considering Marriage



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Topic Areas For Couples Considering Marriage

Directions: Below are a number of different areas for couples to consider when contemplating marriage. Please read through the categories and note which areas you feel are in order and any that need additional focus.

1. **Spiritual Oneness**

- Are you able to understand and apply God's design for marriage to your lives?
- Do you understand and encourage your future spouse's relationship with God?
- Are you able to understand and blend your spiritual gifts as a couple?
- What's your understanding of Scripture reading, devotional time, prayer, worship, and service as a couple?

2. **Expectations**

- What are some myths people have about marriage?
- Do you know the difference between optimism and being overly idealistic?

3. **Communication**

- You can talk, but can you communicate?
- Do you know how to use the speaker-listener technique?
- Do you have ideas about what can get in the way of good communication (filters)?
- Do you understand communication cycles in marriage and how stress affects them?

4. **Conflict Resolution**

- Do you view conflict as a positive force for change or destructive marriage killer?
- What is the importance of these warning signs: escalation, withdrawal, invalidation, negative interpretation, criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling?
- Are you able to separate issues from events?
- What do you know about avoiding the Pursuer/Distancer trap?

5. **Personality and Temperament**

- What are your complementary and contradictory traits?
- How will your personality types affect your communication and decision-making?
- How can you build bridges through differences rather than allowing them to separate you?

6. **Finances**

- What are your thoughts on setting up a realistic budget?
- How will you deal with hidden issues that can emerge through finances (e.g., power, impulse control, security)?
- What is a reasonable standard of living, and can you be content with your financial situation?
- How will you show good stewardship of your assets and strive to be aware of the dangers of debt?

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7. Understanding Love, Affection, and Love Languages

- Do you understand a three-sided model of love (commitment, emotional intimacy, and passion) and how each side reflects a different aspect of God's design for marriage?
- What are your ideas about giving and receiving affection?
- Do you know each other's love language?

8. Your Family of Origin

- Are you able to recognize that you each come from different backgrounds?
- How do you feel about "leaving and cleaving" – separating from your individual families and becoming reliant upon each other?
- What are your thoughts on developing family traditions and dealing with holidays?
- How do you feel about joining a new family and developing good relationships with your in-laws?
- How will you deal with any unhealthy family relationships?

9. Gender Differences

- What is your understanding of the differences between males and females?
- What are some ways you can manage differences in communication, problem solving, and emotions?
- Do you understand how males and females view love and respect in marriage?

10. Sexuality

- Do you see the importance of maintaining godly, healthy boundaries during your engagement?
- How well do you understand God's design of the spiritual, physical, emotional, and relational dimensions of sexuality?
- How well do you understand male and female sexual anatomy, physiology, response, and needs?
- How will you go about developing healthy expectations for the honeymoon?

11. Roles, Responsibilities, and Decision-making

- How will you decide who is going to do what in the home?
- How will spiritual leadership and submission work in your marriage?
- How will decisions be made?

12. Friends and Leisure Time Activities

- How will you spend your free time?
- How will you balance time spent alone and together?
- Who are your shared friends?
- How do you feel about opening your home to others?

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13. **Schooling, Jobs, and Career**

- How can you take your current plans, as singles, and blend them into a shared vision for your future?
- How open are you to discussing and making plans for finances, possible moves or changes, social support, etc.?

14. **Children**

- How will you prepare to be a parent?
- How many children would you like? How soon?
- What are your ideas on raising children?

15. **Marriage Mentoring**

- What are your thoughts on learning from more experienced, mentor couples?
- How do you feel about having postmarital checkups?

16. **Plans for Enrichment in Marriage**

- Where are you headed as a couple?
- What will you do to keep growing together?
- How will you know when you need to step back and refocus?