



PREDICTING

MARITAL

HAPPINESS

12 Lessons

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Marital Success or failure cannot be absolutely predicted. However, sufficient progress has been made in research in the field of marriage and family life that one can be reasonably sure about his proposed marriage. Strength and weakness can be detected at the outset and evaluated if the couple is willing to take time for study, testing, and counseling. The following material will help you make a start in discovering important matters concerning your marriage.

I. WHY PEOPLE MARRY

(Please circle the number that best describes your feelings in each)

1 – Important

2 – Rather Important

3 – Of Little Importance

4 – Not a Consideration

1 2 3 4 a) **The Need for Companionship.** After one has left his family he feels the need of establishing a home of his own in which there will be sharing of thought, play, work, and relationships of love.

1 2 3 4 b) **Home Life and Children.** One wants a home in which children will be born and reared, and where a community of love can be established.

1 2 3 4 c) **Economic Reasons.** A girl may want financial security in life and being married will help her attain this. A man is more desirable to an employer and may be advanced more rapidly if he is married.

1 2 3 4 d) **Social Status.** Married life increases one's social status in the community and makes him more acceptable.

1 2 3 4 e) **Escape.** Some marry to escape an unhappy situation: in home life; an unfortunate romance, a failure in school, a failure in a job, etc.

1 2 3 4 f) **Social Expectancy.** There may be a feeling that single life is not socially acceptable in your community. Parents may want you to be married.

1 2 3 4 g) **Conquest and Achievement.** The prospective mate is desired by many others and getting him or her is quite a feather in one's cap.

1 2 3 4 h) **Physical Attraction.**

1 2 3 4 i) **Infatuation.**

II. AREAS THAT MAINLY AFFECT MARITAL HAPPINESS

(Please answer YES or NO in the following blanks and make whatever notes you care to in the margin)

A. Background and Home Life:

- _____ 1. Are your cultural backgrounds the same or similar?
- _____ 2. Were your parents happily married?
- _____ 3. Were your parents kind and understanding, but consistent in discipline, and firm but not overly strict or severe?
- _____ 4. Was your childhood happy?
- _____ 5. Was it free from conflict with father and mother?
- _____ 6. Do your parents think it is a mature love and approve of your upcoming marriage?

B. Personality:

- _____ 1. Is your disposition one of happiness?
- _____ 2. Are you emotionally as well as physically mature?
- _____ 3. Do you have a capacity for love?
- _____ 4. Are there qualities that make you easy to love?
- _____ 5. Do people like you and have you made many friends?
- _____ 6. Do your personalities blend rather than clash?

C. Educational and Cultural Level and Mental Capacity:

- _____ 1. Are you reasonably close together in amount of education?
- _____ 2. Do you think and talk about the same things?
- _____ 3. Are you somewhere near the same level of mental ability?
- _____ 4. Do you have many major interests in common?
- _____ 5. Do you enjoy doing a great variety of things together?

D. Sex Education and Attitude:

- _____ 1. Did your parents teach sex frankly and naturally?
- _____ 2. Is there a wholesome attitude towards sex, free from fear, disgust, or aversion?
- _____ 3. Have you read good books on sex education?
- _____ 4. Have you had a normal development of sexual maturity?

E. Understanding of and preparation for marriage:

- _____ 1. Have you attended a course in marriage and the family?
- _____ 2. Has your background been a good example for your marriage and home?
- _____ 3. Have you read a good book on preparing for marriage?
- _____ 4. Will there be counseling with a doctor and a physical examination before marriage?

F. Ideals about Home Life:

- _____ 1. Is the establishment of a home that will be a community of love and creative living of greatest importance to you?
- _____ 2. Is there a desire for children?
- _____ 3. Do you enjoy working around the home to make it more attractive and enjoyable?
- _____ 4. Will you work hard to bring economic security to the family?
- _____ 5. Is there agreement about family planning?
- _____ 6. Can you accept the standard of living which you are likely to have?

G. Religious Faith and Practice:

- _____ 1. Have you had religious training in Sunday School?
- _____ 2. Is your church attendance regular?
- _____ 3. Do you have real religious interest?
- _____ 4. Do you have a deep religious faith that will sustain you in times of difficulty or trouble?
- _____ 5. Do you possess qualities of responsibility, honesty, loyalty, trustworthiness, high ideals?
- _____ 6. Are you appreciative rather than critical, ready to forgive and not hold grudges, and more eager to give happiness than to seek it in a selfish spirit?

III. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO MARITAL RELATIONSHIP

1. (Girl) What are my skills as a homemaker? Will I be business-like in household finance?
2. (Boy) Do I have an appreciation of a wife's effort to prepare well-balanced meals and make the home attractive and cheerful?
3. (Boy) Am I capable of holding a job and providing for a home and family? Will I be willing to do my share of the work of creating a home and rearing children?
4. (Both) Will I love home life and give it the thought and care it deserves?
5. (Both) Do I have an attitude toward sex that is favorable to the finest relationship?
6. (Both) Do I love children and want them? How many?
7. (Boy) Will I be more interested in cultural and spiritual pursuits than in making money?
8. (Girl) Will I be interested in and sympathetic with his vocation and business affairs?
9. (Girl) Will I work or have a career? If so, have we planned our future in light of this fact?
- 10.(Both) Have we adjusted our religious differences satisfactorily?
- 11.(Both) Have we found a church that we both can become a part of its life and work?
- 12.(Both) What are the educational differences between us and what adjustments will they require?
- 13.(Both) Have we talked about the budget and agreed on how money will be handled?

14. (Both) Have I dealt with anything in my past that might rise up later and cause a misunderstanding or difficulty in my married life?
15. (Both) Do we intend to continue the ways of courtship after marriage?
16. (Both) Will I treat the other's relatives as my own? What if one becomes dependant?
17. (Both) Will I take the attitude that the other's friends are mine also?
18. (Both) Will I be willing to let the other go out with friends even when it means I will be alone?
19. (Both) What recreational pursuits will we enjoy together?
20. (Both) Have we found a way to get along even when we disagree and through our disagreements to learn to understand each other better?
21. (Both) Will I continue to work on personality adjustment after marriage?
22. (Both) What sort of religious practices will we follow in our home? (Prayer, Bible or Devotional reading, Religious education)?
23. (Both) Will I say "I love you" to the other often and show I mean it by my actions?
24. (Both) Will we continue to study the subject of married life throughout the years to come? In what way?
25. (Boy) How much insurance do I carry? What is my plan for future insurance?
26. (Both) Do we have a plan for savings?
27. (Both) Will parents try to interfere or dominate our lives, or give us the amount of freedom and independence we need for our future happiness?

PREDICTING MARITAL HAPPINESS (#2)

Love is one of the key concepts in marriage. However, this term carries with it several ideas or understandings. The Greeks had different words to denote these ideas. They made distinctions between: (1) Love of family members, (2) Physical attraction, (3) Close friendships, and (4) The highest type of love which the New Testament attributes to God and His love for lost mankind. The following is an attempt to help evaluate the type of love you have for one another.

I. A LOOK AT LOVE IN MARRIAGE

(Please circle the number that best describes your feeling)

- 1 – Definitely yes.
- 2 – I believe so.
- 3 – Not sure.
- 4 – Probably not.
- 5 – Definitely no.

1 2 3 4 5 a) Do you find your love motivating you to make your loved one happy rather than leading you to seek your own happiness and satisfaction?

1 2 3 4 5 b) Do you think of all the things you are planning in terms of "we" rather than just what you want? Do you feel you want to marry for "partnership?"

1 2 3 4 5 c) Do you feel restful and at ease when you are together rather than being under a strain?

1 2 3 4 5 d) Can you talk together for hours about all sorts of things without getting bored?

1 2 3 4 5 e) Is there a sense of satisfaction in just knowing the other one is close by even though you may not be entertaining each other?

1 2 3 4 5 f) Do you enjoy working together on a common project?

1 2 3 4 5 g) Can you get a real sense of satisfaction out of discussing, even arguing, about something on which you differ?

- 1 2 3 4 5 h) When you are in the company of someone of the opposite sex, do you tend to remember the person you say you love, and feel a sense of nearness to him (her)?
- 1 2 3 4 5 i) Is there a strong physical attraction to the loved one?
- 1 2 3 4 5 j) Do you admire the person for what (he, she) is and what has been accomplished in life?
- 1 2 3 4 5 k) Are you proud to be seen with (him, her) in public and by your friends or relatives?
- 1 2 3 4 5 l) Do you enjoy being together even when you are not expressing love in a physical way?
- 1 2 3 4 5 m) Do you believe your love could weather the storms of financial distress, sickness and serious misunderstanding?
- 1 2 3 4 5 n) Do you share together devotion to common causes, goals and religious beliefs?
- 1 2 3 4 5 o) Is (he, she) eager to tell you the experiences of the day and to get your opinion on (his, her) plans and problems?
- 1 2 3 4 5 p) Is (he, she) always striving to put you in a favorable light when you are out among friends? Does (he, she) get a kick out of "showing you off?"
- 1 2 3 4 5 q) Has your love grown gradually to its present state?
- 1 2 3 4 5 r) Is there a certain aspect of your love for this other person which is beyond your ability to describe or completely understand?
- 1 2 3 4 5 s) Do you feel the person you love will meet your needs twenty-five years from now as much as or more than now? In other words, will your love stand the test of time?
- 1 2 3 4 5 t) Do you see in this person the qualities you want in your children?

- 1 2 3 4 5 u) Do you love each other with equal intensity and are you sure your love is not one-sided?
- 1 2 3 4 5 v) Is your love for the other person essentially the same as the other person's love for you? (No feeling that it is of a very different sort?)
- 1 2 3 4 5 w) Is your present love more satisfying than any feeling you have had before in a relationship with the opposite sex?
- 1 2 3 4 5 x) Is your love for the other person unselfish and free from the idea that you may be using (him, her) in a selfish way?
- 1 2 3 4 5 y) When you are with the other person, do you experience feelings of elation, energy, completeness, fulfillment? Does your relationship make you a better person?
- 1 2 3 4 5 z) Are there times when in the presence of the other person you feel reverent as if you were in the presence of something sacred, something to which you want to give yourself, devote yourself, cherish and protect always?

II. YOUR PERSONAL HAPPINESS SCORE

No man can live a satisfactory life without goals toward which he strives. But goals differ in value. A happy marriage can come when two people strive toward common goals and life satisfactions. When one finds his happiness in a way quite different from another, their paths will eventually lead them apart. When the goals and values are cherished in common and are of the highest type, lives will grow together. Satisfactions that come when two people move toward a common goal are gratifying experiences. Be perfectly frank in rating yourselves and face the results honestly.

(Circle the number that describes the relation of this condition to your personal happiness)

- 1 – Very important
- 2 – Important
- 3 – Doesn't matter
- 4 – Of little importance
- 5 – Not important

- 1 2 3 4 5 a) Financial success in your profession or business.
- 1 2 3 4 5 b) A position of leadership in which you have authority over others.
- 1 2 3 4 5 c) Being extremely popular.
- 1 2 3 4 5 d) Doing creative work in art, literature or music.
- 1 2 3 4 5 e) Rearing a family.
- 1 2 3 4 5 f) Working around the home.
- 1 2 3 4 5 g) Traveling and doing adventurous things.
- 1 2 3 4 5 h) Having strength and comfort from a deep religious faith.
- 1 2 3 4 5 i) Having the best furniture and expensive things.
- 1 2 3 4 5 j) A happy married life with children and pleasant home activities.
- 1 2 3 4 5 k) A vocation of a service nature in which you may help other people.
- 1 2 3 4 5 l) Performing an unusual experiment or inventing something important.
- 1 2 3 4 5 m) Becoming an authority on some subject.
- 1 2 3 4 5 n) Being active in politics.
- 1 2 3 4 5 o) Working closely with social problems.
- 1 2 3 4 5 p) Giving a large amount of your time to church work.
- 1 2 3 4 5 q) Making a happy home for your life partner.
- 1 2 3 4 5 r) Cultivating common friendships.

III. YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

The person you want as your friend is one who is basically happy and positive in attitude. The same should be true in your selection of a marriage partner. Ralph Waldo Emerson put it well, *"The best part of health is a fine disposition. Nothing will supply the want of sunshine to peaches. Whenever you are sincerely pleased you are nourished. The joy of spirit indicates its strength. All healthy things are sweet tempered."* It is the quality of health that is in "sweet temper," positive outlook, ability to be objective, and a courageous faith that one should try to develop in himself and look for in the person he marries. The statements in this section will help you understand and appreciate each other in this respect, and through a greater knowledge of yourselves, should help you in the adventure of living together.

YES NO

- 1) I believe that everything will work out all right in the end.
- 2) When I am in trouble I pray for strength and guidance.
- 3) I find the movies a real source of release when I am worried or tense.

YES NO

- _____ _____ 4) When I have a problem I seek counsel from one who is capable.
- _____ _____ 5) I find great peace in listening to beautiful music.
- _____ _____ 6) When I get the blues I go out and work hard and try to forget it.
- _____ _____ 7) Everything that happens in life is God's will and we should be resigned to it.
- _____ _____ 8) I find that a good cry helps me frequently.
- _____ _____ 9) When trouble arises I am not easily disturbed.
- _____ _____ 10) When I disagree with a friend I won't argue.
- _____ _____ 11) I believe that the chief purpose of life is to find God's will for myself and for society.
- _____ _____ 12) Thoughts about heaven help me in this life.
- _____ _____ 13) There are days when I feel very happy and again there are days when I feel very blue.
- _____ _____ 14) When I get a tough break I believe it is best to grin and bear it.
- _____ _____ 15) I fail to understand why there should be sorrow and evil in the world.
- _____ _____ 16) Sometimes I become angry and feel like throwing things.
- _____ _____ 17) I believe in doing good even for those who don't like me.
- _____ _____ 18) I am generally happy no matter what happens.
- _____ _____ 19) Life isn't important and shouldn't be regarded too seriously.
- _____ _____ 20) I am very confused and don't know what to believe.
- _____ _____ 21) I feel that most people can be trusted and will try to do right.
- _____ _____ 22) The prospects for the future are very discouraging.
- _____ _____ 23) What you believe is important to living.
- _____ _____ 24) Being affectionate in married life is being sentimental.
- _____ _____ 25) My philosophy could be expressed in *"Eat, Drink, and be Merry for tomorrow you may die."*
- _____ _____ 26) It is very difficult to find a real friend.
- _____ _____ 27) It is wonderful to be living in such exciting times as these.
- _____ _____ 28) Few people really love their fellowmen.
- _____ _____ 29) Attending church gives me a lift.
- _____ _____ 30) In this world it is every man for himself.
- _____ _____ 31) I find myself worrying about my problems.
- _____ _____ 32) Sometimes I feel shy and inferior.
- _____ _____ 33) I can be optimistic even when those around me are depressed.
- _____ _____ 34) I avoid getting help or encouragement from others.
- _____ _____ 35) I experience keen pleasure by doing things for other people.
- _____ _____ 36) The Golden Rule is a good principle by which to live .

PREDICTING MARITAL HAPPINESS (#3)

People marry for many reasons. Possibly the most important reason is that one has found a person who will be a true and loving companion through the years. This feeling of mutuality which endures and binds marriage partners together comes from a variety of qualities each brings to the marriage. Before marriage it is helpful to explore these areas with your prospective husband or wife. This will help you to know and understand each other better. And an appreciation of your differences and similarities will aid you in making adjustments and living together harmoniously as life companions.

I. TASTES AND OPINIONS

No two people will agree perfectly in this area, but a difference of opinion adds zest to a friendship. The ability to differ and be friends, to argue constructively on an issue is a definite sign of maturity. However, it is helpful to learn to appreciate the other person's points of view and the reasons that he holds them. By so doing, people find a deep harmony. There is also great delight in finding that the other person thinks the way you do and enjoys doing some things exactly as you do. It is hoped that these experiences will be had while you work with this material in this section. The points that follow will help to show the likenesses and the differences. Where the differences are great they will call for growth toward better understanding and a common mind.

(Please circle the number that best describes your feeling)

- 1 – Yes
- 2 – Probably
- 3 – Not sure
- 4 – Probably not
- 5 – No

- 1 2 3 4 5 a) The enjoyment of food is one of life's chief pleasures.
- 1 2 3 4 5 b) I like antique furniture better than modern design.
- 1 2 3 4 5 c) Bargain sales are particularly attractive to me.
- 1 2 3 4 5 d) There is a lot of truth in "*Clothes make the man.*"
- 1 2 3 4 5 e) It is quite all right to borrow money whenever it is needed.

- 1 2 3 4 5 f) I prefer eating out several times a week.
- 1 2 3 4 5 g) I believe in writing my congressmen about a social, economic, or political problem which I think is important.
- 1 2 3 4 5 h) My idea of an ideal summer vacation is taking a long trip to see the country.
- 1 2 3 4 5 i) I am a frequent attender at musical concerts
- 1 2 3 4 5 j) I prefer opera to musical comedy.
- 1 2 3 4 5 k) Forums or meetings of public interest receive my enthusiastic support and attendance.
- 1 2 3 4 5 l) When I am with friends we frequently discuss social problems. I will fight for passage of laws which I think necessary.
- 1 2 3 4 5 m) I read the editorials of my newspaper regularly.
- 1 2 3 4 5 n) I am interested in problems of juvenile delinquency in my community.
- 1 2 3 4 5 o) I have helped or would help to eliminate racial discrimination in my community.
- 1 2 3 4 5 p) I believe the greatest threat to the world is socialism.
- 1 2 3 4 5 q) Socialism offers some solutions to our present-day problems.
- 1 2 3 4 5 r) I think another world war is inevitable.
- 1 2 3 4 5 s) I am very careful to find out the nature of a motion picture before attending it.
- 1 2 3 4 5 t) I believe that the church is absolutely necessary for the good of the world.
- 1 2 3 4 5 u) Sometime in the future I would like to do jury service.
- 1 2 3 4 5 v) Ministers of churches should avoid preaching about economic and political questions.
- 1 2 3 4 5 w) I am against picketing by any group.
- 1 2 3 4 5 x) People with large incomes should be taxed heavily.
- 1 2 3 4 5 y) I should attend church three or more times a month.
- 1 2 3 4 5 z) The amount of profit a person can make should be limited by the government.
- 1 2 3 4 5 A) I believe that the Republican party is more nearly right than the Democratic party.
- 1 2 3 4 5 B) When reading a newspaper I am more apt to read the comic strips, sport section or society page before reading the front page articles or the editorials.
- 1 2 3 4 5 C) I believe in buying only the best quality clothes.
- 1 2 3 4 5 D) I believe in "*keeping up with the Joneses.*"
- 1 2 3 4 5 E) One should try to be acquainted with all his neighbors.
- 1 2 3 4 5 F) I like to go out of my way to help others and to make friends.

II. HOBBIES AND LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

Someone has estimated that every couple, to have a good marriage, should have six or more interests in common. Couples with less than six are apt to find difficulties in enjoying their leisure time together. A great amount of marital happiness comes from cooperative ventures in work and play. Tension and fatigue are relieved to a considerable extent. A hike in the woods, a game of tennis, a good play or concert, a project for church or community enjoyed together can contribute much to people by way of making minds and attitudes more healthy and bodies more vigorous. Before marriage, two people who already have interests in common can develop still more. Use this section to survey the present situation and to start on the road of development toward more common interests and activities.

(Circle the number that describes your feeling)

- 1 – Like intensely
- 2 – Enjoy
- 3 – Can take or leave
- 4 – Don't care for
- 5 – Dislike intensely

- | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|------------------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | a) Bowling | 1 2 3 4 5 | s) Writing poetry or short stories |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | b) Dramatics | 1 2 3 4 5 | t) Movies |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | c) Amusement Park | 1 2 3 4 5 | u) Plays or Opera |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | d) Running a Nursery School | 1 2 3 4 5 | v) Reading magazines |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | e) Painting | 1 2 3 4 5 | w) Watching TV |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | f) Bridge (or card playing) | 1 2 3 4 5 | x) Horseback riding |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | g) Reading books | 1 2 3 4 5 | y) Clubs or organizations |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | h) Conversation with friends and family | 1 2 3 4 5 | z) Teaching a Bible Class |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | i) Attending church functions | 1 2 3 4 5 | A) Picnics |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | j) Parties | 1 2 3 4 5 | B) Playing a musical instrument |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | k) Tennis | 1 2 3 4 5 | C) Attending sports contests |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | l) Attending an auction sale | 1 2 3 4 5 | D) Symphony concerts |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | m) Golf | 1 2 3 4 5 | E) Attending a bargain sale |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | n) Swimming | 1 2 3 4 5 | F) Traveling |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | o) Visiting relatives | 1 2 3 4 5 | G) Photography |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | p) Hiking | 1 2 3 4 5 | H) Wood carving |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | q) Sewing or knitting | | |

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 I) Writing poetry or short stories | 1 2 3 4 5 (O) Fishing and hunting |
| 1 2 3 4 5 J) Personal Meditation | 1 2 3 4 5 (P) Volunteer social service work |
| 1 2 3 4 5 K) Working in a flower or vegetable garden | 1 2 3 4 5 (Q) Attending lectures |
| 1 2 3 4 5 L) Window shopping | 1 2 3 4 5 (R) Visiting a night club |
| 1 2 3 4 5 M) Art exhibits | 1 2 3 4 5 (S) Aeronautics |
| 1 2 3 4 5 N) Writing letters | 1 2 3 4 5 (T) Stamp collecting |

YOUR LISTENING, READING AND VIEWING PLEASURE

This section should prove interesting since radio and television seem to play such an important part in present day life. The reading and discussion of books or articles in current periodicals is always a pleasant experience. Perhaps tastes can grow together here with proper thought and planning. And certainly if one wants to listen to a symphony concert while the other prefers Country music, this ought to be known and an adjustment made ahead of time.

(Circle the number that describes your feeling)

- 1 – Like intensely
- 2 – Enjoy
- 3 – Can take or leave
- 4 – Don't care for
- 5 – Dislike intensely

A. Your listening and viewing pleasure

B. Your reading pleasure

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 a) World News | 1 2 3 4 5 a) World News |
| 1 2 3 4 5 b) Metropolitan Opera | 1 2 3 4 5 b) Crime stories |
| 1 2 3 4 5 c) Comedians | 1 2 3 4 5 c) Local events |
| 1 2 3 4 5 d) Jazz music | 1 2 3 4 5 d) Reader's Digest |
| 1 2 3 4 5 e) Baseball game | 1 2 3 4 5 e) Detective magazines |
| 1 2 3 4 5 f) Travel talk | 1 2 3 4 5 f) Comic magazines |
| 1 2 3 4 5 g) Country music | 1 2 3 4 5 g) Popular novels |
| 1 2 3 4 5 h) Football | 1 2 3 4 5 h) True romances, etc. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 i) Political speeches | 1 2 3 4 5 i) Religious magazines |
| 1 2 3 4 5 j) Mystery program | 1 2 3 4 5 j) Time |
| 1 2 3 4 5 k) Household hints or recipes | 1 2 3 4 5 k) Mystery stories |

- 1 2 3 4 5 l) "Soap Operas"
- 1 2 3 4 5 m) Talent show
- 1 2 3 4 5 n) Quiz program
- 1 2 3 4 5 o) Commentary on world news
- 1 2 3 4 5 p) Church services

- 1 2 3 4 5 l) Technical books
- 1 2 3 4 5 m) Travel books
- 1 2 3 4 5 n) Adventure stories
- 1 2 3 4 5 o) Biography
- 1 2 3 4 5 p) Humor magazines
- 1 2 3 4 5 q) Philosophy
- 1 2 3 4 5 r) The "Classics"
- 1 2 3 4 5 s) Religious books
- 1 2 3 4 5 t) Book-of-the-month selection

