









# Home-Base Mentoring

## Relational History and Spousal Qualities

This section of the Marriage Expectation Inventory is devoted to the examination of previous relationships or a prior marriage. It is intended that this review will have you consider the factors involved in those relationships. This

will enable you to contrast those relationships to your current relationship. Further, an open discussion with your partner about these relationships will help you build a more secure marriage. It will help you avoid future revelations that could cause hurt, mistrust or embarrassment.

1. Have you been married before? Have you previously had a common-law relationship? Have you lived together with someone?
  - 1.1. How long were you together?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 1.2. What was the cause of the break-up?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 1.3. What were the factors that drew you into this relationship?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 1.4. Was sexual intercourse involved in this/these relationship(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 1.5. Have you discussed your sexual history with your partner? \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. How much time has elapsed between your last significant relationship and your relationship with your partner? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you believe this time to be adequate? \_\_\_\_\_





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13. What concern or doubt do you have about yourself or your partner in your marriage (current or upcoming)? How are you working on resolving this doubt or concern?
14. What are your role expectations in marriage? (i.e., “who will do what?”) Some areas to consider:
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reconciler (quick to forgive)      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gardening and other outdoor chores |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiator in love making           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Driving the “family taxi”          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Money managing and bill paying     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooking the meals                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spiritual leading                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Primary parent                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shopping for clothes and groceries | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Money earner                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relating to the in-laws            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning the holidays              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home maintaining                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Helper to others                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social scheduling                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographing the family history   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cleaning the house                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dealing with neighbours            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership outside the house       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Working the computer               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiating conflicts               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing the letters                |









## Home-Base Mentoring Personal Communication

There are probably more books written on personal communication in marriage than any other subject (sexual affection may be a close second). Many newly married couples believe that they were communicating effectively during their engagement and early months of marriage. They find that they have been able to plan their wedding, determine where to live, and establish who will do what during the first few months. After several months of marriage they may find that there are a lot more decisions and details to work through than had been anticipated. Therefore, learning to communicate effectively with one another can eliminate many of the stresses that might otherwise arise.

1. How would you like your partner to tell you and show you that you are appreciated?
2. What is the best thing about your present communication?
3. What is most aggravating about your present communication?

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4. How would you prefer your partner to request changes in some of the things that you do or say?

5. When do you feel listened to by your partner (mark as many as apply)?

- Lets me talk without interruption.
- Agrees with what I am saying.
- Lets me say anything I want (within okay limits).
- Smiles at me when I talk.
- Faces me squarely and looks into my eyes (this can be hard when you are driving)
- Doesn't get angry with me or reactive to me.
- Lets me do what is important to me.
- Asks questions and makes comments.
- Changes his / her mind to understand me.
- Puts away busyness (the TV or web surfing, etc.) to focus in.
- Tries to identify with my feelings.
- Values my opinion more than our friends or family.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_







## Home-Base Mentoring Conflicting, Fighting and Being Hurt

This section of the inventory focuses on one aspect of communication — conflict. The importance of this review is to help you identify some of the causes of being hurt and the feelings you experience in fighting or being hurt.

But before you get busy, here is our bias on this – we think that conflict is normal (that is, it happens in even the best relationships) and that it can motivate you to change and grow. Hence, conflict is not all bad.

1. When I have been hurt by something my partner has said or done, I (mark as many as apply):
  - Withdraw from my partner
  - Do something to hurt him/her
  - Get angry at him/her
  - Play the martyr
  - Pretend everything is fine
  - Drop hints
  - Get in a “mood” or pout
  - Wait till he/she initiates forgiveness
  
2. The reason I respond like this is (mark as many as apply):
  - To clear the air
  - To get my partner to listen
  - Because we're too different
  - Making up is so nice
  - The pressure piles up
  - I want attention
  - We can't agree
  - I want something very much
  - I have a short temper
  - He/she starts it
  - Nothing else works

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3. I am most hurt by my partner when he/she (mark as many as apply):
- Pays more attention to work than me
  - Puts another relationship first
  - Is careless about money
  - Doesn't keep up his / her appearance
  - Embarrasses me publicly
  - Does all the talking
  - Leaves everything up to me
  - Doesn't listen to me
  - Goes out too much with friends
  - Doesn't give me any space/peace
  - Says "no" to sexual advances
4. The worst things about our disagreements are (mark as many as apply):
- Name calling
  - Physical violence
  - Never finishing
  - Hard to apologise
  - Bringing up the past
  - I always lose
  - They're so frequent
  - They last too long
  - We never solve the problem
  - They are vengeful
  - My feelings are hurt
5. "Fighting fairly" is (please define what you think it is):

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6. How would you describe your way of handling conflict? How would you describe your partner's way of handling conflict? How would you describe your parents' way of handling conflict?

	You Win	You Lose
Partner Wins	Win / Win	Win / Lose
Partner Loses	Lose / Win	Lose /Lose

7. When there was fighting in your family of origin (the family you grew up in), you would (describe what you would do):

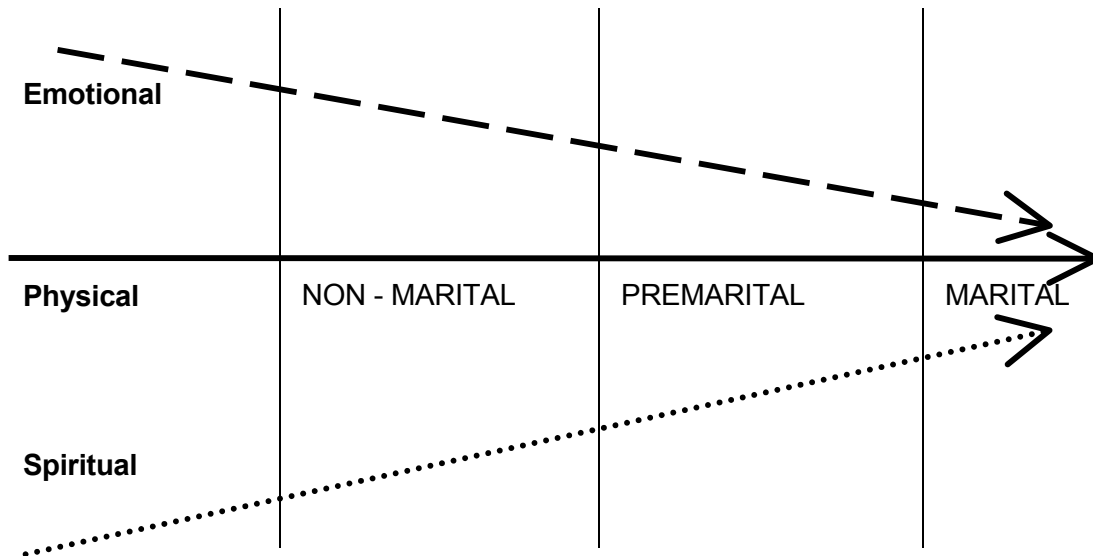
8. The key to handling conflict in marriage is (this is your opinion):





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8. Below is a chart of the development of the emotional, sexual and spiritual aspects of your relationship. Note the greater distance between the three factors at the beginning of your relationship.



9. What do you think is the difference between non-marital and premarital? What is the difference between premarital and marital?
10. Where is your relationship on this chart? For example, is your physical relationship in the "marital" area and your spiritual in the non-marital or before?
11. Is there any part of your relationship that seems "out of line" to you?
12. What is the relationship between your sexual expression and your emotional life? Your spiritual life?





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## Weekly Experience Record

Life for everybody is difficult sometimes. The following chart gives you the opportunity of talking about "when it gets bad." Your mentors know that it is not bad all the time. On the following chart, show where you feel each of you fit in terms of the item mentioned. Write your first

initial in the cell whether the descriptor is rare for you, moderate for you, frequent for you. Do the same for your partner using his / her initial.

Weekly Experience	Rarely	Moderately	Frequently
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anger, irritability, frustration			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anxiety, worry, fear, dread			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guilt, self-condemnation			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hopelessness, despair			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loneliness, isolation, cut-off			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Helplessness, weak			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-pity, "poor me"			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inferiority, worthlessness			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Avoiding responsibility			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undisciplined, procrastinating			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attacking, defending			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Withdrawing, quitting			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abusing alcohol or drugs			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overeating			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smoking			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual frustrations, upsets			







# Home-Base Mentoring

## Interests I / We Have

Friendship is a natural basis for marriage. Here we intend to explore both your combined and separate interests, believing that both are important in your relationship.

1. Please list at least five interests or activities that you and your partner share. How frequently would you engage in this activity? (Feel free to use the in-between dashes!)

Daily - Weekly - Monthly - Less Frequently (List Activity or Interest)

- 1.1. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.2. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.3. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.4. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.5. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please list at least five interests or activities that one of you hold but the other does not. Please identify if you or your partner hold this. How frequently is it engaged in? (Feel free to use the in-between dashes!)

Daily - Weekly - Monthly - Less Frequently (List Activity or Interest)

- 2.1. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.2. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.3. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.4. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.5. D - W - M - LF \_\_\_\_\_

3. Prioritise, from the following items, your marital priorities (#1 being most important, #10 being least important).

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- \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoyment and relaxation as a couple or as a family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Community involvement, active in society
- \_\_\_\_\_ Marriage, in enrichment, problem solving, couple dialogue, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Self, in personal growth, relaxation, sports, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to God in prayer, worship, church involvement
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual satisfaction and freedom in marriage
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting ahead financially and "making it"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Work, vocation or studies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Developing meaningful friendships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Children and their development

4. Is there one or more shared or separate interest that might result in conflict or tension in your relationship?

5. Why might this be a source of tension?

6. Do your hobbies involve others that are not acceptable to your spouse?



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- Gifts (Christmas, birthday, anniversaries)
- Cell phone, gym pass or other lifestyle expenses
- Other giving
- Savings
- Loan repayment
- Job enrichment
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Suppose after you are married you suffer a significant financial setback. What areas would you be willing to cut back in (list your major 3 or 4)?

5. Assume you both are employed outside the home because you need two incomes to make ends meet. Then you are laid off and there is no work available in your field in that city. What would you do?

- Move?
- Go back to school and retrain?
- Reduce your standard of living?
- Take any job?
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What are your thoughts on an individual who is trained in a vocation or profession, wanting to change to a new career, which entails several years of schooling?

7. How do you feel about the wife / mother (or husband / father) working outside the home after you have children?



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Miserly ←————→ Extravagant

13. How would you describe your spouse in terms of spending habits?

Frugal  
Miserly ←————→ Spendthrift  
Extravagant

14. How would you like to be in terms of your spending habits?

Frugal  
Miserly ←————→ Spendthrift  
Extravagant

15. Describe your relationship together —

Frugal  
Miserly ←————→ Spendthrift  
Extravagant

16. Do you have a will? (When are you planning to draw up a will? You are planning, aren't you?)



# Home-Base Mentoring

## Children and Expectations

It used to be said that couples had kids to save a broken marriage. It also was said that couples should together for the good of their children. Well... both are true! Many

couples do find themselves pregnant when they want a better marriage. And it is a great idea to stay together for the good of the kids. Their style of staying together is in your control too – will you be miserable and married? It is up to you.

1. Describe some of your best memories as being a child? Would you think of your childhood as “happy”?
2. Do you plan to have children? If so, how many kids would you like to have?
3. If you could not have kids how would you handle that (or how have you handled that)?
4. If you plan to have kids, when would you like to have your first, and what do you figure is the best spacing between children?







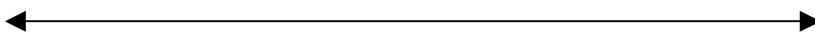
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## Our Spiritual Relationship

1. Briefly describe your relationship with God.

2. How would you describe your spiritual life:

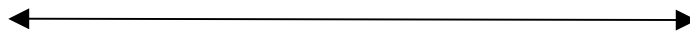
Very important  
Vital



Not my thing  
Not interested

3. How would you describe your spiritual life together as a couple:

Important to both of us  
Vital to our lives



Not very important  
Not involved

4. Do you feel spiritually equal to your partner? Are you intimidated in any way by your partner's spirituality?







# Home-Base Mentoring

## For Those Previously Married

Some couples who come to us for premarital / marital mentoring have been married or lived common law prior to this covenant. There are some particular issues that these couples will need to face. These questions are intended to

assist you in talking about some of these issues.

### 1. Economic

- 1.1. What do you know about your partner's financial situation; including debts, assets, alimony payments, child support and child care expenses?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 1.2. What will your partner bring from his / her previous household arrangements in terms of furnishings and possessions? How does this affect your feelings of "theirs" and "ours"?

### 2. Legal

- 2.1. What has your partner organised in terms of insurance and will?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2.2. What legal obligations (financial, other) does your spouse bring into the marriage?

### 3. Co-Parental

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- 3.1. Contact with a former spouse can be upsetting. How does your partner cope with interactions with his / her "ex"? Your "ex"? And your former spouse's family - on both sides?
  
- 3.2. What plans do you have regarding legal guardianship, adoption of stepchildren, and / or conception of new children in your marriage?
  
- 3.3. What do you know about the personality and behaviour of your partner's children?
  
- 3.4. How will you integrate them into your new life together? What will your role be with your spouse's children (i.e. discipline)?

### **4. Emotional**

- 4.1. What sorts of feelings did your partner go through when his / her previous relationship dissolved? Which ones were hardest to cope with? How does your partner cope with these now?
  
- 4.2. What are the unresolved issues in your previous marriage?





# Home-Base Mentoring

## For Those Marrying Cross-Culturally

Every marriage is a cross-cultural experience because each person comes from a family that has its own culture — its own way to doing everything from celebrating holidays to settling disagreements. When the premarital couple comes from different identifiable cultural or ethnic groupings, extra care needs to be taken to understand how diverse ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving (i.e. culture) affect assumptions and values about marriage.

Many people approaching marriage are not aware of how their own culture and family values shape their marital expectations. Neither are they aware of the extent to which a spouse's different cultural background will make the adjustment to couple hood more complex. This is an issue where we live. British Columbia's three million people include sixty distinct cultural groups and seventy distinct language groups. The following questionnaire is meant to help a cross-cultural couple become aware of the issues they face.

### 1. Cultural Profile

1.1. What "traditional" beliefs or values or ideals exist in your culture concerning marriage and family?

1.2. How would you describe your culture on the following continuum:

Collectivistic   ←—————→   Individualistic  
Loyalty to family primary                      Personal well-being primary

1.3. How did this value (as 1.2 above) express itself in your family?

1.4. What was the normal practice in your culture with regard to —

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- Changing or retaining one's name when getting married?
- Who is expected to adapt the most in marriage (e.g. Is the woman expected to enter into the man's life and into his family and thus adapt more than the man)?
- Who was the “actual” leader in your family?

1.5. Marriage roles — how would you describe the structure of marriage and family from your cultural background?

Hierarchical ←—————→ Egalitarian

1.6. How did this value (as in 1.5 above) express itself in your family?

1.7. How was a sense of harmony and well being (i.e. where mutual well-being was valued most) experienced in your family?

With the extended family ←—————→ In privacy  
When we were all “there” As a couple or individuals

1.8. How would you describe the role of your extended family (grandparents, cousins, etc.) in your culture?

1.9. How was this cultural role value (1.8 above) expressed in your family?

## 2. Family Profile

2.1. Profile your family in terms of where you "fit" in your culture re:

- Socio-economic status
- Level of education

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- Language ability
  - Rural or urban background
  - Religious commitments and practice
- 2.2. What family holidays or traditions are celebrated? What is expected of you at these family times? What role would be exercised by grandparents, parents, children? Discuss the importance of loyalty to the family in your answers.
- 2.3. How were disagreements settled?
- 2.4. Who cared for the children's emotional needs? Who was responsible for discipline?
- 2.5. Who held authority?
- 2.6. Discuss the impact of religious practice on any of the above.

### 3. **Communication Profile**

- 3.1. What would the following gestures mean in your culture and family —
- Eye contact
  - Avoiding eye contact
  - Smiling
  - Crying
  - Talking about personal feelings
  - Silence
- 3.2. What topics are considered taboo in family, among couples?

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3.3. In decision-making is it important to consult your family? If so, give an example.

3.4. Are conflicts resolved with or without family input?

### **4. Couple Profile**

4.1. What is "assumed" to be the meaning and purpose of marriage in your culture? In your family?

4.2. Is socializing in your culture normally done as a couple or individually?

4.3. Is closeness and intimacy valued or not valued in marriage in your culture? What about personal fulfillment as a by-product of marriage?

4.4. What do you notice about the ways of thinking, acting, and speaking in your partner's culture that are different from your culture?

4.5. Seeking out marriage counselling in your culture would be a sign of . . .

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### 5. Sexual Profile

5.1. What are the sexual standards in your culture and in your family re

- Virginity
- Promiscuity
- Keeping a mistress
- Privacy
- Double standards
- Other:

5.2. What sexual standards did your family follow?