



Counseling for Second Marriages

(Especially for older couples, i.e. widower and widow)

History & Memories

1. Have you shared with each other concerning your previous marriage and mate?
2. How did your previous marriage end? Death or divorce?
 - a. If death, was it sudden or after a lengthy illness? Have you given yourself sufficient time to work through the issues related to that death?
 - b. If divorce: When? Why? Present state of divorced spouse.
3. What did you learn from your previous marriage — negatively & positively?
4. How do these things affect your expectations for this marriage?
5. Are you able to look at this marriage as separate from the first? How? Are you expecting this marriage to be just like the first?
6. In what ways was your former mate similar to or different from your proposed mate?
7. Can you handle these differences without always comparing? How have you done that so far?
8. Can you talk about each other's former mate without feelings of inadequacy or jealousy?
9. Did your former mate have wishes or desires for you if he/she pre-deceased you? What were they?
10. Do you feel guilty or unfaithful in marrying again?
11. Will you understand if your proposed mate feels sad on the birthday or anniversary his/her former mate?
12. What will you do with the wedding and engagement rings of your previous marriage?
13. Have you discussed where you will be buried, i.e. with your first or second wife or husband?

Family Considerations

1. Have you taken sufficient time to get to know one another's children/grandchildren and other family members, e.g. sisters, brothers, parents?
2. How many of your family members are not independent of you?
3. Are all of your family members in agreement with this marriage?
 - a. If not, why not?
 - b. How are you getting along with each of them?
 - c. How do you believe this will affect you and/or your proposed marriage?

4. Can you foresee any problems with any family members or friends, e.g. interference with your plans?
5. What is the general feeling of your closer friends regarding this proposed marriage?
6. What changes do you believe will occur within your family and in your friendships with this proposed marriage?
7. Have you discussed your family customs for things like birthdays, anniversaries, Thanksgiving, Christmas, family reunions? How might these affect your proposed marriage?
8. What have you discussed about visits to or from your children? Will you normally visit them together or separately?
9. Have you discussed how you will handle things if there are hard feelings between your children and your spouse?
10. Would you anticipate any of your family members separating from you because they disagree with this marriage or dislike your new proposed spouse?
11. Have you discussed with both families the way you intend to dispose family heirlooms in the event of your death?

Personality Considerations

1. Why do you want to marry her/him? How do you know that you love him/her?
2. Are you in agreement regarding the duties, priorities, and overall role of a good husband and a good wife?
3. How would you describe your prospective mate's personality? What are her/his strengths and weaknesses?
4. What are your strengths and weaknesses? How do they complement those of your proposed mate?
5. Are you "set in your ways", or are you flexible, e.g. regarding schedules, interruptions, etc.?
6. What makes you angry, sad, peaceful, happy, etc.? Does your prospective mate know? Do you know what affects him/her? How do you deal with these things?
7. Can you openly discuss everything? How do you handle disagreements/conflicts? What is your typical procedure for solving problems?
8. What are your tastes in vacations? How do you intend to spend the "free" time that you have?

Sexual Considerations

1. Did you enjoy sexual intimacy in your previous marriage, or were there difficulties?
2. What are your expectations for sexual intimacy in this proposed marriage?
3. Do you see sexual relations as a duty or as something "intended for pleasure"?
4. How will you work to make your sexual intimacy even more pleasurable in this proposed marriage?
5. Have you found it easy to show physical expressions of love during your courtship?
6. Can you discuss openly and freely your feelings in this area? If not, why not?

7. Are there any physical or health issues that may affect your marriage, including in the area of your sexual intimacy?

Housing/Financial Considerations

1. Have you taken an inventory of all of your possessions? What will you do with duplicate belongings, e.g. Sell? Give to children? Give to others?
2. Where will you live? Why? Have you given consideration to what your housing needs will be with advanced age and disability?
3. Of you move into an apartment or house previously occupied by the other mate, how do you feel about that?
 - Are there too many memories?
 - Will you feel like an intruder?
 - Will you totally redecorate to make it your home?
 - Would it be better if you both give up your previous home and get another?
 - Will you give your homes to your children as part of their inheritance, or will you sell or rent to add to your income?
4. Are your tastes in housing and furniture similar or, at least, compatible?
5. Are there items of furniture or other possessions that you will keep for sentimental reasons? How does your future mate feel about that?
6. Have you done what is necessary to be sure that your financial situation will allow you to have the housing arrangement you desire?
7. Is debt a major issue for either of you? What are your plans for getting out of debt?
8. Do you have similar attitudes toward spending, buying, use of credit cards, etc.
9. Have you made, or will you be making, a prenuptial agreement regarding your assets and belongings in order to ensure a fair settlement of your estate?

Spiritual Considerations

1. Are you assured that your proposed mate is committed to live for Christ and to establish a God-honoring home?
2. Are your Christian beliefs similar? Are you agreed on the biblical roles and duties of the Christian husband and the Christian wife?
3. What church will you attend? Are you both content with that? Why?
4. How do you intend to be involved in Christian service?
5. Are you in agreement on biblical giving, e.g. tithes, offerings, special gifts?
6. What will be your pattern for personal and family devotions?
7. Do you share the same convictions on matters of practical Christian living, e.g. movies, television, Lord's Day behavior, the use of Christian liberty in things like smoking or the use of alcoholic beverages?

8. Are there any “skeletons in the closet” that need to come out before you get married, e.g. crimes, or anything that would bring the charge of “marriage under false pretenses”?
9. What are you most looking forward to in this proposed marriage?

The Wedding Ceremony

1. Location, date, and time.
2. Do you intend this to be a large wedding? Primarily only for family? For church family and friends?
3. The wedding ceremony you want to use.
4. Officiant(s). What role do you want each to play?
5. Other members of the wedding party?
6. Are there things you would like included in the wedding ceremony that are not represented in the form you will be using, e.g. special music, special readings, testimonies?
7. Wedding rehearsal: Location, date, time.
8. The plans for your wedding reception.
9. The marriage license. (Check with the laws of the state in which you will be getting married).

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