

PERSONAL HISTORY WORKSHEET

Name _____ Age _____

Fiancé(e)'s Name _____ Age _____

Current Occupation _____

Length of employment at your current job _____

Highest level of education completed _____

Hobbies and interests _____

Previously married? Yes No How many times? _____

Divorced

Widowed

How long have you been divorced or widowed? _____

Much of who you are today is a product of your past. You and your fiancé(e) have probably not attempted to conceal your background from each other. But you may not have taken the time needed to adequately examine how your past influences your future.

One of the most underestimated influences on your new marriage is your family. When most couples marry today they assume that their marriage is between two people who want to become one. In reality, it is two people and *two families* that are coming together to form a new merger. You will leave your father and mother so that you can cleave and become one. However, as you will see in the years ahead, your family's impact on your new family must not be minimized, but rather understood and planned for.

We estimate this project will take at least two hours to complete, but you will find the effort well worth it! As you complete this project, you'll uncover some treasures along the way that will enrich your current relationship. You'll also locate a few old rusty nails that if not properly handled could create wounds that will infect your future marriage.

Take your time and answer each question as thoroughly as possible, then meet with your fiancé(e) to share your answers. If you are meeting with a mentor, give him or her a copy of the completed questions before you meet together.

Section One: Your Relationship History

Your Current Relationship Story

1. How we met

2. What attracted me to him/her

3. How long we have been dating

About Your Friendships

1. Friendships for me have generally been (check one)

- Easy, like falling off a log*
- So-so, I can take 'em or leave 'em*
- A challenge, a lot of work but satisfying and rewarding*
- Discouraging, more pain than I bargained for*
- Absent, I've never really had a truly close friend*

Now share why you checked the box you did:

2. Who are two of your closest friends and what makes those relationships special?

How long have they been your friends?

3. What are three to five adjectives these friends would use to describe you?

4. Describe a serious dating relationship from the past. Briefly state how it began, progressed and ended.

5. Can you identify any patterns that seem to be present in your relationships with the opposite sex? (Examples: "My tendency is to fall hard and fast, then get hurt." Or "I am generally the more committed one in a relationship.")

For Previously Married Only

1. If you are divorced, why did you get a divorce? What were your reasons for divorcing?

2. Have you sought reconciliation with your former spouse? If so, how? If not, why not?

3. Have you discussed with your pastor or counselor whether you are free to remarry from a biblical standpoint? Write down your conclusion.

4. Give three reasons you are confident you have gotten over your previous marriage and are ready to marry again.

5. Give three reasons you may be unsure.

Section Two: Your Family

Home Environment

1. What was your family's socioeconomic background as you were growing up? What is it now?

2. How would you describe the environment of the home you grew up in?

3. Did you experience any type of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual) as you grew up? Explain.

4. What traumatic, tragic events or financial hardships did your family experience?

5. As you look back over your family history, do you see any legacies that have been passed from one generation to the next? (For example, one family might pass on a tradition of trusting God in tough circumstances, while another family might pass on a tendency toward turning to alcohol to alleviate problems.)

Parents

1. What words would you use to describe your parents' marriage? Tell why you chose each descriptive word.

2. As parents, what did your mom and dad do well?

Dad	Mom

3. As parents, what do you wish they would have done differently?

Dad	Mom

4. Describe the most significant impact your parents have had on you (positive or negative).

Dad	Mom

5. What roles did your parents assume in the household?

Who was the leader in the marriage?

Who was the leader as a parent?

How did they make decisions?

6. Choose three to five adjectives to describe your relationship with your father and tell why you chose them.

7. Choose three to five adjectives to describe your relationship with your mother and tell why you chose them.

8. In what ways are you like each of your parents?

9. In what ways are you different?

10. Are there any unresolved issues between you and your parents? Articulate them here if you can.

11. How do your parents feel about your choice of a mate?

Siblings and Other Relatives

1. Rate your relationships with each of your siblings:

	<i>Distant</i>			<i>Close</i>	
<i>Sibling</i> _____	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Sibling</i> _____	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Sibling</i> _____	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Sibling</i> _____	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Sibling</i> _____	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Sibling</i> _____	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>

2. With what relatives do you have a special and unique relationship and what makes it unique (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.)?

Section Three: Your Spiritual Journey

1. What kind of religious upbringing did you have?

2. What role does God play in your life today?

3. How certain are you that you have a personal relationship with Jesus?

- Absolutely certain
- Sort of certain
- Not certain at all

Why?

4. Describe your spiritual life over the past 10 years. What were the high points?

What were the low points?

What caused growth or prevented growth?

5. Check the areas of your life in which you find it difficult to trust God and give Him complete control of:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Sex</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Relationship w/parents</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Self-confidence</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Thought Life</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Finances</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Anger</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Worry</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Decision making</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>My future</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Career</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Relationships</i> | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Critical Spirit</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other</i> _____ | _____ |

6. How has your involvement in a local church helped you grow in your relationship with Christ and in your outreach to others?

Section Four: Your Life Map

On the next page you will find a "life map." This exercise is intended to give a summary view of your life. You will not be able to fit your whole life story into this project. Make sure to complete your Life Map privately. Do not interact with your fiancé(e) as you work on it. In preparation for this project, answer the following questions:

1. List at least three memories that you can vividly recall about this period of your life: BIRTH THROUGH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2. List at least five events/circumstances/experiences that you think shaped your life during this period: JUNIOR HIGH THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

3. List at least five events/circumstances/experiences that you would consider "life-changing" from this period of your life: POST-HIGH SCHOOL TO THE PRESENT

Plot these answers on your Life Map in the appropriate spot. Use the sample Life Map as a guide in developing your own. Remember, the midline is emotional neutral. Anything above the midline indicates positive experiences; below indicates negative. Try to plot at least seven and no more than 12 mile markers.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS SURVEY

Write down the specific expectations you have for your marriage in the following categories. Write down how you feel about the particular item, not what you think your fiancé(e) wants to hear. Answer all the questions. The more specific and honest you are, the more gold you'll discover.

Marriage Relationship

1. How will you make decisions once you are married?

What will you do when you find you cannot agree?

2. When you are ill, how much sympathy and attention do you desire? What does being taken care of look and feel like to you?

3. How much time do you expect to spend with your friends after you are married?

4. How will you relate to opposite-sex friends after you are married?

Finances

1. Who will be the primary financial provider in the family?

2. Do you anticipate both husband and wife pursuing careers? If yes, for how long?

3. How will you decide on major purchases?

4. Who will pay the bills and keep the checkbook?

5. What is your philosophy of giving (to your church or other charitable organizations) and how will you make decisions about giving?

6. What are your convictions about the use of credit cards?

Home

1. Where do you want to live?

In what setting would you want to live (i.e. city, suburb, small town, rural, plains, mountains, desert, coastal, etc.)?

2. Will you live in an apartment or house? Will you rent or buy?

What do you expect your standard of living to look like after five years of marriage?

3. How soon after you are married do you expect to have your home reasonably furnished? What does "reasonably furnished" mean to you?

Housekeeping

1. Who will prepare meals and what types of food will you eat?

2. How important are family mealtimes to you? Why?

How often will you eat out?

3. How clean do you want your home to be? What does "clean" mean to you?

4. Who will do each of the following?

Laundry and ironing _____

Purchasing groceries _____

Automobile maintenance _____

Home repairs and yard work _____

General household cleaning _____

Cleaning bathrooms _____

Making the bed _____

5. Do you want a pet in the home? If so, what type?

Children and Parenting

1. What is your attitude toward children?

2. When do you see yourself having children and how many would you like to have?

3. What would you do if you cannot conceive children of your own?

4. What is your view on abortion?

5. What is your view on birth control?

6. Who will be the primary nurturer/caregiver of your children?

7. How will you discipline your children? How do you envision sharing that responsibility?

Social/Entertainment

1. How often do you want to invite people to your home?

What kind of entertaining do you expect to do (i.e. formal or informal dinner, lavish or simple parties, etc.)?

2. How often will you go out on dates?

3. What will be the role of television in your lives and what guidelines will you have?

What about movies?

4. How will your personal friendships (his friends/her friends) change after marriage?

5. What hobbies or recreational pursuits will you pursue individually?

Together?

How often will you pursue them?

6. How do you feel about having alcoholic beverages in your home?

Spiritual Life

1. Who will take spiritual leadership in the home and what do you think this means?

2. When and how often will you pray and read the Bible together?

3. Where will you join a faith community and what will your involvement be?

4. In what ways do you anticipate reaching out to others as a couple?

Holidays/Vacations/Special Occasions

1. Where will you spend Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter?

How will you decide?

2. What expectations do you have for celebrating holidays?

3. How will you celebrate birthdays and wedding anniversaries?

4. How much will you spend on gifts for family, friends and each other for...

	Family	Your Children	Friends	Each Other
Birthdays?	_____	_____	_____	_____
Christmas?	_____	_____	_____	_____
Weddings?	_____	_____	_____	_____
Anniversaries?	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. How will you spend your weekends?

Parents and Other Relatives

1. How do you think your relationship to your parents will change after you are married?

2. How much time do you anticipate spending with your parents and your in-laws?

3. What other relatives do you expect to be involved in your marriage and family (siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins)? In what ways would they be involved?

4. How involved do you want your parents and in-laws to be in your children's lives?

How will you accomplish this?

Sex

1. In your first year of marriage, how often do you expect to experience sexual intimacy?

2. What are your expectations about sex on your honeymoon?

3. What do you feel about your spouse at times saying no to having sex?

For Those Who Have Been Previously Married

Marriage

1. Review each category below and ask yourself this question: What unique expectations might I be holding on to from my previous marriage that I haven't yet discussed? Or to put it another way: What are areas of this marriage that I'm expecting to be different from my previous one?

Marriage Relationship

Finances

Home

Housekeeping

Children and Parenting

Social/Entertainment

Spiritual

Holidays/Vacations/Special Occasions

In-laws/Relatives

Sex

2. If your fiancé(e) needs to contact his or her former spouse (due to finances, business, in-laws, children, etc.) how do you want that to be handled?

Children

(if applicable)

1. What kind of relationship do you expect your new spouse to have with your children?

2. What kind of relationship do you expect to have with your spouse's children?

3. How will you handle the children's need to see your former in-laws – their grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins?

4. What guidelines need to be developed in disciplining the children?

5. How will you handle disagreements with former spouses about how to raise the children?

6. What are the financial burdens involved in raising the children? How will these be handled?

7. Will you have additional children? When? How many?
