

Jose' Freeman, LMFT

THE MARRIAGE EXPECTATION INVENTORY

by Patrick J. McDonald
revised by John P. Bingham

INTRODUCTION

The Marriage Expectation Inventory is designed to help you discuss and understand some important aspects of your relationship. It was created from the experiences of hundreds of couples like yourselves who wished to understand more about each other. If used thoughtfully and seriously, it can help you grow in love.

DIRECTIONS

The procedure for taking this inventory is simple.

1. Set aside an hour and a half and separate yourselves so you do not see what your partner is writing.
2. Fill in the form as thoughtfully as possible. The more thought you give your answers, the more you will get from doing the exercise. If you do not finish in the time period (not likely), take a break and continue later.
3. Do not discuss your answers until our next appointment. At that time we will compare and discuss answers, exploring the similarities and differences.

Name: _____ Date _____

Part 1: LOVE EXPECTATIONS

1. Loving my partner means for me:
2. Recall two instances of how your partner demonstrated love toward you during the last month:
 - a)
 - b)
3. List 2 situations in which you, intentionally or unintentionally, were hurtful to your partner during the last month:
 - a)
 - b)
4. List 2 ways you and your future spouse differ:
 - a)
 - b)
5. List two ways you and your future spouse are alike:
 - a)
 - b)
6. What is the best strength that you bring to your marriage?
 - a)
 - b)
7. What is your future spouse's best strength?
8. What is the greatest weakness you bring to your marriage?
9. What do you think your future spouse's greatest weakness is?
10. After we are married, I expect the following change in our relationship:

PART 2: EXPECTATIONS AROUND SEX

11. Sex in marriage is . . .

12. Have you discussed your sexual history with your future spouse?
Is there something that needs to be discussed at this time?

13. When it comes to sexual pleasure, my needs . . .

My future spouse's needs . . .

14. Sexual experience without love is . . .

Love without sex is . . .

15. I feel most comfortable having sex with my partner when . . .

16. I feel most uncomfortable having sex with my partner when . . .

17. My feelings about family planning (birth control) are . . .

18. My feelings about using pornography or 900 telephone numbers are . . .

PART 3: EXPECTATIONS ABOUT IN-LAWS

19. List two things about your partner's parents you really like:
- 1.
 - 2.
20. List two things about your partner's parents you dislike:
- 1.
 - 2.
21. As far as I am concerned, my parents in our marriage.
22. As far as I am concerned, my future spouse's parents in our marriage.
23. As far as I am concerned, my responsibility for my parent's financial welfare (now or in old age) is . . .

PART 4: EXPECTATIONS RELATED TO CHILDREN

24. How many children would be the ideal number?
What spacing between them would be ideal?
25. We can best help our children grow and mature by . . .
26. What changes do you plan to make from your own parents' child-rearing techniques?
27. In a sentence, say what children mean to you?
28. Will you invite or restrict your parents involvement with your children?
Please explain.

PART 5: EXPECTATIONS RELATED TO COMMUNICATION

29. Communication means . . .
30. I feel most like communicating with my partner when . . .
31. I feel least like communicating with my partner when . . .
32. Two things my partner does that makes it difficult to share myself with him/her:
- 1.
 - 2.
33. Two things my partner does that makes it easy to share myself with him/her:
- 1.
 - 2.
34. When there is fighting in my family of origin (family I grew up in) , I would (describe what you would do)
35. The key to handling conflict in marriage is . . .

PART 6: MISCELLANEOUS EXPECTATIONS

36. Prioritize, from the following items, your future marital priorities (#1 being most important, #10 being least important).

- _____ Enjoyment and relaxation as a couple or as a family
- _____ Community involvement, active in society
- _____ Couple dialogue, problem solving, etc.
- _____ Personal growth, relaxation, sports, etc.
- _____ Spiritual and/or religious involvement.
- _____ Sexual satisfaction and freedom in marriage
- _____ Getting ahead financially and “making it”
- _____ Work, vocation or studies
- _____ Developing meaningful friendships
- _____ Children and their development

37. Marriage being a life-long commitment means to me . . .

38. I intend to use drugs/alcohol . . .

39. The shift in *you* from lover to wife/husband involves what being different?

40. The shift in your *partner* from lover to wife/husband involves what being different?

41. One aspect of our relationship I've been reluctant to discuss with my partner and wish to mention now is . . .