

COUPLES RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY

This inventory is for helping to determine multiple things at once: educate couples on the primary aspects of a relationship; better assess how each partner relates to the issues in general; see how closely aligned the couple is regarding each issue (if one partner at a 3 while the other one is at a 7, then the difference needs to be addressed as to the reasons for such a significant gap); helps discern strengths and areas for improvement; gives a better sense of priorities and goals for a treatment plan; review again at the end of treatment to gauge improvement.

0 = very poor

5 = fair

10 = great

1. **MONEY.** More is more than dollars and cents, it is power, control, freedom, time, opportunities and security, and research has shown it is the most problematic issue for couples. People not need to be rich but a decent level of income makes a huge difference in the overall quality of life. How couples talk about money, share expenses, have access to money and plan how to spend it in the present and future is very important. Women have historically been vulnerable financially in marriages and often struggle financially after a divorce, so they should be aware of finances within the marriage.

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2. **PARENTING.** Parenting in healthy ways is one of the most demanding roles in life, one has to constantly adjust to new developmental stages and circumstances with each child while balancing an understanding and appreciation of who a child is with discipline. How we structure home-life sets important priorities, and how we model behavior for kids influences how they will treat themselves and others in life. People of use the same tactics as their own parents did, and this can result in a culture clash between parents.

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3. **HOUSEHOLD.** We live very busy lives and having an organized structure for the all the chores makes a big difference in terms of the level of stress we have to contend with. Women traditionally do more chores within the home, and there should be as much equal sharing of these responsibilities as possible or as agreed to (especially if one partner works outside the home and the other doesn't). Children can start doing basic chores at age 4.

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4. **INTIMACY.** Intimacy is more than sex, it is spending time together, sharing mutual interests, being kind (basic civility is the minimum and loving gestures at the top), holding hands, and sharing your experiences and inner-most thoughts and feelings. Additionally, there are a wide variety of types of emotional and sexual intimacy.

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5. **COMMUNICATION.** Being able to express one's emotions, thoughts, wants, needs and frustrations is necessary in any relationship. Advocating for oneself in a fair and reasonable manner is a critical life skills that is more involved than most people consider. These allow us to be able to collaborate, resolve problems, forgive and heal. Being aware of the importance of body language, vocal intonations, subtext and certain types of language or phrases makes a huge difference in getting along with others, builds self-esteem and minimizes unnecessary stress and frustration.

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6. **PERSONHOOD.** Each of us are unique individuals with our own wants and needs. As partners, we should respect the other person as a fellow human being first and foremost and strive to share the inherent powers in any relationship equitably. How couples come to a relatively equal relationship is up to each couple to decide together. Promoting healthy individual activities and relationships should be part of all relationships, and respecting this keeps jealousy/sense of ownership at bay. Everyone has the right to choose how to live their life, and balancing this with our obligations to others can be healthy for each person and our overall communities.

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7. **FAMILY.** Each of us comes from some type of family with its own issues, culture and habits and melding into a much larger family that includes in-laws and their own issues, culture and habits is complicated and can be outright challenging. When one has poor relationships with in-laws, it puts the other partner in a very difficult position, often feeling as though they are expected to choose between their family of origin and their own nuclear family. Everyone can and needs to make concessions of some kind for the greater good of each family.

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8. **HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.** Lifestyle involves sleep, exercise, diet, substance use, stress management and other issues that could effect the relationship on an ongoing basis. If we don't take care of ourselves individually, it directly/indirectly effects our partner in multiple ways (e.g., mood, appearance, money, etc.). Being open and honest enough to contend with one's own mental health issues through professional treatment is not optional.

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