

9 Relationship Conversations – Before the Big Question

By Tracey Schreiber, MS CACI CC

February 2013

You meet the person of your dreams - check. You fall in love - check. There is a proposal - check. And you live happily ever - ah, not so fast!

Love is a good start but it isn't everything. You know you need a foundation of connection, commonality, individuality, and a sharing of goals to build a life time partnership. Below are some topics every couple should discuss to determine compatibility that will hold your relationship together throughout the marriage.

Where to Live: His home, her home, or new residence. Apartment, condo, house - with or without a yard. Will you live close to family or work - which family or work? Consider how size of residence or town.

Money: Individual accounts, joint accounts, or both. Decide investment, saving goals and spending behaviors. How will bills be paid - online, via check, auto withdraw, etc. Discuss how debt incurred prior to relationship will be resolved.

Chores/Pet Peeves: Discuss the balance of responsibilities in the home, the yard, and the car. Who will maintain the car and do home repairs. How will you share "space"? Toilet paper under/over, seat up/down, toothpaste end/middle.

Children: First question, yes or no. How many? Discuss the affect children will have on money, lifestyle, career, social life, future plans. Discuss options for having children - adoption, invitro, etc.

Job/Career: One work, both work. Both have careers. Work FT/PT. Does one or both want to obtain advanced education? How will you handle job stress, time commitment, travel and odd shifts.

Family/Relatives: Discuss spending time with family, how often. Do you agree about allowing family to live with you, how to handle aging parents, loaning money. Discuss culture, traditions, religion, familial expectations, and holidays.

Recreation/Social: How and where do you play? Consider down time, fun time, hobbies – together or individual. Vacations – how many, how often, drive, fly, cruise. Discuss travel goals.

Spirituality: Will you convert? Discuss organized religion options, beliefs, meanings. Understand each other's beliefs and how this may or may not impact children.

Sex: Consider frequency, virginity, body image concerns, STD's, preferences, turn on/off, and needs.

Premarital Counseling can help sort through all the questions. Tracey offers the Prepare and Enrich assessment to help couples determine their strengths and resolve their differences. Start your relationship with a piece of mind.