

Bliss or Bust? Take the Marriage Quiz

Retrieved from <http://www.utexas.edu/features/archive/2003/love2.html>
26/05/2011

Circle the answer that best describes your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

Part 1 Our Relationship As Newlyweds

1. As newlyweds, we were constantly touching, kissing, pledging our love or doing sweet things for one another.

Strongly disagree (1pt.) Disagree (2 pts.) Agree (3 pts.) Strongly agree (4 pts.)

2. As newlyweds, how often did you express criticism, anger, annoyance, impatience or dissatisfaction to one another?

Often (1 pt.) Sometimes (2 pts.) Rarely (3 pts.) Almost never (4 pts.)

3. As newlyweds, my partner and I felt we belonged together; we were extremely close and deeply in love.

Disagree (1 pt.) Mildly agree (2 pts.) Agree (3 pts.) Strongly agree (4 pts.)

4. As a newlywed, I think one or both of us were confused about our feelings toward each other, or worried that we were not right for each other.

Strongly agree (1 pt.) Agree (2 pts.) Disagree (3 pts.) Strongly disagree (4 pts.)

Part 2 Our Relationship By Our Second Anniversary

1. By our second anniversary, we were disappointed that we touched, kissed, pledged our love or did sweet things for one another less often than we had as newlyweds.

Strongly disagree (1 pt.) Disagree (2 pts.) Agree (3 pts.) Strongly agree (4 pts.)

2. By our second anniversary, we expressed criticism, anger, annoyance, impatience or dissatisfaction a lot more than we had as newlyweds.

Strongly disagree (1 pt.) Disagree (2 pts.) Agree (3 pts.) Strongly agree (4 pts.)

3. By our second anniversary, we fell much less belonging and closeness with one another than we had before.

Disagree (1 pt.) Mildly agree (2 pts.) Agree (3 pts.) Strongly agree (4 pts.)

4. By our second anniversary, I fell much more confused or worried about the relationship than I did as a newlywed.

Strongly disagree (1 pt.) Disagree (2 pts.) Agree (3 pts.) Strongly agree (4 pts.)

Scoring: Add up the points that correspond to your answers in Part 1. If you scored between 4 and 8, place yourself in Group "A." If you scored between 9 and 16, place yourself in Group "B." Now add up the points that correspond to your answers in Part 2. If you scored between 4 and 8, place yourself in Group "C." If you scored between 9 and 16, place yourself in Group "D."

Your Results: Find the type of marriage first by considering your score in part 1 (either A or B) in combination with your score in part 2 (either C or D): If you scored A + C, read "Mixed Blessings"; If you scored A + D, read "Disengaging Duo"; If you scored B + C, read "A Fine Romance"; If you scored B + D, read "Disaffected Lovers."

Disaffected Lovers

The contrast between the giddiness you felt as newlyweds and how you felt later may cause disenchantment. While you and your spouse are still affectionate and in love, there are clouds behind the silver lining. You may bicker and disagree, which, combined with a loss of affection and love in your relationship, could give rise to the first serious doubts about your future together.

Food for Thought: Your relationship may be at risk for eventual divorce. But the pattern of decline early on does not have to continue. Ask yourself: Did we set ourselves up for disappointment with an overly romantic view of marriage? Did we assume it would require little effort to sustain? Did we take each other for granted? Did our disappointment lead to frustration and anger? Will continued bickering erode the love we have left?

A Fine Romance

You have a highly affectionate, loving and harmonious marriage. It may have lost a touch of its initial glow as the mundane realities of marriage have demanded more of your time. But you feel a certain sense of security in the marriage: The relationship's gifts you unwrapped as newlyweds continue to delight.

Food for Thought: You have the makings of a happy, stable marriage. The cohesive partnership you have maintained bodes well for its future. You will not always be happy—all marriages go through rough periods. But your ability to sustain a healthy marriage over the critical first two years suggests that you and your partner operate together like a thermostat in a home—when it's chilly, you identify the source of the draft and eliminate it, and when it's hot, you find ways to circulate cool air.

Mixed Blessings

Your marriage is less enchanting and filled with more conflict and ambivalence than Western society's romantic ideal, but it has changed little over its first two years, losing only a modicum of "good feeling." It seems to coast along, showing few signs that it will deteriorate further or become deeply distressed.

Food for Thought: This relationship may not be the romance you envisioned, but it just might serve you well. Many people in such relationships are content, finding their marriage a reassuringly stable foundation that allows them to devote their attention to career, children or other pursuits. Other people in these relationships are slightly dissatisfied, but stay married because the rewards outweigh the drawbacks. A few people may eventually leave such marriages in search of a “fine romance.”

Disengaging Duo

You and your mate are not overly affectionate and frequently express displeasure with one another. In contrast to those in a marriage of “mixed blessings,” the love you once felt diminished soon after the wedding, and you became more ambivalent about the relationship. You may already have a sense that your relationship is on shaky ground.

Food for Thought: Your relationship may be in immediate trouble. You may have married hoping that problems in the relationship would go away after the wedding, but they didn't. Ask yourself: Did I see our problems coming while we were dating? Did I think they would dissolve with marriage? What kinds of changes would I need to see in my partner in order to be happy? How likely are they to occur? How bad would things have to get before the marriage would no longer be worthwhile?

—Created for Psychology Today by Ted Huston, Ph.D., Shanna Smith, Sylvia Niehuis, Christopher Rasmussen and Paul Miller

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