

Do you wish that your partner would change?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Yes, Many Areas Some Areas I Accept Him/Her

If you have the idea that your partner is not exactly the right person for you but that he or she will “come around,” then you are not in the relationship for the right reasons.

Do you actively put energy into your relationship?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 No I Try Sometimes A Lot of Energy

Do you spend time thinking about your partner and what his or her needs are? Do you think of activities for you and your partner to do together? Do you make time for your partner?

**Rank the following questions on a 10-point scale:**

- _____ How important is your relationship? (10 being the most important)
- _____ How willing are you to do what you need to do to make the relationship work? (10 being most willing)
- _____ How competent do you feel that you have the skills to make the relationship work? (10 being most competent)
- _____ How ready are you to begin working on the relationship? (10 being most ready)



Relationship Survey

How a couple handles conflict in their marriage can provide some insight into healthy relationships by turning destructive interaction into positive interaction. Relationship stress factors can include avoidance, withdrawal, physical aggression, dysfunctional attitudes, commitment, and motivation.

Please answer each of the following questions in terms of your relationship with your partner.

Almost Never (1)	Once in a While (2)	Frequently (3)	
			Little arguments escalate into ugly fights with accusations, criticism, and name calling or bringing up past hurts.
			My partner criticizes or belittles my opinions, feelings, or desires.
			My partner seems to view my words or actions more negatively than I mean them to be.
			When we have a problem to solve, it is like we are on opposite teams.
			I hold back from telling my partner what I really think and feel.
			I think seriously about what it would be like to date or marry someone else.
			I feel lonely in this relationship
			When we argue, one of us withdraws, that is, does not want to talk about it anymore, or leaves the scene.

Source: Fighting For Your Marriage by Scott Stanley and Howard Markman.

TOTAL _____

8 to 12 “Green Light” – If you scored in this range, your relationship is probably in good or even great shape at this time, but we emphasize “at this time” because relationships do not stand still. In the next 12 months, you will either have a stronger, happier relationship, or you could head in the other direction. There is no need to stop, but it is probably a great time to work on making your relationship all it can be.

13 to 17 “Yellow Light” – If you scored in this range, it is likely you are coming to a yellow light. You need to be cautious. While you may be happy now in your relationship, your score reveals warning signs of patterns you do not want to let worsen. You will want to take action to protect and improve what you have.

18 to 24 “Red Light” – If you scored in this range, it is like approaching a red light. Stop and think about where the two of you are headed. Your score indicates patterns that could put your relationship at significant risk. You may be heading for trouble—or you may already be there. But there is good news. You can stop and learn ways to improve your relationship now.

Revitalizing Your Relationship

(by Michele Weiner-Davis, PhD in Divorce Busting)

Couples need to make their relationship a priority. I believe the single biggest contributing factor to a breakdown in relationships today is the fact that couples are not spending enough time together. The relationship gets put on the back burner. Everything else seems more important: careers, children, hobbies, community involvement, and personal pursuits. When relationships are not attended to, trouble sets in.



People who do not prioritize their relationships tell me that they often end up fighting during the little time they do have together. They argue about day-to-day issues: unpaid bills, uncleaned houses, unruly children, and so on.

But the truth is, arguing about “who is doing what around the house,” may be connected to a variety of other problems. Some of these may be related to the relationship itself, such as problems of isolation, loneliness, and resentment. At other times the problems may be more socially and culturally related: gender inequities, economic issues, or problems of depression and anxiety. Most of the time people argue about the mundane issues when their emotional needs are not being met. The soda can left in the living room becomes a symbol of a lack of care for the partner. Does this sound familiar?

And here is the Catch-22: if you and your partner are arguing a lot, you do not feel like spending time together. In fact, you want to spend as little time as possible with him or her. Unfortunately, avoidance only makes matters worse: more distance, more tension, less cooperation, more conflict, and the list goes on.

However, time together can be a great healer. Even if it is awkward at first, when two people commit to investing energy and time to their love life, good things can come from it. When people put their relationships first, they start to feel appreciated and important. They feel loved. Spending time with your partner tells him or her in no uncertain terms, “You matter to me.” Time together gives people opportunities to collect new memories, remember old ones, and do activities they enjoy, laugh at each other’s jokes, and renew their love.

Some do’s and don’ts:

- Do plan and schedule dates together. Write these dates on your calendar or appointment book, the same way you would a business appointment or doctor appointment.
- Do spend some time together without your kids. The best thing you can do for your kids is to make your marriage work.
- Do something enjoyable together; it will make you and your partner feel more loving. As a result, you may even be able to resolve heated topics more easily in the future.

- Do go for a walk around the block. Read a novel together. Go dancing (or take dance lessons). Set aside ten minutes each day to talk. Ride a bike. Be creative.
- Do not think you have to spend enormous amounts of time together to create closeness and connection. Regular, brief get-togethers work too. Small changes in your schedule can make a huge difference.
- Do not think you have to go to a tropical island to make time together meaningful. You do not have to spend a lot of money to show your love for your partner.

Remember, having fun together is a way of acknowledging that relationships are a serious business and are not to be taken for granted. Embrace the moment and cherish today with your partner as you joyfully and happily play in unique and creative ways.

Seven Principles for Making Relationships Work *(John Gottman)*:

Maintain a love map.

1. Foster fondness and admiration.
2. Turn toward instead of away.
3. Accept influence.
4. Solve solvable conflicts.
5. Cope with conflicts you cannot resolve.
6. Create shared meaning.

Final Thoughts to Ponder ... consider the following:

1. Is your well-being your partner's priority?
2. Does your partner accept, like, honor, and respect you as you are?
3. Do you accept, like, honor, and respect your partner as they are?
4. Do you accept, like, honor, and respect yourself when you are with your partner?
5. Does your partner bring out the best in you?
6. Is your partner your best source of emotional support and encouragement?
7. Does your partner believe in you and your abilities?
8. Does your partner encourage your personal growth?
9. Do you feel like a separate person with valid opinions, beliefs, and preferences?
10. Is your partner proud of your achievements and accomplishments?
11. Do you feel understood, validated, safe, and peaceful?
12. Is your partner your best friend? Consistently?
13. Does being with your partner affirm and enhance your life?
14. Are you happy when you are with your partner?

