

THE COUPLESPEAK™ MARRIAGE FITNESS TEST

A 10 Point Checkup To Measure Marital Health And Well-being

Created by Susan Lager, LICSW, BCD

In more than 22 years of private practice specializing in couples therapy, I have come to some central truths about elements vital to marital health. When I meet with couples for an initial consultation, I quickly get a pretty clear sense of the prognosis for their relationship based on 10 critical factors. Give yourself and your spouse a giant service by each taking this ten minute test and comparing notes. If individually or together you average below 80% when you tally up, your marriage is limping along and needs some work! If your scores are 80% or higher, you are already doing a lot of things right, and it's probably not an accident. Now your job is to become more aware of who's doing what to nurture the marriage, so you can both commit to consciously continuing the good work!

Rate your relationship on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest score:

1. Do you both have an overall feeling of happiness in your relationship?
2. Do you spend quality time together on a regular basis doing things which bring you both satisfaction, joy or fun?
3. Do you divide the chores of life (childcare, bill paying, housecleaning, laundry, shopping, earning a living, etc.) in a way which feels fair and even-handed?
4. Do you show appreciation and respect for each other?
5. Do you feel free enough to speak openly about your wants, needs, and hurts?
6. Do you each put energy into being emotionally close?
7. Do your arguments feel safe and mostly productive?
8. Do you honor each other's need for space (alone time, individual friendships)?
9. Do you protect each other from other's unacceptable or hurtful behaviors?
10. Do you keep agreements and promises?

Reflect upon, and discuss your results and scores. In areas where you have scored lower, resolve to make one significant change WITH AN ACTION PLAN in the coming weeks, as a good beginning. Retest yourselves in one month and notice any improvements, then move on to another area of weakness and do the same thing. If nothing seems to shift in a meaningful way, you may consider professional help in the form of couples therapy, or a live or online coaching program such as Couplespeak™.

Susan Lager, LICSW, CPC, is a board certified psychotherapist and coach in private practice in Portsmouth, N.H. where at The Couples Center, she specializes in providing comprehensive services to married and unmarried partners at all stages of the coupling process. In May 2010 she launched Couplespeak™ for online coaching, consultation, training programs and materials designed to assist individuals and couples to build and strengthen their relationships. Look for her now on her blog about relationship issues at: www.SusanLager.com

There you can also access various training materials and services to improve your life and all your relationships.