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# Foreword

What goes into a marriage. Get all the info you need here.



## *Pre-Marriage Maintenance*

What You Need To Know About Pre-Marriage Counseling

# Chapter 1:

## *Counseling basics*

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### **Synopsis**

The style of counseling is becoming more popular in current times and is usually popularly backed by various religions and governmental agencies. This is primarily some to create a better understanding and acceptance of what it entails to be part of a lasting relationship. The main idea behind this particular exercise is also to limit the possibility of a high divorce rate and to try and keep couple together as a family unit for the betterment of the children..



## **The Basics**

These counseling sessions are designed to help couples prepare for the eventual marriage as best as possible and with all the knowledge that they should ideally be equipped with. It is hoped that with these sessions, the couple heading for marriage will be stronger and more focused on making the marriage last. Giving the participants a better chance at achieving a stable and satisfying marriage is usually what forms the basis of the counseling sessions.

Another main aim of the counseling sessions is to help the couple intending to walk down the aisle a chance to identify weakness that are evident in each other and work toward either changing for the better or learning how to accept each other and move on. However this acceptance has to be complete and without compromise, so that it does not surface later to create problems within the relationship.

Couple who do not attempt to attend such counseling session may find that some of the problems that could have been identified and sorted out before the marriage actually takes place, would instead become the focal point of contention within the relationship and eventually cause enough damage to create discord and dissatisfaction within the relationship. This of course will usually end up causing such harm that divorce would not most likely present a good option to seek out..

# Chapter 2:

## *Discussing finances*

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### Synopsis

Finances are usually a very delicate subject to approach and discuss especially if the couple are still in the early stages of the relationship. This is still difficult even when both parties are contemplating a more stable commitment with each other. A lot of questions should be asked and ideally a lot of good and intelligent answers should be given, as this will eventually give both parties a clear idea of how each individual handles money issues.





## **Money**

There are several different issues that should be discussed and the pre marital counseling session usually conducts such discussions to ensure both parties face the realities of financial elements within the eventual partnership. Some of the issues based on finances should include how each party sees and prioritizes financial choices made.

These could include payments towards accumulated debts, payments towards retirement plans, payments toward establishing an emergency fund and any other such payments which very few people consider and certainly even less actually start.

These are all very important financial commitments that would require the cooperation of both parties in order to ensure harmony within the relationship.

Other more simpler issues that should also be discussed within the pre marital counseling sessions on finances would be the seemingly simple daily expenses, weekly expenses and monthly expenses both parties are currently committed to or have grown accustomed to spending on.

These expenses may seem acceptable and even necessary to each individual but would most certainly not be shared by the other

party. This could eventually be an area of contention if these feelings and perceptions are not discussed and understood by both individuals.

Coming up with a suitable budget together is also something that will be taught during these counseling sessions and it could prove to be very useful indeed as the advice given is usually from tried and true methods already successfully in use..



# **Chapter 3:**

## *Discussing children*

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### **Synopsis**

Most people tend to go into a relationship with preconceived notions on how things should be. This can have its own advantages and disadvantages, especially if both parties have very different views on certain subjects and are unable to compromise satisfactorily.

This is where pre marriage counseling can come in very handy as the couples explore various topics and find some level of acceptance and compromise.

The topic of children is usually an area that presents a lot of challenge and if not tackled well, it will eventually lead to serious problems within the future relationship. This is what the counseling session would ideally like to avoid, thus making it possible to give the couple a better insight to the upbringing and handling of children.

## **Children**

Relationships already have to put up with a lot of other challenges in order to make it work, and having children added to the equation does not make things any easier. In fact it could even be the actual cause of many marriages eventually breaking up.

Therefore it would be wise to explore this particular platform when attending pre marriage counseling sessions. One counseling session would start this particular discussion by encouraging both parties to talk about their childhood and how they were raised.

This would give everyone a better picture of how the individual views children and the general upbringing process. This is a good starting point as the counselor will be able to guide the couple through the various encounters they would most likely have to face as a couple when children are part of the equation.

This is also important when the couple in question have very different views on how things should be done and how the issue of child upbringing should be tackled. Therefore in order to limit any possibility of problems these counseling sessions would be a good place to start the understanding process of children.

# Chapter 4:

## *Discussing religion*

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### Synopsis

Taking as much care as possible to avoid as many pitfalls will help the marriage get off to a good start and stay that way for much of the time. Pre marital counseling is one way to getting off to a good start because at this juncture the couple will learn about almost every different aspect of how to work at a marriage and what they can expect to encounter.



## **Religion**

One of the more topics explored would be the one on religion. This of course for most seems to be rather a simple matter and if both parties are not really practicing any particular religion they may not see any real importance in this particular area within the marriage. However for the pre marriage counselor, this is a very important area that should be thoroughly understood for the benefit of both parties and for the eventual well being of the marriage and future children the couple would intend to have.

The aim here is to create some level of clear understanding and respect for all the various religious elements so that both parties will be better able to avoid any future conflicts that may arise successfully and without damaging the relationship in any significant way.

This is especially important for those intending to be part of, or are already in an interfaith relationship. This particular type of relationship has the potential of presenting even more problem than any other normal relationship, thus needing even more pre marital counseling care and guidance. In the initial stages both parties will not be able to understand the possible impacts of being in an interfaith relationship, but as time goes by it may become more difficult to cohabitate peacefully and happily while still wanting to practice one's own religious beliefs, thus the need to explore and discuss matters pertaining to religion openly..

# **Chapter 5:**

## *Coming up with ground rules*

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### **Synopsis**

As with every endeavor, marriage also require some ground rules in which both parties are expected to commit to for the betterment of the relationship.

The process of establishing such ground rules should ideally be done as a couple and if possible with the added help of an experienced pre marriage counselor.

This is very useful as it will help both parties go into the relationship with a clear understanding of what is expected of them both.

The following are some areas that should be covered by the ground rules to ensure the relationship stays the best it can be:

## **Rules**

Laying down the perimeters of acceptable behavior and unacceptable behavior, would be a good place to start. although both parties already have some idea of each other's personalities, the boundaries are necessary to ensure what is presently considered normal does not change in anyway and where unpleasant surprises are the call of the day.

Other ground rules should ideally cover the topic of finances. This very delicate matter is usually the main cause of problems within any existing relationship and without the ground rules in place, there would really be no guidelines to follow to ensure conflicts are kept at bay. Understanding the spending habits and commitments of both parties and learning how to reach compromises will help both parties eventually accept each other's financial commitments and needs, thus creating a clearer picture of what to expect in the future.

Communicating is another very important ground rule to establish very early on in the relationship. Being able to communicate freely and openly should be something that insisted upon as this will give both parties a chance to be honest and forthcoming with their own thoughts and feelings within the relationship.



# Chapter 6:

## *Discussing expectations*

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### Synopsis

Every human being has aspirations in life, and while some are quite detailed and extensive other may not really have that much to aspire about. However everyone should be given the opportunity to pursue such expectations without any outside pressure or discouragement.



## **What Do You Expect**

For those who are lucky enough to have a clear picture of their expectations, finding someone who will fit the profile would be one way of going about choosing the ideal partner.

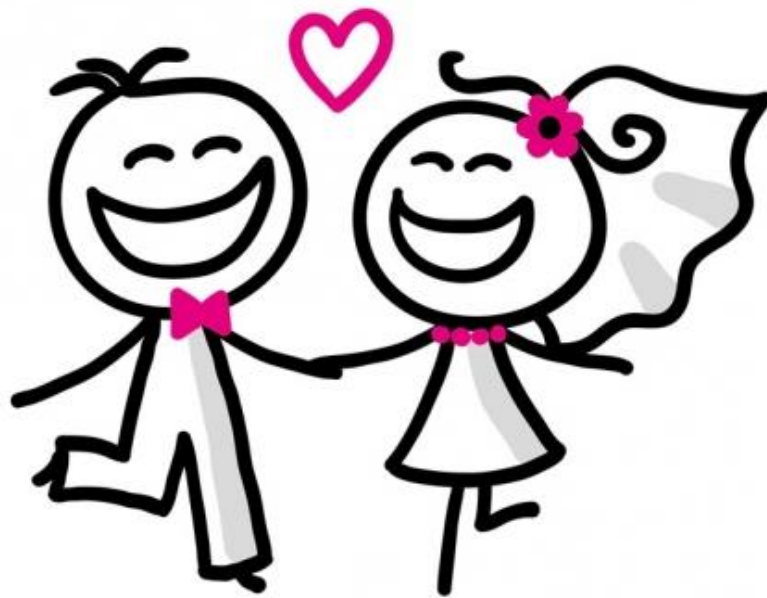
However for most people who tend to go with the flow, it might be harder to eventually be more firm with their expectations in the relationship.

The importance of expectations being expressed very early on in the relationship cannot be emphasized enough. This will allow both parties to be aware of the expectations, so that they can decide if they can be part of such expectations or if they would prefer to move on to another relationship more fitting to their agenda.

Expectations are often good guiding tools to have as long as they don't become a dominating and uncompromising factor in an individual's life. With expectations in place the individual is better able to adjust and also get the other party to understand the stand taken on certain elements.

A pre marriage counselor will be able to guide both parties on the way to decide and document these expectations in a more logical and realistic way, thus giving both parties an insight of what to expect within the relationship and its future direction.

Discussing these expectations will also allow both parties to be in sync once it is agreed that the expectations are acceptable. There will be less conflict and more working in tandem to ensure the expectations of both parties are adequately met within the confines of the relationship.



# Wrapping Up

Marriage is difficult enough to cope with, without being burdened with unnecessary elements that would cause conflict and negativity. In order to limit these negative outside elements and to ensure a better marriage relationship, it would be good for both parties to explore potentially problematic issues before actually taking the very important step towards a more permanent relationship in the form of marriage.

One of the more difficult dangers to face would be the idea of divorce when things don't go as planned, however most couples do try to hold on as long as possible, but if these issues are not resolved divorce would still be inevitable.

Most pre marriage counselors would usually advise the couple to take a very serious attitude to the various topics often explored through the course of the counseling sessions.

These topics are often very pivotal in ensuring the best mindsets are created, in order to be able to withstand the pressure caused by situations within the topics explored.

Failing to understand the importance of a pre marriage counseling session and take action to join such sessions will only cause the couple to be less equipped to deal with the pressures of marriage.

Other dangers would include having to endure an unhappy marriage situation without positive alternative or escapes available. This will eventually take a toll on the individual's mental and physical wellbeing. In some cases the results from a bad marriage can be so extensive that one party will often resort to unthinkable ways to get out of the seemingly desperate situation with little or no regards for its consequences. This is a very sad option to follow especially when there are now children included in the equation of the family unit.

