

◇ Chapter 28
Readiness for Marriage

Enrichment Activities

WHAT IS ATTRACTIVENESS?

Directions: Another theory on partner selection is that people choose others of equal physical attractiveness. This theory is a combination of the homogamy and social exchange theories. It indicates that people who believe they are “unattractive” will seek those who are equally “unattractive,” and beautiful women and handsome men will end up together. In order for a “Beauty and the Beast” match, however, “attractiveness” has to be seen in inner qualities or character, not just physical appearance. Think about the theory of attractiveness as you answer the questions below.

1. To what extent do you think physical attractiveness should enter into a person’s choice of a partner?

2. How might a person’s self-confidence and self-worth influence his or her attitude about the attractiveness of a partner?

3. What inner qualities do you think enhance a person’s physical attractiveness?

4. Name five inner qualities that often mark a person of outstanding character.

5. What qualities would you like to cultivate in your character, and how could you go about it?

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CHALLENGING ISSUES

When couples are considering marriage, some issues are red flags — potentially challenging issues that should be discussed and worked through carefully prior to marriage. Although these red flags don't spell disaster in every case, they are serious early warning signs. Here is a list of potential red flags. Can you think of any others?

- A. One or more parents do not support the marriage.
- B. Either or both partners have had little or no dating experience.
- C. Pregnancy is involved.
- D. The partners are of different races, religions, or social classes.
- E. The couple's educational levels and/or goals differ greatly.
- F. The couple will have to rely on family members for financial or emotional support.
- G. Either partner came from a family where there were problems with alcohol, drugs, anger, or abuse.
- H. Either partner has parents who had an unhappy or unstable marriage.
- I. Marriage is thought to be a way to escape an unpleasant situation.
- J. The couple argues, breaks up, and then makes up often.
- K. The engagement is less than three months or more than three years old.
- L. The relationship became serious soon after one partner suffered a loss due to death or the breakup of a previous relationship.

Directions: Select *one* of the red flags listed above and describe:

1. Why you think it could pose potentially serious problems if not discussed prior to marriage:

2. What a counselor or clergyperson might recommend: _____

3. How the couple might benefit individually and as a couple from seeking professional help in dealing with this issue:

Focus In

You have just opened an office as a counselor who specializes in helping people assess their readiness for marriage. Design a brochure that outlines issues that you can help couples with. Be sure your brochure encourages couples to call you for an appointment.