

Before You Say 'I Do': Premarital Questions

Perhaps you are dating seriously, your kids are dating seriously or you are in the process of preparing your kids to date seriously. Whatever the case may be, it's important that you have ways to get to know your potential mate well.

By spending time with them, listening to the way they talk and observing the way they act, you will learn much about their character.

To go even deeper in understanding someone before you say "I do," here is a list of questions to be sure you discuss together:

Lifestyle

- Are they a morning person or a night person?
- Do they like to fall asleep to the TV or radio, or do they prefer quiet?
- Are they neat or messy? Do they pick up after themselves?
- Can they relax when there are chores to be done, or do they prefer working first, then relaxing?
- How often will they want to go out socially as a couple, on their own or with their friends?
- How much TV do they watch?
- How much time do they spend on their phone, on Facebook, on Twitter, on Instagram, etc.?
- How will you protect your time together? Will you set aside specific time each week for one-on-one time?
- Where will they want to spend the holidays—with their family or yours?
- How often will you spend time with each other's family?
- Do they like to exercise? How often? Do they expect you

to exercise too?

- Do they drink alcoholic beverages? How often?
- Do they have the ability to make and keep friends? Do you like and respect their friends?
- Do they want to live in the same town, or are they open to relocating?
- Do they want to live in the city, the country or the suburbs?

Children

- How many children do they want?
- How do they want to handle childcare?
- How do they want to handle discipline?
- Would they be open to adoption?

Faith

- What are their religious beliefs?
- How often do they attend worship services?
- How often do they plan on attending services once you are married?
- Do they plan on giving financially to their place of worship? If so, how much?
- What faith will you teach your children?
- What role will faith play in your day-to-day lives?

Commitment

- What are their views on divorce?
- In what circumstances would they consider divorce?
- Would they attend counseling if requested by you? At what point would they consider that an option?
- What steps will they take to “affair-proof” your marriage?
- What are their views on socializing with opposite-sex friends?

Financial

- Do they currently have a savings plan? Do they actually have money saved?
- Do they have a retirement plan?
- Do they have debt? What kind of debt? Credit card debt? Student loans? Car loans?
- Have they borrowed from family and friends? Do they still owe them?
- Do they pay their bills on time?
- Who will handle the bill-paying in your marriage?
- How much will you spend on gifts for family and friends?
- Do they have a budget plan for married life?

Ethics and Character

- Do they have clear-cut ideas about right and wrong, or do they subscribe to situational ethics?
- Will they lie if it makes things more convenient for them? (For example, calling in sick to work when they're actually well, cheating or being misleading in business deals, or saying they never got a request for something when they simply forgot to follow through.)
- How would they describe a person of good character?
- Are they willing to do hard work, or do they want instant success and quick money?
- Do they accept responsibility when they've made a mistake or try to blame others?

Personality Traits

- Do they have a quick temper? How do they show it? Screaming? Pouting? Walking away? Throwing or breaking things? Driving fast? Physical violence?
- Are they open to discussing sensitive subjects, or do they get defensive and withdraw?
- Do they take prescription drugs for mental illness? Would they be open to taking such medication? Would they be open to counseling?
- Do they hold a grudge, or are they forgiving?

- Do they complain often about people, work or other things?
- Do they criticize others, pointing out their flaws and shortcomings?

Intimacy

- Are you a virgin? Is your potential mate?
- How many sexual partners have you each had in the past? What does your potential mate think about those relationships?
- What are your expectations for sex with your potential mate, both before and after marriage?

Can you think of any questions I forgot? If so, please share your thoughts with me in a comment below.

Mark Merrill *is the president of Family First. For the original article, visit .*