

# VALUING OUR DIFFERENCES

## Getting Ready

*Here's what you'll talk about:*

- personalities
- honoring your spouse
- remembering what brought you together

## Survey Says...

Take a quick look at the SCOPE Personality Scales section of your Couple Checkup report. Notice whether this is a “strength” or “growth” area in your relationship.

## Selfie

*Taking a Snapshot of Where You Are Right Now*

Here's a survey to complete, preferably in three minutes or less. Go with “off the top of your head” responses if you can. The point isn't to come up with “right” answers, but just to start thinking about where you stand on some of the issues addressed in this

session. You and your spouse-to-be should fill in your answers separately so that you can compare and discuss them later.

1. Do you think opposites attract? If so, do they attract forever?

2. Which of the following apply to you and your future spouse?

- “We couldn't be more different.”
- “He [she] completes me.”
- “We're on the same page.”
- “We have a lot in common.”
- “We're practically twins.”

3. How would you and your future spouse probably react to the following situations? How would you then react to each other's reactions?

- Your car runs out of gas at midnight on the freeway.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- At the entrance of a grocery store, you're asked to donate money to an organization.

- Your favorite tech company introduces a great new product.
- You're invited to a New Year's Eve party; you don't know anyone but the host.
- You win a trip for two to Hawaii.

4. Think of a habit your spouse-to-be has that sometimes annoys you. Which of the following do you think will be true 10 years from now?

- The habit will have gone away on its own.
- I'll be able to change the habit.
- The habit will stop irritating me.
- I'll pick up the habit myself.
- I'll hate the habit more than ever.
- other \_\_\_\_\_

5. How would you rank the following differences according to their likelihood to affect a marriage—from least powerful

(8) to most powerful (1)? Write the numbers in the boxes to indicate your answers.

- Republican vs. Democrat
- football vs. ballet
- Christian vs. agnostic
- Mac vs. PC
- vegan vs. carnivore
- dog vs. cat
- introvert vs. extrovert
- a weekend at a spa vs. a weekend camping

## WeTube

### *Getting the Most from the Video*

After watching the Session 2 video on the DVD, discuss the following questions.

1. If you and your future mate have differences, where do you think most of them come from?
  - having different genders
  - being raised differently
  - having different personalities
  - having different values or beliefs
  - cultural differences
  - other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you think most people would agree that “the fact that we are different is never the problem”? Why or why not?
3. What’s your favorite way in which your future mate is different from you? How might this difference help or be an asset in your future marriage? Why?
4. If you’d never heard of honoring or cherishing your spouse, which two of the following methods might you try in order to deal with your differences? Do you think they would work? Why or why not?
  - ignoring differences
  - fixing your spouse
  - gritting your teeth and bearing it
  - pretending everything’s fine
  - spending as little time at home as possible
  - threatening to leave
  - other \_\_\_\_\_
5. When was the last time you cherished something? How did it affect the way you treated it? If you had to prove in court that you cherish your spouse-to-be, how would you do it?
6. Bill and Pam Farrel talked about 1 Corinthians 9:24, “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize?” Everyone runs best at a particular pace in life; if you run faster or slower you’ll get fatigued. The

challenge in marriage is that you married someone with a different pace. In what ways is your pace different from your future mate's? How might you help each other run at your optimal individual paces?

7. If there were a TV program called *Romantics Roadshow* in which people declared the value of their spouses, and the winner was the spouse who did the best job of convincing "appraisers" of the spouse's value, how would you describe your future mate to the appraisers?
8. Let's say it's your first anniversary. You want to surprise your spouse with a cake after dinner. Which of the following verses do you ask the bakery to write on the cake for you? Why?
  - Ephesians 5:29
  - Genesis 1:27
  - Psalm 139:14
  - Exodus 19:5
  - Ephesians 1:18
  - Isaiah 43:4
  - Luke 12:34
  - Romans 12:10
9. We don't know much about Adam's and Eve's personalities. But God brought them together. Do you think their personalities could have made them incompatible? Why or why not? Could they have "married the wrong person"? Do you think

it's likely that their personalities were similar, opposites, or something in between? Why? What does this tell you about the power of differences to make or break a marriage?

10. This session challenges the assumption that if two spouses are doing something differently, one of them must be wrong. How could both of you be “right” in the following situations?
- You want a red car; your spouse worries that red cars seem to be stolen more often than other cars, and their drivers may get more speeding tickets.
  - Your spouse cries at the end of every “relationship” movie you watch; you just cringe and sink lower in your seat.
  - You think it's embarrassing for mothers to nurse their babies in public; your spouse thinks it's the most natural thing in the world.
  - Your spouse wants to spend Christmas Eve with your in-laws; you believe that should be a special time for just the two of you.

## *Application*

### *Taking Things Personally*

Here's an Action Step you can take.

Each of you can make a “Cherish List” of the things you appreciate about your future mate. It'll come in handy when your differences seem like punishment instead of qualities that make life

more interesting. Write your own lists and share them with each other. You might even put the lists in a time capsule (perhaps a jar, jewelry box, or envelope) that you'll plan to open on your first wedding anniversary—if not before.

Look your list over whenever you have a hard time honoring each other. It will help remind you of the strengths that attracted you to your mate in the first place.

## Face The Book

*Going Deeper with Ready to Wed*

To learn more about—and apply—the principles you've just discussed, please read the following in the *Ready to Wed* book during the week:

Chapter 8, "We Are So Different!" by John Trent, PhD

Chapter 4, "Honoring You All the Days of My Life," by Gary Smalley