

**THIS IS A SAMPLE**

**SAMPLE**

**MORE  
IMPORTANT  
THAN A  
PRE-NUP**

PRE-MARITAL  
DUE DILIGENCE  
QUESTIONNAIRE

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*Love Is Beautiful. This Can Make It Stronger.*

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# FOR **ALL** COUPLES PLANNING TO MARRY

## COMPLETE THIS TOGETHER BEFORE THE WEDDING

Before any wedding, couples spend months—sometimes years—planning a single day. But very few devote the same time and attention to preparing for the lifetime that follows.

This questionnaire exists for one simple reason: to help you enter marriage with more clarity, honesty and confidence.

One woman who used an earlier edition of this questionnaire expressed exactly why this matters:

*“The Due Diligence Checklist is truly amazing. I downloaded it and shared it with friends... I wish something like this had existed before I married. Our vicar never asked the difficult questions, and many issues were never discussed—even after the wedding. My marriage eventually ended because we wanted different things about children. As a single mother now, I’ll be using the Checklist if I date again, and I’ll be encouraging my children to do the same when they’re older.”*

— **Melanie Coombs**

Her story is not unusual. Most marriages break down not because the couple is “wrong” for each other, but because important topics were never explored openly before promising a life together. This detailed questionnaire helps you avoid that mistake.

# COPYRIGHT NOTICE

This sample is provided for personal use only.

This guide is often given as an engagement gift to help couples start marriage wisely.

If you believe this guide may help other couples prepare for marriage more thoughtfully, please feel free to recommend it.

# HOW THIS DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO WORK

## WHAT THIS IS

- A structured pre-marital due diligence process
- A framework for difficult but necessary conversations
- A risk-awareness tool
- A transparency exercise
- A way to identify alignment — and misalignment — before legal commitment
- A governance document for your future partnership

## WHAT THIS IS NOT

- It is not a psychological test
- It is not a trap
- It is not an interrogation
- It is not anti-marriage
- It is not designed to create doubt where none exists
- It is not about looking for reasons to leave
- It is about removing reasons for future regret

## HOW TO APPROACH IT

1. Have conversations based on the questionnaire
2. But complete the questionnaire separately
3. Answer fully, honestly, and in writing
4. Do not rush. If discussion becomes intense, pause
5. Exchange documents and read carefully and with an open-mind
6. Focus on patterns, not on specific answers

Notice:

- Where you are in natural alignment
- Where your expectations differ
- Where further discussion and agreement is needed
- Where either of you feel defensive, evasive or uncomfortable

## **WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE**

Success is not about coming up with identical answers.

Success is:

- Transparency and honesty
- Emotional maturity
- Shared awareness of the risks
- Clear agreements about your future together
- A mutual decision made with open eyes

Marriage thrives when you create something together - on purpose. Vague assumptions on the basis of 'seeing how things work out' will weaken it.

## **WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT PUTTING IT IN WRITING**

Talk is cheap. Written clarity demonstrates your commitment to each other.

If you are prepared to put your answers in writing before your marriage, you are far more likely to protect the marriage after it begins.

You will both almost certainly change as you grow older. The issue is about whether you grow closer, or allow each other to drift apart.

## **WHAT THIS WILL TAKE (REALISTICALLY)**

Most couples complete this in 3-5 short sessions.

Typically 30-45 minutes at a time.

Many say the conversations become the most valuable part.

## A BRIEF NOTE TO PARENTS WHO ARE GIFTING THIS

When your son or daughter becomes engaged, a few things change — obviously for them — but also for you. Your role as parents is no longer quite the same. You still love and care for them deeply, of course, but you can no longer guide their decisions in the same way you once did.

In many cases, grown children no longer want parental advice. As part of building their own independent lives, they understandably want to make their own decisions — even when those decisions involve marriage.

Because you — like every married person — know something that engaged couples are only just beginning to discover: a wedding and a marriage are not the same thing. And while everyone hopes for “happily ever after,” experience teaches us that a strong marriage rarely happens by accident.

**This short guide, written by someone outside your family, is therefore not about interference. Nor is it about introducing doubt or dampening their excitement. Instead, it is simply a thoughtful engagement gift — one that gently encourages the kind of conversations that help couples build strong, resilient marriages that last a lifetime.**

Many other parents say that when they first read this document, they immediately recognised how valuable these conversations would have been before their own marriages began.

## OUR PARENTAL MESSAGE TO THE ENGAGED COUPLE:

- May this guide spark helpful conversations that deepen trust.
- May it help you ask the questions that matter.
- May it strengthen what is already good.
- And may it serve as a quiet reminder that you are loved and supported — always.

We give this with love, respect, and complete confidence in the future you are building together.

# INTRODUCTION

Huge congratulations on your engagement. I'm sure you've been inundated with best wishes for the future from immediate, as well as extended family, as well as friends and colleagues. It is a time for celebration as you prepare for your future lives together.

Couples often spend months — sometimes years — planning the wedding.

- The venue.
- The dress.
- The guest list.
- Accommodation
- Menus
- Photographer.
- The honeymoon.

The conversations inevitably revolve around the 'big day'.

But very few couples devote anything close to that amount of time and structure preparing for the marriage that follows.

**So between now and your wedding, make a point of having more conversations with family and friends about 'marriage', not exclusively about the wedding.**

And that especially includes with your partner. If your partner shows little interest in such conversations (or is always 'too busy', 'too tired' etc) it could be a red flag for the future.

This detailed questionnaire exists for one simple reason: To help you both enter marriage with far more clarity and transparency, and a shared understanding of all the legal, financial and familial responsibilities that are an integral part of marriage today.

Prior to publication, "*More Important than a Pre-Nup*" was shared with a number of married (and some divorced) trusted friends for their insights and improvements. It is far better because of them. So thank you.

The most common feedback has been *“OMG - I WISH something like this had been available when we first got married.”* And *“I’ve been happily married for decades, but the section on managing disagreements and conflict was especially valuable - I will use those techniques from now on. Brilliant.”*

If have been given this document as an engagement gift, I can confidently **guarantee** that whoever gave it to you, read, analysed and assessed it before they made the decision to share it with you. At the very least, this means they have agreed with enough of it to be confident that it could be helpful to you.

It would be naive to expect everyone to agree with everything within this document. And that’s OK.

But what a fantastic reason to use it as a conversation starter about your future marriage with parents, extended family members and friends.

A good marriage requires effort from both partners. But the rewards are worth it. Personally, marriage offers emotional security — the knowledge that one person has chosen you deliberately and publicly. And has ‘got your back’ at all times. Marriage reduces loneliness, lightens the load of life’s burdens, and provides continuity through illness, career upheaval, ageing and loss. Life is rarely simple. Everyone experiences what I call ‘life storms’. Watch trees during a violent storm. They bend and sway to absorb the forces being thrown at them. Their deep root system built over many years, provide the essential stability to weather each storm. A good marriage provides a similar strong, stable root system.

Psychologically, stable and satisfying marriages are consistently associated with greater life satisfaction, lower chronic stress, and increased resilience. Secure attachment reduces anxiety. Emotional reliability reduces uncertainty. In a healthy marriage, conflict enriches the experience rather than being destructive.

For children, the quality of the parental bond matters profoundly. Children require stability. A cooperative, respectful marital relationship provides a predictable emotional climate in which children can thrive.

Marriage is not a guarantee of happiness. But a well-functioning one — grounded in honesty, mutual respect and shared values — remains one of the most powerful structures for long-term personal stability and family coherence.

This document will hopefully help you think more clearly and realistically about your marriage and your shared future.

## About Author Roy Sheppard



Roy began his career as a presenter and interviewer on BBC network radio and television, appearing on BBC1, Radio 4 and Radio 5. For several years he read the news on BBC Breakfast Time, sharing the green room with what felt like a conveyor belt of celebrity guests.

One encounter still amuses him: he spent a long time chatting with a charming little old lady who chain-smoked beside him — in the days before indoor smoking was banned. After she left, colleagues swooned at the privilege of meeting her. Roy innocently asked, “*Who IS Audrey Hepburn?*” The room fell silent in disbelief. It was a turning point. He decided he clearly needed to get out more!

That moment reflects something that has defined him ever since: a deep curiosity about people. Friends have long sought his advice for his calm, practical common sense. To deepen his understanding of human behaviour, he trained as a hypnotherapist — not to practise, but to sharpen his perception and insight as an interviewer. In a world often dominated by conflict and confrontation, Roy has devoted much of his professional life to helping individuals and organisations ask difficult questions with a light touch — often through well-judged humour.

As a facilitator and conference emcee, he has worked with audiences of up to 9,000 internationally. His books evolved rather than being strategically designed, but they share a consistent theme: helping people see their lives differently and make wiser decisions. From *Press Pause on Your Life* to *Your Personal Survival Guide to the 21st Century* — described by The Independent as “required reading” — to relationship guides, life advice for teenagers, networking skills manuals, and modern dating, Roy’s work has always centred on personal responsibility and emotional clarity. His YouTube channel, @ModernManAcademy, addresses the challenges facing young men today, while his forthcoming AttractIQ app builds on his long-standing interest in self-assessment and honest feedback in relationships. Across decades of broadcasting, writing and facilitating, one principle remains constant: clarity reduces conflict, and thoughtful preparation improves lives.

All Roy’s links in one place: [www.LinkTree.com/RoySheppard](http://www.LinkTree.com/RoySheppard)

## FULL DISCLOSURE:

I am nearly 68 as I write this. I have been married and divorced twice.

One was simply sad. The other was catastrophic and should never have happened.

I would have willingly paid thousands to have had this document available to me all those decades ago. It would have stopped a marriage from happening that should not have taken place in the first place. And saved me a great deal of emotional and financial heartache.

So, in some ways I am probably better qualified to write about marriage than someone who has only experienced successful ones.

After the inevitable divorce, so many said the same *"We knew it wasn't going to last"*. Yet no one told me that before because, as they later explained, they didn't want to 'spoil the wedding day'. Or risk losing the friendship.

The statistics are sobering; four out of ten marriages (in western cultures) currently end in divorce. It is my view that a proportion of those marriages should never have happened in the first place (like mine). While the rest fail because of unrealistic expectations and a lack of conflict resolution skills (more on that critically important topic later).

**Let me be VERY clear: I am NOT anti-marriage. I am anti-BAD marriage.**

So, there is a small possibility this document COULD lead either, or both of you, to pause or cancel your wedding and your future marriage. As distressing as that could be in the short-term, it could potentially save you from untold stress, unhappiness and a considerable amount of money.

Based on this, for legal reasons I HAVE to include the detailed disclaimer on the following pages:

# LEGAL DISCLAIMER

This document is provided for general educational and informational purposes only. It is designed to help you think more clearly about your relationship, your planned marriage and personal decision-making regarding your future life together. It does not replace professional advice.

The author is not acting as a lawyer, therapist, counsellor, financial adviser, or medical professional. Laws, financial regulations, and relationship norms vary between jurisdictions and may change over time.

Nothing in this document constitutes:

- Legal advice
- Financial advice
- Medical or psychological advice
- A diagnosis of any person or relationship

Before making significant decisions regarding marriage, finances, property, children, separation, personal safety, or health, you should seek qualified professional advice appropriate to your circumstances.

## **Personal Responsibility**

Any examples or scenarios included are illustrative and generalised. They are not intended to describe specific individuals or predict outcomes.

You are solely responsible for:

- How you interpret this material
- The decisions you make
- Any actions you take

The author cannot assess your individual circumstances and accepts no liability for outcomes arising from the use or misuse of this document.

## **Emotional & Sensitive Content**

Some topics addressed may involve difficult or distressing subject matter, including conflict, trauma, manipulation, or abuse. If reading this material causes distress, or if you feel unsafe, overwhelmed, or at risk, seek appropriate professional or emergency support in your location.

## **Jurisdiction**

Legal and cultural frameworks differ between countries. This material reflects general Western principles and may not apply in all regions. Always verify local laws and seek local advice.

## **Acceptance of Terms**

This document offers perspective, not instructions. You are encouraged to use it as a starting point — not a substitute for professional guidance.

By choosing to complete this questionnaire, you acknowledge that you have read and understood this disclaimer and agree to accept full responsibility for your own decisions and actions.

# WHAT “DUE DILIGENCE” MEANS IN A RELATIONSHIP

‘Due diligence’ is a phrase that comes from business. Before anyone buys a company, a responsible buyer investigates:

- Financial history
- Liabilities
- Legal obligations
- Hidden risks
- Existing commitments

It’s common practice for a potential buyer to hire a team of lawyers, accountants, risk assessors, corporate governance specialists and more, to scrutinise the purchase. This is to ensure there are no shocks or surprises for the buyer. And to uncover potential problems and highlight assumptions.

No sensible person would ever invest their life savings in a new business without understanding what they are acquiring.

Marriage deserves at least the same seriousness. When you marry, you are not only committing emotionally. You are entering:

- A legal partnership
- A financial partnership
- A family system - future children effectively become ‘shareholders’ of your marriage partnership, introducing significant on-going costs and responsibilities.

Due diligence in a relationship means:

- Transparent disclosure
- Honest discussion of past behaviour
- Review of mental health history
- Examination of financial habits
- Exploration of values and expectations
- Future career and home priorities
- Clarity around children, shared roles and the long-term direction of the relationship.

This is not about a lack of trust. It’s about respect: Respect for yourself. Respect for your partner. And above all, respect for the lifelong promise to each other that you are preparing for.

# THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'DUE DILIGENCE' AND A PRE-NUPTIAL AGREEMENT

Due diligence is the process that takes place **before** marriage or any legally binding arrangement such as buying property together. It involves asking honest questions, sharing personal histories, discussing values and expectations, and identifying potential risks.

Its purpose is simple: to ensure both partners understand who they are marrying and what married life together will realistically involve.

A pre-nuptial agreement ('pre-nup'), by contrast, is a legal document primarily focused on money and assets. Its purpose is to clarify financial responsibilities and outline what happens if the marriage ends.

Pre-nups are often used in situations such as:

- protecting the assets of a wealthy partner
- safeguarding inheritance for children from previous relationships
- clarifying ownership of significant assets.

A pre-nup must be drafted by lawyers and signed before marriage. Each partner must usually obtain independent legal advice to confirm they understand what they are signing.

In some jurisdictions they are known by different names. For example, in Australia they are often called **Binding Financial Agreements (BFAs)**.

Even then, courts may sometimes set pre-nups aside, meaning their protections are not always guaranteed.

In simple terms:

**Due diligence helps you decide whether you should marry.**

**A pre-nup helps decide what happens if the marriage ends.**

# WHAT MARRIAGE MEANS IN LEGAL AND PARTNERSHIP TERMS (WESTERN CONTEXT)

In most Western countries, marriage is not only a romantic commitment — it is also a legally binding partnership affecting many aspects of adult life, including money, property, responsibilities, decision-making and children.

When two people marry, the law often treats them as a single economic and legal unit in important ways.

## Marriage as a Legal Contract

A Western marriage is essentially a state-recognised contract.

By marrying, each partner typically agrees to:

- share financial responsibilities
- support each other economically if necessary
- link assets and debts
- accept legal obligations if the relationship ends.

Importantly, many of these obligations apply even if they were never explicitly discussed.

For example, if one partner stops working to care for children, the other may later be legally required to provide financial support after divorce — even if the arrangement was informal.

## Money, Assets and Debt

Marriage can significantly affect financial ownership and responsibility.

Depending on your country and legal system:

- income earned during marriage may be considered joint income
- property acquired during marriage may be shared
- debts taken on by one spouse may affect the other.

Even when accounts appear separate, courts often examine the **reality of the relationship**, not simply whose name appears on paperwork.

For example:

If one partner builds a business during the marriage, the other may still have a legal claim to part of its value — or responsibility for losses — if the marriage ends.

I once advised a long-standing friend who discovered her husband had secretly resumed gambling and accumulated enormous debts. He had even forged her signature to secure additional mortgages on their home. Despite the fraud, she was legally exposed to the financial consequences of his actions.

## **Decision-Making and Legal Authority**

Marriage also gives spouses certain legal privileges.

A spouse may automatically have:

- authority in medical decisions
- influence in financial matters
- priority in inheritance if there is no will
- legal standing in emergencies.

This can be helpful — but it also means power and responsibility are shared whether or not couples have consciously discussed it.

It is worth noting that in the UK, spouses do **not** automatically have power of attorney, although other jurisdictions may differ.

## **Responsibilities if the Marriage Ends**

Divorce is not simply a breakup. It is the legal unwinding of a complex partnership.

This process may involve:

- division of assets and property
- ongoing financial support
- pension sharing
- child-related financial obligations.

Courts usually focus on **fairness and dependency**, rather than blame or intention.

For example, a higher-earning spouse may be required to support the other long after separation if the lower-earning partner sacrificed career opportunities during the marriage.

## **Emotional Partnership vs Legal Reality**

Many people marry for love, companionship, faith or family.

The legal system, however, focuses on different factors:

- financial interdependence
- care responsibilities
- vulnerability and reliance.

This gap between romantic expectations and legal realities is where many couples are caught off-guard.

# **GENDER ROLES, EXPECTATIONS AND “POLITICALLY INCORRECT” REALITIES**

TEXT REMOVED FROM THIS SAMPLE

# **WHAT COMES FIRST: CHILD WELFARE OR THE MARRIAGE?**

TEXT REMOVED FROM THIS SAMPLE

# **MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY**

Mental health remains a major taboo, despite the global rise in mental health problems since COVID. For example, over 280–330 million people worldwide are living with depression, affecting approximately 5% of all adults.

The World Health Organization recognises depression as one of the leading causes of disability worldwide, significantly affecting daily functioning, quality of life and relationships. During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, global prevalence of depression and anxiety increased by an estimated 25%, showing how social isolation, economic disruption and uncertainty can intensify emotional strain.

Women are disproportionately affected, with depression occurring at rates about 50% higher than in men. They are also at greater risk after childbirth.

Anyone who has experienced depression knows how debilitating it can be. It becomes especially challenging and exhausting when a partner has it.

There are many other mental health conditions that deserve serious attention because they can be equally — or more — challenging. That is why the due diligence questionnaire includes:

- Bipolar disorder
- Addiction
- OCD
- Psychosis
- Personality disorders
- Eating disorders
- Childhood abuse or trauma
- Family psychiatric history

These are not accusations or judgments, nor is this discussion intended to stigmatise mental health. They are simply important aspects of any serious relationship.

You both need to know the mental health history of your future spouse.

## Personal Case Study

Deciding whether to include this personal example has caused me a great deal of discomfort, but on balance it highlights an important point.

***“LIFE WAS LIVING HELL — My violent ex-wife nearly drove me to suicide after years of physical abuse”*** was the headline of a national newspaper interview with Coronation Street actor Charlie Lawson. Ironically, although he played a wife-beater, in real life he said he was the victim of domestic violence.

His wife was a TV make-up artist called Lesley Bond. She died in 2010, aged 55.

Decades ago, I too was in a deeply challenging relationship with Lesley Bond for around six months. I eventually ended it after months of her intense anger, emotional twisting, and the feeling that nothing I said or did was ever right. Her rage seemed to escalate steadily. When I ended the relationship, she exploded with anger. My main feeling was relief that the rollercoaster had finally stopped.

Lesley was obviously a troubled soul. She appeared to live with deep inner torment. I do not recall the physical violence later described by Charlie Lawson, but I did experience enough to understand how disturbed she was.

Here is the key point — and the reason I have decided to include this example:

If left untreated, mental illness can escalate.

It is common for sufferers to conceal symptoms under the belief that they are ‘managing’ them, often out of embarrassment or shame. But within the privacy of an intimate relationship, they may relax, let their guard down, and symptoms can reappear — seemingly from nowhere.

Untreated mental health conditions can influence long-term behaviour, especially when one or both partners are under stress, during or after pregnancy, financial strain or illness.

For an unsuspecting partner, the effects can be devastating.

Linked to this are the many ways people try to self-medicate emotional pain: alcohol, prescription or illegal drugs, sex, online pornography, gambling, overeating, even compulsive use of social media as an escape from reality.

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### **Healthy vs Unhealthy Disagreement**

Understanding this topic can have a profound impact on the success or failure of any marriage.

No two people agree on everything. When we are young, we are often attracted to those who seem most like us. The more mirror-like they appear, the more easily we convince ourselves they are our soulmate. As we mature, we begin to see that compatible differences often add richness and depth to a long-term relationship.

But where there are differences, conflict is inevitable.

It is not conflict itself that predicts divorce.  
It is how couples handle conflict together.

Couples who proudly say they never disagree are actually a cause for concern. Without learning how to manage disagreements well, even small conflicts can eventually break a relationship.

## Healthy disagreement looks like this:

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## Unhealthy disagreement looks like this

These formulae predict future divorce 97% of the time:

$$w(t+1)=a+r1w(t)+ihw[h(t)]$$
$$h(t+1)=b+r2h(t)+iwh[w(t)]$$

They were developed by Professor James Murray, a mathematician at the University of Washington, in collaboration with psychologist Dr John Gottman. A detailed explanation appears in *The Seven Principles of Making Marriage Work* by Dr John Gottman and Nancy Silver, pioneers in the scientific study of modern marriage.

Over several decades, Gottman observed thousands of couples in what became known as the “Love Lab,” analysing not just what they said, but how they said it — tone, facial expression, physiology and repair attempts. His work focused on measurable predictors of long-term stability or breakdown.

One of Gottman’s most influential findings was what he called *The Four Horses of the Apocalypse* — four communication patterns that strongly predict marital breakdown if they become habitual:

**Criticism** — attacking a partner’s character rather than addressing a specific behaviour

**Contempt** — mockery, sarcasm, eye-rolling, moral superiority; the strongest predictor of divorce

**Defensiveness** — refusing responsibility, counter-attacking, or playing the victim

**Stonewalling** — emotional withdrawal, shutting down, refusing to engage

Men are often particularly prone to stonewalling because they become overwhelmed — sometimes called ‘flooding’ — and may lack the vocabulary or confidence to express emotions clearly.

When these patterns replace respect, curiosity, responsibility and repair attempts, emotional safety disappears. The issue is no longer the disagreement itself, but the destructive escalation it produces. Over time, repeated escalation leads to emotional distance and, in many cases, divorce.

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# HOW TO USE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Due Diligence Checklist has been designed to help all couples make more thoughtful, and better-informed decisions before marriage so that when you walk down the aisle feeling you will both feel a much deeper connection and a sense that you have a shared vision of your future life together.

Remember, this questionnaire is not finalising a contract - you're capturing a better understanding of each other.

Marriage is one of the most consequential legal and emotional commitments you will ever make. With four out of ten marriages in Britain and the United States ending in divorce, it is essential that both parties enter into marriage fully aware of who they are marrying and what expectations each holds about married life.

If your partner has invited you to complete this questionnaire, take it as a sign of seriousness and respect. This process is not about suspicion or accusation. It is about clarity, responsibility, and mutual protection.

## Why Some of the Questions May Feel Uncomfortable

Some of the questions that follow may feel intrusive. This is deliberate.

Areas of conflict within relationships are well documented and well understood. Many marriages struggle not because problems were unforeseeable, but because difficult subjects were never discussed honestly before commitment.

TEXT REMOVED FROM SAMPLE

The purpose of these questions is to gain deeper insight into:

- Your own emotions and your partner's emotional landscape
- Financial maturity and responsibility
- Shared values and expectations
- Personal accountability
- Capacity for repair after conflict

Marriage requires all of these.

Do not attempt to resolve every difference immediately. After each short discussion session, take five quiet minutes to write down what felt clear, what felt unresolved, and what deserves further conversation. You do not need long summaries. Brief honesty is enough.

**In a world dominated by technology and automation, this joint activity is best done in your own handwriting - in ink, not pencil.**

**And avoid doing it digitally. And definitely not involving AI!**

So purchase two high-quality notebooks. You might like to call them your 'Marriage Books'.

Certainly, use the questions as a part of a conversation with your partner - but ensure you write down your answer to each question too.

As you work through the document, notice not only what you answer, but how you respond — emotionally and behaviourally. If discussion becomes intense, pause, and return when you are more calm.

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## **Confidentiality**

All written responses must remain private and confidential at all times. They are not to be shared with any third party. And never used as 'weapons' against each other!

This process is designed to protect you both — not to judge or accuse — but to build a foundation of trust strong enough to support a stable and lasting marriage.

# THE 'DUE-DILIGENCE' QUESTIONNAIRE

## 20 SAMPLE QUESTIONS (174 IN TOTAL)

### FAMILY HISTORY

*How your early family experiences may shape your views about marriage*

### FAITH & MORALITY

*The role beliefs and moral boundaries may play in married life*

11. Are there moral boundaries (e.g., abortion, assisted dying, political activism) that would create serious conflict for you?

### DIGITAL PRIVACY

*Expectations around personal devices, messaging and private communication*

13. What level of privacy do you expect regarding phones, passwords, and personal devices? Should access be open, restricted, or situational?

### MEDICAL HISTORY

*Important health and psychological history that may affect your future together*

15. Are you, or have you ever been, prescribed any mood-altering medication, eg. anti-psychotics, anti-depressants or tranquilisers? If so, what were the circumstances and are you still taking them?
22. Have you ever been diagnosed with any personality disorders, eg. borderline personality disorder, anti-social personality disorder? If so, which one(s)? What treatment did you receive, and are you still being treated?

## DRUGS & ALCOHOL

*Personal experience, family history and attitudes toward substance use*

31. Have friends, family or work colleagues ever tried to tell you that you may have a drink or substance abuse problem?

## SEXUAL HEALTH

*Health history, responsibility and attitudes toward sexual safety*

38. What are your views on long-term contraception? Whose responsibility is it - male or female?

## SEXUAL EXPECTATIONS

*Intimacy, expectations and how couples manage differences over time*

## LEGAL HISTORY

*Past legal issues that could affect trust, safety or future stability.*

47. Do you have a criminal record? For what?

53. Have you ever been reported or arrested for violence against men/women, in particular has a previous partner, husband or wife ever made allegations of sexual or physical violence against you?

## FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

*Habits, debts and personal responsibility with money*

56. How financially responsible would your closest friends say you are?

## FINANCIAL PHILOSOPHY BEYOND DEBT

*How you think about risk, wealth, income and long-term financial goals*

72. Do you prefer joint accounts, separate accounts, or a hybrid model? Why?

73. What level of financial risk feels acceptable in investing or entrepreneurship?

74. How important is early retirement or long-term wealth accumulation to you?

## HEALTH CRISIS & DISABILITY

*Expectations if illness or disability changes your future together*

## EMOTIONS, ATTITUDES AND VALUES

*How you think, react and take responsibility in life and relationships*

## PAST RELATIONSHIPS

*Patterns, lessons and behaviour in previous relationships*

104. How and why have most of your past relationships ended?

106. What does 'commitment' mean to you in a relationship?

107. How do you usually sort out relationship problems?

## MARRIAGE & FAMILY

*Expectations about commitment, marriage and shared responsibilities*

125. What does the institution of marriage mean to you?

131. How important is monogamy (ie. exclusive sexual access to your partner) to you? Why?

## EXTENDED FAMILY BOUNDARIES

*How parents, relatives and traditions influence your future household*

## WHERE WE LIVE

*Career decisions, relocation and responsibilities to ageing parents*

143. What responsibilities do you expect to have toward ageing parents? Would you relocate to care for them if necessary?

## FUTURE LIFE TOGETHER

*Children, careers, roles and the practical realities of family life*

147. As specifically as possible, why do you want children?

# YOU AND ME

*What you believe each partner brings to the relationship*

168. What do you believe you contribute to the relationship?

## SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

If you have taken the time to complete this questionnaire honestly and thoughtfully, you have already done something many couples never do: you have chosen to look carefully at the foundations of your future life together.

The purpose of this guide has never been to test your relationship, but to strengthen it through clarity, openness and mutual understanding. Many marriages encounter difficulty not because love was absent at the beginning, but because important expectations, assumptions and concerns were never fully discussed beforehand. By having these conversations now, you are giving your relationship something extremely valuable — a deeper awareness of each other, and a stronger platform on which to build your marriage.

As you move forward toward your wedding day, may the conversations you have shared here continue to deepen your trust, strengthen your partnership, and help you navigate the many joys and challenges of life together. I wish you both a truly wonderful wedding day — and far more importantly, a long, stable and deeply happy marriage in the years that follow.

*“A beautiful wedding lasts a day.  
A strong marriage lasts a lifetime.”*

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## YOUR FEEDBACK

This is the first edition of this document. Your constructive feedback about how later editions could be improved would be very welcome.

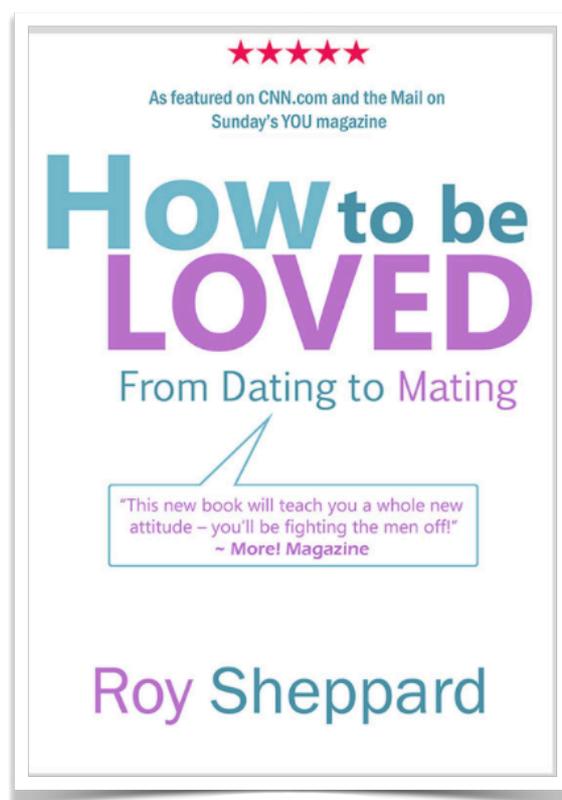
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