

A COMPENDIUM OF QUESTIONS FOR COUPLES ABOUT TO GET HANDFASTED

compiled by Angela Roberts from various sources, including Sue Curewitz Arthen of Earthspirit Community, Ruthann AMARTEIFIO of the Correllian Nativist of Wicca, and Sacred Threshold by Gertrud Mueller Nelson and Christopher Witt.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

1. Are you optimistic or pessimistic?
2. What will you contribute to the marriage?
3. What are your strengths? Shortcomings?
4. How do you view “traditional” gender roles in marriage?
5. How much personal time by yourself do you need?
6. What are your feelings about friends and interests outside of your marriage that your partner does not share? How do you feel about your partner’s friends and interests that you do not share?
7. What is your favorite trait in your partner? What is your least favorite trait in your partner?
8. Are you a morning person? Is your partner? If you are different from each other in this way, how do you deal with the difference?
9. What is your idea of a good time? What interests do you and your partner share?
10. Do you come to decisions quickly without second-guessing yourself, or do you agonize over every possible alternative?
11. Do you consider yourself more emotional or intellectual?

12. How do you think you might change after the wedding? How do you think your partner might change?

FAMILY AND BACKGROUND

1. What was or is your parents' relationship like?
2. How did your parents handle and resolve conflict?
3. What did your experience growing up in your family teach you about marriage and what is important in forming and managing a healthy relationship?
4. What about your parents' relationship do you want to emulate? What would you do differently?
5. How do you interact with your future in-laws?
6. Do your parents approve of your choice?
7. What past and present family issues may appear during the planning of the wedding?
8. How much extended family influence should be expected in your wedding? In your marriage?
9. Will you expect to celebrate your holidays with family? Which holidays? Which family? Where?
10. What family traditions do you plan on using when you celebrate?
11. Who will take care of your mother and father when they can no longer live alone?
12. Who will take care of your future in-laws when they can no longer live alone?
13. Are you willing to take in sick or elderly parents or in-laws?

KEEPING HOUSE

1. Do you and your partner have similar standards of tidiness for your home?
2. Who do you expect will do most of the housework? Have you discuss the division of labor?
3. Will you both cook? Can you both cook?
4. How do you decide how your home will be decorated and furnished?
5. How do you feel about pets? How many and what kind? Who takes care of them? How much money will be spent on them?

FINANCES AND CAREER

1. In general, how would you describe your relationship with financial issues?
2. How open are you with your partner about your individual financial situation? Do they know how much you currently earn? What debts you owe? How much you have saved or invested?
3. Do you or your partner make a lot more than the other? How comfortable are you with that?
4. Are you a “spender” or a “saver”?
5. How do you budget your expenses?
6. How do you feel about credit cards and loans?
7. Do you plan on keeping money in separate accounts, a joint account, or a combination of separate and joint accounts?

8. Who will handle paying the bills and balancing the checkbook?
9. How do you or will you make financial decisions?
10. What is the biggest amount that your partner could spend from your joint finances without consulting with you?
11. Do you enjoy your career or is there a change on the horizon?
12. How comfortable are you with your partner's career choice?
13. What would happen if one of you lost your job?
14. How comfortable would you feel about supporting your partner and for how long a period of time?
15. If you were offered a job that required moving, what would you do? What if your partner were offered a job that required moving?

CHILDREN AND CHILD REARING

1. Do you want to have children? If so, how many would you like? When do you plan on having them?
2. Do you know why you do or do not want children?
3. If you and your partner started with different desires, have you and your partner reached an agreement about having children and how many? Who gave in, and why?
4. How do you feel about various methods of birth control?

5. If your birth control were to fail, what choices would be on the table for you?
6. If you already have children, how will they be incorporated into your new life together? What role will the stepparent play in raising them, especially in disciplining them?
7. If you plan on having children and for some reason cannot, what would you do?
8. What kind of parents do you think you will be?
9. What is important to you to pass on to your children?
10. What have you learned about being a parent from your parents that you want to emulate? What attitudes and ideas do you not want to pass on to your children?
11. Do either of you have habits that should be stopped before having children? How will this be done?
12. What do you think a father's role in child rearing is?
13. What do you think a mother's role is?
14. What role will the grandparents play?
15. How do these role support one another? Where are areas of potential conflict?
16. Will you or your partner quit work to raise children? How do you think you might handle balancing career and child rearing?
17. How do you feel about disciplining your children? How would you describe your style of discipline? Who has the final word on disciplining?

18. If both of you are keeping your last names or hyphenating them, which surname will you give your children?
19. How will religion be presented to the child and what path will s/he be raised in? How will these choices be presented to extended families?
20. Do you feel about your children watching certain types of television or film? How much television viewing is acceptable? What about certain types of books?

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

1. What was your experience of religion growing up?
2. What part, if any, does it play in your life now?
3. What spiritual values are important to you?
4. What do you believe about the Divine (God(s), Goddess(es), deities, nature spirits, ancestors, etc.)? About the purpose of life? About morality, forgiveness, and death?
5. How serious are you about living your religious beliefs?
6. How open with your families are you with your religious and spiritual beliefs and practices?
7. Do you and your partner have the same or different religious or spiritual beliefs?
8. How do you handle differences of worldview or belief?
9. How important is it for you to worship together, be in the same religious community, or have the same beliefs?

10. What would happen if you or your partner began exploring a different religion or spiritual tradition that you found incompatible with your own?

SEX AND INTIMACY

1. What is the nature of your sexual relationship at this stage?
2. How satisfied are you? What aspects of your sexual relationship do you think you and your partner need to discuss in greater detail?
3. What can you do to keep your lovemaking fresh and alive?
4. How do you think your sexual relationship will change with time as your relationship deepens?
5. How much physical closeness (intimate touching rather than sexual touching) do you desire?
6. How comfortable are you talking about sex and your sexual feelings and desires with your partner?
7. Have you and your partner talked about each other about your sexual and dating history with others? How comfortable are you about what you know?
8. Have you and your partner discussed an open, closed, polyamorous, or polyfaithful relationship? Did you both feel that way from the start?
9. If you decide to have an open or polyfaithful marriage, how will you deal with it?
10. Have you ever been molested, beaten, raped, or otherwise abused? Have you done healing or therapy? Have you told your partner? How does it affect your relationship?

11. Do you have idiosyncrasies or “kinks” that you have not shared with your partner? If so, why haven’t you shared this with your partner? What would happen if your partner found out?
12. What information about you, your partner, and your relationship can be imparted to others? What should be kept confidential between the two of you?

COMMUNICATION STYLES

1. What do you like most about the way your partner listens to you?
2. When is the last time you and your partner talked about what you most like about each other?
3. What subjects can you not talk about?
4. What subjects are you afraid to bring up?
5. Do you ever fight? How would you describe your fighting style?
6. Do you tend to bear grudges?
7. Do you express your feelings verbally or withhold them?
8. When you disagree with each other or get angry at each other, how does that make you feel? What do you feel like doing – running away, shouting, withdrawing, or some other way?
9. How do you and your partner resolve issues?
10. Can you admit when you are wrong and ask for forgiveness? Can you forgive?

11. Do you ask for you what you need? Or should your partner “just know”?

12. What buttons can your partner push to make you “lose it”? Which of your partner’s buttons do you push?

13. Do you and your partner share a sense of humor? Can you tease each other without wounding?

14. How do you feel about sharing these answers with your partner?