

MARRIAGE INTERVIEW

One of the best ways to find out about marriage is to talk with people who are married. Select four couples, each at a different stage of marriage:

1. Married 2 years or less, no children
2. Married 5-7 years with small children
3. Married 15 years with teenagers
4. Married 30 years or more, retired

Try to select couples with whom you feel comfortable and who will answer your questions openly and honestly. Ask the following questions:

1. How old were they when they married?
2. Do they think that was a good age to get married? Why? Why not?
3. What is the happiest memory they have relating to their marriage?
4. What qualities do they think are most important for happy marriages?
5. What advice would they give to someone who wasn't certain whether to marry a particular person?
6. What is the most important quality for a mate to possess?
7. Has their marriage changed over time? If so, how?
8. Is their marriage what they expected it to be?
9. Have they experienced any crises in their marriage (illness, loss of work, etc.)? Did it help them draw closer together? What was their initial reaction to the crisis?
10. What is the most important thing have they done in their marriage to keep it happy?
11. What idea have they disagreed on? How did they resolve it?

After completing these interviews, summarize the ideas on a separate piece of paper. Be sure to include the following information:

1. What attitudes do these couples have in common?
2. On what do their attitudes differ?
3. What conclusions would you draw about creating a successful marriage, based upon what these couples said and your own ideas?