

## B. Evaluating the Strengths and Weaknesses of Your Relationship.

If you are like most couples, your relationship has both weaknesses and strengths. How do you rate your relationship? What can you do to keep the strong areas strong? What can you do to improve the problem areas? This quiz can help you think about these questions.

The questions come from a research study that looked at the quality of relationships.<sup>54</sup> The study included 1,550 couples who are typical of all couples in the United States. The researchers who did this study found that a person's answers to the quiz can tell a lot about the quality of a relationship, but it's not perfect.

Here's how the quiz works: Answer these 30 questions and then add up the score. Then you can go through an exercise to find the strengths in your relationship and areas where you need to make improvements.

You can do the quiz on your own. If you feel comfortable, both you and your spouse could take the quiz separately, then share your results. Use the tips at the end to help you appreciate your strengths and talk about ways to work on your weaknesses.

For each question, circle the number below the answer that best matches your feelings. Remember, the usefulness of this quiz depends on how much you know about yourself and your partner and how honest you are in your responses.

In your relationship, how satisfied are you with:					
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1. Your overall relationship with your spouse?	1	2	3	4	5
2. The quality of your communication?	1	2	3	4	5
3. The love you experience?	1	2	3	4	5

How is your SPOUSE in your relationship?					
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
4. My spouse understands my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My spouse listens to me in an understanding way.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My spouse uses a tactless choice of words when she or he complains.	5	4	3	2	1

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
7. My spouse doesn't censor his/her complaints at all. She/he really lets me have it full force.	5	4	3	2	1
How often do these words or phrases describe YOU?					
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
8. Worrier	5	4	3	2	1
9. Nervous	5	4	3	2	1
10. Depressed	5	4	3	2	1
11. Feel hopeless	5	4	3	2	1
12. Fight with others/lose temper	5	4	3	2	1
13. Easily irritated or mad	5	4	3	2	1
How often do these words/expressions describe YOUR SPOUSE?					
14. Worrier	5	4	3	2	1
15. Nervous	5	4	3	2	1
16. Depressed	5	4	3	2	1
17. Feel hopeless	5	4	3	2	1
18. Fight with others/lose temper	5	4	3	2	1
19. Easily irritated or mad	5	4	3	2	1

How much do you agree with the following statements about the family you grew up with?					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	It depends	Agree	Strongly Agree
20. I'm still having trouble dealing with some issues from my family while growing up.	5	4	3	2	1
21. Some issues from my family while growing up make it hard for me to form close relationships	5	4	3	2	1

How often have the following areas been a problem in your relationship?					
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
22. Financial matters	5	4	3	2	1
23. Communication	5	4	3	2	1
24. Intimacy/sexuality	5	4	3	2	1
25. Parents/In-laws	5	4	3	2	1
26. Roles (who does what)	5	4	3	2	1
27. Time spent together	5	4	3	2	1
28. How often have you thought your relationship might be in trouble?	5	4	3	2	1
29. How often is your current SPOUSE violent toward you?	5	4	3	2	1
30. How often are YOU violent toward your current partner?	5	4	3	2	1

Score your quiz now. To score your quiz, just add up the numbers you circled. Your score should be between 30–150.

Your Score: \_\_\_\_\_

What Your Score Means: A higher number indicates more areas of strength and fewer areas of weakness. A lower number indicates more areas of weakness that you may need to work on to improve the quality of your relationship.

**C. Learn from the Quiz:** What Are Your Strengths and Weaknesses? All couples have strengths and challenges in their relationships. List and talk about your strengths and areas for improvement.

Strengths. For the questions in this quiz, higher numbers indicate strengths in your relationship. So, from your answers to the quiz, list the greatest strengths in your relationship.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Think and talk about these strengths. Don't take them for granted. How can you maintain and nurture these strengths?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Weaknesses. For the questions in this quiz, lower numbers indicate weaknesses in your relationship. From your answers to the quiz, list some challenges in your relationship that you could work on.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Think and talk together about these challenges. What can you do to improve in these areas?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

There are easy ways to get a more detailed, in-depth look at all the different aspects of your relationship. For instance, here are some relationship inventories, or questionnaires, that you can access over the Internet that allow you to answer many detailed questions about your relationship with your spouse (privately). Then you get detailed feedback on the strengths and weaknesses in your relationship.

Relationship Inventory	Web Address	Associated University
• FOCCUS	<a href="http://www.foccusinc.com">www.foccusinc.com</a>	Creighton University
• Enrich	<a href="http://www.prepare-enrich.com">www.prepare-enrich.com</a>	University of Minnesota
• RELATE	<a href="http://relate.byu.edu">relate.byu.edu</a>	Brigham Young University