

Delight or Doom?

Seven Signs You've Found the 'Right' Marriage Mate

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You've invested a lot of time, effort, and emotional energy to your relationship. Things are good, and you think you've found "the one"—that marriage-worthy person you're prepared to spend the rest of your life with for better or for worse. But before you say "I do" and turn this relationship into a lifelong commitment, first determine if you and your mate are compatible in key areas proven to foster happy, healthy marriages that go the distance.

Here are seven signs to help you best assess if your relationship will result in delightful wedded bliss, or if doom and gloom is the more likely outcome. This Marriage Compatibility Checklist will help you analyze the relationship hand you've been dealt so you can hold 'em or fold 'em!

1. You are like-minded. While you don't have to be exactly the same (let's face it, that would be boring), you do need to have congruent core morals and values. These shape expectations and direction and are essential ingredients of a resilient marriage. After all, how can two people travel together and enjoy the journey, unless they are heading in the same direction and agree on how they will get there? Are you on the same pathway in terms of wants, needs, and desires, or are you headed down opposite roads?
2. Your temperaments balance one another. One of you may be an extravert and the other an introvert. One a Type A and the other more passive. While these glaring differences may lead to conflict at times, these opposing temperaments often bring balance. If you are the Yin to your mate's Yang or vice versa, you will better your chances of achieving a harmonious relationship. But bear in mind these differing character traits should serve to create a well-rounded whole relationship. Beware if your respective tendencies are just too different to ever make the puzzle pieces fit.


3. You are both committed to do the work. The Beatles got it wrong—love is not all you need.

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Effort and work is necessary to cultivate a strong and satisfying relationship for the long term. Rewards rarely come by just "phoning it in"; rather, dividends are realized when you work hard at something with forethought, intention, and resolve. With respect to relationships, committing to always fine tuning and bettering it is the glue that holds it all together. If your partner is not engaged in making the effort now, it is unlikely to change once you are married. In fact, the lack of effort and engagement could get even worse as complacency sets in.

4. You are able to speak your partner's "love language." When two people with different dialects try to communicate, it is often confusing, frustrating, and downright futile. Neither person understands what the other is trying to say. The same holds true in a marriage where each partner has their own "love language"—those romantic, sexual, and emotional needs that make each individual feel fulfilled. Is your mate taking the time to learn and speak your love language, and are you interested in speaking theirs—or is such emotional gratification already being lost in translation?
5. You are able to work together to resolve problems. This is when the rubber meets the road. The bottom line is that you have to be able to work through conflict to find mutually felt resolution in a healthy and productive manner. Marital life is filled with bumps, twists, and turns, so having a partner that works well with you to work through conflict minimizes the stress on the relationship. This certainly doesn't mean you can or should enter marriage with the intent to change the other person, and don't change who you are simply to keep the peace. The key is to be true to yourself while learning when and how to compromise so that you can effectively work through problems without one or the other feeling resentful. If this isn't possible now, take pause.

6. You are attracted to each other. Do you remember that initial spark between the two of you? There is a special chemistry that is electrifying when there is a true physical attraction. As your relationship matures and daily life issues dominate your attention, and as your bodies age, this fundamental human attraction can keep those fires burning between the two of you—both physically and emotionally. Every fire will burn itself out if not fueled, so assess if the flames are being stoked now well before the wedding day.
7. You genuinely like who your partner is as a person. A relationship must be based upon a solid friendship that can stand the test of time. You genuinely enjoy each other's company and prefer to spend time together rather than alone or with others. You should like the person as much as you love them. Respect, admiration, and honor are enduring traits that remain even as passion ebbs and flows over time. Can you truly say that your mate is your best friend? Would your partner say that about you?

This simple seven-item checklist can help you determine if your relationship has happy marriage potential for the long haul. Just like any other type of investment, it's always wise to conduct a SWOT analysis to identify intrinsic qualities (strengths and weaknesses) that may help or hinder your marital life as well as external issues (opportunities and threats) that may assist or adversely impact your happily ever after. 

"America's Marriage Doctor" Jacqueline Del Rosario is President and CEO of Recapturing the Vision International, an organization dedicated to promoting healthy marriages and family strengthening. Also a published author, speaker, and nationally regarded media personality, Dr. Del Rosario has been a certified pre- and post-marital counselor for more than 20 years. Her cutting-edge series, Marriage Solutions and The Marital Constitution™, help couples successfully work through problems and find healthy solutions. She has two children and currently resides in Miami, Florida, with her husband of over 20 years. Dr. Del Rosario may be reached online at www.doctordelrosario.com.