

**H**ERE ARE 7 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!



**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?



**YOUR TEMPERAMENTS BALANCE EACH OTHER.** One of you may be an extrovert, 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 that 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.





**YOU ARE BOTH COMMITTED TO DO THE WORK.** The Beatles got it wrong – love is NOT all you need. Effort and work are 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, a commitment to continual fine-tuning and improvement 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.




**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 in which 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?



**YOU ARE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS.** Cooperation is where 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 who cooperates with you to work through conflicts 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, nor should you 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 work through problems effectively, without one or the other feeling resentful. If this isn't possible now, take pause.



**YOU ARE ATTRACTED TO THEM.** 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, daily life issues dominate your attention and bodies age; a 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 well-stoked now, before the wedding day.



**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 should 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 swells over time. Can you truly say that your mate is your best friend? Would your partner say that about you?

**THIS SIMPLE 7-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." ■**



PHOTO COURTESY OF DR. DEL ROSARIO

"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. A published author, speaker and nationally regarded media personality, Dr. del Rosario has been a certified pre- and post-marital counselor for over 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 is best known for her reformative leadership in the world of marriage education and family healing and strengthening. Inspired to break generational cycles of failure, violence and destructive behavior, Dr. del Rosario has become a leading advocate for healthy marriage formation.

In 2006, Dr. del Rosario received nearly \$3 million from the federal government to implement her marriage education program in educational institutions throughout south Florida. In 2008, she launched the *Making Marriage Work* radio talk show. The show serves as a stage for intelligent and practical conversation about real marital problems. In addition, she spearheads the Marriage Minutes campaign, a series of video presentations

that provide the tools to prepare for healthy relationships and marriages.

As a certified marriage counselor and Florida state-approved, pre-marital course provider, Dr. del Rosario has developed proven tools to help couples talk through their problems and find healthy solutions in support of her vision to break generational cycles of dependency that have crippled so many families.

Dr. del Rosario is also the founder and CEO of Recapturing the Vision International, a globally recognized nonprofit dedicated to helping young people and their families overcome the negative trends that lead to generational cycles of failure and dependency. To do this, she has devised a suite of programs to empower youth and families at school, at home, and in the community; to date, her programs have received over \$20 million in federal, state and county funding. Dr. del Rosario continues to work tirelessly to pave the way for social reform, a new mindset and, most importantly, lighting the path towards an enriched life.

Recently Dr. del Rosario was named the official marriage coach for Executive 50 ([nationalexec.org](http://nationalexec.org)), a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization focused on executive leadership development. She may be reached online at [doctordelrosario.com](http://doctordelrosario.com).