

## *Divorce Proof Your Marriage*

# The Relationship Dynamics Scale

Please answer each of the following questions in terms of your relationship with your mate. These questions should be answered by yourself (not with your partner). The ranges on the back of this sheet can be used for your own reflection. Use the following 3-point scale to rate how often you and your partner experience the following:

**1 = almost never, 2 = once in awhile, 3 = frequently**

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Little arguments escalate into ugly fights with accusations, criticisms, name-calling, or bringing up past hurts ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. My partner criticizes or belittles my opinions, feelings, or desires .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. My partner seems to view my words or actions more negatively than I mean them to be .....                              | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. When we have a problem to solve, it seems like we are on opposite teams .....  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. I hold back from telling my partner what I really think and feel .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. I think seriously about what it would be like to date or marry someone else .....                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. I feel lonely in this relationship .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. When we argue, one of us withdraws... that is doesn't want to talk about it anymore; or leaves the scene .....         | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Who tends to withdraw more when there is an argument?

Male    Female    Both Equally    Neither Tend to Withdraw

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If you are faced with a difficult personal, emotional, or relational issue:

**Call for an appointment today!**  
**Ask for a counselor in your area**  
**1-800-998-6329**

# How Strong is Your Marriage?

Stanley and Markman based these questions on fifteen years of research at the University of Denver. Their research examined the kinds of communication and conflict management patterns that can predict if a relationship is headed for trouble. Higher scores mean your relationship may be in greater danger if changes are not made.

## 8 to 12 “Green Light”

If you scored in the 8-12 range, your relationship is probably in good or even great shape at this time. But we emphasize “at this time” because relationships don’t stand still. In the next 12 months, you could have a stronger, happier relationship, or you could head in the other direction. Think about it this way: you are traveling along and have come to a green light, there is no need to stop but it might be a good idea to check both ways before proceeding. This would probably be a great time to work on making your relationship all it can be.

## 13 to 17 “Yellow Light”

If you scored in the 13-17 range, it’s likely you are coming to a “yellow light.” You need to be cautious. While you may be happy now in your relationship, your score reveals warning signs of patterns you don’t want to get worse. You’ll want to take action to protect and improve what you have. Spending time to strengthen your relationship now could be the best thing you could do for your future together.

## 18 to 24 “Red Light”

Finally, if you scored in the 18-24 range, it’s like approaching a red light. Stop and think about where the two of you are headed. Your score indicates the presence of patterns that could put your relationship at significant risk. You may be heading for trouble – or already be there. But there is good news; you can stop and learn ways to improve your relationship now.

To summarize, there are *two key risks* that can threaten marital success and satisfaction:

**High Conflict:** *“A fool gives full vent to anger, but the wise quietly holds it back.” – Proverbs 29:11*  
*“Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.” – Proverbs 12:18*

**Avoidance:** *“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ‘In your anger do not sin’: do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.” – Ephesians 4:25-27*

At **Turning Point Counseling**, we specialize in helping couples identify and correct the patterns that put a relationship at risk. Call 1-800-998-6329 today and start the process toward a healthier and happier relationship. You will be glad you did!

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