

OPENNESS IN COMMUNICATION

Note: After reading the summary following each presentation, make every effort to respond to the questions, starting with the most significant.

Openness in communication is a process of talking and listening that involves elements of risk, trust and acceptance. In marriage we are challenged to take a risk, to share openly with our spouse and to trust our spouse's acceptance of our thoughts, ideas and feelings. To experience the deepest sense of love, we need to become vulnerable and trusting.

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1. What things (thoughts, feelings, behavior, dreams, values) do I find difficult to reveal to you? (Share positive as well as negative examples.)



2. In what ways do I listen to you openly? In what ways do I think you listen to me openly?
3. Do I go along with you just to avoid an argument (peace at any price)? Explain.
4. How do we differ in the way we argue? (e.g. attack, withdraw, ignore) How can we use the rules for arguing?
5. Circle the areas where you are the least open with your fiancé and then explain why it is difficult to be open about them:

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|-----------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| *My family | *Education | *Marriage responsibilities |
| *Careers | *Habits | *Fear of failure |
| *Children | *Friends | *Previous marriage/relationships |
| *In-laws | *Values | *Hobbies/free-time/sports |
| *Drinking/drugs | *Health | *Financial matters |
| *Life-styles | *Sex | *The way you treat me |
| *Religion | *Other | *Roles in marriage |