Whom Not to Marry!
Jeffry H. Larson

In the last five years I have reviewed over 60 years of research on the premarital factors that predict a satisfying and stable marriage. That review showed that certain personality characteristics which can be identified before marriage predict marital dissatisfaction and often divorce.

These personality traits may predispose a person to distort or overreact to relationship events. These traits, as Lawrence Kurdek emphasizes, may contribute to the partners being someone with whom it is very difficult to live!

So, what are these traits and what types of individuals fit into the category of: Whom NOT To Marry? Research shows that if a person is excessively depressed, self conscious, anxious, impulsive, hostile, and/or vulnerable to stress he/she is a poor marriage risk. Such traits lead to a negative view of self and others in general. Psychotherapy is usually necessary to overcome these problems.

Below are some specific relationship situations or types of individuals that reflect these excessive traits or other dangerous traits. Under these conditions, it is best not to marry!

BE VERY CAUTIOUS TO GET MARRIED:

1. If either of you relentlessly asks questions like Are you sure you love me? Do you really care about me? (Approval types)
2. If, when you are together, you spend most of your time disagreeing and quarreling. (Love-hate relationship)
3. If you don’t really know each other as persons, or don’t relate to each other’s ideas, even though you have spent a great deal of time together.
4. If you don’t get along well with either your mother or father, and your prospective mate seems to you to be just like that troublesome parent.
5. If you are really marrying someone to mother or father you.
6. If you find that your decision to get married has been largely influenced by your prospective father-in-law or mother-in-law.
7. If you keep having thoughts like “Maybe things will get better after we’re married.”
8. If your partner insists that you drop all your old friends and start afresh in building a social life. (Possessive types)
9. Your partner makes all the important decisions in your relationship and you feel resentful. (Control types)
10. If, after you’ve done some soul-searching, you discover that you are marrying a sex object
rather than a person.
11. If your partner frequently explodes in anger and has difficulty controlling his/her temper.
12. If you’re feeling pressured by your partner to get married.
13. If your partner is physically or verbally abusive to you.
14. If you spend a day alone with your prospective mate (without watching television) and you find it intolerable!

Finally, here are three recommendations to help you avoid marrying someone with these traits:

1. Learn how to recognize these traits in yourself and others and pursue therapy, if necessary, before marriage. Remember, marriage does not cure personal problems; rather, it makes them worse!
2. Do not marry at a young age.
3. Become well-acquainted before marriage.

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