

Common Expectation Gaps

Take this list and work through each one and share your expectations openly.



MONEY

- Who's the Spender vs. Who's the Saver?
- Will we join our bank accounts?
- Who will manage our money?
- What will we spend our money on?
- What are our savings goals?
- When do we need to check with the other before spending?



SEX / ROMANCE / AFFECTION

- How often will we be sexually intimate?
- What's OK in the bedroom and what's not?
- Non-sexual intimacy vs. sexual intimacy?
- What does "cuddling" mean anyway?



IN-LAWS / EXTENDED FAMILY

- How much time will we spend with them weekly, monthly, yearly?
- How involved will they be in our relationship?
- How will we divide holidays between yours and mine?



KIDS

- Discipline styles? (Spanking, Time-out, Reasoning, etc.)
- Sports & Activities: Which ones and how much?
- How much time away will we take from our kids weekly, monthly, yearly?
- Will either of us stay home with the kids or will we put them in childcare?
- Who will provide childcare – a daycare or family?
- What kind of schooling?
- Will we let them move back home or not one day?

Common Expectation Gaps



CHORES

- Who does what?
- What does 50/50 mean anyway?
- Do we fall into typical gender stereotypes? And are we ok with that?
- Will we hire someone to do some things? What things?



ORGANIZATION

- Tidy vs. messy?
- Structured vs. free spirit?
- Planner vs. spontaneous?



ENTERTAINMENT & VACATIONS

- Differing vacation/relaxation styles?
- For date nights, will we go out or stay home?
- Vacation or Staycation?
- Cabin vs. tent camping?
- Mountains vs. tropical beach?
- Movie vs. museum vs. ballgame?
- How will we spend our downtime: Productive or mindless?



COMMUNICATION

- Talker vs. Thinker?
- Loud vs. Soft-Spoken?
- Differing styles: internal processor vs. external processor?
- Are we emotionally available to each other (do you both engage?)



CONFLICT STYLE

- Passive aggressive vs. direct?
- Conversation pursuer vs. conversation avoider

Common Expectation Gaps



SPIRITUAL

- Who will be the spiritual leader?
- What is a "spiritual leader"?
- Where will we go to church?
- How much will we be involved/volunteer?
- Will we pray together? How often?
- Quiet times together? If so, when? How often?



WORK / CAREER

- Will we ever work overtime?
- Will we travel for work? If so, how much is ok?
- Are we willing to relocate if necessary?
- Will we both have a full-time career?
- Am I fine with him/her working outside the home while I stay home?



HOLIDAYS & CELEBRATIONS

- How, where, when, and with whom will we celebrate?
- Are birthdays/anniversaries a big deal?
- Will we celebrate Valentine's Day? If so, how?

Serious marriage problems can develop because we assume the other person shares our expectations.