
Your Online Workbook for Your Marriage Insights™ Report

Understanding Your Strengths and Blending Differences in Marriage

Ministry Insights™ International
www.ministryinsights.com

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This workbook is designed to help you interact with your spouse as well as ask important questions about who you are in the context of your marriage based on your report. Working through these questions, alone and with your spouse, can give you added insights into your own strengths and how to blend your differences in your marriage.

How to get the most from this workbook:

- Have your Marriage Insights report on hand as this workbook will walk you through each major section of your report.
- Commit to taking at least one half hour of uninterrupted time to go through these questions. By investing the time it takes to sit through one television program, you can gain tremendous insights into your strengths as well as how to better your marriage.
- We highly recommend that you share your report and your workbook process with your spouse – make it an interactive experience, with positive conversation and plenty of affirmation. Sharing your insights can set the stage for important, positive changes in your marriage, as well as foster accountability between spouses.

How do I go even deeper than this workbook?

Perhaps you're a Lion who needs to work on sensitivity or communication skills, an Otter who needs to get better organized, a Golden Retriever who wants to learn how to say hard things in a soft way, or a Beaver who would benefit from adding more laughter or flexibility to your style.

After you work through your report and workbook, we urge you to visit our website at www.ministryinsights.com to obtain a copy of the book, "The Two Sides of Love" by Dr. John Trent. Additionally, our Ministry Insights trainers and staff can provide key support and training on location for small groups, churches and other ministries interested in hosting a marriage enrichment program using the Marriage Insights tools.

(*Note: if you are experiencing extreme dissatisfaction and conflict in your marriage, we recommend that you seek a qualified Christian counselor or pastor in your area that will offer you solid, Biblical counsel and direction. Click on the "Find a Christian Counselor" tab on our website to start the process).

We're committed to providing outstanding tools and customer service to each person who takes our assessments. Let us know how we can help you!

John Trent, Ph. D.,
Chairman and CEO,
Ministry Insights International

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Please turn to the “General Characteristics” section of your report.

From paragraph one, pick three statements that in particular cause you to nod your head and say to yourself, “That’s me!”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

From paragraph two, pick three statements about yourself that you think your spouse most appreciates.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write down specific examples of when you “lived out” these statements in your marriage. You may want your mate to give you feedback for these.

Are there ways in which you are “holding back” using some of your strengths in the context of your marriage? (Example: “It says I’m expressive, but I don’t always share my true feelings with my spouse.”) Why?

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS (cont.)

From paragraph three, list three statements that describe the way you tend to communicate with others.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What seems like “positive” feedback from this “General Feedback” section?

In what areas of this section can you see a need for personal growth?

Schedule a time for working through these questions with your spouse. At what time in the next 48 hours will you talk to your mate about your report and these questions?

KEYS TO MOTIVATING

Please turn to the “Keys to Motivating” section of your report.

The Bible says, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” In other words, those things that we treasure, we’ll tend to move toward. People are motivated by what they desire most. Read and list four desires that are most important to you from this section.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

In your marriage, what tends to motivate you the most? Be honest and draw from the items in this section if needed.

Is your spouse aware of the areas that tend to motivate you? _____

Who are the people in your life, besides your mate, who need to see this section of your report? Why?

Which of these keys can you list as the most important goals for you to achieve in your marriage relationship?

KEYS TO MOTIVATING (cont.)

What, if any, are the major roadblocks or hindrances to achieving the goals you just listed?

List the three most important ways your spouse can help you achieve these goals, or help motivate you in specific areas of your life.

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
-
-
-

RELATIONSHIP STRENGTHS

Please turn to the “Relationship Strengths” section of your report.

Read and list four statements that describe your strengths from this section.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

In your marriage, how aware do you feel your spouse is of your strengths?

What are two of your strengths that you could “tap into” a little more to encourage your spouse?

1. _____
2. _____

List three specific actions you can do for your mate that utilize the strengths listed from the previous question.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are there any items from the Relationship Strengths section of your report that are the same or are “synonymous” with those on your spouse’s report? If so, list them below.

RELATIONSHIP STRENGTHS (cont.)

List the strengths that seem to be totally different or “opposite” from those on your spouse’s report.

Now that you have identified the differences in your strengths, list two specific differences that cause the most conflict in your marriage (For example, “I’m outgoing and social, and she tends to be more reserved and to herself”), and list a corresponding solution to blending these differences (this may take plenty of conversation!).

1. _____
2. _____

Strategy for blending key differences: _____

KEYS TO COMMUNICATION

Please turn to the “Keys to Communication” section of your report.

Identify and list four items that are most important for your spouse to keep in mind when communicating with you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What is the most important key to communication from this section for your spouse to apply on a consistent basis?

From the answer above, take the communication key you selected and apply it to a specific example of how your spouse could apply this one communication key. Make sure you frame the application positively.

Are there other people in your life that could benefit from knowing this information about you? If so, list up to three people you can share this information with.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Please turn to the “Barriers to Communication” section of your report.

Do you tend to communicate forcefully, without elaborating? Or do you like drawing out a story and going into detail? Maybe you make sure to ask about your spouse’s day or feelings during conversations. Most of us tend to expect our spouses to communicate with us just like we converse with them. However, different people use different styles of communicating. Understanding your spouse’s natural communication style is a powerful way to “join” or “connect” with him or her. It’s also a tremendous way to head off potential communication problems. With that in mind,

Read and list the four most important statements for your spouse to follow as he or she communicates with you on a daily basis.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Compare your statements with those on your spouse’s report. Identify similar statements and list them below.

Take four statements from the list of barriers and rewrite them in a “positive” way by removing the “don’t”. For example, the statement “Don’t be demanding or domineering” can be changed to “Be patient and relaxed when sharing your thoughts.” These can be used as goals for solid interaction between you and your spouse. The “Keys to Communication” section also contains positively framed statements to help you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

Please turn to the “Communicating with Others” section of your report.

Identify your spouses dominant, core style (Lion, Otter, Golden Retriever or Beaver – highest point(s) on his or her graph). Write down his or her style below.

From the explanation of your spouse’s core style in this section, what are the most beneficial items for you to remember when interacting with your spouse?

Cite some possible situations in which you can apply these suggestions. Be specific and use your answers as “goals for daily communication” in your marriage.

Identify and list a few other people in your life who you think can be described with one of the “dominant” styles below.

Lions _____

Otters _____

Golden Retrievers _____

Beavers _____

HINDERING FACTORS

Please turn to the “Hindering Factors” section of your report.

This section of the report highlights what the report calls “limitations” or hindering factors to optimum communication and interaction between you and your spouse. You’ll notice that each of the items that are in this section is one of your strengths pushed too far in the context of your interaction with your spouse and others.

Identify and list three statements if any, that most often tend to reflect your interactions at home.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The statements above indicate at least three specific strengths that you are pushing to an extreme. List these corresponding strengths below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Turn these three “hindering factor” statements into action items or goals to keep your strengths “in check” when you interact with your spouse.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

PERCEPTIONS

Please turn to the “Perceptions” section of your report.

Read and reflect on this information. The words listed under “self-perception” are words that you would use to describe yourself in a positive light. However, it is natural for us all to display a negative side. Everyone has days when he or she is not at his or her best.

Look at the words that your spouse may sometimes use to describe you.

Which of these perceptions do you agree with (if any)?

If your spouse ever has any negative perceptions of you, which one or more would be the most frequent? Why?

Which of these perceptions can be or have been roadblocks in your marriage relationship?

What specific changes or adjustments can you make in these areas that can have a positive difference in your relationship with your spouse?

CORE AND ADAPTED STYLE – HOW ARE YOU HAVING TO ADAPT?

Please turn to the “Core and Adapted Style” and the “How are You Having to Adapt” sections of your report.

Your Marriage Insights™ report is a personal, comprehensive profile of your “core”, God-given strengths with a few challenging suggestions and keys for communicating in your marriage. Your report also points out how you are “adapting” to succeed in your relationship with your spouse. The side-by-side graphs give you a visual picture of the degree of change you make in your style of relating to your spouse. Adapting to the relational needs of your spouse, no matter how different they are from yours, is very important in maintaining harmony and commitment in marriage.

If your core style is quite different than your spouse’s style (for example, if you are a Lion and your spouse is a Golden Retriever), your differences will naturally be seen in how you solve problems, show affection, communicate verbally and non-verbally with each other, and in the various social settings you both create. It is in meeting the needs of your spouse and your home environment that you may have to adjust or adapt your behavior, but the degree to which you “adapt” can indicate potential areas of conflict and stress in your home environment. If you feel the need to be someone totally different than who you are in your “core” style, this could lead to increasing dissatisfaction and disharmony in your marriage.

- Remember that as husbands and wives we are called to mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21-28), so our adaptations in marriage are necessary and are part of love and service to our spouses and God.
- The way you deal with problems, people, tasks and pressure will always affect your home environment. The main emphasis of this section of the workbook is to have you assess how you blend your differences and celebrate your spouse’s strengths.

In your “How Are You Having to Adapt” section, locate and list three statements that are the EASIEST adaptations to make in your marriage.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

HOW ARE YOU HAVING TO “ADAPT”? (cont.)

Locate and list the three statements that take the most energy for you- the adaptations that may be the HARDEST for you to make on a consistent basis in your home.

If your Core and Adapted graphs are extremely different, does this indicate that you are adapting just to SURVIVE or keep the peace in your relationship? Or are your adaptations helping you SUCCEED and thrive in your marriage? List some thoughts and questions below and continue conversation with your spouse on this topic.

Take some time to reflect on your report with your spouse with special attention on the areas of your shared strengths and the goals you have set to actively blend your differences.

Write down three specific things you appreciate most about your spouse and share them with him or her today. These can include specific character traits, talents, emotions and values.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____