

Evaluate Your Marital Communication

Instructions for the Counselor

This exercise is meant to help couples reflect on their communication and to give feedback on their strengths and weaknesses. The couple should fill out a copy of the worksheet separately, and then follow the instructions on the last two pages.

Note the husband fills out both the “Evaluate Yourself” and the “Evaluate Your Spouse” pages. The wife does the same thing.

The real usefulness of this exercise is that the person not only evaluates himself or herself, but then hears how his/her spouse would evaluate himself/herself on the same parameters. Example: Jim marks a “2” (hardly ever) for anger and his wife marks a “7” (frequently) for the same thing. As they talk through this exercise, the similarities and differences in what they marked will be instructive.

After the couple has filled out the worksheet and also worked through the instructions on the last page, sit down with them and talk with them about what they learned. (Be sure to do this only after they have completed the instructions on the last two pages!)

Evaluate Yourself

Instructions: Individually evaluate yourself according to the following scale. When you are done then compare your evaluation with your spouse's evaluation of your communication.

Unbiblical Communication Scale									
Strength								Weakness	
Hardly Ever		Seldom		Sometimes		Frequently		Almost Always	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I **blow-up** (vent my anger) when I talk with you (Eph. 4:26).

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

I **clam-up** instead of talking with you (Prov. 6:1-5; 24:11-12).

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

I **interrupt** you when you're talking (Prov. 18:13).

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

I **judge** your *motives* (1 Cor. 4:5).

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

I use **sweeping generalizations/absolute statements** when I talk to you.

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

I **blame-shift** my responsibilities to you (Gen. 3:12).

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

I **dig up** things from the past (1 Cor. 13:5).

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

I use **harshness** when I talk with you (1 Sam. 25:3, 10-11).

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

Weakness		Biblical Communication Scale								Strength
Hardly Ever		Seldom		Sometimes		Frequently			Almost Always	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

I do *grant forgiveness* to you (Eph. 4:32).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I do *ask for your forgiveness*.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I strive to bring *unity and peace* to our relationship (Eph. 4:3).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I speak *loving and kind* words when I talk to you.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I demonstrate *self-control* with the words and emotions I choose.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I communicate with a *loving* countenance on my face (Gen. 4:6; Isa. 3:9a).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I consistently communicate *biblical truth* when I talk to you (Eph. 4:25).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I use *honest, accurate,* and truthful *statements* when I talk to you (Eph. 4:25).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Whenever you explain your motives, I *believe you* (1 Cor 13:7 “love believes all things”).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am *quick to listen* (Jas. 1:19).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I *slow to speak* (Jas. 1:19).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I take *great pleasure* in *understanding* my spouse (Proverbs 18:2)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I *look at you* when I talk to you (Job 6:28).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I *touch* you enough when I talk to you (Jn. 13:23; 21:20).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Evaluate Your Spouse

Instructions: Evaluate your spouse's communication according to the following scale. When you are done compare your evaluation with your spouse's evaluation.

<i>Strength</i>		<i>Unbiblical Communication Scale</i>						<i>Weakness</i>	
Hardly Ever		Seldom		Sometimes		Frequently		Almost Always	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

My spouse *blows-up* when he/she talks with me (Eph. 4:26).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *clams-up* instead of talking with me (Prov. 6:1-5; 24:11-12).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *interrupts* me when I am talking (Prov. 18:13).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *judges* my *motives* (1 Cor. 4:5).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse uses *sweeping generalizations/absolute statements* when he/she talks to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *blame-shifts* his/her responsibilities to me (Gen. 3:12).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *digs up* things from the past (1 Cor. 13:5).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse uses *harshness* when he/she talks with me (1 Sam. 25:3, 10-11).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Weakness		Biblical Communication Scale								Strength
Hardly Ever		Seldom		Sometimes		Frequently				Almost Always
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

My spouse *grants forgiveness* to me (Eph. 4:32).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *asks for my forgiveness*.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse strives to bring *unity and peace* to our relationship (Eph. 4:3).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse speaks *loving and kind* words when he/she talks to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse demonstrates *self-control* with the words and emotions he/she chooses.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse communicates with a *loving* countenance on his/her face (Gen. 4:6; Isa. 3:9a).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse consistently communicates *biblical truth* when he/she talks to me (Eph. 4:25).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse uses *honest, accurate,* and truthful *statements* when he/she talks to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Whenever I explain my motives, my spouse *believes me* (1 Cor 13:7 “love believes all things”).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse is *quick to listen* (Jas. 1:19).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse is *slow to speak* (Jas. 1:19).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse takes *great pleasure in understanding* me (Proverbs 18:2)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *looks at me* when he/she talks to me (Job 6:28).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My spouse *touches* me enough when he/she talks to me (Jn. 13:23; 21:20).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Talking to Your Spouse About Communication

Evaluate the Husband's Communication

Step 1. Husbands, look at your evaluation of yourself. Wives, look at your evaluation of your spouse. Go through each statement *one at a time* and compare it with your spouse's answer. ("I put a 3 on 'my spouse does not look at me', what did you put, honey?")

Step 2. After comparing answers, come to some agreement about the husband's two greatest areas of weakness. (You may choose weaknesses from the unbiblical communication page, the biblical communication page, or both pages.)

Husband's greatest areas of weakness:

- 1.
- 2.

Step 3. Wives, give a *specific* example of each of your husband's areas of weakness. Take a moment and write them down.

An example of first area of weakness:

An example of second area of weakness:

Step 4. Wives, affirm your husband for one or two of his communication strengths.

Evaluate the Wife's Communication

Step 1. Wives, look at your evaluation of yourself. Husbands, look at your evaluation of your spouse. Go through each statement *one at a time* and compare it with your spouse's answer. ("I put a 3 on 'my spouse does not look at me', what did you put, honey?")

Step 2. After comparing answers, come to some agreement about the wife's two greatest areas of weakness. (You may choose weaknesses from the unbiblical communication page, the biblical communication page, or both pages.)

Wife's greatest areas of weakness:

- 1.
- 2.

Step 3. Husbands, give a *specific* example of each of your wife's areas of weakness. Take a moment and write them down.

An example of first area of weakness:

An example of second area of weakness:

Step 4. Husbands, affirm your wife for one or two of her communication strengths.