

Rules of Engagement

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The Expectation

ACTIVITY SHEET

Given that misplaced expectations can lead to marital frustrations, it's better to talk about one another's perspective on important issues, prior to getting married. Beyond the venue, cake and dress decision for your wedding day, there'll also be important decisions you'll need to make going into marriage. Discussing your respective expectations in advance helps eliminate unwanted surprises and disputes after marriage.



SESSION OBJECTIVES

This Rules of Engagement session is designed to help you:

- (a)** become acquainted with each other's expectations of marriage
- (b)** reflect upon roles and responsibilities, taking into consideration faith, family upbringing and cultural norms
- (c)** learn how to align your expectations prior to marriage

What do you expect after marriage?

All couples start out expecting great things. However, unmet expectations can lead to disappointment and frustration. There are many factors that can influence and shape what you consider normal or acceptable (especially as it relates to roles and responsibilities), consequently you might have different expectations of each other after marriage. Here are some categories and questions to consider:



FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Will both parties be responsible for income generation? Will you have individual or joint bank accounts (or both). Should major financial decisions be made jointly?

EMOTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Will you agree to be completely open and honest with one another, or can some things be kept private. How do you expect to be treated? How will you resolve disagreements?

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS

How often do you expect to be sexually intimate with each other? What about physical affection? Is this reserved only for private settings or are public displays also welcome?

FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Do you intend on starting a family? If yes, how soon after marriage? How many children do you hope to have? What about in-laws? How involved should they be in your life/family?

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Will you allow each other the freedom to go out and socialise with personal friends? If yes, how often is acceptable? How involved will you each be with mutual friends?

FAITH EXPECTATIONS

Will you pray with one another and worship God together? Will you attend church, participate in a connect group, and be faithful in tithing and giving offerings?

HOUSEHOLD EXPECTATIONS

Will you share household responsibilities equally (either by taking turns or designating tasks), or will one serve as a primary 'home manager' and the other the 'bread winner'?

HEALTH EXPECTATIONS

What do you envision your lifestyle will be like? Disciplined or undisciplined? Will you prioritise health and fitness (diet, exercise and self-care), or will you let go and enjoy life.

CAREER EXPECTATIONS

What about if/when you start a family, will both parents stay working, or will you transition to a one income household? What are your long term future career objectives?

What is HE expecting?

PROSPECTIVE HUSBANDS:

Consider what expectations you may have of your wife and for your marriage. Use the following expectation categories as a guide.



Record responses in the space provided, but don't reveal the answers to your fiancé yet.

FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS	
Income generation	<i>I expect he/we will...</i>
Spending and paying bills	
Budgeting and goals	

EMOTIONAL EXPECTATIONS	
Love and respect	
Transparency and honesty	
Conflict resolution	

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS	
Sexual intimacy	
Physical affection in private	
Physical affection in public	

FAMILY EXPECTATIONS	
Children (starting a family)	
Involvement of in-laws in your family	
Spending time with in-laws	

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS	
(She) Connecting with your friends	
(He) Connecting with his friends	
Going out with mutual friends	

FAITH EXPECTATIONS	
Prayer and Bible study time	
Church and/or small group attendance	
Tithes and offerings	

HOUSEHOLD EXPECTATIONS	
Mealtimes	
Cleaning	
Home maintenance	

HEALTH EXPECTATIONS

Fitness	
Diet	
Self-care	

CAREER EXPECTATIONS

Your career	
Her career	
Change of careers and/or retirement	





RATHER THAN CULTURAL,
SOCIETAL OR POLITICALLY
CORRECT NORMS DICTATING
WHAT YOUR EXPECTATIONS
SHOULD BE,

**consider
what's
best for you
and your
family.**

What is SHE expecting?

PROSPECTIVE WIVES:

Consider what expectations you may have of your husband and for your marriage. Use the following expectation categories as a guide.



Record responses in the space provided, but don't reveal the answers to your fiancé yet.

FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS	
Income generation	<i>I expect he/we will...</i>
Spending and paying bills	
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EMOTIONAL EXPECTATIONS	
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Transparency and honesty	
Conflict resolution	

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS	
Sexual intimacy	
Physical affection in private	
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FAMILY EXPECTATIONS	
Children (starting a family)	
Involvement of in-laws in your family	
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SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS	
(He) Connecting with your friends	
(She) Connecting with her friends	
Going out with mutual friends	

FAITH EXPECTATIONS	
Prayer and Bible study time	
Church and/or small group attendance	
Tithes and offerings	

HOUSEHOLD EXPECTATIONS	
Mealtimes	
Cleaning	
Home maintenance	

HEALTH EXPECTATIONS

Fitness

Diet

Self-care

CAREER EXPECTATIONS

Your career

His career

Change of careers and/or retirement



WHERE YOU FIND YOUR
EXPECTATIONS DIFFER,
ONE IS NOT NECESSARILY
'RIGHT' AND THE OTHER
'WRONG'.

however, it's
possible your
expectations may
be 'realistic' or
'unrealistic'.





DISCUSSION POINTS

From the list of expectations that you independently provided responses for, choose 3 categories to discuss. Take turns in sharing and enquiring of each other's specific expectations. When you find your expectations to be both realistic and compatible, SNAP – you've got a match! If, however, you discover some expectations might be misplaced or mismatched, apply the 3-step problem solving strategy you learnt in session 8, and together, see if you can come to realistic expectations that will work best for your married life.

EXPECTATION CATEGORY	SNAP (on which specific points do you share the compatible expectations)	RESOLUTION (transform your mismatch expectations to become realistic and compatible)
1.		
2.		
3.		



NOTE: EXERCISE CAUTION

Discussing expectations that are maybe misplaced or mismatched, requires maturity and wisdom. Rather than arguing, quarrelling or fighting, this is another opportunity to practice your 3-step problem solving plan and consider things from the other persons perspective (taking into consideration each other's cultural and family-background). Be kind and extend grace as you work towards mutually compatible and realistic expectations.