

## Expectations

Couples also expect their marriage to progress smoothly onward and upward without any major upheavals or adjustments. Consider the suggested outline of the three stages of marriage on the following page. It has been suggested that most couples go through these three stages. What about you? Perhaps in your own relationship you have experienced some of the disenchantment stage already.

Do you want to go through the full extent of the disenchantment stage as you see it expressed below?

If not, then take some time to write out what you can do as an individual and what you can do as a couple to keep from going through all of the experiences of this stage.

When you have finished writing, share your responses together.

<u>Enchantment</u>	<u>Disenchantment</u>	<u>Maturity</u>
On Cloud 9	Upset	Feet on the ground
Perfect	Terrible	I need you
Just right	Absolutely wrong	How do you see it?
Forever	I quit	Let's work it out
Infatuated	Hurt	I'll help you
Idolize	Put down	Encourage
Numb	Splintered	Whole
Fascinated	Irritated	Refreshed
Charmed	Wretched	Thankful
Captivated	Burdened	Free
We've arrived	We'll never make it	Together we'll make it

Adapted from: Wright, H. Norman (1997). Before You Say "I Do"®. Harvest House Publishers. Kindle Edition.

### Shared Values

Successful couples have communicated enough to find common values between them. These shared values help direct decisions and are a means of drawing nearer to each other rather than apart. A well thought out set of shared values also gives a couple a clear set of values they can pass on to their children should they have them. Values can be a single word (Honesty, Faith, Together) or a whole sentence (We value each others' differences and seek to help each other reach our potential., We value understanding and loving Christ more and more and seek to become more like Him and to help each other become more like him., We value family time together so we will set healthy limits on our own and our children's activities so we can be a family together.)

Take some time to carefully think through at least five values that you feel are critical for your new family:

Husband

Wife

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Adapted from: Values, Dreams, & Expectations – a few musings by Steve Reed

### Shared Dreams

Just as Shared Values tell us who we are as a family and give us a framework to build a healthy family, Shared Dreams lead us forward, give us specific things to work toward, and focus our hopes together toward a united dream. Dreams can be tangible (own a home within ten years, start a college savings account for each child, own and operate a Bed and Breakfast) or intangible (go to Hawaii for our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, see our kids marry well, take our whole family on a missions trip). List below some dreams you have and share them with your fiancé during your date this week.

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