

## ***Quiz: Do You Avoid Conflicts, or Do You Talk About Them?***

Although our research shows that conflict-avoiding marriage can be a stable marriage, it can also lead to emotional distance, which sometimes puts couples at risk for affairs.

This list of questions can help you determine whether you (Partner A) and your spouse (Partner B) are more likely to avoid conflicts in your marriage or to talk about them.

### **PARTNER A**

T/F

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1. I often hide my feelings to avoid hurting or inconveniencing my spouse.

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2. When we disagree, there's not much point in analyzing our feelings and motivations.

\_\_\_

3. Time takes care of most of our conflicts.

\_\_\_

4. When I'm angry, I prefer to be left alone until I get over it.

\_\_\_

5. During a disagreement, there's not much point in trying to figure out what's happening on a psychological level.

\_\_\_

6. I think it's usually inappropriate to show strong signs of anger, sadness, or fear.

\_\_\_

7. I just accept the things in my marriage that I can't change.

\_\_\_

8. We've learned not to talk about issues that cause disagreements.

\_\_\_

9. Talking about disagreements just makes matters worse.

\_\_\_

10. There are some areas of my life that I prefer not to discuss with my partner.

### **PARTNER B**

T/F

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**PARTNER A****PARTNER B**

T/F

T/F

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|-----|---|-----|
| ___ | 11. There's not much point in trying to persuade my partner to see things my way.             | ___ |
| ___ | 12. Thinking positively solves a lot of marital issues.                                       | ___ |
| ___ | 13. Anger doesn't solve anything.   | ___ |
| ___ | 14. I prefer to work out negative feelings on my own.   | ___ |
| ___ | 15. In our marriage, there's a fairly clear line between the man's role and the woman's role. | ___ |
| ___ | 16. We turn to our basic religious or cultural values for help resolving conflict.            | ___ |
| ___ | 17. It's hard for me to show when I'm angry, sad, or afraid.                                  | ___ |
| ___ | 18. Expressing negative feelings is selfish; it just brings your partner down.                | ___ |
| ___ | 19. Expressing sadness, anger, or fear makes you appear weak and ineffective.                 | ___ |
| ___ | 20. The best way to get over negative feelings is to ignore them until they go away.          | ___ |
| ___ | 21. We hardly ever disagree.  | ___ |

**SCORING.** Count the number of items you and your partner marked as "true." If either of you scored eight or more, you may prefer a style of marriage that avoids conflict.

If one or both of you find you prefer this style, you may need to work harder at staying emotionally close and guard your relationship against extramarital affairs.

Recognize also that you may face conflicts that simply have to be addressed. When this happens, the mediation exercise described below has proven especially helpful for people who would just as soon not fight.