

# Quiz: What Are Your Perpetual Issues and What Are Your Gridlocked Problems?

Every marriage has perpetual issues—those conflicts that just keep recurring, no matter what. But just because the same conflict keeps popping up again doesn't mean it has to harm your marriage.

Below is a list of common perpetual issues. There's also room at the bottom to fill in some of your own issues if they're not listed here.

In the first column, circle the issues that ring true for you and your partner. Then, looking back at each of the issues you've circled, ask, "Can my partner and I can still talk about this issue and find ways to compromise? Or are we gridlocked?" Make a check mark in the second or third columns as appropriate.

Is this issue a source of a perpetual conflict in your marriage	If so, do you talk and compromise?	Or do you gridlock?
<p><b>1. Neatness and organization</b></p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> Thinks it's important to be neat.</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> Doesn't think neatness matters that much.</p> <p><b>2. Emotional expression</b></p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> Explores emotions and expresses them freely.</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> Is less comfortable with expressing or talking about feelings.</p> <p><b>3. Independence versus togetherness</b></p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> Wants to spend more time together, to be more dependent on each other.</p>		

Is this issue a source of a perpetual conflict in your marriage	If so, do you talk and compromise?	Or do you gridlock?
<p>Partner B: Wants more time apart, to have more autonomy.</p> <p><b>4. Frequency of sex</b></p> <p>Partner A: Wants sex more often.</p> <p>Partner B: Wants sex less often.</p> <p><b>5. Sex and emotional intimacy</b></p> <p>Partner A: Wants to feel emotionally close before initiating sex.</p> <p>Partner B: Wants to have sex as a way to get emotionally close.</p> <p><b>6. Finances</b></p> <p>Partner A: Spends carefully, tries to save.</p> <p>Partner B: Spends freely, saves less.</p> <p><b>7. Family ties</b></p> <p>Partner A: Wants independence and distance from relatives.</p> <p>Partner B: Wants to spend time with and feel close to relatives.</p> <p><b>8. Household chores</b></p> <p>Partner A: Wants an equal division of labor.</p>		<p><i>continued</i></p>

Is this issue a source of a perpetual conflict in your marriage	If so, do you talk and compromise?	Or do you gridlock?
<p>Partner B: Does not want an equal division of labor.</p> <p><b>9. Disciplining children</b></p> <p>Partner A: Is stricter with the children.</p> <p>Partner B: Is more permissive with the children.</p> <p><b>10. Being on time</b></p> <p>Partner A: Thinks it's important to be on time.</p> <p>Partner B: Thinks being on time is no big deal.</p> <p><b>11. Socializing</b></p> <p>Partner A: Is extroverted, wants to spend more time with other people.</p> <p>Partner B: Is introverted, would rather spend time alone or as a couple.</p> <p><b>12. Religion</b></p> <p>Partner A: Places more value on religious practice.</p> <p>Partner B: Places less value on religious practice.</p>		

Is this issue a source of a perpetual conflict in your marriage	If so, do you talk and compromise?	Or do you gridlock?
<p><b>13. Ambition</b></p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> Is more interested in success at work.</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> Is less interested in success at work.</p> <p><b>14. Romance and passion</b></p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> Wants more romance and passion in life.</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> Doesn't care that much about romance and passion.</p> <p><b>15. Adventure</b></p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> Wants more adventure and excitement in life.</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> Doesn't care that much about adventure; thinks life is exciting enough.</p> <p><b>16. Perpetual issue</b> _____</p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> _____</p> <p><b>17. Perpetual issue</b> _____</p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> _____</p> <p><b>18. Perpetual issue</b> _____</p> <p><b>Partner A:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Partner B:</b> _____</p>		

Is this issue a source of a perpetual conflict in your marriage	If so, do you talk and compromise?	Or do you gridlock?
<p><b>19. Perpetual issue</b> _____</p> <p>Partner A: _____</p> <p>Partner B: _____</p>		
<p><b>20. Perpetual issue</b> _____</p> <p>Partner A: _____</p> <p>Partner B: _____</p>		

As you review your check marks in the second column, consider how you and your partner can keep your minds and hearts open to each other around this issue. How can you keep talking, keep compromising, and keep stretching to find common ground?

As you review the check marks in the third column, consider whether there's any room for new dialogue or compromise on this issue. If you come up blank, look back at the section in Chapter 5 titled "Your Hidden Dreams and Aspirations: The 'Prairie Dogs' of Marital Conflict." As the material in this chapter explains, gaining a better understanding of each other's hopes and dreams is often the best way to break through gridlock.