

Mate Selection,
Nonmarital Cohabitation, Transition to Marriage
Factors in Mate Selection:

Family Background

- Socioeconomic status
- Education and Intelligence
- Race
- Religion

Factors in Mate Selection:
Personal Characteristics

- Homogamy regarding:
 - Age
 - average 2.3 yrs difference
 - Attitudes & Values
 - Gender Roles
 - Habits

Mate Selection:

- The higher the parents' marital quality, the higher their children's marital quality
- Predictors of Poor Marital Success:
 - parental divorce
 - parental mental illness
 - dysfunctional family of origin
 - lack of support from parents & in-laws

Mate Selection

- Predictors of Poor Marital Quality:
 - Young Age (prior to 19)
 - Limited Education
 - Limited Income

Mate Selection:
Regrets

- ♣ Marrying Too Quickly
- ♣ Fantasy World
- ♣ Looking for Wrong Qualities in a Mate
- ♣ Confusing Sex with Love
- ♣ Poor Self-Image/Lack of Self-Esteem
- ♣ Succumbing to Pressure
- ♣ Unconscious Neurotic

Mate Selection:
Regrets

- ♣ Marrying Too Quickly
 - not giving time to develop relationship
 - usually takes several years of getting to know each other under a variety of circumstances

Mate Selection:
Regrets

- ♣ Fantasy World
 - over looking faults of partner & relationship problems
 - “love will conquer all”
 - unrealistic expectations/ idealization

Mate Selection:
Regrets

- ♣ Looking for Wrong Qualities in a Mate
 - e.g., physical characteristics instead of character

Mate Selection:
Regrets

- ♣ Confusing Sex with Love
 - primary focus of relationship is sex & passion
 - incomplete love
 - friendship & care needed to sustain marriage

Mate Selection:
Regrets

- ☛ Poor Self-Image/Lack of Self-Esteem
 - don't believe anyone desirable would really love them and accept them
 - court rejection & unhappiness
 - believe they are unworthy of support, love, & nurturance

Mate Selection:
Regrets

- ☛ Succumbing to Pressure
 - biological clock
 - "if I don't marry this person, I may never find anyone else"
 - Parents
 - Friends
 - Pregnancy

Mate Selection:Regrets

- ☛ Unconscious Neurotic Needs
 - Need to feel needed
 - Uncomfortable with successful, desirable people
 - Boost their ego
 - Role combinations

Mate Selection:Regrets

- ☛ Unconscious Neurotic Needs
 - Need to feel needed
 - marry mate they take care of
 - alcoholic, difficulty keeping job, immature,

Mate Selection:Regrets

- ☛ Unconscious Neurotic Needs
 - Uncomfortable with successful, desirable people
 - marry someone they can feel superior to as a means of boosting their own ego

Mate Selection: Regrets

- ☛ Unconscious Neurotic Needs
 - Boost their ego by choosing a mate they feel will enhance their image in others' eyes
 - a trophy wife

Mate Selection: Regrets

- ☛ Unconscious Neurotic Needs
 - Role combinations
 - father-daughter
 - sadist-masochist
 - pursuer-pursued
 - beater-batterer
 - rescuer-victim

Danger Signals in Relationships

- ☛ Substance Abuse Problems
- ☛ Evidence of Severe Personality Faults
- ☛ Character Flaws
- ☛ Problems Relating to His/Her Family
- ☛ Difficulty Getting Along with Others
- ☛ Unstable Job History

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Danger Signals in Relationships

- ☛ Evidence of Severe Personality Problems
 - mental illness diagnosed by a professional
 - extreme criticism of you &/or others
 - excessive jealousy or possessiveness
 - deep-seated insecurity, excessive fears & anxiety
 - unstable temperament
 - very rigid, inflexible, or compulsive thinking & behavior
 - cold, insensitive personality
 - negative attitude toward life in general

Danger Signals in Relationships

- ☛ Character Flaws
 - dishonest
 - unfaithful
 - distrustful
 - immoral
 - abusive
 - arrogant
 - condescending

Danger Signals in Relationships

☛ Serious Problems Relating to His/Her Family

- is it primarily the family's fault, the individual, or both
- troubled family of origin: greater risk for difficulty in marriage

Danger Signals in Relationships

☛ Difficulty Getting Along with Others

- lack of social skills
- lack of friends
- socially isolated

Danger Signals in Relationships

☛ Unstable Job History

- possibly irresponsible in job & task performance
- unable to keep a job

Cohabitation

☛ Proportion of dissatisfied cohabitators higher among those who do not marry

☛ No evidence that cohabitation weeds out incompatible couples or prepares couples for successful marriage

☛ generally report poorer relationship quality than married counterparts

- possibly: less commitment & less security

Cohabitation

☛ Significantly lower on measures of marital quality

☛ Significantly higher risk of marital dissolution, especially if cohabitated more than once prior to marriage

Marital Readiness

- Age at time of marriage
- Level of maturity of the couple
- Timing of marriage
- Motives for marriage
- Readiness for sexual exclusivity
- Emotional emancipation from parents
- Level of education and vocational aspirations and degree of their fulfillment