

RIGHT FROM THE START

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY INSTITUTES

This question seems to come up a lot: Is there anything my prospective partner does not need to know? How much should I tell him/her? And why, since I have already gone through a Blessing Interview and confessed everything?

A good rule of thumb is if your spouse had these things to share with *you*, would you want to know them? No one wants to live a lie. Knowing your weak spots as well as your strengths can help your partner support you where you may need it most.

Sandra Lowen

SECRETS

What Should You Share With Your Prospective Partner?

A lot of questions begin to arise as conversations begin between prospective partners. What does someone need to know about your past? What things about your family—good as well as bad—do you need to share with the person on the other end of the line? Does s/he need to know that your Great Aunt Myrtle had eight fingers on her left hand and so did your

brother Frankie before his surgery, so having thirteen fingers just might be hereditary? Do you need to let him/her know that when you reach thirty-one you will inherit the family fortune?

What is information that your prospective spouse needs to know about you, and what is best kept to yourself?

Particularly with the advent of programs such as High Noon, people are being persuaded to share as much as they can: “Leave no shadow” is the

byword. And indeed, being up-front about one’s struggles is absolutely essential in any relationship. No one wants to waltz into a marriage only to discover months or even years later that the partner has been deceptive or withholding. Enough issues will rear their heads in the relationship without one member of the couple needing

to blindside the other with something they could have begun working on years before.

IT IS HARD TO LAY YOUR
SECRETS OUT FOR ANOTHER
TO KNOW. BE RESPECTFUL.

Kids or Not?

A typical issue that comes up is around children. Not everyone wants them, despite the Principle understanding of how integral a part of building an ideal family they might be. The reasons are legion and could range anywhere from a fear of passing on a metabolic or other hereditary trait to just not wanting to have children for vague reasons. Whatever the situation, the honest person puts this up front, not disguised as “I don’t

want to have children until I am secure in my career”, or “I want to wait until I am 40”, but says up front, “I don’t want to have children”.

One should also be honest about family maladies. If one can’t help but escape to the woods and howl at the moon every 28 days and then requires a full body wax and a trip to the dentist to file down those incisors the next day, one would do well to let one’s Intended know. Issues with desire or ability to have children and other physical or emotional considerations should all get worked out within that first two or three weeks, while the couple is still getting acquainted.

The Blessing is Not a Panacea.

Many people look on the Blessing as having magical curative powers. However, it is not, nor was it ever intended to be, a substitute for the work a person needs to do him/herself, or a spell to cure certain things. Getting the Blessing is not a cure for homosexual tendencies, for addiction to pornography, metabolic or hereditary illnesses, or for other maladies. No matter what someone says or intimates, these things require significant work, and should not be foisted on another person, because one thinks the condition will disappear on its own or some angel will come down and sprinkle enchanted sparkles on him/her while s/he sleeps. Some people

with these issues, especially they that are trying to keep their concerns out of family or public view, may forge ahead with the matching process, hoping against hope that their condition will not rear its ugly head. This is unfair to the potential partner on too many levels to discuss here. Suffice it to say that when people have attempted to hide their pasts, those pasts have managed to manifest, often in very unfortunate ways.

If one really does have a difficulty, how much better it is to state it up front: “I have an addiction to video games and need help with that” is better than wanting to name one’s first child ‘Call Of’ and the second one ‘Duty’.

Best is to begin working through issues long before getting into the matching process. This may take months, even years to do, but going through available programs such as High Noon or available counseling through BFD or other sources is much better than having to deal with the shock and surprise on the face of someone that feels s/he has been deceived.

Doing It for Mom and Dad:

A person should want the Blessing because s/he feels it to be appropriate to his/her life, not merely because it makes someone else look good. If a person is just not feeling it right now, but Mom and Dad are

insisting, it is that person’s responsibility to ‘stick to his/her guns’ and not enter another person’s life until feeling committed to being a good marriage partner. Parents have rushed their children into the Blessing prematurely, in hopes of cutting off a budding romance with some other person or just to make sure *their* child does not become a casualty or too old. If a person just takes on the Blessing without personal commitment, the only thing that can really result is heartbreak. The person is not really ‘there’ for the partner and has all the ‘presence’ of a table or chair. That person usually comes to resent the partner, resulting in chilliness toward him/her or even violence in some cases. If a candidate is genuinely not ready to make this kind of commitment, s/he needs to be honest with parents and not commence a search until other distractions have been resolved.

Bills and Other Issues:

College is not cheap, and grad school is downright overwhelming financially. Many young people come trailing sheaves of unpaid loans and other bills behind them, sometimes totaling several thousands of dollars.

More than one of ‘my’ candidates has asked if I thought s/he could get the spouse’s family to take over the burden of a pretty prohibitive college loan, now that they were talking

seriously. This loan, in one particular case, had never come up before, and everybody was surprised to hear about its existence. The young woman's family had just decided, it seemed, that if she was going to live with someone else outside their home, why they could jolly well take over total responsibility for her bills(!). Her partner and his family agreed, after some discussion, to assist with the loan, but they were rare people. The loan was something that had preceded her relationship with the other family, and they were very generous. Other families have found that to be grounds for breaking the deal.

And Speaking of Deal-Breakers...

Always, always be honest. If someone says s/he cannot accept a person that lived in Pensacola, it is best not to deny having lived in Pensacola if you did. One young woman said she could not tolerate a man that had a smoking habit. The young man that had an interest in her told her he did not smoke and had never smoked. This pleased her, until she went to visit his home and entered his room. His curtains and other items stank of

cigarette ash and she found cigarettes on his desk. She ended the relationship, not because she found out he was smoking, but because she felt that if he could lie to her about such a thing he certainly could be untruthful about other things and she would have a hard time trusting him.

People have objections to many things, some reasonable, some not. Sometimes they change their minds, if they understand the reason a person has what they consider to be a deal-breaker. A man that insisted he wanted a virgin was Blessed to a woman that revealed she was not a virgin—because she had been molested as a pre-teen and had undergone trauma therapy to overcome the issues associated with the assault. A man admitted he had watched pornography with relatives when he was fourteen years old—but not since then, and now he was 27.

So, What *SHOULD* You Share?

I advise candidates to share anything they feel might come up later. That can be a long list. First, what is their level of commitment to the ideals and concepts of the movement? Are they getting Blessed out of their

own volition, or is there a parent somewhere, prodding them to go for it now? How would they characterize their personality: outgoing or quiet? Do they like company or enjoy being alone with a spouse (or just alone) more? What influence do their friends have on them, and how do they spend their spare time? What are their ambitions for the future? Are there personal or family problems or situations that you need to know about? How do they feel about children? How many do they want? Are there legal or financial things you need to know about?

How Do You Respond to Secrets?

It is hard to lay your secrets out for another to know. Be respectful and honor their trust in you, even if the secret is one you cannot accept. Thank the person for sharing and explain why you need to think about it before proceeding. Pray about their situation. If it is truly an issue you cannot overcome, say so in the kindest way possible. But if there is a way to accept this person even with his/her flaws, perhaps something wonderful will occur.

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RIGHT FROM THE START is a newsletter developed for Matching Candidates working with Sandra Lowen. Its purpose is to give additional and collateral information regarding the Matching and Blessing. For further information, contact **sandra-lowen003@gmail.com**.