

SHOULD YOU CONSIDER BREAKING YOUR ENGAGEMENT?

Most of you will build satisfactory and even very happy marriages. But for a few there are THIRTEEN WARNING SIGNS which might well indicate you should have some serious second thoughts.

- 1.** If you have known each other for less than three months.
- 2.** If he/she has been really drunk three times in the last three weeks or about ten times in the last three or four months.
- 3.** If he/she makes statements like, "I owe a great deal to mother. It's my duty to make her happy" ... and If such statements are coupled with behavior which makes it apparent that he/she will do "most anything to keep parental approval."
- 4.** If one party says things like, "I can't live without you. My life has no meaning apart from you. If I ever lost you I would kill myself"... and if such statements are joined to very obvious dependency behavior. This partner is bringing almost nothing to the relationship except deep needs. Being so needed may flatter the ego for a while, but if that's all there is, it can soon get dull and very draining.
- 5.** If the majority of times you have been together in the last three months you have developed a "pattern of quarrelling, of disappointing, seriously irritating or hurting" each other.
- 6.** If many of the significant, mature people in your life – parents, relatives, teachers and especially good friends who love you – indicate that you are very likely making a mistake, this should give you pause. These days people tend not to comment on another's decision. If they call up the courage to tell you (in words or otherwise) that they are troubled, weigh their opinion.
- 7.** If some very serious problem has come up in the last few weeks and if it is definitely troubling you and if you have not had in an opportunity to work it through, then either confront it or think about a postponement.
- 8.** If he has had more than five or six jobs in the last two years.
- 9.** If your chief reason for marrying is that everybody in your circle of friends is doing it and you feel it is high time you did too lest people think you cannot attract a mate.
- 10.** If you have been sexually involved and now feel you have to marry each other even though the relationship is already a little boring and empty.
- 11.** If you are both 18 or under (your chance of divorce is 3 ½ times higher than that of people of 21 or over).
- 12.** If you are marrying because "you just have to get out of the house."
- 13.** If you are a pregnant couple (it takes two to be pregnant) then slow down, think, talk, ponder and pray. Neither pregnancy itself nor the fear of any social stigma it may cause, is in itself, a good reason to marry. Ask the key question- would we really go through it if there were no pregnancy?

NOTICE

None of these warning signs should be given too serious a consideration in the last weeks before marriage. This is the tradition "buck fever" period when fears become magnified and many people become like the hypochondriac who is certain he has every symptom in the medical book.

Marriage is wonderful. Romance is exciting and no one wants to throw cold water. But for a tiny percentage of you, these considerations might head off a lot of heartbreak.

No one can give you a gilt edge guarantee that your marriage will succeed. The risk is part of the adventure and mystery. Just remember...

We are not born lovers! Marriage is a lifelong task!

Good Luck.