

# Marriage 101

Back  
to the  
BASICS

*Building the  
Next Generation  
of Successful  
Marriages*

**Premarital Coaching & Marriage Enrichment**



<http://www.marriage101online.com/couple-checkup>

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# Introduction to the Couple Checkup by PREPARE/ENRICH

Congratulations on completing your *Couple Checkup*! Taking the time to reflect on your relationship is an important part of growing as a couple. With 20 different aspects of your relationship measured, the *Couple Checkup* is designed to get you talking and thinking together about your relationship and taking steps to grow both as individuals and as a couple. This Couple Checkup is based on over 25 years of research with the PREPARE/ENRICH Program.

**One goal of the Couple Checkup is to celebrate your relationship strengths.** You should be proud of the areas where you and your partner are doing well. Keep nurturing these aspects of your relationship so they remain strong. Strengths can help you compensate and address other areas of your relationship that need improvement. For example, if you have strengths in communication, but struggle with Finances, take time to communicate about financial issues and talk about your concerns with one another. Next, use your communication skills to brainstorm possible solutions and offer support to one another as you begin to make changes.

**Another goal of the Couple Checkup is to identify issues you disagree on and need to resolve.** Just like a mechanic determines what is working and what is not when tuning up your car, relationships require direction, maintenance, and attention to keep growing and running smoothly. By identifying your relationship growth areas, issues can be resolved. Don't view your results as permanent, or unchangeable. These results are a snap-shot of where your relationship is today.

**A third goal is to encourage you and your partner to talk about your relationship.** By sharing your feelings and ideas, you will discover ways to build a stronger relationship. Remember, there is no such thing as a perfect relationship. All couples have challenges and issues, as well as strengths that attracted you to one another in the first place. You should take time to digest these results and discuss the Couple Checkup with your partner. If you have serious concerns, you could contact a counselor who can administer a more complete inventory and/or give you professional feedback and assistance.

The Couple Checkup is a self-report measure intended for personal use involving relationship enrichment, education, and discussion purposes only.

**We hope you will enjoy the process of growing together as a couple. Remember, the more you invest in your relationship, the more you both will benefit.**

**We wish you much success as a couple!**

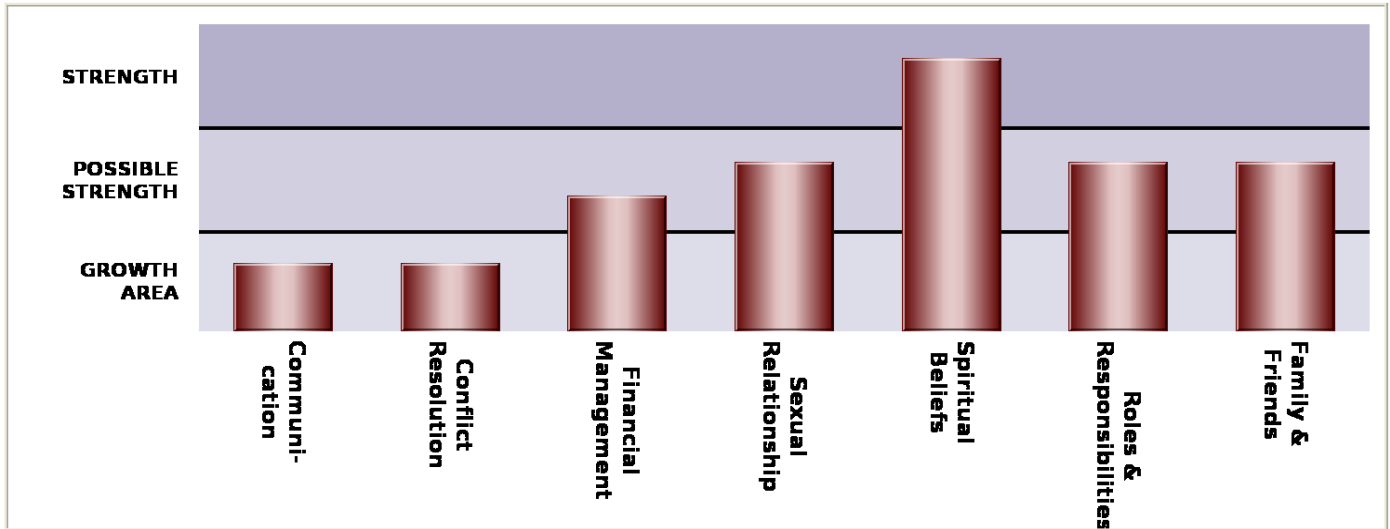
# Couple Checkup by PREPARE/ENRICH

## Contents

The following sections outline the results of your Couple Checkup. These results are based on your scores as individuals and as a couple. Take time to read each section and discuss the feedback with one another.

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# Summary of Strength and Growth Areas



This chart and table describe key areas in your relationship. You and your partner's responses were compared and summarized. Each area was identified as a **Strength**, **Possible Strength**, or **Growth Area** for you as a couple.

- **Strength Area:** you are both very satisfied with the area and agree on many things.
- **Possible Strength:** you are generally satisfied with the area but have a few concerns.
- **Growth Area:** one or both of you are less satisfied with the area and have some concerns.

<b>Relationship Strengths</b> (Areas with <i>High Couple Agreement</i> )	Spiritual Beliefs
<b>Possible Relationship Strengths</b> (Areas with <i>Moderate Couple Agreement</i> )	Financial Management Sexual Relationship Roles & Responsibilities Family & Friends
<b>Relationship Growth Areas</b> (Areas with <i>Low Couple Agreement</i> )	Communication Conflict Resolution

## Couple Type

Your results indicate that you are a **Conventional** couple with more strength in areas such as relationship roles and spiritual beliefs. Conventional couples can improve the quality of their relationship by working on communication and conflict resolution skills. Review your strength and growth areas together, and commit yourselves to continuing to enrich your relationship.

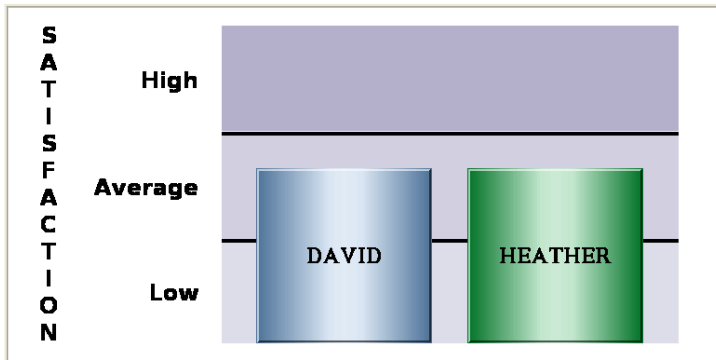
Based on research relationships are categorized into one of five common patterns:

- **Vitalized** couples are typically most satisfied with their relationship, skilled in communication and conflict resolution.
  - **Harmonious** couples also enjoy high levels of satisfaction across most areas of their relationship.
  - **Conventional** couples are often highly committed to one another, but not as skilled in communication & conflict resolution.
  - **Conflicted** couples have a lower level of satisfaction and often struggle with many areas of their relationship.
  - **Devitalized** couples have the lowest satisfaction and have growth areas in almost all aspects of their relationship.
- Studies have shown that couples can improve their couple type by improving their relationship skills, such as communication and conflict resolution.

# Roles & Responsibilities

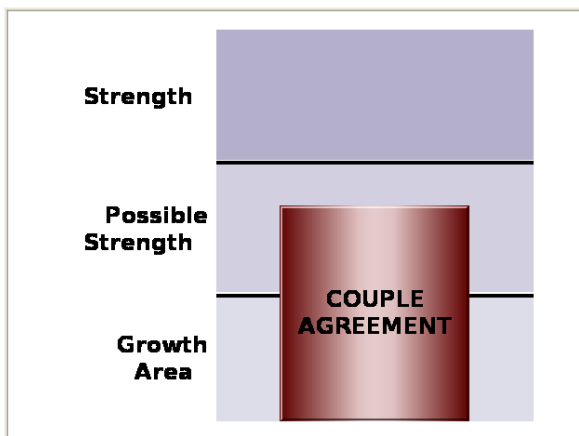
The **Roles & Responsibilities** category measures your satisfaction with how you handle roles and responsibilities in your relationship. More specifically, this category looks at how household chores and decision-making are shared.

## Individual Results for Roles & Responsibilities



- As individuals, you are both somewhat satisfied with how you handle roles and responsibilities in your relationship, but there may be some issues that need to be discussed

## Couple Results for Roles & Responsibilities



**Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:

- Consulting one another on important decisions
- How chores are divided
- How leadership is shared
- Your flexibility regarding roles and responsibilities

**Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:

- Finishing household chores
- Sharing household tasks
- Whether or not you're too busy for household chores.

Roles & Responsibilities are **Possible Strength Areas** in your relationship. Finding ways to share and effectively deal with household chores, decision-making, and leadership can be very challenging. Some families adopt more traditional roles, while others divide and share roles and household responsibilities based on time availability, interest, and skill. There is more than one way to successfully approach your roles and responsibilities. By discussing your expectations and agreeing on a plan, you can work together as a team to grow this area of your relationship.

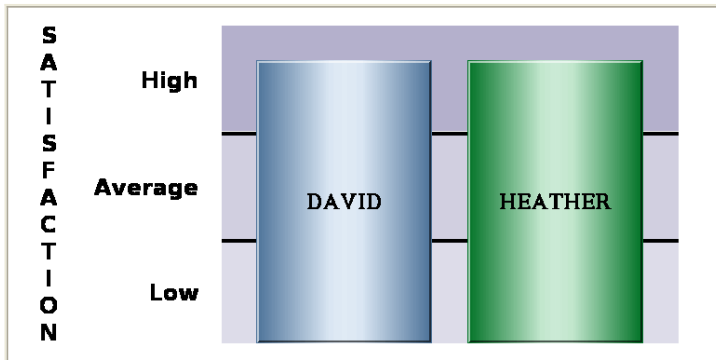
### Couple Discussion:

This is a **Possible Strength Area** because you agreed on some of the items in this category. Review the **Agreement Items** listed above. These represent strengths in your relationship. Be proud of your strengths! Review and talk about the **Discussion Items** as well. It is unrealistic to expect you'll agree on every item, but start by trying to understand one another's thoughts and feelings. Creativity and good communication will help you problem solve and further improve this area of your relationship.

# Emotional Climate

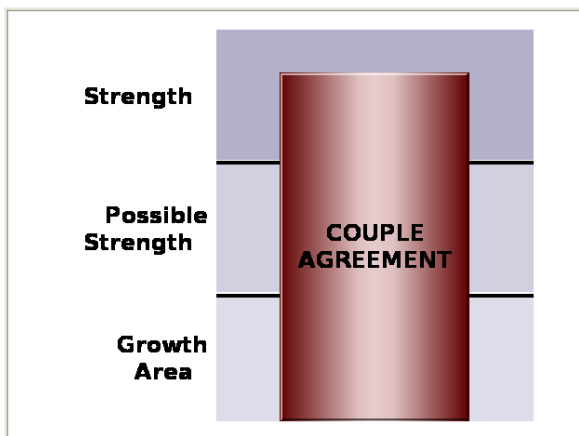
The **Emotional Climate** category measures your ability to be open, understanding, and available to one another. More specifically, this relationship category measures the presence of supportive listening and effective problem solving skills.

## Individual Results for Emotional Climate



- As individuals, you both are very satisfied with your ability to be open, understanding, and available to one another.

## Couple Results for Emotional Climate



**Agreement Items** You have similar expectations about:

- Feeling listened to
- Feeling understood while discussing problems
- Making decisions and resolving conflict
- Receiving the love and affection you desire
- Your ability to compromise
- Your ability to express your true feelings

**Discussion Items** It may be important to discuss your expectations for:

- Feeling understood

Emotional Climate is a **Strength Area** in your relationship. When you can listen to one another with an ear towards understanding and caring about each other, the emotional climate in your relationship begins to feel very safe and accepting. Safe communication and problem solving allow each person to be very open and honest, allowing for more connection, intimacy, and satisfaction. Good job fostering this type of emotional safety in your relationship.

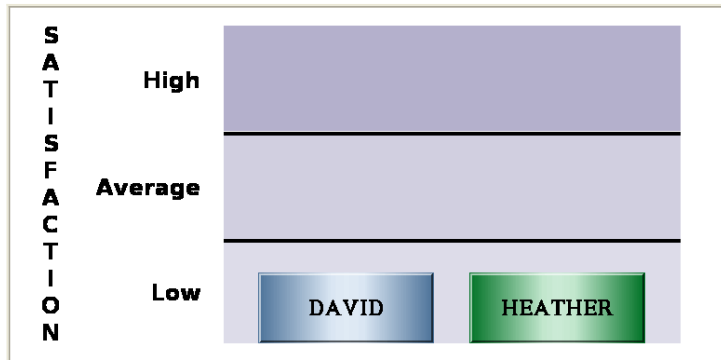
### Couple Discussion:

Congratulations! This is a **Strength Area** because you agreed on many items in this category. Review the **Agreement Items** listed above. These represent strengths in your relationship. Be proud of your many strengths. You may also have some **Discussion Items** listed. Take a few moments to talk about any issues that you could resolve as a couple.

# Communication

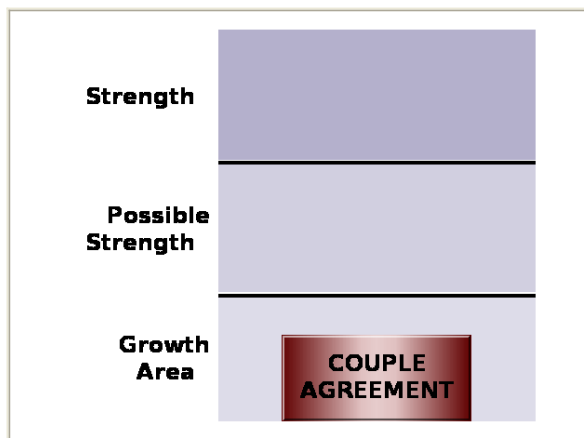
The **Communication** category measures how you and your spouse feel about the quality and quantity of communication in your relationship. It explores how you share feelings, understand, and listen to one another.

## Individual Results for Communication



- As individuals, you both recognize that communication may be an area of your relationship that needs improvement.

## Couple Results for Communication



- Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:
- Feeling listened to
  - Your satisfaction with how you talk to each other

- Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:
- Feeling understood
  - The ability to ask for what you want
  - The ability to share negative feelings
  - Whether or not you refuse to discuss problems
  - Your willingness to share feelings

Communication is a **Growth Area** in your relationship. By learning and practicing new communication skills such as assertiveness and active listening, you can improve your relationship. If neglected, communication issues can become more problematic over time making it hard to feel close to one another, or effectively solve problems as a couple.

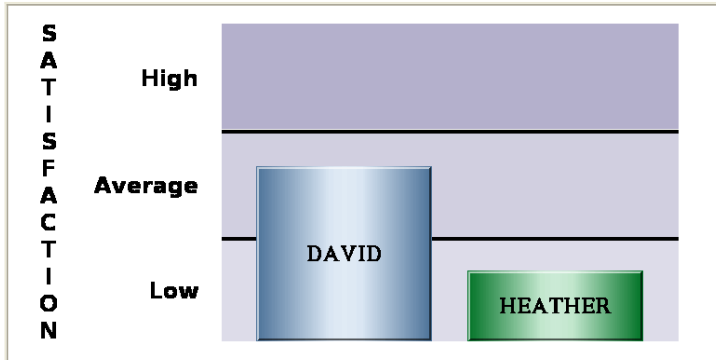
### Couple Discussion:

This is a **Growth Area** because you disagreed or both had concerns on several items. It is important that you discuss and resolve these issues so that this area can become a strength. First, review any **Agreement Items** in this category. They are a source of strength for you as a couple. Second, review and talk about the **Discussion Items** listed above. Attempt to identify and define the issues, and understand one another's feelings and opinions. Finally, work towards a plan to resolve your differences.

# Conflict Resolution

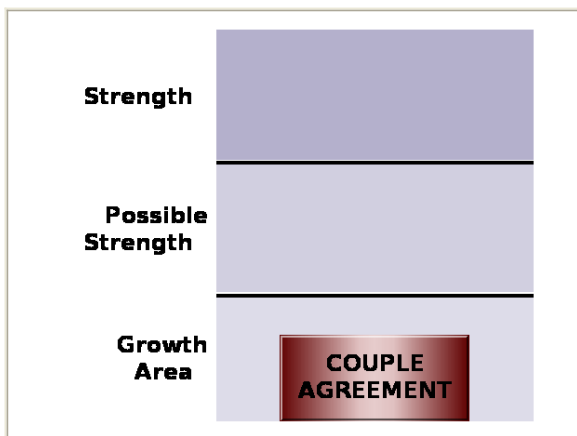
The **Conflict Resolution** category looks at your ability to discuss and resolve differences. Also, this category measures how effectively you are able to share opinions, ideas, and feelings with your spouse, even during times of conflict.

## Individual Results for Conflict Resolution



- David is somewhat satisfied with your ability to discuss and resolve differences with one another, but may be aware of some issues that need to be discussed.
- Heather is aware of considerable difficulty discussing and resolving differences with one another.

## Couple Results for Conflict Resolution



**Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:

- Feeling understood while discussing problems
- The ability to express feelings/ideas while resolving differences

**Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:

- Bringing differences to a point of resolution
- Whether or not you end up feeling responsible for problems
- Whether or not you have disputes over trivial issues
- Whether or not you say nothing to avoid hurting one another
- Your approach to solving disagreements

Conflict Resolution is a **Growth Area** in your relationship. All couples have some conflict in their marriage; the key is how you handle the differences you experience. A healthy goal is not to avoid all conflict, but to develop good conflict resolution skills so differences can be productively resolved. If neglected, conflict resolution issues can become more problematic over time and affect other areas of your relationship such as closeness and communication. Study and use the *10 Steps for Conflict Resolution* for solving some of your current issues.

### Couple Discussion:

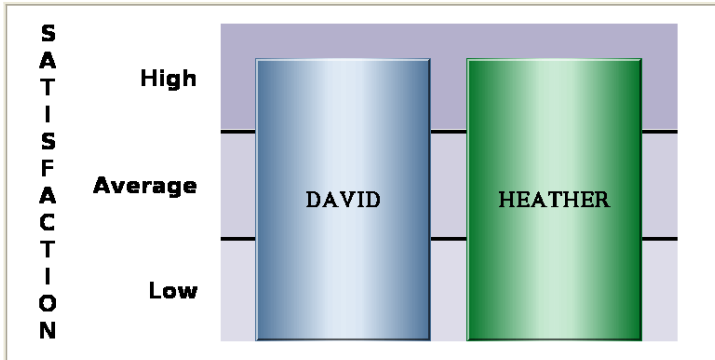
This is a **Growth Area** because you disagreed or both had concerns on several items. It is important that you discuss and resolve these issues so that this area can become a strength. First, review any **Agreement Items** in this category. They are a source of strength for you as a couple. Second, review and talk about the **Discussion Items** listed above. Attempt to identify and define the issues, and understand one another's feelings and opinions. Finally, work towards a plan to resolve your differences.



# Spiritual Beliefs

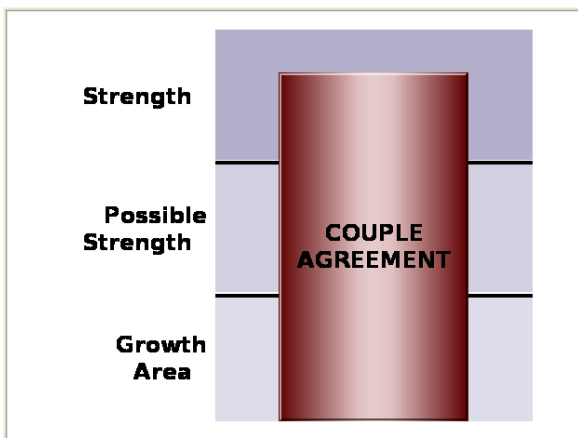
The **Spiritual Beliefs** category measures how satisfied you are with the practice and expression of spiritual beliefs in your relationship. This category looks at how similar your spiritual beliefs are and whether they are a source of relationship strength or a source of tension.

## Individual Results for Spiritual Beliefs



- As individuals, you both are very satisfied with the practice and expression of spiritual beliefs in your relationship.

## Couple Results for Spiritual Beliefs



**Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:

- Feeling more connected because of spiritual beliefs
- Reliance on spiritual beliefs during difficult times
- The role of spiritual beliefs in your commitment
- The role of spiritual values in relationship growth
- Understanding one another's spiritual beliefs
- Your similarity in spiritual beliefs

**Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:

- Whether or not spiritual differences cause tension

Spiritual Beliefs are a **Strength Area** in your relationship. Your responses indicate high individual satisfaction and healthy agreement as a couple. You recognize how important spiritual beliefs can be in your relationship - impacting holidays and traditions, family and friends, values and priorities, and raising children. Celebrate the fact that this is an area of strength in your relationship.

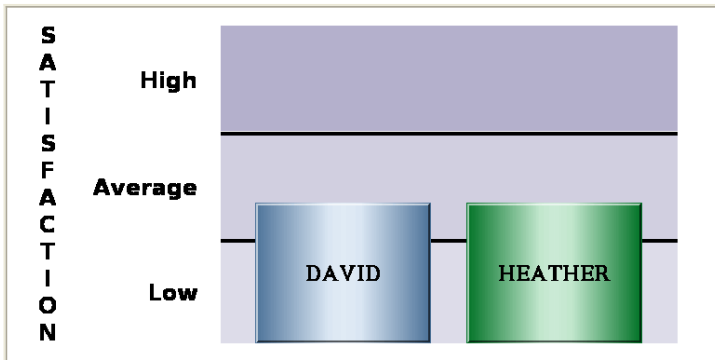
### Couple Discussion:

Congratulations! This is a **Strength Area** because you agreed on many items in this category. Review the **Agreement Items** listed above. These represent strengths in your relationship. Be proud of your many strengths. You may also have some **Discussion Items** listed. Take a few moments to talk about any issues that you could resolve as a couple.

# Financial Management

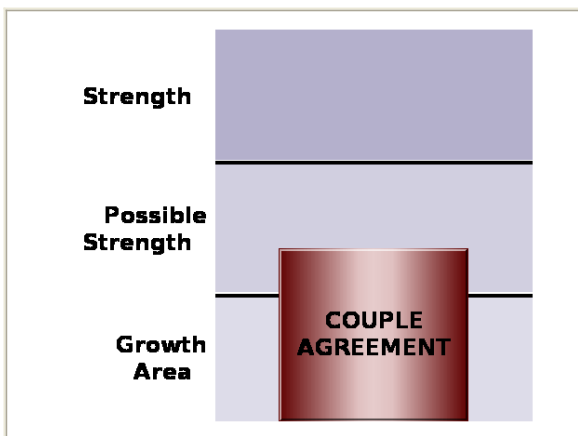
The **Financial Management** category looks at spending habits and agreement with one another in the area of finances. This category explores your opinions about savings, debt, handling money, and making financial decisions.

## Individual Results for Financial Management



- As individuals, you both feel somewhat satisfied with how finances are being handled, but may be aware of some concerns that need to be discussed.

## Couple Results for Financial Management



**Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:

- A savings plan
- Spending priorities
- Your level of debt/unpaid bills

**Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:

- How credit and charge accounts are used
- How money is handled
- Making financial decisions together
- Sharing financial control

Finances are a **Possible Strength Area** in your relationship. By putting in place a budget, savings plan, and setting financial goals, you can improve this aspect of your relationship. If neglected, financial issues can grow and become a burden on your relationship. Now is the time to be proactive about resolving any financial issues.

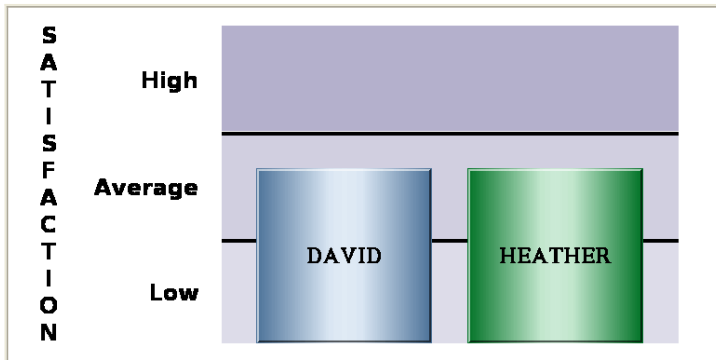
### Couple Discussion:

This is a **Possible Strength Area** because you agreed on some of the items in this category. Review the **Agreement Items** listed above. These represent strengths in your relationship. Be proud of your strengths! Review and talk about the **Discussion Items** as well. It is unrealistic to expect you'll agree on every item, but start by trying to understand one another's thoughts and feelings. Good communication will help you problem solve and further improve this area of your relationship.

# Sexual Relationship

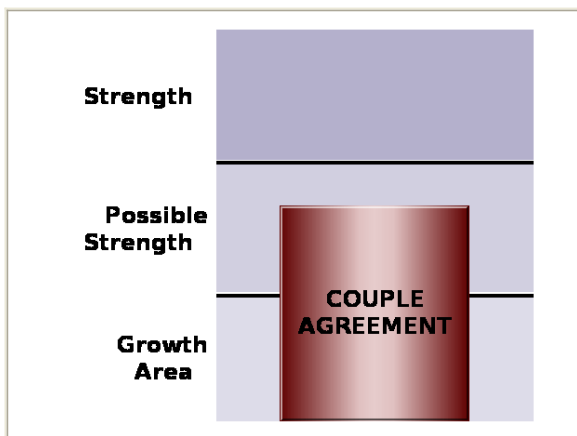
The **Sexual Relationship** category measures your satisfaction with your sexual relationship and the level of affection expressed. This category also explores your level of interest in sex and your ability to discuss sexual issues and preferences as a couple.

## Individual Results for Sexual Relationship



- As individuals, you are both somewhat satisfied with your affection and sexual relationship, but there are some issues that need to be discussed.

## Couple Results for Sexual Relationship



**Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:

- Fostering an interesting and enjoyable sexual relationship
- The amount of affection expressed
- Your openness in discussing sexual topics
- Your satisfaction/fulfillment with sexual relationship

**Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:

- Having similar levels of interest in sex
- Sexual interest and attraction
- Whether or not affection is used or refused

Affection & Sexual Relationship are **Possible Strength Areas** in your relationship. These can be difficult topics for couples to manage and discuss openly. By practicing good communication skills, such as assertiveness and active listening, you can learn to talk openly about your affection and sexual relationship. If neglected, unresolved issues in the areas of affection and sexual expectations can lead to greater misunderstanding, hurt, and resentment.

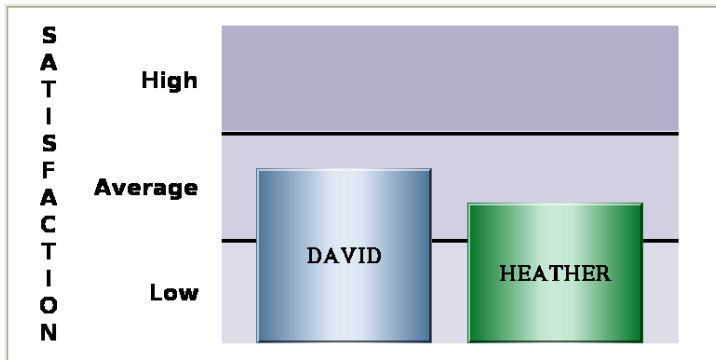
### Couple Discussion:

This is a **Possible Strength Area** because you agreed on some of the items in this category. Review the **Agreement Items** listed above. These represent strengths in your relationship. Be proud of your strengths! Review and talk about the **Discussion Items** as well. It is unrealistic to expect you'll agree on every item, but start by trying to understand one another's thoughts and feelings. Good communication will help you problem solve and further improve this area of your relationship.

# Leisure Activities

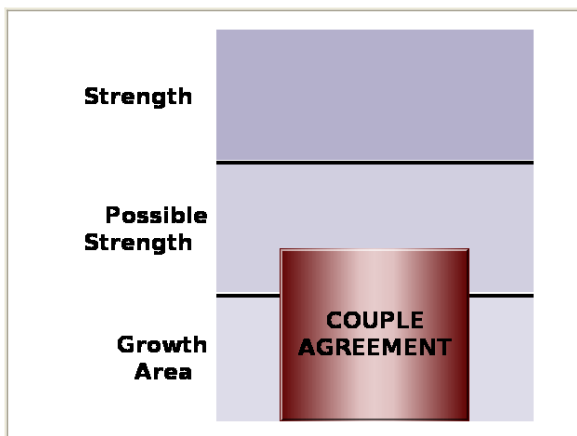
The **Leisure Activities** category measures your satisfaction with the amount and quality of leisure time spent together. It looks at similarities in interests, and your satisfaction with the balance of time spent together and apart.

## Individual Results for Leisure Activities



- As individuals, you both feel somewhat satisfied with the amount and quality of leisure time you spend together.

## Couple Results for Leisure Activities



- Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:
- Balancing leisure time spent together and apart
  - Enjoying similar activities
  - Forming friendships with other couples

- Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:
- The amount of activities/hobbies you have
  - Whether or not activities interfere with your relationship
  - Your idea of a good time
  - Your time and energy for recreation

Leisure Activities are a **Possible Strength Area** in your relationship. Couples who have a great marriage are typically great friends as well. While it is healthy to have some personal interests and hobbies, it is also important to find activities, interests, and friendships that you can enjoy together. Pursuing common interests can bring you closer together as a couple, providing a more fulfilling relationship. Work together to enrich your leisure activities and turn this area into a relationship strength.

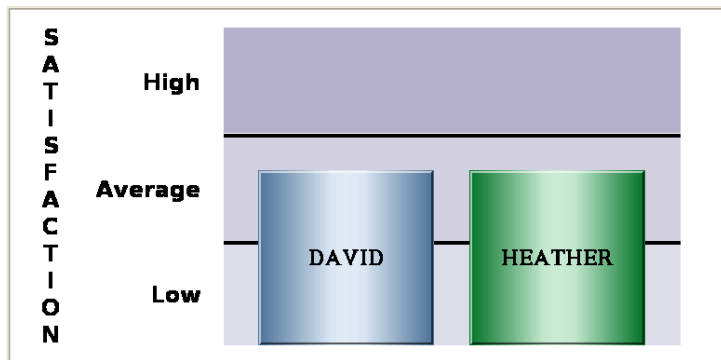
### Couple Discussion:

This is a **Possible Strength Area** because you agreed on some of the items in this category. Review the **Agreement Items** listed above. These represent strengths in your relationship. Be proud of your strengths! Review and talk about the **Discussion Items** as well. It is unrealistic to expect you'll agree on every item, but start by trying to understand one another's thoughts and feelings. Creativity and good communication will help you problem solve and further improve this area of your relationship.

# Family & Friends

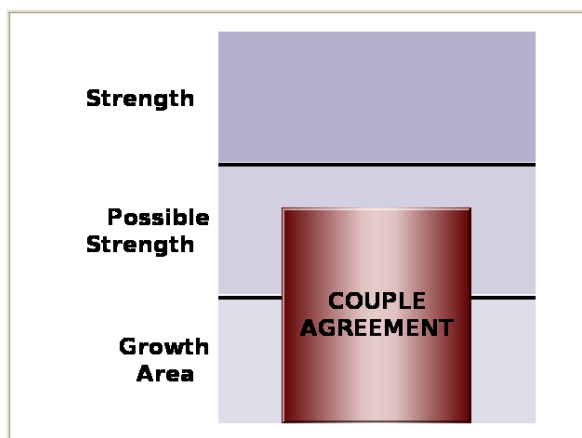
The **Family & Friends** category measures how satisfied you are in your relationships with relatives and friends. It looks at your opinions of one another's friends and families, and the level of interference, influence, and acceptance you each feel from family.

## Individual Results for Family & Friends



- As individuals, you are both somewhat satisfied with how you relate to family and friends, but there are some issues that need to be discussed.

## Couple Results for Family & Friends



**Agreement Items:** You both feel positive about:

- Feeling accepted/respected by your family
- Getting along with one another's friends
- Spending time with one another's family
- Spending time with one another's friends

**Discussion Items:** It may be helpful to discuss:

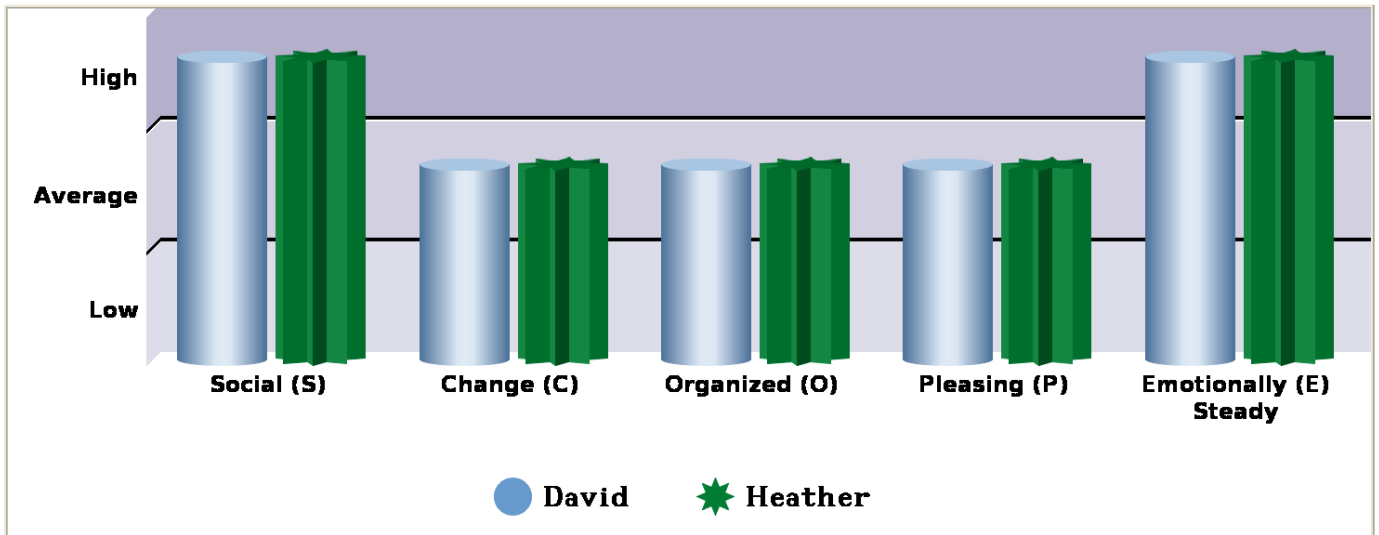
- Whether or not family causes trouble in your marriage
- Whether or not friends interfere with your relationship
- Your family's level of involvement in your life

Family and Friends are **Possible Strength Areas** in your relationship. Family and friends can provide great encouragement and support for your relationship, but they can sometimes interfere and undermine a relationship as well. Remember to make your marriage relationship the priority, and take the needed steps to enrich and protect it. Consider how you can work together as a couple to productively communicate and relate with family and friends. If neglected, problems with family and friends can interfere with your marriage satisfaction.

### Couple Discussion:

This is a **Possible Strength Area** because you agreed on some of the items in this category. Review the **Agreement Items** listed above. These represent strengths in your relationship. Be proud of your strengths! Review and talk about the **Discussion Items** as well. It is unrealistic to expect you'll agree on every item, but start by trying to understand one another's thoughts and feelings. Creativity and good communication will help you problem solve and further improve this area of your relationship.

## SCOPE Personality Scales - Social



The Personality SCOPE consists of five dimensions based on the Five Factor Model of Personality.

The five dimensions, and your scores on them, are described below. Review your results on all five dimensions rather than focusing on just one or two traits where you scored high or low.

Then, as a couple, compare where your Personality SCOPE results are similar and where they are different. Discuss the advantages and potential drawbacks to each.

### Social (S)

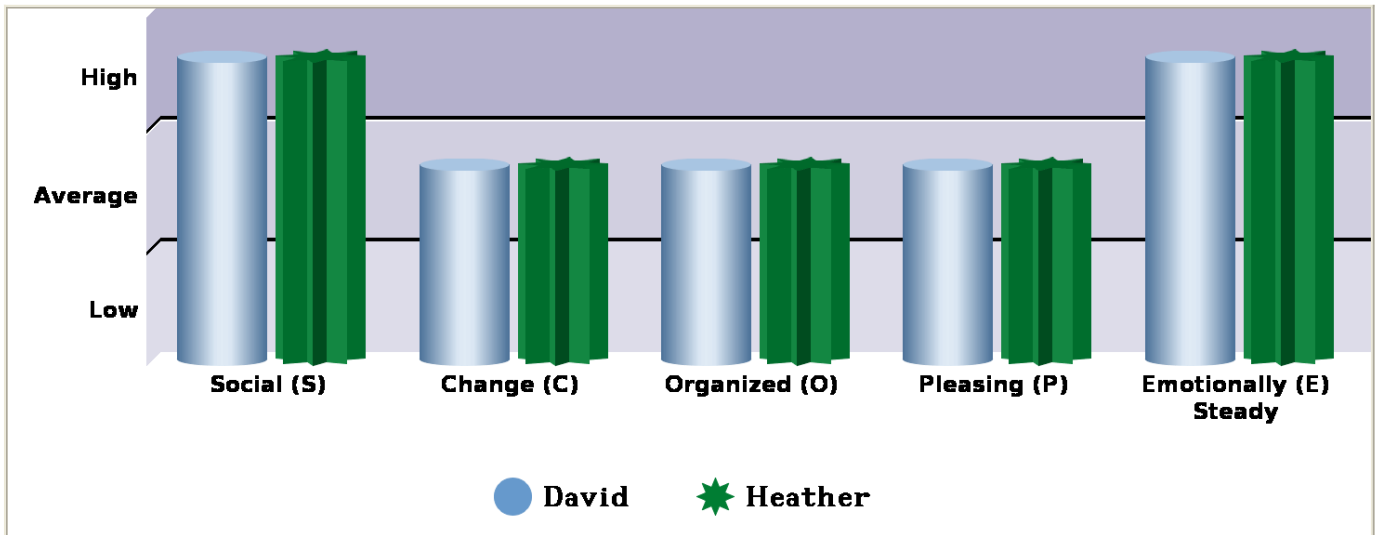
***This trait reflects preference for, and behavior in social situations.***

- You both scored in the **High** range, suggesting you each are more outgoing. Social extroverts enjoy being with people and are often full of energy. You may be enthusiastic and action oriented. In groups you like to talk, assert yourselves, and may often be the center of attention. You likely enjoy your ability to make friends and acquaintances easily and do not prefer solitude. If out of balance, you could appear to be attention seeking or shallow. Others may even see your high extroversion as an inability or refusal to take life seriously.

### Couple Discussion:

You both tend to be outgoing and energetic. As a couple, you have the potential to have lots of fun. People are likely drawn to you because of your fun-loving mindset and ability to make friends easily. Potential drawbacks include becoming overly busy and too involved in outside activities. You may neglect placing enough priority on your relationship due to your busy social calendar. When out of balance, this leaves less time for your relationship and personal life. You may benefit from periodically scheduling time to reconnect with one another.

## SCOPE Personality Scales - Change



### Change (C)

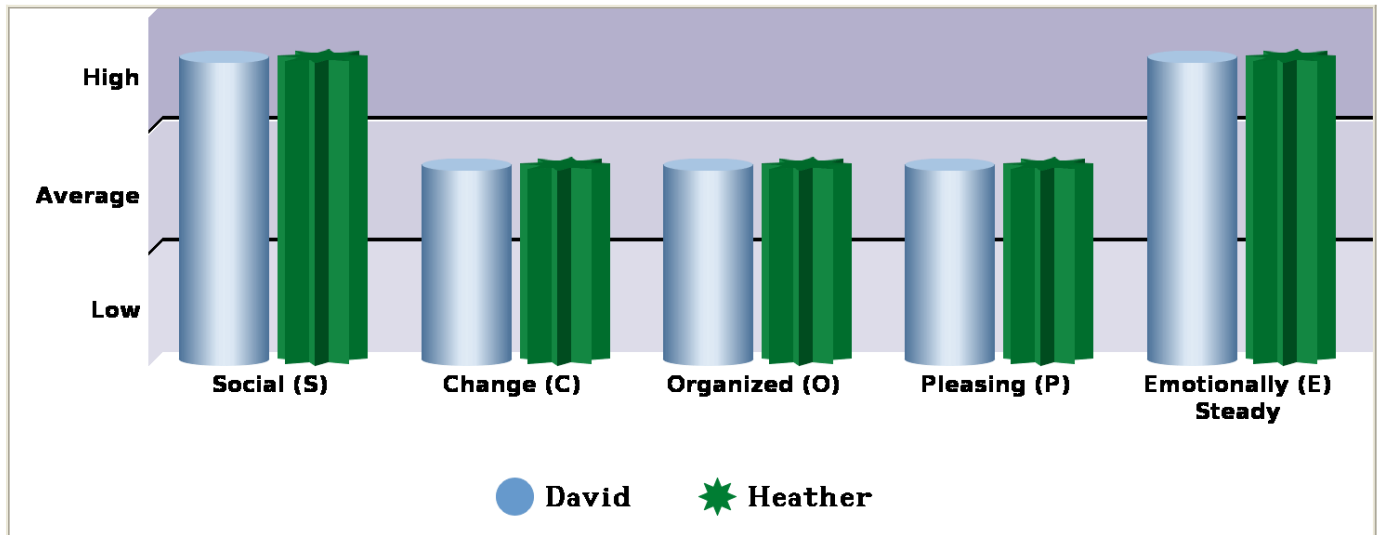
*This trait reflects openness to change, flexibility, and interest in new experiences.*

- You both scored in the **Average** range, suggesting you each balance new and creative ideas with more traditional or down to earth approaches to life. Based on the situations you encounter, you can fluctuate between being flexible and keeping things the same. While being practical, you are both open to considering new ideas, experiences, and ways of handling your relationship.

#### **Couple Discussion:**

Both of you seem to balance new ideas with practicality. You are open to change and new experiences, but there may be areas where you have conventional interests and more traditional preferences. This balance will allow room for curiosity and imagination, while maintaining a steady approach to life. Your relationship will benefit from your comfort with change and ability to be somewhat flexible.

## SCOPE Personality Scales - Organized



### Organized (O)

*This trait reflects how organized and persistent a person is in their daily life and work. It also reflects persistence in pursuing goals.*

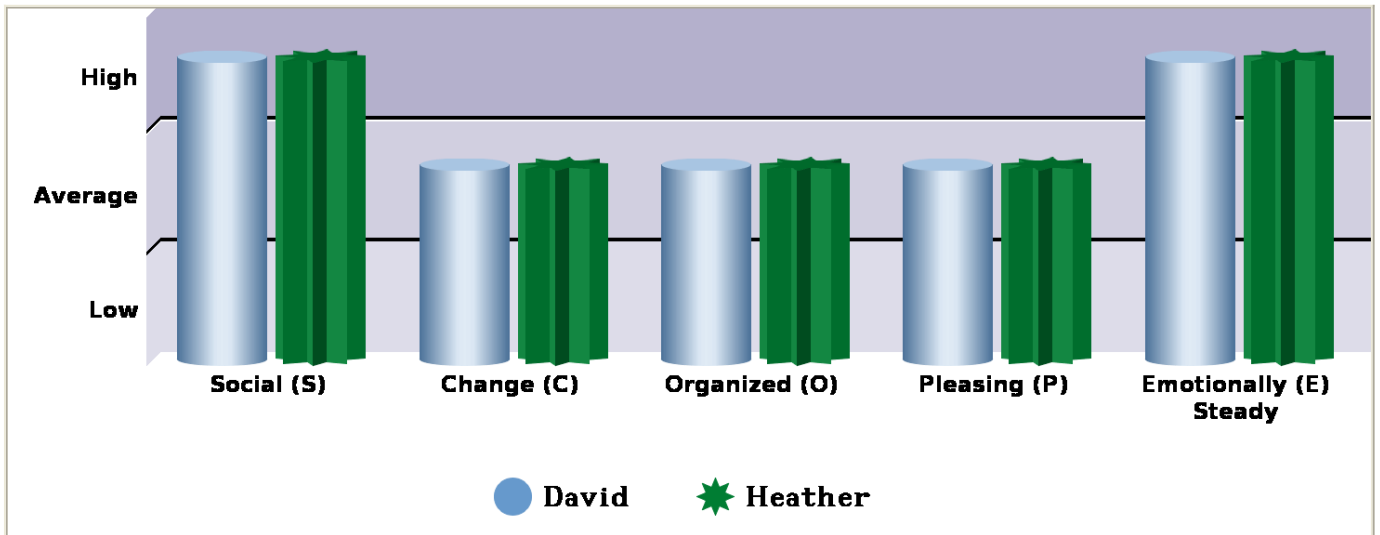
- You both scored in the **Average** range, suggesting you both are generally organized. You are most likely dependable and goal-oriented, but can also be flexible, sometimes setting aside work and agendas. You know how to get organized, but it is not always a high priority. Your home and workspace are probably somewhat cluttered, but you know where things are located.

#### Couple Discussion:

Having this in common can be a positive in your relationship as you balance tasks, goals and relationships. You are most likely able to be organized and goal-directed in areas that are important to you as a couple, while simultaneously able to enjoy a free-spirited approach to life. Talk to one another about areas in your life where you need to get more organized, and what roles you will each fulfill to maximize your effectiveness as a couple.



## SCOPE Personality Scales - Pleasing



### Pleasing (P)

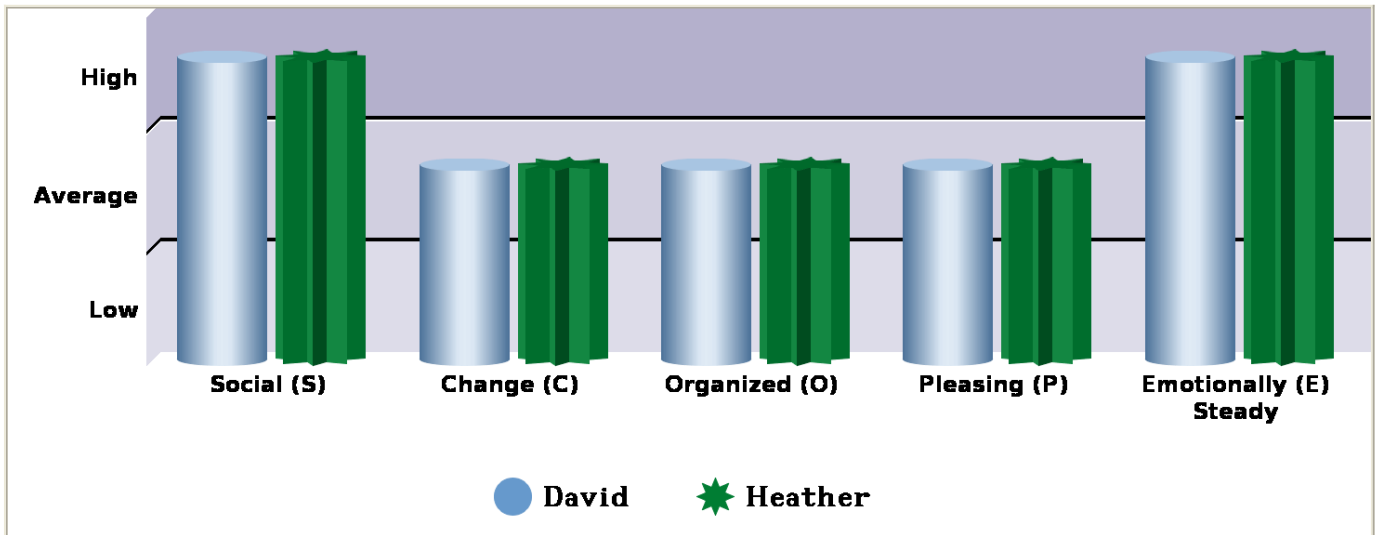
*This trait reflects how considerate and cooperative one is in their interactions with others.*

- You both scored in the **Average** range, suggesting you are generally warm and cooperative, but occasionally somewhat competitive, stubborn, or assertive. When you feel your rights are violated, you are able to respond and stand up for yourselves. As a couple, you may occasionally argue about little matters, but you generally know how to get along well.

#### **Couple Discussion:**

Both of you have the ability to be cooperative, but are sometimes competitive with each other. You know how to balance consideration for one another with assertiveness and straightforward talk. Try to avoid the extremes of not expressing your true feelings, or aggressively voicing your opinions with little regard for one another. Be especially mindful of your communication styles during periods of increased stress in your relationship, as these will be the times when you may lean toward one extreme of functioning or the other. Practice assertiveness and active listening skills.

## SCOPE Personality Scales - Emotionally Steady



### Emotionally Steady (E)

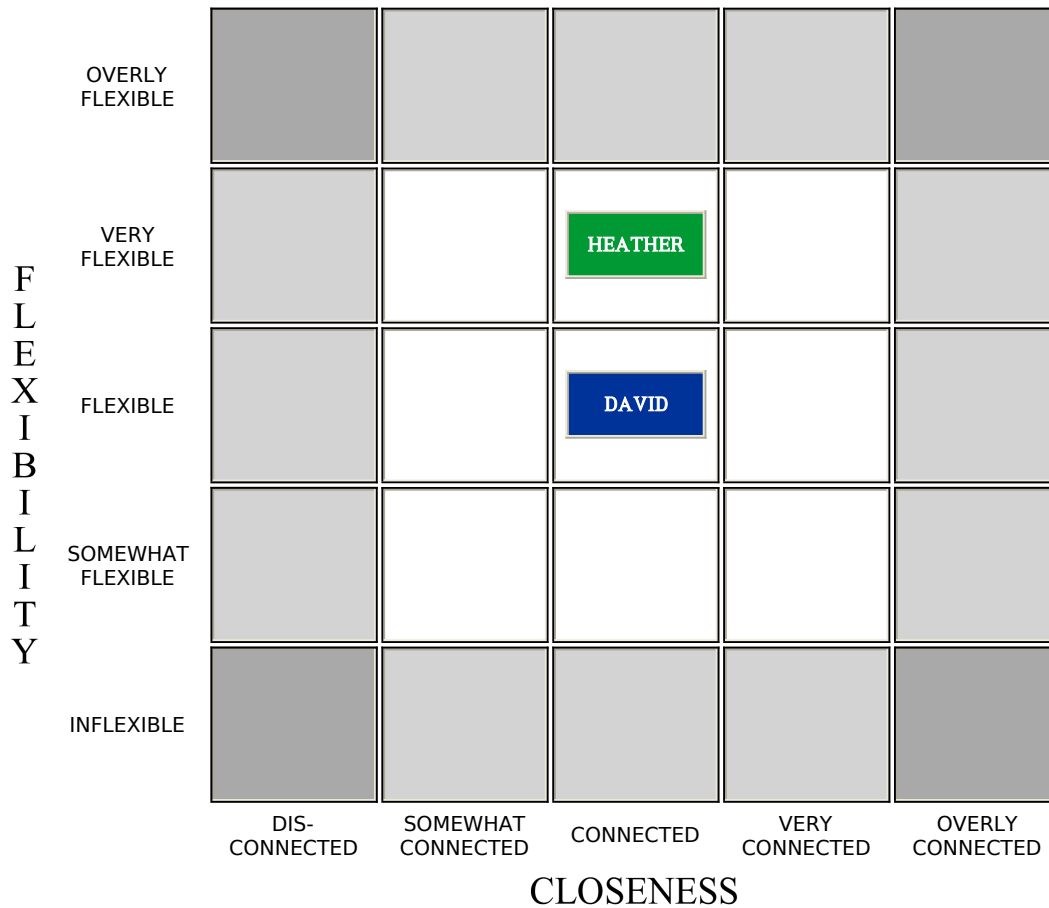
*This trait reflects the tendency to stay relaxed and calm even when faced with stress, versus those who are more prone to experience negative thoughts and feelings.*

- You both scored in the **High** range, suggesting that you each tend to be more relaxed, calm and less prone to distress. You are likely to be emotionally stable even when confronted with stressful situations. In the extreme, you may appear unfeeling or unflappable. You likely consider most of life's stressors to be minor passing annoyances and may even be surprised by your ability to remain composed in situations that could be difficult for others.

#### Couple Discussion:

As individuals you are both very calm and collected and this will help you to cope with the challenges life presents without a great deal of distress. As a couple, use good communication skills, problem solving and flexibility to navigate stressful times without the extremes of negative emotion. Focus on what you can do individually and together, rather than worrying about what you cannot control.

## Map of Couple Relationship



**Couple Closeness** is defined as the emotional closeness you feel toward your spouse. On this dimension, relationships can range from *disconnected* to *overly connected*.

- You both perceive your relationship as **Connected**, meaning you experience a healthy balance of "We" and "I", or closeness and separateness, which reflects an interdependent relationship. Most healthy marriages not only foster connection, but also leave room for each partner to continue to grow and develop as individuals.

**Couple Flexibility** is defined as the ability to adjust to changes and be flexible in response to life's demands. On this dimension, relationships can range from *inflexible* to *overly flexible*.

- David, you perceive your relationship to be **Flexible**. Relationships in the flexible range are open to change when necessary, with a good balance between stability and change. Leadership and decision-making are equally shared, and roles can adjust to life's demands. This is a healthy balance that most couples enjoy.
- Heather, you perceive your relationship to be **Very Flexible**, with a good balance between stability and change. You often share decision making, and are able to adjust to ongoing issues. Most couples enjoy this level of flexibility.

**Couple Discussion:** Review your couple closeness and flexibility results. Discuss what you like about the current levels of closeness and flexibility in your relationship. Discuss how you might want to change (increase or decrease) your closeness or flexibility as a couple.