

Relationship Vulnerability Map

There's no way to predict with certainty whether a specific couple is "affair-proof." Responding to the statements below will help identify relationship vulnerabilities that make marriages susceptible.

Directions: Circle the appropriate number to the left of each statement:

1 = **No**, disagree completely 2 = **Yes**, agree somewhat 3 = **Yes**, agree completely NA = Not applicable

- 1 2 3 NA 1. We had problems trusting each other before we got married.
- 1 2 3 NA 2. Our marriage revolves around our children.
(or for childless couples) We disagree on whether or not to have children.
- 1 2 3 NA 3. My partner spends too much time away from home.
- 1 2 3 NA 4. My partner rarely takes my side in anything.
- 1 2 3 NA 5. We've grown apart.
- 1 2 3 NA 6. I have felt alone and unsupported at times of loss or crises.
- 1 2 3 NA 7. We don't have equal input for important decisions.
- 1 2 3 NA 8. We argue about the frequency of sex.
- 1 2 3 NA 9. Our interactions feel more like a parent-child relationship than one between equals.
- 1 2 3 NA 10. We are uncomfortable about exposing our inner selves to each other.
- 1 2 3 NA 11. We sweep things under the rug, so we hardly ever fight.
- 1 2 3 NA 12. There's a disparity in how invested we are in the relationship.
- 1 2 3 NA 13. I feel I can't influence my partner to do what I request.
- 1 2 3 NA 14. I don't know if I really love my partner.
- 1 2 3 NA 15. We don't know how to repair after a conflict.
- 1 2 3 NA 16. We don't have much in common.

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Scoring Key:

Add up your total number of points to interpret your relationship vulnerability score.

Your marriage is in:

16-20 = A safe harbor

21-29 = Choppy waters

30-39 = Rough seas

40-48 = Watch out! You're headed for the rocks.

Take another look at those statements that you rated 2 or 3. You and your partner can work on these issues to build a better marriage. Sharing your responses will give you another way to discuss your marital lifeline and the relationship patterns discussed in this chapter.

It's important to realize that your relationship vulnerability score is not a predictor of infidelity. It is an assessment of your marital adjustment. Remember that affairs can and do happen in good relationships. Even a score that indicates high vulnerability does not mean that infidelity is inevitable. Just as there are happily married people who are unfaithful, there are also many dissatisfied individuals who remain faithful because of individual or cultural factors. The Relationship Vulnerability Map is one component that should be considered along with the vulnerability maps in the next two chapters.