

FAQ: FOCCUS® PRE-MARRIAGE INVENTORY

What is the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory?

As a key step in their marriage preparation, The FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory is a 156-item questionnaire used by engaged couples with a trained FOCCUS Facilitator. Taking the inventory results in a personalized FOCCUS® Couple Report that helps target discussion on topics important to marital success. While FOCCUS is not a test and is not used to label couples or predict marital outcome, the report is used by the Facilitator to help couples celebrate their relationship strengths and talk to each other about topics warranting further attention. FOCCUS assesses nineteen categories to help couples sort the challenges and strengths they are bringing into marriage.

How does the Facilitator use the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory?

FOCCUS Facilitators are trained to administer and score the FOCCUS® Inventory one of two ways:

Online Answer Entry by the couple (with any computer that has an Internet connection)

QuickScore entry of couples' written responses by the FOCCUS Facilitator (with any computer that has an Internet connection)

Each process results in a FOCCUS® Couple Report, which helps the Facilitator target topics for the couple's discussion. A detailed FOCCUS® Facilitator Manual provides Facilitators with supplemental questions that help elicit optimal, positive couple discussion. Facilitator training prepares facilitators and mentor couples to administer, interpret and discuss FOCCUS Inventory results with couples.

Does the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory address specific faiths?

The General version of FOCCUS refers to issues of spirituality and decision making regarding the practice of religion. However, several FOCCUS versions are tailored for specific religious faiths: Christian Non-Denominational edition, Orthodox Christian edition, and Catholic edition.

What relationship areas does the FOCCUS® Inventory assess?

The FOCCUS® Couple Report presents scores and graphs of couples' agreement based on five major content areas, representing 19 separate scales:

MATCH: Life Style Expectations, Friends and Interests, Personality Match, Personal Issues

SKILLS: Communication, Problem Solving

BONDERS: Religion and Values, Parenting, Extended Family, Sexuality, Finances, Marriage Readiness, Marriage Covenant

SUMMARY CATEGORIES (combining category-specific items with relevant items from the rest of the inventory): Key Problem Indicators, Family of Origin, Dual Career

SPECIAL GROUPS: Interfaith Marriages, Remarriages, Cohabiting Couples

How is the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory Scored?

Online Scoring can be done two ways:

Online Entry by Couple-Couples take the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory on any personal computer using log-in information provided by their Facilitator. Once it is completed, the Facilitator can immediately view and print the confidential FOCCUS® Couple Report.

QuickScore by Facilitator - Facilitators who administer the paper-pencil version of the FOCCUS® Inventory can then input the couple's responses into a QuickScore screen on the FOCCUS, Inc. USA website, immediately obtaining the FOCCUS® Couple Report.

On-line scoring provides the following advantages:

- Faster and less expensive than mailing in answer sheets
- Convenient report management by Facilitators
- Excellent report features not available in other formats:
- Full-sentence items printed on the report
- Responses clustered according to category
- Detailed graphs of agreement of the couples' responses

- Free, colorful FOCCUS® for the Future forms with each report!
- Free Questions by Category with each report!

Why should couples take the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory?

The FOCCUS® Pre-marriage Inventory was designed for couples preparing for marriage or seriously considering marriage. It provides them with a personalized profile of their relationship, its strengths and challenges. Overwhelmingly, couples give as their top response to the FOCCUS® Pre-marriage Inventory, "It helped us to talk about what we didn't know we needed to talk about." FOCCUS actively involves the engaged couple in the marriage preparation process,

The FOCCUS® Pre-marriage Inventory is ideal for use by professionals or trained lay persons who help prepare couples for marriage. It gives a unique profile of the couple so that the preparation work can reinforce the strengths in the relationship and concentrate discussion or problem solving on the particular challenges the couple may face. FOCCUS can be readily adapted to marriage preparation programs, skills training or facilitation by mentor couples.

Which categories in the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory are most predictive of future marital challenge or quality?

The 1995 study by Williams and Jurich indicate that the FOCCUS® Pre-marriage Inventory categories of Problem Solving and Personality Match provide the strongest indicators of the future for couples. All the categories have good predictive validity but these two areas warrant special attention by FOCCUS Facilitators and couples. View Research Articles.

Why does the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory work so well in so many different countries and cultures?

Every category of the FOCCUS® Pre-Marriage Inventory calls for the couple to examine what each partner brings from his/her family, culture or environment. This includes attitudes and expectations about money, sex, communication, household roles, etc. that they are likely to repeat or react against in the new marriage. Emphasizing these aspects of the relationship allows a great diversity of patterns and messages to emerge and tailors the inventory not only to the couple, but also to their specific cultural background(s) and setting.