

# ***Marriage Can Be Forever—Preparation Counts!***

## ***Walking a Path to a Spiritually-Based Marriage*** **~ A Workbook ~**

### **Table of Contents: Steps on the Path**

<b>Foreword by Marriage Therapist, Paul Coleman, Psy.D.</b>	9
<b>Introduction – What Is It All About?: A [Not-to-Be-Missed] Book Tour</b>	10
<b>Step 1 – Lay the Foundation: Preparing Yourself</b>	
Chapter 1 Life Partners: Preparation and Marriage	16
Chapter 2 A Broad View: The Purposes of Life	22
Chapter 3 Making Decisions: The Tool of Consultation	27
<b>Step 2 – Get Yourself Ready: Starting Your Search</b>	
Chapter 4 Looking Ahead: Exploring Expectations	37
Chapter 5 Moving On: Learning from Relationships	45
Chapter 6 Your Focus: Assessing, Knowing, and Growing Character	53
Chapter 7 What You Want: A Great Marriage Partner	62
Chapter 8 I Like You: Being Friends	70
<b>Step 3 – Walk Carefully: Being a Couple</b>	
Chapter 9 An Initial Step: Do You Want to Date?	80
Chapter 10 Becoming Serious: Courting One Another	88
Chapter 11 Promising Forever: Making Commitments	96
Chapter 12 A Positive Choice: Chastity Before Marriage	106
Chapter 13 The Goal: A Strong, Eternal Marriage	112
<b>Step 4 – Explore Compatibility: Learning Together</b>	
Chapter 14 In Harmony: Compatibility and Unity	119
Chapter 15 Powerful Attraction: Your Love for One Another	129
Chapter 16 Focus on God: Your Spiritual Life Together	136
Chapter 17 A Big Happy Family: You Will All Verily Be Related	146
Chapter 18 An Even Bigger Family: Being an Intercultural Couple	
Chapter 19 True Partnership: Equality in Marriage	156

Chapter 20	Our Interactions: Personality, Attitudes, and Behavior	164
Chapter 21	Minds and Hearts: Communicating with One Another	175
Chapter 22	Doing It Better: Improving Communication Skills	183
Chapter 23	Abundance of Feelings: Expressing Emotions	196
Chapter 24	A Personal Discussion: Intimacy and Sex	207
Chapter 25	Family Time: Children and Marriage	219
Chapter 26	On the Go: Service and Time Choices	229
Chapter 27	Money In and Out: Earning, Budgeting, and Spending	241
Chapter 28	A Blend of Lives: Creating a Home	253
Chapter 29	Rocks on the Path: Responding to the Tough Stuff	261

### Step 5 – Come to Commitment: You and Your Parents

Chapter 30	Setting Priorities: Your Marriage Commitments	271
Chapter 31	The Choice: To Marry...or Not to Marry	277
Chapter 32	To Our Parents: Seeking Consent	283
Chapter 33	Parental Choice: Deciding Consent	289
	<b><i>**Chapter for parents about privilege and responsibility of consent**</i></b>	
Chapter 34	When the Answer Is “No”: Consent Denied	297

### Step 6 – Move Forward: Wedding and Marriage

Chapter 35	It Is Almost Time: Tasks During Engagement	305
Chapter 36	The Big Day: Creating Your Marriage Ceremony	310
Chapter 37	An Adventure: The First Year Together	317
Chapter 38	It Is Just the Beginning: Marriage Can Be Forever!	323

### Appendices

A	Knowing One Another: Defining Character Qualities	325
B	A Spiritual Selection: Bahá'í Prayers	330
C	<i>A Foundation for Well-Being's Fortress,</i> <i>An Essay on Marriage Preparation</i> by David Bowers	331
D	Spiritual Revelation: A Glimpse of the Bahá'í Faith	335
E	Our Gratitude for Use: Permissions	336
F	Behind the Scenes: About the Authors	337
G	Publications: Ordering Information	339

# Worksheets

4A	Your Expectations of a Spouse	41
4B	A Vision of Your Marriage	42-43
5A	Learning from Relationships	49
5B	“Cleaning Up” Previous Relationships	50
5C	Developing Yourself as an Excellent Spouse	51
6A	Assessing Character Qualities	59
6B	Character Development Plan	60
6C	Character Modeling	
7A	Describe Yourself	67
7B	Describe Your Ideal Marriage Partner	68
8A	Appreciating Friends	76
8B	Widening Your Circle of Friends	77
10A	Identify Couple Learning Activities	93
10B	Setting Courtship Goals	94
11A	Fears About Commitment	102
11B	Making Commitments	103
11C	History of Long-Term Commitments	104
12A	The Topic of Cohabitation	110
14A	What You Each Bring to a Relationship/Marriage	124
14B	Assessing Your Compatibility	125-127
15A	Married Couples and Love	134
15B	Using the Love Languages	XXXX
16A	A Spiritual Exploration	142-144
17A	Parents’ Marriage/Relationship Example	152-153
17B	Learning from Parents	154
18A	Understanding Diversity and Prejudice	
18B	Exploring Culture, Ethnicity, and Race in Your Relationship	XXXX
19A	Marital Behavior and Equality	161
20A	Assessing Personality, Attitudes, and Behavior	169-173
21A	Consultation Skill Level	
22A	Identifying Poor Communication Habits	
22B	Understanding Communication Patterns	191-193
22C	Communication Guidelines	194
23A	Expressing Your Emotions	203-204
23B	Your Partner’s Emotions	205
24A	Discussing Intimate Feelings and Sex	214-217
26A	Tracking Your Time	234-235
26B	How Do You Spend Your Time?	236
26C	A Helping Hand—Being of Service	237
26D	Making Moderate Service Choices	238-239
27A	Current Financial Situation	249
27B	Preparing a Budget	250
27C	Distinguishing Necessities and Luxuries	251
28A	Experiences in Sharing Living Space	259
30A	Commitments for Your Marriage	275
31A	Trends in Your Relationship and Current Status	281
36A	Planning the Marriage Ceremony	315
37A	Your Marriage Goals	321