

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____



WELLNESS WORKSHEET 43

Assessing Your Readiness to Become a Parent

Many factors have to be taken into account when you are considering parenthood. The following are some questions you should ask yourself and some issues you should consider when making this decision. Some issues are relevant to both men and women; others apply only to women. There are no “right” answers—you must decide for yourself what your answers reveal about your aptitude for parenthood.

Yes No

Physical Health

- ___ ___ 1. Are you in reasonably good health?
- ___ ___ 2. Do you have any behaviors or conditions that could be of special concern?
- | | |
|--|---|
| ___ Obesity | ___ Anemia |
| ___ Smoking | ___ Diabetes |
| ___ Alcohol and drug use | ___ Sexually transmitted diseases |
| ___ Hypertension | ___ Epilepsy |
| ___ Previous problems with pregnancy or delivery | ___ Prenatal exposure to diethylstilbestrol (DES) |
| | ___ Asthma |
- ___ ___ 3. Are you under 20 or over 35 years of age?
- ___ ___ 4. Do you or your partner have a family history of a genetic problem that a baby might inherit?
- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| ___ Hemophilia | ___ Phenylketonuria (PKU) |
| ___ Sickle-cell disease | ___ Cystic fibrosis |
| ___ Down syndrome | ___ Thalassemia |
| ___ Tay-Sachs disease | ___ Other |

Financial Circumstances

- ___ ___ 1. Will your health insurance cover the costs of pregnancy, prenatal tests, delivery, and medical attention for the mother and baby before and after the birth?
- ___ ___ 2. Can you afford the supplies for the baby: diapers, bedding, crib, stroller, car seat, clothing, food, and medical supplies?
- ___ ___ 3. Will one parent leave his or her job to care for the baby?
- ___ ___ 4. If so, can the decrease in family income be worked into the family budget?
- ___ ___ 5. If both parents will continue to work, has affordable child care been set up?
- ___ ___ 6. The annual cost of raising a child is about \$9500; can you save and/or provide the necessary money?

Education, Career, and Child Care Plans

- ___ ___ 1. Have you completed as much of your education as you want?
- ___ ___ 2. Have you sufficiently established yourself in a career, if that is important to you?
- ___ ___ 3. Have you investigated parental leave and company-sponsored child care?
- ___ ___ 4. Do both parents agree on child care arrangements?

(over)

WELLNESS WORKSHEET 43 — continued

Yes No

Lifestyle and Social Support

- ___ ___ 1. Would you be willing to give up the freedom to do what you want to do when you want to do it?
- ___ ___ 2. Would you be willing to restrict your social life, to lose leisure time and privacy?
- ___ ___ 3. Would you and your partner be prepared to spend more time at home? Would you have enough time to spend with a child?
- ___ ___ 4. Are you prepared to be a single parent if your partner leaves or dies?
- ___ ___ 5. Do you have a network of family and friends who will help you with the baby? Are there community resources you can call on for additional assistance?

Readiness

- ___ ___ 1. Are you prepared to have a helpless being completely dependent on you 24 hours a day?
- ___ ___ 2. Do you like children? Have you enough experiences with babies, toddlers, and teenagers?
- ___ ___ 3. Do you think time spent with children is time well spent?
- ___ ___ 4. Do you communicate easily with others?
- ___ ___ 5. Do you have enough love to give a child? Can you express affection easily?
- ___ ___ 6. Do you feel good enough about yourself to respect and nurture others?
- ___ ___ 7. Do you have safe ways of handling anger, frustration, and impatience?
- ___ ___ 8. Would you be willing to devote a great part of your life, at least 18 years, to being responsible for a child?

Relationship with Partner

- ___ ___ 1. Does your partner want to have a child? Is he or she willing to ask these same questions of himself or herself?
- ___ ___ 2. Have you adequately discussed your reasons for wanting a child?
- ___ ___ 3. Does either of you have philosophical objections to adding to the world's population?
- ___ ___ 4. Have you and your partner discussed each other's feelings about religion, work, family, and child raising? Are your feelings compatible and conducive to good parenting?
- ___ ___ 5. Would both you and your partner contribute in raising the child?
- ___ ___ 6. Is your relationship stable? Could you provide a child with a really good home environment?
- ___ ___ 7. After having a child, would your partner and you be able to separate if you should have unsolvable problems? Or would you feel obligated to remain together for the sake of the child?