

## **Are you the one for me? Determining Negotiable vs. Non-negotiable Qualities**

Choosing your peer, your “equal”, your compatible partner in life is perhaps one of the biggest and most important decisions you’ll ever make. The right choice brings a lifetime of incredible joy, love, sharing and support. The wrong choice, however, brings much pain, anger, resentment and disappointment along with record breaking numbers of marriages now dissolving and ending in divorce. Far too often these days we will settle for less than God’s best for us and stay in mediocre and unfulfilling relationships because we’re not exactly sure what qualities we’re looking for in a potential mate. If we don’t know what we’re looking for, how do we now if we’ve found it?

To help you through this relationship maze and save a lot of frustration in the dating process, I challenge you to take a moment to sit down and really focus on your personal needs of non-negotiable vs. negotiable qualities in your future mate.

**Non-negotiable Qualities:** These are absolute, essential, core qualities that are must-haves, and deal-breakers if your potential mate doesn’t possess them (ex: common faith, affection, integrity, sense of humor, wants/doesn’t want children...) Only you can determine these. Try to write down at least 5 qualities. (Be sure to write down just your crucial qualities, and be careful not to make your list so extensive that no one person could possibly ever fulfill them!)

**Negotiable Qualities:** These qualities would be great for your potential mate to possess, but are not essential. These are “bonus” items and not deal-breakers. (ex: punctual, romantic, mutual hobbies/pastimes...) again only you can determine these.

**Summary:** Once you’ve reviewed and adjusted your list, you now have an accurate snapshot of the qualities you are looking. If the person you are dating doesn’t possess all of your non-negotiables, then you’re likely not compatible for a lifetime and will have voids in your relationship in those specific areas. If they do possess all your non-negotiable then you’re on the right track to having your essential needs met! Occasionally review your list as sometimes what you think is non-negotiable is really negotiable and vice versa.