

Why Are Family Relationships Important

Contributed by admin
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Each person is mainly a product of his family. The family has created him not only physically, but his character and his personality as well. Although wholesome development requires that he become separate and independent from his parents, stand on his own feet and assume control of his own life, he is still largely what his family has made him. The family is not only the factory in which each of us was built. In some respects it is the material out of which we were constructed. Therefore one of the best ways to know a person is to know his family. Someone has said, "The best way to pick a wife is to find a happy family and marry any one of the daughters." So extreme a statement requires qualifications. But even taken literally it would result in a higher degree of success than the methods of choice now usually employed. Here are some further questions you should both ask about each other.

Were your own parents happily married? Your own home background happy?

In most of the studies which have been made so far, a happy home background stands out as one of the most important essentials for marital success. As Professor Nimkoff says in "Marriage and the Family", "Happiness begets happiness. It appears that those who are brought up in a happy home come to expect happiness and act in ways which produce it; they have the habits that make for happiness."

The Burgess and Cottrell study found that when both parties to a marriage come from very happy homes, their chances of making a good adjustment are more than twice as good as when both have come from average or unhappy families. These statistics carry both a warning and a hope. Over ten percent of those from happy homes made poor adjustments, and nearly three-tenths of those from homes not particularly happy made good adjustments. A happy home background does not guarantee success nor does an unhappy home background foredoom you to failure. If either or both of you come from unhappy home backgrounds, it means, not that you should refrain from marriage, but that you should exercise greater care, and work harder to make your marriage a success.

An important part of the question concerns the happiness of your own childhood. A commonly accepted myth makes childhood the happy period of life. Careful research and clinical experience has shown that the opposite is often true. Many childhoods have been periods of violently resented oppressions and terrifying fears. We know that the basis for personality is laid during the early years. Therefore the happiness of your childhood is one important indication of your chances for success in marriage. Here, again, you are not guaranteed or necessarily doomed. But it is a matter to which you should give most careful consideration.