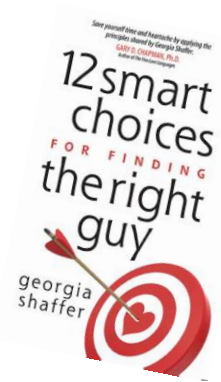


Smart Choices Relationship Profile



The Smart Choices Relationship Profile is designed to increase your awareness of your personal style of relating to God and others. The more clarity we have about who we are and the kind of people we want to spend time with, the less likely we are to repeat the same mistakes.

Creating healthy relationships begins with an understanding of the kind of people we've been attracted to in the past. Reflect on your dating history by completing the assessment chart below. If you have dated, think back on your past dating relationships. Go through your old journals, address books, Outlook files or Rolodex. List the names (on the next page) of all the people you've gone out with more than three times. After each name, complete each column of the chart by listing qualities that attracted you (attractive qualities), areas of concern you noted in the beginning, and those negative qualities that showed up as you spent more time with this person.

Pay special attention to the list of negatives. You could get creative and use different colored highlighters to mark any repeated negative traits. While the positives show what you *think* you were looking for, the negatives speak louder. They say, "This is what I find. Why do I keep ending up with this?" (See Chapter 1 of *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* for more information)

	Dating	Inventory	
Name	Attractive qualities	Areas of concern noted in the beginning	Negative qualities that showed up over time

Deal-Breakers

Find the top five most frequently listed negative traits of those you've dated and recorded in your dating inventory chart above. Write these five traits in the box labeled "My Deal Breakers". Although you have been attracted to this type of person in the past, decide that you will not settle for someone like this in the future. By writing down these traits and posting them where you can see them daily, you are more likely to be intentional about those with whom you spend your time and resources.

My Deal-Breakers

I will not continue to date someone who:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Fears That Consume Us

We are often attracted to unhealthy people because of our fears. We might, for example, be afraid we will never find anyone to love us, so we settle for someone less than God's best. Fears can unknowingly consume us and feed feelings of desperation. However, when we identify and deal with our relational fears we are less likely to be driven by them. (Chapter 2 of *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* will give you more information on addressing your fears)

Here are some example questions of what creates feelings of panic and uneasiness in some singles. What are your main fears and concerns? Are they hindering your ability to make wise choices? Are your fears causing you to get pulled into the traps of others?

What if I ...

- ...can't make it on my own?
- ...die alone?
- ...get hurt again?
- ...lose my job?
- ...grow old alone?
- ...never have children?
- ...don't have money to retire?
- ...hurt someone again?
- ...never experience sexual intimacy?

Three Fears That Can Influence My Relationships

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Blind Spots

You may have learned when driving a car to be aware of your visual blind spots. It's just as important when dating that we understand our emotional blind spots. Blind spots are either those things we don't see in ourselves, or in others, or something we discount as not being important when in reality it is quite significant.

Let's look at what obvious things you might have missed in past relationships and write them in the box below. Paying attention to what we ignored or missed in the past can give us clarity in our current or future relationships. Maybe someone you dated was extremely jealous, and you incorrectly assumed it was because they didn't want to lose you. What you may have failed to notice or realize is jealousy is not love, and unreasonable jealousy can be an indicator of a potentially abusive relationship. Chapter 3 in *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* helps you to identify your blind spots.

Three Blind Spots Ignored or Discounted

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Intimacy Blockers

Intimacy blockers refer to any behaviors, patterns, or habits that inhibit our ability to give and receive love. In order to experience healthy relationships, it's critical that we are aware of our intimacy blockers. In chapter 5 of *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy*, we discuss how our less-than-perfect family can impact our ability to connect lovingly with others.

Here is a list of behaviors that can create problems in our ability to relate with others. Which two of these best describe you? If you are stuck, you may want to ask someone close to you that you trust to help you with this exercise.

- Failing to communicate when something is bothering you
- Giving the silent treatment when upset
- Placating or giving in just to keep the peace
- Numbing pain with work, food, alcohol, sex, drugs, or busyness
- Attempting to control everything
- Refusing to discuss the obvious (the elephant in the room)
- Believing that love is something earned, not given freely
- Believing that love is a feeling that comes and goes
- Unforgiving in current or past relationships
- Disrespecting, being critical, or demeaning others
- Being unwilling to hear the truth when spoken in love
- Refusing to deal with issues that make you angry
- Being unwilling to be yourself or express true feelings for fear of rejection
- Focusing on "what's in it for me" rather than having a spirit of give and take

Intimacy Blockers

1.

2.

The Truth about Yourself

Chapter 6 in *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* addresses the erroneous beliefs we have about ourselves, God and others, and the importance of deleting and replacing these thoughts with the truth of God. We want to remind ourselves continually that just because we feel something is true doesn't mean it is true.

Again, it may be helpful to ask those closest to you for help in recognizing the lies and distortions (about God, self and others) with which you especially struggle. After you have identified them, write down the truths of Scripture that counter your incorrect beliefs and remind you of what God says.

Here are a few examples:

- I feel God doesn't want me to be happy, but here's what I choose to believe: "No good thing will he [God] withhold from those who walk along his paths" (Psalm 84:1 TLB).
- I feel I don't have enough faith to believe God will help me, but here's what I choose to believe: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me" (Psalm 50:15 NASB).

**Despite what I think and how I may feel, here's what
God says is true:**

1.

2.

3.

Stress Relievers

Chapter 7 of *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* discusses how grieving our losses is critical to making a fresh start in our dating lives. But facing the pain can be overwhelming. Therefore, it's important when grieving that we purposefully carve out time for something that brings us a few moments of relief. Otherwise we tend to use food, sex or busyness to numb our pain.

If you had a whole day to do something that was healthy and enjoyable, what would you do? Would you ride your bike (or motorcycle), hike, play video games, shop, read, sleep, golf, watch TV, visit a spa, take a long hot bath, chill out with friends, rent a DVD or go to the movies, learn something new, entertain a few friends, fish, or travel to the beach?

Create your own list of healthy stress relievers. When those difficult times hit, you will already know what can refresh your soul.

Stress Relief Favorites

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Connecting with God

Since all loving intimate relationships flow out of our personal relationship with God, we want to carve out time and space to connect with him in a way that is meaningful to us. Unless we are purposeful about this, it won't happen naturally (connecting to God and making him our first love is the topic of Chapter 8 in *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy*).

What are some of the ways you best connect with God? Have you found some of your most intimate times with him when you're listening to music, sitting on the beach or taking a walk? Pick your three favorite ways and record them in the first box below.

In the second box write down what alerts you that you're close to or running on empty. Maybe one sign for you is that you feel especially insecure and needy. Perhaps you get extremely driven and anxious. Or maybe you start looking to others to make you happy.

Recording these indicators will enable you to identify more quickly when you're in trouble and need to be refilled with God's love, joy, and peace.

My Style of Connecting with God

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I'm Neglecting My Relationship with God when. . .

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Social Network

One of the challenges of being single is the mistaken belief that we need to go it alone. God created us to be in relationship with him and with others. We need people with whom to share our lives. A supportive social network is vital to establish and maintain healthy lives. Chapter 9 in *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* discusses how we do this so we are no longer starving for relationships and become vulnerable to the advances of the wrong people.

Take a few moments to identify the people who make up your current community and those who are your closest friends. Do you have people who will accept you as you are and show you God's grace? Do you have a friend you can call when your life gets messy? Do you have someone who will speak the truth to you in love, someone who will encourage you when you get discouraged? But most importantly, are you willing to do this for others?

Evaluate the kinds of relationships you have, and then record them in the boxes below. If no one is including you right now, reach out to those you would like to get to know better. Make the time to invest in the lives of others and build a strong social network. It is vital in establishing and maintaining healthy connections.

My Social Network

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

My Closest Friends

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Deal-Makers

It's critical to be clear on what we want in a special someone so we don't accept less. What kind of person are you seeking? What character qualities are most important to you? What are the core values you hold dear? Do you want someone who is committed to Christ, has integrity, humor and a heart to serve others? Or maybe you prefer someone who is generous, humble, compassionate, flexible and reliable.

You might not find someone who has everything on your list, but at least you'll know what that target looks like. Chapter 10 in *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* provides additional information in determining your top five deal-makers.

Take the time now to record your deal-makers before your brain is short-circuited by that passionate "in love" feeling.

Top Five Deal-Makers

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

An Action Plan for the Holidays

Chapter 11 in *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* discusses the ongoing challenges of the single lifestyle and gives healthy ways to address our needs and longings. For instance, which holidays are especially difficult for you? Planning ahead for these difficult times minimizes the chances you will seek someone or something unhealthy to ease your loneliness. For example, maybe you dread Valentine's Day. What can do you to make this time more enjoyable? Perhaps you could send Valentine's cards to your closest friends and host a dinner for them. Use the box below to write down a plan of action for the times when you are most vulnerable.

Two Difficult Holidays and an Action Plan

1.

2.

Passions

All too often, as singles, we put our lives on hold, believing that only a significant other, a spouse, or a child will give us a sense of purpose and the joy to live with passion. By waiting for that special person to come along, however, we miss out on living our lives today.

Instead of waiting or trying to get a different life, we need to start right now, right where we are, to live the life we've been given. (Chapter 12 in *12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy* discusses how to do this).

What gets you excited? What are you passionate about? Think about when you were a child. What are the stories you love to tell? What did you love to do? Even if you don't know what you love (I didn't until the age of 40), don't give up. Once you've identified your passions, write them in the box below.

My Passions

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Once you've completed the profile, put it where you can refer to it often. It's your style of connecting to God and others. And it will remind you of what makes you special.

Note: This profile was adapted from:
12 Smart Choices for Finding the Right Guy.



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