

I. Introduction

“What are we going to DO!?” was how Andrea and Bruce, both profoundly deaf, began our conversation. They wanted to begin marriage preparation. Their wedding would take place in about two years, and they wanted to use that time to prepare as thoroughly as possible. The reason for their desperate question was that they lived in different Texas cities, 300 miles apart, and could get together only once a month. How, then, could they even remotely prepare for marriage . . . if they were apart most of the time? They asked if I would design a correspondence course for them.

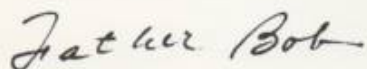
This Pre-Marriage Questionnaire (PMQ) was, in large part, my response to Andrea and Bruce. It has become the “tool” I use now for *all* engaged couples who come to me, whether living near or far apart.

I have tried to be comprehensive in scope and clear in language. I called on the talents of several deaf married couples to guide me in the tricky and virtually impossible business of selecting vocabulary and phraseology that most deaf couples could understand. I trust that you, the interviewer, will make up for our linguistic shortcomings!

The PMQ is **only** a “tool” and is meant to provoke discussion. Whether they agree with me or with each other in their answers is not the real issue. I am primarily interested in their response to: *why* did you answer this way; what do you *mean* by your answer, etc. You will, most likely, want to provide additional materials to further the couple’s understanding of marriage and their own relationship as you treat each section.

Finally, I thank those couples and pastoral workers for their help during the developmental stages of this PMQ. Their pertinent suggestions, gentle corrections, steady encouragement . . . and their belief that this was a much needed and valuable undertaking . . . gave me the patience and perseverance needed to continue on to its completion. I hope you will benefit from its use with your engaged couples.

Yours, in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Father Bob".

II. Preparing Yourself (the interviewer)

1. Except for sections 1 and 2, I suggest you take only *one* section per meeting. This will give you enough time to cover the topic and weave in other related materials.

2. I find that a once/week meeting is ideal. You will more easily be able to pick up where you left off, and they still have enough time in between meetings to talk over their answers and prepare for your next session.

3. *Logistics*: To insure a minimum of distractions during the *answering* time of the session ask them to separate to write, one sitting to one side and behind the other (usually the boy sits behind), making sure they both can see me, but not each other's communication with me.

I make sure I have some light reading material to keep me occupied, but not absorbed, should they ask for clarification, explanations, etc.

After one finishes and is waiting for the other (and has read through his/her answers again) ask him/her to pray quietly, asking God to bless their love . . . or read from the materials provided.

4. I have found that the PMQ works best if you do *not* give them the entire packet but only the section they are to answer at that meeting. I do however, think it helpful to let them know at the first meeting, *all* the topics you will address with them in the months ahead.

III. Preparing The Couple (to be mentioned at first meeting)

1. **Not a Test**: There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. The Questionnaire is an opportunity for you both to look at your relationship, to see similarities and differences, so you can learn more about yourselves, build on your strengths or change attitudes that may cause conflict between you. The Questionnaire will help you both examine your dreams, your opinions, your feelings . . . so you can have a wonderful married life together.

2. **Honesty**: It is crucial, therefore, that you answer all the questions and statements with honesty. To tell the truth can only help you both and make your love stronger. To hide the truth will only bring suffering later, when it may be too late.

3. **Privacy/confidentiality**: I (the interviewer) will not tell anyone else what we discuss here. I respect your need to share your ideas and feelings openly during our meetings. I will tell others **ONLY** with your permission. (Whether you expect the same from them is up to you, the interviewer).

4. **Take Your Time**: There is no hurry! Enjoy the quiet time to think through your answers. Explain as much as you want. Give details. After you finish, please read through again to make sure you are satisfied with your responses.

5. **Vocabulary**: If you are not sure of the meaning of some words, feel free to ask me. One word used throughout is "sweetheart" and means your girl/boyfriend. Along this line . . . do not worry about English grammar, syntax rules, spelling. If I did not understand your meaning, I will ask you to explain later. So write as much as you want!

IV. How to administer the PMQ:

1. Before the couple arrives:

Make sure your *logistics* are ready:

- chairs are arranged for them to write privately, as described in II, 3;
- pens/pencils, clipboard with PMQ section;
- light reading materials

2. After the couple arrives, and after greetings, etc.:

a. Explain your Diocesan Marriage Preparation Policies, emphasizing the need to meet for several months to adequately cover all the complexities of marriage.

b. Introduce them to the PMQ, using the “Preparing The couple” material above (III); leaf through the PMQ, showing them the various topics you will cover. Call their attention to the duplicate copy attached to each worksheet, which you, the interviewer, will use during their discussions.

c. Give them the (first) section; remind them of your availability to answer questions during their writing time.

d. After they finish, ask them how they felt as they wrote.

e. Begin your discussion.

f. At the end of your meeting, urge them to continue their discussion during the week to gain further insights into their relationship.

g. Set date and time for your next meeting.

h. Pray with them, using discussion material as subject of your prayer, or bless them, asking God to help them grow in the areas just discussed.

First name:

1. My sweetheart

What I like about you: (X)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> It is easy to talk with you |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your smile | <input type="checkbox"/> You work hard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your laugh | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smart | <input type="checkbox"/> Brave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You tease me | <input type="checkbox"/> Respect me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your patience | <input type="checkbox"/> Good person |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You love me | <input type="checkbox"/> Nice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet | <input type="checkbox"/> Fun, good time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You like me to tease you | <input type="checkbox"/> You love God |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You tell truth | <input type="checkbox"/> Save \$\$\$ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You like church | |

2. Interests and Hobbies

A. What I like to do with you: (X)


- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Movies | <input type="checkbox"/> Share |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch T.V. | <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk & talk | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay quiet with you |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joke | <input type="checkbox"/> Car ride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk serious | <input type="checkbox"/> Visit friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fuss & argue | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play | |

B. Some things I like to do by myself and alone: (X)

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pray | <input type="checkbox"/> Read |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self quiet and think | <input type="checkbox"/> Drive car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch T.V. | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

First Name:

3. Marriage love (X)

- Stay together until I die
- Feel warm
- Smile
- Listen
- Hug
- Hold hands
- Decision, not feelings
- Romance
- No divorce
- Feel good all time
- Sex
- Patience & suffer
- Sleep together
- Kiss
- Baby
- Stay near
- Save \$\$\$
- New car
- Makes me excited and  pump fast
- Nice home
- Give
- Sometimes feel stupid
- "I am not wrong"
- Always follow what sweetheart wants
- "My ideas are best"
- Other

First Name:

4. Church and God

A. I think:

- God see me all time.
- God sometimes shut eyes and can't see me.
- God does not love me sometimes and is angry with me.
- God good and loves all people.
- God not love me.
- God lives far from me.
- God lives near me.

B. Jesus: (X)

- A man
- Spirit only
- Human and God same time
- Loves me always
- Loves me sometimes and hates me sometimes
- Knows my name
- Stays near me all time

C. I do not understand about these church rules and ideas:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

D. "Church" is: (X)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God's home | <input type="checkbox"/> Heaven |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jesus | <input type="checkbox"/> Other churches |

E. My sweetheart thinks that God is:

F. My church picks on me (preach) and forces me. No Yes

G. I want to leave (give up, drop) my church and join your church.

H. I want *you* to leave (give up, drop) your church and join my church.

I. I think God wants me to go to my church and you go to your church. ()

J. I want our children:

() Go to my church.

() Go to your church.

() Go to our church because we are both Catholic.

() Choose their own church later.

First Name:

5. Home and Housework

A. Duties for (H) Husband or (W) Wife:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Set the alarm | <input type="checkbox"/> Make our bed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean house | <input type="checkbox"/> Open bills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas in car | <input type="checkbox"/> Write letters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fix breakfast | <input type="checkbox"/> Decide go church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wash clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> Wash dishes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plan activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan supper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up my dirty clothes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shop for food | <input type="checkbox"/> Repair home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Pay bills |

B. Who will have job?

- Husband
- Wife
- Both

C. After our wedding, we will live in:

- House
- Apt.
- With my family
- With sweetheart's family
- Other (explain)

First Name:

6. Thoughts, Words, Actions

A. Sometimes you show me love *in front of* other people:

- | | I like (X) | Not like (X) |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------|
| 1. Hug | () | () |
| 2. Kiss me | () | () |
| 3. Hold my hand | () | () |
| 4. Smile at me | () | () |
| 5. Tease me | () | () |
| 6. Look at me | () | () |
| 7. Touch me | () | () |
| 8. Other ways (explain) | | |

B. Sometimes my sweetheart:

1. Stubborn, refuse listen () No () Yes-explain
2. Bad mood, refuse talk with me () No () Yes-explain
3. Hot temper, angry () No () Yes-explain
4. Feel discourage ("down") () No () Yes-explain
5. Sad and cry () No () Yes-explain
6. Follow mother and father *too much* () No () Yes-explain
7. Clothes not nice and bother me () No () Yes-explain
8. Deep serious too much () No () Yes-explain

C. () I worry because my sweetheart use alcohol, drugs, tobacco (cigarettes; cigars; pipe; chew).

D. () I worry because *I* use alcohol, drugs, tobacco.

E. () Most time I am happy, enjoy life.

F. Health:

1. My body or mind is weak.

Now

Maybe in future

2. My body or mind is good and fine.

3. My sweetheart's body or mind is weak.

Now

Maybe in future

4. My sweetheart sleeps too much. No Yes-explain

G. Sometimes I am afraid of my sweetheart, maybe hurt me. No Yes-explain

First Name:

7. Money & Job

A. I have a job. () Yes () No

B. I like my job. () Yes () No

C. Choose one:

() Both of us will work.

() Only I will work.

() Only my sweetheart will work.

D. Understands \$\$\$ better: (X)

() Me

() Sweetheart

E. I have bills and owe money. () Yes () No

F. Who will manage, control our money (pay bills, balance check book, etc.)?

(choose one)

1. () I will control all our money.

2. () My sweetheart will control it.

3. () We will pay our bills separately.

4. () We will pay our bills together.

5. () Other way. (explain)

G. I think my sweetheart has bills and owes money. () No () Yes

H. My sweetheart refuses pay money owe me. () No () Yes

First Name:

8. Communication

A. I am afraid to talk with my sweetheart. () Yes () No

B. I like:

- () Write letters
- () Talk on phone
- () TTY/VP
- () Sign language
- () Read Letters
- () Read lips
- () Other (explain)

C. Sometimes my sweetheart not share feelings. (explain)

D. Sometimes we cannot talk about these problems (X):

- () My family or sweetheart's family
- () Job
- () Money
- () Children
- () Sex
- () Feelings
- () Love
- () God
- () Other (explain)

First Name:

9. Marriage

A. Long ago, who invented marriage? (Whose idea?)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adam and Eve | <input type="checkbox"/> Jesus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

B. Marriage = (X)

- I am boss of our family.
- We make our plans together.
- My sweetheart is boss of our family.
- We will go to the Catholic church after our wedding.
- I make some decisions and sweetheart make some.
- We will go to other church (not Catholic) on Sunday.

C. What does "Good Marriage" mean?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Love | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk together | <input type="checkbox"/> Share feelings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Share | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain) |

D. If our marriage has problems (trouble), we will:

- Stay together as husband and wife until death.
- Break up and divorce.
- See marriage counselor.
- Ask my mother and father for help.
- Separate and live apart for awhile.
- Ask priest, minister or preacher for help.
- Hide feelings and ideas and forget problems.

E. Fuss, argue is:

- O.K. & good idea.
- Not O.K. and bad idea.
- Sometimes O.K. and necessary. (explain)

F. Marriage will help all my problems. No Yes (explain)

G. Divorce:

- Never O.K.
- Is O.K. and marry again.
- Necessary sometimes. (explain)

H. It is O.K. for husband/wife to play around, make love with another person:

- Sometimes
- Never

I. Wedding: (choose one)

- I am ready for our wedding now.
- I think better wait.

J. I want our wedding:

- In Catholic church.
- In another church, not Catholic.
- In courthouse with Justice of Peace (JP).
- Other place. (explain)

K. I am afraid to marry. No Yes (explain)

L. What plan do you have for your *first year* of marriage?

M. Is there anything about your sweetheart that you want to change? No Yes
(explain)

N. Is there anything about *you* that you want to change? No Yes (explain)

O. What do if sweetheart hit you? (explain)

P. What you hope and dream for your marriage life? (explain)

First Name:

10. Children

- A. We have talked about children:
 Often
 Sometimes
 Almost never
 Not yet
- B. Marriage = O.K. never have baby.
- C. It is O.K. to adopt a baby.
- D. I do not want to have children.
- E. Yes, I want to have (circle one): 1 2 3 4 children.
- F. When we want our first baby:
 One (1) year after our wedding.
 Two (2) years after our wedding.
 Three (3) years after our wedding.
 Later.
 We will have a baby *before* our wedding.
- G. I cannot have babies.
 Doctor told me.
 Something is wrong with sweetheart or me. (explain)
- H. We will prevent (birth control) babies. (explain)
- I. "F" = good father; "M" = good mother:
 Play with baby. Give baby bath.
 Change diapers. Take baby to store.
 Feed baby. Buy new baby clothes.
 Help baby during night. Other:
- J. I am not sure about my duties as "Mother" or "Father".
- K. When I think of myself as "Mother" or "Father", I feel:
 Interest and excitement Clumsy and awkward
 Fear Angry
 Happy Love and warm
 Puzzled Confused
 Sad Other:

L. When I think of my sweetheart as "Mother" or "Father", I feel:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interest and excitement | <input type="checkbox"/> Clumsy and awkward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fear | <input type="checkbox"/> Angry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happy | <input type="checkbox"/> Love and warm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Puzzled | <input type="checkbox"/> Confused |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sad | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

M. Good ways to control our children if they do not obey:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Put in room alone | <input type="checkbox"/> Try understand child |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk nice | <input type="checkbox"/> Take away food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spank or hit | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to child |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scold, scream at child | <input type="checkbox"/> Take away toys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask child questions | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never hit child | |

N. What do if our baby handicapped (blind, deaf, mentally retarded)?

- O. I love children.
 My sweetheart loves children.

First Name:

11. Parents

A. My mother:

1. What I like about her:

2. What I do not like about her:

B. My father:

1. What I like about him:

2. What I do not like about him:

C. My sweetheart's mother:

1. What I like about her:

2. What I do not like about her:

D. My sweetheart's father:

1. What I like about him:

2. What I do not like about him:

E. How I rate my parent's marriage:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(awful) (best)

Why did you choose that number?

F. How I rate my sweetheart's parent's marriage:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(awful) (best)

Why did you choose that number?

G. Why I want to marry you, my sweetheart: