

# Thriving Couples Hierarchy\*

| Roommates   | Hierarchy                                  | Husband and Wife  |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sexual affairs, porn and solo masturbation or swinging, etc.</li> <li>-low or no frequency of sex between them</li> <li>-sexuality does not feel meaningful or mutual for both spouses</li> </ul>   | <h3>Intimacy and Sexuality</h3>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-private couple sexual language</li> <li>-sexuality is dependable, mutual, meaningful</li> <li>-shared monogamous eroticism</li> <li>-no porn in bedroom (distraction from each other)</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Aunt Bertha Kisses or NO kisses</li> <li>-Separate beds or separate bedrooms</li> <li>-no cuddling if in same bed; child or dog in bed</li> <li>-Separate chairs in the living room or separate rooms altogether</li> <li>-I Love you; I'm not IN love with you</li> </ul>    | <h3>Warmth and Affection</h3>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-meaningful kisses</li> <li>-intimate cuddling in bed (1-2 times/day)</li> <li>-sensual without needing to be sexual</li> <li>-sleeping in same bed and same time</li> <li>-teasing and flirting with each other</li> </ul>                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-separate interests</li> <li>-more time with friends or hobbies than spouse</li> <li>-shared excitement with others (not spouse)</li> <li>-no effort at compromise on interests</li> <li>-if couple dates they do so only when kids, friends or relatives are along</li> </ul> | <h3>Fun and Friendship</h3>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-each has own interests, but the couple develops mutual couple interests</li> <li>-shared excitement and camaraderie</li> <li>-regular dates alone</li> <li>-regular overnight getaways with just the two of them</li> </ul>                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-keep issues bottled up or fight about them or both</li> <li>-periodic explosions</li> <li>-efforts to solve problems leads to more fights, hurt or shutting down</li> <li>-can't seem to overcome problems to improve the relationship</li> </ul>                             | <h3>Communication and Problem Solving</h3> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-each can say what they need to say</li> <li>-both feel heard</li> <li>-meet regularly to discuss problems and concerns</li> <li>-can work through most problems</li> <li>-relationship improves over time</li> <li>-disagreements don't lead to hurt</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-lots of unaccountable time and relationships</li> <li>-little shared feelings</li> <li>-accusations of being a bitch or control freak</li> <li>-accusations of secrecy</li> </ul>   | <h3>Trust and Accountability</h3>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-what each says matches what each does</li> <li>-both voluntarily let the other know what's going on</li> <li>-both want the other in their lives</li> <li>-both work at keeping the relationship exclusive</li> <li>-no affair talk or jokes</li> </ul>         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-living together, not married</li> <li>-separate bank accounts</li> <li>-little discussion of money, hurt around money</li> <li>-veiled and overt threats to divorce or separate</li> <li>-relationship feels unfair</li> </ul>  | <h3>Marriage and Commitment</h3>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-a specific wedding day and promise</li> <li>-shared bank accounts and regular money talks</li> <li>-no divorce talk, threats or jokes</li> <li>-each secure only death will separate</li> <li>-both sacrificial in spirit</li> </ul>                            |