

Thank you for reaching out, if you have more questions feel free to reach out to me via my website <https://withpurposecoaching.com/>

*Note: I am not a licensed marriage and family counselor nor am I a licensed attorney, I am a life coach specializing in Divorce and Custody, trained in mediation and psychology.

Directions: This journaling form can be done alone or with a trusted partner. It includes questions for both men and women. If you're doing this alone and you're brave enough, answer the questions from the opposite potential parent's perspective as well. It will help you see your own maturity and blind spots. If you're doing it together, set clear ground rules: complete openness, kindness, and absolutely no using each other's answers against one another.

If you feel any concern or fear about your partner's maturity, reaction, or ability to handle honest answers, then complete this privately. Having to hide your answers out of fear is, in itself, a possible red flag to pay attention to.

Read each question carefully and answer with truth and real introspection. Use a separate paper or write directly on this form. Revisit your answers often; more insight usually appears as these questions settle into your mind.

Red flags often show up early, but people ignore them hoping things will improve for the sake of the children. When those warning signs are overlooked, the consequences can be emotionally draining, financially heavy, and especially painful once kids are involved.

Choosing the right partner matters because marriage and parenting require shared values, emotional safety, and long-term stability. Some people can be loving partners but struggle deeply under stress, conflict, money issues, trauma, or substance use. These problems usually appear later, not at the beginning.

Red flags are easy to miss during the honeymoon phase because everyone is on their best behavior. Stress, big life changes, and real responsibilities reveal who someone truly is. Mental health issues,

growing substance use, and hidden financial problems can slowly surface. Many people hide or minimize these signs until the damage is already done.

Ignoring red flags becomes especially costly when children are involved. Raising a child requires emotional stability, teamwork, and low conflict. High conflict co-parenting harms children's emotional and behavioral development, while cooperative parenting supports healthier outcomes.

Parents who separate still must work together for many years. If your child is young, you may have more than a decade of co-parenting ahead. A difficult partner now often becomes a difficult co parent later.

California law focuses on the child's best interests, but that doesn't mean the more stable parent gets control. Courts favor shared legal custody unless there is clear evidence of danger. A child's preference doesn't carry real weight until around age fourteen. Parents also cannot move or limit contact without court approval. Choosing the wrong co parent can mean years of conflict, court involvement, and stress.

The main advice is simple. Do not ignore red flags. Ask yourself whether this person is dependable and whether you'd want a child to grow up modeling their behavior. Look for consistency, emotional regulation, honesty, healthy conflict skills, and financial transparency. If you are unsure, slow down. Waiting is far better than regretting a lifelong commitment.

The heart of the message is this. Love is important, but emotional safety, stability, and shared values matter more. Your partner becomes your co parent, even if the relationship ends. Trust your intuition, pay attention to patterns, and choose a future built on steadiness and respect.

Questions men need to ask yourself prior to having children with your partner.

1. Do her actions match her words over time, especially when she is stressed, disappointed, or said no?

Early charm means nothing if she cannot handle stress or conflict without blaming, shutting down, or attacking.

Healthy partners stay consistent in calm moments and hard moments, not just during the honeymoon phase.

Journal prompts:

When was the last time she was stressed, and how did she treat me?

Do I feel safe being honest with her?

What patterns do I see when things do not go her way?

2. If we had a child together, could I count on her to co parent without using the child as leverage when she is upset?

Research shows that high conflict co-parenting harms kids more than almost anything else in a breakup.

If she already struggles with communication, boundaries, or emotional regulation, parenting will not make it better.

Journal prompts

Has she ever held grudges or used silence or guilt to control situations?

Does she apologize and repair or does she punish you?

Can I see us solving tough problems as a team?

3. Is she financially honest and emotionally stable enough to handle the long term demands of partnership and parenting?

Money stress exposes character. Parenting stress exposes it even more. If she hides spending, avoids responsibility, or becomes unstable when overwhelmed, this will not magically improve with a baby.

Journal prompts

Has she ever lied or avoided the truth about money?

Does she take responsibility for her choices?

Would I trust her with our future family's stability?

Questions for Women to Ask Themselves Before Committing or Having Children.

1. Does he have consistent emotional control, or does he switch between kind and unpredictable depending on his mood?

Many women overlook mood swings, anger issues, or withdrawal during the honeymoon phase.

But long-term relationships and parenting magnify instability. Kids need emotional safety, not volatility.

Journal prompts:

How does he act when he is frustrated?

Do I ever feel nervous to bring up concerns?

Has he shown real change over time or just made promises?

2. If we had a child, would he show up as a partner, or would I end up doing most of the work emotionally, financially, or physically?

A child does not fix an unequal relationship. It exposes it.

Research shows women often take on most of the load, but healthy men step up without being asked repeatedly.

Journal prompts:

Does he take responsibility without blaming me?

Do I trust him to handle things when life gets hard?

Has he shown consistency in basic areas like work, money, and communication?

3. Is he trustworthy with money, stress, conflict, and loyalty, or do I keep making excuses for his behavior?

If there are red flags now, they will become major problems later.

Trust is not built on hope. Trust is built on what he has already shown you.

Journal prompts:

Have I ignored anything because I did not want to be alone?

Has he taken accountability for past mistakes?

Would I want a child to copy his character and habits?

If any of these questions make you pause, do not ignore that feeling. Love matters, but stability, emotional regulation, respect, and honesty matter more. A partner becomes a co parent for life. Choose someone who makes the hard parts of life easier, not harder.

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