

The family in which we each grew up has tremendous impact upon our newly established marriage. Together we must **experience the freedom to develop our own family system**. Here are some helpful insights:

1. To experience a learned ability to discuss one another's family of origin without a critical spirit.
2. Gradually establishing a mutually agreed upon understanding concerning our combined family of origin can be very helpful.
3. Giving yourself and your spouse time to sort out and deal with the positive and negative aspects of your family of origin over a period of years is key.
4. **Taking care to together decide what you want for your own family system** and determining why you want it, as well as designing strategies for learning how to make these qualities a part of your daily lives together is critical.

**MY FAMILY BACKGROUND**

Take this opportunity to complete an evaluation of your perceptions of your own and your spouse's family of origin, taking care to be specific, concise, kind, and as non-judgmental as you know how to be.

HUSBAND OF OWN FAMILY: Strengths	Weaknesses
HUSBAND OF WIFE'S FAMILY: Strengths	Weaknesses
WIFE OF OWN FAMILY: Strengths	Weaknesses
WIFE OF HUSBAND'S FAMILY: Strengths	Weaknesses