THE BACKWARD TRUTH • STAGE I FREE GUIDE

Before You Say "I Do"

12 questions most couples never ask until it is too late

Many couples discover years into marriage that their partner has hidden debt, a different idea about children, or a habit they never mentioned. **The best time to ask the hard questions is before your lives are fully joined.**

> Couples who take part in premarital education report happier marriages, and one large study linked it to about **30 percent lower odds of divorce**.
>
> *Source: Stanley, Amato, Johnson & Markman, Journal of Family Psychology, 2006*

Ask each other

Check each one off once you have really talked it through. Wait 24 hours before drawing any big conclusions.

☐ What counts as cheating to you? (Texting an ex? Dating apps? Emotional affairs?)

☐ Do you want children? How many, and what if we can't have them naturally?

☐ What is your total debt, and what is your plan to pay it off?

☐ Do you send money to family now, or expect to someday?

☐ What role will faith play in our home and in raising kids?

☐ Would either of our parents ever live with us?

☐ If one of us got a great job in another city, would we move?

☐ If one of us earns more, does that person get more say?

☐ How do you feel about staying friends with exes?

☐ Is there a mental health history or diagnosis you want me to understand?

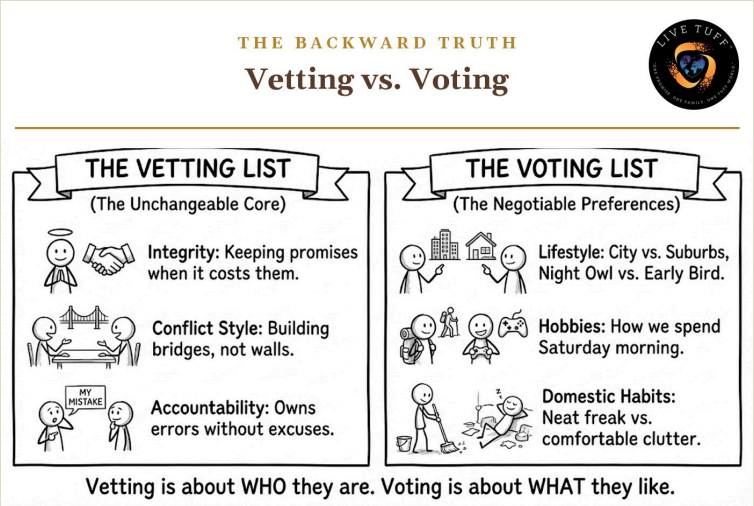
☐ If we hit a rough patch, will you see a counselor with me?

☐ What would make you want to leave? Will you tell me early?

The answer that surprised us most:

Vetting vs. Voting

Vetting is about who someone is: honesty, keeping promises, how they handle conflict. **Voting** is about what they like: city or suburbs, night owl or early bird. You can compromise on preferences. You can't compromise your way into trusting someone who hides the truth.



Quick Check

Statement	Circle one
We have both shared our full financial picture, including debt.	0 1 2
We agree on whether, when, and how many children.	0 1 2
We fight fair: no yelling, cruelty, or days of silence.	0 1 2
What we say and what we do have matched for months, not just weeks.	0 1 2
We have each named our dealbreakers out loud.	0 1 2

0 = not yet • 1 = somewhat • 2 = yes, and we live it

9–10: Eyes wide open
You are building on truth.

5–8: Keep talking
A few big topics still need real conversations.

0–4: Slow down
Get these answers before you take the next step.

In the Stage I workbook

- All 18 Questions Most Couples Never Ask
- The 10-question Honesty Conversation
- How to share a hard truth, step by step
- A 90-day money trust test
- The pace test for daily rhythms
- A Decision Point before you commit

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Build your marriage on the truth from day one.

Get The Backward Truth: Stage I, The Foundation Years.

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