

3.5 Honesty and Openness

Most of us want an honest relationship with our spouse. But some people have a need for honesty and openness -- it gives them a sense of security and helps them become emotionally bonded to the one who meets that need.

Those with a need for honesty and openness want accurate information about their spouses' thoughts, feelings, habits, likes, dislikes, personal history, daily activities and plans for the future. If their spouse

does not provide honest and open communication, trust is undermined and the feelings of security can eventually be destroyed. They cannot trust the signals that are being sent and feel they have no foundation on which to build a solid relationship. Instead of adjusting, they feel off balance; instead of growing together, they feel as if they are growing apart.

Honesty and openness helps build compatibility in marriage. When you and your spouse openly reveal the facts of your past, your present activities, and your plans for the future, you are able to make intelligent decisions that take each other's feelings into account. And that's how you create compatibility -- by making decisions that work well for both of you simultaneously.

But aside from the practical considerations of honesty and openness, those with this need feel happy and fulfilled when their spouses reveal their most private thoughts to them, and feel very frustrated when they are hidden. That reaction is evidence of an emotional need, and if that is the way you feel, include honesty and openness as one of your most important emotional needs.