

Credit must appear as a credit to the book:

Excerpted from FINANCIAL INFIDELITY: Seven Steps to Conquering the #1 Relationship Wrecker by Bonnie Eaker Weil, PhD. Published by arrangement with Plume, a member of Penguin Group (USA), Inc. Copyright © Bonnie Eaker Weil, 2008.

Your Relationship Balance

Exercise: Dream Big — Five Year Goals

This exercise is one that should be done early, and often, in a relationship. Identifying individual and shared lifestyle goals is critical to maintaining the balance between emotional needs and financial resources. I advocate beginning to talk about these goals as early as a first date, and revising them regularly to see what has changed and assess if your partnership in attaining them is still on track. Each partner should assign an “emotional value” from 1 to 10 for each goal. Use this evaluation to talk about why certain goals are more important to you than others. Use this evaluation to talk about why certain goals are more important to you than others.

Here are some suggested areas to explore as you work together on your five-year relationship plan.

- What kind of house / apartment do I want? It is important to own? How important is geographical location?
- Do I want a second or vacation home?
- Do I want children?
 - What kind of day care is best?
 - Do I want to stay home with my children?
 - Will I choose public or private school
 - Will I continue to have a career?
- At what age do I wish to retire?
- How much should I spend on charitable giving?
- Where do I want to travel?
- Do I want to take vacations? How often? How exotic?
- What kinds of “toys” (cars, boats, technology) do I want?
- What is priority (and at what point): career or relationship?
- Will I accept from parents?
- How much debt am I willing to carry?

TIME FRAME	GOAL	ESTIMATED COST	BUDGET GOALS	EMOTIONAL RANKING	
				His	Hers
One Year	Move in together; rent an apartment	\$1,500 month	Contribute \$750 each per month	8	8
	Buy a new car	\$35,000	Contribute \$250 each per month to payment	9	6
	Vacation in Paris	\$5,000	His treat	7	7
	Make partner	48 out of 52 weekends	Increase earnings by 40%	10	8
Two Years	Get married	\$55,000	Save \$20,000 gift from parents for balance	5	10
Three Years	Buy starter house in suburbs	\$600,000	Down payment from his grandparents; his salary will cover mortgage	8	9
	Start family become stay-at-home mom	\$75,000	Lose one salary	7	10
Four Years	Start college savings plan	\$1,500 month	Reduce dining out	4	6
	Hire part time child care	\$2,000 month	Mother will return to consulting work	3	8
Five Years	Have second child	\$6,000 month	Both parents will work full time	7	7