

# PREPARE ENRICH

• *building strong marriages* •

## Understanding Relationship Roles

### Role Assessment Scales for Engaged & Married Couples

- Roles & Responsibilities (10-items, married couples) – evaluates individual’s satisfaction and feelings about marital and family roles and responsibilities. This scale also measures Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) for the couple and is scored the same way as other core categories.
- Relationship Roles (10-items, engaged couples) – evaluates an individual’s beliefs, attitudes and expectations about future marital and family roles. While it measures Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) for the couple, it also places each individual in one of three roles categories including equalitarian, transitional, and traditional (described below).

### What does the Relationship Roles category measure?

For engaged couples, a *high individual score* on Relationship Roles indicates the person prefers an equalitarian role relationship, while a *low individual score* indicates the person prefers a more traditional role relationship. Those who score in the *mid-range* are referred to as transitional and reflect a combination of both traditional and equalitarian attitudes.

### What is the difference between equalitarian and traditional roles?

An equalitarian role relationship is one in which partners desire a shared approach to leadership and decision-making. The distribution of household tasks and responsibilities is determined by interests and skills rather than by traditional male/female roles.

Couples in a traditional role relationship prefer roles that are based on gender, with the husband being more dominant in leadership and decision-making. The husband may be the main breadwinner, while the wife typically stays home and does housework and childcare.

### Why are roles important to discuss?

Roles are an important area to discuss because they directly affect each partner’s behaviors and responsibilities in everyday life. This category encompasses a variety of issues from household chores and child-care, to leadership and decision-making. All of these issues have the potential to create conflict and tension in a relationship if both partners don’t agree on how their roles should be defined and implemented.

### Unique Scoring of Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) for Relationship Roles Category

A couple can get a high PCA score if *both* partner’s Revised Individual (REV) scores are *high* or *low*. A high PCA score does not necessarily indicate that the couple has equalitarian roles, it simply means both partners agree on the type of roles they desire in their future marriage.

### **Why are there no Special Focus Items for Engaged Couples Taking the Relationship Roles Category?**

There are no Special Focus items for the Relationship Roles category because either a high or low individual score can be positive. When considering roles, it is often more important to understand the extent to which a premarital couple agrees on their role expectations. Since there are no Special Focus items in this category the facilitator should instead focus on items where the partners agree or disagree.

### **Why are there no (+) or (-) symbols in front of the Relationship Roles items?**

The (+) and (-) symbols listed before items indicate a positive/healthy item or a negative/unhealthy item, as well as indicating how items are scored. The PREPARE/ENRICH assessment does not have a “desired response” when it comes to roles. Couples can have a successful relationship whether they embrace equalitarian or traditional roles, thus the plus and minus signs would not be relevant to this category. Instead, items have a (E) or (T) in front of them indicating the statement is equalitarian or traditional, and PCA scores are based on agreement across all items in the category.

***\*For more information on the Role Relationship Category refer to your Facilitators Manual: Chapter 1.***

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