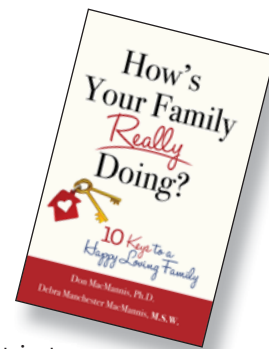


# Current Family Assessment

## Instructions

Begin by answering the fifty questions that follow. If you have a partner, a sibling or an older child who wants to participate, make copies of the test and complete it independently of one another. Hold off on discussions and comparisons for now.

We have designed this assessment to work intimately with the content of our book, and there are five questions that relate to each of the **10 Keys**. Go through and answer as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers. The point is to identify both strengths and areas for improvement in your family. For most, the first step in any change process involves awareness. You will learn about elements of family functioning that you may not have thought about or put into words before.



Each item in the assessment describes a particular behavior or attitude that might or might not accurately describe your family. You are scoring each item based on your unique personal perspective. The questions ask you to make generalizations about your family even though you might score individuals in the family very differently. Decide what you believe to be true about your family right now.

## Assessment

This assessment contains fifty statements, each describing a particular family strength. How much improvement do you believe your family needs on each item? Grade from 1–5 according to the following scale:

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1	2	3	4	5
much need for improvement		some need for improvement		no need for improvement

### Key #1

- We talk things over and know what's going on with each other.
- Individuals speak for themselves, not for others.
- Each family member finds a balance between talking and listening.
- We notice and discuss some of the nonverbal messages we send and receive.
- We listen to one another's ideas or points of view.

Subtotal **Key #1**

### Key #2

- Feelings are expressed in a balanced way—not too much or too little.
- We comfort one another and are able to cry openly when sad.
- Feelings of fear, frustration, and anger can be shared constructively.
- As needed, we use calming methods such as centering and slow deep breaths.
- We share more positive feelings (joy, tenderness, pleasure) than negative ones (fighting, criticizing, yelling, teasing).

Subtotal **Key #2**

### Key #3

- \_\_\_ We recognize and encourage each other's unique strengths.
- \_\_\_ Mistakes are treated as helpful learning opportunities.
- \_\_\_ We adapt well to losses, changes, and transitions.
- \_\_\_ We have developed good habits of exercise, self-care, and regular sleep.
- \_\_\_ Each of us draws social support from friends, extended family, and social groups.

\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #3**

### Key #4

- \_\_\_ We like to spend time together.
- \_\_\_ There are established routines for bedtime, meals, and family time.
- \_\_\_ Family meals taken together occur more than once a week.
- \_\_\_ We have rituals that are special to our family and/or extended family.
- \_\_\_ Each family member spends some quality time with every other member.

\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #4**

### Key #5

- \_\_\_ Parenting of the children is not too soft but not too strict.
- \_\_\_ The parental figures in our family are on the same page and work together.
- \_\_\_ We use encouragement and praise far more often than negative words.
- \_\_\_ Punishment consists of consequences rather than spanking or yelling.
- \_\_\_ The children follow rules and respect the adults as the leaders of the family.

\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #5**

### Key #6

- \_\_\_ We find a balance between closeness and distance with each other.
- \_\_\_ We feel close and connected to other family members and to friends.
- \_\_\_ There is overall respect for each other's needs for independence.
- \_\_\_ Family members are usually available to one another for help and support.
- \_\_\_ We have "boundaries" that provide privacy between adults and children.

\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #6**

### Key #7

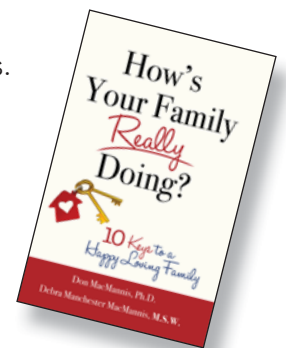
- \_\_\_ Differences among family members are acknowledged and valued.
- \_\_\_ People don't "need to be right," allowing others to have their own perspective.
- \_\_\_ We acknowledge and accept differences in temperament and learning style.
- \_\_\_ Parents focus on the strengths of individual differences and teach tolerance.
- \_\_\_ As appropriate, we state preferences and requests rather than making demands.

\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #7**

### Key #8

- \_\_\_ We emphasize the positive aspects of situations rather than complaining.
- \_\_\_ We teach about social values and moral decision-making.
- \_\_\_ We treat others the way we would like to be treated.
- \_\_\_ We are capable of offering apologies and being forgiving.
- \_\_\_ We emphasize spiritual values, the bigger picture in life, and service to others.

\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #8**



### Key #9

- \_\_\_ We negotiate and compromise rather than one person dominating decision-making.
- \_\_\_ We face problems early on rather than waiting until things get out of hand.
- \_\_\_ Parents are organized and provide leadership to make decisions and follow through.
- \_\_\_ Family members feel respected for their ideas even when they don't get their way.
- \_\_\_ Children are included in decision-making in a way that is age appropriate.

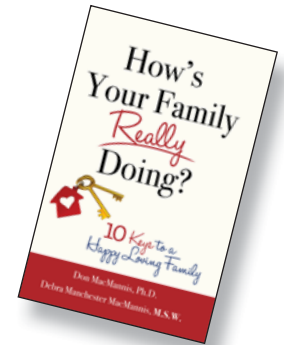
\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #9**

### Key #10

- \_\_\_ Parents provide a model of love, respect, and healthy boundaries.
- \_\_\_ Parents walk their talk rather than falling back on "Do as I say, not as I do."
- \_\_\_ Criticism and defensiveness happen infrequently as forms of communication.
- \_\_\_ Parents work towards agreement and keep conflict away from the children.
- \_\_\_ Parents make their relationship a priority, cultivating friendship and intimacy.

\_\_\_ Subtotal **Key #10**

\_\_\_ Total **Keys #1-10**



### Analyzing Your Assessment

Add up your scores for each of the individual Keys. The maximum score for each Key is 25 points, so a comparison of the point scores for each Key will clearly highlight your family's strengths and areas for growth.

The first and most obvious starting point is to look at your present family's strengths and weaknesses. Examine your scores for each Key. Where did you score high? Where did you score poorly? If you have scored 16-25 on a Key, look on that component as a strength. If you scored from 12-15, the topics covered in this Key probably need some attention. A score from 5-11 identifies a problem Key. The results of this assessment will help you figure out how to obtain tangible results from this book. Circle your lowest scores and star those keys for later attention.

Next, compare the scores you gave your current family with those given by your partner or other family members. If there are big discrepancies, try to define what aspects of the Key led to differing conclusions. Listen to the perspectives of others and explain how you see things. Obviously there is no "right" answer, so let it be okay to disagree. Bear in mind that each individual had a unique experience even while growing up in the same family. If you remain open and curious, you can learn a lot about each other just by comparing notes.

### Learning About the 10 Keys

Now that you have completed your analysis, you can head in a few different directions. You can read the book from cover to cover, getting the big picture first, or you may be eager to learn about the areas that need the most improvement first. Since each of the 10 Keys is explained in detail in Chapters 1-10, you can turn immediately to the key that draws your attention, going back later to fill in the whole picture. We recommend that you read through all of the Keys at some point in your journey. Not only will you get a better understanding of each Key, you will also see how they interact with one other.