



## NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE RELATIONSHIP

Read all questions before you begin so that you can organize your thoughts. Answer **all** questions in **all** sections. All of these questions are critical to the investigation, because the Tribunal is searching for not only what happened in this relationship, but why it happened. Simple yes or no responses are not sufficient. Prepare your response in a story form following the outline of this guide. Use as many examples as possible. **Do not write on this paper. Please type or print your answers on separate sheets, using standard size (8.5 x 11 in.) paper**

### A. YOUR FAMILY AND PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Describe your mother's personality; your father's personality. Are you more like your father or mother? Explain your own strengths and weaknesses.

Describe how your family got along with one another (i.e., your parents with each other; you and your parents; you and siblings).

Describe the presence of the following in your family and how they affected you personally: unemployment; physical or mental illness; alcohol or drug abuse; sexual, physical, or mental abuse; problems with police or other authorities.

Describe your family's Church membership and what role religion played in your family and in your own life (e.g., attending church, religious education, etc.).

What kind of student you were in school. Describe your participation in school activities and outside of school activities.

Describe your friendships while growing up. Have you kept those friendships or developed new ones over the years? Explain.

Describe your dating experience (including casual dates, going steady, or any engagement) before you met your former spouse.

Describe your personal goals in life before you met your former spouse. Do you normally strive to reach goals and do you normally accomplish them? Do you tend to do things on your own or do you seek out advice? As a child, adolescent, and young adult were you more of a leader or follower? Explain.

Describe your use of drugs and alcohol prior to meeting your former spouse, during the courtship, and during the marriage.

## **B. YOUR FORMER SPOUSE'S FAMILY AND PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

Describe the personality of your former spouse's mother; your former spouse's father. Is your former spouse more like his/her father or mother? Explain your former spouse's strengths and weaknesses.

Describe how your former spouse's family got along with one another (i.e., parents with each other; former spouse and parents; former spouse and siblings).

Describe the presence of the following in your former spouse's family and how they affected your former spouse personally: unemployment; physical or mental illness; alcohol or drug abuse; sexual, physical, or emotional abuse; problems with police or other authorities.

Describe the Church membership of your former spouse's family and what role religion played in that family and in your former spouse's own life (e.g., attending church, religious education, etc.)

Describe what kind of student your former spouse was in school. Describe your former spouse's participation in school activities and outside of school activities.

Describe your former spouse's friendships while growing up. Has your former spouse kept those friendships or developed new ones over the years? Explain.

Describe your former spouse's dating experience (including casual dates, going steady, or any engagement) before you met your former spouse.

Describe your former spouse's personal goals in life before you met. Does your former spouse normally strive to reach goals and does he/she normally accomplish them? Does your former spouse tend to do things on his/her own or seek out advice? As a child, adolescent, and young adult, was your former spouse more of a leader or follower? Explain.

Describe your former spouse's use of drugs and alcohol prior to meeting you, during the courtship, and during the marriage.

## **C. COURTSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT**

Describe how you met your former spouse; what attracted you to each other; what you had in common.

Explain who initiated the dating; how often you saw each other before and after you were engaged. Describe a typical date.

Describe any difficulties with communication (e.g., only talking about trivial or superficial matters; not being able to share feelings; avoiding each other; etc.).

Describe any problems during the courtship and engagement and how often they occurred. How did you address and resolve those problems? Did you break up during the courtship and engagement? If so, explain what happened each time and how you reconciled.

Were both of you faithful during the courtship (before and after the engagement)? If not, explain.

Were you sexually intimate prior to marriage? Who initiated sexual intimacy? Was either of you reluctant or ashamed about this aspect of your relationship? Explain. What effect did this type of intimacy have on your decision to marry? If there was a premarital pregnancy, what effect did it have on the decision to marry?

Where did you and your former spouse live before and after you were engaged (with parents, alone, with others, with each other)? If you lived with each other, why, and for how long before marriage? How did living together differ from being married?

How soon after you started dating did you first talk about marriage? During the courtship what did you discuss about your future life together in marriage? Did you focus more on the wedding ceremony and reception, or on married life? Explain. Did both of you participate in the discussion and planning? Explain.

Explain the plans which you and your former spouse had prior to the wedding about children (how many, when you would start a family). What other plans and goals did you have to meet before you would have children (e.g., paying for college loans, buying a home, etc.)? What plans and agreement did you reach in regard to practicing birth control during the marriage?

How did your families and friends react to the news of your engagement? Describe especially any negative concerns or comments? Did you receive any advice based on such concerns? If yes, why did you or your former spouse fail to listen and act on it?

At the time of the courtship what was your attitude about divorce and about the permanence of marriage? What was your former spouse's attitude? Did both of you intend to be married for life?

Did either you or your spouse have any doubts about getting married? If yes, what were they? Were these discussed with each other or shared with anyone else? Explain.

#### **D. THE WEDDING AND HONEYMOON**

What Church preparation did you have for this marriage? What was the attitude of you and your former spouse toward meeting with the priest, minister or attending any instructions before marriage? Did you and your former spouse use the information from the marriage preparation in your discussions with each other? Explain.

What were the attitude, feelings, and behavior of you and your former spouse at the rehearsal and on the wedding day (both at the ceremony and the reception)? Was the wedding more of a religious celebration or a "show"? Explain. Did anything unusual occur?

Describe your honeymoon, including any problems. How did each of you react to the first days of marriage? During this time were there any feelings of regret or unhappiness by you or your former spouse? With whom were these feelings shared?

## **E. MARRIED LIFE**

Describe where you lived immediately after the wedding (e.g., with others, in your own home/apartment).

Describe how you and your former spouse got along in the first part of your marriage (including how you shared responsibilities as well as how you supported each other in your individual and common goals). How did married life compare with your expectations?

Describe your relationship during the marriage (e.g., sensitivity to each other's needs and values; expressions of affection and any problems with intimacy; communication, decision-making and problem-solving; cooperation in working toward mutual goals; the influence of in-laws or other persons).

At what point in your marriage (month/year) did the two of you begin to experience problems? Explain in detail with examples what these problems were and how they were addressed and whether they were resolved.

Describe any separation(s) and reconciliation(s) before the final separation (what were the reasons for separating and reconciling; month/year when each occurred). What caused the final separation? How did each of you react and cope with the final separation? Describe any problems that resulted from the separation or civil divorce.

If there were no children in the marriage, explain why (e.g., difficulty with intimacy or conception; birth control was practiced; decision to delay or not to have children;).

If there were children in the marriage, who has custody? What contact does each parent have with them? How are both parents fulfilling their moral and financial responsibilities toward each other and the children?

Looking back, what were the reasons which led you to marry your former spouse? How did your family background and personal experience prepare you or influence your approach to marriage?

What is your present lifestyle and that of your former spouse? Has either of you remarried or do you have plans for marriage? If so, give the name of each one's spouse, that date and place of the wedding(s), and date of subsequent divorce if applicable.

Has your present or intended spouse been previously married? If yes, give the name of each prior spouse, the date and place of the wedding(s), and date of subsequent divorce, if applicable.