Marriage Q-Sort Items

AFFECT CLUSTERS

Cluster 1: Positive Affect
1. Expression of positive affect
3. Use of laughter/humor
6. Touch each other in affectionate manner

Cluster 2: Negative Affect
2. Expression of negative affect
5. Use of put-downs, sarcasm, attack
12. Wife seems hostile/defensive/argumentative
13. Husband seems hostile/defensive/argumentative
23. One or both fights to get the last word, to win
24. Each tries to tell the other what to do (power struggle)
33. One tries to convince the other
38. Wife tries to blame husband for the problem
39. Husband tries to blame husband for the problem
40. Use of complaints, criticisms of other

Cluster 3: Respect
8. Listen carefully to each other
9. Wife seems to respect husband’s point of view
10. Husband seems to respect husband’s point of view
11. Both seem satisfied with outcome of discussion
14. Wife seems to understand husband’s thoughts/feelings
15. Husband seems to understand wife’s thoughts/feelings

PROBLEM-SOLVING CLUSTERS

Cluster 4: Avoidance
7. Seem anxious in this situation with each other
21. One partner is noticeably silent/nonparticipatory
22. One partner gives in to the other
25. Difficulty in finding what to say
27. Casual, social, non-focused conversation
35. One or both seems to give up on discussion
36. Seem to avoid discussion of disagreements
43. Couple seems to have “hidden agendas”

Cluster 5: Negotiation
26. Stay on topic/maintain focus on issue
28. Able to move to a solution to the problem
30. Consider several alternatives to problem
31. Clearly identify a problem or disagreement
32. Use of compromise or negotiation

Cluster 6: Open
4. Look at each other while talking
18. Both participate about equally in discussion
29. Each openly express thoughts/opinions
34. Talk about how they are communicating
37. Clearly express agreement or approval
41. Express disagreement in a constructive manner
42. Seem to have a “right/wrong” orientation *a

LEADERSHIP CLUSTERS

Cluster 7: Husband Led
16. Husband seems to lead discussion
20. Husband initiates topics

Cluster 8: Wife Led
17. Husband seems to lead discussion
19. Husband initiates topics

*a Item is reversed before including in cluster score