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VALUES CLARIFICATION FOR COUPLES:
How to Choose a Contraceptive Method

If a method of contraception is going to work for you, it needs to fit not only your lifestyle, relationship needs, and overall health but also your personal values. Your values reflect the core of who you are and they influence the choices you make. When you know what is important to you then your chances of making the right decision and reaching your goals will be higher. If there is poor sync between your values and choices, then you might find yourself on a slippery slope. If you are confused, uncertain or feeling pressured and uncomfortable (by your physician, partner or peers), you will benefit from professional counselling.

The values listed below represent some of the main considerations involved in choosing a method. While all of them may be important, each person needs to clarify and prioritize what values are the most relevant for them. Then, they need to evaluate the degree of "sync" between them and their partner. All values cannot "fit" into first or second place. There is no right answer!

You and your partner are invited to separately rank each of these values on a scale of 1 to 11, with *"1" being the most important and "11" being the least important* (You will need 2 copies of this sheet). After you complete the exercise, set a time together so you can sit, discuss and compare your preferences. Feel free to add additional values.

_____   Natural (does not interfere with cycle or hormones)

_____   Cost (monetary and emotional)

_____   Health and safety (side effects and risk factors)

_____   Convenience and relatively ease of use

_____   Spontaneity and freedom

_____   Effectiveness

_____   Ideological acceptability; faith/belief this is right for me

_____   Enjoyment and pleasure (does not alter mood, libido, cause pain or disrupt pleasure)

_____   Partner cooperation and joint responsibility

_____   Peace of mind

_____   Ecological concerns (method is environment-friendly)