



**GH  
Rakhi  
Special**

# How Close Are You To Your Sibling?

Find out how well you bond with the people you have grown up with

Do you know that in your adult life the bond you share with your sibling can be either one of the most supportive or the most stressful relationship of your life? The quality of this bond can be quantified on the degree of emotional connect, support you share, frequency of contact and engagement in each other's lives.

Here is a quiz to assess **how attached you are to your brother/s or sister/s** – the findings will help you understand the type of bond you share and what you can do to make it better. Remember to answer these questions based on how your relationship is today and not on how you wish it should be!

**1** You just won a lottery of ₹10 crores. When would you call your sibling to share the news?

- A** Right away of course, I have the number on speed dial. We need to start planning a world tour!
- B** Within an hour, maybe I can buy that expensive watch he/she has had eye on.
- C** I think my sibling has number a few weeks ago – will have to first call my mom to get the number.
- D** Never! He/she would want a piece of the money or would now use this to try and cut me out of my inheritance.

**2** You are on a dream vacation with your spouse and children. Do you often think of your sibling and wish he/she was with you on this vacation?

- A** Absolutely, how did you read my mind?
- B** A few times, especially when I go shopping – we would have had a blast together.
- C** Just a fleeting thought, every now and then.
- D** Sure, in my nightmares. Vacations with my sibling, during our childhood, were disasters.

**3** How often, on an average, do you connect with your sibling (in person or through emails/FB/phone call) in a week?

- A** We talk every day, at least once – don't all siblings?
- B** About thrice a week – we are always aware about what's going on in each other's lives.
- C** We wish on birthdays and connect on festivals, so a few times a year.
- D** Too much of him/her gets on my nerves – I connect when I am in the mood.

**4** Your sibling has a medical crisis and needs a kidney to lead a functional healthy life. How would you choose to help?

- A** Sign up for organ donation without as much as a second thought.
- B** Discuss it with my spouse, doctor and make an informed decision.
- C** Send my good wishes and ask if I can help in any other way.
- D** Nothing. My sibling has always been so irresponsible about his/her health.

**5** Your sibling seems to have forgotten to wish your mom on her birthday. Your mom calls you to complain about this...

- A** I lie and take the blame. I tell her that my sibling actually did tell me to pass the wishes on (as he/she was going to be in a day-long office event) but I forgot.
- B** I quickly let my brother/sister know by sending an SMS.
- C** My mom would never call me to complain – she knows my sibling and I hardly talk that much.
- D** I secretly feel good – after all I am the more responsible child of hers and this incident is another proof of this.

**6** Your sibling takes your new car out for a spin and puts a dent in it. How does that make you feel?

- A** No big deal, it's just a car. I know he/she is feeling terrible about it anyhow.
- B** I feel bad inside, but do not show it openly.
- C** Nothing, it was kind of expected.
- D** Doesn't sound like me – I would never let my brother/sister take my new car out.



**7** Your sibling is in a financial fix again and needs your help. What do you do?

- A** Give the money in a heartbeat, no questions asked.
- B** Would talk it over with my spouse and come up with ways to help.
- C** If money is needed, he/she would have to call our parents – we hardly talk about finances.
- D** I may feel bad knowing my brother/sister, it was expected. I would make some excuse.

**8** If you think of the five most important people in your life, would your sibling be one of them?

- A** Yes, no doubt about it!
- B** I think 10 is more like it.
- C** Not likely.
- D** No way – maybe in the top three pains of my life.

Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

**9** Today is the last day you can redeem that spa gift coupon and you have taken an appointment for the afternoon. Your sibling whom you haven't met in six months happens to be in town and sends a surprise SMS 'Hey, let's meet for lunch!' What's your reaction?

- A** Go for lunch of course and on the way pick up his/her favourite sweets too.
- B** I will ask if we could meet for tea or dinner instead – I think he/she would understand how much that spa means to me.
- C** We hardly ever reach out to each other; maybe it's something urgent? I would call and then decide what to do.
- D** That's easy – the spa, any day.

**10** How would you describe your relationship with your sibling?

- A** Symbiotic – like peas in a pod.
- B** Balanced – friendly, supportive and cooperative.
- C** I wish him/her well but we are not really engaged in each other's lives.
- D** I feel sad, but the fact is it's bad and ugly!

### Find Your Score

● Number of times you selected **A** = \_\_\_\_ X 4 = .....

● Number of times you selected **B** = \_\_\_\_ X 3 = .....

● Number of times you selected **C** = \_\_\_\_ X 2 = .....

● Number of times you selected **D** = \_\_\_\_ X 1 = .....

**Total Score = .....**

### What Your Score Means

Find out how attached you are to your sibling

**31-40** **Joined at the hip, you and your sibling have an important place in each other's heart** and you value this relationship above others. Your sibling is your best confidante and you both accept each other a 100 percent, flaws and all included. For many of you, as long as you have your sibling, you may not need any friends.

While this is great, a word of caution: Is there a price you are paying for this emotional intimacy? Are you compromising other important relationships in your life? Strive to maintain a healthy balance between all your roles – sibling, spouse, parent and friend.

**21-30** **Friends forever, you take care of each other and are supportive.** While you two are close, you do place a higher value on the other roles in your life – spouse and/or parent. At the same time, you do make the time and take the effort to stay connected and enjoy each other's company. You also make meaningful investments in building bonds with the people important to your siblings, for instance their spouse, children, in-laws and friends.

Maintaining a balance between your role as a sibling and other roles is a good place to be. Continue to enjoy the benefit these relationships bring to your life.

**11-20** **You genuinely wish your sibling well, but your relationship is based on the fact that you are family – so you "have" to.** You are not necessarily engaged in each other's lives on a regular basis and you do not miss him/her. However, you know you could count on them on a need basis.

You may have reached here due to the realities of your respective lives. It does not mean you don't love your sibling, it does mean that you need to invest more time and effort in nurturing your bond with your sibling.

**10** **Your relationship is marked by bitterness, and anger.** You have a negative emotional impact on each other. You actually make efforts to avoid being in each others' lives. This hostility may be a result of childhood incidents and sibling rivalry or more likely, a rift in your adult life due to circumstances such as legal and financial disputes; discord with sibling's spouse and incompatible lifestyles.

Given the importance of healthy sibling relationships, I advise you to re-evaluate the reasons why your relationship has turned sour and explore options for reconciliation. Over time, the benefits of having a sibling by your side outweighs the perceived benefits of being disconnected from them. Take a deep breath and dive in!

This quiz is created by Dr Aparna Samuel Balasundaram, a practicing psychotherapist, parent and relationship coach with two decades of experience. She is the Founder of [www.lifeskillsexperts.com](http://www.lifeskillsexperts.com) and [www.aflourishing.me](http://www.aflourishing.me) – online consulting sites that empower and transform lives

