

Are You Ready for Marriage?

Five insights I knew I was ready for that final step.
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Over half of America gets divorced. This is a staggering statistic that's most frightening for a young college student in love. You look into your lover's eyes and you are sure you want to spend the rest of your life with them. But is this enough? There is a better way to know, and to ensure you eventually have a long, healthy marriage.

When I met my husband I was a sophomore in college. We had loads of fun dating and being young and in love but when he began giving me the signals that he was ready to get serious, I turned on my marriage radar. I wanted to make absolutely sure he was the one because I believe deeply in the sacredness of vows and only plan to marry once in my life.

First of all, know the person you are dating and make sure it fits with what you want. Don't assume you will change them because this almost always never happens and who wants to spend all their time and energy badgering someone to change? Some important things to know are religion preferences (and how dedicated), their plans for the future, their work ethic, their love for children, how they handle finances etc. Don't just ask for this information but observe them. Keep your eyes open to how they act and react in certain situations. I know it may be hard when you're blinded by love but you must notice things about him or her if you plan to spend the rest of your days with them.

Your willingness to compromise (and vice versa) is a big key that you are ready for marriage. If the relationship is all about you then it's best to stay single. For an example, when my husband and I was dating I wanted to spend the holidays with my family and he wanted to with his. Instead of bribing him with my good looks and womanly charm (which I definitely could have) I compromised and we managed to drive back and forth to both houses. Little things like that makes a bigger difference than most think.

Can you make him or her number one in your life? Once you are married you are entitled to be numero uno to one another. If thinking about putting your current love's needs over your best friend's needs make your cringe or if you are a momma's boy who just can't let go of mommy, then married life will be a constant battle. I'm not saying you have to eliminate these important people from your life but you have to understand that once you say 'I do', you are in essence saying 'you come first now'.

You must give more than take. Here is a scenario, let's say you just sat down and relaxed on your couch. Right when you get into your comfortable groove your husband says "honey I really would like a glass of water." What do you say? If you can see yourself getting up for him then you are indeed ready to be a wife. Or let's say it's late and you just turned the game on (of whatever sport of choice) and then your wife decides she would like to talk about her feelings. What do you say? If you are willing to turn the game off just to spend a few moments with her then you receive an 'A' for the husband test.

I've learned marriage is give more than take. You have to want to give your time, energy, and self to someone else.

Finally, you have to ask yourself this last question. If this person was to suddenly change some of their wonderful ways would I still love them? I know you are probably thinking, but that isn't fair? Isn't that why I wanted to marry them in the first place? But a lot of the time marriages fail because their partners weren't the people that they used to be. But people do evolve and the evolution might not be for the better. The vow says 'for better or for worse,' your love for that person has to exceed all things artificial and be much deeper then loving him or her because they are so neat and tidy. (Trust me, after a few years of marriage, that won't last long.)

As you can see, marriage is not the fairy tale that many make it out to be. Simply stated, marriage is hard work. It can be mind boggling, sheer frustrating and a pain in the butt. On the other hand, you will have that companion to grow with, to share your joys and fears, to hold you and love you forever-if you're ready.
