

# FALL BRIDAL SHOWCASE

## Chase away those last-minute concerns

By Deborah Purdy and Karen Cooksey  
Copley News Service

Practically the first time you spotted your guy, you knew you wanted to marry him. It wasn't hard to say "Yes!" when he asked you to be his bride, and you confidently explained to your friends and parents why you and he are a perfect match.

But now that your dream come true is close to fulfillment, you find you're not only elated but just a bit scared. You've read the marriage license and noticed that it didn't come with a guarantee.

The apprehensions that can gnaw at you before you take that enormous step down the aisle are experienced in one way or another by every bride-to-be. These fears include everything from, "Will our love life be as romantic once we're husband and wife?" to "Will I lose my independence?" to "How will we keep our relationship exciting over the years?"

**• Why you're worrying more.**  
It's perfectly normal to feel these concerns more as the wedding draws nearer.

"The farther away from an event you are, the more you see the positives, but the closer you get to it, the more you notice the negatives," says Dr. Carol Philpot, a clinical psychologist in Melbourne, Fla.

Think for a minute about a new job that seemed perfect while you prepared your resume, worked hard to impress the interviewer and jumped for joy when they

called to say you had been selected over all the other applicants.

The day before you reported for work, however, you worried whether you could handle the responsibilities, wondered how you'd get along with your co-workers and couldn't sleep because you feared you might not hear the 6 o'clock alarm.

That's what happens when your wedding day draws closer, too. And just like your pre-job concerns, many of your pre-wedding fears may turn out to be paper tigers.

**• Making a change for the better.**

Of course, not all the concerns you envision will remain just in your mind. As you approach your wedding day, you begin to realize that your life will change forever. Even if you have been living together before the wedding, you may still worry that things will be "different" after the big day.

"There's an inherent fear of change in all of us," says Sirah Vettese, Ph.D., a counselor in Del Mar, Calif. The unknown is scary compared to the safe harbor of your parents' home or the familiar circle of single friends you've chummed with since junior high school.

You can alleviate your pre-nuptial anxieties and strengthen your loving bond by sharing your fears with your partner. Sit down together and go over your worries one by one.

**• Are we ready for marriage?**  
If you're concerned that you both might not have experienced enough, traveled enough or gotten



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far enough along in your careers to be ready to settle into married life, it's time to take stock of your goals.

"A fear is 50 percent diminished once you talk about it," Vettese points out. And at the same time, you'll each get a chance to voice your expectations of one another and the marriage itself — eliminating points of friction later.

Share your dream — as well as your doubts — with your partner and find ways you can work together to meet your mutual goals. That trip to Europe you've always wanted to take may be a lot more

fun now that you're a twosome. And career ups and downs are bound to be more palatable with your mate at your side to cheer you on.

**• Creating a lifetime of love.**  
Will your relationship stay as stimulating as it is now? Psychologist John E. Northman, Ph.D., of Amherst, N.Y., says the best way to deal with this worry is to reassure one another that you want to grow together and keep enjoying each other throughout your lifetimes.

"By sharing emotions, ideas, philosophies and goals, you'll keep your relationship intimate and will fulfill each other's needs," he says.

Make a pact with your partner not to become complacent or take each other for granted. It's the little things that count — thoughtful deeds, loving words, heartfelt hugs — as your marriage grows and develops. Always remember that you are on the same team. Agree to strive for the good of the other person as well as your own.

If certain worries remain even after talking them over with each other, you might decide to bring them up while having dinner with another couple whose marriage you admire. Did they have any of these same concerns before they tied the knot? How did they work them out? What did they learn about communicating? When you gather to celebrate each other's second, third or 10th wedding anniversaries, you'll remember your pre-wedding conversation with smiles.

Other fresh points of view that can help ease your mind are probably standing by, too. Pull aside your mom, a good friend or a clergyman whose opinion you trust. Sometimes just hearing, "I know exactly how you feel; I felt like that myself once," is all it takes to calm your fears.

**• Establishing positive patterns.**  
Perhaps you've noticed what marriage has "done" to some of your friends once they plugged themselves into married roles. Before marriage, they picked up their own clothes, checked the oil levels on their own cars and automatically began cooking dinner if they were the first one home. But

once the wedding rings were on their fingers, they began following a different script — with "his" and "her" traditional chores clearly labeled.

You may worry that you'll lose the balance that now allows you to share tasks and designates the first one home as the evening's chef.

"You can establish the patterns that you want for life, rather than just fall into ones you don't like," Northman points out.

Talk about the roles you see each other playing and speak up if you'd rather wash the car than the kitchen floor.

Another way to help quiet your butterflies is to play a tape in your mind of how married life will be. Imagery — sitting quietly and picturing your life as a wife in a positive light — is a powerful tool for dissolving negative fears. By dwelling on the positive, you can make it the marriage of your dreams.

**• Balancing money matters.**  
Financial patterns are also a source of concern. Will you be able to live on what you both earn? Do you both want to spend your income on the same things? Will you have to get each other's OK every time you want to buy something?

Anxieties about money matters can be calmed by sitting down with your partner and deciding how you'll manage your money. Plus, it might be worth it to consult a parent or professional financial planner to help you get started on the right track.

## Music must be planned for the effect you desire

By Tershia d'Elgin  
Copley News Service

We know a couple who had part of the Vienna Boys Choir flown in to sing at their wedding. Talk about a no-expense-spared gala.

But this kind of extravagance isn't necessarily more meaningful or pleasurable than a modest soloist or even prerecorded music. What's important is to create an atmosphere — anything from hodge-podge to Blue Danube.

How best to shape your wedding through music? Think about what you want first, then prioritize and start checking feasibility. What's your budget? Can you afford to do what you want?

Does your church or synagogue have limitations on numbers of musicians and instruments? How about your reception area?

Interview some musicians and disc jockeys. Ask to hear cassettes and see videotapes of previous performances. Get prices including overtime charges.

Check the sound system for both the ceremony and reception sites. Do you need more equipment? Much sound equipment can be leased or even borrowed from friends.

But it takes thoughtful planning to position speakers and run wires discretely behind decor. Be sure to have all components tested thoroughly well in advance as well as right before the event.

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