

In marriage, love isn't enough

The decision to marry is one of the most important an individual makes in his life.

Yet, with the national divorce rate so high, it appears couples head for the altar without giving the decision much thought.

Today, marriage counselors and ministers are encouraging the betrothed to examine their compatibility and resolve their differences before they say, "I do."

The notion is similar to preventative medicine.

Premarital counseling, seminars and books on marriage are among the resources available to couples who want to know whether they're suitable for each other and ready for marriage. They may also consult trusted adults who have been or are married.

'A true friend isn't going to abandon you when times get difficult or when they're put off by your behavior.'

— The Rev. William McIvor

Two suburban marriage counselors and a clergyman, in interviews with the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, shared some of the special considerations that should be given before entering into marriage.

LOVE, they said, is important to a relationship, but it's not enough. Friendship and respect are the crucial necessities.

"I always try to find out if they're friends," the Rev. William McIvor said

of the couples who come to him for marriage at First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham.

Friends stick together and accept each other the way they are, he said. Lovers may not.

"A true friend isn't going to abandon you when times get difficult or when they're put off by your behavior," said McIvor who estimates he's performed 150 weddings in his 10-year career. That devotion, he said, is needed in confronting the day-to-day

problems in a marriage.

Both partners need to be secure in who they are so they don't depend on the other for their happiness and esteem, noted Bernadette Hughes of Troy's Marriage Growth Center.

Otherwise, the relationship is immature with one person taking care of the other as a parent cares for a child, said Hughes who recently conducted a marriage preparation seminar for St. John Fisher Chapel at Oakland University, Rochester.

THAT CAN be burdensome for the one who is doing the caring and cause the one who is being cared for to feel resentful and angry, she said.

"If you're looking to go into mar-

Continued on page 22

Check it out

Planning a wedding takes research

Once a couple decides to wed, there are a lot of decisions left to make.

The couple must select the engagement and wedding rings, the wedding gown and tuxedo, the photographer and florist, all the way down to the reception hall and musicians.

They also have to set a date, decide where the wedding will be, agree on its type and size, choose attendants, pick out a wedding cake and arrange the honeymoon.

So what should be considered in making all these decisions?

Suburban merchants, interviewed

by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, offered these suggestions:

THE RINGS

Purchase a loose diamond, then select a setting, said Andrew Rismann of Diamonds & Fine Jewelry, Birmingham.

"Eighty to 90 percent of the value of an engagement ring is in the center stone," Rismann said.

Unless the stone is loose, couples can't examine it for color, clarity or tell if they're getting their "80 percent worth."

Rismann advises couples to view the diamond lying on its side on a white sheet of paper in order to see its color.

"If you look at the top, you only see its brilliance, which will oftentimes mask its color," he said, adding that the whiter a stone is, the better its quality.

Ask the jeweler for a 10-power magnifier to view the stone's clarity. A reputable jeweler, Rismann said, will tell you what to look for, including black carbon spots, fractures and grain lines.

Also, examine the stone's proportions in terms of width to length. "If it's flat, it's going to be dead. It's not going to sparkle," Rismann said.

Finally, couples should determine what they want for the price they can afford. Buying a larger stone with a flaw that's barely detectable under magnification is sometimes better than buying a smaller, perfect one, he said.

In selecting wedding rings, consider quality as well as price and style, Rismann said. Generally, the heavier the ring, the better the quality.

THE GOWN

A wedding gown should fit more than the bride's figure. It should also fit her personality.

"A bride should look to her personality, her look (in selecting a gown)," said Madge Pollak of Creations by Pollak's, Farmington Hills, who will lead a seminar Feb. 25-27 on wedding dress selection at Detroit's Cobo Hall.

"It should fit her image of herself,"

Continued on page 14



MINDY SAUNDERS/staff photographer

Photographer Buz Holzman, who with his wife owns two area studios, straightens Carole Schumacher's gown before taking her wedding portrait. The Holz-

mans advise couples to review a photographer's work before hiring him or her to record their wedding in pictures.