



## It's normal to worry about your wedding day

**Y**OU'RE GETTING married in a month or two and you find yourself daydreaming about all the things that might go wrong at the wedding and in the marriage. Does this mean you should call the whole thing off?

No, say two authorities who have talked to many brides and grooms. Jerilyn Ross, president of the Phobia Society of America, says that it's normal and appropriate to worry about the unknown.

Cele Lalli, editor of *Modern Bride*, sees the realization of potential conflict as a sign of maturity in the age of divorce. Both say it isn't the worries you should worry about, but what you do about them.

In a recent seminar she conducted for *Bride's*, Ross noticed both brides and grooms-to-be had more fears than they realized and hadn't discussed them.

"MERELY LEARNING that others worried about similar fears made the participants feel better because they had felt their worries were unique. In many instances, the partner was surprised to learn of the fears," she says.

This observation led her to conclude that communicating worries may be all that's needed to relieve them. "Even if you need to go to a third person such as a therapist or religious leader to get the worry out, it's best to reveal it," says the psychologist who counsels at Roundhouse Square Phobia Treatment Center in Alexandria, Va.

Lalli says that because couples getting married now are generally older

than couples in the recent past, there are more potential wedding conflicts between them and the way their parents do things. She sees this as a plus, not a drawback.

"That's what marriage is all about — separating from the family. Working out conflicts that may develop over the wedding is the often the first opportunity to act as a couple," she says.

ONE REASON WHY worries may be more overt but less troubling is that there is wider latitude in what's considered acceptable and greater awareness of a need to communicate. Couples are less inhibited about talking about conflicts, says Lalli.

In general, both women agreed that issues that couples worry about fall into one of two main categories: practical concerns relating to the ceremony and party and philosophical concerns about the durability of the bond they are assuming.

Today's different way of life has created both the problem and its solution. For example, higher costs force different financial arrangements.

"Traditionally, the bride's family paid for just about everything. Practi-

cally speaking today, that is difficult. If both families want an extravaganza, they are more flexible about paying for it. The traditional guidelines are not relevant," says Lalli.

"BECAUSE OF greater mobility and the fact that couples often meet and live in a city other than the one where the bride grew up, there's often some concern about where to have the wedding. Today, the right decision is what is most convenient and least expensive," she says.

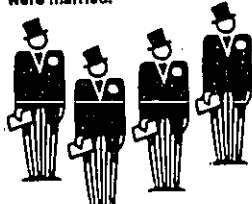
Ross characterized most worries of couples about to be married as normal worries about the future. It's only if the worries become irrational, involuntary and inappropriate that phobia — a psychiatric disorder — is involved.

Despite role changes in recent years, Ross says men and women at the seminar she conducted worried along traditional lines.

"The women all talked about their fears of being a good mother. They felt the children were their primary responsibility. The men talked about their fears of being the sole support of a family," she says.

### MARRIAGEFACTS:

■ 80% of single men wish they were married.

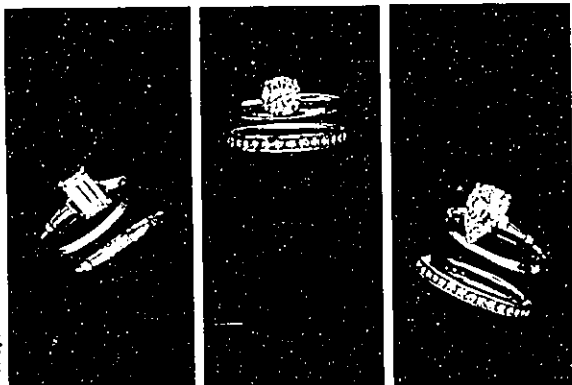


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