Making Marriage: Some Key Ingredients for a More Successful Union

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Sponsored by Dr. Dianne Dentice

Before entering into my own marriage on October 17, 2015, I wanted to discover the factors of what makes a successful marriage to help prevent becoming part of the 50% divorce statistic. When divorce can range anywhere from $15,000 - $30,000, why would anyone want to leave their spouse?

**Finances**

Essentially the biggest threat is a marriage in finance. Living on a tight budget and worrying about bills can cause tension in a marriage. Typically, the partner earning the most would be in control over spending.

- Money spent on the wedding can affect your divorce.
  - Men who spent between $2,000 and $4,000 on engagement rings are more likely to divorce.
  - Brides whose weddings cost $20,000 or more have been found to be 3.5 times more likely to divorce.
  - The average cost of a U.S. wedding is $33,300.

- Debt can also cause a marriage. New York Times revealed that 15% of respondents delayed marriage because of student loan debt.

Lower income married couples get married out of fear of pecuniary threats.

**Top Three Reasons for Divorce**

Age

- The older a couple is when they enter their first marriage, the more likely they will divorce.

- The average age of a first marriage in the United States is 27 for women and 29 for men.

- A study done by Nick Winger says the best age to be married is between 28 and 32.

**Education**

- The more education a couple has, the more likely they will remain married. When couples receive an education, they tend to wait until graduation to get married.

- The National Center for Health Statistics estimate that 78% of college-educated women who married for the first time between 2006 and 2010 could expect their marriages to last at least 22 years. But among women who have a high school education or less, the share is only 40%.

**How Race/Ethnicity Affect Marriage**

African Americans are more likely to divorce than Hispanics and white Americans. This is the least likely to divorce.

- Today, inter-racial marriage accounts for roughly 8.4% of all marriages.
- Interracial marriages are 31% less likely to divorce.
- interracial marriages are 7.9% less likely to divorce.

**Other Factors**

- If you need to be in a lower state, it can increase the likelihood of divorce by 20%.
- A study reveals that couples who have more in common are less likely to divorce.

- Couples who cohabitate are more likely to divorce than couples who marry in a sacred ceremony.

- People who live in a red state are 5% more likely to divorce than those living in a blue state.

Many people consider the 1950s to be ‘the good old days’ due to more marriages staying intact, but is that really the case?

Today, the divorce rate is roughly 50%, but that has steadily declined. This trend can be attributed to keeping people marrying and more education. When a conscientious couple is forming a relationship it is difficult to record the data. Although more people remained married during the 1950s that does not necessarily mean they were happier. Divorce was seen as immoral, so even when domestic abuse was involved, remaining unhappy was better than divorce.

To better understand the factors that affect marriage I interviewed five individuals. The interviewees include a local divorce lawyer, a minister who has dealing with marriage counseling and officiating ceremonies, as well as my husband’s paternal grandmother and my maternal grandparents. (All sets of grandparents have been married for over 50 years)

- **Attorney**
- **Minister & Reverend**
- **Map**
- **Pastor Mark**

**Be sensitive to how the other one feels and be willing to give and take and always be supportive — Mary Hornback**