

# Why 'Bachelor'-Inspired Values Matter in Relationships and Marriage



By Susan Shapiro Barash, Author of *The Nine Phases of Marriage*

What could be more appealing in today's slick, fast paced society than to watch a dashing handsome bachelor who is also pristine make his commitment known to us? It is little wonder that 28-year old Sean Lowe captured the attention and curiosity of so many female viewers.

And while the heat was on to see his final choice and we waited with baited breath, it was refreshing to learn about a young, charismatic man who has a traditional attitude toward marriage and family. On March 11th when Catherine won Sean's heart, it underscored how much values mean in a relationship. Not only were we watching this couple move forward with great anticipation, but this next step also jolted us into thinking about what it takes for a marriage to be successful.

## The Pillars of a Love Relationship

According to the media, the lucky couple hopes to start a family right away, and this of course is a big part of the picture. When it comes to commitment in a love relationship, there are other factors as well. The foundation of a solid relationship and marriage include:

- 1. Honesty and respect:** There is no better way to build the relationship and sustain it through the ups and downs of daily life.

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**2. Commitment and Communication.** A couple should, ideally, discuss their views in depth on the following (in no particular order) family –including in-laws, friendship, children, work ethics, finances, and religion ahead of time with full disclosure, in order to secure the relationship.

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**3. Flexibility and Understanding.** Both parties should know one another well enough to roll with the punches and support one another in times of need.

### **Shared Values Protect the Relationship**

Many times couples are too caught up in the excitement and the passionate phase of a new relationship and pending marriage to address the important issues stated above. The problem here is that if expectations are implicit and not fully discussed and recognized, this can lead to problems later. If a couple is not prepared as a team for the ups and downs of life (illness, loss of job, problems with children, relocation) and has not discussed the 'what if's, there can be friction ahead and this can drive a wedge into the relationship.

It is wise to remember not only that life throws us curve balls, but that it is our esteem for one another, our shared points of view and methods of coping that will get us through.

*Susan Shapiro Barash is the author of 13 books on women's issues and is frequently sought after by national media to comment on gender and relationships issues. Most recently, she appeared on ABC's 20/20 to discuss "The Truth About Lying" in marriages. In her recent Huffington Post piece, "It's Wives Who Want More Sex and They Are Getting It," Barash reveals some surprising statistics she found about wives and their intimate relationships.*