

Relationship Advice: Does Marriage Change Your Feelings?



By Dr. Jane Greer

So much planning goes into a wedding, from the venue, to the guest list, to the flowers and food, and that's after you go through what can be the long process of setting the date! It might seem, as you move closer to the big day, that becoming a married couple is the end goal, and that is where all the work stops. But in reality, that is where it all begins as you start your life together as spouses. So much goes into making the decision to take that next step from either serious dating or living together, and the big question is – does anything change on the other side as far as your own feelings go, or

your feelings toward your new husband or wife? Celebrity couple Erin Foster and Simon Tikhman recently got married, and [according to](#) Foster, “It feels really nice and it feels safe and cozy that I have a husband. Like I have a person keeping me safe from the world, you know?” Many people live together and never get married, and others live together for a long time before even thinking about tying the knot.

So what, if anything, changes with marriage? How important is being married? Check out Dr. Greer’s relationship advice.

The first things that immediately change are the legalities—the rights you have to each other, in times of illness and other situations, as well as to each other’s property, become law and you are no longer operating by your own system. Marriage endows you with more protection, power, and control in almost every aspect of life together. It indicates that you have committed to sharing financially with this person. Even if you were already doing that before, it was on your own terms, and now it is spelled out and nonnegotiable. Taking this big step can solidify your sense of partnership. All of this often does change the way people feel toward each other since you are clearly in it together for the long haul, and you have made a declaration to the world that you are committed to each other for a lifetime.

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That statement also ushers in public accountability and all the expectations that go with that, from your own to those of your family and friends. This changes the status of your relationship in other people’s eyes, and, depending on your

new family, might either bring you both more acceptance and respect from those around you, or on occasion may garnish more hostility than you did before taking the jump. Either way, it may lead you to being more invested in making things work between you, and to mustering the patience and tolerance it takes to solve the problems you face which you might otherwise be tempted to bail on. Marriage brings with it a sense of permanence. Whether you are married or not, ending a relationship is heartbreaking, but dealing with divorce brings in a whole new level of pain and anguish which makes ending your connection much more complex. Realizing how complicated it can be to break all of your official ties might compel you to continue to try to make it work and stay together.

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With all of this in mind, there are a few things to think about as you decide whether or not you are ready for this next step. The first is how will becoming a spouse change your role in the way you deal with each other, as well as in your financial situation? Will it make you feel more protected or will it cause things to be messier than they are now. If one or both of you were previously married and there are children involved, how will it affect them? Sometimes they can be the determining factor for getting married as was the case for Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt who ultimately got married because it was what their children wanted them to do. Getting married can solidify the family unit. Finally, if you have been divorced, you might still be feeling the aftershocks of the marriage failing, and be afraid to try again for fear of either making a mistake or once again having things not work out. Consequently, your past may be holding you back from a better future. Evaluating what you stand to gain can help you sort of if marriage is right for you.

While being married might feel similar to living together, it can bring with it a feeling of security and comfort that you didn't have before. It becomes more about the two of you in

your respective worlds fully dedicated to being together. Erin Foster talked about feeling that there was now someone keeping her safe in the world. If you get to the point of taking wedding vows, hopefully that will be your experience as well.

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