

Experts Give Advice on How to Live Happily Ever After

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Four experts with a combined total of 126 year of devoted marriage discussed five myths that sabotage a happy marriage and seven tools for living happily ever after. A recording of the panel discussion is available for free at <http://ideamarketers.com/experts/calls/happilyeverafter.cfm>

MYTH #1: Being married to the same person for so long is boring. Christian coach, author and mediator, David Evans shared, "Somebody asked me just the other day when they found out my wife and I had been married for 50 years, 'How in the world could you be married to the same person for 50 years?' My response is, 'I'm not married to the same person.' If you're lucky and living in a thoughtful way you're always becoming a new person. You're often growing into someone you'd never imagined. We're always becoming new people... so that's kind of the adventure of marriage."

MYTH #2: I must give up individual needs, desires, and interests. Dr. Neill Neill, therapist and author related, "A man I know announced that he was giving up pool because he was getting married (he was a good pool player). I privately shuddered, 'Uh oh.' They lasted about three years. You don't give up yourself. You bring out yourself in a good relationship." Relationship expert Nancy Gerber adds, "People often automatically assume that their partner wants them to give up something or that it's expected without really having a conversation. In many cases their partner wouldn't want them to give up their interests. In fact, their partners want them to do what makes them happy and is fun for them."

MYTH #3: Once you get married, the hard work is over. Each of the panelists concurred that marriage is work and requires investment. Dr. Neill Neill said, "It's really important to invest in yourself. If you invest in yourself while you're married, you're also investing in your marriage. It's a bit of both. The thing is investing implies putting out, challenge and difficulty. But the return is huge. You can't find an area in life where there's greater return, fulfillment, and enjoyment than in your relationships and your self-growth."

Marnie Pehrson, creator of IdeaMarketers, author and mother of six, compares marriage to a garden, "There are two types of crops -- there are early harvest and late harvest crops. Early harvest crops reap rewards immediately. We live in an instant gratification world. You do something for me... I do something for you. I get my paycheck this week. But a marriage is a late harvest crop. You could work and wait and put effort in for years, and then suddenly it grows exponentially. It's the law of increasing returns on a marriage. You're growing an oak, not a green bean."

MYTH #4: Once we're married, I can change my partner. Nancy Gerber reflected, "When my husband and I were engaged, we went to visit a good friend who'd been married about ten years. She had a piece of advice for me, 'Think about how he is right now -- all his faults, all his gifts. Imagine that he's going to stay exactly the same for the next 50 or 60 years, do you still want to marry him?' I thought for a minute and said, 'Yeah.' I thought that was a great question."

MYTH #5: Problems will usually work themselves out if we ignore them and let them go. "You really have to address things right when they happen." David Evans compared ignoring problems in your relationships to a little twig that grew outside his office, "I let it go and years later it cost me three hundred dollars to have it cut down." Nancy Gerber summarized the panelists' views, "If there's a problem, you absolutely, positively must address it some way - either visit a qualified professional or read a book together and talk. Do something to address it. It's not going to go away otherwise. It will affect your marriage and your relationships with others in ways you can't even imagine."

You may listen to a recording of the panel discussion covering these five myths and the seven tools for living happily ever after at <http://ideamarketers.com/experts/calls/happilyeverafter.cfm> .

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