

Conscious Rituals: Weddings and Marriages with Heart

By Rev. Donna Miller Watelet

“Brian, will you cause her anger?”

“I may”

“Is that your intent?”

“No.”

“Erica, will you cause him anger?”

“I may.”

“Is that your intent?”

“No.”

“Brian and Erica, will you take the heat of anger and use it to temper this union?”

“We will.”

“And so, the binding is made.”

This is one of six very conscious questions borrowed from a celtic handfasting ritual that can be used in a wedding ceremony to demonstrate the challenges to every relationship and how to lovingly and directly approach them. Amidst the heart felt declarations of love and admiration in a wedding ceremony, these pearls of truth are priceless. In declaring their intentions for conscious, caring attention in their interactions with one another alongside their love and devotion, a couple strengthens the very foundation of their marriage, creating a firm bedrock in which to anchor their married life.

The *Americans for Divorce Reform* estimates that "*Probably, 40 or possibly even 50 percent of marriages will end in divorce if current trends continue.*" (*per Religious Tolerance.org*) We know that in this fast paced, high tech, spiritually challenging world, it is easy to forget to breathe, to open our hearts to the Spirit of God, and allow strength and clarity to flow through us and into what we are, what we do and what we say. In many cases, wedding ceremonies are simply the gateway to the biggest party a couple has ever thrown. The choice of whether to be married in a Spirit-filled manner or not becomes just another detail to be decided along with the choice of a reception hall, florist, and cake baker, and, it is often not the first decision made in “wedding planning” today.

There is nothing more important to a strong marriage than a meaningful, deeply beautiful and ritually cathartic wedding ceremony. And the process of exploring the couples’ need in order to plan their ceremony, their strengths can be highlighted. More importantly, their challenges can be identified and tools can be taught to them to empower their best efforts at conscious living in their married life. With time and care, a ceremony can be planned to reflect, support, and nurture the most positive intentions and commitments two people can make together in an atmosphere that is highly charged with spiritual goodness and the potential for deep transformation.

In the wedding ceremony, two people publicly speak their most private, intimate thoughts and feelings to All That Is. They are declaring their truths to God and all witnesses. In this group process, we raise significant spiritual energy for their marriage. And in such a marriage, two become more than they could ever be individually, for a marriage that is deeply made and spiritually alive becomes more than an outward joining. It is made to glow and sing with the love and power that exist when a group comes together in common, love-centered purpose. And, the exponentially multiplied blessings of a gathering of family and friends can come to the aid of a couple who are struggling. Angels come in familiar as well as not so familiar forms.

True, open-hearted, mutual marriage agreements, made with God at the center by two people with eyes wide open and surrounded by those who love and care for them most, allow the loving power of the Spirit to infuse their wedding. And their subsequent married life will be filled with the awesome healing powers of the All-in-One. That endless source of love, wisdom and strength that we are all a part of everyday, and that when held consciously in the center, can be the balm and the inspiration for a married life that is ever growing and deeply glowing.