



READING SUGGESTIONS FOR WEDDINGS

FOUNDATIONS OF MARRIAGE

-Regina Hill

Love, trust and forgiveness are the foundations of marriage. In marriage, many days will bring happiness, while other days may be sad. But together, two hearts can overcome everything...

In marriage, all of the moments won't be exciting or romantic, and sometimes worries and anxiety will be overwhelming. But together, two hearts that accept will find comfort together. Recollections of past joys, pains, and shared feelings will be the glue that holds everything together during even the worst and most insecure moments. Reaching out to each other as a friend, and becoming the confidant and companion that the other one needs, is the true magic and beauty of any two people together.

It's inspiring, in each other a dream or a feeling, and having faith in each other and not giving up... even when all the odds say to quit. Its allowing each other to be vulnerable, to be himself or herself, even when the options or thoughts aren't in total agreement or exactly what you'd like them to be. It's getting involved and showing interest in each other really listening and being available, the way any best friend should be.

Exactly three things need to be remembered in a marriage if it is to be a mutual bond of sharing, caring, and loving throughout life: love, trust, and forgiveness.

THE COUPLE'S TAO TE CHING: "A SACRED PLACE"

-Lao Tzu, sixth century BCE reinterpreted by William Martin

Your love requires space in which to grow. This space must be safe enough To allow your hearts to be revealed. It must offer refreshment for your spirits And renewal for your minds. It must be a space made sacred By the quality of your honesty, Attention, love and compassion. It may be anywhere, Inside or out, But it must exist.

EXTRACT FROM THE AMBER SPYGLASS

– Philip Pullman

I will love you forever; whatever happens. Till I die and after I die, and when I find my way out of the land of the dead, I'll drift about forever, all my atoms, till I find you again... I'll be looking for you, every moment, every single moment. And when we do find each other again, we'll cling together so tight that nothing and no one'll ever tear us apart. Every atom of me and every atom of you... we'll live in birds and flowers and dragonflies and pine trees and in clouds and in those little specks of light you see floating in sunbeams... and when they use our atoms to make new lives, they won't just be able to take one, they'll have to take two, one of you and one of me, we'll be joined so tight...

MARRIAGE IS A PROMISE OF LOVE

-Edmund O'Neil

Marriage is a commitment to life, to the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other human relationship can equal; a joining that is promised for a lifetime, within the circle of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener, and critic. There may come times when one partner is heartbroken or ailing, and the love of the other may resemble the tender caring of a parent for a child.

Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller, memories are fresher, commitment is stronger; and even anger is felt more strongly, but also passes away more quickly. Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing love through the seasons of life. When two people pledge to love and care for each other.

MARRY YOUR BEST FRIEND

-Unknown

I do not say that lightly. Really, truly find the strongest, happiest friendship in the person you fall in love with. Someone who speaks highly of you. Someone you can laugh with. The kind of laughs that make your belly ache, and your nose snort. The embarrassing, earnest, healing kind of laughs. Wit is important. Life is too short not to love someone who lets you be a fool with them.

Make sure they are somebody who lets you cry, too. Despair will come. Find someone that you want to be there with you through those times.

Most importantly, marry the one that makes passion, love and madness combine and course through you. A love that will never dilute – even when the waters get deep, and dark.

THE BRIDGE ACROSS FOREVER

- by Richard Bach

A soul mate is someone who has locks that fit our keys, and keys to fit our locks. When we feel safe enough to open the locks, our truest selves step out and we can be completely and honestly who we are; we can be loved for who we are and not for who we're pretending to be. Each unveils the best part of the other. No matter what else goes wrong around us, with that one person we're safe in our own paradise. Our soul mate is someone who shares our deepest longings, our sense of direction. When we're two balloons, and together our direction is up, chances are we've found the right person. Our soul mate is the one who makes life come to life.

THE ART OF A GOOD MARRIAGE

-Wilfred Arlan Peterson

A good marriage must be created. It in the marriage, the little things are the big things... It is never being too old to hold hands. It is remembering to say "I love you" at least once each day. It is never going to sleep angry. It is having a mutual sense of value and common objectives. It is standing together and facing the world. It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family. It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways. It is having the capacity to forgive and forget. It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow. It is a common search for the good and the beautiful. It is not only marrying the right person, It is being the right partner.

MAYBE

– Anon

Maybe we are supposed to meet the wrong people before we meet the right one so when they finally arrive we are truly grateful for the gift we have been given.

Maybe it's true that we don't know what we have lost until we lose it but it is also true that we don't know what we're missing until it arrives.

Maybe the happiest of people don't have the best of everything, but make the best of everything that comes their way.

Maybe the best kind of love is the kind where you sit on the sofa together, not saying a word, and walk away feeling like it was the best conversation you ever had.

Maybe once in a lifetime you find someone who not only touches your heart but also your soul, someone who loves you for who you are and not what you could be.

Maybe the art of true love is not about finding the perfect person, but about seeing an imperfect person perfectly.

FROM BEGINNING TO END

- Robert Fulghum

You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way. All those conversations that were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks—all those sentences that began with “When we're married” and continued with “I will and you will and we will”—those late night talks that included “someday” and “somehow” and “maybe”—and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart.

All these common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, “You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed—well, I meant it all, every word.” Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another—acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years.

Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this—is my husband, this—is my wife.

MY LOVE

- Linda Lee Elrod

When I met you, I had no idea how much my life was about to be changed... but then, how could I have known? A love like ours happens once in a lifetime. You were a miracle to me, the one who was everything I had ever dreamed of, the one I thought existed only in my imagination. And when you came into my life, I realized that what I had always thought was happiness couldn't compare to the joy loving you brought me.

You are a part of everything I think and do and feel, and with you by my side, I believe that anything is possible. (this day) gives me a chance to thank you for the miracle of you...you are, and always will be, the love of my life.

CAPTAIN CORELLI'S MANDOLIN

-by Louis De Bernieres

Love is a temporary madness, it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides. And when it subsides, you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part. Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not the desire to mate every second minute of the day, it is not lying awake at night imagining that he is kissing every cranny of your body.

No, don't blush, I am telling you some truths. That is just being "in love", which any fool can do. Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident.

EXTRACT FROM CARRIE'S POEME

-Sex and the City

"His hello was the end of her endings
Her laugh was their first step down the aisle
Hi shand would be hers to hold forever
His forever was as simple as her smile.

He said she was what was missing
She said instantly she knew
She was a question to be answered
And his answer was 'I do'.

LETTER FROM JOHNNY CASH TO JUNE CARTER

"We get old and get used to each other. We think alike. We read each others' minds. We know what the other wants without asking. Sometimes we irritate each other a little bit.

Maybe sometimes take each other for granted. But once in a while, like today, I meditate on it and release how lucky I am to share my life with the greatest woman I ever met".

EXTRACT FROM THE NOTEBOOK

-Nicholas Sparks

"Poets often describe love as an emotion that we can't control, one that overwhelms logic and common sense. That's what it was like for me. I didn't plan on falling in love with you, and I doubt if you planned on falling in love with me.

But once we met, it was clear that neither of us could control what was happening to us. We fell in love, despite our differences, and once we did, something rare and beautiful was created.

For me, love like that has happened only once, and that's why every minute we spend together has been seared in my memory".

BLESSING FOR A MARRIAGE

-James Dillet Freeman

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring, and may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding.

May you always need one another — not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you to know your fullness. A mountain needs a valley to be complete. The valley does not make the mountain less, but more.

And the valley is more a valley because it has a mountain towering over it. So let it be with you and you. May you need one another, but not out of weakness. May you want one another, but not out of lack.

May you entice one another, but not compel one another. May you embrace one another, but not out encircle one another. May you succeed in all-important ways with one another, and not fail in the little graces.

May you look for things to praise, often say, "I love you!" and take no notice of small faults. If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back.

May you enter into the mystery that is the awareness of one another's presence — no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side, and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities.

May you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy. May you have love, and may you find it loving one another."

EXTRACT FROM SYMPOSIUM

-Plato

"Humans have never understood the power of Love, for if they had they would surely have built noble temples and altars and offered solemn sacrifices; but this is not done, and most certainly ought to be done, since Love is our best friend, our helper, and the healer of the ills which prevent us from being happy.

To understand the power of Love, we must understand that our original human nature was not like it is now, but different. Human beings each had two sets of arms, two sets of legs, and two faces looking in opposite directions. There were three sexes then: one comprised of two men called the children of the Sun, one made of two women called the children of the Earth, and a third made of a man and a woman, called the children of the Moon. Due to the power and might of these original humans, the Gods began to fear that their reign might be threatened. They sought for a way to end the humans' insolence without destroying them.

It was at this point that Zeus divided the humans in half. After the division the two parts of each desiring their other half, came together, and throwing their arms about one another, entwined in mutual embraces, longing to grow into one. So ancient is the desire of one another which is implanted in us, reuniting our original nature, making one of two, and healing the state of humankind.

Each of us when separated, having one side only, is but the indenture of a person, and we are always looking for our other half. Those whose original nature lies with the children of the Sun are men who are drawn to other men, those from the children of the Earth are women who love other women, and those from the children of the Moon are men and women drawn to one another.

And when one of us meets our other half, we are lost in an amazement of love and friendship and intimacy, and would not be out of the other's sight even for a moment. We pass our whole lives together, desiring that we should be melted into one, to spend our lives as one person instead of two, and so that after our death there will be one departed soul instead of two; this is the very expression of our ancient need. And the reason is that human nature was originally one and we were a whole, and the desire and pursuit of the whole is called Love."

GIFT FROM THE SEA

-Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"When you love someone, you do not love them all the time, in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility. It is even a lie to pretend to. And yet this is exactly what most of us demand.

We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, of relationships. We leap at the flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb. We are afraid it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity; when the only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity – in freedom, in the sense that the dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern.

The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping, even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what was in nostalgia, nor forward to what it might be in dread or anticipation, but living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now.

Relationships must be like islands, one must accept them for what they are here and now, within their limits – islands, surrounded and interrupted by the sea, and continually visited and abandoned by the tides."

QUOTATIONS AND PROVERBS

- Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies - Aristotle
- The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams. - Eleanor Roosevelt
- To the world you might be one person, But to one person you might be the world. - Annon
- May your hearts be forever clasped in friendship And your hearts forever joined in love. – Annon
- Today I love you, that is truer than true. There is no one around I love more than you – Dr Seuss
- I would love you in the rain. And in the dark. And on a train. And in a car. And in a tree. Because you are the one for me! – Dr Seuss
- Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love. How on earth can you explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as first love? Put your hand on a stove for a minute and it seems like an hour. Sit with that special girl for an hour and it seems like a minute. That's relativity – Albert Einstein

- A great marriage is not when the “perfect couple” comes together. It is when an imperfect couple learns to enjoy their differences – Dave Meurer
- There is no greater happiness for a man than approaching a door at the end of a day knowing someone on the other side of that door is waiting for the sound of his footsteps – Ronald Reagan
- When you realise you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible – When Harry Met Sally
- It was a million tiny little things. When you added them all up, it just meant we were supposed to be together – Sleepless in Seattle

MARRIAGE IS LIKE BY OLD CAR
- Marie April Gismondi

The way I see it, marriage is like my old car.
 When I bought it new from the dealership,
 everyone around me was saying; “Wow that’s a nice car!”
 It was all bright and shiny and worthy of admiration.

And then as the years went by...
 there were places where the paint was starting to peel off.
 It got a little dent and a scratch or two here and there...
 and once it was over a decade old...

People started saying; “Why are you still driving that old thing?”
 But my car ran like a top and would never leave me high and dry.
 Every time something sounded a little off, or needed attention,
 I got to work on it and fixed whatever needed fixing immediately,
 knowing that you get what you give.

And then, when she became “a classic”,
 it was off to the body shop she went for a new paint job.
 People once again began saying; “Wow, that’s a really nice car!”
 But what they didn’t know was that all the things that really matter,
 were always things that nobody could see from the outside.
 A marriage is like my old car.

It’s the maintenance you do between the high of the wedding day,
 and gaining the admiration your grandchildren
 by being the couple who still laughs and shares secrets,
 and still holds hands after all these years.

So don’t worry so much about what people think or say.
 Just do your oil changes, keep up with your maintenance,
 get out and have fun,
 don’t be afraid to blow the dust off now and then,
 and fix whatever breaks as soon as it happens.

This is my advice for a marriage
 that will motor successfully on down the highway of life.

FROM ALIVE IN WONDERLAND

- Lewis Carol, adapted by Marie April Gismondi

Over 150 years ago Lewis Carol wrote the words that have inspired generations to think in different ways and take a different path to the goal that all humanity shares... that of being our truest and happiest selves. Today's reading reflects this whimsical wisdom.

"Who are YOU?" said the Caterpillar.

This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation.

Alice replied, rather shyly, "I-I hardly know, sir, just at present, at least I know who I WAS when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."

Marriage will indeed make you a different person.

A good marriage will make you the best possible version of yourself that you can be.

"But I don't want to go among mad people," Alice remarked.

"Oh, you can't help that," said the Cat: "we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad."

"How do you know I'm mad?" said Alice.

"You must be," said the Cat, "or you wouldn't have come here."

And today we are all indeed, Mad for LOVE... this beautiful expression of Love... and commitment to many wondrous tomorrows that we are here to participate in and celebrate!

Mad Hatter: "Have I gone mad?"

Alice: "I'm afraid so. You're entirely bonkers.

But I'll tell you a secret. All the best people are."

For so many marriage starts off with plans to create an amazing future and the question of "Can we really do this?"

The Queen of Hearts: "Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

And Alice had begun to think

that very few things indeed were really impossible.

For as The Dodo said: "The best way to explain it is to do it."

But how does that happen?

By taking the advice offered by The Unicorn: "If you'll believe in me, I'll believe in you. Is that a bargain?"

We... this crazy cast of characters you have invited here today... all love and support you. We believe in you as I know you believe in each other.

For as The Duchess said: "The moral of that is—

'Oh, 'tis love, 'tis love, that makes the world go round!'"

LOVE IS AN ADVENTURE

-Pierre Tielhart de Chardin

Love is an adventure and a conquest. It survives and develops like the universe itself only by perpetual discovery. The only right love is that between couples whose passion leads them both, one through the other, to a higher possession of their being.

"Put your faith in the spirit which dwells between the two of you. You have each offered yourself to the other as a boundless field of understanding, of enrichment, of mutually increased sensibility.

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“You will meet above all by entering into and constantly sharing one another’s thoughts, affections, and dreams. There alone, as you know, in spirit, which is arrived through flesh, you will find no disappointments, no limits.

“There alone the skies are ever open for your love; there alone lies the great road ahead.

I WILL BE HERE

-Steve Curtis Chapman

If in the morning when you wake, if the sun does not appear, I will be here.
If in the dark we lose sight of love, hold my hand and have no fear, I will be here.

I will be here, when you feel like being quiet, when you need to speak your mind I will listen.
Through the winning, losing, and trying we’ll be together, and I will be here.

If in the morning when you wake, if the future is unclear, I will be here.
As sure as seasons were made for change, our lifetimes were made for years, I will be here.

I will be here, and you can cry on my shoulder, when the mirror tells us we’re older.
I will hold you, to watch you grow in beauty, and tell you all the things you are to me.

We’ll be together and I will be here. I will be true to the promises I’ve made, to you and to the one who gave you to me.

I will be here.

LOVE IS

-Susan Polis Schutz

Love is: being happy for the other person when they are happy, being sad for the other person when they are sad, being together in good times and being together in bad times.

Love is the source of strength.

Love is: being honest with yourself at all times, being honest with the other person at all times, telling, listening, respecting the truth and never pretending.

Love is the source of reality.

Love is: an understanding that is so complete that you feel as if you are a part of the other person accepting the other person just the way they are and not trying to change them to be something else.

Love is the source of unity.

Love is: the freedom to pursue your own desires while sharing your experiences with the other person, the growth of one individual alongside of and together with the growth of another individual.

Love is the source of success.

Love is: the excitement of planning things together, the excitement of doing things together.

Love is the source of the future.

THE KEY TO LOVE

-Annon

The key to love is understanding....
the ability to comprehend not only the spoken word,
but those unspoken gestures,
the little things that say so much for themselves.

The key to love is forgiveness....
to accept each other's faults and pardon mistakes,
without forgetting, but with remembering
what you learn from them.

The key to love is sharing...
facing both good fortunes as well as the bad, together;
both conquering problems, forever searching for ways
to intensify your happiness.

The key to love is giving....
without thought of return,
but with the hope of just a simple smile,
and by giving in but never giving up.

The key to love is respect....
realising that you are two separate people, with different ideas;
that you don't belong to each other,
that you belong with each other, and share a mutual bond.

The key to love is inside us all....
it takes time and patience to unlock all the ingredients
that will take you to its threshold;
it is the continual learning process that demands a lot of work...
but the rewards are more than worth the effort...
and that is the key to love.