

Intro to Weddings Planning / Marriage Enrichment
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My first goal is to help you have a fun, meaningful wedding

Here are the kinds of meetings I recommend so that this can happen:

Meetings about The Wedding - planning, rehearsing, wedding service itself

So I can get a sense of what you expect and would like and would not like to see happen as part of the wedding, I prefer to meet with the couple before the service. It does not always happen this way, and that's ok too! Parts of the planning can also happen by email and by phone.

A wedding may seem like a quick thing, and it is. At the same time there are usually lots of choices and options to consider (for example, does the bride want to be "given away," or not? Will there be a prayer, a reading, a song, some other ritual or action that is meaningful to you? Planning can often take two, one hour long meetings, not including a rehearsal, if there is one.

[To see a template of the standard Wedding Service I use, click here](#)

A second goal:

I am also interested in you having a great marriage relationship

I am happy to help you with your wedding! I am also interested in being of service to you with something much bigger, helping you have a wonderful marriage. Given that the divorce rate is still at 50%, you have a 50-50 blind shot at staying married after the wedding is over. I have done too many weddings that resulted in unhappiness! At this point in my life, I am interested in helping you have the best marriage you can have can have.

This would mean putting in a little more time and investment up front and separate from your wedding planning. This could take the form of your choice of various Marriage Enrichment / Relationship Skill Building opportunities. In my experience this pays off in terms of more relationship satisfaction and less suffering latter on!

This is your choice, it is an option I offer and encourage. Couples who have taken this step find that it is really useful.

Meetings about The Relationship - Marriage Enrichment / Skill Building options

I would like to ask you to consider among the options outlined below, or come up with your own. I would be happy to consult with you to see which option might be best for you. These are skill building sessions for a successful and happy relationship.

A - Foccus Relationship Inventory and Discussion

Each member of the couple would each take an online inventory which matches your expectations about being married and gives us an idea of what might be important to talk about so you as a couple can be on the same page. We do the sessions at my office at Kanawha Pastoral Counseling Center. There would probably be three sessions, and possibly more, depending on what comes up.

B - Read and Discuss a few Books

The Seven Principles for making Marriage Work and/or
What Makes Love Last by John Gottman

Up to date research on past practices in your marriage

Nonviolent Communication by Marshall Rosenberg.

A very good book on who to have heart open communication

More Than Just Friends by Shirley Glass.

This is a great book on how to establish guardrails for your marriage and protect it outside influences.

C - Attend a Smart-Marriage Skill Building Workshop

My colleague, Andy Counts, offers workshops and individual sessions for couples on relationship skill-building developed by the marriage researcher John Gottman. Research indicates that couples who commit to this kind of skill building have a very high likelihood of navigating hard issues later on.

Our schedule of workshops is on our website: <http://www.kpcc.com/>

D - A 20,000 mile checkup

It is often a good idea to schedule a meeting one meeting about a year after your wedding, to see how things are going and if and how you are using the skills you learned in the skill building sessions

If you live outside Charleston, I am sure we can come up with skill building solutions that would be geographically workable for you. If you already have a pastor, or know or are already working with someone who can help with the marriage preparation, that would work too!

Costs

The costs of all this will be a matter of time, financial expense, and maybe a willingness to trust each other even more than you do now, and to be as open as possible about your needs and hopes and dreams for what a successful marriage will look like for you. The experience of many has been that putting in the time and effort now may save you much great heartache later on. I will also be investing a fair amount of my time, energy and trust in the success of your marriage, and I will be expecting the same from you.

If you decide you would like to work together with me on this project of your happy life together, I will be glad to sit down with you to figure out what all will be involved, and how much of a time commitment will be needed on both of our parts.

Thinking realistically in terms of my commitment: if I am fully involved in the planning, rehearsing, and officiating your wedding will probably require around six hours of my time providing a professional service to you. This is not including time and expense of travel. I would like to be compensated fairly for my efforts to make your special day as special as possible. If this sounds like it would be outside of your budget, we could look at my participating in a scaled down kind of way.

[Here is a wedding budget planning sheet](#)

I hope this helps you get a sense of how I do this and the time involved as you approach this important day! As you can see, I am asking you to be fairly committed to making this event the next step in what a hope will be a long-term and very happy and satisfying relationship for you.

Please take some time to talk together about whether you think this is something you would like to do, and let me know! Wishing you the best!

If you are ready to ask me to commit to a date, please use this form:

[Wedding Planning Form](#)

Planning a wedding can be an anxious time. It might help to remember that "Wherever you are, God is, and all is well!"

Sky