

INTRODUCTION

This e-book is divided into four categories:

Poems: Eighty-five poems on the subject of love and marriage.

Quotes: Twenty-five quotes, both poignant and humorous, about love, relationships and marriage.

Wedding Rituals: A variety of rituals that can be incorporated into your wedding ceremony, such as sharing of wine, the rose ceremony and the unity candle.

Traditions From Various Cultures: Traditions from cultures other than your own can be beautifully incorporated into your own special day.



Compiled by Essentially Organized

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Wedding Poems, Quotes, Rituals and Traditions

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A MARRIAGE

A marriage makes two fractional lives a whole.
Gives to two restless lives a plan.
And doubles the strength of each to perform it.
It gives two questioning natures a reason for living.
And something to live for.
It will give new gladness to the sunshine.
A new fragrance to the flowers.
A new beauty to the earth.
And a new mystery to life.

Mark Twain

A MARRIAGE

A marriage is a promise that two hearts gladly make.

A promise to be tender.

To help, to give and take.

A marriage is a promise to be kind and understanding.

To be thoughtful and considerate.

Fair and understanding.

A marriage is a promise to share one life together.

A love-filled promise meant to be kept lovingly for ever.

Author Unknown

A WALLED GARDEN

Your marriage, he said, should have within it, a secret and protected place, open to you alone.

Imagine it to be a walled garden, entered by a door to which only you hold the key.

Within this garden, you will cease to be a mother, father, employee, homemaker or any other of the roles which you fulfil in everyday life.

Here you are yourselves, two people who love each other.

Here you can concentrate on one another's needs.

So take my hand and let us go back to our garden.

The time we spend together is not wasted but invested.

Invested in our future and the nurture of our love.

Author Unknown

AS I DREAM MY DREAMS OF YOU

As I dream my dreams of how life should be.

You are always there.

To share my laughter, my joys and tears.

To comfort my sorrows and calm my fears.

We're always together - hand in hand.

Living the dreams we both have planned.

Loving each other wherever we go.

I know I'll continue to dream my dreams.

Always living each one through together with you.

Forever in Love.

Just me and you.

Author Unknown

BE AS ONE

If you can always be as close.
And as happy as today.
Yet be secure enough to grow.
And change along the way.
If you can keep for you alone.
Your love as man and wife.
Yet find the time to share your joy.
With others in your life.
If you can be as one.
And walk through marriage hand in hand.
Yet still support the goals and dreams.
That each of you have planned.
If you can dare to always go.
Your separate ways together.
Then all the wonder of today.
Will stay with you forever.

Larry S. Chengges

BLESSING FOR A MARRIAGE

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 which 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!

James Dillet Freeman

BRIDAL SONG

Comforts lasting, loves increasing.

Like soft hours never ceasing.

Plenty's pleasure, peace complying.

Without jars, or tongues envying.

Hearts by holy union wedded.

More than theirs by custom bedded.

Fruitful issues; life so graced, not by age to be defaced.

Budding, as the year ensu'th.

Every spring another youth.

All what thought can add beside crown this bridegroom and this
bride!

John Ford

CHAPTER ONE OF ONE THOUSAND

For two people this dawn brought on a magical day.
Now husband and wife they head on their way.
As a boat setting sail may their journey begin.
With calmest of waters, most helpful of wind.
And if they should stumble upon turbulent sea.
May it pass them unharmed - leave them be.
For here are two people whom love has well bitten.
Here opens their book which has yet to be written.
As the first page unfolds and their life inks its path.
May it write a true story where forever love lasts.
Let their journey be happy till death do they part.
Of one thousand chapters may this be the start.

O. J. Preston

DESIDERATA

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love, for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

Max Ehrmann

DESTINY

Somewhere there waiteth in this world of ours.

For one lone soul, another lonely soul.

Each choosing each through all the weary hours.

And meeting strangely at one sudden goal.

Then blend they, like green leaves with golden flowers.

Into one beautiful and perfect whole.

And life's long night is ended, and the way lies open onward to
eternal day.

Sir Edwin Arnold

FOUNDATIONS OF MARRIAGE

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.

It's allowing each other to be vulnerable, to be himself or herself, even when the opinions 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.

Regina Hill

FRIENDSHIP

May your friendship and trust endure and strengthen through the winters of your lives.

And may your love be renewed, as surely as the blossoms adorn the trees each spring.

And may your understanding of each other grow with this love, until the wonder of each night and day becomes a lifetime of happiness together.

Nanushka

FULFILMENT

May your love and understanding grow with the years.

May you seek each other's happiness; recognise each other's needs.

And find fulfilment in your life together.

May these rings you have exchanged be a reminder of the love and faithfulness you have pledged to each other.

Author Unknown

HOW DO I LOVE THEE?

How do I love thee?

Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height my soul can reach,
when feeling out of sight.

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's most quiet need, by sun and
candlelight.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right.

I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.

I love thee with the passion put to use in my old griefs, and with my
childhood's faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose, with my lost saints.

I love thee with the breath, smiles, tears, of all my life!

And, if God choose, I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

I AM SURE OF YOU

I am not sure that Earth is round.
Nor that the sky is really blue.
The tale of why the apples fall.
May or may not be true.
I do not know what makes the tides.
Nor what tomorrow's world may do.
But I have certainty enough.
For I am sure of you.

Amelia Josephine Burr

I CARRY YOUR HEART WITH ME

I carry your heart with me, I carry it in my heart.

I am never without it.

Anywhere I go you go, my dear.

And whatever is done by only me is your doing, my darling.

I fear no fate, for you are my fate, my sweet.

I want no world, for beautiful you are my world, my true.

And it's you.

Whatever a moon has always meant and whatever a sun will always sing, is you.

Here is the deepest secret nobody knows.

Here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud.

And the sky of the sky of a tree called life.

Which grows higher than the soul can hope or mind can hide.

And this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart.

I carry your heart, I carry it in my heart.

Edward Estlin Cummings

I GIVE TO YOU

Listen, I will be honest with you.

I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough new prizes.

These are the days that must happen to you.

You shall not heap up what is called riches.

You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve.

However sweet the laid up stores.

However convenient the dwelling, you shall not remain there.

However sheltered the port, however calm the waters, you shall not anchor there.

However welcome the hospitality that welcomes you, you are permitted to receive it but a little while Afoot and lighthearted, take to the open road.

Healthy, free, the world before you the long brown path before you, leading wherever you choose.

Say only to one another: Camerado, I give you my hand!

I give you my love more precious than money.

I give you myself before preaching and law.

Will you give me yourself?

Will you come travel with me?

Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

Walt Whitman

I GIVE YOU MY LOVE

For the harmony you bring into my life, I give you my love.

For the understanding of my needs and the many smiles you have brought to me, I give you my love.

For the joy you bring to my heart and the many ways you make me feel with every embrace, I give you my love.

For the comfort you bring to me and the many treasured times we have shared, I give you my love.

For the way you are my friend as well as the many ways you express our love, I give you my love.

For the many ways that you've allowed me to be a part of your life, I give you my love.

Richard Weber

I HELD OUT MY HAND

I held out my hand.

And you were there.

You took my foolishness.

And gently showed me the path.

You took my pride.

And made me laugh at myself.

You took my wounds.

And covered them with the balm of love.

In your light I have the faith I need to succeed.

In your presence I can explore myself.

In your arms I find peace.

I give myself to you because I want to.

Because I trust that I can.

Lisa Integali

I KNEW I HAD BEEN TOUCHED BY LOVE

I knew that I had been touched by love the first time I saw you, and I felt your warmth, and I heard your laughter.

I knew that I had been touched by love when I was hurting from something that happened, and you came along and made the hurt go away.

I knew that I had been touched by love when I quit making plans with my friends, and started dreaming dreams with you.

I knew that I had been touched by love when suddenly I stopped thinking in terms of 'me', and started thinking in terms of 'we'.

I knew that I had been touched by love when suddenly I couldn't make any decisions by myself anymore, and I had the strong desire to share everything with you.

I knew that I had been touched by love the first time we spent alone together, and I knew that I wanted to stay with you forever because I had never felt this touched by love.

Obed Rodriguez

I LOVE YOU

I love you not only for what you are but for what I am when I am with you.

I love you not only for what you have made of yourself but for what you are making of me.

I love you for the part of me that you bring out.

I love you for putting your hand into my heaped-up heart and passing over all the foolish, weak things that you can't help dimly seeing there.

And for drawing out into the light all the beautiful belongings that no one else had looked quite hard enough to find.

Roy Croft

I LOVE YOU AS YOU ARE

I love you as you are.

You are my inspiration and the song I sing.

You are what makes me happy.

You are my everything.

You are my daily sunshine and my evening star.

Everything I hoped to find is what you are.

You are my thoughts when I'm awake, and my dreams when I'm asleep.

You are the reason for my smile, you are the words I speak.

Every role I play in life you play the leading part.

Everything I'll ever want or need is what you are.

The only one I'll ever want for me that's what you are.

Song Lyrics by Dolly Parton

I PROMISE

I promise to give you the best of myself and to ask of you no more than you can give.

I promise to respect you as your own person and to realise that your interests, desires and needs are no less important than my own.

I promise to share with you my time and my attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to our relationship.

I promise to keep myself open to you, to let you see through the window of my world into my innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams.

I promise to grow along with you, to be willing to face changes in order to keep our relationship alive and exciting.

I promise to love you in good times and in bad, with all I have to give and all I feel inside in the only way I know how.

Completely and forever.

Dorothy R. Colgan

I WILL BE HERE

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.

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.

Steven Curtis Chapman

I WILL LOVE YOU

As long as I can dream.

As long as I can think.

As long as I have a memory.

I will love you.

As long as I have eyes to see.

And ears to hear.

And lips to speak.

I will love you.

As long as I have a heart to feel.

A soul stirring within me.

An imagination to hold you.

I will love you.

As long as there is time.

As long as there is love.

As long as there is you.

And as long as I have breath to speak your name.

I will love you.

Because I love you more than anything in this world.

Daniel Huaghian

*IF I TRIED TO DESCRIBE HOW MUCH I LOVE
YOU*

If I tried to describe how much I love you, I would get all tongue tied, trip over my words and blush with embarrassment.

It would be particularly difficult here in front of all our family and friends.

In any case you would probably start laughing at my stumbling efforts and we'd both end up giggling.

So just let me say to you I love you from the bottom of my heart.

I am so happy that we are being married today.

And as we start our life all over again together, I want you to understand that you are my partner, my friend, my love.

There, now I've said it so we can both laugh happily together.

Author Unknown

IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind be ever at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face.

May the rains fall soft upon your fields.

May you have warm words on a cold evening.

A full moon on a dark night.

May the roof above you never fall in.

And the friends gathered below never fall out.

May you be poor in misfortunes, rich in blessings.

Slow to make enemies and quick to make friends.

And throughout your lives may God hold you in the hollow of his hand.

IRISH BLESSING

May God be with you and bless you.

May you see your children's children.

May you be poor in misfortune, rich in blessings.

May you know nothing but happiness.

From this day on.

IT DOESN'T INTEREST ME

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for. And if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the centre of your own sorrow, if you have been opened by life's betrayals or have become shrivelled and closed from your fear of further pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide or fade it or fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own; if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, be realistic, or to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you're telling is true, I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself; If you can bear the accusations of betrayal and not betray your own soul.

I want to know if you can be faithful and therefore be trustworthy. I want to know if you can see the beauty even when it is not pretty everyday, and if you can source your life from its presence. I want to know if you can live with failure, yours or mine, and still stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the silver of the moon, "Yes"!

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done for the children.

It doesn't interest me to know who you are, or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the centre of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away. I want to know if you can be alone with yourself and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.

Oriah Mountain Dreamer (Indian Elder)

LEARN HOW TO LOVE

Every day you live, learn how to love.

Take time with each other.

Restore each other's soul with loving words.

Receive love with as much understanding as you give it.

Find that which is within yourselves.

Then you can share it with each other.

Do not fear this love.

And do not fear this marriage.

But keep open hearts and sincere minds.

Be sincerely interested in each other's happiness.

Be, too, constant and consistent in your love and in your actions.

From this comes security and strength.

All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.

So, even though you retain your individuality today, you also become one, in a true unity.

That this may become deep and rewarding today, the day of your marriage.

Try to commit yourselves fully, freely and trustingly to each other without reservations.

Walter Rinder

LOVE

Love puts the music in laughter, the beauty in song.

The warmth in a shoulder, the gentle in strong.

Love puts the magic in memories; the sunshine in skies.

The gladness in giving, the starlight in eyes.

Love puts the fun in together; the sad in apart.

The hope in tomorrow, the joy in the heart.

Rod McKuen

LOVE

You can give without loving; but you can never love without giving.

Love is knowing that even when you are alone, you will never be lonely again.

And the great happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved.

Loved for ourselves.

And even loved in spite of ourselves.

Victor Hugo

LOVE IS THE REASON

Love is the reason why this day was chosen by you both to begin your lives together.

And love is the reason why you both will give with all your hearts for the good of the other.

Love is the reason that together you will become one.

One in hope.

One in believing in life.

One in sharing the coming years.

Author Unknown

LOVE NOT ME

Love not me for comely grace.
For my pleasing eye or face.
Nor for any outward part.
No, nor for a constant heart!
For these may fail or turn to ill.
Should thou and I sever.
Keep, therefore, a true woman's eye.
And love me still, but know not why!
So hast thou the same reason still.
To dote upon me ever.

John Wilbye

LOVE'S COMING

Quietly as rosebuds.

Talk to the thin air.

Love came so lightly.

I knew not he was there.

Quietly as lovers.

Creep at the middle moon.

Softly as players tremble in the tears of a tune.

Quietly as lilies.

Their faint vows declare.

Came the shy pilgrim.

I knew not he was there.

Quietly as tears fall.

On a warm sin.

Softly as griefs call in a violin.

Without hail or tempest, blue sword of flame.

Love came so lightly I knew not that he came.

John Shaw Neilson

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

The fountains mingle with the river.
And the rivers with the ocean.
The winds of heaven mix forever.
With a sweet emotion.
Nothing in the world is single.
All things by a law divine.
In one another's being mingle.
Why not I with thine?
See! The mountains kiss high heaven.
And the waves clasp one another.
Now sister flower would be forgiven if it disdained its brother.
And the sunlight clasps the earth.
And the moonbeams kiss the sea.
What are all these kissing's worth, if thou kiss not me?

Percy Shelley

MARRIAGE ADVICE

Let your love be stronger than your hate or anger.

Learn the wisdom of compromise, for it is better to bend a little than to break.

Believe the best rather than the worst.

People have a way of living up or down to your opinion of them.

Remember that true friendship is the basis for any lasting relationship.

The person you choose to marry is deserving of the courtesies and kindness you bestow on your friends.

Please hand this down to your children and your children's children.

Jane Wells

MARRIAGE IS...

Marriage is a dynamic process of discovery.

Marriage is a journey, not an arrival.

In marriage, being the right person is as important as finding the right person.

Marriage is starting to love, over and over again.

Marriage is a life's work.

Marriage is an art and like any creative process, it requires active thought and effort.

We have to learn how to share on many different levels.

We need to practice talking from the heart, and understanding attitudes as well as words.

Giving generously and receiving graciously are talents that are available to anyone.

But all these skills need to be developed, if the marriage picture that we paint is to be anything approaching the masterpiece intended.

Author Unknown

MARRIAGE IS A LIFETIME OF LOVE

Marriage embraces two people in love for a lifetime of sharing.

Marriage is a unique sharing of day-to-day events.

It's having someone with you in spirit to give support and love at all times.

Happiness in marriage doesn't just happen.

A good marriage requires time and devotion.

It's often filled with compromise and sacrifice, as two people learn to live together in harmony.

In marriage, little things become big.

It's important to never take one another for granted and to always be able to hold each other.

Marriage is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

Being married means having a lifetime best friend.

Someone to laugh with, dream with, and cry with.

The true foundation of marriage is giving love continuously and unconditionally from one's heart.

Sherry Jill Shaw-Levine

MARRIAGE IS A PROMISE OF LOVE

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 no other human relationship can equal, a physical and emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime.

Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships.

A wife and 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 each 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; even anger is felt more strongly and 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 in marriage, they create a spirit unique to themselves, which binds them closer than any spoken or written words.

Marriage is a promise, a potential, made in the hearts of two people who love, which takes a lifetime to fulfil.

Edmund O'Neill

MARRIAGE IS A PROMISE TO LOVE

Marriage is a covenant between two people who deeply sense that their lives are, and always will be, shared as one.

Marriage is the fulfilment of a dream and an awareness that reality also can bring us the beauty of dreams.

Marriage is a promise that today is the beginning of a future that will nurture love, respect, honour, and mutual faith as the greatest strengths for its foundation.

Marriage is an understanding between two sensitive, intelligent, and caring people who have evidenced that true love can survive all obstacles and grow stronger with the passage of time.

Edith Schaffer Lederbergh

MARRIAGE IS LOVE

If two are caring, as they're sharing life's hopes and fears.

If the music of laughter outweighs the sadness of tears.

Marriage is togetherness.

If both derive pleasure from mere presence of each other.

Yet no jealousies restrict, worry or smother.

Marriage is freedom.

If achievements mean more when they benefit two.

And consideration is shown with each point of view.

Marriage is respect.

And if togetherness, freedom and respect are combined with a joy
that words can never fully define.

Then marriage is love.

Gloria Matthews

MARRIAGE IS THE GREATEST HAPPINESS OF ALL

In a marriage, two people become as one.

Yet they are individuals.

Each with their own ideas and goals.

In a marriage, two people share their thoughts.

They give advice, sharing their feelings.

Being open and loving.

They must trust each other and hold onto faith while going through ups and downs.

They have their smiles, and they have their tears.

When one is low, it is up to the other to support them, to get them back on the right track.

Communication is the key.

Two people united learn so much.

They learn to depend yet be independent.

Sometimes letting each other have time to themselves.

They care for each other and protect.

They make a family and become a lifeline.

They bring their dreams, their future.

Loving and growing together.

With their commitment and true love they find happiness.

Michele Gallagher

*MARRIAGE IS TWO PEOPLE SHARING
EVERYTHING IN LIFE*

In marriage two people share all their dreams and goals, their weaknesses and strengths.

In marriage two people share all the joys and sadness of life and all the supreme pleasures.

In marriage two people share all of their emotions and feelings, all of their tears and laughter.

Marriage is the most fulfilling relationship one can have.

And the love you share as husband and wife is beautifully forever.

Susan Polis Schutz

MARRIAGE LINES

In a marriage where love lives:

There's realism and truth.

There's pleasure in giving of time.

Closeness and security.

Freedom for individuality.

No need to possess or confine.

In a marriage where love lives:

True friendship is present.

With respect for each point of view.

Through disappointment sharing comes deeper caring.

Happiness deeper for two.

In a marriage where love lives:

There's no need for rules.

There's understanding if harsh words are spoken.

Apologies are accepted.

Trust is effected.

The true bonds of love never broken.

Gloria Matthews

*MARRIAGE MEANS BEING IN LOVE FOR THE
REST OF YOUR LIFE*

Marriage is love walking hand in hand together.

It's laughing with each other about silly little things.

And learning to discuss big things with care and tenderness.

In marriage, love is trusting each other when you're apart.

It's getting over disappointments and hurts, knowing that these are present in all relationships.

It is the realization that there is no one else in this world that you'd rather be with than the one you're married to.

It's thinking of new things to do together.

It's growing old together.

Marriage is being in love for the rest of your life.

Chris Ardis

MAY YOUR MARRIAGE BE BLESSED

Marriage is the joining of two people.

The union of two hearts.

It lives on the love you give each other and never grows old.

But thrives on the joy of each new day.

Marriage is love.

May you always be blessed in your hearts with the wonder of your marriage.

May you always be able to talk things over, to confide, to laugh with each other and enjoy life together.

To share moments of quiet peace when the day is done.

May you be blessed with a lifetime of happiness.

Jill Rynanen

MAYAN WEDDING POEM

I know not if the voice of man can reach to the sky.

I know not if the god's will hear if I pray.

I know not if the gifts I have will all be granted.

I know not what will come to pass in future days.

But I hope only good will come from my love to you.

MY GARDEN

A relationship has a life of its own.

It exists in the space between two individuals, and is fed by those people.

Like a garden, it is a growing thing that needs to be tended.

What is sown is what will grow, and the quality of nurturing will reveal itself in the health of what comes forth.

There will be storms, forces of nature that will bring their power of destruction and fury on the garden.

Sometimes it will seem as if the entire garden needs to be re-dug, re-sown, and grown anew.

At these times, remember that this ground is sacred.

It is the earth that you have loved and tended for years; that has fed you and given you pleasure.

It is your little plot; a part of your heart and life.

Dig deep into your soil, into your relationship, and look for its life.

When the storms come, remember the fruit; and when the fruit comes, remember the storms.

To live is to be mindful of the elements.

Author Unknown

MY LOVE FOR YOU

I have shared the radiance of your smile.

I have enjoyed the happiness of your laughter.

I have thrilled to your slightest touch.

I have memorized every part of you.

I have seen you say "I love you" with your eyes.

I have learned about life from you.

I have known the joy of loving you more with each passing day.

And yet, I have only scratched the surface of my love for you.

Thomas R. Dudley

MY TRUE LOVE HATH MY HEART

My true love hath my heart, and I have his.
By just exchange, one for the other given.
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss.
There never was a better bargain driven.
His heart in me keeps me and him in one.
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides.
He loves my heart, for once it was his own.
I cherish his, because in me it bides.
His heart he would receive from my sight.
My heart was wounded with his wounded heart.
For as from me on him his hurt did light.
So still me thought in me his hurt did smart.
Both equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss.
My true love hath my heart and I have his.

Sir P. Sidney

NOBODY BUT YOU

I want to chase away any clouds you'll ever have.

And let you know that no matter what, our being together and in love is the most important thing I'll ever have in this life.

When it comes to sharing love, today and every tomorrow, you're the one that will always shine through.

And when it comes to the person I always want to be with ... you know that there's nobody but you.

Laine Parsons

NOW WE ARE ONE

When thoughts take wing.

A wedding ring encircles all our dreams and love abounds.

Above, around, enriching all our schemes.

We plan together all our life to make our dreams come true.

When love is there a smile, a prayer, a hug, a kiss will do.

And then together hand in hand we go with love we've won.

And you will see the you and me that once were two - are one.

Kate Fisher

ON YOUR WEDDING DAY

Today is a day you will always remember.
The greatest in anyone's life.
You'll start off the day just two people in love.
And end it as Husband and Wife.
It's a brand new beginning the start of a journey.
With moments to cherish and treasure.
And although there'll be time when you both disagree.
These will surely be outweighed by pleasure.
You'll have heard many words of advice in the past.
When the secrets of marriage were spoken.
But you know that the answers lie hidden inside.
Where the bond of true love lies unbroken.
So live happy forever as lovers and friends.
It's the dawn of a new life for you.
As you stand there together with love in your eyes.
From the moment you whisper 'I do'.
And with luck, all your hopes, and your dreams can be real.
May success find its way to your hearts.
Tomorrow can bring you the greatest of joys.
But today is the day it all starts.

Author Unknown

1 CORINTHIANS 13

Love is always patient and kind.

It is never jealous.

Love is never boastful or conceited.

It is never rude or selfish.

It does not take offence.

And is not resentful.

Love takes no pleasure in other peoples' faults.

But delights in the truth.

It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope.

It is always ready to endure whatever comes.

Finally, true love does not come to an end.

RING VERSICLE

The roundness of these rings betokens the endlessness of love.

Their pure metal speaks of the purity of love.

Their value reminds us that we should defend and protect that which we hold most valuable in life.

Wear them with love and honour.

Author Unknown

SHALL I COMPARE THEE

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?
Thou are more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May.
And Summer's lease hath all too short a date.
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines.
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd.
And every fair from fair sometime declines.
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd.
But thy eternal Summer shall not fade.
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st.
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade.
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st.
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see.
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare

SHARING

There is no greater happiness than that of sharing life.

With all its joys and all its cares, as a loving man and wife.

For love gives life new meaning, and has a special way of growing stronger and deeper with every passing day.

Yes, life is so much happier and brighter when you're sharing the very special joys that come with loving, giving and caring.

Author Unknown

SONNET 116

Let not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments.

Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds.

Or bends with the remover to remove: Oh, no!

It is an ever fixed mark that looks on tempests.

And is never shaken.

It is the star to every wandering bark, whose worth is unknown,
although his height be taken.

Love is not Time's fool; though rosy lips and cheeks.

Within his bending sickle's compass come.

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks.

But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

If this be error and upon me proved, I never writ, nor no man ever
loved!

William Shakespeare

TAKING TIME TO LOVE

Taking time to love is what it's all about.

What makes clocks turn and the sunsets come.

True and without complications.

That does not mean lying close in shut up rooms.

Or staying always face to face.

It is meant to cover walking, being apart and knowing that coming back together makes small distances even smaller.

And taking time to love is, most of all, caring enough to not hold on too tightly, and yet, not run too loose.

Rod McKuen

*THE APACHE WEDDING PRAYER
(NATIVE AMERICAN)*

Now you will feel no rain, for each will be shelter for the other.

Now you will feel no cold, for each will be warmth to the other.

Now you will feel no loneliness, for each will be companion to the other.

We are two bodies, but there is one life before us and one home.

When evening falls, I'll look up and there you will be.

I'll take your hand; you'll take mine and we'll turn together to look at the road we travelled to reach this: the hour of our happiness.

It stretches behind us, even as the future lies ahead.

A long and winding road, whose every turning means discovery.

Old hopes, new laughter, shared fears.

The adventure has just begun.

THE ART OF MARRIAGE

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens.

A good marriage must be created.

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 a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is at no time taking the other for granted.

The courtship should not end with the honeymoon, it should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values 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 doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice, but in the spirit of joy.

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.

Wilferd Arlan Peterson

THE BEAUTY OF YOUR EYES

If I could write the beauty of your eyes.

And in fresh numbers; number all your graces.

The age to come would say, 'This poet lies. Such heavenly touches
never touched earthly faces'.

William Shakespeare

THE GIFT OF LOVE

Keep open your hearts.

Be true to your souls.

Remember always that the greatest gift of all is love.

Given and received without any reservation.

With great humility and deep gratitude.

A strength that never wanes or weakens.

But grows more wonderful day by day.

The gift of love makes life exciting and satisfying.

An existence filled with happiness.

Author Unknown

THE HAND WHICH YOU OFFER

The hand which you each offer to the other is an extension of yourselves.

Just as is the warmth and love which you express to each other.

Cherish the touch, for you are touching another life.

Be sensitive to its pulse, and try to understand and respect its flow and rhythm, just as you do your own.

If your love is to grow and deepen, you must find a way to move with each other.

Perhaps in a slow and graceful dance, bare feet firmly feeling the ground.

A dance, that circles and tests and learns as it gradually moves closer to that place where you can each pass through the other and turn and embrace without breaking or losing any part of yourselves but only to learn more of who you each are by your touching, to find that you are each whole and individual and separate yet, in the same instant, one, joined as a whole that does not blur the two individuals as you dance.

The music is there if you will listen hard, through the static and noise of life, and other tunes that fill your heads.

You are here, marking time to the music.

The dance begins when you take the first steps.

Paul L'Herrou

THE KEY TO LOVE

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 by 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 your 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.

Author Unknown

THE PROPHET

Love one another.

But make not a bond of love.

Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from the same cup.

Sing and dance together and be joyous but let each one of you be alone.

Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts but not into each other's keeping.

For only the hand of life can contain your hearts.

And stand together yet not too near together.

For the pillars of the temple stand apart and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

Kahlil Gibran

THIS DAY

This day we shall remember well.
As in our married love we dwell.
And cast our minds back to this time.
You made me yours and I you mine.
In wedded love we choose to be.
Each binding each and yet each free.
As days and months and years go on.
Our love will hold us firm and strong.
The marriage vow this day we say.
Is a vow we'll build on day by day.
And as we walk the path of life.
The world will know we're man and wife.
We two who now are but one soul.
Have each to play a different role.
And yet we know that all shall see.
That bond of love twixt you and me.
For in this life we each shall care.
That all we do is all times fair.
We pledge this day to be as one.
In all those wondrous years to come.

Brian Zouch

THIS IS WHY I LOVE YOU

For the kindness in your eyes and the warmth in your voice.

For the honesty of your words and the silence of your smile.

For the ways in which we are similar; and those in which we are worlds apart.

I love you.

For the openness of your understanding, and the acceptance of your heart.

For the tenderness of your touch, and the strength of your commitment.

For your sense of humour and your seriousness of purpose.

For a thousand small reasons, and one most important of all - simply because you are you.

In all of creation; you are the one whom I cherish most.

The one with whom I hope to share my life.

Its joys and sorrows, its accomplishments, its challenges.

While building our dreams together and growing everyday.

In the love that makes us one.

Author Unknown

THIS RING

This ring is my gift to you and with it I pledge all that I have and all that I am.

It is an unbroken circle with no beginning and no end and it symbolises the eternity and perfection of my love which is also never ending.

Let us be like the earth and know balance.

Let us be like the wind and fly free.

Like fire let us be spirited and alive.

And like water, let us sustain each other.

Author Unknown

TODAY

Today I marry my friend.

The one I have laughed with and cried with.

The one I have learned from and shared with.

The one I have chosen to support, encourage, and give my life to.

Through all the days given to me to share.

Today, I marry the one I love.

Bertrand Russell

TODAY

Today...I look into the eyes of my best friend. The one with whom I can share anything with.

My deepest hopes and heart-filled dreams. Inner fears and sheltered insecurities. My most warming joys and overwhelming triumphs.

All future journeys that I have left to encounter. This and more I know I can share with you.

Today...I take pride in my best friend.

With admiration I look upon you and smile. For all that you are and all that you do that makes me so proud.

Every part of you that I have come to adore. And for all those parts I have not yet learned. I will live each day from now on cherishing you with honour.

Today...I share my soul to my best friend.

My most prized possession which no other has been given. I give it with great confidence and trust.

Because with you I am at peace and I know with you it is safe. You give to me a warmth that I keep with me always.

And what else can I give to someone who has given me so much. For you have opened my eyes to see a love, which before you I was blind to.

Today...I am marrying my best friend.

For I know now God put you here to be my partner. Knowing even before I, that you were the one I would live to love, guiding me to this aisle.

He knew your hand would be waiting here for me to hold. Graciously leading me here to you and allowing us to share this moment together.

So I could begin the rest of my journeys through life, happily ever after with you...My Best Friend.

Author Unknown

TODAY I MARRIED MY BEST FRIEND

Today I married my best friend.
Our bond complete, it hath no end.
We share one soul, we share one heart.
A perfect time - a perfect start.
With these rings we share together.
Love so close to last forever.
This special day - two special hearts.
Let nothing keep this love apart.

Rachel Elizabeth Cooper

TODAY IS OUR WEDDING DAY

Today is our wedding day and how happy we both are.

With family and friends gathered to hear us promise to each other all the good we can think of.

Today it is easy, we are full of joy and confident in one another.

And yet we know it will not always be as easy as this.

We know there will be less happy times, even very difficult times.

But we will always have our love for each other and family and friends to help us.

We ask all of you with us today to take pleasure from our happiness and to enjoy our day with us and the love we share.

Let everyone here today stop and reflect.

It is our wedding day and each and everyone here is forever involved in the marriage we make today.

Author Unknown

TOGETHER IN LOVE

Time does not stand still but one moment in time can stretch till eternity.

One moment when eyes meet and sparkle in a place known to only two, where warm sands and salt in the air are perfect, but would not be so without the presence of the other, hands entwined and ocean air breathed as one.

This moment is your love.

It is in this moment that you commit, in this moment that you trust, in this moment that you will spend your lives, as lovers, partners and friends.

The nights when the breath of one lulls the other into shared dreams has just begun.

A lifetime stretches before you but you are not daunted.

For you will live each day together.

Together in the moment.

Together in love.

Melissa Bell

TWO LIVES

Two lives, two people, so very different, yet so similar.

Together we stand as one, sharing our future as it comes.

The past is that, past.

Buds are yet to blossom, with care and trust, the best is yet to be revealed.

Honesty and kindness, are the fruits of love.

Lord bless this day and always to enrich us so our love will never end.

Author Unknown

WALK WITH ME

Come take my hand.
And walk with me.
Into the future.
As was planned.
For every year upon this day.
Your eyes shall meet.
Above the toasting glass.
And you shall pledge again.
With outstretched hands.

Author Unknown

WE TWO

You and I have so much love.

That it burns like a fire, in which we bake a lump of clay.

Moulded into a figure of you, and a figure of me.

Then we take both of them, and mix the pieces of water.

And mould again a figure of you, and a figure of me.

I am in your clay.

You are in my clay.

In life we share a single quilt.

In death we will share one coffin.

Kuan Tao-Sheng

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love is just not looking at each other and saying "You're wonderful".

There are times when we are anything but wonderful.

Love is looking out in the same direction.

It is linking our strength to pull a common load.

It is pushing together towards the far horizons, hand in hand.

Love is knowing that when our strength falters, we can borrow the strength of someone who cares.

Love is a strange awareness that our sorrows will be shared and made lighter by sharing; that joys will be enriched and multiplied by the joy of another.

Love is knowing someone else cares, that we are not alone in life.

Walter Rinder

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love is the strongest feeling known.

An all encompassing passion.

An extreme strength.

An overwhelming excitement.

Love is trying not to hurt the other person.

Trying not to change the other person.

Trying not to dominate the other person.

Trying not to deceive the other person.

Love is understanding each other.

Listening to each other. Supporting each other.

Having fun with each other.

Love is not an excuse to stop growing.

Not an excuse to stop making yourself better.

Not an excuse to lessen one's goals.

Not an excuse to take the other person for granted.

Love is being completely honest with each other.

Finding dreams to share. Working towards common goals.

Sharing responsibilities equally.

Love is a feeling not to be taken lightly.

Love is a feeling to be cherished, nurtured and cared for.

Love is the reason for life.

Susan Polis Schutz

WHEN I LOOK AT YOU NOW

When I look at you now, I see all the hope and promise of our life together.

As the love that was always there in us grows stronger still.

I see the wonder, the mystery, the miracle of love and all our dreams waiting to be born.

I see that we've learned what it takes to make a relationship work, and ours does.

Thank you for being you.

And making me feel loved.

Because what we have is special.

And together as husband and wife it will only grow.

Author Unknown

WHEN LOVE BECKONS

When love beckons to you, follow him.

Though his ways are hard and steep.

And when his wings enfold you, yield to him.

Though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you.

And when he speaks to you, believe in him, though his voice may shatter your dreams.

As the north wind lays waste the garden.

Love gives naught but from itself.

And takes naught but from itself.

Love possesses not, nor would it be possessed.

For love is sufficient unto love.

Kahlil Gibran

WHERE THERE IS LOVE

Where there is love the heart is light.

Where there is love the day is bright.

Where there is love there is a song to help when things are going wrong.

Where there is love there is a smile to make all things seem more worthwhile.

Where there is love there's quiet peace.

A tranquil place where turmoil's cease.

Love changes darkness into light.

And makes the heart take wingless flight.

Helen Steiner Rice

WHY MARRIAGE?

Why marriage?

Because to the depths of me, I long to love one person, with all my heart, my soul, my mind, my body.

Because I need a forever friend to trust with the intimacies of me.

Who won't hold them against me.

Who loves me when I'm unlikable.

Who sees the small child in me, and who looks for the divine potential of me.

Because I need to cuddle in the warmth of the night with someone who thanks God for me.

With someone I feel blessed to hold.

Because marriage means opportunity to grow in love, in friendship.

Because marriage is a discipline to be added to a list of achievements.

Because marriages do not fail, people fail when they enter into marriage expecting another to make them whole.

Because, knowing this, I promise myself to take full responsibility for my spiritual, mental and physical wholeness.

I create me.

I take half of the responsibility for my marriage.

Together we create our marriage.

Because with this understanding the possibilities are limitless.

Mari Nichols-Haining

WORDS TO LIVE BY

Always be there for one another; to help, create; live life fully.

Encourage, share, show that you care, even without the need for words.

Work for common goals; simply enjoy!

Walk hand in hand along the paths that will take you to your dreams.

Make beautiful and lasting memories.

Create a relationship strong enough to weather any clouds that come your way.

Always communicate.

Fill your home with smiles.

Realize how wonderful it is that the two of you are together.

And know that the bond you share; and the love that encircles you, can last forever.

Author Unknown

WEDDING QUOTES

"Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction."

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

"Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies."

Aristotle

"Love and kindness are never wasted. They always make a difference. They bless the one who receives them, and they bless you, the giver."

Barbara De Angelis

"Marriage is not a noun; it's a verb. It isn't something you get. It's something you do. It's the way you love your partner every day."

Barbara De Angelis

"Marriage is a wonderful invention; but then again, so is a bicycle repair kit."

Billy Connolly

"A blessed thing it is for any man or woman to have a friend, one human soul whom we can trust utterly, who knows the best and worst of us, and who loves us in spite of all our faults."

Charles Kingsley

"Love is a friendship set to music."

E. Joseph Cossman

"Today I begin to understand what love must be, if it exists. When we are parted, we each feel the lack of the other half of ourselves. We are incomplete like a book in two volumes of which the first has been lost. That is what I imagine love to be: incompleteness in absence."

Edmond and Jules de Goncourt

Wedding Poems, Quotes, Rituals and Traditions

"People shop for a bathing suit with more care than they do a husband or wife. The rules are the same. Look for something you'll feel comfortable wearing. Allow for room to grow."

Erma Bombeck

"He is not a lover who does not love forever."

Euripides

"Love doesn't make the world go round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile."

Franklin P. Jones

"Two souls with but a single thought. Two hearts that beat as one."

Friedrich Halm

"A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person."

Germaine Greer

"There is nothing nobler or more admirable than when two people who see eye-to-eye keep house as man and wife, confounding their enemies and delighting their friends."

Homer

"Only from the heart can you touch the sky."

Jalaluddin Rumi

"If you have love, you don't need to have anything else, and if you don't have it, it doesn't matter much what else you have."

Sir James M. Barrie

"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage."

Lao Tzu

Wedding Poems, Quotes, Rituals and Traditions

"Let the wife make the husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave."

Martin Luther

"There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage."

Martin Luther

"At the touch of love everyone becomes a poet."

Plato

"Real love stories never have endings."

Richard Bach

"Remember that happiness is a way of travel, not a destination."

Roy Goodman

"We come to love not by finding the perfect person, but by learning to see an imperfect person perfectly."

Sam Keen

"This day I will marry my friend, the one I laugh with, live for, dream with, love."

Unknown Author

"You are always beautiful to someone who loves you."

Unknown Author

"You don't marry someone you can live with...You marry the person who you cannot live without."

Unknown Author

"Love is a canvas furnished by Nature and embroidered by imagination."

Voltaire

WEDDING RITUALS

HANDBASTING

Handfasting was used in many ancient cultures and traditionally involved the Bride and Groom facing each other, joining right hand to right hand, then left hand to left hand. Their hands were then bound by a ceremonial wrap, cloth or piece of rope.

It can be incorporated into your modern day wedding, usually taking place at the beginning or the end of the ceremony and you may opt for your hands to be tied with ribbon or any piece of cloth that has meaning to you.

During the handfasting process you may have your wedding Celebrant speak of the two of you joining together as one, or you may like to make promises to each other as each stage of the ribbon is wrapped and tied.

LOVERS' KNOT

The Celebrant or someone special to the couple says the following:

"This silken ribbon close entwines two hearts in love together.
Friendship's dearest pledge is made in joy forever.
United you will walk through life sharing Earth's pain and pleasure.
Hand in hand you shall strive for achievement in life together.
Should the path be rough and thorny let love sustain and guide you.
Should the way be strewn with roses let the joy of life sustain you."

The chosen person now loosely ties a silken ribbon around the Bride and Groom's wrists so they are joined together, then says,

"Now I tie this lovers' knot you two are joined in oneness.
Gentle are the bounds of this union.
Pull one way and the bonds are strengthened, pull the other way
and they are loosened.
Store the knot in a silken purse and it will remain tied forever."

The Bride and Groom then slide their hands out of the ribbon leaving the knot intact. The ribbon may be put on display throughout the reception and is later stored in a silken purse (or something similar) in the Bride and Groom's home.

MAKING A WEDDING QUILT

If the Bride or Groom, or someone close to them is adept at sewing, consider making a wedding quilt which can either be hung on the wall or used on the newlyweds bed.

To do this, when sending out the wedding invitations include a request for guests to bring a piece of material of their choice, measuring approximately 25cm square (you may wish to specify a colour or type of fabric) to the ceremony or reception.

At some stage during the ceremony or reception, guests are asked to bring the material pieces forward and place them in a basket. An explanation is then given that the pieces will be sewn together to form a wedding quilt.

PLANTING A TREE

The Bride and Groom are surrounded by their family and guests, standing in an area of special significance to the couple, where they are going to plant their marriage tree.

The Bride or Groom then says, "Here we are in this beautiful place surrounded by trees. To celebrate the occasion of our marriage, we have decided to plant the seed of a tree: our marriage tree. A tree is symbolic of much in a relationship, representing the cycle of life and growing together. Like a relationship, a tree needs nourishment and care. We hope to grow old together under this tree, and perhaps one day our grandchildren will play in its branches. So now together we plant a seed, and nourish it with water, as we plant the seed of our union which we will nurture with love."

The couple then plant the seed.

SHARING OF WINE

During the ceremony, wine is poured into a goblet.

The Celebrant or someone close to the Bride and Groom says, "The glass of wine is symbolic of the Cup of Life. As you share this wine, you promise to share all that the future may bring. All the sweetness that the Cup of Life may hold for you will be sweeter because you drink it together, and whatever drops of bitterness it may contain will be less because they are shared."

The Bride and Groom then drink from the goblet.

The Celebrant or special person then says, "We wish you all the blessings that life can bring: peace and harmony; love and companionship; happiness and prosperity; all the days of your life."

THE ROSE CEREMONY

The Groom hands his Bride a long-stemmed white rose and says, "(Bride's name) take this rose as a symbol of my love. It began as a tiny bud and blossomed, just as my love has grown and blossomed for you."

The Bride then places the rose into a vase filled with water and says, "I take this rose, a symbol of your love, and I place it into water, a symbol of life. For, just as this rose cannot survive without water, I cannot survive without you."

The Groom then says, "In remembrance of this day, I will give you a white rose each year on our anniversary, as a reaffirmation of my love and the vows spoken here today."

The Bride responds with, "And I will refill this vase with water each year, ready to receive your gift, in reaffirmation of the new life you have given me and the vows spoken here today."

The Bride and Groom then join hands around the vase and the Groom says, "And so, this rose will be a symbolic memory of my commitment to you. This hour I vow to be a faithful husband to you, to comfort you, honour you, respect you and cherish you for as long as we live."

The Bride then says, "And I commit myself to you, to be a faithful wife, to comfort you, honour you, respect you and cherish you for as long as we live."

THE SAND CEREMONY

The Celebrant or someone special to the Bride and Groom says the following:

“(Bride’s name) and (Groom’s name), you have just sealed your relationship by the giving and receiving of rings, and this covenant is a relationship agreement between two people who agree that they will commit themselves to one another throughout their lives.

The most beautiful example of this partnership is the marriage relationship.

You have committed here today to share the rest of your lives with each other.

This relationship is symbolised through the pouring of these two individual containers of sand one representing you, (Bride’s name) and all that you were, all that you are, and all that you will ever be, and the other representing you, (Groom’s name), and all that you were and all that you are, and all that you will ever be.

As these two containers of sand are poured into the third container, the individual containers of sand will no longer exist, but will be joined together as one.

Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be.

Far more important than your individuality is now the reality that you are no longer two but one, never to be separated one from the other.”

The Bride and Groom both empty their individual containers of sand into the third container.

The Sand Ceremony may be performed using salt in place of sand.

THE UNITY CANDLE

The unity candle, along with two taper candles, are placed on a small table near the altar.

The two taper candles represent the couple as individuals and they are used to light the single unity candle, as a visible symbol of the Bride and Groom's commitment to each other.

The two taper candles are lit first and this may be done by the Bride and Groom's parents, as a symbol of the two families coming together as one; the Maid Of Honour and Best Man; or by the Bride and Groom themselves.

The unity candle process can then be done in one of two ways:

Option 1 - The Bride and Groom use the taper candles to light the unity candle together, and extinguish their own individual candles, signifying they have now become one.

Option 2 - The Bride and Groom use the taper candles to light the unity candle together, but keep their own individual candles burning, signifying they have kept their individuality but also have a shared commitment.

The Bride and Groom are then both responsible for keeping the united flame bright for the rest of their days.

TRADITIONS FROM VARIOUS CULTURES

BELGIUM TRADITIONS

To symbolize the union of the two families, wedding invitations are printed on two sheets of paper. One sheet from the Bride's family and the other from the Groom's family.

As the Bride walks up the aisle, she will stop to hand her mother a single flower. They then embrace. During the recessional, the Bride and Groom walk to the Groom's mother and the Bride hands her mother-in-law a single flower and they then embrace.

On her wedding day, the Bride carries a handkerchief that has her name embroidered on it. After the wedding, this handkerchief is framed and hung up in a place of honour as it is an important family heirloom. When the next female member of the Bride's family marries, the handkerchief is removed from its frame, the new Bride's name is embroidered onto it, and she carries it on her wedding day. This continues from generation to generation.

CHINESE TRADITIONS

In China, red is the colour of choice for dresses, invitations, bonbonniere and envelopes for cash gifts as well as being featured throughout the Bride and Groom's homes on the day.

It is traditional to marry on the half-hour so the happy couple start their life together on an 'upswing' with the hands of the clock moving up not down.

FRENCH TRADITIONS

The Groom greets his Bride at her home, on the day of the wedding and he then leads her to the church.

At the church, children stretch white ribbons across the couple's path, blocking the entrance. The Bride cuts the ribbons then she and her Groom enter the church, followed by their guests.

The church is filled with flowers and incense and the ceremony takes place beneath a silk canopy, which is thought to protect the couple from descending malice. This same silk canopy is later used for the baptism of their child.

GREEK ORTHODOX TRADITIONS

The Koumbrao (religious sponsor) exchanges the rings three times, symbolising the unbreakable and united strength of the couple.

The Priest joins the right hands of the Bride and Groom, saying: "To join your servants, unite them in one mind and one flesh." Their hands then remain together throughout the service representing the oneness of the couple.

The Bride and Groom are symbolically crowned as the king and queen of the household. The crowns are attached by white ribbon, strengthening the bond and signifying the glory and honour that God crowns them with.

A readings describes a wedding in Cana where Jesus performed the miracle of changing water into wine. A glass of wine is shared between the couple, as a symbol of combined life.

The Priest leads the Bride and Groom around a table on the altar three times, as a hymn is sung.

After a blessing, the Priest removes their crowns and separates their hands as they are now joined in marriage.

Once the MC announces the entrance of the newlyweds at the reception, a white ribbon is held in their path by the page boy and flower girl or may be extended across an archway made of flowers or balloons. This symbolises the crossing of a new and exciting threshold for the wedding couple.

HINDU TRADITIONS

The Bride and close female family members have henna or Mehendi painted in intricate patterns on their hands and feet to symbolise the strength of love in a marriage.

Traditional ceremonies take place outside under a canopy known as a Mandap. A Hindu Priest chants ancient mantras and the couple exchange vows and promise loyalty and love to the other, around a sacred fire that is lit under the canopy. Then the Bride and Groom walk around the fire seven times.

The fire symbolises illumination of the mind, knowledge and happiness as well as purity and spirituality.

ITALIAN TRADITIONS

Sunday is believed to be the luckiest day to get married on.

The colour green is thought to bring good luck to the newlyweds. The tradition of something blue is replaced with something green.

A ribbon is tied at the front of the wedding chapel to symbolise the bond between the soon to be married couple.

The Bride and Groom release a pair of white doves after the ceremony, to symbolize their love and happiness.

JAPANESE TRADITIONS

The Bride wears a white kimono and an elaborate headpiece covered with ornaments to invite good luck at the ceremony. Then she changes into a red kimono, and later into a western-style gown.

During the ceremony the Bride and Groom's families face each other.

JEWISH TRADITIONS

The Bride circles the Groom seven times with her mother and future mother-in-law. (The number seven is symbolic of the days of creation).

The Rabbi recites the marriage blessings over a goblet of wine, then the Bride and Groom drink from the goblet.

Some couples, rather than receiving gifts, will ask that a donation to charity be made instead, as Jewish tradition emphasises the importance of giving to the poor during times of personal happiness.

THAI TRADITIONS

During the ceremony, the Bride and Groom sit together on the floor, each with their hands pressed together and their fingers pointing up under their chins.

The Bride and Groom's hands are linked by a chain of flowers.

TURKISH TRADITIONS

Before walking down the aisle, single bridesmaids and friends sign the sole of the Bride's shoe. Towards the end of the night, the person's name which is least visible will be next to marry.