

4 Words That Will Predict Your Marriage

By Carly Cylinder

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Having a B.A. in psychology in no way makes me a psychologist (no matter what my parents think). But working in the wedding industry has inadvertently turned me into a pseudo-therapist -- a judge of character, if you will. When I meet couples for the first time during their consultations for wedding flowers, do I, the lovely innocent florist, make subliminal summations on the probable longevity of their marriage? Of course I do! And I think I've got it down to a science.

Now we all know that this is the bride's wedding. You can laugh because it's true. Sometimes the groom will come along to appease his bride (as he should), and every once in a while, you have a groom who is totally into the planning, which at times makes my head nod to the side like a dog and yet is very cool at the same time. He speaks! He has thoughts! And opinions! I've noticed that there are some couples that you meet where you know that this is meant to be. They didn't settle, they found love, they make each other laugh and it is just easy. Although her fiancé may not give a darn if there are roses or dahlias or freesia or mums in their wedding, she will ask him, "What do you think?"

That one little question, four little words tied together to show a mutual respect, is one of the best, if not the best, questions couples can ask each other. Those are the four words that can predict the success of a marriage. This applies to any aspect of life: From asking each other's opinions about where to eat or where to vacation to decorating the home to bouncing business advice off each other -- asking "What do you think?" shows that you value your partner's opinion.

Over the years, I've observed this one question being asked more than any other, and numerous times throughout a consultation or meeting. The groom appreciates that he's being asked his thoughts and opinions, and most of the time it will open communication for other aspects of the wedding, and steer the conversation into topics neither of them had thought about. It also generates ideas and options, leading to responses such as "I love it," "Sounds good," or "Well, what if we did this instead?" This kind of open communication is a testament to a couple's level of communication, which is an absolute predictor of marriage longevity.

This may seem obvious to us when we see those who are with their Mr. or Mrs. Right, but it's apparent that this is missing from those other couples where something's a bit ... off. These brides, or grooms, don't realize that they don't really care about what their significant other thinks -- they aren't being rude (well, sometimes they are), but they just simply don't care about their soon-to-be spouse's opinion. It doesn't dawn on them to say, "What do you think?" Now that's one red flag I think we can all agree on.

While this isn't a scientific longitudinal study, it appears to be a good indicator about the direction the couple is heading in the long run. So I leave you with this: The next time you find yourself running the show, take a moment to pause and ask your partner, "What do you think?"