



## TO GET HITCHED OR NOT?

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Mignon McLaughlin once said, "A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person." " This has never rung truer than in today's modern times, where 'I do's' are exchanged just as easily as accusations of infidelity and divorce papers. Marriage also requires that each spouse find ways to express their love for one another and find more endearing qualities about the other. Failure to do this often leads to hasty separations that both cost a lot and devastate at the same time.

Unfortunately, the idea of staying together through thick and thin with one and the same partner for the rest of eternity has proven unpalatable for some, thus bringing forth the concept of living together without the benefit of marriage. This option might prove a more practical way of getting a partner, without the hassles brought about by subsequent separation, but who really stands to lose more in such arrangements?

The uncertainties inherent in married relationships have led some to choose to remain single. Such people would rather not go through marriage for fear of getting disappointed a few years down the road. At least, they claim, they wouldn't have to answer to anyone for their decisions and actions, much less account for their mistakes and shortcomings. This group also has a certain grain of truth in their argument. But the fact remains that when many of them fall madly and deeply in love, they will also opt for marriage.

Marriage is always a two-way street, where both partners must learn to give and graciously receive, often with the giving part more comprehensive than the receiving. Unconditional love means you never count the costs, and partake unselfishly of the fruits. That marriage requires a balancing act is true. But when the balancing act proves to be too overwhelming for one, there won't be anywhere else to go but out.

Finding the right partner is not really as essential as being the right partner to the one you love. Adoration, even of the ultimate degree, will eventually yield to endless abhorrence if the relationship is not taken care of. Partners should eternally seek ways to make the other feel that he/she has made the perfect choice. Those who are too lazy and caught up to even bother looking their best for their partner will often live to regret it. Responsibilities must be carried out with commitment and dedication to the welfare of the one loved, especially when the children come along.

Marriage is not the easiest relationship to get into. It's also a continuous journey that might have many pit stops along the way, but promises to be fruitful and without end when it is made to work.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What advice will you give someone who is considering getting married? What about for someone contemplating divorce?
2. How different are getting married and simply living together without marriage? What are the possible consequences of living together without marriage?
3. Is there a particular married couple you admire? Why?
4. What are the possible consequences of getting divorced?
5. Would you rather get married or stay single? Why or why not?