

Is it Just Wedding Jitters?

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You're in love. You've decided to get married. It has been fun planning each stage of your pending nuptials, and the big day is just around the corner—one month away. You should be happy, right? You've met the person you want to spend the rest of your life with—or have you?

"It's crucial to determine whether these second thoughts are indications that you should back out [of the wedding], or simply that you're making a huge life change, and that always brings stress," says Dr. Judith Sherven, co-author of *The Smart Couple's Guide to the Wedding of Your Dreams, Planning Together For Less Stress and More Joy*. (New World Library, 2005) "If you're certain that you want to marry, and are simply having jitters, that's normal."

If you are starting to have doubts, take our quiz and find out if you're having second thoughts about marriage, or simply pre-wedding jitters?

1. Your soon-to-be-spouse begins to ask you a few questions about your vows to each other over dinner one night, so you:

- A. Think about how if a tornado occurred just a few minutes before your wedding and swept your catering facility away, it wouldn't be your fault the wedding didn't actually happen.
- B. Think about how to deal with your nerves that day when you profess your love for each other in front of all your friends and family.

2. When friends and family ask you, "How are the wedding plans coming along?" you:

- A. Feel a pit swelling in your stomach, and try to blow off the question by changing the subject.
- B. Say you are starting to get nervous, and are hoping all the events unfold as planned!

3. When finalizing all plans with wedding vendors who will help orchestrate your wedding day, you:

- A. Find yourself asking if they would give a partial refund if, for some unexplained reason, the wedding didn't happen.
- B. Find anxiety building as you fork over final payments, because that means the big day is almost here.

4. During the last month of your engagement, everything your future spouse says pertaining to the pending nuptials:

- A. Annoys you to the point that you suddenly have a "short fuse," and find yourself arguing with him/her constantly.
- B. Makes you little nervous, but you try to relax yourself, and work through the anxiety you may be feeling.

5. When trying to balance work and wedding planning, which can be a full time job in itself, you often find yourself:

- A. Delving into your work, and leaving the wedding part of your day to the last minute while blaming your spouse for not doing his/her share of the planning.
- B. A bit stressed and sleep deprived because you are trying to juggle both, and do each well.

6. You bump into an Ex boy/girlfriend in a bar or nightclub, so you:

- A. Find yourself confessing that you don't know if you can spend

the rest of your life with one person, and you are not sure you made the right decision by breaking up with him/her in the past.

- B. Explain you're nervous about the whole marriage thing, but think you are making the right decision to wed this person.

7. When your best friend, who is single, talks about his/her vacation plans that include laying in the sun all day, and partying all night, you:

- A. Relish every word, and wonder to yourself why you aren't going with him/her.

B. Find yourself wishing you could go, but then thinking about how your honeymoon will be great, especially because the actual wedding day will be over.

Give yourself five points for every "A," and three points for each "B."

Results:

If your score is 25 or above, you're having serious second thoughts about getting married. If you're truly having second thoughts, it's important to share your feelings with your future spouse. "Not only should these feelings be explored as a test of whether the relationship can handle deep truths or not, but also to determine whether the wedding

should go forward," says Dr. Jim Sniechowski, co-author of *The Smart Couple's Guide to the Wedding of Your Dreams, Planning Together For Less Stress and More Joy*. (New World Library, 2005). "Postponing or canceling a wedding is always better than a divorce later on. Solid, loving marriages can handle all feelings and experiences that arise in daily living, and feelings about getting married are terrific tests."

If you've scored 24 or below you are more likely having normal pre-wedding jitters, which can be remedied with a few stress-busting techniques. "Pre-wedding jitters are feelings of generalized anxiety due to the stress of the wedding—a life altering decision," explains Debbie Mandel, author of *Addicted to Stress* (Wiley, 2008). "You need to sort out: Is it you, or is it the stress of the wedding ceremony and celebration? Perfectionism and the endless to-do list will sap your vitality, and cause stressors to overwhelm you. The dream wedding can be an impossibility to aim for as things inevitably go wrong with flowers, music, caterer, etc. What kind of "stuff" can you eliminate from the wedding plans to simplify and ease up on yourself?" To relax, try: breathing, exercise, yoga, meditation, or hot baths!

