

Never get married in a flurry

Congratulations are in order. Our Romeo and Juliet have decided it's time to tie the knot. Now you may think this was the hardest part? Wrong

Organising and surviving the wedding day can cause even greater anxiety.

Anticipation of this great event, and the desire to make it perfect, can be so filled with stress that the couple may be exhausted by the time they get to the altar.

In some cases families get so involved in wedding preparations that the couple feel as if they've been left out.

So what can you do about it?

It's important to keep your relationship in perspective because there will be times when outside stress can test your love.

Our Romeo and Juliet need to take time out to create space for themselves each week in the mad flurry leading up to the wedding.

Don't talk wedding plans then. It's your time to reconnect and remember why you want to spend your lives together.

One tricky area can be if Juliet wants a big white wedding in a cathedral while Romeo wants sarongs and sunsets on a beach.

You need to talk about this one and work out how you can bring these completely different pictures into one marriage.

Be creative. Put your heads together and come up with something that gives you both something of what you want.

Compromise is the key here.

The second difficult area can be if the bride and her mother have different expectations.

If this rings a familiar bell to you, you may be stuck in the "child" role rather than an adult who is getting married.

Perhaps you feel that having the wedding the way your mother wishes is the last big responsibility you will fulfil towards your family. This thinking is flawed because there will always be another big event when you and your parents' expectations will differ.

The answer is to find a way as a couple to deal with your families.

Don't submit to emotional blackmail. The wedding is supposed to be about the bride and groom, not the parents.

The tension of the wedding build-up is best handled by supporting each other.

If you admit that this is really hard, you'll avoid turning your relationship into a battleground.

Just recognising you are both struggling with how to juggle your families' expectations can be a big help in reducing stress.

At least the wedding day will give you some lovely photos to share as you embark on the exciting journey through your lives.

And there's always the honeymoon. Even the most domineering parents won't be around to get in the way of what you and your new spouse really want.

Survival tips

- **Take time to be together as a couple and talk about something other than the wedding preparations**
- **Remember that this is your wedding, not your parents' wedding**
- **If you're suffering from too much pre-wedding build-up, admit it to your partner**
- **Try to laugh the tension off and remember there is a whole lifetime after the wedding day.**