

love



**THINGS
YOU'VE
GOT TO
HASH
OUT
BEFORE
GETTING
HITCHED**

Getting that rock on your finger is only the first step. Planning your perfect forever comes next! *Cosmo* tells you how to get your happy every after right

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MONEY TALKS

Everyone has a money personality (be it big spender or saver). But don't fret if you think nothing of splashing out Dhs1,000 for a brand-new pair of boots compared to your partner's 'think on it' money personality. Dr Terri Orbuch, relationship expert and author of *5 Simple Steps to Take Your Marriage From Good to Great*, says you don't have to be on the same page when it comes to finances but "it's important to know your partner's expectations and values".

Admittedly, talking about finances with a partner can be slightly uncomfortable if you're used to being accountable for yourself (hello, new make-up, goodbye savings). But it's worth being honest about what you expect from your partner well before the wedding festivities commence. Are you planning to have a joint bank account, and if so, how much is each of you going to contribute to the bills and other expenses?

TIP

Sure, setting time aside for a money meeting may seem boring when the only big decision is deciding where to go for dinner. But to spice it up, why not decide how much you'll budget for date night each month?

CAREER AMBITIONS

Although careers are unpredictable, it's important to discuss where you both stand with your career goals, so there are no big surprises down the line.

If you want to stay in familiar surroundings, close to family, but your partner has always dreamt of working in another city, would you consider relocating? Alternatively, if you want to set up your own business or fancy returning to school, would your partner be happy to financially support you?



IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK

STARTING A FAMILY

Mention wedding bells and the inevitable "when will you have kids?" question pops up. But before you pick out the colour of your future child's nursery, don't just assume your partner is on the same page as you (and we're not talking about how he wants lilac and you can't stand it).

Natalie Lue, author of *Love, Care, Trust & Respect* and blogger at baggageclaim.com agrees: "Don't assume that because you love each other and share similar interests that you share the same viewpoints."

Do you both want children someday, and if so, will you be able to afford it? How will you support each other if you experience difficulty conceiving? And if one of you has a more laid-back parenting style compared to your partner's stricter approach, will you be able to compromise?

Don't be afraid of talking about what you both expect to do when the baby comes (will one of you or neither stay at home with the children?), as that could prevent resentments from building down the line.

YOUR ARGUMENT STYLE

It can be easy to get caught up in a tsunami of emotions but you and your S.O. need to be aware of how to effectively argue. If he prefers to be left alone after a big argument but you find silence hurtful, set ground rules if you want to have long-term success in your relationship. This could mean listening rather than name-calling, yelling or leaving the room suddenly. In a study conducted by Dr Terri Orbuch, couples who did these things were happier and more likely to be together over time.

And put down your phone – love coach and couples counsellor Cate Mackenzie advises couples to meet face-to-face to solve tricky issues: "Don't sort out issues on text or email. Wait until you are both calm and settled before talking through something deep."



GET INTIMATE: KNOW YOUR PARTNER'S LOVE LANGUAGE

Does your partner prefer spending quality time together instead of receiving surprise gifts or surprise sweet texts? Or does physical closeness help them feel more loved? Successful partnerships prioritise finding out the way their partner likes to receive love and feel valued. This will help you and your partner feel more appreciated and get what you want without asking.

Here's to wedded bliss... **COSMO**

TIP

With a new addition to your family, consider ways you and your partner will keep the spark alive.