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## WRITING YOUR OWN WEDDING VOWS

*"I love you. You are my best friend. Today I give myself to you in marriage. I promise to encourage and inspire you, to laugh with you, and to comfort you in times of sorrow and struggle."*

Whether you go for traditional or unique wedding vows, the purpose of them is to make promises to your partner about your commitment and love for them.

We've probably all been to weddings where the couple promises "to have and to hold from this day forward" although, these days, many couples are choosing to forgo the traditional vows in favour of writing their own.

Writing your own wedding vows gives the two of you the chance to personalise this moment and provide your guests a look into the unconditional and true love you have for one another. Every love is a one-a-kind. You can write your vows to celebrate just how incredibly special your love is.

### *Here are my top tips for writing your own vows*

Look for inspiration from all sorts of sources. You could start by looking at the traditional ones. Maybe think of TV shows and movies you have seen where there has been a wedding ceremony and re-watch those. There are also lots of examples online of vows. See if you can identify what sort of things strike a chord. Notice what sort of things don't feel right.

Discuss with your partner the sort of tone you want for your vows. Make sure you are both comfortable with what you decide and are on the same page. Should your vows be poetic, romantic, funny, irreverent, gushing, serious, religious, relaxed, formal etc.? Your vows should always feel genuine and true to you.

Once you have decided on the 'creative direction', you might want to think about whether you are going to write them together or surprise each other on The Day. Whatever you decide to do, with an agreed tone, they will match and work well together.

In the run up to finalising your vows, keep jotting down notes as and when you think of things about your relationship. You could record voice memos on your phone too. Perhaps start to think about why you have decided to get married, what makes your relationship work, what made you fall in love and what challenges are there for the future.

Begin to start coming up with your promises. I would recommend avoiding cliches unless there is a tongue firmly in cheek! Don't make them too embarrassing for your partner or too cryptic. Your guests are there to share your day and not be left feeling awkward or feeling left out by not understanding the meaning behind your vows.

In terms of length, 1 to 2 mins each is probably about right for this part of the ceremony.

And once you have finished writing your vows, practice, practice and practice them. Make sure you are really familiar with them whether or not you decide to read them on the day or memorise them. It's a good idea if both you and your partner either both read them or both learn them by heart. You can also construct them so that the Celebrant reads them and then you repeat them or so that you just say "I do" after.

A Celebrant can help you write your promises/vows. They will help you so that they are personal and unique to you, and are completely right for you both as a couple.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if there is any help or assistance I can give you.

*Jane*

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