

# Perspectives on the Transition to Marriage and Changing Marital Satisfaction

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There's nothing quite like lifelong love. A built-in best friend, lover, and someone to connect and share a long life with. Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? Marriage is an exciting – and even momentous – occasion that marks the start of a pivotal new chapter in one's life.

Despite all this, the transition to marriage has its challenges. The move to marriage involves significant changes to the dynamics of the relationship and the lives of the individuals involved.

We all know that the first year of marriage is often referred to as the "honeymoon phase." During this period newlyweds are usually still basking in the glow of their

newlywed status. They are excited to be together, sharing their lives fully, and starting their life-long journey as a married couple. During this phase, everything seems to be perfect, and there are no problems in sight. Okay, not all couples enjoy a honeymoon phase. But for those who do, the honeymoon inevitably ends and reality sets in.

Couples often enter marriage with unrealistic expectations about what their life together will be like. They may expect their partner to be perfect or to fulfill all their emotional and physical needs. When these expectations are not met, it can lead to disappointment and frustration. In fact, [45%](#) of people who divorce report that unrealistic expectations contributed to the breakdown of their marriage.

Along with unrealistic expectations, marriage brings a lot of change. The beginning of marriage is one of the most profound personal changes a person may go through. Marital satisfaction naturally [declines](#) somewhat for many couples as a result of those many things that occur during the first few years of marriage. One [study](#) showed that husbands and wives even experience modest changes in personality over the first year and a half of marriage. Wives' openness and husband's extraversion (the opposite of introversion) declined, and this was associated with declines in the couple's marital satisfaction. People encounter phases of stability and change throughout their lives because of new experiences and circumstances.

Declines in marital satisfaction may be discouraging. Some may even begin to question if they made the right decision. So, what can we do? To counterbalance the often unrealistically high expectations that burden romantic relationships we first need to be aware of these transitions and changes that will naturally occur. Marriage can provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment, even when sky-high feelings of marital bliss come down to earth.

When two individuals get married, they are embarking on a life-long journey together. This can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience, as couples work together to achieve their shared goals and dreams. With the right mindset and approach, the transition to marriage can start a lifetime process of finding richer meaning and a deeper sense of joy, even as feelings of satisfaction ebb and flow.

Check out my other blog in which I discuss the normality of decline in marital satisfaction and ways to combat it.

Jamie Shepherd is the primary author of this blog.