

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

»I take you to be my wife/husband; and I promise before God and these witnesses to be your loving and faithful husband/wife; in plenty and in want; in joy and in sorrow; in sickness and in health; as long as we both shall live.«

Marriage is one of the most important events in someone's life. It is a legal contract between two people. Such an union is often formalized at a ceremony. Ceremony could be religious or civil. Bride wears a wedding dress, which is usually white and long with a train, head-dress and veil while groom wears a formal suit and a tie.

In many countries married couple live together, share the same bed and have their own household. But not always living together means to be married. Some couples cohabitate before marriage to test whether such an arrangement might work in the long term. Other countries have different habits. For example, in Sumatra husband moves into the household of his wife's mother. People in Saudi Arabia have an arrangement called misvar marriage, where husband and wife live separately but they meet regularly.

People get married for **different reasons**. The main reason is usually love and wish for children, but it could also happen because of economic differences or religious and cultural customs. These might include arranged marriages and family obligations which is different from our marriages, because ours create obligation between two individuals, who decided for that step by themselves and nobody pushed them into. **Arranged marriages** exist in Asia, particularly in India inside the casts. That means that poor man marries poor woman and rich man marries rich woman. Here is the family obligation: father chooses the partner for his daughter. Arranged marriage often isn't built on love, women have almost no rights and no individual liberty and it is very difficult to get out.

Some couples decide to marry under few conditions. This is called **prenuptial agreemenet**. It means that they have a list of rules for their marriage, which define every little detail of their lives together: when to go to bed in the evening, what to do when arguing, what can and can't be bought in shops...

There also exist **same-sex marriages**, but they are not legal everywhere, even though there is a long history of recorded same-sex unions around the world. It is believed that same-sex marriages were celebrated in ancient Greece and Rome, some regions of China and at certain times even in ancient Europe. In modern world these marriages are big problem. Opponents have argued that they would undermine a right of children to be raised by their biological mother and father.

Usually when couple is once married, they want to star a **family**. It is a group of people affiliated by consanguinity, affinity and co-residence. In most societies family is the principal institution for the socialization and education of children. A family consisting of a mother, father and their child or children is named **nuclear family**, which is the most usual in general. We also know **extended family**, consisting of parents, children, grandparents, aunts and other relatives. **Single-parent family** has only one parent and his or her children. **Broken family** is a family in which parents have divorced. Nowadays the number of divorces is steadily incresing due to busy and stressful lifestyle, lack of time and communication.

When children grow up they usually move out and start their own household. But not all of them wants to be on their own. **Kippers**, which means "kids in parents' pocket eroding retirement savings" stands for individuals in their late twenties or early thirties that are still living with their parents. Similar terms are "parasite single" or "boomerang generation".

Some parents like having their children with them at home, but some don't. The first ones miss their kids, feel lonely and worry about them. Those who don't like their children to live with them want to be free, save money and have more space, don't want to clean after kids, have arguments or listen to parties with friends.

Children want to go away so they feel grown up and independent, escape criticism of parents, meet new people and can be financially independent but on the other side it is hard to pay rent and bills, live in a less comfortable place, miss home cooking and have no parent support.