

**David and Sharlet
03-03-03 at 3:03pm
Wedding Ceremony**

*Arlene Taylor PhD, officiating
Jill and Dustin Waters, witnesses*

*Welcome - 2:59 pm
Arlene, Jill, and Dustin walk in together*

On behalf of Dave and Sharlet, and their two witnesses, Dustin and Jill, welcome to this joyous celebration as Dave and Sharlet formalize their partnership into a legal entity. Each of you was specifically invited to attend and we are pleased you could be here. Dave and Sharlet, if you are ready, please come forward so we can begin.

Affirmation of Choice

Dave and Sharlet, do you affirm before God, your two witnesses, and gathered guests that you voluntarily choose to merge your partnership into the legal entity of matrimony?

Verify no Impediments, Bride and Groom

Does either of you know of any reason why you may not take this legal step?

Verify no Impediments, Witnesses

Do you, Jill or Dustin, know of any reason why Dave and Sharlet may not take this legal step?

Verify no Impediments, Assembled Guests

Do any of you assembled guests know of any reason why Dave and Sharlet may not take this legal step? If so, now is the time to speak. If not, as the old saying goes, *forever hold your peace*. That means keep your mouths shut. Avoid making any criticism, judgment, gossip, disclosure, or comments that would negatively impact this marriage. I take your silence as agreement of no impediments.

*3:03 pm
Pronouncement*

It is important to Dave and Sharlet that they be married at 3:03pm. Dustin, if you will please take this clock and let me know when we are 20-30 seconds away from the time.

Now therefore, at your stated request and with the concurrence of your witnesses, I, Arlene Taylor, a NCCC ordained Minister of Counseling (License # 7347678) and according to the laws of the State of California, pronounce and announce that you are legally married.

Pledge Exchange

As a preacher's kid, I always thought it was a bit like putting the cart before the horse to do the pledges before a couple was actually married. It's one thing to say what you plan to do before you're actually married, and another to verify that after the actual pronouncement. To that view, you have chosen to exchange pledges with each other as husband and wife. Please give each other your pledge as husband and wife.

License Signing

Now it is time to sign on the dotted line, so to speak. Your witnesses and I will affix our signatures to the marriage license form that will be filed with the State of California, verifying this legal partnership.

Kiss

You may now exhibit a public gesture of your affection. That means you can kiss each other--assuming you can find your way through the feathers on Sharlet's hat.

Rings

Dave and Sharlet, you have elected to exchange tangible symbols of your pledge of fidelity. Dave, you designed Sharlet's engagement ring and specifically included facets to represent Jill and Dustin. It is a sign that in establishing this legal entity, it involves not only a husband and wife, but also two children.

Now it so happens that Jill and Dustin already have a biological father and they don't need another one. What you can provide for them, Dave, is a role model of not only how to treat a partner, but also how to be real and to live authentically. In that way you have the potential to influence their lives for as long as they live and any children they may have.

Jill you have served as guardian of Sharlet's rings and Dustin, you have served as guardian of Dave's ring. At this time, please exchange rings and tell each other what these rings symbolize. Fortunately, the feathers shouldn't be much of a problem here . . .

Words of Admonition

Both of you have learned information about the brain and have practically applied it. It's one thing to learn information; it's entirely another to apply it in everyday living. I am very proud of you both. Think of it this way: in learning about brain function, your own and that of each other, and putting it to practical use, you have invested in a form of nuptial insurance. Again, I am very proud of you. For the benefit of your guests, I call attention to the fact that based on a comparison of your brain function, at least on paper you have great potential for being best friends, as well as lovers and legal partners.

Here are a few comments. About 7 or 8 pages worth for those of you who are keeping track--but it's large type. I put my comments on paper as a reminder that this is not a brain seminar and, therefore, I don't need to talk for the next six hours!

Extroversion-Introversion

Your brains both tend toward introversion. This means that your brains can take in huge amounts of data second for second and can become overloaded. Be sensitive to data overloads in yourself and in each other. That means, be available to serve as a sounding board to help each other to debrief as requested, but also be a catalyst to actively assist each other in finding space for solitude, reflection, and recharging of your brain, without taking it personally.

Sensory Preference

Your brains both appear to have a visual sensory preference. That will make sensory nurturing and affirmation relatively easy since we tend to relate to others automatically in our sensory preference unless we make a different choice. It means that your brains register feelings of love instantly when you receive visual stimuli from each other. Make it a point, a part of every day when you are together, to look directly at each other, to allow each other to see your smiles of acceptance and affirmation, to see love for each other shining from the windows of your soul.

Thinking Style Preference

In brain-function terminology you both have a FR brain lead. In essence you speak a similar brain language, which will reduce the need for translation. But you will still need to listen to each other carefully because your brains are as unique as your thumbprints and, therefore, will never perceive anything exactly the same. This is no problem as long as you realize that. Your brains also tend to stack bounded shapes . . . as visual FR's the way the stacks look will be important to you . . . and you already know not to mess with each other's stacks.

Gender Differences

Dave, you have a male brain and Sharlet you have a female brain. This means, for example, that Dave tends to excel at short term planning (and, no doubt, would have been happy to have this day arrive much sooner) while Sharlet tends to excel at long term planning (and took her time to be sure).

Avoid competition within your differences and strive for collaboration. As Carol Gilligan put it so eloquently: *One can think of the oboe and the clarinet as different. Yet when they play together, there is a sound that's not either one of them, but it does not dissolve the identity of either instrument.* So play, each of you your instrument, and play together, making a new sound.

A word of caution

When two people sign on the dotted line, as you have today, a couple of things happen in the brain. First, a goal has been reached and the brain tends to decrease the level of whole brain nurturing. We've already talked about your similar visual sensory preference. This means that you won't have so much difference between before marriage and after marriage in terms of sensory nurturing of each other. I encourage you, however, to continue whole brained nurturing, by choice. It will be an interesting journey of discovery over the next few years for you to explore the auditory and kinesthetic systems in a way that was perhaps not permitted or encouraged or even available to you earlier in life.

Second, after you have signed on the dotted line the brain begins to act out its subconsciously absorbed expectations of role. You already have some patterns of interactions developed and some of them may change, based on this brain tendency. You will likely tweak some of those patterns. That's not bad but it can be a shock, especially if you're not ready for it. So listen up!

Overreactions

If you overreact to any situation between you, it will likely be due to the surfacing of those subconsciously observed expectations of role. It will have little, if anything to do with the present moment. Rather, the overreaction will be triggered by something in the present that reminds your brain of something in the past. This means *that the reason is never the reason.*

If you truly get that, it will allow you to stop, take a deep breath, identify what your brain might have been reminded of, and separate that from the present. In this way you can avoid many disconnects that, over time, can push couples apart. View these episodes, when they occur, and they will occur although hopefully

infrequently, as gifts. Learn from them, clean up unfinished business, and forge your own roles.

Spirituality

I encourage you to remember that you are sexual, relational, and spiritual creatures. Each of you needs a spiritual relationship with the Being that created you. It will help provide you with energy for the partnership, and can enable you to live more authentically. I encourage you to nurture a spiritual relationship with your Higher Power. In the words of the poet Kahlil Gilbran: *Look about you and you shall see God everywhere. Playing with your children. Walking in the clouds, arms outstretched in lightening. Descending in rain. Smiling in flowers, and waving hands in trees.*

Laughter

Finally, remember to laugh. A lot. At yourselves, with each other. It is physiologically impossible to be angry or fearful or even very sad while you are laughing.

Prayer

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Parent, we know you have a Universe to run. And because we are part of that Universe we know that you are well aware of Dave and Sharlet on this, their wedding day. I ask a special blessing on them as they forge a new life together. Thank you for their lives and their love. Give them energy and strength, wisdom and commitment, and may they have joy, and fun, and tears, and laughter together--forever. Amen.

Poem

In the words of the poet Kahlil Gilbran:

Let there be spaces in your togetherness
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another but make not a bond of love.
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup,
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.

And stand together, yet not too near together,
For the pillars of the temple stand apart--

And the oak tree and cypress grow not in each other's shadow.
Live always so that you return home at eventide with gratitude,
And then to sleep with a prayer for your beloved in your heart
And a song of praise upon your lips.

Children Support

Jill and Dustin, children can't really make or break a relationship; they can make it easier or much more difficult. I ask you, Jill and Dustin, to affirm that you agree to do everything in your power to support and encourage this partnership.

Audience Support

As invited guests, each of you is important in Dave's and Sharlet's life or you wouldn't be here. Therefore, I ask you, their invited guests (family and friends) to affirm that you agree to do everything in your power to support and encourage this partnership. I heard your verbal assent, but Dave and Sharlet are visual. Perhaps you can wave your hands so they can see your affirmation.

Song

Jill and Dustin are going to sing a chorus--one that Dave sings to Sharlet. This will be a piece of proverbial cake for Jill's brain. For Dustin's brain, it is a clear and conscious choice, and he agreed to make that choice at Sharlet's request. When they get to the last chorus, please sing with them. Watch Jill and she will give you the cue.

Introduction

It gives me great personal pleasure to be the first to introduce to you since they became husband and wife: Dave and Sharlet, and their children Jill and Dustin.

Recognition

Before we offer toasts to the bride and groom, enjoy refreshments, cut the cake, offer our congratulations, Sharlet and Dave would like to recognize some of you so that everyone has a sense of who you are as guests.