Planning a Wedding With Anxiety

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How to Cope With Wedding Anxiety

Weddings are a time for happiness and optimism; a joyful occasion to solidify the union with the special person in your life with good music, good food and good company. Though it is joyous for many, planning a wedding can be enough to completely overwhelm someone with anxiety disorder.

Anxiety has a powerful ability to make even the most mundane tasks seem tremendously huge and impactful: choosing an outfit seems like a major undertaking; deciding what to have for dinner becomes a time-consuming journey; and planning to leave the house is an arduous challenge often skipped in favor of staying at home. If this is daily life with an anxiety disorder, just imagine the symptoms triggered by a significant milestone such as a wedding.

Some might be so worried about the interplay between their anxiety and a wedding that they choose to avoid marriage altogether. This is the true force of anxiety; it can make a blissful event a negative circumstance if you let it.

Do you want to reduce anxiety while basking in the happiest day of your life? Here's how:

Commit

Naturally you're committed — you just agreed to get married. Commitment to everything else should be easy, right? Not always.

Oftentimes, people become wrapped up in the excitement of the proposal and acceptance that they lose sight of what is to come. If you cannot be fully committed to the complete process of planning a wedding and going through with it, you will never succeed.

Be sure you accept the engagement and everything that comes with it because, over time, anxiety will begin to wear you down and force you into second-guessing your choices.

Know Yourself

Acknowledging and understanding your anxiety disorder is essential when undertaking a major life event like a wedding. This is true because anxiety disorders each have their own unique set of symptoms and issues. The specific anxiety disorder you have will dictate its impact on the wedding.

Having generalized anxiety disorder will make every decision every step of the way more challenging. The choices that seem obvious will require massive amounts of deliberation as the more difficult judgments will induce crippling amounts of anxiety.

If you have social anxiety disorder, the planning and preparation might seem like a breeze. The choices are welcomed and met with a feeling of excitement.

This all begins to change at the engagement party when hordes of people seek to offer their congratulations. You may be quickly overwhelmed with an onset of panic.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is not officially considered an anxiety disorder any longer, but it continues to share many similarities. Whereas features of OCD, like attention to detail and the focus to complete a task, can actually improve the wedding planning, fully developed OCD will negatively influence wedding planning since each task will take much longer than necessary as compulsions steal time and energy.

Maintain the Relationship

With the changes and excitement in your life, it will be paramount to maintain what led you to this position initially: the relationship with your partner. Anxiety will force you into devoting more time and energy in other areas. Also, it will encourage you to focus exclusively on your own perspective, which will ultimately take away from the relationship with your partner.

To counter this, set aside time to reconnect with them while discussing your goals, hopes and fears for the wedding and the marriage that follows. Be sure to spend as much time listening as you do speaking to help ensure a balanced approach where each of you gets your needs met.

Set Reasonable Expectations

When people plan a wedding, they have to consider finances, timelines and guest lists. You have to consider all of the above as well as your anxiety.

When you were younger, you may have envisioned your wedding as a lavish affair with hundreds of guests. Now, your social anxiety makes being around large groups extremely uncomfortable. Alternatively, when you were younger, you imagined flying to Orlando to get married at Disney World. Now your fear of flying will not allow that.

Setting expectations that are reasonable and realistic will make the wedding planning much more comfortable for you and those around you. Use the information gathered from early steps to acknowledge your comfort zone and plan an event that will push yourself only slightly beyond it. Not stretching your abilities or trying to stretch too much may end with disappointment.

Assemble Your Team

When planning a wedding with an anxiety disorder, you will benefit from a strong team in place to guide your decision-making and to offer encouragement and support. Your team can be made up of anyone — the only requirement is they offer positivity and optimism. Exclude people who are overly negative, as their tendencies may trigger your anxiety needlessly.

Once your team is established, work to delegate responsibilities as tasks to avoid placing too much pressure on you. Seeking feedback and opinions from a few trustworthy supports can aid in decision-making as well as solidifying your vision for the day. Avoid asking too many as opposing views can create additional confusion.

Address Anxiety Directly

Your wedding planning is going to evoke stress and anxiety. Though it seems like bad news, you are fortunate because you know the anxiety is coming — this provides you with the ability to prepare and prevent.

Choose to be different by making measures throughout the planning process to decrease current and future stress. Schedule spa days with friends complete with massages. Set aside time each day to mindfully reflect on

what is accomplished and what is left to do.

With your anxiety disorder, wedding planning is the perfect time to restart or reinvest in your mental health treatment. By exploring new medications or therapeutic techniques, you can prevent your anxiety from becoming more prominent and destructive.

Your big day is coming, but anxiety doesn’t have to be invited. By taking steps to commit to the process, understand your anxiety, maintain the relationship while engaging your supports, and having reasonable expectations of yourself, you can stop anxiety’s approach. Your wedding can be the fairy tale you’ve always imagined.