

The Honeymoon

The honeymoon is vacation time for the newly married couple to celebrate their new beginning. Traditionally, a honeymoon is a time to get away from family and close friends for the couple to celebrate with each other in very tender and special ways. The honeymoon can be as short as two days and as long as two weeks.

From a teenager, I have been intrigued by the word “honeymoon”. I wondered where that word comes from. Then one day, I was reading one of the children’s storybooks we had at home that had a story about the word honeymoon. This is what I can remember reading. It explained that there was a tradition of a tribe of people that required newlyweds to drink a honey mixture for moon days. Moon days are thirty days, one month.

This week, I did an online search and found this. Here’s what Wikipedia states: “The original concept involved honey wine, also called mead. Newly married couples received a month’s supply of this sweet drink made from honey. They were expected to consume it for one full moon cycle after their wedding day. This practice gave birth to the term “honey month,” which eventually became honeymoon.”

A honey mixture! Wow! Today, most couples do not have a month of honeymoon. Neither do they drink a money mixture. However, it is great that most, if not all, couples do have a honeymoon: a short vacation to celebrate the marriage. Occasionally, a couple I am preparing for marriage would tell me that they cannot afford a honeymoon. Hence, they will be going back to work the following day. They would say that they would plan for it a year later.

I would quickly explain to them the purpose of the honeymoon and suggest that spending at least two nights in a local hotel could be their honeymoon, even though they can still plan for a bigger one in a year. I would remind them that celebrating the beginning of a life-long journey, marriage, is worth doing, even if it is not grand. I am happy to say that all of the couples I suggested to do this were happy to have had that “short honeymoon.” They never regretted it.

My wife and I very own honeymoon, about fifty years ago, was at the brother-in-law and his wife’s little bungalow at the rear of their home in Port-Au-Price, Haiti. We spent one entire week there with no expense. It was wonderful. We got married in Martinique (my wife’s native home), and the flight back to Jamaica, where we were still college students, stopped in Haiti. It would be thrilling and free of cost to take up the offer to spend our honeymoon in Haiti.

There are many parents, grandparents, or other relatives or friends who would be delighted to offer a “free honeymoon” for the couple they know who would be getting married. I encourage families not to let their relatives not have a honeymoon because they cannot afford a trip to Florida, Europe, Thailand, or a Family Island. Offer them your extra cottage for free. But remember, it is to be private. Do not see or disturb them.

Let's discuss further about planning for the honeymoon. In the article "Who Pays for the Honeymoon? The Answer Will Likely Surprise You," states: "In older traditions, it was customary for the groom's family to cover the cost of the honeymoon, while the bride's family typically paid for the wedding itself. . . . However, this standard has evolved with time. With modern couples, it's more common for them to fund their own post-nuptial getaway, split the costs between their families, or even ask guests to contribute to such a vacation, she says. "There's no one-size-fits-all rule anymore!"

Today, older, responsible adults are getting married. They both have successful career paths and substantial income. Thus, they are organizing, planning and financing their own weddings. If parents give funds towards it, it is considered a bonus blessing, not necessarily a requirement.

I truly believe it is appropriate for parents to plan to contribute financially to their children's weddings. I am speaking about first-time marriages and younger adults first starting out. I am not referring to senior couples or divorced couples getting married again. That's their own doing. There are parents who truly cannot afford to give their children any funds due to a lack of employment or underemployment. That is okay.

Truthfully, lack of funds for a grand wedding ceremony, reception or honeymoon should not be a reason to not get married. The cost for a wedding in The Bahamas would be, first, the cost of the application to get married, which is \$100, and then, if there is a small fee for a marriage officer, if the church pastor is not performing the wedding for free. In addition, add the cost for the two nights in a local hotel. The total cost to do all of this can be as little as \$1000.

If you are getting married, make sure you have a honeymoon right away. It is a wonderful way to celebrate the beginning of a life-long journey.

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