

## *After The Honeymoon: Adjusting to Living Together*

Your wedding was absolutely perfect, just as you imagined it. You've had a dream honeymoon. On your way home, as you're sitting on the plane next to your new spouse, it hits you: from this moment on, you'll actually be living with this person for the rest of your life!

When you've never lived with a person before, cohabitation is not always a piece of cake. Planning a wedding may have been stressful, but how about planning a home for the two of you? Many couples agree that getting used to living together is even harder than getting used to being married. Just as marriage itself, living with your spouse also takes plenty of work, patience and understanding from both parties.

Follow these tips for a stress-free adjustment to living with each other:

♥ Discuss all decisions, whether they are significant financial issues or simply the color of your bathroom. It may not seem like a big deal to make small choices without your spouse, but disappointments over smaller decisions may add up---and the left-out spouse may end up feeling resentful towards the one making all the decisions. It is best to include each other in all planning.

♥ Set your monthly budget and discuss financial planning even before you move in together. It will save you from future fights and headaches!

♥ Be sure that your living quarters are agreeable to both of you. If you are a hermit, while your spouse prefers lots of light, you will need to find an apartment or living situation that partially accommodates both of you. You may need to compromise quite a bit, but your mutual happiness will be all worth it!

♥ Discuss your roles and the division of labor in the house before you move in. This can also avoid future disagreements.

♥ Be sure to give each other as much space as needed. Some of the most common disagreements after moving in together arise simply because one or both partners needs a bit of time to him/herself. Visiting friends or going out by yourself may just give you the space you need to miss your spouse.

♥ Learn not to "sweat the small stuff." Does that toothpaste cap really bother you enough to give your spouse the silent treatment for a month? Getting used to one another's daily habits and quirks may be quite a task---so be sure to pick your battles wisely. Of course, you should be able to expect the same from your partner.

♥ Talk it out. Discuss disagreements calmly before they escalate into huge fights. You may just find that you're both ALMOST on the same page!