



# Video Course Worksheets

These exercises are designed to help you  
deepen your experience of being engaged.

Complete them as you view the video course the first time.  
Then revisit the worksheets as your experiences, emotions  
and thoughts evolve throughout your engagement.

Questions? Feel free to contact me:

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## Video 1: All About You

### **Turn Your Feeling System Back On**

Are you trying to pick and choose your emotions?  
To try to feel “only happy”?

What emotions have you been trying to box up and not deal with?  
Do you remember specific moments when you chose not to “go there”?  
Becoming conscious of the moments you have chosen to feel vs. not feel by noting them here.

## Video 1: All About You

### **Grieving the End of Your Single Life**

What have been your meat-aisle or pre-dinner party moments, when the grief about the ending of your single life suddenly strikes you in the gut, seemingly out of nowhere? When have you felt bouts of anger about the changes going on in your life?

Becoming aware of these moments – and knowing they are helping you consciously end your single life and make the change into married life – will help you NOT PATHOLOGIZE them.

With practice, you will become more adept at riding the emotional waves...if you take them as a healthy, necessary part of this transition, and NOT as evidence you shouldn't get married.

Keep a running list below, and write about your emotional reactions.

## **Video 1: All About You**

### **Letting Go**

**What aspects of your single life are you sad to see ending?**

**What parts of your identity as a single woman are you scared to give up?**

**What parts of your identity as a single woman are you angry to give up?**

**What aspects of your single life are you relieved and happy to see ending?**

## Video 1: All About You

### Brainiac Brides

Most brides working with me readily admit to their tendencies to over-analyze. They take their feelings of grief and loss and anger about the endings in their lives as FACT that they shouldn't get married. As data, like this:

If I'm feeling sad/angry about anything, at any time during my engagement,  
then I shouldn't get married.

Brainiac brides must challenge these assumptions by incorporating the info about healthy, appropriate grief at the ending of their single lives, like this:

If I'm feeling sad,  
then I am grieving this specific aspect of the end of my single life.

If I'm feeling angry,  
then I am angry that this specific aspect of my single life is coming to a close.

Practice reformulating your if/then statements below:

If I'm feeling sad,  
then I am grieving \_\_\_\_\_ of the end of my single life.

If I'm feeling angry,  
then I am angry that \_\_\_\_\_ of my single life is coming to a close.

## Video 1: All About You

### **Young Brides**

If you're marrying very young or one of your first deep relationships, your mourning process involves grieving the endings of "what could have been." You need to spend some time consciously grieving and letting go of all the unknown handsome strangers, dating life, relationships and sexual experiences that you won't be having as a result of getting married.

This is important work for you to do, by yourself. I've found that if brides don't individually mourn "what could have been," they punish their fiancés and are angry at them for proposing...even if getting married is exactly what, deep down, the bride wants.

What experiences are you sad that you will not have?

## Video 2: It's A Family Affair

### Drawing Your Own Family Map

Drawing your family map and seeing the emotional relationship within your family laid out in black and white can help you become aware of the emotional work you may need to do during your engagement.

1. To begin with, write down all the members in your family by generation, in the style of a family tree.
2. Next, draw your emotional relationships with your family members. For example, if you have a healthy, emotionally balanced relationship with your father that allows for connectedness and intimacy as well as separation and individuality, indicate that with a single line (I). If you're extremely (perhaps unhealthy) close to your mother, mark that with a double line (II). If you have a rocky relationship with a sibling, use a jagged line (VVV). If you don't have a relationship with your father, indicate the cutoff with a broken line (- - -).
3. Next, draw all other family relationships, including healthy, overly close, difficult, and cutoff relationships.
4. Now, step back and look at your family map. With whom are you overly close and entwined? With whom are you distant? What role do you play in your family? How has your role affected your relationships and your ability to be fully "in" your relationship with your fiancé?
5. List major events in your family in one corner of your map. Brides have included: The death of a parent or influential grandparent. Your parent's divorce, and year. Include any remarriages (and year), stepparents and stepsiblings. Reflect on other major events that happened in your family's lifetime – a serious illness, an accident, a move, a financially unstable time. You may find yourself reflecting on and regretting these challenging times in your and your family's life during your engagement.
6. Draw your fiancé into your family map. Use one single line (I) to represent your (hopefully) emotionally balanced and healthy relationship. Reflect on the impact of his joining your family on your family members and your relationships with them. Might your mother or father feel replaced by him? How do you think your siblings are reacting to this new guy in the family?
7. Sit back and reflect on your family map. What are the emotional dynamics going on right now? What's changed recently? What unfinished family business do you have to attend to?
8. Walk your fiancé through drawing his family map. Then lay your maps side-by-side for a bird's-eye view of the two family situations you're combining in marriage.

## Video 2: It's A Family Affair

### My Family Map/His Family Map

Grandparents

Grandparents

Parents

You & Your Siblings

#### Draw Emotional Relationships Among Family Members

- I "healthy"
- II "overly-close"
- Vvvv conflictual
- cutoff

#### List Major Family Events



## Video 2: It's A Family Affair

### **What's Your Unfinished Family Business?**

On the threshold of marriage, most brides find themselves tying up loose ends on some unfinished family business – revisiting old wounds or difficult times, renegotiating complex relationships.

It's often this unfinished family business that is the root cause of your upset and angst – not this wonderful man you want to marry. Distinguishing that, discerning that, understanding that it's NOT him, but your own family issues, is an essential step.

So...what's your unresolved family issue? Your unfinished family business?

I've helped brides work through their feelings about growing up in a family with addiction, death, depression, detachments, divorce, emotional enmeshments and estrangements, financial hardships, immigration, mental illness, traumatic events.

What is your unfinished business? Is it grieving an event? Renegotiating a relationship? Write about this below.

## Video 3: Let's Talk About Your Relationship

### The Developmental Stage of Your Relationship

This exercise is particularly helpful for brides who've dated their fiancés for many years before getting engaged. It is designed to

- a) give you context for why you aren't spending entire weekends naked in bed
- b) remind you that you DID have that stage
- c) encourage you to rekindle the falling-in-love feeling by reminiscing with your fiancé

**When did you meet?**

**When did you start dating?**

**When did things get serious?**

**When did you fall in love?**

**When did you spend entire weekends naked in bed?**

**What are 5 words to describe the falling-in-love era of your relationship?**

## Video 3: Let's Talk About Your Relationship

### Cluster Stress

The wedding industry makes you feel like the ONLY thing happening in your life is planning your wedding. But that's just not true.

Most brides I work with have many other demands on them, in addition to planning the wedding: fulltime jobs, job changes, graduate school, family responsibilities, loved ones who are ill or die, their own health issues, moving away, buying houses together, moving in together...the list goes on.

What other major stressors do you have going on in your life right now?

Name them below and keep this in mind that your feelings of anxiety or upset may not be about him or the wedding. The feelings may be about the other stressors in your life.

## Video 3: Let's Talk About Your Relationship

### **Why Him?**

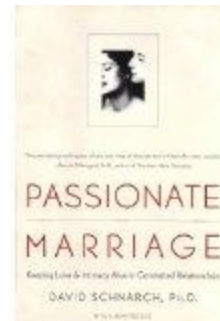
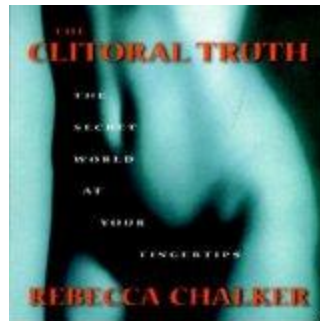
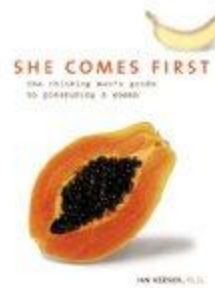
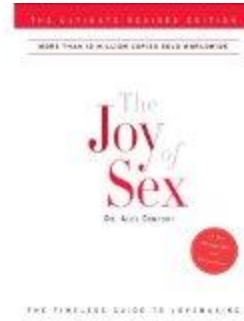
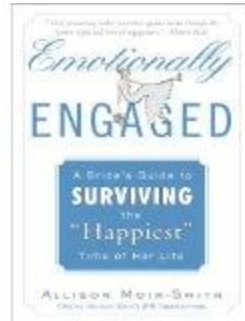
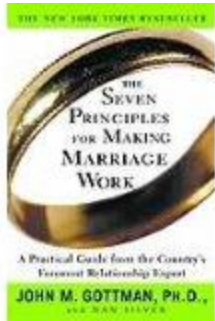
Write about why you are choosing this man to be your husband. Get specific.

### **Why This Marriage?**

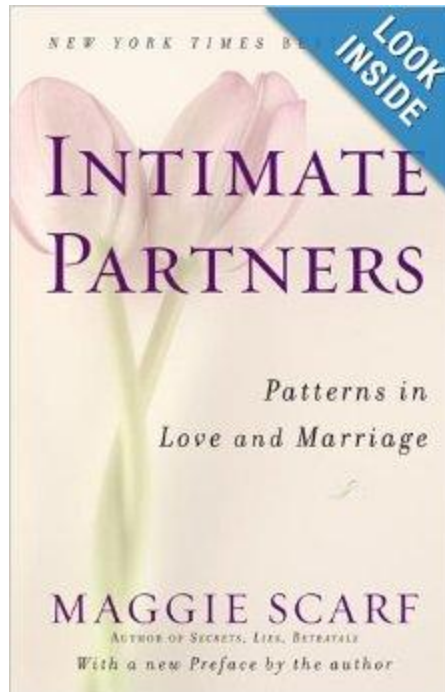
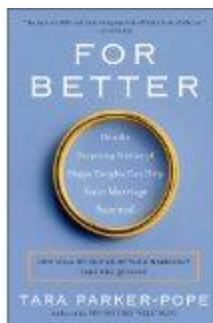
Write about why you want this marriage. Get specific

## Video 3: Let's Talk About Your Relationship

### Book Referenced in the Video Course



I also recommend....



## Video 4: Crossing the Bridge Into Marriage

### **Bridging Moments**

Many brides-to-be don't notice they're in the bridging stage until it's been going on for a while.

As your wedding date approaches, keep an eye out for the moments when your new, married life feels more real to you than your old, single life. Bridge moments like this can be in-your-face, such as when the invitations arrived on the sociologist's doorstep, or more subtle, such as the bride's different emotional experiences at her two bridal showers.

Keep a running list of your bridging moments. That way, when your conflicted feelings resurface (as they occasionally will), you can refer to your list of bridging moments. Then, you'll be able to see how far you've come from the grueling days of grief, and be aware of how ready you are, the majority of the time, to be married.

List your bridging moments here:

## Thank You

**For allowing me to be a part of your journey from single woman to married woman.**

I hope this video course offered you new insights and perspectives into this profound time of your life.

Know that I'm always here, and am happy to meet you for a free 15-minute video consultation to discuss your specific situation.

Wishing you all the best,

Allison

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