

# BRIDES 2008

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## Memo to brides: **CHILL!**

You have so many things to do before your wedding day that you can't imagine getting everything done. Everyone has their own stories, good and bad, of what they did and maybe you should consider doing this, that or the other for your wedding. You are getting stressed out, which doesn't make you happy in what should be a happy time.

You need to realize that planning a wedding can be stressful and be prepared to deal with that fact. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that everything will go perfectly. This will only add to your stress when things don't. Focus on what you have to work with, not on what you don't have. Everyone will have their own ideas about your wedding, but keep in mind you can't please everyone. You and your spouse-to-be are the only ones you need to please because it is your wedding.

In order to deal with stress, you need to recognize it. Symptoms include headaches, moodiness, poor concentration, stomachaches, problems sleeping, racing thoughts and irritability. Should these symptoms persist or get worse, they could indicate a more serious condition, so pay attention to what your body is telling you.

After you have acknowledged you are feeling stressed, there are a few things you can do to cope with it:

- Space out deadlines and set them far enough ahead to allow for problems. Don't let everything go until the last minute.
- Delegate responsibilities to people you trust. Check in with them occasionally but let them handle things.
- Set boundaries and be assertive. If others are interfering too much or taking up too much of your time, let them know how you feel without being too aggressive.
- Don't take everything so seriously. Try to laugh when things go wrong.
- Spend time with your spouse-to-be. Discuss everything and make sure the wedding plans are going the way you both want them to.
- Get enough sleep, eat right and exercise. Avoid outside stimulators like alcohol, drugs, caffeine, nicotine and sugar.
- Take a breather when necessary. When feeling stressed, practice some relaxation or meditation exercises or go for a walk. Don't be afraid to talk to others about how you are feeling.
- Pamper yourself. Go to the movies, read a book, take a bubble bath or spend a day at the spa.
- Keep your activities in check. It's only natural for others to be excited for you and want to get together to celebrate but don't overextend yourself with too many social obligations.

With so much emphasis put on the wedding, it can be easy to forget that the event is just the beginning of your marriage. If your wedding isn't perfect, it's not the end of the world. In fact it, it might make it more memorable, so go with the flow.

—By Ronda Addy

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