

Melissa Haley

Civil Celebrant

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Vow Renewal or Commitment Ceremony Information Kit

Let's Celebrate!

I'm so excited that you have chosen me to be a part of your special event! I am looking forward to helping you plan the most amazing, exciting and memorable ceremony that will truly represent this celebration of your lives together.

As your celebrant I am committed to providing you with a unique, creative and enjoyable ceremonial experience for your vow renewal or commitment ceremony. A **commitment ceremony** is a non-binding wedding ceremony so none of the legal requirements of a marriage included. A **vow renewal** is more of a private celebration of marriage and as the couple are already married and there are also no legal requirements. Either ceremony should still reflect the innate personal qualities and values of the two individuals who are coming, or have come, together as one. To achieve this, I work closely with you to understand your goals, values and aspirations to craft a ceremony that will reflect the couple, their beliefs and wishes for their special day.

As a member of your team what do I bring to the event? I have a great sense of fun and adventure; and I love opportunity to meet, greet, and get to know new and different people. I utilise differing perspectives so that I can create something totally unique for you... that suits you to a tee! As a teacher, tertiary educator and life coach I am well equipped to in public speaking and communication to connect with people of all ages to ensure your ceremony is both well planned, scripted and executed.

The purpose of the ceremony...

The intent behind a commitment ceremony is the spoken public declaration by two individuals who plan to enter into a lifelong commitment and love each other. The event can be private or shared with family and friends. Whereas, a vow renewal is not a second wedding, it is the opportunity for a couple to renew the vows they made to each other when they were first married. A vow renewal is a commemoration and celebration of the love that has grown and matured between a couple.

Both ceremonies also give the couple the opportunity to tell the story so far... These ceremonies highlight your best memories and set the narrative you intend to build for your future together recording the moment in time so that it can be savoured and celebrated down the track.

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The Basic structure of the ceremony

The basic structure of a wedding ceremony (less the legal requirements) can be used as a guide for either a vow renewal or a commitment ceremony, and is as follows (alterations to suit needs are actively encouraged):

- Housekeeping
- Processional (or Bridal March).
- Welcoming
- The giving away
- Introduction.
- Readings.
- The asking
- Personalised Vows
- Ring Ceremony
- The Pronouncing
- Signing of the ceremonial certificate
- Optional ritual section
- Conclusion/Summing up or Blessing
- Presentation to family and friends
- Recessional

Some examples of songs, quotes, rituals and poems that can be used for a wedding as your starting point:

Poems

The One

When the one whose hand you're holding
is the one who holds your heart,
When the one whose eyes you gaze into
gives your hopes and dreams their start,
When the one you think of first and last
is the one who holds you tight,
And the things you plan together
make the world seem just right,
When the one whom you believe in
puts their faith and trust in you,
You've found the one and only love
you'll share your whole life through.

When You Are Old

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;
How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;
And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sad, "From us fled Love,
He paced upon the mountains far above,
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars."
-W.B. Yeats

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Poems (cont)

The Art of a Good Marriage

A good marriage must be created.
In the marriage, the little things are the big things...
It is never being too old to hold hands.
It is remembering to say "I love you" at least once each day.
It is never going to sleep angry.
It is having a mutual sense of value and common objectives.
It is standing together and facing the world.
It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.
It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.
It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.
It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.
It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.
It is not only marrying the right person, it is being the right partner

Wilfred Arlan Peterson

I Promise

I promise to give you the best of myself and to ask of you no more than you can give.
I promise to respect you as your own person and to realise that your interest, desires and needs are no less important than my own.
I promise to share with you my time and my attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to our relationship.
I promise to keep myself open to you, to let you see through the windows of my world into my innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams.
I promise to grow along with you, to be willing to face changes in order to keep our relationship alive and exciting.
I promise to love you in good times and in bad, with all I have to give and all I feel inside in the only way I know how - completely and forever.

Dorothy R Colgan

I Love You This Much

I love you this much.
Enough to do anything for you, give my life, my love, my heart and my soul to you and for you.
Enough to willingly give all of my time, efforts, thoughts, talents, trust and prayers to you.
Enough to want to protect you, care for you, guide you, hold you, comfort you, listen to you and cry to you and with you.
Enough to be completely comfortable with you, act silly around you, never have to hide anything from you and be myself with you.
I love you enough to share all of my sentiments, dreams, goals, fears, hopes and worries, my entire life with you.
Enough to want the best for you, to wish for your successes and to hope for the fulfilment of all your endeavours.
Enough to keep my promises to you and pledge my loyalty and faithfulness to you.
Enough to cherish your friendship, adore your personality, respect your values and see you for who you are.
I love you enough to fight for you, compromise for you and sacrifice myself for you if need be.
Enough to miss you incredibly when we're apart, no matter what length of time.
Enough to believe in our relationship, to stand by it through the worst of times, to have faith in our strength as a couple and to never give up on us.
Enough to spend the rest of my life with you, be there for you when you need or want me and never, ever want to leave you or live without you.
I love you this much.
-author unknown

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From: Gift from the Sea

When you love someone, you do not love them all the time, in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility. It is even a lie to pretend to. And yet this is exactly what most of us demand. We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, of relationships. We leap at the flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb. We are afraid it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity; when the only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity - in freedom in the sense that the dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern.

-Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Foundations of Marriage

Love, trust, and forgiveness are the foundations of marriage. In marriage, many days will bring happiness, while other days may be sad. But together, two hearts can overcome everything...

In marriage, all of the moments won't be exciting or romantic, and sometimes worries and anxiety will be overwhelming. But together, two hearts that accept will find comfort together. Recollections of past joys, pains, and shared feelings will be the glue that holds everything together during even the worst and most insecure moments.

Reaching out to each other as a friend, and becoming the confidant and companion that the other one needs, is the true magic and beauty of any two people together. It's inspiring in each other a dream or a feeling, and having faith in each other and not giving up... even when all the odds say to quit. It's allowing each other to be vulnerable, to be himself or herself, even when the opinions or thoughts aren't in total agreement or exactly what you'd like them to be.

It's getting involved and showing interest in each other, really listening and being available, the way any best friend should be. Exactly three things need to be remembered in a marriage if it is to be a mutual bond of sharing, caring, and loving throughout life: love, trust, and forgiveness.

Regina Hill

Rituals

Water Ceremony - wash hands to seal renewal vows

Loving Cup - both drink from a two handled cup that represents the trust you have in each other

Music

Hallelujah - Pentatonix

If Tomorrow Never Comes - Ronan Keating

I can't help myself (Sugar Pie Honey Bunch) - Jessica Mauboy

Heaven - Bryan Adams

We go together - John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John

Picture of You - Boyzone

Always Remember Us This Way - Lady Gaga

Against All Odds - Phil Collins

Take My Breath Away - Berlin

Open Arms - Journey

Can You Feel The Love Tonight - Elton John

I'm Yours - Jason Mraz