

# Toasting Tips

You've been given the great honor of offering a toast at a wedding for someone you love. You want it to go well and they want it to go well. Here are some tips to help make your toast memorable, for all the right reasons.

The most important thing to remember as you prepare is that this is a toast, not a speech. Keep the focus on the the occasion and the guests of honor.

## **Preparation:**

- Prepare your toast beforehand. You'll want time to practice and to run it by someone you trust to tell you the truth.
- Use Note-cards rather than a word-for-word speech if you can. If you do need to read it, read it out loud when you practice, to make it sound warmer and more sincere.
- Be yourself. If you're serious, be serious. If you're funny, interject some humor, but keep the humor appropriate to the occasion.
- Keep it brief. Depending on your skills as a speaker, 2-3 minutes is probably enough time to offer a nice toast. Leave them wanting more, rather than hoping you'll stop soon.
- Remember, there may be several other toasts, so the total length of time for the toasts is the total of all toasts, not just yours.
- Refrain from too much alcohol prior to your toast. Alcohol may make you THINK you're a better speaker, but it probably makes you think you're a better dancer, too. Hang-overs, headaches, and lack of judgement are not pretty at a wedding.
- Keep it "Family-Friendly". Watch your language. If you share stories, make sure it's something you would gladly share with your own grandmother.

## **Don't be that guy.**

- You won't need to introduce yourself. Your MC will get everyone's attention and introduce you. Don't open after being introduced with, "Hi, for those of you who don't know me..." because at that point, you will have just been introduced.
- Do not talk about how much you hate "public speaking" or "doing this kind of thing" or "I'm not any good at this." This is an honor and should be treated as such, and not as a distasteful chore. Those kind of statements are a negative way to begin a very positive moment and make the moment about you, when your toast should be about the newlyweds.
- Avoid negative subjects, like breakups, previous marriages, cheating, divorce, etc.
- Do NOT attempt the mic drop. The couple will be charged \$300 for a replacement if you do.

## **Ideas for your Toast:**

- Relationship - How do you know the bride & groom?
- Childhood stories - Did you grow up together as children? What did you do together that forged your relationship?
- Friendship - What does their friendship mean to you?
- How they met? Did you introduce them? What were your first thoughts when you met the other person?
- Watching them as a couple. Could you tell when they were falling in love? How?
- Words of Wisdom - What can you share to help them have a long, happy, healthy marriage?
- Reference a famous quote - If you know a quote which describes the couple, use it, but don't over-do it with too many.
- Always end on a positive note!

## **Delivery:**

- Use your notes. Don't read word-for-word, but have your outline with you, in print large enough to read in dim lighting.
- Bring your champagne or other drink up with you.
- Stand near the couple and don't wander away. This is very important for photos and videos.
- Hold the microphone 1-2 inches from your mouth. It won't pick up your voice at your chest. This will be recorded and it's important for the sound quality to do this. Microphone feedback is caused when the microphone is held too far away and we are trying to compensate for that.
- Close by asking everyone to raise their glasses and toast the bride and groom.
- Don't be nervous. This isn't public speaking. You are speaking to a private gathering of family and friends.
- When you've finished your toast, take a few seconds to savor that moment by giving them a hug, a kiss, a handshake, a high-five or fist bump, depending on what fits for you. We'll introduce the next person when the moment is right. Do not introduce then next person unless your MC has asked you to do so.
- Finally, we will want to discuss your toast with you at the reception prior to toasting time. Knowing what each person is going to say helps us to transition it smoother. If it's written in advance, it's a huge help to us if you will email it to us in advance at the email address below. It's great to surprise the couple, but please keep us in the loop on your plans.