

Vow of Marriage

We find ourselves in a strange time. As we look into the past, we can see cultures and peoples who experienced little change from one generation to the next. These cultures, while imperfect, were adapted to the needs of their people. Likewise, as we try to anticipate the future, it seems that scientific and technological advancement will plateau, and things will settle into more of an equilibrium. But this moment is one of change. The traditions of our ancestors seem lacking in the face of the onrushing future. And so in this fragile moment it falls upon our shoulders to adapt our traditions and restructure them as best we can to fit what is to come without giving up the things that matter.

The core of our marriage—the nucleus around which we build—is a promise. It’s a commitment to each other, to our community, and to ourselves. It’s a decision to bind ourselves to a specific path, so that we might gain strength and stability from that certainty. This document is meant to communicate our promise, and serve as a record for us to reflect upon, in all the years to come.

The core vow of our marriage is this: **We vow to, as a family, work together to try and make a glorious future and be married longer than any people have before.**

Aspect of Kinship

Our marriage is a vow to be family. We are promising to choose and love each other as family, and to be bonded together as kin in a way that will endure hardship and the passing of years. We will make room in our lives for the other, hold space for each other, and have curiosity about the other’s experiences and yearnings. We will turn towards each other rather than away, and be a refuge for the other to be strengthened and find safety. We will tend to our relationship, nurture our connection, and work to keep our love strong.

Aspect of Teamwork

Our marriage is a vow to work together. This means we commit to hold each other as partner and teammate as we navigate the challenges of life together, making a full good faith effort to work through problems or conflicts with honor and love. This means, at a minimum, to listen, assist, and be open with the other no less than once per week of subjective time. As a team, we will cooperate, rather than compete, offer support through hardship, and share in the glories of victory together. We will listen to one another with an open heart and true effort to know and to understand the other and their experiences. We will strive to help each other by drawing upon our resources, including those of mind and body. We will be open with each other, holding no secrets from the other, and will proactively share important information, thoughts, desires, and goals, as long as it would not be dishonorable to do so.

Aspect of Transcendence

Our marriage is a vow to try and make a glorious future. Through this vow, we choose to hold, as central to our mutual goals, the pursuit of noble dreams, passions, missions, and destinies, and to celebrate growth, learning, and development, even as we work to keep our marriage stable and strong. Our priorities will be on becoming wiser, more knowledgeable, healthier, and generally more virtuous, not merely on being comfortable, richer, or more liked. As part of that, we will seek to be grounded in the world and our communities, and encourage each other to do good and to create beauty. When death and illness threaten, we will fight, side-by-side and with all our tools, to be alive and well.

Aspect of Longevity

Our marriage is a vow to try and be married longer than any people have before. This aspiration means that our marriage is no fragile thing. It cannot be ended through petty divorce or by simply growing apart. We will stay together even if one of us ceases

to breathe or beat their heart. If one or both of us falls by the wayside, into a long, cold sleep, we can still be reunited as husband and wife in the beautiful tomorrow. If ever we are physically separated, we will not forget the other, but will instead maintain space in the home for the other to return to, and put in a real effort at least once per subjective year to be reunited.

No human being has ever been married longer than one hundred years (the current record is ninety), but there's a real chance of that record being broken sometime soon. It's not clear to us what that means, for marriage, or for us. We are young and foolish, but want to apply the wisdom of not making eternal promises while still in our infancy. And thus, we are giving our marriage vow a default duration of one hundred years, as measured by the motion of the stars. But if, for whatever reason, either of us hasn't yet experienced thirty-six subjective years of marriage at that time, the natural end of the marriage will be pushed back until each person has. If either of us dies the true and final death, or has somehow been changed such that they fail to uphold their vows, the other is likewise released from the bond. We will hold to our promise, as it is conceived, until at least thirty-six subjective years pass for one of us, after which we can modify the shape of our marriage, including choosing to divorce or change our vows, through mutual agreement. We aspire towards a marriage so strong and good that in ninety-nine years' time we choose to extend it for another century.

We have thought deeply about this vow, and swear to uphold it, to love each other and be true to each other, in good times and bad, in sickness and in health, in wealth or in poverty, in peril or in safety, in the warmth and the cold, today, tomorrow, and for as many days as we can be lucky enough to share, together.

In Love,

— Max Worsham Harms and Haven Worsham Harms