



Marriage Rules[©]

“THE FIRST FAMILY”

By: Larry B. Gelman, Psy. D.

It is said that on your wedding night, there are at least six people in bed with you!

Husband and wife make two. His parents make four and hers make six. If there have been remarriages by either set of parents or by either of the spouses, then the number is even larger.

Six or more people in bed with you on your wedding night!

Think about that in terms of mathematical factorials.

A factorial is any number, times the next lowest sequential number and so forth, times the number one.

Consequently, six factorial (6!) equals $6 \times 5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 720$ possible combinations resulting from each of the six people in bed with you.

If each person has only one expectation of what a couple should do, then, theoretically, there are 720 possible “expected shoulds”.

However, if each person has more than one expectation of what a couple should do, then the number of “expected shoulds” should explode into outer space!

So what should a couple do? Especially, when each partner endeavors, in good faith, to fulfill the expressed and implied “expected shoulds” of their, respective, family of origin?

In my opinion, a couple must evaluate and select whose family is at issue or, to put it simply, whose family comes first.

This question is forever being played out on the stage of the holiday season and is complexified when one family’s traditions are different from the other family’s traditions.

Although most couples seem to quibble about money, sex, religion and politics, it has been my experience that “family” represents the single greatest struggle.

The safe path to take is one in which a couple tries to make everyone happy by juggling or rotating their time, resources and affections between the major players in this drama.

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Unfortunately, the only problem with this strategy is that even if each partner’s family is happy with the couple minding their place, their place isn’t really “their” place, but their, respective, family’s of origin place.

The difficult path to take is for the couple to prioritize “their” family as “The First Family”.

Husband and wife and kids are first!

This is the brave new family world whose primary task now is to create their own unique traditions in their own unique family...their family...“The First Family”...which, now and forever after, comes first.

The alternative, I fear, is to go along to get along and then, to silently resent the hell out of his family or resent the hell out of her family because there can never be any “their” there.

When “The First Family” just so happens to be your family, then “their” is here, there and everywhere or, in other words, “The First Family”!

Dr. Larry B. Gelman is a licensed Clinical Psychologist at Northern Illinois Counseling Associates, P.C. (NICA) located in downtown Crystal Lake, Illinois.

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