

Conflict vs. Compromise when Planning Your Wedding

Your Aunt Martha prides herself on being the choir director of her hometown church. She touts that she can hit a B flat above a high C and can play "How Great Thou Art" in her sleep.

Although Aunt Martha may have a distinguished talent, it doesn't make her qualified to sing in your wedding.

As your big day gets closer, problems will arise, feelings will get hurt, and decisions will be made. But I promise you can spare your sanity by addressing conflict with grace.

The conflict: You parents are paying for your wedding, and your mom is micromanaging everything.

The compromise: Respect your parents' opinions by acknowledging that they have a voice, even if you don't agree with them. If you're struggling to come to an agreement, speak to a third party, and explore all options where a fair decision can be made and everyone feels heard.

The mother of one bride once requested that her daughter wear a pair of emerald earrings that had been in their family for years. The earrings didn't go with the color scheme of the wedding, but the daughter agreed to wear them in some of her bridal portraits. Both mom and daughter were pleased!

The boundary: No one deserves to be disrespected. If demands are being made, refer back to the compromise, and don't make a decision while you're angry. Give yourself time to cool down before addressing conflict, and consult with your planner as necessary.

The conflict: You want an inexpensive destination wedding, but you don't want an all-inclusive, cookie-cutter event.

The compromise: After you evaluate your options, discuss your ideas with a planner and speak to a travel agent, make sure you've done thorough research before making any decisions.

The parents of one bride came to me about planning a destination wedding, but their expectations were unrealistic for their budget. The mother-of-the-bride had read an article online, but failed to realize it was written by a travel agency trying to promote a specific resort. Though she was misinformed, I consulted with all parties involved, and we developed a budget with a list of must-haves, and eliminated unnecessary details that didn't add value to the overall experience.

The boundary: You don't want to exceed your budget because your expectations aren't realistic. You can still have a unique experience if you keep an open mind and get creative.

The conflict: You have a relative who wants to make your wedding cake for 250 guests.

The compromise: I wouldn't recommend using close friends or family members as your primary vendors. They usually don't have the experience or required licenses.

When a relative of one couple requested to make their cake, I went over the requirements of what needed to be met. When the relative realized how much work was involved, we settled on having her make the top tier that the couple would cut into. She was actually relieved that so much pressure was taken off of her!

The boundary: If family members step up to request helping out on your big day, remind them that you'd rather enjoy their company on your special occasion without having to put them to work. You would prefer that they spend the day having fun with you!

The earrings didn't go with the color scheme of the wedding, but the daughter agreed to wear them in some of her bridal portraits.



By: Angela Proffitt

The conflict: You want to have an outdoor wedding, but the weather is unpredictable.

The compromise: If you have secured a heat source, a cooling source, a place for food to be prepared safely and an indoor backup plan, you're ready to plan the rest of your outdoor wedding. I could write an entire article on successful outdoor weddings (and I have) because my couples were prepared!

The boundary: If a tent is your only back-up plan to an outdoor wedding, you need to redefine your expectations and consult with a professional planner. Shortcuts come with unexpected surprises.

The conflict: Your wedding party is struggling with what they're required to wear.

The compromise: It's difficult to coordinate everyone's sizes, accessories and overall appearance. More couples are hiring personal attendants or wardrobe managers to answer questions, filter requests and keep your wedding party on schedule.

The boundary: Communicate with your wedding party about any costs involved. Not everyone will have the same budget, so if they aren't able to commit, you can work out a plan that could still include them.

They say that the devil is in the details, but you shouldn't have to go through hell on your way to say, "I do." You can honor your family, make sound decisions, and respect yourself without burning bridges and shedding tears.

Save the tissues for your guests. They'll need them when you walk down the aisle.