

Coming Up

Celebrate Love Seminars

A two day seminar for married couples exploring spirituality and sexuality in the Catholic context.

2007	
Masaka, Uganda	Nov 24 & 25
2008	
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London, GB	Mar 8 & 9
Brisbane, QLD	Mar 8 & 9
Christchurch, NZ	Mar TBD
Perth, WA	Mar TBD
Wodonga, NSW	Mar TBD
Warnervale, NSW	Apr 5 & 6
Melbourne, VIC	Apr/May TBD
Kent, GB	Jun 7 & 8
Sydney, NSW	Aug TBD
Brisbane, QLD	Sep TBD
Birmingham, GB	1 & 2 Nov
Sydney, NSW	Nov TBD

www.CelebrateLove.com.au

Embrace

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Smart Loving Evening Talks 2007

Dates & Venues to be determined

www.CelebrateLove.com.au

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Smart Loving

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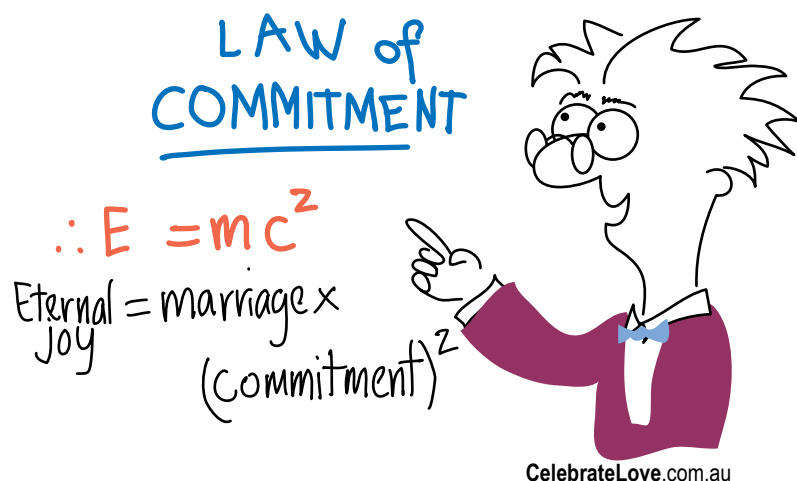
The Commitment Challenge #2

In today's dating scene there is a great deal of confusion about commitment and what it means. Scott Stanley*, one of the foremost thinkers on commitment, suggests that the old 'commitment phobia' explanation doesn't fully explain the dilemma in which dating couples find themselves.

One reason for this, is the confusion between 'public displays of affection' and 'public displays of commitment'. We're very used to public displays of affection: couples holding hands, walking arm in arm, even making out on the park bench! However, many people, including the couple themselves, are prone to misinterpret such public displays as evidence of the partners' **dedication** to each other. Really, all such gestures prove is that they are **attracted** to each other.

On the other hand, public displays of commitment are much more telling. Public displays of commitment include gestures that indicate exclusivity, fidelity and long-term thinking about the relationship. Simple examples include introducing the dating partner to one's parents, choosing not to pursue a liaison with a third party, a willingness to make personal sacrifices for the other and to reconsider personal plans. Of course the most powerful public display of commitment is the wedding ceremony itself. When a couple publicly pledge before friends and family to love each other exclusively for life, they not only enter a formal legal contract, they also obtain the support of all those present.

There is a certain gravity that comes with this form of public display. We know intuitively that a promise made before witnesses carries more weight than one either never formally voiced or made only in the privacy of the cohabitators' bedroom. Marriage and cohabitation can thus never be equals in the game of relationships; the commitment of marriage puts it in an entirely different class.



* Scott Stanley, keynote address at Smart Marriages 2006.