

Coming Up

Celebrate Love Seminars

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

2007	
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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

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Smart Loving

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Cohabitation Myth

Many dating couples opt to live together before deciding to marry, because they believe that it is a responsible and prudent thing to do. They reason that cohabitating together will be like a trial marriage. They will learn all about each other's habits and discover whether they are truly compatible. And when they do finally marry, that they'll have a head start because they'll be knowledgeable of each other, and they will have already negotiated many of their differences.

They have the best of motivations, but unfortunately it's not actually how it works.

Studies consistently show that marriages preceded by cohabitation are more likely to fail. The incidence of divorce among these marriages is around 50% higher than non-cohabiting couples.

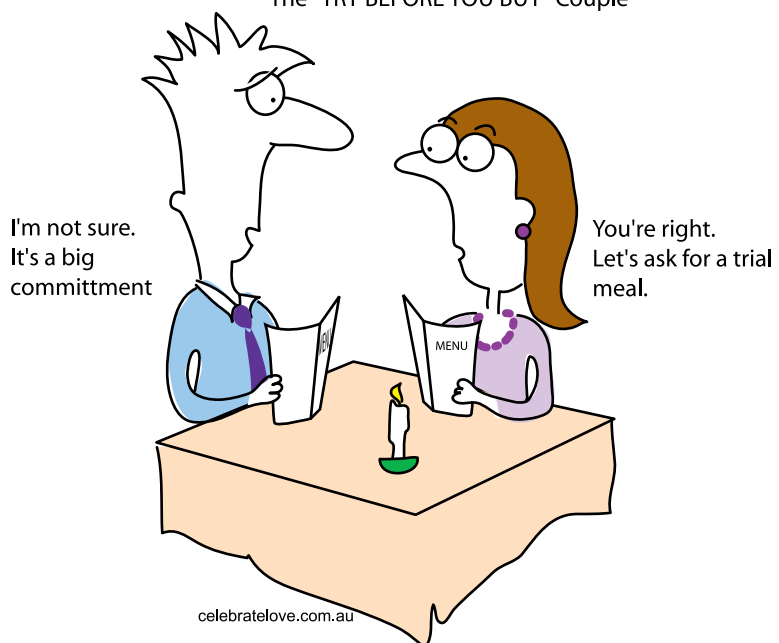
One reason why living together undermines rather than strengthens marriage, is that cohabitation is not a true 'trial' marriage. Cohabitation is not the same as the 'real thing'. It is not even a poor imitation. It is an entirely different relationship.

There are four key characteristics that define marriage; freely entered, total and unconditional sharing of self, faithful and exclusive until death, fruitful and life-giving. These are the basis of the very vows a couple makes at their wedding. Cohabitation only meets one of these – that it is freely entered into (usually). Cohabiting couples can be very generous and loving, but it can never be a total and conditional gift of self while it is understood as a temporary relationship. By mutual agreement the partners reserve the right to change their mind.

Nor can a cohabitating couple claim fidelity until death if their commitment to each other only extends to as 'long as they both feel like it'. And finally, raising a family is not usually part of the cohabitation arrangement. This is fortunate for the possible children involved, as marital stability is important to a child's development.

The public commitment to life-long union that a couple takes at their wedding is very different to the private agreement to 'try it out' of the couple living together. Just as playing a computer simulation of 'fighter pilot' doesn't prove a person can safely fly a plane, living together before marriage is never a good test of a couple's suitability for marriage.

The "TRY BEFORE YOU BUY" Couple



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