



How to Talk About a Prenuptial Agreement

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It's hard to think of a good time to introduce a contractual component to unconditional love. The proposal is obviously inopportune. It may not be engagement dinner appropriate, but the vows are way too late...

Pragmatic advisors to wealthy individuals will often insist that clients choose one of the many moments in between. Resolving this matter is critical to every component of estate and advanced planning and resolving issues including the ownership of financial assets and family heirlooms. Advisors can be of great service to clients in helping them to explain how all parties benefit from an agreement. Discussing a pre-nup doesn't have to kill the romance. Essentially, it is a way for a couple to put the past to rest and concentrate on the new life that they are building together. Rather than destroying trust, it can prevent confusion or resentment over material wealth.

In addition, the fees associated with establishing a pre-nup are nominal in relation to the potential cost of future mediation or litigation. For previously married individuals, a pre-nup is a prerequisite to an enforceable understanding of rights and responsibilities. In these instances, the children – existing and unborn – are often the biggest winners as agreements are incorporated into estate planning processes.

Even the most skillfully constructed prenuptial agreement will not cover every contingency that might arise when two people decide to share their lives. Provisions for contingencies should include a framework for dispute resolution, as well as a plan for sharing assets acquired during the course of the marriage.

Today, a growing population of affluent women is shattering old stereotypes about who benefits from prenuptial agreements. As more women achieve financial and professional success, affluent communities have shifted their perspective on prenuptials. Today the concept is seen less as a concession or expression of doubt, but an essential tool for beginning a financially conflict-free life together. Hopefully, forever after...