



Enduring Love

1+1=3: Relationships and Children

Shazia

I think you proposed after four months.

Yusuf

Hmm. So I met your parents the first time in September and then I proposed in November.

Shazia & Yusuf

And then after that we got married in March. 8 months.

Shazia

And on the day of the wedding I remember not feeling nervous until I got us dress and got in the car and then I was like "god I've only known him for 8 1/2 months, what am I doing?" (laughed).

Yusuf

Yeah I mean getting married so quickly, yeah a couple of my friends said to me do you want to put the brakes on a little bit and slow down? No, I'm pretty happy with the speed this is going at.

Shazia

It was just a bit of a no brainer. I know what I want. I know that I want to be setting up my own business. I know that I want to have children one day. I know that I want to marry someone whose Muslim, is that what you want. Yes it does. Ok. Our parents seemed to get on fine when they met, let's just do it.

Steve

We definitely want to get married at some point.

Kirsty

Yeah.

Steve

Yeah.

Kirsty

I've always been one of these ones that want a big wedding but at the moment, well for a while I just want to be married to him. I wouldn't care if there was anybody there, just me him and Alfie.

Steve

It's just a nice idea to have a bit of extra money ain't it, just to do it?

Kirsty

Yeah it is yeah. I mean we've been just focussing on Alfie at the moment aren't we? Paying our bills and

Steve

Yeah.

Kirsty

Just making sure he's got what he needs and a roof over our heads paid for and we've got food in the cupboard, but it's definitely going to happen isn't it?

Steve

Oh yeah.

Kirsty

We're definitely going to be married.

John

It wasn't a sort of get down on one knee thing; it was just like a conversation over lunch. It seemed like an almost natural thing to say. I didn't go to the lunch intending to discuss that but it just came out of that sort of meeting and err so we decided to get engaged.

Elsa

Yes. I mean that it's important to move forward so we decided because we had the first child Sophia we decided maybe what about having a big feast to gather people we like and to celebrate it.

Bex

I knew that when I met Em I knew that I was going to ask her to marry me.

Emma

I was never ever ever going to propose to anyone.

Bex

And I was never ever ever going to get proposed to.

Bex & Emma

Both laughing.

Bex

Cos it was a lot more complicated as well with it being two women. If Em didn't want to have kids that would have been a problem because I wanna have kids in the future so it was like if she wanted kids like the same way that I did and we wanted the same future from our relationship so it was just plain sailing, I knew I was going to ask her (laughed).

Ann

Well I did actually ask you to marry me didn't I?

Owen

Well we were sitting on this.....

Ann

Because you were not going to get round to it.

Owen

Mmm, well I would have done but (laughing). We were sitting on this cold bench and it seemed quite a good question.

Ann

Mmm.

Owen

Requiring an affirmative answer.

Ann

Actually that is a point though really. There is a different aspect to committing, to actually sign a piece of paper and when you went to that church and you got married, you weren't thinking maybe this might last 5 years or 10 years, this was going to be forever until you died.

John

I don't think anything really changed. It was a general evolution of the relationship.

Elsa

We don't wear the wedding rings because err we don't think we have to show to the world we are married. We are married in our spirits so that's the most important thing.

Emma

I think love is love no matter what relationship you are, what background you are, what race you are. If you've got it, you've got it.

But marriage is not the same as a civil partnership....

Bex

No. We've got to get our names.....

Emma

It's still not the same.

Bex

...changed by Deed Poll after we get married, after we get civil partnered or whatever (both laugh)

Emma

Yeah there still to be fair if you're in a loving relationship with a person you're going be with them forever, that's the same, regardless, so why should in law be different.

Music

Kirsty

Yeah we wanted to have our children first so that we could have our special day with them. I mean some people have it marriage first, children after but that was our way of doing it wasn't it?

Steve

Yeah.

Kirsty

So I've always been maternal and I've grown up with them and how to do... but I've never seen any of my past partners to say yeah I really want one with you and I've never made that step of moving in with anyone before. Steve was the first person I've moved in with and vice versa wasn't it?

Steve

Yeah.

Kirsty

And then Alfie was definitely on the cards with Steve.

Steve

As soon as I heard that first piping cry, well I just burst into tears, my legs went all weak and the first time I held him in my arms was fantastic.

Kirsty

I just couldn't get over how emotional he was and looking at him and I thought oh my god, I've definitely made the best decision to have a child with you.

Steve

It's a real shared experience isn't it

Kirsty

We was close anyway but it has definitely brought us closer together.

Steve

God yes.

Kirsty

Cos obviously it's something that we've got that we've both made.

John

I was 41 when I had my first child and I was ready for children, I was ready to have a family and were very confident about that.

Elsa

To have children hasn't really changed because as mother I am very conscious to maintain the relationship, that also you have to be a good wife, to make sure also there is a place for the husband, that my work is also not to put him in the shadow.

John

Generally when we go out we take the children with us, we enjoy taking the children with us.

Elsa

Ah yes, having children is so natural and, err, we love to be surrounded by, by them.

John

What's also I think is quite good in our relationship is that we give each other space. For instance during the school holidays, Elsa generally takes the children over to France so that puts breathing space into our relationship and I miss Elsa and I miss my children.

Elsa

It's like a balance.

John

Yes.

Elsa

It's like a balance to.....

John

We're not living out of each another's pockets???

Elsa

To be too much glue and its very important for the male to have his space, very important.

Ann

I was 22 when I had our first child and 23 when we had our second. So our life was with children straightaway from an early age. I haven't had a career. I wasn't 30 or even 40 so that children didn't affect that pattern of life at all.

Owen

Yeah.

Ann

They, they melded in with what we were doing.

Shazia

Just before our third wedding anniversary, we found out that we were expecting Ishal. That completely threw our world upside down. I'm the type of person that can cope with anything and everyone else is the one who's having the problem but it's very hard being a parent. You know for people who have children and their not in a strong relationship, I just don't know how they'd stay together, if they do stay together, it was hard, hard. Everything changes you know you stop going out, you haven't got the same time, you're tired all the time but then when we had the second one, it was a lot easier because we knew what to expect and we already didn't have a social life so it didn't matter as much.

Yusuf

Laughing.

Shazia

Then I've set up my business because of the children. I want to be around them.

Yusuf

Mmm yeah me too. I remember when I used to go away on business quite a lot and before I met Shaz I would be happy going away for a few weeks at a time and not really get homesick or anything and after we first got married and I went away for business and after a week of me being away I was like I'm really missing, I'm really missing Shazia.

Shazia

I remember this. Yusuf went away for 3 weeks and I was like oh that's a long time, you'll be fine, its only 3 weeks and then it was him that was calling me all the time, I miss you, I miss you and I said what happened to your 3 weeks.

Yusuf

I know. It changed. Yeah.

Shazia

Yeah.

Yusuf

I just wanted to get home. So I've been away a few times since we got married and had the kids and I miss not being home, I miss not being with Shazia and the kids now.

Music.