

Love. Commitment. Family.

WHY MARRIAGE MATTERS



Ways to Start a Conversation About Marriage

The single most important action you can take towards achieving marriage for everyone is to start a conversation about why marriage matters.

Just because you're "out" as a gay person or a straight ally, don't assume that people in your life know how you feel about marriage for committed gay and lesbian couples. Undecided voters consistently tell researchers, "The gay people I know haven't said that marriage matters to them – so why should it matter to me?" Despite all the media attention, many people haven't had a chance to discuss the issue. You can open that door.

Remember, you don't need to be an expert. And you don't need to change anyone's mind. Your job is to invite someone on a conversational journey. You're their guide. You may not reach the destination right away – just start down the path together. Here are some ways to get the conversation started:

Shared Values

- I was raised with the Golden Rule, which is a good reminder on this issue. I wouldn't want anyone telling me I couldn't marry the person I love, and I wouldn't want to say that to someone else.
- I believe that I'm not to judge anyone. Love is love, and everyone needs be able to show their love.
- Protecting your family is important. Two people in a committed, trusting and loving relationship deserve the support that comes with marriage – especially the ability to protect each other and the legal certainty that only marriage provides.

Family is Family

- Tradition is important in our family. That's why we've invited our son/daughter's partner to be a part of our family traditions and celebrations.
- It is a joy to see my son/daughter and his/her partner together and a part of our family. I wish everyone could understand how much excluding them from marriage hurts our family.
- When gay and lesbian couples get married, they may finally be recognized as being part of the extended family—they are added to the family tree. I know how happy our family will be when all of us have the freedom to marry the person we love.

Sharing Stories

- I want(ed) to get married because _____. Everyone is different in some ways, but we all share the desire to live happily and protect the people we love most. Why does marriage matter to you?
- Do you know any gay people? Are any of them in a long-term, committed relationship? How do you think they would feel if they would get married? How would *you* feel if they could get married?
- There's only one thing called "marriage." It's unique, it's important, and it says, "we've made a lifetime commitment to each other" in a way that nothing else does. I don't know anyone who would trade their marriage for a "domestic partnership" or a "civil union" because it's just not the same. What are your thoughts on that?