

New survey reveals marriage does make you happier

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New survey reveals marriage *does* make you happier

A new study of more than 5,000 people in the UK has lifted the lid on the state of our relationships. Published by Scottish counselling and mediation charity Relationships Scotland, *The Way We Are Now 2014* is one of the largest studies of its kind. It provides a window into the most important areas of our lives – from couple and family life to sex, friendships and interactions with colleagues and bosses. Interestingly, the report explores whether or not marriage actually makes us happier.

The survey showed that people who are in a relationship tend to feel better about themselves than those who are not. Almost four-fifths of people (81%) in who were married or cohabiting reported that they felt good about themselves, compared to 69% of people who were single.

The study reveals very little difference in the way people felt about themselves between those who are married and those who are cohabiting. Simply being in a relationship doesn't guarantee that people feel good about themselves. According to the findings, feeling good about yourself and feeling happy in your relationship go hand in hand. Those who are married or cohabiting who described their relationship as 'very good or good' were most likely to report that they had been feeling good about themselves prior to the survey. In contrast, less than two-thirds of people who described their relationship with their partner as average, bad or very bad reported that they had been feeling good about themselves; this was significantly lower than the proportion of single people who'd been feeling good about themselves. The survey also found that the length of the relationship made little difference to the way people described their relationship with their partner. Income, employment status and education also had little impact (once we adjusted for other factors). Sexual satisfaction was the one area which did stand out though – it does seem to influence how people perceived the quality of their relationship.

Relationships Scotland are hosting a series of events to open up dialogue about the role relationships play in making us who we are. The first of these is a special pop-up cinema screening of acclaimed documentary *112 Weddings* at their Edinburgh offices on Wednesday 14th October. Doug Block's film juxtaposes rapturous wedding day flashbacks with remarkably candid present-day interviews to explore what marriage really means.

As one New York Rabbi says in the film: "A wedding day is the easiest to make happy. You've just thrown a ton of money at it and liquor, but a marriage is hard to make happy because when you throw a ton of money and liquor at it, it often makes things worse."

ENDS

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Notes to Editor

- 112 Weddings press images have been sent alongside this release.
- Relationships Scotland's local services provide relationship counselling, family mediation, child

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contact centres and other family support services across all of mainland and island Scotland. Our work supports individuals, couples and families experiencing relationship difficulties. Around 30,000 people have contact with our services each year.

- The full The Way We Are Now 2014 report and infographic are available to download at <http://bit.ly/waywearenow>. The report was carried out by YouGov on behalf of Relationships Scotland and our sister agency Relate.
- The survey was carried out by YouGov. Responses were gathered between 25 February and 18 March 2014. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. The results were weighted to make the data more representative of the population (of UK adults aged 16+) in terms of age, gender, region and country, and an indicator of social class (based on census information). The data featured in the report and the release were analysed using STATA 13 with individual weights attached to all sample members, therefore direct replication of the statistics featured in this report using the tables published by YouGov may be subject to rounding errors. Analyses generally excluded those who did not answer questions or for whom the question was inapplicable (see the report for full information on these numbers). Any inaccuracies or errors in the further analyses of these data are the sole responsibility of Relate.

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