



## QUESTIONNAIRE ON MY RITUAL PROFILE

This questionnaire is designed to help you define your own ritual profile and determine the best strategy for ritualizing different life events, from birthdays to weddings to funerals.

**Part I** Circle the icons next to the statements that best describe you and bar those that do not apply.

- ★ I am an active member of a religious institution.
- I am an inactive member of a religious institution.
- I am a member of an organization with humanist or philosophical views.
- ◆ I am attracted to groups which value holistic or esoteric practices.
- ★ I attend religious worship services at least once a month.
- I live by my own ethic which is based on reason and humanistic values.
- I attend religious worship services about once or twice a year.
- ◆ Life is a natural process. My life event ceremony should celebrate the mystery, joy and uncertainty of life.
- My wedding / funeral / child's life event ceremony could take place almost anywhere, except in a religious setting.
- ◆ I celebrate nature, am sensitive to the colours of the seasons and marvel at the cosmos.
- ★ I imagine my wedding / funeral / child's ceremony in a religious setting.
- I would love to have my wedding / funeral / child's life event ceremony in a religious setting but, if possible, without a priest / pastor / rabbi / imam or other religious leader.
- As human beings, we alone are responsible for solving the environmental problems we have created. No belief in a god or a supernatural force can help us.
- ◆ It is important for me to have a simple funeral and to be buried or have my ashes spread in a natural setting, far from artificial structures.
- ★ I cannot imagine my wedding / funeral / child's ceremony without a priest / pastor / rabbi / imam or other religious leader.
- My wedding / child's life event ceremony may be held in a secular setting but I cannot imagine my funeral without religious rites.
- ◆ A life event ceremony with a shaman would suit me quite well.
- My family and friends would be disappointed if I did not organize a religious ceremony for my wedding / funeral / child.
- I do not need god or any supernatural being in order to live and die well.
- ★ It is important to have sacred texts and religious rites performed at our wedding / my funeral / our children's life event ceremonies.
- I want my wedding / funeral / child's ceremony to be presided by a humanist celebrant or at least someone who shares my humanist values.

**Part II** Circle the icons next to the statements that best describe you and bar those that do not apply.

- Religious holidays are important to me because they preserve my cultural and social traditions.
- I advocate progressive values and ideals regarding gender and social roles.
- Official documents (religious or civic) confirming my wedding / funeral / child's life events are important to me.
- A ceremony which celebrates my wedding / my funeral / my child's life events must correspond to our values rather than to official social or civic standards.
- I belong to one or several groups composed of people who come together around projects, leisure activities or ideals.
- I am most comfortable with time-tested values, roles and rituals.
- I like the idea of having a close friend or non-official person preside over a life event ceremony, such as my wedding, funeral or a naming ceremony for my child.
- Only a spiritual or civic leader can validate the ceremony of a life event, such as our wedding, a funeral or a ceremony for our child.
- I can imagine holding my wedding / funeral / child ceremony in a unique setting such as a museum, garden, restaurant, library or on a farm.

**Part III** Please note below the number of times you have ticked each of these six symbols and, if you wish, your observations.

Observations:

- ★ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- △ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## KEY TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON MY RITUAL PROFILE

What is your ritual profile? Being clear about your ritual profile helps you determine your ritual strategy. A coherent strategy is essential for designing, creating and implementing appropriate rituals that celebrate your life events.

These symbols are indicators of your ritual profile:

- ★ (5)\* *Institutional*. If this symbol ★ represents the majority of your answers, your religious practice is regular and satisfying. A religious ceremony would be important for you and consistent with your values and view of life. You probably also ticked this symbol □.
- (5) *Distanced*. A majority of this symbol ● indicates occasional religious practice; your ties with a religious institution may be stretched. A ceremony held with a religious leader in a traditional setting may or may not satisfy your need to mark a life event. You may also have ticked the symbol ★. A clear majority of this symbol □ indicates a personalized religious ceremony would be appropriate; a majority of this symbol Δ points to a personalized ceremony outside a religious context.
- (6) *Secular or Humanist*. A majority of this symbol ■ indicates that you identify yourself as a 'none' (e.g. atheist, agnostic). You may be indifferent or even against religion. You may be a member of a humanist or secular group. Tailor-made or humanist ceremonies would best serve your need to mark a life event. You may have a majority of either of these symbols Δ □.
- ◆ (5) *Alternative*. If you ticked this symbol ◆ at least three times it means you find yourself most comfortable with a holistic approach to life and may be a member of an esoteric group. A bespoke ceremony would suit you well. If you ticked a majority of this symbol Δ consider an alternative to a ceremony presided by a traditional authority figure.

These two symbols Δ □ can help you fine-tune your ritual profile:

- (4) *Traditional*. Cultural and social activities linked to one or more traditions are important to your sense of identity. Yet, feeling strong ties with a tradition neither precludes nor indicates a desire for custom ritual or ceremony. However, when ritualising an occasion, you may need to hear some traditional phrases or to perform certain traditional gestures. It is likely that you ticked a number of these symbols ★ ● ■, but improbable that you have a majority of this symbol ◆.
- Δ (5) *Modern*. You feel comfortable with people who respect your personal journey and who encourage you in the development of your own values. You may belong to groups with little official status and avoid institutional settings. It is important that you feel free to craft the kind of rituals that are right for you. While you may have ticked a number of these symbols ● ■ ◆, it is unlikely that you have a majority of this symbol ★.

\*Indicates the maximum number of times this symbol appears in the questionnaire.



## INVENTORY ON RITUAL PROFILE FOR WEDDINGS

How well do you know your partner and the kind of wedding would s/he want? What is your ritual profile? The best strategy for ritualizing your union is *influenced* by your separate ritual profiles but firmly *grounded* on the values you share.

**Part I** Circle the statements that best describe **your partner** and bar those that do not apply.

- ★ S/he is an active member of a religious institution.
- S/he is an inactive member of a religious institution.
- S/he is a member of an organization with humanist or philosophical views.
- ◆ S/he is attracted to groups which value holistic or esoteric practices.
- S/he attends religious worship services at least once a month.
- S/he lives by her/his own ethical code which is based on reason and humanistic values.
- ★ S/he attends religious worship services about once or twice a year.
- ◆ S/he wants our wedding ceremony to be romantic, magic, mysterious and aesthetic.
- S/he would agree that our wedding could take place almost anywhere, except in a religious setting.
- ◆ S/he celebrates nature, is sensitive to the colours of the seasons and marvels at the cosmos.
- ★ S/he would want our wedding ceremony held in a religious setting with a religious leader.
- S/he would want our wedding ceremony in a religious setting but, if possible, without a priest / pastor / rabbi / imam or other religious leader.
- In her/his view, there is absolutely no need for religious approval of our union.
- ◆ S/he wants a simple wedding reception in a natural setting, far from artificial structures.
- ★ It is fundamental for my partner that our union be blessed by a priest / pastor / rabbi / imam or other religious leader.
- S/he is not religious but would not object to having our wedding ceremony in a religious setting because she knows it would please me.
- ◆ A wedding ceremony presided by a shaman would suit her/him quite well.
- Her/his family and friends would object if we did not organize a religious ceremony for our wedding.
- In her/his view, no god or any supernatural beings are necessary for living and dying well.
- ★ S/he would want sacred texts read and religious rites performed at our wedding ceremony.
- S/he would want our wedding ceremony to be presided by a humanist celebrant or at least someone who shares her/his humanist values.

**Part II** Circle the icons next to the statements that best describe **your partner** and bar those that do not apply.

- Religious holidays are important to her/him because they preserve cultural and social traditions.
- S/he advocates progressive values and ideals regarding gender and social roles.
- Official recognition (social, civic or religious) of our union is important to her/him.
- S/he would say that our wedding ceremony must reflect the values we share.
- S/he belongs to one or several groups which are composed of people who come together around projects, leisure activities or ideals.
- S/he is most comfortable with time-tested values, roles and rituals.
- S/he likes the idea of having a close friend or non-official person preside over our wedding.
- In her/his view, *it would not feel like a real wedding* without a religious leader.
- S/he would love to have our wedding ceremony in a unique setting such as a museum, garden, restaurant, library or on a farm.

**Part III** Please note below the number of times you have ticked each of these six symbols and, if you wish, your observations.

Observations:

- ★ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- △ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## KEY TO THE INVENTORY ON RITUAL PROFILE FOR WEDDINGS

These symbols are indicators of *how you perceive* your partner's ritual profile:

- ★ (5)\* *Institutional*. A majority of this symbol ★ means you see your partner's religious practice as regular and satisfying to her/him. A religious wedding ceremony may be important to her/him and coherent with her/his values and view of life. You probably also ticked this symbol □ a few times.
- (5) *Distanced*. A majority of this symbol ● indicates that you see your partner's religious practice as occasional. Her/his ties with a religious institution may be stretched. S/he may or may not feel the need to have the wedding ceremony in a religious setting. If you also ticked the symbol ★, pay close attention to how s/he reacts to the statements with these symbols Δ □.
- (6) *Secular or Humanist*. A majority of this symbol ■ indicates that you identify your partner as a 'none' (e.g. atheist, agnostic). S/he may be indifferent or even against religion. S/he may be a member of a humanist or secular group. A tailor-made or humanist wedding ceremony may be a good choice for marking your union. You may have ticked a majority of either of these symbols Δ □.
- ◆ (5) *Alternative*. If this symbol ◆ was ticked at least three times it means you see your partner as being most comfortable with a holistic approach to life. S/he may be a member of an esoteric group. A bespoke wedding ceremony would suit her/him. If you ticked a majority of this symbol Δ consider an alternative to a wedding presided by a traditional authority figure.

These two symbols Δ □ can help you fine-tune how you see your partner's ritual practice:

- (4) *Traditional*. You see cultural and social activities linked to one or more traditions as being important to her/his ritual practice. Yet, feeling strong ties with a tradition does not exclude a desire for custom ritual or ceremony. Ask her/him if s/he wants to hear some traditional phrases or perform certain traditional gestures. It is likely that you ticked a number of these symbols ★ ● ■; a majority of this symbol ◆ is improbable.
- Δ (5) *Modern*. You perceive your partner as prioritizing her/his personal journey and values. S/he may belong to groups with little official status and avoid institutional settings. It would probably be most meaningful for her/him to craft personalized wedding rituals. While you may have ticked a number of these symbols ● ■ ◆, it is unlikely to have a majority of this symbol ★.

\* Indicates the maximum number of times this symbol appears in the inventory.



# CHECKLIST FOR A WEDDING CEREMONY



## PLANNING

First things first

- We are clear about our objectives for this ceremony
- We have identified:
  - About whom?** Couple
  - By whom?** The couple are responsible for **crafting/presiding/organizing**
  - With whom?** (who **participates/is invited**)
  - What?** Wedding ceremony
  - When?** A fitting **date/time/duration** for the event
  - Where?** A suitable **place/setting/venue**

- COMMUNICATION AND CONTINGENCY
- We have contacted or invited all (see 'With whom?') noted above
  - Participants have approved their roles
  - If there is disagreement about how to proceed we know who makes the final decision
  - We have contingency plans for with Whom, When and Where

PAUSE



## CREATING

Making sense (couple)

- We, the craftspeople, are agreed on:
- Why and how** we are ritualizing our union
  - Our vow is at the **HEART** ♥ of this ceremony
  - The **key values, ideals or philosophy of life** we wish to transmit or convey
  - Confirm consistency of choices** (Who, What, When, Where) with values
  - In case of disagreement, we have discussed the issues

- CONTENT
- Words** ♥ **Our vow + texts**
  - Music**
  - Gestures/symbols/objects**

- FORMAT
- Entry** into ceremonial space
  - Welcome**
  - Heart** ♥ **Our vow+ texts**
  - Closing/exit** ceremonial space > transition
  - Social gathering**
  - Choreography/scenography** check for visual participation from all seats
  - Reminder list**
  - We have walked through the ceremony and checked for flow and choreography**

PAUSE



## REALIZING

Expressing meaning

- Prepare setting** (couple/presider/organizer)
- Open ceremony** (presider)
- Ritualizing** (Content + Format)
  - ◆ Conduct (presider) ◆ Participate (all)
- Close ceremony** (presider)
- Open social part of event** (organizer)
- Social gathering** (all)
- Close event and clean up** (organizer)

**DURATION OF EVENT** (suggested)

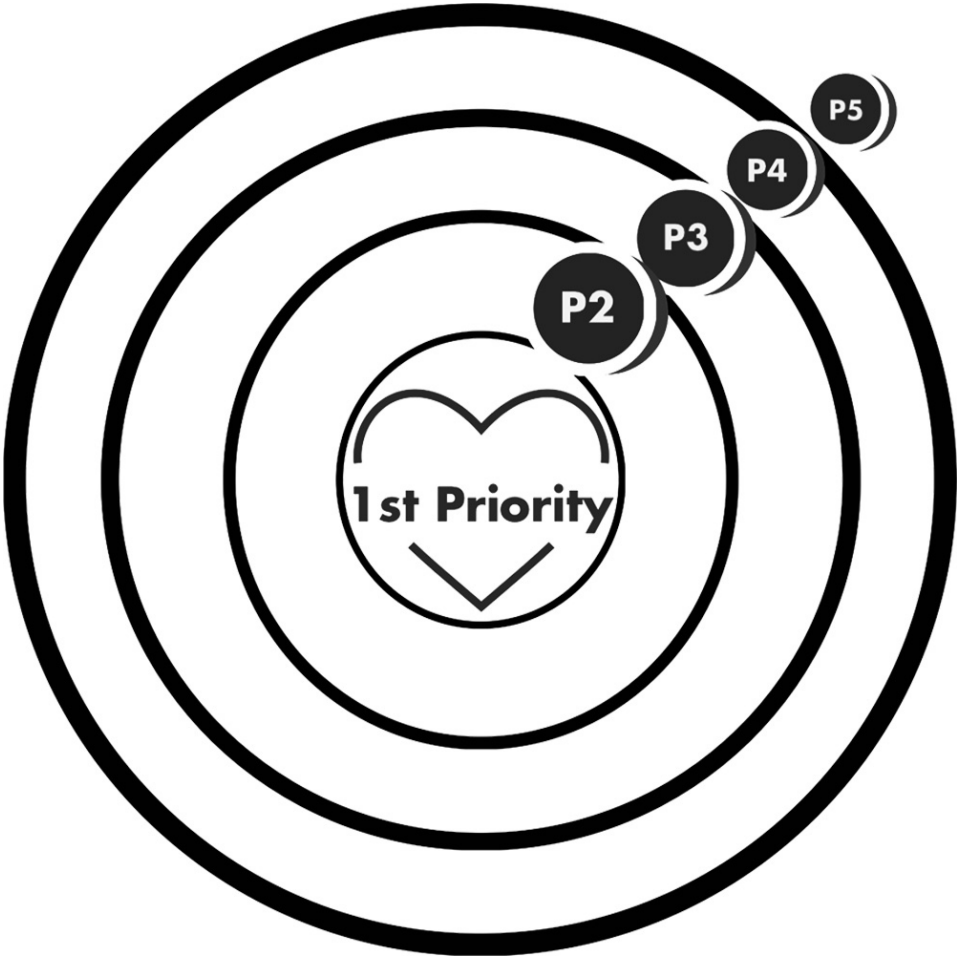
Ceremony (20-40 minutes)

Social gathering (2-6 hours)

July 2019. This checklist is not intended to be comprehensive. Modifications to fit specific situations are encouraged.

# HOW TO PRIORITIZE

This tool is useful for determining your priorities.





## COHERENCE GRID

WEDDING	OUR VALUES (KEYWORDS ACROSS)			
ELEMENTS/CHOICES (BELOW)				
Invitation				
Ceremony venue				
Guest list				
Date / time				
<b>Vow*</b>				
<b>Texts*</b>				
<b>Gestures*</b>				
<b>Symbols*</b>				
<b>Presider*</b>				
Participation (friends and family)				
Cost				
Materials used (tables, chairs, serving)				
Decorations				
<i>* see appropriate tool</i>				