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# Why I Decided Not to Lose Weight for My Wedding

Spoiler alert: There's no such thing as a "bride body."

By **Dana Robinson** | December 20, 2017



Before I even met my husband, there were two things I knew for sure about my wedding day. First, my mother—who can throw it down with just about any *Project Runway* contestant—was going to make my wedding dress. And second, I was going to fit into a single-digit-size dress no matter what.

One of those things happened, but the other did not.



Photo: Dina Douglass/Andrena Photography

I've had a love-hate relationship with my body since the first grade. I always appreciated that I was able to play marathon games of jump rope and climb any tree on the playground, but I began to struggle with my body when a group of 6-year-olds in my dance class snickered at me because my pink, sparkly recital costume was a size or two larger than all of theirs. (Did you know [body image issues start way younger than we thought?](#))

As an adult, thanks to weekly Saturday night dinner dates and skipping the gym in favor of Sunday morning snuggles, I'd managed to put on a few extra pounds. But my favorite pair of jeans still fit, so I thought I was good.

In fact, I was wearing that same exact pair when my husband proposed to me on a cliff overlooking a famous rocky coastline in Maine. Within a few hours, both my Facebook feed and my cell phone blew up with congratulatory messages from family and friends. My mother and I instantly began discussing when we could go fabric shopping for my dress.

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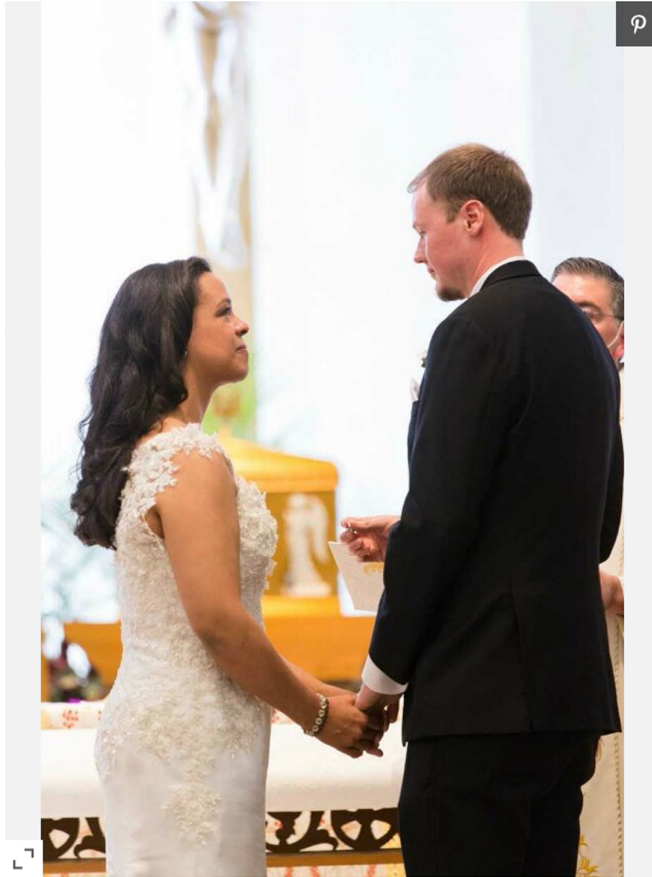


Photo: Dina Douglass/Andrena Photography

Amidst all the good wishes, I received a phone call from a friend-and our conversation really stuck with me. Along with sharing her excitement, one of the first questions she asked was, "Are you going on any crazy diets before the big day?"

I didn't quite know how to feel about that question. Was she suggesting that I needed to lose some weight before walking down the aisle? Or was she merely aware of the fact that a lot of women strive to lose weight before their weddings, and she figured that I would follow suit?

Either way, I was even more taken aback by the answer I blurted out-which was a big fat "no."

In hindsight, I think that "no" was so easy for me because I'd already watched my sister morph from a level-headed woman into a stressed-out bride-to-be leading up to her wedding day. I assumed that I was in for at least some of the same emotional whirlwind, and I just didn't want to add the pressure of losing weight to the mix. (Related: [Why This Is the Year I'm Breaking Up with Dieting for Good](#))

On top of that, my mother was clear about the realities of designing a dress. Seams could be taken in or let out, but only up to a point. Once she sewed the lace applique to the bodice, there would be no way for her to modify anything. If I lost too much weight after that, my gown was probably not going to fit the way I wanted it to.

So, I took a good, hard look in the mirror and decided that in this particular instance, the benefits of weight loss simply weren't worth the hassle. I was healthy, fairly content with my figure, and honestly didn't feel that I would look back at my wedding album in 20 years and wish that I had been slimmer.



Photo: Dina Douglass/Andrena Photography

In the eight months that elapsed between my engagement and my wedding day, I wound up sticking to my usual eating habits and exercise routine. I even forbid my mother from pulling the bodice of my dress in by an extra inch. Steak, champagne and creamy au gratin potatoes were on the wedding reception dinner menu, and I was going to need that extra inch of space to enjoy my meal that night.

In the end, my wedding dress was not the single-digit size of my dreams, but I had exchanged that vision for a new dream. The dream of a (relatively) drama-free wedding planning process where losing or gaining a pound for the week didn't dictate whether I was going to have a good or bad day, and the knowledge that I honored my body at my wedding-not an arbitrary number on the scale.