

When I was first dating my wife, we were pretty informal about our anniversaries. Neither of us were people to stand on ceremony, and usually an anniversary party was just an excuse to spend time together. We would drive out to the ocean, walk in a park, or even just go see a movie. We would end the day with a nice dinner and a romantic evening together. Simple and fun, that was the rule.

When we got married however, we suddenly became much more formal in our lifestyle. Neither of us discussed it, but on some level we both felt that it was time to start settling down a little bit. Things began to change from our first wedding anniversary. We had always made fun of our parents and their extravagant wedding anniversaries. On their golden wedding anniversary, for example, they invited practically everyone they knew. Me and my siblings were convinced that it was probably a bigger crowd that had attended their original wedding. We were all expected to get them anniversary presents with the extravagance of wedding gifts, and if anyone was foolish enough to not buy something nice, they certainly would be out of the loop for the next six months.

When we married, I assumed that we would never have that type of attitude towards her wedding anniversaries. You see, the way the world looked to me when I was young, what mattered was living your life every day. Big events, anniversaries, and historical dates aren't that important. What is important is right now. I had always felt that celebrating wedding anniversaries was not necessary. You simply had to celebrate every day of your marriage. Once I was married though, something changed. Suddenly, I felt the need to mark time in a way I had never done before.

The first wedding anniversary was not that formal. It was a weekend getaway, and although it was quite a bit more extravagant than our usual getaways, we certainly didn't make that big a deal about it. After that, however, all of our wedding anniversaries have gotten bigger and bigger. Now that we have been married for five years, we will typically start planning things out a month in advance. We'll have a formal dinner, go to the opera, and perhaps take a weekend trip. Don't get me wrong - I love the celebration. Nonetheless, it seems like I've lost something. My youthful spontaneity may be going forever.