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Marriage may add to Valentine's Day fun

Flowers, chocolates, dreamy-looking couples strolling hand-in-hand. No, the world didn't suddenly turn into a Hallmark Shop — Valentine's Day is just around the corner.

For many, this traditional lovers' holiday means exchanging gifts or cards as a way of showing feelings of affection for one another.

For married couples on campus, the story is the same — more comfortable perhaps — but not real different.

University senior Steve Crowell and his wife Lisa have been looking forward to dining at the Excelsior Cafe to celebrate Valentine's Day. Crowell believes his marriage has been a positive influence in his life.

"It's been really, really good," he said. "The support Lisa gives me I value like nothing else."

As far as balancing school and married life at the same time, Crowell seems to have no trouble.

"It's improved my grades 100 percent because I don't have to split up my time between her and my school work — we're always in the same spot," he said.

After being married, Crowell said he finds it impossible to think of being single again.

"Marriage is sharing the fun, the love, the good and bad times," he said. "They (the spouse) just become a part of you, an extension."

Speaking of extensions, the Crowells are expecting their first child in June, and Steve said he can think of nothing else besides being a dad.

"We're so excited," he said. "It's consumed both our lives, and it's really fun to think about."

Another married couple on campus, Lisa and Kip Poindexter, both students, look at Valentine's Day differently.

"It's kind of funny because before we got married, Kip was really sweet about holidays but he's more spontaneous now," Lisa said. "He'll do things unexpectedly now, so holidays are more playful for us than serious, meaningful things such as our anniversary."

Lisa seems to look at their relationship differently now than before they were married.

"Marriage shows you a more stable, acceptive love," she said. "You totally trust that person with all of your weaknesses."

"Before we were married, I thought Kip was perfect, and now a year later we know that we are not perfect and we've grown to accept each other for what we are," Lisa said. "It's just a real secure love."

Yet another married couple on campus is student Suzan Miguel-Acosta and her husband Ishmael. To celebrate Valentine's Day, the two have original plans.

Suzan, who is expecting their first child in May, said they will start the day off with a doctor's visit and then attend a baseball game that night.

The couple, who has been married for two years, finds their marriage works as a support system, especially in times of stress.

"When I have finals, Ishmael takes care of the house and cooks dinner and then when he's busy, we trade off," Suzan said.

"The only down is my mood swings now that I'm pregnant," Suzan said. "Ishmael never knows how I am going to react to something; he's afraid sometimes (of my mood swings)."

Suzan feels one of the most important things in a marriage is to keep things interesting.

"Like today, Ishmael is on a busi-

ness trip in California and he had flowers sent to me for no reason," Suzan said. "I bawled my head off for a half hour and kept saying to myself 'That jerk, how can I think straight now?'"

For the Miguel-Acostas, their relationship is more than just a marriage.

"With our relationship, it's not just a marriage; it's a really, really good friendship — he's my best friend," Suzan said.

Rob Olsen and Christy Loew, two students who are also married, have a whole different outlook on Valentine's Day.

"We are doing nothing for Valentine's Day," Olsen said. "To us, Valentine's Day is just another day to consume — just to buy more stuff and waste."

"Besides, we celebrate our love for each other every day, not just on Valentine's Day," Olsen said.

Besides both of them taking classes and being married, they also have a three-year-old daughter named Caitlin.

"Obviously, I couldn't do it without Rob," Loew said. "He helps out with Caitlin a lot and other things. Actually, I don't know how I've come this far."

During their marriage, Olsen feels they've both learned a great deal.

"We've changed and have grown up a lot," he said. "As the relationship grows, the more we learn to treat each other equally."

"It is also important for us to maintain our own identity and yet at the same time be together."

Thus, Valentine's Day means something different to every couple. However, the foremost theme of this holiday that almost everyone agrees on is love and caring for the special person in their life.

—Colleen Pohlig



Ishmael and Suzan Miguel-Acosta plan to celebrate Valentine's Day with a doctor's visit (she's pregnant) and a baseball game.

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