

## Should that be renamed National Pre-Nuptial Agreement Day?

I have to admit, I had never heard of *National Proposal Day* until a divorce attorney colleague of mine sarcastically remarked upon this “special day” as being the first day in the married lives of some of our future clients. Like most jokes or quips in a professional context, this one wasn’t especially humorous but did have a certain ring of truth about it. Notwithstanding, my mind went to work, and I wanted to discover everything there was to know about *National Proposal Day*. It took all of five minutes on the internet. Five minutes I’ll never get back.

I won’t spoil it for anyone except to say that *National Proposal Day* is March 20th of each year, which also happens to be *National Ravioli Day*. One would imagine that observing both, possibly at the same time, doesn’t present any inherent conflicts unless, of course, the proposal is rejected, which may mean that the ravioli goes uneaten or possibly on someone’s lap. Caution: *The March 20th observance should not be confused with “Propose Day,” which is a separate observance and is celebrated on February 8th, ostensibly to trump Valentine’s Day, for which you are most certainly acquainted.*

I digress. What does any of this have to do with the ruminations of a divorce attorney and any practical or valuable legal advice for clients? The answer is . . . NONE! NADA! . . . And . . . ZILCH! That said divorce attorneys don’t always find ourselves dispensing cold legal advice. At times, we might also be wearing our counselor hats, like when a client asks us about a prenuptial agreement. The client might also ask us whether they are doing the right thing – getting married. After the usual disclaimer that we aren’t psychologists or aren’t being paid to be one, we often find ourselves “getting real” with our clients and dispensing the same advice we might say to a close friend. This is where the folly of the idea of a *National Proposal Day* might be seen. As a divorce attorney, I have often been told of a made-up crisis of a quick wedding because the venue is available, or the faux utility of the destination wedding that is booked already so the wedding might as well take place. People are going to get married, and they should, but a rushed marriage is one of the scenarios where a prenuptial agreement is very important.

A good prenup can shield all of the assets that you have worked for and accumulated before committing to be married. It can set-forth whether one party is responsible for paying alimony and support to another in the event of a breakup or divorce. It can also set forth the rules that decide who gets what and when a house that two people contribute to must be sold. A good prenup can define what separation is and what happens when you have children. A good prenup can include “phase-out” provisions that go away after, say, the parties have been married for five or 10 or 20 years. I could go on and on and still not list every advantage of a well thought out prenuptial agreement. This is because everyone’s situation is different.

Marriage is a serious commitment, both emotionally and financially. Planning for an eventual breakup, while really no fun to even think about, can be a necessary part of planning to be married and planning for your future. If it is not, then my colleague’s tasteless “joke” about our future clients being made on the March 20th *National Proposal Day* might be just as funny as it is sad.