

SELF CARE

# Find Your Calm

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KIMBERLY LAKENEN

Wedding preparations can bring on the jitters and awaken emotions. Here are a few ways to manage those stressful moments.

left: Jacquelyn Burt has an emotional support meeting with a client.

right: Kelly Smith uses Koshi chimes and crystal singing bowls during a sound bath.



AS YOUR WEDDING DAY NEARS, you're facing a major life change — while overseeing dozens of details, making seemingly endless decisions, dropping thousands of dollars and trying to manage everyone's expectations. It can be easy to get so overwhelmed that you feel unprepared and emotionally drained when you walk down the aisle.

Handling stress in a healthy way is just as important as other self-care practices to ensure that you're healthy and thriving on your big day. Alongside our experts, we're here to help guide you down a calmer path.

Kelly Smith, a Minnesota-based yoga and meditation teacher, has some solutions. Founder of Yoga for You, an online yoga and meditation studio, Smith hosts the podcast "Mindful in Minutes," where she offers weekly guided meditations.

Smith encourages her students to listen to their bodies to create a personal meditation practice on their mindfulness journey. Her classes offer insights on how you can find joy, gratitude and calm through her practices. She personally handles stress with meditation and sound-bath fusion — a full-body, immersive listening experience that uses sound to relax and nurture the body.

When she's busy planning her travels and events, her advice for reducing stress is to take

eight to 12 minutes between tasks to do some mindful meditation, then dial it back in to finish your tasks. Once your big day arrives, Smith's advice is to remember why all your guests are there: not for a show, but out of love and to share your experience. It's okay to slow down and take time to turn inward and focus on yourself, Smith says, even on your wedding day.

Jacquelyn Burt with First Looks LLC is a coach, educator and award-winning wedding

makeup artist who has recently relaunched and rebranded her business to include emotional support services for her clients. Working as a make-up artist for close to seven years while having a full-time career in higher education, advising and counseling students, allowed her to realize how she could benefit her clients on a new level.

Burt helps coach clients through a number of issues but the most requested skills involve how to handle stress, relationship dynamics and conflict (whether it's with your fiancé, future in-laws, vendors, or anyone connected to wedding preparations), and managing expectations.

She wants her clients to understand that the goal is not *no* conflict, but to have the tools you need to manage conflict efficiently. Facing some tough conversations with family? She can help you navigate those stormy moments. Figuring out what values matter most as you plan your wedding day? Burt can work with you to sort things out.

Because the emotional support service is relatively new, Burt is flexible with the packages she offers and has even included a 30-minute emotional support meeting with any of her makeup packages to create a blend of experiences. For emotional support services alone, there are options of single sessions, session packages, and a monthly subscription that offers two sessions a month.

Her best advice for newly engaged couples looking for extra help is to hire early, as "you don't know what you don't know" and to recognize that this is not a reactive service but a proactive one. She sees the need for professional emotional support as the difference between "getting through it" and "getting to enjoy it." Many of her clients hire her for both services, and she can also be hired to stay throughout the wedding day — for talking people down, providing conflict management, and sharing grounding exercises. ✕

## SOME OF YOGA TEACHER KELLY SMITH'S FAVORITE MANTRAS:

- Inhale — peace; exhale — negativity.
- Sky above, earth below, peace within.
- I trust the journey.
- I am steady, I am still.

## JACQUELYN BURT'S TIPS:

TO HELP MANAGE EXPECTATIONS, BURT RECOMMENDS THIS ACTIVITY

Sit down with your partner and envision what your perfect wedding day ...

- Looks like
- Feels like
- Sounds like



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