

Celebrating 80 years of marriage

Eighty years married and still in love. Couple reflect on 80-year marriage Watch

Maurice and Helen Kaye celebrate 80 years of marriage. The pair say the secret of married life is kindness, love and tolerance

A couple who met as teenagers 10 years before the start of World War Two have celebrated 80 years of marriage.

Maurice and Helen Kaye, from Bournemouth, met in 1929 when they were 17 and 16 respectively.

They courted for four years because Mrs Kaye's mother wanted her older sister to be married first.

The couple, who are now 102 and 101, said the secret to a happy marriage was being tolerant of each other and being willing to "forgive and forget".

The pair, one of Britain's longest-married couples, plan to celebrate their oak wedding anniversary with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mrs Kaye was 16 and working in her mother's shop in Walworth, south London, when she met Mr Kaye, whose father wanted to sell goods to the store.

Mr Kaye ended up staying in the shop for three hours, prompting his future mother-in-law to ask "who's going to throw him out, you or me?".

Helen and Maurice Kaye

Helen and Maurice Kaye are part of a family of four generations



But it was Mr Kaye's car which initially gained the interest of his wife-to-be.

She said: "He had a car and in those days not very many people had cars, which made him interesting."

The couple married in Borough Synagogue in south London four years after they began courting, waiting for Mrs Kaye's older sister, Paula, to wed first.

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Maurice Kaye

After marrying, Mr Kaye went on to manage his father's factory and two shops in London before he joined the Army as a volunteer physical training instructor in 1939.

Mrs Kaye ran the business in her husband's absence, but in 1944 their factory, shops and home were destroyed in the conflict, prompting them to move to Bournemouth.

After the war, the couple had four children.

Asked about whether their long marriage was luck or fate, Mrs Kaye said: "You can never plan anything. How can you plan for 80 years? It is fate."

Mr Kaye said the secret to a happy marriage was always agreeing with his wife.

He said: "I didn't think it would last a week but it's amazing it's lasted 80 years."

Mrs Kaye said: "You mustn't be hard on each other. And if you have to give in a little bit, you give in a little bit."

The couple have two surviving children, seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

They still live independently in a flat and continue to play bridge regularly.

Their son, Larry, 66, said he thought the secret to their longevity was setting targets.

He added: "They wanted to see their grandchildren, then their great-grandchildren and now they want to see their great-grandchildren grow up."

Karam and Kartari Chand are believed to be the UK's longest married husband and wife. The couple from Bradford tied the knot in a Sikh ceremony in 1925.

How long have you been married? What are your tips for a long and happy marriage? Email your comments and a wedding photo to haveyoursay@bbc.co.uk

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