

5:00 PM (ish):

Props

- Folder for the texts
- A glass to break
- Vow books
- Rings
- Marriage certificate
- Ketubah

TODO

- Clarify mic situation with sound guy and videographer
- Ask Dad if he has a fancy pen for the ketubah signing
- Ask Tracy about a small table for vow books, glass

Brief words of welcome

Welcome, friends and family, to Sally and Max's wedding!

It is wonderful to see you all here today. And it is delightful to be a part of this celebration of love, support, and partnership. Please take your seats, as the ceremony is about to begin.

- *pause for a minute for people to take seats if they haven't already*

Once everyone has walked down the aisle, Sally and Max welcome you to take pictures of the whole wedding party in front of the chuppah. After that, I will ask you to silence and put your phones away, at which point the professionals will take over. Thank you.

Procession

- *Max walks in with Nikki and Mark to West Wing theme song*
- *Wedding party walks in, in the following order to You Raise Me Up by Josh Groban*:
 - *Jake and Katie*,
 - *Josh and Rachel*,
 - *Kelcey and Steven*,
 - *Maddie and Sam*,
 - *Kati and Kevin*,
 - *Lily and Lee*,
 - *Alex and John*,
 - *Dev and Kristen and Hazel*
- *Sally walks in Bari and Steve to Here Comes the Sun by the Beatles*

If you'd like, please take this moment to take some pictures.

- *Pause for appropriate length, 10-20 seconds*

Now please silence and put your phones away. Wedding party, please take your seats.

Ceremony introduction

Good evening! To start the ceremony, I would like to list out the many expressions of love present in today's wedding. Your inclusion in today's events is an expression of the love that Sally and Max feel for you. Your presence here, today, is a testament to your own love for them. And, as has been clear for a long time, Sally and Max share a deep love for each other. This wedding is a joyful, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for us all to come together as a community, to bear witness to their love, and to amplify it with our own.

Thanking the parents

Sally and Max next wanted to honor their parents. Nikki and Mark; Bari and Stephen: Max and Sally are beyond grateful for all the love and care you have shown them, and each other, throughout their lives. In fact, Max and Sally feel they are each a pretty perfect combo of the two people who raised them. You have modeled how wonderful and profound marriage can be, and your unconditional love and support have made them the people they are today.

Remembrances

We would also like to take this time to remember loved ones who are no longer with us but whose presence is strongly felt.

Zach

Zach, Max's older brother, would have filled this ceremony with light and had the biggest smile here. The Resnik family of five, while always five, is missing Zach's presence dearly today.

In honor of Zach, Max and Sally have chosen a reading – a poem by Maya Angelou titled *When Great Trees Fall*:

When great souls die,
the air around us becomes
light, rare, sterile.
We breathe, briefly.
Our eyes, briefly,
see with
a hurtful clarity.
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines,
gnaws on kind words
unsaid,
promised walks
never taken.

Great souls die and
our reality, bound to
them, takes leave of us.
Our souls,
dependent upon their
nurture,
now shrink, wizened.
Our minds, formed
and informed by their
radiance,
fall away.
We are not so much maddened
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance
of dark, cold
caves.

And when great souls die,
after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed.

Grandparents

We also honor Sally's maternal grandparents, Molly & Bill; her paternal grandparents Eleanor & Norman; Max's maternal grandparents, Pearl and Phil; and his paternal grandparents Sybil (*Sih-bull*) and Dave. Max and Sally only hope to be as fortunate as they were, in marriages that lasted 50 years, 55 years, 57 years, and nearly 70 years.

Max and Sally were both shown tremendous love by their grandparents, and they carry their memories with them every day. We know they would have loved being here, plotzing, cheering on the bride and groom, as they always did.

Traditions

We feel their presence through the Jewish traditions that Max and Sally have chosen to incorporate into this ceremony.

Chuppah

We are standing today under this beautiful bamboo chuppah. The chuppah, with four poles and a cloth canopy, is a symbol for the Jewish home that Sally and Max will continue creating together after marriage. It is open on all sides, signifying that everyone is welcome and that everyone will be met with warmth and hospitality.

The chuppah's openness also allows for a moment of reflection. Sally and Max, before we continue: please take a moment to look at all the people who have come to celebrate you today. In our conversations, you've said that this is a dream come true, and you should soak it all in for a second.

Blessing for the wine

I now invite Mark Resnik, Max's dad, up to read the blessing for the wine.

- *Alexander hands binder to Mark, with specific page for this section*

Mark: Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, boreh p'ri hagafen.

The wine is thought to symbolize two things. The first sip that you will take represents the sweetness everyone here today hopes you experience in your life. Of course, there will be times when you drink from other cups, from bitter ones; but may life offer you together the opportunity to savor the sweetness. We toast to the awareness of the possibility of a life filled with true meaning. Let this ritual signify that the inevitable bitterness in life will become less bitter because you're together, and the inevitable sweetness of life will be doubled because there is someone with whom to share it.

- *Sally and Max take first sip of wine*

The second sip you will take symbolizes sharing. You have now shared over eight years together, built homes in three different cities, and become parents to an adorable dog, Milton. You have grown into adulthood by each other's side, and each of your experiences has solidified the love which brought you to this day. As you continue to share in each other's lives, you will, as a symbol of this enduring cooperation, share this cup of wine. As you share this cup of wine, you share all that the future may bring.

- *Sally and Max take second sip of wine*

Shehecheyanu

I'll next recite the shehecheyanu, a prayer recognizing time and appreciating that we are present in this moment.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh

- *Mark hugs Sally and Max, takes his seat*

ASN reflections on Sally and Max's relationship

As Sally's oldest brother, it is especially delightful for me to see how happy she is with Max, and how happy he is with her. In a positive way, it is hard for me to imagine the time before Sally and Max were together. For several years, whether in Brooklyn, Washington DC, or the Bay Area, I have enjoyed spending time with them as a couple, and watching them share their lives, hobbies and passions. They have cooked me exceptional pasta. We have bonded over YouTube documentaries of street food vendors and athletic dogs. We have been amused and annoyed together by the athletic remote-stealing of their own dog Milton, the inimitable shepherd-chihuahua. And, to the degree that I can bear it, I have suffered a little with them through their sports fanaticism, through the devastating losses and oddly equally devastating victories of the Yankees and Giants. The fabric of Max and Sally's life together is joyful, loving, and fun. They have built a wonderful foundation for a lifelong relationship.

Reflections on marriage

Marriage embodies ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family.

To Sally and Max, marriage means choosing one another no matter what the future holds. Marriage means opening their hearts to expand their family, and sharing love, sadness, strength, weakness, and everything in between, while always knowing that they will be in it together. Marriage means growing and learning together while recognizing that they will make mistakes, but will be made with the other standing by their side. Marriage means accepting and loving each other's perfections imperfections, and being intentional about spending the rest of their lives by each other's sides.

Today, Sally and Max choose each other.

Vows

The bride and groom will now exchange vows. They have each chosen to write their own.

- *Alexander grabs vows books, hands to Max and Sally*
- *Max goes first*
- *Sally goes second*
- *Max and Sally hand vows books back to Alexander, who puts them back*

Exchange of rings

Now, by exchanging rings, you solidify a lifelong commitment to one another. The rings serve as a welcome and constant reminder of the bond you've formed with your partner.

Max, please repeat after me:

- With this ring, I marry you and bind my life to yours
 - *Max repeats*
- It is a symbol of my love and everlasting friendship
 - *Max repeats*
- And the promise of our future together.
 - *Max repeats*
 - **Max puts on Sally's ring**

Sally, please repeat after me:

- With this ring, I marry you and bind my life to yours
 - *Sally repeats*
- It is a symbol of my love and everlasting friendship
 - *Sally repeats*
- And the promise of our future together.
 - *Sally repeats*
 - **Sally puts on Max's ring**

Seven blessings

In a traditional Jewish ceremony, the seven blessings are read to reflect on the creation of the world, the creation of humankind, the unity of loving people and the joy of marriage. In choosing their own adaptation of the seven blessings, Sally and Max want to highlight seven themes that are central to them: finding peace and comfort in each other's love; creating a home filled with warmth; finding joy in each other's friendship, accomplishments, and dreams; continuously learning and growing from each other; helping each other feel whole in mind, body, and spirit; taking time to admire the world's beauty together; and finding strength through community.

Sally and Max have chosen one of their best friends from Tulane, Lily Bernstein (Bern-steen), to come up and read the seven blessings:

Lily reads 7 Blessings

- May you be blessed with love. May your admiration, appreciation and understanding of each other foster a love that is passionate, tranquil and real. May this love between you be strong and enduring, and bring peace into your lives.
- May you be blessed with a loving home filled with warmth, humor and compassion. May you create a family together that honors traditions old and new. May you teach your family to have equal respect for themselves and others, and instill in them the value of learning and *tikkun olam* (making the world a better place).
- May you be best friends and work together to build a relationship of substance and quality. May your sense of humor and playful spirit continue to enliven your relationship. May you respect each other's individual personality and perspective, and give each other room to grow in fulfilling your dreams.
- May you be blessed with wisdom. May you continually learn from one another and from the world. Together, may you grow, deepening your knowledge and understanding of each other and of your journey through life.
- May you be blessed with health. May life bring you wholeness of mind, body and spirit. May you keep each other well-balanced and grounded, and live long that you may share many happy years together.
- May your life be blessed with the art and beauty of this world. May your creative aspirations and experiences find expression, inspire you, and bring you joy and fulfillment. May you find happiness together in adventures big and small, and something to celebrate each day of your lives.
- May you be blessed with community. May you always be blessed with the awareness that you are an essential part of a circle of family and friends. May there always be within this group love, trust, support and laughter, and may there be many future occasions for rejoicing in their company.

Breaking glass

We end with the traditional breaking of the glass. Symbolically, the breaking of the glass reminds us of the fragile nature of life. The custom has also come to symbolize the shattering of the old and the beginning of the new. The breaking of the glass is irrevocable and permanent; so, too, may this marriage last an infinity of time—as long as it would take to reassemble the broken pieces of this glass. The breaking glass represents a turning point in your lives as you pledge your love today and make a new commitment to one another.

As the groom breaks the glass to conclude this ceremony, and the groom and bride kiss for the first time as husband and wife, I invite everyone to join us in celebration and shout, “Mazel Tov!!!”