

Lin Laishram calls herself 'not the ideal Manipuri bride' on wedding day with Randeep Hooda: 'I couldn't do it'; expert on embracing imperfection

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In a recent interview, actor Lin Laishram recalled grinning ear to ear on her Meitei wedding day with actor Randeep Hooda in November 2023. While the Manipuri wedding, which drew significant attention for their traditional attire and rituals, saw Lin and Randeep looking their absolute best, Lin called herself "not the ideal Manipuri bride" in the way she conducted herself.

"Manipuri brides are supposed to be not smiling at all. They are not supposed to look here and there and move a lot. But I couldn't do it. Usually, I am a still, very calm person. But that day, I don't know what happened. I was moving so much, looking here and there, and I was looking at Randeep. And I was laughing. Randeep was sitting straight, and I was laughing, looking at him," Lin told *Hauterrfly*.

Her father even sent a person who asked her to stop smiling. "So, my father sent a person in the mandap to tell me not to laugh. 'You look so excited to get married. ' I was not smiling because I was happy or excited, but I was smiling at Randeep because he was looking so proper. He was not looking at me at all because he thought that if he looked at me, he would laugh. So, I was not the ideal Manipuri bride," added Lin, 39.

She also expressed that while walking towards the mandap, she "felt very nervous". "There were 10,000 million butterflies in my stomach. I didn't know how I was looking because I wasn't shown the mirror. He (Randeep) said, I was looking like a goddess or something. When I reached the mandap, when I saw Randeep, very nicely sitting and following all the rituals, I felt very calm. I felt good looking at him."

This sentiment reflects a deeper emotional space where personal expectations and cultural traditions intersect. According to Dr Chandni Tugnait, psychotherapist, director, Gateway of Healing, most brides (and even grooms) can resonate with such sentiments because weddings tend to be such a mammoth and once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Deconstruct the cultural script: Instead of adhering to an idealised version of what your marriage day should look like, challenge and deconstruct the cultural expectations. "Recognise that your personal experience is just as valid, even if it doesn't fit traditional molds," said Dr Tugnait.

Create space for imperfection: Rather than striving for perfection, acknowledge the beauty in imperfection. Understand that feelings that you didn't 'do justice' to your marriage day are temporary. Each and every moment is etched in life and in the memories of people who have joined in your celebrations. "So, no matter how imperfect you perceive them to be, it's a beautiful memory that you have lived," said Dr Tugnait.

Reframe vulnerability as strength: When you feel inadequate or disconnected from the "ideal," it's easy to view vulnerability as a weakness. However, embracing vulnerability, especially when shared with a supportive partner, builds a more resilient and authentic connection, said Dr Tugnait.