Happy Before and After

I have always dreamed of getting married. In fact, being a married woman has been my ultimate fantasy since childhood. However, as a young woman I have decided to wait to tie the knot because I want to be able to go out clubbing with my friends every night. Furthermore, I want to wait on marriage until I have found myself in a successful career. Similar to many American young ladies who postpone marriage, I am waiting because I want to obtain promising employment, break the cycle of divorce in my family, and achieve personal freedom.

I ultimately desire financial stability before I get married. I want to successfully earn a college degree and find an exciting career before settling down with someone to marry. Moreover, I am determined not to be a woman who simply marries a man for his money. I have the insight to realize that I must earn my own living. I would not mind if my future husband buys me an occasional gift, but I do not want to rely on him for money to pay for my frivolities at the clubs on nights out with my girlfriends.

I also aim to break the cycle of divorce that has been a problem among the older generations of women in my family. Quite naturally, the thought of divorce is a source of anxiety for me. Unfortunately, many of my female family members have married at an early age only to find themselves divorced within a few years. Although I truly want to be married, I feel strongly about taking marriage vows: “For Better or Worse, Till Death do us Part.”

Another topic of concern is my freedom. I absolutely adore going to clubs, hanging out with my girlfriends, and staying out until “last call,” but I suspect that being wed at an early age would put a dent in my adventurous social life. Obviously, I would not be able to stay out all night with my girlfriends if I had a husband waiting for me at home. Even if my future husband were patient enough to understand my love of partying, he surely would not be copacetic with
my routine of clubbing until the wee hours each night. I know that my habitual partying would have to be curbed once I decide to tie the knot.

I still have not relinquished my dream of marriage, but I know that a flourishing and lasting marriage will have to come later in life. I am determined to become financially stable, break the familial cycle of divorce, and find personal freedom. These three goals have led to my decision to wait to get married.

Note: This version of the essay is superior to the “competent” paper in several respects that reflect the rubric’s requirements under items 4 and 5. Many of the redundant “I want to” sentences have been pruned out and replaced with more complex and interesting structures. In addition, more formal and literate diction is used to create sentences that demonstrate the nuances of a writer sensitive to ethos and pathos. For example, the phrase “my frivolities” at the end of the second paragraph sounds an engaging note of self-deprecation and signals a self-awareness sorely lacking in the writer of inferior versions of this essay.