



Questions to Ask Yourself Before Choosing the Divorce Path

Below are questions you should ask yourself before you get divorced. Ask yourself these questions first – these are questions which have the biggest impact when you tell the truth to yourself. **Focus on your internal state:** If you don't alter this, then wherever you go, the same pattern could show up in your next relationship.

1. How is the current situation reflected inside of myself. (health, emotional or spiritual)

Look for the pattern. For example, say your throat is always tight. You are afraid to communicate how you really feel and just push it down. You want love but you do the opposite almost punishing yourself not so much your partner.

2. How am I doing exactly what I am complaining about my partner doing or not doing?

For example you feel judged by your partner. This is a dynamic where you feel you are always wrong. Now ask yourself, where am I judging them?

It's addictive to get caught up in what everyone else is doing wrong when really we are in pain inside of ourselves. You must change this relationship with yourself in order to be free and not re--create a pattern.

3. Where are you holding back?

Start with yourself. Then see where you are holding back in fear of losing yourself. Look to see where you can be more loving, understanding, and appreciative. Then see where you can give this to your partner or in any relationship.

Change the idea that you come first. Put your partner first for just a week and see how the dynamic shifts. We fear this because if we give we think we will not get it back. This is not true.

And then reflect on these questions when you think you can look at the relationship and see both sides – good and not--so--good.

4. Do you still have feelings for your spouse?

Have your feelings diminished or, are you feeling powerless over a problem in the marriage and due to this, there is a lack of emotional closeness. If there are still feelings of love and affection then you should work on the relationship before deciding on divorce.

You do not want to get caught up in the emotions of a situation like divorce and then realize you've made a mistake. If there is any love left, seeking couples therapy will mean not suffering feelings of loss after an un--needed divorce.



5. Was there a marriage to begin with?

If your marriage has never been anything more than two people living together and getting their own needs met then divorce may be the answer. Marriage is a partnership of two people working for the best interest of the relationship. Married couples work together for the good of the relationship. If there is no “couple,” only two people fighting for their own needs then, now would be a good time to either commit to changing the dynamics of the relationship or parting ways.

6. Is it divorce you want or, are you just threatening divorce?

Are you angry at your spouse and threatening divorce out of frustration over the problems in the marriage? Do you use threats of divorce to get your way or as a means of having power over your spouse?

Are you frustrated and feel that threatening divorce will finally get your spouses attention and they will take you seriously? If it is solutions you are looking for, threatening divorce will not get you where you want to be. You need couples therapy for that. If it is divorce then stop threatening and take a mature, informed step in the right direction.

7. Is your decision to divorce based on emotional reaction or true self awareness?

If you are ready for divorce you will have let go of any emotional attachments you have to your spouse. These are good feelings and negative feelings that often come into play during marital conflict. Deciding on divorce at a time when you are overwhelmed with emotions won't solve problems. It generates problems and compounds any hurt and frustration you may be feeling.

Unless you can look at your spouse as an individual who deserves your respect, even during the divorce process you are asking for trouble. If you cannot, the divorce process will be riddled with frustration, anger and distrust of the motives of your spouse.

8. What is motivating you to divorce?

Are you hoping that a divorce will mean your spouse will start treating you better? Maybe they will realize what they have lost and make the changes you need them to make. If so, you are divorcing for the wrong reasons. Divorce will only promote conflict, not resolve it.

All a divorce will do is end your marriage and split apart your family. If you want a change in the dynamics between you and your spouse, it isn't divorce you want. Something to think about; once you have divorced, your spouse is free to form emotional attachments to others. If that thought is uncomfortable, think twice before making a decision.



9. Have you thought about the negative consequences of divorce?

Divorce can mean a loss of dreams and goals. Even if you are positive it is a divorce you want you need to have a support system in place to help you deal with the stress associated with divorce.

You need to be able to face your children's pain and be there to help them cope. If you are the one wanting the divorce, you will have to deal with the pain of others. Don't let guilt over wanting a divorce stand in the way of helping those hurt cope with the divorce.

10. Are you able to act in a mature way after the divorce?

Your attitude will determine what kind of life you will have after the divorce. Will you be strong, take responsibility and let go of any anger and resentment? Or, will you remain bitter, resentful and feel like a victim? The attitude you choose to live with will determine, not only the kind of divorce you have but the quality of life you have after you divorce.

A Conversation with Your Spouse

Answering these questions truthfully to yourself is a good springboard for having a conversation with your spouse. You must "own" your answers to the questions above and share them as your reality. Go over these questions together, as a couple. Where there is a different perception, listen to what he or she has to say, without judgment. These are their perceptions. If you want to repair the relationship, you have to take responsibility in part for their perceptions. You had something to do with the impact of your behavior on them.

Communication with your spouse.

- Have you talked about the unhappiness and the differences?
- Are you curious about why your spouse reacts the way they react?
- Have you talked about divorce as one option? Have you decided to get divorced already?

Take your time: Giving each other time to come to grips with the idea of divorce is crucial, advises Robert Emery, a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia and author of "The Truth About Children and Divorce" (Viking Adult). "If you're the one wanting out, you need to be patient," he says. "You've been thinking about this for a while. It will take time for your ex to get to that place."

Facing Your Fears: It is natural to be fearful about the idea of divorce, even if you are very unhappy in your marriage. The fear is a warning system telling us to be careful, to be aware of all of the trade-offs and to accept the consequences of those trade-offs before making this significant decision. Listen to your fears, welcome your fears and face your fears. Feeling afraid in a new situation is normal. Whether or not we move on



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to a rewarding and fulfilling post divorce life depends on whether or not we face our fears head on or, allow those fears to dictate how we live our lives.