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**Article on Considering Divorce**

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**Reasons for Divorce**

by *Brette McWhorter Sember, JD*

There are many reasons people consider divorce. One of the most common situations is that the two people have grown apart. Sometimes this can happen gently and calmly. Other times it is associated with a lot of resentment, anger, and hurt. Fighting is the biggest reason people say they want a divorce. People fight for many reasons -- a different life view, parenting disagreements, money, wanting different things, or even individual changes. Some marriages include mental, emotional, or physical abuse, which can be a dangerous situation for everyone involved. Living in a home where there is anger and blame is not usually a comfortable situation. It's possible to reconnect if you've become strangers to each other or to find ways to solve some of the things you disagree about. Marriage therapy can be helpful in getting to the root of what you fight about and in helping you find new ways to relate to each other.

**Adultery** is usually considered a common reason for divorce, but in most cases, adultery happens when there is something wrong in the marriage. That is not to say the person who has been cheated on is at fault; however, there is often a breakdown of the relationship (or at least a breakdown from one person's point of view) when one spouse chooses to go outside the marriage. Adultery causes major trust issues that may be able to be addressed in therapy if you want to save the marriage. Many couples do manage to repair their marriage after an affair.

Money is another big factor in divorce. Couples fight about money more than anything else. If you and your spouse have differing ideas about how to use money (save versus spend), it can create a huge rift in your marriage. Additionally, couples in financial trouble often find that they lash out at each other because the stress of money problems can really disrupt a relationship. Financial and marriage counseling can both be useful in this kind of situation.

Substance abuse is a situation that can easily harm a marriage. If one partner is not in control of himself, it is nearly impossible to have a real and healthy [relationship](#). Substance-abuse treatment can be the first step to repairing the marriage. Trust can be rebuilt once recovery is begun.

**How to decide**

Deciding whether or not you want a divorce is one of the hardest decisions you will ever make. No matter what kind of a state your marriage is in right now, there was likely a time when you loved your spouse. Those feelings don't go away quickly or easily. In fact, even if you do decide you want a divorce, there will likely be times when you question what you're doing, long for your spouse, miss the good times, and possibly even try again. Some people even continue to love (in a different way) their ex after a divorce, even though they have decided they cannot be married to each other.

**Ups and Downs**

The road to divorce is a long one, and, for many people, it is not a straight path. From the time you first start [considering divorce](#) to the point of a final Divorce Decree (should you reach that conclusion), you'll probably change your mind a hundred times. This is normal. No matter what your marriage is like, it is nearly impossible to suddenly turn around and decide it is over without looking back. The most important thing you need to do throughout this process is to give yourself time to work through it and be patient with yourself. Divorce is a process in many ways -- legally and emotionally. It simply takes time to make the decision and move through the various steps. Many people go through this roller-coaster ride and eventually reach a turning point where they know for certain that divorce is the answer -- or decide that it isn't.

**Things to Consider**

No one can decide for you whether a divorce is the right option for you. When thinking about divorce, you should consider what your marriage is like now and how, or if, it could be fixed. Think about how your marriage and spouse make you feel and how you would feel if you were no longer married.

Excerpted from *The Complete Divorce Handbook (Sterling, 2009)* by *Brette McWhorter Sember, JD*. [More info here](#).

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