



THE INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES OF NORTH TEXAS

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Ten Things to Consider Regarding Your Marriage!

June is a beautiful time of year when many couples decide to marry. For engaged couples who have graduated from college or graduate school, June is the most often chosen month to be married. The happy couple expects to live happily ever after in a fairy tale ending. Is this reality? Not!

After the bloom of being newly married wears off, some couples have difficulty adapting to each other's needs regarding intimacy, communication, daily habits, and a satisfying relationship of mutual love and support. For those who have been married several years, the quirks that you overlooked about each other earlier begin to get on each other's nerves. In-laws often give well-meaning, but unwanted advice. Many jobs require a tremendous amount of time and energy with little left over to meet the needs of the spouse and family. Illness, financial issues, or a job loss can also bring a marriage to the breaking point.

Engaged and newly married couples tend to look at each other through a special lens rather than facing reality and objectivity. The hard work of marriage begins when you have to stay within a budget, raise children, maintain a home, and work at a job that supports a growing family. Housework for the "stay-at-home" mom or dad is also difficult as she (or he) has to keep the household running and transport kids to their activities, meanwhile possibly harboring a grudge that a potential career was put on hold. Sex may be infrequent and the couple drifts further apart. Or, one of the parties may suspect that another love interest has entered the picture which complicates the communication. The ego cannot tolerate cheating!

If you find yourself considering a temporary separation or dissolving the marriage permanently by divorce, think it thorough before jumping into uncharted waters. Consider the "pros" of continuing in the current marriage. Also, consider the "cons" that include the economic, social and emotional costs of divorcing. Divorce is emotionally wrenching and expensive—and not just the court and attorney fees!

Here are **ten impact issues** that the two of you should consider before a separation or deciding to divorce:

1. The **economic impact** of being a single mother (or father). The woman is often relegated to a lower standard of living, and the man may be saddled with alimony and/or child support.
2. The **impact of seeking one's freedom** for a new life or new beginning.
3. The **emotional impact on the spouse** who does not want a divorce.
4. The **emotional impact on the child** or children at any age. Divorce impacts most toddlers as well as adolescents in a negative way.
5. The **emotional impact on the extended family**, i.e., in-laws, grandparents, etc.
6. The **social impact of being single** at mid-life and wanting to enter the dating scene again.
7. The **health impact of being single** or staying in a relationship that is platonic and uncaring.
8. The **work and/or education impact** of your job in a culture that looks down on divorce.
9. The **spiritual or religious impact** that makes you feel guilty of leaving your spouse.
10. The **impact of breaking a promise** to "love, honor, and obey 'til death do us part", which is also a legal contract. The division of property can be very complicated!

*Dr. Sandra W. Froese is a Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor at **The Institute for Healthy Families of North Texas** in McKinney who provides individual, couples and family counseling. For more information, phone 972-569-8843, e-mail swfroese@sbcglobal.net or go to the web site at www.texasicounselors.com. Our rates are affordable.*