

# Coaching: Marriage Matters



Week 49

## Emotional Divorce

Indifference is toxic to any marriage. Contrasted to hostility or abuse, indifference is not caring; being inattentive; withholding self. Indifference can result in a couple living separate lives while still sharing the same name and living in the same house.

When the interaction between a husband and wife becomes more transactional than emotional, it will hurt the marriage and leave each partner feeling isolated, unfulfilled, and lonely. And if it's duty that is holding a marriage together, more than desire, it's likely that an emotional divorce has already taken place.

An emotional divorce has taken place when there is more endurance than enthusiasm, more coping than kindness, more disgust than dignity, and more pragmatism than promise. And, when civility is as close as a couple can get to respect, there is little room for experiencing joy.

An emotional divorce involves no lawyers, no court, and no decrees. Rather, it is a created state that results in as much pain and disruption for everyone as if the marriage were legally dissolved. The combination of denial, dysfunction, and disdain creates a toxic mix that will poison a marriage.

Sometimes emotional distance cannot be reduced even by the hard work of a couple both trying to repair the damage to their marriage. Help from a qualified third-party may be necessary to help reverse this destructive trend and create a pathway towards reconnection. If the emotional distance between a husband and wife has not been too far for too long, there is always hope that hard work using good information and competent guidance will result in revitalizing a marriage. A good outcome will certainly be worth the effort!

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