

[Divorce, Indian Style](#)

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Those who are not getting well marriage come occasionally for advice. We work it out together according to ancient shastric that transcend the immediate problems. Marriage is a spiritual adventure, like a journey by ship. Sometimes the going is easy and sunny, and sometimes there is rough weather to endure. But almost always it's advisable to stay with the ship and not jump overboard. My experience is that the so-called bad karmas, astrology and attitudes that may come up in a relationship can be finally overcome, so long as no one gives up the hope and the effort. The marriage continues, children are happy.

For those who are deeply involved in their spiritual work and see life as a spiritual sadhana, divorce is not seen as a solution. But for materialists, divorce can be seen as an easy solution to the simplest or most complex problem. Husband and wife are overwhelmed by the tugs and pulls of pranic forces between them, stimulated by hatred and confusion, tears, remorse, unresolvable misunderstandings and the previous prarabdha karmas which have created the union.

Occasionally, divorce people speak to me of their separation as though it happened a week ago, though it occurred ten years in the past. When we talk, they admit that divorce was no solution, only a postponement of problems that still linger which could have been solved and still have to be. Those who have gone through the experience know that divorce and remarriage is just trading one set of problems for another. We have seen that divorcees remarry others with the same character traits, temperament, faults, failings and even looks as their previous spouse. No one, however clever they may be, can run away from their birth karmas. No Divorce is no solution. It is only the beginning of new problems.

In Hinduism, marriage is still highly respected, and so divorce is a sign of failure, because life is a spiritual journey and failing to fulfill that journey is a weakness. In a sense, it is a crime against one's own karma and dharma in this life. It is like saying, "I can't do what I came here to do." Divorce begs loss of social position and respect in the community. By getting divorced, one betrays a sacred covenant, betrayal that weakness the whole of society.

There is divorce, and there is divorce. I have observed through the years that a modern form of Hindu divorce has become a part of Indian culture. It is clever way to not hurt the feelings of elders, parents and relatives, or to avoid incurring the community stigma of divorce. A modern form of Hindu divorce, it seems, has cleverly been conceived in the following way. The husband is under great stress, a stress that is not natural for a human being, a stress based on living up to materialistic expectations. He comes home psychically wounded tired, worried. If things do not go well at home, he may verbally or even physically abuse his wife and family, blaming her for everything bad that happens to him. Sensing his failure to cope with all of this, he secretly wishes he did to have to face his weakness.

He learns from compatriots that the Big Solution to the marriage problem is to get away from the wife and the kids. He is advised to accept a job in another part of the world, knowing that his association with his family will become distant and tenuous, and that he will no longer have to confront his wife who has become his conscience. He knows he will hardly have to speak with her, rarely visit her and will be able to avoid, most of the time, the challenges the marriage has brought to him which he is unwilling to resolve.

After reorganizing his professional life, the husband keeps himself busy in a far-off land. He returns home for brief periods and only occasionally, thus effecting a separation without the expensive inconvenience and social sin of formal divorce proceedings. He assures everyone, mostly himself, that this is the right thing to do since he is making more money. Of course, money will never make up for his absence, never buy the children their childhood back. The children, lacking in fatherly guidance, are running wild, turning promiscuous, later to repeat the example of neglect dad is teaching them. No one wins.

Husband and wife should always be together. If there is an unavoidable separation, he should call her daily, ask how her day was, inquire about the children. After all, it is the harmonizing of their pranas that will create through

their children a brave new world, a new world order and a new age.

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