

3.3: Personal Philosophy About Divorce.

When two people get married, they usually aren't thinking that the marriage will end in divorce. But then hard times arise and sometimes they find themselves thinking either casually or seriously about divorce. But most people haven't really thought carefully about their philosophy of divorce. When, if ever, is it justified? How hard and how long should people try to work things out? Does it make a difference if they have children? Does it matter how old the children are? There are many things to consider, but many people haven't clarified the answers to these questions. This exercise will invite you to do this. Thinking about marriage and divorce in general (not your marriage specifically), answer these questions as honestly as you can.

A. What circumstances do you think could justify divorce?

B. What circumstances do you think do not justify divorce?

C. If the married couple has children, does that affect your answers in A and B above? Do the ages of the children matter?

D. How long do you think a married couple should try to work things out? Does your answer to this question depend on some of the circumstances you wrote about above?

E. What steps do you think people should take before deciding to get divorced? (For instance, get counseling.)

F. Why do think you have these beliefs? What has shaped your beliefs? (For instance, religious principles, family experiences growing up, friends you have observed going through a divorce, your ideological or political views.)

G. Now apply this personal philosophy to your circumstances. How does your personal philosophy guide your thinking about the challenges you are facing in your marriage? What does this mean in terms of thinking about divorce? Write your thoughts here:

Of course, as we have acknowledged many times, your spouse may have a different philosophy and it only takes one person to end a marriage. If it helps, you may want to try and think how your spouse would answer these questions.