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[Home](#) > The Benefits of Couples Therapy

The Benefits of Couples Therapy

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You and your partner have decided that your cohabitation needs to come to an end and that being apart is the best way to live your lives from now on. So why go to couples therapy anyway?

It seems counter intuitive to go to couples therapy when you've already decided not to be a couple. But bear in mind - separation is always the cause of pain and suffering to the whole family. Besides, even if you've had a bad relationship, you may still have a hard time being on your own again. Consider the feelings of your children, friends, and extended family. Since nobody from the outside actually knows exactly what goes on between a couple, some of your closest friends and family may want to give you their opinion and discourage you from getting a divorce. In their desire to help, they may actually only make you feel worse.

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Couples Therapy

Below you will find the most common reasons why couples therapy can be a wonderful aid, when it comes to going through a separation, and how it can ease the inevitable pain that everyone involved will likely experience.

To See If There's Anything Worth Saving

“What if?”, can be one of the most painful doubts to deal with and can prevent you from moving on with your life. When getting a separation, it’s important to be sure that it’s the right decision and that you have done everything you could, within reason, to help save the marriage/cohabitation. Not all relationship crises are divorce-worthy but to reach that conclusion, you and your partner need to see and decide if you’re willing to fight for your marriage/cohabitation.

To Help the Other One Accept the Separation

You may think that splitting up is the only way, your mind may be made up, but it’s important for your partner to understand that as well. A process that is difficult anyway, becomes even harder when your partner doesn’t understand why you want to get a separation. Sometimes couples therapy helps you gain understanding of the realistic dynamic in your relationship. It uncovers how your behaviour influences the behaviour of another person and how we may be hurting the ones we love most. Additionally, it may help your spouse see that the relationship has worn off. Instead of ending your marriage/cohabitation in more conflict and grief, therapy will create room for understanding and some degree of respect, so that the two of you can remain civil.

To Help the Process Along

Divorce is a process that goes through several stages. Not only is it very emotional, but it also includes practical issues that need to be handled. And we all know that when we let our emotions get the best of us, we don’t make the wisest decisions and end up hurting everyone along the way. You certainly wouldn’t want to end up traumatizing your children. If separation is the only way you see, it is important to prepare for the challenges you’re going to face, to make smart decisions and find closure. Therapy can be invaluable in all of that.

Advice on Talking to Your Children

One of the most important things, when getting a divorce, is learning how to handle your children and their feelings. Your own feelings need to be very clear, you and your ex need to function as a team, reassuring your children that you’re still their parents and will be around to help them grow. But you may also need to learn how to react and contain some of their feelings, such as anger and frustration. In order to have a healthy and rewarding relationship with your children, you need to understand how to handle the situation, if your child starts acting out in school, for instance.

Strengthening the Family

Sometimes, it may make sense to have some family therapy sessions so that everyone can have a chance to express their feelings in a controlled environment, with a trained specialist as a mediator. To talk and be listened to, as well as to be understood by your family, is very important. Divorce doesn’t have to mean your family is broken, it means your family has a new challenge to adjust to. The key is keeping the sense of family intact, despite the divorce.