



8 reasons marriages fail

When you enter into a marriage, you never think about the fact that a large percentage of marriages actually fail. Marriages fail for many reasons and if you've had a failed marriage your main reason for failure might be different than most others. However, there are some reasons that are consistent across most failed marriages.

Take a look at my list of the 8 reasons why most fail.

1) Because you wanted a wedding more than a marriage.

From childhood, so many of us imagine the heady romance of our wedding day, floating down the aisle in that white dress, being admired by all our friends and relatives, feeling—just for once—like a star. When you reach the age when all your friends are doing it, the pressure can increase, and God forbid you've already started planning the wedding when the truth begins to dawn on you. You know in your heart this relationship is doomed, you just can't give up that day. Mothers, please counsel your daughters on this from day one: a marriage comes after the wedding.

2) Because you married the wrong person—or he did.

Sometimes this is a direct result of Reason #1, but there can be other ways to wind up bound to a person with whom you're completely incompatible. Maybe you're jumping the gun and haven't

gotten to know each other past the infatuation stage; maybe you've outgrown him since your early days but your sense of loyalty is saying, "You can't break his heart—maybe things will be okay." Or maybe he proves to be someone completely different than you believed (think con artist or secret substance-abuser). Be cautious and take plenty of time to truly get to know your future mate—just not so much time that you're already "over it" by the wedding day.

3) Because one person cannot meet all your needs.

The problem with long-term monogamy is that even if your spouse meets 75% of your deepest needs on a daily basis, the other 25% are going unmet. Forever. So if, for example, you marry a man who works hard, has a fun personality and rocks your world in bed, but who never calls you by a pet name and isn't the greatest listener—well, your options are to learn to be content with the 75%, or bail out in search of someone who meets the 25% you've been missing. The problem is—once the dust settles—you'll still find that no one person can be everything and your happiness ratio may be less than it was before.

4) Because someone cheated.

Let's say it was you. Let's say your heart was so lonely for whatever need (see #3) your husband wasn't meeting that you went and found it elsewhere. Maybe you actually needed quality sex but more likely you needed attention—affection—someone who made you feel like a desirable chick again, instead of, ho-hum, a wife. Or let's say your husband cheated. Men tend to cheat for different reasons than women, and yes, some do make a career of it—forever reassuring themselves that they've still "got it," but there are also just stupid occasions when their hormones get the better of them. Infidelity is a crushing blow to any marriage and you feel, in the midst of it, that things will never be the same between you. But you'd be surprised how many of your long-married friends have weathered this regrettable human failing.

5) Because you gave up too fast.

Not every crisis is a deal-breaker. Married couples have been known to deal with the most shocking circumstances—infidelity, financial ruin, infertility, loss of a child, deception, even abuse—and still emerge strong and united, but not if they always have one foot out the door. If divorce was impossible and you had to stay married, what would be different? For one, you

might find that time does its work so that today's agony becomes tomorrow's dull ache and next week's distant memory.

6) Because there's no stigma.

In the 1800's divorce rates were in the single digits. By 1915 the rate was 10%, but divorces were only granted in cases of significant abuse, adultery, or abandonment.

Even as late as the 1960's, divorce brought disapproval from a couple's church, from their parents, and from the community at large. Not that this was a great thing—surely many people suffered through horrible marriages because they couldn't bear the “disgrace” of divorce. But maybe nowadays divorce is just a bit too easy, a bit too accepted. It's hardly more difficult than changing your mind about an expensive purse and returning it to the store for a refund.

7) Because you think it's all the other one's fault.

Well, it is, right? You're the nice person and he's the jerk—just ask your mom, your sister, or any of your friends. Of course his family and friends might see it another way, but they're just biased. In truth, there are marriages where one person is clearly the bad guy, but more often there are two people who just need to work on their behavior and communication skills. Find yourself a mature person who's been married many years, and ask them to tell you about the things they did wrong in their early years, things they had to learn to do differently. Chances are that at some point they realized their own behavior and attitude needed work, too.

8) Because you want love while he wants respect.

It's normal, but marriages fail when spouses fail to understand it. Generally speaking, a wife will have a deep need for tender love and affirmation, while a husband needs to be recognized for his abilities and achievements. The problem is that we tend to give our spouses what we want. So if a wife is putting love notes in his suit pockets and trying to tempt him with lingerie but meanwhile making jokes at his expense or correcting him in front of the children, trouble is coming. Ditto for the husband who brags to others about his wife's accomplishments but who

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ignores her at home. If your marriage is on the rocks, try this tip above all others: show love to your wife, respect to your husband.

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