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If you find you are experiencing any of the following list of telltale signs, you should check in with your partner to see whether or not he or she is feeling the same. If the two of you can't reach an agreement on how to go about correcting the situation, or if you both agree that you have already tried everything you can think of, and you both feel there is no hope to resurrect the relationship, you are probably ready to ask for a divorce. Consider whether you are experiencing any of these factors:

1. EMOTIONAL/SPIRITUAL DISTRESS

• Have you tried everything you can think of to communicate with your partner, compromise with your partner, but you still can't find any peace within yourself in the relationship?

• Have you found yourself completely unable to trust your partner, despite every attempt to communicate on a deep level, including with the help of your religious adviser or a mental health professional or counselor?

• Have you and your partner been more and more distant, and despite repeated attempts on your part, you still can't seem to reverse the trend, such that you don't rely on your partner anymore to fulfill your basic emotional needs?

2. ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS

• Do you find yourself showing symptoms of depression, such as lethargy, or insomnia, lack of energy, disinterest in life, dark moods that linger for longer and longer periods of time, loss of appetite, feeling as though you are in a fog all the time, etc. and that there is a clear connection of some kind between these symptoms and your relationship with your partner?

• Do you feel a physical aversion to your partner and/or your current environment living with your partner?

3. IRREVERSIBLY UNHEALTHY FAMILY LIFE

• Has your partner undergone life changes that you feel he or she simply cannot overcome and you cannot live with, such as substance abuse, gambling or other addiction, which has written you out of or replaced you in his or her life, such that you feel unable to ever come to terms with those changes?

• Have you become physically uncomfortable, or medically ill, from the lifestyle you and your partner have developed over time, which you now feel the need to radically reverse, but your partner is not willing to go there with you?

Everyone changes; in fact, one often hears the adage that "change is the only constant". Sometimes our own changes can be difficult for our partner, and vice versa. Relationships of all kinds – family, friends, even co-workers, can become difficult at times, however all the issues are compounded when our life partner is concerned. We develop a dependency on our life partner, that they will be there through thick and thin, and we fear the loss of such an important player in our lives. These feelings are natural, but that doesn't make them easier to deal with. But the fear factor can go way up.

You will discover that your "emotional divorce" may start well in advance of the actual "legal divorce". Which one is harder? Well, by taking charge of your "legal divorce" through divorce mediation, you have the best shot at minimizing the impact on your "emotional divorce" by the processing of your "legal divorce". In this way, you can certainly make your "legal divorce" much easier. However, if you use litigation, divorce attorneys, and the courts to process your legal divorce, you are more likely to face a more difficult, protracted, expensive and contentious "legal divorce" which will also adversely affect your "emotional divorce".

So what are the signs that tell you should ask for a divorce? Primarily, your heart tells you, then your spouse confirms it, and finally you may find it is just a matter of mental health, physical or medical necessity to end your marriage, due to adverse affects on your physical or mental health. Then, before you hire a divorce attorney, talk to a divorce mediator, to see whether or not your situation is appropriate for divorce mediation.

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[David D. Stein](#) - About Author:

a [Oakland divorce lawyer](#): David D. Stein has been an attorney for over 20 years and is the founder of Liaise® Divorce Solutions <http://www.LiaiseDivorce.com>. He is a lawyer, expert mediator, dispute resolution specialist and lecturer on non-violent conflict management techniques and tools.

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