

# Divorce: Going Nuclear Is NOT an Option



**A** woman gets home, screeches her car into the driveway, runs into the house, slams the door and shouts at the top of her lungs, "Honey, pack your bags. I WON THE LOTTERY!!!"

The husband says, "Oh my God! No kidding? What should I pack, beach stuff or mountain stuff?"

"Doesn't matter," she says. "Just get the hell OUT!"

Okay, I know: You're in no mood for jokes. But if you're a woman who can identify with this biting humor, you know this lady lottery winner's sentiment well.

And if you're like the husband who's the brunt of the joke, you could wind up with the last laugh: You may already have bags packed in your mind, in hiding behind the coats in a closet ... The next put down she makes and you're out!

**I**t's **No Laughing Matter**. Truth is, there's nothing funny about divorce. Just thinking about it should cause you great consternation. The other side of a divorce often brings humiliation, exposes you as a failure. You'll fret that the kids don't hate you. Your lifestyle may take a nose-dive. You're likely to lose friends and self-confidence, too.

What you wouldn't do to turn back the hands of time, to go back to when relationships were oh, so simple ...

Divorce may conjure up images of your younger days, of being single and free to quickly dismiss a dysfunctional relationship. You may think divorce is similar to dumping that boring girlfriend you had in college. Or, the time you broke up with

that jerk who drank too much and embarrassed you. But leaving a marriage is far different. It's more damaging and complex than you can imagine.

The threads of life in holy matrimony weave an intricate tapestry. Divorce renders this cloth unrecognizable, frayed and chaotic. Real estate, furniture, CDs, and, most importantly, children will be fought over. Thousands of dollars in mortgage, college and car loans may all be on the line. And who'll get the dog?! (Okay... don't all raise your hands at once!)

Knowing you'd be happier on your own may be a personal truth, but the reality of shredding that complex blanket may leave you, your finances and life in pieces beyond repair. And the high emotional cost of divorce on children is irrefutable.

## **H**ow to Mend Your Marriage

**H**You really **can** make things better... In fact, you make your marriage fun again! Here's how:

1. **Schedule some sessions alone with a therapist.** This is an excellent place to start healing your marriage. You need these interventions for the sake of your mental and physical health.
2. **Get your partner to join you for couples' counseling.** This can be invaluable in helping both of you process the anger, sadness and other heavy issues weighing on you.

Staying committed to your marriage – your family – is the key to healing. There's still love there. Let it propel you toward the work it'll take to repair things. In time you'll find this crisis can actually create a healthier, more loving bond.

### **Marriage Communication Tips**

- Pre-determine from the outset that you're willing to do whatever it takes to save your marriage. Remember: "Don't sweat the small stuff. And it's all small stuff!"
- Discover the truth about why your marriage is in trouble. It's essential to have an open mind as to what you'll hear. Just know that *anything* can be resolved with time.
- Talk about things only when the time is right. Not when your spouse has had a tough day and is trying to unwind by watching his or her favorite TV program.
- Control your temper. That shrill, piercing tone you have? Hate to tell you, but that may be part of the reason you're reading this... Remember this, too: "You can catch more flies with honey than you can with s\*\*\*!"
- Be patient. In fact, over the coming weeks and months, you'll need the patience of a saint. The troubles in your marriage didn't start today, and cannot be fixed in a day, either.
- Compromise. Does it always have to be your way? Even to the detriment of your relationship? Try things your partner's way sometimes. Sometimes what you're fighting for simply isn't that serious.
- Set it and forget it. Program your mind not to keep repeating the charges and accusations. Say your peace and then let there BE peace. Forgive and forget. Turn the page to a new, more pleasant chapter, okay?