

## Why is the Modern Marriage on Fire

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Overtime, the definition of marriage has evolved and transmogrified. Marriage has become less institutionalised and moved towards forming a more inter-dependent partnership. Though it may sometimes seem like modern couples are living “alone together” i.e. living together while maintaining separate individual lives, they choose to share the load, meeting one another’s emotional needs and having one’s needs met, while focussing on their own growth rather than simply fulfilling the traditional spousal roles set by the society.

Modern marriages are generally seen as a framework where couples comparatively rely less on each other in terms of providing a livelihood, securing the basic necessities of life and are both of them are more inclined towards sharing responsibilities, catering to their own needs and creating their own happily ever after.

As partners, they not only make an attempt to facilitate for spouse's need for safety, security, intimacy and connection, but also for their needs for personal growth and fulfilment, interchangeably playing many roles, from being friends, caring confidants, passionate lovers to intellectual challengers, and each others biggest cheerleaders. They are writing their own rules of their modern-day fairy-tale.

One can enter into marriage for various reasons. It can be due to friendship, a romantic partnership or a practical, finance-based agreement, where partners marry for prioritising their comforts or business. It's common for people in financially-advantaged marriages to have a prenuptial agreement (also known as pre-nups), that allow the spouses to divide everything 50/50 or an agreed upon allowance, in the event they want to leave with their share of the money.

Some spouses may even choose to live apart—different states, countries, or even apartments while they remain married to each other. They may choose to live on their own to maintain a sense of individuality amongst various other reasons.

In some marriages, spouses may maintain their committed relationship only to provide a stable and loving environment for their children, keeping parenting a top priority which serves as an anchor for their relationship. They may continue living together as companions and may also choose to probably co-grandparent in future.

Nowadays, in modern marriages, some spouses are opting for open marriages, as an alternative. It's a consensual non-monogamy arrangement, where both the spouses together come to an agreement to seek out sex or romance as suited to their needs under certain conditions with or without disclosing the details of their romantic encounters to the spouse's. However they may check-in with each other from time to time.

Another modern marriage model is the starter marriage. In this type of arrangement, one person in the marriage enters it for a personal gain, say they wanted access to a certain network or professional arena through their spouse, or emotional security and once they had that need fulfilled by their first spouse, they move on to someone else who can likely offer them even more. The professionally successful partner who may be feeling held back by their spouse might call things off with the person who supported them in their journey, and remarry someone who is now more suited to their needs and can keep up with their new lifestyle. Starter marriages are becoming more common than you may probably anticipate.

Any kind of relationship, be it the different types of marriages mentioned in this article, involves continuous work, patience, sacrifice, investing time and effort in nurturing the relationship. A sense of commitment, co-operation and compassion are the hallmarks of a happy and successful marriage.

In my observation, modern couples who come from a space of sharing and caring for each other i.e. rather than looking at “What can my partner do for me?” approaching the relationship with a giving mindset, “I’m here for you”, would help them withstand both pleasant and unpleasant times! They are their authentic selves, they are honest, open, natural, and non-judgemental. They engage in mindful communication i.e. they are aware, intently listen to their partner with full attention. Focussing in the present moment, without any judgements or grievances can improve the quality of relationships and help couples navigate even the most difficult conversations. Inculcating an understanding mind-set versus always demanding for time and attention, can go a long way. Partners who are forgiving of past mistakes and are supportive of each other, who walk together, shoulder-to-shoulder with each other, as a team, tend to live happier together.

It’s when the spouses’ expectations and efforts don’t match up, disappointments, dissatisfaction and conflicts may arise. It also depends upon how quickly these couples resolve conflicts together and uphold the roles they both agreed in the beginning of their alliance. However, specific challenges of the modern-day marriages and development of strategies for them would vary from couple to couple and from one situation to another situation.

Most, if not all, marriages will encounter the occasional rough patch over the years but when does a rough patch turn into an entirely unhappy or loveless marriage? It can be scary to consider the possibility that your marriage is over or to even recognize the signs in the first place, but it is possible to come back to each other.

There is huge social pressure in India for men and women to get married. For men, the percentage unmarried at the age of 50 also rises from 1.4% in 2010 to 5% by the age of 50, with the least educated likely to have the most trouble finding a wife.

A 2020 survey by Gleeden found nearly 55 percent of the married people in India who responded to the survey accepted to having cheated on their partner. 56 percent of them were women. Despite the rise in the divorce rate around the world, India has a remarkably low divorce rate. In 2018 the divorce rate was under one percent, with only 13 out of every 1,000 marriages leading to a divorce. India is officially considered to have one of the lowest divorce rates in the world. Indeed, if we rely on cold figures and statistical studies, it turns out that in India, only about 1% of all married couples end their joint family life with a dissolution of marriage.

Marriages in India are between two families, rather two individuals, arranged marriages and dowry are customary. In the setting of mental illness many of the social values take their ugly forms in the form of domestic violence, dowry harassment, abuse of dowry law, dowry death, separation, and divorce. Since a lot of marriages in India still get formalised based on caste, religion, sub-caste etc, a husband and wife's families often belong to a tight-knit community where it is inevitable to dodge social scrutiny.

According to a Bombay High Court hearing, divorces are higher in love marriages as compared to arranged marriages, in India. It is also a fact that India has a very low divorce rate of only 1.1% when compared to other countries in the world.

The cause of every unhappy marriage is most likely a deep-rooted sense of unfulfillment. A feeling that there is not enough love, affection, trust, respect, or other crucial components for a satisfying connection. By nature, a woman is more connected to her emotions.

### **6 Things To Do When Happiness Fades in Your Marriage**

1. Get To Know Each Other Again.
2. Be Generous With One Another.
3. Spend More Time Together.
4. Don't Be A Victim.
5. Exercise Forgiveness.
6. Focus on the Positives.
7. Hold On Tight

**Reasons for failed marriages in India**

1. Unhappy sex life. ...
2. The primary unit becomes secondary. ...
3. Most relationships fail. ...
4. Change happens. ...
5. Financially incompatible. ...
6. Life gets in the way. ...
7. Lack of trust leads to communication breakdown. ...
8. Molehills become mountains

Domestic violence, abuse and infidelity are not the only reasons why marriages break. Not every fight leaves a visible scar. There are many more things that can go wrong between a married couple that only the rest of the world can't see. Sometimes, two people realize they're just not compatible. Sometimes, people fall out of love. Sometimes, they realize they're both great people, just not right for each other. Sometimes, they just don't understand each other. But sadly, Indian parents don't consider these reasons good enough for someone to walk out of a marriage. And that needs to change. We need to reinvent the definition of a successful marriage.

Sometimes, Indian families over-involve themselves and end up ruining their children's marriages. Our parents and relatives need to understand that it is impossible that they will be pleased by every decision the married couples takes. They need to know that they may not get along well with their child's in-laws and that is perfectly fine, because what matters the most is that the couple is happy with each other. We need to stop looking for perfect families and try to find ideal partners instead.

There's no 'perfect time' to get married. If only this society could be a little less obsessed with their kids getting married 'before turning 30', we might just be able to follow our dreams a lot more fearlessly and do something worthwhile with our lives. Our parents need to stop making such a big deal out of getting us married 'at the right time'. It will happen when it has to. There are much more important life goals than starting a family.

Indian parents feel cheated and betrayed if their son or daughter decides to get divorced. The blame is conveniently put on the couple for making their families go through such a rough phase. But what they fail to acknowledge is that nobody 'wants' to get divorced. Nobody has it on their wish list. Parents need to understand that nobody is more worried about getting divorced than the person who is getting divorced. So, if he/she has taken such a drastic step, there must be a good reason for it. Parents need to stop acting as if their children have let them down, for nobody has it worse than the person getting divorced.

Everybody likes elaborate weddings, but is it really necessary? Now, if can you afford it, there's nothing wrong with spending your wealth lavishly, but we're talking about middle class families here. We hate how the society judges a family on the amount of money it spends on weddings. It just doesn't make sense to go bankrupt trying to please ungrateful people who are going to be dissatisfied with your choice and efforts no matter what lengths you go to impress them. We need to stop making weddings such a competitive affair. It's the union of two people who want to spend the rest of their lives together, let's let it remain that.

As norms and values around marriage and family life change, the Indian youth too are being influenced by recent trends. Lokniti-CSDS Youth Studies in 2016 and 2007 show the proportion of married youth decreased by eight percentage points from 55% In 2007 to 47% in 2016.

As we immerse ourselves in modernity, Indian society is surely finding an altogether new meaning of marriage, at least in some cases, where marriage signifies part compromise, part adjustment and a minuscule part called love. While earlier, having personality differences with the life partner was considered to be the spice (a big yawn to the redundant saying, opposites attract) of the relationship, now these very individual differences have started spelling doom for Indian couples.

The relationship experts feel the main reason for the growing intolerance inside Indian homes is the fact that Indians have become emotionally unstable, thanks to the expectations of the society, stress and other factors. People have unrealistic expectations these days and things go wrong when you walk into a marriage expecting it to be a fairy tale, because it isn't going to be one.

### The Secret to Having a Happy Marriage

1. First of all, even happy couples argue.
2. Focus on each other's strengths.
3. Don't expect your partner to complete you.
4. But still, do things together. ...
5. Choose to be attracted to your spouse.
6. Laugh with each other.
7. Be kind to one another.
8. Celebrate small, good, moments.

### Conclusions

As time passes in any relationship, a couple may witness a change in their expectations and attitudes. It is completely natural. We can learn how to communicate better in the relationship, to being more vocal about our own needs, understanding of our partners needs, patient and forgiving. Again and again, the cycle continues from rosy and glorious bliss to momentary disturbances or quivering.

When the husband and wife are too focused on each other, all the time, they may enter into more fights. After the initial phase of marriage, where everything is magical, as we popularly call it "the honeymoon period" is over, faults start surfacing, all too soon. Remember it this way, lines moving towards each other only move apart after the point of intersection.

Another scenario, when the husband and wife are not focused on each other and their goals in life are different, say they stop seeing eye-to-eye with each other, and communication and trust break down. Further, when the goals are only to satisfy personal desires, there is not much fulfilment or satisfaction that is gained.

It is only when both are moving together, with their focus on a higher goal, say for the society, for the world, that values are upheld in the relationship and beauty, love, and faith are nourished. To draw from earlier example, remember, parallel lines move together until infinity. We need to have both personal goals and goals for the community. Only then would we have a sense of connection, fulfilment and higher purpose. Commitment is what holds it together when you decide, to not fall apart, come what may. It requires courage and resilience as equally important pillars to nourish your relationship, love alone is not enough. Even if you feel the spark has died out, love will blossom again if both the partners make consistent committed efforts to reciprocate love and care. However, you also need to prioritise your own well-being. In no way, we encourage you to continue with an unhealthy relationship.

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