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**Marriage, Children and Divorce: When "le music" stops**

**By Marshall Colt, Ph.D.**

Marriage, Children and Divorce: When "le music" stops

by Marshall Colt, Ph.D.

It can happen in many ways. Sometimes, suddenly, out of the blue, with no warning whatsoever. Other times, the music slowly, gradually, fades to a deafening silence.

Divorce is the great plague on American families today. More than 40% of adults under 40 are children of divorced parents. The U.S. now has the highest divorce rate (roughly 44%) of the Western nations, though it's slightly declining. Avoiding it, preparing for it and dealing with the consequences of when the music stops involve millions of us every day.

Here in France, where the "use" of a lover is accepted and frequent, the current divorce rate is 39%, having more than tripled since 1970. The trend is alarming. Even the French find their own institution of marriage "moins formidable" than before.

Sitting in this near-empty café, I'm struck how the odds those lovers smooching on the Seine might marry, but then divorce, has shot up like my blood pressure now, thanks to my less-than-attentive waiter. Infidelity, financial strains, sexual problems, parenting differences, poor anger management, career incompatibility and, of course, the catch-all "irreconcilable differences," cause marriages to dissolve and families to suffer.

Perhaps the pain becomes too great. Or the notion things are hopeless and won't change, or it will take too long and be too much work cause couples to pull the plug, give up. Hopelessness is a powerful force, robbing us of energy and initiative.

Of course, the stressful consequences of divorce can be devastating emotionally, financially and on any children. How parents inform their children and negotiate future parenting responsibilities affect how children will react to the news.

## Marriage, Children and Divorce: When "le music" stops

It's best to tell your children together, simply, honestly and directly. Don't go into detail about why or bash your spouse. It's okay to reveal your sadness, while allowing them to also show their feelings. If you're separating and not sure about divorce, don't make predictions or promises you can't keep. Try to keep things as consistent as possible.

Let your children know they're not responsible, that nothing they've done is causing the separation, and they can't do anything to make you get back together. Do not use your children as communication go-betweens. Assure them you both love them and will continue to take care of them.

Most people entering marriage expect it to last. Success worth having is worth fighting for...through both the exhilarating highs and mind-numbing lows.

Barring physical abuse, couples can repair and improve their marriages. I've seen 'em do it countless times in marriage counseling. Sometimes it's quicker and easier than expected. Sometimes it takes

time.

Well, the music between my now-empty café waiter and me has dropped to one decibel. Clearly, he has more important things to do than attend to beaucoup-euros-paying little ol' me. I consider divorcing him (C'est la vie, c'est la guerre), but decide to give it another shot. Monsieur!...pardon, monsieur!

Okay, I've had enough. The music's died. I'm leaving. Hey, bud, Happy Bastille Day! Wait! Mon Dieu, he's coming over! I hear music.

Before you bid adieu to your duet, consider the assistance of an experienced, well-regarded marriage counselor.

For more information:

<http://www.advance-counseling-denver-boulder.com/>

Dr. Marshall Colt is Executive Director of Advance Counseling, LLC – Denver/Aurora/Lakewood/Boulder, serving the Front Range since 1994 (

<http://www.advance-counseling-denver-boulder.com/>

). Licensed in Colorado, California and Florida,

Dr. Colt has been in private practice in the Denver/Boulder area for over 11 years, working with a variety of people dealing with the challenges of adolescence and adult life.

## **Marriage Counseling**

**By Steve Holloway**

Currently, the western world has a divorce rate of close to 50%. Some countries have an even higher rate. So why are we seeing an increase in divorce and how can marriage counseling help save marriage - yours and other peoples?

I think it's fair to say that the easier you make something the more often it will occur. If it becomes more frequent it loses its taboo and therefore becomes far more acceptable in society's eyes.

My wife is from a divorced family. When she was a kid at school she was in the minority and it was a stigma. Now, my children are in the minority of those whose parents are still together. Of course, one of the major impacts of divorce is on the family. The impact on young children is often underestimated and we should recognize that even though one in two marriages may end - no matter how common, it doesn't reduce the impact on the family.

Marriage counseling is form of therapy and conflict resolution. It is normally carried out by trained psychotherapist (though not always). For it to work properly both parties need to attend, though separate sessions will most likely be helpful.

If you are considering seeing a marriage counselor then here a few points to consider and questions to ask to help save marriage.

1. Is a first assessment session free?
2. How many times a week are needed?
3. Do you need to pay after each session?
4. Is the marriage counselor qualified?
5. Is the marriage counselor recommended by someone you trust?
6. How long will each session be?
7. Are you able to contact the marriage Counselor outside of session times?
8. Will the sessions fit in with your work schedule?

I am all for marriage counseling to save marriage, however, very often people are being paid huge sums to point out the blindingly obvious. In fact a lot of issues are screaming out to be noticed and normally have been by friends and family.

Of course, having an independent ear can be very useful – but you can achieve a huge amount yourself. With the right techniques, you can actually conduct your own marriage counseling.

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marriage counseling

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