

But I Don't Want A Divorce! What To Do Right Now To Keep Your Spouse From Leaving You and To Build A Better Life Together

By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.

Imagine sitting in your boss's office and being told they're considering letting you go because you haven't fulfilled your job responsibilities. It's a shock, and you might realize you haven't been working up to your potential, merely coasting until retirement. How would you respond? Maybe you'd think, "Fine, I can find a new job at age 63," or you'd initiate negotiations to salvage your position. You might genuinely want to save your job despite your lack of investment.

Now, let's transpose this scenario into a marriage context. What if your spouse expressed unhappiness and is contemplating divorce? You'd need to reflect on the issues similar to the job situation. Have there been discussions about your behavior and contributions to the relationship? What changes does your spouse desire in how you represent the partnership and conduct your shared life?

If you decide to salvage your marriage, the first step is identifying where you've fallen short. Your spouse has likely raised these concerns multiple times. Reflect on the feedback they've given you and consider the alterations they seek in how you contribute to the relationship. Please don't focus on your complaints about them. That will drive them to divorce faster. If you can restore effective communication and problem-solving in your marriage, you will be more able to work through them with each other.

Once the issues are apparent, would you superficially change to alleviate the immediate pressure, or would you genuinely commit to transformation? If there are skill deficits, would you make excuses, or would you proactively address your discomfort and learn the necessary skills to improve the relationship in the long term?

Approaching marital challenges with the same dedication you'd apply to save your job is crucial. Imagine the phrase "too little, too late" echoing in your mind. If you've been through cycles of negotiating and reprieves from potential divorce, only to revert to old habits, it's time to break the pattern.

Contrary to articles advocating quick fixes to prevent a spouse from leaving, a more profound approach is needed. Rearranging the metaphorical deck chairs won't fool anyone. Denial won't help; acknowledging the issues is the first step. Instead of treating divorce talk as a passing whim, wake up, pay attention, and evolve.

Consider getting marriage counseling, taking a vacation, or getting help for your addiction -- whatever they have been advocating for. Many people end up divorced because they don't believe their spouse is serious about divorce and don't engage in the problem-solving necessary to restore their relationship's good feelings and happiness. They often could have focused on building a better life together rather than engaging in desperate attempts to prevent separation. A paradigm shift in how you approach your marriage can lead to

lasting
improvements and
a stronger
foundation for a
fulfilling life
together.

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Despite the specter of divorce, there's a glimmer of hope, a potential pathway towards reconciliation and renewal – your rededicated effort to devote time and attention to your marriage. The Honey Jar can help. This remarkable tool isn't just about salvaging what's left of a relationship; it's about reigniting the flame of love and intimacy that may have flickered or dimmed over time. By engaging in this couples communication exercise, you're not just going through the motions but actively investing in revitalizing your relationship. It's a commitment to open communication, strengthened bonds, and reaffirming your shared commitment to one another. It's a catalyst for change.

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3 of 3

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