

# Understanding the Stages of Divorce

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The stages of divorce include several legal, emotional, and spiritual aspects before it's truly complete. Although a difficult process that no one would choose if they could avoid it, divorce can also be extremely edifying and allow you to move on with your life and make better choices in the future.

## Mental or Cognitive Separation

One of the first stages of divorce process is the mental or cognitive separation. This primarily happens in the mind of one or both parties before they feel prepared to follow through with an actual separation. It often follows a long period of unhappiness in the relationship in which at least one of the partners realizes that separation is the best course of action.

Eventually, one of the partners will verbalize the idea of separating. Because a lot of dysfunction exists in marriages coming to an end, communication may be volatile or non-existent. This can lead to mental health issues as well as a breakdown in parenting skills.

## Physical Separation

This is one of the most straightforward stages of divorce in marriage. During this second stage, one member of the couple moves out of the home the family once shared. The children may remain in the family home or go with the parent who moves out depending on custody agreements. It's also possible the children may spend equal time at each residence going forward.

## Legal Dissolution

It's at this point that the couple requires outside intervention to legally end their marriage. This typically includes a divorce attorney for each party and appearing before a county judge. Unfortunately, many couples use their unresolved conflict and anger to make this stage longer than it needs to be.

Although the couple physically lives apart, they can stay connected through the courts by violating court orders and becoming highly combative during the divorce process. It can be a time of extreme personal duress as one or both members of the couple attempt to let go and hold on at the same time.

## Breaking of the Spiritual Connection

When two people come together in a relationship as intimate as marriage, it binds them at a spiritual level. This connection can take a very long time to break after divorce, if it ever breaks at all. It can be emotionally devastating to let go of the feelings of unconditional love and vulnerability towards the former spouse and to no longer feel those things in return. Some former spouses do remain spiritually connected although they understand they can no longer live together or have the same type of relationship.

## Emotional Un-bonding and Divorce

The last of the stages of divorce requires the most emotional work. It requires each partner to mourn that it didn't work out as well as let go of roles and expectations. Those willing to work through it learn what drew them to the relationship and what caused them to stay. They take responsibility for their role in both the marriage and divorce and learn to do better in the future.

## Contact Wall & Wall, Attorneys at Law

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If you're considering divorce, we invite you to [contact Wall & Wall, Attorneys at Law](#) to request your free [30-minute consultation today](#). We will review your case, explore your options, and let you know what to expect throughout the legal process.