



## WHY WAIT?

### **Lawyer RAJAN CHETTIAR explains the reasons why procrastination is common in divorce proceedings, especially when considering your 'next step'.**

It can take a long time for a client to face and accept the fact that his or her marriage is breaking down. Even after consulting me, I see clients taking a long time to take effective steps to solve their marital problems. This could be due to a variety of reasons:

- 1. Fear of the other spouse's reaction when the issue of divorce is raised.** This worry is inevitable if the client wishes to file for divorce. If not, the only other option is to stay on in the marriage.
- 2. Being in denial that the marriage is over.** Divorce is often an emotional life-altering experience. I always ask my client, "What do you want?" If you're sure you want a divorce, act swiftly. By taking effective steps, the client feels that he or she is solving the problem and is in control.
- 3. Hoping that time can solve any marital issues.** The client has to ask himself the purpose for giving himself more time. Is there a practical issue that hinders him from solving his marital problems? If so, what is the best solution? Is there a real possibility of resolving the differences? Does his spouse share the same goal? If so, what steps are both parties taking towards resolution?
- 4. Busy with work and other commitments.** What other commitments could possibly take precedence? This is just an excuse. If a client's career is more important to them than their personal life then this could well be the underlying issue! And will he or she be as effective at work if their personal life is in limbo?
- 5. Confusion, as a result of 'advice' from family and friends.** Support of family and friends is important. But at the end of the day, the client's life and marriage is that of his or her own - not of those around them. The most important counsel for the client is a marriage counsellor and lawyer.
- 6. Maintaining status quo, rather than facing an unknown future.** Is this what the client really wants? Living with constant stress and fear does more harm than good. If fears are confronted what is the worst that can happen?

Remaining in an unhappy and hopeless marriage does not help either party in the marriage. If something is broken don't we try to fix it? And if it can't be fixed wouldn't we throw it away? If you're experiencing difficulties in your marriage try to resolve these issues with your spouse, and instigate the help of a counsellor, relative or friend if necessary. Set a time period by which you hope these issues would be improving. If there's no improvement your next step is to seek legal advice.

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