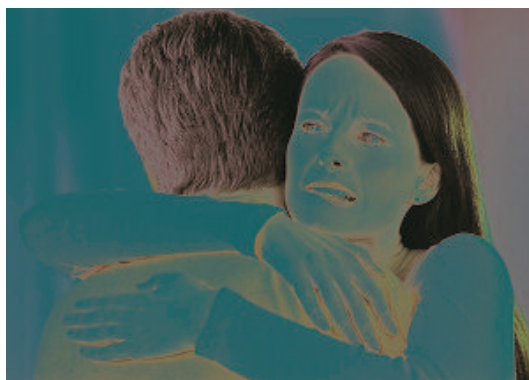


## UNMADE FOR EACH OTHER

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*More than domestic violence and infidelity, it's incompatibility that's causing about 60 percent of marriages to break-up, say divorce lawyers. **Durba Ghosh** probes more...*

She wanted to live in a bungalow. Her husband believed it was a "waste of money". Incompatibility. The couple ended their five-year-marriage over a house. Advocate and legal advisor, Ambika Prakash, says this phenomenon is not uncommon. "I have couples coming to me seeking divorce for reasons ranging from 'he doesn't listen to me,' 'he doesn't respect me,' 'She doesn't

want to live with my parents,' 'I love her, but I'm not in love with her anymore,' 'He's just a male chauvinist pig,' 'he just cares about himself,' 'there's no place for me in his plans,' and so on." On an average 60 percent of the divorces are filed on the grounds of incompatibility and, of this, irreconcilable differences are about 10 percent.

People may say incompatibility is a "lame reason" given by new age couples to go their separate ways, but Suparna Das (32), a communications professional, begs to differ. Married to an IT professional for five years, Das filed for a divorce last year, stating incompatibility as the reason. "There was nothing disturbing about my marriage. In fact, we had our share of fun, we went travelling, partied frequently." But, at a deeper level they wanted different things from life. "His idea of how our future will be was in loggerheads with mine. I wanted to get into business and move to Delhi. He wanted to remain in Bengaluru because he didn't want to leave his parents. I gave him an option that I can move to Delhi first and then the family can follow in a year. But he wasn't willing to listen." So they decided to part ways, though Das's parents and friends found it to be too trivial a reason for divorce.

"It's very common nowadays for couples to file for divorce on grounds of incompatibility. The basic problem underneath all this is lack of conversation," Prakash says. Counselling psychologist Kala Subhramaniam of Inner Dawn says that even when the couples are in love, incompatibility is possible. Although incompatibility in marriages is nothing new, divorce filings on that ground have increased, because of changing gender roles. "Earlier a marriage break up was unthinkable. There was no choice but to stay in a relationship, even when you are miserable. But today, women stand up for themselves, and when you are independent, it's natural to demand respect in a relationship," Subhramaniam says.

Daljit Kaur (37) moved to Bengaluru in 2006 after her wedding, and found herself idle with no job prospect in offing. "But when I got a job finally, my ex didn't oppose it, but he was not very cooperative either. Cooking, cleaning, groceries were always my responsibility, no matter how busy or tired I was," Kaur says.

Subhramaniam points out that these are the core values one must look for in a life partner. "There are differences, it can be on what show to watch on TV, to go out for dinner or not, etc. Then there is incompatibility. If your partner doesn't share the same point of view about how to lead a life, it can become a problem. If you believe in having fun, your partner should be on the same page," she says. Sometimes there are irreconcilable differences, but a lot other times issues can be solved by communicating, "But most of the time, communication lines is the first to snap when couples disagree." Relationships require constant nurturing, and in busy lives we sometimes forget that, Subhramaniam adds.

Anushka Bhartiya (30), a creative writer for an advertising agency, says her one year of marriage has taught her the difference between incompatibility and disagreement. "I am a vegetarian and he is not. That's a difference, and we live with it, letting the other person be as they are. But my husband is hell bent over moving to the US. He loves the US and criticises India all the time. But I never had any inclination to move out of India. I feel that is incompatibility. If I agree to go with him, it will be a compromise on my part," Bhartiya says.

According to psychologist Peter Pearson of the Couples Institute in California, the "holy grail" of relationships is finding a partner who shares the same core values as you. "The initial hormonal rush you feel when you see someone you're attracted to may feel like the most important and stringent factor at the time, but these chemical reactions are likely to fade with time in a way that your core values will not," he said. (source: The Independent)

If you prefer crime shows to romances and your partner does not, compromises and negotiations can be made to work around this. However, if your life ambition is to get rich while your partner couldn't care less about money you may well encounter problems, Pearson adds.

While incompatibility is a big factor in breaking marriages, the sub heads — finances, freedom and interference of extended family also plays a big role. Beliefs and values cause friction - "mainly because a lot of people actually don't respect the other person's point of view if it's contrary to their own, least of all when they're married to each other," Subhramaniam says.

But for marketing professional Piyush Jain, who is slotted to get married by the month-end, mutual love and respect is a given thing in any relationship. "we love each other and that's what matters".

Pointing to such idealism, Subhramaniam says that every couple who is yet to be married may harbor such conception. "The truth is that we don't see those small things that can become an irritant, until and unless we start living with them. Issues will always be there. But if one partner believes in holding on to the grudge, while the other believes in blurting it out, this difference in personality trait can break a relationship."

### **COUNSELLORS RECOMMEND**

» *Communicate to find each other's point of view*

» *When making a decision, consider if your partner will do a thing the same way you would want to. If yes, it's the right decision to get hitched.*

» *Learn to accept each other's personality traits, but look for similarities*

» *Acknowledge that no relationship can be without troubles, and don't term your differences as incompatibility*

» *Work on the relationship constantly with new ideas to spend time and getting to know the spouse*

»Seek help of a counselor or any trustworthy person when needed

»Spell out your expectations clearly, before marriage preferably, to understand what the other person wants.

»Discuss trivial things also, like what kind of house they want to live in, how many times a week they like to go out, etc.

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