



DIVORCE

Divorce, or the dissolution of a marriage, is something that construction workers know too much about. The national average for divorce rates has declined in the past decade and now sits at 7.6%. Meaning for every 100 marriages nearly 8 will fail. Unfortunately, **the construction industry has the 12th highest rate out of all professions with a divorce rate of 36.5%**. This means that over 1/3 of all marriages in the construction industry will end in divorce. I'm sure many of us have been through a divorce or know a fellow co-worker that has. Divorce is not something I would wish for my worst enemy. It leaves those that go through it with feelings of fear, anger, remorse, doubt, and grief. It can destroy a lifetime of accumulated assets and rip apart families. If there are children involved it can leave them with trauma that may last a lifetime.



The decision to file for divorce is a difficult one that is led by many causes. Research shows that the most common reasons for divorce are **lack of intimacy, lack of commitment, infidelity, and basic incompatibility**. Other prevalent causes are constant conflict, financial differences, addiction, and abuse. The decision is so difficult because inherently it leaves us feeling as if we failed. We failed to make it work, we failed to do our part, we failed to make the other person happy. We worry about what our lives will look like without our spouse. We are afraid that we won't be able to make it financially. We are afraid that we may never find someone else again. If we have children, we are afraid of how this will affect them and what our new roles as parents will look like.



HOW DIVORCE AFFECTS CHILDREN

Divorce usually breaks up a household and its routines. Children need assurance that they are still loved by both parents and that they will not be abandoned. They also need to not hear any conversations in which one parent talks badly about the other for any reason. **It is usually not the actual divorce that harms children but seeing their parents fight and in distress.** Because every child reacts differently to divorce, parental response is best tailored to the needs of each child. Often, kids are scared, confused, angry, or disappointed in one or both parents. The stress of the split and readjustment to change—especially if a household move is involved—can heighten anxiety, increase irritability, create behavior problems, beget social withdrawal or have difficulty sleeping. There may be a drop in classroom attentiveness, and grades may suffer. Many of the effects of divorce on children are short-lived and resolved within a year or two. But others may be longer lasting and play out in later attitudes toward their romantic relationships.



HOW TO HEAL FROM DIVORCE

Divorce is as much an emotional process as it is a legal process, and it takes courage to start the process of splitting. One or both partners may experience waves of self-doubt. Both need an array of skills to work out the inevitable conflicts and disappointments that arise. During divorce, two people must come to terms with the relationship failure, set up emotionally and usually financially independent lives, and put the relationship firmly in the past. It is important to understand and accept the role each partner played in the breakdown of the relationship. It is often helpful for divorcing partners to set up rules of engagement to limit contact with each other. The outside perspective of a professional counselor can be especially beneficial. **Eventually, the emotional turbulence subsides, and it becomes possible**—and necessary—to tell the story of the relationship, its failure, the divorce, and the resulting emotional growth into one's own identity. Many exes find it helpful to adopt some kind of ritual—such as an exchange of letters or gifts—to mark the end, acknowledging a past together and moving toward a future apart.



RESOURCES

If you find that you are struggling to move on you may want to talk to someone.

- Therapist/Counselor
 - Find one through our [EAP Health Advocate](#)
 - For in person sessions, over the phone and virtual options available
 - Support groups
 - Find one in your area through [Psychology Today](#).
 - Seek support from a fellow 393 member through [393 Peer Support Program](#)
 - Local faith-based organizations, friends, family, or co-workers
- Help is out there for those that seek it.

