

The Graying of Divorce

THE NEW DIVORCE REVOLUTION



What is Gray Divorce?

- ▶ Refers to the Historical Trend of Divorce that Occurred in the US Since the 1970s Among Adults Aged 50 and Older in Long-Term Marriages (20 years and longer)
- ▶ Gray Divorce (Silver Splitters and Diamond Divorce) is also an International Trend in Western Cultures
- ▶ Two Cohorts: Middle-Aged 50-64; Older Aged 65 and Over



Trends in Gray Divorce

- ▶ The Divorce Rate was Low in 1970 and Grew Modestly until 1990
- ▶ The Divorce Rate Doubled by 2010 for Aged 50 and Over (1 in 4)
- ▶ The Rate Decreased Slightly in the Middle Aged Group (50-64)
- ▶ The Rate is Increasing in the Older Aged Group (65 and up)
- ▶ Women Initiated 66% of the Time Since 1990 (AARP source)



Factors Impacting the Social Trend

- ▶ Baby Boomers Socialized to Challenge Cultural Norms
- ▶ Divorce is No Longer a Stigma
- ▶ Increasing Life Expectancy:
 - ▶ Males age 65 today can expect to live, on average to 84.3
 - ▶ Females age 65 today can expect to live, on average to 86.6
 - ▶ One out of four 65-year-olds today will live past the age of 90
 - ▶ One out of ten will live past age 95
- ▶ Past Regrets: Married Right Person at the Time
- ▶ Compatibility: Empty Nest, Retirement



Factors Impacting the Social Trend (cont.)

- ▶ Technological Advances and Connection
- ▶ Finances and Spending Habits
- ▶ Sexual Desire and Infidelity
- ▶ Addictions
- ▶ Aging Differently



Factors Impacting the Social Trend (cont.)

Women's Role in Society

- ▶ Higher Expectations of Marriage
- ▶ Desire for Emotional Fulfillment
- ▶ Expectation of Equal Partnership
- ▶ Changing Roles in the Family
- ▶ Personal Fulfillment
- ▶ Ageism as Less of a Concern
- ▶ Financial Independence



What to Consider

- ▶ Financial Decline for Both Men (11%) and Women (27%)
- ▶ Responses of Adult Children and Grandchildren
- ▶ Emotional Impact (Initiator vs. the Other Person/ Men vs. Women)
- ▶ Health Concerns
- ▶ Living Arrangements
- ▶ Social Connections



What to Consider (cont.)

- ▶ Legal Matters- Attorney, Mediation, Trusts, Bank Accounts, Shared Credit Cards, Credit Score, Power of Attorney
- ▶ Retirement Plans
- ▶ Shared Responsibilities
- ▶ Future Goals
- ▶ New Relationships/Dating



Not Ready? Try This

- ▶ Trial Separation (legal)
- ▶ Live Apart for a While but Calling Primary Residence “home”
- ▶ Be Intentional with Increased Focused Attention
- ▶ Work on Shared Interests
- ▶ Practice Really Listening and Seeing Your Partner



Surviving and Thriving Gray Divorce

- ▶ The Person Who Initiates Does Better
- ▶ Seek Professional Help
- ▶ Reconnect with Family and Friends
- ▶ Live Where and How you Want
- ▶ Put Yourself First
- ▶ Consider Going Back to Work
- ▶ Seek a Divorce Support Group
- ▶ Grief Work
- ▶ Live Like You Are Single
- ▶ Learn to be Alone



Source Bibliography

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Popular Sources

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Note: An online search of [Graying of Divorce](#) will provide a wealth of basic information from legal issues to psycho-social implications as well as other straightforward self help information.



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