

Contrary to popular belief, divorce rates have declined steadily over the past couple of years, up until the 2020 crisis. The United States rate of divorce also spiked during the 2009-10 recession. This was largely due to marriages feeling the effect of financial stress, and later the stress caused by concern for loved ones and being affected by Covid-19. Overall, while divorce has become more socially acceptable in our country, and in the world in general, divorce rates have been on the decline. It is clear that divorce rates in our country fluctuate largely based on external factors such as financial stress, conflict in the world, and concern for the future of your family as a whole. This is very unfortunate and disheartening, because it shows very clearly that the very moment you need your partner the most, is when most are choosing to jump ship. So, the question remains: what exactly has led to America's loose views of our vows to be there for each other through the end?

There are many reasons why people may get divorced, including: incompatibility between partners, infidelity, marrying too young, and constant arguing. Chief among these however is not having something bigger than physical attraction at the center of the marriage. If your sole reason for marriage is the honeymoon phase feeling you get when initially spending time together, this is an extremely fragile basis for the relationship. A relationship needs to be based on something bigger than this to have a higher rate of success. Sometimes, it becomes clear that a divorce is the right choice for a couple because of their personal situation or individual mental health. If you discover that you have in fact made the wrong choice, while less than ideal, it is definitely a good thing that this is available.

well as that of my grandparents. My parents got married at a very young age. This was partially due to the societal pressures of the time. People all around them, including close friends and family, were getting married young, and since they were already dating, they thought that this could be the right choice for them as well. Once my dad graduated college, that is when my parents decided to have kids. Since I am the oldest in my family by several years, I was the most heavily impacted by this divorce, since I was an only child for quite some time. Besides being difficult to come to terms with, it also has severely altered my own relationship with each of my parents. The divorce forced me to mature at a younger age and take responsibility for me and my younger siblings, since my parents were occupied with their personal issues. This was definitely a challenge for me especially throughout the earlier years of my life. An additional struggle that was introduced to me through divorce was the divorce of my grandparents. My grandparents have been divorced for the entirety of my life. This has further complicated these relationships. Since my grandparents divorce was more messy and they are still not on speaking terms, they would communicate through me. This was hard for me to understand, especially when I was younger. I had to pick and choose who I would spend time with, and was asked for my opinions on adult issues. This is something that a child should never be put through. It is extremely traumatic and damaging to current and future relationships. It has also been proven that families that have divorces impacting their children and families will continue to have higher rates of divorce throughout generations. This is a self-perpetuating issue, and is hard to overcome once it starts. People who have higher rates of divorce throughout their families also tend to view divorce as a more minor issue, therefore when problems do arise they have a tendency to be less

with a couple not affected by this.

This being said, over the past century divorce has been increasingly normalized.

Especially in western culture, divorce has gone from something that is relatively taboo, to something that is fairly normalized. The United States, being a country that was founded on Christian principles, started with a fairly conservative view in terms of divorce, especially in terms of women initiating the divorce. This eventually came into conflict with our further developing views on freedom on women's rights as well as freedom as a whole. In the United States we have always been a country that is pushing towards more freedom and new ideas. This can be seen throughout the decades as our view towards divorce has changed drastically. We have reached a point in this country where women can initiate a divorce with very few societal consequences or negative stigma or consequences. This is an important step for us since there are some situations where due to abuse, emotional or physical, or any other unhealthy aspects of a marriage, it is the better choice to initiate a divorce. While this is widely regarded as the case in the United States, many parts of the rest of the world have not yet reached this point in their culture and development. In less economically and socially developed countries this is not something that is viewed as such a minor issue as it is in the United States as well as other first world countries. Marriage is definitely a bigger commitment in other countries than it is in our western society. As our country has steered more towards individualism and less toward a group support system, marriage has started to be viewed more as a liability than a partner to go through life with. I personally, as someone that has viewed the effects of divorce, think that this is a highly negative effect of divorce being destigmatized. I think that while it is good that we have moved to a point in our country that we can respect women's individuality and identity without a

be a gift. It is supposed to be someone there to support you throughout all of life's ups and downs and help you raise your children.

In conclusion, the fact that the divorce rates spike during the hardest times in our country shows our country's changed attitude towards marriage and its role in our lives. Instead of being a support system, it has changed to be seen as more of a liability and a challenge. Being someone who has personally felt the effects of divorce, this is something that saddens me because I have seen what it can do to a family, for generations to come. I believe that we need to change our attitudes by refocusing on family values and centering around coming together to support each other. America has had a lot of success due to our focus on individuality, but we should learn to balance this without losing the value we have gained in our society from marriage.