

ask Dr Roshan Jain

Your *mental and emotional health* questions answered

Q I am a 38-year-old married lady separated from my husband over 10 years ago. Despite his best efforts, I have refused to divorce him, as I want him to accept his mistakes and not just get away from it. Our daughter of 17 years lives with me and often gets agitated and aggressive. I feel frustrated and depressed. Please advise.

It seems you and your daughter harbour pent up emotions and resentment, possibly due to a sense of rejection and abandonment. Over time, these emotions, if unattended, would have developed into a depressive state, manifesting in the form of unhelpful anger and vengeful feelings.

Divorce was and is still considered one of the most traumatic experiences in a person's life, leaving an emotional and psychological scar that lasts a lifetime. The impact of parental separation and divorce may vary for families and their dependents. Indeed, the primary manifestation may be deterioration of the relationship between parent and child. This may be due to the mother becoming preoccupied with her

adjustment problems and the father either unable or not allowed adequate access to the child. In either case, there can be unintended neglect of the child.

Consistency of relationship with the family enables us to relate, feel secure, and develop coping resources. In other words, it leads to development of personality, identity and sense of self. Unsurprisingly, a break in continuity or breakdown of these factors will affect the above process and increase likelihood of interpersonal and mental health problems, particularly where the children are in their younger years.

I would advise you both to have a one-to-one counselling and therapy to become aware of your feelings. This will facilitate a confiding relationship and adaptive expression of emotions. Additionally, consider marital/couple therapy to bring about a healthy closure to your complicated marriage.

Finally, experts agree that children are better off living in a conflict-free divorced family than a conflict-ridden married one.

Q Can you please explain the term "Schizophrenia" and what it means for individuals?

The word 'Schizophrenia' is over a century old and yet it makes many people uneasy. Most do not understand it. Schizophrenia comes from the Greek roots schizo (split) and phrene (mind) to describe the 'fragmented thinking' of people with the disorder. However, a fundamental misunderstanding by the public is that it is an illness of split personality, demonstrating a prejudice and misconceived notion that those with schizophrenia are unpredictable and dangerous. Unsurprisingly, the word is stigmatising and acts a barrier for those needing or seeking treatment.

Schizophrenia is a disorder or illness of the mind that affects how you feel, think, behave and perceive the world. It is a form of psychotic disorder. 'Psychotic' means out of touch with reality or unable to separate real from unreal experiences. Remember, loss of touch with reality and fragmentation of thinking mainly occurs during an active acute phase of illness or long term untreated individuals.

Clinical conclusion depends on the presence of a pattern of difficulties or symptoms such as seeing or hearing things that don't exist (hallucinations), believing that others are trying to harm you, fear of being constantly watched (delusions), disorganised behaviour such as withdrawing from others and inability to care for one's self, speaking in strange or confusing way, lack of motivation, apathy and loss of interest.

Importantly, it is a treatable condition and the outcome continues to improve. An integrated medicinal and talking therapy intervention, besides empathic person-centred approach, will enable the sufferer with better control of their symptoms/difficulties, gain greater independence, and lead fulfilling lives.



Our doctors will answer all queries on emotional and mental health. Got mind trouble of your own? Drop us a mail at bpositiveQA@apollolife.com

Or write to

B Positive magazine,
Lifetime Wellness Rx International Ltd,
5th Floor, Life Science Building,
Apollo Health City, Jubilee Hills,
Hyderabad-500033

Dr Roshan Jain,
Senior Consultant Psychiatrist &
De-addiction Specialist,
Apollo Hospitals, Bangalore.