

ask Dr Roshan Jain

Your *mental and emotional health* questions answered

Q I need your advice on problems that I have with my marriage. We had an arranged marriage nine months ago and my wife's family is large, caring, but over involved. Unfortunately, we had problems since the beginning and now we can't stop fighting. My wife is very critical, dependent, and we just cannot talk about anything. Not sure if our marriage has already ended.

Marriages are made in heaven but have to be managed right here, in this very life, and when it's an arranged one, both husband and wife have to work hard to establish relationship, trust and care. Love usually follows if all the other things are in place and attended to in a timely manner.

Arranged marriage does get complicated, as they tend to be a formal union of not just a man and a woman but of families. This means that there will be multiple forces in place, usually working to the advantage of the newlywed couple, enabling adjustment, etc. However, this is not always the case and ego tussle may kick in, especially if the couple lives in an extended joint family.

Remember, in a marriage, two individuals become one unit, which means contribution from either doesn't have to be equal all the time. What is important is flexibility of the equation and acceptability of the other being different.

It's never too late for reconciling a relationship problem. I think you should consider having frank and open discussion with your wife about the

issues at hand, ideally away from home. Don't involve anyone from family at this stage, as there will be inadvertent personal bias with untimely advice and unnecessary cross communication. Argument is a form of communication, which is better than impasse. Effective communication requires more listening and less talking. Remember it takes two to fight or tango. You choose. Ideally, seek professional help for independent objective advice and couple/marital therapy. Best wishes.

Q My daughter repeatedly checks her phone, mainly updates on social media, and spends many hours each day on it. I think it is affecting her studies and communication with family. To some degree we are responsible for it, as we got her the phone at a young age. Please advise.

Your daughter is one of many who have traded real world for a virtual one, and is accessing lots of unnecessary information connected to all the people around the world except those around her! Technology, as much as it has connected us, is also disconnecting us more than ever.

Perhaps social media is contributing to an ever-increasing isolated existence and poorer development of personality, social skills and coping resources. Results are for anyone to guess – development of psychological problems, including anxiety, depression and maladaptive use of drugs and alcohol. Overall, the benefits of social media may be matching its disadvantages. However, computer and technology is

here to stay, therefore we must learn to coexist.

Here is some advice for her and us all. I suggest she is encouraged to use smartphone and computer for purpose only and timeout online use; choose use of social media on either phone or computer, not both. Cut down membership of number of social networking sites and substitute newly available time with sport and health activities. Choose real person interaction over virtual connect and spend quality one-to-one time with friends and family. Consider confidence problems and FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out, a form of anxiety problem). Sometimes, there might be obsessive or addictive disorder that will require specialist evaluation.

I remember an update on Facebook: "I used to have a life, now I have Facebook!" I think we all need to get our lives back, reconnect with our surroundings and live mindfully not mindlessly.

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

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