

Q & A Mindline



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Q About 10 days after my arranged marriage, I moved to Bangalore from Bhuvneshwar to live with my husband. Although we knew each other for few months before marriage, we didn't meet each other in person, long enough. Now I think he has changed - he is critical and often picks on me. We are already arguing and I react with extreme anger or avoid talking to him altogether. He thinks I need psychiatric help. Please advise.

It is not uncommon to experience an adjustment reaction to change and expectation and also to relocation. When you leave your comfort zone and security of a known environment and family support to venture into the unknown (especially for girls in an arranged marriage), you can experience emotions such as excitement, irritability and anxiety to surface. Also, if there is a mismatch in expectations, then there can be a sense of self-doubt, distress and regret.

Criticism and comparison may follow and that can have negative consequences for a budding relationship. At these times, each will

be either offensive or defensive which will manifest in arguments and tempers will flare up. So, instead of building on care and communication, which are the key elements for love and intimacy, couples will start finding faults and reasons to drift apart.

I suggest you both give yourselves time to settle into this new relationship and honour the commitment you recently made. Suspend efforts to change the other, in their manner, attitude and habit. Expect the other to be different and curb your tendency to compare and complain. Overlook obvious minor vices and try to focus on positive attributes. Nurture and support each other. Ensure control of language even when angry as harsh words can do irreparable damage to new relations.

Good relations grow into each other, rather than on each other! Give space and spend quality time together. Improve communication by talking about anything and everything. Remember, marriages are a full-time affair, unlike other relations, so it requires full-time dedication and effort especially in the initial months and years.

All problems are solvable if there are willing participants. But if things don't improve soon, seek couple therapy sessions for deeper exploration of issues and differences, as an early remedy of problems. Wish you all the best.

Q I have been married for five years but don't fully understand my wife, who has lot of expectations from me. I lost respect for her after she cheated on me two years ago. I forgave her for this but cannot forget it. I can't seem to control my anger, which is worse at home than at office. Please help.

Infidelity, an extra marital affair

or adultery can have devastating consequences on a relationship. It is often thought that such incidents can only have negative consequences on the one who was cheated upon, as in this case, you seem to be you experiencing frustration and anger. However, the one who cheats also has to make a lot of effort and changes to reconcile, including dealing with guilt.

It takes two to tango. So, bear in mind, infidelity and adultery may be a symptom of deep-rooted issues between partners, which would need working through, perhaps more so than focusing on the act itself. And if the love is deep-rooted, then you have a better ability to forgive and forget.

It would also do you good to remember that we are all good people, it's the things we do, that are not so good at times. And to forgive someone, we first have to separate the person from their actions. Besides, if the undesirable act was a one off thing, then it usually doesn't bring the character of the person into question. To err is human, but to make the same mistake again is foolish. However, all said and done, it takes enormous maturity and courage to forgive infidelity and you have already done it. Nevertheless, it seems you have not been able to move on, or to forget, which is leading to continued self-victimization.

Open and honest communication, is the key here. I hope you both have spoken openly about the incident and associated feelings including anger and hurt. Equally, try and make sense of issues leading to emotional drifting and desire to seek support and/or gratification elsewhere. Let go (wholeheartedly and unconditionally) and your resentment/anger will fizzle faster than a bubble on a soda! And if the above suggestions don't lead to closure, then seek professional help, for a more effective exploration of rooted emotions and unattended feelings.