

HAPPILY EVER OVER: WHY A DIVORCE COULD BE THE KEY TO A BETTER LIFE

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The breakdown of a marriage might not be everyone's dream of happily ever after, but new research shows going through a divorce helps people improve nearly all areas of their life from their health and fitness to job, career and finances.

Researchers discovered the biggest improvement divorced people experience is having a greater appreciation and outlook on life with 65 per cent of divorcees saying this had improved, compared to less than one in ten (9 per cent) who said it got worse.

Half (50 per cent) said they improved their relationships with family and friends following their divorce, while only 17 per cent said their relationships had got worse. For 37 per cent of people, their relationship with their children improved, compared to 8 per cent who said they had got worse.

The research, which questioned 1001 divorced adults across the UK, commissioned by Maguire Family Law, found 44 per cent of people improved their job and career after their divorce, while only 9 per cent said it got worse. Over half (53 per cent) said their money and financial situation improved, however 22 per cent said they were worse off financially.

Two-fifths of respondents said their fitness improved, nearly half (45 per cent) improved their style and appearance, and 38% said their sex lives got better.

Over half said their travel and holidays got an upgrade and 60% enjoyed spending more time on hobbies and other pastimes.

And with so many areas of their lives improving, it's perhaps no surprise that over half (55 per cent) said their mental health and wellbeing improved, compared to only 13 per cent said it got worse. Going through a divorce event improved people's religion and spirituality – 18 per cent said this area of their life had got better – and for 14 per cent, they found they felt more comfortable and happier with their gender identity.

But why does divorce act as such a catalyst for self-improvement? The research found that following the breakdown of their marriage, over half (55 per cent) experienced 'post traumatic growth'. Post traumatic growth is a positive psychological change experienced as a result of going through a period of adversity and other challenges – such as a divorce – to rise to a higher level of functioning.

The Divorce Coach, Sara Davison, commented: "Divorce is now widely accepted as the second most traumatic life experience, second only to the death of a loved one. Leaving a partner is never the easy option and, even in the most amicable situations, it has a huge ripple effect across every aspects of people's lives. The good news is that the personal growth following divorce is enormous – it helps people's outlook on life, shifts their mindset and puts them into action. From getting fit, to taking the trip of a lifetime or starting their own business – this proves the age old adage that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

The research from Maguire Family Law found that the average time for experiencing the benefits of post traumatic growth was 14 months after the divorce.

James Maguire, founder of Maguire Family Law, said: “We carried out the research because we wanted to find how we can support our clients going through a divorce. A third of respondents said a good lawyer can help guide them through the process in a way to help them go onto improve their lives. For those who didn’t experience post traumatic growth, one of the reasons cited was that the divorce process was too stressful and messy. We know it can be really difficult, but if you and your ex can try to make the process as positive as possible when you’re going through the legalities of a break up, it not only helps during that period, but it can also set you up to go on and improve your life in all kinds of different ways.”

According to the respondents, these are the top 13 ways to remain positive during and after a divorce:

1. Spend more time with friends and family (35%)
2. New hobbies and interests or spent more time doing them (34%)
3. Spend more time outdoors in nature (27%)
4. Exercise (26%)
5. Eat health foods (25%)
6. Read more (24%)
7. Listen to more music (23%)
8. Do something creative (14%)
9. Work more (12%)
10. Drink less (11%)
11. Stop smoking (11%)
12. Work less (10%)
13. Party more (6%)

The areas in which people's lives improve following divorce are:

1. General appreciation and outlook on life (65%)
2. Hobbies and pastimes (60%)
3. Relationship with yourself (59%)
4. Feelings about yourself (58%)
5. Travel and holidays (56%)
6. Mental wellbeing (55%)
7. Ability to cope with stress and pressure in other areas of life (53%)
8. Money and finance (53%)
9. Relationships with friends and family (50%)
10. Style and appearance (45%)
11. Job and career (44%)
12. Fitness (41%)
13. Sex life (38%)
14. Physical health (38%)
15. Relationships with child/ren (37%)

- 16. Weight (32%)
- 17. Spirituality and religion (17%)
- 18. Gender identity (14%)

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About James Maguire

James Maguire is the founder and managing director of Maguire Family Law, an award-winning boutique family law practice headquartered in Wilmslow.

The family lawyer of choice for Cheshire's ultra-high and high-net-worth individuals, James is a trusted advisor to celebrities, sportspeople and business owners when it comes to family law matters including divorce, financial arrangements, pre- and post-nuptial arrangements and arrangements relating to children.

An eloquent spokesperson, James is a frequent media commentator on a wide range of family law topics including the peak in divorce instructions following Christmas and the summer holidays, breaking family law judgments, child abduction and pet-nups.

About Maguire Family Law

Maguire Family Law is a specialist family law firm headquartered in Wilmslow, Cheshire with offices in Knutsford, Manchester and London. Maguire Family Law boasts one of the largest teams of family law experts in the North, with expertise across the full range of family law matters, including divorce and related finance matters. The firm is also known for having handled a number of international child abduction matters.

James Maguire and his team represent a wide range of clients: people who simply want good quality, discreet and efficient legal advice and a solicitor who will represent their best interests at all times. The firm's clients also include celebrities, ultra-high-net-worth and high-net-worth individuals.

Maguire Family Law is recommended by two independent guides to the Legal profession Chambers and Partners and The Legal 500. Chambers and Partners describes the firm as 'a well-reputed boutique advising high net worth and international clients on finance matters'. The Legal 500 says: James Maguire is 'extraordinarily clever on financial remedy divorce work, international financial divorce work, child law and international child law'.

In 2018 Maguire Family Law carried out research into pet-nups, or pre-nups for pets which revealed 40% of people in the UK love their pet as much or more than their partner. The research kickstarted a global media campaign and was featured on the BBC, in The Guardian, I, The Mirror, The Sun, Cosmopolitan, Huffington Post, The Sunday Star, The Star, Lad Bible, Take a Break, Fox News and The New York Post.

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About Sara Davison

Sara Davison, best known as 'The Divorce Coach' is one of the UK's most sought after authorities on break-up and divorce. Revolutionising the way we view and navigate one of life's most traumatic events, Sara's quest to banish the stigma surrounding divorce and prove that the end of a relationship can be the most empowering, life-affirming event to ever happen to you, is fast catching-on. A twice bestselling author, NLP Master Practitioner and qualified hypnotherapist, Sara combines 20 years' coaching experience together with her own experience of marriage breakdown to create bespoke coaching programmes designed to help individuals transform their lives by taking control of their mind and designing the lives they want to live. Sara launched the UK's first ever Break-up Recovery Retreat, which run every eight weeks throughout the year. Sara's latest book 'The Split: From Breakup to Breakthrough in 30 days or less' launched in January 2019 and follows her bestseller, 'Uncoupling' which was published in 2016. Within the community Sara has firmly cemented her reputation as the go-to expert in the field of emotional abuse, joining forces with The Dash Charity as their charity patron. At government level, Sara often consults on marriage and divorce related legislation, most recently the divorce law reform, led by Justice Secretary David Gauke.

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