

Second (and Third) Marriages: Destined For Divorce?



By Jim Duzak for Galttime.com

Statistically speaking, the more times you've been married in the past, the more likely you'll get divorced again if you remarry.

The divorce rate for first marriages (meaning a marriage in which neither person has been married before) is reportedly between 40 and 50%. But for second marriages (at least one of the spouses has been married once before), the rate jumps to between 60 and 67%. And for third marriages (at least one of the spouses has been married twice before), it's a whopping 70-73%.

Are second marriages really doomed for divorce? How so? Why would this be? Don't people learn from their mistakes? Well, unfortunately, many people don't, or they rush into another marriage for the wrong reasons or before they've figured out what went wrong last time.

HERE ARE SOME COMMON POST-DIVORCE SCENARIOS:

- **You may be blind to the role you played in the breakup.** The problem was always something your "ex" did or didn't do.
- **You may be stuck in your comfort zone,** even when that comfort zone is harmful to you (like if you're someone who always seems to be attracted to partners who abuse you or cheat on you).
- **You're an incurable optimist when it comes to relationships,** always falling in love too fast and always seeing your latest partner as the answer to your prayers.
- **You fear living alone,** and will get married just to have someone to come home to.
- **You may be looking for a quick fix to the psychological wounds that divorce inflicts,** rather than taking the time to heal.
- **If your ex was unfaithful during your marriage,** you may immediately try to get revenge by taking up with someone else.
- **You may lack basic skills,** such as household, financial or job skills, and will get remarried just to avoid having to learn them.
- **If your ex filed for divorce first, left you or neglected you sexually or romantically,** you may feel rejected and unattractive, and you may marry the first person who makes you feel the spark or lavishes you with compliments.

In addition, second and third marriages often involve the

challenges of dealing with stepchildren and/or difficult ex-es. If those challenges aren't anticipated and addressed, a remarriage can be shaky from Day One.

The good news is that divorce statistics—sobering as they may be—are only evidence of what has happened in *other people's* marriages.

They don't predict how *your* marriage will turn out. If you or your future spouse are getting married for the second, third, or even the fourth time, you can “beat the odds” if you're well-matched, emotionally mature, and truly understand what went wrong in the past—including accepting responsibility for your own mistakes or wrongdoing.

But if you recognize yourself or your partner in at least one of the scenarios I listed, you should temporarily hold off on getting remarried. You may need to do more soul-searching. You may need to have frank discussions with your partner, and ask him or her some tough questions. You may even need to seek outside help from a therapist or other professional. But all of this will be worth it if you can enter into your new marriage knowing that you've done everything in your power to ensure that you're not setting yourself up for another divorce.