

Divorce Attorney Jacqueline Newman Offers Relationship Advice: “You Want to Be Divorcing a Happier Spouse”



Interview by [Lori Bizzoco](#). Written by Emma L. Wells.

Jacqueline Newman has an impressive career as a family law attorney in New York City, so it's no surprise that she knows a thing or two about how to best handle a divorce. For starters, she encourages couples to stay away from social media. Saying negative things about your ex could affect more than just your relationship; it may also impact their career, as future employers may Google them and not realize that it was a former spouse who called them a cheat or a liar.

Jacqueline Newman Shares Relationship Advice for Couples During Divorce

It's also important to remember that your words will be around long after your divorce proceedings end. “Nowadays, children learn to tweet before they learn to walk,” the divorce attorney explains when sharing some relationship advice. “You're making a footprint that's going to be there forever. You're saying bad things about your spouse because you're caught in the moment, but your kids may see this one day.”

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If you're thinking of splitting from your husband, there are several steps you should take. "One of the first things I ask my clients when they sit down in my office is, 'Are you sure you want to get divorced?'" Newman shares. She points out that this process is far from fun and shouldn't be undertaken unless you're 100 percent sure you want out of your marriage.

If your answer is yes, now, you have to decide *how* you want to get divorced. There are three basic options: litigation, collaborative law, or mediation. You need to figure out what process is best for you and what kind of divorce attorney you want to hire. "You want to be with an attorney who you feel you can say anything to. If you're not comfortable talking to them, then you're not giving them the tools and position to really protect you," she reveals.

While a good personality fit is the number one quality to look for in an attorney, the second thing you need is a person who can think strategically. "You need someone who's going to look at the big picture and figure out the best way to get you to your goals," she adds.

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Newman also encourages her female clients to become familiar with their spending habits. "Women are not always aware of their finances before getting divorced," she explains. "Pay attention to your lifestyle." It will empower you to know what's going on and help you control the outcome of your divorce.

Her best relationship advice for those going through a divorce is simple: "You want to be divorcing a happier spouse." She says it's important to maintain a civil attitude – especially if children are involved – and make sure everyone has what they want in the end. If you want to look at [celebrity divorces](#) for inspiration, it may be tough. "If they're really

smooth and amicable, you never hear about them,” she divulges. “The best divorces are the ones you find out about after the fact.”

Prenuptial Agreements Aren't Only for Celebrity Couples

Believe it or not, you don't have to be a celebrity couple or have a lot of money to have a prenuptial agreement. Prenups are the biggest part of Newman's practice, and there are many situations that require one. For instance, if it's your second marriage and you have children from your first marriage or if you own your own business, then a prenup is necessary. As the divorce attorney explains, you should get a prenup “if you have assets that you want to be very clear are going to stay yours after a divorce.” She adds that laws are constantly changing and that it's good to guarantee what's going to happen in the event of divorce.

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Apart from providing security, prenups can be good for your relationship and love. “Not only do they help assure the wealthier spouse that they aren't being taken advantage of, but they teach couples to have difficult conversations about money,” she shares. “You shouldn't look at prenups as asking for a divorce.”

As far as her own ten-year marriage goes, Newman believes that her job actually *helps* her relationship and love. “I think, on some level, it strengthens my marriage because seeing people at their worst, seeing what they will do, gives me perspective on how little it matters if he doesn't unload the dishwasher,” she says. “I fight all day long at work, so I really don't fight that much at home. I get it out of my system. You can't have a lot of drama in both parts of your life!”



Jacqueline Newman joined Berkman Bottger Newman & Rodd, LLP in 1998 and is now the managing partner of the firm. Ms. Newman's practice consists of litigation, collaborative law and mediation. She specializes in complex high net worth matrimonial cases and negotiating prenuptial agreements. Newman has appeared as a commentator on various television shows and has been quoted as an expert in numerous publications, including Glamour Magazine, Crain's New York Business, U.S. News and World Report, Woman's Day and The Huffington Post. For additional information, check out her website, <http://www.nycdivorcelawyer.com/>