

Hello and thank you for downloading this PDF. I'm sorry to hear that you feel there are difficulties in your relationship currently. It's not easy and it can be very draining. But how do you know whether it's a temporary blip, a communication difficulty that can be resolved; or something that is unfixable and a sign that you're incompatible? In this PDF I'll be sharing 5 tips to help you make this decision.



I am Louisa Whitney and I am a family mediator. I help separating couples to create arrangements that are tailor made to them following a separation. I facilitate constructive discussion and provide lots of support and information to help you ensure you get things right for both of you – and, crucially, for your children. I see first hand where relationship problems lead so I can flag issues that will help you make a decision about your situation.

I was a solicitor specialising in divorce for 11+ years and I draw on this experience. I am also a Reiki II practitioner. So I come at decisions with both a wealth of legal and practical experience about separation, but also an understanding that sometimes it's not about our head and facts. Sometimes what your gut and heart tell you are more important. Energy is all around us and part of us so sometimes we pick up on important things without realising what we're perceiving. This is why you can sometimes feel unhappy with something without always understanding why. We talk about trusting our gut instincts for a good reason!



If you're arguing a lot with your partner, and worrying about the future, then it can often feel like a lot of threads you're trying to untangle. Except you don't manage to untangle them. You think about one and then the other and it's still all just a big knot. You know you're not happy and that you aren't getting on with your partner but deciding to separate is a huge decision that scares you. What would be the impact financially? How would it affect your children? What if you can work out your issues? All of these questions are very valid things to think about. Here are 5 tips to help you make this decision.

## TIP 1

### **BE REALLY HONEST WITH YOURSELF ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING**

If your partner is hurting you physically, saying mean things to you and undermining your confidence, or controlling you (this might be withholding money, or stopping you seeing family or friends) then you may be a victim of abuse. This is something you need to take seriously. It may help to make contact with an organisation supporting victims of abuse.

## TIP 2

### **ARE YOU HAVING A HARD TIME OR UNDER A LOT OF PRESSURE RIGHT NOW?**

Stresses, strains and pressures take their toll on people and let's face it we have all been living through a global pandemic. It's normal to feel tired, worn down and irritable at points. If you both feel like this then it can be a recipe for arguments and you each feeling the other doesn't care. Try to find a time to talk calmly and reconnect. If you can't take a break can you create a mini break at home - even if it's just for an afternoon to talk about the pressures you're both feeling.

## TIP 3

### **BE HONEST ABOUT YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Unless it's part of your job we don't really get taught communication skills. Some people are great at communicating at work but struggle with it at home. Sometimes talking to our partners is the hardest thing. We worry how they will react - or about ending up in an argument. Buttons get pressed and we're shouting again even though we really didn't mean to. If all roads lead here then you need to do something (or possibly a few things) differently going forwards. If you feel stuck with this then consider a relationship therapist or coach to help you.

## TIP 4

### VISUALISE THE FUTURE

If you visualize yourself in, say, 2 years' time then imagine yourself being single and being on your own. How does that make you feel? How does it feel in your head, in your heart and in your gut? Then do the same exercise visualizing you still with your partner - perhaps getting on better than you have done in a long while. How do you feel now? If you have strong reactions to either option then that gives you important information about how you feel about the future of your relationship. This may be useful for you in determining how you move forward and what decisions you make about this.

## TIP 5

### HOW DOES YOUR PARTNER FEEL?

It's time to tackle the elephant in the room. You have feelings about your relationship and what's happening currently but so does your partner. If you haven't been able to communicate effectively (or at all) for some time then you may not know what those feelings are.

It's possible your partner feels the same as you, but also that they feel differently. Until you talk about things you won't know but each of you not knowing how the other feels is unlikely to be a helpful way forward. Creating an uninterrupted and compassionate space is important here as is doing your best to ensure you're both as calm as you can be.

Hearing how each other feel will enable you to decide on the right way forward for you. Maybe you just need a reset? Maybe you need support from a relationship therapist or a coach? Or maybe your relationship has reached the end of the road. Whatever your future you deserve a happy life in whatever lies ahead.

If you'd like more help with what lies ahead then please feel free to reach out to me on social media. I know a number of relationship therapists and coaches that I can suggest. If your relationship has sadly reached the end of the road then you might like to consider therapy or coaching to help with this transition. If you are separating you can find more information to assist you on the [LKW Family Mediation website](#).



If you have found this helpful then why not follow me on one of the above social media channels. I share tips about how to have difficult conversations and I share information to help those going through a separation to navigate this difficult path.

I also share some personal things about my own journey in making my life the best it can be for me (that's still a work in progress!). I'd love to connect with you.

*Louisa*



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