

Did your relationship survive 'Rona'?

There have been many feel-good stories emerging from social isolation but family law expert, Fiona Reid has seen a different side.

"Social isolation has been the death knell for many relationships. Juggling kids and home schooling with working from home and without the outlet of socialising with friends, the camaraderie of the office or even watching your favourite sport on weekends has brought to a head the demise of many relationships".

"We have seen a huge spike in the number of enquiries from people looking for advice about ending their marriage or de facto relationship as the pressures of financial uncertainty and forced time together take their toll" says Reid. "Sadly too, there has been an increase in incidences of family violence which has significant long-term impacts on parents and children with many being at a loss to find refuge given the social distancing laws".

"The advent of social isolation has had the effect of bringing cracks in a relationship to the surface. For example, I have one client who, because of working long hours outside the home in a big job, had never really noticed the extent of her husband's drinking problem. Being together 24/7 brought this issue to a head".

"For others, the lack of support from their partners in being able to compromise and recognise the importance of their work commitments when trying to juggle the demands of home schooling, was the last straw in a relationship where they already felt unsupported".

That said, one of Reid's clients, the wife in a marriage of 25 years who had already made the decision to separate before Covid-19 hit, phoned Reid with the happy news that being forced to

spend time together had reconnected the couple in a way they had never anticipated.

Over 95% of matters settle without the need for any Court intervention

Reid says even if you find yourself questioning the viability of your relationship going forward, it's not all bad news.

"There are many great relationship psychologists and counsellors to whom you can turn. They will help you to understand whether the problems in the relationship are insurmountable or whether they're just being magnified in the short term due to Covid".

"Even if you decide to end your relationship, people should know that over 95% of matters settle without the need for any Court intervention".

Below, Reid gives her top 3 tips for people contemplating separating from their partners:

- 1 Explore counselling options to see whether the relationship can be salvaged;
- 2 If not, talk to your counsellor about strategies for communicating with your former partner going forward and especially how to manage the kids;
- 3 Take some legal advice. A specialist family lawyer will guide you as to the likely outcome of any division of your property, your entitlement to financial support going forward, and will also provide valuable advice about how to avoid a lengthy and expensive court battle.



Fiona Reid is the Managing Director of Reid Family Lawyers, a boutique specialist family law firm with offices in Brookvale and Surry Hills. She is supported by a team of expert family lawyers. The firm has a plethora of experience in all facets of family law including complex property matters, parenting matters, child support and spousal maintenance issues, relocation, de facto and same sex issues, surrogacy and adoption.

FREE 20 Minute Consultation

Fiona is offering a free 20 minute consultation to prospective clients who mention this article when they make an appointment for their initial conference. Call 9091 0221 or email [Fiona at fiona@reidfamilylawyers.com.au](mailto:Fiona@reidfamilylawyers.com.au).

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