

Reader feedback on the series

Editor's note: The Star Tribune received well over 100 responses to the three-part Source series, "A Different Divorce." Here is a sampling of reader comments. More are available online at www.startribune.com/lifestyle.

A Different Divorce: Collaboration

The main reason my ex-husband and I decided to use this process was because it was the easiest on the kids ... that was our first priority. This process takes everything into consideration and focuses on keeping things from escalating into a back-and-forth battle. They also were able to give us great referrals to child psychologists, financial planners and mortgage people who deal with these situations often. After reading how the traditional litigation methods work and hearing stories from friends, I'm very glad we were able to work together like this. Believe it or not, we were even able to share a laugh once in a while in our meetings.

RENEE WATSON, Plymouth

In our current "disposable" society, it appears that the mainstay of our culture, the nuclear family, has become something which can be thrown away as well. Clearly, some marriages fail beyond repair and divorce is a reasonable means to lessen future conflict. But this series suggests that divorce can be a simple and readily acceptable process. It sends the wrong message to our young people, who, I fear, will value marriage less and less in the future.

GREGG STRATHY, Edina

The resolution process that you describe in your article is overdue and sounds like a positive alternative to the combative court process. A broad base of support, with a variety of "specialists," could serve to encourage parents to be their best, as well as remove the isolation of advice of a single attorney. The more angst I felt, the harder it was to be mature and not let the negativity overwhelm me, which is not what I wanted my children to see. It is so clear to me that the current process is broken and this sounds like a great place to start.

MELANIE COLE, Fergus Falls, Minn.

I am 18 years past a divorce that my children and I agree was the right thing to do. Despite that, the impact of divorce on children cannot be minimized. Now as adults, my kids and I talk openly about the wide-ranging impact. Each one handled it differently, but divorce has played a role in their developing lives.

MARY BETH BLEGEN, Farmington

Women Who Walk

Thanks for a nice [article] on "Women Who Walk" (a nice flippant, bouncy title by the way!). Sounds very "empowering" for females, especially ones who were married to chumps who were "boring" and "spent too much time with their kids." I think it's about time we just pulled the plug on our planet, as I have no faith in humankind anymore.

ERIK VEGOE, Burnsville

Why was there no mention made of counseling? Of course those poor men were blindsided if they were never given a chance to save the marriage in counseling. While counseling doesn't always save marriages, at the very least it can help both parties deal with the grief over the end of the marriage.

SUSAN ARMSTRONG, St. Paul

After three years of divorce, and having been married for over 23 years (and thought about divorce for over half of that), I have found the process fascinating on many levels. ...Women are strong and independent and seeking a close mutual loving, nurturing, and communicative relationship and I say, "Bravo." It is time that men begin to look within themselves and recognize that they must change, be willing to be open and honest with their emotions and always be willing to explore the opportunities of life.

TIMOTHY ALDRICH

It was wonderful to know that other women were divorcing for the same reason as I, to be happy. And, hopefully, give my children a better marriage model to follow and my ex-husband the chance to be with someone who can truly love him as he deserves to be [loved]. I felt a lot of guilt. My family and friends did not understand. Why would I be divorcing such a kind man, a man who was a good bread winner, [who] never cheated, an honest, good man? My lame excuse? For the chance to be happy again at 41. Thirteen years of marriage and three kids [later], I am finally happy. And feeling proud to be me again.

MAUREEN ENGLUND, Woodbury

Co-parenting that works

My parents divorced when I was 5 and my brothers were 3 and 1. My mom remarried when I was 10 and my dad when I was 13. I don't remember much of when my parents were together, but tomorrow we are ALL leaving on a trip to Florida, and this is not the first time we've all gone on vacation together. During middle and high school, I frequently got comments after conferences like, "Do you realize you had four parents come to conferences last night who were all truly interested in your life and who not only did not fight, but actually got along with each other?" I applaud my biological parents and my step-parents for doing everything they could for the benefit of their children.

LESLEY HENSEL, Wayzata

