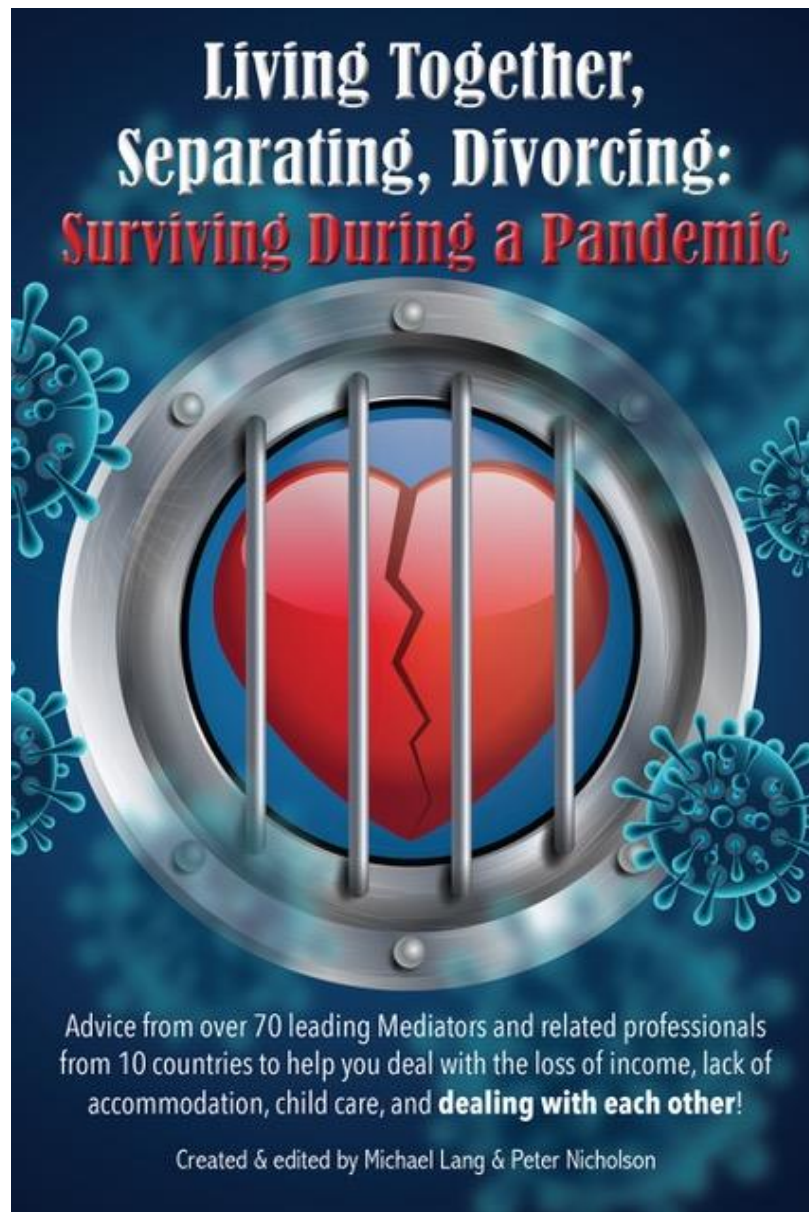


May 2020

<https://www.pandemic-relationships.com/about-us/>

In this time of crisis, we wanted to use our knowledge and experience to help make life just a bit better for families during the pandemic. Our Not-For-Profit book was produced during the COVID-19 Pandemic May 2020 by Michael Lang and Peter Nicholson. Over 70 leading Mediators and related professionals, lawyers, politicians, financial experts, mental health, and child experts from 10 countries offer help to deal with the loss of income, lack of accommodation, child care, and **dealing with each other!**

This publication will be available on Amazon soon



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Living Together, Separating, Divorcing: **Surviving During a Pandemic**

Is this Corona crisis a good time to dive deeper into our relationships?

Tzofnat Peleg-Baker

When I was a student of Architecture, many years ago, I began, what became a habit, to wander the streets of Tel-Aviv and stare at Bauhaus buildings. I had to close my eyes to imagine the beauty of these buildings because the sight was crumbling buildings with peeling plasters, broken windowsills, falling balconies, and exposed concrete. So much money was spent building these monuments of art, so how come their beauty was not there?

Later in life, when I was preparing for my wedding, I was amazed by the incredible amount of money that goes into splashy weddings-- planning, food and drink, flowers, clothes and jewelry, photos, music, and other frills. Advertisements promoted the idea that spending lots of money on a wedding day is proof of love and commitment to each other, and a high-priced ring is an assurance of enduring love and a happily-ever-after marriage. However, a 2014 study by two economists at [Emory University](#) found that couples who spent most on their weddings were most likely to end up divorced. The cheaper a wedding, the longer and happier a marriage – and that’s what’s really important. Interestingly, the study indicated that keeping the cost of a wedding down by brutally cutting the guest list is not a good idea. Inviting many friends and family members is critical for a stable

marriage, even if you invite guests only for a reception and drink. Also, a honeymoon should not be avoided. Couples who went on a honeymoon, of any kind, had a much lower risk of divorce than couples who didn't, regardless of what they spent.

So, what is happening here? What is the connection between historic buildings and marriage? Both fall apart without maintenance. As in the case of buildings that need constant maintenance, relationships must be continuously cultivated. It is not enough to meet "the one" and toss a costly party. We still have to nurture our relationships. While most of us go to the service shop for periodic car maintenance, and many go to annual physical checkups, we do not regularly checkup our relationships. Our honeymoon will not hold a lifetime of marriage. Relationships need to be cultivated. What do you do to ensure your relationships do not break down? Perhaps we should take many honeymoons. Spend time together. Regularly check in with our spouse, our friends, employees.

Everything needs a recurrent examination—a periodic reflection on what's working, what's not working, and what can be done differently to make it work better. Coronavirus time is a rare opportunity to step back, pause, reflect on, and reset our relationships. Here are a few questions to get you started:

1. How are you feeling right now about your relationships?
2. What habits enrich your relationships?
3. What habits interrupt the flow of your connections?
4. What can you let go to make space for what is new?
5. What repairs can you make for you and your relationships to come out of this crisis stronger?
6. What relational structures and practices need to be redesigned and improved to hold and appreciate our relationships?
7. What is really important for me that I can change?

This unprecedented time, like any crisis, brings an opportunity. Try to understand what is presently hidden for you and those who are close to you. While we normally do not have much time for ourselves and our relationships with our family and friends, now we are invited to pause, away from the pressures of daily life, and question the meaning of our future normality. Resilient relationships seems to be the foundation of best outcomes and sustainable existence.

Tzofnat Peleg-Baker

USA

Tzofnat Peleg-Baker, MA Communications, and MA and Ph.D. in Psychology (specialty in conflict and mediation) is a social psychologist, a conflict resolution scholar-practitioner, and mediator for twenty years. Tzofnat is an Adjunct Professor in the professional MBA program, School of Business at Rutgers University-Camden, where she also provides students with mentorship and coaching. She has been training across continents, and as a Board Member and facilitator in peace organizations, she led inter-group dialogues between religious and secular groups, Jews and Arabs, and Israelis and Palestinians. As the Head of Strategy at the Ministry of Justice, Israel, she served on the national team that introduced ADR and mediation in the country. Her experience in innovative democratic and dialogic reforms in schools significantly shaped her contextual-relational approach to transforming conflict. Tzofnat can be reached at: tzofnatpb@gmail.com