

• W O R T H Y •



# Jumping In: Dating After Divorce in 2019

JUNE 2019



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## INTRODUCTION

In February 2019, Worthy invited its community of divorced women to participate in a study to understand how they feel about and approach dating after divorce in 2019. Not only has the dating world changed for many of these women since they were last single but the influence of female voices in society has evolved as well.

Worthy, an online auction marketplace, conducted the study in partnership with six divorce and relationship professionals to discover the emotional, financial, psychological thoughts, concerns, and shared wisdom that will be both insightful and helpful for women to confidently move on to build happy, healthy relationships post-divorce.

While numerous studies on dating have been conducted, this study breaks new ground in that it is the first large-scale study focused solely on women who have and who are going through the divorce journey, with over 1,700 female participants from across the country.

## PANEL OF EXPERTS



**Karen Bigman**

Life coach and divorce coach, founder of The Divorcierge



**Dr. Kristin Davin**

Solution Focused Psychologist and Relationship Coach



**Tamsen Fadal**

Eleven-time Emmy award-winning journalist, anchor of the PIX11 News in New York



**Dr. Gladys Frankel**

Clinical Psychologist, relationship expert



**Jackie Pilossoph**

Creator of [DivorcedGirlSmiling.com](http://DivorcedGirlSmiling.com)



**Karen D. Sparks, CDFA<sup>®</sup>, J.D.**

Certified Divorce Financial Analyst<sup>®</sup>



# DEMOGRAPHICS

## About the Participants

Worthy's clients, newsletter subscribers and social media followers were among the 1,719 women from across the United States that participated in this survey. To help better understand their dating readiness, the survey asked for the ages of the participants as well as how long they had been married and at what age they got divorced. An overwhelming 89% of the women stated they are either thinking about dating, already dating after divorce, or in a post-divorce relationship, an indication that the majority of the women surveyed are in a dating mindset.

Women aged 18 to 75 and over took part in the survey, with 71% being Generation X (ages 35-54), 15% Baby Boomers (ages 55-74), 13% Millennials (ages 25-34) and 1% Generation Z (ages 18-24).

Age	% of Participants
18 to 24	1%
25 to 34	13%
35 to 44	34%
45 to 54	33%
55 to 64	14%
65 to 74	1%
75 or older	0%

Number of Children	% of Participants
None	20%
1	19%
2	37%
3	17%
4	5%
5+	2%



## Age When Divorced

Women are divorcing at all ages. The study showed the ages of 35-44 to be the rockiest years for marriages, with 42% of participants divorcing during that decade. This is followed up with 28% of women surveyed divorcing later in life, between 45 to 54 years old, indicating that midlife seems to be the time when most marriages break up. Women divorcing at 34 or younger made up 22%, and only 9% divorced at 55+.

Age When Divorced	% of Participants
18 to 24	2%
25 to 34	20%
35 to 44	41%
45 to 54	28%
55 to 64	8%
65 to 74	1%
75 or older	0%





## **41% of the women divorced between the ages of 35-44.**

As women, we tend to be the unheralded executive assistant in the family dynamic—we manage schedules, conflicts, last minute emergencies, illness, life crisis, etc. but generally we do not take seriously the driving forces behind the family budget other than financial requirements of real-time expenditures. Thus, women experiencing divorce between the ages of 35 and 44 face a shocking reality of having very little knowledge of what it takes to support day to day living. In my practice as a certified divorce financial analyst® assisting families with strategies for all aspects of the allocation and division of marital assets, it is often necessary to have clients go through and analyze their income and spending structure during the marriage. This often realigns the emotional financial expectations.

**Karen D. Sparks, CDFA®, J.D.**

If we use the average length of marriages, we can theorize that this group married at 27-36 years of age. People divorcing may have married before they were really ready. They hadn't yet learned who they were or fully established their careers. There is much in our culture that influences the fantasy of marriage, such as movies, advertisements, and wedding dress ads. Marriage and relationships, in contrast, are hard work. After a few years of marriage, this group decided it wasn't working and they still have time to develop other relationships.

There are many factors that can contribute to divorce. During the ages of 35-44 people face many different challenges. They are developing financial plans, are in earlier stages of one's career development, as well as possibly trying to start a family. Each of these issues can place different stresses on a married couple.

**Dr. Gladys Frankel, Private Practice, NYC**

## Only 8% of the surveyed women divorced at 55 or older.

Our data may reflect the particular pool we have. For these women in their 50s, they are closer to retirement. Money saved that was to support one household, now needs to support two households. The cost of living as a single person is 50% or higher for each person than for a married couple. Typically, one spouse handled the finances. After 55, there can be an imbalance in each person's preparedness to financially cope with being single. There are fewer years to work to replenish financially. A partner could have had medical insurance coverage through their working spouse's employer. As a 55-year-old, there still are 10 years until Medicare coverage begins. People may have much fear about these challenges and decide to stay in an unhappy marriage rather than face these challenges.

On the other hand, there is a rise in divorces over the age of 50<sup>1</sup>. There is less stigma surrounding divorce, and living life as a single person. Marriages often fall apart when children leave home or people agree to stay together until their children leave for college. As people live longer, there are more opportunities for developing different interests and growing apart. When people consider the extended life expectancy, with many more years ahead of them, if there are already dissatisfied feelings, the thrust to separate becomes intensified. With women becoming more financially independent, there is more confidence in being able to survive a divorce.

”

**Dr. Gladys Frankel**

<sup>1</sup>R. Stepler. "Led by Baby Boomers, divorce rates climb for America's 50+ population." Pew Research Center, March 9, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/03/09/led-by-baby-boomers-divorce-rates-climb-for-americas-50-population/>



## Disproving the Myth of the Seven Year Itch

Since the early 1900s, social scientists have pinpointed the seven year mark to be a breaking point for many marriages, coining the term “seven year itch.” According to a 2009 report by the U.S. Census Bureau<sup>2</sup>, the median duration between first marriage and first separation for those who divorced is 6.7 years.

However, the population surveyed by the Jumping In study divorced consistently across different lengths of marriage. While 23% of the women surveyed divorced after

6-10 years of marriage, this was only a marginal difference across the other marriage timelines.

This might indicate that there is no longer a sense that if your marriage makes it up to 5, 10, 15 or even 20 years, it will be smooth sailing from there. There is no magic number of years to be married when it comes to knowing if you will divorce or not.

Marriage Duration	% of Participants
0-5 years	21%
6-10 years	23%
11-15 years	20%
16-20 years	17%
21+ years	19%



*The Seven Year Itch*, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>Ellis, R., & Kreider, R. “Number, Timing, and Duration of Marriages and Divorces:2009. Current Population Reports.” United States Census Bureau, May 2011, <https://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/p70-125.pdf>

## Age When Divorced vs Marriage Duration

While it may seem that more women are marrying later in life, plenty of women are still entering matrimony in the 20-30 age range, as indicated in the survey results.

Eighty seven percent of surveyed women who married at 18-24 years old, divorced after 0-5 years of marriage. These women are

eager to move forward with their lives after early mistakes. Women who married between the ages 25-34, seem to be more willing to hang on a bit longer, with 50% divorcing after 0-5 years and 38% leaving after 6-10 years.

Women between the ages of 35-44 are divorcing after longer marriages (6+ years). These are the peak years that the women surveyed stated they divorced.

Age When Divorced	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-15 Years	16-20 Years	21+ Years
18 to 24	87%	8%	0%	3%	2%
25 to 34	50%	38%	10%	2%	0%
35 to 44	16%	28%	30%	21%	5%
45 to 54	6%	10%	17%	22%	45%
55 to 64	5%	13%	11%	16%	54%
65 to 74	12%	13%	0%	13%	62%
75 or older	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

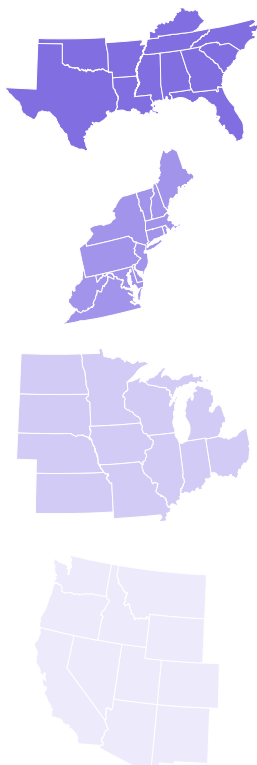
## Divorce Across the Map

Region does not seem to have a major impact on the age of divorce, with the majority of women across the country divorcing between the ages of 35 to 54.

When broken down, the highest number of participants live in California (10%), followed by Texas (9%), New York (5%), Florida, and Illinois (both a 4%).

While the peak age range for divorce is 34-44 across all regions, the southern states have a slightly higher peak at 44% divorcing during this age range as compared to 40% in the Midwest and Western states and 36% in the Northeast.

Women aged 55-64 are divorcing more in the Northeast as compared to the rest of the country, meaning Northeastern Boomer women are more likely to move on to a fresh start.



18 to 24 25 to 34 35 to 44 45 to 54 55 to 64 65 to 74 75+

South						
2%	21%	44%	26%	6%	0%	0%
Northeast						
1%	17%	36%	34%	11%	1%	0%
Midwest						
3%	19%	40%	30%	6%	1%	0%
West						
3%	22%	40%	26%	8%	1%	0%

## SECTION 1: JUMPING IN

### 1.1. The Dating Timeline

**78% of the women have already started thinking about dating by the time the divorce papers are signed.**

In order to understand how long it takes for women to start or consider dating again, the survey took into account at which point in the divorce process women start thinking about getting back out there, as well as how long after the divorce is final do they actually go on a date.

By examining the different stages of the divorce process, the study indicates that 50% of the women are thinking about dating in the early stages of the divorce process (either while separated, before filing for divorce or during the divorce process), while 28% only start considering dating once the divorce is final. This means that an overwhelming 78% of the women have already started thinking about dating by the time the divorce papers are signed.

**At what point did you start considering dating again?**



**22%**

While separated,  
before filing for  
divorce



**28%**

During the  
divorce process



**28%**

Once the divorce  
papers were  
signed

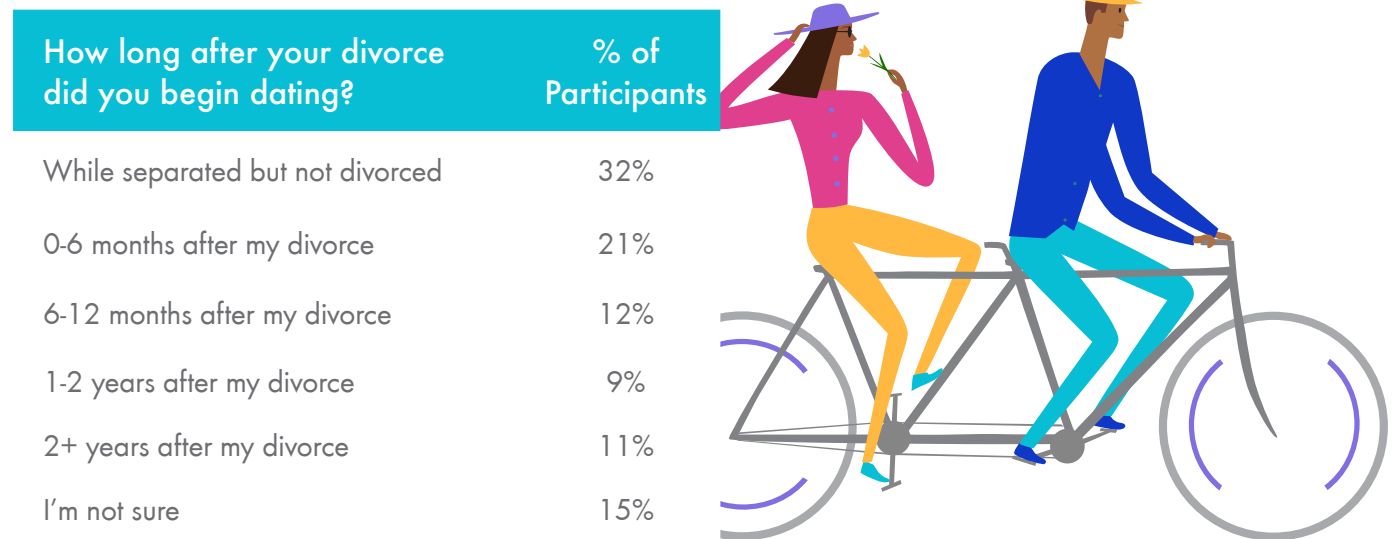


**22%**

I'm still thinking  
about it, just not  
ready yet

There appears to be a high level of excitement and hopefulness when it comes to dating again that is empowering for divorced women to be in control of their future happiness.

The study indicates **65% of women are dating within the first year of being separated or divorced.**



“

The majority of divorced women are thinking about dating and jumping in within this first year because they are now in control of their lives and they are seeking new companionships and yes, a new sexual partner. Many women have not been sexually active towards the end of their marriages and with the study showing the majority of women thinking about and dating during the divorce proceedings, seeking a new, healthier and happier relationship is top of mind.

**Dr. Kristin M. Davin**

Strategic Professional Coach and Therapist  
Counseling, Coaching, and Consulting



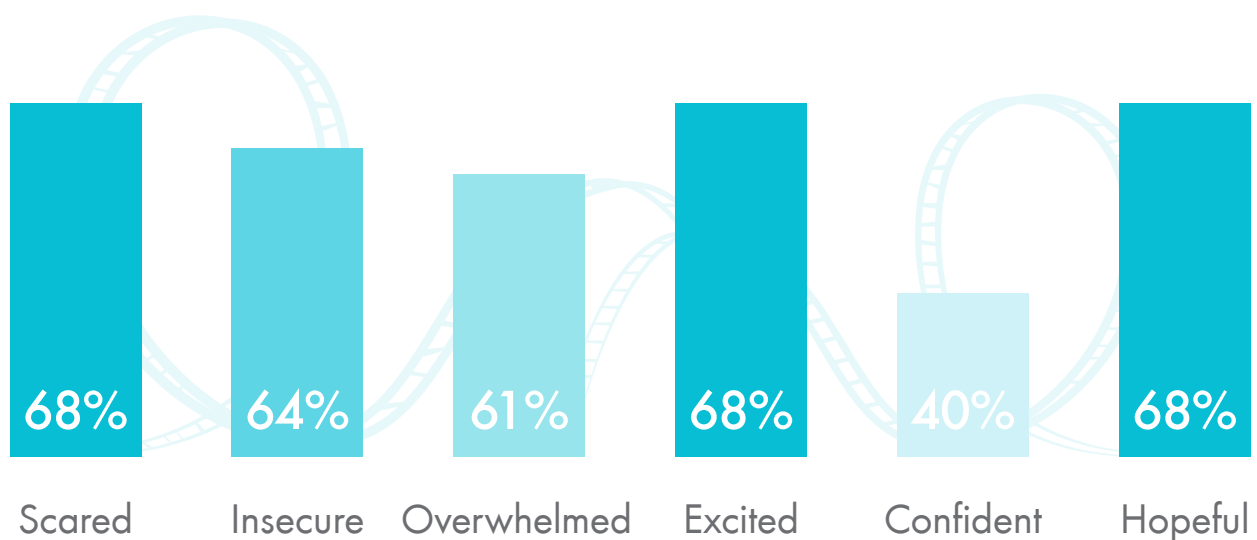
## 1.2. The Emotional Rollercoaster

**40% of women feel confident about dating after divorce, 68% feel excited and hopeful.**

With over 70% of the women surveyed between the ages of 35-54, and over half dating within the first year of being divorced or separated, emotions do range and run the gamut of hopeful and excited to scared, insecure, and overwhelmed. While 68% state that they are scared about getting back out there, the same percentage of women say that they feel excited and hopeful in their new dating journey.

However, only 40% of the participants claimed to feel confident about dating after divorce. This indicates that while women feel excited and hopeful (both of which can be empowering emotions), they are still recovering their personal confidence that may have been damaged during their marriage and the divorce process.

**How do you feel about dating after divorce?**





## Confidence and Sexuality After Divorce

Divorcees are moving from relationships that were filled with conflict and lacked of sexual connection. The opportunity to connect with a partner and be held, touched and have sex is reinforcing. Touching and hugging releases the body's feel good hormones, igniting the brain's pleasure system which is certainly something post-divorce women need and want. People are making these decisions as consensual adults. It is saying: *I am attractive. I am appealing. I am wanted.* Even if I can't predict that this partner is the one, I need to feel wanted. It breaks the ice of those questions of what it will be like with a new partner. *Can I do this?*

The lack of confidence and sexuality are connected. Making the decision to have sex is a decision that can give a sense of control. It reinforces responsibility for one's own choices. A woman is making a decision for herself and her body. It is empowering. Empowerment facilitates confidence and self-esteem. Sex and intimacy can boost self-esteem. Engaging in sex can be the beginning of healing, in making decisions for one's self. This can be a step in transitioning from misery to responsibility for making one's self happy, on the path to a new more confident, fulfilled life.

**Dr. Gladys Frankel**



### 1.3. Fears About Dating

Picking the wrong person is what divorced women fear the most.

When asked about the fears attached to dating after divorce, the most common responses were picking the wrong person, not being able to trust another person again, and repeating patterns. On the other hand, only 26% of women said they're scared of going through another divorce, and 5% replied that they don't face any fears.



What makes you fearful about dating?	% of Participants
Picking the wrong person	67%
Not being able to trust another person	65%
Repeating patterns	62%
Not finding someone	45%
Being exposed to unsafe situations	37%
Blending families	36%
Going through another divorce	26%
Other	8%
Nothing! I feel optimistic	5%



## Dating After Divorce Can Be Scary, and It's Okay

It's really not easy for us to put ourselves back on the "market."

The dating world likely has changed since the last time we dated. Dating apps were new to me, and I soon realized the hell of dating. Hook-up culture can be utterly terrifying if you've only had one or a few partners before getting divorced.

It's okay to be scared and feel insecure. It's okay if those emotions are stronger than any excitement you may feel. You're embarking on a new venture, even if you did date extensively before getting married. Because now you're a different person.

The only way to avoid pain in life is to stop living. Dating after divorce can, and probably will, bring you some pain. The reality is that it's hard to heal from the past until we're in a new relationship and have the opportunity to do things differently. When the old patterns come up, we have to learn to identify and change them. And that takes time and practice.

Be patient with yourself, love yourself, work on your yourself. Even if you never find a partner, it's worth it to know that you're a strong, secure woman who can stand on her own two feet.

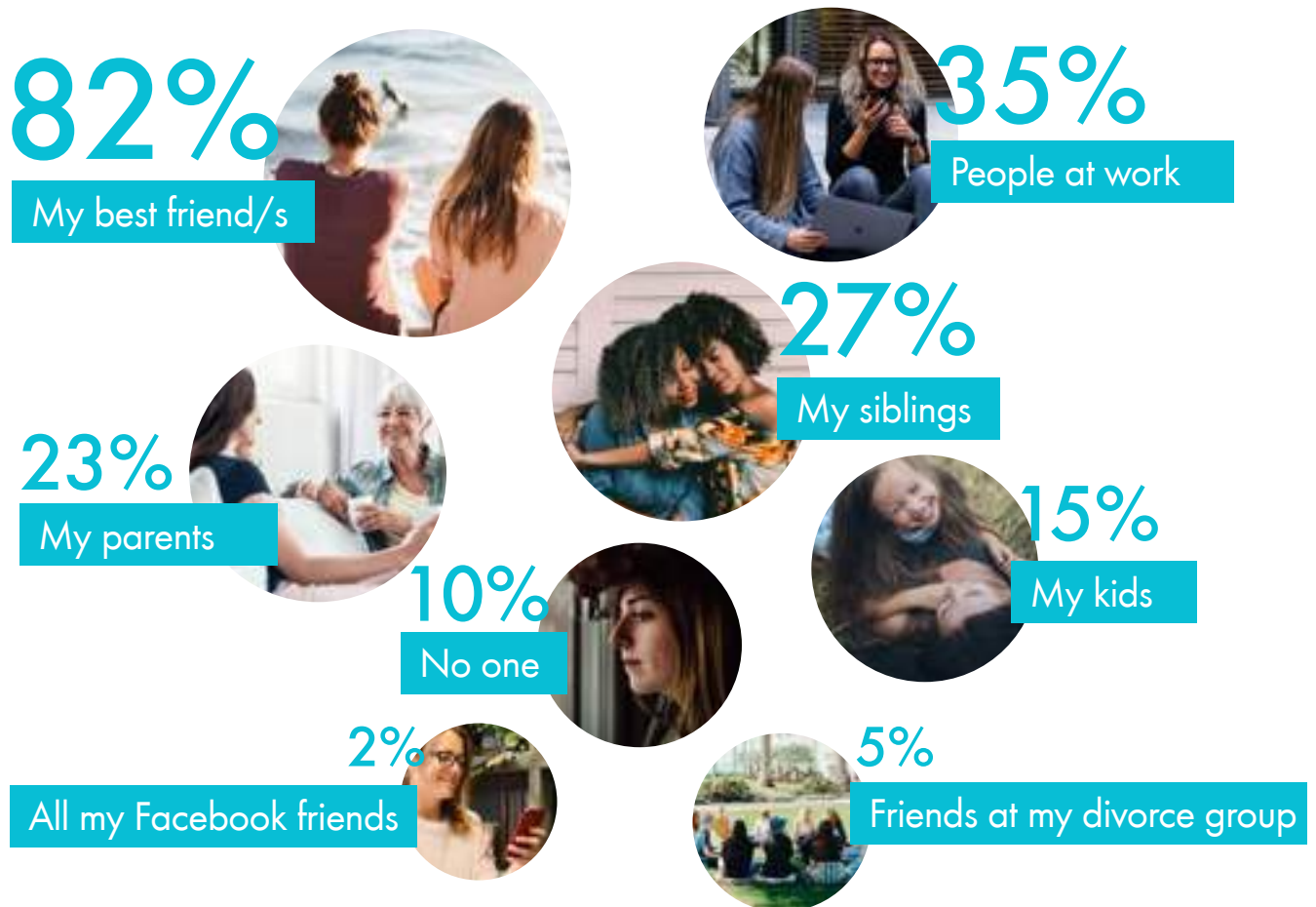
**Dena Landon**

Writer and Worthy contributor

Excerpt from her article ["Yes, Dating After Divorce Can Be Scary, and It's Okay"](#), published on the Worthy Blog on April 17th, 2019.

## 1.4. Talking About Dating

Embarking on the post-divorce dating journey is a conversation that women are having with their closest confidants: the study shows that 82% are sharing their dating experiences and expectations with their best friends. Family connections seem to be less common confidants, including siblings (27%) and parents (23%). These women are not turning to social media to discuss their new romantic lives or even to their divorce support network.



"My best friend called me every morning at 7 am while I was going through the toughest times of my divorce and when I started to date again. She spent 30 minutes a day on the phone with me letting me know that one day this was going to be behind me. An old-fashioned conversation will always replace likes, follows and reposts when it comes to moving onward and upward toward your next step."

**Tamsen Fadal**, journalist and news anchor





## 6 Best Friend Tips In Helping You Gain Confidence In Dating After Divorce

1. Smile and laugh a lot on first dates. Keep things light and positive. Guys love girls who are happy!

2. If you come home from a date disappointed again, feeling like you want to cry, and you feel hopeless that there are no good men out there, it's going to be okay. I have been there. There ARE good guys out there and each date is a step closer to meeting Mr. Right. Try to be patient.

3. Remember that it is better to have no boyfriend than a bad boyfriend or a boyfriend who is wrong for you. Independence is empowering. When you learn how to be totally fine with being alone,

you will feel strong and happy and at peace.

4. Liking someone you are dating is so much more important than loving him. If you don't like him, it will never work.

5. Don't ever go home or get into a car with someone you recently met online. Give it lots of time before you do this. Take your own car or Uber to dates.

6. Keep an open mind. If you take one look at him and say "no way," still talk to him, get to know him. He might end up being one of your best friends. Everyone brings something to the table.

### Jackie Pilossoph

Creator and Editor-in-chief,  
Divorced Girl Smiling



## SECTION 2: DATING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The second section of this study focuses on what dating after divorce looks like in 2019: from online dating and first dates, to communication and sex.

### 2.1 Where Do Divorce Women Date?

Online dating, like online shopping is top, but not the only way.

With 59% of adults ages 35-54 shopping at online marketplaces more than any other adult group<sup>3</sup>, it comes as no surprise that the same number of the divorced women surveyed are using online dating sites as their major channel for finding dates. Digital dating is an easy way to dip your toe in and test the waters, and allows that feeling of excitement, which the study showed 68% of the women feel, while also allowing them to build up their confidence as the study found only 8% of the women feeling confident as they start to date.

Having many online dating sites to choose from, a third of the divorced women surveyed preferred Match followed closely by Bumble. Other dating sites used by the surveyed women are Tinder (17%) and Zoosk (13%). Additional online dating apps and websites mentioned among the responses included Elite Singles, Seniors.com, Biker Planet, Christian Mingle, JDate, and Our Time, showing the plethora of opportunities available to online date shop.



<sup>3</sup>G. Thayer. "Mobile vs online shopping 2018 trends: These might surprise you", Mobile Village, <http://www.mobilevillage.com/mobile-vs-online-shopping-2018-trends/>



59% of divorced women meet dates on online dating websites or apps.

When asked if they're honest about being divorced in their dating profile, an overwhelming 91% responded "Yes", while 5% aren't, and 4% are honest about it only sometimes.

Which online dating websites/apps do you use?

32% **match.com**

24%  **bumble**

17%  **tinder**

13% 

13%  **eharmony**

11% 

4% 

Offline options do exist,  
but most likely not at your  
child’s school.

The women surveyed also cited meeting dates through offline options such as an introduction by mutual friends (48%), as well as chance meetings at the grocery store, farmers markets, or other local neighborhood romps (29%). Other ways to find a date include reconnecting with old friends on Facebook (20%), through work (18%) and at bars (17%). It seems family and religious events are not as heavily relied upon as great connectors. Lastly, at the bottom of the list was meeting someone at the children’s school which was deemed the least likely place to find a date (4%).

How do you meet potential dates?	% of Participants
Online dating sites and/or apps	59%
Through mutual friends	48%
Chance meetings at the grocery store, local farmers market, neighborhood romps	29%
Reconnecting with old friends on Facebook	20%
Through work	18%
At a bar	17%
Family setups	12%
At religious events	10%
Other	10%
Meetups	8%
Meeting single dads at my kids’ school	4%



## 2.2 The First Date

The ideal first date is a quick (and cheap!) one.

The most popular ideal first date, the survey data shows, is a quick coffee date (30%) followed by the traditional date of dining out (25%). With 80% of women stating they have one or more children, they are interested in quick, efficient ways to meet, greet, assess, and exit, something easily accomplished over a cup of coffee.

Another interesting tidbit that these results indicate is the importance of sharing a meal with a potential partner. With food-related activities making up 62% of the most popular dates, it's fair to assume women find a gathering around food to be the best way to really get to know their dates.

More extravagant, full day activities, such as a bike ride, hike, or museum exhibit, were less popular items on the list. Divorced women know their priorities and are juggling work, kids, after school activities, and her weekends may alternate as family time. Going out for a

coffee allows women to assess if the date is going to be worth her time and decide if she wants a second date or not.

What is your ideal first date?	% of Participants
Quick coffee date	30%
Dining out	25%
Drinks	23%
Physical activity, like a bike ride or a hike	8%
Weekend brunch	7%
Museum exhibit	3%
Other	3%
Movie	1%



A quick coffee date is the ideal first date for 30% of divorced women.



## Be Easy On Yourself

Going out on the first date after divorce or separation is quite a doozy for most people. Think of it as like a cocktail of emotions—a dash of excitement, a sprinkle of dread and a dousing of nerves—and voila—you’ve got the first date after divorce.

Of course, the situation is different for everyone. If you’re going out with an ex or an old friend, your “spidey senses” won’t be as heightened since the person is familiar. If you’re venturing out with an online date or app match, chances are your nerves are in overdrive because, let’s face it: the online experience is a kooky one.

You might even feel a little guilty that first date out, even though you shouldn’t. Guilt over moving on or guilt over being so excited about a date and maybe not caring at all about your ex.

Don’t be surprised if your emotions end up being not what you expected, because everyone has

a different journey and path when finding love after divorce.

Make the first date out of the gate an easy one. Try coffee, a drink or lunch. Something low pressure. If you set the bar too high, you may bail on the date. I know that there were many times I canceled dates due to my own nerves. Don’t let that be you!

Also, it’s okay if you get out there and decide you’re just not ready. It’s okay to say—you know what? I didn’t have that much fun, so maybe I need to take some more time still.

Whatever you do or however you feel, don’t pressure yourself.

## Laura Lifshitz

Writer, comedienne, single mother and Worthy contributor

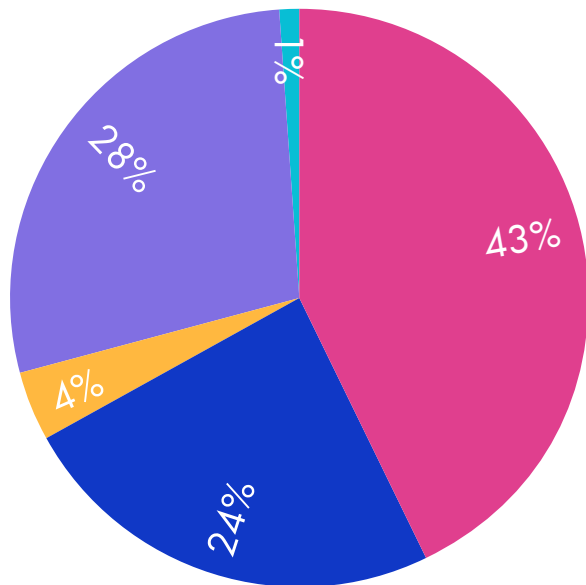
Excerpt from her article [“Tips For Your First Date After Divorce”](#) published on the Worthy Blog on April 25th, 2019.

## Who pays on the first date?

Coffee spots are casual, no reservation required, and affordable. This is key, especially when it comes to the question of who pays. The results indicate that while women are all for equality, old habits die hard. The majority of the women (43%) state that “he pays the full amount”, however 58% of the women also state they are okay with paying, but clearly defer to the guy to pay in the end. When it comes down to it, it’s the gesture versus the amount and the women clearly prefer the gesture, with the guy paying. Delving a little deeper, 28% of the women state they offer to split the tab and 24% say they’d consider how the date was going first before they would offer to contribute.



43% of women state that their date pays on the first date, however, 58% are okay with paying.



- 43% He pays the full amount
- 28% We split the tab
- 24% It depends on how I feel about the date
- 4% He pays and I leave the tip
- 1% I pay the full amount

Do you think it's okay for the woman to pay on the first date?

42%



58%



“

### Gender Equality or Traditional Roles?

This is a hotly debated and talked about situation these days. There is research out of the UK that says 60% of women prefer to pay and do. For many women it is empowering and they feel confident paying. They also feel more in control without feeling there are any expectations on them should the guy pay.

Yet other research shows that despite their desire for independence and to be treated equally, there is something about who pays for the first date that makes this situation much more complicated for women. However, if the guy instigates the date, then he should pay for the date. Many women feel it makes them feel special and being courted or out on an actual date.



To add to this debate, is confusion on the part of man. For example, on the one hand, as times continue to change, the old roles of women and men are being thrown out the window at record speed. Yet, this leaves men confused. The dating rules have changed. Expectations have changed. Some men feel caught in the middle because they don't want to infer anything, they don't want to feel chauvinistic, yet they want to be respectful of women. What to do? Despite how far we continue to come, it doesn't surprise me that 58% of women defer to men. It remains a hotly debated conversation with no easy answers. I think there's also a conversation about the second and third dates as well. The dating rules are changing, and this affects both men and women.

### Dr. Kristin M. Davin

Strategic Professional Coach and Therapist  
Counseling, Coaching, and Consulting

## 2.3. Communication

### Divorced women are willing to take the initiative.

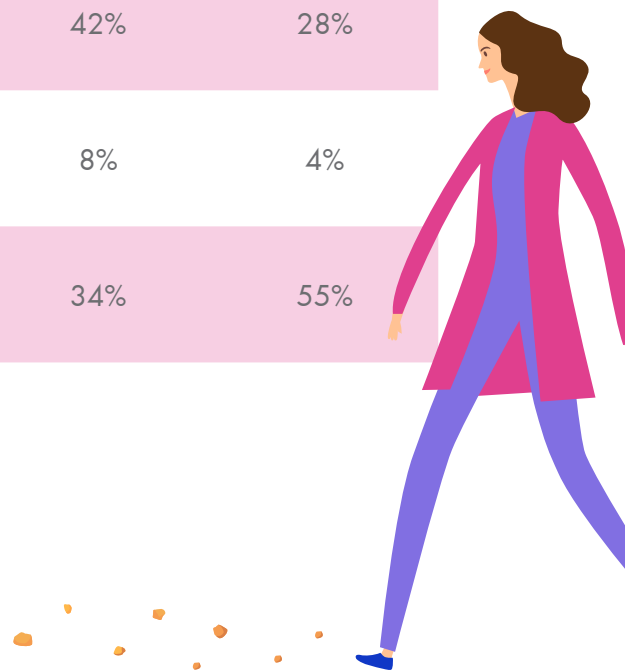
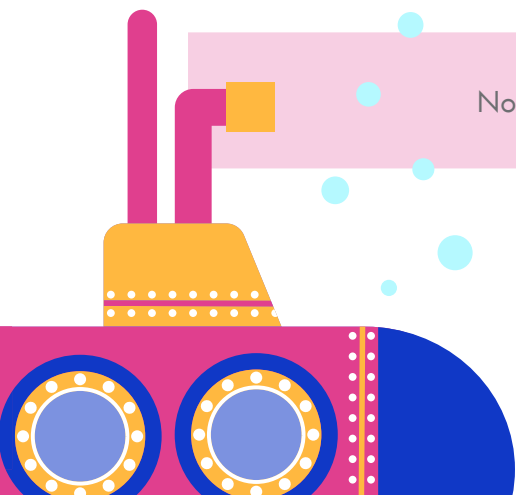
Divorced women don't waste any time when it comes to future dates. According to the results, 48% of the women state that they will arrange a second date within the first forty-eight hours and over half stating they will be the initiator of the first post-date text.

How soon after a date do you set a second date?	% of Participants	After a date, will you text a guy if he doesn't text you?	% of Participants
By the end of the date	15%	Yes	53%
Within 48 hours	48%	No	47%
Up to a week later	31%		
A week or more following the date	6%		

## A New Type of Bad Dating Behavior

With a focus on contemporary dating trends, the survey explored negative online dating behaviors, such as ghosting, mosting, submarining, breadcrumbing and phubbing. While 55% of the women stated they have not acted this way toward their dates, a shocking 66% admitted to having experienced these rude tendencies. The most common behavior half of women experienced was ghosting, or the experience of being totally ignored by the other person. This is followed by online flirting with no further intentions, known as breadcrumbing, experienced by 42% of the women dating.

Answer Choices	Have Experienced	Have Done
Ghosting - Cutting off all communication without warning	50%	28%
Mosting - Making the other person believe they're The One, then ghosting them	28%	4%
Submarining - Reappearing after ghosting someone, acting like nothing happened	30%	5%
Breadcrumbing - Flirting here and there, with no intentions of taking things further	42%	28%
Phubbing - Snubbing someone in favor of your mobile phone	8%	4%
None of the above	34%	55%







## The One Thing You Should Do If You Get Ghosted

No matter how much you think you know someone, you never can get inside their head. Understand the experiences that cause them to see the world as they do. Appreciate the factors in their life that influence how they react to situations, specifically the one you just shared together. Try to, and you will find yourself in an endless pursuit of answers which don't exist, likely not even for them. Too often, people waste precious time creating fictions of why a romantic interest said this, why they did that, and so forth. Or worse still, pursuing them for clarification. You internalize, telling yourself it's got to be about you. And it may be. But not always. And not completely.

When someone ghosts, the reasons are more complicated than you will ever know. Regardless, one truth remains: that person doesn't want to be with you. It's the only truth

you can believe, and the only one that will ever enable you to move forward with your life. Anything else falls under the category of the lies you tell yourself and the lies your friends come up with to make you feel better.

Sadly, ghosting has become an unfortunate reality of modern-day dating. Chances are it will happen to you if it hasn't already. So how should you handle it?

Disappear from their life, too.

### Stacey Freeman

Writer, lifestyle editor at Worthy.com, and the founder and managing director of Write On Track, LLC.

Excerpt from her article ["The One Thing You Should Do If You Get Ghosted"](#) published on the Worthy Blog on June 18th, 2018.

2.4. Sex

42% of the women are fine having sex on the first or just after a few dates.

In order to understand the behaviors and feelings around sex, the study asked how long women wait to have sex with a date, how comfortable they feel discussing sexual health with a date, and how they feel about sexting.

Across the younger segments, more women stated they’re fine having sex on the first date or after a few dates, compared to older segments. Conversely, more women in the older segments stated that being in an exclusive relationship is a must in order to have sex. For women who selected “other”, the most popular answer was whether or not they have the right chemistry with their date. Waiting for a ring, either an engagement ring or wedding band, was the second most common answer.

Overall, most women are not so quick to have sex on the first date, preferring to get to know their date better before making the move to being sexual partners.

	I’m fine with having sex on the first date	After a few dates	After dating for a few months	It doesn’t matter when, as long as we are exclusive	Other
18-24	14%	14%	14%	14%	43%
25-34	14%	34%	19%	20%	13%
35-44	13%	36%	16%	20%	15%
45-54	7%	32%	22%	22%	17%
55-64	4%	18%	29%	25%	24%
65-74	0%	28%	28%	24%	20%
75+	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Overall responses	10%	32%	20%	21%	17%

## Discussing Sexual Health

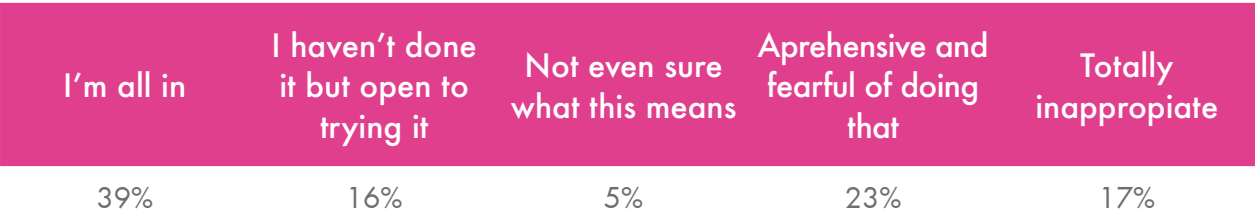
Discussing sexual health matters with a date is something **76% of the surveyed divorced women feel comfortable with**. Young women are particularly comfortable discussing their sexual health with a date (57%), whether this is because the social stigma surrounding the topic of sex has worn off for younger generations or because they are more aware of the dangers of STDs. Most women over the age of 25 stated they are comfortable with the topic, including 40% of women 65+.

	Very Comfortable	Comfortable	Neither	Uncomfortable	Very Uncomfortable
18-24	57%	29%	0%	7%	7%
25-34	34%	42%	11%	12%	1%
35-44	37%	41%	11%	9%	2%
45-54	30%	48%	10%	11%	2%
55-64	25%	41%	14%	16%	4%
65-74	36%	40%	12%	8%	0%
75+	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
<b>Overall responses</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>2%</b>



Sexting

When it comes to sexting, the answers were more divergent. While 39% expressed they're "all in", and 16% said they'd be open to try it, 23% stated they feel fearful of doing it and 17% find it inappropriate.



“

Fourty two percent of the women reported they were fine having sex on the first or just after a few dates.

Despite divorce, many people, both men and women, remain hopeful which would indicate the 78% of women who are dating. And during the divorce process is a little complicated because some divorces go on for a significant period of time (indicating their separation is lasting longer than they probably hoped). It could also be where the person is and how



emotionally checked out they have become through their divorce.

Sex is also a hotly debated topic but the numbers again don't surprise me. As times continue to change, so do the norms for people, especially women. For example, they might see their friends actively dating and having sex. Also, expectations around sex have changed. No longer is it taboo and unacceptable for women to be sexually active outside of a 'committed relationship.'

And for many women, they might feel less inhibited. The conversations around sex, who's doing what and how often, have become more common place and women feel more comfortable in their own sexuality. Coming out of a marriage might also help them become more sexually active. Women are more confident and not afraid to be sexually confident as well. It's all a process. A long time ago, it was more the norm that women don't talk about it and god forbid express their needs and wants! Boy has that changed. Also, as women become more confident in other areas of their lives, so does their confidence around their own sexuality and not feeling shy about 'owning it.'

**Dr. Kristin M. Davin, Psy.D.**



## SECTION 3: A BRIGHTER FUTURE

The study looked to find out how divorced women are letting go of their past to move forward into healthier, happier relationships. In this section, we explore the type of relationships women are looking for after divorce, what personality traits and behaviors they appreciate and reject in a potential partner, and how they're making room for new relationships by letting go of mementos from their previous marriage.

### 3.1. What type of relationships are divorced women looking for?

**Long-term relationships are what most women seek when dating after divorce.**

Of the surveyed women, 65% stated they're looking for a long-term partner, boyfriend or companion when dating after divorce, 13% are looking for a new husband and only 1% stated they are dating for a hookup.

Among the younger segments, a bigger percentage of the surveyed women said they were looking to remarry: 29% among women aged 18 to 24 said they're looking for a new husband, compared to 9% and 10% among women aged 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 respectively. At the same time, more women in the older segments are looking for a long-term partner, without necessarily the need to get remarried.





	A hookup	A companion	A boyfriend	A long-term partner	A new husband	Unsure
18-24	0%	14%	14%	29%	29%	14%
25-34	2%	14%	13%	30%	18%	23%
35-44	2%	18%	10%	32%	15%	22%
45-54	1%	19%	13%	39%	9%	19%
55-64	0%	19%	8%	44%	10%	19%
65-74	0%	24%	8%	60%	0%	8%
75 or older	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
<b>Overall responses</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>20%</b>

The study also showed 69% of the women dated only one person at a time. This was consistent across all age groups and supports the data regarding the majority of women looking for long-term partners and husbands.



More women in the older segments are looking for a long-term partner, without necessarily the need to get remarried.





Turns out, despite the fact that it feels like all the men on apps only want sex, only 1.40% of us are looking for a hook-up when we date. And, while we may not necessarily want to get married again, we want relationships.

I'm not alone in desiring a life partner. Whether it's a companion, a long-term partner, or a new husband, when we put ourselves back out there, we have an end goal in mind.

Though we may be scared, nervous, or feel inexperienced, I do think we're wiser about dating, too. We know what we consider to be relationship material, and I'm betting a lot of us came to this realization after bad marriages.

### Dena Landon

Writer and Worthy contributor  
Excerpt from her article ["Dating After Divorce: What Are We Looking For?"](#)  
published on the Worthy Blog on April 21st, 2019.

## Introducing the Kids

With 80% of the women surveyed declaring they have one or more children, the question of when to introduce kids to someone they're dating provides valuable insights into what women look for in a post-divorce relationship. For 57% of the respondents, the relationship has to be an exclusive one in order to introduce their new partner to their children.

### When do you introduce your children to someone you're dating?

We have to be in an exclusive relationship	57%
I don't have any children	18%
While we are casually dating	9%
I don't plan to introduce my kids to anyone I date	7%
When we are thinking about getting engaged	7%
Right up front, my kids meet everyone I date	2%



## A Happier, Healthier Relationships Lead with Better Communication

The study showed 75% of the divorced women surveyed declared that they believe they will be in a happy relationship again after divorce.

When asked what would make them happier in a new relationship, the study found women value better communication far more than anything else in their next relationship. Having more fun, feeling safe and supported, feeling more themselves, and having greater financial freedom

were also identified by over half of the women as the top factors necessary for a new, happier relationship. Having the ability to travel was cited by 47% of the women as another opportunity for a happier new life with a partner. Being more independent as an avenue for happiness ranked the lowest in a new relationship, which aligns with more than half the women after a divorce are seeking a new long-term companion or partner.



75% of divorced women believe they will be in a happy relationship again.

### What would make you happier in a new relationship?

Better communication	82%
Having more fun	66%
Feeling safe and supported	62%
Feeling more me	62%
Having greater financial freedom and resources	54%
Ability to travel	47%
Being more independent	27%

## 3.2. What do divorced women value in a partner?

Divorced women look for honest, polite, and emotionally available partners that share their values.

The survey asked several questions in order to learn what divorced women appreciate as well as what they reject in a potential partner. Respondents were invited to rate how important different factors, such as age, social status or religion, are when it comes to evaluating whether they can envision a relationship with a date.

Over 90% of the women declared that **values, emotional availability, lifestyle, marital status and sexual compatibility** are either very or fairly important. Values stood out as the most highly appreciated features in a partner, with 85% women describing it as “very important”. Surprisingly, age, religion, money and physical appearance are less important to divorced women when determining if a date is relationship material.

	Very important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not at all important	No opinion
Lifestyle	68%	28%	3%	1%	0%
Physical appearance	19%	57%	23%	1%	0%
Money/profession/ social status	16%	50%	28%	5%	1%
Values	85%	13%	2%	0%	0%
Emotional availability	82%	16%	2%	0%	0%
Family	51%	30%	14%	3%	2%
Marital status	83%	9%	4%	2%	2%
Faith/religion/spirituality	31%	25%	25%	15%	4%
Sexual compatibility	61%	31%	5%	1%	2%
Age	14%	47%	29%	9%	1%
Location	36%	46%	14%	3%	1%



To me, values have less to do with religion and more to do with worldview. Do you want to help the poor, or will you argue with me for 15 minutes about donating to the local food bank? It impacts how we raise our children, too. Is providing extracurricular activities like piano or swimming important, or does the other person seem to want to spend as little money on

their child as possible?

We've probably all learned that marriage to someone who sees the world through a different lens simply doesn't work. That arguments about money and parenting can tear a marriage apart, and that it's exhausting to try to convince someone to consider your viewpoint.

## Dena Landon

Writer and Worthy contributor

Excerpt from her article ["Dating After Divorce: What Are We Looking For?"](#) published on the Worthy Blog on April 21st, 2019.

When it comes to marital status, 98% of the surveyed women said they'd be open to dating divorced people, 92% are open to dating a widowed person, and 85% would date someone with children. Conversely, 93% said they would not date someone who's currently married, and 43% would not date someone who's separated but not divorced yet.

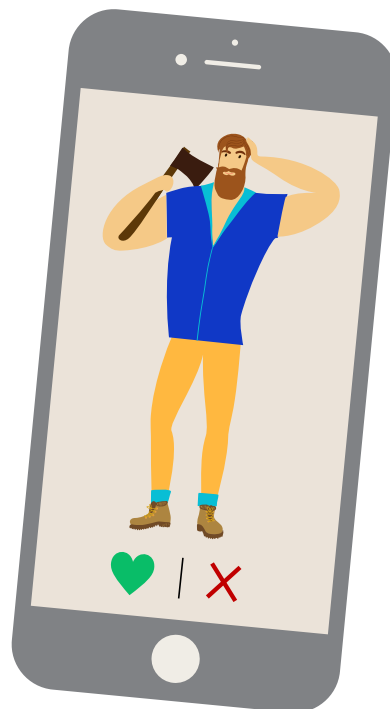
Would you agree to date a person who:	Yes	No	Unsure
Is divorced	98%	1%	1%
Is separated, but divorce is not finalized yet	40%	43%	17%
Was never married	79%	7%	14%
Is currently married	3%	93%	4%
Is a widower	92%	2%	6%
Has children	85%	5%	10%

## Honesty is Appreciated, Rude Behaviors Aren't

Values set the stage and are the moral compass for divorced women in the dating world, from the online profile to the date itself and through building long-term relationships. When a date does not take the time to show respect either in their own profile or on the date itself, women cringe.

The survey asked what makes women cringe the most in a profile and learned that eight out of ten respondents are turned off by poor grammar and spelling errors. The ability to write without error is of top importance because it indicates something deeper. With all the tools available to spell and grammar check online writing, divorced women are saying they don't like sloppiness or carelessness.

What makes you cringe in his online dating profile?	% of Participants
Profile spelling or grammar errors	79%
Pictures dressed in workout clothes, showing off his biceps	55%
Pictures with his car	40%
Pictures with his drinking buddies	35%
Pictures with wild animals, fishing, hunting, etc.	24%
Pictures with his kids	8%
Pictures with his pets	3%





The top five things women hate most on a date are all focused around rude behavior tendencies. When they see such behaviors like being rude to the wait staff, checking the phone constantly, talking about his ex non-stop or getting drunk, these are telltale signs he is not the right one. One more reason for women choosing coffee as a first date option; so they can quickly learn over a thirty minute latte if a second should date be in the cards.

That also resonates in their other cringeable profile blunders: 55% despise pictures of men dressed in workout clothes, showing off their biceps, followed by pictures with his car, and drinking buddies. What's preferred are pictures with his pets and his children.



What are the things you hate the most on a date?	% of Participants
He is rude to the wait staff	60%
He checks his phone constantly	57%
He won't stop talking about his ex	46%
He gets drunk	42%
He's looking around the room while you're talking	38%
He looks nothing like his online photo	27%
He arrives late	17%
He's dressed inappropriately	14%
He orders your food	8%
He only orders food for himself	4%



Talking about their ex should be one of the top red flags, either he's not over her or he's still angry and/or he's got bad personality traits which are indicators of his inability to face the realities of who he is and how he affected his ex.

Abusive men never take responsibility and always blame their ex saying she's crazy. They will be so charming you'll find it hard to believe they're not telling the truth!

### Karen Bigman

Life coach and divorce coach, founder of The Divorcierge

When it comes to personality traits, divorced women are looking for an honest, funny, dependable and compassionate person. 92% of the women state they are honest about being divorced in their profile, and in return 85% state they are looking for honesty as the top trait in a potential partner.



What personality traits do you look for in a potential partner?	% of Participants
Honest	85%
Funny	58%
Dependable	54%
Compassionate	47%
Easy going	35%
Confident	27%
Outgoing	13%
Sensitive	10%
Reserved	2%

### 3.3. Letting Go and Moving On

**Selling their engagement ring can help divorced women embrace their next chapter.**

Worthy has learned from thousands of clients who choose their online auction marketplace to sell jewelry from a previous marriage that selling the engagement ring can allow for feelings of release and the opportunity to give themselves permission to move forward. With that knowledge, the survey looked to gain deeper insights on how the engagement ring plays into dating after divorce.

Among the surveyed audience, **63% are still in possession of their engagement ring after divorce**, and 34% are no longer in possession of it because they either sold it (28%), gave it back (3%), lost it (2%) or got rid of it in a more extreme but symbolic way by throwing it off a cliff or into a lake (1%).

What did you do with your engagement ring after divorce?	% of Participants
I sold it	28%
I gave it back to my ex	3%
I threw it into a lake/ off a cliff	1%
I don't wear it anymore	42%
I still wear it sometimes	3%
I never got an engagement ring	3%
I lost it	2%
Other	18%



This data becomes even more revealing when compared to the emotional weight that women attribute to the ring: **45% of divorced women agree that their engagement ring is emotionally attached to memories of their ex** and previous marriage.

Six out of ten women are still holding onto their engagement ring as they date after divorce and 45% state their ring is still an emotional attachment to the memories of their

ex and previous marriage. Letting go of the engagement ring is usually one of the last possessions connected to the marriage that a woman holds on to.

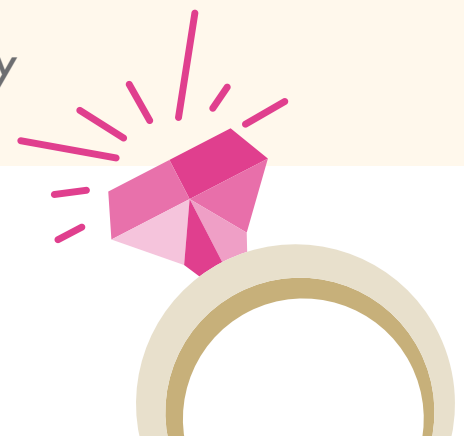
Dating is a surefire step in moving on. With 68% of the women stating that they are over their ex as they embark on their dating journey, letting go of the emotions connected to the ring when dating may be the final step toward a new, happier life.



“Rather than letting it collect dust and weigh you down, sell the ring and use the proceeds for something that will allow you to thrive and feel wonderful!”

**Laura A. Wasser**

Family Law Attorney, Founder and CEO of *It's Over Easy*





## Takeaways

What does dating look like for divorced women in 2019? This study, the first of its kind to dive specifically into the divorced women's dating journey, tells us that:

**It's on their minds early on.** No matter how long that their marriage might have been, women are no longer waiting until divorce papers are signed to initiate their new lives. Eight out of 10 women are already thinking about dating before the divorce is final, and 7 out of 10 are dating within the first year of being separated or divorced.

**It's scary, but also exciting.** Dating is an emotional rollercoaster, filled with excitement and hopefulness at the height and scare and reduced confidence at the lows. The women acknowledge the fun factor in going out on dates. Dating builds confidence in self-worth, laying a foundation to move on, releasing old emotions and igniting a new, happy next chapter.

**It's predominantly online.** Online dating is the pool women jump into surpassing other experiences like introductions through mutual friends or chance meetings. Six out of 10 divorced women meet dates using online dating websites or apps.

**Women are in control.** Women are empowered to be in control from the onset, valuing their time with a quick coffee date assessment, to initiating the follow-up date, to having fun, sex included. Even though divorce may have eroded their confidence, sex helps build confidence for their new life.



## Takeaways (cont.)

**Women are looking for long-term relationships.** Most divorced women are looking to find a long-term partner that shares their values and lifestyle, that is emotionally available and sexually compatible, and that is honest and polite. They find companionship important and dating can provide a way to find a new friend—a new person to explore new places, restaurants, even a travel companion for fun new adventures.

**Women are looking for healthier, happier relationships.** Most divorced women believe they will be in a happy relationship again after divorce, one with better communication. In a world where 7 out of 10 divorced women have experienced negative dating behaviors, healthier communication is what would make women happy in a new relationship.

**It's an opportunity to let go of bad memories.** Even though many consider that marriage mementos like an engagement ring are emotionally attached to memories of their ex, most women are still in possession of their ring as they embark on their new dating journey. To be finally ready for dating after divorce, letting go of the last vestige of the marriage is the surefire way, our experts state, to know you are emotionally ready to move on.

Dr. Gladys Frankel



## ABOUT THE PANELISTS



### Karen Bigman

Karen Bigman started The Divorcierge ([TheDivorcierge.com](http://TheDivorcierge.com)) to help women struggling with their lives during divorce, and those trying to build a new life afterwards. Karen partners with individuals faced with the myriad of emotions and tasks associated with divorce, acting as a guide and confidante, and consulting with them on how to navigate the emotional, financial and logistical issues surrounding divorce. Karen's work includes helping to manage all aspects of the divorce process from pre-divorce planning through post-divorce life.



### Dr. Kristin Davin

Proactive and approachable, 'Dr D' has been described as a 'straight shooter.' She helps people embrace change, cultivate healthier relationships, and become more effective communicators, both personally and professionally. Her areas of focus are: divorce, marriage, dating, life transitions, and relationships.



## Tamsen Fadal

Ms. Fadal is an eleven-time Emmy award-winning journalist and anchor of the PIX11 News in New York. She is also the author of *The New Single: Finding, Fixing and Falling Back In Love With Yourself After a Break-up or Divorce*, a motivational roadmap to rediscovering your power and living your best life.



## Dr. Gladys Frankel

Dr. Gladys Frankel, Clinical Psychologist in private practice NYC, Dartmouth Medical School Faculty and affiliated with Weill Cornell College of Medicine, New York Presbyterian Hospital, is a relationship expert for Worthy. She is a PTSD and health/stress management expert. Attorneys seek her opinion for diverse legal cases. She is also a psychologist for Complete Wellness NYC. She was featured on DrRadio, a Sirius national broadcast radio show and other radio talk shows, has contributed to media and is a sought-after lecturer at national and international venues. She is excited to be involved in Worthy's dating after divorce research.



## Jackie Pilossoph

Jackie Pilossoph is the creator of her divorce advice websites Divorced Girl Smiling and Divorced Guy Grinning. She is also the creator and writer of the weekly column, “Love Essentially”, published in the *Chicago Tribune*, *LA Times*, and several other publications across the U.S. Jackie holds a Master’s degree in journalism from Boston University; currently resides in Chicago with her two children.



## Karen Sparks

Karen D. Sparks, J.D. is a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst® and is the principal and owner of Divorce Financial Strategists™ of Santa Clara, CA. She provides services locally and nationwide for divorce and separation financial analysis and post-divorce financial implications. As a CDFA®, she can accomplish her primary objective to help clients establish and maintain financial health even in the midst of a difficult life challenge such as divorce or separation. Karen is also the co-author of “Stress-Free Divorce”, Vol. 1, published in April 2017.

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## About Worthy

Worthy is an online auction marketplace for pre-owned diamond jewelry. Helping women get a fresh start is one of the things we take the most pride in. We understand that in the process of divorce, women meet many challenges and have many difficult decisions to make. The ability for women to sell their diamond jewelry in a safe, transparent, value-adding way, allows for more possibilities and more confidence in the process. Our clients benefit from complimentary GIA diamond gradings, up to \$100,000 in insurance coverage, and access to a nationwide network of professional buyers.

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