ETHICAL CONSULATION IN DIVORCE DECISION MAKING

Why is divorce decision making an ethical issue?

- Promises were once made for a life-long union.
- Spouses build their lives and futures based on that promise.
- There are usually other stakeholders: minor children, adult children, extended family members, others.

What we know from research about the divorce decision making process

- It's up and down over years in many cases.
- It's an ethical issue for most people.
- Many people consult therapists about their decision, and therapists have zero training in how to be helpful.
- The majority of divorces are in couples who are a year or two prior to the divorce described their marriage as reasonably happy and not high conflict.

Some ethical issues in the consultation process

- **Transparency:** Whethere client tells the spouse that they are losing their sense of commitment or considering divorce.
- **Help seeking:** Effort to see if the original commitment can be sustained.
- **Consequences:** For self and other stakeholders
- **How long to hang on:** When the spouse is being destructive (AAA: Abuse, Affair, Addiction)

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