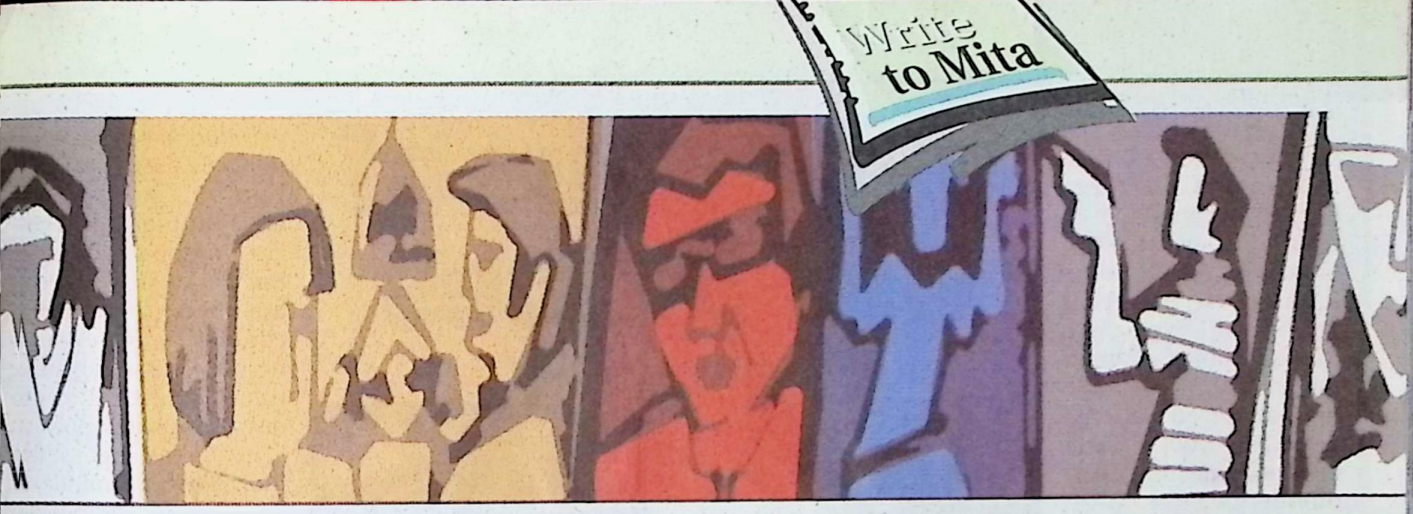


Dear Mita,

I am a 35-year-old man married for ten years. My wife is 29 and we have two children aged 8 and 5 years. We have been fairly happy until the last two years. Over this time my wife has become more and more depressed and often makes scenes at the slightest mistake on my part. She has threatened to commit suicide a few times. I got a better paying job but it also involves late hours. It is true that I have not been able to give much time to her but I have always tried to cater to the family's financial needs. When our first child was born she tried to kill herself by having sleeping pills because I had criticised her. She cannot take any kind of criticism. I really don't know what to do as she refuses to see a doctor. Please advise.

Desperado

Dear Desperado,

Your wife has suicidal tendencies and must see a doctor as this might have very serious consequences. No matter what you must convince her to see a psychiatrist or a psychologist. If she will not listen to you then ask someone else who she trusts to convince her. After this try to get to the bottom of why she is behaving in this manner and analyse if you have contributed to her present state. If she is not suffering from serious mental illness which the doctor will be able to advise then you must make more of an effort to get to the bottom of this. But remember this will require a lot of time and patience on your part.

Dear Mita,

I am 29 years old and working at a private organisation. I am in a long term relationship with someone. We used to have a very passionate relationship for the last six years. But things started to change, the last year or so. Although he claims to be just as much in love with me, his actions and behaviour do not show this. He no longer looks at me the way he used to or say the things that made it obvious how he felt about me. It is almost like a robotic relationship. Unless I initiate a romantic dialogue he will just remain passive. I honestly think that he is no longer attracted to me. I was devastated in the beginning but now am kind of used to it. Do you think this is normal in a relationship? We are supposed to get married this year.

Cynical

Dear Cynical,

You answer your last question, no, this is not normal and something is wrong in the relationship. It is much better that you confront it now before you get married. You both need to talk very seriously and frankly. A robotic relationship now will be a disaster after marriage when many mundane things takes priority and couples move away from romance and passion. If for some reason you or he has lost interest in each other then please admit it and move out of the relationship. However, if with help this situation can be salvaged then go for it. After all you both have invested 6 years of your lives to the relationship which must mean something.

Dear Mita,

I am 31 years old and married to a reasonably nice man. We have one child. I live with my in-laws. My mother in law is a tyrant and dictates everything in the house including who should come to the house, how many times I can go to my father's house, what we should eat etc. No matter how hard I try my in-laws are never pleased and always complain to my husband. I have tried to tell my husband that we need to move out but he just cannot stay away from his parents. I know it is his duty to take care of his parents but does this mean I have to be miserable all my life? I want to get out of this marriage but am scared. What should I do?

Fed Up

Dear Fed-up,

There is no reason for you to tolerate this situation and it is very unfortunate that your husband does not understand it. Moving out with your husband might be too extreme and financially not viable and moreover should be the last option. There must be some ground rules established by which you are able to exercise your independence. Everyone in the house must remember that you are not a child and cannot be treated as such. Try to talk to you husband in a rational way, tell him that if his mothers behaviour does not improve than you will have to move out. Tell your husband that taking care of one's parents does not mean oppressing one's wife. One can be a dutiful son as well as a caring husband. The important thing is to strike the right balance.