Ten Divorce Mistakes to Avoid

1. Failing to understand the divorce process
2. Confusing your emotional needs with the business decisions of divorce
3. Forgetting to weigh the cost vs. the benefit of each contested issue
4. Putting too much emphasis on "winning"
5. Failing to be truthful
6. Believing that the award of custody and placement means the children lose the other parent
7. Deciding to fight every issue. The greater the fight the more costly the divorce. Fighting over every issue will probably result in the sale of some assets to pay for the cost of litigation.
8. Prolonging the divorce. Failing to divide your assets in a timely manner often means sharing the increased value of that asset with your spouse.
9. Getting divorce advice from family and friends
10. Not following your attorney's advice

1.2 Am I required to be represented by an attorney in order to obtain a divorce in Wisconsin?

No. You are not required to retain an attorney to obtain a divorce in Wisconsin. However, if your case involves child-custody or child-placement issues, maintenance, or significant property or debts, you should carefully consider whether or not it is in your best interest to proceed without an attorney.

If your divorce does not involve any major issues, if you cannot afford a retainer, or if you simply want to proceed without legal representation, you can represent yourself *pro se.* A person who proceeds in a legal matter without a lawyer is referred to as acting *pro se,* or on one's own. *Pro se* divorce forms are available at www.wicourts.gov/forms1/circuit. You can also contact your local county clerk of court's office to ask what services are available to assist self-represented litigants. There may also be low-cost legal service programs available in your area. Check online for potential references. Some