

Dorothy, 35 year-old mother of two children married her husband when she was 20 and her husband 22. They both spent their twenties studying and working. While she was reading for a university degree, she “persuaded” him, as she puts it, to finish his secondary school education (to pass a “maturita”). In the marriage her husband, Peter, was rather submissive, giving her “personal space” to do things she enjoyed such as studying, hobbies, etc. When asked what she liked about her Husband, Dorothy said that it was how he was giving her space. Later it transpired that part of that “giving space” was that by then they didn’t have much in common and so by having her own sphere of existence she could stay in the marriage. And she also liked the sense of safety she felt in the marriage. At the same time she complained that Peter wouldn’t make any decisions and found it difficult to state his opinion. She mocked him that he didn’t have an opinion on anything as he was not capable of thinking things through. She didn’t see him as a “real man”. She described Peter as an adult suffering from ADHD (he was diagnosed as a child) and that this severely effected his capabilities. She said that at the time they met, he was a manual worker. With her persuasion and support he became successful in service industry and rich.

For the past several years she would occasionally cheat on him. Then she fell in love with one of the acquaintances who she originally thought of as for sex only. With him she felt as though she experienced real love for the first time. She felt they were equal and that he had taught her so much and it was mutual. He was married at the time as was she. He told his wife he would leave her but then didn’t. She was heartbroken. However, she filed for divorce with Peter. Soon after, Peter found a girlfriend, a secondary school educated woman. They soon moved in together (after less than a month of knowing each other). This was too much for Dorothy. Her argument was that it was not good for their two children. She started attacking Peter for not behaving as an adult father, saying it was impossible to agree on anything with him. She didn’t see him as capable of cooperating with her on raising the children but she needed his help; she herself travelled almost every week abroad on business trips. She complains a lot about how he slandered her in front of his family and their friends, saying it was all her fault. She cannot forgive him for this and says he is blocking any debate about the past because he would have to “admit” to his mistakes. Now they are at the beginning of a couple’s therapy which should help them reconcile and sort out the situation with their children.

*Please try to formulate the case with the information you have. You may be left several questions at the end of it. It is only natural. Please include this questions (thoughts, associations, etc) into your presentation.*