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## **The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

"1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers"

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## **'Collapse of love' in Sarkozy divorce**

URL: [http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0710/071021-sarkozy\\_divorce.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0710/071021-sarkozy_divorce.html)

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**21<sup>st</sup> October, 2007**

## THE ARTICLE

### **'Collapse of love' in Sarkozy divorce**

Cecilia Sarkozy, ex-wife of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, has spoken out on the reasons behind their recent divorce. She said the number one factor for the split was an unexplainable "collapse of love" for her husband. She also said her hatred of being in the public spotlight since her former husband's election success was another major reason. She poured her heart out in an exclusive interview with a French newspaper the day after the Elysée Palace broke the news to the French people. She told reporters: "What happened to me has also happened to millions of other people. Suddenly, your relationship with your partner is no longer the essential thing in your life. It no longer works. The reasons are [puzzling]." She added: "It happens to lots of people. It just happens."

Mme Sarkozy was very open in her interview and spoke on a broad range of topics. In an emotional account of her marriage, she said that both she and her husband had gone to great lengths to salvage their relationship and keep alive any hope of making things work. She confessed that living in the public eye for the five months since the election had been intolerable for her. She talked of being a quiet person who "likes the shadows" and who prefers "serenity and tranquility" to the goldfish bowl of French public life. She explained how it was different for her husband: "For him, it's like a violinist who has been given a Stradivarius – all of a sudden he has the opportunity to practice his art," she said. Mme Sarkozy praised her husband as a "great statesman" who would go on to do "many things for France".

## WARM-UPS

**1. DIVORCE:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about divorce. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*speaking out / splits / love / hatred / pouring one's heart out / relationships / interviews / making things work / serenity / tranquility / violinists / praise*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. LIVING IN THE SHADOWS:** What do you think it's like being married to someone famous? Would you like it? Discuss this with your partner(s) the pros and cons. Use the items below in your discussions.

- paparazzi following you everywhere
- strangers wanting to have a love affair with your partner
- first class air travel
- meeting lots of famous people
- bodyguards and the danger of terrorists attacking you
- you get to write an autobiography about being married to a famous person
- old friends who still have normal lives
- shopping in the supermarket

**4. GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE:** With your partner(s), talk about these grounds for divorce. Rank them from the most understandable to the least understandable.

- |                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • pressure from partner's job  | • lack of physical attraction    |
| • wanting to be single again   | • boredom                        |
| • collapse of love             | • not sharing the remote control |
| • unequal sharing of housework | • arguments about money          |

**5. TRANQUILITY:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'tranquility'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think marriage should be forever and that divorce should be illegal. Students B think this is a ridiculous idea. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. The French President told reporters he no longer loved his wife.       | T / F |
| b. His wife, Cecelia Sarkozy, really didn't like being in the public eye. | T / F |
| c. Cecilia bared all to a newspaper and spoke from her heart.             | T / F |
| d. Her relationship became unimportant compared with other things.        | T / F |
| e. Cecilia and her husband did their best to keep their marriage going.   | T / F |
| f. Cecilia is afraid of shadows and goldfish.                             | T / F |
| g. The French President is a world class violinist.                       | T / F |
| h. Cecilia praised her husband saying he'd be good for France.            | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. spoken out            | a. bent over backwards |
| 2. split                 | b. peacefulness        |
| 3. spotlight             | c. perplexing          |
| 4. essential             | d. rescue              |
| 5. puzzling              | e. unbearable          |
| 6. gone to great lengths | f. been frank          |
| 7. salvage               | g. break               |
| 8. intolerable           | h. calm                |
| 9. serenity              | i. vital               |
| 10. tranquility          | j. glare of publicity  |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                     |                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. spoken out on the reasons behind | a. public spotlight          |
| 2. her hatred of being in the       | b. has the opportunity       |
| 3. She poured her                   | c. range of topics           |
| 4. the Elysée Palace broke the      | d. their relationship        |
| 5. no longer the essential          | e. heart out                 |
| 6. spoke on a broad                 | f. and tranquility           |
| 7. gone to great lengths to salvage | g. thing in your life        |
| 8. prefers serenity                 | h. their recent divorce      |
| 9. the goldfish bowl of             | i. news to the French people |
| 10. all of a sudden he              | j. French public life        |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### 'Collapse of love' in Sarkozy divorce

Cecilia Sarkozy, ex-wife of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, has spoken out on the reasons \_\_\_\_\_ their recent divorce. She said the number one \_\_\_\_\_ for the split was an unexplainable "collapse of love" for her husband. She also said her \_\_\_\_\_ of being in the public spotlight since her former husband's election success was another major reason. She \_\_\_\_\_ her heart out in an exclusive interview with a French newspaper the day after the Elysée Palace \_\_\_\_\_ the news to the French people. She told reporters: "What happened to me has also happened to millions of other people. Suddenly, your relationship with your partner is no \_\_\_\_\_ the essential thing in your life. It no longer works. The reasons are [\_\_\_\_\_]." She added: "It happens to lots of people. It just \_\_\_\_\_."

Mme Sarkozy was very \_\_\_\_\_ in her interview and spoke on a broad range of topics. In an emotional \_\_\_\_\_ of her marriage, she said that both she and her husband had gone to great lengths to \_\_\_\_\_ their relationship and keep alive any hope of making things work. She confessed that living in the public \_\_\_\_\_ for the five months since the election had been intolerable for her. She talked of being a quiet person who "likes the \_\_\_\_\_" and who prefers "serenity and tranquility" to the goldfish bowl of French public life. She explained how it was different for her husband: "For him, it's like a \_\_\_\_\_ who has been given a Stradivarius – all of a sudden he has the opportunity to practice his \_\_\_\_\_," she said. Mme Sarkozy praised her husband as a "great \_\_\_\_\_" who would go on to do "many things for France".

*puzzling*

*factor*

*happens*

*behind*

*poured*

*broke*

*hatred*

*longer*

*account*

*art*

*eye*

*violinist*

*salvage*

*statesman*

*open*

*shadows*

## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### 'Collapse of love' in Sarkozy divorce

Cecilia Sarkozy, ex-wife of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, \_\_\_\_\_ the reasons behind their recent divorce. She said the number \_\_\_\_\_ split was an unexplainable "collapse of love" for her husband. She also said her \_\_\_\_\_ public spotlight since her former husband's election success was another major reason. She \_\_\_\_\_ in an exclusive interview with a French newspaper the day after the Elysée Palace broke the news to the French people. She told reporters: "What happened to me \_\_\_\_\_ millions of other people. Suddenly, your relationship with your partner is no longer the \_\_\_\_\_ life. It no longer works. The reasons are [puzzling]." She added: "It happens to lots of people. \_\_\_\_\_."

Mme Sarkozy was \_\_\_\_\_ interview and spoke on a broad range of topics. In an emotional account of her marriage, she said that both she and her husband had \_\_\_\_\_ to salvage their relationship \_\_\_\_\_ making things work. She confessed that living in the public eye for the five months since the election had been intolerable for her. She talked of being a quiet person who "likes the shadows" and who prefers "\_\_\_\_\_ " to the goldfish bowl of French public life. She explained how it was different for her husband: "For him, it's like a violinist who has been given a Stradivarius – \_\_\_\_\_ he has the opportunity to practice his art," she said. Mme Sarkozy praised her husband as a "great statesman" who would go on to do "many things for France".

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'collapse' and 'love'.

<b>collapse</b>	<b>love</b>

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• behind</li><li>• split</li><li>• hatred</li><li>• poured</li><li>• millions</li><li>• happens</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• open</li><li>• lengths</li><li>• eye</li><li>• bowl</li><li>• art</li><li>• praised</li></ul>
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## STUDENT DIVORCE SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about divorce in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
	_____	_____	_____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What is your opinion on divorce?
- c) What do you think the difficulties are being married to a country's leader?
- d) Do you think Cecilia did the right thing?
- e) What would people in your country think if your leader got divorced?
- f) Is the collapse of love a good enough reason for divorce?
- g) Do you think she could have stayed out of the public spotlight?
- h) When was the last time you poured your heart out about something?
- i) Is your partner the most essential thing in your life if you are married?



### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) When was the last time you went to great lengths to do something?
- c) Are you someone who "likes the shadows"?
- d) Would you like to be married to a national leader?
- e) What do you think it would be like to live in a goldfish bowl?
- f) Do you think Cecilia was jealous that her husband had to spend more time on state affairs?
- g) Do you think Nicolas Sarkozy will go on and do many things for France?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Cecilia?
- i) Did you like this discussion?

## LANGUAGE

**CORRECT WORD:** Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

### 'Collapse of love' in Sarkozy divorce

Cecilia Sarkozy, ex-wife of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, has spoken (1) \_\_\_\_\_ on the reasons (2) \_\_\_\_\_ their recent divorce. She said the number one factor for the split was an unexplainable "collapse of love" for her husband. She also said her hatred (3) \_\_\_\_\_ being in the public spotlight since her former husband's election success was another major reason. She poured her heart (4) \_\_\_\_\_ in an exclusive interview with a French newspaper the day after the Elysée Palace (5) \_\_\_\_\_ the news to the French people. She told reporters: "What happened to me has also happened to millions of other people. Suddenly, your relationship with your partner is no longer the (1) \_\_\_\_\_ thing in your life. It no longer works. The reasons are [puzzling]." She added: "It happens to lots of people. It just happens."

Mme Sarkozy was very open in her interview and spoke on a broad range of topics. In an emotional (7) \_\_\_\_\_ of her marriage, she said that both she and her husband had gone to great (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to salvage their relationship and keep alive any hope of making (9) \_\_\_\_\_ work. She confessed that living in the public eye for the five months since the election had been intolerable for her. She talked of being a quiet person who "likes the shadows" and who prefers "serenity and tranquility" to the goldfish (10) \_\_\_\_\_ of French public life. She explained how it was different for her husband: "For him, it's like a violinist who has been given a Stradivarius – all of a (11) \_\_\_\_\_ he has the opportunity to practice his art," she said. Mme Sarkozy praised her husband as a "great statesman" who would go (12) \_\_\_\_\_ to do "many things for France".

- |     |                |              |                 |                 |
|-----|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | (a) for        | (b) of       | (c) in          | (d) out         |
| 2.  | (a) front      | (b) ahead    | (c) behind      | (d) back        |
| 3.  | (a) of         | (b) by       | (c) for         | (d) in          |
| 4.  | (a) in         | (b) out      | (c) up          | (d) down        |
| 5.  | (a) shattered  | (b) snapped  | (c) damaged     | (d) broke       |
| 6.  | (a) essential  | (b) essence  | (c) essentially | (d) essentials  |
| 7.  | (a) accounts   | (b) account  | (c) accounting  | (d) accountancy |
| 8.  | (a) heights    | (b) widths   | (c) lengths     | (d) depths      |
| 9.  | (a) thing      | (b) things   | (c) all         | (d) thingy      |
| 10. | (a) vase       | (b) dish     | (c) cup         | (d) bowl        |
| 11. | (a) suddenness | (b) suddenly | (c) sudden      | (d) sodden      |
| 12. | (a) on         | (b) in       | (c) out         | (d) up          |

'Collapse of love' in Sarkozy divorce – 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2007

## WRITING:

Write about *divorce* for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

[illegible]

## HOMEWORK

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information about the Sarkozys. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. DIVORCE:** Make a poster about divorce and how different religions and countries view it. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all include similar things?

**4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE:** Write a magazine article about a national leader who got divorced. Why did it happen? What was in the newspapers? Include imaginary interviews with both partners.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to Cecilia Sarkozy. Ask her three questions about life in the goldfish bowl. Give her three pieces of advice on how to live her life from now. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. T      c. T      d. T      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. spoken out            | a. been frank          |
| 2. split                 | b. break               |
| 3. spotlight             | c. glare of publicity  |
| 4. essential             | d. vital               |
| 5. puzzling              | e. perplexing          |
| 6. gone to great lengths | f. bent over backwards |
| 7. salvage               | g. rescue              |
| 8. intolerable           | h. unbearable          |
| 9. serenity              | i. calm                |
| 10. tranquility          | j. peacefulness        |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                     |                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. spoken out on the reasons behind | a. their recent divorce      |
| 2. her hatred of being in the       | b. public spotlight          |
| 3. She poured her                   | c. heart out                 |
| 4. the Elysée Palace broke the      | d. news to the French people |
| 5. no longer the essential          | e. thing in your life        |
| 6. spoke on a broad                 | f. range of topics           |
| 7. gone to great lengths to salvage | g. their relationship        |
| 8. prefers serenity                 | h. and tranquility           |
| 9. the goldfish bowl of             | i. French public life        |
| 10. all of a sudden he              | j. has the opportunity       |

### GAP FILL:

#### 'Collapse of love' in Sarkozy divorce

Cecilia Sarkozy, ex-wife of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, has spoken out on the reasons **behind** their recent divorce. She said the number one **factor** for the split was an unexplainable "collapse of love" for her husband. She also said her **hatred** of being in the public spotlight since her former husband's election success was another major reason. She **poured** her heart out in an exclusive interview with a French newspaper the day after the Elysée Palace **broke** the news to the French people. She told reporters: "What happened to me has also happened to millions of other people. Suddenly, your relationship with your partner is no **longer** the essential thing in your life. It no longer works. The reasons are [**puzzling**]." She added: "It happens to lots of people. It just **happens**."

Mme Sarkozy was very **open** in her interview and spoke on a broad range of topics. In an emotional **account** of her marriage, she said that both she and her husband had gone to great lengths to **salvage** their relationship and keep alive any hope of making things work. She confessed that living in the public **eye** for the five months since the election had been intolerable for her. She talked of being a quiet person who "likes the **shadows**" and who prefers "serenity and tranquility" to the goldfish bowl of French public life. She explained how it was different for her husband: "For him, it's like a **violinist** who has been given a Stradivarius – all of a sudden he has the opportunity to practice his **art**," she said. Mme Sarkozy praised her husband as a "great **statesman**" who would go on to do "many things for France".

### LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d    2 - c    3 - a    4 - b    5 - d    6 - a    7 - b    8 - c    9 - b    10 - d    11 - c    12 - a