

Counselling Trends in Ireland North & South

An Amárach Analysis of ACCORD Data 2007 to 2015

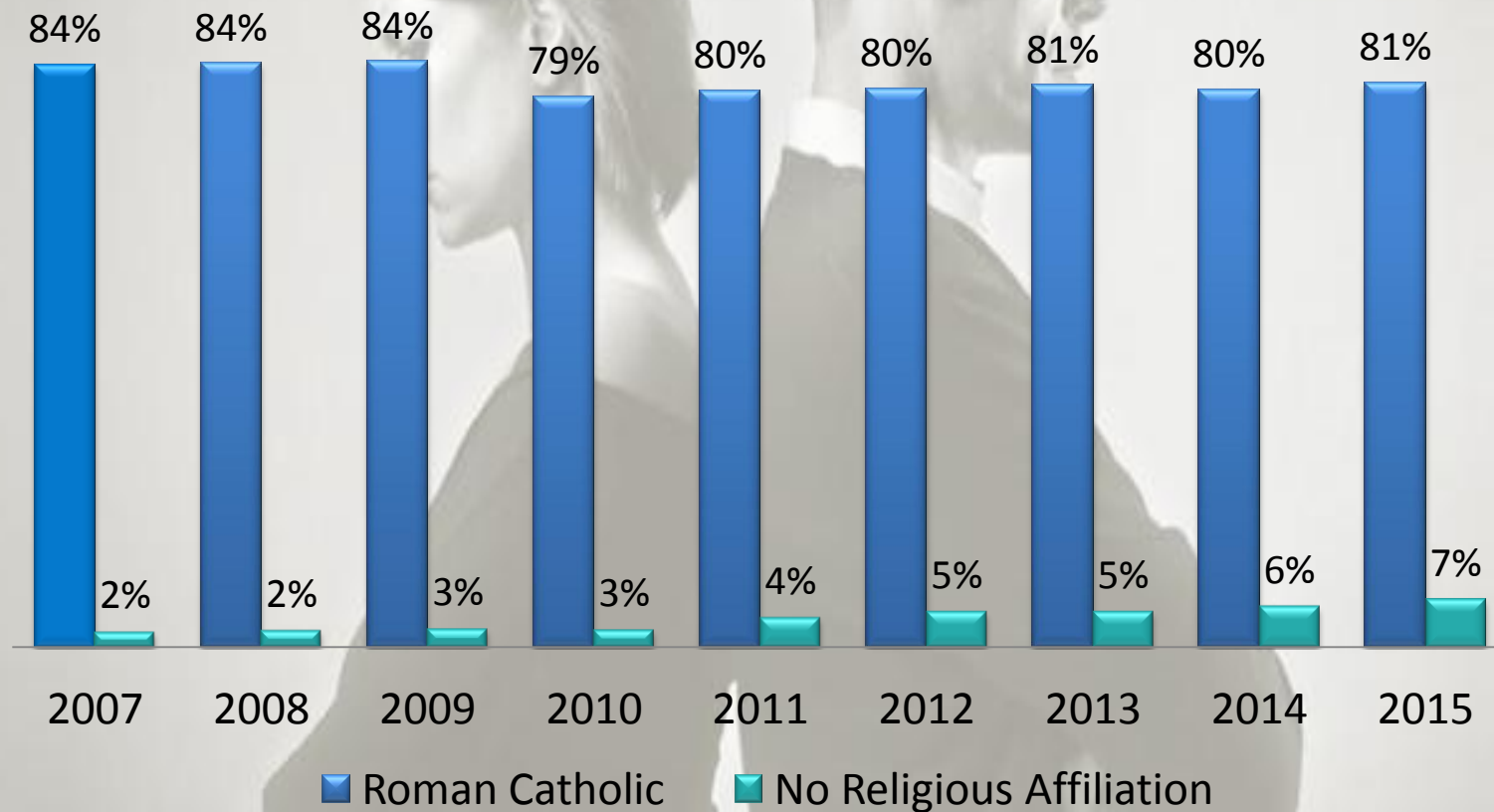


Since 2012, in excess of 300 ACCORD counsellors provide on an annual basis an average of almost 40,000 sessions of counselling to approximately 9,000 couples and individuals experiencing difficulties in their marriage and relationships.

This report summarises trends in the problems clients are dealing with when they work with counsellors to develop new insights about themselves and new strategies to support their relationship.

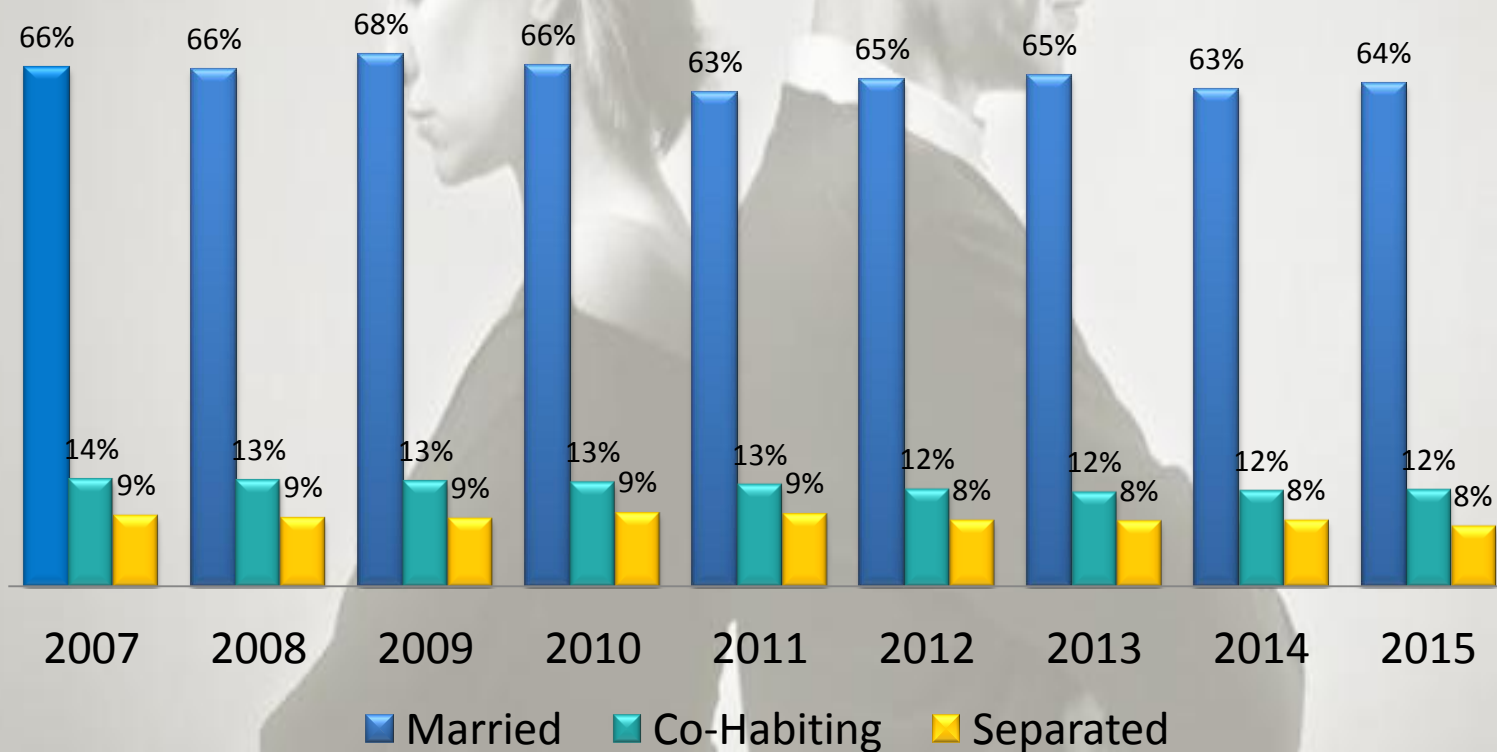
The data combines results for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Some of the presenting problem definitions changed in 2010/11 and so some data covers 2011-2015 only.

Profile of clients: religion

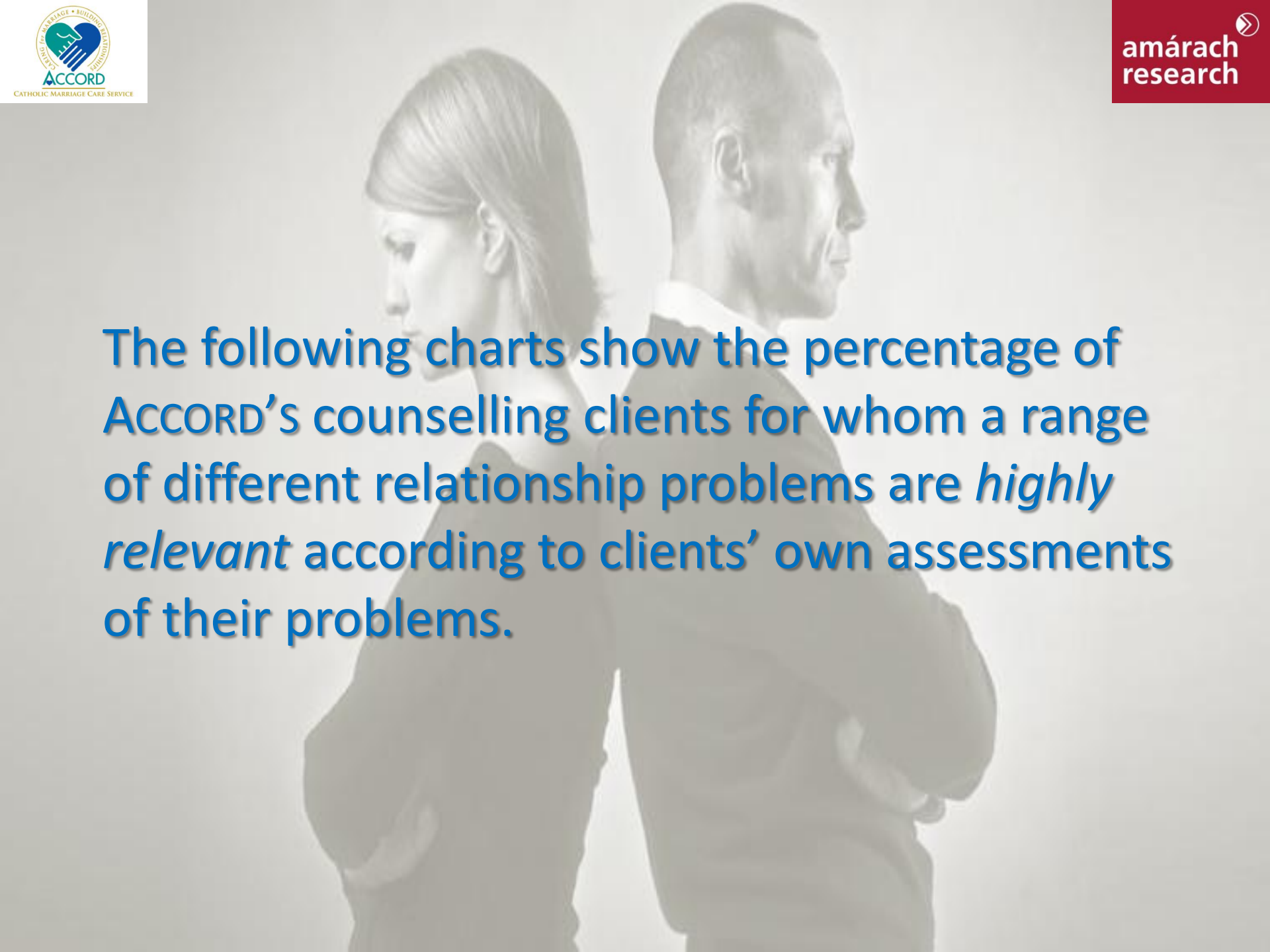


The vast majority of ACCORD's counselling clients are Catholic, but the share of those who express no religious affiliation ranges from 2% in 2007 to 7% in 2015.

Profile of clients: marital status

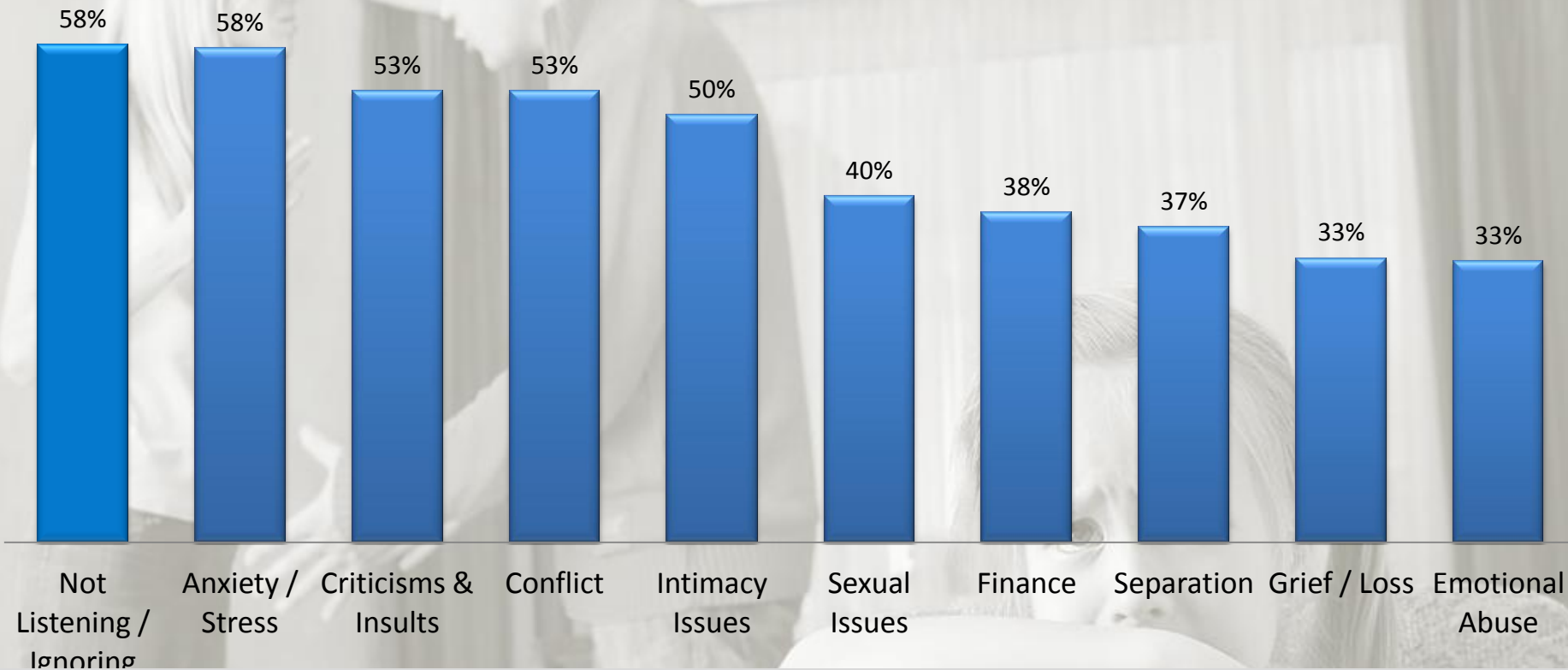


Married couples continue to make up most of ACCORD's counselling clients, while the % share of those who are co-habiting or separated has remained stable over the period.



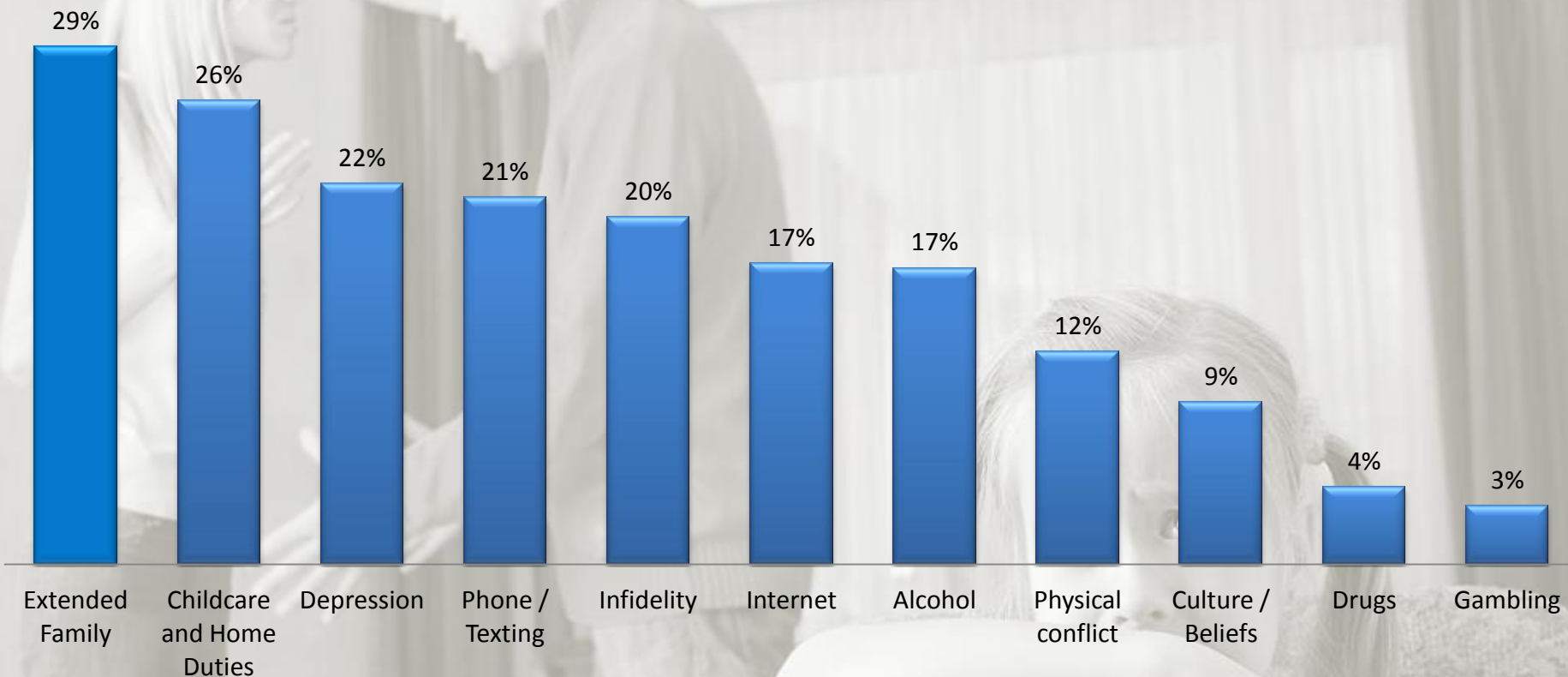
The following charts show the percentage of ACCORD's counselling clients for whom a range of different relationship problems are *highly relevant* according to clients' own assessments of their problems.

Problems ranked by prevalence: 2015



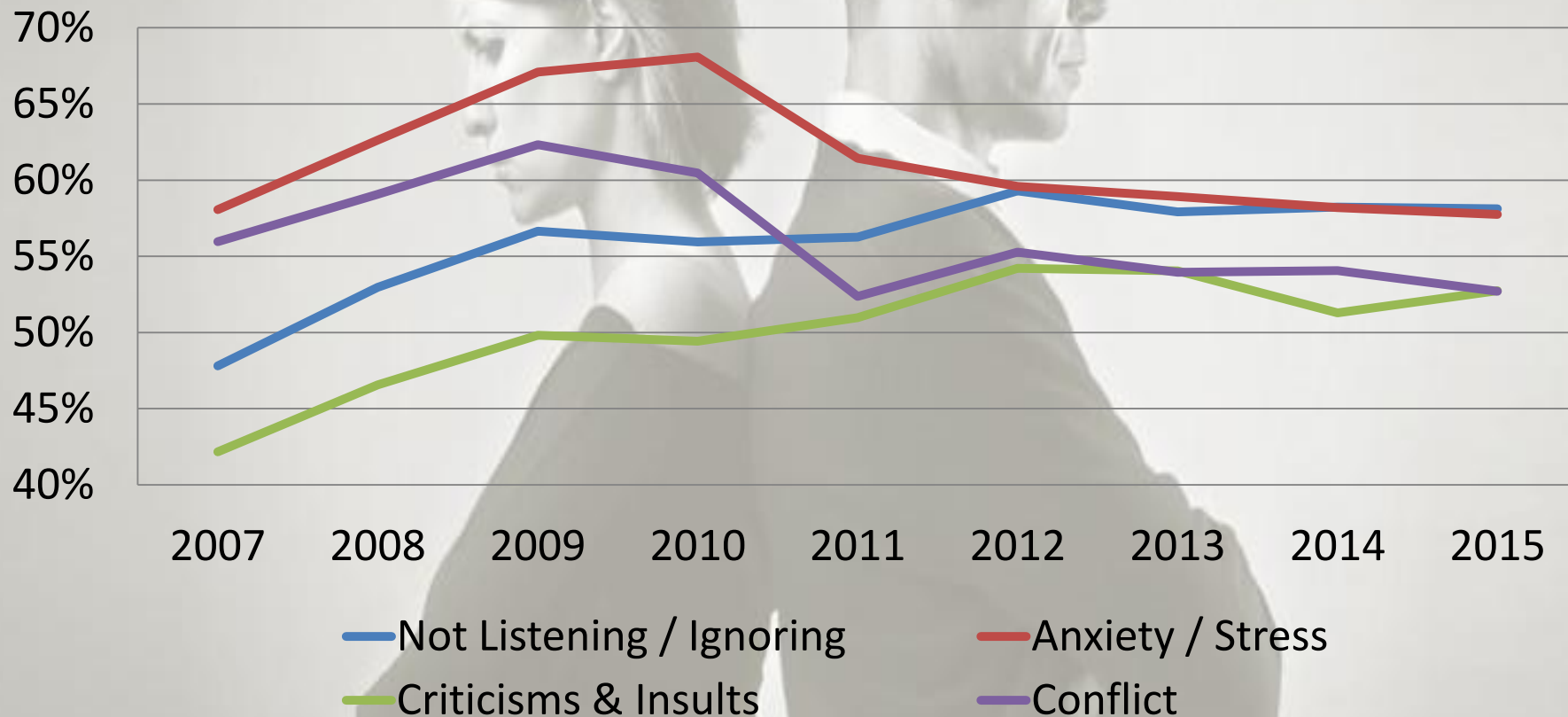
Communication problems tend to predominate among those issues most relevant to ACCORD's counselling clients and have increased from 48% to 58% over the period 2007-2015

Problems ranked by prevalence: 2015 (contd.)



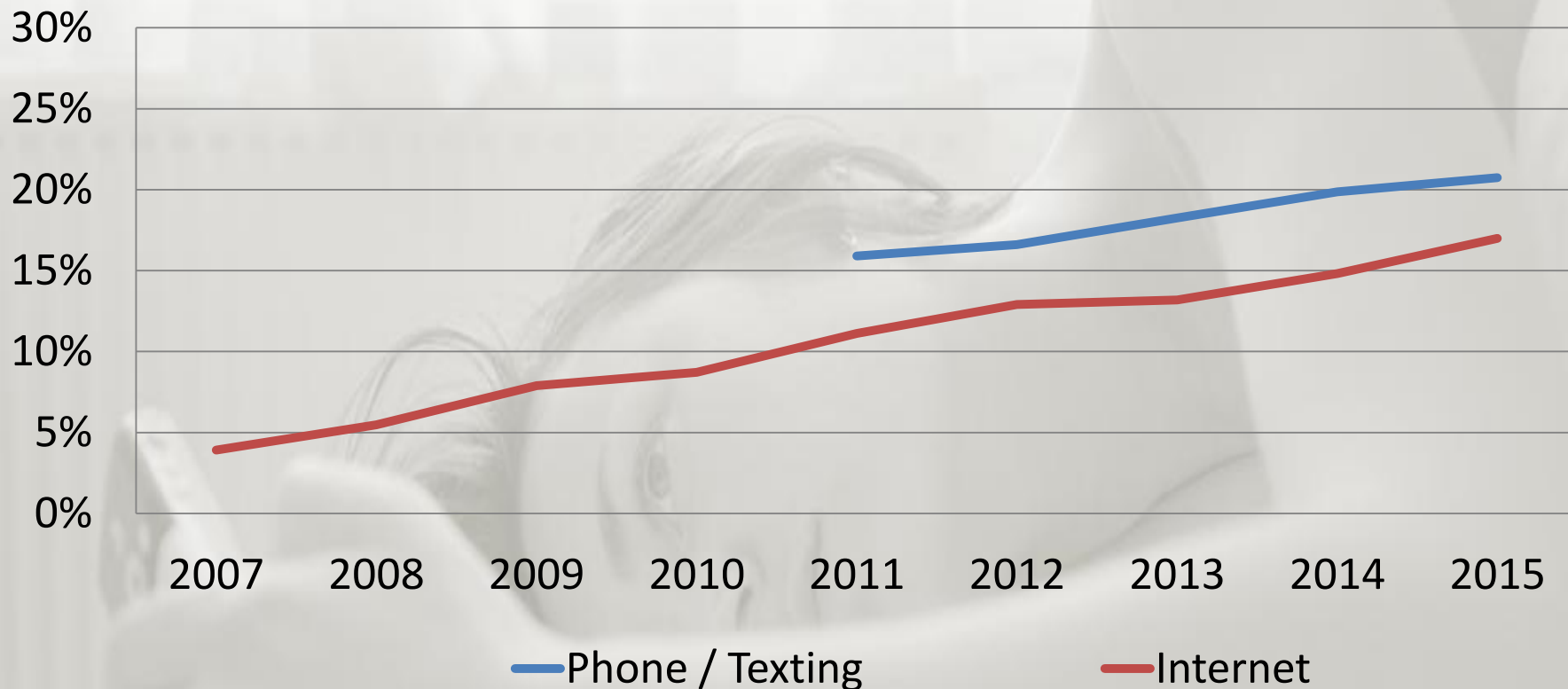
Combined problems related to addiction (alcohol, drugs, gambling) amounts to 24% among those counselled by ACCORD in 2015.

Incidence of Communication Problems



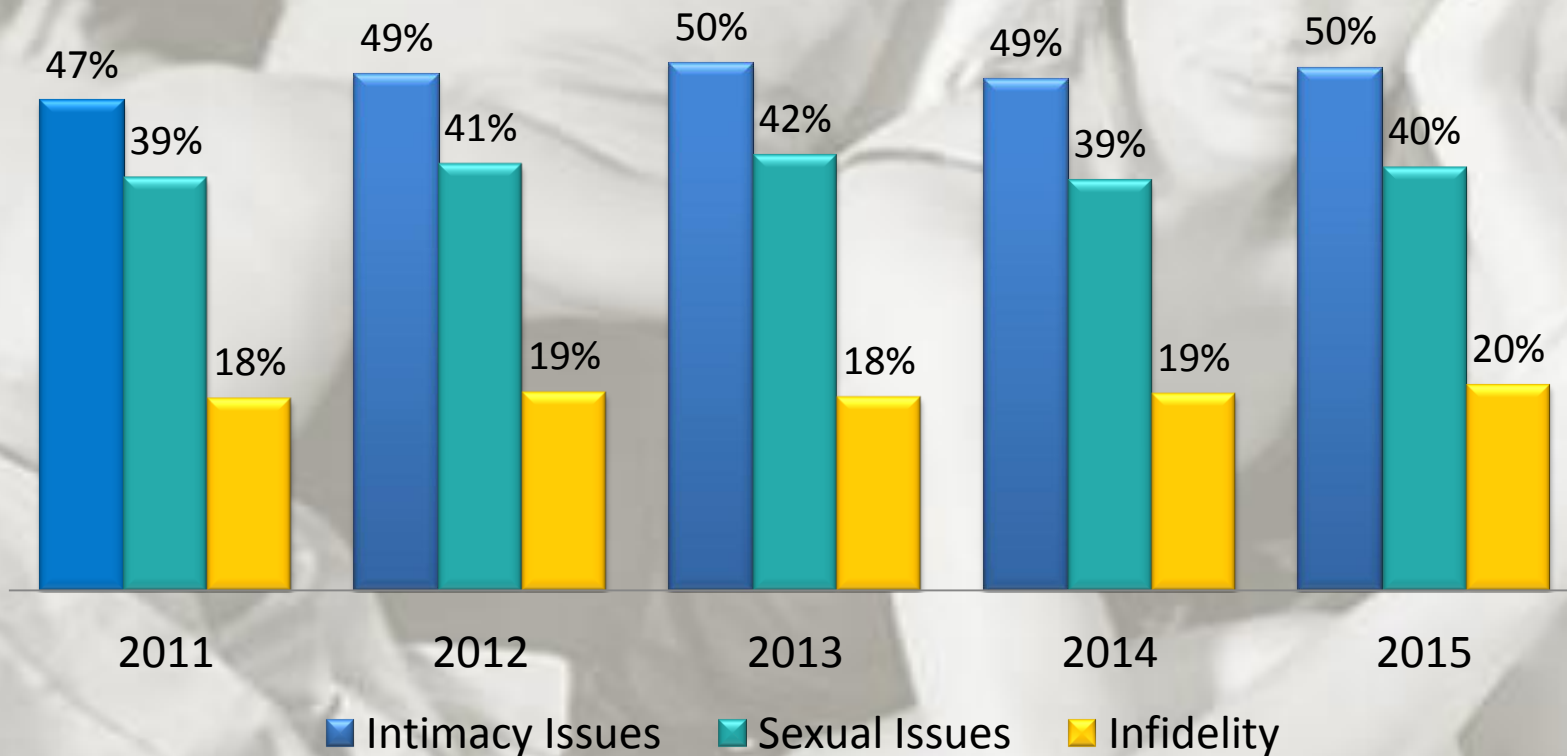
Problems relating to anxiety and stress have decreased from their peak in 2010, while communication problems relating to listening have remained constant over the period.

Incidence of Telecommunications Related Problems



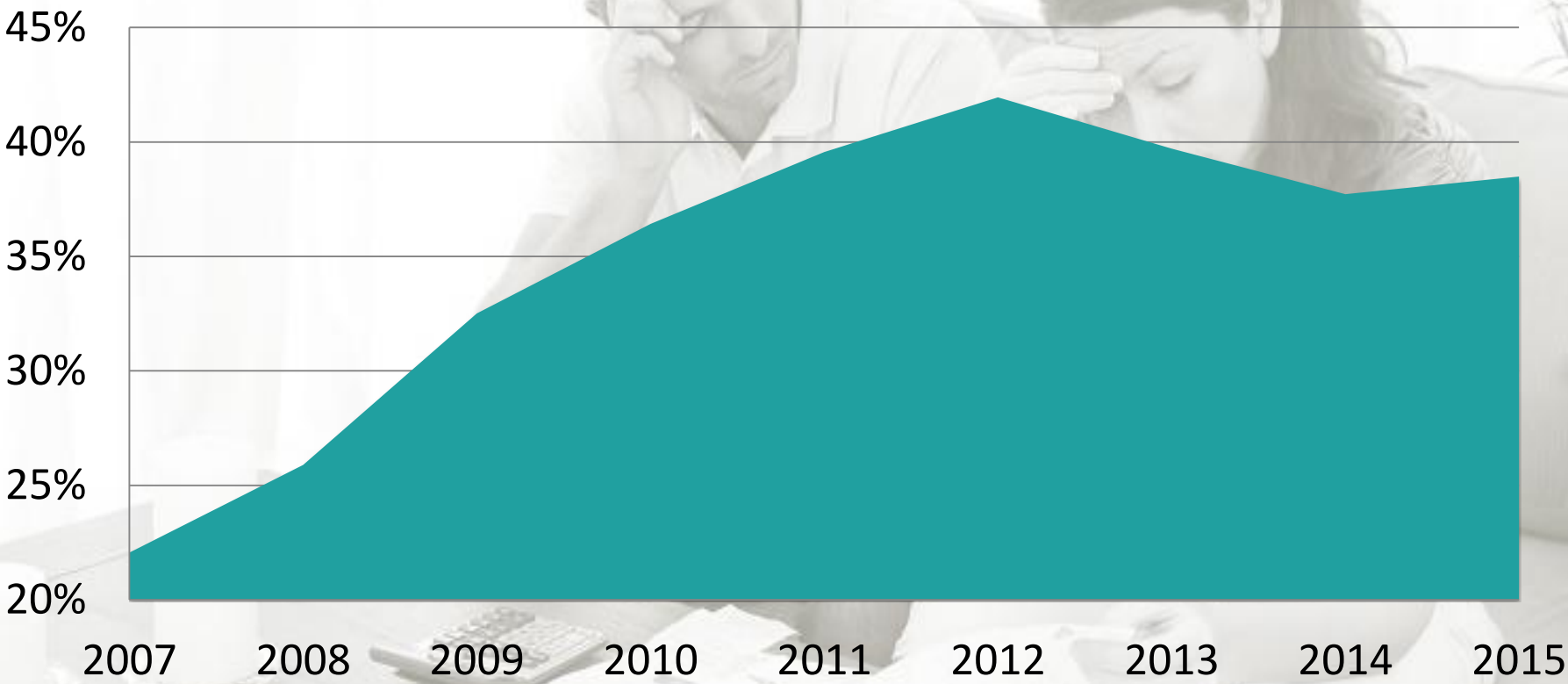
Both use of the Internet and use of phones/texting are increasingly identified as very relevant problems for a growing share of Accord's counselling clients, up from 4% to 17% over the period 2007-2015.

Incidence of Sexual, Intimacy & Infidelity Problems



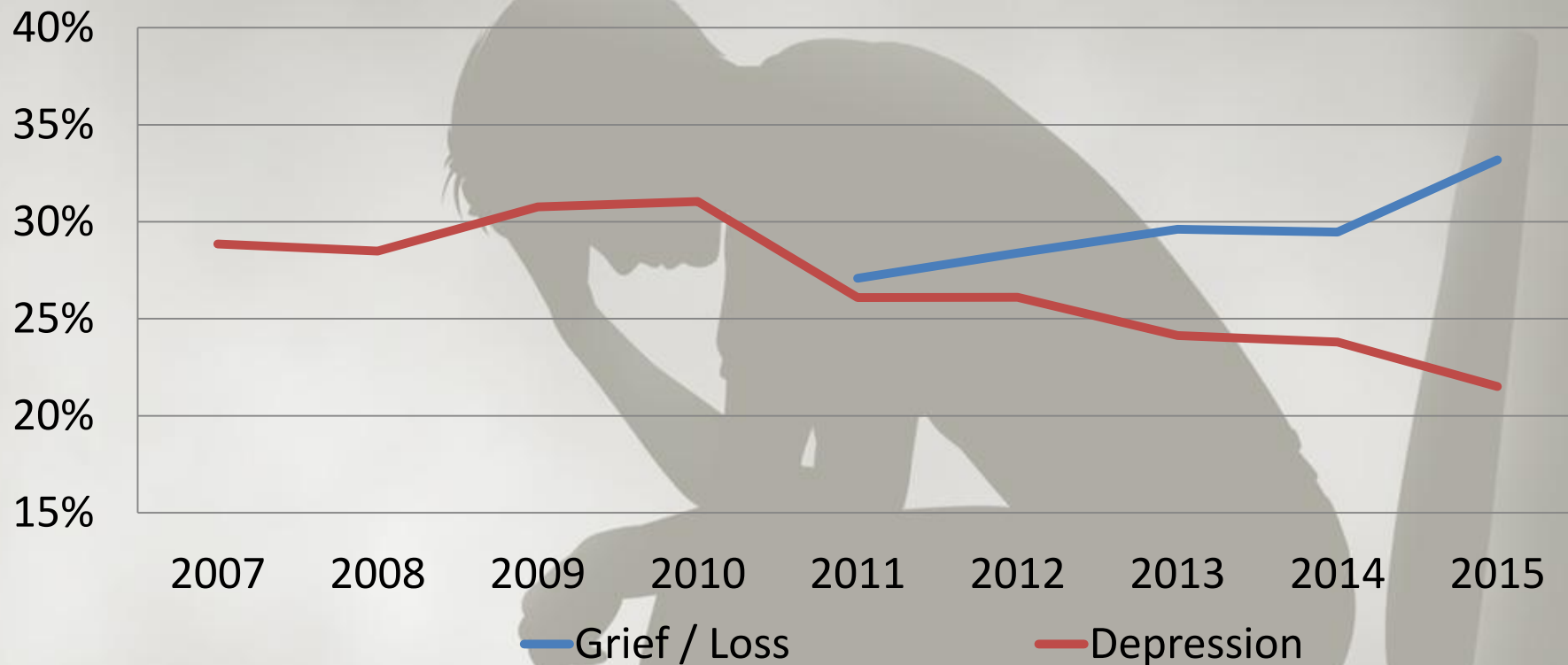
Both sexual and intimacy issues continue to be recurring problems for up to half of Accord's clients receiving counselling in recent years, with infidelity affecting up to 20% of clients.

Incidence of Financial Problems



The percentage of counselling clients presenting with financial problems as very relevant to their relationship peaked in 2012 as the economy turned, and has still not returned to pre-recession levels.

Incidence of Depression & Grieving Problems



The percentage of counselling clients affected by depression peaked in 2009 and 2010 (31%) and has fallen to 22% in 2015; the percentage affected by grief and loss has risen from 27% in 2011 to 33% in 2015.



This brief analysis of Accord data shows that the problems facing clients with relationship issues have changed somewhat over time, though communication difficulties remain the most prevalent.

We have seen some positive trends – for example the modest decline in clients presenting with financial problems – but we have also seen worrying trends, such as the growing incidence of relationship problems relating to internet and mobile technologies.

Religion:	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Roman Catholic	84%	84%	84%	79%	80%	80%	81%	80%	81%
Other Christian	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%
Other Faith	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
None	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%	5%	5%	6%	7%
Not Specified	10%	8%	7%	12%	8%	7%	6%	6%	5%
Marital Status:	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Married	66%	66%	68%	66%	63%	65%	65%	63%	64%
Co-Habiting	14%	13%	13%	13%	13%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Other/Not specified	1%	1%	1%	4%	8%	7%	7%	8%	8%
Separated	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Single	9%	9%	9%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Divorced/Annulled/ Widowed	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Relationship Problems	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>% Highly Relevant:</i>									
Not Listening / Ignoring	48%	53%	57%	56%	56%	59%	58%	58%	58%
Anxiety / Stress	58%	63%	67%	68%	61%	60%	59%	58%	58%
Criticisms & Insults	42%	47%	50%	49%	51%	54%	54%	51%	53%
Conflict	56%	59%	62%	60%	52%	55%	54%	54%	53%
Intimacy Issues					47%	49%	50%	49%	50%
Sexual Issues					39%	41%	42%	39%	40%
Finance	22%	26%	33%	36%	40%	42%	40%	38%	38%
Separation	29%	30%	34%	36%	38%	40%	40%	40%	37%
Grief / Loss					27%	28%	30%	29%	33%
Emotional Abuse	28%	29%	31%	31%	35%	36%	35%	34%	33%
Extended Family	22%	24%	24%	25%	27%	28%	29%	29%	29%
Childcare and Home Duties					25%	27%	26%	27%	26%
Depression	29%	28%	31%	31%	26%	26%	24%	24%	22%
Phone / Texting					16%	17%	18%	20%	21%
Infidelity	17%	17%	18%	18%	18%	19%	18%	19%	20%
Internet	4%	5%	8%	9%	11%	13%	13%	15%	17%
Alcohol					17%	17%	17%	17%	17%
Physical conflict					14%	13%	12%	11%	12%
Culture / Beliefs					8%	9%	9%	10%	9%
Drugs					4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Gambling	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%