

“Should You Stay in a Marriage for the Sake of the Children?”

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Your marriage has been in trouble for quite a long time and you've been considering divorce for many months. But because you have children you've postponed your decision and are not sure what to do. Should you stay in a marriage for the sake of the children?

Leaving a Marriage When Children Are Involved

This dilemma has created more turmoil than almost any other situation in life. The reason? Because for the most part we all want to be happy, while at the same time we know that our responsibility is to our children. We want them to be happy and secure, but we also know that life is short. So, we question whether it is okay to leave a marriage when children are involved. How do we cast aside our guilty feelings and do what will make us happy? Or does being married when children are involved mean we must sacrifice our own lives and our own happiness?

Maintaining a Relationship for the Sake of the Children

Over the years, I've begun to view this dilemma differently. I've witnessed many divorces and seen a number of people struggle with what divorce does to a family. I've seen so many people think that they are making the children feel safe and secure by providing them with a two-parent family. At one time I might have agreed, but I've changed my mind. Children do not find security in a home where each just goes through the motions. In fact, children are far more sensitive than we realize and even if we think we are hiding our feelings well, they can sense that something is wrong. What are we teaching our children when we stay together just for them?

If You Really Know Your Marriage Is Over

We all know that people in relationships go through periods of unhappiness and can experience a great deal of stress. If you're experiencing some stress, it doesn't mean that you have to run right out and get a divorce. But if your period of stress has been ongoing for a few years, and it doesn't appear as if anything will resolve the conflict, or your unhappiness, it may be time to consider taking care of yourself. If you have explored counseling and have done what you believe can improve the relationship and it's still not working, perhaps you and your spouse are not compatible. Ask yourself what is at the foundation of your marriage? Do you enjoy each other's company? Do you have the capacity to build on friendship and love? Do you see yourselves growing old together? Or are you simply living with the person because it's easier? Do you realize that when you don't let the marriage end, you deprive the other party from finding the happiness they rightfully deserve?

Do We Wait Until the Children Leave Home?

Maintaining a relationship for the sake of the children can ultimately be a big mistake. In our indecision, we think that we should wait until they are grown and then maybe we can leave more comfortably. Let me assure you, it will not be any easier when they are a little older. In fact, it gets harder. One day when the children are gone and Mom and Dad are left in a life that is no longer

satisfying, the decision to leave can be even more difficult. Now the guilt of leaving a partner after so many years becomes harder, especially if you've spent years together.

It is Never Easy to Leave

Yes, it's true that leaving is painful and difficult on everyone. And yes, it's true that children who grow up in a loving home raised by two people are usually more secure, have better social lives, make better grades, etc. But what could be worse for children than to live in a home where they don't know what real love can be? You may think you're doing them a favor, but they unconsciously pick up the clues when one or both of the parents are unhappy. It has been proven that children raised in a stable divorced or stable single parent home are less stressed than those who live in a marriage that is uncertain or conflicted. Granted, it isn't easy to end the marriage, but when two intelligent people communicate honestly and assist the children with the transition, the difficult part can pass quickly

Making the Decision Based on What You Believe is Best for the Children

I'm not sure how or why people decided that a family that stays together is better than a broken marriage, but times have changed and people should not have to sacrifice their own lives because they have children. You are in fact, not doing a child any favors when you are in any conflict over your marriage. Not only can you make yourself ill because you are unhappy, but also as I said earlier, children sense it without you saying a word and that makes them feel even more insecure. Now, I'm not implying that making the decision is an easy one. What I am saying is that when two intelligent people work to find a solution, they can make life okay for everyone.

Getting A Divorce is a Personal Decision

Sadly, many couples start out thinking they are in love, but end up feeling disheartened. Consequently, when you stay in a marriage that is no longer filling your most basic needs, children are the ones that suffer most. No one can really tell you what the right answer is to your situation. No family member or friend can advise you as to the best way to go. The decision has to be yours and I realize that this kind of decision takes courage. But whatever decision you make, the most important part of getting a divorce when children are involved is making sure that you develop a cordial relationship with each other by putting the children's best interests first. And that can be achieved even when you don't all live under the same roof.

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