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When a Child Asks for Separation

Liya Panayotova, Daniela Aneis5K reads

It may seem to you that this would be a pretty uncharacteristic behavior for a child. According to most research, children want their parents to be a couple and hope for a reunion even some time after the separation. So when a child asks you to leave their other parent, it is no wonder you may be surprised.

When a child or a teenager asks you to dissolve your relationship, or firmly believes and supports the idea of their two parents getting separated, that would likely strike you as odd. Although it may be strange at first glance, children with such requests usually present clear reasoning as to why you and your partner should no longer be together. It is often said that the simplest explanation is often the best one. And children's reasoning is not only amazingly straightforward, but often also right.

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Psychology 101 Part 2

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Children's Viewpoint

We adults tend to complicate and overthink things too much. And as a parent, you may try to protect your children, by not fighting with your partner in front of them, by pretending everything is normal, but they still know that there is a problem. How can even the smallest child tell that mommy and daddy are not getting along? And how can they, despite your best efforts, sense that you're sad, unhappy, or hurting?

We underestimate our children. They may not know or understand why, because they simply don't have enough experience yet, but deep down they recognize that the relationship between their parents is not normal or healthy. Why is that, you may wonder. Because they have other role-models to look up to, such as couples from the extended family – grandparents, aunts and uncles, etc.

How to React to Your Child's Request

So, what should you do when a child or a teenager asks you to dissolve the relationship? Of course you're not going to get a divorce just because your children say so, after all you're the adult! But the real question here is: are they seeing something you're missing?

You need to ask yourself some questions and analyze the answer in an honest way. To make the process easier, include the questions below.

Why Does Your Child Say That?

Maybe your relationship has deteriorated, but neither you nor your partner have realized it just yet. That is why people close to you, yet outside of your relationship as a couple, such as your kids, your close relative, or even friends, may be trying to hint that something isn't working well. Listen to what they have to say about it and instead of defending your relationship straight away, just take some time to analyze their reasons for saying you should separate.

What Signs Could You Be Missing?

It could be small things: maybe you have been arguing more lately, or using "the silent treatment" as an unhealthy method of dealing with conflict. Perhaps you are no longer as loving or caring in your relationship. Maybe you've grown apart and you lead separate lives, or you disrespect one another...

Is My Marriage/Cohabitation Making My Kids Unhappy?

You may feel comfortable or used to your relationship the way it is, but your children, the other people that share the house with you and your partner, may feel like they live in a war zone. We all recognize that living in harmony at home is important for our mental and physical health.

Am I Actually Happy?

You may have become used to blaming it on the housework or on your job, but are you deflecting the fact that you're unhappy? Are you taking it out on your kids and the people around you? You want your kids to be happy and they want the same for you, so if your relationship is working against your wellbeing, perhaps the time has come to end it.

Am I Humiliating Myself Over Love?

Your kids may feel as if you're existing on crumbs of love, instead of wholeheartedly experiencing a happy marriage/cohabitation. Trying to foster a relationship, where you're constantly struggling and feel alone, is not really a partnership. It takes team work and your

kids know it too.

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