

6

Tips for a Peaceful Divorce

By Josh D. Simon

With the right attitude and the right support, a peaceful divorce is possible.

At first glance, the idea of a “peaceful divorce” may be impossible to imagine. However, as destructive as divorce can be for some couples and families — in terms of psychological turmoil, financial wreckage, and lasting emotional damage to children and extended family — the fact remains that it’s both possible and probable to have a peaceful divorce. That’s because, more than anything, the decision to take the peaceful path starts with something within your grasp: your attitude.

Your attitude will profoundly influence whether you wisely respond or unwisely react to your spouse. It will also determine your ability to look past or look through the painful emotional fog that surrounds you, so that you can make clear-headed decisions that are best for you, your children, and your future.

Below, we present 6 tips for achieving a peaceful divorce, so that you can eventually look back upon this time with your dignity, self-respect and mental health in-tact.

Tip #1: If You Can’t Forgive, then try to Accept

It’s hard for most people to forgive their spouse for the hurtful things they have done and said, or for all of the other major and minor issues that come together and “cause” a divorce. The plain fact is that divorce is often a crushing, unwanted outcome to what both spouses hoped and dreamed would be a

lasting union. However, forgiving someone frees you from dragging around the heavy “baggage” of negative thoughts and energy.

If you aren’t ready to forgive your spouse, then strive to accept the fact that the marriage is dissolving. And furthermore, reach deep inside and accept the role you played in this outcome. Without question, this is easier said than done, and may be too agonizing in the early stages of a divorce. However, the sooner you can accept the situation and your responsibility, the sooner you start to heal — which is a key to a peaceful divorce. You can only give what you have, and if you have inner peace, then you can share it.

Tip #2: Take the High Road — and Stay There

Your spouse, his or her family, friends or even new significant other may try to drag your divorce through the mud. This may come in the form of comments said to your face and behind your back. As tempting as it may be to react-in-kind, resolve to take the high road and decide that you’re going to control the emotional integrity of your divorce; at least as far as you can. This not only helps preserve your self-esteem and dignity, but surprisingly, it can also have a positive influence on your spouse. By modeling how someone should act during divorce, you show your spouse “how it’s done.” And, if you notice that your spouse is taking the high road, acknowledge it as often as you can.

Tip #3: Don’t Use Your Children as Pawns

What harms children greatly during divorce is how their parents act during divorce. In other words: your children are watching you and paying attention to your attitudes, actions and behaviors. And that means if you use them as pawns to “attack” your spouse, or worse, poison them with sordid tales about how evil and uncaring their father or mother is, you’re not harming your spouse — you’re harming your children. And in the same light, when it comes to custody negotiations with your spouse, don’t treat your children like “assets” that you can try and trade or withhold, depending on your mood. Unless the courts agree that your spouse is an unfit parent, then he or she has a right to co-parent with you. Remember, it’s not about you or your spouse. It’s about your children, and what they need to grow into healthy, happy adults with fond memories of both parents.

Tip #4: Choose a Divorce Lawyer who Views Going to Court as a Last Resort.

Almost all divorce lawyers are skilled, compassionate professionals who sincerely want to help you make it through this challenging time in your life quickly and as painlessly as possible. However, there are likely a few divorce lawyers who will pour gasoline on your emotional fire, and march into litigation without striving to resolve

..**CONTINUED ON PAGE 32**