



10 Things NOT to do During a Divorce

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✓ Don't spend the money you have saved.

In an effort to console their hurt, some divorcees buy things that they really don't need. Perhaps you deserve it and everyone might agree but large spending should be avoided for about 6-12 months. You need the money you have to begin your new life. If you have to spend to make things better for yourself or your children, be cautious and make sure that it is truly going to make things better.

✓ Don't increase your debt

The future may be uncertain as to your ability to balance your budget. Again large purchases based on future income should be avoided. Many divorcees get into trouble counting on an increase of income or decrease in expenses that never seems to materialize. Again, the rule is 6-12 months before making any large expenditure or debt.

✓ Don't begin a new relationship

I am sure this made you smile or swear 😊 but the complications, bad decisions, and outright confusion of having another intimate relationship while you are trying to figure out where you are during and after the divorce can be disastrous. Stay connected

to friends you have and remind them that you are not interested in dating right now. Create good boundaries with the opposite sex and stay in groups of friends.

✓ Don't refuse to go to mediation or negotiation

In the heat of emotions, many things and resources are lost. Make sure that there is someone representing your best interest and understand that most divorces contain a lot of compromise and give and take. Your situation may be different than someone else's and may feel you have more leverage but again, let the person representing your best interest help and then be flexible but firm.

✓ Don't ignore your emotions

This is very serious. Allow yourself the freedom to feel and express your emotions. Surround yourself with those who are supportive and helpful. Understand that there is grief in any loss or change. Identify, develop skills to cope, and see your doctor and a therapist to help you process the feelings you are going through. Many of my clients have expressed their appreciation for the support as they journeyed into the unfamiliar territory of divorce.

✓ Don't forget that every divorce is different

Everyone has a different story and there is no shortage of advice giving and comparisons that happen when you get a divorce. The fact is, no two divorces are the same. You have unique circumstances to your situation and those that compare divorces simply put more stress on the situation than is necessary. Listen to advice from a variety of sources and weigh them by talking to someone NOT emotionally invested in your circumstances before you make decisions.

✓ Don't discuss details about the divorce with your children

Despite the age of your children, do not use them as your sounding board or therapist. They are still children and simple and honest explanations are the best. Do not couch your disdain for your ex in "honesty". Many times, people explain they are "just being honest" as a way to disguise their vitriol in the situation. Your children will have a significant adjustment to make and no matter what your explanation is they will have some emotional adjustment to their new life. Do not compound this difficulty with detrimental exposes of your ex. Your attempts to vilify your ex may backfire and at least will prolong the effects of your divorce on your children.

✓ Don't ask your kids what your ex is doing

You really don't have to ask. Kids will often nonchalantly talk about what your ex is doing. It will be at these times that you will have to fight yourself to keep from asking more probing questions. Doing so will create more anxiety in your own life and perhaps emotional difficulties. The best thing you can do is to make sure that your ex and you are on the same page for parenting and communicate your concerns directly to them rather than use your children as messengers. Don't ever put children in the middle of your divorce.

✓ Don't forget to take care of yourself

Many people forget to take care of themselves in times of stress and grief. Much of what is going to happen will take its toll on you emotionally and physically. The times when you can focus on your health, both physically and emotionally, will give you the strength to deal with the stressors of divorce. Take the time for YOU. Even though the demands for your time will come from your children and others, you need to focus on taking time for yourself. What you do is up to you but you know what things will bring an "aha" moment or a sigh of relief and relaxation.

✓ Don't get bitter

Someone once told me that the difficult and traumatic things in your life will serve to make you either "Better" or "Bitter". While it is sometimes easy to get bitter about the way we have been treated and remain that way, it does not serve us in the long run as we try to be happy and productive. If we begin to look at how the bad things in life can serve to teach us and learn from our experiences, we will have a tendency to stay away from the bitter. Bitterness that remains infects many aspects of our life and often prevents people from growing, moving forward, and positively influencing our self and others.



One of the best things you CAN do is see a therapist or life coach. Getting guidance, direction and support from someone who is not emotionally involved can be a huge help during this difficult time. Arizona Family Therapy and Life Coaching has a professional staff that cares about your needs and can help you find your way quickly and successfully. Go to www.familytalkaz.com or call today.