

Five tips on how to resolve conflict with your divorcing spouse

1. Try and respect your ex-spouse/partner and his/her household - find ways of being respectful rather than resentful. Do not personally criticize them, but don't make excuses for their behaviour either.

2. Do not allow financial issues to control your behaviour – Live with the agreement reached or the order handed down by a Judge that has addressed financial arrangements. Do not let your attitude towards it, after the fact; taint your relationship with your ex or your children. If you came to an agreement with your ex, live up to that agreement. If you have a court order, follow that order. No amount of anger over financial issues is worth contaminating your relationship with your ex or your children.

3. Work at forgiving - Hurt feelings from the past is the number one reason you and your ex overreact with one another. Do your part by striving to forgive for the offenses of the past and present. This will help you manage your emotions when dealing with your ex in the present. It also helps cut down on the degree of stress you will have during and after the divorce.

4. Find Common Ground - This good business principle applies to parenting as well. Even if you disagree with the main point, find some common ground and work from there. Be willing to see the situation from your ex's perspective and to give a little instead of taking much. You may no longer be married but the concept of give and take is still very important.

5. Put your children first - You may find it hard to even be around your ex but making the needs of your children your main priority will help establish the kind of relationship that benefits them. And parents who manage to put their children first will minimise the effect of separation and divorce on their children.

Therefore, resolve not to argue in front of children, use them as a sounding board, bad-mouth to them about the other parent, or make them in any way part of the divorce. Resolve to do what it takes to improve the quality of your parenting relationship by communicating and interacting as best as you can with your ex.