

Co-Parenting Conflict: 6 Ways to Cope with the Pain of Spending Time Away From Your Children

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can be tremendously difficult on a family—even more so if you have children together. One of the biggest challenges facing parents who are no longer together is navigating co-parenting. When you're no longer with your child round-the-clock, it can take an emotional toll. Here are coping mechanisms to help you deal with the ups and downs of co-parenting.

1. Expect Conflict

In a perfect world, you and your ex will get along swimmingly in regards to the children. However, there may have been contentions in your marriage that continue post-divorce. Be mindful of how your emotions over being away from your children could be affecting how you deal with your ex. ***Although you have every right to be upset, try to stay calm in order to make the best decisions for your children.***

2. Stay Busy

If you're simply waiting by the phone to hear from your child or anxiously checking the clock until he or she returns home, then you will have a hard time during custody visitations. ***Instead, make plans on the times the children are with your ex to keep your mind off of missing them.*** Spend time with friends, set up dinner reservations, or get lost in a good book. If you're creative, use that time to pursue a hobby such as drawing or crafting. As

long as you find something engaging, you'll spend less time focused on missing the kids.

3. Be Flexible

Being flexible and understanding can foster a good co-parenting relationship with your ex. This can help if any scheduling conflicts arise down the road. Also, make it a point not to dictate the rules of your ex's house. If you insert yourself too much when it's not necessary, then your ex may turn resentful. If lines of communication are kept open, your ex may be willing to keep you in the loop about how the kids are doing during his or her parenting time.

4. Get Help

Talking to a professional can be extraordinarily helpful when dealing with the sadness of missing your children. A therapist can help you talk through your emotions and provide strategies for when the anger or sadness seems too much to bear. There may be support groups in your area as well that you can look into. ***Divorce support groups connect you with other men and women who are going through the same situation.***

5. Stay Active

Physical activity not only keeps you busy, but can also ***relieve stress and aggression***. Go for a walk or a run or find a workout class that you enjoy such as kickboxing, yoga, and aerobics.

6. Create Stability

Although you may want to overcompensate for the time that your kids are away, don't go overboard once you're reunited. If you go on and on about how much you missed them or try to buy their affection, your actions will backfire. The goal of co-parenting is working together to raise healthy and happy children. ***You don't want your children to feel guilty about going to your ex's house or make them feel pulled in two different directions.*** Co-parenting is by no means easy and there will be a learning curve, as you find out what works best for you. But ***the emotional upheaval won't last forever and you will get through these tough times.***

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For a free consultation, contact the Law Office of David Pedrazas in Salt Lake City, Utah at **801-263-7078**. ***David Pedrazas is an attorney with the experience and knowledge on Utah divorce and family law to help you through the many challenges and concerns about children, assets and debts.*** Schedule a free 30 minute case evaluation so that we have the opportunity to review your personal situation by a professional family law attorney in Salt Lake City.

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