

Despite how tough divorce can be, your children and their well-being should be your sole focus.

Having a peaceful divorce doesn't mean there's never any tension between the two of you; it just means you handle that tension with class. Some people waste their lives trying to sabotage their ex's lives, which only hurts the children in the long run and gives them bad karma for their hurtful actions.

To clarify, you are harming your children if:

1. You blame your kids' mother or father by using the word "your" with disdain.

Parents who like to use their kids as pawn in the (unfortunately) popular game of divorce like to say things to their children like, "Oh your mother said that, did she?" Or, "Your father never does X or Y." This may cause your child to feel resentment and guilt — that's his or her parent you're talking about!

When you say the word "your," all that hate and animosity is put onto your child because it's a possessive pronoun. That's right! When you say "Your mother/father really messed up again," your child is taking on your anger at your ex as if it's his or her fault.

Watch what you say about your ex. Not only are you damaging your children's self-esteem and stability, but you're also jeopardizing your relationship with your child down the line.

2. You trash-talk your ex in front of the kids.

Don't talk about the ex in front of your kids. Listing everything your ex does wrong is the same as using your kid as a messenger boy or girl to deliver this note: "Guess what, ex? You suck!"

Let your child figure out on his or her own what they think about their other parent. Don't complain to your children; they're not your therapists. They're kids, so let them be children.

3. You squash all attempts for your ex to spend time with the kids.

If you're angry at your ex for cheating/leaving/hurting you or for anything else under the sun, you have every right to be hurt and angry. Go ahead and lick your wounds but do not let your bad feelings keep your kids from having a relationship with the other parent.

The only one that's truly hurt in this vindictive process is your children.

4. You use your children as messengers between you and your ex.

Do you ever tell your children, "Tell your mother/father X," because you don't want to talk to that evil woman/man? No child should be a go-between. That's tacky and childish. It doesn't matter if your kid is twenty years old; tell your ex yourself. If communication is that bad, just send a text or email to avoid confrontation.

5. You outright sabotage your ex to make yourself look like the better parent.

If you've ever slightly or not-so-slightly done something to make problems for your ex so you look like Mom or Dad of the year, you deserve to have your parental privileges revoked.

It's not a competition. No one gets an award for making the most money and giving the most gifts. Doing things that could hurt your ex with the sole intention of looking like the better parent, or simply to enjoy watching your ex struggle, makes YOU the bad guy.

Wasting your precious energy attempting to make things stressful for your ex, or to appear like the "World's Best Parent," will only end up ruining your kids. You will teach them how to destroy others, be sneaky, downplay and degrade another person's self-esteem, and other terrible things. Is that what you want for your kids? The answer had better be no.

6. You complain to your kids about your ex.

Even if your ex deserves to be flogged with stones, you shouldn't spend your time moaning to your kids about how your ex made your life worse. Manage your emotions on your own, and not through your children.

Your kids don't need to know that the reason you're not going to Disney this year is because Daddy didn't pay his child support and alimony this month, or because Mommy is shopping her money away. Sure, they can know that finances are hard and out of your control, but keep the details to a minimum.

7. You compare your children to their mother or father when they show similar behavior.

You hate your ex, so sometimes when any of your children act like your ex, you remind them by saying, "Oh you're just like your dad/mom!" Your kids know this isn't a loving compliment, rather, a little shout-out saying, "You are terrible just like my ex."

How would you like it if someone told you that you reminded him or her of someone he/she didn't like? No one wants to be compared to Voldemort or Putin. Don't do it.

You deserve happiness and positivity in your life, and getting bogged down by a bad ex is not healthy for you or your kids. Remember, karma is a b* and your ex will get his/hers.

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