



Parenting After Breakdown

Pr Les Ackie

Building Positive Relationships

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

Romans 12:18

Parenting after Breakdown

Don't Divorce
Your Children

Parents need to keep in mind that they have divorced their spouse, not their children

Parenting after Breakdown



Divorce often does not solve the problems it is meant to

Parenting after Breakdown

- Many couples continue to battle over issues they thought they had left behind
 - Separation does not free people from their ex-partner's emotional grip
 - Destructive relational patterns are often repeated in subsequent relationships
 - Children are the biggest victims in a break-up when they become pawns in parental disputes
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Parenting after Breakdown



We learn to 'do' relationships in our family of origin

Parenting after Breakdown



Children are profoundly influenced by how they observe their parents engaging with the world

Parenting after Breakdown



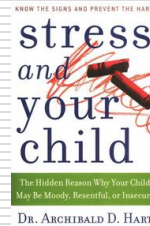
Our children should not pay the price for our emotional pain

Parenting after Breakdown



Whether their parents are married, separated or divorced, children's suffering is heightened when there is conflict

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Research has shown elevated stress hormones in the blood samples from children of conflicted parents

Parenting after Breakdown



Even after separation parents need to learn how to cooperate and practice problem-solving skills

Children of Emotionally Intelligent Parents tend to:

- be more self-confident
- do better in school
- have fewer behavioural problems
- have better overall health
- get on better with others
- handle parents' marital conflict better

Parenting after Breakdown



If the parents would enter more fully into the feelings of their children and draw out what is on their hearts, it would have a beneficial influence upon them.

The Adventist Home, 19

Parenting after Breakdown



A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

Matthew 7:18

Only emotionally healthy parents can produce emotionally healthy children

The Necessity of Forgiveness



Martin Luther King

"He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love"

Parenting after Breakdown



Tell children the simple truth. Don't try to protect them by lying

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The resident parent should welcome the involvement of the non-resident parent

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Parent should agree on such things as:

- bedtime
- study habits
- how much and what type of television programs
- allowance
- piano practice
- table manners

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Access should only be restricted when one parent is physically or emotionally abusive

Parenting after Breakdown



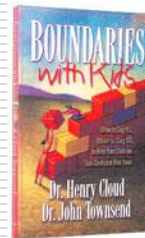
Ideally, both parents should talk with their children together regarding major issues

Parenting after Breakdown



Children need to be assured of their parents love and to know that they did not cause the divorce

Parenting after Breakdown



Children need boundaries in order to feel secure

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Sometimes divorced parents will unconsciously try to make up for the child's loss by indulging them

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Don't allow your own emotional needs to govern your actions toward the children

Parenting after Breakdown



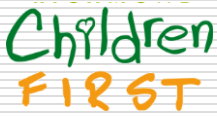
Don't constantly belittle the ex-partner in front of the child in order to vent hostility

Parenting after Breakdown



Do not allow children to play you off against your ex

Parenting after Breakdown



The well-being of the child must be the objective standard by which parents judge their behaviour

Your Ex-partner's Family



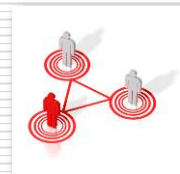
Couples don't divorce, families divorce

Your Ex-partner's Family



Separation from a partner does not have to mean separation from their family

Avoid Triangulation



Triangulation takes place when a third party in a conflict feels emotional pulled to take sides in the dispute

Your Ex-partner's Family

Ways to Avoid Triangles

- Do not use family members as go-betweens
- Don't make your Ex the focus of interactions
- Don't confide secrets about your Ex
- Never criticise your Ex to their family
- Find other people for your emotional support
- Be proactive about your Ex's family involvement in your children's lives

Building Positive Relationships

Six letters,
two words,
easy to say,
hard to explain, harder to do:
Move On.

If the relationship is truly over, be intentional about the course you want your life to take

Moving On



The most common pitfall is premature remarriage

Moving On

60%

There are significant reasons why second marriages have a higher divorce rate than first marriages

Moving On

"Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it."
(George Santayana)

Make sure that you understand why your previous relationship broke down before you start a new one

Moving On



How do you know that you are ready to start dating again?

To Date or not to Date?

**GOOD
GRIEF**

Make sure you have fully grieved the previous relationship before you begin a new one

To Date or not to Date?



Most counsellors agree that it takes about two years to work through the emotional trauma of a divorce

To Date or not to Date?

**EYES
WIDE
OPEN**

Make sure that you are dating for the right reason

Building Positive Relationships



Settling is adapting to, or accepting less than the highest standards and values for healthy relationship

Dating & Children

**MAKE
HASTE
SLOWLY**

Do not introduce new “partners” to your children too soon

Introducing a New Partner

- Talk to your children and explain that you are seeing someone whom you care about and that you'd like to introduce them after a while. Ask them if they have any questions.
 - Keep the first meeting short and low key: Don't force the issue if children are reluctant.
 - Assure your kids that your new partner is not a replacement mum/dad
 - Have realistic expectations about your children's acceptance of your new partner
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Moving On



Don't make plans
for marriage
without a rigorous
premarital
preparation
process

Blended Families

- Too many changes at once can unsettle children
 - Don't expect to fall in love with your partner's children overnight
 - Find ways to experience "real life" together
 - Agree on parenting issues before you marry
 - Don't allow ultimatums
 - Insist on respect
 - Limit your expectations
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What Children Need

- Safety and security. Children want to be able to count on parents and step-parents
 - To feel loved. Children like to see and feel your affection, although it should be a gradual process
 - Be heard and be emotionally connected
 - Feel appreciated and encouraged
 - To have limits and boundaries
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Building Positive Relationships

choose
wisely

Keep thy heart with
all diligence; for
out of it *are* the
issues of life.

Proverbs 4:23
