

I've found that most people, despite being in an unloving and unhappy marriage, will avoid considering divorce as an option because they believe it will be harmful to their children. I believe the opposite is true -- that they are actually doing more damage to their children by staying together.

It's a well known fact that children need love, nurturing, safety, security and structure in their lives. While initially divorce can disrupt a child's foundation of security and structure, the long term effects of divorce aren't necessarily bad. If handled properly, divorce can actually have a positive effect on a child's emotional growth.

Let's break this down. Children need love. They need love given directly to them from their parents but they also need to be brought up in a family environment filled with love. Even if two parents love the children directly but are unloving towards each other, it ends up being detrimental to the children. Why? Because children are extremely sensitive -- more than most people may know -- and will pick up on the dynamics of their parents relationship and internalize it. How each parent behaves with the other within a marriage sets the stage for how their children will eventually relate in their own marriage. The emotional energy that the parents exude towards each other, conscious or unconscious, directly impacts their children's future. This emotional imprint is much more powerful than most people realize.

If the parents choose to divorce because they lack emotional, physical or spiritual intimacy and joy, they are setting a positive example for their children to prioritize what is truly important in their future adult partnerships. It shows children that as an adult, they don't have to settle and remain stuck in a loveless marriage. If the two parents still provide the child love, nurturing, safety, security and structure within their separate environments, the child will flourish. In most cases the children aren't going to like the change and they are still going to need some intervention to help adjust. However, this adjustment process is a piece of cake compared to healing any emotional issues from their parents marriage that might plague this child throughout their life.

Having the courage and strength to exit an unloving marriage allows each parent the opportunity to find authentic happiness. As each parent finds and expresses their happiness, the children are then able to benefit from their parents' positive emotional energy. The divorcing parents are, in fact, doing the right thing for their children. Children then end up learning from their role models the importance of love and joy in life -- and in this case, a marriage.

Please note that I'm not implying that two people should divorce as soon as one or both are

unhappy. They absolutely should do whatever it takes to work things out. If they have done their best and they simply can't find love and happiness together, then they need to move on. There's no need to feel guilty about how the divorce will impact their children as long as they handle it in an emotionally mature manner.

Two parents staying together strictly for the sake of the children set standards that are no longer acceptable in today's age. It's time to set a new standard of positive, loving and joyful examples of relationships and marriages. Sometimes, divorce is the only means by which this can be achieved.