



## DATING DURING ***DIVORCE***

By Laura S. Blackman, Esq.

### Are you or someone you know

recently single and catapulted into the dating world again? Are you separated from your spouse and contemplating divorce and confused as to how to get back into the single world? Are you in the middle of a divorce proceeding and feel as if your world has completely changed from being part of a family unit to being a single parent and you wish to move on but find it difficult to juggle work, co-parenting and dating? If so, continue reading and discover some helpful hints for dating during one of the most difficult transitions in your and your children's lives.

How do you date during this transition in your life? The first rule is that the children always come first. Let me repeat that one more time... the children always come first! It is crucial that the children understand that both parents love them unconditionally and will always be their number one priority. That being said... perhaps initially after making the decision to divorce and/or live in separate homes, it is a good idea to spend quality time with your children when you have them for your timesharing. There will be plenty of time to go out and play when your spouse has the kids.

Rule Number 2: Do not tell your children anything about your dating life. They are going through their own loss and transition as the family unit is fractured and they need consistency, structure and a strong parent. There is no need for the children to be privy to texts or emails or telephone calls to your new exciting friend — it can only cause problems with your spouse when they report back to them about how happy you are in your new and improved life. Be discreet. Keep your children as your number one priority and remember

appropriate; however, during a divorce proceeding your behavior may become part of your case if you are not careful and you allow certain inappropriate behavior and people into your world, which may not be in the best interests of your custody battle or contentious divorce proceeding. Don't drink excessively. Don't think everyone out there is your close friend... you will find out quickly who your true friends are. Keep your circle tight, and don't discuss your case with anyone unless you truly know and can trust them. Seeing your spouse out when you are on a date can only add fuel to the fire in your case, create havoc and exacerbate conflict in your life. Be discreet in dating, take it slow and have fun.

What happens when you finally meet a person who you wish to spend time with and they also have children of similar ages? My opinion, and it's only my opinion from my personal experience and my divorce practice, is that the person you will be dating during this most difficult time period in your life might or will probably be a very different person whom you will be dating one year after this nightmare is done. So perhaps introducing your children to your dates may not be such a good idea as the kids may like one another more than you end up liking your date! Then the children get attached and feel another loss.

Rule Number 4: Social media — Don't post photos of your children on any dating sites. Repeat rule number 4 as many times as needed, and protect your children always. Be discreet on Facebook, Twitter and all other sites... is it really necessary to post where you are and who you are with during your divorce? I think not. My private investigators utilize these sites often to find information and locations of spouses.

there is life after divorce.

Rule Number 3: How to act when you are out playing in the single world? Your behavior and actions should always be ap-

propriate; however, during a divorce proceeding your behavior may become part of your case if you are not careful and you allow certain inappropriate behavior and people into your world, which may not be in the best interests of your custody battle or contentious divorce proceeding. Don't drink excessively. Don't think everyone out there is your close friend... you will find out quickly who your true friends are. Keep your circle tight, and don't discuss your case with anyone unless you truly know and can trust them. Seeing your spouse out when you are on a date can only add fuel to the fire in your case, create havoc and exacerbate conflict in your life. Be discreet in dating, take it slow and have fun.

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What happens when you meet someone and you want to date them exclusively and you are on dating sites? What is "dating site etiquette"? Relationships have ended due to a person staying on a dating site a little too long. A conversation about social media and dating sites should occur so that both parties are on the same page in this new and improved single world of dating.



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