

# Exercises for Chapter 5

## 5.1: How Well Might My Children Adjust to Divorce?

It's important to consider how a divorce may affect your children. Divorce is generally a stressful experience for all children, but certain factors can make divorce harder or easier for children to deal with. As you answer these questions, keep in mind the personalities and characteristics of your children. Whether you divorce or not, answering these questions can help you better understand your children's needs at this time.

**A. Children's Perspectives.** In this chapter, you learned that children tend to have a more difficult time adjusting to divorce when their parents have a low-conflict marriage. On the other hand, in general, children tend to benefit from divorce when their parents had a high-conflict marriage. Either way, it is important to consider how your children experience your marriage. How do you think your children view your marriage? For each of these questions, circle the answer that best describes your situation.

	Unsure/ Not Applicable	Never (0)	Rarely (1)	Sometimes (2)	Often (3)	Very Often (4)
1. My children see or hear our marital conflict.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4
2. My children are aware of the topics of conflict between me and my spouse.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4
3. My children get involved in our marital conflict.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4
4. My children see violence between me and my spouse.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4

	Unsure/Not Applicable	Never (0)	Rarely (1)	Sometimes (2)	Often (3)	Very Often (4)
5. My children act scared, hide, or leave home (or want to leave home) during our marital conflict.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4
6. My spouse and I fight about our children.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4
7. I (or my spouse) treat my children negatively or give them less attention during or after our marital conflict.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4
8. My children are aware that my spouse and I are considering a divorce.	Unsure/Not Applicable	0	1	2	3	4
9. My children see my spouse and I express affection or support for each other.	Unsure/Not Applicable	4	3	2	1	0
10. My children see my spouse and I resolving conflict in positive ways.	Unsure/Not Applicable	4	3	2	1	0

Now add up your score for these 10 questions: \_\_\_\_

Higher scores indicate that your children are more likely to be aware of a lot of conflict between you and your spouse while lower scores indicate that your children are less likely to be aware of conflict between you and your spouse. There is no specific score that indicates this, but if your score is greater than 25, then your children, if they are old enough, probably are aware of your marital conflict.

• Overall, how do you think your children view your marriage? How aware do you think they are of your marital problems?

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