



GARIN DOUGLAS VICK, PSY.D.

CLINICAL & FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

Dear Co-Parents,

I want to thank you for downloading this co-parenting resource. As a result, you are taking positive steps toward improving the lives of your children. In almost two decades of working with families, I have found that even the most well-intentioned parents are at risk of losing sight of what is best for their children, especially when conflict between co-parents is high.

As a result, I have created the following list of questions to assist you in examining your thinking and behavior before acting out and putting your children in the middle of your divorce. By no means is this an exhaustive list of questions, and they are in no particular order of importance.

My hope is that these questions help you or inspire you to create your own questions / prompts to stay child-focused. Please share with the other co-parent or anyone who you think could benefit from considering these questions.

Dr. Vick

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33 QUESTIONS TO KEEP YOU CHILD-FOCUSED

- 1.) Am I meeting my needs or my child's needs?
- 2.) What would it be like to be my child at this moment?
- 3.) Is this the memory I want to create for my child?
- 4.) What will be your children's memories be of your divorce?
- 5.) What will be their best memory of how you handled the conflict?
- 6.) What are you doing well to help your child to get through this time?
- 7.) What would you like to do differently for them?
- 8.) Are we putting our child in the middle of our conflict?
- 9.) How does it help my child to know this information about our conflict?
- 10.) Who is helping our child with the confusion, fear, and sadness that all children feel at this time?

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- 11.) Am I taking or making opportunities to talk with my child openly about how they are feeling?
- 12.) What are the hopes we share for our children and their future?
- 13.) How would I react if my Ex did or said what I'm about to do?
- 14.) Would this be information I would want to know as a parent? If yes, then share it.
- 15.) How does it help my child by putting down their mom/dad?
- 16.) How does it help my child by causing their mom/dad to struggle financially?
- 17.) If I do this, will I regret it later?
- 18.) Would I be embarrassed if I said this or did this in front of my friends, "the judge" or someone you look up to or admire as a person?
- 19.) Is fear making this decision or am I making it?

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- 20.) Will I like myself after this decision? Or Will I be able to look in the mirror and be ok with what I see?
- 21.) Have I thought of the consequences for my behavior? Not just for me, but for my children, the co-parenting relationship, and others who may be involved? Will I be able to deal with the consequences of my behavior?
- 22.) A year from now (or later), if I decide to do X, what might this look like?
- 23.) What's the worst-case outcome by doing or not doing _____?
- 24.) What is the best-case outcome by doing or not doing _____?
- 25.) What is my goal, is this behavior moving me closer or farther from my goal?
- 26.) What would I tell a friend to do?

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- 27.) This is not a question to ask, but more of a technique to use to ensure your decision is the right one for your children and/or you. **“Wait 48 hours before taking action”**. If it’s a good decision now, it will be a good decision in 48 hours. While you’re waiting use the time to run your thoughts by trusted friends or family member to get their insights.
- 28.) Will my actions negatively impact my child’s relationship with their mom/dad?
- 29.) Are my actions true to who I am?
- 30.) Is my behavior going to attract the kind of people I want in my life?
- 31.) Will this matter 5 days, 5 months, or 5 years from now? If the answer is no, then it is probably not worth your time.
- 32.) What are other options, even ones I would not want?
- 33.) Am I doing this so that my EX won’t win?

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