

## Growing Up with a Single Parent

I was very young when my parents divorced. Therefore, I do not recollect much except for the shouting and bickering. I remember those loud fights that used to spread much beyond our house. Feeling insecure and confused, my only resort was to sit in a corner of my room, and try desperately to not hear any bitter statements.

The worst thing that any parent can subject their children to would be to make them their confidant in this phase of misery. Sadly, this is exactly what my parents did to me. I remember my mother coming to me and saying negative and bitter things about my father. Being a child, my judgment was clouded easily. I thought that I need to make things better for my parents and should get involved in sorting things out for them.

I remember I used to go up to my father and ask him if the statements that my mother made were true. This used to infuriate my father beyond imagination. However, rather than letting the issue rest, my father used to tell me his side of the story. I almost felt like I was being stretched from two ends without knowing where I belonged.

I remember spending those nights in utter confusion as I lay on my bed. I remember resisting those thoughts of running far away from "home", if I could still call it that. I still feel that those fights have shaped how I initially reacted to fights with my husband.

My mother used to walk out of the house whenever she used to have an argument with my father. Much as I would have wanted to resist repeating the same pattern, I ended up walking out on my husband during one of our fights. When I came back, instead of being angry with me or shouting at me, my husband sat down with me and told me that there is nothing in this world that we cannot sort out by just sitting and talking together. That day changed one mental block that my broken home had created.

Sadly, this is not the only mental block that I had developed during that bitter phase of my childhood. After my parents divorced, I stayed with my mother. My mother was very bitter about her relationship with my father and about marriage in general. She would constantly mention that marriage is nothing but a compromise.

I was still a child back then and ideas about love were fresh in my mind. When I used to ask my mother about love and its association with marriage, all I ever got were negative responses. Her attitude shaped my approach towards relationships. Therefore, when I started dating, I would either choose men who were incapable of carrying on a committed relationships or I would not date men who appeared committed for the fear of falling in love and subsequently getting hurt.

Due to this self-defeatist attitude, I consistently hurt myself and allowed men in my life to hurt me. I still remember feeling jealous of my friends who grew up with both their parents. I used to visit some of my close friends often and the happiness in their house made me want to stay back in their house forever.

My mother tried hard to ensure that our finances were managed appropriately. However, this meant that she had to stay out of home for the major part of the day. I understood that my mother had to do this to take care of both of us. Nonetheless, it was frustrating to hear "Not now, I have to work" whenever I wanted to have some fun with her.

I do believe that when children grow up with both their parents, at least one of the parents can devote more time with their children. This has a very positive effect on children because there are so many things that children need to talk about and share with their parents. In addition, such children are likely to display more confidence because of their secure home environments. On the contrary, children who are raised by single parents tend to have self-esteem related issues because of their insecure childhood. Therefore, many such children tend to have mental disorders which inhibit their social as well as academic performance.

## About the Author

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