






**RESILIENT DAD**  
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# THE CHALLENGING ROLE OF BEING A PRESENT DAD AFTER SEPARATION



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Without a doubt, no one ever plans to not have the impact or ability to be present in their children's lives when they first think of their futures as a dad. The truth is, life is full of surprises. More times than not, our plans do not happen as we thought they would. However, that 's completely ok. We either succeed or we learn . Challenges are always welcome especially when they contribute to a more stable, fulfilled and more resilient self. Right?

The fact that we are not married to the mother of our kids anymore does not have to be the end of the world. The only problem in life is when we believe life is happening to us and not for us. With every challenge comes a new opportunity to find solutions. Being an example to your children that you can grow from life's obstacles and look for a win-win outcome that works for both sides (our and our kids) is a real gift. Your situation of being separated does not need to mean you cannot be an awesome dad.






It does not matter how our marriage ended and how distant we are from our kids. There is one thing that cannot be stressed enough: we need to be a present father in their life, someone they can look up to and say, "When I grow up, I want to be like my father".

Some may say well how do I do that if I'm not allowed to see my kids? If you didn't develop as soon as other kids, would you give up and say oh well? Or would you keep trying no matter what it took? What if you lived every day the best you could, living the life you would be proud of? Being the example for your children to one day see that you did your best, so when the time comes you're ready to be the most loving and present dad you could be.



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## BEING A PRESENT DAD IS MORE THAN JUST SHOWING UP




Just being there is not enough. Do not get me wrong, it is essential, but there is much more about the “present” part. Being present does not only mean we are physically there. It means we listen and acknowledge the dreams and fears of our kids. It means we are there to support them and help them when necessary. It means sharing our experience and advice that might be useful for them in the future. It means giving them the security they need to feel that they can depend on us if they need to. It means so many things.



The literal meaning of “being present” might imply we will need to take that extra mile (also literally). That is not a bad thing. Is it challenging? It might be. But who does not like a good challenge? My advice? Make plans, and do different things with your kids (remember, you do not need to overcompensate, you need to be their dad). Take the most out of each time you are with them and certify they are doing the same. It can be demanding sometimes, especially when they are going through some ages, but still. We need to make sure they know we are there and that they can count on us always.



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## BEING CLOSE EVEN WHEN WE ARE SEPARATED

Yes, I said being present is more than being there, but sometimes that is all they need. They must know that we will be there. For them. With open arms. Every step of the way. We are their haven. We are their rock, their pillar, and they need us. It does not matter if we are 5 minutes away or 3 hours. We can still be close and have an incredible relationship with our kids.

We need to make sure we always show how proud we are of them and everything they do (do not just say it, actions always talk larger than words). They need to feel our support, to feel we are present, even if from afar.






## STAYING INVOLVED AND STAYING INFORMED

Being divorced does not mean we are part-time dads! The amount of time we spend with our kids does not define the percentage of the father we are. We can be with them 50%, 25%, or even 10% of the time, but we are their dad 100% of the time.



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The fact that we are not with our kids all the time does not translate into not being involved with everything they do. Staying aware of our children's needs, interests, and fears is essential to maintain a connection. And let's face it, both parents' presence is crucial for our kid's development. Both father and mother play an equal role even if we share our kids' time.

With today's technology, staying close to our kids has never been so easy. Being creative brings brownie points as our kids will acknowledge (even if only in the future) that we made the effort for them. Being present can mean saving a TikTok we know they will like, sending them a book through the mail, or ordering pizza when we know they are so concentrated on studying that they will probably forget to eat.



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# MAKE PEACE WITH HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF

I will not lie. That will demand an incredible effort from your side. Still, we can have the life we have always envisioned for ourselves and our kids even if we are not with them 100% of the time. At some point, we need to make peace with the fact that we are single dads.

If you are at peace, I assure you, your life will be full of joy, and great moments and good things will come your way. Stay positive and make the most out of the time you spend with your children.






If you are reading this is because you care. Keep it up. You are already doing great. Resilience is key. Remember, this may not be what you have dreamed but you sure can make it the best possible alternative. Just be the best dad you can be under the circumstances. Your kids will thank you for that. And so will you.

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