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Life Coaching, Dating
and Relationship
Consulting

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Heartmind Connections

7 Things to Consider When Dating as a Single Parent

Here you are single again. Now, you have a child or several to juggle with a career. What are the challenges and considerations you will have to think about as you venture into the dating world? The more you think ahead about how you want to be for your kids and yourself the better dating experiences you will have overall. Here are seven things to consider:

1. How much time and attention do you have to give to a relationship?

You have a busy life with your kids, work, personal activities and commitments. Who has time for dating? It's important to use your precious free time wisely.

- Try internet dating. It is a good way to meet quality people, especially other single parents. You can go online late at night and fit it in between your other responsibilities.
- Develop a good support system of caregivers that can give you time to get out to meet potential people to date, as well as, time for the actual dates.
- Use your time without the children to your advantage to engage in activities that you enjoy and give you a good chance to meet men to date such as dancing, sports, and classes.
- Join groups like Parents without Partners that have both adult only activities as well as those that include the kids. You will most likely have lots in common with these single Moms or Dads!

2. What is your marital status?

Are you divorced or are you separated? If you are not yet divorced, you will have difficulty meeting people who want to date you for more than

just s.ex! (Separated women have a reputation of being easy prey by predator-type men). Also, how will this look to your children?

I suggest you go out and meet “friends” and keep it low key until you are officially divorced and truly available. I know many people who won’t date someone unless they are divorced. If you are at the tail end of your separation with a solid separation agreement with your ex, and have a non-contentious relationship, then you have a better chance of meeting women or men who would be open to dating you.

3. For what reasons are you dating?

Different people date for different reasons. Are you looking to just get out and have fun or do you want to find a new romantic long-term partner? You need to think about *why* you want to date and be honest and upfront with others about what you are looking for.

One of my clients felt like she didn’t feel whole without a soulmate. She was a romantic person who craved love and adoration from a man. Other people cite companionship as a major reason for dating. One other single parent client didn’t want to feel left out among her married friends. Another client wanted a helpmate with the kids and around the house. What is your true reason for dating?

4. Who are you dating and are they cut out to date someone with children?

Not everyone is comfortable stepping into a parent role, especially if they don’t have kids of their own. Can they be flexible enough to roll with the punches? Since you cannot control everything, there are times you will have to cancel a date because of your kids. How will your date handle it? Can your date be able to take a back seat to the needs of your children? Unfortunately, only time will tell!

5. What is your children’s reaction to you dating?

Is your child(ren) supportive and encouraging of your dating, and practically push you with their friend’s fathers or mothers! Other kids are jealous of the attention away from them, create distractions and make it difficult for the parent to date. Your children can have a big role in whether you date or not.

6. *When do you intend to introduce your date to your children?*

There are two schools of thoughts. First is to have a casual introduction to your children by saying that this person is Mommy's or Daddy's friend. That means that you have no physical contact in front of the children. The upside is you can see how well your kids get along with the person you are dating without the fear factor from the kids.

The second is to wait until you are in a serious, exclusive relationship with that person with intent towards a more permanent arrangement. Here you want to make sure that your relationship is solid and that the person loves you before introducing the kids into the picture. You also want to make sure the person loves you for you and not because of the family package.

7. *When your partner does meet your children, how much time will you spend with your children versus just adult time alone with each other?*

Each person needs to express their expectations about this. Are they similar or far apart?

It's important to plan date night alone to keep building the personal adult relationship. Of course, time with the kids allows them to get adjusted to having this new person in your life. There is no right or wrong answer- just what feels right to both of you.

Yes, dating as a single parent seems more complicated. It's a lot different than dating before kids! However, with new challenges also brings many rewards for those dating the single parent. There are many single people who may have missed out on parenthood and now this is their opportunity to be involved in children's lives. This can be end up being a very fulfilling and rewarding experience.

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Do you enjoy reading the latest monthly Heartmind Connections ezine? I would love to hear your comments on my ezine and any suggestions you may have for future issues. You may contact me at: coachamy@heartmindconnection.com. Please feel free to forward to any of

your friends who may be interested in learning more about dating and relationships.

Amy's Vision:

“As a personal life coach, my goal is to bring you the information you need to make intelligent and heartfelt decisions about the most significant relationship in your life. We all desire our best life possible. My hope is that you find this information helpful and achieve all your life long dreams.”

Amy Schoen, MBA, CPCC

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