

The Pre-Divorce Holiday Season

The holiday season is here. You may have already made a firm decision that you're going to get divorced, or the idea of getting a divorce has been weighing heavily on you. You might have friends and family that are urging you to get started right away, while others are telling you to hold off – maybe after the new year kicks off. Until you decide on the best path, we'll help make the holidays more bearable for you and those you care about.

If you're leaning toward filing for divorce as a new year's resolution, you're in the majority. In our experience, January is a popular month for initiating the process. One of our busiest times of the year is the first half of January. At that time, the holidays have passed and the kids are back in school. Daily routine, for the most part, has returned to normal.

Aside from general procrastination, many people decide to hold off until after the holidays for the simple reason that they don't want to spoil the season for their children and families. It's a lot easier to avoid the awkwardness by waiting. Imagine seeing a family member for first time in a year. The conversation may likely go, "So, what's new? How have you been?"
"Things are OK, but John and I decided to file for divorce."
"Oh... I'm sorry..."

The season is oftentimes very important to kids who look forward to gifts and visiting with family members they haven't seen in a long time. Not wanting to ruin that innocent spirit while creating a bad memory could be a primary reason why many choose to wait.

Regardless, we've come up with some recommendations over the years to help make a pre-divorce holiday season go as smooth as possible.

A Mutual Agreement

Assuming you and your spouse have previously discussed waiting to file until January, it's best to bring up the topic again right before the holidays are in full swing. Some solid ideas to tackle include avoiding arguments when in the presence of the kids (or other family members), agreeing to maintain secrecy about your plan, and maintaining normal holiday behaviors or traditions. Since you're trying to maintain normalcy during this time, it's best to be on the same page together.

Make Time for You

You don't have to be attached at the hip. We've seen some spouses overcompensate with their behaviors in attempt to keep family unsuspecting. This time of year is stressful, so be sure to take time alone to destress and breathe. The holiday rush and planning, coupled with the inevitable divorce, can cause havoc both mentally and physically.

New Beginnings

Over the next few weeks, start a new tradition with your children – just you and them. It could be something as simple as a trip to the ice skating rink or the movies. Implementing a new tradition with the kids now will give them something to look forward to the following year, when your spouse won't be in the picture.

A Positive Attitude

You've decided that proceeding with a divorce is the best decision possible. It's easy to understand how it can be an emotional time perhaps filled with sadness and depression, especially when you've spent so much time and energy with your spouse. Positivity may be out of the question, or at least seem inappropriate. Or, is it? Depending upon the perspective, getting a divorce could be a huge positive change in someone's life. It could be viewed as a new chapter full of opportunity. Spending your final days under the same roof as your spouse with a positive attitude can be a catalyst toward an amicable dissolution. Amicable spouses tend to breeze through the process faster than contested divorces. This results in a savings of both time and money.

Preparation

You're waiting until January to officially file for divorce. In the meantime, you can still get started with the process behind the scenes without anyone knowing. You can [contact us for a free consultation](#), and we'll guide you as far as the process and any paperwork you can prepare ahead of time. You can begin tracking down financial records, thinking about your expenses, and any personal assets. You can start looking for an apartment to rent if you plan on moving out in January. The preparation will make things easier and help relieve the full plate you'll encounter in January.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, stressed, and unsure where to turn with the holidays and your impending divorce, feel free to give us a call. Even if it's just to vent and vocalize some frustrations, the goal is to help minimize negative emotions and make the best of the next few months.