

The Golden Rules of Positive Separation *for Parents*

Even if your separation—or the idea of your separation—feels dark and chaotic right now, your kids don't have to be at the center of the battlefield. It *is* possible to break up or divorce in a positive and forward-looking manner that supports your kids—and you—to create a bright, exciting new future without the stress and drama.

THE GOLDEN RULES OF POSITIVE SEPARATION FOR PARENTS

1 CONSIDER HOW BEST TO SUPPORT EACH OF YOUR CHILDREN. Every child, depending on age and temperament, requires a different kind of support. Consider consulting a professional (like a child psychologist, social worker, school counselor, or family coach) about how you can best equip your children to deal with their new situation.

2 DON'T TALK NEGATIVELY ABOUT THE OTHER PARENT. Spare your children the negative details, accusations, and finger-pointing. The reason for your separation is simply that you were no longer happy together. It may feel good in the moment to bash your ex, but in the long term, this will make things more difficult for your children.

*Get the complete Positive Separation Method™ in Eveline's book, *Happy Again! The Art of Positive Separation*

3 DON'T ALLOW YOUR NEW PARTNER TO SPEAK NEGATIVELY ABOUT YOUR EX OR YOUR FORMER FAMILY LIFE IN FRONT OF YOUR CHILDREN. New partners are outside of the situation and this creates tension for everyone.

4 CHILDREN HAVE A RIGHT TO BOTH OF THEIR PARENTS. Unless there is abuse, neglect, or other unsafe conditions happening on your ex's part, keeping your kids from their other parent will do more harm than good. Even if you would rather avoid contact with your ex, parenthood is a 50-50 deal, so make sure the other parent has a clear role to play, even if the children are still living with you.

5 MAKE CLEARLY-DEFINED ARRANGEMENTS ABOUT PARENTING ROLES, TIMELINES, AND SCHEDULES, and always uphold your end of the bargain. This creates a sense of clarity for everyone concerned.

6 NEVER ARGUE IN THE PRESENCE OF YOUR CHILDREN. It makes them feel powerless and uncertain. Strive for friendly or neutral contact during pickup and drop-off times, and during all other interactions. If you need to vent, do so in private. A good stomping-around walk outside can do wonders for your mental state.

7 HAVE FUN! Joining your kids in enjoyable activities isn't just good for them, it's also good for you. Take time to enjoy your kids, laugh, and play. Your time and attention is the best gift you can give them right now

8 DON'T ASK YOUR CHILDREN TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE OTHER PARENT TO GET WHAT YOU WANT—even if it's something as fundamental as child support or alimony. Fight your own battles.

9 NEVER, EVER USE YOUR CHILDREN TO MANIPULATE YOUR EX-PARTNER. This rule speaks for itself.

10 MAKE SURE YOUR CHILDREN DO NOT HAVE TO TAKE SIDES. Don't ask them which parent they love more. Don't ask them to pass judgment on your ex-partner, even if (in your eyes) your ex has done something unforgivable. Don't compete with your ex-partner about who is the "best parent."

11 ALLOW YOUR CHILDREN TO STAY IN CONTACT WITH BOTH SETS OF GRANDPARENTS as long as the situation is safe for them. A sense of continuity in family contact on both sides is very important for your child. Loving grandparents and other relatives can provide comfort, support, and perspective during challenging times.

12 NEVER LET TIME WITH YOUR NEW PARTNER TAKE PRIORITY OVER TIME WITH YOUR CHILDREN. Don't cancel plans with your kids to spend time with your new partner, and don't shuffle the kids around to babysitters so you can have a "date night." You will have plenty of time to enjoy your new partner once your separation is settled.

13 IF YOU HAVE NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, DEAL WITH THEM YOURSELF. Even adult children should not have to deal with playing the role of support for a parent in separation. Your children are not there to comfort you or make you happy. If you struggle with this, or feel like your children are your only support system right now, seek out professional help, and read Chapters 6 and 7 of *The Art of Positive Separation* for more on managing your mindset and creating your Winning Team.

14 REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE CONTINUALLY SETTING THE EXAMPLE FOR YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT HOW TO MOVE THROUGH A CRISIS SITUATION—so practicing balanced behavior can have positive long-term consequences. Be conscious of what your own behavior is modeling for them. If you take an open and positive approach, your child will copy that. If you are jealous and shortsighted, or adopt a victim mindset, your child will also learn that from you.

15 TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO DEAL POSITIVELY WITH THEIR OWN EMOTIONS. Encourage them to read, write, talk, and otherwise express their feelings. Drawing, painting, making music, and other creative activities can serve as an outlet for challenging emotions. Outdoor sports and recreation are likewise helpful. If your children are having a hard time processing the emotions of the separation, don't be afraid to seek out professional help and neutral ground. Your children can benefit from therapy as much as you do!

16 ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN TO FORM THEIR OWN WINNING TEAM of playmates, coaches, teachers, professionals, and even teddy bears! Grandparents can also be part of a child's Winning Team, but only if they can remain positive and neutral.

17 MAKE SURE YOU ARE STICKING TO YOUR COMMITMENTS AND HONORING YOUR GOALS. If you say you will do something, always follow through. If your kids are old enough, share these goals with them so they know what you are working toward. If they see you working to create a positive future (for yourself and for them) they will feel supported.

18 REMEMBER, YOU WILL BE HAPPY AGAIN! Your future is in your hands, so commit to making it a great one!

EVELINE JURRY & THE POSITIVE SEPARATION METHOD™

The Positive Separation Method™ was born in the years following Eveline's own divorce. She knew that she wanted to unravel herself from her old life in a positive way, but there was no handbook for the process, and no one to teach her what she needed to know to do this in a way that conserved energy and propelled her toward a new, happy life.

Over the course of more than three years, Eveline studied the topic of separation. She interviewed the most successful and experienced professionals, happiness gurus, therapists, coaches, and divorced individuals not only in her hometown of Amsterdam (Netherlands) but also across greater Europe and America. From this research, she created a winning combination of tools which ultimately became her trademarked Positive Separation Method, a clear, practical, and empowering approach to navigating separation with a happy future as a goal.



Eveline's full Method can be found in her upcoming book, *Happy Again! The Art of Positive Separation* (coming October 2018)

Learn more about Eveline and the Positive Separation Method™ at www.PositiveSeparation.com.