

Counseling Capsules

An information service from the UTEP Counseling Center

Visit our web site at: <http://sa.utep.edu/counsel/>

ADULT CHILDREN OF DIVORCED PARENTS

Adult children of divorced parents have had their lives altered by their parents' divorce. Parental divorce always affects children, even adult children, and it almost always has some lingering effects. For example, consider the following questions:

- **Do you feel guilty or responsible for your parents' divorce?**
- **Have you ever felt that you lost part of your childhood because of their divorce?**
- **Do one or both your parents depend too much on you for emotional support?**
- **Do you find yourself in the role of "peacemaker" when your parents argue?**
- **Do you feel your parents are so involved with their own problems that your feelings or needs are often overlooked?**

These are but a few of the ways you may have been affected by your parents' divorce. Your academic work, your intimate relationships, and your emotional well being may all be influenced by how you come to terms with your parents' divorce.

HELPFUL REMINDERS WHEN COPING WITH PARENTAL DIVORCE

- **You did not cause your parents' marital problems or divorce.**
- **It is common to have strong emotional responses to the divorce, often accompanied by feelings of split loyalties to your parents and pressures to rescue the more fragile parent.**
- **You have a right to continue your own life and to attend to your own hopes and needs.**

YOUR RIGHTS AND EXPECTATIONS

(Although your parents may not be able to provide them.....)

- **You have the right to want a satisfying relationship with each parent.**
- **You have the right not to be caught between your parents as they struggle with each other.**
- **You have the right to your feelings.**
- **You have the right to work through your emotions and to receive your parents' support in dealing with problems you are experiencing related to their divorce.**
- **You have the right to maintain your priority for family resources, especially concerning support for school.**

HELP! WHERE TO FIND IT:

University Counseling Center 747-5302
202 Union West 8-7 M-T / 8-5 W-F