

A letter to the divorced mother or father of the bride and/or groom . . .

By: JP Reynolds

I hear a lot of stories. Some are tales of divorced parents who have somehow managed to remain friends-- and some whose new spouses genuinely like each other! I know, many of you are thinking that I'm lying. Really—I'm not!

And then I hear stories where I literally need a flow chart to follow who is/was with whom.

Just yesterday I met with a bride who told me that her parents are divorced. They divorced when she was 9 years old. Her father remarried. The bride developed a warm relationship with her step-mom. Eventually, her father divorced her step-mom. The bride remained friends with the step-mom.

The bride's mother is now engaged. The bride's father is now engaged. The bride's step-mom is remarried. All six people will be present at the wedding.

The bride's father hates the bride's mother. The bride's mother hates the step-mom. The step-mom hates the father's fiancé. The fiancé hates the mother and the step-mom.

Are you confused? Do you hear just how OUTRAGEOUS all this is???

And the bride? At the beginning of the "flow-chart" she was laughing at the absurdity of it all. By the end, she was crying. She was crying.

The pressures of dealing with it all. . . the pain of seeing so much hatred among people she genuinely loves and cares for. . . has taken its toll on her.

She is weary from the demands that each of these people is making on her. As a communications coach, I offered her some tips on how to assert herself. But what she needed was more than "tips."

What she needs is KINDNESS. She needs for each of these people to be kind to her and to her fiancé. At the very least, they need to be civil with each other.

On behalf of this bride and on behalf of all the brides and grooms who have cried out of deep hurt I plead with you to stop focusing on your pain and rather, think of your child.

Your ex may have never offered you the kindness you deserved. Now, though, you have the opportunity, the responsibility, to offer your child all the kindness that was denied you.

I am so saddened and so tired of meeting brides and grooms whose hearts are torn by the thoughtless insensitivity of divorced parents.

I know it is not your intention to hurt your child—but you are. In more ways than you know.

You simply do not have the right to douse them with your anger and bitterness. Surely that is not the wedding gift you want to give them?

STOP the demands. STOP the ultimatums. STOP the drama.

Your child deserves the best of who you are on their wedding celebration.

How can you even think of offering them anything less?

Bless them through your hurt and pain—and don't let that hurt and pain cause you to curse them on this day of hope eternal.

Courage!