

# Three Biggest Divorce Mistakes

These seem to be the 3 biggest mistakes couple make when getting a divorce:

- 1. Following the well-intended advice of friends and family (aka the Greek chorus).**
- 2. Thinking that you will get to tell your side to the judge.**
- 3. Assuming a judge can make better decisions than you can.**

**MISTAKE ONE:** Following the well-intended advice of friends and family.

Everybody has his or her own legal interpretation of how your divorce will end up. This frame of reference is usually base on an episode of "L.A. Law" or a best friend who had a cousin who was divorced and got this or that type of settlement.

While some of this advice might be true, you need to remember that your divorce is like a fingerprint. There is not any other one like it. Nobody else had your kids, nobody else had your exact situation and if you go to court you will have a completely different set of attorneys and judges. Don't get false expectations from well-intended but misinformed and subjective sources.

**MISTAKE TWO:** Thinking you will get to tell your side of the story to a judge and that a judge will punish your spouse for being a bad person.

Instead, here's what happens: your case will be given at most 20 minutes at each hearing. And worse, you'll get to sit there and let your attorney talk. Do yourself a favor. Take a little field trip down to the local Court House. You will learn from this field trip that the divorcing couples never get to speak. They don't get to tell the judge anything. They have to trust that their attorney will be persuasive. The judge does not want to hear why your spouse is a bad person or why your life has been turned upside down because of your spouse's selfishness. Did you know that only 2% of divorce cases actually make it into the courtroom? Adversarial lawyers spend the whole time (and your money) preparing for this 2% chance.

The judge also won't hand out any punishment to your spouse because he or she is an evil person. You'd better hope your attorney is prepared.

**MISTAKE THREE:** (The Killer) Assuming a judge can make a better decision than you can.

We're always amazed that two reasonably normal and decent people would rather let a judge in a court of law determine how their children will be parented than come up with a plan on their own. They could do better most of the time by flipping a coin. An agreement a judge imposes on you will never be better than one you come up with because it was not your idea.

After all, you know what's best for your children. And What kind of message do you send to your children by showing them that you're too stubborn to put a parenting plan together without a judge.

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