

Shared Wisdom

*Please share your wisdom with your friends,
family and neighbours....*

1) Wise ways you cope with your husband leaving

*2) Wise ways you help your children cope with
their dad leaving or with mom and dad both
leaving*

3) Wise ways you welcome your husband home

Any additional words of wisdom?

*Name if you like or simply share
anonymously_____.*

And Ever Has It Been That Love Knows Not Its Own Depth Until The Hour Of separation. - *Kahlil Gibran*

Absence makes the heart grow fonder - or so the saying goes. . .or does it?

Being a couple means being together. This may not be the life you expected or wanted...

On top of your personal interpretations of the absence, each of you will have a different perspective depending on whether you're the one leaving or staying..

Away from home

The disadvantages, of course, are missing your home and the company of friends and family. You'll have to deal with the loneliness of having no partner with you . People away from home often find their emotions swing between heights of excitement and depths of longing.

Left at home

If you're the partner who's staying at home, you have the advantage of familiar surroundings and, hopefully, the support of friends and family. The downside of this is that you may feel abandoned and trapped. There are also few new experiences for you, just the humdrum of daily life and the loneliness of having to get on with it on your own.

Making it work

The key to making long-distance relationships work is to talk honestly and openly about how you feel. Couples often fall into one of the following traps:

Let's pretend it's OK - if asked how you are, you both say "I'm OK, everything's fine." Underneath you're both lonely, but are too scared to say in case the other person doesn't understand.

It's all right for you - you try to be nice when you talk, but the resentment slips out. You're both convinced your partner's having an easier time of it than you.

Be honest

Share your feelings about the separation - both the positives and the negatives. This will give you the opportunity to really understand each other and give the support and reassurance you both need.

Talk about your resentment at the situation rather than at each other and look forward to

the time when you're next together.

Keep communicating

Staying in touch regularly is the key to surviving a long-distance relationship. The greatest difficulty that couples in a long distance relationship face is to be a part of each other's life. When shared daily, they create a sense of inter-relatedness of knowing about the other.

- Use a variety of ways of communicating - email, telephone, text message, letter, etc. .
- Make the odd call just to say "I love you." .
- Keep a diary - then share it with your partner each time you meet.

Beware the reunion anticlimax

When you get to see each other again, chances are both of you will have built up great expectations of how fantastic your reunion is going to be. However, the reality often doesn't match up to the fantasy.

Many couples feel disappointed and frustrated when things aren't as they'd hoped. There may be awkward silences or even arguments all knowing that time is short and there is so much you wanted to achieve, experience this adds to the disappointment because you may be setting yourselves up for disappointment.

You can prevent this by making sure you've talked about how you want the reunion to be and always acknowledge that it takes time to get used to being around each other again.

Absence can make the heart grow fonder when you use the time to show your partner how much they mean to you.

Having a happy, loving "long distance" relationship and having a happy, loving "close proximity" relationship isn't really that different. Both require their own set of adjustments; . The needs are still the same - **to love and be loved, to connect, to cherish, be friends and be there for each other.**

Separation Anxiety

Is real

- To deal with separation anxiety it is helpful to understand it.
- Anxiety is a normal and adaptive system in the body that tells us when we are in danger.
- Anxiety that is present even when there is no real danger and which is prolonged can cause both children and adults difficulty in managing relationships, school or work demands, everyday life.

What can be done?

Talk about anxiety, teach your kids about it, and become an expert in it yourself.

Tell your child that it is normal to sometimes feel anxious when alone or away from mom or dad.

Tell your child that mom and dad will always come back.

Explain the reasons for the absences.

Normalize their experience.

Help your child identify some of the feelings, thoughts and behaviors related to his or her separation anxiety.

Tell child that what they are feeling is just the anxiety talking, Tell them we can't let the anxiety bully them around

Reinforce whenever possible...remind child of her successes, when she managed her anxiety and went e.g. to school for the whole day, took back control of acting out behavior and calmed herself down, or simply acknowledged feelings of anxiety, calling them by their name.

Creating a toolbox for your child;

Calm breathing will help a child (and adult) relax. Explain to your child that we tend to breathe faster when we are anxious. This can make us feel dizzy and lightheaded, which can make us even more anxious. Calm breathing involves taking slow, regular breaths through your nose, e.g. count to 5 as you inhale and exhale really slowly through the mouth in very short bursts of air, count as high as you can...

Another useful tool is ***muscle relaxation***. Teach your child the “flop”. He or she can imagine she is a rag doll and relax the whole body all at one. A second technique is to tense and release each muscle group/part of the body one at a time. (Great exercise for parents to help relax before sleep, combined with the calming breathing....sleep!)

Encourage children to use their words to express what they are feeling - and to acknowledge how they are feeling and the reasons they think are the cause.

Teach them to say:

“That’s just Mr. Worry trying to bully me...I don’t need to listen”

“I’m feeling anxiety right now... I will do some relaxing breathing to help myself”

“Dad will be home in a couple of weeks, I’m ok, its just my anxiety talking”

“I can handle waiting for Mom, I’ve done it before, nothing bad is going to happen”

Everything takes time...be patient, loving and reassuring.