**With all due respect, “I want a divorce”**

Half of the people going through a divorce will be on the receiving end of this message, but the other half are the bearers of this incredibly bad news. Let’s start with what NOT to do! Many people really blow it. You’re not sure of how your spouse will react, especially if infidelity is involved, and that fear can cause you to make very bad decisions. For example, thinking that being in a public place will less likely lead to hysterics.

In reality, that translates into your spouse having to sit in a public place while their world crashes down. This discussion will uncover emotions that many don’t even know they have. Let alone having to sort them out in public.

So, what’s the right answer? There probably isn’t one. This will be one of the most difficult conversations you ever have. Here are my best tips.

1. **Make sure the kids are somewhere else.** It’s a great time for sleepovers with friends or a night with grandparents. You both need space to work through this.
2. **Allow your spouse time to process.** My best advice is say it simply and directly and then let them know you don’t want to discuss anything right now. Maybe even make arrangements to leave and spend the night somewhere else. You’ll both be better off for it.
3. **Do it in person.** Whatever you do, do not do it in writing, an email, or God forbid a text message! Have the courage to say it to their face.
4. **Speak only about yourself.** Do not attack! No you statements. It should go something like this; “I have made a decision for myself that I need to tell you about. At this point, I can no longer stay in this marriage and I believe it will be best for both of us to start the divorce process. All of the reasons aren’t important anymore. I just know that I need things to change. I also know this is a lot to absorb and it’s not really a good idea to talk about anything now. I’ve made arrangements to stay somewhere else tonight, so you can have some time to yourself. I’m really sorry.” And quietly walk out.

Now it may not go that smoothly but that’s a good intention to start with.

1. **Make sure you’re safe**. If there is any possibility that you might be met with anger or violence, be sure that someone is with you. Have them stand by the front door while you speak to your spouse in private and then immediately leave.

I know this can be scary, but your life can’t move forward until you do. Good luck!