**LOVE/HATE LIST OF A SINGLE DAD by Matt Haviland**

I know many of the joys and hurts of being a single dad. I was one for nine years. It’s never easy, but our love for and dedication to our children make it worth the effort.

I once read a blog post that featured the “love/hate list” of a single mom. That inspired me to reach out to some single fathers I know to ask what they love and hate about their role. Here are real answers from single dads about what they love and hate (or really dislike) about being a single parent.

Hate (or really dislike)

*I hated never having anyone I could relate to. All my friends were married or in serious relationships. I had to be the on-call parent, 24 hours a day, never really having time for myself. I hated all the roles placed on me because I’m a man, a father, and responsible. I struggled with all the questions and random comments people would make. “Why aren’t you married?” “Your son needs a mother.” I hated always covering for the parent who never showed up. I never found a partner (with whom to) model what a healthy relationship looks like and (held) my son many nights while he cried himself to sleep because he missed his mom.*

*Being without the kids on half the holidays, not seeing them as often as I’d want to, and rarely being able to give both of my kids one on one time.*

*When friends and family are not around to share time, it can feel overwhelming. It feels like I have to put all my energy into just being with my daughter. It is difficult to focus on anything else you might want to get done during the day.*

*Not seeing my daughter every day. Not being able to pick up the phone and call her any time I want. I support her relationship with her mom, but I don’t think it’s reciprocated. Holidays or weekends with no significant other, especially when I don’t have my daughter on those days either. Trying to [co-parent](https://www.allprodad.com/co-parenting-with-integrity/" \t "_blank) through texts only. Saying goodbye after a concert or game—as she goes one way and I go the other.*

Don’t allow temporary circumstances to prevent you from forever investments. Find the good, opportunities, and hope in all times.

Love

*I loved spending time with my son and watching him grow. All the memories we were able to make. I didn’t have to have family court decide what kind of time I would be allowed to spend with him. We laughed a lot. My son reports that I did a great job as a young father. I love how being a single father forced me to grow up and align my priorities around the well-being of our family.*

*Bonding while playing board games, biking, and ice skating. Visiting special restaurants that the kids and I enjoy and don’t always get to experience.*

*What I love about being a single dad is that I can have intimate time with my daughter. When I have her, I can concentrate on being with her and making those memories.*

*“Time with our children is a blessing we cannot take for granted.”*

*Single or not, being a dad is one of the greatest gifts EVER! I know a good portion of how my daughter will view herself as an adult comes through my relationship with her now. I still get to do all the dad things: play, school, concerts, and games, paint her room. I take my daughter to church on the weekends I have her.*

Time with our children is a blessing we cannot take for granted. Use it to love on and build memories with your kids.

**Sound off: What do you love and what do you hate (or really dislike) about being a single dad?**

#### Matt Haviland

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