

Tools to Cope with the Emotional Aspects of Divorce

Contributed by:

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1. **Divorce is not for the unemotional.** Sadness, grief, and loss. Anger. Fear. Loneliness and emptiness. Guilt and shame. All these emotions and more are common to divorce. Depending on whether you are the leaver or the leaved, emotions vary and the timing of emotions varies.
2. Emotions are **golden** because they are the language of the soul. **Cherish** them. Listen to them. Use them as information to guide you in your new life.
3. Emotions around conflict and around money **WILL** be resurrected in your future life and your future relationships. **The only way to get past your emotions is to go through them.**
4. **Emotional separation** is the key to moving through and beyond your feelings. Emotional separation is thwarted by the extent of contact you have with your ex-partner. **Limit** your face-to-face, phone, and email contact with her/ him as much as possible. Exchange the kids at school.
5. **Rewire** your thinking. Holding on to anger, bitterness, jealousy, spite, hurt, blame will keep you stuck in those negative feelings. **Forgive** your ex- and move forward with your new life.
6. There will be many changes in your life: less money, smaller housing, less time with the kids, more work, less companionship. **Don't fight the changes.** Welcome change into your life and **trust** that your future will be good.
7. **Transition times**, when the kids reenter your home after being with their other parent, are always hard. **Recharge** your batteries just prior to their return, so that you can be available to do your **best parenting.**
8. **The divorce is never final.** As long as the kids have contact with both parents, your relationships with the kids will typically resurrect feelings from your past partnership.
9. The biggest challenges to second families are **step-family issues.** Many second relationships are threatened or destroyed because of issues concerning the step-children.
10. Divorce is one of those **sacred** milestones in our lives that **bless** us with **opportunities:** to become more aware of our core values, to make changes in our behavior and our lifestyle, to live more in concert with our values.

Resources

Crazy Times: Surviving Divorce and Building a New Life by Abigail Trafford. This book discusses all the potential heartaches of early separation and divorce.

Co-parenting via **ourfamilywizard.com**, a web site which assists co-parents: to manage information and to facilitate communication between co-parents and with their kids living in two households. Consists of shared calendars, message board, reminders, a journal, budget and expense information. Minimizes the need for physical meetings and/or phone calls, which are much more apt to become rancorous.

Support groups for separated and divorcing individuals:

St. Edward's Catholic Church, Bloomington 952-835-7101.

Wayzata Community Church, Paula Berry, 952-925-2711.

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, South Minneapolis, Carol Schneider, 612-927-7335.