



Grief and Divorce

Grief During Divorce

Grief is most often associated with the death of a spouse, but when partners divorce there is also a grieving process that takes place. When going through a divorce you are not only letting go of your marriage, you are also grieving the loss of what could have been. There is a roller coaster of emotions that you feel as you go through this transition.

The following course will help you better understand the individual stages of grief during divorce.

Five Stages of Grief

1. Denial

You just can't seem to accept that your marriage is really over. You never thought you find yourself in this situation. Denial is normal. It's a way to help you grasp what's happening without overwhelming emotions. It's a way for you to hide from the facts in order to deal with the pain.

2. Anger

Everything about your ex makes you angry. During and after your divorce, you may experience anger directed in a variety of ways depending on the situation that ultimately led to the divorce.

3. Bargaining

You find yourself thinking "If only..." "I could have..." "I should have..." and "What if?" In essence, you are attempting to change the past or the current reality through your thoughts. In a way, bargaining is trying to rationalize what happened. You are trying to fix what has already happened.

4. Depression

You may just want to bury yourself under the covers for months. Odds are, you will go through depression like not eating, exercising, or sleeping properly. The nights can be difficult filled with restless sleep. During the depression stage, you may find times when you feel depressed about having to move, find a new job, and starting over.

5. Acceptance

Acceptance comes when you accept that your marriage is over and you have let go of the past. You now feel ready to build a new life for yourself. You may still experience feelings of anger, sadness, guilt, or blame but the emotions do get less intense as time goes on.

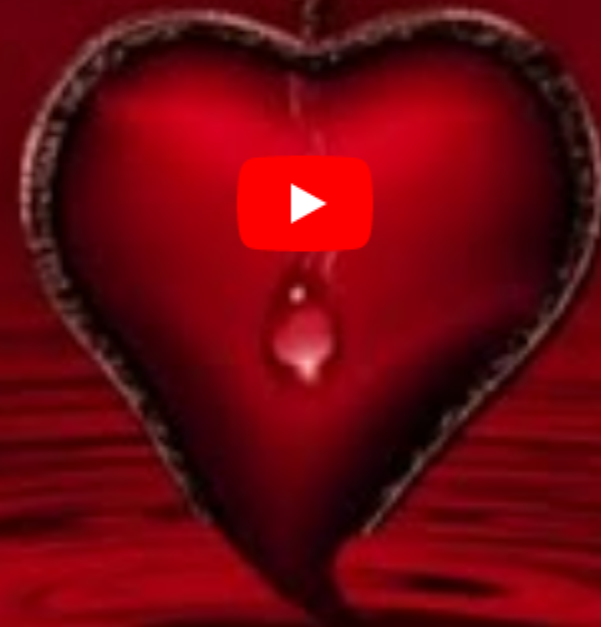


After Divorce: What Are You Grieving?



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5 Tips for Grief After Divorce

1. Loss is Loss

Whether it is death or divorce, loss is loss, the person you once loved is no longer with you. People often think that because divorce is a decision that it isn't as painful, but this is not true. "When you go through a divorce, it's like a death of love," according to Cindy Holbrook from Your Tango. "Even if you're the one who initiated the divorce, you will still grieve. This is because you are not only mourning the loss of your marriage, you are also grieving the loss of your hopes and dreams—the belief of what you thought your life was going to look like."

2. Let Yourself of the Hook

You may have seen the end of your marriage was coming and now you are questioning why you have so many emotions. You still have to grieve and you are exactly where you should be in the grieving process. Be patient and kind to yourself. Divorce is hard. You are allowed to have feelings of hurt, anger, sadness, and depression. It is okay to not be okay.

You may need help to sort through your feelings with a counselor or support groups. There is no shame in getting help.

3. Forgive Yourself

Anger is a natural part of divorce and the grieving process. You may be angry at your partner, angry at your circumstances, or even angry with yourself. Some people look at their marriage as a waste of time, but it is important to remember that not all memories with your partner are bad. You may have children together and experienced many happy and fun times. Forgive yourself for past decisions and possible mistakes that led you to this point. Forgiving yourself is an important step in your healing in order to move on.

4. Moving On

As you move forward with your life you may have times when you must interact or see your ex. You may be surprised to have feelings of anger or sadness bubble up to the surface. This is normal, Just be careful who you share your feelings with. You never want to talk negatively about your ex for your children to hear. Being involved in a support group or therapy is a great way to talk about your feelings so you can continue to move on.

5. Acceptance

Remember that grieving a divorce is not the same for everyone. Don't let other people tell you how you should feel, how long you should feel a certain emotion, or compare yourself to others. The grieving process is full of ups and downs. Once you are in acceptance and have accepted the reality of your situation, it will be easier to move on but you will still have difficult moments. This is normal. Try not to judge yourself because that will only make matters worse.

“The key to recovery from grief is action, not time!”

-griefrecoverymethod.com

References

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