

# Managing Divorce

## Coping with Loss



Recognizing and accepting loss is a significant step toward recovery. In many ways, a divorce is the death and rebirth of your own life. It's a journey that can take time to complete, due to the losses of a shared future, financial and emotional security, shared experiences, familiar routines, possessions, friendships, and time with children.

## Support Systems



It is not uncommon for mutual friends to pick sides. They may not make obvious statements about it, but don't chase mutual friends if they seem reticent. Instead, rely on your individual circle of friends and family for support. Use other resources as well, such as your local church or synagogue or local support groups.

## Use Good Self-Care



Use routine to counteract the destabilizing forces from divorce. Get plenty of rest and go to bed at the same time each night. Avoid using drugs and alcohol as coping mechanisms. Be sure to eat right and exercise for a short time each day in order to stay fresh and keep your head clear.

## Thought Processing



While coping with these emotions can be painful, they are normal. The best way to improve is to deal with your situation in the most positive and constructive manner possible.

## Avoid Unnecessary Conflict



Do everything you can to keep the line of communication open with your spouse. Never threaten or take legal action when you are angry or upset. Be open to mediation and negotiation. Keeping disputes out of the court system usually results in smoother and more amicable resolutions. Hiring lawyers often escalates conflict.

## Refocus Your Energy



Explore new interests and hobbies. Activities that broaden your social circle are best. Read a book you've been meaning to get around to. Make a change around the house by painting a room, changing your landscaping, or rearranging the furniture. Now is a good time to make a few changes to your life in order to fill the void of loss.

## Be Kind to Yourself



While it's important to admit to and learn from the mistakes you've made, berating yourself over them is never helpful. Forgive yourself and forgive your spouse if you can. Things may look hopeless today, but you can—and will—move on to brighter days.

## Deal With Legalities Quickly



Once the decision to divorce has been made, finalize it as quickly as possible. Drawn out battles delay closure, add to expenses, and drain emotional energy.

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