THE EMOTIONAL PROCESS OF DIVORCE

Divorce involves change…changes involves loss…and growth.

People are usually unprepared for the extent of the pain and the length of time it takes to recover. Understanding the process can help. Contradictory feelings and thoughts occur during divorce. People can expect to experience the feelings below. These feelings come and go, often with upsetting rapidity. Also, people may become stuck in one feeling for a long time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEELINGS</th>
<th>THOUGHTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>This can’t be happening. I don’t believe it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>It’s not my fault. That self-centered jerk is ruining my life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bargaining</td>
<td>I’ll do anything if you’ll stay in the marriage -OR- I’ll give you everything if you’ll agree to the divorce.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>My life will never get any better.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>I can’t change the situation. I can only change my reaction to it.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Often there are physical symptoms…

- Change in appetite
- Difficulty concentrating
- Insomnia
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Nausea

Behavior that helps…

- Being patient with yourself
- Crying
- Seeing the humor in the situation
- Writing a journal
- Telling your story to people you trust
- Reading
- Connecting with people you love
- Eating well
- Expressing artistic endeavors
- Gardening
- Taking time to make changes
- Exercising
- Seeking counseling shows courage and the determination to get better
- Attending support groups is particularly helpful
- Sharing experiences with others who have been there diminishes the pain

RECOVERY IS WORK. IT TAKES YEARS, NOT MONTHS…. 