

# Separation and/or Divorce



Sometimes, marriages do not succeed. The end of a marriage can be a relief to some people, but it can also be one of the most stressful and trying times in your life. There are so many things you need to know and understand. Throughout the process, it can become easy to neglect or turn off the emotional responses to this difficult life transition. If children are involved, the stress level is likely to be even higher.

When a marriage ends, the loss of a loved one through separation or divorce can often be emotionally traumatic for both partners. Divorce is only second to death in terms of one of life's most stressful events.

Many people who are suffering from this loss feel left out or uneasy around married friends, unsure of themselves and uncertain about their futures.

Therapy can help you deal with the natural grief process and offers an opportunity for turning the pain of loss into an experience of positive growth.

- Increased emotional health and self-respect
- New skills to deal with the pain of loss
- Healthier family relationships
- Renewed energy to be more effective parents, and improve the standard of living for themselves and their families
- Help navigate the post-divorce recovery stages

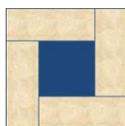
*“Divorce may contribute to certain mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, or personality diagnoses. It can result in nearly unbearable feelings of loneliness or grief.”*

## **Children? How you can help them through divorce.**

- Tell children about the divorce together, if possible.
- Answer children's questions honestly, avoiding unnecessary details.
- Reassure children they are not to blame for divorce.
- Tell children they are loved and will be taken care of.
- Include the other parent in school and other activities.
- Be consistent and on time to pick up and return children.
- Develop a workable parenting plan that gives children access to both parents.
- Guard against canceling plans with children.
- Give children permission to have a loving, satisfying relationship with other parent.
- Avoid putting children in the middle and in the position of having to take sides.
- Avoid pumping children for information about the other parent.
- Avoid arguing and discussing child support issues in front of children.

## **When to consider a therapist.**

- When you feel overwhelmed and a need for help coping.
- Help navigating the wide spectrum of emotions such as pain, anger, or grief
- When you would like guidance through the emotional stages of loss
- You are using a substance to cope
- You feel disconnected from previously beloved activities
- Your friends have told you they are concerned.



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Marriage and family therapists have confidence in the institution of marriage. It is ideal to have a sound marriage built on trust, commitment, and shared meaning.

But, marriage and family therapists know that not every marriage can or should be saved. Family Therapists treat from a relationship perspective that incorporates family systems. They know a lot about relationship and individual dynamics. Call E.J. at 919.753.6238 for a consultation.