

What to Divorce When You Are Divorcing

by

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A Note to Readers:

Do you want to know why breaking up is hard to do? Because ending the marriage is *only* the first step. If you want to move forward after your divorce, in addition to your ex there are a few other things that you must be willing to leave behind.

Worry, self-pity and anger are examples of the kinds of things you must also divorce while you are divorcing.

The judge can end your marriage, but it is up to you to work on letting go of the other things that might be holding you back.

This book contains words of advice and assurance to support you in moving on after your marriage ends.

#1: Worry

Below you will find insight on the harmful effects of worrying. The next time you find yourself worrying about something return to this page and remind yourself that no matter how often it may appear or comforting it may seem, *worry* is not your friend. It cannot help you solve your problems, meet challenges or overcome obstacles. Worry will not heal your past wounds or shield you from future pain. It will only undermine your present efforts to move on.

10 Quotes About Worry:

Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow. It empties today of its strength. -- Corrie Ten Boom

Worry steals the bloom from the cheek and the lightness from the pulse; it takes away the appetite and turns hair gray. -- Benjamin Disraeli

Worry is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained. -- Arthur Somers Rodie

Worry a little every day and in a lifetime you will lose a couple of years. If something is wrong fix it if you can. But train yourself not to worry. Worry never fixes anything. -- Mary Hemingway

Worry compounds the futility of being trapped on a dead end street. Thinking opens new avenues. -- Cullen Hightower

Worrying gives you something to do, but it gets you nowhere. -- Glenn Turner

A day of worry is more exhausting than a day of work. -- John Lubbock

We have to fight them daily, like fleas, those many small worries about the morrow, for they sap our energies. -- Etty Hillesum

Try not to worry as it's sticky and hard to scrub off. -- Terri Guillemets

Heavy thoughts bring on physical maladies; when the soul is oppressed so is the body. -- Martin Luther

#2: Borrowing Trouble

A woman, whom I shall call *Mrs. What If* hired me to represent her in her divorce action. She had been married fifteen years, she and her husband had two kids. Their daughter was eleven and their son was eight. She was a nurse and her husband worked as an admission counselor at the local university. The split-up appeared amicable. Her husband moved out of the marital house and into a rental property they owned.

The only real issue appeared to be custody of kids. She said he was a good father but traveled extensively with his job. She was the primary caretaker during the marriage and she wanted primary custody once the divorce was finalized.

After she finished sharing the facts of her case, I assured her she had a good chance of getting what she wanted. Instead of being encouraged by my assessment, she started borrowing trouble.

She asked, What if he decides to fight for full custody of the kids?

I replied, What if he doesn't?

She asked, What if he persuades the kids to come live with him?

I replied, What if he doesn't?

She asked, What if he refuses to pay child support?

I replied, What if he doesn't?

She asked, What if he decides to bring up stuff that happened before we got married?

I replied, What if he doesn't?

We went back and forth like this for a few minutes, and then I explained that my goal was not to be annoying by responding to her questions with a question. My point was to show her there is no point in borrowing trouble by focusing on potential problems until and unless they actually materialize. I used this example to further clarify my point: Imagine you are going on a weeklong vacation to the Bahamas. Because your attire will consist primarily of tee-shirts, shorts and swimsuits you are able to pack everything you need into one suitcase which you can easily manage. But, before you leave for the airport you ask yourself *what if it snows?* And instead of trusting you will find a way to keep warm if by some remote chance snow falls on the normally tropical island, you decide to pull out another suitcase and fill it with long pants, thermal underwear, sweaters and snow boots. And now you have two suitcases which weigh more than you can comfortably carry.

You have the strength you need to bear the troubles you have. It is the borrowed troubles that will weigh you down and hinder your effort to move forward.

#3: Asking Dumb Questions

Forget what your middle school teacher may have said about there being no such thing as a dumb question. She only said that to encourage students to raise their hands and participate in class. Did you cheat on me before we got married? Did you only marry me because I was pregnant? Did you ever really love me? These are examples of dumb questions. Why are they dumb? Because, now that your marriage has ended, the answers will not change the past or fix what's now broken in your life.

Here are a few more examples of dumb questions that you should not waste your time asking:

Questions in which you already know the response. -- I had a client who returned home early from work and found her husband in bed with their nineteen-year-old babysitter. Six months after her husband left her and moved in with the babysitter she wanted to know whether he ever cheated on her during the marriage.

Questions posed to someone whom you cannot trust to give you an honest response. -- Do you really think your husband is going to tell you why he walked away from your thirty-year marriage without as much as a backward glance? You could not trust him to honor your marriage vows, why do you trust him to honestly answer this question?

Questions posed to someone you don't need to be talking to in the first place. -- Let's just say for the purposes of argument that your mother-in-law made it clear from the moment you met her son that you were not good enough for him. And after you two walked down the aisle she took every opportunity she could throughout your marriage to make you feel like an unwelcome intruder. Whether you should continue talking to her after your marriage ends is up for debate.

What is crystal clear is that she is *not* someone you should rely on to help you find the answers you need to move on.

Questions designed to hurt or illicit a negative response from the person to whom you posed the question. Why are you so stupid? Why can't you do anything right? Why are you such a loser? What's wrong with you? Just because you put a question mark at the end of a statement that does not automatically transform a verbal attack into a question.

Questions in which you really don't want to know the answer. Do you really want him to tell you why he chose his mistress over you? After 20 years of marriage, do you really want to know if he ever loved you or do you really want to know if he regrets the time you all spent together?

How can you tell the difference between a dumb and a smart question? Dumb questions will generate dumb responses or responses that make you feel stuck in the past. The response to smart questions will provide you with the information and insight you need to move forward.

#4: Minding Your Ex's Business

First, the good news. There is something you can do right now to accelerate the speed at which you are able to let go and move forward after your divorce. What is it? Commit to minding your own business. Now, here comes the bad news. After the marriage ends, most women have a very difficult time doing this. The first step is recognizing the things that were once but no longer any of your business. Here are three examples:

How he spends his money. As long as your ex/husband pays what he has agreed or been ordered to pay, then what he does with his money is none of your business. How can he afford a new car? Where did he get the money to take a week-long cruise? Or, how can he afford to attend the Super Bowl? I know your inquiring mind may want to know the answers to these questions but the truth is its none of your business.

How he parent's your children. When your kids are in your ex/husband's care he does not have to feed them at the same times you do. He doesn't have to make them go to bed the same time you make them go to bed. It would be nice if he does but if he doesn't, he doesn't. What happens at your house is your business and what happens at his house is his business

Who he chooses to spend time with. In a perfect world your ex/spouse would introduce you to anyone he is dating or plans to marry prior to introducing them to your children. And upon meeting her, you and his new flame would share a few niceties, acknowledge your mutual admiration for one another and promise to respect each other boundaries. But if we lived in a perfect world you would not have an ex/spouse would you? In the real world, you may have been his first love, but there is a good chance you will not be his last.

While you were together, arguably everything he did or said was your business. And everything you did or said was his business. However, once the marriage ends, your business is your business and his business is his business. Any attempts you make to mind his business are destined to fail and will eventually bring the steps you are taking to move forward to a screeching halt.

#5: Post-Marital Complaining/Griping

Do you want to know the only thing that is worse than listening to someone endlessly moan and groan about her no go good spouse? Listening to someone moan and groan about her no go ex-spouse.

I have a cousin who was married 15 years to a guy she had no business marrying in the first place. Why? Because when they started dating he was still married to his second wife. Of course, neither one of them knew about the other. And when the truth was revealed, his wife had the good sense to kick him to the curb and my cousin foolishly allowed him to move in with her.

Two weeks after his divorce was final, my cousin stood in front of a church full of people and vowed to love, honor and obey him. And from that date forward, no family gathering was complete without everyone having to listen to her complain about what a rotten husband he was. He didn't help with the bills or take care of their three children. Since he never showed up at any of the family events, she complained about that too.

After a few years of this, it got to the point where I had become very strategic about where I would sit at family events ensuring that I would never be in close enough proximity to her to have to endure her complaining. I succeeded but it was exhausting, like playing a game of musical chairs with a group of kindergartners.

That's why I am ashamed to admit that I was over the moon when I heard that she was finally putting him out. I mistakenly believed her complaining would end with the marriage. Their marriage has ended, they have been divorced for several years, yet she continues to complain about him.

Moving on after your divorce will be a lot easier if you have support and encouragement from friends and family. But, if you are constantly complaining then instead of reaching out to you they may run in the other direction.

#6: Fighting with the Facts

A few weeks ago a woman came into my office wanting to file for alimony. She had met with three other attorneys who told her that the facts of her case did not support a claim for alimony. In other words, she was told that if she took the case to court the judge would not award her a dime.

Why? Because under the laws of our state, there is a three-prong test that judge's use to determine whether or not someone is entitled to receive alimony from their spouse. First, the person seeking alimony must need the money. It must be clear that she doesn't have sufficient income to meet her living expenses. Two, her spouse must have the ability to pay. After meeting his living expenses he has to have enough money left over to pay alimony. And, thirdly, the person seeking alimony can't have done something to cause the marriage to breakdown.

The woman who came to see me failed the test. The facts of her case made it clear she was not entitled to alimony. She didn't need the money. Her income exceeded her monthly expenses. He did not have the ability to pay. She earned almost twice as much as he did during the marriage. And when they separated he assumed responsibility for the marital debt. After they separated, he was barely making it from paycheck to paycheck. And guess what caused the

marriage to breakdown? Their marriage ended because after returning home from a three-day religious retreat, she confessed that for over three years she had been having an affair with a guy she knew from high school.

After I explained to her why I agreed with the other attorney's she consulted, she said she did not like my assessment and would not quit until she found an attorney who would take her case and make her husband pay alimony.

The truth is, you don't ever have to agree with the laws that govern or the facts of your case. However, if you want to move on, at some point you have to accept them.

#7: Magical Thinking

All dogs have four legs. Snoopy is a dog. Snoopy has four legs. This is an example of logical thinking. One plus one equals two. This is an example of linear thinking. Because I am lactose intolerant, the last fifty times I ate ice cream I got sick but the next time I eat ice cream I won't simply because I want a different result. This is an example of magical thinking, which is the type of thinking you engage in whenever you fail to use historical data to predict future outcomes and results.

Since magical thinking, unlike the other two types of thinking, will cause you to continue making the same mistakes over and over again, it is important that you recognize the degree to which you are prone to think this way.

Here is a simple quiz to help you assess your proclivity for magical thinking. Carefully read each of the following questions and answer yes or no.

Question One: Prior to their marriage Tom lost his temper and physically assaulted Tina on several occasions. During their marriage Tom lost his temper and physically assaulted Tina and their children on several occasions. If the opportunity presents itself, do you think that now that they are separated Tom will refrain from assaulting Tina or the children?

Question Two: Bill lied to Betty constantly throughout the marriage. Bill lied about graduating from grad school when in fact he never graduated from college. Bill lied about being an only child when in fact he has three other siblings. Bill lied about being downsized from his

job when in fact he was fired for showing up late. Do you think Bill is telling Betty the truth when he insists he has changed and wants to reconcile?

Question Three: Jack and Jill's marriage broke down because Jack would not work regularly. And when Jack was working he used his money to finance hobbies that he could not afford. Do you think that now that they are separated Jill can count on Jack to make regular spousal support payments?

Question Four: Throughout their marriage Will never helped Wanda take care of the children. He refused to help with their homework or transport them to any of their afterschool activities. Will told Wanda on more than one occasion that having kids was her idea and therefore she should be responsible for taking care of them. Do you think that now that they are separated Will is going to work with Wanda in co-parenting the kids?

Question Five: During his marriage, Sam never reported his actual income to the IRS. He would work odd jobs and insist on being paid cash. Sam would claim deductions that he was not entitled to and he went so far as to claim his mother as a dependent although she only actually lived with him a few months each year. Do you think Sam is going to pay child support based on his actual earnings?

Here's how to score your responses:

One or more "Yes" responses is a clear indication that you engage in some degree of magical thinking. But that doesn't mean you have to continue thinking this way. The first step in changing the way you think is to acknowledge the problem. You can do this by reflecting on situations in your marriage in which engaging in magical thinking led to unwanted results or consequences. And as you move forward, after your divorce, commit to learning from your mistakes and correcting the flaws in your thinking.

#8: Pretending Not to Know

There is nothing more disheartening than to have a grown woman walk into my office, look me in the eye and tell me her marriage has broken down and then pretend that she has no clue why it happened. Let me share a conversation I had with a potential client,

whom I will call *Mrs. I Have No Idea What Went Wrong.*

Client: My husband came home last week and after 12 years of marriage told me he wants to divorce.

Me: Did something happen?

Client: No, I have no idea what happened?

Me: Did he say anything else other than he wanted a divorce?

Client: He said he was tired of coming home after working 12-hour days while I stayed home and watched TV all day.

Me: Is that true?

Client: Yes, he has been complaining about that for the past three years.

Me: Did he say anything else?

Client: He said he was tired of me spending the money he was saving for kids college on shoes and clothes.

Me: Is that true?

Client: Yes, I promised him I would stop but two weeks ago he found out I had taken another \$500 out of the account and ordered a bunch of stuff off the home shopping network.

Me: Did he say anything else?

Client: He said he had hoped I would take marriage counseling more seriously and that he was disappointed that I missed two of my three individual sessions. And he couldn't understand why I didn't take the counselors advice that I should seek treatment for a shopping addiction.

Me: Is that true?

Client: Yes, I felt like she was picking on me so I stopped going.

Me: Are you sure you don't know why he wants a divorce?

Client: No, I told you I don't have any idea what happened. I thought everything was good between us. He must be having an affair.

Why do women like *Ms. I Have No Idea What Went Wrong* pretend not to know what caused their marriages to breakdown? I don't know for sure, but here's my best guess: as long as we are pretending we don't have a problem, we don't have to take responsibility for fixing the problem we are pretending we don't have.

The fact is, pretending not to know the source of your problems when it is blatantly obvious to everyone else on the planet may not stop you from moving on after your divorce. However, you don't just want to move on for the sake of moving on. If your goal is to move on to bigger and better things than what you left behind, you have to stop pretending and start taking responsibility for your role in creating and contributing to the problems in your marriage.

#9: Should-ing

Should-ing is not a real word. It is the word I made up to describe the unending stream of self-talk that is comprised primarily of second-guessing, self-condemnation and recrimination. It sounds something like this:

I should have never married him. I should have listened to my mother. I should not have listened to my mother. I should have left him a lot sooner. I should have waited until the kids graduated before leaving. I should have asked for alimony. I should not have asked for alimony. I should have confronted him sooner about the affair. I should have never confronted him about the affair. I should have lied when he asked me where I was going. I should not have lied when he asked me where I was going. I should have tried harder to make our relationship work. I should have agreed to go to marital counseling. I should not have agreed to go to marital counseling. I should have spoke up sooner. I should have never said anything. I should have been a better listener. I should have been a better wife. I should have been a better mother. I should have been a better house-keeper. I should have been a better lover. I should have hired a different lawyer. I should have fired my lawyer. I should have settled my case before going to court. I should not have settled my case before going to court. I should have lied on the witness stand. I should not have lied on the witness stand...

What is done is done. There is no point in wasting time on what you should or should not have done before, during or after your marriage ended. Take a giant step forward in your quest to move on by deleting the word *should* from your vocabulary.

#10: Caring About What Your Ex/Spouse Has to Say

Do you want to know how you will know that you are *really* ready to move on after your marriage ends? You will no longer be interested in what your ex/spouse has to say about anything other than matters directly related to your children or shared finances. And whenever he starts talking about anything other than these things, you will stop listening and allow his words to enter into one ear and exit out of the other. And since your ex/spouse is not your lawyer, when you are really ready to move on you will ignore whatever he has to say about the outcome of any pending legal claims. And unless your ex/spouse is your priest, pastor or spiritual advisor, when you are really ready to move on, you will not give a flying fig what he has to say about your personal conduct or character and you will not dignify any comments he may have about these things with a response.

#11: The Word "Never"

I am going to assume that when you married your ex/spouse you *never* thought it would end in divorce. The truth is you could not predict what the future held before you got married and you won't be able to do so after your divorce is finalized.

That's why I refuse to listen to women talk about what they believe will *never* happen after their marriage ends. *I am never going to get married again. I am never going to trust a man again. I am never going to let myself get hurt again. I am never going to fall in love again. I will never be happy again. I will never stop hurting.*

Every time you use the word *never* you are slamming the door in the face of new possibilities. You have to trust and believe that your life after divorce will be filled with good and wonderful things. Otherwise you won't be willing to do what needs to be done to move forward.

#12: The Words "I Can't"

There will likely be a long list of things you will need to do in order to move on after your divorce. These things might include forgiving your ex/spouse for the things he did to cause your marriage to break-down or forgiving yourself for the things you didn't do to save your marriage. Perhaps your list will be comprised of more practical tasks like learning how to create a monthly budget or how to improve your credit rating.

There is a wrong way to approach this list. And it goes something like this: Divide the things you need to do into two categories - "Things You Can Do" and "Things You Can't Do." Put the things you don't feel any resistance to doing or that you have successfully done in the past into the first category and put the things you feel uncomfortable doing or don't believe you can do into the second category. Then devote half of your time to working on the items on your "Can Do" list and the other half of your time whining and worrying about the items on your "Can't Do" list.

Here is a much better approach:

Divide the items you need to do into these two categories -- "Things You Can Do" and "Things You Can Do With Prayer, Patience, Practice and Persistence." Place the things you feel comfortable doing and have succeeded doing in the past in the first category and put everything else in the second category. Then constantly remind yourself there is *nothing* you can't do and then work without ceasing on whatever needs to be done.

#13: The Words "I feel"

Just in case you are thinking you don't have to move on after your divorce because "you don't feel like" doing the things that need to be done to make that happen, let me try to change your mind. When teaching divorce workshops, I'll often ask the women in attendance who have children to raise their hands if they ever had to get up in the middle of the night to care for a crying baby and most of the hands in the room will go up.

And then I ask them to raise their hand if they waited until they "felt" like tending to the baby prior to changing their diapers or giving them a bottle? Surprise! Surprise! No one ever raises their hand. Why? Mature adults don't ask themselves "How do I feel?" before taking necessary

action. They ask, "Does this need to be done?" and if the answer is "yes" they do it regardless of how they feel.

#14: Self-Pity

Self-pity in its early stages is as snug as a feather mattress. Only when it hardens does it become uncomfortable. – Maya Angelou

You wouldn't be human if you didn't indulge in a little "woe is me" thinking in the first weeks and months after your marriage ends. But at some point you have to stop feeling sorry for yourself and move on.

Never feel self-pity, the most destructive emotion there is. How awful to be caught up in the terrible squirrel cage of self. – Millicent Fenwick

Why is self-pity so destructive? Because the longer you engage in it the more thoroughly you will be convinced that you deserve what happened and the less likely you be to take the steps needed to move beyond it.

Self-pity is easily the most destructive of the non-pharmaceutical narcotics; it is addictive, gives momentary pleasure and separates the victim from reality. – John W. Gardner

What is the reality you need to focus on? You are not the only woman to go through what you are going through and that you are not a victim of your circumstances. You have what it takes to transcend them.

Self-pity is our worst enemy and if we yield to it, we can never do anything wise in the world. – Helen Keller

Yielding to your worst enemy is not an acceptable option. At first you yield then before you know it you will be waving the white flag and in all-out surrender mode. What should you do when confronted by your worst enemy? Stand up and fight self-pity until it retreats.

What poison is to food, self-pity is to life. – Oliver C. Wilson

Finding an antidote begins with identifying the source of the poison. If you have allowed self-pity to contaminate your days, take some time to reflect on when and where you developed this habit.

Self-pity is a death that has no resurrection, a sinkhole from which no rescuing hand can drag you because you have chosen to sink. – Elizabeth Elliot

Here is a way you can rescue yourself from the sinkhole of self-pity. List three reasons you are going to *choose* to rise above your "poor me" mythology. Examples might include: (1) Because everyone makes mistakes. (2) Because there are women a lot worse off than me and (3) Because I am stronger than I think I am.

#15: Anger

Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned. – Buddha If you get burned enough times you will eventually become consumed by the flames. And you know what happens next? Your dreams, your relationships and everything that matters to you will turn to ashes.

He who angers you conquers you. – Elizabeth Kenny

Whenever you allow your ex/spouse to piss you off to the point that you can no longer contain your temper or control your behavior then the game is over and you might as well sit back and watch him run his victory lap.

For every minute you are angry, you lose sixty seconds of happiness. – Author Unknown

Life is short. When you are healthy and in the prime of your life sixty-seconds of happiness may seem like a small price to pay for a minute of outrage. At the end of your life, when you are on your deathbed imagine what you would be willing to pay to regain the minute of happiness you wasted being angry at your ex/spouse.

Anger is one letter short of danger. – Author Unknown

The prison system is filled with inmates serving life sentences for murdering someone they didn't initially intend to kill. First, they get angry and lose control of their temper. And then they stab, shoot or run their victim over with a car.

Temper tantrums, however fun they may be to throw, they rarely solve whatever problem is causing them. – Lemony Snicket

This quote should come with this disclaimer. Tantrums are not only fun but they can work if your goal is to convince your mommy to let you have ice cream for dinner or stay up past your bedtime. However, tantrums will have absolutely no impact on your ex/spouse's behavior.

You don't have to attend every argument you are invited to. – Author Unknown

In other words you don't have to respond every time your ex/spouse does something to provoke you. I once represented a woman who was arrested for getting into an altercation with her ex at their son's school conference. When I asked her why she threw a stapler at her ex she said, "he started the fight when he falsely accused me of neglecting my son." Her ex may have started the fight but for her son's sake she should have ended it by ignoring him.

The best remedy for a short temper is a long walk. – Jacqueline Schiff

The shorter your temper, the longer you may need to walk. And if you suffer from frequent outbursts as in every time you and your ex/spouse cross paths, then as a preventive measure you may want to incorporate a long walk into your daily routine.

There are two things a person should never be angry at, what they can help, and what they cannot. – Plato

Channel your anger into fixing the things you can help and moving beyond the things you cannot.

#16: Fear

Brace yourself. As you navigate the hills and valleys of your separation and divorce fear will invariably rear its ugly head. Fear of change. Fear of confrontation. Fear of failure. Here is some advice on what you can do to douse your fears before they extinguish your chances of moving on:

12 Quotes About Fear

There are four ways you can handle fear. You can go over it, under it, or around it. But if you are ever to put fear behind you, **you must walk straight through it.** Once you put fear behind you. Leave it there. -- Donna Favors

Confront your fears, list them, get to know them, and only then will you be able to put them aside and move ahead. -- Jerry Gille

Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. **Go out and get busy.** -- Dale Carnegie

You can conquer almost any fear if you will only **make up your mind** to do so. For remember, fear doesn't exist anywhere except in the mind. -- Dale Carnegie

We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face... we must **do that which we think we cannot.** – Eleanor Roosevelt

I keep the telephone of my mind open to peace, harmony, health, love and abundance. Then, whenever doubt, anxiety or fear try to call me, they get the busy signal – and soon they'll forget my number. – Edith Armstrong

Many of our fears are tissue-paper-thin, and **a single courageous step** would carry us clear through them. – Brendan Francis

Obstacles are like wild animals. They are cowards but they will bluff you if they can. If they see you are afraid of them... they are liable to spring upon you; but if you **look them squarely in the eye**, they will slink out of sight. – Orison Swett Marden

Feed your faith and your fears will starve to death. – Author Unknown

March On. Do not tarry. To go forward is to move toward perfection. March on, and fear not the thorns, or the sharp stones on life's path. – Kahlil Gibran

Expose yourself to your deepest fear; after that, fear has no power, and the fear of freedom shrinks and vanishes. You are free. -- Jim Morrison

If you **know the enemy and know yourself** you need not fear the results of a hundred battles. -- Sun Tzu

Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to **understand more**, so that we may fear less. -- Marie Curie

#17: Uncertainty and Doubt

What is the *one* thing about your life before divorce that you can be certain will also be true about your life after divorce? There is very little about it which you can be certain. Here's some advice and assurance on how to deal with uncertainty and doubt:

14 Quotes About Uncertainty and Doubt

Doubts and mistrust are the mere panic of timid imagination, which the steadfast heart will conquer, and the large mind transcend. – Helen Keller

When nothing is sure, everything is possible. – Margaret Drabble

If we insist on being as sure as is conceivable... we must be content to creep along the ground, and can never soar. – John Henry Cardinal Newman

Any coward can fight a battle he's sure of winning. – George Eliot

The unknown is what it is. And to be frightened of it is what sends everybody scurrying around chasing, dreams, illusions, wars, peace, love, hate and all that... Accept that it's unknown, and it's plain sailing. – John Lennon

There is a time for departure, even when there's no certain place to go. – Tennessee Williams

If we wait until we've satisfied all the uncertainties, it may be too late. – Lee Iacocca

There is no advancement to him who stands trembling because he cannot see the end from the beginning. – E.J. Klemme

If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts, but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties. – Francis Bacon

Nobody can really guarantee the future. The best we can do is size up the chances, calculate the risks involved, estimate our ability to deal with them and make our plans with confidence. – Henry Ford II

The only realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith. – Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we often might win, by fearing to attempt. – William Shakespeare

They who have conquered doubt and fear have conquered failure. – James Allen

Doubt of whatever kind, can be ended by action alone. – Thomas Carlyle

#18: Hopelessness

Hopelessness happens. During your separation and divorce you will undoubtedly confront disappointment and moments when everything goes wrong and nothing seems to turn out well. At times like this, never give in. Never give out. Never give up. Here is some advice and assurance on how you can keep hope alive:

11 Quotes About Hope

It has never been and never will be, easy work! But the road that is built in hope is more pleasant to travel than the road built in despair, even though they both lead to the same destination. – Marian Zimmer Bradley

Everything that is done in the world is done with hope. – Martin Luther

He who does not hope to win has already lost. – Jose Joaquin Olmedo

Hope and patience are two sovereign remedies for all, the surest reposals, the softest cushions to lean on in adversity. – Robert Burton

Man can live about forty days without food, about three days without water, about eight minutes without air... but only for one second without hope. – Hal Lindley

No hope, no action. – Peter Levi

Hope is an adventure, a going forward, a confident search for a rewarding life. – Dr. Karl Menninger

Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible and achieves the impossible. – Author Unknown

Hope is tomorrow's veneer over today's disappointment. -- Evan Esar

The road that is built in hope is more pleasant to the traveler than the road built in despair, even though they both lead to the same destination. -- Marian Zimmer Bradley

Hope is faith holding out its hand in the dark. -- George Iles

#19: Inaction

You can't stand still and move forward at the same time. That's why "take action" is the advice I offer women whenever they ask me a question regarding what they should do about a problem or respond to a challenge. Here are a few examples:

My husband isn't paying child support so I need to earn more money, I was thinking about going back to school and completing my degree. I am afraid I won't be accepted in the program I want to pursue. What should I do? Take action. **Action cures fear, inaction creates terror.** – **Douglas Horton**

Now that I am separated, I need to sell our house and downsize into a smaller space. I have consulted with three realtors over the past seven months. They all suggested I paint the interior, clean the carpets and complete a long list of other things before signing a listing agreement. I have no idea where to begin, what should I do? Take action. Why? **You cannot do everything at once, but you can do something at once.** – **Calvin Coolidge**

The lawyer I hired to handle my divorce is not returning my calls. And when I have sat down to speak with her, she doesn't really answer my questions. I feel like she has taken my husband's side and sometimes it sounds like she is trying to convince me that I should accept his settlement offers although I have tried to make it clear to her that I don't feel they are in my best interest. I keep paying her money although my gut is telling me that I am going to regret not firing her. What should I do? Take action. Why? **The price of inaction is far greater than the cost of making a mistake.** – **Meister Eckhart**

My ex and I have been fighting like cat and dogs. I thought the fights would stop once we separated. Since most of the stuff we fight about are really just petty disagreements about unresolved stuff from our marriage, I really think we could benefit from going to counseling. I don't want to get back with him I just want to stop fighting and start focusing on raising our kids. I have been putting off suggesting counseling because I don't know how he will react. What should I do? Take action. Why? **The door of opportunity won't open unless you do some pushing.** – **Author Unknown**

I met a really great guy at my daughter's soccer game. He and his ex-wife divorced three years ago. He seems really nice and I am convinced he is interested in going out with me. One of the other moms told me that he asked about whether or not she thought I would be open to going out on a date. That was about two months and he still has not asked me. Part of me wants to ask him out to lunch and part of me thinks I should just wait for him to make a move. What should I do? Take action. Why? ***The woman who has done nothing but wait for her ship to come in has already missed the boat. – Author Unknown***

#20: Indecision

Decisions. Decisions. Decisions. The quality of your post-marital life will be in direct proportion to the number of decisions you make. And the tougher the decision, the greater the reward you will receive for having made it. That's why whenever you are confronted by a situation that requires you to make a decision, make a decision.

Here is some advice and assurance to support you in making the decisions you need to make in order to move on:

14 Quotes About Indecision

Not all of your decisions will be correct. None of us is perfect. But if you get into the habit of making decisions, experience will develop your judgment to a point where more and more of your decisions will be right. After all, it is better to be right 51 percent of the time and get something done, than it is to get nothing done because you fear to reach a decision. – H.W. Andrews

Using the power of decision gives you the capacity to get past any excuse to change any and every part of your life in an instant. -- Anthony Robbins

A peacefulness follows any decision, even the wrong one. -- Rita Mae Brown

When you have to make a choice and don't make it, that is in itself a choice. -- William James

To decide is to walk facing forward with nary a crick in your neck from looking back at the crossroads. -- Betsy Cañas Garmon

Once you make a decision, the universe conspires to make it happen. -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Again and again, the impossible problem is solved when we see that the problem is only a tough decision waiting to be made. -- Robert H. Schuller

Form the habit of making decisions when your spirit is fresh... to let dark moods lead is like choosing cowards to command armies. – Charles Horton Cooley

What I emphasize is for people to make choices based not on fear, but on what really gives them a sense of fulfillment. – Pauline Rose Chance

We lose the fear of making decisions great and small, as we realize that should our choice prove wrong we can, if we will, learn from the experience. – Bill W

The percentage of mistakes in quick decisions is no greater than in long-drawn-out vacillations, and the effect of decisiveness itself “makes things go” creates confidence. – Anne O’Hare McCormick

Often greater risk is involved in postponement than in making the wrong decision. – Harry K. Hopf

Decision is a sharp knife that cuts clean and straight; indecision, a dull one that hacks and tears and leaves ragged edges behind it. – Gordon Graham

Sometimes you make the right decision, sometimes you make the decision right. – Phil McGraw

#21: Regret

Mistakes were made. Words were said that should not have been said. Promises were broken. Lies were told. Arguments were started. Discussions were ended. Forgiveness was denied. Love was withheld. This is not just the story of your divorce; this is the story of every divorce. There is nothing you can now do to change the ending. Here is some insight on how you can begin turning the page on whatever regrets you may have:

16 Quotes about Regret

A great source of calamity lies in regret and anticipation; therefore a person is wise who thinks of the present alone, regardless of the past or future. – Oliver Goldsmith

Always Do Your Best. Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret. -- Miguel Angel Ruiz

Do not brood over your past mistakes and failures as this will only fill your mind with grief, regret and depression. Do not repeat them in the future. -- Sivananda

I see it all perfectly; there are two possible situations - one can either do this or that. My honest opinion and my friendly advice is this: do it or do not do it - you will regret both. -- Soren Kierkegaard

It is better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret. -- Jackie Joyner-Kersee

If you have behaved badly, repent, make what amends you can and address yourself to the task of behaving better next time. On no account brood over your wrongdoing. Rolling in the muck is not the best way of getting clean. – Aldous Huxley

When one door closes another opens. But we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we fail to see the one that has opened for us. – Alexander Graham Bell

Always repenting of wrongs done will never bring my heart to rest. – Chi K’ang

Regret is an appalling waste of energy; you can’t build on it; it is good only for wallowing. – Katherine Mansfield

I have always found that each step we take in life is to be regretted – if we once begin to wonder how many other steps might have been possible. – John Oliver Hobbes

Reflect upon your present blessings of which every man has many – not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some. – Charles Dickens

Your past is always going to be the way it was. Stop trying to change it. – Author Unknown

The only thing I regret about my past is the length of it. If I had to live my life again, I’d make the same mistakes, only sooner. – Tallulah Bankhead

We should have no regrets. The past is finished. There is nothing to be gained by going over it. Whatever it gave us in the experiences it brought us was something had to know. – Rebecca Beard

One must never lose time in vainly regretting the past or in complaining against the changes which cause us discomfort, for change is the essence of life. – Anatole France

We crucify ourselves between thieves: regret for yesterday and fear tomorrow. – Fulton Oursler

#22: Lack of Confidence

Guess what? You are stronger than you think you are. This may come as a surprise to you but you have what it takes to do whatever needs to be done. You may not realize it but you are smarter than you think you are. And contrary to what you may have been told, how you may feel or what you may believe to be true there is absolutely, positively nothing wrong with you. It is for these reasons and many, many others that you should believe in yourself -- now, today and always. Here is some advice and assurance to support you in this process.

Doubt whom you will, but never yourself. – Christian Bovee

Self-acceptance comes from meeting life's challenges vigorously. Don't numb yourself to your trials and difficulties, nor build mental walls to exclude pain from your life. You will find peace not by trying to escape your problems, but by confronting them courageously. You will find peace not in denial, but in victory. - J. Donald Walters

You can succeed if nobody else believes it, but you will never succeed if you don't believe in yourself. – William J.H. Boetcker

As soon as you trust yourself, you will know how to live. – Johann von Goethe

They conquer who believe they can. – John Dryden

Nobody holds a good opinion of a man who has a low opinion of himself. – Anthony Trollope

The way to develop self-confidence is to do the thing you fear and get a record of successful experiences behind you. – William Jennings Bryan

Nothing is a greater impediment to being on good terms with others than being ill at ease with yourself. – Anthony Trollope

The confidence we have in ourselves gives birth to much of that which we have in others. – Francois de La Rochefoucauld

Never bend your head. Hold it high. Look the world straight in the eye. – Helen Keller

All that Adam had, all that Caesar could, you have and can do... Build, therefore, your own world. – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Our ordinary mind always tries to persuade us that we are nothing but acorns and that our greatest happiness will be to become bigger, fatter, shinier acorns; but that is of interest only to pigs. Our faith gives us knowledge of something better: that we become oak trees. – E.F. Schumacher

#23: Ingratitude

What are some of the things -- despite your separation and divorce -- that you are most grateful for? Make a list of at least 5 things and write them down on a 3 x 5 card. Carry the card with you wherever you go. Refer to it often. Gratitude is a super power that will allow you to do the impossible and survive the unbearable. Ingratitude on the other hand is like kryptonite. It will rob you of your power and make it difficult for you to move on. Here is some reassuring insight on gratitude:

12 Quotes About Gratitude

If a fellow isn't thankful for what he's got, he isn't likely to be thankful for what he's going to get. -- Frank A. Clark

The unthankful heart... discovers no mercies; but let the thankful heart sweep through the day

and, as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessings! --
Henry Ward Beecher

Praise the bridge that carried you over. -- George Colman

If you count all your assets, you always show a profit. -- Robert Quillen

He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those
which he has. -- Epictetus

We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our
treasures. -- Thornton Wilder

Two kinds of gratitude: The sudden kind we feel for what we take; the larger kind we feel for
what we give. -- Edwin Arlington Robinson

Gratitude is a quality similar to electricity: it must be produced and discharged and used up in
order to exist at all. -- William Faulkner

The struggle ends when the gratitude begins. ~Neale Donald Walsch

If you want to turn your life around, try thankfulness. It will change your life mightily. -- Gerald
Good

Gratitude is the least of the virtues, but ingratitude is the worst of vices. -- Thomas Fuller

Gratitude is an opener of locked-up blessings. -- Marianne Williamson

#24: Bitterness

Naikan is a Japanese method of self-reflection. I have found it to be very helpful in broadening my perspective and in enriching my relationship with people close to me. It may be equally helpful in supporting your efforts to move on after your break-up.

It is based on *three* simple questions:

What have I received from ex/spouse?

What have I given my ex/spouse?

What troubles and difficulties have I caused my ex/spouse?

Let's take a look at each of these questions in turn. First, *what have I received from my ex?* Lots of women walk away from marriages feeling as if it was a waste of time or as if they were totally innocent and their spouse was absolutely villainous. It is this type of thinking that leaves women filled with bitterness. Focusing on the things you received from your ex can neutralize these feelings.

Once you begin making this list you may be pleasantly surprised by what appears on the page. Start small and remind yourself that little things do matter. Here's an example of what you might write:

He washed my car every Saturday.

He helped me care for my ailing mother.

He always said thank-you.

He stood by me during my illness.

He always made sure the bills were paid.

The second question is *what have I given to my ex?* Answering this question will probably prove to be an easier task than coming up with responses to the first question. Try to avoid generalizations and be as specific as possible. For example, instead of writing "I was always nice to him," write "I always told him how much I appreciated his support."

Spend at least 10 minutes on this list as well as on the other lists in this exercise. Remember, the goal is not to calculate who contributed more to the marriage. The point of the exercise is to acknowledge both you and your spouse's contribution.

The third question is *what troubles and difficulties have I caused my ex?* is not for the feint at heart, because it is not always easy to look at the role we play in causing problems for others. It

is easy to recall every cross word spoken by our spouse but we have selective amnesia when it comes to the harsh words we uttered.

Again be as specific as possible and spend more time on this section than on the others. Here are a few examples:

I complained about his weight constantly.

I criticized his parenting skills.

I unfairly accused him of flirting with his co-workers.

I tried to control his every move.

I worried more about meeting my emotional needs than I did about meeting his.

Why is there no fourth question that asks you to list the trouble or difficulty your spouse caused you? The simple answer is that moving on after a break-up is not about blame or fault, it is about awareness and growth. If you are interested in learning more about Naikan read *Naikan: Gratitude, Grace and the Japanese Art of Self-Reflection* by Gregg Kreech.

#25: Drama (Histrionics)

A *utobiography In Five Short Chapters* by Portia Nelson is a popular text in self-help, recovery and addiction programs. The following is an adapted version of Nelson's poem called *Moving On In Five Short Chapters*. I created it to illustrate what you can do to let go of at least some of the drama that is keeping you from moving forward.

MOVING-ON IN FIVE SHORT CHAPTERS

Chapter One

I look at my phone.

There is a nasty text from my ex.

I read it.

I am confused... I am angry.

I can't control myself.

It takes all day before I can forget it.

Chapter Two

I look at my phone.

There is a nasty text from my ex.

I read it again.

I don't know why I am allowing this to get to me.

But, I can't control myself.

It still takes all day before I can forget it.

Chapter Three

I look at the same phone.

There is a nasty text message from my ex.

I knew that it was a nasty message.

I still read it... but, I realize I am addicted to the drama.

I am part of the problem.

I accept responsibility for my reactions.

I forget the message and refocus my energies.

Chapter Four

I look at the same phone.

There is a nasty text message from my ex.

I quickly delete the message.

Chapter Five

I change my phone number.

#26: Excuses

There is one thing all women who fail to move on after their marriage ends have in common. They are all really good at making excuses for why they have not or cannot do what needs to be done to move forward. What they fail to realize is that their excuses are only excuses. The following is a three-step plan you can use to get rid of the excuses and get on with your life.

Step One: Review the following quotations:

People spend too much time finding other people to blame, too much energy finding excuses for not being what they are capable of being, and not enough energy putting themselves on the line, growing out of the past, and getting on with their lives. -- J. Michael Straczynski

An excuse becomes an obstacle in your journey to success when it is made in place of your best effort or when it is used as the object of the blame. -- Bo Bennett

Nothing is impossible; there are ways that lead to everything, and if we had sufficient will we should always have sufficient means. It is often merely for an excuse that we say things are impossible. -- Francois de La Rochefoucauld

Using the power of decision gives you the capacity to get past any excuse to change any and every part of your life in an instant. -- Tony Robbins

Difficulty is the excuse history never accepts. -- Edward R. Murrow

We excuse our sloth under the pretext of difficulty. -- Quintilian

The best day of your life is the one on which you decide your life is your own. No apologies or excuses. No one to lean on, rely on, or blame. The gift is yours - it is an amazing journey - and you alone are responsible for the quality of it. This is the day your life really begins. ~Bob Moawad

Excuses are the nails used to build a house of failure. ~Don Wilder and Bill Rechin

No one ever excused his way to success. -- Dave Del Dotto

Excuses are the tools with which persons with no purpose in view build for themselves great monuments of nothing. -- Steven Grayhm

If you don't want to do something, one excuse is as good as another. -- Yiddish Proverb

There is no such thing as a list of reasons. There is either one sufficient reason or a list of excuses. -- Robert Brault

He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else. -- Benjamin Franklin

The person who really wants to do something finds a way; the other person finds an excuse. -- Author Unknown

Step Two: Keeping the insight from the above quotations in mind, reflect on the following questions:

Have you made a habit of making excuses?

What are some of the excuses you routinely use for not doing what you need to do?

Are you aware that your excuses are only excuses?

Who are some of the people you blame for why you are where you are?

What do you get out of blaming others?

How can you take more responsibility for why you are where you are?

Step Three: Create specific strategies you can do to start kicking your excuse habit.

For example, if you have been using lack of support from family and friends as an excuse for not moving forward after your marriage ends, then joining a support group for divorced women might be the strategy you use to eradicate this excuse.

#27: Perfection

There may be a right way to move forward and a wrong way to move forward after your marriage ends. But there is no *perfect* way to do it. Human gravy is seasoned with flaws, faults and imperfections. That's why there is no perfect way to do anything.

Here 's how your "imperfect" self can succeed at moving on: Get up every day and do the best you can to do what needs to done. And then wake up the next day and try to do better.

17 Quotations About Perfection

Perfection does not exist. To understand this is the triumph of human intelligence; to expect to possess it is the most dangerous kind of madness. -- Alfred de Musset

He is lifeless that is faultless. -- English Proverb

What, after all, is a halo? It's only one more thing to keep clean. -- Christopher Fry

You're only human, you're supposed to make mistakes. -- Billy Joel

When everything has to be right, something isn't. -- Stainslaw Lec

A good garden will have some weeds. -- Thomas Fuller

Striving for perfection is the greatest stopper there is. You'll be afraid you can't achieve it... It's your excuse to yourself for not doing anything. Instead, strive for excellence, doing your best. - Sir Laurence Olivier

The man who makes no mistakes lacks boldness and the spirit of adventure. He never tries anything new. He is a brake on the wheels of progress. -- M.W. Larmour

Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them -- every day begin the task anew. -- Saint Francis de Sales

Striving for excellence motivates you; striving for perfection is demoralizing. -- Harriet Braiker

No one is perfect... that's why pencils have erasers. -- Author Unknown

Gold cannot be pure, and people cannot be perfect. -- Chinese Proverb

Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without. -- Confucius

The most difficult part of attaining perfection is finding something to do for an encore. -- Author Unknown

When you aim for perfection, you discover it's a moving target. -- George Fisher

Once you accept the fact that you're not perfect, then you develop some confidence. -- Rosalynn Carter

Unless I accept my faults, I will most certainly doubt my virtues. -- Hugh Prather

#28: Crazy Talk

In a landmark Supreme Court case, the justices were unable to nail down a specific definition of "obscenity" for the purposes of determining whether certain language is protected as free speech by the First Amendment. However, Justice Stewart, speaking on behalf of the court, uttered this now famous phrase, "I know it when I see it." Although I know it when I hear it, I too have struggled to come up with a precise definition of what I mean by *crazy talk*. But here are a few clear examples:

Talking to your child(ren) about your ex's late child support payments is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about your ex's late alimony payments is crazy.

Taking to your child(ren) about why your marriage or relationship ended is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about your financial struggles is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about their father's shortcomings is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about the problems you are having in your new relationship is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about what happened in court is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about what happened during their visits with their father is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about your feelings of betrayal is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about your fears about the future is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about your sex life is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about your unmet emotional needs is crazy.

Talking to your child(ren) about their dad's mistresses is crazy.

Talking to your former in-laws about your ex's transgressions is crazy.

Talking to your neighbors about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

Talking to your co-workers about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

Talking to the bank teller about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

Talking to the grocery clerk about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

Talking to the mailman about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

Talking to the pizza delivery man about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

Talking to your dry cleaner about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

Talking to your child's teacher about the intimate details of your divorce is crazy.

#29: Your False Sense of Security

There is beauty in moving on. Breaking up is especially hard for some women because being married created a false sense of security. They mistakenly believed that their spouse would always be there to keep them safe and make them feel secure. If you are one of these women, moving on can be the means by which you discover that true security can only come from within you. And realizing that you can take care of your self is a beautiful thing behold.

14 Quotes about Security

Security is a false god; begin making sacrifices to it and you are lost. -- Paul Bowles

The man who looks for security, even in the mind, is like a man how would chop off his limbs in order to have artificial ones which will give him no pain or trouble. -- Henry Miller

If you want total security, go to prison. There you will be fed, clothed, given medical care and so on. The only thing lacking is freedom. -- Dwight D. Eisenhower

We are never more in danger than when we think ourselves most secure, nor in reality more secure than when we seem to be most in danger. -- William Cowper

To keep oneself safe does not mean to bury oneself. -- Marcus Annaeus Seneca

Only in growth, reform and change, paradoxically enough, is true security to be found. -- Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Whatever course you have chosen for yourself, it will not be a chore but an adventure if you bring to it a sense of the glory of striving... if your sights are set far above the merely secure and mediocre. -- David Sarnoff

Security is not the absence of danger, but the presence of God, no matter what the danger. -- Anonymous

Your real security is yourself. You know you can do it, and they can't ever take that away from you. -- Mae West

Be like the bird that, passing on her flight while awhile on boughs too slight, feels them give way beneath her, and yet sings, knowing that she hath wings. -- Victor Hugo

We spend our time searching for security and hate it when we get it. -- John Steinbeck

The one permanent emotion of the inferior man is fear -- fear of the unknown, the complex, the inexplicable. What he wants beyond everything else is safety. -- H. L. Mencken

Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing. -- Helen Keller

It is in playing safe that we create a world of utmost insecurity. -- Dag Hammarskjold

#30: Comparing Yourself to Others

If "Moving On" were a game, here are the rules: "Do overs" are encouraged. You can call time-out whenever you need to. Ignore the spectators standing on the side lines. You are not allowed to look at the clock. Keeping score is strictly prohibited. The game isn't over until you win. Your definition of winning is the only definition that matters. And most importantly, comparing yourself to others will guarantee defeat.

13 Quotes about Comparing Yourself to Others

When every blessed thing you have is made of silver, or of gold, you long for simple pewter. -- W.S. Gilbert

To most of us the real life is the life we don't lead. -- Oscar Wilde

It is common to overlook what is near by keeping the eye fixed on something remote. -- Samuel Johnson

Life is a hospital in which every patient is possessed by the desire of changing his bed. One would prefer to suffer near the fire, and another is certain he would get well if he were by the fire. -- Charles Baudelaire

The only normal people are the ones you don't know very well. -- Foe Ancis

What makes us discontented with our condition is the absurdly exaggerated idea we have of the happiness of others. -- Anonymous

Instead of comparing our lot with that of those who are more fortunate than we are, we should compare it with the lot of the great majority of our fellow men. It then appears that we are among the privileged. -- Helen Keller

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. -- Max Ehrmann

If we only wanted to be happy it would be easy; but we want to be happier than other people, which is almost always difficult, since we think them happier than they are. -- Charles de Montesquieu

Every horse thinks his own pack heaviest. -- Thomas Fuller

Comparisons of one's lot with others' teaches us nothing and enfeebles the will. -- Thorton Wilder

To think well of every other man's condition, and to dislike our own, is one of the misfortunes of human nature. -- Burton

If all our misfortunes were laid in one common heap, when everyone must take an equal portion, most people would be content to take their own and depart. -- Solon

#31: Being Nice

I have three daughters. And as their mother, I have done everything I can to support and encourage them to become kind, polite, fair, reasonable and compassionate women.

Raising "nice" women is not something I have ever aspired to do. What's wrong with nice women? Nice women worry too much about what other people think. Nice women try too hard to please others at the expense of their own health and happiness. Nice women approach life as if they were still in high school trying to win homecoming queen. Nice women are reluctant to stand up for themselves or to fight for the financial settlements they deserve. Nice women are willing to suffer indignities and sacrifice their self-worth in order to get along with people who neither deserve nor appreciate their offering. And after their marriages end, nice women have to divide their time between doing what needs to be done to move on and doing what needs to be done to maintain their reputation for being nice.

#32: Bad Attitude

What is the best way to describe the process of moving on after a divorce? It will either be a devastatingly painful journey into the inner depths of hell or an enlightening journey of inner growth, self-awareness and personal development. Your attitude

about the journey will dictate which of these descriptions best captures how you experience the process.

The following quotations offer insight on the importance of maintaining a positive attitude:

14 Quotations About Attitude

Choosing to be positive and having a grateful attitude is going to determine how you're going to live your life. -- Joel Osteen

Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude. -- Thomas Jefferson

Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude. -- Zig Ziglar

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference. -- Winston Churchill

Having a positive mental attitude is asking how something can be done rather than saying it can't be done. -- Bo Bennett

The only disability in life is a bad attitude. -- Scott Hamilton

Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. -- Viktor E. Frankl

There is little difference in people, but that little difference makes a big difference. The little difference is attitude. The big difference is whether it is positive or negative. -- W. Clement Stone

Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. -- Viktor E. Frankl

Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it. -- Raymond Chandler

The meaning of things lies not in the things themselves, but in our attitude towards them. -- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. -- Maya Angelou

A great attitude does much more than turn on the lights in our worlds; it seems to magically connect us to all sorts of serendipitous opportunities that were somehow absent before the change. -- Earl Nightingale

Could we change our attitude, we should not only see life differently, but life itself would come to be different. Life would undergo a change of appearance because we ourselves had undergone a change in attitude. -- Katherine Mansfield

#33: Limiting Beliefs

God made the human spirit out of the most resilient and remarkable stuff he could find. I truly believe you can let go of the things that are holding you back. I believe you have what it takes to do whatever you need to do to move forward after your divorce. But, it doesn't matter what I believe. What matters most is whether you believe you have the ability to move on after your marriage ends.

Here are a few insightful quotes about the role your thoughts play in shaping your life:

13 Quotes About the Power of Your Beliefs

Man is made by his belief. As he believes, so he is. -- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact. -- William James

Our belief at the beginning of a doubtful undertaking is the one thing that ensures the successful outcome of our venture. -- William James

If you constantly think of illness, you eventually become ill; if you believe yourself to be beautiful, you become so. -- Shakti Gawain

You have to believe in happiness, or happiness never comes. -- Douglas Malloch

If you keep on saying things are going to be bad, you have a good chance of being a prophet. -- Isaac Bashevis Singer

What one believes to be true either is true or becomes true within limits to be found experientially and experimentally. These limits are beliefs to be transcended. -- John Lilly

The thing always happens that you really believe in; and the belief in a thing makes it happen. -- Frank Lloyd Wright

You cannot escape the results of your thoughts... Whatever your present environment may be, you will fall, remain or rise with your thoughts, your vision, your ideal. You will become as small as your controlling desire, as great as your dominant aspiration. -- James Lane Allen

The life each of us lives is the life within the limits of our thinking. To have life more abundant, we must think in limitless terms of abundance. -- Thomas Dreier

Before a painter puts a brush to his canvas he sees his picture mentally... If you think of yourself in terms of a painting, what do you see?... Is the picture one you think worth painting?... You create yourself in the image you hold in your mind. -- Thomas Dreier

All that we are is the result of what we have thought. The mind is everything. What we think, we become. -- Buddha

Our best friends and our worst enemies are our thoughts. A thought can do us more good than a doctor or a banker or a faithful friend. It can also do us more harm than a brick. -- Dr. Frank Cane

#34: Your False Friends

I don't have to tell you the incredible difference your real friends make in your life. And your divorce will cast a powerful spotlight on who your real friends are. When the rough winds of life blow, they provide a firm place to stand and a soft place to fall. And when you are not at your best, they have a way of gently reminding you that whatever is inevitably right about you can fix whatever may appear to be wrong with you.

Your real friends support and celebrate your efforts to move on after your marriage ends. Your false friends, on the other hand, are only interested in pursuing their own agenda. Here are a few examples of who your false friends are:

People who are only interested in your problems.

People who are only interested in your pain.

People who make you feel worse after spending time with them.

People who encourage you to confront your ex/spouse's new girlfriend.

People who offer to accompany to confront your ex/spouse's new girlfriend.

People who offer to accompany you to confront your ex/spouse's new girlfriend.

People who encourage you to confront your ex/spouse about stuff that happened during the marriage.

People who don't support you in moving on.

People who are miserable and want your company.

People who want to feel sorry for you.

People who want you to feel sorry for them.

People who encourage you to keep your kid's away from their father.

People who talk about nothing but other people.

People who only point out your faults.

People who remind you of the reasons you should stay stuck.

People who allow you to go on and on about the problems in your marriage.

People who talk about their other friends behind their backs.

People who never have anything nice to say about anyone.

People who never have anything positive to say about anything.

People who enjoy conflict, confrontation and confusion.

#35: Impatience

Moving on after your marriage ends will take time. And the longer you were married, the longer it could take. That means it could take years. But, the years are going to pass regardless of what you do. The only question is whether you will spend the time standing still or moving forward. Here is some advice and assurance to support you in being patient:

14 Quotations About Patience

Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness. It is far better take things as they come along with patience and equanimity. -- Carl Jung

Never cut a tree down in the wintertime. Never make a negative decision in the low time. Never make your most important decisions when you are in your worst moods. Wait. Be patient. The storm will pass. The spring will come. - Robert H. Schuller

Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success. -- Napoleon Hill

Our real blessings often appear to us in the shape of pains, losses and disappointments; but let us have patience and we soon shall see them in their proper figures. -- Joseph Addison

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet. -- Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Have patience. All things are difficult before they become easy. -- Saadi

How poor are they that have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees? -- William Shakespeare

The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg, not by smashing it. - - Arnold H. Glasow

There is something good in all seeming failures. You are not to see that now. Time will reveal it. Be patient. - Sivananda

Patience is necessary, and one cannot reap immediately where one has sown. -- Soren Kierkegaard

How many a man has thrown up his hands at a time when a little more effort, a little more patience would have achieved success. -- Elbert Hubbard

Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. -- Victor Hugo

The two most powerful warriors are patience and time. -- Leo Tolstoy

Patience is the ability to idle your motor when you feel like stripping your gears. -- Barbara Johnson

#36: Unrealistic Expectations

Maintaining a positive attitude is one thing. Harboring unrealistic expectations about some of the challenges you may face in the process of moving on after your divorce is something else altogether.

Here are a few of the cold and hard realities you should be prepared to confront after your marriage ends.

After your divorce, it will be difficult to maintain the lifestyle you had during your marriage.

How can this be true? What about alimony? Yes, alimony was designed to support women who were dependent on their spouse's income in maintaining the standard of living they enjoyed during the marriage. However, persuading a judge to award alimony is sometimes easier said than done, and actually making your spouse pay alimony after it has been awarded can be equally challenging. If you are fortunate enough to get alimony it may not be enough to live on. If you didn't work during your marriage, you may be forced to get a job; if you worked one job during the marriage, you may need to work two.

Divorce may be the most emotionally painful experience of your life.

Research a list of the most stressful events in life and you are likely to discover that divorce is at the top, somewhere in the neighborhood of death of a loved one, serious illness or loss of a limb. Since divorce results in broken hearts and fractured families, it should come as no surprise that it is an event that on good days can be described as extremely painful and on bad days as excruciatingly painful.

You may be judged unfairly after your divorce.

Some people may question your decision to end your marriage. Your parents may wonder why you couldn't stick it out, since they have been married for thirty years and cannot understand why you can't do the same thing. Your single girlfriends may talk about how crazy you are for ending your marriage when it is so hard to find a husband. Your minister may question your decision to break your wedding vows. But, everyone is entitled to an opinion. However, your life is not a democracy in which everyone you know gets a vote. You alone decided to say "I do" and you alone have the right to decide when it's time to say "I don't anymore."

The legal system is not always fair.

Your spouse could be the dirtiest, rottenest scoundrel that ever walked this planet. But the legal system is not designed to punish him for his misdeeds. He may be allowed to stay in the home because you can't afford the mortgage payment. He may be awarded joint custody of the children. And two days after your divorce is final, the woman he was having an affair with may move into your old house.

But, is it fair that you were born in this century and not during a time when women were treated as property and had no legal rights? Is it fair that you were born in the U.S. as opposed to countries that have no legal system at all? Expecting life to be fair will leave you disappointed. Accept what it is, make the most of it and move on.

Winning doesn't mean you will get everything you want.

The legal system was designed to divide your stuff and to resolve legal issues regarding who should get what and who should be forced to do what. However, the fallout from divorce goes way beyond your stuff. Divorce involves fractured families, broken hearts and shattered dreams. So, even if the judge awards you the house, \$10,000 a month in alimony and full custody of the kids, the underlying issues will remain to be addressed. Recognizing that there will still be lots of work to do after your legal case is closed may make you mindful of not wasting all of your emotional energy over the stuff. Save it for the heavy lifting that needs to be done after the courtroom drama ends.

Getting divorced may make you feel like a failure.

No one—with the exception of a few celebrities—gets married with the intention of getting divorced. We say the vows because we believe we are going to live happily ever after. So when the marriage ends, despite your best efforts to do everything you can to save it, it may leave you feeling that you are unlovable, and questioning whether you will ever find love again.

It may take years to resolve your legal issues.

The legal system moves very slowly. This should come as no surprise when you consider that thousands of other people file for divorce at the same county courthouse where your divorce is filed and they have only a handful of judges assigned to the cases. And a single alimony trial, for example, could take several hours or several weeks to resolve. The more complex your case is (e.g., the more stuff you have) the longer you can expect the case to take. Lawyers have little incentive to expedite the case, because the longer it takes the more they get paid. You have to approach the process one day at a time. You can't stress out over things you can't control and you can't control the legal process.

Starting over will require you to do more than you believe you are capable of doing.

Most women have to start over after a divorce. They have to start over rebuilding their credit, reestablishing themselves in the workplace and sometimes even finding new set of friends. You may need to relocate to a new city and find a new job. You may need to enroll your kids in a new school, and set up a new bank account. Your to-do list will be overflowing with more things than you believe you are capable of doing. You may not believe you can do everything that you will need to do after your divorce. But, you don't have to do everything at once. You only have to do the next thing.

#37: Wasting Energy

Energy is king. Most women believe that having lots of money is the key to successfully navigating a divorce. Money matters but energy is what matters most. It takes tons of energy to do what needs to be done. Here are three things you can do to conserve and maximize your energy:

Drink more water

Your body is seventy-five percent water. Your brain is eighty-five percent water. Your body needs lots of water to function properly. It is important to remember that your water supply must be replenished on a daily basis. It is a mistake to believe that you can fill-up on Monday and then bypass the water cooler for the remainder of the week. Ideally, each day you should drink eight ounces of water for every twenty-five pounds of body weight. Coffee, tea and soft drinks can not be substituted for water. While it is true that these beverages have a high water content, they also contain caffeine and other chemicals that dehydrate your body. If you regularly consume large quantities of these beverages you should drink an additional 8 ounces of water for every 8 ounces of these beverages that you consume each day.

Eat Lots of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Take a few minutes and make a list of everything you ate today that was not processed and that did not come out of a bag, box or can. Most people are surprised at how few items appear on their list. That's because we live in a fast food nation and our diets are primarily comprised of highly processed prepackaged foods. The problem with eating large quantities of these foods is that, unlike fresh fruits and vegetables, processed foods are the foods we tend to overeat. When was the last time you heard yourself say "I wish I had stopped with that first bowl of broccoli or I really didn't need that second helping of artichokes?" Your answer is probably never. But, it's an all too common refrain to say "I didn't need that second helping of ice cream or slice of cake."

Overeating is a major energy zapper. Think about it: what is the first thing you think about doing after you eat a big meal? If you are like most people, your answer has something to do with lying down on a couch. It takes more energy for your body to digest food than any other function it performs on a daily basis. That's why if you want to keep your energy level high, fresh fruits and vegetables should be the mainstay of your diet. They are seventy-five percent water which means they are extremely easy to digest and they are jam packed with energy enhancing minerals and nutrients.

Exercise Everyday

Energy can only come from energy and a body at rest will remain at rest unless acted upon by some force. These two laws of physics are the key to understanding the importance of developing the habit of exercising every day. Lack of energy is one of the most common excuses people use to justify not exercising every day. Does this sound familiar? You go to bed with the best intention of getting up early and going to the gym, and then the alarm clock sounds, and you don't get out of bed because you just don't have the energy to get going.

The only place we are going to get the energy we need to exercise is by exercising. That's why the more we exercise, the more energy we have to exercise, and the more energy we will have to do all of the other things we need to do. Admittedly, this may be one of the most difficult habits to practice because of another law of physics called "inertia." Inertia is the disinclination to move, act or change. It is a force that resists acceleration or action.

An effective way to overcome inertia or the resistance to exercise is to tell yourself that you only have to start exercising each day. Sometimes, trying to contemplate where you are going to find the time and energy to exercise for thirty or sixty minutes can be overwhelming. But, if you can make a commitment to start exercising every day, there is an excellent chance you will summon the energy to keep exercising for a much longer period.

Following this simple 3-step plan can give you the energy you need to move on after your marriage ends.

About the Author

Jackie Stanley, a graduate of Wake Forest University Law School, is a divorce lawyer with over 20 years of experience. She is also a writer whose books have been featured in *Essence Magazine* and *Psychology Today*.

Jackie's clients routinely refer to her as both their attorney and "encourager" at law. Why? Because her divorce law practice goes beyond just legal advice and representation in court. She is also committed to giving women the support and encouragement they need to move beyond their broken relationships and on with their lives.

One way she expresses this commitment is by conducting free legal self-help workshops called, *Breaking Up and Moving On!* at the Women's Resource Center in Greensboro, North Carolina. Her workshop is one of their most popular and highest rated programs. "Inspiring and Entertaining" is how one participant described Jackie.

The success of the *Breaking Up and Moving On!* workshops ignited Jackie's desire to do even more to reach a broader audience and to help as many more women as possible.

Jackie would love to hear what you think about this book as well as suggestions on other topics you think should address in future books.

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