

Lesson #22: *Emotional Turmoil and Healing in Separation and Divorce*

**Divorced Fathers Network
Advocates Of Shared Parenting
'Because Children Love Both Their Parents'**

Emotional Turmoil and Healing:

1. Separation and divorce = strong emotions. This can be a wide range of very powerful emotions, including, but certainly not limited to, hurt, rage, love, longing, confusion, betrayal, surprise, guilt, failure, desperation. Sometimes these feelings can be with you all at once.
2. Strong emotions can lead to impaired judgment and decision-making. It's one of life's real kickers that during this time when so many important decisions are being made, that you often feel the least capable of making them.
3. The end of a relationship causes wounds, which require care and healing. This is true in many other situations life throws your way—death of a loved one, the loss of a job, or serious illness, for example. Learning from this process could possibly help you later on in facing difficulties.
4. The first order of business is your physical survival, making sure you have food, shelter, and clothing. And remember, if you're even just functioning, you're doing well.
5. The second order of business is tending to your emotional and spiritual needs. There are a number of ways you can do this:
 - make quite time for yourself
 - engage in physical activity and exercise
 - use meditation and relaxation techniques
 - lean on your family and friends.
 - allow for humor and laughter
 - lean on that one person (friend? family member?) that you can always count on to be there for you. If you don't have one, work on developing that kind of relationship with someone. Many people think they don't have this one person, when in reality they do, and might even have many. You'd be surprised at how quick people can be to offer their help and support if asked.
 - get good rest. If possible, try not to think about your former partner for an hour, a few hours, or a day.
6. Allow yourself to feel all of these strong emotions. Let the process of "reviewing" happen. We're all familiar with going over the same scenario in our heads over and over and over. There's a reason this happens. It's part of the process and helps us to accept change.
7. Many have found it helpful to move away from focusing on "why," and pay more attention simply to finding out "what." For example, rather than asking yourself over and over why she did this or that, you can simply acknowledge the way that made you feel: betrayed, hurt, angry, or whatever feelings that you are experiencing. Sometimes coming to no definite conclusions, and just acknowledging the

- experience and the process get us where we need to be.
8. Respect this period of your life. It wasn't in the original plan, but it's here now, and you will get through it.

Contact DFN by: phone: 831-335-5855

www.DivorcedFathers.org

Email:steve@divorcedfathers.org