



SELF-CARE THROUGH A DIVORCE



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When going through a divorce we often think about other people (especially our children), before ourselves but you can't completely look after anyone else if you are not also looking after yourself. Think of the analogy that you cannot fill another cup if yours is not full.

There are some very simple things that you do to help with self-care through this difficult time such as:

- ◇ Maintaining a good support system – it is important to have a friend or family member that you can share your feelings and confide with.
- ◇ Seek out professional support too; sometimes friends and family struggle to know how to help. They can sometimes tell you what they think you want to hear, to support you, but that may not always be best
- ◇ Through a divorce, people's social networks can change or decline especially if the couple have mutual friends who can drift away rather than take sides.
- ◇ Allow yourself to grieve the loss of the relationship; loss of companionship and shared experiences; loss of support, financial, social or emotional and the loss of hopes, plans and dreams.
- ◇ Learn how to balance giving and receiving. You don't have to be perfect.
- ◇ Stop the negative self-talk. You can't change the past, so try to learn the lessons the present offers and then focus on a positive future.
- ◇ Don't worry about what others think. Do what is best for yourself and your family.
- ◇ Pay attention to your emotional needs and give yourself permission to feel and to cry.
- ◇ Stay physically fit. It helps to relieve tension, anger and anxiety, whilst improving your emotional wellbeing and elevating your mood.
- ◇ Continue to eat nutritious and healthy balanced food and surround yourself with positive people. Put an effort into living a lifestyle that will promote feelings of self-worth and esteem.
- ◇ Make time for fun by reading a good book, meeting friends for coffee or wine.
- ◇ Don't make any hasty decisions such as selling the family home, moving to a new town or starting a new job.
- ◇ Talk about your feelings and emotions with your support network.
- ◇ Treat yourself - when life feels upside down, it is the perfect time to do small things to reward yourself, simple small treats.
- ◇ Things such as yoga and meditation will not only help the body but the mind.
- ◇ If your mind is running, practice taking deep breaths and focus on the beautiful positive things in life.

Remember you don't have to do it alone, there are many places that can offer support.

Please see page 2 of this document for a helpful worksheet to write down some thoughts which will help you start feeling a bit more positive about the future and to work out some steps to implement your self care.

Are you thinking about separating or recently separated and wanting to know more about our process?

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Worksheet for you.

When we write things down and have a plan, we seem to have much better clarity of our future.

Remember when answering these questions to think of yourself first.

Who are your main support people? How and how often can you connect with them?

What new books or (Netflix) movies might help you at this moment? Ask your friends and family for suggestions.

What physical activities are you doing or can you plan to do? What mindfulness exercises can you do? This may be yoga, meditation etc.

What was the last thing you did to make yourself happy? What is the next thing you are going to do to feel happy? When are you going to do that?

Write a list of nutritious and healthy foods you can eat and make? Have you got a source of good ideas for recipes and tips?

What are a few of the most negative things you can cut out of your life?

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