

Advice for getting through a divorce

BY DEBBIE MARTINEZ



I have been divorced now for several years and have settled into the single life, but one thing haunts me and that is disappointment -- disappointment in him and in myself. I allowed my self worth to be tied to him and my family. I felt a sense of belonging and "teammanship" and I realize now he did not feel the same. I sacrificed, I became one, but it wasn't enough; I wasn't enough. I'm disappointed and angry that somewhere on that path I lost myself. I had transformed into someone different. Someone who, at the end, stood before a judge and relinquished the only identity I had. I trusted and I believed that this man would protect and love me forever and instead he took from me my dreams and myself. How do I begin to find the true me?

You already have. Being able to look at yourself in the mirror and know that you don't recognize the person looking back is the first step. Self-awareness is not an easy pill to swallow. Once you become self aware, it requires you to act on it which can be painful and a lot of work, but well worth it! The only disappointment you should

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feel would be if you didn't value the importance of you. Be proud that you gave your marriage your all even if he didn't. And yes, the divorce has put you in a place to reevaluate your dreams, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. It's all in how you look at it, and, by the way, how you look at it is your choice alone. Your ex-husband and the divorce have been your teachers. They have taught you to be careful not to lose yourself in a relationship, love and consider yourself important enough to be you, that you have the strength to protect yourself and, through heartache and disappointment, new dreams are born. Don't let past hurts be a distraction. Shake off any self-pity, any discouragement, any disappointment and run this new race with all that you are.

I feel trapped in a loveless marriage. We both have felt this way for a long time, but neither of us is moving forward with a divorce. I think it's fear of many things, but as each day turns into weeks and weeks into months I feel like a part of me dies off. What can I

do to take that final step?

Feel the fear and do it anyway. Remember the butterfly. Leaving a way of life for the unknown is scary, but don't let it paralyze you. In Anderson and Miller's book *Freedom From Fear*, they say, "Fear is a thief. It erodes our faith, plunders our hope, steals our freedom and takes away our joy of living." Change is a gift that can leave us feeling empowered and restored. Don't you deserve to live rather than just exist? If this is what you both want, you be strong and take the first step to a new beginning for both of you.

Note to Self:

The feeling of hope is stronger than my fear of the unknown. I have the power to make my future whatever I want it to be.

Debbie's Library –

Hope for the Flowers by Trina Paulus

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