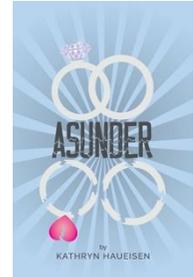


After Asunder - This Too Shall Pass

Tips to Transition from Married to Divorced

By Kathryn Haueisen

I was recently introduced to the corollary to the theory, “This too shall pass,” which is, “It may pass like a kidney stone, but it will pass.” Divorce often feels like death. It is the death of one way of life. It hurts. It can hurt the heart with pain equal to that of passing a kidney. It sucks up all the emotional energy for a while. It consumes all both waking and sleeping hours. Though it may feel like it for a while, a divorce really is not the end of life. It is merely a transition from what was to what is becoming.



When we experience life transition we didn't want, but could not stop, we have choices. We can adjust, adapt, and move forward into a new situation that we help craft. Or, we can waste energy, time, and precious emotional and other resources, refusing to change and stay stuck.

Divorce is certainly cause for grief. Grieving is nature's way of preparing us for what comes next. It is normal, natural, and necessary to take time out to weep and mourn. But as Ecclesiastes reminds us, there is at time to weep, AND a time to (again) laugh; a time to mourn, AND a time to (again) dance. Take time to weep and mourn. Then get up, go out again into the world and find reasons to laugh and dance.

When you are weary of weeping, perhaps these tips will help you go out into the world again, as a single again person with gifts, experience, and renewed energy to share.

- Manage you and let the other person manage him/herself. We cannot make others change to accommodate our preferences. Trying to do so rarely works out well. In fact, it could turn what was undesirable behavior and into potentially dangerous behavior.
- Take really good care of yourself. Eat decent food. Go for walks. Try to get some sleep. If sleep continues to allude you after the first couple of months, talk to a health professional about some assistance to help you sleep.
- Stay connected with friends and family; but try to talk about something other than your pain after the initial shock simmers down and you've brought everyone up to date on your single-again status. If you need therapy, find a trained counselor or reach out to a support group. Friends and family can offer tea and sympathy, but are probably not qualified to provide professional intervention.
- Take up a new activity and attach a goal to it. For example, “I will read a book a week.” “I will learn how to [fill in the blank].” “I will volunteer at [fill in the blank].” I will call a friend [fill in the blank] times a week just to talk.

- Go out. You do not need a partner to enjoy a good meal in a nice restaurant, stroll on a beach, see a movie, or go to social events.
- Find a group of people interested in doing things you enjoy. If the first one doesn't work, try another. All sorts of organizations and places offer opportunities to travel, go to concerts and plays together, and meet around mutual interests.
- Use this time to learn more about yourself and what makes you tick. The internet and book stores are filled with words of wisdom. Dive in.
- Fill your mind with positive thoughts through uplifting books, movies with happy endings, and songs that get you tapping your foot and humming or signing along.
- Plant something. Taking care of it will give you something to do. As the plant grows you can look back and realize you've been growing also.
- Pick a mantra to cling to through the storm. Post it where you can see it every day. I had several, which you are welcome to claim for yourself.

Psalm 30:5 - *Weeping may last for the night; but joy comes with the morning.* (I would add joy also comes after the mourning).

Jeremiah 29:11 - *For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

Philippians 4: 13 - *I can do all things in him who strengthens me.*

If you'd like a one-time, 30-minute free pastoral care conversation, contact me at kathrynhaeisen@gmail.com.

I am a retired pastor and a divorce over-comer. I know from both professional experience and personal experience, that there is life after divorce. A good life. Divorce is a transition from one marital status to another. The good news is that you get to write your own ending to this story.