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Creating Positive Interactions with Your Former Spouse

Dealing with your grief following a divorce is important if you hope to create and maintain professional and respectful interactions with your former spouse. Especially when there are children involved, having civil communications with your ex is something to strive toward.

When dealing with loss of any kind, including the loss associated with divorce, we all experience the 5 stages associated with the grieving process. These stages of grief are well documented and include: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

1. Denial

The denial stage can range from refusing to face the fact that the divorce is really going to take place, to not accepting that you are experiencing the emotional trauma inherent in the early stages of separation.

2. Anger

Anger is a natural and healthy response that enables us to deal with threats. During the anger stage, the threats of a pending divorce stem from the fears associated with betrayal, abandonment, an uncertain future, separation from the family unit, and financial difficulties.

3. Bargaining

During the bargaining phase, people often seek to negotiate with their soon-to-be former spouse, and/or a higher spiritual power.

4. Depression

Depression is a stage that may also include some anger. During this more internalized phase of the grieving process, many people seek professional counseling to deal with their emotional and physical symptoms.

5. Acceptance

Acceptance is the final stage of grieving and when we begin to come to terms with the fact that our marriage has ended. There still may be a lingering sadness associated with the break up, but there is also a sense of hopefulness about the future.

Asking for Help

Although the grieving process is natural during a divorce, you do not have to go through these stages alone. Many people seek the services of a qualified therapist or counselor

to assist them through the various phases. The ongoing insight and support of close friends and family members is also invaluable as you move successfully through each stage and toward a brighter future.

Conclusion:

Keep in mind that the process of divorce can comprise a myriad of difficult emotions and negative feelings. While it is normal to experience these feelings, it is also important to work through the negativity and move on with your life. After you have fully experienced each phase of the grieving process, communicating with your ex can become easier and more successful. When you have children together, maintaining a respectful relationship with your former spouse will ultimately be important to your children, to your former spouse, and to you.