

# Finding Happiness After Divorce

## Objective

To increase positivity and happiness following divorce.

## What to Know

If you have recently experienced a divorce, perhaps you wonder if you will ever feel happy again. If you are depressed, disappointed, or experiencing other challenging emotions, you might believe the possibilities for happiness are limited. There are actions you can take to eventually regain hope and feel happy again.

Divorce recovery takes time, but there are ways to find happiness. Here are fifteen tips to become more positive and cultivate happiness after your divorce.

- 1. Pay attention to your thoughts.** Re-train your mind by tapping into the power of positive thinking to increase your happiness. Whenever you have negative thoughts, replace them with more positive or even neutral thoughts.
- 2. Focus on what you want.** Put your attention on the things you desire. For example, if your desire is to experience more happiness, commit to spending more time doing things you enjoy. If socializing with loved ones brings you joy, schedule regular get-togethers.
- 3. Believe you can be happy.** Even though you feel sad now, recall happy memories and tap into joy by doing something you love. Continuously remind yourself that you *can* have or be whatever you want.
- 4. Take intentional actions.** Do things that are positive and inspirational, like reading books, attending seminars, listening to audios, or watching YouTube videos.
- 5. Practice gratitude.** Begin each morning by saying, “Thank you!” – even if you are struggling. Appreciate all the good things in your life and all the wonderful things that are coming. Use a gratitude journal and take time to write in it each day. Always look for the good things you have in your life.
- 6. Be patient.** It will take some time to adjust to life after divorce. It is not always easy to accept that you are powerless over some situations, and if you struggle with being patient, remind yourself that you are taking the necessary steps.
- 7. Seek support.** Identify the people you can rely on for support. Speak to your religious leader or hire a therapist or a divorce coach. You can also attend an in-person or online divorce support group.
- 8. Release animosity.** By letting go of anger or hatred, you will more easily move forward. This is an area where a strong support network is helpful as you process these feelings.

**9. Remember why you got divorced.** Perhaps you forget the negative experiences, and you might even miss your ex-partner. This is natural, but you divorced for valid reasons. So, when you start to have regrets or miss your old life, remind yourself why you chose to move on.

**10. Discover yourself.** Finding happiness is a process that involves self-discovery. Identify new experiences and get out of your comfort zone. Doing things for the first time will increase your confidence. Here are some examples:

- travel
- take a class
- try a new hairstyle
- learn a language
- train for a competitive event
- sample new foods at a restaurant you have never visited
- go to the theater

**11. Remain single for a while.** Rushing into a new relationship too soon can lead to more heartache. Take time to figure out what you want in your post-divorce life and allow yourself time to heal.

**12. Take accountability for your happiness.** At any moment, you have the choice to be happy. Here are some ways to take accountability for your own happiness:

- stay optimistic about the future
- live in the moment
- practice mindfulness exercises
- meditate
- set goals for the future
- deepen your faith
- find reasons to celebrate

**13. Mind your finances.** One of the most challenging aspects of divorce is the financial strain it can cause. To avoid financial problems, be mindful of your financial situation, create a budget, and seek the assistance of a financial advisor if needed.

**14. Care for your physical health.** Eat a healthy diet, exercise, and get enough sleep. Not only will you have more energy and confidence, but others will see you the way you want to be seen.

**15. Practice self-love.** Self-love and nurturing are the key to finding happiness after divorce. If had an unhappy marriage, you might not know how to show yourself love. Here are some ways:

- spend time alone doing things you enjoy
- go on a trip by yourself
- celebrate big and small accomplishments
- create a vision board
- enjoy a spa day

- list all the things you love about yourself
- learn to say no
- establish strong boundaries

Caring for yourself, staying optimistic, looking toward the future, and following these suggestions will help you find happiness in your post-divorce life.

### **What to Do**

First, answer the following questions.

Do you find yourself caught up in negative thinking? What are some positive (or even neutral!) thoughts you can have to replace your negative thoughts?

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What do you want in life? Be specific.

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Do you have goals? What are they? What are some concrete steps you can take to achieve them?

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What are some positive or inspirational intentional actions you can take?

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What are you grateful for? What (or whom) do you appreciate?

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Are you struggling to be patient with your post-divorce journey toward happiness? Explain.

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Who can support you? Loved ones, a divorce coach, counselor, support group?

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Are you willing to seek support? Why or why not?

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Make a list of all the new experiences you would like to try.

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How can you be accountable for your own happiness? Be specific.

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What can you do to practice self-love?

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Is there an area of your life you can improve that will help you feel happier? It could be physical health, finances, or something else. Describe.

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Referring to the above fifteen tips, do at least one thing each day to increase your positivity and happiness. Use the following chart to record your progress over the next two weeks. Note the date, what you did, how you felt after, and if you will do it again. Have fun with this exercise and move outside of your comfort zone!

<b>Date</b>	<b>What did you do?</b>	<b>How did you feel after?</b>	<b>Will you do it again? Y / N</b>

Date	What did you do?	How did you feel after?	Will you do it again? Y / N

Did this exercise increase your positivity and happiness? Why or why not?

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**Reflections on This Exercise**

How helpful was this exercise? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What did you learn from this exercise?

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