
Amy Edwards

FAMILY LAW

Family Matters

E-newsletter

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Welcome to our second issue of
Family Matters
e-Newsletter.

This Divorce e-newsletter is brought to you by Divorce Magazine and Amy A. Edwards, with the law firm of Mattox, Davis, Edwards & Alexander, P.A. We anticipate sending e-newsletters on a monthly basis. We hope you will find the information and articles useful. If you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please reply with the subject "Remove".

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Divorce Recovery

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Trust Yourself: When it comes to love, do you trust yourself?

By John Gray, Ph.D.

Does having been divorced make you feel like a loser in the game of life? It shouldn't.

About Us



Amy A. Edwards is a Board Certified Specialist in Family Law.

She is a principal at the Greenville law firm of Mattox, Davis, Edwards & Alexander, P.A. in North Carolina.

Web site of the month

This month, we are featuring

Surviving Domestic Violence

This site includes:

DV safety plans

Your children

Protection tips

"Safe" cell phone use

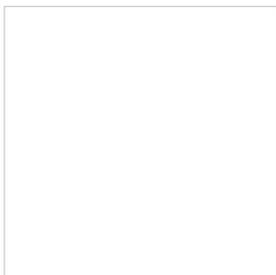
Personal stories and blog

No one is immune to things going wrong, or cruel twists of fate. Everyone makes mistakes: in love, in their careers, in innocent decisions that at times have catastrophic consequences.

If you start believing that you are "cursed," or that you can no longer trust your own judgment, then your doubts will inevitably erode your self-confidence. And that would be pointless and self-defeating.

Instead of looking at your divorce as a loss of time, effort, and esteem, consider it a growth experience. After all, every experience -- be it good, bad, or indifferent -- teaches us valuable life lessons. If anything, your divorce served as a comprehensive relationship primer. Some of its lessons should be invaluable to you: both in enhancing your ability to discern the potential for new primary relationships, and in reassessing and enhancing other relationships as well.

It should also have revealed many personal strengths and exposed some emotional hot-spots. In acknowledging this, you can now better formulate a path for personal growth. Which brings us back to the issue of trust. After such a traumatic experience, you need to be able to trust again -- not only others, but also yourself -- to take the lessons learned in divorce and apply them to the rest of your life.



Let's recap some of those lessons:

Lesson #1: Don't be afraid to get back into the game. You require an open heart and an open mind to move away from the fear that you can't trust your judgment when it comes to relationships. You can trust yourself, and you are worthy of that trust, so get back into the dating game.

Lesson #2: Open your eyes and read the signs. If your instincts tell you that something is not right with a situation, or for that matter, a prospective partner, then listen to those feelings. Don't be afraid to ask a trusted friend or relative for a second opinion. Make sure you weigh their advice carefully -- even if it isn't what you wanted to hear.

Lesson #3: Create a game plan. Make a list of what you seek in your next mate. Stick to the list, but build in some leeway. The best way to do this is to have a few mandatory traits, such as trust, compassion, integrity, mutual respect, and passion. Other desired items give your list the flexibility it needs. That way, if you have 20 or so items on the list and you've found someone who meets the top six "must-haves," you can consider this prospect as someone deserving of your attention.

Lesson #4: Don't rush anything.

Let nature take its course. Take all the time you need to assess your needs, and to determine whether one or several prospective partners meet the criteria that you've set. The only way you'll know this is to date several people before settling down into an exclusive relationship. Taking time allows you to see this person in various situations and then assess whether his way of handling himself meets your standards. Better yet, taking time reinforces the reason why you deserve to trust yourself: because you are

Home security
Emergency documents list
Signs of domestic violence
Stalking
The court process
Pet custody
Victim's rights

[Help for Victims](#)

[Real Crisis Center](#)
in Greenville, NC

[NC Courts and DV](#)

Tip of the Month

Before you hire a sitter, have a dating partner around your child or have anyone in your home you don't know, get a background check.

Here is the list of [companies](#) the NC court system recommends for background checks.

Don't forget to check the NC Department of Justice [Sex Offender Registry](#)

Presentations

Are you interested in having one of our attorneys speak to your educational, professional, civic or other group as a public service?

Browse our [list of potential topics](#)

Contact us at 252-758-3430 to schedule a presentation for your group.

Quick Links

[City of Greenville](#)

[Pitt County](#)

[Pitt County Schools](#)

worthy of it.

John Gray, author of the best selling book Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus has recently launched the Ask Mars Venus Coaching program.

For more advice from John Gray, visit
www.divorcemag.com/articles/Mars-and-Venus-John-Gray

Relationships

Stay Away and Focus on Healing: Ending a Destructive Relationship

Stay Away and Focus on Your Healing

By Penny L. Haider

I can't think of a more empowering thing to do than to focus on your own healing. Give yourself permission to take care of yourself. If you have children living with you and they are young do what you can to make life easy on yourself for a little while. Prepare easy meals or go out to dinner.

Maybe have a friend or relative come over and watch the kids for an evening. Make use of after school programs. Do what is necessary to aid in your healing. If you are working and have health leave available this would be a good time to take some days off. If your children are older, advise them that you need to take care of yourself, and want them to do the meal preparation for a couple of days. Most of the time kids are willing to do this if they've had practice navigating around a kitchen.

It also helps if there are supplies, so make sure you have the necessary ingredients and then let them go for it. They will do a good job and you will get time to take care of you. If you require more sleep then discipline yourself to get to bed earlier. If you have reading to do, take advantage of this time to do it. If you have projects you want to tackle, work on them. Do what you want to do for you. Be gentle with you following the break-up. We often get stuck in the healing process because we take so little time to heal ourselves. Much of our day is taken up being productive on the job, going to school, and taking care of our families. There are also day to day chores, bills to pay, houses to keep in order, and repairs that need to be made. Sure, those things need to get done; but reprioritize to make sure you are at the top of the list. Sometimes we leave a relationship when we're in the middle of a job change. Here is an example from my experience:

I committed to leaving a relationship the day before I was to start a new job. I went to that job in a daze. I didn't think I had enough energy to make it through the day let alone attempt to absorb the mountain of new information and training in front of me. I confided to a fellow employee about my personal situation. She told me something I will never forget. She said: "You have a lot going for you; you don't need that relationship, period. You better focus on this work because it is difficult to learn. Now, stop thinking about what you left, and focus on what's here in front of you!"

Suddenly I bolted to attention. It was surprising to have someone I didn't know well be so candid with me. It made me think twice about what mattered and at that point my life took a turn for the better.

More information on marriage, relationships and divorce

[It's your life, take charge!](#)

[State of NC](#)

[Social Security Admin.](#)

[Research Family Law](#)

[Our firm web site](#)

[Pitt County Courthouse](#)

[Marriage and happiness](#)

[Reinventing relationships](#)

This article has been edited and excerpted from the book No Contact: Ending a Destructive Relationship with permission by Outskirt Press, Inc, copyright © 2008, Penny L. Haider. Penny L. Haider is a survivor of domestic abuse and grateful to have had the opportunity to change her life. She is a strong advocate for women, wanting to help others move forward in their lives by leaving destructive relationships behind. Penny is a licensed teacher with a Bachelor of Science in Community Service and Public Affairs from the University of Oregon. For more information visit www.nocontactbook.com

More articles by Penny L. Haider:

- [Zero Tolerance for Abuse](#)
- [Take Time to Have Fun](#)
- [Signs of an Abusive Relationship](#)
- [Don't Beat Yourself Up About Making Contact](#)
- [Breaking It Off](#)
- [Avoid Impulsive Thoughts to Make Contact](#)
- [Addicted to the Relationship?](#)

Health and Well-Being

The Trauma of Betrayal

The Trauma of Betrayal. Suffering the Trauma of an Affair.

By Dennis Ortman

Some marriages end with a whimper, and the couples simply grow apart. However, many others end with a bang. All too often, couples separate because one partner has been betrayed when the other has sought a fulfilling love elsewhere. While the numbers vary in the studies, some recent researchers have estimated that 37 percent of men and 20 percent of women have had sexual affairs sometime during their marriage. More tellingly, 40 percent of divorced women and 44 percent of divorced men reported more than one sexual contact outside their marriage. These are not just impersonal numbers; they represent persons who have experienced untold pain and confusion with disrupted lives. If you have been abandoned by a lifelong partner, you know how overwhelming and unspeakable the hurt and outrage can be.

More information on your health and well-being before or after divorce:

[Beating stress -- before it beats you](#)

[A Primer in Hostility](#)

In my fourteen years as a Catholic priest and seventeen years as a clinical psychologist in private practice, I have met many who have suffered the trauma of a discovered affair. I call it a trauma because of my observations that many of those who have discovered their partner's infidelity have been traumatized. They feel overwhelmed, enraged, and unable to cope with life. They are preoccupied with the betrayal, have nightmares about it, and suffer flashbacks. At times, they feel emotionally numb, then at other times, crazy. Their reaction can last for years and interferes with their capacity to enjoy their lives and trust others. I call their reaction "post-infidelity stress disorder," with the acronym PISD, which expresses the rage that is the primary symptom and the intensity of the feelings. I use this term not to suggest a new diagnostic category but to suggest a parallel with post-traumatic stress disorder, which has been well documented and researched. Those who have been wounded by their partner's infidelity are often filled with rage, directing their anger, obviously, toward their partner, but also against themselves in self-blame. They also project their anger onto the world of relationships, which becomes dangerous and evokes mistrust.

Some clients in my practice ask me, "Why can't I just get over the affair and move on with my life?" I find it is helpful to explain the nature of the trauma they experienced and how their reaction is a predictable response to an extraordinary event. I tell them their reaction is in many ways similar to those who have suffered life-threatening events, such as war, violent crimes, or auto accidents. In reality, their psychic lives have been threatened and their assumptions about their marriage shattered. These clients often breathe a sigh of relief and tell me, "I thought I was going crazy." In understanding their painful experience and reactions in the broader context of a traumatic response, they become more patient with themselves and the recovery process. They are enlightened by the parallel of their experience with others who have suffered post-traumatic stress disorder, which has received so much publicity lately. They feel more confident they will survive the journey on the road to recovery traversed by many others who have experienced life-threatening events.

Financial Divorce Guide (Free Download)

If you are separating or thinking about it, there are many financial consequences to consider.

financial

[Financial Divorce Guide](#) includes articles about your new financial identity, taking control of your money, appraisals and business valuations. It also covers the impact of marital debt and offers advice from the experts about things to consider throughout the divorce process, such as the marital residence.

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Thank you for reading our newsletter.

Sincerely,

Amy Edwards

Mattox, Davis, Edwards & Alexander, P.A.

* This e-newsletter is not meant to be legal advice. Amy A. Edwards is licensed to practice law in North Carolina. No attorney-client relationship is formed by viewing this e-mail.