



THE DIVORCE RECOVERY PROCESS

Dr. Dave Currie

When a marital crisis leads to

DIVORCE

Response 1

Response 3
Best

Response 2

The Danger of Raw Dependence

Characterized by:

- Needy
- Incapable
- Undiscerning
- Rush decisions
- Blind, Gullible
- Wishful thinking
- Smother people
- Too trusting
- Hurry to connect
- Quick fix
- Fear of being alone
- Rebound marriages

Genuine Resolution of Hurts and Issues

Real Freedom to Relate in Healthier Ways

Emotional and Relational Stability to Step into Marriage

Commitment to Do Marriage God's Way 100% This Time

The Danger of Rash Independence

Characterized by:

- Harsh, reacting
- Unforgiving, bitter
- Selfish
- I don't need anyone
- Denial of issues
- Stubbornness
- Push people away
- Untrusting
- Skeptical, cynical
- Unwilling to connect
- Fear of being hurt
- Never marry again

Key Questions to Work Through Toward A Healthy Divorce Resolution

INSTRUCTIONS:

It is wise to carefully journal your thoughts on each of these questions. Ask God to help you to work through issues, reveal blind spots and clarify places where hurt still needs healing. You will want to be able to move on in life with as much authentic resolution before God and man as is possible. Real freedom is a gift to yourself and all those who you love. Be sure to share and work through your thoughts and emotions with a wise and trusted confidante, pastor or counselor. These questions are designed for your personal growth. You are not doing this for someone else. It's between you and God. It's for your good. Honestly face yourself in what is going on inside you.

A SPIRITUAL LOOK:

1. How am I doing in my walk with the Lord? Where does God need to take over to take my best steps forward? What areas do I need to address to honor Him?
2. Where was God through it all? Why did He allow this to happen?
3. Where was God in my marital breakdown? What should I do different in future?
4. Have I faced God on both my failures and my hurts through the marital breakdown? What do I still need to pray through?
5. What issues of character is God trying to address in my life through this experience? Where do I need to grow the most?
6. Who am I in Christ now after the divorce? What is my identity?

A MARITAL LOOK:

7. What do I need to take responsibility for regarding the marital breakdown?
8. Why did the divorce have to happen?
9. What lessons have I learned about marriage through my experience that I will take with me into any future relationship?
10. What excuses do I honestly find myself making as I listen to myself explain what happened in the marriage?

A PERSONAL LOOK:

11. What have I learned about myself about how I am and how I operate? What are my needs? What are my failings?
12. What have I discovered about what is important in life?
13. Where am I lying to myself on how I am doing? What am I pretending to be to others?
14. What have I found that I need in a spouse that I should keep in mind for the future?
15. What are my fears about getting married again? Which of these are legitimate?

AN EMOTIONAL LOOK:

16. What are my biggest hurts through the breakdown and what have I done to resolve them?
17. The greater the ownership on my own mistakes and the less the blame on the other person, the more real my freedom will be. Where am I at in this journey? What are my mistakes?
18. Where might I be still bitter and resentful over the hurts of the break-up? Where do I still need to extend forgiveness? Who are the people and what are the issues?
19. What will be my biggest ongoing frustrations as I deal with my 'ex'? How will I handle them?
20. How healthy is my self-awareness? Where might I be fooling myself on my recovery?
21. How has the marital breakdown and divorce affected my views of myself? What do I feel about me?

A RELATIONAL LOOK:

22. How soon is it wise for me to start entertaining other people in a relationship?
23. What are my biggest concerns about dating?
24. What is going to make this dating relationship different than the last one that went so good and then so wrong?
25. How patient should I be? What is God's timing on my finding another spouse?

26. What if I find myself starting to recoil from commitment with a future companion?

27. What will I do to insure a healthy, God-honoring start to the next marriage?

A PHYSICAL LOOK:

28. What will I do to handle my sexual desires in a God-honoring way now that I am single again?

29. What will I do when I feel lonely at night? How well am I doing facing my aloneness?

30. What is going to prevent me from doing stupid regrettable things in shallow and casual relationships?

31. How will I govern and guide my levels of intimacy with the people I date?

32. Who will I make myself accountable to and what will be the areas that I ask them to hold me responsible to?

33. Knowing my past, what unhealthy or destructive habits should I be careful to avoid to remain physically healthy? Need prompting - drugs, alcohol, gambling, pornography, bingeing on food, anorexia... and more.

A BIBLICAL LOOK:

Write a response to each of the following Scripture. What is God saying to you?

Malachi 2:13-16

Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer looks with favor on your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

"The man who hates and divorces his wife," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "does violence to the one he should protect," says the LORD Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful.

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Matthew 5:31,32

“It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

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Matthew 19:3-9

Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

“Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

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1 Corinthians 7:10-16

“To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?”

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