

EXPLORING BEYOND DIVORCE

Coaching Guide • Topic 01 of 12

The 3 Transitional Journeys of Divorce and Relationship Endings

Some endings happen long before the paperwork.

About This Topic

Divorce is not a single event — it is a journey through multiple emotional seasons. This coaching guide explores the three transitional journeys that most people navigate after a divorce or significant relationship ending: Endings, the Neutral Zone, and New Beginnings.

Understanding where you are in your journey — and what each stage asks of you — can bring relief, clarity, and a sense of direction when everything feels uncertain.

An Important Reality to Accept

Depending on how long you were married or in a serious relationship, it normally takes 2 to 4 years — sometimes longer, rarely shorter — to move through Journey #1 (Endings) and find yourself transitioning into Journey #3 (New Beginnings). Temporary shortcuts, including bridge relationships, may ease emotional pain in the short term but often do not last.

Overview: The Three Journeys

Below is a brief orientation to each journey. The sections that follow go deeper into each one.

Journey 1: Endings

Healing Emotional Wounds

- The most difficult journey to leave
- Emotionally exhausting — an emotional rollercoaster
- Marked by deep sadness, anger, hurt, and feeling out of control
- Unexpected ups and sudden downs are normal

Journey 2: The Neutral Zone

Peaceful Acceptance

- Life begins to slow down regarding your divorce
- A sense of passing through a portal — from chaos to calm
- A time of self-reflection and personal discovery
- No judgement of good or bad — just honest exploration of who you are right now

Journey 3: New Beginnings

Discoveries and Awakenings

- The most important journey — it sets the stage for your future life
 - Discovering the "New You"
 - Learning to fill your life with Peace, Joy, and Love
 - A time of authentic growth and positive possibility
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Journey 1: Endings — Healing Emotional Wounds

This first transitional journey is often described as an emotional rollercoaster — with unexpected ups and sudden downs that leave you feeling out of control, overwhelmed by sadness, anger, and hurt.

It is the most difficult journey to leave, and it often takes longer than people expect. That is not a sign that something is wrong with you. It is a sign that what you lost mattered deeply.

Key Focus Areas During Endings

- Dealing with practical matters (legal, financial, housing)
- Continuing to grieve your losses
- Finding a divorce support group
- Beginning the practice of saying "Good-Bye"

The Role of Support

Family and friends can offer temporarily comforting support, but this is often not the kind of support that moves you forward. A divorce recovery support group — a circle of people who truly understand because they are living it too — can be transformative.

What Makes a Healthy Divorce Recovery Support Group?

A group of individuals with the common, difficult, and challenging concerns of divorce or relationship endings, who provide emotional and moral support for one another. Usually led by a volunteer or professional facilitator. You may also want to seek support from a divorce psychologist or divorce coach.

Journey 2: The Neutral Zone — Peaceful Acceptance

During this stage, your life begins to slow down in relation to your divorce. It can feel like you have passed through a portal — from the emotional chaos of Endings into a quieter, steadier place.

This is a time of self-reflection and personal discovery. It is not about having answers — it is about honestly exploring who you are right now, without judgment.

Essential Areas of Neutral Zone Focus

- A time of self-reflection and personal discovery
 - Handling practical matters with greater steadiness
 - Clarifying and understanding your grieving
 - Continuing to get divorce recovery support
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Journey 3: New Beginnings — Discoveries and Awakenings

This is the most important journey you will begin. It sets the stage for your future life as the "New You." You will discover how to fill your life with Peace, Joy, and Love — not as distant goals, but as living practices.

Key Focus Areas in New Beginnings

- Saying "Hello" to the New You
 - Refining how you take care of practical matters
 - Reduced need and frequency of deep grieving
 - Finding new support for your journey of personal growth
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Reflection Questions

Take your time with these. There are no right or wrong answers. The invitation is simply to be honest with yourself.

1. What are the losses you have experienced — and how does each one make you feel?

2. What is your current support system, and how well is it working for you?

3. How are you handling practical matters right now (legal, financial, housing, daily life)?

4. Which of the three journeys do you feel you are currently in? What makes you feel that way?

5. What would "Peaceful Acceptance" feel like for you right now? What would need to shift?

A Closing Thought

You are not behind. You are not broken. You are on a journey that takes as long as it takes — and every step forward, however small, is real progress.

"Healing happens one conversation, one insight, and one step at a time."

— Ronnie K

Additional Support Available

1-on-1 Clarity Sessions • Weekly Zoom Support Groups • exploringbeyonddivorce.org