

EXPLORING BEYOND DIVORCE

Coaching Guide • Journey 05 of 12

The 5 Primary Losses in Divorce

Divorce can bring several kinds of loss, each affecting your life in a different way.

About This Journey

This Journey explores five common kinds of loss that can accompany divorce. Recognizing what has changed may help you understand your feelings and identify the support you need. These losses can overlap, and you may experience them differently.

The 5 Primary Losses in Divorce

Most people expect to grieve the relationship itself. What surprises many is the depth and breadth of the other losses that accompany it.

1. Relationship Loss

- Separation from the meaningful physical and emotional presence of your partner
- Physical intimacy and touch
- A partner in life — someone to share daily experience with
- Sharing inner thoughts and being truly known
- Planning tomorrows together

2. Loss of Role

- "I knew who I was — now who am I?"
- Loss of the role of husband or wife
- Loss of the role of friend, confidant, partner
- Identity built around the relationship — now uncertain

3. Material Losses

- Changes involving your home, possessions, finances, or financial security
- Loss of material possessions, property, shared finances
- Financial and property decisions can carry strong emotions
- Disputes over material things can reflect both practical needs and emotional losses

4. Loss of Social Connections and Support

- Losing relationships with family, friends, in-laws, shared social circles
- Friendships that were couple-based may not continue
- Past support systems may no longer be available
- The community built around the marriage can dissolve

5. Loss of Hopes, Dreams, and Expectations

- Often the most difficult loss to name — and to grieve
- The loss of your dreams: growing older together, building a family
- Hopes for a loving future that will not unfold as imagined
- Loss of beliefs, ideas, and the story you told yourself about your life

Can Loss and Relief Exist Together?

Sometimes divorce brings relief from patterns, relationships, or situations that were hurting you. Relief and grief can exist together. You do not have to find a positive side to your losses or feel ready to see them differently.

A Question Worth Sitting With

*Are there any losses from your marriage that, on reflection, might also be a form of release?
Losses that, in time, may open space for something healthier or truer to who you are?*

Reflection Questions

These questions are about honest, compassionate self-exploration. Take your time.

1. What are the two most painful losses you have experienced in your divorce — and why do they hurt so much?

2. What emotions came with each of those losses? Name them as specifically as you can.

3. Which of the 5 types of loss surprised you most? Which one had you not fully acknowledged until now?

4. Are there losses that feel difficult to acknowledge or talk about? What might help you approach them at your own pace?

5. Is there anything you have lost that — with time — might also feel like a release?

A Closing Thought

Your losses deserve acknowledgment, even when others cannot see them. You can take time to understand what each one means to you and seek support as you grieve.

"In divorce the loss of love is expressed not in one loss, but in multiple kinds of losses. And every one deserves to be grieved."