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How your divorce can be empowering

Deborah Moskovitch shares her own divorce story

By: Deborah Moskovitch



There's a story I often share in the hopes that it inspires and empowers others. I call it: *Reframing your thoughts to create the best life yet*. It's about how my engagement ring changed from a symbol of love as a couple to love of myself. I know what you're thinking: This sounds cliché, and this [divorce consultant](#) and educator is just one more flake trying to sell swampland in Florida.

Deciding to divorce was second only to the pain of telling my oldest child his parents were divorcing.

A week after my youngest child was born I learned some devastating facts about my marriage which were about to turn my world upside down. But, fifteen years later my world is not only sunny-side up but also a whole lot different -- very fulfilling. I'm living out my dreams.

I'll never forget the day a week after my third child was born. I tried to buy diapers for my son and my [credit card was declined](#), yet again. The humiliation I felt when I approached my car empty handed, while my parents and baby were waiting for me, was devastating. There is usually a breaking point that causes people to make difficult decisions. And that episode was to be the start of mine. It was the low point that began my catalyst for change.

I believed in the sanctity of marriage in good and bad times. I grew up fairly sheltered, with tunnel vision and naiveté. The "D" word never existed in my vocabulary and I was determined to stay married. I made my life about my children. But all that unraveled that fateful day my diaper purchase was declined - the day I realized that the trust, communication and honesty were gone from my

marriage.

I cried myself to sleep for a year, still pondering the decision to divorce. It wasn't until after a year of soul searching, therapy and digging myself out of the abyss of guilt that I finally decided to tell my husband that our marriage was over - the third most painful experience of my divorce.

The rest of the details are not important. As I speak so candidly about divorce, many often ask for details about my own. And, while those might make for a B-movie, I try for maturity and reason to take over. I pride myself as a parent who tries to put her children's best interest first and have made a personal pact -- never say or write anything that I wouldn't want my children to hear or read about.

I became embroiled in an "emotional divorce" which caused my "legal divorce" to keep the file burning for seven long years. And what did I get? Legal bills and other divorce related expenses large enough to have bought the home of my dreams...but enough therapy to help me rebuild my life and achieve my dreams.

I learned many valuable lessons along the way. There are two sides of divorce to wade through-- the emotional divorce and the legal divorce. Divorce is upper-case Emotional, and if not managed properly, it can wreak havoc on the legal process. While it would be really nice if the two elements could be handled one after the other--you could spend a few years dealing with the emotional issues, and then, heart and head clear, go through the legal process--but, the truth is, that emotions and legal processes cannot be clinically separated, and usually have to be managed at the same time. It takes maturity and resolve to do what is really right.

As I began to move on post-divorce I met lots of wonderful divorcees. But, for many, there was a recurring theme of despair, disappointment and sadness. I didn't want to be like that. I wanted to be focused, hopeful and confident. It was this determination that was my game changer. I decided I was going to write a book about divorce. My book would be different. It would share my pain so that others could heal from the lessons. It would share the wisdom of North America's foremost divorce professionals so that others could be empowered with knowledge and avoid my mistakes. And that is how my book, *The Smart Divorce*, was conceived and written.

So, by now you must be wondering how this story has anything to do with reframing my thoughts. Well, my diamond engagement ring sat in my safety deposit box for 10 years--the shattered symbol of love, hope and promise. But, when I received the publisher's advance for writing *The Smart Divorce*, I decided to rethink what that symbol of love, hope and promise meant. I took part of the book advance to a jeweler to redesign

and reset my engagement ring. That diamond ring (*pictured*) has now become my "empowerment ring" and a new symbol of love, hope and promise, but with an entirely different connotation.

It means: Love - of myself Hope - of having a fulfilling and good life and, Promise - to empower me to be a role model for my children and others to move forward with focus, hope and confidence.

Who would have thought that when I said those words "I want a divorce", that 15 years later I feel I'm living the best life yet. I've rethought what a meaningful life really means, reframed my dreams and feel empowered.

Deborah Moskovitch is a divorce consultant and educator, and author of The Smart Divorce: Proven Strategies and Valuable Advice from 100 Top Divorce Lawyers, Financial Advisers, Counselors and Other Experts. Deborah has become an opinion leader in the media and has shared her insights and research on television and radio to explain that divorce can be managed in smarter ways. To learn more visit thesmartdivorce.com.

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Image: Deborah's empowerment ring. Photo courtesy Deborah Moskovitch.