



Wings for Women

Coaching, Mentoring, & Training for Women in Transition

Wings for Women - May 2010 Newsletter

Welcome to the May 2010 *Wings for Women* Newsletter Tips on Navigating a Divorce and Creating an Ideal Life After Divorce.

How to Develop the Courage to Make a Big Move After Divorce



I recently made a big move to San Francisco from the East Coast ... alone. Why? To start a new chapter of my life after divorce. In fact, after being married for 26 years, I timed my move to be on the one year anniversary of my divorce. That seemed like a sweet and fitting way to celebrate the beginning of my new life, to reinvent myself as a newly single woman. Many have asked me how I developed the courage to make such a big move, so I'd like to share my approach with you.

What is courage anyway? Is it the same thing as fearlessness? No, because there WILL be fear ... fear of the unknown, fear of failure, fear of embarrassment, fear of loneliness, etc. Unless you're in physical danger, most of our fears are caused by negative self-talk when you're feeling a lack of control. The challenge is how to manage our fears by shifting our thinking.

I attribute my courage to my **BAM ... Beliefs, Attitude, and Motivation**:

Beliefs

After high school, I decided to pursue a degree and a career in engineering, which at the time was a very male-dominated field. That seemed scary to some people. Why did I decide to do that? Because I believed women should be able to succeed in a "man's world", and I wanted to prove it. I had enough **conviction in my beliefs** that drove me to take such a bold action. And it worked. I graduated at the top of my class and went on to work for a prestigious engineering consulting firm.

Attitude

I moved to the U.S. from Japan at age 17 to attend college and was the first person in my family to immigrate to this country. Many people are amazed that a 17 year old girl would have the courage to travel alone to the other side of the planet. But I didn't think it was scary at all. I had grown up on U.S. military bases in Japan, so all my friends and classmates were American. I had always expected that when it was time to go to college, I would go to a university in the United States. I was looking forward to the adventure, and it was a great growth experience. I adapted quickly to my new homeland and have enjoyed living in the U.S. ever since.

If you think something is going to be scary, it will be. On the other hand, if you think it's going to be a fun and adventurous learning experience, it will be. Your **attitude and expectations make a huge difference** in how a big bold change feels to you.

About Us

Wings for Women! We are committed to inspiring, empowering, and enabling women to "find their wings" and take bold actions to live the life of their dreams. We will help you get unstuck and find the clarity you need to create a life that fits your passions!

Are you ready to make the bold changes in your life to find your wings and pursue your dreams? Take the first step and work with a Personal Coach to help you move on to a better life.

Keiko Hsu offers coaching services by phone at your convenience, no matter where you are located. Contact her to schedule an exploratory consultation by phone. Keiko can be reached at (415) 738-2313 or by email at keiko@WingsForWomen.net.

To a joyful and fulfilling future!

Keiko

Motivation

After my divorce, I was very motivated to move on with my life. At the time, I was commuting between Philadelphia and my home in Connecticut. I asked myself where I would live, if I could live anywhere in the world? My answer was San Francisco, the city of my dreams. It had the spectacular beauty of the water, mountains, and city lights, as well as the cultural diversity and urban excitement. And it was 2,600 miles away from my ex-husband. I was **motivated to reinvent myself**, to have a fresh new start on a new chapter of my life.

It proved to be easier than you might think to establish oneself in a new city. You can search online for social groups to join, including newcomer groups. Meetup.com is a great resource to meet new friends who share the same hobbies and interests as you have. You can also make friends by joining a ski club, hiking group, tennis club, golfing group, bridge club, or any social or activity-related organization. I've made dozens of new friends in San Francisco over the past few months. And I still stay in touch with my friends on the East Coast. I'm so happy I made the move to San Francisco. It really feels like home to me now.

What bold actions do you want to take? What mental blocks are getting in your way? How might you manage your fears by focusing on your BAM ... your Beliefs, Attitude, and Motivation?

Tell us what you think. We would love to get your comments!!

Annual Performance Reviews for Marriages? Can They Prevent Divorce?



Elizabeth and John Edwards. Tiger Woods and Elin Nordegren. Kate and Jon Gosselin. Sandra Bullock and Jesse James. The media bombards us with stories every day of infidelity and revenge during and after divorce. These battles are between husbands and wives who at one time loved each other and committed to support each other until "death do us part." Why do more than 50% of marriages crumble into dust? And why do so many divorces end up in fierce court battles? **What can be done to prevent divorce?**

Maybe we have unrealistic expectations on what it takes to nurture a relationship. So many long-married couples take each other for granted and co-exist in sheer boredom. They stopped communicating many years ago, so every unspoken minor irritation adds to the plaque of an already calcified communication channel. Gradually, they drift apart and grow in different directions. They no longer share their hopes, dreams, and joys with each other. They only talk about shallow everyday stuff. They just co-exist until one day, one of them gets energized by someone else. It might start with very innocent flirting, and next thing you know, the hormones are raging full blast. And you know what happens after that. By that time, it's often too late to rebuild the marriage. Mutual trust is long gone. So how can we save relationships while there's still a chance to recover and prevent divorce?

Most of us know that in the business world, well managed companies have annual performance review processes. Some have reviews on a more frequent basis. When done well, performance reviews are candid, humane, and inspiring discussions between a manager and employee, intended to motivate the employee to improve communication, performance and loyalty. Sometimes "360 degree" feedback from peers, customers, and direct reports are included in the discussion. Goals, results, and mutual expectations are discussed. By "checking in" on a regular basis, any cracks in the foundation can be identified and corrected before any further damage happens.

If having a regular "check-in" helps companies perform well, why do we expect marriages to last 20-30 years without having a regular "check-in" process? Why don't we consider institutionalizing an annual performance review for our marriages, or some other periodic process to prompt a husband and wife to re-assess their level of satisfaction with their marriage? **If dissatisfaction is caught early, there's a greater chance of recovery and rebuilding the marriage.** And then maybe we have a real opportunity to prevent marital breakdowns and divorce.

What do you think? We would love to hear from you.

Marriage and Divorce ... Decisions of Free Will & Conscious Choice?



As we honor the 99th anniversary of International Women's Day this month, I'm reminded of the story of Nujood Ali, the 10 year old girl in Yemen who made world headlines over a year ago by becoming the youngest known divorced person in the world.

When Nujood was only 8 years old, her father sold her off to marriage to a 30 year old motorcycle delivery man. The groom ignored instructions to abstain from sex until Nujood reached puberty, and he forced himself on her on their wedding night, and allegedly beat and raped her every day since then. In April 2008, two months after the wedding, she escaped and found her way to the courthouse to request a divorce. Shada Nasser, a female human rights attorney, took sympathy and handled her divorce case for free. The divorce was granted by the local judge. Nujood's father and ex-husband were subsequently arrested for underage marriage, but both were released within 10 days.

In Yemen, girls as young as 15 years old could be legally married. Sex is prohibited until the bride becomes "mature." (Hmm ... How do they enforce that?) More than 50% of Yemeni brides are less than 18 years old, often as second and third wives to much older men. (Similar situations exist in other impoverished areas such as South Asia.) Since Nujood Ali's case, the Yemen government has raised the minimum marriage age from 15 to 18 years old. Her case has also sparked a wave of other married children in the Mideast who have come forward to seek divorce, including an 8 year old girl in Saudi Arabia.

It's amazing to know that in the 21st century, women around the world are still subjected to this type of treatment. Why do so many governments and religious institutions allow such legalized pedophilia and sex slavery? Marriage should be based on free will and conscious choice. It should be a long-term partnership based on love and deep commitment between two mature, informed, and consenting adults, don't you agree?

We're very fortunate to be free of such institutionalized oppression in the U.S. But even in this country, lots of people get married for convenience and economic reasons, and not true love. Sometimes they learn to love and respect each other after they marry. That's okay. If both partners make the marriage decision freely as a conscious choice, it can still work out.

Many years later, if you find yourselves growing apart, ask yourself if you're still in the marriage by choice, or if you're feeling stuck or trapped. Freedom comes when you realize you have the power to choose how you want to live your life. And sometimes, making the conscious choice to leave a marriage, get divorced, and reinvent yourself can be the most empowering choice you've ever made. Divorce could be a step toward a happier, more fulfilling next stage of life!

Can Apologies Save a Marriage Torn Apart by Infidelity? Reflections About Tiger Woods' Public Apology.



Tiger Woods' public statement. Another public apology by a formerly well-respected man who destroyed his marriage, hurt his loved ones, and ruined his stellar career and personal brand through his reckless and stupid behaviors. How many times have we seen this movie? John Edwards. Bill Clinton. Eliot Spitzer. Mark Sanford. Countless more. These are influential men who used to be role models for children! Do they ever learn from others' mistakes??

Tiger's apology seemed genuine enough. He appeared to be truly sorry and remorseful, not only for his selfish behavior, but also for the pain, humiliation, and anguish he foisted on his loved ones. He admitted that he had convinced himself that normal rules don't apply to him and that he was entitled to enjoy all the pleasures that his stardom brought to him. And now, he has committed to live a life of integrity and get reconnected to his inner Buddhist.

So what about the man in YOUR life who strayed, got caught, and then apologized? Should you forgive him? Maybe so. But forgive him for your own sake, not for his. Forgiving doesn't mean you condone his behavior. Forgiving him helps you reach a state of acceptance for what happened, so that YOU can move on. And if you had already tried to rebuild the relationship ... I mean really really tried ... and if it still didn't work out, then it's time to move on with your life. Maybe you've both grown apart and he isn't the right partner for you anymore. **YOU DESERVE BETTER.** You have plenty more years to live, and lots of new and more fulfilling relationships you can develop.

I can personally attest to the joys that "life after divorce" can bring to you. I'm living it in my own life, one year after finalizing a divorce from my 26-year marriage. [Click here](#) to see a video of my transition after divorce. I'm so much happier now, and more at peace with myself than I've been in years! The key is to learn lessons from the past without dwelling on the past. Look forward, focus on the present and future, and know that you too can live a joyful life, if you choose to do so. It's YOUR choice. Yes, really.

To a joyful and fulfilling life!



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