

Adjusting to Divorce? Rebuild Routines

Julia Thomas

08/05/2024

Adjusting to Divorce? Rebuild Routines



"Toto, I've a feeling

we're not in Kansas anymore." That famous Wizard of Oz quote can be very relatable after you've just gone through a divorce. Nothing is quite the same as it was. Your life had adjusted to a new routine involving a partnership, and now, you're on your own. You most definitely aren't in Kansas anymore.

Whether Kansas was a delightful or a dreary place for you, this strange new world you have found yourself in is different and requires work to know how to get a grip on your new reality. Adjusting to this new life is a challenging transition for many. And you are not alone in this transition. There were almost [700,000 divorces](#) in the United States last year. [Research](#) has found that about 40-50% of American first marriages end in divorce.

One of the best things you can do for yourself is to create routines that will provide consistency and balance. I'll focus on two specific routines to prioritize: exercise and sleep.

A common area of life that is easily disrupted in post-divorce life is your exercise routine. During that first year after a divorce, research has found that we see the biggest shift in how, or even if, someone exercises. Good research has also found that regular exercise improves your mood and overall health.

The best tip I have for creating a good exercise routine is consistency. Find the time that works best for you. Is it at the crack of dawn? Is it during happy hour? Is it when nocturnal animals awaken? Whatever time works best for you commit and stick to it. Next, find out how you enjoy working out. Is it with a trainer? At the gym? At home? With a workout video? Is it a mix of all of those? Once you find out what you enjoy best, stick to it. Don't let something else become more important during that time you set aside. Binging another episode of *Outerbanks* or *The Office* can be tempting but put it on pause. For those who choose to work out in the morning, beware of the black hole we call bed and the snooze button.

Speaking of snoozing, sleeping habits are another thing that gets scrambled in post-divorce life. Within that first year after a divorce, we see a change in the sleeping habits of those involved. It can be an adjustment for some to go back to sleeping alone after being in a marriage where you slept together.

The biggest tip I have for improving your sleeping habits is – wait for it – [to be consistent about your bedtime routine](#), the time you are going to bed and the time you are waking up. Having a routine in place and being consistent about it will improve your sleep. Things to consider as you build your bedtime routine are what you are doing before you go to bed. Finding some way to unwind is helpful to transition from the busy day you most likely had to dreamland. For some, that is reading a book or watching a show. But as mentioned before, don't let binging your show or finishing the book that has just drawn you in and keep you awake past the bedtime you have set for yourself. (And reading via electronic devices can disturb sleep preparation.) If after creating a routine for yourself, you still feel like you are having difficulties, talk to your therapist or your doctor. They may be able to prescribe you a sleeping aid or have customized tips for you.

These are just two tips to help your post-divorce adjustment when you are definitely not in Kansas anymore. Routines can help settle you in this unsettling time. If you're ready for more, there is another blog on the Utah Marriage Commission website that dives into more areas of life (i.e., staying involved with others and personal budgeting). Check it out.