



COLUMNS

THE MINDFULL DIVORCÉE

Debbie Martinez, Divorce Coach

Are You Chasing Your Past?

YOU HAVE BEEN DIVORCED FOR ABOUT A YEAR AND YOU NOTICE, OR MAYBE you don't, but your friends do, that conversations drift to happy hours you had when you were married, vacations you took, how much you loved your marital home or how you wish things could be as they were. You, my friend, are chasing your past. The problem is you will never catch it and consequently, you live in a constant state of frustration.

Remembering your past and chasing it are two different things. The difference being, when you are chasing it, there is a yearning. Try this: Think of a past memory, vacation or an old relationship. My guess is you think of it fondly. Now think of when you were married. Do you feel that shift? Do you feel a yearning? If so and you have been divorced for a while and find your conversations drifting to those times, then you are chasing your past.



News flash! If you are constantly chasing your past then you have no time or mental energy to plan and go after your future. So you ask, "Isn't chasing and going after the same thing?" No, not at all. Chasing implies something you are attempting to catch and it has a negative feel about it. Going after something has a powerful and strong feel to it. It's positive. The definition of past is something that has already taken place or happened. Your marriage and consequently your divorce were times in your life that already took place. You cannot re-capture it so stop trying.

But how do you do that? The first step is to acknowledge that you are chasing your past by constantly thinking or talking about it. The second step is to be vigilant when the conversation starts to head in that direction and to immediately stop yourself from going any further into the conversation. Our first inclination is to finish our thoughts or in this case our story, that no doubt we have relayed ad nauseam, but it is imperative to just stop and move on to something else. The more you talk about the past the more entrenched it becomes in your present. This is a process, and by all means don't gauge yourself by others progress. I've seen some clients get divorced on a Tuesday and by the weekend that part of their life is behind them. Remember, everyone has had different experiences, feels things differently and has different coping skills.

You are unique, so what is important is that you keep moving from reliving the past to embracing the present and getting excited about the future. Chasing your past serves no purpose other than making you frustrated, sad and stuck. I know too well the sadness that comes with a divorce and the aftermath of picking up the pieces but I also know that precious time is wasted by chasing after something that is unattainable. Leave the past where it belongs and spend your time in conversations about positive things to come.

Everything in life is a choice. You could choose to have a pity party, you can choose to regurgitate the past, not to mention lose friends because you have become a Debbie Downer, or you can choose to thank God you were delivered from a bad situation and that your life is now a blank slate to do with what you want. Don't squander this second chance because you are too busy chasing something you were not meant to have.

Debbie Martinez, MA is a certified, mindful life coach specializing in divorce (aka heartbreak coach). She professionally coaches clients on how to avoid the breakup backlash and live better, not bitter. As a Florida Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator trained in collaborative divorce, Debbie gives clients the tools they need to successfully untie the knot and stand strong in the wake of adversity. She brings her formal training and life experience into her coaching practice to empower and educate clients through their divorce journey and onto new beginnings. You can contact Debbie at debbie@transformationthruidivorce.com.

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