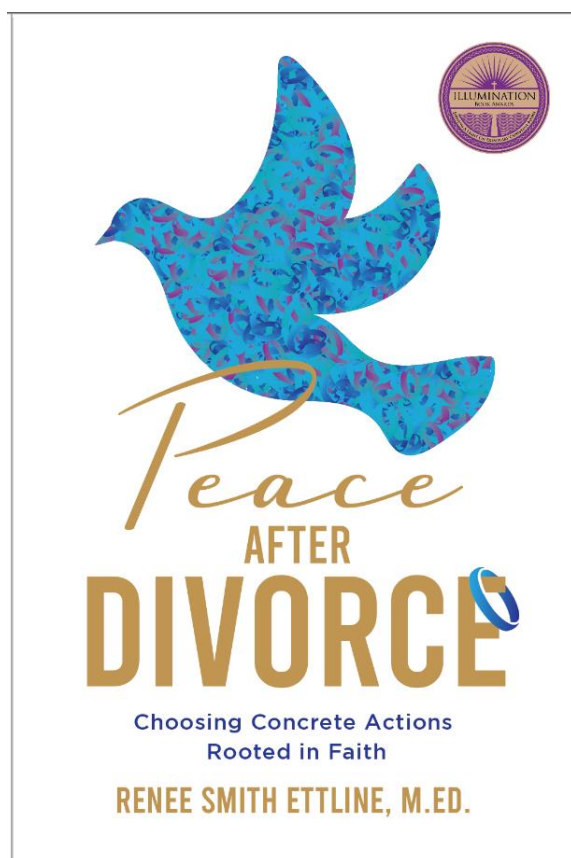


Peace after Divorce Workshop

Facilitator Handbook

Companion to Peace after Divorce Workshop Videos

And the Book with This Cover



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Peace after Divorce Workshop Facilitator's Handbook, 4th edition

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Disclaimer

After Divorce Ministries, LLC and Renee Smith Ettline seek to help churches offer support to those who are dealing with the hurt of divorce by equipping churches with materials to offer the Peace after Divorce Workshop. Our materials provide information for consideration and personal reflection and evaluation on the part of participants. We also offer suggestions and information for implementation on the part of churches and church volunteers. Churches and individuals offering or attending the Peace after Divorce Workshop and peer support groups assume all responsibility and liability for how they use this information.

This ministry does not advocate divorce. However, divorce is a reality in our society. This ministry intends to help those whose lives are touched by its unsettling effects.



After Divorce Ministries, LLC is an independent Christ-centered ministry.

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Welcome

We are excited to have you and your church offer the *Peace after Divorce Workshop*. This handbook gives insight into the principles of the workshop and is intended to help you understand your role as a member of your church sponsored *Peace after Divorce* ministry team. It also gives you the details you need for facilitating each session including questions and activities for your group.

We know that God will use you and your church in a mighty way to help people who are hurting from divorce. Your role is to love those who come, listen to their stories, facilitate their discussions, and pray for their healing. God will see to the rest. God bless you and your *Peace after Divorce* ministry.

Peace, joy, and love to you!

Renee Ettlne

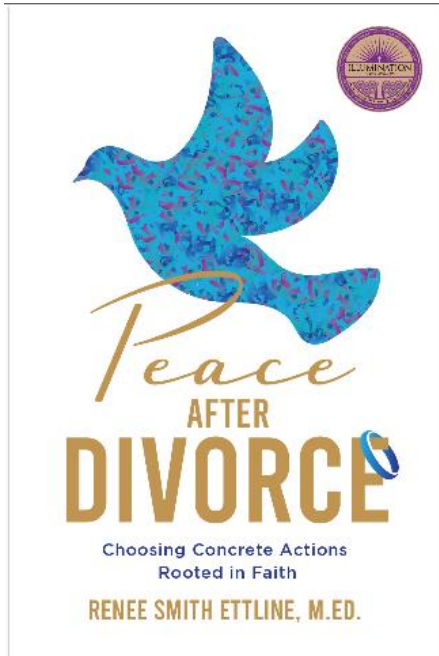
Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever!

Ephesians 3:20-21 NIV

Please give a copy of this handbook to each person who will
Serve on your *Peace after Divorce* ministry team.
You may email them this PDF or print it for them.

Order Participant Books Now

Order the books for your group now to allow ample time for shipping. Each participant and each facilitator will need a *Peace after Divorce* book. Print books are available through most online vendors. A new version of the book has just been released so be sure to order books with the cover shown below.



Books for In-Person Groups

It is recommended that you order print books for your in-person groups. Print books have space to answer questions in the book. When ordering be sure to allow for walk-ins. A link to order print books from Amazon is below. Books are also available through most other online vendors.

[ORDER BOOKS](#)

Books for Virtual Groups

If members of virtual groups can't get to the church to pick up a print edition of the *Peace after Divorce* book you may have them order their own books using the link below. Those who choose an eBook will also need to have a notebook or journal of their choosing for answering questions.

[ORDER BOOKS](#)

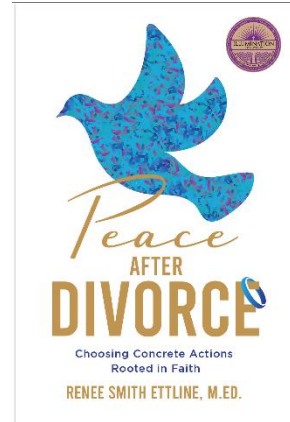


Elements of the Peace after Divorce Workshop

1. Peace after Divorce Books

The book *Peace after Divorce: Choosing Concrete Actions Rooted in Faith* is essential for each participant and facilitator. This book allows participants to apply what they read to their personal situations as they ponder and answer the questions in the book. Readers are then encouraged to reflect and talk with God at the end of each reading. Interwoven scriptures uplift and share God's love, forgiveness, and grace. Group discussions about the readings further enrich this experience. Books may be handed out to participants the first session for in-person groups. Most churches charge participants for the books.

Peace after Divorce has been recognized as an Exemplary Christian book by the Illumination Book Awards



2. Video Presentations

Video presentations enrich book content and prepare participants for group discussions. The first week includes an orientation as well as an overview of Chapter 1. Detailed session directions for each meeting are included in this Handbook.

3. Group Discussions

Group discussions offer peer support and insight in a non-judgmental Christian environment. You may have more than one discussion table within a workshop depending on the number of your participants. Be sure to each table facilitator has a copy of this handbook. If you're offering Peace after Divorce virtually, see the section on facilitating discussions in a virtual *Peace after Divorce* group on pages 28-29 of this handbook.

4. Prayer and Scriptures

Each reading includes scriptures and a call to talk with God. Facilitators model the importance of prayer by opening and ending each session with a prayer for the group.

Important Things You Need to Know

The Mission

Peace after Divorce Workshops are intended to help divorced and divorcing people find healing and hope through self-reflection, talking with God, and peer support.

The Goals

1. To educate participants regarding adjustments typically related to divorce as well as life skills associated with divorce recovery.
2. To provide divorced and divorcing people with a non-judgmental Christian environment with opportunities for focused discussion and mutual peer support.
3. To provide participants with the opportunity for self-discovery by personalizing their journey via the workbook format of the *Peace after Divorce* book.
4. To lovingly share God's healing power, grace, love, and forgiveness so that participants will actively build or strengthen their relationship with Christ.

Who Should Attend

This workshop is for adults who are seeking support and who want to know practical things they can do to cope with and move beyond the life-shaking impact of a pending or past divorce. People who have benefitted from the experience range from the newly separated to those decades beyond their legal divorce. Since the workshop is designed for individual healing, couples who are divorced, divorcing, or dating one another should not attend the workshop together.

Note: Numerous reconciliations have occurred because of how God has used this workshop in the lives of individuals, however, the focus of this workshop is on healing from divorce.

The Workshop Schedule

Workshops are structured to meet once a week, one and one-half or two hours per session, for 8 consecutive weeks. There is also an optional 9th week for parents that focuses on helping children cope with divorce. See the session 7 facilitator tips on page 21 of this handbook for details.

Cost to Participants

Churches set their own fees and may charge only for the book or set a fee that will help recoup overhead. The church may also wish to offer need-based scholarships and/or childcare.

Participants Return Free Policy

Once participants have attended a *Peace after Divorce Workshop* and have the book *Peace after Divorce*, they may return to future workshops for free, assuming that the materials used in the workshop have not changed. If new materials exist, returning participants pay only the cost of those materials. Healing from divorce takes time. This policy allows returnees to continue to grow as their healing is a work in progress. It also enriches your new attendees' experiences when previous attendees join a group.

Serving on Your Church Peace after Divorce Team

*Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you.
Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord,
because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.*

1 Corinthians 15:58 NIV

Who Should Serve?

Team members should have an active Christian faith, a good listening ear, and a grace-filled heart to help. If they have been through a divorce themselves they need to be beyond the raw emotion of their own divorce grief.

What is it Like to Serve on the Team?

Serving on the *Peace after Divorce* Ministry Team is amazingly rewarding. You become a part of the miracle that happens when God takes the difficult circumstances of our lives and uses them for good. You have a chance to share his love and to watch Him work in your life and in the lives of other people. The *Peace after Divorce* Workshop is structured to make serving on the team incredibly easy. You can relax because you aren't to be an expert or to provide all the answers.

What Do I Need to Do?

- **The Basics**

1. Attend each session arriving early to welcome participants.
2. Create a supportive, non-judgmental environment that reflects God's love.
3. Facilitate discussion according to the guidelines and strategies in this Handbook.
4. Read the weekly readings so you are prepared.
5. Help pass the word about the *Peace after Divorce* Workshop.
6. The *Peace after Divorce* coordinator will also need to arrange for logistics and promotion of the workshop.

- **Take a Load Off Yourself!**

The purpose of volunteering with *Peace after Divorce* is to serve God. It is about you letting God's spirit work through you. It is not about you helping people. It is about God helping people through you. As a ministry team member and group discussion facilitator, you share God's love and give your best to the mission, but the results are up to God. Remember these key points:

1. Healing is between God and each person.
2. You may not know what each person gets from the program.
3. A person may not live up to your expectations as a participant but God is still at work.
4. Base your interactions in love and respect—never be legalistic or punitive.
5. A participant's commitment to heal is to himself and to God, not to you.

- **Create a Supportive Workshop Environment**

Coming to the first workshop is a daunting experience for some people. Even subsequent sessions can be challenging and emotional. As team members, you will set the tone for this ministry. The

atmosphere of the workshop should be Christ-centered, friendly, love-based, safe and confidential, welcoming and respectful. This is a workshop and peer support group. It is not group counseling.

1. Be positive and encouraging. That can be as simple as saying, "Glad to see you," versus "Where have you been?" Always be emotionally supportive and respectful of each person.
2. Provide a safety net of prayer support.
3. Send a weekly email to participants. From our course site you can download weekly emails that you can copy and send to your participants.
4. Follow-up with individuals in your group as appropriate. A simple, "We missed you. I hope you're not sick. Please let me hear from you" email lets absentees know they are valued and were missed.
5. Complete the week's readings before each meeting. This helps you to support participants in processing the content.

How to Become a Great Peace after Divorce Facilitator

With a little effort you can polish the skills listed below and become both comfortable and effective as a group discussion facilitator.

1. **Use the Discussion Guidelines.** Discussion Guidelines are found in the Preface of the *Peace after Divorce* book on page xvi. These guidelines are extremely helpful and when honored yield a productive group dynamic. You will be asked to read them to your group at the first session.
2. **Relax.** You'll enjoy the sessions more and be more effective.
3. **Be aware of your own body language.** It communicates your interest level.
4. **Keep your comments short.** If you elect to share part of your personal experience surrounding divorce keep it brief. Your task is to facilitate their discussion and recovery, not to focus on your own.
5. **Listen attentively.** If you are a little nervous there can be a tendency to be so busy thinking about what you are about to say yourself that you don't really listen to your group members. Listening is very important.
6. **Listen for emotions as well as what is said.** Communication consists of both verbal and non-verbal components. This includes the words said as well as tone and emotion expressed. Stay tuned to them all.
7. **Use Reflective listening.** Reflective listening involves paraphrasing the content of what you have heard someone say, as well as commenting on the feelings they have expressed. This accomplishes three things: you must be listening; when you state what you heard, it gives the person a chance to set you straight if you misunderstood; it lets the person speaking know they have been understood.

EXAMPLE:

Participant: "I still hate him for blowing all of our money on things we did not need."

Facilitator: "So you are still very angry because you feel he misspent your money."

8. **When tears flow.** Be empathetic but comfortable. It's okay. Even Jesus wept.
9. **Wait time.** People need time to mentally process questions and to brainstorm their answers before they speak. When you ask a question, wait long enough for this process to take place. Don't feel like you have to fill the silence. You may find you have certain people who are always quick with an answer. If so, you may have to allow a little wait time before the next person is ready to answer. Silence for a few moments is perfectly okay. Become comfortable with silence. If you jump in too quickly to fill the silence, they won't talk and you'll stifle the dialog between

participants. Be patient.

10. **Redirect questions to the group.** Even if a question is directed to you, you can most often redirect that question to the group for answers. This helps to facilitate discussion on the part of the group members and takes you off the hook for providing answers. The facilitator's voice should be heard very little and mostly to encourage group members to interact.
11. **Facilitate the comfortable involvement of each discussion group member.** Some people may not want to say a word. That's okay. Generally they will become more verbal once they feel safe. If they choose not to do the homework, that is their right.
12. **Respect each person's space.** Some people will want a hug yet others will not want to be touched. Some will pour out their hearts yet others will not want to say much. Love and accept them all allowing them their comfort space. Each person always has the right to pass on commenting.
13. **Resist offering advice.** This can be hard, especially when the answers are so clear to you. But remember, facilitators are not there to solve participants' problems. Your role is not that of an expert. Indeed, there may be times when sharing your divorce experience has a place, but be brief and to the point at those times. The people you are facilitating are to be the focus. Avoid saying, "You should..." or "You ought to..." It is a much less directive thing to say, "Have you considered..." or "what would you think of this..." Do not pass judgment.
14. **Allow participants to experience self-discovery.** Allow them time to process the material within themselves and with each other.
15. **Bring everyone back on track when necessary.** Group members need to feel free to discuss their concerns as they relate to the topics but there are times when they stray too far off topic. Gently bring them back on topic by asking a topic-related question.
16. **Call people by name.** Calling someone by name is affirming. Name tags will take the stress out of this.
17. **Rein in side conversations.** Politely bring multiple conversations together.
18. **Be cautious not to divert the topic yourself.** An example would be sidetracking to personal connections with a group member that are not relevant to the rest of the group. For example, following up, "Oh you grew up in Sarasota too?" with detailed chit chat, versus, followed by, "We'll have to talk about that after the workshop tonight."
19. **Serve as an equalizer.** Pull others into the conversation when one person is dominating the floor. In one sentence, summarize the relevant points of what the person has said then ask questions such as, "Has anyone else experienced what he is talking about?"

Session Preparation for Site Coordinators

General Preparation for Sessions



Site coordinators should preview the session video and read session directions during the week prior to each session. This will prepare you and tell you what to take to workshop sessions. Be sure you also read the chapter in the book that the upcoming week covers so that you are prepared to facilitate discussion.



- It is recommended that a box of tissues be made available at each discussion group table.
- Reusable plastic clip-on name tags used from week to week are helpful and can be recycled from group to group.
- A sign-in roster helps site coordinators keep up with absences.
- Take books for registrants and walk-ins and be sure each facilitator has a book.

Important Details about Session Videos

The most popular way to show the session videos each week is to play the video from beginning to end and then go to the discussion questions. Videos are no longer than 18 minutes. This is the easiest and therefore recommended method for playing the videos.


If you'd rather break the video into two parts with some of the discussion questions asked after the first part and the remainder of the questions after the second part, you can do that. If you choose this approach, pause the video when you see this symbol on the screen.  Then look in this Handbook for that session's questions that are marked with  and ask those questions during the video break. Save the remaining questions for after the rest of the session video is played.



Session 1 Facilitator Guide

Facilitator Tip: Encourage people to come a few minutes early to register. Try to start as close to your announced starting time as possible. Gather registration information for those who are not preregistered, collect fees, and distribute a Peace after Divorce book to each participant. (Each facilitator should also have a book.) Facilitators should read Chapter 1 in advance.



Facilitator Tip: Discussion questions below marked with  may be asked after the video is finished, or during the optional pause in the video. See page 12 of this handbook for details.

STARTING THE SESSION

Welcome

Welcome everyone and say an opening prayer

Orientation


Draw everyone's attention to page xvi in the Preface of the book. Read the group discussion guidelines to the group. It is very important to have everyone clearly understand the guidelines because it will make your group much more successful and supportive. It's also important to make sure they understand the two requirements in the Preface as well as the importance of having a loving, supportive environment.


Brief Getting Acquainted Time

Directions: Briefly share your name, whether you are separated or divorced, and whether you have children. If you like, share how long you were married and if you're divorced, how long since your divorce.

PLAY THE SESSION 1 VIDEO

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

1. Have participants complete the "You Mean I'm Normal?" checklist on pages 21-23 in the *Peace after Divorce* book. Provide these directions: Check an item if it reflects a feeling, thought or experience you have had since your separation or divorce. Your first reaction is probably most accurate so move through the list quickly. Complete both pages. You have five minutes. 

2. To which items on this checklist do you most relate? Discuss. 
3. The following questions reflect on each of the seven foundations for moving forward from divorce cited toward the end of the video. Read the foundation and then ask the discussion questions beneath that question.

Foundation 1: *If you believe your life can only be better if someone else changes, you have set yourself up for a very frustrating life.*

- Why does it only take one person to end a marriage?
- In what ways are you still secretly hoping your ex will change?

Foundation 2: *You can't change the choices your former spouse makes. Dwelling on your former spouse's responsibility for your situation will breed a downward spiral of frustration.*

- In what ways do you feel tossed about by the winds of divorce?
- What's one thing you can change this week to help you have a better outcome as you navigate the winds of divorce?

Foundation 3: *You may have to live with circumstances created by another person, but you do not have to act like a victim. You can still act within your circumstances to make your life better.*

- What does a life defined by divorce look like?
- How can you develop a mindset that moves you beyond feeling like a victim?

Foundation 4: *If divorce is your reality, acceptance is the beginning of healing.*

- How is accepting your reality fundamental to finding peace after divorce?
- Where are you on the road to acceptance?

Foundation 5: *It pays to be intentional about healing. The choice is yours, you do not have to be defined by your divorce.*

- How does it feel to know you have a choice—that there is hope?

Foundation 6: *Healing emotions takes time. If you cry a lot, that's okay, even Jesus wept.*

- Do you find that you grow frustrated with yourself as you try to process all that is happening with your divorce? Or, if your divorce is in the past, do you get frustrated with yourself for not healing faster?

Comment for facilitator use: When you feel that frustration, pause and take a deep breath. Breathe in the presence and peace of God. Know you're moving in the right direction. And, that brings us to the last fundamental for today...)

Foundation 7: *God is with you all the way. He still loves you and offers you grace, forgiveness, hope, strength, and guidance. Talking with God as you work through the content of this workshop will make all the difference.*

- Take a minute and look at the headings on pages 8-10.
- Do you ever have any of these questions?
- If so, which? Discuss.
- Turn to pages 11-12 and read the section entitled, "How do I Thrive and Find Peace as a Christian who has Divorced?" Circle the principles you need to focus on the most. Discuss with your group.

CLOSING

- **Read to Participants**


While the video touched on the highlights of Chapter 1 we still encourage you to read through it yourself and answer the questions at home. The next session will focus on chapter 2. Read Chapter 2 in your *Peace after Divorce* book and reflect on the questions before that session. Also, be sure to bring your book to each session so you can refer to it during discussions.

Just so you know, we want you to build a support network among yourselves but due to privacy concerns, we will not give out contact information for group members. That said, please feel free to exchange contact information among yourselves.

- **Ask for Prayer Requests and Say Closing Prayer**



Session 2 Facilitator Guide



Facilitator Tip: Discussion questions below marked with  may be asked after the video is finished, or during the optional pause in the video. See page 12 for details.

Facilitator Tip: The video for this session references page 39 in the book which was correct for the first version of the book. Please tell your group to instead see pages 52-53 in the *Peace after Divorce* book with the dove on the cover.

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

PLAY THE VIDEO FOR SESSION 2

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did you complete the timeline on pages 40-41? If so, what did you learn? 
2. Does your timeline show repeated patterns? 
3. What changes related to your divorce have created the most turmoil in your life? (See page 46.)
4. What impact has divorce had on your relationship with your friends and family?
5. What resources do you have to help with changes related to divorce?
6. How can the choice to have a mindset of faith lead you in a more positive direction?
7. Refer your group to pages 49-52 in the book: Look at "Ineffective strategies for Dealing with Changes Associated with Divorce." To which ineffective strategy do you most related? Discuss.
8. How do you see yourself growing in perseverance and character? See pages 57-60.
9. Discuss Matthew 6:31-33 on page 57. What does it mean to you?
10. What role is prayer playing in your ability to cope with your divorce? Has divorce ever left you so empty that you found it hard to pray? Discuss pages 67-72.

PERSONAL UPDATES, CONCERNS, AND SUCCESSES


In general, how are things related to your divorce, or coping with your divorce, going for you now? Any updates since last session? Any successes? (Make sure everyone has a chance to share.)

CLOSING

- Directions to Participants: Read Chapter 3 before next week and answer the questions.
- Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer








Session 3 Facilitator Guide

Facilitator Tip: Discussion questions below marked with  may be asked after the video is finished, or during the optional pause in the video. See page 12 for details.

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

PLAY VIDEO SESSION 3

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does knowing that you and your ex may be at different places in your emotional divorces shed light on anything you're dealing with now? 
2. Do you have a realistic perspective of your ex? Was it hard to do the lists on page 86? 
3. Reflect on "Feelings about Your Former Spouse" (See pages 88-92.) 
4. In what ways are you still holding on to your former spouse? 
5. What do you think about the concept of a "State of Neutral"? (See page 88-89) 
6. Do you find yourself asking the "Why?" question? (Pages 94-97.) How can you stop asking why and start asking God what he wants you to learn from the situation?
7. What barriers to healing from divorce do you recognize in your own life? What underlying beliefs help to create your barriers? (See pages 98-103.)
8. What do you need to do to make a more defined break with your former spouse?
9. How do you deal with emotional flare-ups? (See pages 108-111.)
10. Does knowing that marriage is a triple chord help you to be more patient with yourself?
11. What one thing can you do this week to help untie the emotional knot?

PERSONAL UPDATES, CONCERNS, AND SUCCESSES


In general, how are things related to your divorce, or coping with your divorce, going for you now? Any updates since last session? Any successes? (Make sure everyone has a chance to share.)

CLOSING

- Directions to Participants: Read Chapter 4 before next week and answer the questions.
- Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer



Session 4 Facilitator Guide





Facilitator Tip: Discussion questions below marked with  may be asked after the video is finished, or during the optional pause in the video. See page 12 for details.

Facilitator Tip: The video for this session references pages 111-112 in the book which was correct for the first version of the book. Please tell your group to instead see pages 148-149 in the *Peace after Divorce* book with the dove on the cover.

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

PLAY VIDEO FOR SESSION 4

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Each person share one of your divorce-related fears if comfortable in doing so. 
2. What fears are common to the people in your discussion group? 
3. Discuss the questions at the end of the section on fear in the book. (See pages 121-122.) 
4. Discuss what the section on Guilt and Regrets means to you. (See pages 123-129.) 
5. What impact has your divorce had on how you feel about yourself?
6. How can you not let someone else make you feel inferior?
7. What does the Bible say about your value to God?
8. Discuss the section in your book on Loss and Grief. (See pages 134-139.)
9. Reflect on the sections on Loneliness and the Empty Love Pot and then discuss:
 - a. Where are you on the road to finding contentment in being alone?
 - b. What are your thoughts on Limbo Land?
 - c. How can neediness affect your ability to make good judgement calls in a dating relationship?
10. Discuss the questions at the end of the section on Joy and Laughter. (See pages 154-155.)

PERSONAL UPDATES, CONCERNS, AND SUCCESSES

In general, how are the challenges of coping with your divorce going for you now? Any updates since last session? Any success stories? (Make sure everyone has a chance to share.)

CLOSING

- Directions to Participants: Read Chapter 5 and work through the questions.
- Prayer requests and closing prayer



Session 5 Facilitator Guide

Facilitator Tip: See list of materials needed below.

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

PLAY VIDEO FOR SESSION 5 [There are no pause options in this video.]

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITIES

Forgiveness Activity

This is a VERY important activity. Directions will be on the video.

Materials Needed:

1. 3 ½ x 5" index cards or pieces of blank paper
2. Pens or pencils
3. A cross if possible. The cross can be large or small. The idea is to have a place where people can walk to and leave their slips of paper at the foot of the cross. You can screen share an image of a cross if you are offering a virtual group.
4. Music if you wish to softly play music during the cross activity.



Discussion Questions

Spend the rest of the time going through Chapter 5 one section at a time and discussing the topics and questions at the end of each reading.

PERSONAL UPDATES, CONCERNS, AND SUCCESSES


In general, how are the challenges of coping with your divorce going for you now? Any updates since last session? Any success stories? (Make sure everyone has a chance to share.)

CLOSING

- Directions to Participants: Read Chapter 6 and work through the questions.
- Prayer requests and closing prayer







Session 6 Facilitator Guide

Facilitator Tip: Discussion questions below marked with  may be asked after the video is finished, or during the optional pause in the video. See page 12 for details.

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

PLAY VIDEO FOR SESSION 6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you see your thoughts impacting your ability to heal from divorce? 
2. What reflections do you have on the flow charts in Chapter 6? 
3. What is your response to the idea that you don't have to accept a thought just because it surfaces? 
4. Self-reflection, persistence, talking with God, and trusting the Word of God, are key tools for shifting from Darkness Thoughts to In-the-Light Thoughts. How do you see yourself using these tools? 
5. Discuss the questions on page 204-205.
6. Discuss the questions on pages 211-212.
7. Discuss the questions on pages 218-219.
8. Discuss the questions on page 224.

PERSONAL UPDATES, CONCERNS, AND SUCCESSES


In general, how are the challenges of coping with your divorce going for you now? Any updates since last session? Any success stories? (Make sure everyone has a chance to share.)

CLOSING

- Directions to Participants: Read Chapter 7 and work through the questions.
- Prayer requests and closing prayer



Session 7 Facilitator Guide

Facilitator Tip: Discussion questions below marked with  may be asked after the video is finished, or during the optional pause in the video. See page 12 for details.





Facilitator Tip: Chapter 7 of the *Peace after Divorce* book includes a section on helping children cope with divorce. Your bonus video also addresses this topic. You have three choices:

1. Show the session 7 video at the beginning of your seventh session then incorporate the bonus video on helping children cope later in your session 7 meeting. If you do this allow time to discuss both videos.
2. Have your group discuss pages 263-276 in the *Peace after Divorce* book during the seventh session without using the bonus video.
3. Add a ninth *Peace after Divorce* session that focuses solely on helping children cope with divorce. If you choose this option you can save discussing pages 263-276 until this ninth session.

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

PLAY VIDEO FOR SESSION 7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to you to handle divorce in a Christian way? (Page 233) 
2. Does being a Christian mean you allow people to take advantage of you? 
3. In what areas do you have the most trouble with your actions toward your former spouse? (Pages 235-242) 
4. Discuss everyone's answers to questions 3 and 4 on page 242. 
5. Look at the 7 sections of Setting Communication Guidelines on pages 245-249. With which of these seven do you have the most trouble?
6. Share one interest that went by the wayside while you were married that you want to develop now or tell one thing you need to do to refresh yourself. (Pages 253-256)
7. What impact has divorce had on your health? (Pages 258-262)
8. Discuss Helping Children Cope pages 263-274 then discuss the contract on pages 275-276.
9. What about your behavior/actions do you need to change to help you recover from divorce?

PERSONAL UPDATES, CONCERNS, AND SUCCESSES

In general, how are the challenges of coping with your divorce going for you now? Any updates since last session? Any success stories? (Make sure everyone has a chance to share.)

CLOSING

- Directions to Participants: Read Chapter 8 and work through the questions.
- Prayer requests and closing prayer



Session 8 Facilitator Guide



Facilitator Tip: This is a full session as it includes the video, discussion questions, two activities, and the workshop evaluation. There are no optional breaks in the video. Watch the time so you cover everything. You will need to copy the following for each person:

- Puzzle Activity (Page 24 in this handbook.)
- Reflections (Page 26 in this handbook.)
- Evaluation (Page 27 in this handbook.)

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

WATCH VIDEO FOR SESSION 8

ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Puzzle Activity:** Complete the puzzle activity. (See directions on page 24 of this handbook.) After the puzzle activity, have participants discuss their answers to these questions:
 - Do you have any thoughts yet on whether you'd like to remain single or someday marry again?
 - How do "ghosts" from previous relationships affect you? (pages 301-303)
 - Do you think you'll be able to learn to trust again? (After some participant discussion, refer them to pages 306-308 for comments on the content.)
2. In what areas have you progressed the most since starting this workshop? (pages 282-285)
4. What area of achievement has meant the most to you?
5. In what areas do you think you need to work on next?
6. Have everyone turn to pages 288-299. Have participants share their reflections on each topic.
7. What does the scripture on page 288 mean to you?
8. How can serving others help you get outside of yourself and serve God's purpose for your life?
9. Share a dream you have for your future as a single person.
10. Participants complete Reflections Activity (See directions on page 26 of this handbook.)

PARTICIPANTS COMPLETE EVALUATION (Hand out copies of page 27 in this handbook.)

PRAYER REQUESTS AND CLOSING PRAYER Remind participants that they can repeat the workshop.

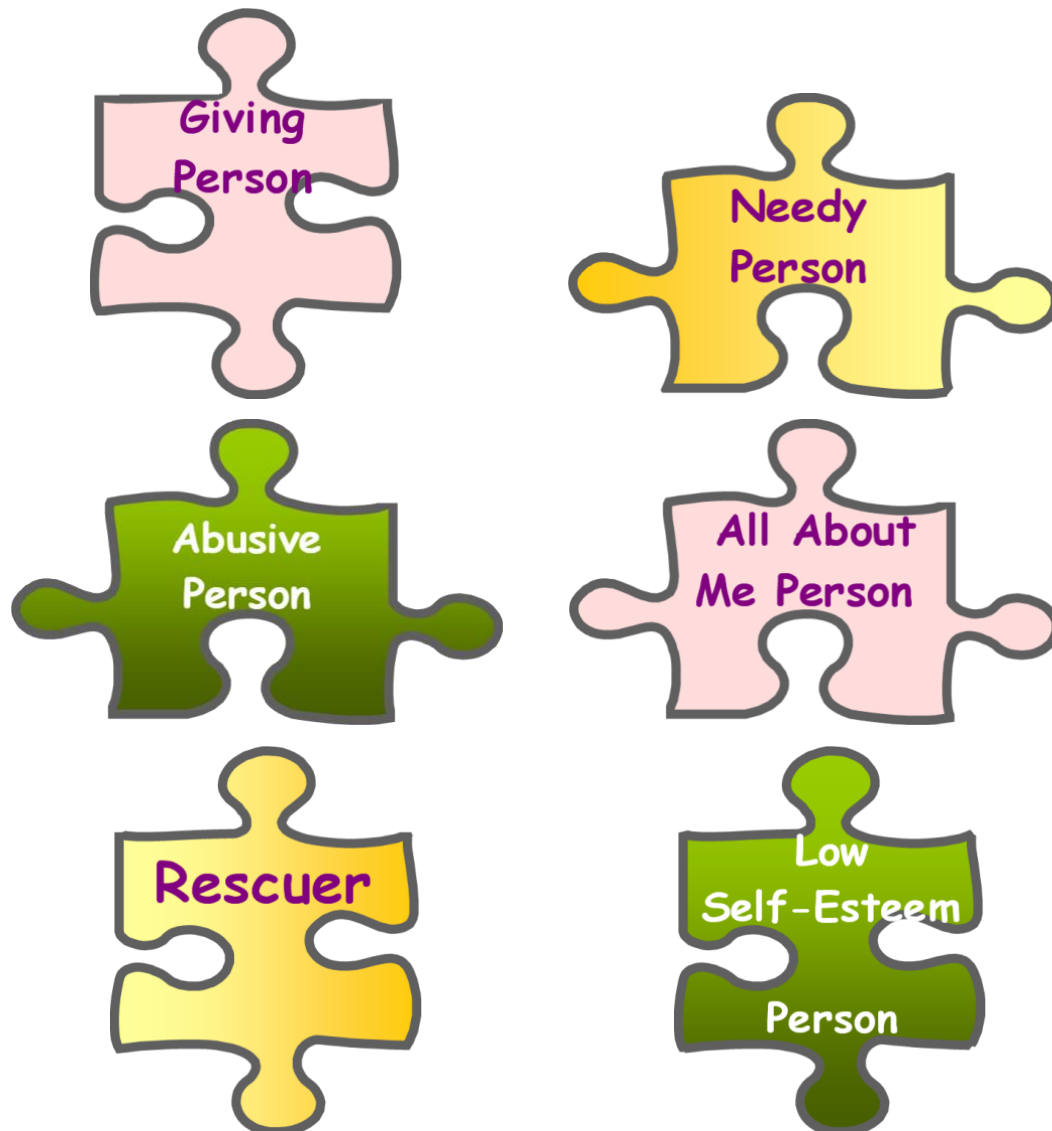
Puzzle Activity

Facilitator Note: Print this page for each person in your group. The following page is for your reference only.

Let's have some fun looking at what types of people tend to attract each other. Consider each puzzle piece below to be a person having the trait shown. For each piece on the left, find the piece on the right that represents the person to whom there would likely be the greatest attraction. Compare thoughts with your group.

Look at each pair your group identified and answer the following questions:

1. Why would these two traits likely attract one another?
2. Based on their traits, what relationship challenges might each pair face?
3. If each person wanted to stop attracting the type of person you paired them with, what changes would they need to make?



Puzzle Activity for Facilitator Only

Facilitator Tip: This page is for you to use as an illustration after discussion about the puzzle activity.

A Healthy Balance in a Relationship

The best way to attract a well-balanced person is to be a well-balanced person. The following shows some of the healthy traits that would tend to increase your personal sense of well-being and also increase your likelihood of attracting other people with healthy traits.



REFLECTIONS ACTIVITY

These are Reflections of Me (Write Your Name) _____

You've had the chance to get to know each other and to watch each other grow. This activity allows you to continue to encourage one another even through this workshop is coming to a close.

To start, write your name at the top of this sheet where indicated. Once you've done that, pass your sheet to someone else in the group. (If you are seated at round tables just pass sheets to the right until each person gets back their own sheet.) As you receive a sheet, look at the name at the top and write personal words of encouragement to that person. Tell the person whose sheet you are writing on what you like or respect about him or her. Comments should all be positive. Once you finish with a sheet, pass it on to someone else. At the end of the activity, each person should get back their own sheet full of personal messages of support from everyone in their discussion group.

Keep your completed "Reflections of You" paper in a safe place and pull it out on days that you need encouragement. Or, you may wish to post the sheet somewhere in your house where you will see it daily as a reminder that you are a treasured and valued person.

Offering a Virtual Peace after Divorce Workshop

Note: The first part of this Facilitators' Handbook is your guidebook to offering *Peace after Divorce* and is important to both in-person and virtual groups. This section highlights tips important to virtual groups only.

7 BEST PRACTICES FOR VIRTUAL PEACE AFTER DIVORCE WORKSHOP GROUPS

1. **Turn off Meeting Recording. This is a requirement for offering this group virtually.** Be sure your Peace after Divorce Workshop group meetings are set up so that group meetings cannot be recorded by leaders or participants. This protects your participants' privacy and protects you from copyright violations with the videos.
2. **Get Everyone on Board Technically at the Start.** Be sure everyone knows the basics of how to turn on and off their device camera and how to mute and unmute their microphone. Tell them how to shift from a grid image to a speaker only image. If you're new at leading virtual groups, say so. People will likely be very supportive.
3. **Avoid Out-Of-Sight-Out-of-Mind.** Not everyone has access to a tablet device, such as an iPad, or a computer in their homes. Some people may need to call in to the workshop meetings by phone. Depending on their phones, they may or may not be able to participate via video. Do not forget these people during discussion. Be sure to ask for their insights.
4. **Ask Everyone to Stay on Mute unless they are Speaking.** This cuts out background noise such as TVs, dogs, and children. Encourage everyone to share in the conversation but be sure all participants know they have the right to pass rather than answer.
5. **State How People are to join the Conversation when They Have Something to Say.** While not necessary in an in-person group, it is important to helping a virtual group run smoothly. You may find it helpful to tell everyone to raise their hand when they have something to say. Ask call in participants to say their name and that they would like to share something.
6. **Never Comment on Any Participant's Home.** Zoom sessions take everyone into participants' homes revealing economic disparities which may be sensitive for some people. In short, if you're commenting on how great one person's house looks, someone else may feel shame. Keep your focus on creating a comfortable group atmosphere for all.
7. **Encourage Privacy.** Ask group members to either attend from a private place in their home or use earbuds to protect the privacy of others in the group. Remind them that while we ask all to keep confidentiality, the group is educational and peer support in nature. It is not group counseling.

THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF OFFERING A VIRTUAL GROUP

Choose a Platform for Your Online Group. While there are other online platforms for virtual groups, we find *Zoom* easy to use. You may also wish to check into the other platforms. Be sure to choose a virtual meeting service that allows for 90-minute long sessions. *Zoom* offers a number of tutorials. Here are links you may find helpful.

[Zoom Meeting plans/pricing](#) [Sharing Your Screen](#) [Managing Breakout Rooms](#)

Showing Videos. With *Zoom* you can easily show *Peace after Divorce* session videos by using screen share. These videos are short (under 20 minutes each) and help the group to prepare for discussions.

Breakout Rooms. If you have a large number of participants, you may wish to use the breakout room feature to create discussion groups after showing the session video. If you use this option, each breakout room needs a discussion facilitator who is familiar with the *Peace after Divorce* facilitator guidelines in this Handbook.

Consider a Co-Facilitator for Technology. It's not essential but it is helpful to have a co-facilitator who handles the technical aspects of the group, especially if you have a large group. This frees the main facilitator to focus on group interaction. The technical facilitator can orient everyone to the technology, mute participants during the videos, shift people to breakout rooms if needed, etc. (Groups of 12 or less won't need breakout rooms.)

Be aware that two devices connected to the meeting from the same room may cause static for everyone. This may even happen if someone is mirroring their device to a TV. For this reason, you and your tech person probably shouldn't be in the same room.

Resources Needed to Lead a Virtual Peace after Divorce Workshop Group

- 1) A desktop or laptop computer. (Needed by the facilitator for sharing videos.)
- 2) Access to an online virtual group platform.
- 3) A co-facilitator to handle technology, especially if you have a group of over 12. (Recommended but not required.)
- 4) *Peace after Divorce* group facilitator's materials including session videos.
- 5) Each participant and each facilitator needs a *Peace after Divorce* book. The book is critical to personal growth and discussions. Book order links are on page 5 of this handbook.

About the Author

Renee Smith Ettlne is living proof that people can move past divorce to find healing and hope. As a Christian who married for life, she knows the sense of isolation, confusion and frustration that occurs when “till death do us part” isn’t how a marriage ends up playing out. She now feels called by God to use her experience, faith, and background as an educator and guidance counselor to help others to do the same. Renee is founder of After Divorce Ministries, LLC, author of the award-winning book *Peace after Divorce*, and creator of the Peace after Divorce Workshop.