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What kind of reactions can a parent have if they are left by their spouse?

By *superman* on May 31, 2012



Dr. Douglas Berger says: It is normal for everyone to be in some level of distress if “left behind” after a divorce. In cases where the relationship itself was distressing, a separation or divorce may lead to some degree of relief, especially if the

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news in recent years, a discussion of which is beyond the scope of this article.

Some persons may have specific mental schema or ideas about themselves and the world where they unreasonably become negative about themselves and easily lose self-esteem. These mental schema can include feelings of inadequacy, feeling unloved, or unwanted, etc. and can become especially prominent if the person was over-dependent on their spouse for love and affection. If they catastrophize, this can lead to high anxiety or panic. In addition, the level of outside stress may aggravate the psychological makeup of the person. The care needs for the children and one's social and financial situation will come into play in the degree of stress one feels.

We all know some people are resilient and some are fragile under stressful situations. It may be possible to work with a person in therapy to improve their resilience by changing one's expectations and coping mechanisms, perhaps to see how their new situation leads to some new opportunities instead of a black-hole.

If the subsequent stress and psychological distress after divorce becomes prolonged, this can actually lead to the chemicals (neurotransmitters and other supporting substances) in one's brain that are involved in stress and coping to become deranged leading to a clinical depression or anxiety disorder.

If one's level of stress or distress is great, or if one has significant anxiety, depression, insomnia, despair, signs of giving-up, etc., then they should seek the help of family and friends, social services, a mental health professional, and medical care as indicated.

Dr. Berger and his staff at the Meguro Counseling Center in the Shibuya-Ebisu area provide mental health care for individuals, couples, and families, in both English and Japanese.
www.megurocounseling.com

The discussions herein are meant as general information and advice only. Each person needs to make their own personal life decisions and to contact a mental health professional for consultation if deemed appropriate. Send your comments to: editor@tokyofamilies.com