

Single Parent Networker

**Ascension, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit,
Corpus Christi, St. Anne, St. Mary, St. Joseph,
Christ the King, and Spirit of Life**

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Healing After Divorce

Healing after divorce is something that can be hard to find as the effects can be so damaging. Here I share my personal experience and some ideas to help you find your own healing.

Emotional Contraction

Healing after divorce comes from an understanding that we need to learn to love ourselves again. We probably feel unloved and maybe even unlovable as an important relationship has broken down. A painful break-up causes us to emotionally contract, like a hedgehog rolling up into a ball to protect itself, spines sticking out on all sides; if anyone tries to get too close, they get pricked!

Negative Beliefs

Does that ring true to you? It was certainly true for me; I didn't like men for a long time after my split and didn't even want to be in the same room as one! I was angry and defensive; and this only got worse as I went through the contact and custody battles with

my ex. The beliefs I had about him just got more and more negative and entrenched; and the fight got more and more bitter.

I Am Responsible

I now realize that, although there had been some provocation; I was responsible for my reaction to his behavior. I responded in a way that only made things worse; with anger and hate. It was really tough to get myself out of that pattern of behavior, but I am getting there!

Take A Step Back

I think part of the problem of divorce situations is we are so emotionally involved in it; we're so close to it. It can help to try to look at the situation from the perspective of someone observing from outside. This will enable you hopefully to change your feelings a little. You can see a difficult situation in your mind's eye, then gradually move away from the scene as if you were someone watching it happen from a distance. Doing this might

help you to see things from a more objective and less emotional viewpoint.

Do You Love Yourself ?

Getting over the emotional damage of divorce will take time, so be kind to yourself. A good way to become aware of your feelings about yourself is mirror work. Stand in front of the mirror and look into your own eyes, how does it feel? Say to yourself "I love and accept you; you're perfect just the way you are." Does saying that phrase make you smile, feel like a liar or cry? If you truly love and accept yourself you will feel a joy well up, if you cry it's because you don't love yourself. Doing this every day will help you start to love yourself again. Learning to love yourself is the first and most profound step towards healing after divorce.

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Frances Copping,
www.all-about-motherhood.com.

Happy New Year 2014



FAMILY FUN

What do you do after a long winter day and everyone is famished but it's too early for dinner? Try this easy and delicious recipe, served up with a nice mug of steaming hot chocolate.

You will need:

- 12- ounce package of chocolate chips
- 4 cups of cereal (unsweetened, like Cheerios or Rice Krispies)
- 6 tablespoons peanut butter
- Wax paper
- Cookie Sheet

Melt the chocolate chips and the peanut butter in the microwave. Stir after each minute to be sure that the chocolate won't burn. Once melted, stir in the cereal. With a teaspoon drop mixture onto a cookie sheet covered with wax paper. Refrigerate a few minute to harden and then eat.



Forgiveness is unlocking the door to set someone free and realizing you were the prisoner!

- Max Lucado

Are we often weary, disheartened and sad? Do we feel weighed down by our sins? Do we think that we won't be able to cope? Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up: there are no situations which God cannot change, there is no sin which he cannot forgive if only we open ourselves to him.

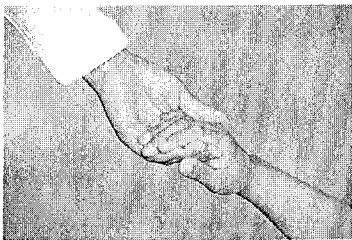
- Pope Francis

Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your faith lies.

- Mother Teresa

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Feast Day, January 4

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton was the first native born American to be canonized by the Catholic Church. She was not born a Catholic but the importance of a spiritual life for her family brought her to seek out the Catholic faith. People were drawn to Elizabeth because of her kindness, wit and patience. After her husband's passing, she took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. She died at the age of 46 only 14 years after becoming a Catholic. She was canonized a saint on September 14, 1975. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us.



A Family Statement of Purpose

We the people of this family, in order to form a more perfect union and ensure our stability, proclaim the following as our purpose for the coming year.

- To speak our love for one another at least once a day, either through words or actions so that each of us knows we are loved by the others.
- To act swiftly to heal wounds when we fail in the home; to say "I'm sorry" more often and "You're forgiven" even more to remember the power of embraces and kisses to show reconciliation.
- To compliment each other in order to support each of us in our work, whether in the home, at school or where we labor; to praise jobs well done; to recognize effort; to salute performance; to honor achievement.
- To pray more frequently as a group, not only at the table and at Mass, but also spontaneously on other occasions so that God is included in all we do and so that He is invited to help us carry out the other parts of our statement of purpose.

Taken from Faith & Fest in Family, Omaha Archdiocese



Talking About Your Feelings

Sometimes the toughest thing about feelings is sharing them with others. Sharing your feelings helps you when your feelings are good and when they aren't so good. Sharing also helps you to get closer to people you care about and who care about you.

Focusing on Your Feelings

You can't tell your friends what's inside your backpack if you don't know what's in there yourself. Feelings (which lots of people also call "emotions") are the same way. Before you can share them with anyone, you have to figure out what feelings you have.

Making a list of your feelings can help. You can do this in your head or by writing it out on a piece of paper or even by drawing pictures. Is something bothering you? Does it make you sad or angry? Do you feel this emotion only once in a while or do you feel it a lot of the time?

When you're trying to figure out your feelings, it might help to remember something that happened and think about how it made you feel. Then you can say, "I feel sad when my friend doesn't play with me" or "I feel angry when my brother always wins at baseball." This can help you figure out your own feelings. It also gives the person you're talking with more information about what's bothering you.

Why Talk About Your Feelings?

The way a person feels inside is important. It can be really hard not to tell anyone that you're feeling sad, worried, or upset. Then, it's just you and these bad feelings. If you keep feelings locked inside, it can even make you feel sick!

But if you talk with someone who cares for you, like your mom or dad, you will almost always start to feel better. Now you're not all alone with your problems or worries. It doesn't mean your problems and worries magically disappear, but at least someone else knows what's bothering you and can help you find solutions.

Your mom and dad want to know if you have problems because they love you and they want to know what's happening in your life. But what if a kid doesn't want to talk with mom or dad? Then find another trusted adult, like a relative or a counselor at school. Maybe this person can help you talk with your mom and dad about your problem or concern.

How to Talk About Your Feelings

Once you know who you can talk with, you'll want to pick a time and place to talk. Does it need to be private, or can you talk with your brother and sister in the room? If you think you'll have trouble saying what's on your mind, write it down on a piece of paper.

If the person doesn't understand what you mean right away, try explaining it a different way or give an example of what's concerning you. Is there something you think could be done to make things better? If so, say it.

Some kids — just like some adults — are more private than others. That means some people will feel more shy about sharing their feelings. A kid doesn't have to share every feeling he or she has, but it is important to share feelings when a kid needs help. You don't have to solve every problem on your own. Sometimes you need help. And if you do, talking about your feelings can be the first step toward getting it.

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Parenting Pointers

553. Jan.3: It's resolution time, but long range resolutions are hard to keep. How about resolving to play with your child this weekend. If your child is far away play virtually or remember fond childhood memories together.

554. Jan. 10: Sunday, Jan. 12 is the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Tell your child the story of his/her Baptism today. Where and when was it. What did he/she wear? Who was there? Are they old enough to remember it? Perhaps they could contact their Godparents and say, "Thanks."

555. Jan. 17: (Martin Luther King weekend) As we approach Martin Luther King Day, nurture the values of equality and respect at home. Does everyone contribute to household chores according to their ability? Are siblings called to task if there is nasty name calling? Do parents share leadership and authority?

556. Jan. 24: Babies are usually cute and lovable - but there are times when an unplanned pregnancy can be a crisis for the whole family. Talk to your children about the sanctity of human life, no matter how invisible. Make it real by supporting both pregnant mothers and those struggling to raise a young child - perhaps alone.

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How Will Your Family Support Each Other in 2014?

N is for **NURTURING** your child'. Do all you can to nurture your child, and don't stop there, also nurture others. Once your children see this he/she will begin to practice being nurturing to others.

E is for your **EXPECTATIONS**, make sure your child knows what is expected of him/her and follow up on it.

W is for the **WARMHEARTED**, showing your child that you are that soft place for them to fall is important.

Y is for **YEARLY**, each New Years review how the family is doing in supporting one another. Make changes and get input from everyone on how to make things better.

E is for **EDUCATION**, be sure to let your child know how important education is. Keep on top of homework and grades and don't forget to give those high fives for a job well done!

A is for **ACCEPTANCE** of your child just the way they are. Let them know how proud you are of them just for being your child.

R is for **RESILIENCE**, no matter what happens you can shine with resilience if you allow God to walk with you in your family!

Beginning Experience:

Separated, Divorced, Widow

Barbara at 701-226-7719

Level I—Charity Lutheran

Level II—Faith Lutheran

Level III—Good Shepherd

Each level is 10 weeks. All levels run concurrently.

Children's Beginning Experience:

Susan at 1-701-258-3152

Free Preschool for 3&4 year olds for eligible families, contact **BECEP** at 701-323-4400 for school year.

Caring for Children Program—health coverage to uninsured children. 1-800-342-4718. www.ndcaring.org

Single File Newsletter

For information

www.bismarcksinglefile.com

Parish Information:

Cathedral—222-2259

St. Anne—223-1549

Ascension—223-3606

St. Mary- 223-5562

Corpus Christi—255-4600

Spirit of Life-663-1660

Christ the King -663-8842

St. Joseph -663-9562

Office of Family Ministry—Diocese of Bismarck—

Joyce McDowall 701-222-3035

Toll Free 1-877-405-7435

www.bismarckdiocese.com

jmcdowall@bismarckdiocese.com

If you would like your name removed from the mailing list, please call your parish coordinator

Parents Forever-Education for Families in divorce Transition, call NDSU Parent Resource Center, 667-3342 or 667-3340

WEBSITES THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:

- www.celebratesimply.com
- www.bereavementmag.com
- www.beginningexperienceofwesternnorthdakota.org
- www.vibrantfaithathome.org
- www.usccb.org
- www.fambooks.com/moms.htm
- www.singleparents.about.com
- www.bridgetobenefits.org