

BUILDING YOUR TEAM

A guide to help you gather a trustworthy support system for yourself during separation or divorce.

BY AMY OLIVER



Welcome.

Being in a destructive marriage often comes with feelings of isolation, confusion, fear and loneliness. Many times we struggle with putting into words the painful realities we are living because it can appear so differently to the public eye. Sometimes people do not understand or believe what we share. Healing House Solutions was born out of my own story of separation and divorce, leaving me with empathy and a deep desire to share this incredible truth...

You are not alone.

Unfortunately, the story and patterns of a painful marriage are not unique. But, there is hope. The community of women who have successfully navigated the difficult road you are on and have come to a place of peace, joy and newness of life, have one commonality: they did not travel the road alone. They gathered a trusted team of advisors for support, clarity and knowledge to help guide them through this season.

This guide will help you identify and clarify who you do (and don't!) want on your team as you navigate this season.

Cheering you on!
- Amy Oliver

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01

Start Small: Friends and Family

It's natural to seek the comfort and support of your friends and family during this season. But not everyone in your friend and family circles will have the capacity or skill set to be a healthy member of your support team. Use discernment. Aim for 2-3 trusted individuals who can confidentially hold your story, will not try to "fix" your situation and can walk alongside you in encouragement and support. Allow this small number to hold the deepest pain and darkest details. Increasing this number can lead to vulnerability overload and expose your family to unneeded interference from well intentioned, but unhelpful people.

These questions can help you discern trustworthy friends and family. Who in your life can hold a different point of view, yet still honor and support you? Who have you watched navigate conflict with grace and humility? Who can hold your pain without absorbing it? The process of discerning trustworthy friends and family can take some trial and error. If someone's good intentions move into harmful or not helpful, don't hesitate to set appropriate boundaries, learn from the situation and try again. Trust requires time and consistency.

02

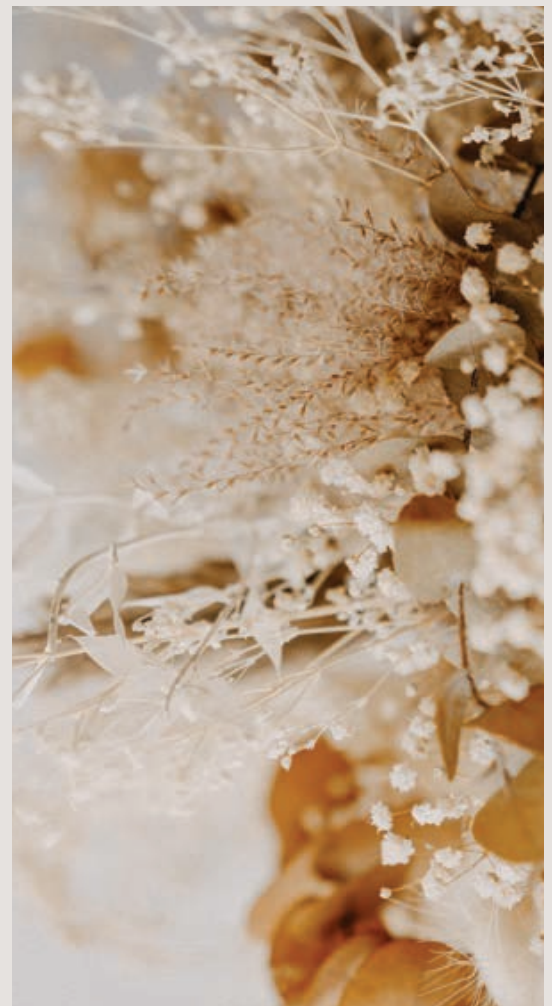
Those Who've Gone Before: Mentorship

Seek out women who are successfully divorced and settled into a newness of life. It is helpful to have at least one woman who has been divorced less than 5 years to act as a resource for more current divorce norms and laws, which change over time. Specifically search for a woman who empathizes with your situation and focuses on moving forward with a positive outcome. Walking through my own story, I have found my greatest comfort within relationships with other divorced women. There is a unique level of understanding and ease as we cry, laugh and encourage one another. Additionally, women who have successfully navigated their divorce are eager to aid other women in navigating their own journey. Discern women who are harboring bitterness and resentment from their divorce. While compassion is a good response here, leaning on them may not be. If you need help finding someone, ask friends, colleagues and/or your faith community for personal recommendations.

03

Talk About It: Therapy

Considering a separation or divorce is a highly emotional time. A gifted therapist is a key to finding relief and hope because they are solely focussed on helping you process emotions and identify unhealthy mindset and behavioral patterns. Many women attend to everyone around them, failing to make their own emotional health a priority. Like an oxygen mask, taking care of your own emotional needs is the best way to take care of those you love. Additionally, if you have fear within your marriage, it is imperative to have professional support to help you evaluate physical and emotional safety and advise options.





04

Financial Self-Care: CDFA®

The financial implications of divorce can feel overwhelming and scary. It is the reason many women are paralyzed and feel stuck in a destructive marriage. They don't see a way out, especially if they are looking at single parenting. Some women play a passive role in their family finances and do not know where to begin. Others may feel embarrassed or vulnerable in sharing their financial information with someone. A Certified Divorce Financial Analyst® (CDFA®) or financial advisor can help you understand your current financial situation, financial rights and navigate creative solutions. Moving through this process provides financial knowledge that empowers you and helps you become unstuck, regardless of divorce or reconciliation in your marriage. A trusted advisor will provide confidentiality to help ensure your safety.

05

Peaceable Communication: Mediation



Divorce and/or family mediators are a neutral third party to help bridge the communication gap in the cyclical arguments within your marriage that do not resolve. They are trained in conflict resolution and carry a variety of professional backgrounds and titles. Mediators help families identify their challenges, create goals and find solutions. As the neutral third party, they also provide validation into the situation and bring some accountability. They help you evaluate the pros and cons of separation/divorce and create an amicable plan for both parties. Although they remain neutral, you can meet individually with a mediator to seek wisdom for engaging certain topics or sharing the news of separation or divorce. Mediators can help you come to a separation or divorce settlement agreement, usually in a shorter time and with less cost than going through attorneys when both parties are willing and active participants in the process.



06

Essential Order: Attorney

Many people believe that attorneys are the first step when seeking separation or divorce. However, most divorces are uncontested, filed jointly and settled without attorneys. Regardless, an attorney should be consulted early in the process for an initial consultation regarding your legal rights and to get your questions answered. It is not always necessary to retain an attorney upfront, but is important to identify an attorney you feel comfortable with and confident in. You can meet with an attorney for a confidential consultation and to vet them to your situation. Securing a lawyer upfront is more critical in situations where there is a safety concern for you or your children or you are financially not being provided for.



07

You're Not The Only One: Support Groups

Your separation or divorce is likely the result of a deeper problem in the marriage. I often see the four A's: Addiction, Adultery, Abuse and Abandonment. When one or more are present in a marriage, the result is chaos and pain. In addition to individual therapy, consider a support group for added resources, community and healing. For example, Al-Anon is a sister organization for Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and is a support group for people whose loved one struggles with alcohol addiction. There are also groups for women experiencing abuse of any kind (emotional, physical, financial, spiritual, verbal, etc). DivorceCare supports those moving through the process of separation or divorce, providing a community to help combat isolation and promote healing.

the bottom line is
You are not alone.

This guide is designed to encourage you to invite people into your hard story, ask for help and combat isolation.

Leaning into other people's personal and professional experience relieves your burden and helps you wisely navigate next steps. There are many women who have walked a similar difficult road and come to a place of peace, joy and newness of life. Remember, they did not walk the road alone. My desire is that this list educates, encourages and empowers you to build a team to support you.

Not sure where to start?

Reach out to our team at Healing House Solutions! We will help restore clarity and direction to the financial aspects of your situation while providing the referrals and resources you need to move forward well.

Get in touch!

Check out our website for more details about what we offer or to schedule a free Discovery Call to help determine your next steps.

healinghousefinancial.com