

Dear Counselor

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How Can One Put to Rest Phase of Life Problems?

Dear Suzanne: I am a 42-year-old, recently divorced mother of two teenagers. I think I am making a pretty good adjustment to being alone after 20 years of marriage, but lately I have headaches, backaches, no energy, can't concentrate, and am always tired but don't sleep well. I have seen my doctor and he can find nothing physically wrong with me. He suggested that maybe I should see a counselor. What do you think? -- Marcy

Dear Marcy: Divorce is a major life event to which people respond in a variety of ways. And, whether you still loved your "ex", or didn't anymore, it is still a loss. While you didn't mention experiencing sadness, your other symptoms might indicate a mild depressed reaction to the divorce. Sometimes aches, fatigue, insomnia, as well as changes in eating patterns can signal a mild depression.

You could probably benefit from a divorce support group or from some short-term counseling in a safe place with an objective person with whom you could sort out your feelings and put any residual disappointments, grief, or resentments to rest. Keeping busy socially and getting some regular exercise can also reduce stress.

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