

10 Ways You Can Help Someone Going Through A Divorce

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Jackie, my cousin is going through a divorce. His wife wanted it after 33 years and 3 beautiful girls. How do I help him get over her and get past the pain stage? He is really upset and there is no other guy she is dating. I don't know what to do to help him. Any advice?

Perhaps almost as bad as [going through a divorce yourself](#) is watching someone you love go through one. Whether it's a parent, a son, a daughter, or a close relative or friend, seeing someone in that kind of pain can cause you anxiety and make you feel helpless and frustrated.

While it's true that the person going through a divorce has to help himself/herself, there are some things that you can do and say that will support your loved one's healing process.

Here are 10 ways you can help someone going through a divorce:

1. **Don't try to give advice.** I can't count the number of never-divorced people who tried to give me divorce advice several years ago. It was infuriating at the time, but now, looking back, I truly believe they meant everything they said for my best interest. Still, to tell a divorced person what they should be doing/thinking is absolutely ridiculous. Examples: Don't date right now. You need to be by yourself. You need time to heal. If I were divorced, I would never, ever get married again. Stuff like that.
1. **Invite him/her to have coffee or a beer or go for a walk or a jog.** Newly separated people are [lonely people](#). They are sort of lost, in a daze, perhaps. They need interaction with friends. Even a half hour a day is helpful.

1. **Hug him/her.** People going through a divorce need to be touched physically. Yes, men too. Think about how powerful a hug really is. You are embracing someone who really, really needs love.
1. **Write him/her a letter of encouragement.** I know I'm a writer and it might be easy for me, but even if you aren't good with words on paper, a card or a letter is extremely meaningful to someone going through a divorce. If you can't think of what to say, just say, "I'm thinking of you. Please reach out to me if you ever want to talk or go for a walk or for a drink or dinner." Also, you can steal an inspirational poem and speech from one of your heroes—maybe someone famous and quote them.
1. **Assure him/her that confiding in you is OK.** I think it is very comforting when someone assures me he/she isn't going to [run all over town](#) and tell everyone what I divulge to them.
1. **Do not exclude him/her from couple's nights.** How can you tell the difference between true friends and acquaintances? True friends still invite you out on couple's nights. They could care less if you are solo or there with a platonic friend or even if you bring a girlfriend. My friends who did that are the real deal. It meant everything to me. Incidentally, I also had friends drop me like a hot potato. I remember that too.
1. **Don't say anything stupid.** Refer to point #1 on this list. Other stupid things people say: "It wasn't meant to be." "He's an asshole." "Kids are resilient." If you don't know what to say, don't say anything. People appreciate silence, i.e. peace.
1. **Don't badmouth his/her ex.** Trust me, [they will do all the badmouthing](#). You just sit there and listen. Offer support like, "That must be so frustrating." Or "I'm so sorry you had to deal with that. It must have been very difficult."
1. **Offer to babysit his/her kids if they need "me" time.** That is a huge gift to a newly separated person, who might just want to sit in a room and watch American Ninja Warriors, or sleep or go for a much needed jog. Keep offering and tell them not to feel guilty for one second for leaving their kids for an hour!
1. **Be honest if you must.** It isn't easy to do, but if you see some bad behavior, or the person is doing something that you strongly feel is a bad idea, [inappropriate](#), unethical, etc. speak up. That's what friends do.

I do want to bring up something else. If your loved one becomes distant or cold or says something mean to

you, let it slide and don't take it personally. People going through a divorce are not themselves. Forgive and forget, and let them know you are here for him or her.

Jackie Pilossoph

Divorced Guy Grinning is a website that gives men contemplating divorce, men who are separated, men who are already divorced and single dads a place to go for information, inspiration and perhaps at times, a much needed grin.



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