

Separation - looking after yourself.

Separation and divorce are among the toughest experiences people can face.

It is a difficult time for both men and women, but often men find it harder to cope.

Men report a huge range of intense reactions when they are going through a separation, and many men experience different physical and emotional responses at various stages.

The following are a few examples of these responses.

You may feel:

- frustrated, powerless and angry
- confused, with thoughts spinning in circles
- desperate, ready to drop off the planet
- determined to stand ground and battle to the bitter end
- lonely and sad
- bewildered and hurt

These types of responses, while painful and distressing, are perfectly normal.

The good news is that most men face these intense feelings and survive. Even better, they usually go on to live fulfilling and happy lives. The not-so-good news is that it will take time.

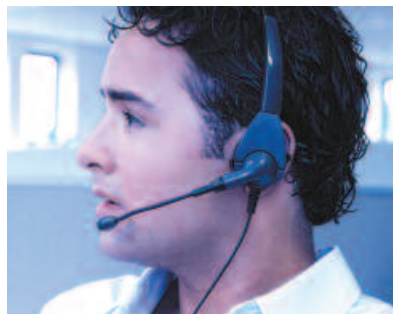
The path through separation is unlikely to be a neat, straight line. You will find yourself experiencing the highs and lows that come with grief and loss. You will revisit memories and feelings you thought you'd left behind.

The emotional and mental impact will test your strength and your capacity to look after yourself properly.

Often, the last thing men want to do is seek support of any kind. Some men feel so ashamed about the breakup they go into denial. Others feel ashamed that they are not coping very well.

It is important to ask for help if you need it. You're likely to be surprised at how willing people are to offer support. You could talk to your friends, family or work colleagues, or try your local doctor, counselling services and men's groups.

Don't be too hard on yourself, and never be afraid to ask for help.



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Looking after yourself - some ideas:

- Be honest with yourself and take responsibility for your life.
- Be clear about where you have choices and where you don't.
- Become aware of what is happening within and around you.
- Listen to what you are telling yourself. Be alert for signs of self-pity, hopelessness and revenge.
- Avoid using blaming language.
- Think about the consequences of what you decide to do.
- Commit to looking after yourself. Continue to do the things you enjoy.
- Talk to people about what's happening.
- Realise that dealing with separation is not like repairing a car - there's no quick-fix solution. It will take time to fully recover.

1300 78 99 78
www.menslineaus.org.au



The only service of its kind, Mensline Australia provides confidential telephone counselling, information and referral to specifically enable men to enhance their relationships and manage the challenges associated with disruptions to their family life or primary relationships.

Managed through Crisis Support Services Inc, Mensline Australia is a national service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the cost of a local call.

Mensline Australia was established in September 2001 as part of the Commonwealth Government's Men and Family Relationships initiative. Since then, the service has been overwhelmed by calls from men around the country wanting to talk about their relationships.

Talk it over
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AUSTRALIA


crisis support services

Mensline Australia
is managed by Crisis Support Services