



HEALTHY LIFE PLANNING PRESENTS
HOW TO BE OK ALONE:
Healthy Ways to Regroup When Newly Single

Presented by
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*How I Met My Second Husband Online at Age 50:
A dating coach shares her keys to Internet dating success*

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YOU CAN BE ALONE WITHOUT BEING LONELY

Loneliness is a state of mind, not a medical condition. Once you make up your mind not to let yourself drift into that state, you're on the path to being OK with being alone. Here are several techniques that make solitude enjoyable, thus keeping loneliness at bay:

- Develop habits to help yourself be more comfortable in your own company
Example: Keep in good phone contact with family and friends
- Stay busy mentally with something you love doing in the present moment or planning for your future, so you don't dwell on past problems or situations
Example: Get lost in a good book
- Do something creative that's better done alone (write, paint, draw, sew, sing, dance, do some scrapbooking or craft projects, etc.)
- Surround yourself with positive people who love you (schedule regular get-togethers with your closest friends and family)
- Avoid drinking alcohol alone, watching so much TV that it becomes a substitute for socializing or using other "escapes" such as nonmedical drugs
- Be your own best friend & "chat" or brainstorm with yourself in a journal or in poetry you write for your eyes only

ENJOYABLE THINGS TO DO WHILE HOME ALONE

- Rent the movie "Home Alone" and have a good laugh
- Spend time on a hobby you love
- Immerse yourself in a pursuit that makes you lose track of time
- Rent comedy or classic films
- Sit outdoors on your patio or in your yard really savoring the sights, sounds, and smells of the air, the trees and flowers, the animals and birds, etc.
- Do some gardening, flower arranging, weeding or other outdoor project that puts you in close contact with Mother Nature
- Play with your pets
- Invite friends over for lunch or dinner on a regular basis
- Read self-improvement books or re-read books you loved as a kid
- Work on a volunteer project
- E-mail, Facebook, or write to your kids, friends, parents, old classmates, or others with whom you'd like to deepen your relationship
- Hang out with your neighbors
- Pursue your spiritual practice (prayer, meditation, Bible study, etc.)
- Make progress on an important goal every day (Examples: studying a new language, writing in your journal, exercising, learning to play an instrument, or de-cluttering some drawers, closets or rooms in your house)
- Rent or buy a DVD box set of an old TV series you missed (or really loved)

ENJOYABLE THINGS TO DO OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

- Take a class
- Spend time reading books or magazines at a bookstore or library
- Go people watching at a coffee shop, mall, or park
- Attend a personal growth seminar
- Join a Meetup group for one of your hobbies (www.meetup.com)
- Try a volunteer activity with the Single Volunteers of Bucks County (www.svbucks.org)
- Be a mentor for someone
- Pursue a new hobby or passion
- Take a walk or a hike at a nearby park
- Join or start your own singles social group
- Attend a monthly support group of like-minded people
- Go to a movie on a weeknight or a weekend afternoon (when it's less likely you'll feel awkward going alone)
- Take yourself on a "date" to a place you've been dying to go...a museum, play, concert, arboretum, garden, mural or architectural tour in Philly or New Hope...anything that grabs your fancy

8 STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU REFOCUS & FORGET YOUR LONELINESS

1. Forget about yourself, focus on others.

Uncertainty can drive people into themselves, making them feel isolated and helpless. The best strategy here is to go in the opposite direction, expanding your connection with others—focusing on helping them transform their negatives into positives. The more you contribute in this fashion, the less you will need to worry about your own situation. You will become a source of confidence for everyone else.

2. Forget about your losses, focus on your opportunities.

Things you had and may have taken for granted sometimes disappear. Some people never get over this. They keep trying to replay their old games. A better strategy is to start an entirely new game—using new ideas, new energies, new tools, and new resources. As the world changes, opportunities suddenly become available to achieve far more than you ever did in the past.

3. Forget about your difficulties, focus on your progress.

Because of some changes, things may not be as easy as they once were. New difficulties can either defeat you or reveal new strengths. Your body's muscles always get stronger from working against resistance. The same is true for the "muscles" in your mind, your spirit, and your character. Treat this whole period of challenge as a time when you can make your greatest progress as a human being.

4. Forget about the "future," focus on today.

The "future" is an abstraction. It doesn't exist except as an idea. The only future that has any reality is the one that you continually create for yourself through each day's contributions, achievements, and results. This is an excellent time to ignore all those experts who never saw the present circumstances coming. Focus on what you can do over the course of each 24 hours, and you'll be the only expert on the future you'll ever need.

5. Forget about who you were, focus on who you can be.

Many people define themselves by external circumstances. When these abruptly or unexpectedly change, they don't know who they are, so they keep trying to be who they used to be. From now on, take your cues from the inside—from your dreams, ideals, values, and operating principles. These need never change, regardless of the circumstances. Take advantage of external confusion to become self-directed, self-managed, and self-motivated.

6. Forget about events, focus on your responses.

When things are going well, many people think they are actually in control of events. That's why they feel so defeated and depressed when things turn bad. They think they've lost some fundamental ability. The most consistently successful people in the world know they can't control events—but continually work toward greater control over their creative responses to events. Any period when things are uncertain is an excellent time to focus all of your attention and energies on being creatively responsive to all of the unpredictable events that lie ahead.

7. Forget about what's missing, focus on what's available.

When things change for the worse, many desirable resources are inevitably missing—including information, knowledge, tools, systems, personnel, and capabilities. These deficiencies can paralyze many people, who believe they can't make decisions and take action. A strategic response is to take advantage of every resource that is immediately available in order to achieve as many small results and make as much daily progress as possible. Work with every resource and opportunity at hand, and your confidence will continually grow.

8. Forget about your complaints, focus on your gratitude.

When times get tough, everyone has to make a fundamental decision: to complain or to be grateful. In an environment where negative sentiment is rampant, the consequences of this decision are much greater. Complaining only attracts negative thoughts and people. Gratitude, on the other hand, creates the opportunity for the best thinking, actions, and results to emerge. Focus on everything that you are grateful for, communicate this, and open yourself each day to the best possibilities!

HELPFUL BOOKS

Chicken Soup for the Singles Soul by Jack Canfield

The Right Questions: Ten essential questions to guide you to an extraordinary life by Debbie Ford

Mama Gena's School of Womanly Arts: How to use the power of pleasure to have your way with the world by Regena Thomashauer

Marry Yourself First: Saying "I Do" to a Life of Passion, Power & Purpose by Ken Donaldson

Take Time for Your Life: A 7-step program for creating the life you want by Cheryl Richardson

The Best Year of Your Life: Dream it, plan it, live it by Debbie Ford