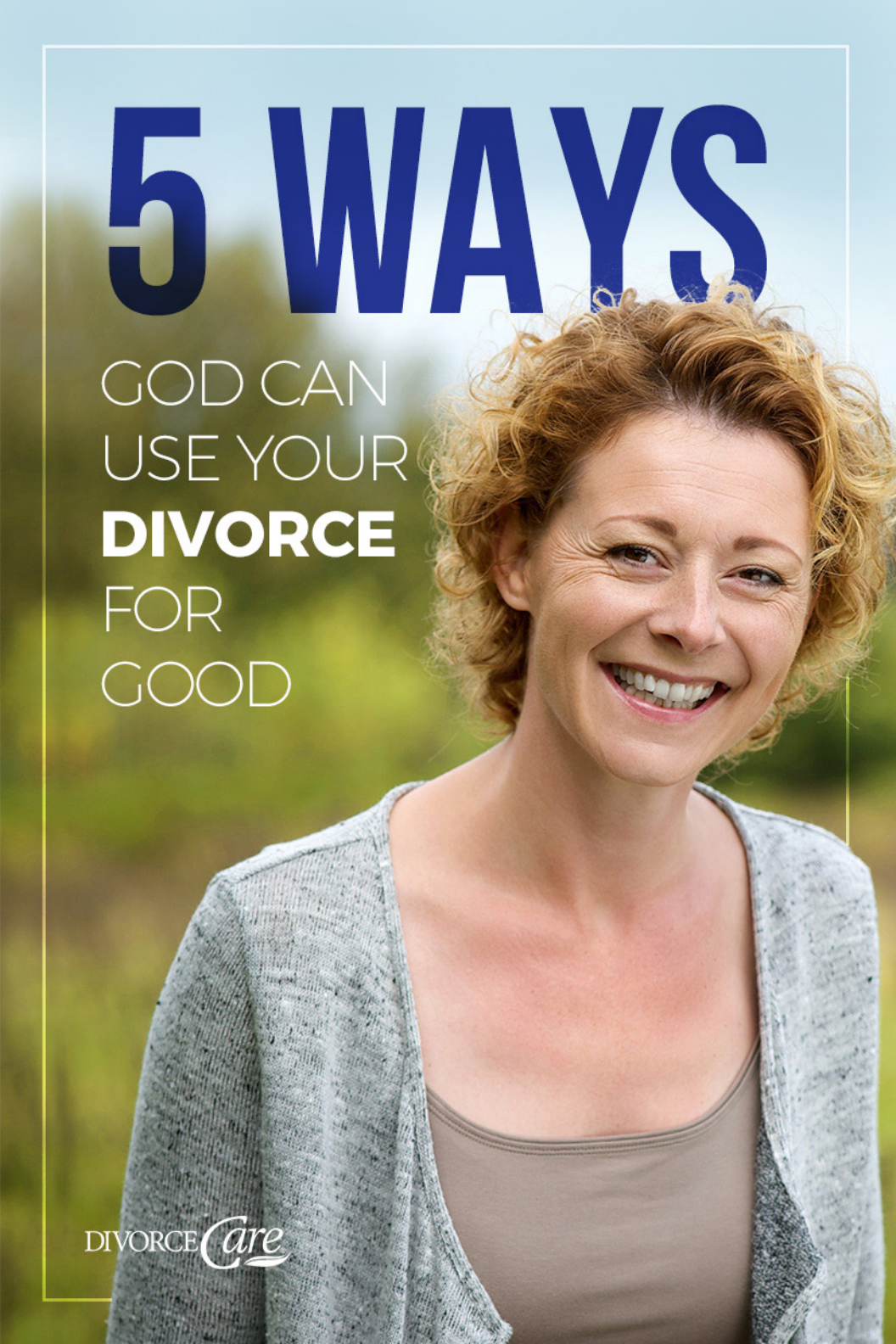
5 WAYS

GOD CAN USE YOUR **DIVORCE** FOR GOOD



DIVORCE Care



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5 WAYS

GOD CAN USE YOUR **DIVORCE** FOR GOOD

Introduction

You know intimately the pain and heartache of divorce. And you may wonder what purpose there could be in it. Can any value be redeemed? Can anything good come out of such a hurtful experience?

God says, "Yes!"

The Bible tells us God can redeem all pain. All suffering can be used for good. We repeatedly see this theme in the lives of Bible "heroes," and He does the same thing with ordinary people like us. God does not waste a single hurtful experience.

For example, you've probably seen how God has used your divorce to change how you relate to others. Perhaps you've become less reactive when talking to your ex-spouse. Maybe you've learned to be more patient with your kids. Insensitive remarks have become easier to forgive. You've gained wisdom you might not have had otherwise.

But could God be calling you to more? Keep reading to find out.

This ebook presents ideas you can put into practice through which God can use your divorce for good—in bigger ways than you've probably ever imagined.



1

SHARE YOUR STORY

... so others in divorce know they're not going crazy!

Think of how it felt … when you were first going through your divorce. It affected your emotions, your mental state, your concentration at work, and even your finances. Perhaps, as the days and months went by, you wondered if you were going crazy, especially if friends and family were pressuring you to "get over it" or "snap out of it."

The truth is, your experience was completely normal.

Did you have someone who walked alongside you through the divorce process, who encouraged you and let you know what to expect? If you did, you know the comfort of someone else understanding the anger, loneliness, and depression. If you didn't, wouldn't you have been encouraged by someone sharing their story with you and letting you know you weren't alone?

You could be that hope-giving person for someone else.

Think of all the wisdom you've gained. Lessons you've learned, mistakes you might have avoided, steps you wish you'd taken—all are part of that "20/20 hindsight" that could make a huge difference to someone going through a divorce or separation. God could even use your experience to help prevent a marriage breakup or initiate a reconciliation—what a blessing that would be!

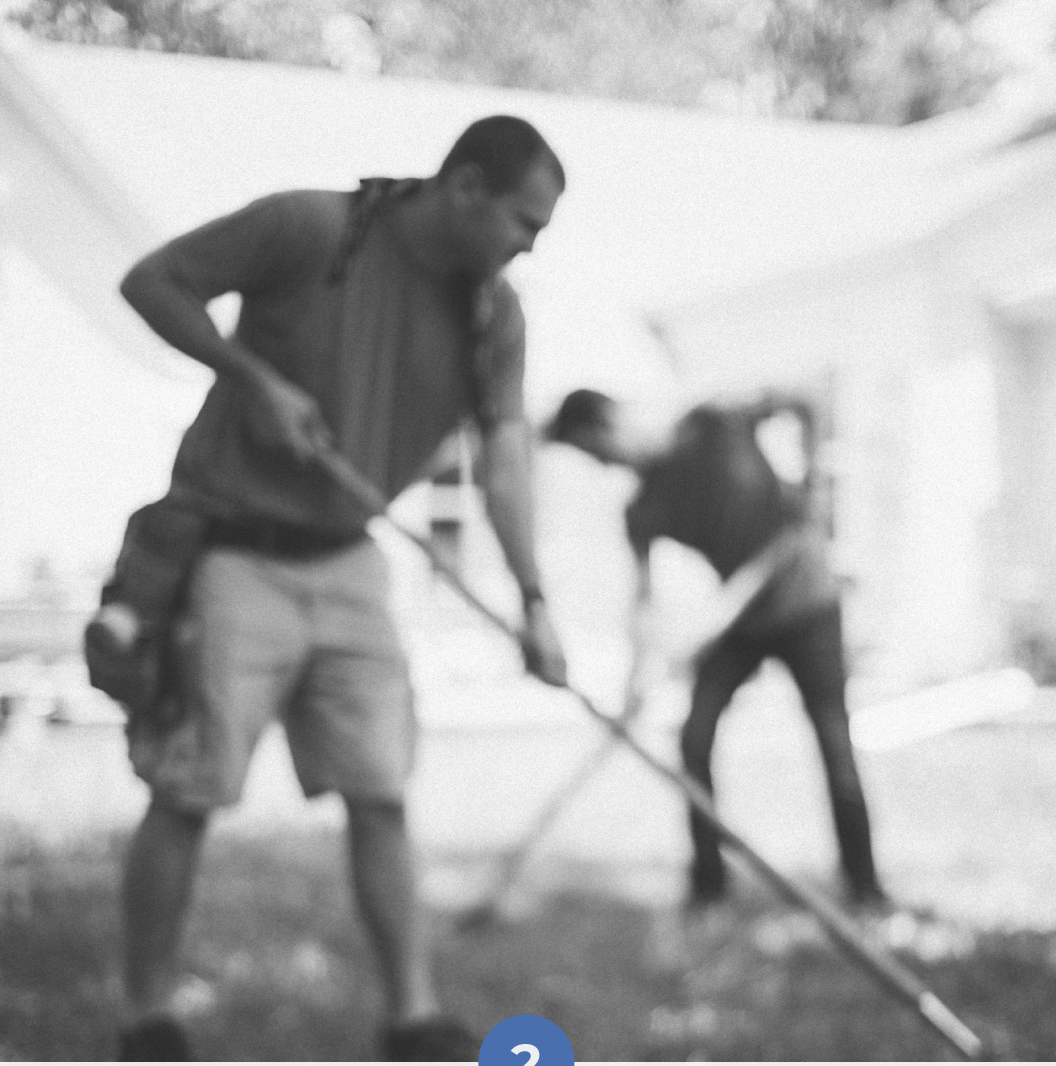
How to get started sharing your story

You may find that God opens doors for you to share your story quite naturally. You could also take the initiative by letting others know you're willing to help. For example:

- Reach out to friends or family members in divorce or those thinking about it. Let them know you may understand some of what they're going through and that you're there for them.
- Write a supportive note or email to someone you know who is hurting from a divorce.
- Use social media to share how God helped you during your divorce and what He's teaching you now.
- Let your pastor know you'd be willing to mentor or just talk over coffee with another person going through divorce.
- Consider sharing your testimony with a small group at church or during a Sunday service to help more people understand the effects of divorce.

God can use your story to help others when you're willing to share it. If you're not sure whom to share it with, commit to praying for God's guidance and for Him to give you confidence, boldness, and opportunities.

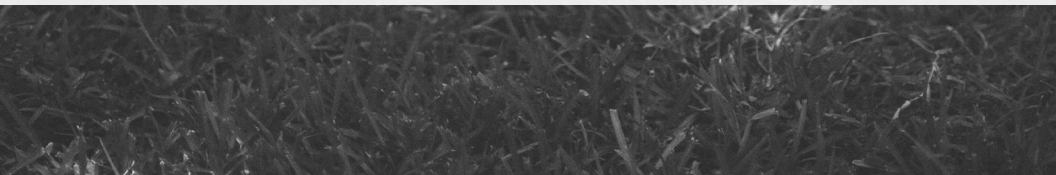
Please keep in mind for this and all the activities and services mentioned in this book that it's wise to be cautious about spending one-on-one time with a person of the opposite sex. A new relationship might be the last thing on your mind, but understand the other person might think differently. Healing and becoming whole after divorce is of utmost importance for the individual, so do not jeopardize that.



2

OFFER YOUR TIME, ENERGY, OR SKILLS

... practical help is priceless!



When you were going through your divorce ...

what did it mean to you when someone offered practical support—even in the smallest ways? What helped you the most? What additional help do you wish you'd had?

God can use you to be that support to others in divorce as you volunteer to help meet their practical needs. You may not have tons of time. You may be better suited to some activities than others. But here are some ideas to help you get started:

Run errands

What miscellaneous, time-consuming errands can you offer to do for someone going through divorce? It could make that person's day!

- Pick up kids from school or extracurricular activities.
- Drop off or pick up mail/packages at the post office.
- Grab a few groceries.
- Get the dry cleaning.
- Take Fido to the vet.
- The list is endless!

Perform repairs and maintenance

- Are you handy around the house? Offer to help with home projects or cleaning, organizing, etc.
- If you're able, lend your car skills to remove the pressure of unexpected and costly car maintenance and repairs.
- Love yardwork? Use this as an opportunity to save someone going through divorce the time and stress of outdoor upkeep.

Offer financial help

- Are you skilled at managing money? Provide help with budgeting or financial planning.
- Consider giving financially to help those in need due to a divorce, and let your pastor know you're willing to help.

Offer meals or invitations

- Drop by with an occasional meal or special treat. In some circumstances, your friend in divorce might appreciate your scheduling others to bring meals on a regular basis.
- Organize a network of church families willing to invite divorced singles to their holiday meals or gatherings.
- Host a potluck or event at your church or home during various holidays for those who are in need of "family": single parents and their kids, divorced folks, the widowed, people without family in the area, international students, etc.

By helping to meet the practical needs of people in divorce, you're passing on God's love and care for them—and experiencing His redemption regarding your own divorce. As your empathy and compassion grow through your acts of service, you may be drawn to give even more to help. What might that look like?



3

HELP DIVORCED FRIENDS WITH DECISION-MAKING

You know from your own experience ... that just thinking clearly can be a challenge for someone in the midst of a divorce. And because of the swirl of emotions and weight of cares, making good decisions can be difficult. In fact, making any decisions can be difficult.

The situation is made worse by the fact that divorce brings about a number of life changes that require making big decisions, and divorced people often don't have another person around for bouncing off ideas. This opens up an area where you can step in and help.

You don't need to have all the answers. Just be there, and perhaps help them find resources, sort through information, and identify pros and cons. There are a number of decision-making areas where your help can be valuable:

- Career changes or choices
- Whether to move and be near family
- Furthering education
- Finances
- Selling a home and downsizing
- Creating a new budget
- Taking care of overlooked health needs
- Addressing the needs and behavior of children
- Handling unexpected situations

Keep in mind that some newly divorced people will have to make decisions in territory unfamiliar to them. For example, some spouses have

never had to think through certain everyday financial choices, so they may go into their divorce without really knowing the true cost of living.

Also, the hurt of divorce often creates a vengeful mind-set that goes against good judgment and ends up hurting all parties. So having someone like you available to help think through matters can make a significant difference in choices made.

You may feel hesitant about helping others with the significant life decisions that need to be made by those experiencing divorce. But remember, people are often reluctant to ask for the help they really need. So, while respecting boundaries, don't be afraid to get involved.



4

COME ALONGSIDE A SINGLE PARENT



Anyone who faces a divorce ... can easily feel overwhelmed. The emotional overload caused by regrets, sadness, anxiety, and even feelings of failure makes just coping a common challenge. And then there's also the added pressure of meeting responsibilities once covered by a spouse.

But the likelihood of feeling overwhelmed is even greater for the divorced person who suddenly has to function as a single parent. In this case, a helping hand—along with a lot of moral support—is usually needed and welcomed.

So how can you best help a single parent? A lot will depend on the parent and on factors such as the ages of the children. But no matter the particulars of the situation, you can surely find a way to come alongside and assist.

Ways to help single parents

- Offer to babysit (even an hour or two can be a much-appreciated break).
- Help by driving kids to school or to extracurricular activities.
- Become a mentor for a child of a single parent.
- Teachers, coaches, Sunday school leaders, etc., can play a critical role in the life of a child and provide a single parent a supportive child care partner.
- Offer to attend special events or activities with the child when a parent is stretched thin or unable to attend.
- Help the parents as they seek to make decisions about child care or their kids' education.

- Be a friend who will encourage and guide them regarding parenting worries.

If you reach out to a single parent you don't know very well, there might be some reluctance to accept your offer of help, at least at the beginning. This is understandable as single parents seek to sort through what is best for their children. When this happens, don't be offended, just let the single parent know you are glad to help if needed in the future.



5

CONSIDER FACILITATING A SUPPORT GROUP

You may feel like you want to do more ... to help people in divorce, but you're not sure where to begin. Leading a support group at your church can be a great way to use your experience to help others.

Why a support group?

You know the value of being around people who understand what you're going through in divorce—either because you had this kind of support, or you wish you'd had it. When people in divorce come together in a support group, there's a great sense of relief to find out that other people "get" what they're going through and aren't going to judge them.

Plus, being among others in this kind of setting provides a renewed sense of confidence, strength, and hope. Participants get to see others who are further along in their healing from divorce. They'll meet people who struggled immensely, but are now healthy, smiling again, and having successes with their jobs and children. It's so encouraging for them to hear from people who've been there (people like you!) that they will be okay.

Your experience, along with that of others who've walked the same path, is the "support" in the support group.

Are you qualified to lead?

If you've been through divorce, have healed, and have a passion to help others find God's healing, you have what it takes to lead a support group. And you don't need to know everything about every possible divorce situation. You just need what you already have—a heart to help.

How does a support group work?

Support groups for the divorced vary in their approach. And many of them are dependent on a skilled and experienced teacher or facilitator to lead a group. But the DivorceCare program is an example of a program that's different in that the group facilitator does not need to do any teaching or counseling. (The group facilitator just needs to have the desire and the heart to come alongside people in divorce.) The weekly videos feature respected Christian counselors and teachers, plus testimonies of men and women who've been through divorce. After each video there is a small-group discussion (with weekly agendas and discussion questions provided).

The program is fully designed to equip people who've been through divorce to help others who are going through it now. And DivorceCare leaders find the program to be a meaningful way to give back to others as they help them heal from the trauma of divorce.

DIVORCE Care

EXCHANGE YOUR PAIN FOR PURPOSE

... and watch God work!



GOD IS AT WORK

You've already seen God at work in your divorce, and you know His healing power. The fact that you're reading this book and thinking about how to bring something good from your divorce shows He's still working in your life and drawing you to something more.

Continue to pray about how God wants to use you to help others in divorce. Select some ideas from this book and put them into action.

Thanks for taking the time to read this ebook. If it has helped you, share it with a friend who's also been hurt by the pain of divorce and is looking to give back to others.

ABOUT DIVORCECARE

DivorceCare is a 13-week, biblically based support group program. It's designed to be facilitated by people like you who've been through separation or divorce and have found some help and healing. It's a great opportunity to use what you've been through to help other people in divorce who need encouragement.



DivorceCare a friendly, welcoming place where group members start each week by watching a video, which features helpful teaching from counselors, pastors, and people who've been in divorce. After that is a discussion time where the group comes alongside each other and offers support (discussion questions are provided).

LEADING A SUPPORT GROUP

Are you interested in exploring how to use your divorce to help others through DivorceCare?

Here are a couple of options to get you started:

Ministry coach

Talk to a ministry coach, who can walk you through everything you need to know and help you crystallize your vision of using your experience to give back to others in divorce. Call **800-489-7778** or email **info@divorcecare.org**.

DivorceCare.org

Visit the **DivorceCare website**. You'll find complete information and details on how to start a group.



CONTACT A COACH TODAY!

Call **800-489-7778** or schedule an appointment online.

SCHEDULE ONLINE

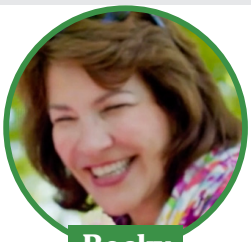
DIVORCE*Care*®



Stories of **DivorceCare Leaders**

Leaders share why they love DivorceCare

Leading a DivorceCare group is a huge responsibility. But it's also incredibly rewarding. How so? Hear what Daniel, Becky, and Sue have to say.



Becky

"You get to see miracles every week as people realize God has not forsaken them, He is with them, and He will restore them.

"There's so much joy in watching these people that are so hurting in the first week, to see them [become] filled with joy, and fun, as they get close with one another in the small groups.



Sue



Daniel

"To watch them laugh, smile, and recognize they are not alone … how can you not want to be a part of that?

DIVORCE*Care*

In Their Own Words

5 leaders explain how they've been blessed by leading DivorceCare

Daniel and Becky's story

Before leading DivorceCare, Daniel and Becky Lehmann wondered if divorce disqualified them from ministry. They discovered that God's plans for them were bigger than they imagined.



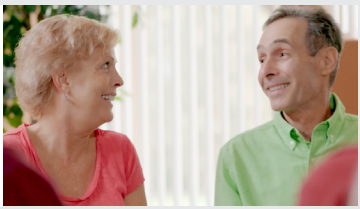


Sue's story

During her divorce, Sue made her share of mistakes. But through DivorceCare, she's discovered a way to prevent others from making the same wrong choices. That's why she's led for over 20 years.

Rich and Susan's story

The Grecos share how leading DivorceCare has been a way to redeem the pain of their divorces.



Discover more about leading a DivorceCare group

Download the DivorceCare Quickstart Guide today!

DOWNLOAD NOW



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