



Stepping Out of Chaos: Surviving Divorce: Transforming Pain to Possibility

Karen McMahon, Lisa Brick

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Stepping Out of Chaos is a guidebook for everyone involved in a disintegrating marriage and tired of failing, fighting, and fearing. Emotional pain is an unavoidable companion of all but the rarest of divorces. Emotional pain can be an impetus for personal transformation and growth or it can reinforce feelings of powerlessness and victimization. This guidebook is a commitment to the former.

This bold and brief book introduces the reader to a new way to navigate the turmoil and chaos that accompanies divorce. It shares more productive ways to see situations and provides simple yet powerful processes and unique tools that lead you out of internal chaos onto more solid ground. Using these perspectives and tools will eventually lead the reader into a more rewarding chapter of life.

The solution that Stepping Out of Chaos offers is difficult if not impossible to discover alone. Without the perspectives that this book offers, the reader is stuck in seeing his/her situation from the same perspective that created it, forming an endless cycle of disappointment and pain. It is only by seeing through another's eyes, seeing something that was invisible beforehand, that allows for choice and the possibility of change.

Stepping Out of Chaos approaches the reader respectfully and provides support through a non-judgmental and compassionate dialogue. This compassion and freedom from judgment is essential for being able to use the experience of divorce for situational and personal transformation. The book introduces three practices that open the reader's mind: Awareness, Acceptance, and Action.

Everyone involved in divorce suffers. The suffering comes from ways of interacting and relating that prevent healthy, loving, and sustainable relationships. It is the rare individual who enters into a relationship with the goal of destroying it yet this is often the outcome since there are aspects of how individuals relate that doom it from the start. Those aspects may not have shown themselves until children were born, financial hardship hit or success was achieved, or sickness or aging impacted individual expectations. Individuals rarely know what will trigger disharmony in advance nor are they aware of their part in creating it. "The problem" is always perceived as "out there".

There is an inherent innocence in individuals caught up in a downward spiraling relationship. When this is recognized and honored it is possible to drop defensiveness and begin to be aware of what role each party is playing in the dissolution of the marriage. This awareness is the first step out of chaos. Through awareness one begins to develop the capacity to accept both responsibility for patterns of behavior that undermine dreams and the immense inherent power human beings have to change. With awareness and acceptance strategic actions can be designed and implemented to consciously and intentionally improve circumstances and the experience of being alive. Divorce is as much a beginning as an end.

The authors, Karen McMahon and Lisa Brick, partners and divorce and relationship coaches, share the experiences of their many divorce clients to illustrate the perspectives they introduce. They weave their expertise as coaches throughout the thought-provoking solution-seeking questions they pose to their readers. These questions provide access to parts of the brain that are lying dormant, waiting to awaken. Consider

Stepping Out of Chaos the gentle supportive voice that will wake the sleeping creative, the finder of solutions, the innovator of new approaches, and ultimately, the wise self in which peace and happiness resides.

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