



## **Women Engaged in Powerful Transition (W.E.P.T)**

### **Tips to Help Move from Grief to Celebration After Divorce**

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Your divorce is not the end of your life. It's not the end of your family. It's not the end of your happiness. It's not the end of your holidays. Things will change, but you will definitely get back to joy, and you just might find that the true meaning of the holidays will shine brighter than ever.

#### **1. Be Patient**

Be patient with yourself. Be patient with your family. You will grieve your losses, but remember what you are really celebrating. You can use this time to find new meaning, a deeper connection, and richer joys that you might have missed if this divorce had not happened. Accept the tears. Take one holiday at a time. The true meaning of the holidays will never disappear, and this experience, as hard as it is, can bring a fresh understanding of that truth.

#### **2. Simplify**

A recent poll said 4 out of 5 people want the holidays to be simpler. A midlife divorce will make you look at your priorities. You usually have moved to a smaller place; you have less money; and you have less time if you have gone back to work. You have an opportunity to do what most people want to do. You have been forced to do something that may be a positive turning point in your family's life. Take a look at your priorities and simplify.

#### **3. Be Flexible**

Keep the traditions you want. Try some new things. Finding creative ways to share the season can enhance the real meaning of the holidays. Who says Thanksgiving has to be celebrated on the official Thanksgiving Day? If you don't have the children on Christmas, have a tree-decorating party earlier in December. Make that a new tradition. An added benefit might be to make the week of Christmas less hectic.

#### **4. Focus on others**

The holidays are really about sharing and being thankful. Spread the joy around. Expand your list of people to welcome into your celebrations. There are all kinds of people that YOU could encourage during the holidays. The holidays aren't about you, anyway. They are about what God has done for all of us. They are about having a generous heart and a gracious spirit. Cultivate those characteristics and be grateful for every good thing you have.

#### **5. Remember, it's not about stuff!**

Make a budget. Don't overspend. Don't try to buy love or loyalty. In a recent survey, many Americans are still paying off some part of holiday extravagance until November of the following year. Change that "more stuff" mind set. It will be good for you and good for your children, too. Give gifts of time and attention.

#### **6. Don't postpone joy.**

There are many, many things to celebrate. It's okay to cry when you need to, but the rest of the family (fair or not) will often take their cue from you. YOU spend some time figuring out real tangible, unchangeable things you can celebrate. Focus on those things. This is a sometimes-difficult transition, but a transition that can in the long run make your holidays more meaningful and memorable for everyone. Find every little joy you can this holiday season; be grateful for it and share it!

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