



# Mental Health Association of Northern Kentucky

A LEADER IN PROVIDING ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND SERVICES THAT PROMOTE MENTAL WELLNESS

EDUCATION AND SCREENING OUTREACH PARTNER FOR THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

513 Madison Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Covington, KY 41011 859-431-1077 or [www.mhanky.org](http://www.mhanky.org)

## The Emotional Process of Divorce

**Divorce involves change ...change involves loss...and growth.**

People are usually unprepared for the extent of the pain and the length of time it takes to recover from divorce. Understanding the process can help. Conflicting feelings and thoughts occur during and after divorce. People can expect to experience the feelings listed below. These feelings come and go, often so rapidly that it upsets people. Sometimes, people become stuck on one feeling for a long time.

### Feelings

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

### Thoughts

1. This can't be happening, I don't believe it.
2. It's not my fault, that self-centered @#! is ruining my life.
3. I'll do anything if you'll stay in the marriage OR I'll give you everything if you'll agree to the divorce.
4. My life will never get any better.
5. I can't change the situation, I can only change my reaction to it.

**Often there are physical symptoms such as ...**

- Change in appetite
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Difficulty concentrating
- Insomnia
- Gastrointestinal upset

**Some behaviors that help ...**

- Being patient with yourself
- Exercising
- Talking with someone you trust.
- Spending time with people you love.
- Expressing yourself with arts or crafts
- Seeing the humor in the situation
- Seeking counseling shows courage
- Writing a journal
- Crying
- Doing things you like to do.
- Taking time to make changes
- Eating well
- Reading
- Attend support groups, share your experiences with others who have been there.

**Recovery is work. It takes years, not months.**