

# And now, time for something completely different

**You feel like you've climbed the metaphorical Mount Everest, so why not try it for real? Doing something positive will get your post-divorce life off to a great start.**



Many people decide to break out of the mould and re-define themselves when a divorce is over. After all, everything else in your life has changed, so maybe it's time to bite the bullet and do something different.

## **THE NEED FOR CHANGE**

It's true that divorce changes lives forever. However, change should not be seen as negative. It's very easy to feel dragged down and depressed by the process of divorce, but a great way to get through the dark days is to focus on the opportunities that lie ahead. Of course, these opportunities may not be the ones you thought you'd have when you got married, but they will be exciting and vibrant nonetheless.

Here's an  
idea for  
you...

**Seize your opportunity: think of that something different you might do. The trick here is to base it on something that interests you. For example, if you like travel, simply put a different spin on it. Instead of lying on the beach in Morocco, trek the Atlas Mountains. If you're interested in the environment, take a sabbatical and get involved in an eco-tourism scheme. Interested in other cultures? Then learn Arabic or Swahili online. Open your mind and *expect* to achieve different things. This shift to positive thinking alone will enable you to do whatever you want.**

Think about it. When you were married you had to consider your spouse. You had to take their views, likes and dislikes into consideration. Perhaps your own needs and desires were subjugated because of this. Maybe you were the one forever compromising and putting what you wanted aside for the sake of the marriage. Those times are over! The divorce is through, you've allowed yourself some time to grieve, and now you're ready to implement some positive change and move on.

So, what is it you really want to do? You know you've got an opportunity to make some decisions entirely of your own, but do you not have a clue where to start? Don't panic! This is normal. Even the things you dreamed about as a way to get through the divorce often fade and seem intangible when the process is finally over. The mere fact that you *can* choose whatever you want to do can sometimes be paralysing.

How do you get out of that paralysis and start to move things forward when you're scared of change? Well, try to accept your fear. Realise that change after divorce is inevitable, and that the fear of moving on alone is normal. Don't give yourself a hard time. Instead try to understand why you might feel this way.

Realise that you've been focused on a single outcome – that of finalising your divorce. Once that focus has gone you may feel cut adrift and a little lost. To get back on track you simply have to focus on your goals and take things step by step.

**Want to do something different, but you're concerned about finances? Take a look at IDEA 35, *Save it or spend it?*, for advice.**

Try another idea...

## **ACTION PLAN**

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The first thing to do is write down your ambitions and start to work out practical ways to achieve them. Okay, but what if you don't have any? Even better! You can really allow your imagination to roam and create an action plan from scratch.

Many people feel the need to do something completely different when a marriage has ended. They want to experience something outside the norm and something that no one would have expected them to do when they were married. This is a way of expressing your regained individuality after divorce.

After my divorce I trained to walk the Great Wall of China for charity. Being small and a bit on the delicate side, no one really thought I could do it. This made me all the more determined. With the help of a sympathetic trainer at the gym, I got fit. I ran, I rowed, I did things with weights I only thought men in vests did, and pretty quickly I became fit, strong and prepared for anything.

I also went out and raised money. I convinced people in my local community that if I could train for something as arduous as walking along an ancient wall in the Gobi Desert, then they could donate a bit of cash.

***'Shoot for the moon; even if you miss you'll land among the stars.'***

LEE BROWN, Writer

Defining idea...

The sense of achievement was immense. I regained my self-respect and I gained the respect of others. It gave me a great focus and stopped me dwelling on the sadness of my divorce. Best of all, it was something completely different. I'd proved to myself that I could be anyone I wanted to be if I put my mind to it. And I assure you, if I can do it, you can too!

How did  
it go?

**Q Isn't doing something different just a temporary escape?**

*A Not if you view it the right way. That's why it's important to base your 'different' thing in your reality – in other words an interest you already have. That way you'll be able to develop a latent part of your character and explore new areas of achievement. Divorce can be an experience that shrinks your confidence, and this exercise is a way to make it grow again.*

**Q You joke about climbing Everest, but now I'm divorced I'd love a physical challenge like that. How do I go about it?**

*A There are all sorts of physical challenges you can take part in, often for charity, and a quick web search will get you started. Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro is a great start as it's more of a walk than a climb. Expeditions to Everest cost around £29k and take about seven weeks. Be prepared for altitude sickness, frostbite and sunburn, but there are benefits – you need to eat 6000 calories a day!*

