

**TRUE PATH
PARENTING**

The First 90 Days After Separation

*A Gentle Guide Through One of
Life's Biggest Transitions*

Helping individuals and families find clarity,
reduce conflict, and create a path forward.

truepathparenting.com.au



DEDICATION

*For every parent who has ever wondered if they
were enough.*

You always mattered more than your perfection.



Welcome

Dear Friend,

If you're reading this guide, I imagine life looks very different today than it did only a short time ago.

Perhaps your separation came as a complete surprise. Perhaps you knew it was coming for a long time. Perhaps it was your decision. Perhaps it wasn't.

Whatever has brought you here, I want to begin by saying something that I hope you'll carry with you as you read these pages.

You are not alone.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of sitting with many people during some of the most difficult seasons of their lives. I've met people who felt frightened.

People who felt angry.

People who felt relieved.

People who felt completely lost.

I've sat with parents who worried they were failing their children.

People who questioned every decision they had ever made.

People who wondered if they would ever feel like themselves again.

If any of those thoughts have crossed your mind, I want you to know something.

You are not unusual.

You are not weak.

And there is nothing wrong with you.



You are a human being trying to make sense of a significant life change.

That is hard.

This guide won't give you all the answers.

I wish I could.

Life is rarely that simple.

Instead, my hope is that it becomes a quiet companion during the weeks and months ahead.

A place you can return to when things feel overwhelming.

A reminder to pause.

To breathe.

To be gentle with yourself.

You don't need to read it all at once.

In fact, I hope you don't.

Some days you may only have the capacity to read a page or two.

Some days you may simply open it to remind yourself that someone understands.

That is enough.

As you move through these chapters, I invite you to let go of one expectation.

The expectation that you should already know how to do this.

No one teaches us how to navigate heartbreak.

No one hands us a map for rebuilding life after separation.

Most of us simply do the best we can with what we know at the time.

If that's where you are today...



Please know that your best is enough.

One of the greatest privileges of my work has been watching people slowly find their way again.

Not because life suddenly became easy.

But because they discovered something they thought had been lost.

Hope.

It rarely arrives all at once.

It appears quietly.

In ordinary moments.

A deeper breath.

A peaceful night's sleep.

A genuine laugh.

A conversation that leaves you feeling lighter.

The first time you realise you've gone an hour without thinking about what happened.

I call these moments glimmers.

Small reminders that even after great loss, life still has the capacity to surprise us with beauty. My hope is that this guide helps you notice your own.

As you turn these pages, please remember this.

There is no race.

There is no perfect way to heal.

There is no timeline you have to meet.

Go gently.

Take what you need.

Leave what doesn't serve you.



Come back whenever you need to.

*And if, somewhere within these pages, you begin
to feel even a little less alone...*

then this guide has done exactly what it was created to do.

Thank you for allowing me to walk beside you for a little while.

Take good care of yourself.

Warmly,

Cass

Founder | TruePath Parenting

*"Helping individuals and families find clarity,
reduce conflict, and create a path forward."*

Contents

01 The First Few Days

When Survival Is Enough

02 Understanding What You're Feeling

Grief Doesn't Only Follow Death

03 Looking After Yourself

You Cannot Pour From An Empty Cup

04 Caring For Your Children

Your Children Need You, Not Your Perfection

05 The Stories Your Mind Will Tell You

Be Gentle With The Meaning You Make



06 **Making Big Decisions**
Not Every Decision Needs To Be Made Today

07 **Building Your Support Team**
You Were Never Meant To Do This Alone

08 **Finding Moments Of Calm**
Tiny Anchors In A Storm

09 **The First Glimmers**
When Hope Quietly Returns



If You Remember Nothing Else...

Ten gentle reminders for the days when everything feels overwhelming.

- ☐ *You are not broken.*
- ☐ Your children need a regulated parent, not a perfect one.
- ☐ *Rest is productive.*
- ☐ You don't have to make every decision today.
- ☐ *Ask for help.*
- ☐ *Healing is rarely linear.*
- ☐ *Your feelings make sense.*
- ☐ Be gentle with the stories you're telling yourself.
- ☐ *Trust that you will find your way.*
- ☐ *There will be glimmers.*

About TruePath Parenting

Helping individuals, parents, and families navigate separation, reduce conflict, and create a path forward.

www.truepathparenting.com.au



CHAPTER 1

The First Few Days

When Survival Is Enough

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



If you're reading this, there is a good chance life looks very different today than it did only a short time ago.

Perhaps your separation was expected.

Perhaps it came completely out of the blue.

Perhaps you were the one who made the decision.

Perhaps the decision was made for you.

Whatever your circumstances, I want you to know something before we go any further.

What you are experiencing is a human response to a significant life event.

There is no "right" way to feel.

You may feel sadness.

Relief.

Anger.

Fear.

Disbelief.

Hope.

Numbness.

You may feel all of these emotions before lunchtime.

That doesn't mean you're losing control.

It means your mind and body are trying to make sense of something that has changed your world.

Your Brain Is Trying To Protect You

When something significant happens, your brain shifts into survival mode.

It is designed to keep you safe.



It scans for danger.

It searches for answers.

It replays conversations.

It wonders what you could have done differently.

It tries to predict what might happen next.

You may find yourself unable to concentrate.

You might walk into a room and forget why you're there.

You may read the same email three times and still not remember what it said.

You may struggle to sleep.

Or you may sleep more than usual.

You may feel constantly exhausted.

This can be frightening if you've never experienced it before.

Please hear this:

There is nothing wrong with you.

Your brain is responding exactly as we would expect following a significant emotional event.

Right now, it isn't focused on thriving. It's focused on surviving.

Survival Looks Different Than You Think

When we hear the word "survival," we often imagine dramatic situations.

But emotional survival is much quieter. Sometimes surviving looks like:

Getting out of bed.

Having a shower.

Making a cup of tea.



Remembering to eat lunch.

Walking around the block.

Answering one email.

Taking your children to school.

Saying "I don't know" instead of pretending you're okay.

These things may feel small.

They are not.

They are evidence that you are continuing to move forward, even when life feels heavy. In these early days, lowering your expectations of yourself is not giving up. It is responding with kindness.

You Don't Need To Have All The Answers Today

One of the greatest pressures people place on themselves after separation is believing they must immediately figure everything out.

The parenting arrangements.

The finances.

The property settlement.

Where they'll live.

What the future looks like.

How the children will cope.

Whether they will ever feel happy again.

It is understandable to want certainty. Our minds naturally search for it. But today may not be the day you find all the answers. And that's okay. Today, your only job might be to make it through today. Tomorrow can wait.



If You Have Children

If you're a parent, your children will also be navigating change.

You may already be worrying about whether you're saying the right things, making the right decisions, or protecting them enough.

Please be gentle with yourself. Children do not need perfect parents. They need parents who are present, loving, and willing to keep showing up.

There will be opportunities to make decisions about parenting, routines, and the future. For now, remind yourself of this:

One calm conversation.

One reassuring hug.

One predictable routine.

These small moments matter far more than having all the answers.

Be Gentle With Yourself

The first few days after separation are rarely the time for major life decisions.

If possible, give yourself permission to slow down.

Eat when you can.

Rest when you can.

Accept help when it is offered.

Drink water.

Go outside.

Take one phone call at a time.

Complete one task at a time.

There is no prize for carrying this alone.



Strength is not measured by how much pain you can hold without asking for support.

Sometimes strength looks like saying: "I'm not okay today."

And allowing someone to sit beside you.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

Take a slow breath.

If your shoulders are tight, gently let them soften.

If you've been holding your breath without realising it, exhale.

Nothing in this guide needs to be rushed.

Neither do you.

Take a Moment to Reflect

- ☐ What has felt hardest over the past few days?
- ☐ What do I need most today—not next week, not next month, just today?
- ☐ Who is one person I can contact if I need support?

One Small Step



Choose one gentle act of self-care before today ends.

It doesn't have to be big.

Drink a glass of water.

Eat something nourishing.

Step outside for five minutes.

Have a shower.

Turn your phone off for half an hour.

Rest.

Small steps are still steps.

A Gentle Reminder

You do not need to have everything figured out.

You do not need to know what your life will look like six months from now.

Right now, your only responsibility is to care for yourself as kindly as you would care for someone you love.

Your Glimmer

It may not feel like it today, but something important has already happened.

You reached out.

You started looking for support.

You opened this guide.



That tells me that, somewhere beneath the overwhelm and uncertainty, there is still a part of you that believes life can become different.

Hold on to that part.

You don't need to know exactly where you're going.

You only need enough courage to take the next small step.

One breath.

One day.

One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 2

Understanding What You're Feeling

Grief Doesn't Only Follow Death

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



When people think about grief, they often think about death. But grief can follow any significant loss. The end of a relationship is a loss. The end of a shared future is a loss.

The end of daily routines, familiar roles, family traditions, financial certainty, emotional safety, and the life you thought you were building can all be losses.

Even when separation is the right decision.

Even when part of you feels relieved.

Even when the relationship had been difficult for a long time.

Grief can still be there.

Not because you made the wrong choice.

Not because you want everything back exactly as it was.

But because something meaningful has ended.

And endings take time to absorb.

You May Be Grieving More Than The Relationship

After separation, people often expect to grieve the person. And sometimes they do.

But often, the grief is much wider than that. You may be grieving:

The family unit as you knew it.

The future you imagined.

The home you shared.

The routines that gave life structure.

The version of yourself you were inside the relationship.

The sense of certainty you once had.

The belief that things would turn out differently.



The way your children's lives have changed.

The loss of being chosen.

The loss of feeling safe.

The loss of trust.

The loss of identity.

This is why separation can feel so disorienting. You are not grieving one thing.

You may be grieving many things at once. That can feel confusing, especially when some parts of you feel sad, while other parts feel angry, numb, relieved, or strangely calm. All of that can exist together. Human beings are not simple.

Neither is grief.

There Is No Correct Way To Feel

In the first weeks and months after separation, emotions can come in waves.

You might feel okay one moment and completely undone the next.

You might cry in the supermarket.

You might feel nothing at all.

You might feel strong in the morning and frightened by evening.

You might feel furious, then guilty for feeling furious.

You might miss someone and not want them back.

You might feel relieved and devastated at the same time.

This does not mean you are inconsistent.

It means you are human.

Grief rarely moves in a straight line.

It does not arrive neatly.



It does not follow a schedule.

It does not ask whether you have work, children, bills, deadlines, or school lunches to manage.

It simply appears.

Sometimes loudly.

Sometimes quietly.

Sometimes at the most inconvenient moment possible.

The Emotional Rollercoaster

Many people describe the early months after separation as feeling like an emotional rollercoaster.

That is often because your brain and body are trying to process change, loss, fear, uncertainty, and practical decisions all at once.

You may notice:

Mood swings.

Difficulty sleeping.

Loss of appetite or comfort eating.

Tightness in your chest.

A racing mind.

Tearfulness.

Irritability.

Forgetfulness.

Exhaustion.

A sense of unreality.

Feeling overwhelmed by simple tasks.

These responses can be frightening, but they are also common after a major emotional rupture.



Your system is trying to adjust.

It may feel messy because it is messy.

That does not mean you are failing.

When Your Mind Searches For Answers

After separation, the mind often becomes very busy.

It wants to understand.

It wants to explain.

It wants to find the exact moment things changed.

You may find yourself replaying conversations, analysing messages, thinking about what you missed, wondering what you should have done differently, or trying to understand how someone else could make the choices they made. This is the mind's attempt to create certainty. If it can find the answer, perhaps the pain will make sense. If it can find the reason, perhaps the future will feel less frightening.

This is understandable. But it can also become exhausting. Sometimes there is no single answer. Sometimes relationships end because of many layers, many choices, many patterns, many hurts, many silences, and many moments over time.

And sometimes, especially in the early days, your mind will search for a level of certainty that simply is not available yet. When that happens, gently remind yourself:

"I may not understand everything today."

"I can let some questions wait."

"I do not have to solve the whole story right now."

Shock, Sadness, Anger And Relief Can Coexist



One of the most confusing parts of separation is that emotions can appear to contradict each other.

You might feel devastated and relieved.

Heartbroken and angry.

Afraid and hopeful.

Lonely and grateful for space.

Certain one day and completely unsure the next.

This does not mean you are confused in a problematic way. It means different parts of you are responding to different parts of the experience. One part may be grieving what has ended. Another part may be relieved that conflict has reduced. One part may miss the person. Another part may know the relationship was hurting you. One part may feel ready to move forward. Another part may still be standing in the rubble, trying to understand what happened. All of these parts deserve compassion.

You do not have to choose one feeling and reject the others. You can make space for complexity.

Grief Comes In Waves

Grief often moves like waves.

Sometimes it is far away.

Sometimes it knocks you over.

Sometimes you think you are doing okay, and then a song, a smell, a school event, a family photo, a quiet Sunday morning, or a child's question brings it rushing back.

This can make people feel as though they are going backwards.

But grief does not work like a staircase. It is not always step one, step two, step three. It is more like the ocean. The waves come and go.



Some are small. Some are powerful. Some arrive without warning.

Over time, the waves usually become less constant. Not because the loss never mattered. Because your capacity to carry it grows. For now, when a wave comes, try not to judge it.

Let it move through.

Breathe.

Reach for support if you need it.

Remind yourself that waves pass.

Even the big ones.

Why You May Feel So Tired

Emotional pain is exhausting.

Even if you are physically doing less than usual, your internal world may be working overtime.

You may be managing legal questions, financial concerns, parenting arrangements, communication with your former partner, children's emotions, extended family, work responsibilities, and your own grief all at once.

That is a lot. Fatigue after separation is not weakness. It is information.

Your body is telling you that this matters. That this is big.

That you need care.

If you are tired, it does not mean you are failing.

It may simply mean you are carrying more than you realise.

Where possible, lower the bar.

Rest is not laziness.

Rest is part of recovery.



Be Careful With Timelines

People may say things like:

"You'll feel better soon."

"Time heals."

"You just need to move on."

"They don't deserve your tears."

"You should be over this by now."

Often, these comments are intended to be helpful.

But they can also make people feel rushed or ashamed.

Healing does not follow someone else's preferred timeline.

There is no correct date by which you should feel better.

There is no neat moment where grief simply ends and you become your new self.

You are allowed to take the time you need.

That does not mean staying stuck.

It means respecting the depth of what you are moving through.

You can be healing and still hurting.

You can be moving forward and still grieving.

Both can be true.

When To Seek Extra Support

While strong emotions are common after separation, there are times when extra support is important.

Please reach out to a trusted professional, GP, counsellor, psychologist, crisis line, or emergency service if you feel unable to keep yourself safe, if you are having thoughts of harming yourself, if you are unable to care for yourself or your children, or if the



overwhelm feels unmanageable.

You do not need to wait until things are unbearable before asking for help.

Support is not a sign of weakness. It is a way of caring for yourself during a significant life transition. You were not meant to carry this alone.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

Place one hand on your chest or your stomach if that feels comfortable.

Take a slow breath in.

Then a longer breath out.

You do not have to push your feelings away.

You do not have to understand them all.

For now, simply notice:

"This is grief."

"This is change."

"This is hard."

"And I am here."

Take a Moment to Reflect



- □ What feelings have been showing up most often for me?
- □ What loss am I grieving that others may not see?
- □ What would feel supportive today?

One Small Step

Choose one feeling and name it gently.

You might say:

"I feel sad."

"I feel angry."

"I feel scared."

"I feel numb."

"I feel relieved."

Try not to judge the feeling.

Just name it. Sometimes naming what is happening inside us helps it feel a little less overwhelming.

A Gentle Reminder

There is no right way to grieve a life that has changed.

You are allowed to feel more than one thing at once.

You are allowed to have better days and harder days.

You are allowed to take your time.



Your Glimmer

Your feelings may feel messy, but they are not meaningless.

They are part of your mind and body trying to understand a significant loss.

You do not have to rush them.

You do not have to tidy them up for other people.

You do not have to be “over it” before your heart is ready.

For now, let this be enough:

You are grieving because something mattered.

And with care, support, and time, you will not feel like this forever.

One breath.

One day.

One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 3

Looking After Yourself

You Cannot Pour From An Empty Cup

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



There is a phrase we hear often.

"You can't pour from an empty cup."

It appears in books, on social media, and in conversations about self-care.

It is true.

But I don't think it tells the whole story.

The people I meet are not running on empty because they don't care about themselves.

They are running on empty because they care so deeply about everyone else.

They are trying to protect their children.

Support their family.

Manage work.

Respond to lawyers.

Answer emails.

Attend mediation.

Pay bills.

Keep the house running.

Hold everything together.

Somewhere in the middle of all of that...

they quietly disappear.

If this sounds familiar, I want you to know something.

You are not selfish for needing care.

You are human.

Somewhere Along The Way...



Many people become experts at caring for everyone except themselves.

It doesn't happen overnight.

It happens slowly.

One skipped meal because the children needed dinner.

One sleepless night because there was too much to think about.

One cancelled appointment because someone else needed you more.

One more task.

One more responsibility.

One more thing to carry.

Until eventually looking after yourself begins to feel like a luxury rather than a necessity.

Perhaps you've even caught yourself thinking:

"I'll look after myself once this is all over."

The difficulty is...

separation doesn't have a neat finish line.

There isn't a day when everything suddenly settles.

There are conversations to have.

Decisions to make.

Children to support.

New routines to create.

*If you wait until life becomes easy before caring
for yourself...*

you may be waiting a very long time.



You Matter Too

This may feel uncomfortable to read.

Especially if you have spent most of your life putting other people first.

But I want to say it anyway.

You matter too.

Not after everyone else.

Not once everything is sorted.

Not when you've finally earned a break.

Now.

Because your wellbeing matters.

Your health matters.

Your nervous system matters.

Your sleep matters.

Your heart matters.

You matter.

Not because of what you do.

Not because of how much you give.

Not because of how well you cope.

Simply because you are a person deserving of care.

Looking After Yourself Is Not Selfish

This is one of the biggest myths I hear.

"I feel guilty doing anything for myself."

Perhaps you do too.

You might feel guilty sitting down with a cup of tea.



Going for a walk.

Meeting a friend.

Reading a book.

Having a counselling session.

Resting.

Yet imagine saying those same words to someone you love.

- Would you tell your closest friend they should never rest?
- Would you tell your sister she doesn't deserve support?
- Would you tell your child to ignore their own wellbeing until everyone else was okay?

Of course not.

We often extend compassion so freely to others.

Yet struggle to offer even a small amount to ourselves.

Perhaps it is time to begin changing that.

What Your Children Really Need

If you are a parent, I know your children are likely at the centre of almost every decision you make.

You want to protect them.

Support them.

Keep life as normal as possible.

Those instincts come from love.

But children do not need parents who never struggle.

They need parents who know how to care for themselves when life becomes difficult.

Your children are watching.



Not in a critical way.

In a learning way.

They are learning what adults do when life hurts.

They are learning how people speak to themselves.

They are learning whether asking for help is acceptable.

They are learning whether rest is something we earn or something we deserve.

One day, your children will experience disappointment, heartbreak, grief or uncertainty of their own.

- What do you hope they will do?
- Would you hope they ignore their needs?
- Carry everything alone?
- Pretend they are fine?
- Or would you hope they reach out, accept support, rest, cry when they need to, and treat themselves with kindness?

The way you care for yourself becomes part of your children's understanding of how people deserve to be treated.

That is not a burden.

It is an opportunity.

Small Acts Matter

When people hear the words "look after yourself," they often imagine they need hours of free time.

A weekend away.

A massage.

A holiday.



Those things can be wonderful.

But they are not the only ways we care for ourselves.

Sometimes caring for yourself looks like:

Eating breakfast.

Drinking enough water.

Stepping outside for five minutes.

Going to bed half an hour earlier.

Accepting help.

Turning your phone off for a while.

Saying "not today."

Taking three slow breaths before responding.

Choosing kindness over criticism.

These moments may seem insignificant.

They are not.

Small acts of care repeated consistently become powerful.

They remind your nervous system that you are safe.

They remind your body that someone is looking after you.

Even if that someone is you.

You Do Not Have To Carry Everything Alone

One of the greatest strengths I see is not independence.

It is the willingness to accept support.

Whether that support comes from family...

Friends...

Neighbours...



A counsellor...

A doctor...

A mediator...

A parenting coordinator...

Or someone who simply sits quietly beside you.

Allowing others to help is not weakness.

It is wisdom.

Human beings have always healed in connection with others.

You were never meant to carry every part of this journey on your own.

Sometimes the strongest thing we can say is:

"I need some help."

Rest Is Productive

There is something our culture has taught many of us to believe.

That our worth is measured by our productivity.

That resting must be earned.

That slowing down is laziness.

That if we stop, everything will fall apart.

During separation, these beliefs can become even louder.

You may feel pressure to keep going.

To stay strong.

To keep everyone else afloat.

To make every decision.

To answer every email.



To solve every problem.

But your body has limits.

Your heart has limits.

Your mind has limits.

Ignoring those limits doesn't make them disappear.

It simply makes them harder to hear.

Rest is not something you earn once you've completed everything on your list.

Rest is one of the things that allows you to keep going.

It is not the opposite of productivity.

It is part of it.

Sometimes the most productive thing you can do is close the laptop.

Go to bed early.

Sit outside.

Take ten slow breaths.

Allow your nervous system a moment to remember what calm feels like.

Progress Rarely Looks The Way We Expect

Many people imagine healing as a straight line.

Each day a little better than the last.

Each week easier than the one before.

Life rarely works that way.

You may have a wonderful day and wonder if you're finally turning a corner.

The next morning, something reminds you of your former life and suddenly you're in tears.



That isn't failure.

That isn't going backwards.

That's being human.

Healing isn't measured by how often you cry.

It's measured by how gently you begin responding to yourself when you do.

One day you may notice you recovered a little more quickly.

Another day you may notice you laughed without feeling guilty.

Then perhaps you realise you slept through the night.

Or enjoyed a coffee with a friend.

Or made a decision without second-guessing yourself.

These are glimmers.

Small moments that quietly tell you your heart is beginning to carry the weight differently.

Don't overlook them simply because they seem ordinary.

Healing often arrives dressed as ordinary.

Receiving Care Is Also Caring

Many people are comfortable giving help.

Far fewer are comfortable receiving it.

Perhaps someone has offered to cook dinner.

Collect the children.

Walk the dog.

Sit with you.

Listen.

Your first instinct might be to say:

"No thank you, I'm fine."



Pause for a moment.

Ask yourself:

*"If someone I loved were in my position, would I
want to help them?"*

Most people answer yes.

Then gently ask yourself another question.

*"Why would I deny someone the opportunity to
care for me?"*

Receiving support is not taking from others.

It allows people who love you to express their care.

Connection has always been part of healing.

You are not a burden because you need support.

*You are a person moving through one of life's most significant
transitions.*

There is a difference.

Be As Kind To Yourself As You Would Be To Someone You Love

Imagine someone you love sitting across from you.

Perhaps your closest friend.

Your sister.

Your brother.

Your child as an adult.

They tell you everything you've been carrying.

The sleepless nights.

The fear.

The guilt.

The uncertainty.



- Would you criticise them?
- Would you tell them to "get over it"?
- Would you expect them to have all the answers?

Of course you wouldn't.

You would probably offer compassion.

Patience.

Understanding.

You would remind them they are doing the best they can.

You deserve the same kindness.

Perhaps not because you believe it yet.

But because it is true.

One Day, This Will Not Be Your Whole Story

It may be difficult to imagine today.

Right now, separation may feel like the biggest thing that has ever happened to you.

It may feel as though it has taken over every conversation, every thought and every part of your identity.

But one day...

It will become part of your story.

Not the whole story.

There will be laughter again.

There will be ordinary Tuesday afternoons.

There will be moments where you realise you haven't thought about the separation all day.



*Not because you have forgotten.
Because you have grown around the grief.
Life will not necessarily return to what it was.
But it can become something new.
Something meaningful.
Something peaceful.
Perhaps even something beautiful.
Not today.
Maybe not tomorrow.
But one day.*

Until then...

Be gentle with yourself.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

*Take another slow breath.
Notice your feet on the floor.
Notice the chair supporting you.
Notice that, despite everything you have been
carrying...
you are still here.
There is strength in that.
Not the kind of strength that pretends everything is okay.*



The quiet strength that keeps showing up.

One day at a time.

Take A Moment To Reflect

- ☐ What is one way I have cared for myself recently, no matter how small?
- ☐ What would change if I believed I mattered as much as everyone else I care for?
- ☐ What is one thing I can let go of today?

One Small Step

Choose one thing that will help your future self.

Go to bed a little earlier.

Drink another glass of water.

Text a friend.

Step outside.

Say no to something that feels overwhelming.

Choose just one.

Tiny steps, repeated over time, create lasting change.

A Gentle Reminder



You do not need to earn rest.

You do not need permission to care for yourself.

Looking after yourself is not taking something away from your children.

It is giving them a parent who is learning that they matter too.

Your Glimmer

Today, you may still feel tired.

You may still feel uncertain.

You may still wonder how you're going to make it through everything that lies ahead.

That's okay.

You do not have to feel strong every day.

You only need to keep offering yourself the same compassion you would so freely offer someone you love.

Every glass of water.

Every meal.

Every deep breath.

Every moment of rest.

Every conversation where you ask for help.

They all whisper the same message to your heart.

Someone is looking after you.

Even if that someone is you.

One breath.



One day.

One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 4

Caring For Your Children

Your Children Need You, Not Your Perfection

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



One of the first questions parents ask after separation is:

"How do I make sure my children are okay?"

It's a question asked with love.

With fear.

With guilt.

With hope.

Parents often carry an enormous weight during separation.

You are navigating your own grief while trying to protect your children from theirs.

You are making decisions while your own world feels uncertain.

You are trying to create stability when you may not feel particularly steady yourself.

That is an incredibly difficult position to be in.

Before we go any further, I want to offer you one gentle reminder.

Your children do not need a perfect parent.

They need a parent who keeps showing up.

Children Don't Need You To Have All The Answers

Many parents worry about saying the wrong thing.

Getting it wrong.

Missing something important.

Making a decision their children will resent one day.

These fears are understandable.

The truth is...



children are remarkably resilient when they have emotionally available adults around them.

Your children are not expecting perfection.

They are looking for reassurance.

Safety.

Consistency.

Connection.

They need to know that the adults in their world are helping them carry something that feels very big.

Sometimes the most reassuring words you can say are:

"I don't have all the answers yet."

"We're going to work it out together."

"I love you."

"None of this is your fault."

Simple words.

Repeated often.

Children remember how safe they felt far more than perfectly worded conversations.

Your Children Are Grieving Too

Separation changes children's worlds as well.

Even when conflict has been high.

Even when separation is ultimately healthier for everyone.

Children may still grieve.

Not always in obvious ways.

Some children cry.



Others become angry.

Some become quiet.

Others seem completely unaffected.

Some ask endless questions.

Others ask none at all.

Children often move in and out of grief differently to adults.

They may play happily for an hour...

then suddenly become upset over something that seems small.

They may seem fine one day...

and cling to you the next.

This doesn't necessarily mean they are going backwards.

It means they are making sense of change in their own way.

Just as you are.

Your Calm Becomes Their Safe Place

One of the greatest gifts you can offer your children is not certainty.

It is your presence.

Children borrow calm from the adults who care for them.

When life feels uncertain, they naturally look towards the people they trust.

That doesn't mean you can never cry.

Or feel overwhelmed.

Or have difficult days.

It means helping your children see that feelings can be experienced safely.



That sadness can exist without everything falling apart.

That difficult emotions come and go.

That families can experience change and still remain connected.

You are not responsible for removing every uncomfortable feeling from your child's life.

You are helping them learn they can move through those feelings safely.

It's Okay To Repair

Every parent gets things wrong.

You will lose patience.

You will have days where you're distracted.

You may say something you wish you hadn't.

That does not make you a bad parent.

Children do not need flawless parenting.

They need repair.

One heartfelt conversation.

One apology.

One hug.

One moment where you say:

*"I'm sorry. I was feeling overwhelmed. That
wasn't your responsibility."*

Repair teaches children something incredibly important.

Relationships can recover.

People can make mistakes and take responsibility.

Love doesn't disappear because someone got something wrong.



Sometimes repair builds trust even more deeply than getting it right the first time.

Protect Children From Adult Problems

One of the hardest parts of separation is resisting the urge to involve children in adult concerns.

Not because you would intentionally burden them.

Because you may feel very alone.

Children should never feel responsible for managing adult conflict.

They should not feel caught between parents.

Nor should they feel they must choose sides.

Whenever possible...

allow children to remain children.

Let them play.

Laugh.

Go to birthday parties.

Kick a football.

Read stories.

Build cubby houses.

Have ordinary days.

Childhood is still allowed to exist.

Even during separation.

Talking To Your Children About Separation

One of the questions parents ask most often is:

"What should I say?"



There is no perfect script.

No single conversation that will make everything okay.

Children rarely need one perfect conversation.

They need many small conversations over time.

They need opportunities to ask questions.

To express feelings.

To return to the same worries more than once.

It is okay if you don't have every answer.

Children often feel safest when adults are honest without overwhelming them.

You might say:

*"Things are changing, but one thing will never
change—we both love you."*

*"This is an adult decision. It is not because of
anything you did."*

*"You can always ask me questions, even if I don't
have all the answers yet."*

Simple.

Honest.

Age appropriate.

Above all, reassuring.

Children Listen To What We Do

Children hear our words.

But they learn from our actions.

They notice how we speak about the other parent.



They notice how we respond when plans change.

They notice whether home feels calm or tense.

They notice whether emotions are welcomed or avoided.

This doesn't mean you need to hide your feelings.

It means remembering that your children are learning what relationships look like by watching you.

Every moment of patience.

Every respectful conversation.

Every repair after a disagreement.

Every gentle response.

These moments quietly teach children what emotional safety feels like.

They are learning that people can experience difficult emotions without hurting one another.

That lesson will stay with them long after childhood.

The Gift Of Predictability

When life changes suddenly, children often crave one thing more than anything else.

Predictability.

Knowing what happens next helps children feel safe.

Simple routines matter.

Reading the same bedtime story.

Friday night pizza.

A goodbye hug before school.

Knowing whose house they'll be at tomorrow.

Ordinary routines become emotional anchors.



Don't underestimate their importance.

Children rarely remember the perfectly planned holiday.

They remember feeling safe enough to fall asleep.

It Is Okay To Say, "I'm Having A Hard Day"

Parents sometimes believe they must always appear strong.

Children don't need that.

They need authenticity with reassurance.

There is a difference between saying:

"Everything is terrible."

And saying:

"I'm feeling a little sad today, but I'll be okay."

One places emotional responsibility on the child.

The other teaches emotional honesty.

Children benefit from seeing that adults have feelings.

They also benefit from seeing that feelings pass.

You are teaching emotional resilience every time you allow emotions to exist without fear.

Looking After Yourself Is One Of The Greatest Gifts You Can Give Your Children

Earlier, we spoke about caring for yourself.

Perhaps now you can see why that matters so much.

A regulated parent is better able to comfort a frightened child.

A rested parent is more able to respond with patience.

A supported parent is more able to offer reassurance.

Looking after yourself isn't separate from caring for your children.



It is one of the ways you care for them.

Every time you choose rest.

Every time you ask for help.

Every time you attend counselling.

Every time you pause before reacting.

You are building the emotional environment your children are growing within.

That matters.

More than you may ever realise.

Childhood Can Still Be Beautiful

Separation changes families.

But it does not end childhood.

Your children will still laugh.

Still build cubby houses.

Still tell terrible jokes.

Still lose their shoes.

Still ask impossible questions five minutes before bedtime.

Still want one more cuddle.

Still need you to watch them do the same cartwheel for the twentieth time.

Life will continue.

Not exactly as it was.

But differently.

And within that different life...

there can still be joy.

There can still be birthdays.



Christmas mornings.

School concerts.

Beach days.

Movie nights.

Messy kitchens.

Family traditions.

Love has an incredible capacity to grow inside changed circumstances.

Your family may look different.

It can still be deeply connected.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

Take a slow breath.

If you're carrying guilt, see if you can place it down for just a moment.

Not forever.

Just for now.

Your children do not need you to carry guilt.

They need you to carry hope.

Take A Moment To Reflect



- □ What is one thing I already do that helps my children feel safe?
- □ What family routine would I like to protect, even during this time of change?
- □ If my child could hear one message from me every day, what would I want it to be?

One Small Step

Choose one predictable moment to protect this week.

A bedtime story.

Saturday pancakes.

A walk after school.

Movie night.

A cuddle before lights out.

Children rarely remember extravagant moments.

They remember consistent ones.

A Gentle Reminder

Your children are not looking for perfection.

They are looking for connection.

Every time you listen.

Every time you repair.

Every time you remind them they are loved...



you are helping them build a secure foundation that will stay with them long after this chapter of life has passed.

Your Glimmer

One day, your children may not remember every conversation you had during this season.

They may not remember every timetable, every handover, or every difficult decision.

But they will remember how home felt.

They will remember feeling welcomed when they walked through the door.

They will remember the hugs.

The laughter.

The ordinary moments that quietly reminded them they were safe and deeply loved.

That is what children carry with them.

Not perfect parents.

Loving ones.

Keep showing up.

Keep loving them.

Keep loving yourself too.

Because the safest place a child can grow is in the presence of a parent who keeps choosing connection over perfection.

One breath.

One day.



One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 5

The Stories Your Mind Will Tell You

Be Gentle With The Meaning You Make

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



*"Be careful what conclusions you draw while
your heart is breaking."*

There comes a point during separation when something begins to shift.

The initial shock starts to settle.

Life begins asking you to make decisions again.

The phone calls still need to happen.

The children still need dinner.

The washing still needs folding.

The world keeps moving.

And somewhere, almost quietly...

your mind begins trying to make sense of what has happened.

This is what human minds do.

We are meaning-making creatures.

When something painful happens, we naturally ask:

"Why?"

"How?"

"What does this mean?"

These are not signs that something is wrong with you.

They are signs that your mind is trying to create order in the middle of chaos.

Unfortunately...

when we are hurting, the stories we create are often far harsher than the truth.



The Stories We Tell Ourselves

Perhaps you've caught yourself thinking...

"I wasn't enough."

"I'm too much."

"I should have seen this coming."

"Nobody will ever love me again."

"I've failed my children."

"I've wasted years of my life."

"I can't trust my own judgement."

These thoughts often arrive quietly.

Then they begin repeating.

Eventually...

they can begin sounding like facts.

But thoughts are not facts.

Thoughts are often our first attempt to explain pain.

That doesn't mean they are accurate.

When Pain Becomes The Narrator

Pain has a voice.

When we are hurting, that voice often becomes louder than every other voice.

Pain tells us:

"This feeling will last forever."



"Nothing will ever get better."

"This happened because of who you are."

"Everything has been ruined."

Pain speaks in absolutes.

Always.

Never.

Forever.

No one.

Everyone.

It rarely speaks in possibility.

This is why it is so important to be gentle with the stories you create while your heart is hurting.

Because pain is real.

But... pain is not always the most reliable narrator.

Making Meaning

One of the most remarkable things about being human is our ability to create meaning.

*Two people can experience something very
similar...*

and walk away carrying completely different stories.

One person may think:

"This proves I am unlovable."

Another may think:

"This relationship ended, and it hurts deeply."



The event may be the same.

The meaning is different.

The meaning we create becomes the story we tell ourselves.

And the stories we tell ourselves eventually become the lives we live.

That doesn't mean we should ignore reality.

It means we should become curious about the meaning we have attached to it.

Sometimes the story we've created is the only story we've ever considered.

But it may not be the only one available.

- What Else Might Also Be True?

This may be one of the most powerful questions you ever learn to ask yourself.

Not:

"Is my story wrong?"

But:

"What else might also be true?"

Instead of:

"I failed."

Perhaps...

"I was doing the best I could with what I knew at the time."

Instead of:

"Nobody will ever love me again."



Perhaps...

"Right now, I'm hurting too much to imagine the future."

Instead of:

"I've ruined my children."

Perhaps...

"My children are experiencing change, and I am doing everything I can to help them through it."

Notice...

None of these replace pain with false positivity.

They simply make room for compassion.

Sometimes compassion is the beginning of a different story.

Your Story Is Still Being Written

Perhaps the most dangerous thing we can do after separation is assume today's pain tells us everything about tomorrow.

It doesn't.

Today is one chapter.

Not the whole book.

Right now, you cannot see the pages that haven't yet been written.

The friendships you haven't yet made.

The peace you haven't yet felt.

The confidence you haven't yet rebuilt.

The laughter that hasn't yet returned.



The version of yourself you have not yet met.

Your story is still unfolding.

Please don't let one painful chapter convince you it already knows the ending.

Your Mind Is Trying To Protect You

When painful things happen, our minds naturally try to protect us from future hurt.

Sometimes that protection sounds like:

"Don't trust anyone again."

"Don't let yourself get too close."

"Never be vulnerable."

"Don't make the same mistake twice."

These stories often begin with good intentions.

Your mind is trying to keep you safe.

But sometimes the strategies that protect us in one season begin limiting us in the next.

Protection and possibility don't always travel together.

As your heart begins to heal, you may gently notice which stories are still serving you...

and which ones have become walls rather than shelter.

Curiosity Is Kinder Than Certainty

When we are hurting, certainty can feel comforting.

If I can just find the answer...

If I can just work out why...



If I can just understand every detail...

Then perhaps the pain will stop.

But life is rarely that simple.

Sometimes certainty keeps us stuck.

Curiosity allows us to move.

Instead of asking:

"Why did this happen to me?"

Perhaps we begin asking:

"What am I learning about myself?"

Instead of:

"What's wrong with me?"

Perhaps:

"What happened to me?"

Instead of:

"Why wasn't I enough?"

Perhaps:

*"What would I say to someone I loved who
believed that about themselves?"*

Curiosity doesn't erase pain.

It simply opens a window where certainty had closed a door.

Notice The Story Without Becoming The Story

Imagine sitting beside a river.

Leaves float past on the water.



Some are large.

Some are small.

Some move quickly.

Others drift slowly.

Your thoughts can be a little like those leaves.

You notice them.

You don't have to chase every one.

You don't have to climb into the river and let it carry you away.

You can simply notice.

"There's the thought that I'm a failure."

"There's the thought that I'll always be alone."

*"There's the thought that I've ruined
everything."*

Notice the difference.

You are not saying:

"I am a failure."

You are saying:

"I'm noticing the thought that I'm a failure."

It may seem like a small shift.

But it creates space.

And sometimes...

space is where healing begins.

Your Story Deserves Compassion

Every story has a beginning.



Every belief was created somewhere.

If today you believe you aren't enough...

perhaps there was a time when believing that helped you make sense of something painful.

If today you struggle to trust...

perhaps trust was broken.

If today you expect rejection...

perhaps rejection has been part of your experience.

These stories didn't appear by accident.

They developed for reasons.

Understanding that doesn't mean they must remain forever.

It simply means meeting yourself with compassion rather than criticism.

Instead of asking:

"Why am I like this?"

Try asking:

*"I wonder what this part of me has been trying
to protect?"*

That question alone can soften years of self-judgement.

You Get To Write The Next Chapter

One of the most hopeful things about being human is this:

We are always making meaning.

That means we are also capable of creating new meaning.

Not by pretending painful things didn't happen.



Not by forcing optimism.

By allowing new experiences to sit alongside old ones.

One kind conversation.

One trusted friend.

One peaceful morning.

One moment of courage.

One decision that honours your values.

These moments don't erase the past.

But they slowly begin writing a different future.

Your story is not finished.

Not because I say so.

Because you are still living it.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

Take a slow breath.

Notice the thoughts that have been loudest lately.

You don't need to argue with them.

You don't need to push them away.

Simply notice them.

Then gently remind yourself:

"A thought is not always the truth."



Take A Moment To Reflect

- □ What story have I been telling myself most often?
- □ Is this a fact, or is it the meaning I've created?
- □ What else might also be true?

One Small Step

The next time you notice a painful thought, pause before believing it.

Try saying:

"I'm noticing the thought that..."

See what changes.

Not because the pain disappears.

Because you have created a little space between yourself and the story.

Sometimes...

that small space is enough to let hope in.

A Gentle Reminder

You do not need to rewrite your whole story today.



You only need to become curious about the chapter you're living now.

The future has not been written yet.

Please don't allow today's pain to write tomorrow's ending.

Your Glimmer

Your mind has been working very hard to make sense of what has happened.

Thank it for trying to protect you.

Then gently remind it that protection does not always require certainty.

Sometimes it simply requires compassion.

Your story is still unfolding.

There are people you haven't met.

Places you haven't been.

Moments of peace you haven't experienced.

Versions of yourself you haven't yet discovered.

Please don't let one painful chapter convince you it already knows how the story ends.

Be gentle with yourself.

Be gentle with your heart.

And perhaps most of all...

Be gentle with the pen.

One breath.

One day.



One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 6

Making Big Decisions

Not Every Decision Needs To Be Made Today

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



"Not every decision that feels urgent is important. And not every important decision needs to be made today."

After separation, it can feel as though every part of your life needs your attention immediately.

- Where will I live?
- How will we share the children?
- What happens to the house?
- Can I afford this?
- Should I keep my job?
- Do I need a lawyer?
- Should I agree to that proposal?
- Should I fight for something different?

The questions seem endless.

Sometimes they arrive all at once.

It's no wonder so many people describe feeling overwhelmed.

When everything feels important, it becomes difficult to know where to begin.

Before we go any further, I want to offer you some reassurance.

You do not have to solve your entire future today.

You only need to take the next step.

Your Brain Wants Certainty

One of the hardest parts of separation is living with uncertainty.

Our brains are designed to predict what comes next.



When life suddenly changes, the mind works overtime trying to create certainty again.

It asks endless questions.

It imagines every possible outcome.

It tries to prepare for every worst-case scenario.

This is not because you are overthinking.

It is because your nervous system is trying to help you feel safe again.

The difficulty is that uncertainty cannot always be solved immediately.

Sometimes it has to be lived through.

That doesn't mean doing nothing.

*It means recognising the difference between
needing an answer...*

and needing reassurance.

Decision Fatigue Is Real

- Have you ever stood in the supermarket staring at a shelf, unable to decide which loaf of bread to buy?

Or opened the fridge and thought,

"I genuinely don't know what to cook."

You might even laugh reading that.

- How can something so simple suddenly feel so difficult?

The answer is surprisingly simple.

You are tired.

Not just physically.

Mentally.



Emotionally.

Your brain has been making hundreds of decisions every day.

Legal decisions.

Financial decisions.

Parenting decisions.

Emotional decisions.

Practical decisions.

Eventually, even choosing what to have for dinner can feel overwhelming.

If this has happened to you...

please know you are not losing your mind.

You are experiencing decision fatigue.

And decision fatigue is a very human response to carrying too much for too long.

Big Decisions Deserve A Calm Mind

There are some decisions that cannot wait.

Ensuring your safety.

Protecting your children.

Seeking urgent legal advice.

Responding to immediate risks.

Those decisions matter.

But many of the decisions that shape the next ten years of your life deserve more than ten minutes of thought.

When we are frightened, our brains naturally seek relief.

Sometimes that relief comes from making a quick decision.

Any decision.



Because deciding feels better than sitting in uncertainty.

But relief and wisdom are not always the same thing.

Whenever possible, give yourself permission to pause.

To gather information.

To ask questions.

To seek advice.

To sleep on it.

A decision made from clarity often looks different from one made in panic.

There Is Wisdom In Waiting

Waiting is often misunderstood.

Waiting is not avoidance.

Waiting is not giving up.

Waiting is not pretending the problem doesn't exist.

Sometimes waiting is an intentional act of wisdom.

It is recognising that your heart and mind are still settling.

It is allowing yourself time to understand what matters most.

It is trusting that not every answer has to arrive today.

Some of the wisest decisions are not the fastest.

They are the ones made after the noise has quietened.

Responding Rather Than Reacting

There is an important difference between reacting and responding.

Reaction is immediate.

It is driven by fear.



By hurt.

By urgency.

Response is different.

Response creates space.

It asks:

"What outcome do I want?"

"Will this move me closer to it?"

*"Is this decision aligned with the person I want
to be?"*

That small pause can change everything.

It doesn't remove emotion.

It allows wisdom to sit alongside it.

You Are Allowed To Gather Information

Sometimes people feel pressure to have all the answers immediately.

You don't.

You are allowed to ask questions.

You are allowed to speak with a lawyer before making legal decisions.

You are allowed to seek financial advice before agreeing to a settlement.

You are allowed to attend counselling before making decisions that will shape your future.

You are allowed to say:

"I'd like some time to think about that."



There is strength in thoughtful decision-making.

Not weakness.

One Decision At A Time

When everything feels overwhelming, try asking yourself one simple question.

"What is the next decision?"

Not the next ten.

Not next year.

Just the next one.

Perhaps today the next decision is booking an appointment.

Perhaps it's replying to one email.

Perhaps it's asking someone to collect the children so you can rest.

Perhaps it's simply deciding what you'll have for dinner.

Small decisions move life forward.

One at a time.

That is enough.

You Can Trust Yourself Again

After separation, many people lose confidence in their own judgement.

They wonder:

"How did I not see this?"

"Can I trust myself anymore?"

These questions are understandable.

But one difficult experience does not erase your wisdom.



It may have shaken your confidence.

It has not removed your capacity to make thoughtful decisions.

Trust rarely returns all at once.

It grows through small choices.

One decision.

Then another.

Each one reminding you that your wisdom is still there.

It has simply been quieter than your fear.

And with time...

you will begin to hear it again.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

Take a slow breath.

Notice whether your mind is trying to solve everything all at once.

If it is...

gently thank it for trying to protect you.

Then remind yourself:

"I only need to decide what comes next."

Nothing more.

Nothing less.



Take A Moment To Reflect

- ☐ What decision feels heaviest for me right now?
- ☐ Does this decision truly need to be made today?
- ☐ What information or support might help me make this decision with greater clarity?

One Small Step

Instead of trying to solve everything, choose one next step.

Make one phone call.

Book one appointment.

Ask one question.

Write one list.

Then allow yourself to stop.

Progress is built one decision at a time.

A Gentle Reminder

You do not need to rush because you are uncomfortable.

Uncertainty is difficult.

But it is not dangerous.



Sometimes the wisest thing you can do is slow down long enough to hear your own wisdom again.

Your Glimmer

One day, you will look back on this season and realise you didn't have all the answers.

You simply kept taking the next step.

That is how people rebuild their lives.

Not through one perfect decision...

but through many thoughtful ones.

Trust yourself.

Not because you know everything.

Because you are learning to listen to yourself again.

Your future is not created by one decision.

It is shaped by countless small choices made with courage, compassion and hope.

One breath.

One decision.

One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 7

Building Your Support Team

You Were Never Meant To Do This Alone

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



"Strength isn't measured by how much you can carry alone. Sometimes strength is allowing someone to carry a little of it with you."

By now, you've probably realised something.

Separation isn't just emotionally exhausting.

It asks a lot of you.

It asks you to make decisions.

To support your children.

To navigate practical changes.

To manage finances.

To communicate with people you may not want to speak to.

To keep showing up at work.

To remember birthdays, school notes, appointments and grocery shopping while your heart is trying to catch up with a life you never imagined.

It's a lot.

Too much for one person, if we're honest.

Yet many people still believe they should be able to do it all alone.

They apologise for needing help.

They worry about being a burden.

They tell themselves they should be coping better.

If that's you...

I'd like to gently challenge that belief.

Human beings were never designed to heal in isolation.

We heal in connection.



You Don't Need One Person To Be Everything

Sometimes people begin searching for one person who can solve everything.

A friend.

A lawyer.

A counsellor.

A family member.

But no one person can meet every need.

And they don't have to.

*Instead of looking for one person to carry
everything...*

consider building a small team.

Each person offering something different.

Each person walking beside you in their own way.

Your Family And Friends

The people who know you best can often provide something no professional can.

Familiarity.

History.

A cup of tea.

A shared laugh.

Someone to collect the children.

Someone to sit beside you without trying to fix everything.

Not every friend will know what to say.

That's okay.



Often the greatest gift isn't advice.

It's presence.

Choose people who leave you feeling calmer.

More understood.

More yourself.

Counselling

Counselling offers something different.

It provides a space that belongs entirely to you.

A place where you don't have to protect anyone else's feelings.

You don't have to be "strong."

You don't have to edit your emotions.

You don't have to have everything figured out.

Together, you can explore your thoughts, emotions, fears and hopes in a safe and supportive environment.

Counselling isn't about someone giving you the answers.

It's about helping you reconnect with your own.

Family Mediation

When decisions need to be made together, mediation provides a structured process for difficult conversations.

Rather than deciding who is right or wrong, mediation focuses on helping people explore options, communicate more effectively and work towards practical agreements.

The goal is not perfection.

The goal is progress.

Especially when children are involved.

Parenting Coordination



Some families need support beyond mediation.

Particularly when conflict remains high or communication continues to break down.

Parenting Coordination helps parents implement parenting arrangements, reduce conflict and make day-to-day parenting decisions with children's best interests at the centre.

It isn't about revisiting the past.

It's about helping families move forward.

One decision at a time.

Legal And Financial Advice

There are times when specialist advice is essential.

Family lawyers help you understand your legal rights and responsibilities.

Financial professionals can help you understand the practical implications of decisions before you make them.

Seeking advice isn't preparing for conflict.

It's preparing for clarity.

Knowledge often reduces fear.

Let People Love You

One of the hardest things after separation can be allowing people to care for you.

Perhaps you're used to being the helper.

The organiser.

The one everyone relies on.

Receiving support may feel unfamiliar.

Even uncomfortable.



But imagine someone you love was walking through what you're experiencing.

- Would you want them to ask for help?
- Would you want to be there for them?

Of course you would.

Allow the people who love you the opportunity to do the same for you.

Connection is not weakness.

It is one of the ways we heal.

Your Support Team May Change

Some people will walk beside you for a season.

Others for many years.

Some friendships may grow stronger.

Others may quietly drift away.

That can feel painful.

It can also make space for new relationships.

Relationships built on who you are becoming.

Rather than who you once were.

Be open to that possibility.

Healing often introduces us to people we may never have met otherwise.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...



Take a breath.

Now think about the people in your life.

Not the people who expect things from you.

The people who help you feel safe.

- Who comes to mind?

Take A Moment To Reflect

- ☐ Who helps me feel calm, accepted and understood?
- ☐ Have I been trying to carry more than I need to alone?
- ☐ What kind of support would make the biggest difference for me right now?

One Small Step

Reach out to one person this week.

Not because you have everything to say.

Simply because you don't have to carry everything alone.

Sometimes healing begins with one conversation.

A Gentle Reminder

You do not have to earn support.



You do not have to reach breaking point before asking for help.

You are worthy of care exactly as you are.

Your Glimmer

There is great courage in saying,

"I can't do this by myself."

Not because you've failed.

Because you've recognised something profoundly human.

We all need one another.

The people who truly love you will not think less of you for needing support.

If anything...

they'll feel honoured that you trusted them enough to let them walk beside you.

You do not have to carry this alone anymore.

One hand reaching out.

One conversation.

One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 8

Finding Moments Of Calm

Tiny Anchors In A Storm

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



"Peace rarely arrives all at once. More often, it arrives in quiet moments that remind us we are safe."

If you've made it this far through the guide, I want to acknowledge something.

You have been carrying a great deal.

Perhaps more than anyone else truly knows.

By now, you may have noticed something.

Healing doesn't usually happen in one life-changing moment.

It happens in hundreds of small ones.

A better night's sleep.

A conversation that leaves you feeling lighter.

The first time you laugh without immediately feeling guilty.

A walk in the sunshine.

A quiet cup of tea.

A song that makes you smile instead of cry.

These moments can seem almost insignificant.

They are not.

They are your nervous system quietly remembering that life still contains safety.

Your Body Remembers

Long before your mind has made sense of everything, your body has already been responding.

Perhaps you've noticed tight shoulders.

A racing heart.

Difficulty sleeping.



*Feeling constantly alert.
Or perhaps complete exhaustion.
Our bodies carry stress in remarkable ways.
They are not trying to make life difficult.
They are trying to protect us.*

The beautiful thing is...

*our bodies can also learn safety.
One slow breath.
One walk.
One moment of stillness.
One genuine laugh.
One safe conversation.*

These experiences gently teach your nervous system that danger is not everywhere.

That life is beginning to soften again.

Calm Doesn't Need To Be Big

When people hear the words "finding calm," they often imagine long holidays or perfect mornings.

*Real life rarely looks like that.
Sometimes calm lasts thirty seconds.
The warmth of sunlight on your face.
The smell of coffee.
Watching your child sleep peacefully.*

Listening to birds before the rest of the house wakes.

*Feeling your feet on the grass.
Holding a warm mug between your hands.*



These tiny moments matter.

Not because they solve your problems.

Because they remind your body that not every moment is painful.

Nature Has A Quiet Way Of Healing

There is something deeply regulating about nature.

Perhaps it is the rhythm of the ocean.

The sound of rain.

Trees moving in the wind.

A garden.

A mountain.

A local park.

The sky changing colours at sunset.

Nature asks nothing of us.

It doesn't expect us to be productive.

It doesn't require us to have all the answers.

It simply invites us to be present.

If you can, spend a few moments outside each day.

Not to achieve anything.

Simply to notice.

Sometimes healing begins by remembering we are part of something much bigger than our pain.

Create Small Rituals

Routines create predictability.

Rituals create meaning.

Perhaps every morning you sit quietly with a cup of tea before the day begins.



Perhaps you light a candle at the end of each day.

Perhaps you write down one thing you're grateful for before bed.

Perhaps you walk around the block every evening.

These small rituals become anchors.

Gentle reminders that life continues.

That you continue.

That hope quietly grows in ordinary moments.

You Don't Have To Feel Calm All The Time

Let's be honest.

There will still be difficult days.

Days where your thoughts race.

Days where you feel overwhelmed.

Days where the grief returns unexpectedly.

This chapter is not asking you to eliminate those days.

It is inviting you to notice that they are not the only days.

Between the hard moments...

there are often tiny moments of peace.

You do not have to chase them.

Simply notice them when they arrive.

Let Yourself Receive The Moment

Sometimes, just as peace begins to arrive, we interrupt it.

We remember another problem.

Another email.

Another decision.

Another worry.



If you notice yourself doing this...

gently return to the moment.

Stay with the warmth of the tea.

The sound of the birds.

The hug from your child.

The breeze on your face.

Allow yourself to fully receive it.

You are allowed to experience joy, even while life is still complicated.

One beautiful moment does not minimise your pain.

It simply reminds you that pain is no longer the only thing present.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

Before reading any further...

Pause.

Look around the room.

- Can you notice five things you can see?
- Four things you can touch?
- Three things you can hear?
- Two things you can smell?
- One thing you can taste?

Without realising it...



you have just returned to the present moment.

And sometimes...

the present moment is far gentler than the stories our minds have been telling us.

Take A Moment To Reflect

- ☐ When did I last feel even a tiny moment of calm?
- ☐ What places help me feel more like myself?
- ☐ What simple ritual could I create that would remind me to slow down?

One Small Step

Today...

find one moment that belongs only to you.

Five quiet minutes.

A walk.

A cup of tea.

Sitting in the sunshine.

Listening to your favourite song.

You do not need to earn this moment.

Simply receive it.



A Gentle Reminder

Healing is not measured only by the difficult work you do.

It is also measured by your willingness to notice moments of peace when they quietly arrive.

Do not rush past them.

Let them stay a little longer.

Your Glimmer

Perhaps today your life still feels uncertain.

Perhaps there are still decisions waiting.

Conversations to have.

Feelings to process.

That is okay.

Because even in the middle of uncertainty...

there can be moments of peace.

A smile.

A sunrise.

A deep breath.

A shared laugh.

A quiet cup of tea.

These moments are not interruptions to healing.

They are healing.



Let them remind you that your heart is slowly learning something beautiful.

You can carry both grief...

and gratitude.

Both sadness...

and hope.

Both endings...

and beginnings.

One quiet breath.

One peaceful moment.

One glimmer at a time.



CHAPTER 9

The First Glimmers

When Hope Quietly Returns

One breath. One day. One glimmer at a time.



*"Healing rarely arrives with an announcement.
More often, it slips quietly into ordinary
moments."*

If you've made it to this chapter, I want to pause for a moment.

Not because your journey is over.

Because you've come further than you probably realise.

When you first opened this guide, life may have felt impossible.

You may have wondered if you would ever feel like yourself again.

Perhaps you still wonder that some days.

That is okay.

Healing is not measured by whether you never struggle again.

It is measured by the quiet ways life begins to grow around the pain.

And one day...

almost without noticing...

you'll experience your first glimmers.

You May Not Notice Them At First

The first glimmers are rarely dramatic.

They don't arrive with certainty.

They don't erase grief.

They simply appear.

One ordinary moment at a time.

You laugh at something unexpectedly funny.

You drive home and realise you weren't thinking about the separation.



You hear a song that no longer makes you cry.

You enjoy your morning coffee.

You make plans for next month.

You notice the sunset.

You sleep through the night.

You smile when your children laugh.

These moments can feel almost insignificant.

Please don't dismiss them.

They are evidence that your heart is beginning to breathe again.

Healing Doesn't Mean Forgetting

Some people worry that feeling happier somehow means they are forgetting.

Forgetting the relationship.

Forgetting the life they once had.

Forgetting the person they loved.

Healing is not forgetting.

Healing is remembering without being consumed.

It is carrying your story differently.

The relationship will always be part of your life.

It helped shape who you are.

It may always hold sadness.

It may also hold gratitude.

Life has a remarkable way of making space for both.

You Are Not The Same Person

This journey has changed you.



That may feel unfair.

It may even feel frightening.

But change is not always loss.

Sometimes it is growth that arrived through circumstances we never would have chosen.

You may discover strengths you didn't know you possessed.

Boundaries you never thought you could set.

Peace you didn't think was possible.

Compassion for yourself that has never existed before.

One day, someone may say,

"You've changed."

And perhaps you'll smile.

Because they'll be right.

Not because life became easier.

Because you kept choosing to grow.

There Will Still Be Hard Days

I wish I could promise that grief never returns.

That difficult anniversaries disappear.

That certain songs lose their power.

That every handover feels easy.

Life doesn't work that way.

Even years later, there may be moments that catch you by surprise.

That doesn't mean you've gone backwards.

It means you're human.

The difference now is this.



*You know those moments pass.
You know how to care for yourself.
You know who to call.
You know how to breathe.
You know your story is bigger than one difficult day.
That is healing.*

Trust The Person You Are Becoming

Somewhere during this journey...

perhaps quietly...

*you began trusting yourself again.
Not perfectly.
Just enough.
Enough to make decisions.
Enough to set boundaries.
Enough to ask for help.
Enough to believe your feelings matter.
Enough to imagine a future.
Trust grows like that.
Quietly.
Steadily.
One small choice at a time.
One act of courage at a time.
One glimmer at a time.*

There Is Still So Much Life Ahead

Perhaps this is the most important thing I want to leave with you.



Your life did not end when your relationship ended.

It changed.

Profoundly.

Painfully.

Unexpectedly.

But it did not end.

There are friendships you have not yet made.

Books you have not yet read.

Places you have not yet visited.

Conversations you have not yet had.

Ordinary mornings you have not yet enjoyed.

People who will love you.

People you will love.

Versions of yourself you have not yet met.

The pages ahead are still blank.

That is not something to fear.

It is something to honour.

Pause & Breathe

A quiet moment before we continue...

Take one slow breath.

Then another.

Now, gently look back.

Not to judge yourself.



Simply to notice.

Look at everything you've carried.

Everything you've survived.

Everything you've continued to do, even when it felt impossible.

You are still here.

That matters.

Take A Moment To Reflect

- ☐ What am I most proud of surviving?
- ☐ What strengths have I discovered that I didn't know I had?
- ☐ What kind of life do I hope to continue creating from here?

One Small Step

Today...

celebrate something.

Not because everything is perfect.

Because you've come further than you realise.

Make your favourite meal.

Watch the sunset.

Walk along the beach.



Call a friend.

Buy yourself flowers.

Sit quietly with a cup of tea.

Allow yourself to notice that you are still becoming.

A Gentle Reminder

Healing is not about becoming the person you were before.

It is about gently meeting the person you are becoming.

There is beauty in both.

Your Glimmer

If I could leave you with just one thought...

it would be this.

There was never anything wrong with you.

You were never broken.

You were a human being experiencing one of life's greatest losses.

You loved.

You grieved.

You questioned.

You survived.

And somewhere along the way...

you began finding yourself again.



Perhaps not the same version.

Perhaps an even kinder one.

A wiser one.

A gentler one.

One who knows that strength isn't found in pretending life isn't hard.

It is found in continuing to love.

Continuing to hope.

Continuing to believe that tomorrow can hold something different.

As you close this guide...

I hope you carry one thing with you.

Not certainty.

Not perfection.

Simply this quiet knowing.

You have found your way through difficult days before.

You will find your way through future ones too.

Keep trusting yourself.

Keep choosing kindness.

Keep noticing the ordinary moments that make life beautiful.

And whenever the path ahead feels uncertain...

keep looking for your glimmer.

One breath.

One day.

One glimmer at a time.

And From Here...



If you're reading these words, you've reached the end of this guide.

I hope that somewhere within these pages you found more than information.

I hope you found a little breathing space.

A little reassurance.

A little kindness.

Perhaps even a little hope.

There will still be difficult days.

Days when old stories return.

Days when grief unexpectedly knocks at your door.

When they come... be gentle with yourself.

Remember what you've learned.

Remember to pause.

Remember to breathe.

Remember that your thoughts are not always the truth.

Remember that your children need your connection, not your perfection.

Remember that you don't have to carry everything alone.

Remember that healing often arrives dressed as ordinary.

Most of all... remember this.

There was never anything wrong with you.

You were never broken.

You were always finding your way.

Thank you for allowing me to walk beside you for a little while.

Take good care of yourself.



The next chapter of your life is waiting.

And I have every reason to believe...

it holds more light than you can see today.

Until then...

Keep looking for your glimmer.

If you'd like a little more support...

If this guide has been helpful, please know you don't have to navigate this journey alone.

At TruePath, I offer:

- ☐ Individual Counselling
- ☐ Therapeutic Support During Separation
- ☐ Family Mediation
- ☐ Parenting Coordination

Whether you're looking for a safe place to process your emotions, support through co-parenting, or guidance as you make important decisions, I'd be honoured to walk alongside you.

www.truepathparenting.com



You are doing better
than you think you are.

One breath.

One step.

One day at a time.

TRUE PATH PARENTING

