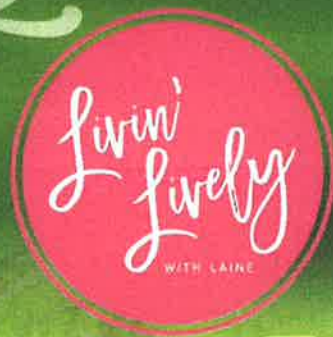


MIND • BODY • SOUL & SPIRIT

WH



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W O M E N

STUCK IN GRIEF?

Bronner delivers message of hope

HOW TO HEAL FROM THE PAIN OF DIVORCE

Brighten your winter clothes with colors for spring

EVEN WITH A BABY

you can be a mother AND a lover

A spring-themed meal every Mom will love

THE JOYS OF SEX

It's not just for procreation

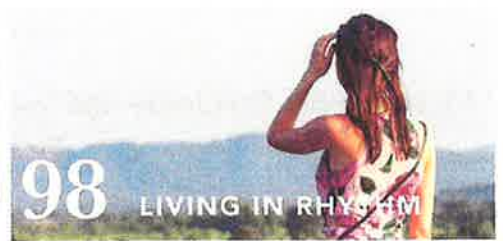
MISS KAY ROBERTSON

Ladies of *Duck Dynasty* speak their minds on sex, motherhood and much, much more



Spring 2016

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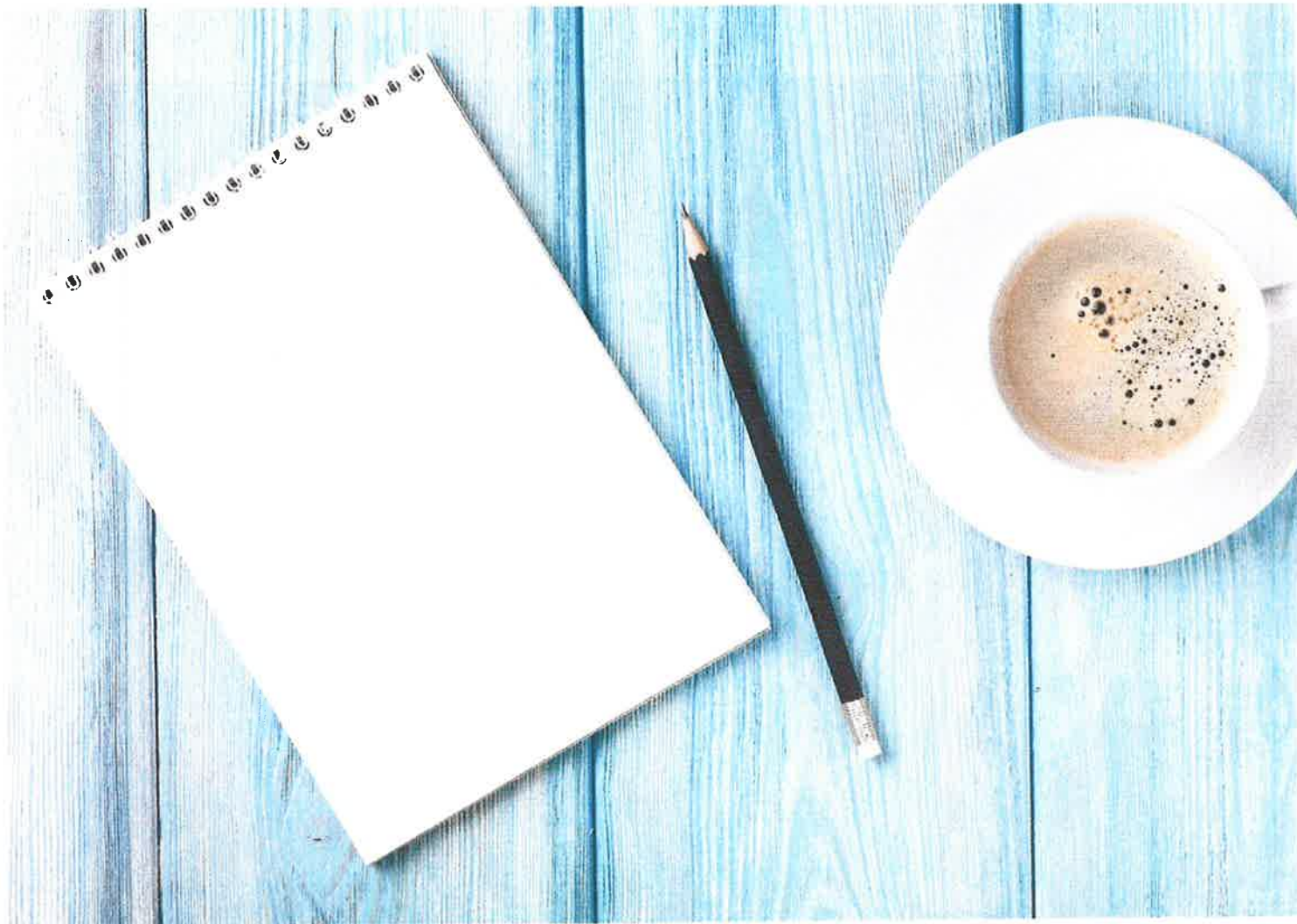
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SHARE YOUR STORY

These are first-person stories by women who have achieved a victory in their lives. If you have a story to share, please send it to share@WHOAwomen.com and it could appear in an upcoming edition.

LIFE BEYOND DIVORCE

AFTER 10 YEARS OF HEALING, SHE'S WHOLE AGAIN

By Julie Castro

I didn't listen to the counsel that family and friends gave me about marrying the man I chose to be my husband. I lived with the consequence of a bad decision for 12 years before God released me from the marriage.

There were plenty of good times, but they were outweighed by the bad. The marriage broke down because of spiritual, emotional, cultural and familial conditions. Not one to look at the past, I move forward and share my experiences of restoration, healing and life after divorce.

Having been awarded full custody of our son, I did not ask for child support or any financial assistance. It was a clean break and allowed us to move to a new city and begin the restoration process in new surroundings. The physical restoration of a new home, job and school was easy to get accustomed to; my son settled into school and made new friends. I worked and was home in the evening to be with him.

Our home life was now different; there was no more yelling, defending myself against the verbal abuse and addictions in the home. It was peaceful and quiet, and my son and I lived in harmony.

Healing took place in my son quickly. God brought solid men into his life to mentor, educate and guide him into the man he is today. I spoke Scripture to reinforce life's lessons and give him understanding of what he was experiencing and what he could look forward to, as he matured and started living his life outside of "mom."

Busy raising my son for the six years after the divorce, I never thought about the restoration that was needed in my life. In fact, I didn't even know that the hurts of a bad marriage were being masked; I needed to be strong for

the family unit during the marriage and after it dissolved. A few years after the divorce, I could begin to admit that I was verbally abused. It's not that I was in denial. I just chose to keep moving forward, looking to the future God had for me.

I had a good job, we lived in a nice house and we even had some disposable income, allowing opportunities for some outside activities. It wasn't until I lost my job that we had to cut the amenities. My son learned a valuable lesson about money and why God gives it to us. In fact, the job loss was the catalyst for tithing, as I had never given the full 10 percent before.

My son didn't understand it, but I knew that if I was faithful to Jesus, He would be faithful to me. And He proved His faithfulness. I tithed my way to a new position, which paid 20K less than the job I lost; a lower house payment due to a lower interest rate; and a new level of trusting God to meet all our needs.

It wasn't until I was instructed to write a book that God started to address the past hurts. I started to write and God started the inner healing process. It was a process that I didn't even know I needed until I was already in it for a few months. I had suppressed the hurts of the verbal abuse from my ex-husband, but as God brought people into my life, I began to heal. The more I shared my testimony, the more I cried. The more I cried, the more I healed.

And when the healing process was over, God started to do a "new thing" in me. It was the understanding of my One, True Husband—Jesus. I began to understand the Song of Solomon when I read the book *Song of the Bride* by Jeanne Guyon. I had experienced every aspect the author wrote about. I came into a deeper relationship

“AND WHEN THE HEALING PROCESS WAS OVER, THEN GOD STARTED TO DO A ‘NEW THING’ IN ME. IT WAS THE UNDERSTANDING OF MY ONE, TRUE HUSBAND—JESUS.”

and understanding of who He is to me and how He has everything predestined and ordained, if I will walk in His will, not mine. I began to understand *Proverbs 3:5*: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.” (NASB)

I also began to understand what was happening in my life. I have come to a place of walking it out, and when a door opens, I go through it. I can knock, but if it doesn't open up, I keep moving forward toward the destiny in which I have been called.

Arriving at the place of complete trust in Him allows me to walk in the fullness of my calling. I made a mistake of marrying the wrong man, but *Romans 8:28* says: “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” (NASB)

Shortly after the divorce, I came to realize that a spiritual release needed to take place between both parties. I had released my ex-husband from the marriage, but he had not released me. I had forgiven him during and after the marriage, but I had never told him. Many years later I acknowledged a text he sent me asking for forgiveness; replying to the text, I wrote that I forgave him and he needed to move on with his life.

I didn't understand it at the time, but in the natural, I was released from the marriage through the divorce decree, but he had not released me spiritually. I continued to receive texts, but never opened or acknowledged them, as the enemy could use a response as a way to give hope of restoring the marriage. And there wasn't any hope.

I moved on with my life in the natural and the spiritual. Recently, almost 10 years after the divorce, I

received a text from my ex, but this one I opened instead of deleting. This text said something different and I responded with the words “move on with your life, I have.” I haven't received a follow-up text, so I believe the marriage is finally over spiritually and both our lives can now move forward.

As humans, we believe we know when the process we are in is finished. But God is omniscient, all knowing, and over a year after I thought the healing process was finished, a song triggered memories that led to tears and my complete healing. After a healing process of close to 10 years from start to finish—divorce decree to final memories—God has made me whole again.

The process is finished. That chapter of my life is closed and a “new thing” is beginning. Doors are opening up and I walk through them. There is life after divorce in the natural and spiritual, but God needs to be the center of it. Without Him, we have no life.

... “For in him we live and move and have our being.” ... *Acts 17:28* (NIV) 🌸



JULIE CASTRO

Julie resurrected Fiesta Publishing, the company her mother co-founded over 20 years ago in order to publish the book she wrote, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, a Personal Allegory. It was the catalyst for her call to ministry, a call she didn't know existed until a few years ago. Obedience to God's instruction to write the book opened

the door for Julie to assist with the women's ministry at her local church where she was responsible for minor tasks; this led to her current position as the women's ministry director. Her faithfulness with the small things then opened doors to minister at local churches, pray for the Body of Christ and serve other ministries. Being unconventional in her walk with Jesus, Julie does not limit how the Lord wants to use her and the messages she shares. She passionately pursues Jesus and her relentless fire for the Holy Word of God is leading her toward her destiny.