



7 ways to break up without breaking down

There are more ways to get divorced, break up a civil partnership or leave your live-in lover than you might realise, and it doesn't have to turn into a saga of anger and bitterness.

Inspiration is just as important as Information when you are experiencing a major life changing event. I am no more an expert than anyone else who has been through a traumatic family break up, but my story was featured in the September 08 issue of Eve Magazine, and I am the creator of the [Starting Over Show](#), an event designed to give people going through relationship breakdowns access to a wide range of resources and specialists who can help them break up without breaking down.



Suzy Miller
The Starting Over Show
www.startingovershow.co.uk



The Starting Over Show was the first event of its kind in the UK and has been designed to provide useful information, expert advice, resources and support to anyone who has experienced a relationship break up or significant life crisis or change, all under one roof.

To find out when our next live events are planned, visit www.startingovershow.co.uk

Or checkout our resource site at www.sos-village.org

Feel free to contact us direct for guidance and to contribute to our 'personal stories' section: email me at suzy@startingovershow.co.uk

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One: Don't try to do it all alone. [Relate](#) isn't just there to help you stay together – they can help you break up as well. There are different courses and professionals who can help keep the lines of communication open, and avoid an adversarial approach. Why not work with an independent mediator? Most people have never heard of [Matrimonial Financial Mediators](#) – but they charge a great deal less than solicitors and can help you thrash out a financial settlement without you having to be in the same room as each other. If you reach a full agreement, then you don't have to go to court at all.

Two: Be collaborative. Understand that the courts don't care a fig who caused the breakdown of the marriage, despite all the media about famous people dishing the dirt in court. If you go straight to court you might as well toss a coin as to who will 'gain' the most financially, but if you work together or even use [collaborative lawyers](#) to keep your focus on putting your children's financial security before your own, for example, you are less likely to spend so long getting angry about things the court really aren't interested in, and create a sustainable settlement.

Three: Don't join a dating site or even an introduction agency (a much better option) until you are really ready – in other words, don't still be angry about your last relationship before you start to search for a new one. Like attracts like. Dealing with the emotional journey of a breakup can bring up a great deal of stuff from your past, and this is a wonderful opportunity to sort yourself out once and for all (or at least, make some good headway!). Life coaching can be invaluable at turning a horrible situation into a catalyst for positive change, and some life coaches specialise in divorce for this reason. Some kind of self development process can not only help you deal with your immediate situation, but prepare you for a positive future as a new single.

Four: Don't compromise because you just want it 'all over and done with'. Everyone I know who has done this later felt angry about what they then saw as a very poor settlement. Agreeing to not have enough to pay the mortgage and to feed the kids (when that income is available to be had) can create disharmony and even bitterness later down the line, and even attempts (usually futile) to go back to court. Make informed decisions by finding out what you really need to live off by talking to independent financial advisers who specialise or have experience of divorce and relationship breakdown situations.

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Five: Prepare a change of Will. This may seem premature, but by drafting a new Will you will be forced to think about the future and the needs of yourself or your family, including what insurances or pensions you will need to put in place. This will keep your focus on creating a sustainable and sensible financial settlement, whether you will need a bigger or smaller property in several years time, and generally looking forward to how you want to live the rest of your life rather than backwards at what has recently caused you such pain and probably anger.

Six: Don't take medication just because the GP offers it. Psychiatric issues can arise out of relationship breakdowns, but the first stop is a qualified and experienced practitioner and like most things in life worth having, you may be better off paying for them even if it is just so you can have more sessions sooner than you might get via the NHS. Pills can sometimes be used to keep you `stable' whilst being put on a waiting list but many drugs can themselves cause an initial depression and should be avoided unless you are in danger of self harm. NLP trained (Neuro Linguistic Programming) practitioners focus on your future and changing your behaviour patterns and can be excellent for getting you back on track with coping mechanisms you can learn to do yourself. Keep going over the negative sides of your broken relationship to the minimum, and only with your kindest friends who will listen, because otherwise you will stay stuck in sadness and anger and find it difficult to move forwards.

Seven: Love yourself. Get fresh air and exercise (a better cure for depression than most medication can offer). Stay away from drugs and alcohol at least until you are through the worst of the pain, and spend time with people who love and care for you. Even if you feel deeply unloved or unworthy at this point, there will be someone who cares, even if it is a listening ear of a good [Samaritan](#). If you have children, don't feel guilty, feel joy that they were created and will see how their parents can (despite some odd hiccups) get through their break up showing the best and not the worst of themselves. Change your hair, your glasses, go on a mad adventurous holiday where you don't know any of the other people, dance in clubs you haven't been to since you were twenty, and laugh with your friends. If your friends don't laugh with you, get new ones. If you take responsibility for rebuilding your own self esteem and sense of self worth, you will deal with the legal and financial issues around your breakup much more effectively.



OUR PARTNERSHIPS:



wikivorce
the divorce support community



For a full list of our current partnerships, see <http://www.startingovershow.co.uk/index.php/home/our-partnerships/>

So where has the SOS concept come from?

Austria and Holland have already staged similar shows. Around 500 people and 20 exhibitors attended the first ever divorce fair at the Vienna Marriott Hotel in October 2007.

But Starting Over Show is very different from previous and copy-cat events - we focus on the 'starting over', so there are no private detectives or DNA testers at our SOS events!

A new and ongoing survey by professional services directory 'Certain Shops – Professionals Online' supports anecdotal evidence that, following a relationship break up, people are more likely to buy new properties, update their wills and insurances, and spend money on themselves.

Results to date show that in the three years following the break up of a relationship:

- 26.5% rented a property more than once
- 36.7% bought a new property
- 51.0% went on a foreign holiday more than once
- 27.3% joined a gym
- 20.0% changed their appearance
- 35.3% changed their job

Financial advice and legal advice were considered 'definitely important' for people going through

a relationship break up (53.1% and 50% respectively) with well-being advice also as a definite at 45.5%.

The highest score for 'definitely important' was 82.8% for 'people to listen to them sympathetically'.

See our current press page here, which includes articles and features in **[Eve Magazine, The Telegraph and The Mail](http://www.startingovershow.co.uk/index.php/sos-15-march-2009/press-coverage/)**

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MORE ABOUT THE SHOW



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Find out more about me here: http://www.sos-village.org/SOS_Village/About_.html

SOS is the first UK event designed to help people bounce back from relationship break ups and life crises. It will be a safe haven in which soon-to-be singletons can take professional advice to build the confidence and skills they need to go it alone. The philosophy behind the show is useful information, honest communication, personal transformation.

www.startingovershow.co.uk

Suzy has also created an independent online resource hub - SOS Village <http://www.sos-village.org>, which allows people to access a range of resources and to share personal stories to help them through a break up.

To find out more about our Starting Over Show events go to:
<http://www.startingovershow.co.uk>



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