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life advice

The Power of Letting Go

Letting go of the past, no matter what it may be, will help you and your spouse move forward in a positive direction.

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It doesn't benefit your marriage to dwell onto past struggles, what is, is.

Stuff happens.

Your spouse had an affair, but you decided to work it out together. One of you was merged out of your job, and the family budget is drastically reduced. You've come down with some autoimmune disorder that requires "rest, rest, rest!" leaving all the chores and more up to your already over-burdened spouse. Stuff happens.

All too often, it feels like life as it was is over. You feel like you'll never trust your unfaithful spouse as you used to. It's impossible to find as good a job as the old one in this economy. You'll never get your energy and health back to where it was before.

And yet, for every ending, there is a beginning. For all that you are in pain over the infidelity of your spouse, that is the past. Yes, one of you is jobless, and that is scary. Your present ill-health

is worrisome, as well as a drag for your spouse. But whatever was before these present conditions, has ended. What is, is.

There is nothing more powerful than really getting that "What is, is." It's a new platform from which you can have powerful beginnings. The truth is, you change with every minute that passes. If you choose to, you can learn from everything that happens to you. You have now the benefit of the experience of your situation. You can look at what happened and learn from it.

Your marriage can be stronger from what you learn about each other, as a consequence of the affair. Affairs are rarely just about sex! And even if they are, there's still an important lesson for the both you in why it happened. You are richer by far from your experience, as you are willing to learn from it and incorporate what you learn. But you can't do that if you keep going back to blaming, feeling guilty or the other emotions that crop up when people dwell on what happened, instead of accepting "What is, is," and seeking that new beginning.

Even as you downsize your living situation to accommodate your new "one-job couple" existence, let that be the end of the old. As soon as you can, turn your attentions to the new. Let this be an opportunity to review the jobless spouse's new options: "Was this old job really what I wanted to be doing with my life? What new possibilities, what new potential would I like to explore?"

The same with your health: What is, is. You have the disorder, accept it, and move forward into exploring ways of healing yourself, reach out to friends, family, support of all kinds to help your spouse take on his or her additional burdens, as well as your own.

What is, is. Gnash your teeth, weep your tears, grieve what was, and then turn resolutely toward the new. For in the new you'll find new joys, new successes, and new reasons to love life.

Noelle C. Nelson, Ph.D., is a relationship expert, popular speaker in the U.S. and abroad, and author of nine best-selling books, including her most recent, "[Your Man is Wonderful](#)" and "[Dangerous Relationships](#)." Dr. Nelson focuses on how we can all enjoy happy, fulfilling lives while accomplishing great things in love, at home and at work, as we appreciate ourselves, our world and all others. For more, visit www.noellenelson.com and www.yourmaniswonderful.com/blog.