Family Law Attorney Maggie White for the Journal Record - Preparing for Divorce: Practical Tips

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Deciding to move forward with a divorce is a significant and often emotionally challenging decision. Unfortunately, many factors that will impact your divorce are outside of your control. Instead of focusing on the unknowns, think about the steps you can take now to navigate the transition more effectively and best position you for life after divorce.

1) Organize your finances. Whether you are the primary wage earner or not, you will need to have a clear idea of how much it costs to maintain your lifestyle. What are your largest expenses? What line items could you live without? What will you use to fund the costs associated with your divorce, including legal fees? You may have to invest some time to get clear insight into your financial situation, but doing the hard work up front will save you time later and ensure that your priorities are aligned with your finances.

2) Build support systems. Your daily life will change considerably during and after your divorce. You will need practical and emotional support from friends and family members who can help you adjust to your new normal. Additionally, you should consider whether a therapist or counselor would be beneficial to ease your transition. A financial advisor could also assist with organizing your finances and setting new financial goals.

3) Clarify your priorities. Get honest with yourself and your counsel about what matters most to you. While you may want to remain in the residence you lived in during your marriage, that may not be a financially viable option. Or, the parenting time schedule you would like to adopt may be perfect for your child's routine, but it may not fit with your co-parent's work schedule. Once you know what your goals are, you and your counsel can efficiently work towards accomplishing them.

Making the decision to get a divorce is daunting. Rather than ruminating on all the potential outcomes, you can focus your energy on taking concrete steps to prepare for your divorce, and most importantly, life beyond it.

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