



## TRANSFORMING RELATIONSHIPS

Time transforms relationships – it just happens. Look back at how your relationship with a parent or a sibling has changed over the years. Consider your best friend from high school or college – is the relationship the same as it was 10, 20, 30 or more years ago?



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**A**s individuals we constantly are learning, experiencing new things, meeting new people. Layer upon layer it falls on top of our existing relationships, and we are bound to change – our worldview, goals, interests, even food preferences shift over time.

The relationship with a spouse or partner is not isolated from this change. In fact, the many dimensions of this relationship – emotional, physical, spiritual, financial – can result in great change, and depending on circumstances and the personalities of the two people, lead a couple to grow together or apart.

Most people would agree that when change leads to personal growth, it is good.

It may be difficult to accept that sometimes growth leads to the completion of a relationship. To see the end as natural, and to honor the path that led to the completion is much more inspiring and uplifting than calling the marriage a failure.

I am talking about divorce.

Looking at my friends and family members who have marriages that work – I see that each person is transforming in ways that complement the other. As a divorce lawyer, I see people every day who are transforming, too. But in these cases, each person's growth is calling them in a direction that is different than the other person's journey. It takes courage for one (or both) of these people to acknowledge these changes and to be willing to let go of the past. Rather than labeling it a failure, we call it a new beginning.

Why? Because, even after a divorce, the relationship remains – albeit in a new form. This is especially true if the couple has children, grandchildren, or a business. Once the dust of the divorce has settled and each person has embraced the “new normal,” they can look back and see how their relationship has contributed to who they have become.

So, if your relationship is ending or you have a friend who is in the midst of a divorce, I invite you to see it as I see the relationship I have with the father of my children – as one which changed me profoundly – a transforming relationship.