



## Encouragement and Strategies for Single Moms

with *Dr. Sharon Morris May*

- \* Statistics: Over 12 million single Mom Homes in America
- \* 50% of all children by the time they are 18 yrs. old, will be living in a single Mom house

### A Woman's Journey to Single Parenting:

**Widows:** *Usually no conflicts: death is final, closure*

**Never-married:** *Equals the number of divorced women: often struggle financially, have unique problems*

**Divorced:** *50% of all marriages end in Divorce: Relationship with Ex =visitation rights, can be conflict*

\***Rose Illustration:** Flourishing and Winter comes...Pruning:

### Our lives can be turned upside down through:

**Death**  
**Denial**  
**Isolation**  
**Anger**  
**Bargaining**  
**Depression**

**We all have to go through the 'Healing Process':**  
*Re-evaluate and Regroup*

If you're stuck in depression, **REACH OUT** for professional help

## New Responsibilities and Concerns

Children

Finances

Responsibility of being the 'Head of the Household'

### Concerns:

*What impact will this have on my children?*

*Where will I get the energy to take care of my family?*

*What will happen to me? Will I ever marry again or will I stay single?*

*If you're divorced: custody, visitation and child support*

*Why do you need to adjust to the new roles and responsibilities of being a single Mom?*

*Because there's still life left to live*

*The children need you*

*God is still completing the Good Work He began in you!*

*Because you're capable and able: You will get through this!*

*How can you adjust to new roles and responsibilities?*

*Know your responsibilities*

*Know your strengths, weaknesses and new skills you may need to develop.*

## **Budgeting, organization and systems that work for your family.**

*Stay connected: Make friends, be proactive...*

*Find a support system to help you parent your children.*

## **Your Children's' Emotions and Adjustments**

Make sure your children understand what happened;  
why we're no longer a 'family'

Different ages respond in different ways

Some will deal with loss differently: Fear, rejection, sadness, anger

Erratic behavior at times

### **How can we help our children deal with their emotions?**

- Listen: "Full Face and Shoulder to shoulder"
- Empathy: Confirm and name emotion with child
- Label the emotion
- Help the child express their emotions appropriately
- Structure: Stability to flourish and grow

### **Have HOPE! If you've made mistakes, you can start anew:** Children are resilient!

- Family Life: Creating a "Haven of Safety"
- Unconditional love
- Separate the real loss from the 'imagined' loss
- Don't say "*if only*"...

## The Key to Development and Well-being of Children:

1. Build a secure emotional attachment with our children
2. We all need a 'haven of safety'
3. Secure Base: *Home is **always** there*

### How do we create a Haven of Safety in Our Homes?

- **Love unconditionally:** don't spoil
  - **Trustworthiness:** Be consistent
  - **Be emotionally and physically available to your children,** and respond with consideration
4. **Parenting style:** Be intentional; Don't be reactive or 'disciplined-focused':  
Be heart and character focused
  5. **Make your children your #1 priority;** not your life
  6. **Make your home a 'Christ-centered' home**
  7. **Develop rituals that connect your children:**  
(i.e. Dinnertime, breakfast, prayer time, movie nights, game night, make your house 'kid friendly')

### *Connect your children to Godly, positive male role models*

## Divorce and 'co-parenting' can be frustrating

- Your children need a loving, stable relationship with both parents
- Give your children permission to have a relationship with their father:  
Don't 'bad-mouth' them – Time will reveal the hearts and character of your spouse
- Talk directly to the father: Don't use your children as 'spies'
- Allow your children to have disappointments: listen

## Three things you can do to help with turmoil between father and child:

1. If there is abuse or neglect, take the appropriate action
2. Be there for the child
3. Focus on your own home: You have control over your own home!

## Self Care: Intentionally living a Balanced Lifestyle

### **Our emotional lives:**

\*Resentfulness= One of the most destructive emotions a person can deal with:

It keeps our hurts alive; it can destroy us

\*We must come to the point where we choose to forgive

### **How do we deal with our emotions?**

\* Stuff

\* Ooze = Always complaining

\* Ignore = "I'm fine!"

\* Explode = Our emotions build up and we 'snip'

- "What do I do with my frustration?"
- Name our emotions: keep journal
- Own our emotions: hold ourselves accountable
- secondary emotions = loud, angry, harsh
- primary emotions = care, tender, 'fear of being abandoned'
- Learn how to regulate our emotions
- Don't make major decisions or react out of the heat of our emotions

**Develop your Walk with God: Center your life around Christ**

Your **Body and Mind**: Stay Balanced

***Jeremiah 29:11, Isaiah 41:9, Psalms 32:8***

***Isaiah 40:31*** :“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; They will soar on the wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint”.

**You will make it!**