

Screen Treatment:
Love Trauma, Separation to Post-Divorce
By Paul A. Wagner, Ph.D.

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Logline: "Resurrection: Rising from the Death of a Relationship." This is a literary *Sherpa* guiding you up the other side of collapse. Experience the dramatic interviews during counseling sessions. Tears, anger, hate, even thoughts of suicide. Nothing hurts like lost love and love was never meant to hurt.

Genre: Non-Fiction/Self Help, Relationships, Marriage & Divorce.

Based on over 1,000 interviews of middle-class divorcees, ages 25-55, interviewees share their struggle with guilt, hate, anger, fear and loneliness. Divorcees in counseling, both men and women, fight their emotions just to survive alone or race to find a new safe harbor. Each path is a dead end. Divorcees must learn to "re-pack", take systematic small steps to disembowel themselves of crippling emotions that haunt them 24/7.

Like running a marathon, the primary disabling distractions come from within. Being a divorcee is different from being single the first time and way different than being a spouse. As Johnny Cash once sang, "*You gotta walk that lonesome valley. You gotta walk it by yourself.*"

Chapters include:

□ **The Fight**—Who is the enemy? Putting on the gloves, The Need to Fight, Fighting the Right Fight. □ **The Furies**—dealing with hate, anger, guilt, jealousy, and fear. □ **The Victory**—

knowing you've beat your true enemies **From Loneliness to Aloneness**—the essential move **Wonderment**—an ingredient of happiness [] **Finding a Home and dealing with substance and alcohol abuse, workaholicism, reclusiveness, and promiscuity.**

The good news is, divorcees have to change. Not doing the same things in the same way expecting different results which is insanity. An avoiding looking for new love in all the old, wrong places. There is a world beyond gloom and doom!

Main Characters:

- Three women coming in for counseling. Different events led to their split.
- Three men coming in for counseling. Different mind sets than their former spouses. Some come in for joint counseling. Explosive situations.
- Counselor discussing their situations individually. Listening to them pour out their hearts of deep depression and sadness, anger, fear and guilt.
- Friends of the men trying to help their brother in pain, often suggesting the wrong paths, let's hit a bar and find you a woman.
- Friends of the women, commiserating with them, crying together, building a case against the spouse.
- Kids of parents in distress from splitting up.

Three male and females playing central rolls. One couple playing the role of struggling heading for disaster. One couple playing the roles of over-compensation, moving on with the divorce. One couple playing the reconciling couple that find love with each other.

**Publisher's note to Producer/Director: With over 1,000 counseling sessions, Dr. Wagner can put these three types of couples together for as many episodes as the producer wants. Each couple is different.

Settings:

- Scenes of spouses fighting in their homes
- Counselor's office with both and individually.
- Men friends drinking beer at a friend's house, talking about the divorce
- Women at friends' houses commiserating, pity parties, drinking wine
- Bar scenes, trying to "get back in the game." Calamities that follow. One night stands.
- Emergency Room scene, drunk, car accident
- Work scenes, trying to cope with so much on their minds.
- Scenes with kids trying to understand what is happening and parents trying to explain.
- Desperate calls in the middle of the night to the counselor from spouses

Act 1--The Set Up

- (Voice Over) telling viewers that insurance data tells us that divorcees are more likely to get into auto accidents, commit suicide or suffer some morbid event in the first two years following divorce. More MEN suffer these events than Women.
- Divorces are caused by many things: Incompatibility, finances, self-centeredness, addictions, infidelity, being overbearing, trying to change each other, abuse. Dr. Wagner discusses each.
- Men tend to have less support from their friends... "Buck up buttercup, move on."
- Women tend to have more support of their friends, sides are taken.
- The trauma of broken routines of both men and women take a heavy toll on each. They enter a world of their past failures. They feel anger, resentment, depression and loneliness.
- Each handles this trauma in different ways. Most of which do not help. Things get worse. Life is miserable and seems worthless to continue in this pain.

Act 2- The Conflict

- Choices: Bear it yourself or seek help?
- Counseling by friends and family or Professional counseling?
- Talking through the pain
- Applying guilt, pointing fingers, seeking legal divorce proceedings, grasping for all you can get, giving up a fairly comfortable life. More anger, more hate, more depression, more loneliness.
- Counselor talks with both together and individually. Communication begins.
- Hurts and emotions finally surface. A relief for both to be heard.
- Understanding becomes paramount.
- Right and wrong ways of starting over discussed, whether through reconciliation or moving on. Counselor guides them both individually and together.
- Dealing with the kids' future and well-being
- Exploring different outcomes, different paths for each of the couples. Some leading to a better life. Some to more disaster. There is life after divorce and reconciliation.

Act 3-The Resolution

- One couple is racing for greater pain and loneliness, possible suicide of one.
- One couple moves on with separate lives, working out their situations.
- One couple reconciles, discovers their former lover for each other.

Five Star Reviews:



Kindle Customer

5.0 out of 5 stars A great book for surviving your divorce.

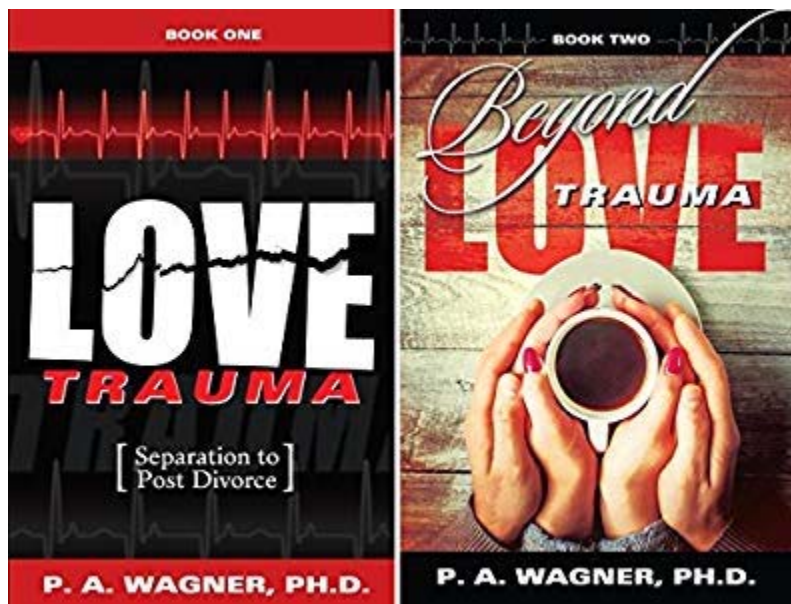
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Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

I love the way Dr. Wagner explains each point. This book is very detailed and each chapter is clear and descriptive in full detail. He helps us understand divorce. It's not a comfortable situation, but with this book, I believe the process can be more comfortable.

The perfect book for people to know that divorce is not the end and we can survive beyond it.

"Dr. Wagner's writing style is so friendly and comforting. Yet, the wisdom he portrays calling on scholars and ordinary people alike is palpable." J. Hanna.



Paul Wagner, Ph.D. University of Missouri, now a Professor of Psychology at University of Houston, Clear Lake, Texas with affiliations with Harvard, Yale and Stanford Universities over the past 35 years. He worked closely with Texas Ethics Commission and the LBJ School at the University of Texas to sponsor an annual ethics workshop for senior State Officials.

He has worked closely with many psychologists, taken relevant law school classes and taught a course entitled, *Philosophy of Sex and Love*. In his books, Wagner discusses the Three Intimacies: 1. Sexual 2. Intellectual 3. Emotional.

His books are based on over 1,000 interviews of middle-class divorcees from ages 25-55.

***Beyond Love Trauma* was a finalist in the prestigious International Book Awards in 2019.**