



Is your spouse reading "Finding Love After Divorce"? Oh dear.

The Love Scout

Who wrote the book on goodbye?

Navigating separation and divorce

Remember the good old days of Gregory's maps, the paper book you studied to get around? Now we've got smart phones and algorithms to help us navigate life. What about matters of the heart? Is there a road map for heart ache, separation, and divorce? What's the best way to do? Where do you even begin?

Unfortunately, there is no book on goodbye; it is something deeply personal and intimate to each of us. There is no "right" way, only what feels right for you. In saying that, once you know your relationship has passed its expiry date, it will require you to take affirmative action. Sometimes it's hard to know how to move forward.

What do you do after you've decided it's time to split?

1. Get honest with yourself

What are the real reasons and motivations? What needs aren't being met? Are there values that no longer align? Has there been growth apart? Do you have different visions

for the future? Self-honesty will allow you to be honest and transparent with those around you and stay in your integrity.

2. Check in with your values

What do you stand for? Why are these things important to you? This will be the framework through which you conduct yourself moving forward. Separations can be incredibly painful. If kindness, compassion, empathy, fairness, and love exist in your value set, bear them in mind as you communicate and negotiate with your spouse, family members and loved ones.

3. Rip the band-aid off

Stop avoiding the conversation and tell your spouse you want a divorce. Be intentional with your words, let your values carry the conversation, but be direct and clear. Ambiguity leads to false hope and fantasy, which inflicts greater pain on the other in the long term. Don't offer hope if there is none.

4. Make a timeline for your separation

Grab an A3 piece of paper and start making crosses of when

you will take the next logistical actions. This could include talking to your children, telling family members, sharing with community members, consulting lawyers around finances or custody, seeking out therapy to support your emotional and psychological well-being, exploring accommodation options, discussing co-parenting plans, talking to your employer and re-structuring work. Giving yourself a structured plan will help hold you accountable and support you in taking the next step towards your outcome. This can also help move you out of emotional overwhelm into action.

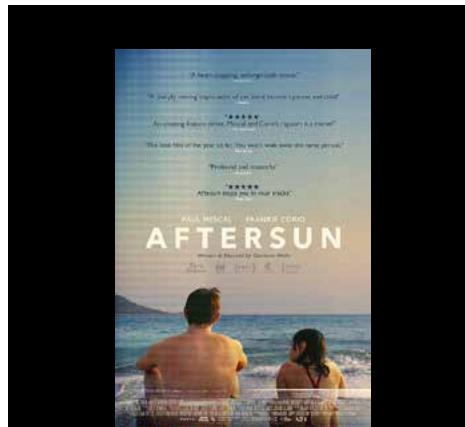
5. Build and reach out to your support networks

Separations can cause huge turbulence in our lives. They can demand us to reflect on our identity, roles, meaning, purpose, and direction. For some, it can even lead to an existential crisis. We can be vulnerable in this time when our world is being flipped upside down. Rely on your friends, family, community, therapist, hobbies, co-workers, and support groups to help you emotionally and psychologically sustain the changes.

Time may not heal everything, but it surely helps. Take it one day at a time. Yes, the unknown can be scary, but it also holds infinite opportunity. You just have to imagine the horizon and what's on yours. Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.

Words: **Scout Smith-O'Leary**

Scout is a Relationship Therapist & Educator working with singles and couples based in Manly. Visit thelovescout.com or call 0410 030 463 to book a session.



Aftersun

Genre Drama
Rent/buy on Apple, YouTube & Amazon

How much can you ever truly know your parent? This is the central question in Charlotte Wells' magnificent directorial debut film which focuses on a girl's relationship with her young father.

The film plays like a mashup of home video recordings, a kaleidoscope of memories, moments, glances, minuscule heartbreaks and the world of emotions that lay under the surface. The images are striking in both their structure and deeper meaning. Wells takes her time in fully absorbing you in the central relationship and slowly tugging on your heartstrings.

The result is a profound and poetic experience that feels joyful and heart-breaking. It unites the audience in a sense of something universally human. This isn't a fast-paced film. It's not plot-heavy or action packed, but patient and lovely and just creeps up on you in the best way.

The two lead performances are sensational, and their chemistry is so natural and smooth - you truly believe this a real-life father and daughter. Family is always complex, and this film honours the complexity of family with a beautiful piece of art that offers more each viewing.

Words: **Christopher Roberts**
 Chris is the author of [filmandfoodpodcast](http://filmandfoodpodcast.com)

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