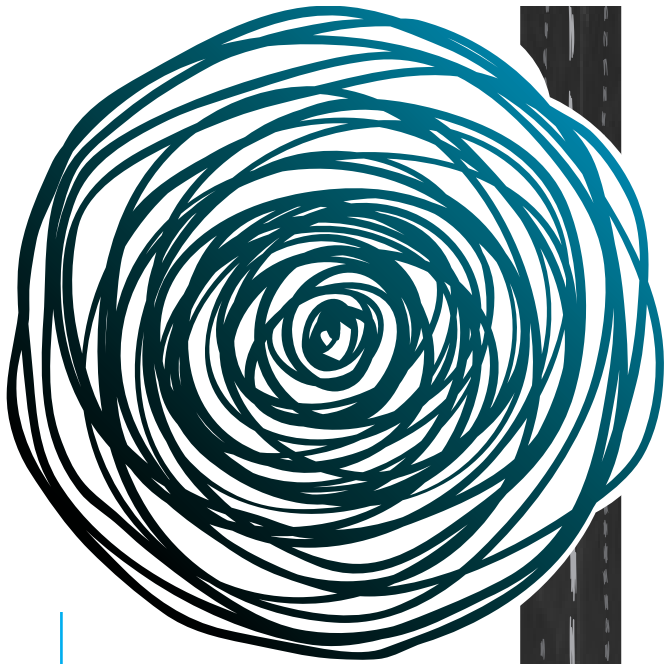


## NEW COHORTS starting SUMMER of 2023



with **RAE GAELYN  
EMERSON**

- Certified Life Coach
- Divorce Recovery Coach
- Couples Relationship Coach (CPLC, CDRC, CCRC)
- Certified Partner Coach – Supervisor and Member of the Board of Directors Association of Partners of Sex Addicts Trauma Specialists (CPC-S)
- Professional Certified Coach and Registered ICF Mentor Coach International Coaching Federation (PCC)
- Also trained via The Society for the Advancement of Sexual Health, High Conflict Institute, The Center for Loss and Life Transition and The Gottman Institute

HEALING TALKS BACK  
310.415.3614  
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**GROUP COACHING SUPPORT** for  
Survivors of Betrayal-Related Separation or Divorce

# AVENUE D:

“The Road Through  
Debridement”

*for women who have experienced —*

or are currently experiencing—a divorce from their sex addict partners, life becomes a process of personal debridement.

Physically speaking, Wikipedia defines **debridement** as:

*“the medical removal of dead, damaged or infected tissue, to improve the healing potential of the remaining healthy tissue.”*

In a conceptual sense, those words accurately capture, in black and white, the extreme and heroic experience of women whose marriages do not survive the trauma of sex addiction.

In a literal sense, even the word debridement suggests a powerful message. Break it into three equal parts, and you’re left with a sobering statement:

[ de ]	a prefix used to indicate a removal, a separation, a negation, a descent or a reversal
[ bride ]	a betrothed or married woman
[ ment ]	a concrete suffix, denoting an action or resulting state.

As a veteran divorce recovery coach—and as a woman who has survived divorce twice, each time in the aftermath of my then-husband’s sexual betrayal and abandonment—these two interpretations strike me profoundly. By the time a woman reaches the end of her life with someone who betrays her, she’s undergone an excruciating process of **debridement** and “**de-bridement**,” often becoming an antithesis of the woman who once entered into that relationship. She might be relieved, excited, terrified or overwhelmed. But whatever her feelings, she knows that her new reality will be nothing like the one that preceded it.

Staring down this road of debridement and de-bridement, she bravely dares to wonder:

*“Where will I be when this marriage is dissolved?”*

For those very women, who courageously ask that question...

THIS GROUP IS FOR YOU.



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### the details

**what** ..... **Avenue D is a 4-month, topic-based COACHING SUPPORT GROUP, created to provide a safe and validating peer environment for female survivors of betrayal-related separation or divorce—including women who are divorced, divorcing or permanently separated from their sex addict partners or spouses.** Unlike other programs that concurrently support ALL partners of sex addicts, regardless of their relationship status, this group will focus EXCLUSIVELY on the needs of divorced, divorcing or permanently separated women—the unique challenges involved in the **process of dissolving an intimate partnership**, combined with **new aspects of living independently** beyond that relationship with a sexually addicted loved one. *Avenue D* is designed to supplement (not replace) primary treatment for women traumatized by their partners’ compulsive sexual behaviors. Participants are encouraged to pursue foundational support resources, like therapy, counseling, coaching, spiritual direction, mentoring, sponsorship, etc.

**why** ..... **Women who experience divorce or permanent separation often have UNIQUE NEEDS for group support—needs that are not always met within the broader population of support groups designed for betrayed spouses or partners of sex addicts.** As a long-time certified divorce recovery coach working exclusively within the field of relational trauma, I’ve focused my work toward those who feel they no longer “fit” within traditional, peer-populated environments—both at and beyond the points when it becomes obvious that their relationships cannot “recover.” Within these traditional, all-inclusive support groups, divorcing partners often experience a subtle-yet-significant sense of isolation from the group-at-large. They experience a deepening of their personal pain, the direct (albeit unintended) result of repeated exposure to “success stories” shared by reconciled and/or reconciling spouses.

**who** ..... **Avenue D is designed for women who are divorced, divorcing or permanently separated in the aftermath of sexual betrayal. This includes women who have experienced any sexual betrayal within the context of an intimate romantic relationship.** Because it’s intended to be a complimentary (not comprehensive) resource for healing, *Avenue D* is open to women who: (a) have been impacted by their partners’ infidelity, pornography, secrets and/or sex addiction; (b) are actively engaging another primary resource for individual support; (c) are emotionally stable-yet-still-suffering in the aftermath of discovery, disclosure and/or divorce; (d) are ready, able and willing to participate, to commit to all twelve sessions, and to share their experiences within a small, safe and empathetic group of others healing in the aftermath of similar trauma.

**when** ..... **NEW COHORTS STARTING IN JUNE, JULY and AUGUST 2023**

**JUNE Start** (C10) = Tuesdays @ 11am–1pm ET (June 7–September 19)

**JULY Start** (C11) = Wednesdays @ 4pm–6pm ET (July 5–October 18)

**AUGUST Startt** (C12) = Mondays @ 8pm–10pm ET (August 7–November 20)

**where** ..... **Avenue D is a virtual coaching group, connecting women from around the world—literally!** Our live coaching sessions will meet via Zoom, allowing individuals to participate virtually, interactively, onscreen and in real-time.

**size** ..... **Each group will be limited to 3 (minimum) or 6 (maximum) participants.**

**cost** ..... Session fees for Avenue D are \$1200 total (\$100 per session), payable in three payments of \$400 each. A \$400 deposit (\$200 nonrefundable) is required to reserve your space, and no refunds are given for non-participation. Limited scholarship assistance is available; if you need it, please ask!



**how** ..... **INTERESTED IN JOINING US?** Please contact me via email (rae@healingtalksback.com) or visit my website (healingtalksback.com/aftermath) to get current schedule details.



# AVENUE D:

GROUP COACHING SUPPORT FOR  
Survivors of Betrayal-Related Separation or Divorce

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## “The Road Through Debridement”

### GROUP TOPICS } Please note: This outline is for preliminary planning only. Final topics and schedule may be adjusted, based on the needs of specific group members.

#### SESSION 1 . . . From Discovery to Debridement

Where am I currently at in my journey to and through “debridement?”  
Do I have what it takes to survive this process?  
What are my deepest hopes, fears and needs as I embark on this journey?

#### SESSION 2 . . . Divorce: The “D” Word

How did I reach this decision to divorce—or how was that decision made for me?

#### SESSION 3 . . . From Distortion to Destruction: The Spectrum of Abandonment, Abuse and Trauma

What exactly are we dealing with, here?

#### SESSION 4 . . . Disintegration? Disconnection? Detachment?

How do I relate to my ex husband? How do I renegotiate my role within this relationship?

#### SESSION 5 . . . Divorcing Homes, Divided Hearts

How is this divorce affecting my children, my parents, family relationships and friendships?

#### SESSION 6 . . . Does Divorce Equal Failure?

His? Mine? Ours? If my marriage failed, what does that say about me?

#### SESSION 7 . . . Divorced Womanhood

How has this divorce impacted my concepts of sex, intimacy and female identity?

#### SESSION 8 . . . Detailing the Damage: Each Loss Counts

What have I lost in this whole experience? Which of those losses are temporary, and which are permanent?

#### SESSION 9 . . . Death Spiral: The Grief Goes Deep

How am I experiencing the different kinds (and stages) of grief, in response to my divorce?  
Have I given myself permission to grieve? Have other women witnessed and understood my grief?

#### SESSION 10 . . . Date Night? Yes? No? Maybe? Someday? Never?

How has this divorce impacted my concepts of sex, intimacy and womanhood?  
Where am I at (or not at) with the idea of future love, romance and relationships?

#### SESSION 11 . . . Discovering Me + Dreaming New Dreams

What’s my identity in the aftermath of this experience? Who am I? Who do I want to be?  
What kind of post-divorce life do I want—and how do I get there?

#### SESSION 12 . . . Determining Closure: Reframe and Reclaim

How do I deal with photos, rings, keepsakes and anniversaries?  
How can I commemorate this transitional journey of debridement?

#### THEN WHAT? What happens after Avenue D ends?

Many of my clients who complete *Avenue D* take a short break to absorb and metabolize everything they’ve explored on our journey—then choose to continue working with me either (a) individually on an as-needed basis, or (b) in my long-term, twice-weekly, open-topic support group, ***DreamGirls: Designing Our New Lives***, exclusively for survivors of betrayal-related separation or divorce. Though I recommend *Avenue D* as an important foundational exercise for divorcing women, *DreamGirls* is also open to women who have NOT first worked with me via Avenue D. **Please contact me for more information!**

# The Fable of the Bridge

by the late  
Rabbi Edwin Friedman, adapted

THE FABLE OF THE BRIDGE begins with a woman wrestling with her own thoughts about her future and what choices she wants to make about her life. After much contemplation, she achieves great clarity and is excited about the vision she can see for her life. She starts off on the journey to her future...

SHE MUST TRAVEL to another town where an amazing opportunity is waiting for her—but she must get there by the next morning, or the opportunity will pass.

She travels many hours, each step getting more excited about the life she is creating. As the full moon rises, she is alone in her thoughts as she starts crossing a bridge.

Out of the corner of her eye, the woman sees a stranger coming towards her. She thinks the man approaching is putting his hand out to greet her.

However, the stranger has the end of a rope in his hand, with the other end wrapped and knotted tightly around his waist. "Here," the stranger says to the woman, thrusting the end of the rope into her hands.

And although she is perplexed, the woman complied.

The stranger asks the woman to hold on tight with two hands, then promptly jumps off the bridge toward the deep river, running swiftly far below. "Hold on!" the stranger cries, as his free-falling body hurtles the distance of the rope's length.

From the bridge above, the woman abruptly feels the pull. She holds tightly to the rope, despite being almost pulled over the side of the bridge. Peering down at the stranger who is close to oblivion, the woman yells, "What are you trying to do?"

"Just hold tight," says the man in response.

The woman tries to haul the stranger up, but she cannot. She cannot get enough leverage. Her strength is almost perfectly counterbalanced by the man's weight. "Why did you do this? I cannot pull you up," the woman cries.

"Just hold on. I need you," the stranger yells. "If you let go, I will be lost."

The woman looks around for help, but no one is near. She holds on for a while, and then calls down, "Please, I cannot hold you. Please climb up."

"I am your responsibility," says the man.

"Well, I did not ask for it!" says the woman.

The woman tries to invent solutions, like tying the rope to the bridge, but she cannot find any solutions that work.

Fearing that her arms cannot hold out much longer, she ties the rope around her waist. If she just waits long enough, the woman thinks, someone is bound to come and help her pull the stranger up.

She waits many hours, but no one else comes. "Why did you do this?" she asks again. "Don't you see what you have done? What possible purpose could you have had in mind?"

The man did not answer her question. "Just remember," replies the man, "my life is in your hands."

Time passes... and a decision needs to be made. The woman knows she cannot hold on much longer. In desperation, one final idea occurs to her. If the stranger hauls himself up, while she keeps the end steady—if he reaches up, while she reaches down—working together, surely they can get the stranger back to safety.

But the man isn't interested in climbing up. "You mean you won't help?" the woman cries out. "But I told you, I cannot pull you up by myself, and I don't think I can hang on much longer, either."

"You must try," the man shouted back in tears. "If you fail, I die."

More time passes and finally, the point of decision has arrived. The woman says to the man, "Listen to me. I will not accept the position of choice for your life. I will only accept the position of choice for my own. As for the position of choice for your life, I hereby give it back to you."

"What do you mean?" the man asks, suddenly afraid.

"I mean, simply, it's up to you," she replies. You decide which way this ends. I will help you, if you help yourself."

"You cannot mean what you say," the man shrieks. "You would not be so selfish. I am your responsibility. What could be so important that you would let someone die? Do not do this to me."

The woman states again, "I will not stand here and hold this rope. If you want to live, you must start climbing now. If you start climbing now, I will help you. Please, start now."

She waits a few minutes, but there is no change in the tension of the rope. "I accept your choice," the woman says, at last, and frees her hands. ■ ■ ■