

*take a deep breath...*  
*ok let's go.*

# module one

## Rediscover Yourself

Hi there. It's happening. It's here. I would say 'GET READY' but the truth is, you don't have to feel "ready" for this course in the slightest bit. You just have to start. And why not now, why not today? Because the sooner you get started, the sooner you get somewhere.

For every module, you will get an overview of what's to come. I said this in the **Before You Start** section, but I suggest you let each module take as long as it takes. Resist the urge to plan to finish at a certain time. Your healing, which is what I assume you're going for, depends on your willingness, your openness, and your honesty. There is no prize for finishing in a hurry.

Throughout this course, I will be here, giving you all the love and support I can. You are not alone, not one little bit. Feel free to use your own journal or the take extra notes on the blank pages provided at the end of each module. And if you see this  in the bottom left corner of a page, you'll know there is a quick video you can watch online of me either adding a little extra or simply cheering you on. Every little bit helps!

Ready or not, let's get going!

 Ashlyne

### **Overview/Lessons:**

1. Who Are You (**Me Before** Assessment)
2. Deep Dive (**Me Married** Assessment)
3. Today (**Me Now** Assessment)
4. Tomorrow

### **Tools:**

Pen(s)  
Journal (optional)



I'm a big believer in writing things down. I prefer a pen and paper so I can have more freedom than in a word processor, I can use fun pens, etc. But mostly, it's because I can see where I've been on the paper. If only you could see the Moleskine I'm writing this draft on. Yes, you would see all these words, but you would also see all the words I crossed out as I edited. It's not neat, it's not perfect, and that's kind of the point of the exercise I want you to do to begin this course: To avoid curating or putting a filter on *anything*.

And while I'm on the subject of writing, expect to write a little more these first two modules than in the others. I promise you it's necessary to your growth and for the natural flow of this course. I tell you this just to prepare you so you don't assume they will all be that way. Nothing lasts forever; not your pain, not these first two modules. (And if you love writing, this is right up your alley.)

If we are anything alike, the question *who am I* is downright overwhelming. But it is the most important question at this point in your life. And I happen to have some hacks to help you answer it. That said, I'm going to suggest a few more tools for you to use. I swear I won't do this to you every time!

Remember, honesty is paramount, so if you're feeling denial-y, close this course and come back to it a little later. No judgment! Just be open. If you **are** open now, then let's do it!

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## MORE SUGGESTED TOOLS:

- Find a table or a desk. You need some space. (Ex. Dining room table)
- Photos (printed or digital) of yourself during the three time periods in the assessments **Me Before, Me Married** and if you have one, of **Me Now**. (You can gather them as you go.) *This is optional, but it really helps to assemble old memories and images!*
- Computer/phone- for limited access to the Internet
- A spare chunk of time, distraction-free

# me before

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With your photos in front of you, pick one or two and describe a memory.

Happy or sad memory?

Why?

Did it get resolved (if sad)?

Did it happen again?

Where did you live during this time?

Who did you live with? How was that?

School?

Church?

Dreams?

Who were your biggest relationships? (romantic/platonic)

Who was the thorn in your side?

Hobbies?

Big moments/accomplishments?

Regrets?

Fears?

What was your financial situation?

What was the biggest thing you focused on/worked for?

Barriers to your success?

Pets?

TV show you were obsessed with?

Movie?

Favorite song(s)?

What was your outlook on life (broadly)?

Any other memories that keep coming up?

## QUICK TIP

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I realize it might be difficult to recall everything right away. That's perfectly normal and actually great news for you!

### Mental ROAD TRIP!

If some of your memories are just beyond reach, you get to go in search of them. Depending on your generation and past experience with social media, you might go through some digital photo albums on your computer, on Facebook or Instagram, your phone, or maybe even (dare I say) real photo albums.

If you have any old journals or diaries, they are phenomenal tools to get into your state of mind back then. And if your parents or caregivers kept any old items or yearbooks—maybe even your old room in tact—it's time for a little visit! Coffee with an old friend might also be helpful. And Google is perfect for searching old movies, shows, and songs during the years in question.

Once you have more of your answers, return to the assessment at hand. But please, **TAKE YOUR TIME** with these. Absolutely no rush.

Going way back into your life can go one of three ways.

It can be devastating.

It can be nostalgic.

It can be a reprieve from your current life.

It all depends on your life experiences and where you are right now.

You're probably in continuous state of fight or flight mode these days. But maybe that's nothing new in your life. Maybe you've been in that state for years, and it feels normal now. Or maybe this divorce is the biggest challenge of your life so far.

Whatever it is, it is. So if you're lamenting that you had this or that happen, it can't change. Not now. That doesn't mean you cannot work to get beyond it... you will. But orchestrating a time travel excursion is just a complete waste of time. I've tried.

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*Take the rest of the day to think about you "before". Add any anecdotes or new thoughts that arise. Nothing is off limits. And then, relax! We'll get to **Me Married** tomorrow.*

## LESSON 2 DEEP DIVE

Welcome back! Instead of going back into what you did yesterday and parsing it just yet, I think it's best to keep going and start your second assessment: **Me Married**. Depending on how long you were married, how long ago it was, and how much you've tried to forget, this assessment could take some time. And that's ok. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: **TAKE ALL THE TIME YOU NEED**. The more information you can gather and write down, the better off you will be as we move forward in this course. That said, I know this is a lot all at once. If you'd rather take a mental break and come back tomorrow, that's great! If you're ready to keep going, **ONWARD!**

**JUST KEEP SWIMMING,  
JUST KEEP SWIMMING,  
JUST KEEP SWIMMING,  
SWIMMING, SWIMMING.**

**-DORY, FINDING NEMO**

# me married

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Gather photos from your marriage. Again, pick one or two to describe the memory.

Happy or sad memory?

Why?

Did it get resolved (if sad)?

Did it happen again?

When/how did you meet?

What was your first date?

How long was it until you got engaged?

How was the wedding planning? Who did what?

When did you get married?

What was your wedding like? Weather that day?

Who were your bridesmaids/groomsmen?

Of all of them, did anyone stand out?

Where did you go on your honeymoon?

What was your job when you were a newlywed?

Your spouse's job?

What was your financial situation?

Did you have any pets?

Where did you live?

Best friend at the time?

Was any of your family living close by? (Including in-laws)

How was your relationship with your family?

In-laws?

What did you do during holidays?

Fears?

Biggest worry?

How was your sex life during your marriage?

Any addictions to deal with? (either of you)

Sum up your first year of marriage in two sentences:

Your second year of marriage:

Continue with all subsequent years of marriage. (Maybe on another piece of paper if you need more room or in the notes section!)

Your communication style?

Your spouse's communication style?

Any issues with communication between the two of you?

Biggest argument?

Recurring argument?

Pet peeves?

Did you attend a church?

Your love language? (If this is foreign, check out Gary Chapman's *The Five Love Languages*)

Your spouse's love language?

Did you recognize each other's love language?

Did you have children?

If yes, when were they born? Names?

If no, did you have trouble conceiving? IVF? Adoption?

If no, did you both want them?

In your opinion, what “broke” the marriage?

Last straw?

Who decided? Who filed?

Climate during divorce process? Ugly or civil?

How long did the process take?

Any big snags or smooth sailing?

If you're still in the process, what is your biggest fear thus far?

How are you dealing with all of it?

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**T**ake the rest of the day to let anything else that may be brewing come up. If you feel like you should write it down, do so. This course is yours; there is nothing I'm going to ask you to turn in. You will be surprised how much initial healing can come from writing stuff down and literally getting thoughts out of your head.

Going into your immediate past is probably opening up some boxes you'd rather not touch right now. I get it. **Me Before** wasn't easy, but **Me Married** is even fresher. I'll go out on a limb and say it's not going to be easy for anyone in your situation! But it's a step in the right direction, and that's worth it in the long run!

**BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO  
HEAL YOURSELF,  
EVEN WHEN IT HURTS.**

**-BIANCA SPARACINO**

## LESSON 3 TODAY

Heeeeello again. Did you get some rest? Memory hangover? Hopefully not, but it's normal if you did. We've got ONE MORE assessment to go for the rest of the entire course. I know you can do one more. This one shouldn't be too hard to answer because it relates to how you are right now. Still, give yourself time to be gut-level honest with yourself. And remember, it's ok if you are not ok right now. Pretending will not serve you, just stall your progress. Let's do this.

**DO NOT GIVE UP; THE  
BEGINNING  
IS ALWAYS THE  
HARDEST.**

**-KEMMY NOLA**

# me now

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This time, either look at your face in the most recent photo you have OR at yourself in a mirror. What do you see?

Date of divorce?

Did you have to go to court or did your spouse? Both?  
If you went, how did you feel there? Who went with you?

How did you feel when you left the courthouse?

What were your preconceived ideas about divorce?

Actual feelings about divorce, now that it's real?

Best friends (now)?

Biggest supporters?

How far away is your family (location-wise)? Are they supportive?



Where did you/are you moving? How do you feel about it?

Where is your spouse going?

What is your new financial situation?\*We talk more about this in Module 6.

Is it enough or will you need to supplement your income?

Is dating on your radar yet?

What are your thoughts on online dating?

If you have kids, how are they doing? What is the custody situation?

What are you telling people about your divorce?

Is it public knowledge? Why or why not?

Are you posting on social media about it?

Are you leaving the house?

Are you going out at all with friends or are you staying home?

Therapy?

Divorce Care?

Any support groups?

Books you're reading? Show? Are they helping at all?

Eating more or less? Why?

Exercising more or less? Why?

Any coping mechanisms?

Fighting or fighting?

Are you sleeping?

How are you doing (honestly)? Does it track with how you thought you would be doing?

**Y**ou now have 3 versions of yourself; real pictures and word pictures in front of you. A friendly reminder: **YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIKE WHAT YOU SEE.**

Here's the thing: **Any information is good information in this case.** And anyway, you can't go back and change any of it, so it's just as good to have directions you *don't* want to march toward as much as the ones you might.

**Question** Take a few minutes to identify something you liked about yourself in each version. Something or some trait you'd like to take with you into the "new you". Write it down below. Then identify and write something you *refuse* to take into your new life. (Notice which of the two is easier to identify. No judgment, just notice.) We'll come back here later.

Do you have someone in your life you admire, someone whose life might be worth emulating? It's always good to recognize the good in others and to have someone to look up to during tough times.

## LESSON 4

# TOMORROW

We have been going back a LOT in this first module, and I think it's time you think about what's to come. Think about who you'd want to see in the future. You can think about the months ahead or even years out. Whatever you are thinking, write it down. Write the version of "you" you'd be proud of below or in a journal. (Please feel free to come back here and add more throughout the course.)

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**C**lose this course for the rest of the day. Try to be present in the life you have right now. I know I asked you to go back in time and then switch gears and think about the future. I know I opened up boxes and closets that were perfectly fine shut, and there is a good chance you're reeling from all the emotions and memories right now. It's a lot to do/feel when you're already doing/feeling so much. But you might as well do it right now in Module 1. Rip off that Band-Aid, lady. Or the hot wax. Jump into the freezing cold ocean.

Having all of this in front of you is **VITAL** to moving forward. And guess what? You've already done a lot of the work! Plus, Maya Angelou said so. (See the bottom of the **I Will Statement on page 15.**) For now, enjoy the rest of your day! I'll see you tomorrow.

**START WHERE YOU ARE.**

**USE WHAT YOU HAVE.**

**DO WHAT YOU CAN.**

**-ARTHUR ASHE**









