

# THE THREE PHASES OF SINGLE PARENTING

WHERE ARE YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY?



The first step toward where you want to be is knowing exactly where you are right now.

A SOLO PARENT RESOURCE

# INTRODUCTION

*Hi There!*

Solo parenting comes with its own set of challenges, and the path to healing isn't a straight line—it's a journey through different phases of growth.

Understanding where you are right now can help you take meaningful steps toward greater stability, confidence, and hope. That's why we've created the **Three Phases of Single Parenting**—a framework shaped by the experiences of thousands of single parents we've walked alongside. This journey typically unfolds in three phases: **Triage, Recovery, and Wellness**.

- **Triage** - In the Triage stage you feel like the rug has been ripped out from under you. There are days when you don't know if you can even get out of bed, much less take care of your kids. Life feels overwhelming and emotions may be raw. This is a time where support and self-compassion are essential.
- **Recovery** - The Recovery stage brings the feeling of spring - you're coming out of the dark season and new life is happening. Even though you're continuing to work through emotional and practical challenges, you're adjusting to your new normal and you're even finding moments of stability. You feel confidence building every day.
- **Wellness** - The Wellness stage feels like balance and peace are your best friends. You feel emotionally and spiritually stable (on most days - because let's be real, we're all human). You're able to be present for your kids and others around you, and you feel confident in using your story to help others. You understand that life is full of ups and downs, and you've learned how to navigate those in a healthy way.

Use the assessment on the following pages to determine what stage of single parenting you are in. We're looking forward to walking alongside you regardless of where you are at in your journey!

*Your Friends at Solo Parent*

# SOLO PARENT WELLNESS ASSESSMENT

To help you identify which stage of solo parenting you're in, we've created this short assessment, based on what we've learned from thousands of solo parents just like you.

**Instructions:** For each statement, choose the response that best describes your current situation. Answer honestly to get an accurate sense of where you are in your healing journey - so you can confidently take your next step toward greater clarity, strength, and hope.

## 1. EMOTIONAL STATE:

- A.** I feel overwhelmed and anxious most of the time, struggling to keep my emotions in check. (This can also often present as just feeling numb.)
- B.** I have moments of calm but still feel sadness or anxiety regularly. I can manage my emotions sometimes, but it's challenging.
- C.** I generally feel emotionally stable and can handle stress well. I experience joy and contentment regularly.

## 2. DAILY FUNCTIONING:

- A.** Basic tasks like cooking, cleaning, and managing my schedule feel almost impossible some days.
- B.** I can manage my daily tasks but still feel like I'm often on autopilot. I need to make a conscious effort to stay organized.
- C.** I manage my daily responsibilities effectively and find time for personal interests and self-care.

## 3. SUPPORT SYSTEM:

- A.** I feel isolated and don't have anyone to turn to for support.
- B.** I have some friends or family who I can talk to, but I still feel alone at times.
- C.** I have a strong support network and feel comfortable reaching out when I need help.

## 4. COPING MECHANISMS:

- A.** I often turn to unhealthy habits (e.g., excessive drinking, overeating, withdrawing) to cope with my feelings.
- B.** I try to use healthy coping mechanisms, but sometimes I slip into old habits.
- C.** I consistently use healthy coping strategies like exercise, meditation, or talking to friends.

## 5. PERSPECTIVE ON THE FUTURE:

- A. I can't see past my current struggles and feel hopeless about the future.
- B. I have hope for the future but still feel uncertain about what lies ahead.
- C. I feel optimistic about the future and have plans or goals that I'm excited about.

## 6. RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF:

- A. I often feel inadequate, unsure of who I am, and find myself blaming others or myself for everything that's happened without a sense of balance or fairness.
- B. I have moments of self-doubt but am working on accepting and loving myself. I can fairly recognize my part in past and present circumstances.
- C. I have a healthy sense of confidence and self worth. I regularly take ownership of my actions and responsibilities.

## 7. ADAPTABILITY TO CHANGE:

- A. Any change or unexpected event feels like a major setback and is hard to handle.
- B. I can handle some changes, but I still get anxious and stressed when things don't go as planned.
- C. I am adaptable and can adjust to changes with minimal stress.



# SCORING AND INTERPRETATION

### Mostly A Responses

#### You are in the **TRIAGE** stage

You might feel like the bad feelings are never going to end, but you will get through this! In this stage it's critical to have people around you who get it. Join one of our [FREE groups](#) if you don't have friends or family who can help.

### Mostly B Responses

#### You are in the **RECOVERY** stage

Those moments of sadness and loneliness still creep in, but you're building strength and confidence every day! Prioritizing daily self-care is essential to continue on the right path. Need a self-care idea? Go for a walk and listen to our [podcast](#)!

### Mostly C Responses

#### You are in the **WELLNESS** stage

Congratulations! You've found a balanced, healthy approach to life and feel content (most days). Continue to your healing journey by giving back! Start a [Solo Parent group](#) in your area or find ways to help other single parents feel the hope you're experiencing.

Regardless of what stage you're in, please know you're not alone. So many single parents are exactly where you are. You don't have to do this alone! Whether you attend one of our groups, tune into our podcast, or engage in any of our resources, we are here to walk alongside you. We know what it's like. We've been there, and we get you.