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Having grieved, ex-wife's a guide

Rowlett: She hopes to help others through TV show appearance

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Surviving divorce was worse than going through breast cancer three times for Lynn Jones, a Rowlett mother of two.

"You're one when you're married, and all of the sudden, you have a split straight down the middle and all your insides are just out there," she said. "It was the absolute worst part of my life."

Still, she says, she agreed to bare her grief and anger on the ABC show *Ex-Wives Club* to give hope of recovery to others. The episode featuring Ms. Jones will air at 8 p.m. Monday.

"I exposed myself so that anyone who is going through this knows that they can get through it too," she said. "The show is basically to help you bounce back on your feet."

Ms. Jones, 40, said she was apprehensive about appearing on the show when her attorney, Michelle May O'Neil, nominated her. Ms. Jones said she wasn't interested in bashing her ex-husband or being belittled for entertainment. And, she said, she didn't want to look as though her divorce had changed the value she places on marriage.

"I didn't believe in divorce for anything," Ms. Jones said.

"I was in for the long haul. But I think that infidelity is huge, and I couldn't live with anybody that I couldn't trust anymore."

Ms. Jones divorced her husband in 2005. During the process, someone from the show contacted her attorney in search of potential participants.

"I've had several clients go through a similar situation – enduring breast cancer while going through a divorce – but Lynn is so bubbly and has such a great outlook on life," Ms. May O'Neil said.

"It's not everybody that wants to put their life on national TV, but I felt like even my own clients could benefit from seeing how she came out on the other end of divorce with such a great attitude."

Ms. Jones admits that she wasn't the perfect role model at first.

"People tell me that it's the same kind of emotions that you go through when someone dies," she said. "But for 10 straight months, I went through just anger."

She blames that anger on her latest recurrence of breast cancer, which first appeared eight years ago, returned four years later and reappeared last summer.

"The first thing I thought was, 'Why me? I've been through enough,' " Ms. Jones said. "I've since learned that you help things along because of the way that you think, and I was in the negative.

"I'm a Christian, and it says in the Bible that there's no room for love if you're hoarding anger," she said. "I said, 'I can't do that anymore. I've got two kids to raise that I love.' "

Ms. Jones said she learned some things to help her work through her anger while shooting the TV show in California in early 2006. The rest, she said, she figured out through experience and reflection.

"I knew that going on the show would help me. It helped me gather perspective and see that there's a light at the end of the tunnel ... and it's not a freight train! It's the good light."

The pain she felt because of her divorce makes healing that much more satisfying, Ms. Jones said.

"In spite of all the circumstances you have been through, you start from here and move on," she said. "You make your own journey."