

After Their Happily Ever After: A Savvy Story of Divorce

Written by Nadine Toren

[Television](#) personality and AZfoothills.com columnist Nadine Toren is scouring the area, finding savvy Valley features, bringing readers “on the scene.” Every day she'll introduce you to [celebrities](#), [athletes](#), and give you an inside look into local events and hot spots. She'll touch on topical issues, and keep AZ fans posted on all the big talkers around town.



Imagine being buddies with your ex-husband and befriending the ex-wife you once hated. That's what's going on with one Scottsdale couple happily unmarried. Here's their inspiring story.

Louis and Shelley met in paradise.

29-year old Lou was working as a tennis pro for Club Med on a Caribbean island; 26-year old Shelley was visiting on vacation, and in addition to soaking up the sun, she fell in love.

The two didn't even date—instead, Shelley ditched life as she knew it, moved to the Caribbean, and instantly became Lou's lovely girlfriend, and the two savored romantic bliss, living an exotic, exciting life.

That was more than 20 years ago. Little did the lovebirds know, they'd eventually get married, move to Arizona, and have kids; however, their happily ever after would end in divorce, resulting in a bitter two years downright hating one another.

“I'd purposely send the kids home with messy clothes and show up at birthday parties with hot stiletto-wearing 20-somethings. It was messy and awful,” said Louis Silberman, divorcee.

It's a tale many of us know all too well: a dire, depressing, and distressing divorce. But Lou and Shelley have a happy ending to their bad story. After many years of despising one another, they sought peace and decided to co-write a book fittingly called “After the Happily Ever After.”

“The book includes all the crap that makes a marriage crumble, in addition to the drama that goes along with divorce,” said Shelley Cooks, Lou's ex.

Like many people, Lou and Shelly's love story kicked off euphoric—they were young, frivolous, care-free people in love with love, enjoying a life far from reality. They spent a handful of their first years living in hot spots like Mexico, where they ran the sports and entertainment programs for top-notch resorts.

“We had few worries. Life was surreal—we weren't concerned with money or kids...it was all about fun,” said Shelley.

Following their Mexican stint, the two moved to LA, then decided to call the desert southwest home. They relocated to Scottsdale, and after 7 years together, Lou popped the question and Shelley said “yes.” In 1993, they tied the knot.

Two kids later, things changed. Lou says the excitement fizzled; Shelley says they simply grew apart. Unfortunately, their lives just didn't jive anymore, and so began the long road of divorce.

“There was no hope for the long term. We were in love with passion, not one another,” said Shelley.



After the papers were filed, things got bad—real bad. Lou and Shelley didn't get along, and would go out of their way to annoy and aggravate one another. This undoubtedly took a toll on their children.

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“They never asked for divorced parents and we feared the dysfunction would rub off on them,” said Shelly.

That’s why they decided to make a mends, realizing it was just too exhausting being mean. Also Shelley was faced with breast cancer, and that put things in perspective.

“When she got sick, I realized the trivial things were just so petty,” said Lou.

Luckily Lou’s ex survived the horrible disease, and so opened a new door in their relationship. They hashed things out and decided to put their kids first; in turn, becoming friends again. Lou even hired Shelley to help run his Med Spa business and they continue working together to this day.

“At first, it was weird calling him boss, but now it’s the best it can be,” said Shelley.

Shelley has since remarried; Lou remains a single dad—but the two created a unique bond over their book. It’s available for anyone looking for hope during the tough turmoil of divorce. Too many times do children take on the burden, and that’s something Lou and Shelley hope to break. While their book is witty and entertaining, it also offers 101 tips on how to handle the kids so they don’t end up turned off by the beauty of marriage.

“Writing the book was very therapeutic because we did it together. I am happy to say our boys are very well-adjusted, and they have what they deserve—a mother and a father,” said Shelley.

And the couple once in love are now living independent happily ever afters, a unique fairy tale ending to their love story.

To purchase the must-read, visit www.afterthehappilyeverafter.com.



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