

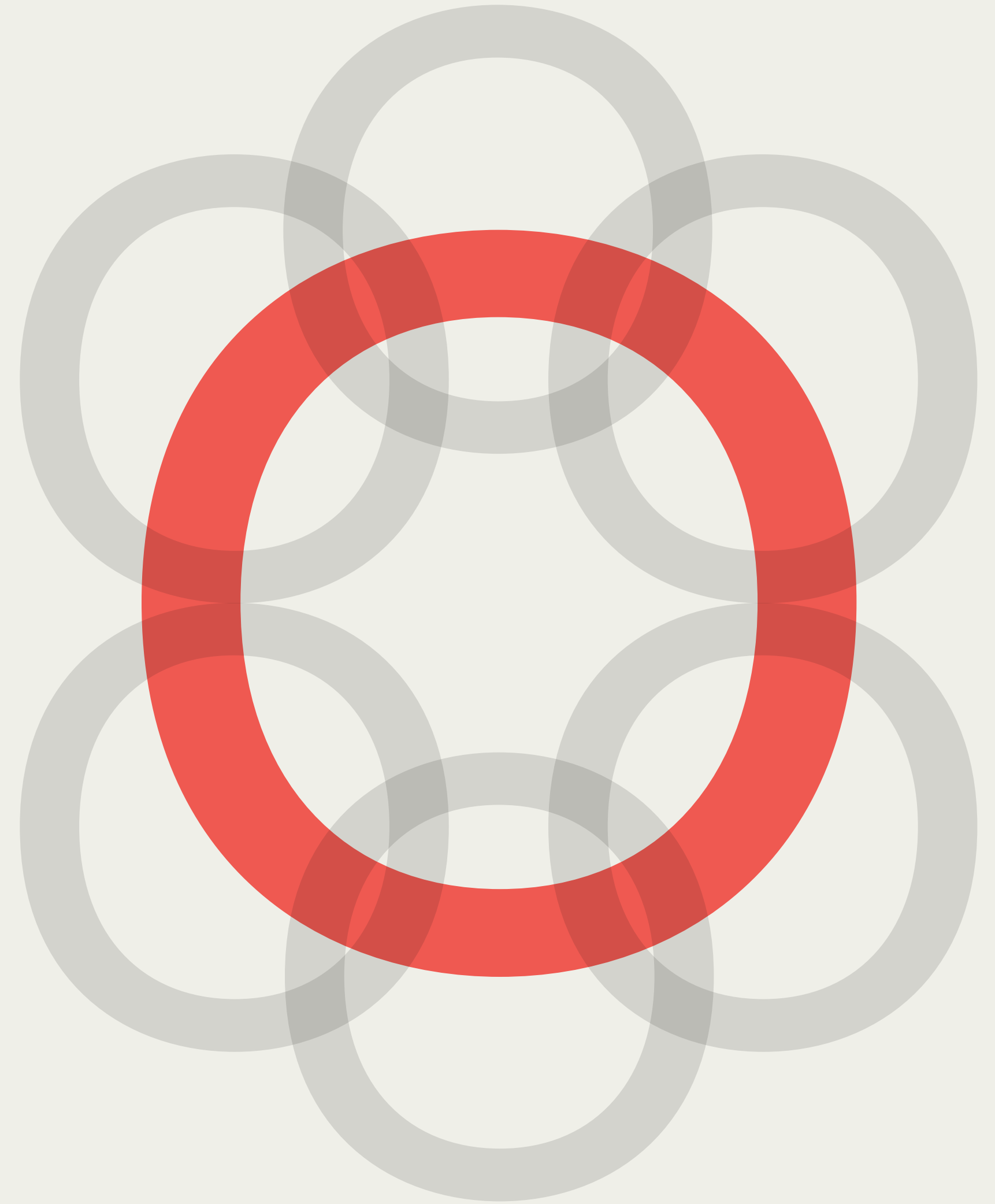


Onward™ Guides:

Sharing Your Decision to Divorce with Your Friends

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Breaking news of your divorce to friends can be a difficult task, as it involves sharing personal and emotional information. Sharing the news is a significant step that can help you gain support and understanding during a difficult time.



Here are some steps to help you navigate this conversation with thoughtfulness:

1

Choose the Right Time and Place

Find a Comfortable Setting: Select a location where you feel comfortable and can talk openly, whether it's in person at a café, in your home, or through a video call if you're far apart.

Pick a Good Time: Consider timing carefully, choosing a moment when both you and your friends are not rushed or distracted.

2

Prepare for the Conversation

Plan What to Say: Think through your key points and how you want to present the news. You don't need to share every detail but have a clear understanding of how you want to frame the situation.

Anticipate Reactions: Be prepared for varied responses. Friends may have a variety of opinions about your spouse and/or your marriage and some have may have expressed concerns about your spouse previously, and some may be very close with your spouse. Responses could include shock, sympathy, concern, or questions. Understanding that their reactions may be emotional can help you remain calm.

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Be Honest and Direct

State the Facts Simply: Share the news clearly and concisely.

Keep It Personal Yet Respectful:

While it's important to be honest, avoid going into excessive detail about the reasons, especially if they involve conflict or bitterness. Instead, frame the conversation as something that's primarily about your well-being.

4

Acknowledge Emotions

Give Them Space to React: After sharing the news, allow your friends to process the information and express their feelings. Be ready to listen and validate their reactions.

Be Prepared for Support: Your friends may offer support and comfort. Encourage them to share their feelings as it can help both you and them process the changes.

5

Reassure Them

Share Your Current Feelings: Let them know how you're feeling about the situation—whether it be sadness, relief, or uncertainty. This can foster a sense of understanding and connection.

Discuss Your Support System: Mention that you are seeking support from other friends or professionals, which can help reassure them of your well-being.

6

Discuss Practical Matters

Talk About Changes in Dynamics: If you have mutual friends or friends who might be involved socially with both you and your ex, it may be worth addressing how you hope to navigate those relationships going forward.

Invite Continued Connection: Let your friends know that you still value your relationships with them and hope to maintain those connections as you navigate this transition.

7

Invite Their Support

Encourage Open Dialogue: Let them know you appreciate their support and invite them to ask any questions they might have. Be willing to share what you feel comfortable discussing.

Be Open to Help: Whether it's going out for coffee or just checking in with a text, express that you'd welcome their support during this time.

8

Follow Up With Them

Keep Friends Updated: As you move through the divorce process, consider keeping your friends informed about significant developments in a way that feels comfortable to you.

Continue Nurturing Friendships: Investing time in your friendships during and post-divorce can foster support and connection, further aiding your emotional well-being.

Opening the Conversation

Setting the stage for this important conversation is crucial. These openers help signal to your friend that you need their full attention and create a safe space for sharing difficult news. Choose a private, comfortable setting where you both have time to talk without interruptions.

"Hey, do you have a minute?
There's something I really
need to talk to you about."

"Can we sit down? I have
something important I need
to tell you."

"I have some news I wanted to
share with you personally."

"I've been wanting to talk to
you about something that's
been going on."

"This isn't easy for me to say,
but I wanted you to hear it
from me first."

"I need to share something
with someone I trust, and
that's you."

Making the Announcement

Be clear and direct when sharing the news. While it's natural to feel nervous, straightforward communication helps your friend understand the situation and respond appropriately. You can choose to be more direct or ease into the announcement, depending on what feels comfortable for you.

"I wanted to let you know that [spouse's name] and I are getting divorced."

"I'm going through a divorce right now."

"After a lot of thought and trying to work things out, we've decided divorce is the best path forward."

"I've made the decision to end my marriage."

"You know how [spouse's name] and I have been having some challenges? Well, we've decided to separate."

Explaining Your Feelings

Sharing your emotional state helps your friend understand what you're experiencing and how they can best support you. It's okay to acknowledge that you have mixed or complicated feelings—divorce is rarely simple. Being honest about your emotional journey can also help normalize the range of emotions you're experiencing.

"I'm feeling a mix of things, honestly. It's been a long time coming."

"It's scary, but I also feel relieved that we've finally made this decision."

"I know it's the right choice, but it's still really hard."

"After lots of reflection, we decided it's best for both of us to go our separate ways."

"I want to be happy again, and I think this is how I get there."

"Some days are harder than others, but I feel like I'm moving in the right direction."

Addressing Concerns

Your friend may have questions about aspects of your divorce, particularly if children are involved or if they're part of your social circle. Addressing these concerns proactively can help ease worries and demonstrate that you're handling the situation thoughtfully. Share what you're comfortable with, and remember it's okay to keep some details private.

"We've reassured the children that we'll both always be their parents, no matter what."

"The practical stuff is complicated, but we're working through it step by step."

"The kids are understandably upset, but we're working together to make this as easy as possible for them."

"We're trying to figure out all the logistics, but we're committed to being civil about it."

"I understand that things might change, especially with family gatherings and everything."

Responding to Their Reactions

Your friend's reaction might range from surprise to sadness to full support. Being prepared to respond to different reactions can help the conversation flow more smoothly. Remember that their initial response may be driven by their own shock or concern for you, and it may take time for them to fully process the news.

"I know it might come as a shock. We've been private about our struggles."

"Thank you for being so understanding. It really means a lot."

"We've been working on things for a while, but it just wasn't getting better."

"I'm grateful to have a friend like you who doesn't judge."

"I hear that you're angry and I understand this is unexpected news."

"It's complicated, but I'm happy to share what I'm comfortable talking about."

Looking Forward

While divorce marks an ending, it also represents a new beginning. Talking about the future—both your hopes and your concerns—can help shift the conversation toward a more positive outlook. It also reassures your friend that you're thinking about moving forward and that your friendship will continue to be important.

"I hope this won't change our friendship."

"I want to make sure we can still do the things we've always enjoyed together."

"Your friendship is really important to me, especially now."

"I might need some distractions, so maybe we can plan some time to hang out."

"I'm trying to focus on the positive changes this could bring."

"I'm looking forward to rediscovering who I am outside of this marriage."

Closing the Conversation

End the conversation on a note that reinforces your appreciation for your friend and sets realistic expectations for your friendship moving forward. A thoughtful closing helps both of you transition out of this intense conversation while maintaining the connection and support you've established.

"I wanted to tell you because you're one of the people I trust most and feel the safest talking to."

"I could really use your friendship and support right now."

"Thank you for being there for me. It really means everything."

"I might need to lean on our friendship a bit more than usual."

"Some days might be harder than others, but I'm working through it."

"Just knowing I have friends like you makes this whole process feel more manageable."

Remember

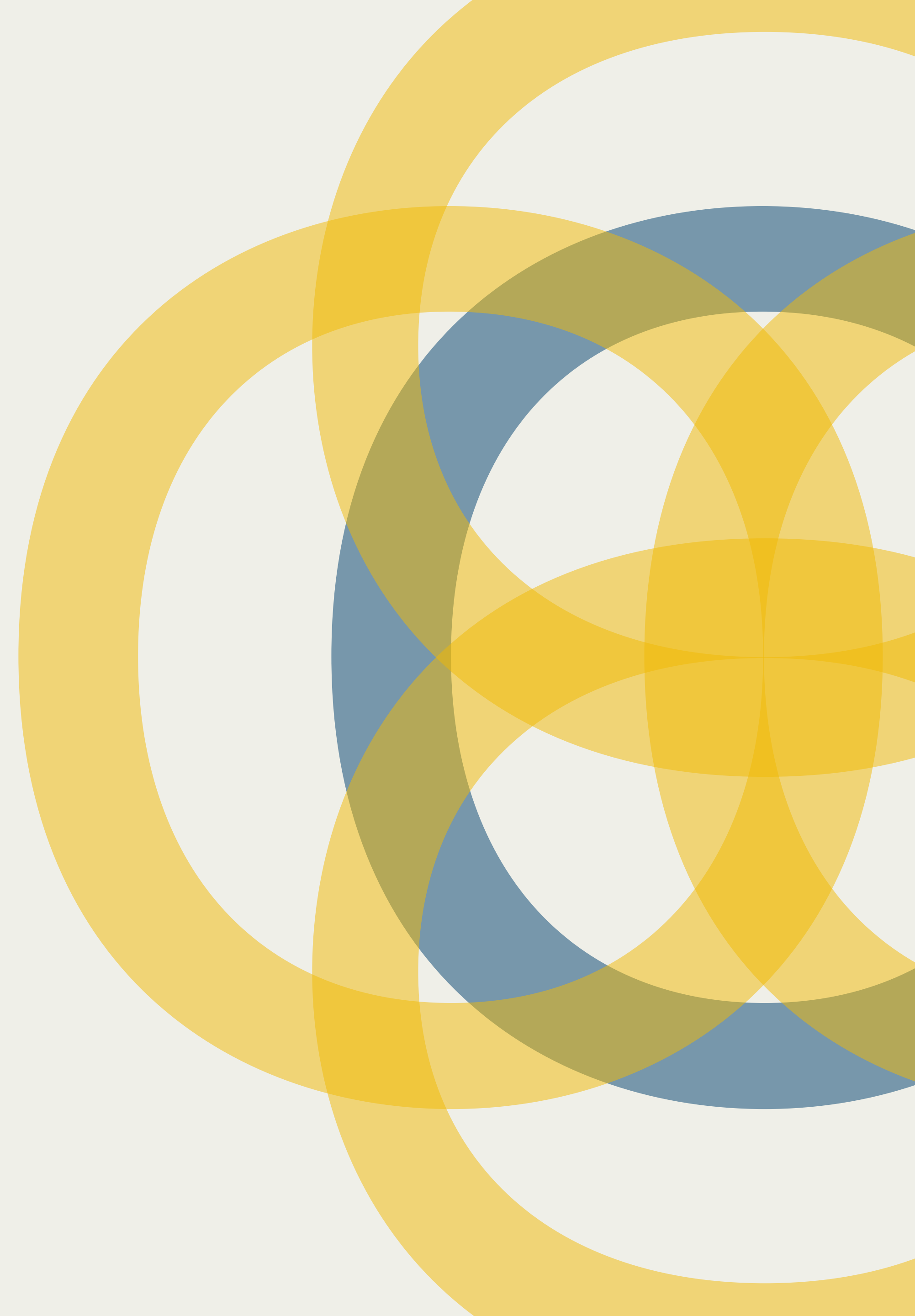
These conversation starters can be mixed and matched depending on your relationship with your friend, your communication style, and how much detail you want to share in the initial conversation.

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Open communication is essential, and preparing yourself to face the challenges with resilience and self-awareness is critical. [Join our Onward community](#), where you will have a safe place to organize your thoughts and everything else to get you through your divorce.

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