
Implementing the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) Method: a coaching-based emotional regulation program for women before, during, and after divorce

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Abstract: this study aims to explore the effectiveness of the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method as a coaching-based emotional regulation program for women before, during, and after divorce. The research focuses on addressing the lack of accessible, non-clinical tools for emotional self-regulation during one of the most psychologically challenging life transitions. The study employs a qualitative community case study design involving fifteen women aged 32–48 experiencing different stages of divorce. The intervention consisted of five structured individual coaching sessions based on the ELHM method and the “Seven Levels of Feelings” model. Data were collected through session notes, participant self-reports, reflective journals, and facilitator observations. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring emotional patterns and transformation processes. The findings demonstrate a consistent emotional transformation across participants, characterized by a shift from fear, guilt, resentment, and confusion toward acceptance, clarity, gratitude, and emotional stability. Participants reported reduced emotional tension, improved decision-making, and increased self-awareness. The ELHM method supported the development of intentional emotional self-regulation and strengthened internal resilience during the divorce process. The study confirms that the ELHM method can serve as an effective coaching-based approach to emotional regulation in women experiencing divorce. The intervention provides a structured, accessible, and non-clinical model that supports emotional stability and conscious decision-making. The results highlight the potential of integrating emotional-awareness-based coaching methods into community programs, educational initiatives, and support systems for individuals undergoing significant life transitions.

Keywords: coaching intervention; emotional resilience; life transition; positive psychology; psychological adaptation; women’s well-being.

1. Introduction

Divorce is widely recognized as one of the most emotionally challenging life transitions, often accompanied by heightened stress, uncertainty, and a diminished sense of personal stability. For many women, this period involves not only legal and social changes but also profound internal emotional disruption, including experiences of fear, guilt, resentment, and loss of identity. Research in psychology indicates that difficulties in emotional regulation during major life transitions are closely associated with decreased well-being, impaired decision-making, and long-term psychological distress.

Existing support systems for individuals experiencing divorce are predominantly based on clinical or therapeutic models, which often focus on trauma processing, pathology, or retrospective analysis of past experiences. While such approaches are valuable, they may not be accessible or appropriate for individuals who are not in a clinical state but require structured tools for real-time emotional self-regulation. In particular, there is a lack of accessible, non-clinical, and practice-oriented methods that

help individuals stabilize their emotional state, maintain clarity, and make conscious decisions during ongoing life transitions.

Contemporary research in positive psychology highlights the importance of emotional awareness, mindfulness, and intentional state management as key factors in psychological resilience and well-being [25, 20, 5]. These perspectives suggest that the ability to consciously work with one's emotional state can significantly influence adaptive functioning, personal growth, and recovery after stressful events. In addition, recent studies emphasize that coaching-based interventions can serve as effective tools for developing emotional intelligence, self-regulation, and goal-oriented behavior in non-clinical populations [21, 3].

Within this context, the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method was developed as a structured coaching-based approach aimed at working with emotional states at a deeper level. The method integrates elements of coaching, positive psychology, and practical techniques of emotional awareness and transformation. A central component of the method is the "Seven Levels of Feelings" model, which describes a progression of emotional states and provides a framework for conscious emotional navigation and transformation. The conceptual foundation of the ELHM method has been previously presented in the author's publications on emotional awareness, internal support, conscious living, and coaching-based personal development [7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 19].

Despite the growing interest in emotional regulation and coaching approaches, there remains a gap in research examining structured, non-clinical interventions specifically designed to support women before, during, and after divorce. In particular, there is limited empirical evidence on how coaching-based emotional regulation methods can be applied in real-life community settings and how they influence emotional resilience and decision-making processes.

Previous publications have considered the ELHM method in the broader context of psychological transformation, emotional self-regulation, technology-induced stress, and educational development; however, its focused application to women experiencing divorce-related life transitions remains insufficiently explored [15, 16, 17, 18].

Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore the implementation of the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method as a coaching-based emotional regulation program for women experiencing different stages of divorce and to examine its potential as an accessible and structured tool for supporting emotional stability and psychological well-being.

2. Object and subject of research

The object of the research is the process of emotional self-regulation in women experiencing divorce-related life transitions. The subject of the research is the implementation of the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method as a coaching-based emotional regulation program for women before, during, and after divorce.

3. Target of research

The target of the research is to explore the effectiveness of the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method as a structured coaching-based program for emotional self-regulation in women experiencing different stages of divorce.

4. Literature analysis

4.1. Emotional regulation and psychological adjustment during divorce

Divorce is consistently identified in psychological research as a major life stressor associated with significant emotional, cognitive, and behavioral changes. Individuals experiencing divorce often report heightened levels of anxiety, emotional instability, and reduced psychological well-being. Difficulties in emotional regulation during this period are closely linked to impaired decision-making, prolonged stress, and challenges in adaptation to new life circumstances [2].

Empirical studies demonstrate that emotional regulation plays a central role in post-divorce adjustment. For example, research indicates that individuals with higher emotional awareness and regulation skills show better psychological resilience, faster recovery, and improved long-term well-being following relationship dissolution [22, 23]. Similarly, studies in cognitive-behavioral frameworks confirm that structured approaches to working with emotional responses can significantly reduce anxiety and improve coping mechanisms in divorced populations [1, 26].

At the same time, traditional support models are predominantly focused on therapeutic or clinical interventions, emphasizing trauma processing, pathology, and retrospective analysis. While effective in clinical contexts, such approaches may not fully address the needs of individuals seeking practical tools for real-time emotional self-regulation during ongoing life transitions. This highlights the need for alternative, non-clinical, and structured approaches that support emotional stability without focusing on pathology.

4.2. Coaching-based approaches to emotional regulation

In recent years, coaching has emerged as a complementary approach to psychological support, particularly in non-clinical populations. Coaching-based interventions focus on present-moment awareness, goal-oriented thinking, and the development of self-regulation skills, making them especially relevant for individuals navigating life transitions.

Research in coaching psychology suggests that structured coaching interventions can enhance emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and decision-making capabilities [21]. Furthermore, studies exploring the neuroscience of coaching indicate that coaching processes can facilitate sustainable emotional change by influencing cognitive and affective patterns [3].

Unlike traditional therapeutic models, coaching approaches emphasize personal agency, resource activation, and forward-oriented development. This makes coaching particularly suitable for individuals who are not in a clinical condition but require structured support in managing emotional states and making decisions under stress. This orientation is also consistent with recent applied discussions of leadership psychology, team building, emotional resilience, and conscious entrepreneurship as areas where self-regulation and emotional awareness influence personal and professional development [8, 24].

4.3. Positive psychology and emotional awareness

Positive psychology provides a theoretical foundation for understanding emotional regulation as a key component of well-being. According to [25], sustainable well-being is achieved through the development of positive emotions, engagement, meaning, and a sense of control. Similarly, Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory [20] suggests that positive emotions expand cognitive flexibility and contribute to the development of psychological resources.

Research by Diener and Biswas-Diener [5] further emphasizes that subjective well-being is influenced not only by external circumstances but also by internal interpretative processes, including emotional perception and regulation. These findings support the idea that working directly with

emotional states can lead to meaningful improvements in psychological functioning and purposeful personal development [4].

Within this framework, emotional awareness and intentional state management are increasingly recognized as essential skills for navigating complex life situations, including divorce. However, despite the growing body of research, there remains a lack of structured, practice-oriented methods that integrate these principles into applied interventions.

4.4. The emotional-level happiness management (ELHM) method

The Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method was developed as a structured approach to working with emotional states at a deeper level. Earlier descriptions of the method emphasized emotional awareness, conscious state management, internal support, and the practical application of the “Seven Levels of Feelings” model in personal development and coaching practice [6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 19]. The method integrates elements of coaching, positive psychology, and practical techniques for emotional awareness and transformation. A key component of the method is the “Seven Levels of Feelings” model, which provides a framework for identifying, understanding, and transforming emotional states.

Unlike approaches focused primarily on cognitive processing or trauma analysis, the ELHM method emphasizes working directly with emotional experience as a primary level influencing behavior, decision-making, and well-being. The method is designed to support individuals in transitioning from reactive emotional patterns to intentional emotional states, thereby strengthening internal stability and resilience.

Despite its practical application in coaching contexts, the ELHM method has not yet been sufficiently explored in academic research, particularly in relation to structured interventions for women experiencing divorce. This creates a gap in the literature and highlights the need for empirical investigation of its effectiveness as a community-based emotional regulation approach.

5. Research methods

5.1. Research design

This study employed a qualitative community case study design within an interpretivist paradigm. This approach was selected to explore the process of emotional transformation and the development of emotional self-regulation skills among women experiencing different stages of divorce. The qualitative design allowed for an in-depth examination of participants’ subjective experiences, emotional states, and internal changes throughout the intervention.

5.2. Participants

The study involved fifteen women aged 32–48 who were experiencing different stages of the divorce process. Five participants were in the pre-divorce stage, characterized by internal conflict and uncertainty. Five participants were undergoing the active phase of divorce, marked by emotional instability and decision-making challenges. The remaining five participants had completed the divorce process and were focused on rebuilding personal identity, emotional stability, and life direction.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria:

- current or recent experience of divorce;
- willingness to engage in a structured coaching process;
- ability to participate in five individual sessions;
- openness to emotional-awareness practices.

All participants reported emotional challenges associated with divorce, including fear, guilt, resentment, loss of confidence, and internal imbalance.

5.3. Procedure

The intervention was conducted in an online format and consisted of five structured individual coaching sessions, each lasting between 60 and 90 minutes. The sessions were based on the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method and the “Seven Levels of Feelings” model.

The intervention was supported by the “Seven Levels of Feelings” model [6, 18, 19], which provided a structured framework for identifying and transforming emotional states. Each session incorporated reflective practices, coaching questions, and emotional-awareness techniques aimed at facilitating conscious emotional regulation and internal state stabilization.

The structure of the intervention included the following stages:

Identification of the current emotional state and clarification of the desired outcome;

Development of emotional awareness and recognition of internal patterns;

Acceptance of emotional states without resistance or judgment;

Transformation of emotional responses and creation of resourceful states;

Integration of changes and development of sustainable emotional self-regulation strategies.

Between sessions, participants completed reflective exercises and maintained journals to document emotional changes and insights.

5.4. Data collection

Data were collected from multiple sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding of participants’ experiences and to enhance the credibility of the findings. The following data collection methods were used:

- session notes documenting emotional reactions and state transitions;
- participant self-reports reflecting perceived emotional changes;
- reflective journals completed between sessions;
- facilitator observations recorded during the coaching process.

This multi-source approach enabled data triangulation and provided a richer understanding of emotional transformation processes.

5.5. Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis involved several stages:

- repeated reading of participant materials and notes;
- identification of recurring emotional patterns and themes;
- grouping of similar experiences and emotional trajectories;
- interpretation of changes in emotional states across different stages of the intervention.

This approach allowed for the identification of consistent patterns of emotional transformation and provided insight into how the ELHM method influenced emotional regulation and resilience.

5.6. Ethical considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary. All participants provided informed consent prior to the intervention. Personal data were anonymized to ensure confidentiality and privacy. The study adhered to ethical principles of psychological research and ensured that participants were not exposed to harm during the process.

6. Research results

The findings are presented according to thematic categories. The results of this community case study demonstrate a consistent process of emotional transformation among women experiencing different stages of divorce. Across all fifteen participants, a central

outcome of the intervention was the development of intentional emotional self-regulation, which enabled participants to move from reactive emotional states toward more stable and conscious emotional experiences.

6.1. Overall emotional trajectory

Analysis of participant data revealed a common emotional trajectory observed across cases:

fear → guilt → resentment → acceptance → gratitude → trust

Participants initially reported high levels of emotional distress, including anxiety, confusion, and internal tension. Over the course of the intervention, a gradual shift toward emotional clarity, stability, and positive emotional states was observed.

6.2. Pre-divorce stage: from internal conflict to emotional awareness

Participants in the pre-divorce stage experienced significant internal conflict, uncertainty, and fear related to potential life changes. A key outcome of this phase was the development of emotional awareness and the ability to identify and articulate emotional states.

Participants reported that recognizing and naming their emotions reduced internal tension and improved clarity in decision-making.

Example:

One participant noted that identifying her emotional state allowed her to move from avoidance to conscious reflection, which reduced anxiety and increased her sense of control over the situation.

6.3. Active divorce stage: from emotional reactivity to self-regulation

Participants undergoing the active phase of divorce experienced intense emotional reactions, including resentment, anger, and emotional exhaustion. During this phase, participants began to develop skills in emotional self-regulation.

The intervention supported participants in:

- processing emotional responses without suppression;
- reducing attachment to past experiences;
- shifting toward acceptance and emotional balance.

Example:

One participant reported that understanding the connection between resentment and attachment to past expectations allowed her to release emotional tension and respond more consciously to ongoing challenges.

6.4. Post-divorce stage: from acceptance to personal reconstruction

Participants who had completed the divorce process demonstrated higher levels of emotional stability and clarity. The focus of this phase shifted from emotional survival to personal growth and future orientation.

Participants reported:

- restoration of personal boundaries;
- increased confidence;
- initiation of new personal and professional goals;
- decision-making based on clarity rather than fear.

Example:

One participant described a transition from emotional closure to renewed motivation, noting an increased sense of internal strength and readiness to build a new life direction.

6.5. Summary of findings

Across all participants, the following key outcomes were identified:

- reduction in emotional tension;
- increased emotional awareness;
- improved decision-making;
- restoration of confidence;
- development of emotional self-regulation skills.

The findings suggest that the ELHM method provides a structured and effective framework for supporting emotional transformation during divorce. The consistent patterns observed across different stages indicate that the intervention can be applied as a practical, non-clinical tool for enhancing emotional resilience and psychological well-being.

7. Prospects for further research development

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings.

First, the sample size was limited to fifteen participants, which restricts the generalizability of the results. Future studies should include larger and more diverse populations to validate the findings.

Second, the study did not include a control or comparison group, making it difficult to assess the relative effectiveness of the ELHM method compared to other interventions.

Third, the data were primarily based on qualitative self-reports, participant reflections, and facilitator observations. While this approach provided rich insights into subjective experiences, it may also introduce potential bias.

Fourth, the dual role of the researcher as both facilitator and observer may have influenced participants' responses and the interpretation of the data.

Finally, the study did not include long-term follow-up, limiting the ability to assess the sustainability of the observed emotional changes over time.

7.1. Practical implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications for professionals working in coaching, education, and emotional development.

First, the ELHM method can be integrated into individual and group coaching programs aimed at supporting individuals during emotionally challenging life transitions. Its structured format allows practitioners to guide clients through a clear process of emotional awareness and transformation.

Second, the method can be applied in educational and community settings, including programs focused on emotional intelligence, resilience development, and personal growth. It may be particularly valuable for women navigating divorce or similar life changes. This practical direction is supported by previous publications on pedagogical technologies for forming awareness and emotional resilience in the educational process [14].

Third, the approach can be adapted for use in organizational and workplace contexts, such as employee support programs, burnout prevention initiatives, and leadership development training.

Finally, the study highlights the importance of developing accessible, non-clinical tools for emotional self-regulation. Expanding such approaches may contribute to broader efforts in promoting psychological well-being and preventive mental health support.

8. Conclusions

This study explored the implementation of the Emotional-Level Happiness Management (ELHM) method as a coaching-based emotional regulation program for women experiencing different stages of divorce. The findings demonstrate that the intervention supported a consistent process of emotional transformation, enabling participants to move from reactive emotional states toward greater stability, clarity, and intentional self-regulation.

The results confirm that emotional awareness and the ability to consciously manage emotional states play a central role in psychological adaptation during major life transitions. The ELHM method provided a structured and accessible framework that facilitated this process, helping participants reduce emotional tension, improve decision-making, and restore internal balance.

The study also highlights the potential of coaching-based approaches as effective non-clinical tools for emotional development. Unlike traditional therapeutic models focused on trauma processing, the ELHM method offers a forward-oriented, practical, and scalable approach that can be applied in real-life contexts.

Overall, the findings suggest that the ELHM method can serve as a valuable resource for supporting emotional resilience and psychological well-being among women navigating divorce and other significant life transitions.

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