



Coping with a breakup



Like any major loss, the end of a relationship is often accompanied by intense feelings and grief. Everyone experiences and moves on from a breakup differently.



Dealing with the end of a relationship?

The following are typical emotional reactions to the loss of a relationship:

- **Denial** – It may be difficult to accept that the relationship is ending or that your partner seems to care so little about the relationship and your feelings.
- **Grief and Despair** – It is normal to feel sad and lonely, and to cry after a break up. Times during the day when you are alone with your thoughts may be especially difficult.
- **Fear** – It may be frightening and difficult to imagine life without the relationship. You may fear that you will never find love or feel happy again.
- **Anger** – It is common to feel angry towards the person who has caused pain by initiating or contributing to the breakup.
- **Self-blame** – It is common to feel responsible for a break up and seek to “bargain” continually with yourself about what went wrong and what could have been done to salvage the relationship.
- **Guilt** – If you initiated the breakup, you may feel guilty about causing pain to your partner.
- **Jealousy** – You may experience jealousy about your partner possibly being with someone else.
- **Confusion** – Life may feel strange or incomplete after a break up. You may question who you are, and the meaning of life without your partner.
- **Relief** – You may feel some sense of relief from the negative feelings associated with the relationship if fighting, insecurity, or boredom was present. It is important to accept that ending a relationship will cause some distress and to not judge yourself. All these feelings are normal. The more you struggle with them, the longer it will take to adjust.



What can I do to help myself to deal with the breakup?

Self-care following a breakup is very important. Here are some strategies to help you cope after a break up:

Seek support

Reach out to people who care, and who will listen to your feelings and provide encouragement. Spending time with others may be difficult at first, but will help you to realise that there are other people in your life who care about you.

Self reflect

Make a note of what you have learned about yourself, and what you value in relationships for your own self development and confidence.

Make a daily schedule

Structure your time each day, to help you redirect your mental energy towards accomplishing meaningful projects and tasks. This can boost your feelings of control and competence, and help to fill the time that you used to spend with your partner.

Find new interests

Often in a relationship, you'll share your activities and friendships with your partner. While you shouldn't necessarily give these all up, it's a good idea to also develop new interests and relationships that are independent of your ex-partner.

Discard the timeline

Coping with a breakup is an ongoing process, and you'll probably have good days and bad days (or even weeks or months). Remind yourself that there's no deadline for 'moving on' and that you don't need to compete with your ex-partner there are no real 'winners' in a breakup.

Look after yourself

Plan to do activities you enjoy. Get the basis of exercise and nutrition right. It is important to use helpful and healthy strategies to manage.

Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

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Crisis contacts

Ambulance/Fire/Police: 000
Lifeline (24 hours): 13 11 14
Mental Health Access Line: 1800 011 511