

**Guide following Relationship Breakup**

Good and happy relationships can greatly benefit our mental health and emotional wellbeing. But problems or changes in our relationships can impact on this. .

A breakup or divorce can be one of the most upsetting, stressful and emotional experiences in life. Whatever the reason for the split and whether you wanted it or not the breakup of a relationship can turn your whole world upside down and trigger all sorts of painful and unsettling emotions.

A divorce or relationship breakup can be extremely painful because it represents the loss, not just of the partnership, but also of the hopes, dreams and commitments you shared.

After a relationship breakup you may feel a range of emotions, these may include fear, uncertainty about the future, anger at your partner or yourself, sadness, loneliness, isolation and a possible sense of failure. You may be asking yourself if you could have done anything differently, and may worry that the breakup may have been your fault.

It might be difficult to adjust to your new circumstances and this can impact on your mental health. Worrying about the impact of the breakup, separation or divorce on others such as children can also add to the stress of the situation.

You may find it difficult to think about future plans. You may feel worried or anxious about the future. Even if the relationship prior to the breakup was not stable and happy venturing into the unknown is frightening.

However despite the feelings you might have in time things will get better. You will need time to come to terms with what has happened and to learn to accept that a relationship has come to an end which will be difficult.

**Things that can help:**

* Time - to get over the breakup;
* Talk - share your feelings; talk to someone about how you’re feeling;
* Occupation - distract yourself and keep busy with interests, physical activity, and social events.
* Support - surround yourself with good friends
* Help – get advice and help to help you with practical difficulties

It is important to recognize that it’s OK to have feelings. It’s normal to feel sad, angry, exhausted, and frustrated, and that these feelings can be intense. But it is important to accept that reactions like these will get less over time.

Give yourself a break. Give yourself permission to feel and to function at a less than optimal level for a period of time. You may not be able to be quite as productive on the job or care for others in exactly the way you’re accustomed to for a little while. No one is superman or superwoman; take time to heal, to regroup, and to re-energize.

Don’t go through this alone. Don’t be frightened to share how you are feeling with friends and family. They can support and help you get through this difficult time. You may want to think about a support group where you can talk to others in similar situations. Your initial thought may be that ‘this isn’t for you’ however think again as it may help. You may find Isolating yourself can raise your stress levels, reduce your concentration, and get in the way of your work, other relationships, and overall health. Don’t be afraid to get outside help if you need it.

**Self-care tips:**

Make time each day to look after yourself. Help by putting in daily time to do things you find calming, de-stressing and relaxing. Spend time with friends, go for a walk, listen to music, enjoy a hot bath, get a massage, read a book, take an exercise class/gym class.

Keep to a routine. A divorce or relationship breakup can disrupt almost every area of your life, causing uncertainty, and chaos. Getting back to a routine can be helpful to give sense of structure and some normality.

Take time out. Try not to make any major decisions in the first few months after a breakup or separation such as starting a new job or moving to a new area. If you can, wait until you’re feeling less emotional so that you can make decisions with a clear head.

Avoid using things such as alcohol, drugs, or food to cope. When you’re in the middle of a breakup, you may be tempted to do anything to help your feelings of pain and loneliness. Using alcohol, drugs, or food as an escape is unhealthy and can be harmful in the long run and create further difficulties. Alcohol and drugs can have a significant impact on your mood or emotions. It’s important to find healthier ways of coping with painful feelings.

Think about new interests. Are there things that you have always wanted to do?. A breakup can be a beginning as well as an end. Take the opportunity to think about new interests and activities. Pursuing new things gives you a chance to enjoy life in the here-and-now

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You might find yourself not eating well, exercise might be harder to fit in because of the added pressures at home and sleep might be difficult. But all of the work you are doing will help and support you to move forward in a positive way.

**Help and Support**

It is usually a good idea to get some specialist advice from a family law solicitor when a relationship breaks down or when you first think about separating or divorcing. A solicitor will be able to tell you about your rights, and help you work out what your options are. You may want advice about access to children, finances or housing. When you have that information, you can decide the best action for you.

There are a range of help available which provide assistance and support to those experiencing relationship breakup, separation and divorce.

[www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-separation-and-divorce/coping-thoughts-and-feelings](http://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-separation-and-divorce/coping-thoughts-and-feelings)

<https://www.supportline.org.uk>

<https://fnf.org.uk>

Citizens Advice