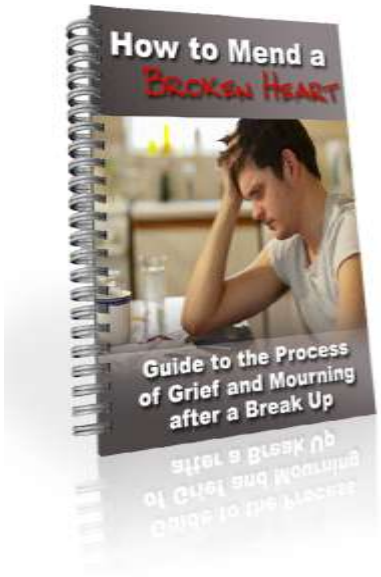

How to Mend a Broken Heart

STRAIGHT TALK FOR MEN & WOMEN

Free Guide from www.aLoveLink.com

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"And how can you mend a broken heart?
How can you stop the rain from falling down?
How can you stop the sun from shining?
What makes the world go round?
How can you mend a this broken man?
How can a loser ever win?
Please help me mend my broken heart and let me live again."
--Bee Gees
How do You Mend a Broken Heart

Just as you didn't fall in love overnight, you won't fall out of love overnight. And, we call the process of falling out of love "mending a broken heart."

There are several stages to mending a broken heart.

First, there is the hurting stage. During this stage, the pain can feel so bad that you may want die rather than experience it. People often try to drown their symptoms by drinking, taking drugs, or cutting themselves.

There are other, less severe symptoms as well. For instance, crying often accompanies the painful period after a break up.

Some people use this time to "stalk" their ex. Whether it is making midnight phone calls, millions of texts, or going over to their home to monitor their behavior, stalking is a way of keeping tabs on an ex.

Others lean on friends during this period. Good friends can give you the emotional support you need to move on.

During this initial period of hurting, it is important to develop strong coping skills. For instance, it is good to rekindle friendships that you didn't have time for when the relationship was going strong.

Talking to other people about how they dealt with a break up is another excellent way to cope. Not only will you get survival strategies, it will confirm your belief that other people have gone through the same thing – and lived to tell the tale.

It is important at this stage of the game to think happy thoughts. Just remembering that there are pleasant things in the world will help you live through this tough stage in your life.

Finally, you should begin to focus on you. Breaking up means taking the "I" out of the "We." So, now is a good time to begin looking at how you can meet your needs – especially the needs that were not met in the relationship itself.

The next stage of the break up is "getting even." During this time, you want to repay your ex with all of the misery he has doled out on you. Getting even is not a healthy phase of getting over a relationship, and you should do everything you can to minimize the time you spend in this place.

During this time, you may try to make your ex's life a living hell. This can involve things like crank calling them dozens of times, sending them a computer virus, and threatening them. All of these are bad ideas. Not only can they get you in trouble within your own social group and potentially in trouble with the law, they also delay your own recovery.

Another way people try to get even after a break up is to enter into a rebound relationship. Some people try to replace their ex right away as a way of getting over the ex. These relationships almost always fail and a person is hurt a second time.

A more productive thing to do with your time is to finalize the end of the relationship. For instance, exchange all of the "things" that you have of the other's. If there are "things" that you don't necessarily need to exchange (ie. his toothbrush), then throw them away. Get rid of any of the things that remind him of you.

And, as you reach the end of the "getting even" phase, you can begin to see the whole event as a learning experience. Maybe you have learned that there is a specific type of person that you want to avoid in the future. Maybe you have learned some things about yourself that will make you a better partner in the future.

Eventually, you will reach the final stage which is not giving a damn. You will start to wonder what you saw in your ex in the first place. Perhaps you will always have a special place in your heart for your ex, but seeing him with another woman won't be the end of the world. At this stage, it is possible to move back into a friendship relationship with your ex.

You will also be ready to move into a new relationship yourself. If you still have strong feelings (even negative ones) towards your ex, it's a rebound relationship. But, if you don't give a damn about him, you can develop strong positive feelings toward a new man.

What is Grief

The reason you feel so terribly after a break up is that you are going through a normal human emotional reaction known as grief. What is grief? Grief is the specific process of letting go of an attachment to a person.

When we think of grief, we usually associate it with the death of a loved one. But, sometimes, the grief is actually stronger with a break up. One woman's first husband died suddenly. Some time later, she remarried and that relationship ended in divorce.

The woman related that the divorce was more emotionally devastating than the death of her husband. That's because there was a normal mechanism for dealing with grief when someone dies, but when you break up with a person you loved, people tend to tell you to "get over it." There's no support for breaking up grief.

Whether the grief is over someone who died or over someone you lost through break up, it goes through four stages.

The first stage of grief is denial. You may be saying to yourself "I can't believe that he left me" or "I can't believe that she likes him better." These are normal reactions.

Next, you will move on to an acceptance of the situation that is infused with anger. You believe that the person has really broken your heart and you are angry with them for doing that.

In time, you will be able to acknowledge your sadness without the strong emotional response of anger. During this time, you need to take care of yourself and your needs.

Finally, you will eventually be in a place where you can accept your loss. While you may still feel sad from time to time, you will move to a new place in your life where new relationships of all sorts begin to fill the void left when your ex dumped you.

You should know that there is not a linear progression of grief lessening. That means that some times you will feel grief more intensely than others and while it will gradually get better over time, there will be spikes of intense emotional pain. This is normal and if you are prepared for it, you will be able to handle it better.

The process of mourning is how we cope with grief. Mourning binds up the torn places where love was and gives you a chance to heal.

Three Pronged Emotions

There are three important parts of you that have to be addressed when you are getting over someone: the conscious mind, the unconscious mind, and the physical dimension.

You will probably be most aware of your conscious mind, after all, this is where you create meaning. This is the center of your thinking and awareness.

You have more control over your conscious mind than over the other two dimensions. When you have a negative thought, you can actively replace it with a positive thought. You can create a new positive reality if you really try.

That is not to say that it is easy to control your conscious mind. Only that it is possible.

The next level is your unconscious mind. This is the area of your brain that stores and runs the programs of automatic behavior. You don't consciously think about breathing most of the time, your brain just runs the "breathe" program in the background while your conscious mind is dreaming of cupcakes (or revenge).

Your unconscious mind works by carrying out tasks without your deliberate intention. It does this through the mechanism of association.

That is why you will be calmly walking along a street and start to cry for no reason. Perhaps you see a discarded wrapper for a Three Musketeer's bar (which was his favorite candy). That makes an unconscious trigger to think about him. You may not have even processed the candy wrapper in your conscious mind, but your unconscious mind has started the grieve mechanism.

Dealing with the unconscious mind means reprogramming the circuits. For most people, this happens naturally over time. But, if you want to speed things along, you should try guided imagery, meditation, and prayer to reprogram your unconscious.

Finally, almost all intimate relationships have some level of physical contact, even if it is not a sexual relationship. You hold hands, kiss, and do other non-verbal affectionate communication.

If you had a sexual relationship, you will notice your ex's absence even more as you are no longer having your sexual needs fulfilled.

How to Survive One Day at a Time

The most important day in surviving a break up is today. Get through today and tomorrow will be easier. Get through tomorrow and all of your tomorrows will be easier. The key is to survive one day at a time.

Although your relationship has ended, your life has not. In fact, you may have more time now to do the things you love.

There are several strategies you can employ to survive today.

One is to meditate. Another is to pray. In either case, you are using your mind to heal your heart.

Some people turn to food to help them get through the day. In moderation, this isn't necessarily a bad idea.

Many people eat ice cream when they are depressed. This may be because of a chemical in the body known as ghrelin which increases your appetite when you are depressed. People are especially prone to eat ice cream when ghrelin is produced in the brain and stomach.

Others turn to chocolate. This may be because the chemicals in chocolate replicate the feeling in the brain of being in love. Chocolate's key ingredient is phenylethylamine (PEA).

A non-calorie indulgence for people who are trying to heal a broken heart is herbal tea. Tea is soothing and warm. Herbal tea helps you to sleep, improves your immune system, and has a calming effect overall.

On the theme of indulgence, you might want to go out of your way to focus on you. Get a massage or a manicure. Treating your body to an indulgence may help you get over the physical nature of the relationship.

You should also look for a distraction. It's a good time to read that thick novel that you have been saving for a rainy day. Getting into the plot of someone else's life (even a fictional character) is good for getting over an ex.

Another distraction is to watch a movie. You don't want to watch a romantic comedy or drama, but most other movies are good for the soul at this time.

Some people recommend watching a comedy which will encourage you to laugh again. Perhaps the sillier the movie, the better this strategy is.

Other people encourage you to watch a movie that will make you cry. Being prompted to cry at someone else's sorrows may help you let out your own emotions for the first time. The tears could be cathartic.

A final distraction is shopping. For some people, the act of buying something new helps them get on with life. Remember that if you buy something on credit, you will be paying for it for a long time, so purchase responsibly.

It is Okay to Mourn

Grief requires mourning. Give yourself permission to get over the relationship. Call in sick to work if you need to.

Write a letter to your ex spilling out all of the hurt you have. It is okay for this letter to run pages and pages long. But don't send it. Instead, when you have poured out your heart on paper, burn it. This will help you bring closure to the relationship.

You may also want to create a "divorce ceremony" to help you bring closure to the relationship. Just as the bride and groom take two separately lit candles and together light a unity candle to signify their new union at a wedding, you can create a divorce ceremony that signifies your new single state. Your ex may wish to join you in this ceremony or you can do it yourself.

Congratulate Yourself on Being Human

Part of being human is experiencing the hurts of everyday life. Life hurts – but there are great parts too. Acknowledging that there is both pain and joy in life will help you appreciate the human experience more.

You may want to develop a helpful mantra to help you get through this stage in your life. A mantra is a mind tool which is used like a barbell

for the mind. You repeat a short phrase frequently to help you develop that mindset. You might say "I am a lovable person" to yourself with a great frequency – especially when you are feeling unlovable.

During this time, you should reach out to a close friend or family member for support. Your ex was a big part of your support system prior to the break up. Because he is no longer there, you need to strengthen the other facets of the support system you have in place.

You also need to remember what is good about you. Make a list of the things you offer a potential partner. If you are loving, giving, and an easy conversationalist, dwell on these things rather than the fact that your ex didn't want you anymore.

Also, remember that it's not always about you. Your ex had other things going on in his life that were independent of whatever you brought to the relationship. When he said "it's not you, it's me," maybe it was.

Finally, honor how you are feeling. Don't dismiss your emotions quickly just because they are uncomfortable. Part of being human is to have these hard emotions. They help you grow.

Surviving the Immediate Future

Once you get past the initial shock of the break up, you will still have a period of mourning. During this time, you have to toughen up. While you may have been able to indulge your self for a short time, now it is time to adjust to the new reality.

Take good care of yourself. While having a pint of Ben and Jerry's felt good right after the break up, developing good eating habits is important now. You should also be exercising regularly. The endorphins that your body produces when you exercise will help improve your mood.

Don't be afraid to cry when the mood strikes you. You are going to have ups and downs. But, don't give in to a chronic state of depression.

Forgive your ex. At some point, you will have to forgive your ex for breaking your heart. You will also have to forgive him for any actions he took during the relationship which hurt you. The longer you hold anger toward him, the longer it will be before you can exit the break up mentality.

You should also ask him for forgiveness for any of the hurt you caused in the relationship. This will allow you to cleanse.

Go out – even when you don't feel like it. This can mean going out with your friends for social things. But it can also mean going out on dates with a new person. While you don't want to enter into a hot and heavy rebound relationship, going out on dates will allow you to see yourself as an attractive catch. It will boost your self esteem at a time when you really need it. Go out on a date with someone you are not likely to fall in love with.

Socialize with your friends and reconnect with people who you have let go of. Many times, a relationship dominates our lives and our other friends get squeezed out without us even knowing it. Go through your address book or email list and find people you haven't talked to in a few months. Set up a time to go out for coffee.

Take up a new hobby or interest. If you always wanted to try toll painting, take a class. If your ex was a couch potato but you like the great outdoors, join a hiking group. Not only will your new activity take up some of the time left vacant from the termination of the relationship, you will also have the chance to meet new people.

Think about getting out of town for a few days. The change in scenery could be good for your soul.

You can also get a new hairstyle or do a wardrobe makeover. You don't have to consider his preferences any more. It may be a good time to reinvent yourself.

Remember that healing takes time. You are going to have good days and bad.

Figure out what you were supposed to have learned from the relationship and then apply that to your life in the future.

Finally, believe that your ex did you a favor in the long term when he called it off. Your true soul mate is still out there waiting for you.

In the long term, you will begin to compartmentalize the experience. Your ex will become just another boyfriend. That will be one part of your life, but you will have many other parts.

Can You Get Him Back

One of the big questions people have when they have been dumped is whether they can get their ex back. There are any number of tricks and techniques to do ensnare your ex, but the question is whether you want to. Even if it hurts, is this a good time to let go and move on?

If you do decide you want your ex, there are three paths to take, only one of which is truly effective.

The one most people choose is to act needy. They write long letters to their ex pouring out their heart (and they actually send them rather than burn them which I suggest earlier.) They make midnight phone calls or send multiple text messages. They send friends as emissaries to "feel out" whether their ex would want them back.

This tends to be a turn off for many ex's. He will feel hunted and go out of his way to shy away from you.

A second route is recommended by many of the "get your ex back" products and it involves playing games. Show up where he hangs out and then talk to everyone but him. Flirt with his buddies. Even date his best friend.

In the long run, these tricks cannot repair a broken relationship – even if they get him back short term.

If you really are determined to get him back, you need to take control of yourself. Become the women he fell in love with all over again. Do a makeover and take better care of yourself. It's okay to start dating again because this will let him know that you are an attractive person to other men.

If you take control of yourself, there is some hope that he will fall in love with you again. You haven't hounded him into coming back and you haven't played any games. You've simply moved on with your life while being open to his returning.

In this way, you can start to move on while leaving the door open which is probably the best way to leave things if you want to get your ex back.

Can You Still Be Friends?

One of the standard lines in a break up is "I just want to be friends." Is it possible to just be friends with someone who you have previously had an intimate relationship?

Although being friends after the split offers temporary relief, it may block the slow but necessary passage from loss to restoration of independence.

You need to give each other space to heal and to move on with life. If you see each other frequently, you may try to hold on to some thoughts of getting back together.

If you do want to be friends in the long run, give yourself some space in the short term. Take a 30 day "vacation" from each other. During this time, you should not have any contact with each other including phone calls, meetings, or emails. Go out of your way to not be present where the other one is.

If you do decide to remain friends after this 30 day period, the feeling must be mutual. If one person decides that they do not want to pursue a friendship, then it is not possible.

If you still want to be friends, there must be some ground rules. Understand the feelings each of you have for each other. You should also understand each of your motivations for wanting to stay in contact.

When you talk, ask neutral questions rather than emotionally laden ones. Avoid hurtful confrontations or questions.

You should also establish boundaries. For instance, how often do you want to see or call each other? What kind of gifts are appropriate for the new friendship?

Conclusion

The best piece of advice I have for you is "this too shall pass." No, it's not easy. But, life isn't easy. Instead, life is filled with sorrows and joys.

Rejoice in the fact that you are human and that you will find your soul mate in the future.

Resources

More great places to find help with getting over your broken heart and getting your ex back if you want to. (Clickable links below)

* The Magic of Making Up - www.aLoveLink.com/ff/1

* Have The Relationship You Want - www.aLoveLink.com/ff/2

* The Power of Conversational Hypnosis - www.aLoveLink.com/ff/3

* Save My Marriage Today - www.aLoveLink.com/ff/4

* How To Win Back Love - www.aLoveLink.com/ff/5

* How To Get Past Your Partner's Affair - www.aLoveLink.com/ff/6

* The Advice Diva's How To Get Your Ex Back - www.aLoveLink.com/ff/7