



the facts:  
navigating life



headspace  
National Youth Mental Health Foundation

# dealing with relationship break ups

## Relationships break up for lots of reasons and they are often out of our control.

Break ups can be tough, even when you know that it might have been what you needed. Some people feel as though their world has turned upside down and that things will never be good again, and others can feel relief and happiness. There's no right or wrong way to feel.

It's OK to feel whatever you're feeling, lots of people do. Be kind to yourself; it can take time to heal after the loss of a relationship.

## Break up challenges

**Everyone experiences break ups differently, but some things people might experience are:**

- low energy
- restlessness
- loss of hope
- loss of appetite
- lower motivation
- sadness
- anger
- changes to sleep.

Some people might lose the friendships they made with or through their partner, and this can be really upsetting.

Whatever you're feeling now won't last forever, but it might take some time to recover.



Recognise there will be good days and not-so-good days and always be kind to yourself.



## Some things to remember

- If you ended the relationship, it doesn't necessarily make the break up decision any easier.
- If someone ended the relationship with you it doesn't mean that there's anything wrong with you. Try not to take it personally because relationship break ups affect lots of people at different times in their lives.
- It's better not to be in a relationship than to be in an unhealthy or unsafe one – remember, you don't have to be in a relationship to feel happy.
- Many people feel upset or angry during this time. Always make sure you're safe in how you express your feelings.
- Try not to feel embarrassed or to worry about how the situation will look to others. Now is the time to focus on you.
- Try to see the positives in a break up. You can learn more about yourself and what you want in future relationships.
- Remember that with time and support you can get through a relationship break up.

# Things that can help after a break up

**It might be tempting to try and get over a break up quickly, but it can take a bit of time, work and support. It's OK not to feel OK.**

**After a break up it's a good idea to prioritise and support yourself:**

## Talk

Talk to trusted friends, family members, Elders or others who can support you.

## Give yourself some space

You don't need to shut your ex out of your life but having a break from them can give you some healing space. Consider taking a break from them on social media too.

## Keep busy

You might find yourself with too much free time on your hands, especially on weekends. Plan ahead and do things that you usually enjoy.

## Take time out for you

Do things that you find relaxing, like watching a movie, listening to music, or getting into nature.



## Try not to use alcohol and other drugs to deal with the pain

While they might help you feel better at first, the after-effects will leave you feeling much worse.

## Give it time

Allow yourself time to cope with the change after a break up.

## Sleep well

Set yourself up a sleep routine. Apps can help with this.

## Stay active

It might feel like the last thing you want to do, but it's at times like this it can be the most helpful.

## Eat well

Food nourishes our bodies and brains and can help with our mood.

## Get into a routine

Having a routine can help with stress by making things predictable. They also make you more likely to do the tasks.



Spending time with supportive people can help get your mind off things and can help you see things from a different point of view.

## Getting support

**Relationship break ups can really hurt, however people usually work through them in time and without any serious problems.**

If you're having a hard time moving on, or if you feel unsafe in any way, it's important to talk things through with someone you trust like a friend, family member, Elder, counsellor, or a health service.



**If you or someone you know is going through a tough time you can get help and support from headspace, your school, TAFE or university wellbeing service or your local health provider. For more information, to find your nearest headspace centre, or for online and telephone support, visit [headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)**

**If you need immediate assistance call 000 or to speak to someone urgently, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467.**

headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation is funded by the Australian Government.

 **headspace**  
National Youth Mental Health Foundation

The headspace Clinical Reference Group have approved this clinical resource. Fact sheets are for general information only. They are not intended to be and should not be relied on as a substitute for specific medical or health advice. While every effort is taken to ensure the information is accurate, headspace makes no representations and gives no warranties that this information is correct, current, complete, reliable or suitable for any purpose. We disclaim all responsibility and liability for any direct or indirect loss, damage, cost or expense whatsoever in the use of or reliance upon this information. 03 October 2022