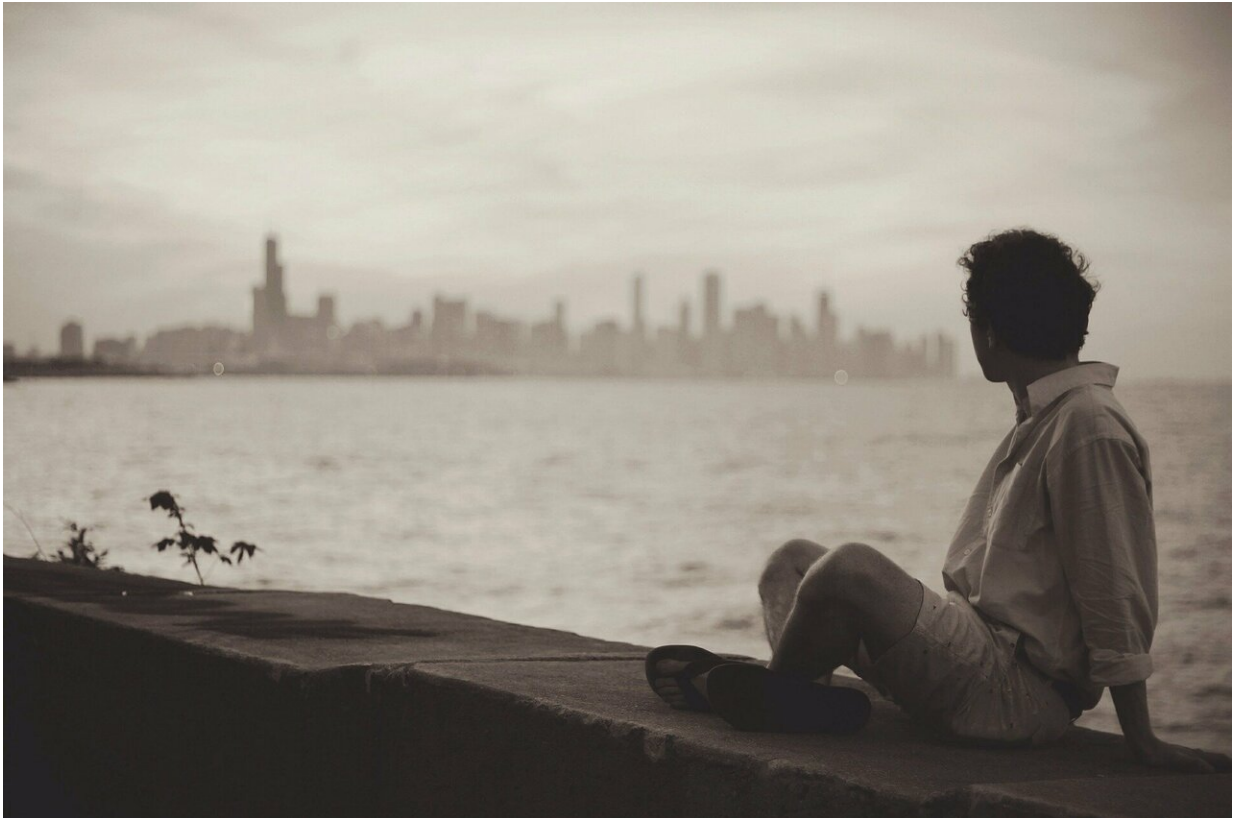


# Newly single? How to beat the breakup blues

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Whether you dated for weeks, months or years—when it ends, you can experience a range of emotions and feel a little uncertain about what's next. Research even shows the pain from a breakup can activate pain receptors in our brain the same way that physical injuries do. When you're feeling down and out, how do you beat the breakup blues?

## Back to basics

After a break-up, the biggest loss tends to be your sense of self. You may become sad, upset, irritable, stressed, overactive or overwhelmed. Whether you lean on Netflix and [ice cream](#) or start hitting the gym a little too hard, it's important to check in about what you actually need.

Start by addressing the basics. Do you need to eat a proper meal, take a walk or get good night's sleep? Have you been making it to class and work, or do you need to take a little time off? Listen to your own cues and work towards meeting your immediate needs.

Once you're taken care of, you can look at getting back to being who you really are. Identify hobbies and activities that make you feel like yourself and make time for them again whether it's art, music, sports, reading, podcasts or something new altogether.

## Reach out and renew

Some people may withdraw socially after a break-up, while others may get overwhelmed making plans for every night of the week. It's important to take some time to connect with the people closest to you like friends, family or roommates.

- Make a point to sit down and have dinner with a close friend to talk about how you're really doing – and how they are, too.
- Check in with a parent, sibling or other family member about what you need right now.
- Schedule a roommate meeting to talk about where you're at with everything and how that might impact your roommate duties or how you've been acting. This can help you feel recharged and diffuse potential conflicts.

It's also important to do some reflecting and renewing with yourself. Jot down a list of things in your life you are grateful for and add to it daily, then read it back to yourself when you need a reminder.

## Time for mourning

We've all been there: browsing an ex's Instagram, watching and re-watching their Snapchat stories, reading through old texts. It's natural to wonder how they're doing, think about your [relationship](#) and even imagine a future where it all worked out. For your own mental health, though, you need to set boundaries.

Research suggests that making structured time for this kind of behavior or thinking may actually be helpful to breaking the pattern and eventually moving on. For example, setting a phone timer for ten minutes in the morning and at night to check [social media](#) and just feel bummed – and making yourself stop when the timer goes off – provides a structured time to mourn the breakup and gives you permission to move on to other things.

After a while, experts recommend cutting back the timer to five minutes, then just once a day or once a week. Eventually you'll be able to wean yourself in a way that doesn't force you to move on sooner than you're ready.

Getting through and growing from a break-up is a [personal experience](#), and it looks different for everyone. The key is to treat yourself with kindness and take the time you need to process and move on at your own pace.

Provided by University of Colorado at Boulder

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