



Post-Breakup Negativity

Liya Panayotova, Filip Teovanovic 4.1K reads

We have all heard pop songs with lyrics, such as, “I can’t live, if living is without you”. But what happens when you exist in those words?

Building a relationship with someone you are interested in, or even love, requires work, dedication, and compromise. You become used to life with that person, and you know each other’s quirks and secret desires.

Perhaps you have even pictured spending the rest of your life with that person. So, when the relationship doesn’t work out, and you break up, the experience may be painful.

EXPLORABLE
Quiz Time!

Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2

Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2

Quiz: Flags in Europe

[See all quizzes ⇒](#)

The Ideal Breakup

In a healthy relationship, both partners have their autonomy and the right to engage in individual tasks and hobbies. They both have friends, as well as separate activities, and remain in touch with the social reality. They provide each other with support, pleasure, and companionship, but can maintain healthy boundaries.

In an ideal scenario, a couple like that would have discussed their breakup calmly and rationally, with understanding for the other person’s point of view and emotions.

The couple would then separate in a civilized manner, with respect for each other, and though

the two people may be sad for a while, they would move on with their lives.

However, as you probably know, breakups are seldom this perfect.

Dysfunctional Beliefs of a Breakup

When the ideal breakup doesn't happen, and your relationship ends in sorrow and negativity, you may start to feel helpless and miserable. Although that is certainly a very unpleasant experience, it can be remedied, so that you can move on to a happier relationship.

To help you do that, below you will find the most common dysfunctional beliefs, that emerge after a breakup.

I must never be rejected.

Naturally, nobody enjoys being rejected, because it is natural for all of us to want to think highly of ourselves and nurture a high self-esteem. However, rejection is a normal, although undoubtedly unpleasant, part of life.

If you start to think that you are not good enough, that there is something wrong with you, or that everyone else will reject you as well, perhaps it is time to take a deeper look into your psychological mechanisms. A good way to do that would be through boosting your self-esteem [1], as well as learning how to cope with breakups [2].

I am not attractive or adequate.

This thinking pattern would go something like this, "If I am attractive and competent, I would be able to conquer anybody's heart. Since my partner no longer wants to be with me, that must mean I am unattractive and inadequate." When put so literally, you can probably see how this thinking pattern is dysfunctional.

Remember, just because you have parted ways with someone, doesn't take anything away from your personal qualities.

I need a partner to be happy.

It is indeed true and well-proven that humans are social beings – we need to be in touch with others and feel as if we are a part of a unit, as well as experience social support and love.

However, that doesn't necessarily mean that you need a romantic partner, to be happy. In fact, the only certain way to be happy in a relationship is to be happy with yourself, on your own first.

Otherwise, it is highly likely that you will transfer some of your negativity and insecurities into your relationship. That is why it is crucial to take care of your mental health, before engaging in romantic relationships.

I couldn't sustain my relationship, so I must be a failure.

One of the basic postulates of couples' psychotherapy, is that the relationship, or its end, is

always driven by two people – it is never the fault of one of the partners.

If you have been doing something negative, during your relationship, you should certainly look into the functionality of that behavior and try to transform it into a healthier one.

However, remember that your partner has also engaged in behavioral patterns that supported whatever you were doing.

I won't be able to handle life on my own.

This is a common fear for people who have been in long-term relationships and have lived in the same household as their partner. In that case, there were probably chores and responsibilities that your partner had taken on, and you may now fear that you won't be able to handle them on your own.

However, consider if this is just your fear talking, or if you have any objective evidence. After all, you were able to organize your life on your own, before your ex came around. Besides, there are probably other people in your life who can help you, by providing advice and support.

Thinking Patterns

The irrational beliefs listed above are examples of cognitive distortions that are the basis of our thinking patterns and therefore of our negativity. As you were reading about them, you might have thought that they were exaggerated or that they do not apply to you.

However, it is important to remember that if you are experiencing a strong sense of negativity, it is likely caused by these or similar irrational beliefs. Since they are a part of our subconscious processes, it may be challenging to uncover them, but with work and determination, you can certainly do it.

To understand your way of thinking better, and change it to a more positive one ^[3], may often turn out to be the key to happiness and successful relationships.

Source URL: <https://explorable.com/e/post-breakup-negativity>

Links

[1] <https://explorable.com/e/boost-your-self-esteem>

[2] <https://explorable.com/e/handling-separation-and-divorce>

[3] <https://explorable.com/e/changing-our-thoughts>