

## Tips For Surviving A Broken Heart

from the American Counseling Association

Despite all the happy images Valentine's Day may bring about love, the reality is that not all romantic relationships last forever. Losing someone you possibly considered the love of your life can be a painful experience, leaving you feeling shattered, abandoned and very much alone. But there are some steps that can help get you through the pain of a lost love.

**1. Recognize this as a loss**, similar to the death of someone close to you. That means you will mourn. Don't feel guilty for being sad or angry.

**2. Acknowledge that with time you will get better.** When you have the flu, you know it won't last forever. Think of this pain as a flu of the heart. It's going to go away, too.

**3. Take care of yourself physically.** Get lots of rest but don't languish in bed. Exercise. Eat well and sensibly. This is not the time to junk out nor the time for stringent dieting.

**4. Put structure in your life.** Stick to your regular schedule as much as possible during the week. Make plans for evenings, weekends and holidays.

**5. Realize you really aren't alone.** Seek the support of others. There's nothing to be ashamed about. It's okay to accept comforting, but don't wallow in repeated story telling.

**6. Invest your energies in life.** Surround yourself with things that are alive: plants, pets, and kids. Nurturing others is a fantastic way to nurture yourself.

**7. Be aware of the rebound.** This is not the time to rekindle old, failed relationships, nor the time to start a new one. You need time alone to get to know yourself again.

**8. Start something new, interesting and involving.** Develop a new interest or rediscover an old one. Take a class at the community college... pick up that craft project gathering dust... consider some travel.

**9. Forgive your ex-lover. Forgive yourself.** Celebrate the good in the relationship ended, but don't hold on to mementos from it. Accept that when something's over, it's over.

**10. Reaffirm yourself.** Be gentle with yourself. Your life is well worth living. Learn from this experience and evaluate your own growth. Take stock and make realistic adjustments where needed.

These simple steps can help minimize that pain and put your life back on a positive, solid footing. And perhaps, come next Valentine's Day, you'll again be a participating member of the relationship celebration.

*Counseling Corner" is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to [ACAcornor@counseling.org](mailto:ACAcornor@counseling.org) or visit the ACA website at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)*

###

words: 399