

Rebuilding after separation and divorce

TIP SHEET

Relationships Australia WA has developed a range of tips to help support you during difficult times. As a free resource, we encourage you to share this with your community.

Are you struggling with the breakdown of a relationship? Whether it has been weeks or years, coping with the pain of a separation or divorce is difficult.

Feelings of grief and sadness are normal and over time they can greatly impact your overall sense of self and well-being.

Here are some of our top tips for helping you to rebuild:

1. Understand that rebuilding is a journey

It's important to recognise that coping with a relationship breakdown is a process that takes time. In the early stages, it's common to be in denial about what has happened as a way to protect yourself from overwhelming emotions. However, getting stuck in this phase can hinder your ability to heal and adapt to the change. If you find yourself stuck, it's important to acknowledge it and seek further support.

2. Identify the source of your grief

A relationship breakup is a significant loss. You might be grieving not only the end of the relationship but also the positive parts of your former life and the hopes and dreams connected to it. Sometimes it's hard to pinpoint why you feel bad, but trying to identify which painful feelings are prominent? and understanding what aspect of the breakup hurts the most can provide clarity.

3. Address feelings of loneliness

When a relationship ends, feelings of loneliness can be overwhelming, and it may feel like they will never end. Turning to alcohol or numbing methods is counter-productive. Instead, consider filling the void with exercise or other healthy activities and making new friends. Writing a journal can also help you express your thoughts and feelings.

4. Recognise your self-worth may be impacted

A relationship breakdown often involves a loss of self-worth because we invest a lot of ourselves in our romantic relationships. Recognise that this impact on your self-worth is only temporary. Instead of pretending everything is fine, be kind to yourself, especially if you're on your own. Now is a good time to start or continue with counselling, therapy or group work to rebuild your self-worth and your life.

5. Avoid returning to your former partner

Going back to your ex-partner will only prolong the recovery process. It might seem tempting as the relationship was once a source of comfort, but it won't aid your rebuilding journey. When you feel the urge to reconnect, find ways to distract yourself and consider the consequences of clinging onto the past. If you need to talk about it, consider seeking counselling or talk to a friend.

6. Learn from your past

When you feel emotionally strong enough, reflect on your past relationship to gain insights and learn from the experience.

This self-reflection can help you avoid repeating choices or patterns of behaviour that were unhelpful.

7. Avoid rushing into a new relationship

Resist the urge to seek a new partner immediately, thinking it will reduce your pain or restore a sense of normality. Focus on rebuilding your life, processing your emotions and learning from your past experiences. Only look for new relationships when you genuinely want one, rather than feeling like you need one.

8. Rediscover your passions and purpose

Explore hobbies or study you've always wanted to try. Perhaps there were things your former partner discouraged you from pursuing, but now you have the time and the freedom to do what you want.

If you are at the point where you are ready to start learning strategies to help you move forward and rebuild your life, our [Rebuilding After Separation and Divorce course](#) could be great for you.

Discover our upcoming Education Courses and Workshops [here](#).