

Should We Break Up?



If you're in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, figuring out the next step can be very difficult. You have feelings for this person and have developed a history with them. However, it's the future, not the past, that you should consider. Will you be happy with them? Will you be able to achieve your goals? Will you feel safe? Whatever decision you make, we can help you plan for your safety.

Staying Together

You may not be ready or it may not be possible to leave your abusive relationship, but you can still increase your safety. Try following these tips:

- If you go to a party or event with your partner, plan a way home with someone you trust.
- Avoid being alone with your partner. Make sure that other people are around when you're together.
- If you're alone with your partner, make sure that someone knows where you are and when you'll return.

How to Prepare for a Break Up

You may feel pressure from your friends and family to just break up and move on, but we know it's never that simple. Here are some things to keep in mind when thinking about breaking up:

- The person you're dating has probably become a huge part of your life. You might see more of them now than you do your friends or family. So being scared about feeling lonely after the break up is normal. Talking to friends or finding new activities may make filling your new free time easier.
- You'll probably miss your partner after you break up, maybe a lot. Even if they've been abusive and controlling, it's normal to miss them. Try writing down the reasons you want to end your relationship and keep them as a reminder for later on.
- If your partner is controlling and jealous, they may make a lot of decisions for you. It can take time to adjust to making your own decisions again. If you start to feel helpless or overwhelmed, tap into your support system.
- You may be scared to end your relationship. If you are, take that fear seriously. Visit loveisrespect.org to download our safety plan tools, designed to guide you through situations you may encounter.

connect now!

chat at loveisrespect.org

 text "loveis" to 22522

 call 1-866-331-9474

Discuss your options anonymously.
Peer advocates are available 24/7.

For more information, visit www.loveisrespect.org

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Please contact Break the Cycle or the National Dating Abuse Helpline for more information.

Breaking Up

Ending an unhealthy or abusive relationship is not like ending a healthy one. Your abusive partner may not accept the break up or respect your boundaries. They may try to control you through guilt trips, threats or insults. It may be very difficult to have a peaceful or mutual breakup with an abusive partner. Just know that as long as YOU are ok with the decision, it's ok if your partner is not. If you're thinking of ending your relationship, consider these tips:

- If you don't feel safe, don't break up in person. It may seem cruel to break up over the phone or by email but it may be the safest way.
- If you break up in person, do it in a public place. Have friends or your parents wait nearby. Try to take a cell phone with you.
- Don't try to explain your reasons for ending the relationship more than once. There is nothing you can say that will make your ex happy.
- Let your friends and parents know you are ending your relationship, especially if you think your ex will come to your house or confront you when you're alone.
- If your ex does come to your house when you're alone, don't go to the door.
- Trust yourself. If you feel afraid, you probably have a good reason.
- Ask for help. Chat with a peer advocate who is trained and ready to answer your questions at loveisrespect.org.

After Breaking Up

Just because an unhealthy or abusive relationship is over, doesn't mean the risk of violence is too. Use these tips to stay safe after ending your relationship:

- Talk with your friends and family so they can support you.
- If you can, tell your parents what's going on, especially if your ex may come by your home.
- Talk to a school counselor or teacher you trust. Together, you can alert security, adjust your class schedule or find other ways to help you feel safer.
- Avoid isolated areas at school and local hangouts. Don't walk alone or wear earphones.
- Keep friends or family close when attending parties or events you think your ex might attend.
- Save any threatening or harassing messages your ex sends. Set your profile to private on social networking sites and ask friends to do the same.
- If you ever feel you're in immediate danger, call 911.
- Memorize important numbers in case you don't have access to your cell phone.

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