

30 Days to a Brand-new Heart

I read in some self-help book that, as a rule of thumb, the amount of time it should normally take to recover from a relationship break-up is half the entire time the estranged parties were together. To illustrate, if a couple who's been dating for say two years splits up for some reason, we could expect that they'll be over each other for at most a year. But we shouldn't believe everything we read. Besides, crying over some lost love for as long as a year is clearly a waste of essential bodily fluid. Pining for a person, who's not a bit interested in you anymore, is just an exercise in futility. And putting one's life on a standstill while hoping for reconciliation is simply pathetic.

If you've just been dumped, here is a quick 30-day therapy to fix your broken heart, and to get you out of the pits and back to the world of the living. Here's what you may do on a day-to-day basis for the next 30 days:

Day 1. Cry all you want. Raise hell if you must. If you wish to go on a few day's leave from work, call in sick—you wouldn't want your officemates to see you looking like a gargoyle suffering from PMS. If you feel like pulling your hair off their follicles, nobody's going to stop you. But as soon as you gain a little composure, bring out your diary and write down all your sorry emotions, document all the debilitating aches and pains, and jot down all the cusswords you couldn't believe yourself spewing. Later on, after your 30-day therapy, you will get back to all the things you've written down; and you shall have a great time laughing at yourself from realizing how silly you've been.

Day 2. Today you shall eat to your (broken) heart's content. You shall abandon the dieting program you're trying to stick to over the past weeks. If you've been suffering

from anorexia, you shall forget about it. You shall order pizza (with everything on it!) delivered right at your doorstep in short intervals. You shall have several blocks of sans rival after you've done with generous slices of blueberry cheesecake. You shall consume a bar or two of Snickers at bedtime. If you should wake up in the middle of the night feeling dreadful, you shall raid your ref and finish off those leftovers.

Day 3. Listen to music. I don't think "Even If", "I Will Survive", and "You've Made Me Stronger (By Breaking My Heart)" will do the trick. Instead, play tender selections like "Burn", "Good Riddance", "Highway to Hell" or "666 is the Number of the Beast" at very high volume.

Day 4. Take a walk, stroll in the park, run a mile—any form of exercise that won't require concentration. Afterwards, rest somewhere breezy and bright; and ponder on all the wonderful things that you've missed or overlooked these past months.

Day 5. Inform your friends that any time during the day you are prepared to give a presscon to answer all their queries about the circumstances which led to the break-up.

Day 6. Delete him from your mobile phone directory. Ignore his text messages. Ignore his calls. If his attempts at making contact with you should persist, go get a new SIM card.

Day 7. Pack up a day's worth of belongings and take up residence at a spa! You deserve that body scrub, full-body massage, and aromatherapy. Pamper yourself whom you have taken for granted through all those times when you're so wrapped up with whatshisname?

Day 8. Go on a shopping rampage. Raid every boutique that accepts your VISA. Buy the clothes he won't let you wear, the fragrances he is allergic to, and the accessories he didn't want to be seen alive with you wearing.

Day 9. After a day of frenzied shopping, stress down with a yoga or pilates session. Kickboxing and taekwondo are just as effective not only in de-stressing you but more importantly in sublimating whatever pent-up anger that remains in your heart.

Day 10. Do as you did on Day 4. Take a walk or ride a bike. Assess how you feel about him. A little feeling of anger is just fine. Feeling sorry for him means you're on your way to full recovery.

Day 11. You are now ready to completely get him out of your system. Obliterate every single item that reminds you of him. Delete from your hard disk all his scanned pictures that you alternately use as your desktop wallpaper. Incinerate his letters and shred (or recycle) his greeting cards.

Day 12. Rediscover old hobbies and interests—things you have set aside in favor of your ex. Take dance lessons, join an organization, or learn a sport or musical instrument. Anything to keep you even more busy and preoccupied.

Day 13. Throw a party. Invite friends old and new. Serve good food. Reintroduce yourself to society.

Day 14. Set out for a movie marathon. Take up residence at the nearest mall the entire day.

Day 15. You should be dead-tired from all the movie watching the day before. Sleep all day.

Day 16. Shop for interesting books. Avoid materials about Black Magic and Occult.

Day 17. Cook something special for your family. Bake a cake or some cookies. If you can't bake, pancakes will do.

Day 18. Talk your friends into trying extreme activities. Go mountain climbing. Or skydiving. Or watch together an episode of Wowowee and see if you can live through it.

Day 19. At this time you should be able to think about your ex with neither yearning nor abhorrence. You are now able to consider his existence with such objectivity you can afford a speck of dust.

Day 20. If you were able to stick to the therapy by Day 19, it is now time for closure. Sit down and write him a letter indicating how much better you feel the past days and how sincerely you wish that he moves on. You shall do the letter with utmost objectivity. Shedding even a molecule of tear is not expected anymore at this time and an indication of a relapse. If this happens, go back to Day 2.

After you're done with your letter, keep and hide it in a place you'll forget where in not ime. You are not sending this one out.

Day 21. Get a radical haircut. Try a new style that is unlike you or a color that could shock the wits out of family and friends.

Day 22. Look around for prospects. Make the first move. It does not mean that you are desperate. You just wouldn't want some guy who may deserve you to miss out on an opportunity of a lifetime.

Day 23 & 24. Entertain group dates. It gives you the chance to meet as many deserving guys as there are in so little time. If you should select from your collection, give him a fresh start. Don't bring the past love into a blossoming affair by measuring the prospect against the yardstick that is your ex. Then again, it would be nice to restrain yourself from rushing into a relationship during the therapy period.

Day 25 & 26. Spend the whole day window-shopping. Visit new stores. Check out new arrivals. Taste new food. Whether you wish to bring along a chosen one—a different one for each day—is your call.

Day 27. Go see and be seen. There's a great chance that you will bump into your ex, so ensure that every chance is an opportunity to make him realize what he's been missing. If you crossed paths with him (with your chosen all over you), proceed as usual like you couldn't care less, especially if he has his own chosen one wrapped around him like a boa constrictor.

Day 28. Text your chosen one(s) and thank them for the great time you've been having the past days. Just remember that you should not in any way feel obligated to give in to a second date, unless of course you crave one.

Day 29. Take time to go over your personal journal entries from Day 1 and amaze yourself at how wonderfully you've managed to live through a tough month. Give yourself a pat on the back.

Day 30. You did it! Throw another party. Dress up, relax, dance like there's no tomorrow, sing your heart out, just spend the night in gay abandon.