Going Through a Break-up With Depression

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Depression and Break-ups

Break ups are a hard time for anyone, especially if the relationship ended on bad terms. Most of us can relate to the negative feelings experienced after a break up. It doesn't matter how long the relationship was, whether it was long distance or whether you were serious or not – a break-up can be rough to cope with, and an especially difficult time with someone suffering from depression.

We always hear the same thing from the people around us when it comes to how to deal with a break-up: "There's plenty of other fish in the sea." "Just get over them." "You can do better." "Find something to take your mind off them."

Even though the people who say these things are usually trying to help you through, this is not always the best advice. If you suffer from depression, a break up can make things worse for you. It can affect any previous steps to recovery, leave you with a sense of hopelessness, decrease your feelings of self-worth and can cause you to push yourself away from those around you.

Those with depression may experience some or all of these whilst going through a break-up:

Relapse: Those who have taken steps towards recovery may lose all hope of a happier and healthier future after separating from their partner. They may begin to ignore any progress they have made with improving their daily life with depression and their symptoms may become intense and difficult to deal with once again.

Feelings of worthlessness: Dealing with depression may include the feeling of worthlessness and low self-esteem. When a break-up occurs these feelings may increase and the person may believe that they are not good enough to be in a relationship. They may blame themselves for the break up to a degree that it can seriously affect their mental wellbeing. These feelings may lead to serious problems such as self-harm, substance abuse and even suicidal thoughts and tendencies.

Anti-social behaviour: It can be normal for people to want to spend time alone after a break-up and try to deal with how to move on and how to deal with their thoughts. However with depression these feelings may become prolonged. A person suffering with depression may choose to spend weeks or months with little to no social activity after a breakup. This can lead to problems alongside other symptoms of depression such as the feelings of worthlessness. They may shut out their family and friends and choose to avoid social situations and spend more time in bed or staying in their home.

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Coping With the Aftermath

These are just some of the things a person with depression may experience after a break-up. It is important to

remember that everyone is different and some may experience symptoms that are different to others. If you are experiencing a break-up whilst dealing with depression, here are some ways to help you through this hard time in your life:

Communication: Opening up about what you are feeling and how the break-up has affected you is a good way to help you deal with your emotions. Speaking to your therapist, counselor, other health professional or even a close friend or family member you can confide in is a good way to vent your feelings and not letting them build up. Leaving your thoughts and feelings to build up may worsen your symptoms and have a negative effect on your mental health.

Activities: Once you feel comfortable, a great next step is focusing your mind on something else. Partaking in activities and hobbies you enjoy is a great way to relieve stress and put your mind in a better thought process. Things such as exercise, being creative, travelling, studying or learning new things are just some examples of things you can enjoy to help cope with a break-up.

Social interaction: The two previous points may go hand-in-hand when dealing with a break-up. Enjoying a hobby or activity may also be enjoyable with other people. Taking a class or joining a club is a great way to meet new people and focus your mind on other things. If you don't feel comfortable meeting new people or being in an unfamiliar environment, partaking in activities with people you know is another option. Surrounding yourself with positive and helpful distractions and socializing with other people may decrease the feelings of worthlessness, anti-social behaviour and other negative thoughts and effects of depression.

Taking steps to moving on: If you feel like you need closure or the ability to move on to help improve your mental wellbeing there are things that you can do to achieve this. Returning or disposing of mementos or belongings of your previous partner may be a step towards being able to move on. Especially if you have a lot of negative feelings towards the person or the situation, removing the things that are associated with this person from your personal space may improve the feelings that arise from depression. Alternatively you may find comfort and good thoughts from these and may choose to keep them around to help improve your negative feelings.

Don't assume this relationship is your last: Long-term relationships or intense relationships that end may make you believe that your will never find someone in the future. As previously mentioned the feelings of hopelessness and negative emotions may increase after a break-up. It is important to remember that you will be able to move on from this break-up and you will find someone new. However it is also important to remember that you do not have to rush into a new relationship to feel like you need the comfort after a break up. You can enjoy being single and you do not need a relationship to be able to stay positive and healthy whilst dealing with depression and your everyday life. There is nothing wrong with focusing on yourself and your needs and having the comfort of those around you.

Conclusion

Break-ups are hard. Those with and without depression may find it hard to cope and even if you are suffering with depression you should not be hard on yourself for feeling negative. Even though those with depression may experience more intense and long-term emotions and thoughts, it is normal to feel low whilst experiencing a break-up.

Finding a way to not let these emotions and thoughts remain a constant part of your life is the best way to be able to move forward with your recovery.