

S P R I N G 2 0 2 2

Psychcare Bulletin

Spring 2022 Edition

A Word from the Editor

Welcome to the Spring 2022 edition of the Psychcare Bulletin – the quarterly newsletter of the Trauma Centre of Australia.

In this issue we explore how to manage the complex and often contentious issue of relationship breakdown. In 'Symptoms of Relationship Breakdown,' Ryan Buesnel discusses how to recognise the physical and psychological impacts of relationship breakdown in the life of a friend or loved one. In 'How You Can Cope,' Annie Di Denso outlines practical steps that can help mitigate the pain of a break-up or broken relationship. Finally, Peter Horton explores the importance of understanding relationship values in 'Values and Relationship Breakdown.'

We hope you enjoy this month's edition. We welcome any feedback or comments, which can be sent through to reception@traumacentre.com.au

Psychcare Bulletin is published by Trauma Centre Australia



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When Relationships Go Bad: Physical and Psychological Symptoms

Our interpersonal relationships help orient us in a turbulent world. In the ebb and flow of life, relationships with friends, families, and romantic partners help connect and ground us and provide a sense of security and love that is essential for human flourishing.

Yet relationships can easily go bad. There are many reasons for this: infidelity, personality conflicts, financial disputes, or even just a simple case of drifting apart. Whatever the reason, it is perfectly normal for one or more parties to feel a sense of betrayal or grief during a breakdown of relations. Learning to spot the symptoms and signs of someone going through this difficult experience can therefore be an essential way of offering support and encouragement. Indications of relationship breakdown can manifest in both physical and psychological ways. Of the former, an individual may stop eating or overeat, leading to weight loss or gain. They may start drinking excessively or using drugs, which can lead to a variety of physical symptoms depending on the quantity, frequency, and type of drug used. Other signs can include frequent headaches, recurring stomach issues, and vulnerability to colds and other illness

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Psychologically, the signs of a relationship breakdown commonly include anxiety, stress, and depression. These are natural responses to the loss of a valued relationship, be it romantic or otherwise. In some cases, these psychological symptoms can lead to a more prolonged sense of disillusionment with life and prospects for the future. The individual may withdraw into themselves and dissociate from their broader social networks and work commitments.

Being able to recognize potential psychical and psychological signs of relationship breakdown in the life of a friend or loved one thus presents us with an opportunity to reach out and offer consolation and a sense of hope that the period of grieving will ease.

By Ryan Buesnel

How you can cope with relationship breakdown

Participate in self-care activities – during a relationship breakdown you may not put yourself first. However, self-care is a great way to ensure that you focus on yourself and become more comfortable living independently. Do things that take your mind off your emotions by taking time to watch a movie, listen to music or a podcast, or get a massage.

Exercise – maintaining exercise is a healthy habit that will ensure that you are getting some active movement. When you are grieving the loss of a relationship it can be hard to motivate yourself to stay active. Attempt to start with little steps by choosing a small goal such as walking 10 minutes outside every day or following a short YouTube workout. Once you feel comfortable, try adding in a little more exercise.

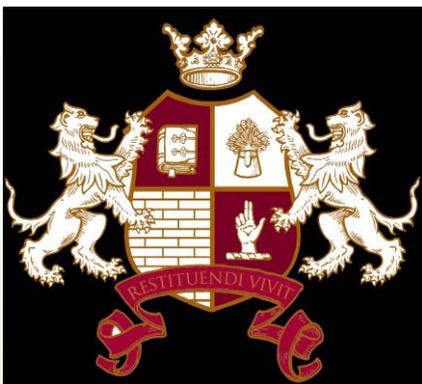
Eat consistently and nutritionally – At times of grief, it can be difficult to maintain healthy and regular eating habits. Aim to eat enough food to fuel your body and ensure you are eating nutritionally dense foods. Avoid eating takeaway or fast food regularly. Also, avoid excessive consumption of alcohol and drug use as a coping mechanism

Communicate with family and friends regularly – Ensure that you reach out to family and friends to inform them of the breakup and also keep in contact so that you have the opportunity to express your emotions when you are feeling upset or overwhelmed.

Download useful apps - Apps can aid your recovery by establishing small habits to boost your mood. For example, Break Up Boss is an app created by Zoe Foster Blake that includes daily empathic affirmations, as well as a feature that allows you to send a text to an ex that expires as soon as you press send! In addition, the Resilience Project aims to build resilience by participating in mindfulness activities.



By Annie Di Censo



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Correlation between values and relationship breakdown

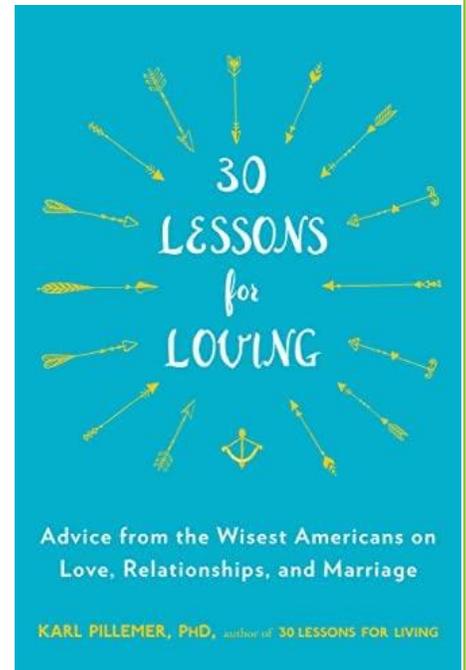
During my past 35 years of relationship counselling, one consistent theme reappears. Even though each partner may love the other, differing core values are usually the key indicator of a relationship breakdown. Understanding underlying values can thus provide partners with crucial insight into romantic partnerships.

In his book *30 Lessons for Loving*, Professor Karl Pillemer attests to the importance of shared values. Pillemer recommends that we all have explicit discussions about our core values before embarking on a new relationship, as this will potentially prevent heartache down the road. Examples of values include whether one wants children, the importance of money, and religious status.

The intensity of your values may be difficult to change or modify. This rigidity can be painful for your partner and may cause resentment. However, values can still change over time, meaning that the person you are happy with today may not be the person you will be happy with forever. Nevertheless, if core values align then the chances of relationship success are higher. Examples of 'core' values include:

- Adventure
- Ambition
- Courage
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Kindness
- Love
- Peace
- Trust.

Take a moment and talk about your values to the ones close to you.



Courage
 Kindness Integrity
 Adventure
 Ambition • • • • Trust.
 • • • • Peace
 • Love
 Honesty

By Peter Horton



Trauma Centre of Australia Pty Ltd

WHO WE ARE:

Trauma Centre Australia are one of Australia's most qualified and experienced providers of psychological support and assistance. We specialise in immediate, on-site response for Critical Incident and Trauma Management services, and 24/7 Employee Assistance and Support.

WHO WE SERVICE:

We provide psychological support services to personnel, and strategic advice to organisations in a broad range of settings including Commonwealth, State, and Local government, large and small businesses including, the aviation industry, multi-national corporations, law enforcement, health care workers, hotels, banks, community clubs and emergency first responders.

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