

There is honour in a break-up

SARAH ROWLAND

One of the biggest challenges of breaking up is saying goodbye with love in your heart.

As relationship counsellor Lori Yusishen explains, when we've been hurt, we tend to go into fight, flight or freeze mode.



But if you commit to conscious decision-making, you don't have to live with that bitter taste in your mouth or that chip on your shoulder just because things didn't work out. I know - easier said than done, right?

But really, if you look at your breakup as an opportunity for emotional growth, then you'll see there is no other way.

Plus, carrying around so much contempt does nothing to avenge your ex- in the end, all it does is blacken your heart. That's why Yusishen has the following five tips for people who want to let go on a positive note:

Separate feeling from behaviour

"You don't always get to choose how you feel, but you can choose how you behave," explains Yusishen. "You might feel shitty, but you don't have to act on it." In other words, she doesn't buy the old adage "I just couldn't help myself." Point being spewing venom is a choice, not a reflex response.

Make a mental list

What do you want to take away from this experience? It probably wasn't all bad. There must have been some aspect of your time together that made you a better person. Furthermore, every relationship is a lesson in love, so it's up to you if you want to learn something or keep repeating the same mistakes.

Commit to values

"If you're someone of high moral integrity, and think you are a good person, then act like it," suggests Yusishen.

And remember: you can read all the spiritual self-help books you want, but if you don't put your money where your transcendent mouth is during hard times, what's the point?

Consider the future

"Ask yourself how you want to do this so that you can look back and still be proud of your behaviour," says Yusishen. She warns that scoring a low-blow against your ex might feel good at the moment, but that feeling of satisfaction won't last long: "If you think of yourself as a standup person, in 10 minutes, 10 hours or 10 months, you'll feel like an ass for doing it." So before you send a spiteful text, sh-t-talk your ex to mutual friends or worse, cause the mother of all public scenes, you might want to reconsider.

Honour your feelings

Don't push your feelings down.

All that hurt and anger is not necessarily a bad thing.

According to Yusishen, the negative emotions you're feeling now prove that you were open to love at one point ... and that's always a good thing.

"Acknowledging hurt speaks to the positive feeling and hopes you once had," she says, adding, "It's physics: for every equal there's an opposite." So go ahead: feel the pain and celebrate the love you once had and will have again!

Source: Lori Yusishen, BHEc, MMFT (winnipegtherapy.com)

e-mail Sarah at [van24feedback@ sunmedia.ca](mailto:van24feedback@sunmedia.ca)