

Should You Go Back to Him?

Escaping the No-Win Trap of Dead End Relationships

“A Second Chance at Love or Heartbreak, Knowing When to Try Again or To Just let Go”

In this complex day and age of relationships, it can be very confusing to know when to fully let go of someone we and when to give it another chance. When do you go back and try again with the same person?

There are many scenarios with various outcomes regarding instances where a couple has divorced or broken up, and met sometime later to find themselves living to the tune of “living happily ever after” versus wishing they had never tried again.

What do the more successful rekindled couples seem to have in common? They have discovered a new perspective on life in addition to a higher appreciate for themselves and each other. With a new understanding of what really goes into love and a relationship they also have learned “who is responsible for what.”

Certainly, there are the hopeless romantics who simply thrive on falling in love over and over again and are devastated when a relationship doesn't work out. These individuals unknowingly long for the drama of failed relationships merely for the roller-coaster effect.

If this is you, perhaps you should try on the hat of the sentimentalists who are insightful realistics now recognizing the benefits and joys of healthy coupling. In her book, “How to Escape the No Win Trap,” Barbara Cowan Berg, L.C.S.W. points out that the main reason couples don't work out is because they are programmed to crash and burn in relationships right from the start.

In asking yourself why you want to go back in to a previous relationship, you need to determine if it means going backwards. Are you afraid of letting go and being alone? Is this notion of “going back” actually a move forward with new insights and appreciation for what you really want with yourselves and each other? The answers can be complicated and sometimes deceiving. We all too often fool ourselves into sticking with what we know. Even in a clingy relationship, we often find a comfort zone and convince ourselves that familiar is “good” when it is anything but that.

Milking a stale, unhealthy relationship to siphon out the last hurrah in hopes of that one final good time that will turn it around is the greatest deception we can give ourselves. Letting go takes effort and can be painful, understandably, but staying in a no-win relationship only leads to deeper pain and heartache in the long run.

Perhaps you may believe – due to low self esteem – that he is the only guy out there for you. We must not forget, however, that there are six million people on this planet, and we were truly NOT born to suffer.

While this questionnaire is not intended to be the end-all concerning whether or not you will be likely to succeed if you do get back together, it can give some excellent insight as to what to consider before you do. Hopefully, you will be glad that you aren't contending with some of the issues others have when they are considering getting back together, which is why a number of the "Not Applicables" give two points.

Please take the following quiz and help yourself determine if you are returning to a "No Win" relationship, or if reconciliation will provide a chance for a healthy and fulfilling outcome. If the content does not apply to your situation, please check "Not Applicable."

Questions:

1. You were almost over him and doing quite well when a life tragedy hits you. In this vulnerable time he contacts you and you convince yourself to try again because life seems too complicated to manage alone.

True – 1

False – 2

Not Applicable – 2

2. You have tried over and over again to get him out of your mind, dated others and yet, every time you meet someone new, you only miss him more.

True – 2

False – 1

Not Applicable – 0

3. You had a romantic trip or a major event planned together prior to the break up. He called and offered to take you, even though you had recently broken up and you just couldn't say no.

True - 0

False - 2

Not Applicable - 0

4. He realized he is truly in love with you and can't live without you. He has decided to move out on his own, away from a roommate situation, adult family member or adult child who may have been unhealthy for him and your relationship. He now is in a living situation where he is appropriately available to you.

True - 1

False - 0

No Applicable - 2

5. Even though he still isn't able to leave "the family compound" he invites you to move in with or near his family. You are concerned of what he tells them when you aren't around.

True - 0

False - 0

Not Applicable - 2

6. You are both able to see the roles that you played the last time around and are both actively working toward correcting your mistakes to the point of demonstrating ongoing commitment and consistency. You also realize that your values, beliefs and ideas about relationships, children, marriage and family are very compatible.

True - 2
False - 0
Not Applicable - 0

7. You both let everyone in your families and in your lives know that you are truly forming a partnership this time and you will not be divided by "well meaning" friends or family.

True - 1
False - 1
Not Applicable - 2

8. You are concerned that he will continue to make part of his family's opinion about you carry too much weight down the road. However, he has taken great measures to show them and you that you are number one in his life. Therefore, you see it as worthy of another chance.

True - 1
False - 1
Not Applicable - 2

9. You really don't want him back and you can't stand the thought of living with him again, however, you discover that you are pregnant with his baby, and for the sake of the child, you give it another chance.

True - 0
False - 1
Not Applicable - 2

10. You know in your heart and head that he is not really the one for you, but you tell yourself that you aren't looking for a committed relationship right now anyway. You decide to keep him around because he is really fun, a great distraction and is good in bed.

True - 1
False - 1
Not Applicable - 2

11. He has commitment phobia issues and still can't say the word "marriage," however, it's not such a big issue with you anymore.

True - 1
False - 1
Not Applicable - 2

12. He said he really would get his divorce finalized this time and you believe him.

True - 0
False - 0
Not Applicable - 2

13. He showed you the papers that proved that the legal issues that he had been dealing with are clearly resolved to your satisfaction, and you now feel comfortable with moving forward.

True - 1
False - 1
Not Applicable - 2

14. He is making obvious attempts to better himself, take your needs more into account, and is moving more forward to commitment.

True - 2
False - 0
Not Applicable - 1

15. He said he would change his negative behaviors or addictions if you come back, and you give him the benefit of the doubt, even though he has made the same promises in the past.

True - 0
False - 0
Not Applicable - 2

16. He has continually shown he has changed his negative behaviors or addictions and is really to reconcile with you if you are ready to, and you agree.

True - 2
False - 0
Not Applicable - 2

17. He promises to put the cap back on the toothpaste or anything else he does that annoys you if you won't nag him about it when you return, and you agree to be less nit-picky.

True - 0
False - 0
Not Applicable - 2

18. Though you aren't physically attracted to or sexually compatible with one another, you realize that he is truly your best friend and you believe common interests are enough to sustain a solid relationship.

True - 0
False - 0
Not Applicable - 2

19. You realize that you don't want to go through life without him, and that you can talk to him about almost anything!

True - 2
False - 0
Not Applicable - 0

20. Even though your family and friends don't like this person, and you differ on important issues, you believe he really is a great guy and is worth a second try.

True - 0
False - 0
Not Applicable - 2

21. No matter where you have been in your life, who you have been with or what you have done, this man is always in your thoughts and dreams.

True - 2
False - 0
Not Applicable - 1

22. He said he would give you a ring or a full commitment if you came back to him. Although he doesn't say it is an engagement, you still feel there is a chance for permanence.

True - 1
False - 0
Not Applicable - 0

23. You realize you don't really want the big career you once dreamed about and he was so adamantly against. You are now ready to give it all up to be with him.

True - 0
False - 1
Not Applicable - 2

How did you do? Were you glad that you didn't have as many complications as others might have? Do you want to continue thinking it over? Add up the numbers you got from each answer and see where you fall in the answer section below:

36 -45 Points: This may well be the love of your life! Keep your eyes open and keep letting each other know what you need. Feel safe to give it your all and make it easy for the other person to do the same. Let time and love take its course.

27 - 35 Points: This has possibilities of going well if you are both willing to see the roles you play in the situation. Address all issues immediately so that they don't blow up in the future. If your partner recommends that you seek professional help, go even if you think you don't need it. Remember to keep your egos in check.

18 - 26 Points: Be cautious and willing to see that you could be programmed to fail in relationships. You might consider not going back just yet. Be clear about what you need from him and what you need for yourself first. He'll never take you as seriously as he does now, so don't be negative and blaming. Go on with your life or keep things very light until he comes through with what you need.

6 - 17 Points: Recognize you are a glutton for punishment. If you are determined to play this one out, be cautioned that he won't be easy when it comes time to leave, and that time will come to you sooner rather than later. While miracles do occur, things will remain the same here unless ALL parties involved have a transformation. This includes your fear of being alone with yourself in the way than your poor choices in a man.

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