



50 Self-Care Tips

To Make Separation Suck Less

rebuildfromhere.com



I'm glad you're here!

Going through a separation (or divorce) is like drinking MiraLAX before a colonoscopy: Whether it was forced upon you or you initiated it, it still usually sucks.

Your thoughts are all over the place, you can't settle down, and you feel like you're on a never-ending emotional rollercoaster.

And **all you want is some relief** to get you through the day and the near future.

r **I know exactly what you're going through, and just how much it sucks. 😞**

That's why I've created these 50 tips—grounded in neuroscience and translated into doable actions—that can help you get through the next **hour, day, or week**.

They are categorized by themes, based on what you may need in the moment.

And please—don't let the number overwhelm you! Go ahead and choose whatever you need right now.

Whether that's one category, a mix, or even just one item from the list—you'll start feeling a little better. ❤️

Quick note: *Though I love psychology and neuroscience, I'm not a therapist or medical professional. This guide is for educational and emotional support purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical or legal advice.*

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Reset your nervous system

When your body feels hijacked, start here.

Name the emotion

For example, “This is grief,” or “I’m angry right now.” Naming the feeling takes away its power and reduces its hold on you.

Schedule your grief

Expressing grief is healthy, but it can turn into a soul-sucking beast if not contained. So cry. Rage-journal. And then go about your day.

Ice your face

(Not your ex—even though you want to!) Change temps quickly to activate your body’s built-in stress reset system—which slows your heart rate to induce a state of calm.

Breathe into a box

Hyperventilating after reading that dreaded text from your ex? 4 seconds inhale. 4 hold. 4 exhale. 4 hold. Repeat.

Slow the nighttime spiral

Don’t get caught in a tornado of negative thinking before bed. Tell yourself: “I’ll decide tomorrow. Right now it’s time to rest and relax.”



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Reset your nervous system

Hit the hay early

Speaking of resting, try to do more of it if you can. Sleep is more important than ever right now.

Create a panic protocol

Add 3 steps to follow when triggered. Keep it on you to pull out when needed.

Kill the catastrophizing

The anxious brain loves to create worst-case scenarios. Remind yourself that anxiety ≠ prophecy.

Practice opposite action

Feel like curling into the fetal position and hiding forever? Try texting a friend instead.

Go for a purposeless stroll

Hit the trail without headphones or a destination.

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Use boundary-based self-care

This might be the hardest category to follow consistently. Sometimes the urge to see what he's up to is very powerful. But it just reopens the wound.

Here are some tips to set boundaries while you heal.

Mute him

Unless you have to stay in contact for the kids. If so, keep communication need-to-know only.

Mute his friends too

Yes, even the ones you got along with. They are his support system now, not yours—and blurring those lines can create unnecessary stress and gossip.

Unfollow the couples content

And while you're at it, mute or remove anything related to marriage or romantic love (for now, while you heal).

Don't stalk

On socials or in person.

Don't ask for intel from friends

It's fun in the moment, but it can make everything worse.



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Use boundary-based self-care

Don't text when drinking

When alcohol is in your system, your inhibitions are lowered, and you might say something you'll regret.

Ignore the gossip

You know the truth about what happened, and that's enough. No need to explain yourself to people who weren't in the marriage.

Resist the urge to put him down

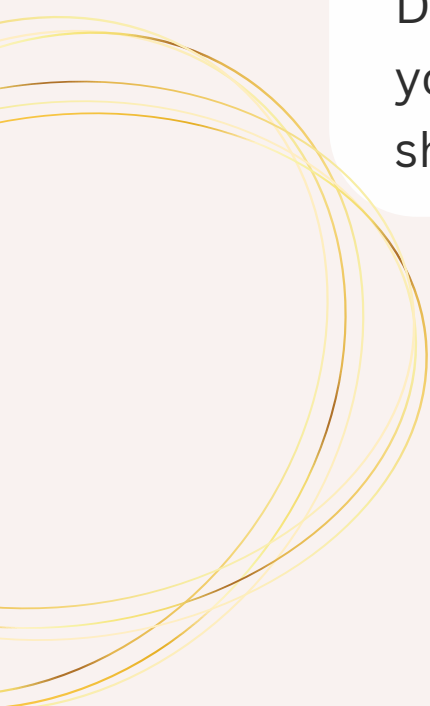
Of course, processing emotions with friends is healthy. But the less negative you are, the better.

Remove reminders

Old screenshots, photo albums, etc. Or at the very least, put them out of sight for now.

Protect your peace

Don't feel like you owe him or anyone access to what you're going through. Only share what you feel like sharing.



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Process and heal

Use these tips to process thoughts and feelings in a healthy way.

Write a letter that you don't send

This is a great way to express yourself without the emotional repercussions. Just be sure not to send it! (It won't land the way you want it to anyway.)

Journal the reality, not just the highlight reel

When we're grieving, our brain tends to focus on the good times. Writing out what happened helps us step back and see the full picture more clearly.

Say out loud: "I miss him." Then also say: "And it wasn't healthy"

(or "This is the best option for me right now"). Both things can be true at once.

Let yourself have mixed emotions

It's okay to feel glad that he's gone and sad at the same time.

Cry in the shower

It's a great place to let it out.



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Process and heal

Avoid using drugs and alcohol as coping mechanisms

I know; it's so hard right now and you just want some relief. But trust me, it's not worth it in the long run—using substances may dull the pain temporarily, but it comes back with a vengeance and ultimately delays the healing process. 😞

Schedule a therapy session

A good therapist can help you work through your grief in a healthy way. If you can't afford it, check your local resources. Many communities offer free or income-based counseling services.

Sign up for a divorce support group

These are usually offered through local churches, but there are online options as well.

Avoid isolation

Isolation can make grief worse and lead to rumination and depression. If you're now living alone, reach out to friends and family regularly.

Practice gratitude and affirmations

Think realism, not toxic positivity. Listing three things you're thankful for and three things you're good at can help reduce negative thinking and improve your mindset.

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Rebuild your identity

Separating doesn't just mean the end of a marriage. It's also a shift in identity. Who are we when we're no longer playing the role of "wife"?

Use these tips to help you rediscover yourself.

Make a "Who I Was Before Him" list

Sometimes, it's hard to remember the "me" before the "we." Reconnect with yourself by making a list of your traits—personality type, likes, dislikes, hobbies, etc.

Make a "Who I'm Becoming" list

Include old hobbies you want to revisit, habits to cement, and personal growth you're striving for.

Try one thing he would've rolled his eyes at or disregarded

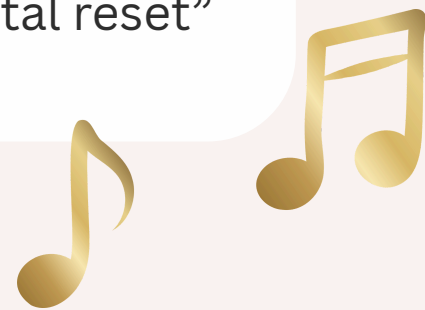
Maybe it's paint-by-numbers, going to a musical, or singing along to your favorite tunes.

Reclaim your favorite music

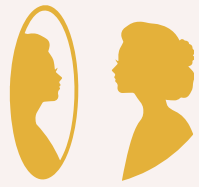
You no longer have to sacrifice your radio songs in the name of marital compromise—so pump the jam (pump it up)!

Change one thing in your physical space

Even moving one thing can provide a "mental reset" and create feelings of calm and focus.



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Rebuild your identity

Nix the “failed marriage” language

Try calling it a “closed chapter” instead.

Create a new Friday night ritual

Give yourself a manicure, set up an 80s movie night with your bestie, or read a new self-help book.

Go out alone

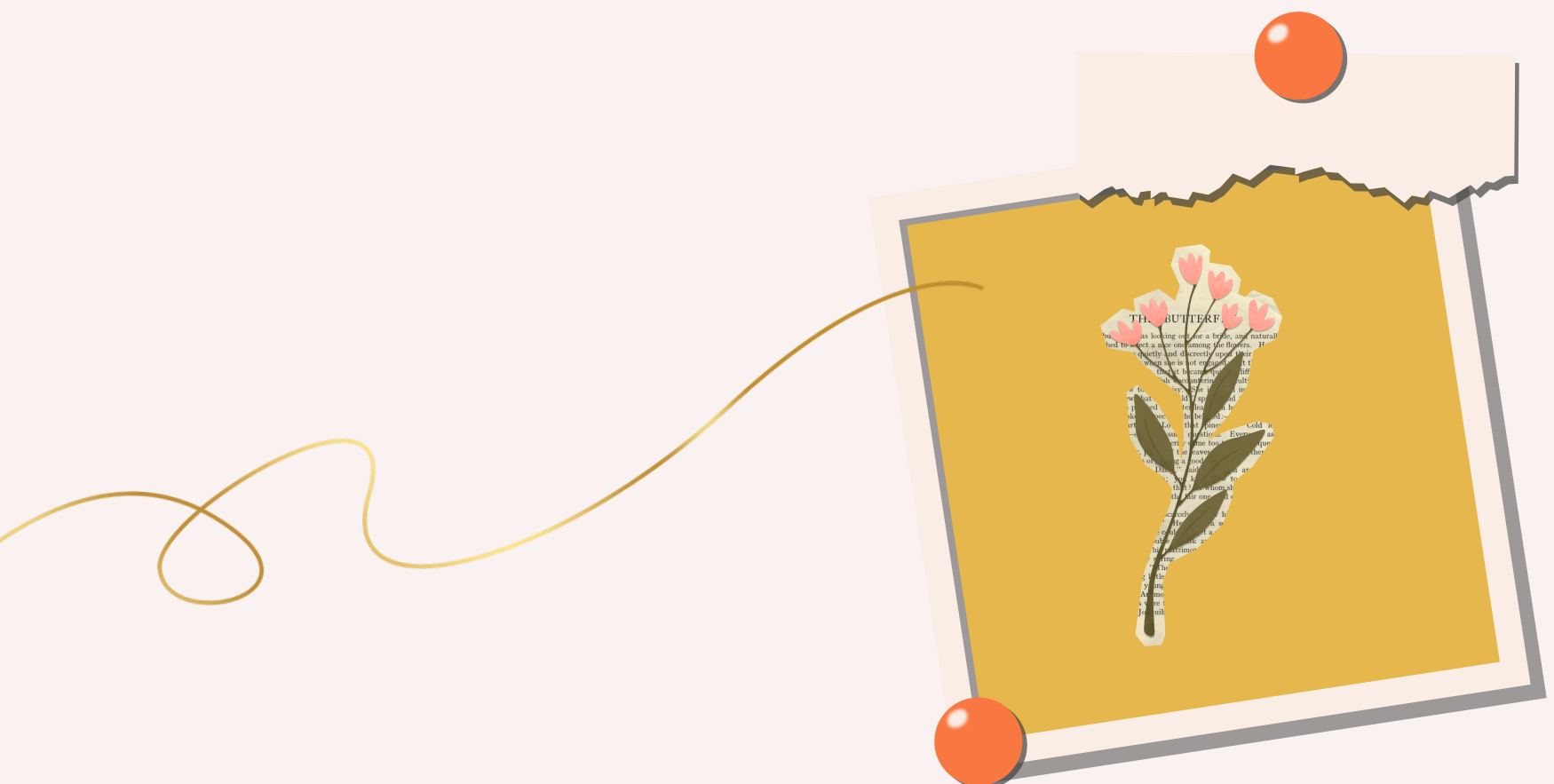
It might feel a bit weird at first. But eventually, it will feel like freedom.

Buy yourself roses non-ironically

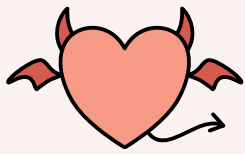
Optional background music: Miley Cyrus’s “Flowers.”

Create a vision board for your future self

Create a Pinterest board or try cutting out pics from magazines like 1992 is going out of style.



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Get a little unhinged

For when you're feeling snarky, sassy, or just completely over it. 😏

Create a “He Lost Access” playlist

Recommendations include Kesha's “Woman,” Dua Lipa's “IDGAF” and Lizzo's “Good as Hell.”

Create an “Anger and Justice” playlist

Feel the rage* with songs like Alanis Morissette's “You Oughtta Know” and Carrie Underwood's “Before He Cheats.”

Get creative

Write a snarky haiku or a fairytale where he's the villain.

Block him for a few days

Again, considering children and the need for communication here.

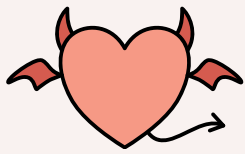
Rage-clean

Or rage-write, rage-exercise (I recommend kickboxing!). Anything that releases your pent-up anger and channels that adrenaline works.

**But please don't act on it! This is for emotional processing only.*



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Get a little unhinged

Do one petty-but-harmless glow-up thing.

Get the pedicure he thought was pointless, or buy the shoes he'd have made fun of.

Rename him in your phone to "Lesson."

Or "Toxic Mold," depending on your level of sass and the amount of harm he's caused.

Have a 24-hour no-marriage-talk day.

Because your brain and nervous system need a break anyway.

Make a non-negotiables list of what you won't tolerate.

This includes with him and in a future relationship. Make it as silly and petty as you want.

Feeling nostalgic?

Write a list of what went wrong, or revisit the hard times as reminder for why you left (or why this is for the best).



Feeling better? I hope so!

I'd love to hear which ones helped
most.

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