



Because You Deserve Love

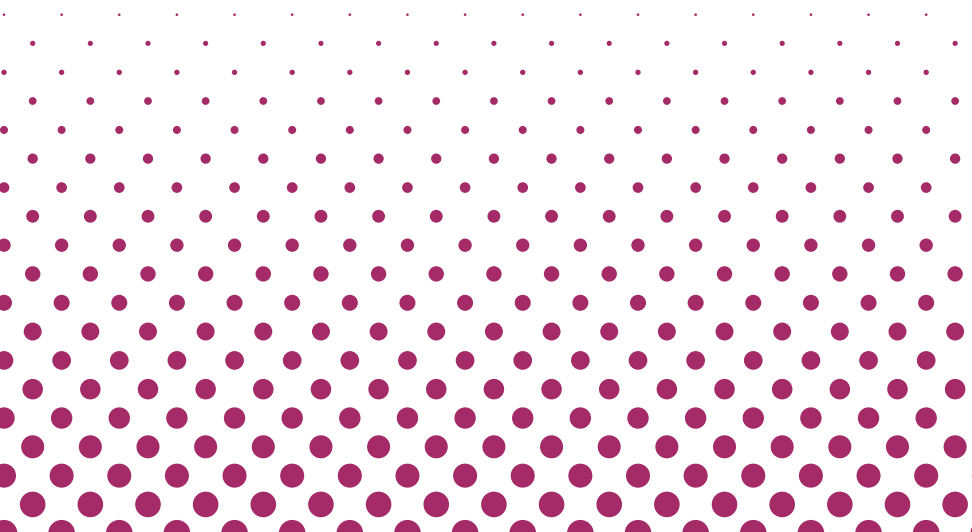
*A single girl's guide to
healing from and
dealing with breakups*

Osayi Osar-Emokpae

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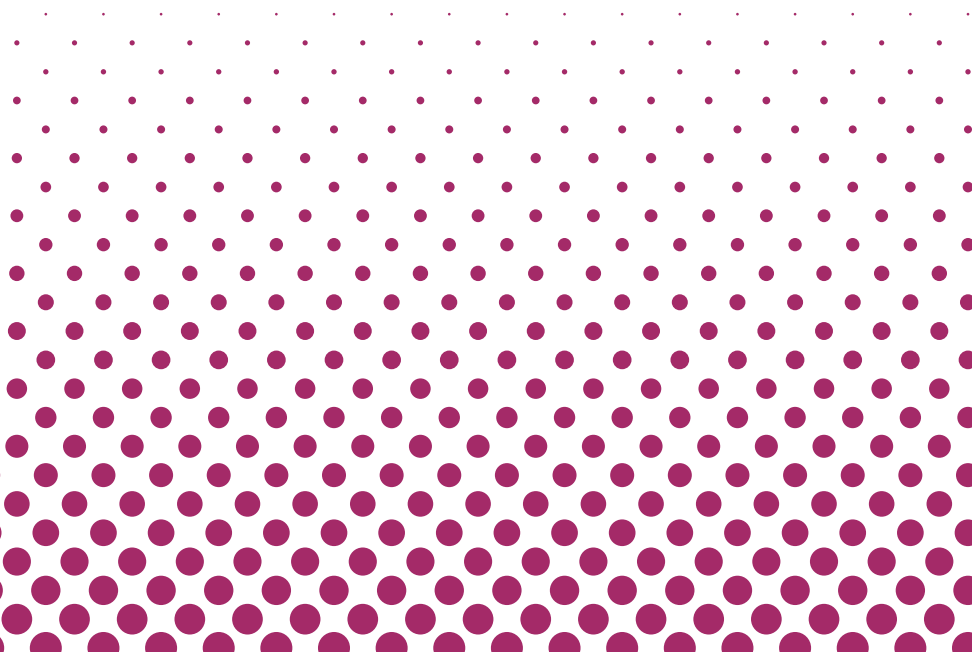


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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my four fabulous brothers who have shown me that there are still young men out there that are brave and full of integrity, to my parents who let me use their surname for all these years, to my wonderful sister-in-law who showed me what a peaceful and happy home looks like, and to my niece and nephew who always make me smile.



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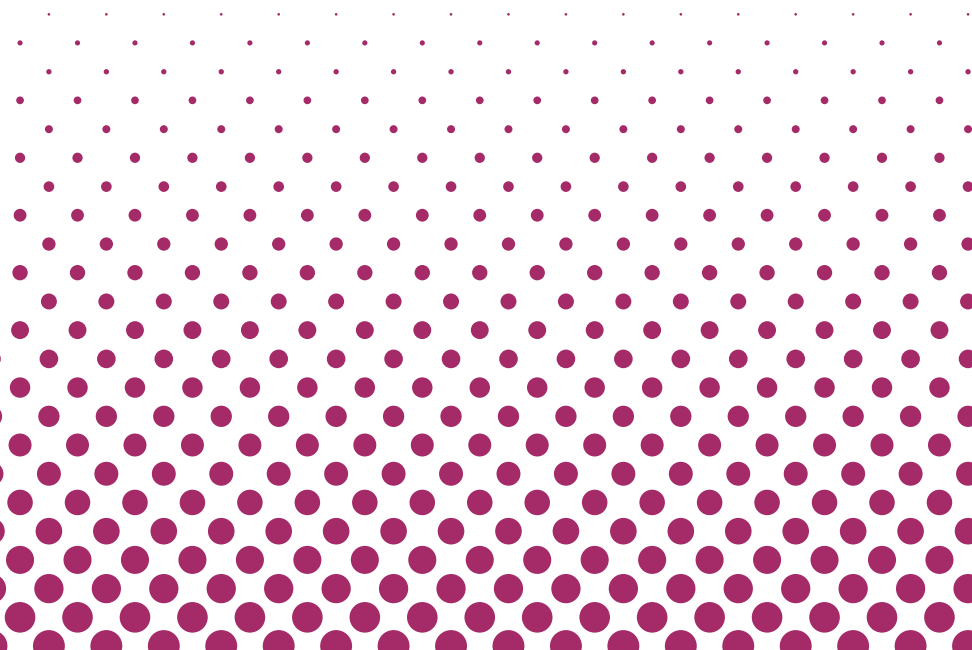
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Section 1

Contemplating a Breakup

One of my favorite pastors said he was stunned when he asked some of his most committed congregants if they ever thought of leaving his church and he was shocked to find out that they all had contemplated it at some point, but many of them chose not to leave. There comes a point (and sometimes multiple points) in a relationship when you wonder if it's worth it to continue building the relationship. You think about what has happened so far, and what you think the future holds for the relationship and have to decide whether to cut your losses, or keep moving forward.

So what do you do?

Do you make a decision based on
what is logical?

.....

Do you make a decision based on
your emotions?

.....

Do you make a decision based on what
family and friends are telling you?

What do you do?

When There's Abuse



“Loving a man shouldn't have to be this rough”

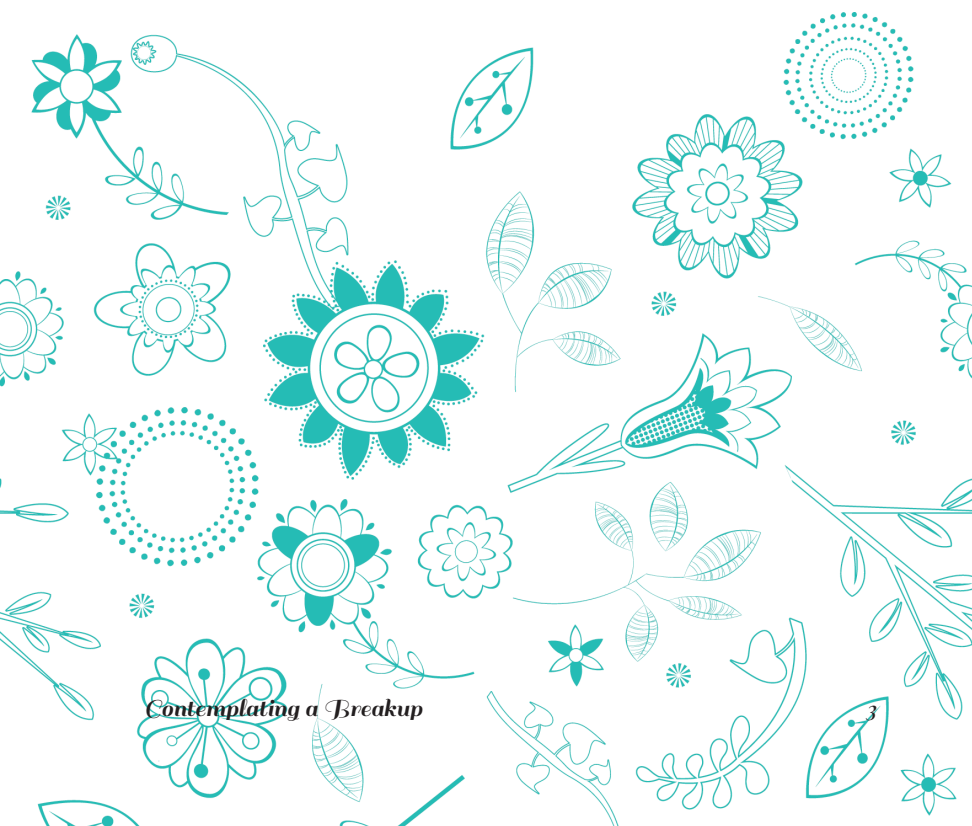
— Tim McGraw

A guy I liked once asked me if I believed in divorce, and I told him no. “But what if there was physical abuse?” he asked. “Then I would get a divorce.” I responded. I don't believe in divorce, and I believe that any relationship can be healed regardless of what the two parties have been through. But relationships only work when both parties

If he's hitting you now, stop contemplating leaving him, and just leave.

are willing to work on the relationship. There are some things that can be improved if one person in the relationship is willing to do the work, but there are many more things that you need both parties to be involved. In the case of physical abuse, staying silent is just not the right way to go. I'm not married, so I can't really talk about what goes on in a marriage. However if you're in a relationship and he's already abusive, now would be the time to realize that this relationship won't get better. It's not after he has you as his wife, and he feels that he can do anything with you that he will all of a sudden start treating you like the princess you are. It is not all of a sudden when the church decides to look away from the way he is treating you that you can expect him to

feel any kind of remorse for tearing up your face and making you his punching bag. If he's hitting you now, stop contemplating leaving him, and just leave. Don't tell me that he's apologized and that he's so sorry, don't tell me that he did it because you caused him to do it, and definitely don't tell me that you can't leave him because he needs you. It's not you he needs, it's a true revelation of Jesus he needs. So carry what you can carry with you and leave him, before you get stuck being married with this sorry excuse for a man. And if you're already married, carry what you can carry and leave this pathetic thing that thinks he's a man, and leave him before you become a statistic, or a story that we read about on the internet, shake our heads, sigh, and move on... you're much too important and valuable for that.



He's a Cheater

“It's hard to close the door on optimistic expectations when you love someone.”

— Dennis Lehane

What is cheating? It could range from anything between having sexual intercourse, to just kissing, and whatever else in between that might make a person feel guilty. There's a difference between a guy who has cheated, and a guy who's a cheater. A guy who's a cheater has done this multiple times, while a guy who has cheated, has only done it once. Either way, it's up to you to decide what you would like to do. Would you like to stay and work it out? Or would you like to move on and try finding happiness elsewhere? I've heard of stories where it was best to move on, but I've also heard of stories where they chose to make it work, and things worked out well, but really, it's up to the individuals. Are they willing to do the work to make it work? Is your man willing to be accountable to you for the rest of the relationship? Is he willing to go through counseling with you? To tell you exactly what caused the problem, and how it can be avoided in the future? And are you willing to deal with the lack of trust that will exist in your relationship for some time until you can rebuild that trust? It won't be easy, but if you get through something like this, it will be hard for anything else to shake the relationship.

You're Fighting All the Time

“There is no three-strikes when it comes to dating.
One heartbreak and that's it.”

— Sarah Tregay

When I'm with my beloved, all I want is peace and quiet. Life is stressful and chaotic already, I don't want to have to deal with stress and chaos in my most sacred space. This was why it was so traumatic to me when I was dating this guy, and we ended up arguing all the time. I wasn't even sure why we were arguing most of the time, all I know is that our dates always began and ended with arguments. I left more exhausted at

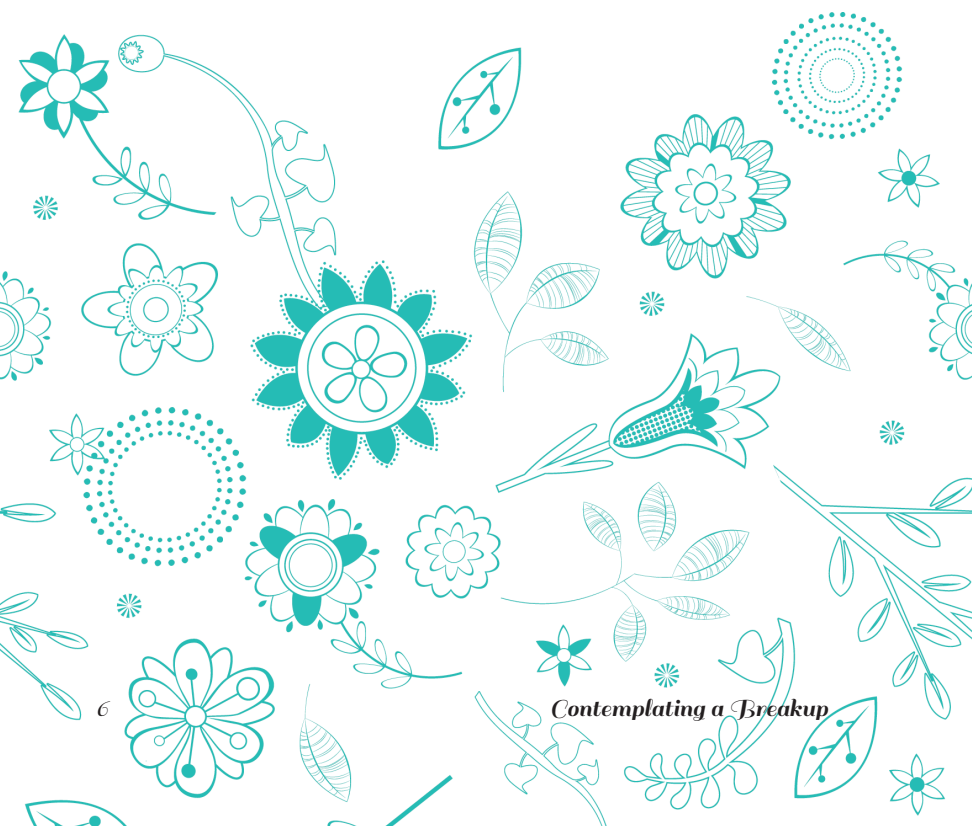
We were so busy trying to get our own individual needs met that we missed out on the opportunity and the beautiful privilege of serving each other.

the end of the date than when I came. We became better friends after the breakup, and although there were times that I felt like I never wanted to see him again, and he felt like he never wanted to see me again, we've learned to respect each other and cherish the good times we shared together. The problem we had was that we never really listened to each other. We were so busy trying

to get our own individual needs met that we missed out on the opportunity and the beautiful privilege of serving each other.

So if you're fighting all the time, I would suggest that you take time out to just do nice things for your beloved. Just one little thing at a time, to let him know that you care about him. And then work on just listening to him. If he's complaining that you don't spend enough time together, don't argue with him about how much time you've spent and how busy you've been, just nod, and make suggestions as to how you can spend more time together. If he's complaining that he feels like you don't appreciate him, apologize to him that he feels that way, find out in what ways you make him feel that way, and then make the corrections.

You may eventually decide to breakup, and that's fine, because headaches are not cute, but at least you know you tried.



You're No Longer Fighting

“You cannot be with someone just because you don't want to hurt him. You have your own happiness to think about.”

— Melissa de la Cruz

Sometimes when the fighting stops, you may think that maybe things are getting better, when really the two of you just stopped caring. Now things are dull and dry. Both of you feel so distant from each other, you can count on all your fingers and toes all the things you would rather be doing than hanging out with him, yep there's a problem.

You can choose to breakup because of that, but I can't promise you won't face this same situation in your next relationship. Actually I can almost guarantee that you will face the same situation in your next relationship. So it's best you just deal with it now because going around the same mountain over and over again, is not cute either.

I'm Kinda Bored

“It’s disconcerting to realize how little you have to say to someone who once occupied such a prominent place in your bed.”

— Sue Grafton

Well I read a book recently (actually I listened to the audiobook, but it sounds more sophisticated to say I read the book). But anyway, in the book the lady explained that only boring people are bored in relationships. So many times we argue that

Only boring
people are bored
in relationships.

our beloved is boring and we can’t imagine what we ever saw in them, when the truth is that we are the boring ones. It’s up to us to decide what kind of relationship we will have. Whether we choose to sit, eat cereal, and watch TV 12 hours a day and do nothing else, or whether we choose to visit different countries, and do adventurous things, it’s up to us. So if the problem is that you’re bored in your relationship and you’re contemplating breaking up, I’ll say that’s your prerogative, but you’re breaking up with the wrong person.

He Has Bad Habits

“Those who have hurt you in the past cannot continue to hurt you now unless you hold on to the pain through resentment.”

— Rick Warren

Whoa! This is a tough one. I'm not sure what I would do. I would probably breakup with a guy if I found out a bad habit, especially if he was not trying to make any changes, like if he was addicted to pornography, or drugs, or something like that. I would just cut my losses and wish him the best. Why would I wait until we were married and have to be stuck with that kind of mess.

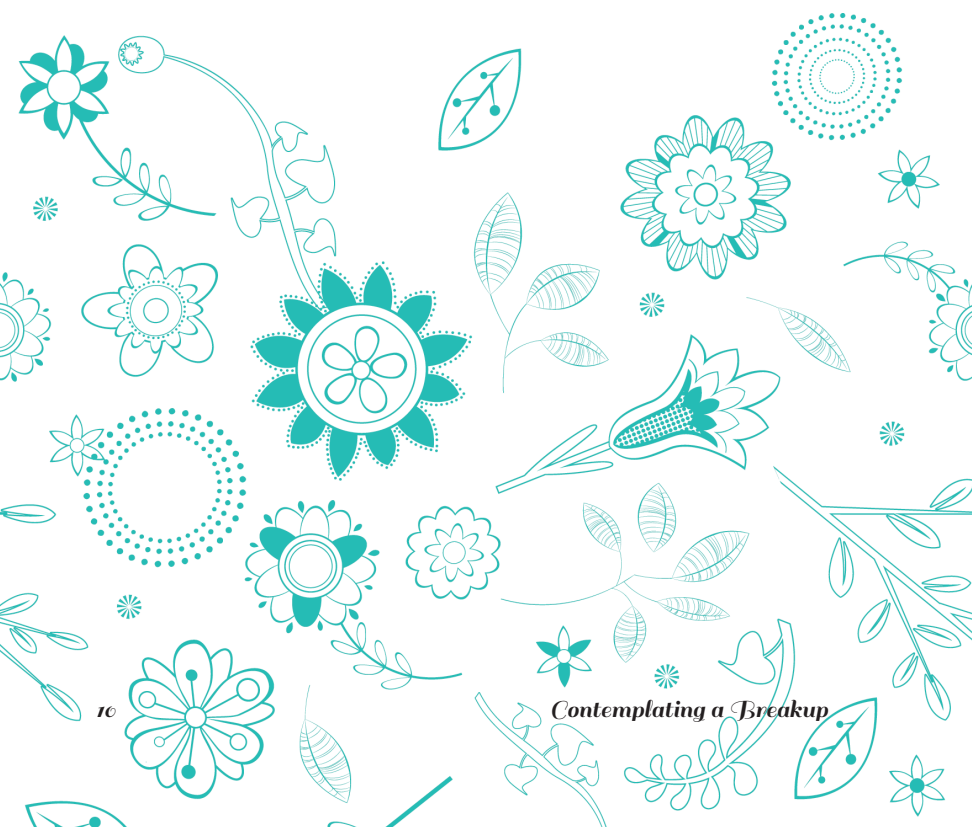
Don't play with damaged goods, you will only hurt yourself.

On the other hand, if the guy is talking about he used to be addicted, and now he's been 2 years sober, I may still be reluctant, but I would probably be a bit more willing to give him a chance.

Now I'm saying from my own point of view, my own perspective. If you, on the other hand, have been told directly from God to stay with this man, then please don't use this book as an excuse to go against God's wishes, but if you're just trying to stay with him because you think you can "save him" or you feel guilty

for his life-experiences, then you're in for a rude and very painful awakening.

Don't play with damaged goods, you will only hurt yourself. Give him some time to heal and make his life-changes, then perhaps if you're still available the two of you can try to make it work, but if not, it's okay, life can still be amazing for the both of you even if your lives are completely separate.



His Family Doesn't Like Me

“What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family.”

— Mother Teresa

Well, despite popular opinion, when you marry a man, you marry his family. Yes you may be able to live far away from them and not have to deal with them most of the time, but when you have to deal with them it can be devastating. You don't want your relationship to be just the two of you against the world, no matter how romantic that may sound, it is actually tragic. You need both of your families to help and support and prop you up in the different seasons of life. You don't need anyone pulling you down, or telling him what an awful wife you must be. So carefully consider his family while plunging into this relationship thing, because if it leads to marriage you don't want to be badly burned.

Don't Jump Into a New Relationship

“How many times have you said, ‘This is it. I’ve finally found my one true love’? And how many times has the reality turned out differently? Paperback romances and fairy tales promote an ideal of a first and only love, but few of us can claim to have had such uncomplicated good fortune. For most people, the process of finding the perfect partner is one trial and error: breakups, makeups, missed opportunities and misunderstandings. Human love is a fragile creation, and sometimes the smallest thing - the wrong choice of words or a single clumsy gesture - can make love shatter, stall or fade away.”

— Haruki Murakami

I remember when I stopped dating one guy, and it was so painful that I just started calling all my guy friends, and found someone that could take me out on a date – That was a mistake. I later found out that he was dating someone else, but was looking to give himself more options when he decided to begin dating me. And I also would always compare him with my ex, by either expecting him to do things that my ex did, or expecting him to want things that my ex wanted. Needless to say that the new

“relationship” didn’t last long, and there I was battling yet another breakup.

The easiest way to temporarily relieve yourself of that heart-break is to jump into a relationship, and some people even get back with the ex before this current breakup. It’s not advisable. Yes you’ll get into a relationship again, but now is not the time.

Best thing to do is just to deal with it now, and move on. It won’t be easy at first, but it will be worth it.

While you are hurting you will attract men that will want to prey on your vulnerabilities, or will be repulsed by your mood swings and depression. For some time it may feel great because you feel like you

now have someone you can talk to on the phone, or hang out with. It may even feel like “replacement therapy,” but don’t be deceived. My biggest most painful breakup came from the rebound guy, because he was only supposed to be a rebound guy, but then I discovered how wonderful he was, but I wasn’t emotionally or mentally prepared to be in a healthy relationship. My heart was still limping from the pain of the past, and I was taking it all out on the new guy.

You may think that you’ll get over your heartbreak quicker by being in a relationship, but you really just delay everything, and by the time you deal with it, it will be more painful, more disastrous and more traumatic. Best thing to do is just to deal with it now, and move on. It won’t be easy at first, but it will be worth it.

Dealing With Friends and Family

“Too many couples break up without understanding the consequences for their families.”
— Iain Duncan Smith

So you’ve fallen in love with his friends and they’ve fallen in love with you, or he’s fallen in love with your family, and they’ve fallen in love with him, and now you’re broken up...

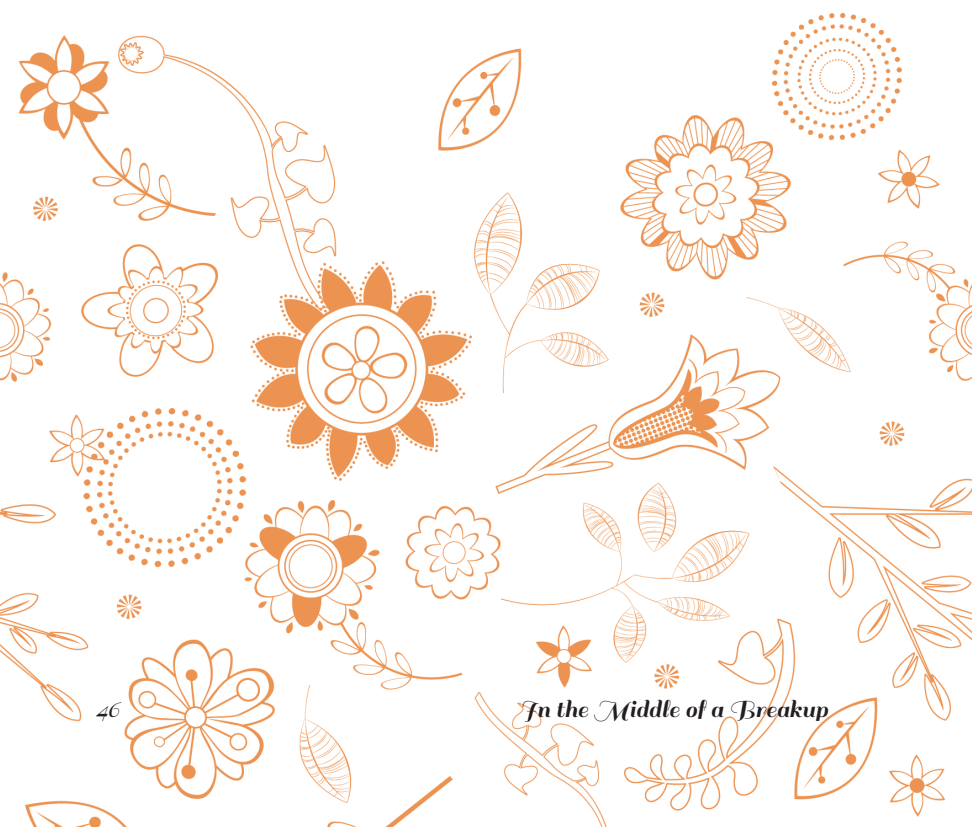
One of the hardest things I had to deal with after my breakup was realizing that I could no longer hang out with my ex’s friends. They were really nice people and I’m sure they wouldn’t have minded, but it wasn’t fair to them. He had those friends before me, and it would be unfair for me to make them have to choose between the two of us whenever they wanted to do something. So my rule was you keep all the friends you came into the relationship with, and any new friends we made together, were up for grabs.

When your life is intertwined with your ex, it’s okay to give yourself time to disentangle from the craziness of it all.

So what did I do? I let all his friends go. It was a very conscious and purposeful decision but it didn’t make it easy. There were events I wanted to attend but I couldn’t attend because he

would be there, and there were times I missed his friends but decided against contacting them.

When your life is intertwined with your ex, it's okay to give yourself time to disentangle from the craziness of it all. And granted you may not be able to stay away from all his friends, but do as much as you can to protect yourself from the hurt of not being invited to events just because he will be there, or from the awkwardness of forcing friends to decide between the two of you. Breakups are painful and messy enough, so try to keep things as simple as possible.



I Feel Like I'm Going Crazy

“Heartbroken men are like wild animals, running around with hysteria in their eyes, desperately trying to knock the dents out of their egos.”

— Jessica Thompson (*This is a Love Story*)

Sometimes when you're going through a breakup you may feel like you're going crazy, or you're already crazy.

I remember the feeling. Geez, it's not easy to have that person you talk to about everything leave your life so abruptly. I remember

As I've said before,
even if he was a
nice amazing guy, it
doesn't mean he was
the one for you.

listening to one of my favorite breakup songs (Lions and Dragons) over and over again. I screamed-sang every line of that song until I wore myself out.

There will be times when friends will be very supportive, and times when they will be tired of your sobbing, and want you to just move on. There will be times you will look back on all the mistakes and wish you could change things. There will be times you would wish you could win him back. But baby girl, as hard as it may seem to you, it's time you realized that he's just not that into you. If he was, he would be there. But that's alright, you're way too fabulous to mess up your makeup over him.

Whenever you feel yourself starting to think about the “what ifs” I recommend you use replacement therapy. That is, replace that thought with something else. Think about how much God loves you, think about your favorite goofiest song and start singing (or humming if in public). Go out and hang out with friends, and other people. Go out and be fabulously you. As I’ve said before, even if he was a nice amazing guy, it doesn’t mean he was the one for you.

C’m on soldier, dust
your shoulder off and
let’s get you a new man...

C’m on soldier, dust your shoulder off and let’s get you a new man... so what do you think about that tall dark and handsome brother over there checking you out... yeah you know the one.



Dealing With the Loneliness

“Sometimes loneliness makes the loudest noise.”

— Aaron Ben-Zeév

There was a time when I was sure if you looked up the definition of loneliness in the dictionary you would see my face right next to it. . . I mean the one guy. . . the one guy I thought I would spend the rest of my life with. . . and well. . . it didn't work out. . . the one guy I had planned so much around. . . and well. . . it didn't work out. . .

so now here I was trying to make dinner plans by myself. Here I was rejecting invitations to events since I was no longer part of “a couple.” Here I was wondering maybe perhaps he and I could be “friends” again and. . .

You can fight
the loneliness and
you can beat it!

you know. . . just hang out as friends. . .

I couldn't remember what I had done before him, and couldn't imagine what I would do without him. . . but thankfully life went on, and not only did I survive, I was able to look back, smile, and realize that everything worked out really well.

If you're going through a break up right now, I'm sure it's really hard. You're thinking you'll never be alright, you'll never survive the loneliness, life will never be worth living. . .

I hope I can encourage you with my story, that yes breakups are hard, but you are incredibly valuable whether or not you're dating someone. You can fight the loneliness and you can beat it!

We Are Just Friends But...

“‘Was it hard?’ I ask. ‘Letting go?’ Not as hard as holding on to something that wasn’t real.”

— Lisa Schroeder

Oh no you are not just friends. Don’t even lie to yourself.

I’ve noticed lately that many young people lie to themselves saying “OH it’s nothing we are just friends,” but they spend one on one time with each other as if it were a date. Some of them even hold hands and some go to the extent of even kissing intermittently. But oh they’re just friends.

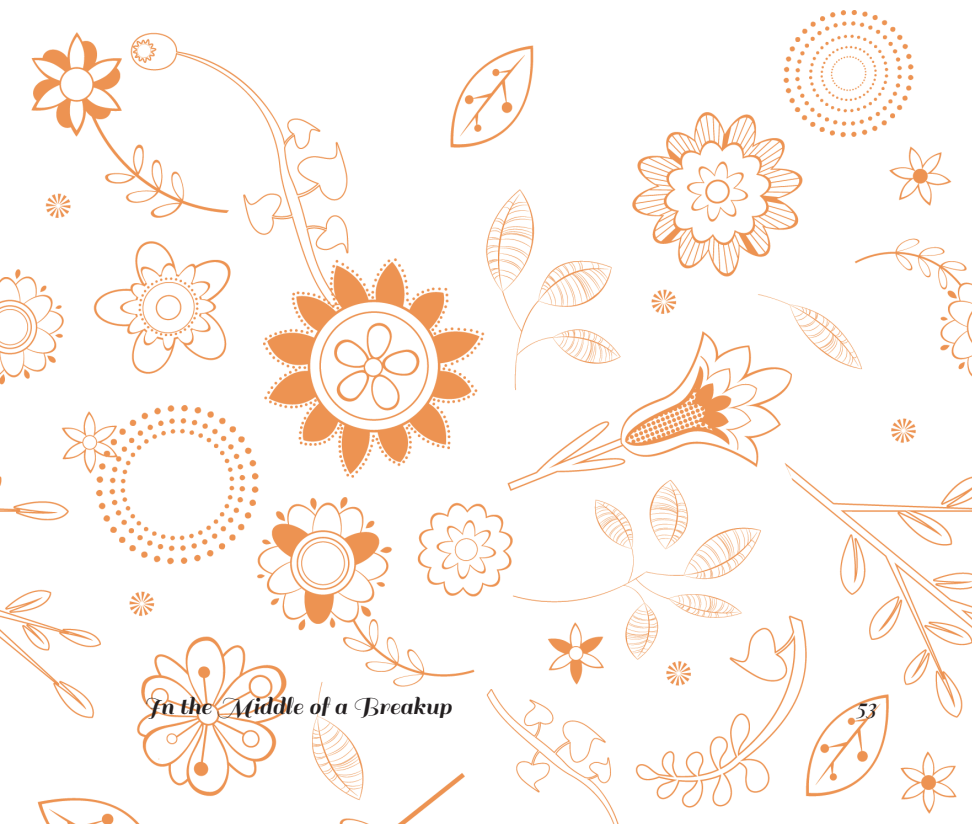
Who are you kidding? Baby girl save yourself from a world of hurt and find out from this your umm...friend whether he holds hands with all his other friends, male and female, the way he holds your hands or if he kisses them as well. If that’s the case, well then baby girl, you have a player on your hands, whether or not he knows he’s a player. Now if he doesn’t do that, then he needs to commit to being your man. He shouldn’t be enjoying

You have too much to do, too much to give, too much at stake. Stop kidding yourself, if he can get the milk for free, I wouldn’t expect him to buy the cow.

the benefits of being your boo without the commitment of being your boo.

It's not about y'all changing your Facebook status (I don't even change my Facebook relationship status), or him buying you something for valentine's day (I don't encourage guys to buy me things anyway), but it's about him committing. You are too fabulous to be any guy's side business, plan B, or his leftover.

You have too much to do, too much to give, too much at stake. Stop kidding yourself, if he can get the milk for free, I wouldn't expect him to buy the cow. It will be hard, I know, trust me, even fabulous me has been there. But it gets better. And when you meet that wonderful guy that treats you as not just plan A, but the only plan, and actually treats you as the princess that you are (instead of just calling you a princess), and wants to be with you and only you! Girl it's a beautiful thing – Trust me, I've been there too.



Forgive (Yeah I Know I'm Repeating It)

“Forgiveness is not a feeling; it is a commitment.”

— Gary Chapman

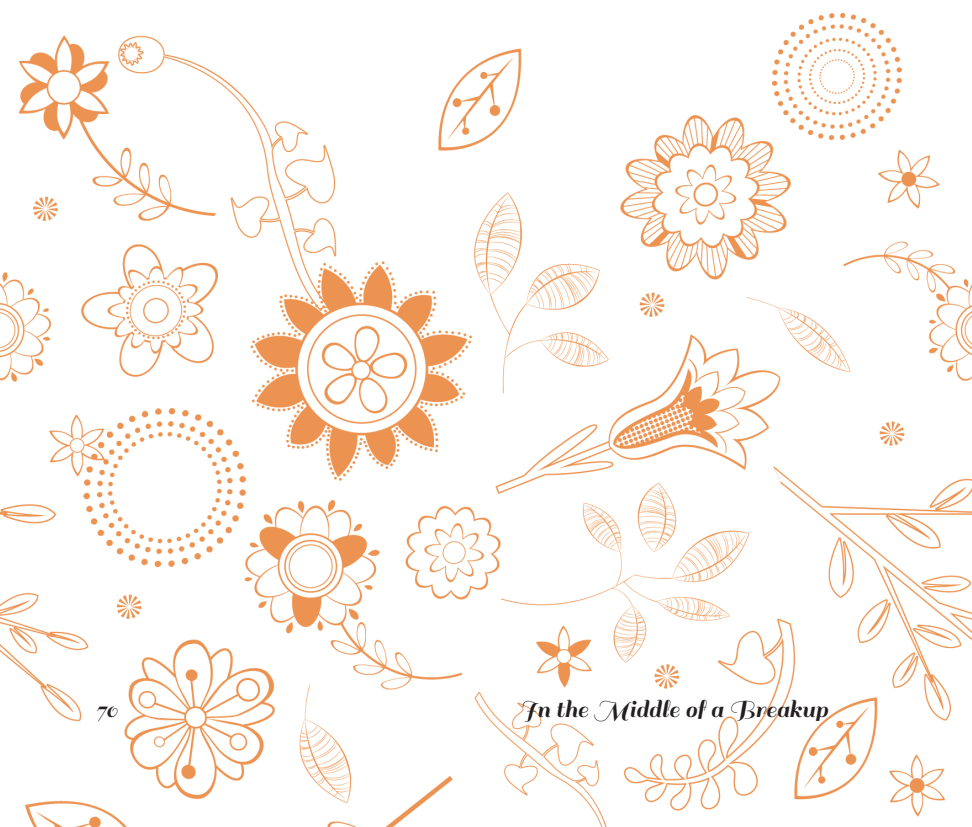
Hey I'm sure your ex may have been a jerk in some things, but I'm sure you were a jerk in some things too. There's no point reliving all the bad experiences and wondering what would have happened if this had happened, or the other thing had not happened. Just let it go.

True forgiveness comes when we are able let go of the people that hurt us and not only let them go, but pray that they thrive and are successful wherever they go. I remember when my ex started dating the woman that later became his wife, I was so upset. Here I was doing the right thing, and he was getting happily hooked up, while I was devastatingly single. Shouldn't it be that when you do the right thing, then you're the one that enjoys the rewards, not the other person? Well sometimes life doesn't work out the way you would like it to.

True forgiveness comes when we are able let go of the people that hurt us and not only let them go, but pray that they thrive and are successful wherever they go.

Because You Deserve Love

The important thing is realizing that if you really think that you have forgiven someone, imagine that their lives are 100% better since they've left you, if it leaves a bitter taste in your mouth, then you probably need to work on your forgiveness. If on the other hand, you are able to rejoice with them, then my dear you are on the journey to true forgiveness and freedom.



In the Middle of a Breakup

this man, but she felt that she would always regret sleeping with him before they got married.

I was wondering what I would have said if she had come to me. All I could think about was the regret – the regret of giving yourself away before marriage. I was listening to a podcast about it the other day (Revive our Hearts), and they talked about how we don't think about the consequences of our actions before making decisions.

We don't think about the possibility of STDs, or pregnancy, or the crazy emotional attachment.

We don't think about the possibility of STDs, or pregnancy, or the crazy emotional attachment. We are focused on our feelings at the time, and what we want and desire. The lady also talked about how her prior sexual experiences were now affecting her in here marriage, and how she wished she could have made different choices.

I was reading in Proverbs (Prov. 6:32) some time ago, and it really spoke to me.

Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding;
He who does so destroys his own soul.

I thought about replacing the word “adultery” with “sexual immorality” or “sexual promiscuity,” and I thought about how unwise it was to be sexually promiscuous. And how people who participate in it do not really understand that yes there may be pleasure, and yes they may feel as if they are getting away with something, but what they don't realize is that they are really destroying their own soul.

This sex thing is so serious. It's not easy, but making a wise decision is so important, no matter how hard it is to do the right thing.

So I guess if she were to ask me for advice I would ask her if being around him drew her closer to God or away from God. And I would just say:

What would you advise your own daughter, if she was in the same situation?

Don't Feel Sorry for Yourself

“Stop feeling sorry for yourself and you will be happy.”

— Stephen Fry

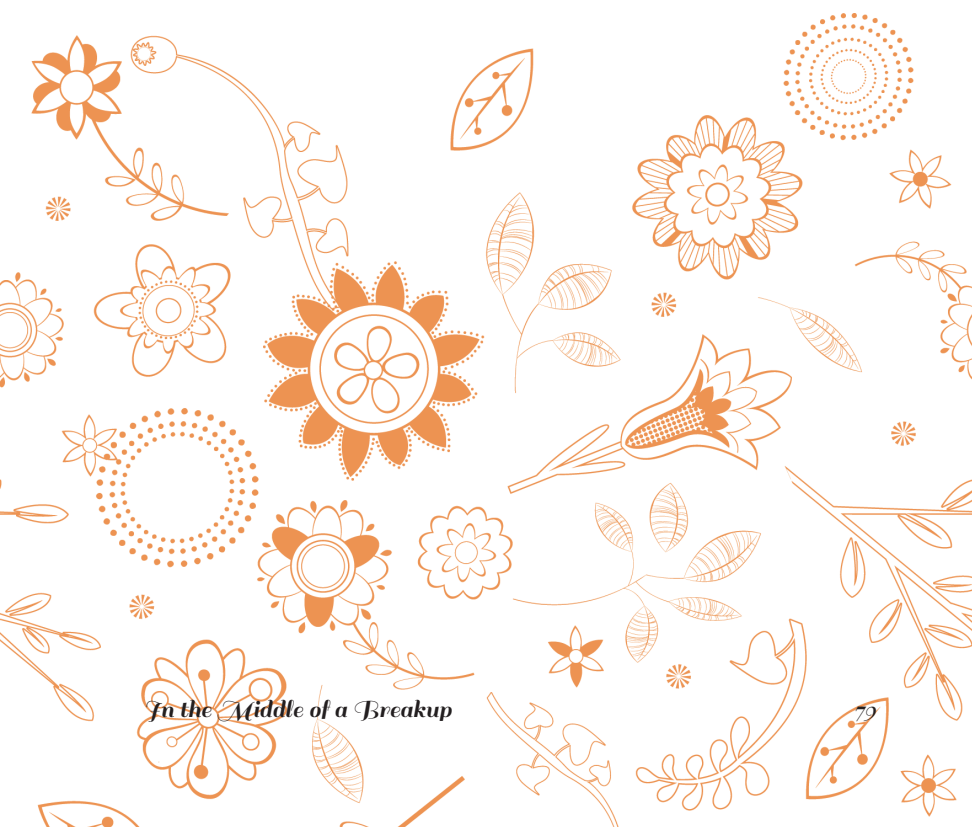
Sometimes when I think about past relationships I'm tempted to think that all those guys can't be wrong, maybe there really is something wrong with me. Then I sigh, shake my head, smile and say “Nah! I'm fabulous.”

When you've been through many relationship ups and downs, you may start to second-guess yourself, and start to dislike some of your decisions and some of your experiences. You may be tempted to feel depressed, and you may start questioning whether you'll ever be happy, whether you'll ever be with someone who truly loves and appreciates you, or whether you'll always be stuck choosing between the one that loves you so much and you only like a little, or the one you love so much but he only likes you a little.

No matter how tempting it may be, try not to feel sorry for yourself.

No matter how tempting it may be, try not to feel sorry for yourself. Remember that for all the guys in the world, you only need one good one. You only need one guy that is willing to lay down his life for you, and that you are willing to lay down your

life for. So don't feel sorry for yourself that things haven't worked out with all the other jokers, because after all you're a queen, and you deserve a king.



Section 3

Life After

It's time to move on... you've given yourself time to think about the hurt, and the lessons you've learned, you've given yourself time to heal and to rethink your future without him, so what's next?

Now that you have this new lease on
life,

What do you do with it?

.....

Where do you go?

.....

How do you begin?



Ready to Date Again

“People always fall in love with the most perfect aspects of each other’s personalities. Who wouldn’t? Anybody can love the most wonderful parts of another person. But that’s not the clever trick. The really clever trick is this: Can you accept the flaws? Can you look at your partner’s faults honestly and say, ‘I can work around that. I can make something out of it.’? Because the good stuff is always going to be there, and it’s always going to pretty and sparkly, but the crap underneath can ruin you.”

— Elizabeth Gilbert

You’ve been through a lot and you’ve survived.

So it’s been a while since the breakup, you’ve gone through your process of grief, you’ve forgiven him, and now you can think back on what you went through and even appreciate the lessons, but now you’re wondering what happens next? You put a temporary moratorium on dating, but now you’re thinking it’s time to unleash your new found self to the world. And I say go for it girl!

to be a hermit, and never feel any pain, or you can decide to put yourself out there, and expose yourself to the potential of pain and the amazing realities of love. It's not up to you to control what other people do, but it's up to you to choose your reaction to what they do. You can choose to be single for the rest of your life, because you were hurt before, and that's fine. You can choose to be bitter and disappointed for the rest of your life, or you can choose to dust yourself off, and move on to the next life lesson. It's important for you to remember that you always have a choice, I pray you choose wisely.



Create Boundaries

“When we fail to set boundaries and hold people accountable, we feel used and mistreated. This is why we sometimes attack who they are, which is far more hurtful than addressing a behavior or a choice.”

— Brené Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are*

In every relationship there is a point where the relationship participants have to draw a line as to what is safe and unsafe, what is accepted and unaccepted, and what is important and unimportant. After the breakup, it becomes a time to analyze where were the breakdowns in the relationship, which boundaries did not exist, and which boundaries were disregarded or torn down?

Then decide to start creating or rebuilding those boundaries and preparing them for any kind of storm that you may go through. Let him know from the beginning what you will and won't do, and let him know what the consequences will be for the crossed boundaries. And then stick to your words no matter how hard it may be. If you can't uphold your boundaries, he will never respect your boundaries either.

Fun & Simple Date/Activity Ideas

“You’ve gotta dance like there’s nobody watching,
Love like you’ll never be hurt,
Sing like there’s nobody listening,
And live like it’s heaven on earth.”

—William W. Purkey

So you want to hang out with your beloved, but you don’t want to spend too much money? Great, I have some ideas for you:

Bike Ride. Cook together. Go to the gym together. Take a class together. Read a book together and discuss. Plan a picnic. Go to the Beach. Go to a Park. Go to a fast food restaurant, or a café. Go window shopping. Go hiking. Plant a garden. Play videogames. Go to a concert. Play tennis. Play basketball. Play any fun sport together. Take dancing lessons. Visit the zoo. Go fishing. Volunteer together. Play Monopoly, tic tac toe, crosswords, Sudoku, Scrabble. Learn to play musical instruments together. Bake. Go to a museum. Go to a water park. Visit friends. Visit family. Horseback riding. Go on a day cruise.

Section 4

Make it Work

You're now in a relationship you like, and boy do you want it to work. You remember the hurts from the past breakup, and you swear to yourself that you won't make that kind of mistake again.

So what do you do?

How do you make it work?

.....

What changes can you make?

.....

How do you make sure you have a healthy
mindset?



Perfection Doesn't Exist

“You don’t love someone because they’re perfect, you love them in spite of the fact that they’re not.”

— Jodi Picoult, *My Sister's Keeper*

I want to marry prince charming, and I want him to take me off on his white horse and I want us to live happily ever after. I want to live the Disney dream, where after I meet the right one, he solves all my problems, and brings me nothing but joy...

But sadly that guy doesn't exist. There are many great guys out there, but they are not perfect. I once joked that if I could take the good I like from three of my guy friends, I would be able to create the perfect guy. And those guys are probably thinking the same thing about me too.. (although they better not let me catch them doing it though!)

There are many great guys out there, but they are not perfect.

But anyway, thankfully we only get to pick one. We only get to focus on one. When we are with someone that is good, there will be things they do that may be absolutely disgusting to you, or things they do that you may not understand, but that doesn't necessarily mean that you should completely write them off. The beauty of a healthy relationship is that there are two imperfect people com-

pletely aware of their imperfection, yet trying to exist together despite their imperfection.

In the words of Dr. Myles Munroe, getting along with another person is “art.” The more you practice this art form, the better you will get at it.

So be patient with one another, don’t let imperfection surprise you. Expect it, embrace it, and move on, and hopefully your man will do the same for yours.



The Scars Are Not Forever

“It’s so hard to forget pain, but it’s even harder to remember sweetness. We have no scar to show for happiness. We learn so little from peace.”

— Chuck Palahniuk, *Diary*

I recently discovered shea butter, and coconut oil, and jojoba oil, and all these wonderful oils that are great for our bodies. Scars that I’d had for years, due to carelessness, or accidents, or ignorance have begun to be a thing of the past. My skin continues looking better everyday, and it made me think about emotional scars that I had been carrying around...

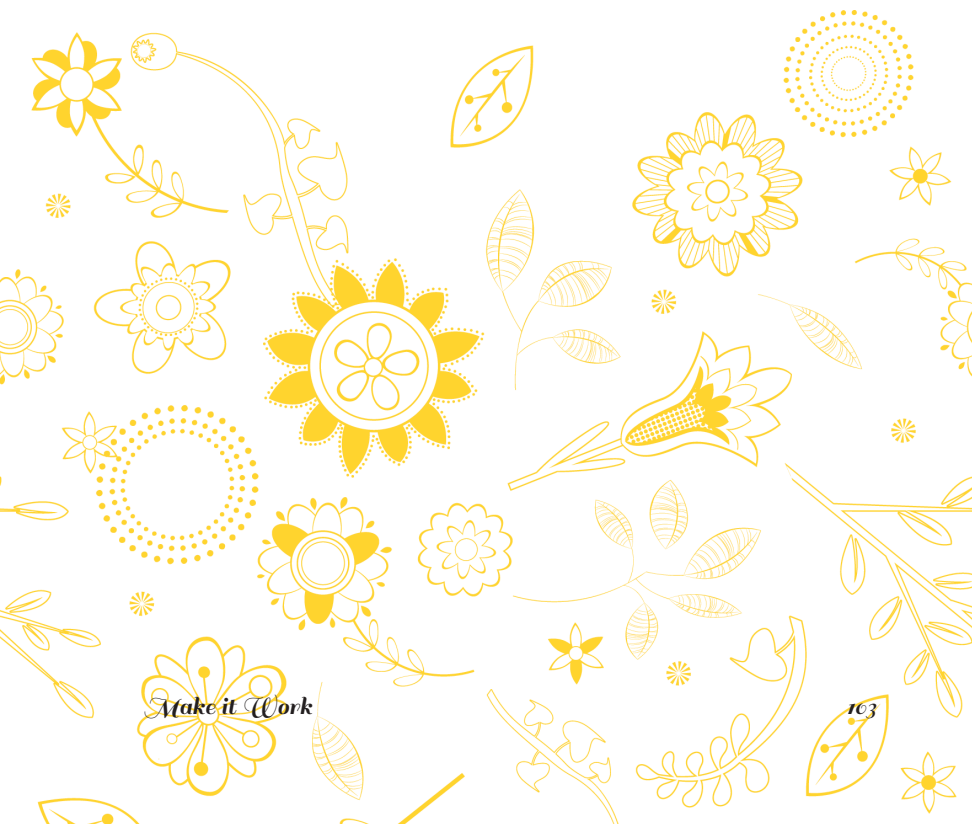
Sometimes people tell us that some of our experiences leave scars with us that remind us not to make those mistakes again. Some people say that even Jesus had scars on his hands and feet, so why would we expect to be any different. But I’ve begun realizing that just as Jesus took the punishment of our sins, our pains and sorrows, he also took our scars so we don’t have to carry it.

When we let go of the pain, and we let go of the scars, we can go into a relationship fresh, willing to make things work, willing to focus on the person we are with, without comparing them to the other.

Our pains, mistakes and failures can burn us and leave us bitter, and leave us vowing to never make those mistakes again, or they can burn away the impurity in us that made us susceptible to the decisions we made. We cannot blame ourselves for what others do, but we are responsible for our reactions. We can choose to look back on the memories and smile and be thankful for the lessons learned, or we can choose to focus on the pain from the experience.

When we let go of the pain, and we let go of the scars, we can go into a relationship fresh, willing to make things work, willing to focus on the person we are with, without comparing them to the other. We can choose to listen to what this person is saying, without assuming they are just like the other.

We can choose to love beyond the pain, beyond the suffering...and as we learn to love, the fear disappears – because perfect love casts out all fear.



We All Handle Conflict Differently

“You see, a conflict always begins with an issue - a difference of opinion, an argument. But by the time it turns into a war, the issue doesn’t matter anymore, because now it’s about one thing and one thing only: how much each side hates the other.”

— Neal Shusterman, *Unwind*

One of my good friends disappears when he’s angry. Even if you were the CIA, Secret Service, you would never be able to find him, he says he just doesn’t want to say the wrong thing when he’s upset. One of my other friends is cold whenever she’s angry. She’ll talk to you, but you wouldn’t be sure she’s talking to you because she would treat you like you were a stranger.

We’re all fellow
journeymen trying to
make it in the world, so
please be patient with us.

One of my friends yells and screams and curses people out when she’s angry. One of my friends gets very quiet when there is conflict and says nothing. One of my other friends talks faster and louder when there is conflict...

We all deal with anger differently, we all deal with conflict differently. The important thing is realizing this, and being patient

with each other. We can't just say, "if it was me, I wouldn't..." Because it doesn't matter if it was you, it's obviously not you... what matters is how is your partner handling it, can you give him some space so he can deal with it his way? Can you talk to him about how it makes you feel when he distances himself from you, or walks out in the middle of an argument? Can you encourage yourself by focusing on the good times in your relationship instead of the present pain, whenever you're in the middle of a conflict?

It's not easy, and it will never get easy, but it can get easier...

We're all fellow journeyers trying to make it in the world, so please be patient with us.



Close Doors

“I learned that love can transcend race and time, and that it can be beautiful and perfect and worth fighting for but also fragile and heartbreaking, and sometimes sacrifice is necessary. That sometimes it’s you against the world, and there are no easy answers. That you have to know when to hold on... and when to let go. And even if that love comes back, you could discover something in someone else who has been there all along.”

— Julie Kagawa

I find it hard to close doors on things, because you never know when you may need that leopard skin polka dot stiletto heels, or that lime green and orange striped jump suit with fur accents... hey! bell bottoms came back in style...so who knows...

But the problem with not letting things go is that you don’t have the room for the new fresh, and fabulous things that are out there.

Sometimes you also have to close doors on people, not because you dislike them, or because you’re angry, but because they may be distracting you from having the kind of relationship you desire.

If you're so busy hanging out with Joe, Sam, Boo and the other guys, how will you have enough time to see if Mr. Right

So if you find yourself with too many doors open, that all the mosquitoes and other bugs are flying in, it may be time to prayerfully consider closing some doors, and focusing on one person at a time.

is really Mr. Right? How will you keep yourself from comparing Mr. Right to all the other guys, because as we all know Mr. Right is not going to be Mr. Perfect...well because Mr. Perfect does not exist.

Maybe there is something Joe does that you just love, or that Sam does, or Boo and the other guys. Just because Mr. Right

doesn't do those things you may begin to wonder if he's truly the one for you.

So if you find yourself with too many doors open, that all the mosquitoes and other bugs are flying in, it may be time to prayerfully consider closing some doors, and focusing on one person at a time.

Fight for Love

“But I can be alone without Yoko, but I just have no wish to be. There’s no reason on earth why I should be alone without Yoko. There’s nothing more important than our relationship, nothing. And we dig being together all the time. Both of us could survive apart but what for? I’m not going to sacrifice love, real love for any whore or any friend or any business, because in the end you’re alone at night and neither of us want to be. And you can’t fill a bed with groupies. It doesn’t work. I don’t want to be a swinger. I’ve been through it all and nothing works better than to have someone you love hold you.”

— John Lennon

I once told a guy that sometimes I argue with him, not because I think I’m right, but because I want to express something that concerns me and I want him to show me that I’m wrong... maybe even allay my fears...

Love is not just a feeling, it’s action. Sometimes you have to fight for it. You have to fight for love. You can’t just accept what happens as what “will” happen. If this is the one you want to spend the rest of your life with, then you have to fight to make

it work. Unless of course there is a really bad character flaw, then that would be an exception.

If this is the one you want to spend the rest of your life with, then you have to fight to make it work.

A guy once told me that he made provision to forgive me. I know it sounds mushy or cliché, but there is something beautiful about realizing that someone is committed no matter what. That someone is willing to fight for the two of you to work out no matter what...

So you don't have to be afraid of doing the wrong thing or making the wrong decision or making mistakes... instead you can focus on making the relationship work, because you know that there is provision for forgiveness waiting for you if you mess up, and you know that this love that is growing between you is worth fighting for!

There will always be something to pull you apart, there will always be someone who's "better," there will always be something... so you can't afford to have the nonchalant "if it's meant to be" attitude... Fight!

Even If That One Thing is Annoying

“I love being married. It’s so great to find that one special person you want to annoy for the rest of your life.”

— Rita Rudner

So he takes your car to the mechanic whenever there’s something wrong with it, lets you borrow his car (while he takes public transport) when you need it, thinks of creative things to do to take you out, listens to every concern and everything you talk about, forgives you when you’ve done something wrong etc. etc. etc... but yet there’s that one annoying thing... he doesn’t open the door for you...

Take time out today to think of three things he does that make you happy, and focus on those things.

LOL...I know some of you may think I’m being ridiculous. But haven’t you been in a relationship with an amazing guy where he’s so amazing and everyone says how amazing he is, and how lucky you are to be with him, but all you can focus on is that one annoying thing. Something that should be so minute, has been enlarged until it is a gargantuan concern, just because you have focused on it so much!

Well friend, you aren't that hot either. If I were to sit with you, I'm sure together we can come up with 773 things about you that are annoying as well. So perhaps you should be a bit more generous with this person. We have already established that he's not perfect, and we've already established that no one is perfect, so perhaps it's time for you to start learning to focus on the amazing things about him.

Take time out today to think of three things he does that make you happy, and focus on those things. Send him a text message or email to let him know that you appreciate those things about him. The more you focus on the good things, the more miniscule the bad things become.



Imagine Your Ideal Relationship

“For the two of us, home isn’t a place. It is a person. And we are finally home.”

— Stephanie Perkins

The interesting thing about life is that whatever we focus on is what we become. If we focus on beauty and truth we become more beautiful and truthful. But if we focus on sadness and betrayal, we become sadder and less trusting of people.

This is also true in relationships. We can focus on all the things we want that our partner is not giving us, or we can focus on what our ideal relationship would look like and start doing those things. If in our ideal relationship we smile a lot, then we can start

If in our ideal relationship we spend time together praying, or doing activities that we enjoy, then we should take the time to pray and try to do the activities that we enjoy.

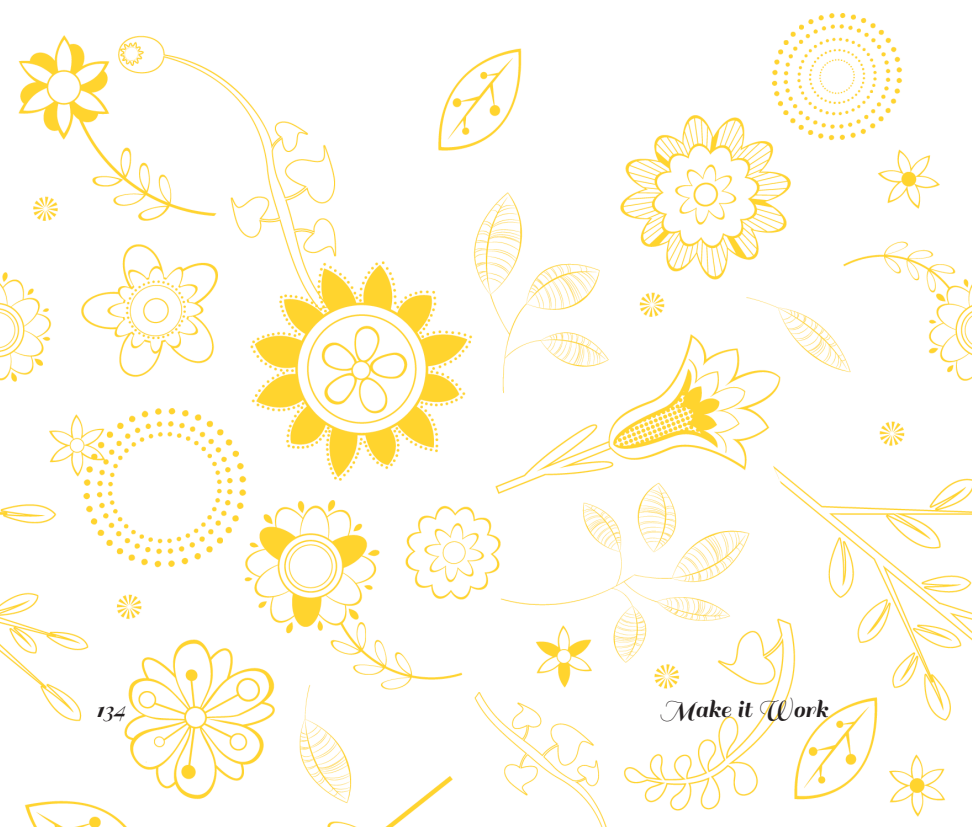
smiling and expect things to happen that would make us want to smile more. If in our ideal relationship we spend time together praying, or doing activities that we enjoy, then we should take the time to pray and try to do the activities that we enjoy.

We can’t wait for our partners to shape up before we decide to do things differently. Granted, it does take two to tango, and

your relationship will not be great just because you decided to change. But when you change, you're inviting your partner to change as well.

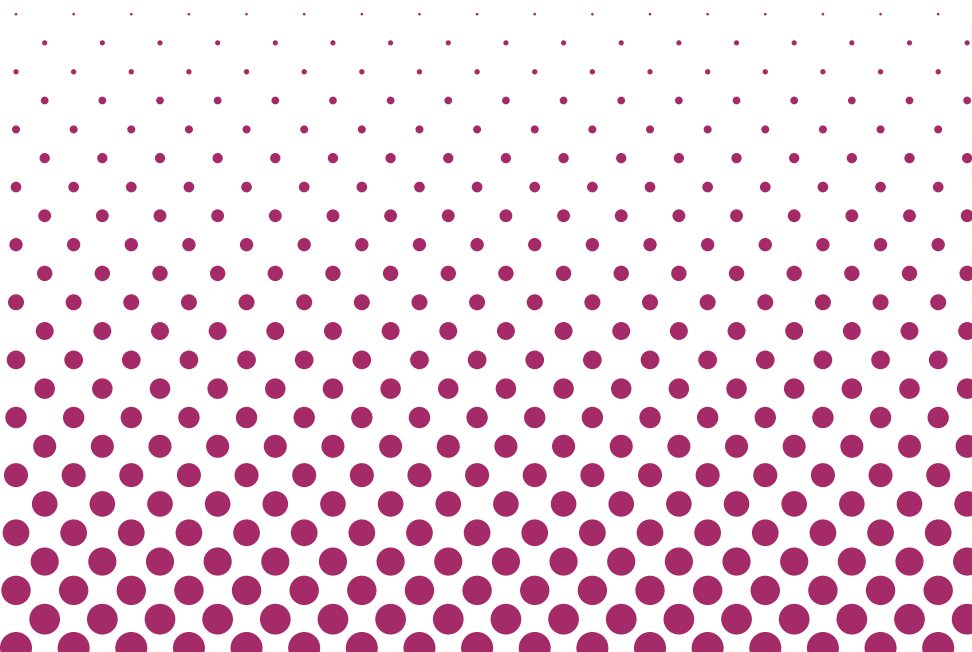
And there is something about the good guys out there. They are very simple, and all they want is for you to be happy. So if you can express your desires to them, the things that would make you happy, then they will eagerly do it – especially if you've shown them that you are willing to do things that make them happy as well.

So instead of using your imagination to worry, or to think about all the ways you've been hurt in the past, use your imagination to think of ways that you can make him feel special and make your relationship even that much better, and before you know it people will be asking you for tips on how to have the kind of relationship you have with your partner.



About the Author

Osayi Osar-Emokpae is one of those people that is down to earth, and you can't help but love her. Her first mainstream book "Impossible is Stupid" launched her as an author and motivational writer. She loves spending time with friends and family, and she especially loves spending time with her man.



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