How to Heal Heartbreak

by Kandace Simmons

Love is an act of courage. Life is so much sweeter when you open your heart to love in all its forms, yet an open heart inevitably will result in heartbreak at some point in your life, if not many times. Perhaps an intimate relationship has ended. Maybe a loved one has died, or a friendship has reached its conclusion. Or, you may just feel that you are not experiencing the life that you wanted or planned.

Many years ago, three beloved relatives including my father passed away within a six-month period. My heart was ripped open and the pain of the loss seemed unbearable and unending. My life is much more vibrant because of that journey and other experiences with heartbreak. Just as a bone that has healed is actually stronger than it was before the injury, I deeply believe that heartbreak is an opportunity for you to expand your capacity to love.

The Top 10 Big Ideas

1. Acknowledge that You Are Hurting and Mourn
   Our emotions can run from the highs of joy and pleasure to the depths of pain, trauma, and loss. Emotions are part of what makes us human and how we experience life. Rather than pretending that you are not hurt or suppressing feelings that seem not so nice, walk through the fire and allow yourself to feel the pain. When you postpone mourning, you actually delay and frustrate your healing process.

2. Forgive
   Forgiveness is a powerful tool for personal transformation. Staying in a state of resentment is like allowing a virus that you can control to eat away at you from the inside. Forgiveness does not mean that you agree with a situation or someone’s unkind behavior. You need not stay in a constrictive relationship. Forgiveness is the recognition that you can liberate yourself and be free. Sometimes the most important person to forgive is yourself. Once you resolve in your heart to forgive, people and tools will become available to you to help you. Do it for yourself.

3. Volunteer
There are few things more healing than helping someone. Volunteering reminds you that you have something to offer and that someone else needs you. It’s an opportunity to meet new people and be in a different environment. It is an outward reminder that you matter and can positively influence someone's life. Plus, a study has shown that engaging in charity activates the same part of our brains as a good meal or sex. Who knew that being of service could feel so good!?

4. **Make Space for Namaste Moments**
When you say “Namaste,” it means that the light within you sees, acknowledges, and honors the light in someone else. One night before going to sleep, I stated out loud that I wanted to see the face of the Divine. The next day, I experienced many unexpected acts of kindness from people I had never met. It was only at the end of the day that I realized what had happened. I was being shown Namaste in action. Set an intention to see the Universe in everyone, and you may experience something wondrous.

5. **Spend Time in Nature**
Nature expresses itself in its highest possible state. Unlike us humans, nature does not have the power to choose to be less than its ultimate calling. The tree does not worry if its trunk is crooked. The blade of grass never has a bad hair day, and the rose feels no concern about the opinions of the other blooms in the bush. Take a walk in the park, stroll along the water, or just put a rock in your hand and experience the perfection of nature. Know that you are a part of that energy.

6. **Seek to Learn the Lesson and Experience the Sweetness of the Relationship**
Every experience is an opportunity for you to grow. When you are ready, take the opportunity to go into witness mode and review the catalyst for your heartbreak with detachment and without judgment. There are lessons for you, and the main teaching may be that you can survive to thrive once again.

7. **Hang Around People Who Embrace Joyful and Healthy Ways of Living**
When you are experiencing hurt, heartbreak, and pain, you are in a very tender place. Invest your time with people who choose to be positive and healthy. They will help lift your spirits and remind you that you can feel better.

8. **Begin to Appreciate Solitude**
There are many great teachers out there for meditation and mindfulness. I first learned to meditate in the midst of my heartbreak over the death of my father in a plane crash. My teacher told me to start with one minute a day. Now, I suggest the same to my clients because the goal is to make meditation a daily habit like brushing your teeth. You can start by simply closing your eyes and focusing on your breath with no judgment about whatever thoughts pass through your mind. Your responses to everything that goes on around you – from what is expansive or feels good to that which hurts – will change by getting comfortable with seeking your answers within through meditation.

9. Delight in Your Senses and Your Physical Body
Some may say that the path of healing is to transcend feelings and emotions. You have incarnated into a body. Your body is a means through which you experience life. It is to be appreciated. You can see and hear and touch and taste and smell. These are the benefits of being alive. When was the last time that you rejoiced in the feeling of the warm sun or a cool breeze on your skin? How about biting into a piece of fruit and slowing down to experience the exuberant sweetness of the juice? What about appreciating the cleansing power of water on your naked body in the shower or bath? Invest time in the gift of your senses.

10. Open Your Heart to Love in All of Its Forms
In English, we only have one word to describe all types of love. In ancient Greek, agape was translated unconditional love, such as love from the Divine or the Universe. Philia was defined as brotherly/sisterly love with eros equaling intimate/erotic love. If your heartbreak is one area, seek to experience love by giving and receiving a different expression of love. Tell a friend or relative that you love him or her. Share your smile with someone you don’t know. All love is healing and transformative.