

How to Embrace the Single Life

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You were in a relationship, perhaps one that you thought would last the rest of your life, but now you're not. You might be sad, angry, or even relieved that it's over. Now, you have the rest of your life to look forward to.

There are plenty of things you can do when you're single that are harder, or even impossible, to do when you're in a relationship.

Take advantage of your new, single status:

- 1. This is a great time to spend some time with yourself.** You can't know yourself until you spend a fair amount of time alone with yourself. Relationships require a lot of time and take up a lot of mental space.
- 2. Appreciate the new-found freedom.** Relationships restrict your freedom in many ways, and not just socially. You don't always get to choose what you're going to watch on TV or what you're having for dinner. Weekend and holiday plans also have to include the wishes of your partner.
 - **You can have everything your way for a change.** Take advantage of your single status by making all of the decisions without having to consult with anyone else.
 - **Make a list of everything you want to do now that you're single.** Create a list that will get you excited, then vow to start doing a few of them. See if you can do everything on your list.

3. **Pick up a hobby you've always wanted to try.** You have more free time now. Find an enjoyable way to spend it. Now is the perfect time to try something you've been thinking about for years. Maybe you've always wanted to learn how to prune bonsai trees or to play the violin. Now is your time.

4. **Reconnect with your friends.** We often lose track of friends and family while we're in a relationship. Pick up the phone and let everyone know you're available to socialize. Take the initiative by inviting a friend out to lunch and catch up. They'll be glad to hear from you, and you'll enjoy the company.

5. **Let go of the past.** It takes time to get over a failed relationship, but there's no reason to drag it out longer than necessary. Look forward to the future and leave the past in the past.

6. **Take your time before dating again.** There's no rush. Enjoy the benefits of being single before jumping into another relationship. **You're the only one that will know when the time is right.**

7. **Spend time doing things your partner hated.** This might mean going to the local high school football game or watching a foreign film at the little theater on the other side of town. You can do all of the things you avoided doing because your partner couldn't stand them.

8. **Volunteer.** It's easy to feel sorry for yourself after a breakup. One way to help yourself move on is to work with those less fortunate than you. Look around for a cause that stirs your heart and get involved.

Remember that you're a complete person, even if you don't have a partner at the moment. Being single doesn't have to be a bad thing. There's so much you can do now that you couldn't before. You can spend more time with your friends and family

without feeling guilty. You have more free time and more control over how you spend it.

Take advantage of being single. Have fun and find yourself again. Another relationship will come along when you're ready.