



*Sex and relationships*   *Lifestyle / Family & Relationships*



Luisa Tam

## The Naked Truth | How to get back with an ex and give love a second chance after breaking up – tips on rebuilding a relationship

For some of us, no matter how much hurt and devastation we may be feeling, the hope of a relationship working second time around is too hard to resist

Here are some simple tips to help couples get back on track and the danger signs to watch out for

Reading Time: **4 minutes**

Why you can trust SCMP



Listen



---

**Luisa Tam**

Published: 8:00pm, 8 Mar 2020 | Updated: 8:00pm, 8 Mar 2020

Advertisement

Even after a messy break-up, it's common to wonder if we have made a mistake – whatever the reason for separating may have been. This can lead to contemplating whether it's worth giving things another chance and doing things differently.

Advertisement

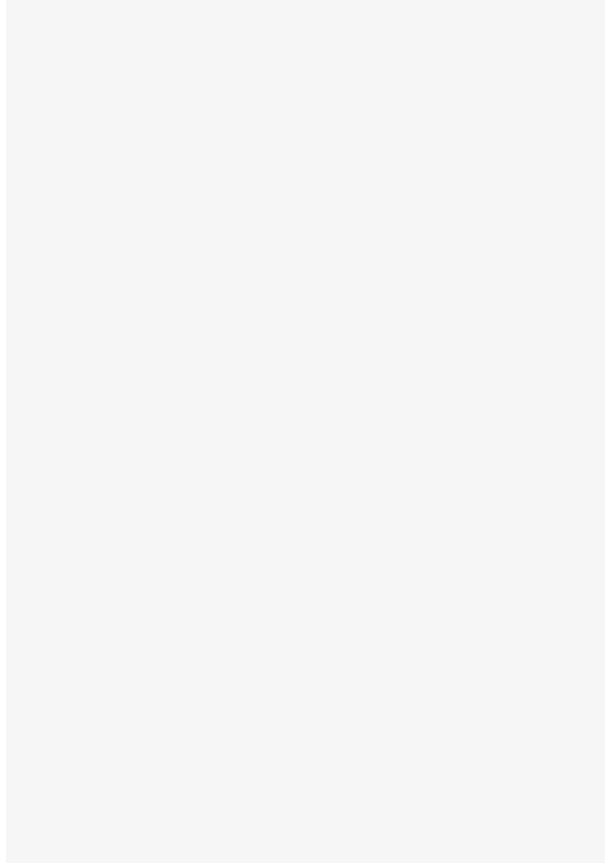
No matter how much hurt and devastation we are feeling, some of us still cling on to the hope of giving love another go. This is especially true when we feel that a relationship ended before its time.

Despite the challenges, if you are willing to fight for it and explore the opportunity, a new chapter in your old relationship can begin.

But we mustn't overlook the importance of allowing time to process what we are going through, and of both parties being on the same page when working towards a reunion.



If you and your ex are determined to rekindle the romance, you first need to think hard about whether it's really worth starting over. Photo: Shutterstock

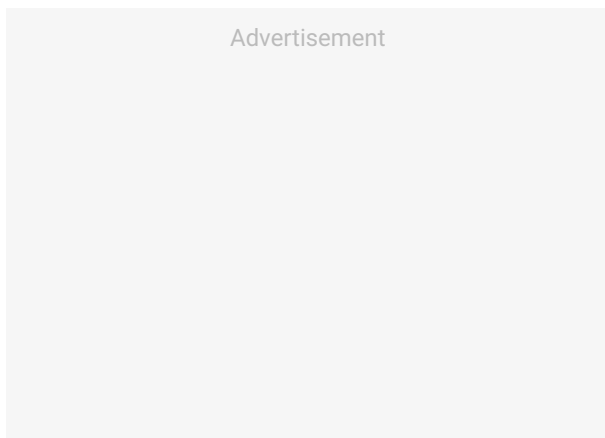


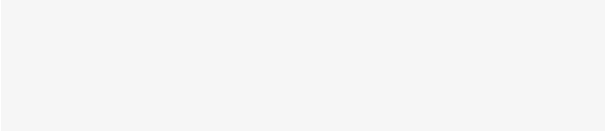
If you do it right, the time apart will help you both learn, heal, grow, and return to each other as better people. Together you can now find the missing pieces to reconnect and be whole again.

Be forewarned though, because reconciliation is incredibly hard. Even when you do get back together there is no guarantee that it will last. But if you and your ex are determined to rekindle the romance, you need to assess if it's worth going ahead by following these few simple rules.

First, discuss what led to the break-up in the first place. Ask yourselves if that issue has been resolved. If not, then you need to address it before deciding to get back together again, advises Dr Kristin Zeising, a clinical psychologist and certified sex therapist.

Advertisement





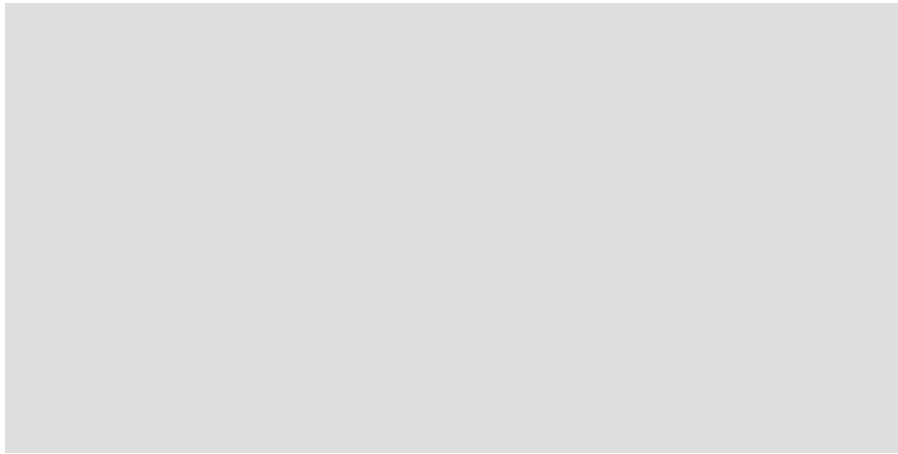
For example, if the issue was a financial one, be clear on how you will negotiate spending money in the future. If it was related to parenting, find a way where you can work together as a team. If it was about different lifestyles or values, make sure you are honest with yourself about whether you can accept these differences.

“It is about admitting to your role and take responsibility for what went wrong in your marriage or relationship. You can’t change what you don’t acknowledge,” Zeising says.

“Ask yourself: have you forgiven them, or do you still hold on to that resentment that built up in the first place? What would you need to let go of that? Have you found that the grass isn’t greener on the other side and you now have a different perspective about the relationship?”

Advertisement





Dr Kristin Zeising is a clinical psychologist and certified sex therapist.  
Photo: Kristin Zeising

In assessing whether it's worth working towards reuniting, Zeising says: "We know that relationships are made up of positives and negatives. Think about the positives this person brings to your life."

Those who really want to make it work need to prepare themselves on different levels and synchronise their "speed".

Advertisement

#### FURTHER READING

[The Naked Truth](#) | Destined to be together: the 'twin flame' theory explained

---

[The Naked Truth](#) | 'Who am I?' How good self-concept improves relationships, sex

---

[The Naked Truth](#) | Touching, bonding and relationships during a viral lockdown

“Take things slowly. Continue to check in with yourself about how you’re feeling about the relationship. It’s important to be honest with yourself about what you’re feeling and not get caught up in the fantasy that this will all be different this time,” Zeising warns.

She explains that some aspects of the relationship will likely be different, so you need to allow for love to grow again. If there are children involved, couples need to tread even more cautiously.

“It’s best to not get [children’s] hopes up prematurely. This could put more pressure on you to reconcile even if things aren’t going as well between the two of you as you would like. And don’t share with them that you’re back together until you feel certain you are ready to commit.”



If some warning signs or red flags pop up, you need to address them head-on. Otherwise you’re going to be repeating the same dynamic that broke you up in the first place

— Dr Kristin Zeising

If there are still unresolved problems such as jealousy or a lack of physical intimacy, you need to confront them head-on and make sure you are both in a calm and grounded place to discuss them, she points out.

Advertisement

If either partner hooked up with other people during the separation, it's best not to share all the gory details, Zeising says.

“That can only lead to hurt feelings, jealousy, or beliefs that maybe your relationship was easy to get over,” she says.

And if you are really curious about what happened during your separation, Zeising says to keep questions and responses general and don't ask questions you don't want to hear the answer to.

Advertisement

“Remember that whatever is said can't be unsaid,” she warns. “It is important that you practise safe sex until you have a conversation about your sexual health and if you have been sexually intimate with others.”





Dealing with old unresolved problems can help restart a relationship. Photo: Shutterstock

Eventually, you need to assess if the reunion is working. First, see how you're feeling around your partner. If you feel at ease and can be yourself, it is a good sign.

Advertisement



Other ways to gauge progress include asking: do you feel this time is different and the same issues aren't popping up like before? Or are you starting to go down the same path that led you to trouble before?

"If some warning signs or red flags pop up, you need to address them head-on. Otherwise you're going to be repeating the same dynamic that broke you up in the first place," Zeising says.