

Feelings at the End of a Relationship

When a relationship ends, we experience a welter of feelings. These feelings include:

- **Denial** – We cannot believe that this is happening. We cannot believe that the relationship is over.
- **Anger** – We are angry and often enraged at our partner or lover for shaking our world to its core.
- **Fear** – We are frightened by the intensity of our feelings, that we may never love, or be loved again, and that we may never survive. Yet, we will.
- **Self-Blame** – We blame ourselves for what went wrong and replay our relationship over and over, saying to ourselves, “If only I had done this. If only I had done that.”
- **Sadness** – We cry, sometimes for what seems like an eternity, for we have suffered a great loss.
- **Guilt** – We feel guilty, particularly if we choose to end a relationship. We do not want to hurt our partner. Yet, we do not want to stay in a lifeless relationship.
- **Disorientation and Confusion** – We do not know who we are or where we are anymore. Our familiar world has been shattered. We have lost our bearings.
- **Hope** – Initially we may fantasize that there will be a reconciliation, that the parting is only temporary and that our partner will come back to us. As we heal and accept the reality of the ending, we may dare to hope for a newer and better world for ourselves.
- **Bargaining** – We plead with our partner to give us a chance. “Don’t go”, we say, “I’ll change this and that if you will stay with me.”
- **Relief** – We can be relieved that there is an ending to the pain, the fighting, the torment and the lifelines of the relationship.

While some of these feelings may seem overwhelming, they are all “normal” reactions and are necessary to the process of healing so that we can eventually move on and engage in other relationships. Be patient with yourself. If you would like to talk your feelings over with someone, contact the Counseling Center at (616) 331-3266. Speaking with someone can help put things into perspective.