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How to avoid a person whom you love

Share on PinterestMost people would agree you generally can't help who you fall in love with. But in some circumstances, you might wish that weren't the case. Maybe you love someone who doesn't feel the same way about you. "The longing that accompanies one-sided love can affect emotional well-being and cause a lot of discomfort," explains Kim Egel, a marriage and family therapist in San Diego.Or perhaps you love someone who continually demonstrates they don't have your best interests at heart. Maybe you and a partner love each other intensely but have too many differences to sustain a lasting partnership.Regardless of the situation, love is a complicated emotion. And even when it's clear that a relationship isn't doing you any favors, it can feel impossible to simply turn off your feelings. These tips can help you start the process of moving forward. Optimism isn't a bad trait. In fact, the ability to hold on to hope in difficult or painful situations is typically considered a sign of personal strength. But when it comes to struggling relationships, it's more helpful to consider the present reality than the future you imagine.The person you love may not feel the same way. Or maybe you feel wildly in love during intimate moments but spend the rest of your time together disagreeing over just about everything. If you believe giving up on your relationship or love for someone means you've failed, think again. It takes courage and self-awareness to recognize this. You've taken a positive step toward self-growth.Simply realizing your relationship isn't going anywhere probably won't make your feelings disappear overnight, but it's a significant step. Taking a careful look at what you want from a relationship, as well as what you absolutely don't want, can help you pinpoint the ways a love interest may not be the best match. Say you and your FWB have a great thing going. The more time you spend together, the more connected you feel. Eventually, you realize you've fallen in love with them. But there's one big issue: Days, sometimes a week or more, often pass without you hearing from them. You send them Facebook messages and notice they've been online, but there's still no reply.If you prioritize good communication in relationships, their inability to get back to you in a timely manner is a pretty good indicator that they're not a good match.When you recognize the ways someone you love doesn't quite meet your needs, you might have an easier time getting over your feelings. "Some loves might always scratch at your heart," Egel says. "Some relationships, especially those that were an integral part of growth at pivotal times in our lives, thread through the inner makings of who we become." Letting go of a meaningful love can make you feel like you're also letting go of everything it once was. But try to take the opportunity to acknowledge the good things about the relationship, including anything you might have learned from it. Validate those feelings. Give them space in your heart. Denying your emotions or their significance can hold you back. Honoring your experience and letting those intense feelings become part of your past can help you begin to find peace and move forward. What's more, acknowledging the past importance of your love can help you see how it's no longer serving you. Love for an ex or someone who doesn't return your feelings can limit you. If you stay stuck on someone you can't have a relationship with, you'll likely have a hard time finding happiness with anyone else. Even if you don't feel ready for anything serious, casual dating can help you realize there are plenty of great people out there. Once you do want to date more seriously, finding the right partner might still prove challenging. It often takes some time. Dating frustrations can make it especially tempting to dwell on the person you already love. But commit to looking forward, not back into your past, even if it's difficult at first. If no one feels quite right, you may still need time to work through your lingering attachment. It's perfectly fine to enjoy casual relationships while doing this work. But handle these situations with integrity: Be open and honest about what you're looking for and what you're currently able to give. People getting over heartbreak often tend to "forget" about other important relationships in their life. Your friends and family members can offer support as you work to heal. They may even have some helpful insight or wisdom to share from their own experiences. Loved ones can also provide strength and guidance if you're trying to heal from the effects of a toxic relationship. Just be sure to pay attention to how your interactions make you feel. If you feel someone is judging you or your choices, or making you feel bad in other ways, it may be wise to limit your time with them. When you feel head over heels in love, you might make small (or not so small) changes to your appearance or personality to align with what you think they want in a partner. Consider those parts of yourself you might have denied, pushed down, or altered. Maybe you dressed more snazzily than you'd prefer, started following a sport you had zero interest in, or gave up on your favorite hobby. Or perhaps you avoided fully expressing your emotions and stopped asking for what you needed. Do you feel comfortable with those changes? Thinking about the parts of yourself that you could have easily lost in the relationship may help diminish love for someone who didn't truly love you for you. This may seem like an obvious step, but it's an important one. When you're ready to move on, distance can be your best friend. Even an occasional text, call, or Snapchat can rekindle those feelings you thought you'd already left behind. You may want to avoid contacting the person unless you really need to, like if you share custody of children or work together. If you're friends who used to spend a lot of time hanging out, it may be wise to spend time with other friends for the time being. You might want to maintain your friendship. That's not a bad goal if the relationship was healthy. But consider waiting until the intensity of your love fades. Otherwise, you may end up causing yourself unnecessary pain. Feelings of love can and do fade, but this generally isn't a rapid process. And it's very normal to feel a lot of discomfort in the meantime.Here are some tips to help you through this period:Have patience with yourself.Practice self-compassion by telling yourself what you might tell a friend in the same situation.Accept that it's natural to hurt.Remind yourself the pain won't last forever.Loving someone who's not right for you, even someone who hurt you, doesn't make you foolish or flawed. It's easy to see the best in someone and hold out hope that they'll change. It can take time to shift your perspective and realize they probably won't change. "Matters of the heart can get us where it really hurts," Egel notes.She recommends therapy as a helpful resource when you:have a hard time living your life as you typically wouldfeel confused about your feelingsfind yourself in a dark placehave trouble acknowledging or accepting your feelingsTherapy provides a safe, nonjudgmental space to explore emotions and talk through strategies for productively addressing them. A therapist can also teach you coping skills to manage these feelings until the intensity lessens.It's always best to seek professional help right away if you:Humans are unique beings with complex emotions. No matter how much you want to stop loving someone, it's hard to simply flip a switch on your feelings. You may always carry those feelings with you in some form. Love doesn't always go away just because we want it to. But even if you can't entirely stop loving someone who doesn't love you or who's caused you harm, you can manage those feelings in positive, healthy ways so they don't continue to cause you pain. Crystal Raypole has previously worked as a writer and editor for GoodTherapy. Her fields of interest include Asian languages and literature, Japanese translation, cooking, natural sciences, sex positivity, and mental health. In particular, she's committed to helping decrease stigma around mental health issues. 1 Try to stay away from places they're likely to visit. You probably have a good idea of what the person you love likes to do and where they often go. Use this information to avoid spots where you're more likely to run into them, such as grocery stores near their house, their gym, or their favorite restaurants.[1] For example, if you know they visit Chinese restaurants often or study at the local library, try ordering your Chinese food or studying at a coffee shop instead. If there are places that you have to go where they might be, try to go at times where the person is less likely to be there too. 2 Hide the person on social media so you don't see their posts. Even if you try to avoid the person in real life, it can be hard to truly get away from them with social media showing you what they're doing all the time. Hide their profile so you can't see it, or unfollow them to clear your feed of their posts.[2] Facebook lets you hide a person's post when they show up in your newsfeed, and you can also unfriend or block people. Try unfollowing the person on Instagram or Twitter so that their posts don't show up for you to read. Advertisement 3 Be upfront and tell the person you need space. Sometimes telling the person directly that you need to cut ties with them is the best way to go, and it reduces a lot of stress and anxiety related to avoiding someone. Tell the person politely that you need space and would prefer that they don't contact you in the foreseeable future.[3] For example, tell the person, "I'd really appreciate it if we could give each other some space and not interact for awhile while I work through some things." 4 Block them so they can't contact you, if necessary. In extreme cases, it might be easier to block the person on your phone and social media so that they can't talk to you at all, and you can't talk to them. Your phone allows you to block phone numbers so that they can't call or text you, as do most social media sites.[4] This works well if you don't have the willpower not to try talking to them. You're usually able to unblock the person later on, if desired. Advertisement 1 Stay as far away from them as you can if you see them in person. If you see the person you're trying to avoid, it's best to put as much distance between the two of you as possible. If you're inside a room, like a restaurant or office, try going to the opposite end of the room. If you're outside, you have a lot more space to maneuver your way away from them. If you see the person at school, walk to a different end of the hallway or sit at a desk on the opposite side of the room. If you see the person while you're at work, walk to a different room if possible, or look down if you're sitting at your desk so they can't see you as well. 2 Shift your gaze so you're not looking at them. While it's okay to glance at the person every now and then to see where they are, don't stare or make eye contact with them. By ensuring that you're never spotted looking their direction, you're less likely to have to interact with them.[5] Focus on what you're doing and try to avoid thinking about them so that you don't even have to worry about accidentally looking at them. 3 Start up a conversation with someone around you. This not only helps distract you from the person you're trying to avoid, but it also makes you appear busy. If there's someone standing near you, try starting up a simple, polite conversation with them for a couple of minutes.[6] If you're talking with another person, the person you're trying to avoid is less likely to come interrupt you. 4 Leave calmly if you notice the person walking over to you. If you see the person you're trying to avoid coming over to you and you really don't want to interact with them, walk across the room in the opposite direction or leave entirely. Do it calmly and without making a big deal out of it. 5 Give a concise, neutral response if they talk to you. If you tried your best to avoid them but you just weren't successful, be polite. You don't need to start up a long, detailed conversation with them, but you can shut down the conversation quickly and politely by answering with 1-word answers or politely nodding your head.[7] If you want to continue talking to the person but know it's a bad idea, it's especially important to remind yourself to give neutral, short replies. For example, if the person asks you how you're doing, just say, "I'm doing well, thanks." Advertisement 1 Practice moving on and being in the present. Whenever you catch yourself reflecting on the past or thinking about the person you're trying to avoid, refocus and think about your present and future. This will help motivate you to move on and set new goals for yourself. Set goals such as getting in shape, learning a new skill, or advancing in your career. Think about the things that are currently going well in your life, such as your job, social life, academics, or personal health. 2 Focus on the person's negative characteristics when you think about them. When you love someone, it's easy to only think about their positive attributes, or the qualities that you love about them. By reminding yourself that they have flaws, it'll help shift your outlook and make it easier for you to stay away from them.[8] For example, the person may be very kind, but maybe they also are always showing up late, have trouble keeping promises, or are a bit lazy. Reflecting on what you didn't like about the relationship can also help you avoid those things in the future.[9] 3 Put yourself first. Put aside any thoughts you have about the person you love and are trying to avoid, and instead start focusing on yourself. Evaluate your own needs and spend some time reflecting on how you can make yourself happier, healthier, and more content. Set aside time each day just for you, whether it's through reading each morning, doing yoga, or reflecting in a journal. Try out a new activity like boxing, cooking, or swimming. 4 Stay busy through distractions. Try to fill your time with activities and goals, no matter how big or small. The busier you are, the less time you'll have to think about the person you love, making it even easier to avoid them. For example, start a daily routine of going to the gym, reading, going to work, gardening, and then cooking a new recipe.[10] Try to choose distractions that get you out of the house and moving, such as going on bike rides, thrift shopping with friends, or volunteering. Advertisement Ask a Question Advertisement Thanks! Thanks! Advertisement This article was co-authored by Sarah Schewitz, PsyD. Sarah Schewitz, Psy.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist by the California Board of Psychology with over 10 years of experience. She received her Psy.D. from the Florida Institute of Technology in 2011. She is the founder of Couples Learn, an online psychology practice helping couples and individuals improve and change their patterns in love and relationships. This article has been viewed 49,616 times. Co-authors: 6 Updated: December 30, 2020 Views: 49,616 Categories: Relationship Issues Print Send fan mail to authors Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 49,616 times. 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