



eharmony Unlocks the Secrets of Heartbreak in Dating Diaries Report

eharmony's **Dating Diaries report**—a series of timely consumer studies that uncover how Americans feel about their love lives right now—has returned! This time, our report is honing in on a universal experience: heartbreak. Many people have gone through heartbreak in their dating lives. Whether it's a broken engagement, a sudden breakup, or unrequited love, heartbreak can be a painful and life-changing experience.

In this edition of Dating Diaries, we explore the hidden world of heartbreak, its impact on people's lives, and reexamine tired dating terms we've grown accustomed to. For example, as the summer heat fizzles out and colder weather rolls in, **a quarter (26%) of singles are going through a breakup right now, peaking at 37% among Gen Z**, signaling an end to cuffing season as we know it. Instead, this fall 50% of singles aren't sure what they're looking for or are looking for something casual. eharmony is dubbing this autumn the **"Fall Out Season,"** as our report uncovered an all-new attitude toward coupling up during colder months.

Furthermore, how do breakups affect our perspectives on dating, sex, and relationships? And how do Millennials and Gen Z differ when it comes to handling rejection or rekindling old flames? Grab your tissues and get ready to embrace the feels; our report dives into all this and more.

The Breakup Overview: From DTR-ing to How We Cope

Breakup season is upon us. And with this season comes varying reasons to breakup, including lack of communication (48%), growing apart (39%), infidelity/cheating (33%), and more. There are also a plethora of ways to cope with heartache. More often than not, breakups can make you more guarded when embarking on future romances. In fact, **84% of Gen Z singles believe that past heartbreaks have made them 'more cautious' about relationships**, and 72% say it made them 'less trusting' in relationships.

The most common ways Gen Z singles cope with heartbreak are:

- Taking a break from dating: **55%**
- Talking to friends: **50%**
- Exercising: **50%**

"Fall is the season when many relationships may come to a natural end," shares Laurel House, an eharmony relationship expert. "The heat is off, and the chilled-out summer vibe is coming to an end as individuals are getting serious about life again. Couples who are coming back from summer vacations are now reconsidering what they really need and want out of life and love, creating this year's "Fall Out Season." The holidays are around the corner, so reevaluating what type of person they want to spend those special moments with is in the back of their minds. That being said, many singles are also choosing to stay single instead of falling into the flood of the cold weather-instigated cuffing season."



Millennials turn to therapy. The Therapy Generation, Millennials, are living up to their namesake, with singles and those in relationships being more likely to cope with therapy than any other generation (26%).

Situationships cut deep. As the lines between casual flings and committed love blur, more hearts are being shattered from situationships than committed relationships. In fact, **three-quarters of singles (75%) have had their heart broken from a situationship, spiking at 82% among Gen Z.** What does this mean for the way we internalize our feelings? For singles, **53% found their situationship heartbreak equally or more painful as a longer “real” and committed relationship.**

“Situationships can be confusing and emotionally complex because they don’t have the clear boundaries and expectations that come with a committed relationship,” shares Minaa B., an eharmony relationship expert. “In a situationship, two people may be spending a significant amount of time together, sharing intimate moments and feelings, and even engaging in physical intimacy, but without any clear commitment or path towards a future together it can leave both parties feeling uncertain, anxious, and vulnerable. Additionally, because there may not have been a formal commitment, it can be harder to find support from friends and family who may not understand the emotional investment and vulnerability that comes with a situationship.”

Define ex? And while the most commonly accepted definition of an ‘ex’ among those in relationships is any exclusive relationship regardless of length (40%), nearly a quarter (**23%**) of **Gen Z in relationships consider anyone they’ve dated for at least a month an “ex”, regardless of exclusivity.**

Gen Z’s Experience With Rejection

When Gen Z makes the choice to sever ties, the ways to reject someone run the gamut. **The most common types of rejection Gen Z singles are experiencing are:**

- Not being texted back: **49%**
- Breadcrumbing (sending out flirty cues without a real intention for commitment): **45%**
- Being ghosted: **44%**

“Gen Z is a no-drama generation. They tend to be easy-going, conflict avoidant, and can sometimes come across as non-committal,” explains House. “In attempting to avoid drama, many Gen Zers are jumping out of entanglements in styles that can be confusing for the person on the other end.

Block, delete, and unfollow. Once Gen Z singles are rejected, they are most likely to react by accepting the behavior and moving on (44%), followed by giving the other person space (43%) and confronting them (35%). **And 35% of Gen Z singles ‘always’ scrub exes from their social media accounts.**

The Ex-Factor: Rekindling, Sex with an Ex



Will they, or won't they? The decision to break up is huge, with many going back and forth on it for months or even years. In fact, while over a quarter (28%) of singles knew they wanted to end their most recent relationship within month one, only 23% actually ended their relationship at that time. Even after a breakup, the door isn't always closed, with **70% of single Millennials having sex with an ex after breaking up with them.**

Infidelity blurs the lines. 7 in 10 (69%) singles have been cheated on. And **58% of singles have had sex with someone after finding out they cheated on them.**

“One reason someone might choose to get back together with an ex-partner may be because the familiarity and comfort of the past relationship is more appealing than the uncertainty of starting a new relationship with someone else,” explains Minaa. “Others may feel the need to reconcile with their ex in order to regain a sense of control and power in the relationship, after getting cheated on. Nevertheless, the decision to get back together with an ex is a complex one and requires careful consideration of the dynamics at play. With honest conversations, couples therapy, and commitment from both partners, there is opportunity to establish a healthy and fulfilling relationship.”

No matter what happens, closure is key. Two-thirds (68%) of those in relationships believe it's important to get closure from an ex after a breakup to help them move on. Sometimes your end goal is closure, but you end up getting back together. In fact, 6 in 10 adults in a relationship have rekindled a past relationship, **with Millennials leading the charge at 73%.** And the good news is these rekindled relationships are much more likely to have improved (43%) than worsened (20%).

Ending on a high note. While experiencing a breakup is nearly inevitable, almost three-quarters (74%) of singles have learned that they are 'more resilient than they thought' after a breakup. **And almost two-thirds (63%) of singles still believe in the concept of 'the one', peaking at 73% of Gen Z.**

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About “The Dating Diaries” Report

The Dating Diaries: Unlocking the Secrets of Heartbreak 2023 report was commissioned by eharmony and conducted by Harris Interactive. The survey was fielded online between June 27th, 2023 and June 30th, 2023 and surveyed over 2,000 participants. Participants qualified if they were aged 21+ and were either married, cohabiting, in a relationship, or were currently dating. Results were weighted to be nationally representative by age, gender, and region.

About eharmony

Los Angeles-based eharmony has helped over 2 million people find real love. As one of the original dating platforms, eharmony has been at the forefront of creating meaningful relationships based on its innovative Compatibility Matching System. The company operates in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. For more information visit www.eharmony.com or download the app available on both [iOS](#) and [Android](#).