

Literature review on break up strategies

Life



Ending any kind of relationship is found to become a traumatic experience to both parties involved. This could include a romantic relationship, friendship and even business partnerships. All relationships involve strong interpersonal communication skills that would allow the parties involved to cope and eventually heal emotionally. There are five phases in breaking up from a relationship. Duck (as qtd in Dickson, Saunders, and Stringer, 1994 & "Interpersonal Communication," para 18-22) identified the break up model to have the breakdown phase, intrapsychic phase, dyadic phase, social phase, and grave dressing phase.

However, any break-up solution would not work successfully unless the three factors in the relationship are identified, namely - the high level of satisfaction with the relationship, the acknowledgment of both parties of the time and effort that has gone into building it, and the absence of new compensatory attachments. (Dickson et al, 2004) According to Dr. Margaret Paul, people try their best to end relationships gracefully such that the society perceives it as a reflection of their worth when someone does not want to be with them any longer ("Ending Relationships," para 1).

But ending relationships gracefully will always have to go through hurting the other person's feelings. A person may meet wonderful people though they may not feel any connection to them or a single individual alone. And the only way that person can end that relationship is telling the other the truth. There are on the other hand various strategies in breaking up from a relationship as identified by Baxter (1982, 1984 qtd in "Interpersonal Communication," para 12-17) as either unilateral or bilateral and indirect or direct.

Some of these strategies identified were avoidance, Pseudo de-escalation, cost escalation, fade-way, the blame game, and others. Much early work examining initiation, intensification, and termination as relational goals simply compiled ad-hoc lists of strategies for redefining relationships without organizing strategies around a theoretical framework. More recent work has suggested that theories of politeness or facework may be applied to foster understanding of how people regard and respond to the relational goals of initiation, intensification, and termination of relationships. (Kunkel, Olufowote, Robson, & Wilson, 2003)

Politeness theory is one of the most commonly utilized strategies implemented by individuals in order to enact their desired behaviors from their partners. According to the theory, convincing another person to alter his or her own behavior is inherently face threatening, thus they use politeness strategies to try to balance the competing goals of persuading the other and supporting the other person's face. But politeness theory falls short in its ability to explain how compliance seekers must contend with multiple potential face threats to both their own and the target person's face.

(Kunkel et al, 2003) In an article written by Janet Jacobson on countrysingles.com, their study showed that "leavers" and "lefts" have various coping strategies after breaking up from a relationship. "Leavers" focuses more on self-enhancement strategies through understanding and improving themselves by spending more of time with friends and families and dates other people. There were however those who become introspective and spends time alone, reflecting on the relationship they had left. (Jacobson, 2004)

On one hand, individuals who were left behind focus on self-enhancement. The same with the “ leavers,” “ lefts” spend time with friends and family but they keep themselves more busy with work and/hobbies. They are more likely to change their perspectives on the relationship as much as they try to change their physical appearance to “ look good. ” There were also those who bad-mouths former partners and those who become intentionally mean by flirting with their past partners and eventually dumping them off.

Avoidance was as well another strategy identified by the respondents of the study upon coping up with breakups. (Jacobson, 2004) References & Works Cited: Dickson, D. , Saunders, C. , & Stringer, M. 1994. Rewarding People: The Skill of Responding Positively. International Journal of Social Psychiatry. Interpersonal communication relationship dissolution. Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interpersonal_communication_relationship_dissolution#Phases_of_dissolution on December 7, 2007. Jacobson, J. 2004.

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