

Today

4

DAY 4:

widow for a DAY

Unlike the pity party you threw yourself on Day 1 when you focused all of your efforts on feeling the pain while exorcising your ex from your home and heart, and Day 2 when you denied your ex's actual existence, today you get to channel a different kind of loss. Instead of being a breakup survivor, on Day 4 you're going to transform into a relationship widow. You're even going to hold a funeral, burial, and wake in honor of your deceased relationship—and that's not all! You'll also write a death certificate, eulogy (to perform at the funeral), and last will and testament to determine the breakup beneficiaries. Sound fun? Crazy? A little of both? Good!

As crazy as it sounds, today is an exceptionally important step in your recovery. By being a relationship widow, you allow yourself to properly mourn the death of the life you had with your ex, a life that encompassed many beautiful, amazing, fun experiences. That's the thing about breakups. They're like

Today, I feel . . .

little deaths. The life you once had no longer exists. While there are plenty of reasons that's a blessing (with more and more reasons revealing themselves as you heal and move on), there are also plenty of reasons that you're hurting. Maybe you didn't see the breakup coming so the shock and surprise feel overwhelming. Or maybe you initiated the breakup, and now feel a sense of disappointment that *what could've been* will never be. Or maybe the breakup was mutual, with both of you realizing that your lives were going in different directions and that it was simply time to move on. Even so, the sorrow and loss you experience is very real. At times, it can feel suffocating. But before you hyperventilate or hide under the covers until the year 2050, now would be a good time to remind yourself that everything you're feeling is perfectly normal. In fact, it's healthy. In other words, let the grieving begin! The following are some suggested activities to help you channel your inner widow today:

Experience the Five Stages of Grief

During your twenty-one-day action plan, you'll most likely experience the five stages of grief. They are:

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

As a widow, you may encounter them all in one day. Or, since you already spent Day 2 in denial, you just might decide to skip straight to anger. Go ahead, engage your rage! Kick, scream, curse your ex, and cry until the anger subsides.

Once you've exhausted your anger, give yourself plenty of time to bargain your way through the disbelief surrounding your breakup. Give yourself permission to be needy, clingy, and downright pathetic as you beg (in your head or on paper—*not* to your ex) your loser of an ex-boyfriend to come back to you. Don't worry. You'll grow tired of being such a bargaining mess and snap out of it eventually. When you do, you'll probably fall into a dark depression. Fighting your feelings won't do you any good. Instead, really live in and love the fear, agony, and darkness. Eventually, you'll pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and experience a level of acceptance that ultimately helps you move on. Don't stress if you don't experience all five stages of grief today. You've got seventeen more days to go. (You're doing great!)

Alert Your Boo-Hoo Crew

Being a widow for a day can be a solitary adventure, or you may recruit your Boo-Hoo Crew for support. Only you will know whether you want to include your support system in the funeral, eulogy, and wake. If you do, call, e-mail, or text the funeral details early in the day so your Boo-Hoo Crew has time to put on their most fab little black dresses, pick up necessary supplies (ex-bf voodoo doll), and arrive with tissues (and cocktails) in hand. Once you've alerted your Crew, get back to being a super-stylish widow!

Write a Death Notice

Schedule some time during the day to write your official relationship death notice (see the worksheet at the end of the chapter). Your death notice should include the following:

Name of Deceased

While it's perfectly acceptable to use your ex's actual name, you may want to get a little more creative. Feel free to borrow these suggested names or add your own!

1. My A**hole Ex
2. Mr. Limp Shrimp
3. Cheating Bastard
4. Mayor McSleeze
5. The Cheap Creep

6. _____
7. _____

Where Death Occurred

Next, you'll want to identify the location where your love died. You may choose to be literal or you can have a little fun with it. Borrow from the following suggested death locations or add your own:

1. In my apartment in the middle of *Grey's Anatomy*
2. Somewhere between my dignity and his emotional unavailability
3. In between the sheets he shared with that skanky ho
4. Via text message (the clueless coward!)
5. In a drunken stupor after a night of partying with the guys
6. _____
7. _____

Cause of Death

Just as it's important to identify who died and the location of your relationship's demise, you'll also want to perform an autopsy to determine the cause of death. This can be a little trickier. Right about now, you may have a lot of unanswered questions. Confused about what went wrong, you may be craving closure and clarity. That's why you'll want to spend some quality time today performing an emotional autopsy on your now-deceased relationship. You may not get all of your questions answered, but you may gain some insights that hadn't come to you before. When in doubt, borrow from the following causes of death or add your own:

1. Ongoing emotional neglect
2. An inability to keep his d*#! in his pants
3. Smug overdose
4. Drowned (in his own bs)
5. Lethal rejection
6. _____
7. _____

Once you've written your death certificate, look it over, date it, and make a copy. You'll want to keep one copy for your relationship records and bury one at tonight's funeral.

Write a Eulogy

Next you'll want to write a eulogy to deliver at the funeral (see the worksheet at the end of the chapter). Throughout the day, keep your journal handy to jot down your thoughts as they come to you. The goal is to craft a scathing eulogy of your ex and his participation in your failed relationship, including every hurtful, nasty, and pathetic thing he ever said, did, or was. By getting in touch with all that breakup bitterness (and fully engaging your rage), you're allowing yourself not only to feel and deal with the pain but you're showing the universe (and your ex, the bastard!) that you're going to do more than just survive. You're going to thrive—BIG TIME!

If you're having trouble coming up with eulogy ideas, feel free to borrow from the following list or add your own!

1. (name) was a kind and gentle soul. That is until his overinflated ego got the best of him and he became an absolute nightmare to be around . . .
2. They say breaking up is hard to do, but (name) had no problem dumping me like old, dirty, smelly garbage . . .
3. My mother never liked (name) and now I know why. I won't bore you with the details, except that here are the top ten reasons he was an absolute ass . . .
4. Here lies (name). Good f\$%@ing riddance!
5. I've met some jerks in my time, but (name) takes the cake . . .
6. _____
7. _____

The Funeral Procession

To fully prepare for your evening activities, you'll need to run a few errands to gather some supplies. First, stop by a toy store and pick up a male doll. It doesn't have to be an expensive purchase and it doesn't even have to look like your ex. Next, stop by the grocery store or your fave restaurant and get delish dinner fixings for you and your Boo-Hoo Crew. Don't forget the wine or cocktails—this is a celebration!

While you're out, you may want to stock up on more boxes of tissue. And if you're planning a cremation, make sure you have matches and a funeral pyre. Come to think of it, you'll want to have plenty of candles, too, and a fire extinguisher handy.

Once you collect your funeral supplies, head home. Put dinner in the fridge to keep cool or in the oven to warm. Then break open that bottle of wine or mix yourself a strong cocktail, light some candles, and enjoy some much-needed "me" mourning time before your Boo-Hoo Crew arrives. To create even more ambiance, put on some somber music. Or if you're in a celebratory mourning mood, put on something with a good beat so you and your friends can dance your bodacious booties off!

The Funeral

Once your Boo-Hoo Crew arrives, it's time to get down to burial business. First, take your doll out of his box but set the box aside. You'll want to use it as a coffin when the time comes (you can use an old shoe box if you prefer, but remember that your ex doesn't deserve much!). Next, take whatever measures necessary to prep the doll for his proper burial. Since your relationship is already dead, let your grief loose on this symbol of its demise. Want to chop his hair off? Go for it! In the mood to stick pins through his eye sockets? You and your gal pals should take turns. Intent on mutilating his genitals? Good luck there, as the doll probably doesn't have any (kinda like your ex, huh?).

Once you've ~~tortured~~ prepped the doll to your satisfaction, place him in his makeshift coffin. If he complains, remind him that he was never very good about saving for a rainy day and this is all you could afford. That'll shut him up.

Next, fold up the death certificate you created and place it in the box with your ex. Then place the box on the floor or on the funeral pyre (be sure

to have that fire extinguisher handy). Toast to his demise, break out the eulogy you wrote earlier in the day, and deliver it in your most dramatic and diva-rrific voice in front of your Boo-Hoo Crew. Really rip your ex to shreds! Talk about the toenail clippings he perpetually left in the tub. Or that he always forgot important dates like birthdays and anniversaries. You can imitate his most ridiculous sex face. And if there are particular passages of the eulogy you want to emphasize, stamp your stiletto-heeled foot on the coffin/box (to the whistles and cheers of your Crew). Or better yet, kick the coffin across the room. In fact, take turns kicking it all over your house! That's considered cardio, you know. The widow's workout: Burn calories while you burn your ex. It's a win-win.

Once you've delivered the eulogy, decide how you'd like to dispose of the body. You can toss it in the garbage, burn it in your trashcan, bury it in the backyard, or take it for a ride out into the country and ditch it. But don't waste too much time with the burial. What comes next is the best part of your day. It's time for the wake. Let the party begin!

The Wake

It's surprising how hungry you can get when trashing your ex, isn't it? Well, now it's time for you and your friends to enjoy that delicious dinner. Set the table with your finest linen, fill every wine or cocktail glass, light some more candles, and toast once again to the recently deceased. Better yet, toast to yourself—the saucy, strong breakup survivor that you are! If you're in the mood, listen to music during dinner. Or if you want to watch a movie, go

ahead. Or if you want absolute silence to reflect on and honor the dead, that's your choice. Do whatever feels right for you.

Movies to Mourn By

Just as you may have parked it on the couch and watched movies during your pity party, today's another day to celebrate your inner couch potato. Only this time, you're in serious mourning mode and will want to choose appropriate movies about lost love, love gone wrong, or long lingering illnesses. Mourn by the following movies or add your own!

1. *An Affair to Remember*
2. *Beaches*
3. *The Bridges of Madison County*
4. *The English Patient*
5. *Ghost*
6. *Legends of the Fall*
7. *Love Story*
8. *Same Time Next Year*
9. *Steel Magnolias*
10. *Titanic*
11. _____
12. _____

After you finish dinner (but before dessert), you've got one more assignment for the evening. And because I believe in saving the best for last, I think you're really going to enjoy it! Just as we inherit valuables when someone close to us passes away and split assets during a divorce, after a breakup we deserve to do the same. So grab a pen

and your journal (or use the worksheet included at the end of the chapter), find a comfy spot, and write your relationship's last will and testament. Recruit your Boo-Hoo Crew to help. Together, get creative in what you bequeath to your ex versus what you keep for yourself. Here are some examples, but feel free to brainstorm your own for the worksheet at the end of the chapter.

POSSIBLE THINGS YOU WANT TO KEEP:

- The dog
- The airline miles you jointly accumulated
- Your dignity
- The flat-screen TV you paid for (even though at the time you agreed to go Dutch)
- Your mutual friends (except for his dumb-ass best friend—good riddance!)
- _____
- _____

POSSIBLE THINGS YOU BEQUEATH TO YOUR EX:

- His horrific morning breath
- His beer belly
- His bland cooking
- His inability to take out the trash without being told to
- His bad jokes
- _____
- _____

Once you've reviewed and revised the will to your satisfaction, put it aside and enjoy the rest of your wine or cocktails with dessert. As you savor the rest of the evening with your friends, toy with the idea of sending the will to your ex. Imagine the horrified look on his face when he reads it. Take pleasure in his displeasure. Finally, enjoy the idea that your ex is no longer living and that you're a widow who's almost done with her grieving. If you feel the need to shed more tears, go for it. Or if you're so inclined to dance on your ex's recently dug grave, feel free. There's no right or wrong way to grieve. Just do what feels right for you. Tomorrow's another day and another chance to wake up, break up, and move on.



Chapter *Check-In*

Whether you decide to mourn privately or with the help of your Boo-Hoo Crew is up to you. The most important thing to remember today is that you are not alone. Many breakup survivors have come before you, and many will follow you. The pain, anger, sadness, and grief you're experiencing are universal. Let yourself feel every emotion, and then release it, knowing that like the many heartbreak survivors who came before you, you too will survive and thrive. You just have to give yourself time. Don't forget to give yourself a gold star or circle on the calendar today, depending on how well you did.

One last thing. You may want to have a Boo-Hoo Crew slumber party tonight. Or you may choose to end the evening on your own. Either way, when it's time for bed climb in, claim the middle, and practice your gratitude for the day, starting with *I am so grateful to have buried the dead. I'm now free to move on to the next stage of my recovery. I am ready!*



worksheet 1

create a breakup death certificate

Create a death certificate for your deceased relationship using this form.

Date _____

Name of deceased: _____

Time of death: _____

Date of death: _____

Where death occurred: _____

Cause of death: _____

worksheet 3

draft a last will and testament

Create a will for your dead relationship. Write down the things you want to keep as well as the things you're bequeathing to your ex.

DATE _____

I, _____ being of sound mind and body, bequeath the following to my ex (a.k.a. Clueless Cad, Fat Bastard, Lying Scumbag):

In addition, I, _____ being of sound mind and body, retain ownership of the following items of value:
