

Is it time to break up?

Should you stay or should you go? Professor Sarah Niblock, CEO of the UK Council for Psychotherapy, and psychotherapist Suzanne Worrica explore how to figure out if your relationship is at an end, and how to reconcile and reconnect if it is at risk



We all have issues in our love lives, but how do we know

whether we are making the right decision to continue a relationship or call it a day? Recognising when to give up on something we have built over time can be overwhelming. What are the signs that a relationship isn't working and can we regain what we have lost? I ask therapist Suzanne Worrica for her insights.

Sarah CEO of the UK Council for Psychotherapy

Psychotherapist Suzanne Worrica shares her wisdom around saving a relationship that is in trouble or finishing one that has run its course

Culturally and socially, we find it difficult to face endings, so getting to the point where you question whether or not your relationship may be over can take a while and is a major step.

The strength and quality of your bond can change over time. Are you still committed to your partner? Do you feel safe expressing negative emotions? Are you connected on an intimate level? Perhaps you fight a lot or are consistently at loggerheads over the same issue.

These factors, if unaddressed, erode trust and your sense of security.

Many people find it hard to see that their relationship is at risk. Denial, the need to stay together for practical reasons or fear of what life might be like without your partner may outweigh the call to address your problems. More often than not, we hope that the other person will change when we should focus on who they are now.

It's good to talk

It is never too late to repair your relationship. Try to communicate your breaking point to your partner and tell them what you want. Listen to their response without interrupting them.

Psychotherapeutic support during turmoil is hugely beneficial. It may be that you want to re-engage with your relationship, find meaning in its end

or work through patterns of behaviour. Whatever the case, everyone needs help through such difficulties. A therapist will offer non-judgmental and unbiased assistance through this painful time and help you find meaning in the outcome.

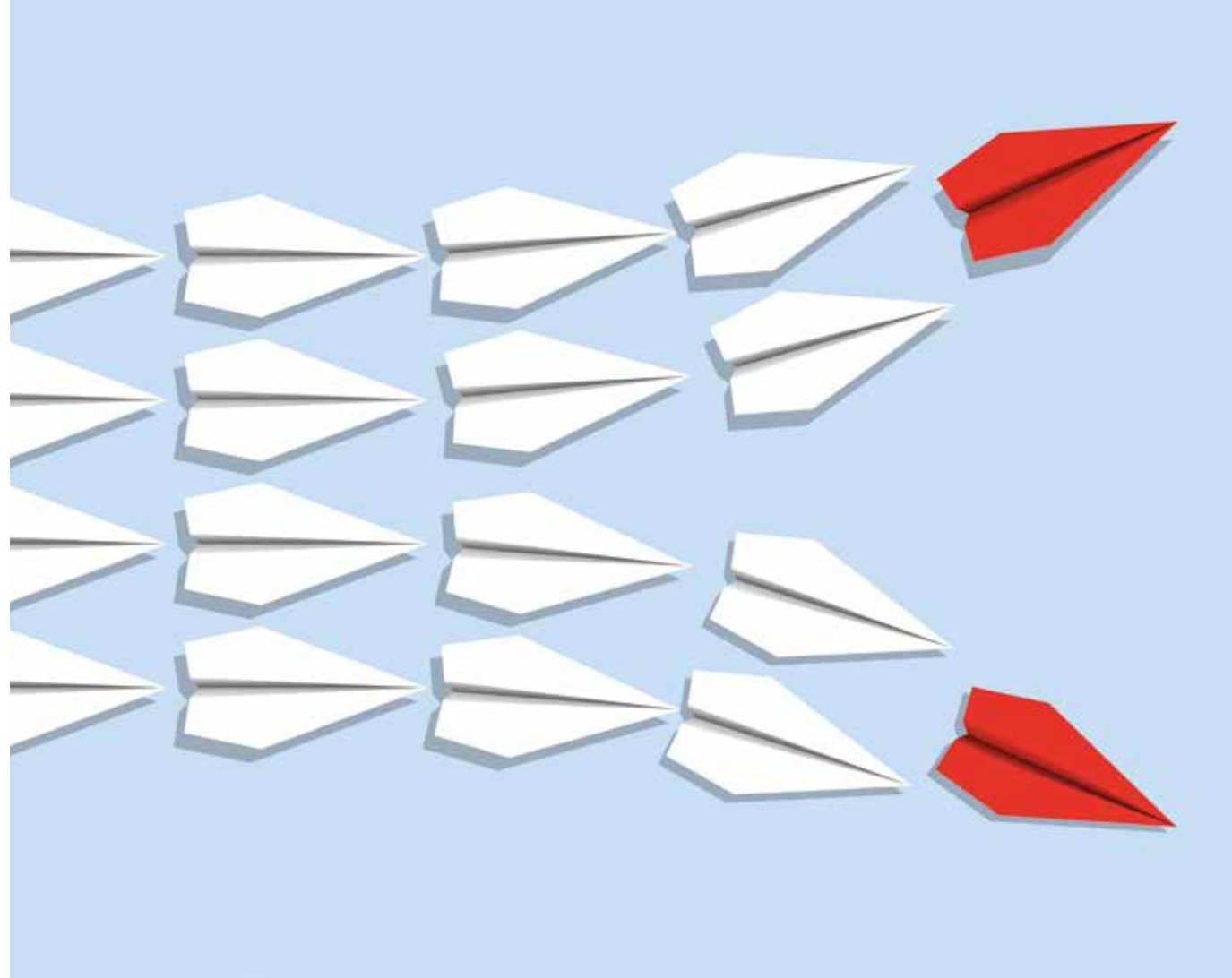
With time and space, you can look back on lessons learned. When you separate, you can have feelings of shame, guilt and anger. But what brings pain and opens up vulnerability builds resilience and wisdom for your next relationship.



The podcast

Do you wonder whether your relationship should end? Perhaps your attachment is not the same and you're unsure about a shared future. Sarah Niblock chats to therapist Suzanne Worrica about the answers to these questions and how to move forward. Listen at psychologies.co.uk/my-relationship-risk-podcast-ukcp

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES



HOW I BECAME A THERAPIST



Relationship expert Suzanne Worrica outlines her journey into psychotherapy

I WAS DRAWN TO THE profession for a long time before I began training. I worked in the voluntary sector for many years, mainly in advocacy work with vulnerable adults. I also had a brief career in theatre – performing, writing and project management.

These experiences, alongside the opportunity to visit many countries for the cultural opportunities, led me to retrain as a psychotherapist. I chose Gestalt therapy because of its focus on the here-and-now experience of the client – how in each moment, a client and therapist co-create a situation, and also because of the attention to the somatic – the body. I don't see how I can leave my body or that of the person in front of me out of the therapy space. I have a particular interest in the interface between talking therapy and current thinking on the brain-mind-body relationship.

suzanneworrica.co.uk

Can you save your relationship?

Can you regain what you have lost? Understanding what has changed and whether your relationship can be rescued is the first step, says therapist Suzanne Worrica. Address these questions alone and as a couple if possible

1 'Is there hope?'
Firstly, consider whether you feel your relationship has a future. Ask yourself these questions: Do I think that my relationship can be saved? And, most importantly, do I want my relationship to be saved?

2 'Can you hold me in times of turmoil?'
When relationships are challenging, it is important to know that you have a partner who will support you emotionally. Do you want to support your partner? Do you want your partner to support you?

3 'Can we forget those niggly little issues?'
Sometimes, it's an accumulation of many small problems that turn into a pattern of dispute. Can you both let go of minor conflicts and focus on the bigger picture?

4 'Can we communicate with each other?'
Meaningful communication is the backbone of any relationship. If you can still communicate openly, there is a good chance that your relationship can be rescued and improved.

About the UKCP and how to find a therapist

• **The UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)** is the leading research, innovation, educational and

regulatory body working to advance psychotherapy for the benefit of all. We have a register of more than 8,000 individual members, who offer a range of therapy approaches for couples, individuals, families and groups. We also have more than 70 training

and accrediting organisations for those who wish to become psychotherapists.

• **To find the right therapist for you,** or learn how to become a therapist, visit psychologies.org.uk

