
THE WRONG AND RIGHT MOVES IN BREAKING UP

Read the following stories to the class, and using a student scribe, record the mistakes made on the board as the stories progress. Suggestions are in parenthesis.

Josie and Stephen -

Josie and Stephen have been "going out" for two (2) months. Stephen has just informed Josie that he would like to see other people and not be committed to just one person. Josie accepted the idea for the first few days, and then she started to pretend that the break up never happened. She was sure that given a few more days, Stephen would come to his senses and everything would be back to normal.

(False hope, living in the past, denying the fact that it is over)

When Stephen didn't come back as expected, Josie began calling his home and begging him to come back. She wrote many notes and letters pleading with him to give her another chance, and telling him she would be different. Stephen finally asked her to stop calling him. He felt sorry for her at first, but then her calls and letters grew annoying. He wanted more than ever to be rid of her.

(Pleading, begging, harassing)

Josie decided on a new approach. She began to quiz their friends for news of Stephen--what did he say about me? where did he go? who was he with? etc. She would wait by his locker and hide so she could watch him, but he couldn't see her.

(Playing detective, spying to gain new information)

After a month and nothing else had worked, Josie was getting really angry. She told Stephen she would start rumors about how he acted when they were alone together, bad ones, so that other girls wouldn't want to date him.

(Threatening, seeking revenge)

Stephen talked to Josie for a long time, and tried to get her to be reasonable. She calmed down, and began promising him anything if he would just come back to her. She wouldn't be jealous anymore, and he could have the freedom to see other girls if he wanted. She even promised to be more "physically loving" if he wanted. She would do anything.

(Unreasonable promises, compromising values and personal ethics)

The feelings were a little better after their talk, but Stephen was not at all interested in reconciliation, especially after all that had been said. Josie had been preoccupied with their breakup and her school work had dropped. Her report card was terrible. She saw Stephen in the hall and yelled, "It's all your fault! You made it so I couldn't work and now look what you've done to me!"

(Blaming)

THE WRONG AND RIGHT MOVES IN BREAKING UP - Page 2

As this sad story continues, Josie decides she needs someone new to shower her affection upon. No one is available that she is really interested in, so she sets her sights a little lower. She jumps from one boy to the next and as a result, ends up feeling hurt and hurting others' feelings also.

(Building relationships on the rebound)

Josie begins to reason that Stephen just didn't think she was good enough for him. "Well, I'll show him!" was her attitude. "I'll give other boys what I didn't give him physically and that will make him sorry he ever dumped me." Unfortunately, Josie gave herself physically to several different boys, she put herself at risk for AIDS and other STD's and lowered her self-concept and lost her reputation. Stephen was not impressed or sorry, except sorry for her.

(Casual sex to compensate)

From Mike's Diary:

I guess everything is getting back to normal. I thought I'd go crazy when Jane broke up with me. But a month has gone by, and I'm not calling her anymore. I still feel sad some of the time, but not as much now.

(Time heals, just let go)

I tried out for the ski team and made it! I didn't really want to, but some friends thought it would help to take my mind off of Jane. I think it probably will--they're probably right.

(Get involved in something else)

It seems strange looking for girls to date again, there are a few really great girls that I hadn't even noticed before. I guess I'll ask one of them to the game on Saturday.

(Put yourself back in circulation)

I saw Jane today with her new boyfriend (looks like a nerd to me). It was hard at first, but she seemed happy and she deserves it.

(Get over the anger, be friendly with ex)

At first, after we broke up, I tried to figure out what I had done wrong. I blamed myself for everything. Then a friend reminded me that people just change and move away from each other sometimes. It's normal, I guess. When I think back, it did bug me the way Jane acted sometimes, so I guess she wasn't perfect either.

(Don't blame yourself, changes are normal)