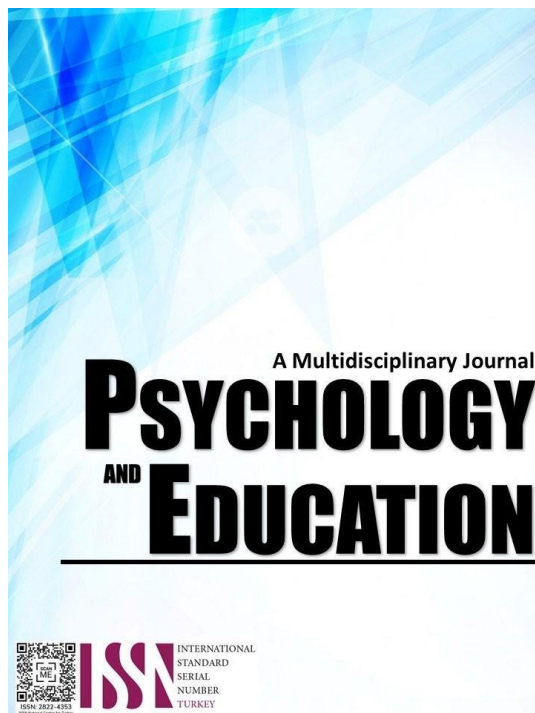


IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S ME: THE STRESS AFTER TRIGGERING THE SEPARATION IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP AMONG BISEXUAL INDIVIDUALS



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It's Not You, It's Me: The Stress after Triggering the Separation in Romantic Relationship among Bisexual Individuals

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the stresses of the initiator during the termination of their romantic relationship among Bisexual individuals. This study uses phenomenological research design that utilizes phenomenological analysis, the purpose of this research is to understand further the experiences of being an initiator of the breakup inside the bisexual community. This study's participants are 15 bisexual individuals who have initiated the break up with their previous relationship and reside within District Five (5) of Bulacan (Balagtas, Bocaue, Guiguinto, and Pandi). The researchers also acquired a semi-structured interview guide that included questions pertaining to their participants' experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of bisexual initiators of the breakup. The findings of this study revealed that bisexual initiators of the breakup experience anger, grief, depressive symptoms, and experience trying to fix the relationship. Aside from that, this study also reveals that bisexual initiators can feel regret, experience confusion about their gender, experience challenges within their previous relationship, and have bad coping mechanisms, as well as finding a reason to reconnect with intrapersonal relationships.

Keywords: *bisexual, initiators, termination, breakup, restore, stress, trigger*

Introduction

Termination of a romantic relationship can be one of the negative life events that can happen in a young adult's life, and it might cause major distress—producing negative emotions such as sadness, anger, or worse, depression and post-traumatic stress for young adults (Eisma et al., 2021). In addition, Wreford (2016) stated that relationship breakups are dealing with the post-breakup life is much more difficult, but regardless of how distressing a breakup is, Randjelovic and Goliovic (2020) claimed that there is a different intensity of pain, sadness, and emotional distress among the initiator and the non-initiator.

Furthermore, Akbari et al. (2022) have found that initiators of the breakup experience breakup distress and a depressive state after their decision, but most likely mediated by forgiveness of self and self-compassion. However, Bronfman et al. (2016) stated that those who didn't make the decision regarding a breakup are those who experience greater distress than the initiator. Which person decides the breakup has a great impact on the adjustments after the event, resulting in the initiators having the easier adjustment rather than the non-initiator (Carter et al. 2018). Meanwhile, Gonsalves (2022) claimed that grief is a devastating feeling after a breakup, especially if one is trying to move on months or years after the relationship dissolution but still remains in that emotional state. However, Gonsalves revealed a 2007 study that found out that 71% of people who have experienced going through a breakup have managed their grief within three (3) months span, while a survey that occurred in 2017 says that moving on is within six (6) months. In addition, Raypole (2022) also revealed the 2007 study of Lewandowsky that had participants who went through a breakup within six (6) months—it takes an average of 11 months to move forward.

Aside from that, Lahti and Kolehmainen (2020) have further claimed that breakups in homosexuals have similar distress to heterosexual breakups, even though homosexual relationships are difficult to know by the world since it is viewed as "less common" (Abraham, 2021). Despite same-sex relationships being less common, Scott et al. (2022) have shown that female-female relationships have higher chances of dissolution rates than male-male relationships—reasons for dissolution of their relationship include lack of sexual intimacy, fights, infidelity, and problems with their own mental health.

Moreover, this study aims to explore the emotional stresses and experiences of bisexual individuals after initiating a breakup. Since breakups are distressing life events that can occur to anyone, especially to those who are in a romantic relationship, no matter what gender a person identifies themselves with—this study also aims to help bisexual individuals to understand that even in their relationship, initiators of the breakup had also experience negative emotions when it comes to the dissolution of their relationship. Additionally, this study also aims to help future researchers in providing evidence and factual information with the same research topic about initiators of breakups among bisexual individuals.

Research Questions

This study entitled "It's Not You, It's Me: The Stress after Triggering the Separation in Romantic Relationships among Bisexual Individuals". This research aims to understand and explore the attitudes of bisexual individuals, focusing on gaining insights into their experiences, challenges, and perceptions. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of people who initiated the breakup among bisexual individuals?
2. What are the initiator's challenges towards the romantic relationship's termination?
3. What are the coping mechanisms that they used to cope up with the grief of initiating a breakup?

4. Based on the findings, what progress can be determined?

Literature Review

Initiator's Experiences Towards the Termination of the Romantic Relationship Among Bisexual Individuals

Lyness (2023) stated that triggering a breakup is hard. There are many reasons for breaking up; for Lyness, one of the many reasons could be growing apart from each other, not sharing the same values and interests, or arguing about something. Steppo (2019) added that there are looming pointers before the breakup triggers like emotional dissociation, for example when the person involved spotted a problem or a potential issue in the relationship to which could trigger a breakup. As detachment could also occur, many reasons could also be found as to why a person detaches in a relationship. They either get drained of how tiring the relationship is or get physically or mentally abused by their partner. Detaching from the relationship or, more likely, emotionally detaching from the relationship could be a way to save oneself from further affecting themselves. An example of why a person detaches from the relationship is when they get involved in matters their partner is involved in, eventually taking responsibility for the person's actions and behaviors (Dyke, 2021).

Infidelity, on the other hand, also plays a huge role in making a person feel depressed and lowering their self-esteem, thus eventually affecting their emotional well-being. As infidelity has a destructive impact on the termination of the romantic relationship, even before the breakup occurs, grief is felt. It also shows that before the initiator triggered the breakup, the initiator felt upset about finding out about the infidelity that occurred. Gender also played a part as well, with men feeling more upset when it's about sexual infidelity while women feeling more upset when it's about emotional infidelity, and in terms of heterosexual relationships, gay and lesbian, they feel more upset when it's about emotional infidelity, feeling more distress as well as anger in response to the emotional infidelity that occurred. (Rokach & Chan, 2023). Moreover, termination of the romantic relationship can produce negative emotions such as sadness, grief, depression, and feelings of betrayal (Verhallen et al., 2019). Thus, It is not always the non-initiators who experience these negative feelings; Filkenstein (2014) has further claimed that the feelings of terminating a romantic relationship can be compared to losing someone whom a person shares a life with. Filkenstein also added that initiators also experience negative emotions such as grief after the termination of the romantic relationship.

According to Shulman et al. (2017), As breakups are a part of a romantic relationship, distress follows a breakup. Distress is a part of the aftermath of a breakup, and emerging adults experience distress on different levels. For Bronfman et al. (2016), distress had a wide range of variability, wholly depending on the emotional impact the breakup had on the person. Some could receive minimal distress, while some had received an intense version of distress. Adding to the fact that the length or duration of the relationship played a part in the intensity of the distress the person could experience. An adolescent having a high level of depressive symptoms on distress from breakups can result in recovering being much more difficult. According to Field et al. (2013), both the high-distress group and low-distress group showed that they experienced negative emotions like depression, anxiety, and anger, with the high-distress group scoring more than the low-distress group and having the tendency to have feelings of less forgiveness.

Randelović and Goljović's (2020) study stated that the status of the initiator was later determined to have a statistically significant connection with anxiety by evaluating the impact of the predictor and the variable. With a higher level of anxiety comes a higher level of breakup distress and emotional distress. If the rejected partner was the one experiencing the high levels of anxiety, the distress will also be as high as well. Given that these individuals are sensitive to rejection by others, it would seem that acting as a stressor can be a cause for a strong emotional reaction. On the other hand, a person who went through a breakup and experienced a low level of anxiety may experience a low level of breakup distress, even if they were the initiator or the rejected partner.

Psychological Distress has always been associated with romantic relationship breakups. Del Palacio-González et al. (2017) stated that memories had a huge influence on the severity of the psychological symptoms, whereas a higher frequency of positive memories played a big role in breakup distress at a higher level either because of feelings of loneliness and disbelief that the relationship had ended already. It could be concluded that positive memories when reminiscing could trigger grief-related symptoms or breakup distress. On the other hand, negative memories, when reminiscing, could trigger a depressive symptom aside from breakup distress; thus, both memories, whether positive or negative, could elicit breakup distress. Furthermore, Kansky and Allen (2018) reported that post-breakup stress, anxiety, grief, and sadness are not just the negative things that one can experience through a breakup; people who have gone through a breakup also experience abusing substances in-take, lowering in self-esteem, low satisfaction in life, and poorer physical health during the post-breakup period. Akbari et al. (2022) added as well that even the initiators of the breakup felt a breakup distress and not just the rejected partners' side. The initiators of the breakup are more likely to feel and fall into depression no matter the reason for the breakup and only by doing self-compassion that could lead to forgiving themselves could they emotionally heal from the scars of breaking up.

Carter et al. (2018) studies showed that the initiators, especially females, had experienced a more positive outcome of the breakup. Most positive emotions that were felt by the initiator were feelings of relief, feelings of freedom, no anxiousness and being happy. Although the positive outcomes are more likely to show up, negative outcomes could still show up as well, with sadness, jealousy, and loss of self-esteem being the first three to be felt after the breakup.

Initiator's Challenges Towards the Termination of the Romantic Relationship Among Bisexual Individuals

Although it has been a long time since relationships with the same gender started, there are still some who openly show their prejudice

against bisexual individuals. Todd et al. (2016) studied that there are certain families who do not accept and openly show prejudice to the individuals of their family who are bisexual. Thus, with this, those bisexuals openly show that they are in a relationship with the opposite sex in order to avoid the prejudice and the negativity of their family. They also showed in their studies the results of some of the participants' answers regarding their experiences in talks about their orientation. Most of the participants showed confusion or words like they are confused due to the family members saying their perceptions about their orientation and that it was just a phase they had to go through. Aside from prejudice towards bisexuals, bisexual individuals tend to be unsure of their identity since it is normal in the bisexual culture to be confused whenever they are attracted to both men and women (Gilmour & Shearing, 2023).

When it comes to relationship breakups, Salzwedel (2021) studied break-ups as being the most difficult aspect of dating. A romantic relationship's ending has a specific pattern; a problem arises in the relationship and thus could end in terminating the relationship between the individuals. Breaking up was not as simple as people can see; it was more complicated than it looked. A breakup could occur in any place, in a public or private, personal or a text message. The initiator decides these things, and the hardest part comes, which is the aftermath of the breakup. The challenge comes in the aftermath, the coping process that comes with a period of depression to distraction to moving on. In the study conducted by Times of India (2023), impulsive decisions could be a reason for the people who initiated the breakup to regret terminating the relationship. As feelings of regret commonly occur when a breakup is triggered, it doesn't matter whether the couple stayed short or for a long time or whether there were many reasons to trigger it. Ending a relationship could hurt emotionally and physically. Regrets come after the breakup, feeling like the breakup was a large mistake a person made, thus following it with reminiscing about the relationship or imagining what could have happened if the breakup didn't happen or when they get back together with their exes. (Renee & Brolley, 2019)

As signs of regrets could also manifest after the breakup of the relationship. Women who triggered the breakups showed more signs of regrets than Men when talking about a relationship that is sincere and are in a committed relationship than those who are in a casual relationship. (Wilder et al., 2023) Furthermore, Parent (2020) stated in their study that every person who triggered the relationship, whether it was them or the other party, had experienced an 'ultimate low', a phase where they realized that they should end their relationship. With relationships that came to an end, some manifested regrets. Doubting whether the decision to break up was the right thing or whether the timing for the breakup was wrong or even how it played out. In every regret that was shown, the person falls into blaming themselves, focusing on the past or having wishful thinking. Regrets could also be described as 'longing for the past and wishing that they could have done things differently'.

Moreover, Bravo et al. (2017) found that one of the reasons for breaking up with their partner is due to autonomy, having been dependent on their partners, they choose to break up because of wanting to be independent to themselves this time. Bravo also stated in their study that there were many reasons for a breakup to occur, thus understanding why these relationships ended throughout their study. One factor mentioned is the involvement of infidelity, affiliation as well as lack of intimacy. Since going out on dates and sharing intimate conversation or communication are what describe a romantic relationship for youths, lacking these activities, thus eventually affecting the relationship, could result in either affiliation or intimacy, hence why affiliation and intimacy rank high in the reasons for breakups. Adding to that, their findings showed that poor communication as well as growing apart could also be a reason to terminate the relationship. In addition, Connard (2023) examines the experiences of the "initiators" of the breakup, it states in the study that initiators initiate the breakup since the partner is either being too possessive, being very inconsiderate, being unfaithful, too ordinary, very distant, or having no similarities.

Coping Mechanisms of the Bisexual Initiators Towards the Breakup

There are different coping strategies when it comes to coping with a breakup, as there are different strategies, every person employs a different coping mechanism (Schiltz et al., 2013). There are good habits or coping mechanisms that could help a person cope up with their experience as well as bad habits or strategies that make them avoid the situation instead of facing it.

Gehl et al. (2023) studied five coping strategies that people who underwent breakup used after the breakup. In the test they had conducted, studies showed that with pre-breakup attachment anxiety and avoidance heightened the use of self-punishment and avoidance as their coping strategy. With self-punishment as the coping strategy, this strategy enhanced the depressive and anxiety symptoms a person who underwent a breakup had experienced. On the other hand, using the accommodation strategy as their coping mechanism resulted in lower risk for depressive symptoms only and not on anxiety symptoms. Thus, when an emerging adult experiences greater distress and depressive symptoms from breakup, this can result in them not being able to handle their present relationship. Although depressive symptoms are present in both sexes and can affect both, a breakup distress that affects the current relationship is only present in women and is absent in men. Results were shown as well that women had the tendency to receive more of a breakup distress than men. Women tended to go through a negative self-image, be socially withdrawn or even lash out their anger

as a way to express their emotions (Sarwar et al. 2020). Harake and Dunlop (2020) studied as well that avoidantly attached people try to reduce their emotional pain after a romantic breakup; however, it is the opposite for those anxiously attached individuals. Instead, they seek their former partner even though they had initiated the breakup.

As bad habits aren't the only habit to cope up with the pain, one of the good habits that Zhang and Chen (2017) focused on was using

self-compassion as a means of coping strategy for the people who initiated the breakup themselves. The outcome stated that self-compassion as a coping mechanism predicted a better romantic viewpoint, as well as predicted a greater expected future romantic partner appreciation. Furthermore, for the people who initiated the breakup, greater self-compassion can encourage more adjusting and growth in behaviors to a breakup. Moreover, Yau (2013) showed in their studies that resilience could also be a coping mechanism as well in dwelling with the breakup distress. In the outcome of their study, Yau showed that people who have a high level of resilience after the breakup tend to have a high self-esteem and were unlikely to use maladaptive coping mechanisms as a strategy, as well as not having a high risk for depression.” Fyfe (2018) added that as breakups were a painful process, stated that doing journals could be employed as a healing strategy that could address the pain. Fyfe described journaling as a way to let out coped up feelings in a safe environment. It is a way to process the negative feelings such as sadness, anger, and even longings for the person. In addition, Camacho (2022) also added that as some people were afraid to say things out loud, they often resort to writing their thoughts in a journal. Journaling could also help a person to discover and identify what they needed and spend time thinking about what you need to focus on.

Furthermore, Ceglarek et al. (2017) conducted a test focusing on the aftermath of the termination of a romantic relationship among Bisexual Individuals, looking both into its positive appraisals and negative appraisals. It resulted in negative appraisals having a lower psychological well-being than positive appraisals having symptoms associated with anxiety, self-esteem and self-competency. As negative outcomes aren't the only outcome that could result after the termination of a breakup. In a study by Tran et al. (2023), time is essential to healing. As time could be a factor that could strongly affect the emotional state of a person regarding the breakup they went through. Their studies showed that after time had passed after the breakup, most of the participants felt relief and better, and even the anger and guilt that occurred after the breakup diminished over time. They also showed that positive outcomes could also result after the separation. The people who played the initiator of the breakup in the relationship stated that they had felt more relief, less sadness, anger and guilt and were in a much better emotional state than before. One of their findings also stated that the initiators who had reasons for initiating the breakup related to serious problems with the partner had a much better emotional status or adjustment after the breakup. Thus, concluding that a negative relationship experience could result in a more positive emotional state and signs of relief.

Self-love could also be done to help oneself heal, Segal et al. (2023) explored that moving on by facing the problem could also help a person move on and eventually love themselves more. Segal discussed that when a person experiences a breakup event, it could lead to them being more vulnerable either physically or psychologically. Thus, this could result in them treating themselves better than before, focusing on themselves and caring for themselves. Ryu and Pajer (2023) also stated in that making the person who experienced the breakup grieve and feel the emotions of the pain could help them eventually move forward and be able to one day focus on themselves more, like being able to go back to do the things that made them happy or habits they used to do, as well as be able to create new happy memories.

Methodology

Strategies of Inquiry

This study uses a phenomenological approach, a qualitative method aimed at exploring the participants' experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms. It speaks to a deeper understanding of human experiences in specific life events. Therefore, a phenomenological design is an appropriate inquiry strategy for this study.

Phenomenology is implemented in a study that aims to use in-depth interviews to investigate similar experiences among selected groups further. Legitimate information gathered in this kind of study came from people who actually experience a certain phenomenon or a certain life event (Eckel, 2019). The researchers interpreted every participant's statement to include in the findings of a qualitative phenomenological study.

Participants

The participants of this study are among the Bisexual Individuals who recently initiated the termination of their previous romantic relationship and are living around the Province of Bulacan. The selected 15 participants met the formulated criteria for filtering and identifying participants— which include: (1) a Bisexual individual, (2) must have experience in initiating a breakup one to three months ago with a previous romantic relationship, (3) must be living around the Province of Bulacan, (4) must be 18-30 years old, and (5) must be approved to the given consent form prepared by the researcher.

<i>Participants</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Prior relationships had</i>	<i>Months/days of separations</i>
Participant #1	22	Bisexual	Guiguinto	2	1 month
Participant #2	20	Bisexual	Guiguinto	4	6 months
participant #3	20	Bisexual	Balagtas	5	2 months
Participant #4	21	Bisexual	Bocaue	1	12 days
participant #5	23	Bisexual	Bocaue	2	3 months

participant #6	20	Bisexual	Bocaue	1	1 month
Participant #7	20	Bisexual	Pandi	0	5 days
Participant #8	20	Bisexual	Bocaue	11	2 weeks
Participant #9	20	Bisexual	Pandi	7	1 month
participant #10	21	Bisexual	Pandi	5	5 months
Participant #11	20	Bisexual	Balagtas	4	6 months
participant #12	20	Bisexual	Bocaue	3	6 months
participant #13	20	Bisexual	Guiguinto	1	2 months
participant #14	18	Bisexual	Guiguinto	4	4 months
participant #15	27	Bisexual	Balagtas	3	2 months

Instruments of the Study

The researchers conducted an interview using an interview guide as an instrument for the study. The Interview guide questions used in the study aim to understand further the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of Bisexual Individuals after they initiated the breakup. The questions that are included in the interview guide end in an open-ended question; furthermore, to ensure that the Interview guide is valid—an academic validator evaluates and validates the questions included in the Interview guide of this study. Aside from that, the interview guide was also reviewed and improved before the interview was implemented for the participants of this study.

However, the researchers presented an informed consent letter to the participants before collecting the data according to the research ethics guidelines. This process is necessary to ensure that participants receive the necessary information to consider before voluntarily deciding to participate in the study. This interview guide arrowed down the three main themes of this study: the lived experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of Bisexual individuals in Bulacan.

Data Collection Process

The study employed a semi-structured interview with bisexual individuals who experienced initiating a breakup in Bulacan. Researchers have gone through a step-by-step process in collecting the participants' data, which is analyzed and explained in the latter part of the study.

1. To achieve the target data, the researchers made a questionnaire to be validated by the validators and presented to the participants.
2. The researchers used an online platform to find participants who would meet the study's criteria in identifying the participants. Eventually, the researchers selected fifteen (15) Bisexual Individuals from District five (5) in Bulacan to participate in the Interview.
3. The study participants were given a consent form through pen and paper for permission to go through and record the Interview. Aside from that, the consent form also ensures that the participant knows that the data gathered will be confidential.
4. The interview was conducted through a face-to-face setup; the researchers also used a device to record the conversation between the researcher and the participant. The participants were interviewed individually to ensure their information was kept private. Apart from that, Interviewing the participants individually will make them feel safe, without judgment, and uninterrupted during the interview.
5. After gathering all the data, the researchers will transcribe the recorded interview to analyze and conclude findings for the purpose of this research.

Ethical Consideration

In data collection, The researchers kindly request informed consent from the participants to ensure they are aware of their rights as participants and as potential contributors to the study. Moreover, informed consent provides information about the study's title, purpose, the rights to refuse, and the strict confidentiality of the data. The safety and well-being of the participants are of utmost importance to the researchers. Participants are under no obligation to answer any questions and their willingness to contribute their answers as data to support the study is completely voluntary. Rest assured that the researchers will only use the information for its intended purpose, in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 R.A 101773.

Data Analysis Procedure

To examine the data collected for this study, the researchers utilized the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) method, which is supported by Modified Van Khaam's Analysis. This method follows a seven-step process that includes Listing and Grouping, Reduction and elimination, Clustering and Thematizing, Validation, Individual Textual Description, Individual Structural Description, and Textural-Structural Description. This approach provides researchers with a valuable opportunity to gain insights into participants' personal reflections on their experiences. Furthermore, it enables participants to freely express themselves and share their stories without any bias or persecution.

A thorough examination of the data collected from young adults who went through a breakup among bisexual individuals. Interviews were transcribed and recorded as an effective way to gather qualitative data and address any inconsistencies in the content. The interview data includes the exact statements of each participant, which were carefully analyzed. The interview transcriptions underwent a comprehensive process of thematic content analysis to systematically eliminate any potential biases, identify common themes during data search, and uncover significant patterns throughout the entire data set. This rigorous analysis method ensured that the findings and

conclusions drawn from the interviews were reliable, accurate, and reflective of the participants' perspectives. The next step involved creating simple codes and themes that captured and unified each piece of information. The participants' experiences, attitudes, and coping techniques were important aspects of this study. Additionally, the process culminated in creating more specific sub-themes and a concise report containing these sub-themes. These approaches guaranteed that the information was reliable, precise, and unavoidable.

Horizon	Subthemes	Themes
<p><i>"Galit ako syempre, wala naman tao na may deserve na lokohin diba, nagalit ako tapos nung humupa na 'yung galit ko, syempre nalungkot ako kasi bakit ginawa sa'kin 'yung mga ganong bagay which is hindi ko naman deserve."</i></p> <p><i>"Galit? (laughs) galit siguro. Galit. Yun ang pinaka-ano, galit. Galit talaga."</i> P3</p> <p><i>"Ahh... of course (naisip makipagbalikan) but uhm...ahh...tawag dito, hindi mo siya agad masasabi, though nandoon yung thought, nandoon 'yung feelings, nandoon 'yung emotions na gusto mong bumalik, na baka pwede pang ayusin but nilalabanan kasi 'yon ng sarili mo kasi ayun nga, sabi ko nga kanina—the mean factor of the break up is ahh...mental health so talagang ahh...kahit gusto mo, gustuhin mo man, hindi mo magawa kasi, hindi sa hindi kinoconsider yung feelings nung isa but ahh... tawag dito, hindi na kaya nung isa."</i> P10</p> <p><i>"Syempre nung una hindi naging madali dahil involved yung mental health ko eh. Nahihirapan din ako mag look forward sa mga susunod na araw kasi syempre, nasanay ako na siya ang bubungad sa umaga at huli kong nakakausap sa gabi. So, hindi maiiwasan yung mga pagkakataon na mag breakdown ako at iiyak ko lahat. But then, marami akong responsibilities kaya siguro isa yun sa naging factor na naka move forward ako sa breakup namin..."</i> P13</p>	<p>Exhausting Anger</p> <p>To Restore</p> <p>Things Triggered by own Decision</p>	Experiencing Stress
<p><i>"nacoconfuse po ako whether lalaki po ang gusto ko or girl then ayon po."</i> P1</p> <p><i>"malayo kasi kami sa isa't isa so 'yung mga time na gusto ko siyang makasama, minsan hindi magawa kasi hindi siya pwede, busy and such."</i> P9</p>	<p>The Struggles of Being Bisexual</p> <p>The Struggles in Relationship</p>	Surrounded by Setbacks
<p><i>"may time noon na napapa isip ako kung nasa akin ba yung problema. To the point na hindi ako nakikipag usap kahit kanino. Nag self isolate ako sa bahay."</i> P14</p> <p><i>"Pero mostly sinusulat ko siya sa journal or parang diary, kung ano 'yung nararamdaman ko that time, sinusulat at detail detail kung anong gusto kong gawin, kung anong nararamdaman ko, kahit pinakaslightest information na nararamdaman ko, susulat ko sa journal na 'yun."</i> P3</p>	<p>A Guilty Pleasure</p> <p>A Pleasant Way to Bear Love Oneself</p>	Managed to Move Forward

Experiencing Pain

A breakup can give pain in one's life, it is one of the painful, depressing, and growing at the same time. Every person who has experienced a breakup has a 'before' phase where one can feel angry towards their partner and become tired by it (Exhausting Anger), and also during this phase, one might try to fix the problem (Mending) its relationship has without them thinking about breaking up. However, some relationship needs to end— a reason why there is an 'after' phase. During the 'after' phase, the initiator can also experience pain, sadness, regret, and even depression but with right coping can lead to growing and self-love (Things Triggered by Own Decision).

Exhausting Anger

In this part, this was where some of the participants answered whether what makes them think to break up with their previous partner and answered questions related to experiences of an initiator of the breakup.

"Iniintindi ko muna pero habang tumatagal na naiisip ko na niloko niya 'ko— lumalabas yung galit. I'm galit, first time kong magmura sa kanya."

"Galit talaga, ikaw ba naman lokohin kahit pure intentions mo sa kanya." participant (1) said with a sarcastic tone, reminiscing how the participant one's previous partner cheated during their relationship.

Same with participant one (1), participant three (3) have also felt anger towards its previous partner saying *"Galit ako syempre, wala naman tao na may deserve na lokohin 'di ba? .nagalit ako tapos nung humupa na 'yung galit ko, s'yempre nalungkot ako kasi bakit ginawa sa'kin 'yung mga ganong bagay which is hindi ko naman deserve."* *"Galit? (laughs) galit siguro. Galit. 'Yun ang pinaka-ano, galit. Galit talaga."*

This anger of participant three (3) has revealed its exhaustion with words saying *"Na-drain? na-drain ako sa pagiging gano'n niya. Tapos, madalas kasi siyang nag-iisip ng negative thoughts so, ayun. Madalas din... siyempre, kokontra hin ko 'yun."*

"Yung... pagod siguro. Sa dulo, nung ano, nung naramdaman ko na lahat ng pagod. Pero wala naman siyang kasalanan, napagod lang ako dun sa kung ano' yung naging cycle namin sa relationship."

Participant seven (7), thirteen (13), and fifteen (15) has also expressed through words how drained they are being with a cheater ex

partner saying *“Hindi ko iniisip, kasi nad-drain niya ako at the same time kasi nga, about sa parang sa family problem niya, sa situation niya sa family, nad-drain—”* P7

“Na-drain ako. Understanding naman siya, super. But then may cheating na involved, Like I said I confronted her that time, but then she denied all of it, and that made me suffer, kahit pa genuine and pure ‘yung love na binigay ko.” P13

“I’ve had enough of everything. It’s really tiring to be with a cheater.” P15

Participants one (1), three (3), seven (7), thirteen (13), and fifteen (15) have all experienced cheating causing them to experience feelings of anger thus, this proves the study of Rokach and Chan (2023) that states that infidelity has a huge impact on one's emotion and well being that can result in destroying one's own relationship. Moreover, anger has played a vital role in deciding to dissolve their own relationship—Timesofindia (2023) has stated that situations inside relationships can be worsened by anger that might also lead to destroying one's relationship.

Furthermore, Moore (2021) stated that cheating may result in giving stress and depression like symptoms to those who have been cheated on—these stresses and depression like symptoms caused by infidelity might lead to one's emotional exhaustion (Cafasso, 2023)

To Restore

In this part, some participants have stated that it crosses their mind to fix the relationship with their previous partner.

Participant three (3) despite of being drained, participant three (3) have expressed wanting to fix the relationship saying *“Oo naman, tinry namin ulit ayusin pero ang nangyari is naulit lang. Naulit lang ng naulit so syempre napapagod ako nakakaintindi edi ang nangyari sa huli eh ayaw ko na.”*

Similar to participant three (3), participant five (5) has also revealed its desire to mend things with previous partner stating *“Oo naman, gusto ko pa maayos—after a month siguro nagpahinga, nag-chat and then after a week din parang hindi na rin siya interesado. So hindi ko na rin pinilit ‘yung sarili ko.”* and *“Oo naman, may rason pa ‘ko to want na maayos kasi misunderstanding lang naman yun and hindi ko naman expect or hindi ko naman hawak yung feelings niya. Nag bakasakali lang ako. Nung time na wala na talaga siyang interest, doon ko na binitawan after a week din.”*

“Oo, nagsasuggest pa nga ako how to make it work e, pano maayos, gawin namin to ganyan.” said by participant nine (9) when this participant convey how participant nine (9) still wants to fix its previous relationship with pain in its voice.

Similar to the other participants, participant ten (10) has also stated how its own feelings still wanted to mend the relationship with words saying *“Ahh... of course (naisip makipagbalikan) but uhm...ahh...tawag dito, hindi mo siya agad masasabi, though nandoon yung thought, nandoon ‘yung feelings, nandoon ‘yung emotions na gusto mong bumalik, na baka pwede pang ayusin but nilalabanan kasi ‘yon ng sarili mo kasi ayun nga, sabi ko nga kanina—the mean factor of the break up is ahh...mental health so talagang ahh...kahit gusto mo, gustuhin mo man, hindi mo magawa kasi, hindi sa hindi kinoconsider yung feelings nung isa but ahh... tawag dito, hindi na kaya nung isa.”*

After a breakup you may experience some of the stages of grief. Take Bargaining for example. As a way to control the outcome or avoid accepting the breakup, you may start to try to make promises to change yourself or believe you can “fix the relationship.” (JED, 2023). After a breakup, people often experience stages of grief, such as bargaining, aligning with psychological theories like the Kübler-Ross model. Originally designed for coping with death, the model extends to various losses, including romantic breakups. In the bargaining stage, individuals try to regain control by making promises or attempting to fix the relationship. While it's a natural response to loss, coping mechanisms vary, and not everyone goes through these stages linearly. Ultimately, accepting the reality of the breakup is crucial for personal healing and growth.

Things Triggered after the breakup

This part reveals the negative feelings such as pain, sadness, depression and the like of most of the participants after its decision of terminating their previous relationship.

“Sobrang sakit, tapos ano... hindi ako nakakagawa ng mga nagagawa ko dati, hindi nakakakain sa sobrang down ko”, participant one (1) said with a low voice, reminiscing the painful emotions after the break up, *“Ano... parang nagkaroon ako ng overthinking, nagkaroon ako ng fear na pumasok sa relastonship ulit saka magtiwala ulit”,* *“Stress, lumalala yung trust issues ko talaga tapos sabi ko nga kanina, overthinking”,* participant one (1) added when describing how the break up and the previous relationship affected participant one (1).

Similar to participant one (1)—participant two (2) also went through a heartbreak stating, *“Of course, breakup is masakit. And, well, after a few weeks naman is, I feel life kasi, you know, some people go and may darating din naman. So, yeah.”*

Participant five (5) has stated physical pain caused by the habit the participant got from the break up saying, *“Masakit tapos medyo*

magulo 'yung isip and then hindi makatulog. Tapos ano, masakit sa ulo."

"Masakit pero, mas matimbang sa akin yung nararamdaman namin na dalawa na para sa amin din naman yung breakup na 'yun. Mas magiging okay siya para sa amin.", stated by participant six (6).

Unlike other participants that has pure grief after the break up, participant seven (7) has feel its own pride more than its grief, "Syempre yung sakit. Like, siyempre, parang nag-grieve din ako for that. Pero, katulad kasi ng sinabi ko kanina, ma-pride ako. So, parang mas nauuna 'yung pride ko kasi dun sa sakit. Kapag ka, ah okay, pinag-cheatan mo ko about 'dun sa girl na 'yan, okay, mas higher ako. Masakit siya, oo. Like, siyempre, harapin mo siya as, alam mo na, ikaw 'yung nandun eh.", however, even though its pride first for participant seven (7), this participant cannot deny the fact that the break up brings pain and feelings of betrayal, stating "Masakit siya kasi, pure ka eh. Then, nag-cheat siya, ganito.", participant seven (7) hides its feelings of betrayal through anger, "Galit ako. I mean, hindi sa galit. Like, siguro, more on, kasi nasasaktan ako. So, parang, nags-show ako ng emotions ko na galit ako.", p7 also added, "Oo, 'yun. Na-feel ko betrayed ako, yung tipong pure yung intentions ko, tas lolokohin mo ko."

Participant eleven (11) has also experienced pain after initiating the break up, stating "Nasaktan. Mahal ko yung tao eh. Siguro rin ang namimiss ko siya na kahit saan ako pumunta siya nakikita ko", "Nung una sobrang hirap kasi tuwing gigising ako siya agad iniisip ko tapos everytime na maiisip kong wala na talaga, umiiyak na lang ako. Masakit, pero I know naman na para rin sa 'min dalawa yung naging desisyon ko."

Similar to the rest, participants 13 and 14 have also experienced pain after breakup but later on found themselves loving and respecting themselves even more. "Painful, it was really painful for me." "I lost the one person that I've been with for more than 1 year." "More time with myself, family, friends and academics." (when it comes to getting back together) "No, respeto ko na lang sa sarili ko dahil sa ginawa niya sa 'kin." "That I am worth it, that I know my worth na. That I deserved to be respected, that I deserve more and not only the bare minimum. That I should focus on myself, ako naman.", these were the words of participant 13 while participant 14 says, "Masakit. Napapabayaang ko narin po kasi yung sarili ko dahil sa mga nangyari. Nawalan din po ako ng gana sa lahat."

According to Randelovic and Goljovic (2020), the one who initiated the break up is proven to experience anxiety, and emotional stress after dissolving the previous relationship. In addition, initiators of the break up are prone to depression, grief, and other negative emotions one can feel after break up (Akbari, et al. 2022).

Furthermore, close to other participants, participant three (3) has also felt negative emotions after its decision of breaking up with a previous partner. Participant three (3) stated "Uh syempre ano disappointed, frustrating syempre. Syempre andun 'yung part na broken hearted ka, kasi syempre galing ka sa breakup."

"Sa disadvantage naman siguro is nakakalungkot syempre siya yung kasama ko pag may gusto akong kainin, may gusto akong puntahan, may gusto akong gawin. Siya 'yung kasama ko sa ganon. Pero nagbreak kami, wala na, siguro yung disadvantage nun is feeling ko magisa na lang ako, 'yun siguro." Participant three (3) added.

In addition, participant nine (9) has describe its pain as 'grief' and compared the feeling as 'person who has lost a loved one due to death' saying "Uhm ano, I would describe it as ano e parang nagg-grief ako sa taong namatay na, gano'n 'yung feeling. Pain, heaviness, masakit, sobrang sakit.", This proves Filkenstein's study in 2014 where it is stated that initiators of the breakup also experience what grief is. Also, Filkenstein (2014) compared break ups to a situation of losing a person whom one shared their life with.

Aside from that, participant ten (10) has stated that the break up that this participant has initiated causes to trigger something in its psychological well-being which leads to having a diagnosis of Persistent Depressive Disorder. Participant ten (10) revealed it by saying "Sa psychological naman, naging malaking factor din siya since before nito lang ahh...ano ba, September, September— nagpaconsult ako sa psychiatrist ayon nga sabi sa'kin is that I have the Persistent Depressive Disorder, wherein for so long I've been depressed, for uhh... I think eight (8) or nine (9) years, then sabi sa'kin ng doctor kailangan natin i-therapy, kailangan natin gamutin gan'to gan'yan and 'yung break up namin is naging isang malaking factor din siya hindi para makatakas, nakadagdag siya. After talaga siya nung break up, malaking factor doon sa mental health na dinagdagan niya talaga kasi parang binagsak talaga." This proves that a breakup can trigger a PDD which was also stated by Cleveland Clinic in 2021 where it was revealed that situations that cause distress such as suffering a loss of a loved one due to death, a job, going through an unexpected crime, and experiencing a break up can trigger PDD.

In addition, similar to participant three (3), nine (9) and ten (10)— participant 12 also felt pain after initiating a break up. "I came into a realization din na sarili ko lang yung iniisip ko before. I didn't save her. I didn't bother to save us. All I care about is to leave and be free. I feel like hindi ako maka-hinga. I have a lot of responsibility and I don't know. Sa dami ng susukuan, 'yung relasyon pa namin 'yung sikuan ko." Participant 12 added, "Syempre nung una hindi naging madali dahil involved yung mental health ko eh. Nahihirapan din ako mag look forward sa mga susunod na araw kasi syempre, nasanay ako na siya ang bubungad sa umaga at huli kong nakakausap sa gabi. So, hindi maiiwasan yung mga pagkakataon na mag breakdown ako at iiyak ko lahat."

Surrounded by Setbacks

Being a bisexual inside a relationship can be confusing for some, not just because of being attracted to both male and female but also since there are people who are a part of the bisexual community who are either not accepted by the people around them or some are not open or vocal about their gender orientation (The Struggles of Being True). Aside from the struggles attached to their gender orientation, there is also the difficulties one had to undergo during inside a relationship (The Struggles in Love)

The Struggles of Being Bisexual

In this part, the researchers asked the participants about the struggles and challenges of being a part of the bisexual community.

Participant two (2) has revealed that the previous partner this participant had is not open to its family about its gender orientation, participant two (2) described it as being “closeted” which means that one is keeping their real gender identity from other people or a state of not admitting one’s true identity (Resnick, 2021). *“Unlike, sa part niya, is closeted siya. So, yun lang yung naging another challenge namin actually, which I kind of forgot to tell kanina. Well, ayun nga, closeted siya.”*

Participant four (4) on the other hand, expresses sadness by talking about how other people throw painful words at them because of being bisexual, *“Masaya siya na malungkot. Well, kasi siyempre hindi mo maiiwasan yung may ibang nakaka alam tungkol sa inyo ng partner mo and then may masasabi silang masasakit na salita tungkol sainyo.”*

On the other hand, participant one (1) had struggled with feelings of confusion when unexpected attraction to both gender happened stating *“Noong grade nine (9) po ako, nagkacrush ako sa lalaki pero... may friend kasi siyang babae tapos parang mas gusto ko na pog nakakasama yung kaibigan nyang babae, then doon din nagstart yug pagkakaroon ko ng fan account then ever since po no’n, nacoconfuse po ako whether lalaki po ang gusto ko or girl then ayon po.”*. This kind of confusion among bisexuals are common, it is actually in bisexual culture to be unsure of their identity being bisexual—a bisexual might think that they are straight hence, there are more situations occur in their life that they can be sure that they belong among bisexuals (Gilmour & Shearing, 2023)

Similar to participant one (1), participant four (4) has also had confused feelings— stating whether what gender one will experience the future with *“pero confusing pa rin kasi may times na hindi mo alam kung sino ‘yung makakasama mo sa future.”*. In addition, participant nine (9) has also revealed feelings of confusion in being attracted to both genders by stating *“pero minsan confusing since attracted sa both male and female.”*

In being one of the bisexual community, An article by Allo Health (2023) stated that one may have feelings of confusion, fear, and doubt— these feelings are a part of one’s discovering own gender identity and it is needed to take time in the journey of self identifying gender since it is difficult to distinguish.

The Struggles of Being an Initiator

participant three (3) has felt regret after its decision saying *“May times talaga na pumapasok sa isip ‘yun eh, magkabalikan kayo. Parang nire-regret mo yung decision mo, maisip mo ‘yun eh.”* Feelings of regret after break up are normal since according to Rennee and Brolley (2019), one reminisces about things that happened during the previous relationship or one can think what are the possibilities that could happen if the break up didn’t occur.

In addition, participant nine (9) also expressed regrets, stating *“Regret, sinuyo ko pa pabalik e. Hindi ko naman gustong makipaghiwalay pero ‘yun kasi yung nakita kong way para magising siya.”*

Similar to participant three (3) and nine (9), participant ten (10) also revealed the feelings of regret, *“Syempre, ano uhm... may regret pero ayon you have to stand on your decision eh, ‘yun ‘yung pinakamahirap.”*

Furthermore, participant 12 has also expressed regrets after the decision, saying *“Ako, alam ko sa sarili ko may chance pa talaga. It’s just me na gusto nang bumitaw and it haunts me everytime. I regretted it.”*

The Struggles in Relationship

In this part is mentioned the struggles that most of the participants’ have faced during their previous relationship. These struggles are the main struggles of almost all of the participants— stating that these are the struggles they have encountered and mostly are the reasons why they have initiated the break up.

One of the difficulties that one in a relationship may encounter is what some called ‘long distance relationship’ (LDR)— those who experience this kind of relationship tend to experience a rough path during their relationship which leads to having more risks to relationship dissolution (Waterman et al., 2017). In this case, participant one (1) has encountered this kind of problem during its previous relationship. Participant one (1) revealed it by stating *“LDR, mag-kaiba kami ng bayan e— Sta. Maria siya tapos ako Meycauayan”*

In addition, participant two (2) had a similar struggle and revealed that being in a long distance relationship hinders them on a lot of factors, stating *“It’s just that naging mahirap lang nga siya because of LDR na. Challenges are like more on quality time and, you know, the distance. Kasi, I’m a, again, language ko kasi is gift-giving, quality time and physical touch. So, kung LDR ka, di ba, sobrang hirap.”*— a long distance set up has a lot of disadvantages, one of the is that a couple who’s inside an LDR are more probably have no physical intimacy since they are separated in far distance (Barudwala, 2023) resulting to lack of physical touch, and other factors that can only be done face to face.

Furthermore, participant four (4) has admitted that being in a long distance relationship is something that this participant can’t handle

since lack of communication occurred when this participant has experienced it, saying “LDR kasi, 'di ko kayang ganon eh. 'Yung sa malayo talaga or like other country.”. *“Kasi dito sa Pinas LDR na tapos lalo pa siyang lalayo, tapos 'yung, 'yung sa time nga ng reply hindi ganon kabilis, wala kaming communication tapos ayon parang hindi ganon ka-loyal pa sa isa't-isa.”*, participant four (4) added—according to Somani (2019), being in a long distance relationship can screw a couple's communication, it is either miscommunication or lack of communication.

Similar to participant two (2) and four (4), participant six (6) has issues in being in an LDR—lack of things that can be done face to face, stating *“Yung distance lang siguro namin, since LDR kami. Tapos, madalang kami magkita. As in, sobrang dalang. Gawa ng may responsibilities din kami sa school and sa family.”*

Furthermore, participant nine (9) has also experience long distance relationship, saying *“malayo kasi kami sa isa't isa so 'yung mga time na gusto ko siyang makasama, minsan hindi magawa kasi hindi siya pwede, busy and such.”*, however, participant nine has developed dependency on its previous partner even in this kind of set up, stating *“siguro kasi parang nawalan din ako ng bestfriend. He was not just my partner kasi, He was also my best friend, prayers ko siya sa Lord e, ayon parang nawalan ako ng kakampi sa mundo.”*—this kind of dependency is possible even in long distance relationships, not many ldr couples have this but a few can have (Burclaw, 2022). In this case, a statement by Demi Moore whom experience a dissolution of relationship and has been dependent to its previous partner was revealed after their break up, stating that there is a feelings of void left after their break up that leads to dealing factors such as habits and dealing with being alone (D'Mello, 2015).

In addition, participant ten (10) has experience same struggles with participant nine (9)—experiencing being dependent while in a long distance relationship, saying *“unang una is yung malayo kami sa isa't isa, hindi kami parehas ng bayan, hindi kami parehas ng gan'to so yung communication, yung needs, yung wants, and yung ahh... wants, I mean needs yung sa emotional is hindi nabibigay through physical and kailangan ko bumyahe gan'to gan'yan, siguro yun yung nakikita kong main problem.”*. *“during our relationship ahh... naging depend— ahh... hindi ako naging independent sa sarili ko, naging dependent ako sa kanya. So ang disadvantage is that ahh...after the break up naging ahh...tawag dito, parang nawalan ka ng kakampi yung gan'to gan'yan, kasi lagi kang nakadepende sa kanya, then during the schoolworks and such, sa kanya ka rin nakadepende, nagtutulungan kayo gan'to gan'yan but nung nawala or natapos 'yung break up, nawala lahat ng iyon.”*, participant ten (10) added.

Moreover, similar to participant nine (9) and ten (10)—participant 12 has also became dependent with previous partner while inside a long distance set up in relationship, stating *“ayun sa distance nga, isa rin yung sa pagod dahil sa pagba-biyahe biyahe namin and I thought hindi yun magiging hindrance for us, but eventually, it's tiring.”*. Participant 12 also added *“Naging dependent din ako sa kanya, sa relasyon namin and nasanay ako ron.”*

Aside from long distance relationships—another reason for such a relationship to end so suddenly is when infidelity or cheating is involved. When a person who had their partner cheated on them, negative emotions would surely erupt such as anger, disappointment, and even betrayal. It is a negative experience that Participants one (1), three (3), seven (7), thirteen (13) and fifteen (15) had all gone through.

Rokach and Chan (2023) added that as it has a destructive impact on the relationship breaking apart, that even before the separation happened, grief is something that the initiator had experience as shown by Participant three (3) saying that *“Unang una is, close friends sila nung ex niya na until ngayon friend niya, 'yun. Isa yun sa pinakamahirap na challenge sa'kin, is yung friend sila nung ex niya, may trauma ako sa ganon.”* this grief was also experienced by Participant thirteen (13) *“She cheated on me kasi, the worst part for me is sa ex-boyfriend niya pa, parang naging rebound 'yung nangyari. I told her what I've seen sa phone niya, and she was still talking to her ex saying na 'she still love him' ganon. I confronted her about that, she denied all of it, then nagalit pa siya sa'kin, like bakit ko raw pinapakialaman 'yung phone niya when una pa lang, she gave me access to her phone.”* who caught their ex red-handed from the act of cheating.

Aside from Participant thirteen (13) who caught their ex red-handed, Participants one (1), three (3) as well as fifteen (15) shared the same experience. It was shared by Participant one (1) that they caught their ex-partner cheating on them through the use of social media. *“Cheating, ano... nakita ko sa twitter niya, may kasagutan siyang ibang babae sa comments non then nung inistalk ko yung profile ng babae—naka bio yung name ng partner ko.”*. While Participant three (3) and fifteen (15) shared that their partner already had a history of cheating, *“Maraming incidence, of cheating, yung paggawa ng mga bagay na hindi dapat—marami pero mostly talaga is cheating talaga.”* *“Constantly cheating on me while we're still together.”*. It was reported that people who have ESI or extra dyadic-sexual involvement (a person with a sexual relationship with others aside from their partner) would likely be engaged in ESI to their next relationships as well. (Knopp et al., 2017)

When asked whether they wanted to get back with their former partner, Participant seven (7) said that *“Niloko ako eh”* and added *“Hindi (hindi naisip makipagbalikan), kasi kapag alam kong niloko—like, kapag alam mo sa sarili mo na loko na, like, cheating na siya, hindi mo na magbabago 'yun eh. Hindi mo na pwedeng bigyan ng second chance, kasi kung binigyan mo na ng pangalawa pang second chance, maaaring gawin ulit sa iyo 'yung pangalawa pang beses, uulit-ulitin eh. Ayaw ko na nun.”* Thus closing the thought of wanting to get back to their former partner.

Managed to Move Forward

After a break up, one may develop ways to cope up. Everyone has its own way to decrease the pain that felt in every person's heart

after a stressing event— one may develop bad habits to bear the pain (A Guilty Pleasure) but that does not necessarily mean that one is a bad person already, as said by Zantamata, an author— “sometimes good hearts chooses poor methods” (Quoter, 2022). Aside from that, one might also acquire good habits or one may decide to come back with their old habits— to reconnect with themselves and to improve (A Pleasant Way to Bear). Aside from that, this section also includes the part where the participants learned to love themselves more despite the breakup (Love Oneself).

A Guilty Pleasure

This part tackles the poor coping mechanisms that the participants’ have developed to bear the pain caused by the break up.

Participant six (6) disclosed personal information saying that they tend to engage in self-imposed isolation as a coping mechanism following the break up. “*Nag self-isolate (after break up).*” “*Madalas, ‘di ako nagsasabi talaga sa mga kaibigan.*” This act of self-isolation is their chosen method to manage and navigate through the emotional aftermath of their break up.

Moreover, participant three (3) expresses loneliness by talking about wanting to be alone since it feels like they are distancing themselves to everyone. The participant expresses a preference for being alone, even though it seems contradictory since it arises from their feelings of isolation— reminding each individual of our need for connection. (Brown et. al., 2021). “*Oo naman syempre, syempre ‘yung pakiramdam mo na galing ka sa breakup parang gusto mo mapag isa, parang ayaw mong may lumalapit sa ‘yo kasi ayaw mo silang mahawa or madamay sa nararamdaman mo. Ayaw mong mabuhos sa kanila ‘yung nararamdaman mo, ganon. Na parang nilayo ko ‘yung sarili ko sa kanila.*”

Similar to participant six (6), Participant 14 also had the same experience regarding self isolation stating that they are not talking to anyone and doesn’t want to bother talking. “*may time noon na napapa isip ako kung nasa akin ba yung problema. To the point na hindi ako nakikipag usap kahit kanino. Nag self isolate ako sa bahay.*” In addition, Participant 14 included that they are overthinking about things that they didn’t do in the midst of isolating. “*Like, napapa overthink ako before sa kasalanan na hindi ko naman ginawa.*”

In addition, participant ten (10) shares almost the same sentiments with participant six (9) stating— “*open book ako before lalo na sa mga kaibigan ko. ngayon kasi na lessen na ‘yun.*” while participant ten (10) said, “*sa social, naging sarado ako sa lahat. I mean... hindi ako tumatanggap ng tulong sa iba, hindi tumatanggap ng ah... tawag dito, ng iba pang lumalapit na kaibigan, gan’to gan’yan, na families, hindi ako tumatanggap.*” However, the experience of participant ten (10) extends beyond reduced openness; they describe becoming more closed off in social interactions. Refusing help from others, whether it be friends or family, reflects a significant change in their approach to relationships and support systems. This divergence in social dynamics among participants highlights the varied ways individuals navigate and adapt to their experiences of loneliness and changing social landscapes— it is uncertain whether their effects are independent or whether loneliness represents the emotional pathway through which social isolation impairs health. (Steptoe et. al., 2013)

On the other hand, there are participants who have not developed self isolation but developed other things instead— participant four (4) shared a funny sentiment. “*nagch-check out ako ng product para mag-ano kunyari ano para- ‘yun kasi ‘yung way ko para ma-comfort ko sarili ko, ganon.*” Instead of isolating and doing nothing to cope up from their break up, participant four (4) bought products as a way of comfort. Compulsive buying tendency is associated with maladaptive mental disengagement, denial and lack of acceptance coping strategies, which could be useful to consider in therapy. (Lawrence, L. et al., 2020).

Furthermore, participant eleven (11) affected its mental health, causing not eating and sleeping. “*May mga time na hindi ako kumakain or natutulog dahil sa break up namin.*” It’s important to recognize that these behaviors, not eating and sleeping, align with signs of unhealthy coping mechanisms. According to Gasparini, 2023. While these coping mechanisms may provide short-term relief, they tend to create additional problems and prevent individuals from finding sustainable solutions to their challenges. Not eating and disrupted sleep patterns can contribute to a cycle of physical and mental health issues, worsen the emotional distress already experienced due to the breakup.

Moreover, it appears that participant five (5) has become more emotionally sensitive following the breakup. “*una-una yung trust issue, tapos maging open up, tapos masyado na rin naging parang suplado or masungit po ganon sa hindi ko ganong kaano.*” This heightened sensitivity may manifest as increased emotional responsiveness, vulnerability, or a heightened awareness of their own and others’ feelings. Recognizing that heightened sensitivity is a common and understandable reaction to the emotional turbulence associated with the end of a relationship is essential. Being sensitive may lead to overinterpreting or overreacting to perceived criticism or judgment. Effectively managing this sensitivity is crucial for maintaining empathy and attentiveness without taking things too personally (Cherry, K. 2023).

A Pleasant Way to Bear

From another standpoint, there are some participants who have developed better routines to move forward from the unexpected event in their lives, which is the break up. This part tackles the good habits developed by some participants to cope with the pain and distress.

Participant one (1), revealed that P1 has learned new hobbies that this participant has never done before, saying “*Ano... parang ginagawa kong hobby yung mga bagay na hindi ko naman hilig para po ano... ma ano, ano ‘yon? Ma divert yung attention ko sa ibang bagay*”— this kind of approach is good for one’s mental well-being since it was revealed by Dr. Orme, a Houston Methodist

psychologist— that creating healthy habits makes one become organized and produces feelings of controlness thus, it allows one to move forward in their lives (McCallum, 2021).

Moreover, participant three (3) has concealed that its way of coping up with the negative emotions is through writing it in journals and share it by saying *“Ah, may journal ako, tapos dun ko sinusulat lahat ng negative emotions na nararamdaman ko during that time yun tapos hindi naman siguro counted if mag-oopen ka sa mga hayop na kasama mo like alagang pusa, alagang aso ganon. Parang kumbaga sila ‘yung nasasandalan ko during that time. Pero mostly sinusulat ko siya sa journal or parang diary, kung ano ‘yung nararamdaman ko that time, sinusulat at detail detail kung anong gusto kong gawin, kung anong nararamdaman ko, kahit pinakaslightest information na nararamdaman ko, susulat ko sa journal na ‘yun.”*— journaling has been a therapeutic tool to cope up, it allows one to heal emotionally and have resilience mentally hence, doing journals after a break up allows one to create their own space where one can share and express own feelings without thinking whether anyone will judge or interrupt (Connors, 2023).

Furthermore, Cherry (2023) revealed that keeping oneself occupied can be a helpful way to cope up with heartbreak since it allows a person to keep oneself busy and keeps one to thinking repetitively about negative thoughts— which was done by participant seven (7) and eight (8) which they have both revealed in their statement. Participant seven (7) stated that they diverted their focus and time to their family instead of lingering with the negative emotions they had felt saying *“Hindi, positive (no bad habits created). Wala, mas naglalaan ako ng time sa family, friends, and stuff. Kasi, ako rin naman nagawa ng acads niya. So, parang, this time, eh, acads ko na lang ‘yung pinaproblema ko.”* This sentiment was also shared by participant eight (8) who added *“Like, I keep myself busy and focus on my studies instead of wasting my time thinking about what happened.” focusing on academics instead of thinking about the breakup that happened.”*

Aside from that, Vincenty (2022) affirmed that during the post break up, it is important to reconnect with yourself since it is a very helpful tool to rediscover and improve yourself that allows one to heal. Moreover, Vincenty also stated that redoing or returning to the activities one once loved can be a great way to reconnect with ourselves— which was the thing that participant nine (9) and participant ten (10) have done during their post break up. Participant nine (9) has disclosed that one way to cope that this participant has done is by going to church and improving hobbies, *“Umaattend attend ng church then ayon hobbies like dancing, singing then hand crafts.”*. In addition, participant nine (9) had other good way to cope up that is similar to participant ten (10), it is by doing the old things they love— Participant nine (9) stated *“Doing things I love before, dancing gano’n, saka nagattend ng church for spiritual growth din para mapatawad ko rin ‘yung sarili ko.”* while participant ten (10) says *“Aahh... siguro dina-divert ko siya sa mga bagay na kinahihiligan ko before, like for example, yung ahh... pagsasayaw, pagd-drawing, yung— binabalikan ko ‘yung kung anong kinahiligan ko before. Dinadivert ko yung attentions ko and yung emotions ko para hindi, ahh hindi naiipon, hindi nagbuburst out, yung gano’n.”*

Love Oneself

This part includes the participants' path to self love. This includes, self reflections, and realizations of mostly all of the participants.

Participant one (1) realized something positive regardless of the negative emotions felt after the break up— stating, *“I realized na dapat ko rin i-priority yung sarili ko. Kasi after ng break-up, doon ko mas nakita yung worth ko eh.”*

In addition, participant three (3) has also felt the lightness despite of being in pain after the break up. Participant 3 stated, *“Advantage siguro, kumbaga wala na kong iisipin, ‘di na ko maloloko ulit, wala na ‘kong iisiping ibang tao, sarili ko na lang ‘yung aalalahanin ko.”* and self-love *“Na hindi lang sa kanya umiikot ang mundo ko. Na marami pang ibang tao dyan na dapat mag-focus muna ako sa sarili ko, sa career ko sa pag-aaral ko.”*

Similarly, participant two (2) stated that the participant has focused on self love stating, *“Uhm...self love or nagpakabusy na lang sa mga bagay bagay hanggang sa makapag move-on sa...ganon lang.” “Uhm siguro ah... (self love like) maging busy lang, ‘yung nakikinig ng music, gumagawa ng mga music, kumakain sa labas, wowork out ganon. Para sa sarili, binigyan ko ng oras ‘yung sarili ko, ganon lang po.”*

Furthermore, participant six (6) has described that the break up is somehow painful but however, this participant accepted that their break up is very much more beneficial for them rather than staying inside their relationship. Participant six (6) has also stated in the latter part of the interview that the breakup brings lightness feeling, *“Parang gumaan yung... siguro yung pakiramdam ko, na after nung ano... parang...naging free ‘yung emotions ko.”*, participant six (6) also added *“Siguro para sa akin, mas na-ano ko na magfocus ulit ako sa sarili ko.”*

Regardless of the pain due to the breakup, participant seven (7) still managed to find an advantage of its breakup with its previous partner, *“Ang advantage niya kasi, more on time sa sarili ko. Hindi ko iniisip (ang sarili ko during the relationship), kasi nad-drain niya ako at the same time kasi nga, about sa parang sa family problem niya, sa situation niya sa family, nad-drain— Then, ‘yun, ang advantage ay more time sa sarili ko”*

Similar to the rest, participant 11 and 14 stated that they have learned to know and value own selves. Participant 11’s words are *“Siguro ang advantage sa break up namin ay mas nakilala ko sarili ko at unti unti ko ulit nakikita ang worth ko.” “Nilibang ko sarili ko. Naglaro ako online games at doon ko lalabas ang sakit. Nag try rin ako magbasa ng mga story at mas nag focus ako sa sarili ko.”* while participant 14 says *“mas napahalagahan ko yung sarili ko.”*

Furthermore, the pain caused by the break up didn’t hinder participant nine (9) to find its own peace, saying *“Sa advantage siguro ano,*

yung wala na akong iniisip kung may aayusin pa ba ko or what, less isip din kung may iauupdate ba ko and such. Then, ano... peace din na ano... ayon wala kang iniintindi"

Similar to others, participant ten (10) has managed the pain and found a way to feel positive despite the illness triggered by the situation. *"Ahh syempre sa una, hindi madali but right after that syempre, maiisip mo rin na hindi lang naman pwedeng doon ka lang, so kailangan mo rin unti-unti mag move on, gano'n."* Participant ten (10) added a positive outcome of its decision by saying *"So sa advantages naman is that you can still focus on yourself, you can improve, ahh... tawag dito and mas maeexplore mo pa kung ano talaga yung meaning ng nandoon ka sa isang relasyon."*

This proves the study of Segal et al. (2023) that discusses about a person who have gone through a breakup and decided to move forward by facing the problem causes them to move on and love themselves more. Furthermore, Segal added that a person during a breakup is much more vulnerable to emotionally and physically that makes them absorb the emotions and eventually made them realize and love themselves more.

Conclusion

Initiating breakups involves navigating a spectrum of emotions, from anger and exhaustion to contemplation, grief, sadness, and various challenges. These feelings are common responses to the complex decision-making process and the emotional toll of ending a relationship. The initiator of the breakup often faces significant challenges as they grapple with these complex emotions, underscoring the emotional complexity inherent in the act of ending a relationship. This emotional complexity is further heightened for bisexual individuals, who must contend with additional internal conflicts, such as the struggle with coming out, as well as external pressures like societal expectations and the pressure to disclose their gender identity. These added layers of stress can make the decision to initiate a breakup even more daunting and emotionally taxing.

For bisexual individuals, being in a relationship often involves unique challenges, including internal conflicts and external pressures that impact their sense of well-being. Post-breakup, these individuals may experience regret and face diverse coping mechanisms, ranging from poor habits to healthier routines and reconnection with themselves. Despite the depression that can follow a breakup, many bisexual individuals demonstrate resilience, transforming negative emotions into positive ones, showcasing emotional maturity and psychological flexibility. To address these unique challenges, it is recommended that dedicated platforms for emotional expression, awareness programs about the emotional stress of breakup initiators, and supportive communities for bisexual individuals be established. These initiatives can validate feelings, normalize emotional challenges, and foster a sense of belonging, ultimately promoting mental health and resilience during and after breakups.

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