

## What Is A Rebound Relationship?

By Nina Atwood

### What is the definition of a "rebound relationship"? Is it true they can be unhealthy? - David

Rebound relationships occur very shortly after the end of a significant love, and sometimes begin before the end. The problem with a rebound is that it doesn't allow time for the grieving and healing process to be complete.

When this happens, there is emotional confusion. Sometimes, the feelings for the old partner simply transfer to the new one, and that results in the illusion that you've found someone totally "different," when, in fact, you've found someone very much like your old love. Often the issues that drove you away from your previous partner are the very ones with which you eventually find yourself grappling in the new relationship.

Rebound relationships serve a purpose: To protect the heart from the devastation of losing someone very important. Like a very big cushion, they protect us from the trauma of the fall that is experienced when a deep connection is abruptly severed. These relationships can be healthy, as long as you remain aware of their purpose and take your time with your new partner. If you are not paying attention, however, a rebound relationship can be unhealthy. Potential problems include:

**Expecting a new partner to make up for the shortcomings of the old.** "Since my last girlfriend cheated on me, I expect you to give me 100% reassurance of your loyalty 24 hours a day."

**Commitment hunger.** "My last boyfriend dated me for three years without making a commitment, so I'm expecting an engagement ring within six months or I'm out of here."

**Chronic fear and anxiety.** "After what my ex did to me, I have to constantly check to see that you're really there for me, even if that drives you crazy."

**Skyrocket relationship.** Rebound dating relationships are often too fast-paced, with a false sense of urgency, in order to "make sure" that this one sticks.

The biggest risk of a rebound is that it serves its purpose and then the re-bouncer moves on, leaving someone else devastated. If you're dating someone who has just left another relationship, know that you may have a Westbound Train. Don't allow the rebounding person to set the pace, as it will be too fast and may leave you in the dust. Take your time, allow the relationship to develop slowly, and take good care of yourself emotionally (i.e., have a good support system).

A rebound relationship can work out, as long as you and your partner are able to develop a genuinely loving and trusting bond, and that you maintain good communication each step of the way.

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