

## Depression after one night stand <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

Recently I had my first one night stand. It happened with a guy at a club and it happened very fast without us getting to know each other too much first. The problem is, the next day I felt extremely sad and depressed. I felt like I've been used and felt cheap. I was also sad that he didn't ask me for my phone number even though I wasn't interested in him. I felt unattractive and worthless. Is it normal to feel this way? Do guys ever feel this way too? How can I get over this post-one-night-stand depression?

### Answer

Dear Reader,

A no-strings-attached experience doesn't always equate to no-feelings-attached. Whether you feel sad, confused, or even empowered, it's very common to have many emotions after a one night stand. While some find engaging in casual sex to be fun and exciting, others find that it may not be great for their emotional health. But try not to fret, as there are ways to address your feelings that can help you work through them.

Self-reflection may be key to sorting out your emotions. Consider asking yourself some questions that can help you move forward. For example, what kind of relationship would you like to have with sexual partners? What role, if any, do you think "one night stands" could play for you in the future? These questions may help you better understand the pros and cons of different sexual situations you may encounter. In the meantime, if you're feeling down and out, there are a variety of ways to cope with your feelings and practice some self-care, including:

- **Boost your morale** by writing down a list of your strengths. What do you absolutely love about yourself? Reading over this list can help remind you of what makes you so fantastic.
- **Pump up your energy level** by engaging in physical activity. This is a great way to boost feel good hormones and feel energized.
- **Revisit your favorite hobby**, such as playing a musical instrument, cooking, or reading a book. Find an activity that makes you happy and that you enjoy!
- **Catch up on your rest and relaxation**. Consider practicing meditation, yoga, or tai chi as they could help you achieve mental peace and well-being.

- **Talk it out.** Try speaking with a trusted friend, family member, or a mental health professional.

You also asked if guys feel this way, too. Well, research indicates that while more men may participate in casual sex, there aren't significant differences in the psychological well-being of men and women after participating in casual sex. This means that men and women seem to experience the emotions after casual sex, both positive and negative, in similar ways.

If days go by and your feelings still linger, remember that sorting out your emotions may take some time. Hopefully, by treating yourself to some quality thinking time, exploring your emotions, and being patient, you can feel confident and balanced again. If these feelings are impacting you on a daily basis, you may find speaking with a mental health professional to be helpful. Upon further reflection, you may find that you may enjoy casual sex or that it's not for you — either decision is completely yours to make. Additionally, if you haven't already, you may want to start incorporating [safer sex](#) [2] practices into your sex life. Not only will this keep both you and your partner protected from potential pregnancy and STIs, it may help you feel more confident about the sexual choices you make in the future, whatever they may be.

Alice!

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