



Couples Therapy: My ex wants us to go to Thailand together but I'm torn

COUPLE THERAPY

In this week's Couples Therapy dilemma, couples counsellor and psychosexual therapist Cate Mackenzie advises on navigating break-ups



Before the couple broke up, they booked a holiday to Thailand (Photo: Getty Images)



By i Team

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My **boyfriend and I split up** relatively amicably in March. Before we broke up we booked a trip of a lifetime to Thailand. We risk losing our deposit and the cost of the flights if we cancel, and he thinks we should still go together as friends. I don't know if I can do that. He seems to have moved into friend mode more easily than I have. I'm still healing from the disappointment of the



his own. Or maybe he'd mind someone else to go with but then I don't know how to feel about that either.

Am I being too sensitive? Should I just go and we'll figure it out? I have not travelled much and so this trip was a big deal for me – and him too. We could probably ask for the room to be made into a twin room but the thought of us sharing a room again feels like it would be very confusing.

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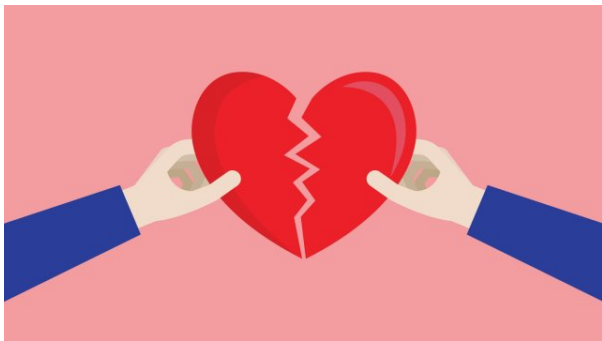
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The trip is not until November, so I don't know what will be happening in our lives then. Should I just cancel and swallow the cost? Or should I go on the trip I've always dreamt of, even if it's not in the situation I dreamt of?

Couples counsellor and psychosexual therapist Cate Mackenzie says:

First of all, I think it's great that you are giving yourself all the time you need to heal from the **end of this relationship**. You may feel that your boyfriend has moved on more quickly and easily but we all respond in our own time. Allow yourself as long as you need to feel all your feelings about the break up. Reach out to supportive friends or people who can hear you and give yourself a chance to grieve and create a protective bubble around you.

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Now, let's think about the trip. To start, I'd invite you to really think about what you are feeling about this situation. Do you really not want to go but are **feeling worried** about letting him down? Is there a part of you that is keeping this trip open as a possibility in order to keep the peace or because you should feel OK with it because he does? If that is the case please give yourself permission to let go of the plans. First and foremost, prioritise your own wellbeing. There will be other trips and other opportunities. If you decide not to go, then congratulate yourself on prioritising your own **mental health** and needs. On a practical note you could also double check that there aren't more refunds available than you think, or perhaps a way to change flights to another place at another time.

On the other hand, if you are really disappointed not to go to Thailand there are a few different approaches you could take. If you can bear to share a flight with him then why not go to Thailand then find separate

rooms or even separate accommodation?



Whatever happens, I would not share a room together, even a twin room. What if one of you meets someone and wants to bring them back?

Do you have a friend that you could go with? Or even a few friends? Or might you think about spending time on your own? Some people find travelling on their own intimidating but it can also be hugely liberating because you can set your own agenda.

Places such as Thailand are set up for solo travellers. Can you do some research on retreats or places you might like to go to? Can you put out some feelers for group adventures you might like where you can feel safe and open to meeting others? People meet friends of a lifetime when they travel so perhaps this could be a wonderful opportunity to take a different kind of adventure to the one you planned.

As told to Marianne Power

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