

A FREE GUIDE FROM THE LONG WAY BACK

The First 7 Things to Do

After you broke trust

You did something you cannot undo, and some part of you wants to fix it immediately. This guide will not undo it either. But it will tell you, plainly, where real repair actually starts, so the next steps you take help instead of making it worse.

1 End it completely, and make it verifiable

Not “mostly over.” Not “still friends.” All contact ends, and it ends in a way your partner can actually see, not just take your word for. Nothing else on this list matters until this one is real.

2 Tell the whole truth, not the survivable version

Giving the truth in pieces, so it keeps trickling out over weeks, does more damage than one hard conversation. Every new piece resets the clock on their healing. Say the whole thing once, even the parts that make you look worse.

3 Expect to answer the same question many times

They may ask the same thing five times in a month. That is not them failing to move on, it is how someone tries to rebuild a story they can trust. Answer patiently, again, without sighing.

4 Offer transparency before it's asked for

Open your phone before they ask. Volunteer where you were. The point is not surveillance, it is that transparency offered willingly rebuilds trust; transparency dragged out of you under pressure barely counts.

5 Sit with their pain without defending yourself

When it comes up again, and it will, the job is to stay present, not to explain, minimize, or say “how long are we doing this.” Their timeline decides when this gets easier, not yours.

6 Carry your own guilt somewhere else

Your shame is real, but it is your work to process, in therapy or a journal, not something to hand to the person you hurt. Making them comfort you about what you did to them asks backwards.

7 **Accept there is no guaranteed outcome**

You do not get to trade good behavior for forgiveness on a schedule, or for staying together at all. You do this because it is the right thing to do, not because it buys a result. They still get to decide. That is not unfair, it is what trust actually costs to rebuild.

None of this is fast, and none of it is a script for winning someone back. Trust does not return through promises. It returns through a long stretch of ordinary days where the truth kept turning out to be the truth. That is the whole method. There isn't a shortcut.

This guide is drawn from *The Long Way Back*, a companion guide for the person who broke trust, on taking real ownership, staying present in your partner's pain, and becoming someone trustworthy again, one honest day at a time.

This is a self-help resource, not therapy or relationship counselling. If you and your partner are trying to rebuild, a qualified couples therapist can help far more than any guide can.