

- Burn Out (Psychology)

Hitting the reset button

Burnout applies to relationships too. If you start to feel self-doubt, frustrated or drained, here's how you can combat online dating fatigue.

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BURNOUT. We've all experienced it, whether at work, from school, over family obligations, or even due to a too-packed social schedule. We can also apply it to relationships – because it's actually completely normal. Sometimes it stems from being overwhelmed (so many apps, so little time), and other times you find yourself feeling like you've swiped on every profile in a 100km radius – with no one catching your eye. No matter the cause, there are ways to reset yourself when you start to feel frustrated, self-doubt, or drained.



Take a break

Constantly swiping through profiles and engaging in small talk can be exhausting. It's perfectly OK to step back and catch your breath, whether it's for a weekend, a week, or even a month, if that's what you need. Give yourself permission to take a hiatus from the dating scene and focus on the things you enjoy – take that cooking class that popped up on Instagram or go for a hike with friends.

I understand why some people don't want to pause their online dating, even for a few days – “What if I miss a message from a great match?” But it's healthy to take breaks and come back energised to catch up on anything you may have missed.

Learn a new hobby

Sometimes you just need a little distraction. Maybe you've been meaning to start spin classes, you are ready to try beekeeping, or you want to pick up painting. Once you start pouring your energy into something other than dating as your main focus, you can tap back into yourself. Plus, you can always share what you're learning in your bio in hopes of sparking a conversation.

Explore different avenues

Online dating is a popular route to meeting potential partners these days, but it isn't the only way. While you're swiping away on Bumble and Hinge, your match could be looking for love somewhere other than on their phone. There are plenty of ways to make connections while also being social (win-win!), such as playing in a sports league, joining a book club, volunteering for a cause, attending an alumni event, or even hanging out at the dog park (with a pet or friend's pet, preferably). Even if your match isn't there, you're opening yourself up to meeting a lot of new people and their single acquaintances.

Change your profile

It might be time to refresh your bio and photos to give yourself a new look. Make sure everything is up to date (no old references or years-old pictures) and your profile is full of message bait, or interesting tidbits that could lead to someone sending you an opening message to ask about. You should also reconsider your search settings. Try expanding your location radius, being flexible with age range (and height!), and other criteria that might exclude potential matches. Are there any "dealbreakers" that you could reconsider? Maybe you would prefer a partner who drinks socially, but would you be open to someone who doesn't drink but doesn't mind spending time at a bar? You never know what someone's reasons are for their decisions until you have a conversation.

Practise self-care

Dating isn't easy, and dating fatigue can take a toll on your mental and emotional well-being. It's essential to prioritise self-care during this time. Make time for activities that nurture your mind, body, and soul – practising mindfulness, exercising, or just surrounding yourself with loved ones. A focus on selfcare can help alleviate stress and replenish your energy levels.

Dating is an inevitable rollercoaster full of ups and downs, including burnout. But by giving yourself some grace (and maybe a little pause on dating), you can get over those humps as they occur. – Tribune News Service
Erika Ettin is the founder of A Little Nudge, where she helps others navigate the often intimidating world of online dating.