



LETTERS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND SE COUNSELLORS

Rest assured that some parts of the letter that might identify the student have been changed or removed.

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Dear Counsellor

So 2 months after a breakup, my ex-girlfriend reached out asking to be friends again. I've been thinking through what to tell her and I've been losing sleep thinking, honestly.

On one hand, people say to block, unfollow, and never talk to your Ex again. On the other, I was more on the mindset that if you've truly detached yourself from the person, you'd be able to be friends again, no strings attached. What do you think?



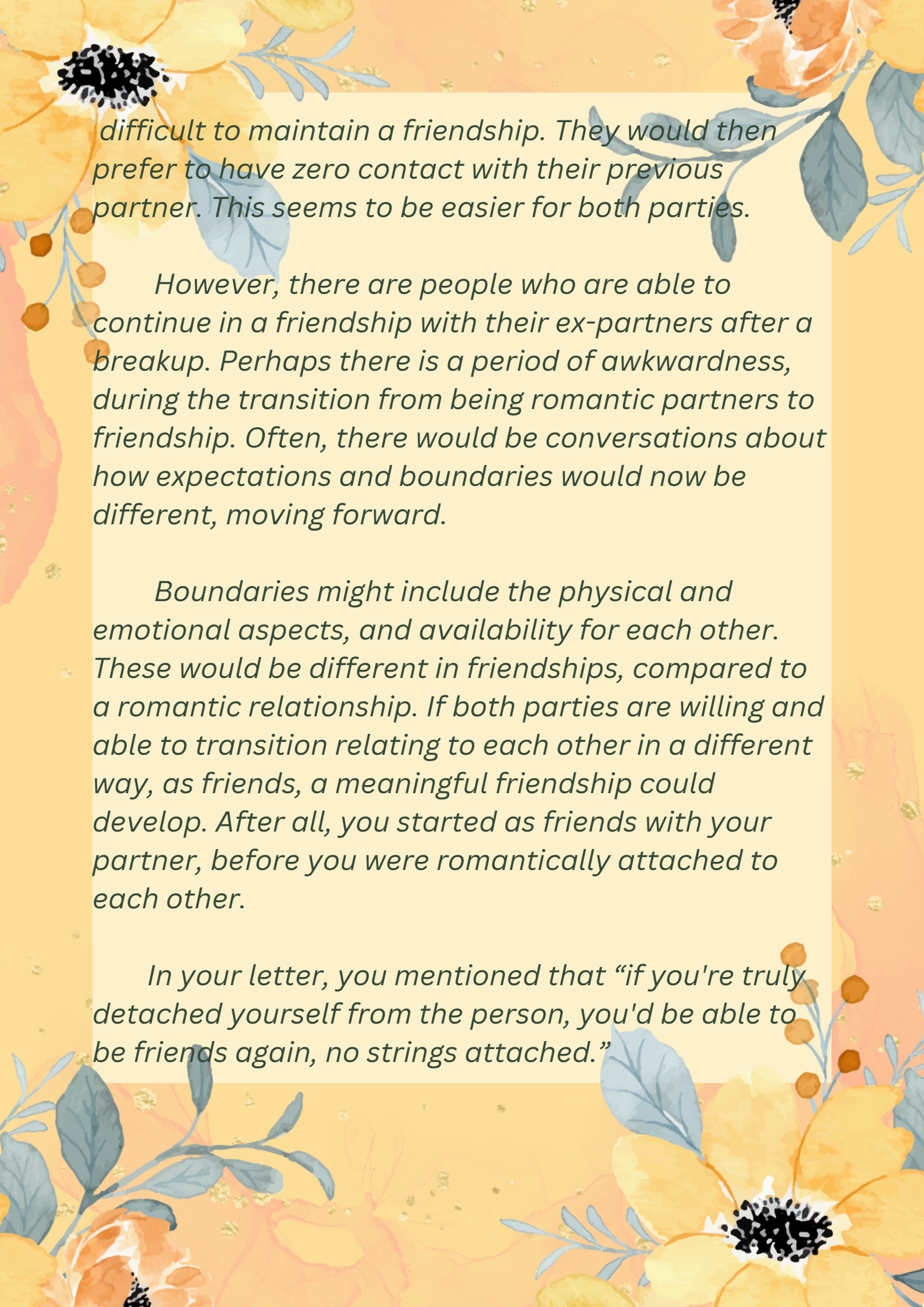
Dear Student

Thank you for writing in! It's the first time you are writing a letter on such a platform. I am glad to hear from you!

I hear that your ex-girlfriend has reached out to you to be friends with you again. I like how you have put serious thought into how best to respond to her request. This shows a desire to handle emotional issues in a mature manner.

You have heard from people the view to have a clean cut off from the relationship after a breakup. However, I hear that your mindset is different. You are wondering if it is possible to have a healthy friendship with an ex-girlfriend.

There is no one-right-way to handle such relationships. Some people are not able to have a friendship with a partner after a breakup. The memories and experiences of the past make it




difficult to maintain a friendship. They would then prefer to have zero contact with their previous partner. This seems to be easier for both parties.

However, there are people who are able to continue in a friendship with their ex-partners after a breakup. Perhaps there is a period of awkwardness, during the transition from being romantic partners to friendship. Often, there would be conversations about how expectations and boundaries would now be different, moving forward.

Boundaries might include the physical and emotional aspects, and availability for each other. These would be different in friendships, compared to a romantic relationship. If both parties are willing and able to transition relating to each other in a different way, as friends, a meaningful friendship could develop. After all, you started as friends with your partner, before you were romantically attached to each other.

In your letter, you mentioned that “if you're truly detached yourself from the person, you'd be able to be friends again, no strings attached.”



Each of us handle relationships in a way that is best suited to us. Someone might be truly detached, but prefer not to develop a friendship with an ex-partner. Another might think that it is worth keeping the ex-partner as a friend.

Whether you and your ex-girlfriend continue or stop this friendship, is really a choice for both of you to make. As she has taken the initiative to reach out to you first, perhaps it demonstrates a readiness and willingness on her part. I wonder if you are similarly ready to forge a friendship with her, after being apart for 2 months. If you are not, it's also perfectly fine.

I hope the sharing has been helpful. If you would like to have a conversation with a counsellor to discuss this further or support you emotionally, do make an appointment when you are ready.