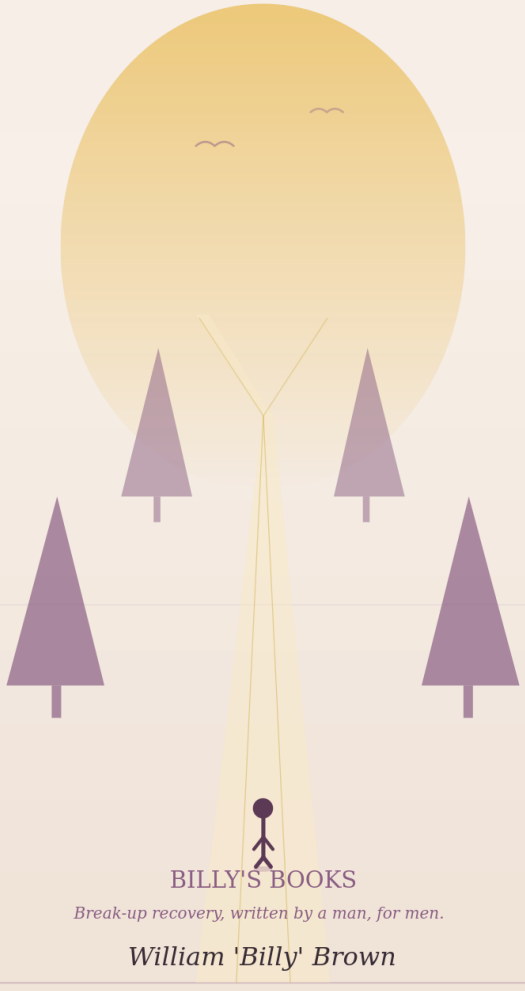
AM I READY TO DATE AGAIN?

A Short, Honest Self-Check



BILLY'S BOOKS

Break-up recovery, written by a man, for men.

William 'Billy' Brown

There's no clean, universal timeline for this, whatever anyone tells you. Some men are genuinely ready in months. Others need years. What actually matters isn't the calendar — it's whether you're honest with yourself about which of these questions you can answer well.

This isn't a test with a pass mark. It's five honest questions I wish I'd asked myself properly before I started dating again, rather than finding out the answers the harder way, part way into someone else's life.

1. Are you lonely, or are you actually ready?

These can feel identical late at night. Loneliness wants anyone. Readiness can wait for the right one. If you're not sure which one you're feeling, that uncertainty is itself worth sitting with a while longer.

2. Can you talk about your ex without it taking over the room?

A little context is normal and healthy. If every date turns into an hour about the marriage, that's usually a sign there's still real processing left to do, not yet a new relationship to build.

3. Are you looking for a partner, or a replacement for what you lost?

There's a real difference between wanting to build something new and wanting someone who can quickly fill the exact shape of what's missing. The first is healthy. The second tends to end badly for everyone involved.

4. Would you be genuinely comfortable if this person is nothing like your ex?

If you notice yourself only drawn to people who echo the same patterns, that's worth examining honestly before going much further, rather than assuming the familiar feeling is automatically the right one.

5. Are you dating to feel better right now, or to build something real?

Both are understandable impulses. Only one of them tends to lead somewhere lasting. Knowing honestly which one is actually driving you matters more than any external timeline.

If any of this landed, the full story — the marriage, the diagnosis, the bottom, and everything that came after, including learning to date again properly — is told in detail across three books: The Space Between, Still Standing, and Loving on Purpose, along with a companion workbook if you want somewhere to actually work through your own version of it.

You can also read the whole thing that started it, my autobiography, Billy, if you want the fuller story behind the story.

Whatever your honest answers turned out to be, I hope they were useful. There's no wrong pace here. Keep going.

— William 'Billy' Brown