

What Gone Girl Taught Us About Moving

By **Moira Lawler**

Today, all eyes are on "Gone Girl," which is making its highly anticipated jump from the page to the big screen. The plot (for those of you who *somehow* haven't read it yet!) follows the aftermath of what happens when Nick Dunne and his wife Amy pack up their New York City life and head to Missouri. Instead of excitement, there was—well, let's just say—resentment. Oh, and a missing person's report, a murder accusation, and way, way more drama that unfolds.

And while moving to a new town with your significant other (hopefully) won't bring nearly as much theatrics as it did for the Dunnes, re-locating can still be tough. But if you do it right, a change in geography can allow you and your partner to connect in a way that you never have before, says Nicole Paulie, a psychologist who's moved internationally and knows firsthand about the pluses (and minuses) that come with settling into a new home. Is a big move like the Dunnes' is in your future? Here, how to make your new home fulfilling stat.

Put Yourself First

Though the excitement of exploring a new city together can bring you closer together, make time for yourself as an individual too. "Relocate *your* life to the city and get involved in things that interest you," says Christina Steinorth-Powell, a psychotherapist who moved from Los Angeles to Dallas earlier this year. "One of the best ways to ward off resentment is to have a fulfilling life for yourself."

Find a Local Coffee Joint

Whether it's taking your dog for a walk around the new neighborhood each evening or grabbing your morning coffee from the same corner shop, settling into a routine puts you on the fast track to feeling more at home, says Steinorth-Powell. "Routines help us feel a sense of stability and quite often bring us a sense of harmony," she says. Start a routine to establish familiarity, but don't make it too rigid, Paulie warns. If you limit yourself to certain activities, you'll also limit your chances of discovering new events, people, and places in your new city.



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Get Comfy

Even though you probably won't feel like it right away, unpack your boxes and take the time to make your home feel like yours as soon as you can, Steinorth-Powell says. With the bubble wrap thrown away and your favorite family photos placed where you can see them, you'll create a safe comfort zone that'll make you feel settled, she says. After all, if your new home isn't a home you want to come home to (and who wants to come home to bubble wrap?), you'll be that much more likely to associate "home" with your previous location, where you *were* comfy.

Find Your New Sweat Spot

Ever been to a kickboxing class where everyone seems to know each other? Chances are, it wasn't always like that. Check Yelp to see the gyms and types of workouts that are popular in your new hometown. Then, make an effort to go to classes in the same time slots—say 7:30 a.m.—when the same people go, says Betina Gozo, fitness director at CrossTown Fitness in Chicago, IL. Eventually, after seeing the same faces day after day, you'll have a new buddy in the class.

Use Meetup.com

Zero in on your favorite activities, like roller blading or checking out the latest art galleries, and search for a local group on Meetup.com. Everyone on the site is actively looking to meet new people, which takes away some of the pressure and makes it easy to start a conversation, Paulie says. "In time, conversations can lead to lunch or shopping dates, and ideally, good, long-lasting friendships," Steinorth-Powell says.

Learn to Love Your Own Company

Moving to a new place can set the stage for self-exploration, and you might be surprised at just how independent and brave you are, Paulie says. Sure, meeting new people can be scary, but if you allow yourself to feel the fear and make an effort anyway, you'll win in the long run. "Although it's tough, you're not only meeting new people, and exploring a new city; you're meeting a whole new side of yourself that you've never had the chance to meet before," she says.