

SANDY DAYS, SALTY NIGHTS

Roadmap to a breakup



In my circle of friends, we gossip endlessly about the relationship train wreck of Anne and Michael. Their constant bickering and public fights provide enough conversation fodder to last an entire brunch. We titter over the insults she throws his way (most are compound expletives centered around the f-word) and marvel at his icy stoicism (I think relationship books call that “stonewalling”). Since their first ill-fated meeting, we’ve predicted relationship doom. Now, of course, they’re getting married.

Why would this disastrous couple think to head down the aisle? I’ll tell you. Because breaking up is hard. If you ask me, the No. 1 reason people stay in disappointing relationships is because they don’t have the guts to call it quits. For those of you straddling the relationship fence, here’s a breakup plan in three easy steps.

Step 1: Premeditation. The biggest reason breakups fail is because people hate to spend weekends alone. Stack enough empty Saturdays and Sundays against one another, and

you have a recipe for reconciliation (and disaster). Nothing makes for a “let’s get back together” conversation quicker than 48 straight hours of weekend boredom. So, before you drop the breakup bomb, plan your social calendar for the next four weeks. That means a definite weekend social activity and at least one outing during the week. Afraid to rely on friends for all that going out? Join an organization like Young Professionals of Southwest Florida. With 714 members under 40 and regularly scheduled activities, there are plenty of opportunities to expand your social horizons.

Step 2: Execution (indeed). Of course, the hardest part of a breakup is the actual breaking up. For that, there is no



panacea. But there is a way to make the moment less painful for everyone: Do it in writing. Personally, I can’t understand the fixation with the in-person breakup. I’d rather have mine typed, preferably e-mailed, but I do draw the line at text messaging. You may ask, isn’t this the coward’s way out? Doesn’t the dumper owe the dumpee a face-to-face rupture? My answer: No and no.

When my first big love dropped the “I’m just not in love with you” load (in French, but that did nothing to soften the blow), he delivered the lines in his apartment, after the Metro had stopped running for the night. All that raw breakup agony I should have nursed alone came pouring out in the miserable hours until sunrise. Talk about a long night.

“We titter over the insults she throws his way (most are compound expletives centered around the f-word)...”

Later, I wondered what it said about his character that he was able to stare into the face of that hurt. Was he incredibly brave or unspeakably cruel? Whichever the case, I wish he had saved us both the agony and e-mailed a message instead. An e-card would have been nice.

Step 3: Follow through. This is the crucial step. When the breakup is complete, when your social calendar is full and you’ve uttered the divisive words, then you must stick with the decision. That means no backpedaling, no hanging out for a period of time, and definitely no late-night booty calls. Breaking up is tough; have the courage to see it through to the (bitter, bitter) end. ■

Contact Artis
 >>Send your dating tips, questions, and disasters to: sandydays@floridaweekly.com



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Ladies Day Out 10am - 6pm

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Fridays by the Fountain 6pm - 9pm
Enjoy live music by Karkey & Dave at Center Court

Friday - January 23rd
Fridays by the Fountain 6pm - 9pm
Enjoy live music by Jubilee at Center Court

Sunday - January 25th
Pug Fest 12 pm - 4 pm
All breeds welcome!
A fundraiser for the Lee County Library System

Friday - January 30th
Friday Fest Concert Series 6pm - 8pm
Featuring the Ocean Reef Band

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