

Dear John,



Dear John,

It's not an official break up at this point and that's the strangest part, because we should have broken up many months ago. We've had a two year, long-distance relationship and we see each other about a week every month. We talk on the phone for hours every day, but at some point I came to the conclusion that I can't move in with her and her two kids. It's just not what I want in my life. I'm younger, without kids, and want a fresh start when I actually get married. Knowing this, I should have ended it LONG ago but it was hard because she is such a great person. The question is, should we still occasionally talk, or should I cut ties altogether? She is my best friend and not talking would be hard on us both. Should we try a slow separation instead, until we fizzle out completely? I'm not sure what the best strategy is. Adding to the confusion is being so far apart. It might be hard to be "separated" but still talk on the phone like we always do. I really need some

Signed,

In Limbo

Dear In Limbo

It's good to see a guy using this forum as well as girls. It shows we can be as sincere as they are, and not the uncaring cads described in their letters.

I don't doubt your sincerity, Limbo, but the situation you find yourself in is of your own making. By indulging in a relationship after its expiration date, you have made the inevitable that much harder. If your girlfriend is the great person you say she is, then do the right thing and give her complete honesty. Anything less is selfishness on your part.

The rule of thumb when breaking up is to leave no hope. This may sound cold, and it can be painful to carry out, but ultimately it shows the most sensitivity to the jilted party. A slow separation is bound to leave her with a lingering hope, a hope that you alone know will never be fulfilled. What your girlfriend needs is closure and an opportunity to move on. And, as a mother of two, she needs that opportunity sooner than later.

My advice is to cut ties completely, but in a way that shows the caring guy that comes across in your letter. Showing genuine remorse, yet resolve, is the best way to play it. If your break up is done correctly--with empathy, but emphatically--then it's possible that down the road you might even regain your friendship.

Time to stop bending instead of breaking, Limbo. Straighten up and jump over that last hurdle.

Thanks for playing,

John