

Please note: The following is not a substitute for working through these very serious issues with a professional. The worksheets can serve as a way to clarify your thoughts. Bring them to your appointment to start the discussion.

Stay or Go?

“You got to know when to hold 'em; know when to fold 'em . . .” ~ Kenny Rogers

Ending a committed relationship is a difficult and emotional decision. As you think about staying or leaving, focus on the impact of your decision for yourself, your partner and your family. Instead of thinking only about breaking up as a yes or no, evaluate the quality of the relationship.

Aspects to consider about your present situation:

Trust – How safe do you feel emotionally? Explain.

Trust – How safe do you feel physically? Explain.

Safety – How safe do you feel sexually? Explain.

Love – Is your love romantic, platonic, intermittent, evaporating, or other? Explain?

Cooperation – How do you help each other with day-to-day responsibilities?

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Respect – What level of respect does your partner have for you?

Respect – What level of respect do you have for your partner?

Physical intimacy – How are you and your partner “in sync” about intimacy and sex?

Physical intimacy – How are you and your partner not “in sync” about intimacy and sex?

Physical intimacy – How would you describe your sex life? Explain.

Communication – Do you talk to each other about finances? Explain.

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Communication – Are you only sharing information or are you able to discuss feelings, worries and excitement?

Values – How much do you agree on ethical and moral issues? How does that influence your relationship?

Religion and spirituality – Describe how you share a religious and/or spiritual belief system. If you do not, describe how that works in your relationship.

Raising children – If you have children, describe how you have or have not been able to find common ground regarding discipline, guidance, medical decisions, educational plans and goals.

Family-of-origin relationships – Do you believe you and/or your partner are more loyal to your own families-of-origin than to each other? Explain.

In-Law relationships – How have you or have you not worked out relationships that avoid high levels of conflict with each other's families?

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In-Law relationships – Do you have close relationships with your in-laws? Is that likely to continue if your relationship breaks up? Why or why not?

Finances – Are you both contributing to the family economy, either by working outside the home or inside? How does that work for you?

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Finances – How do you agree or disagree on methods of spending money? Explain.

Finances – How do you agree or disagree on a budget or saving money? Explain.

Arguing – Do you and your partner stick to the issue at hand when you argue? Explain.

Arguing – Do you or your partner bring up wrong-doings of the past when arguing? Explain.

Arguing – Does your fighting ever become physical? Describe.

Arguing – When you are arguing with your partner, how safe does everyone in your family feel? Explain.

Future – How do you believe your life (and that of your children, if applicable) would be better without this committed relationship? Explain.

Future – How do you believe your life (and that of your children, if applicable) would be worse without this committed relationship? Explain.

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Being Left

The end of a committed relationship is usually difficult. Often the end may come after a long period of distress, uncertainty and frustration for both parties. Sometimes a decision is made by only one partner, and the other partner finds this difficult to cope with. If the end of the commitment seems to come out of nowhere, the sense of rejection can be even more profound. Evaluating the relationship more objectively can help you recognize your own view of the relationship.

Review the following list and check whether the question is true or false for you.

Our Relationship	True	False
Our relationship has been difficult for a long time.		
I have felt I'm running on automatic pilot in my relationship.		
My relationship gives me everything I want.		
I would have left before if I hadn't been so afraid to be on my own.		
I feel as close to my partner as I did when we made a commitment to each other.		
If my partner hadn't been involved in another relationship, everything would be fine.		
This is just a midlife crisis - it'll pass		
Part of me is relieved that this is finally happening.		
We used to have mostly good times. Now it's mostly bad times.		
With the kids gone, we really just go our own way.		
We probably should never have gotten together in the first place.		
I am still deeply in love with my partner.		
I feel like I'm playing a part in a play, not really being me.		
I knew this was coming - I just didn't want to be the one who broke it up.		
I know we both contributed to the problems we've had.		
This may give me a chance to do some things I couldn't do before.		
I feel my partner has betrayed me.		

Now look at your answers. Which ones surprise you? What have you learned in doing this exercise?

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Quality of Current Relationship

When you feel ready to move forward with the process of ending a committed relationship, it is important to assess, as objectively as possible, how daily events are going and how you have been feeling.

Check the emotions you have felt over the past month – always, sometimes or never – and any comments you wish to note.

Emotions	Always	Sometimes	Never	Comment
Anxious				
Confident				
Content				
Depressed				
Disappointed				
Empty				
Enraged				
Fearful				
Fulfilled				
Hopeless				
Hurt				
Irritated				
Lonely				
Pleased				
Regretful				
Sad				
Satisfied				
Secure				
Suspicious				
Tense				
Trapped				
Other				
Other				

What responses surprised you?

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Our Goals

What are your own personal goals?

What are your partner's personal goals?

How are these compatible or incompatible with your goals

What are your goals for your family?

What are your partner's goals for your family?

How are these compatible or incompatible with your goals?

What are your career goals?

What are your partner's career goals?

How are these compatible or incompatible with your goals?

What are your leisure goals?

What are your partner's leisure goals?

How are these compatible or incompatible with your goals

What patterns, if any, do you notice from your responses?
