

CAN THIS BE LOVE?

WATCH OUT FOR WEEKENDS
In those two luscious days lie hazards to your romance

In theory, a weekend means two blessed days when we don't have to do anything we don't want to do. In practice, however, a lot of us who live with a man find ourselves doing just as many things we don't want to do on the weekends as during the week, the difference being that on the weekends we don't get paid for doing them.

Take me, for instance. I'm one of those who believe that the weekend is a time to do nothing more physically draining than turn over in bed, and nothing more mentally exhausting than decide which restaurant to order in from. Every Saturday morning I

open my eyes under the benighted delusion that my lover and I have the whole day in front of us with nothing more pressing to do than browse through an expensive jewelry store. Then I look over and see him perusing a list of several dozen tasks that, he informs me, he is hoping to accomplish in the next eight hours; tasks that, he further informs me, he expects *me* to help him accomplish. "Me and the Volunteers of America," I mumble, knowing in my heart that the goldsmiths and diamond cutters of the world will have to get through one more day without our support.

My friend Sue's husband joins me in the opinion that weekends are the ideal time to vegetate. Everything she suggests they do is met with a groan. She can tell him that they've been invited to spend the day at a friend's house on the beach, to be followed by a lobster dinner on the friend's patio, and Gil's response is a look that implies Sue has suggested they spend the day disinfecting their garbage pails.

Annie's weekend difficulties stem from the fact that she likes to see people, while her lover likes to see his checkbook balanced. "A perfect weekend for Peter would

be forty-eight hours spent with his bank statements, his tax receipts and his will. But I like to socialize, and I can't get used to viewing Saturday and Sunday as a time to put our affairs in order, as if we're going to be shot at dawn on Monday."

A universal truth about weekends is this: When one partner constantly either brings the office home or goes into the office on the weekends, he is waving a red flag at his mate as surely as if his line of work were bullfighting. The rule applies even when said partner *has* to work on the weekends, if he is an obstetrician, say, or a major league umpire. I know one woman whose partner, a musician, always has to spend his weekends playing the accordion at wedding receptions. She finds this both exasperating and ironic, pointing out that he seems to attend everyone's wedding but his own.

Difficulties can also crop up when partners' weekend hobbies are at odds with each other. My friend Nancy's hobby is antiquing; her husband Les's is getting a sun-tan. If they are going to pursue one's hobby together, the other's has to go by the wayside since Nancy has yet to find a beach that comes equipped with a stand selling hot dogs, cold drinks and nineteenth-century furniture. Their incompatibility is exacerbated by the fact that Nancy, fair-skinned and redheaded, responds to the sun the way other people respond to sulfuric acid, and has to go to the beach in complete purdah.

Then there are problems that arise because one partner in a relationship has some weekend-related habit not shared by the other. One friend, for example, complains that her lover doesn't feel it's the weekend unless he has a huge breakfast on Sunday, a practice that nauseates my friend, who believes that the only legitimate reason to have anything other than coffee in the morning is if you're a dog. "I can't stand to watch him wolf down a heaping plate of bacon and eggs," she reports, "and have exhibited my feelings by papering our kitchen with charts showing C.P.R. instructions, cholesterol levels of various foods, and a how-to for the Heimlich maneuver."

The important thing to remember about weekends is that there are fifty-two of them every year, so you and your partner are bound to connect on one every so often. Even if you believe that Saturday should be spent in a horizontal position, while he thinks it should be spent like a day in the life of a slave laborer, there will have to come one or two Saturdays when he won't be trying to get every appliance in the house in working order. If you're lucky, he might get sick one weekend, and actually want to spend the entire day in bed—and you can get in right next to him.

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