HOW TO END A RELATIONSHIP

1 **Get out immediately.**
The moment you realize you are in—or starting to get into—a relationship that is not working for you, just say "no."

2 **Decide on a mode of communication.**
Voicemail, e-mail, or a card may be considered cowardly. However, these options have their advantages, particularly for a short-term relationship. If you are ending a long-term relationship, consider drafting a letter as a way to begin a conversation. Hand it to your partner to read while you are there.

3 **Be kind.**
Mention the things you like about your partner and express gratitude for the good times you have had together. This may seem contrived, but do it anyway.

4 **State your position simply.**
Be decisive, leaving no room for doubt or negotiation. It is not necessary for the other person to agree with you or to understand your reasons, but try to explain. One of the consequences of terminating a relationship is that you no longer have to get the other person to understand or agree.

5 **Keep the focus on yourself.**
Talk only about yourself, not the other person: Don't make it their fault. Say something simple and true, such as, "I prefer not to continue dating, but I want you to know how much I have enjoyed your sense of humor," or, "This relationship just is not working for me." If necessary, repeat these phrases.

6 **Do not belabor the point.**
You do not need to go over all the advantages and disadvantages of the relationship. Do not offer critical feedback or long explanations. If your real reason for breaking up might be painful for the other person to hear, do not mention it.

7 **Do not try to take away the pain.**
You are doing what is right for you and the other person has a right to a response. It is no longer your job to make the person feel better. Be firm but not cruel.

8 **Never say, "I will call you."**
When tossed out insincerely, this phrase is unimaginative and unkind. Instead, try saying something more honest and more final: "Maybe we will see each other again sometime. If not, have a nice life."