

# How to Determine the Expiration Date of Your Relationship



By Allison Pescosolido, M.A. and Andra Brosh, Ph.D.

When you think the milk in your fridge has gone bad, you look on the side of the carton for the expiration date. If the date of expiration has passed, you simply toss it in the garbage, and buy a new one.

Relationships can also have expiration dates, but unfortunately there is no stamp on your partner's forehead that tells you it's time to move on. As a result, many people stay too long in a sour relationship, which can be toxic and damaging for everyone involved.

Sometimes the last breath of a dying relationship happens early on, like with Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries. In other situations it comes much later, like with Al and Tipper Gore. Deciding to stay in a relationship or get out is complicated. While there are no hard and fast rules about when it's time to leave, here are a few tips to help you finalize your decision:

**Related:** [When Is It Time To Break Up](#)

**1. Have a bottom line:** Be very clear about what you are willing to accept as part of your relationship. Ask yourself if you are sacrificing your own integrity to save the relationship, and decide on what you are willing or are not willing to live with going forward. For example, once Sandra Bullock discovered that Jesse James was a serial cheater, she knew that the time had come to move on. She quickly separated and began a new life on her own with her adopted son.

**2. Know thyself:** Knowing if a relationship is healthy can be tricky, especially if you don't have any good role models to draw from. Many people know that their loves lives aren't happy, but can't really figure out why. Happiness comes from within, and knowing how and when you feel happy will help you decipher if it's you or the relationship that isn't up to par...or maybe both.

**Related:** [How Do You Know When It's Time To Call It Quits](#)

**3. Trust your gut:** If you know in your heart of hearts that the relationship has not felt right for a long time, trust your gut. It's easy to rationalize away the negative to avoid confronting what you don't want to face. Telling yourself lies so you don't have to leave will prevent you from making a rational decision. Look at the whole picture, not just the one you want to paint for yourself.

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## **Al Gore's Daughter Has Marriage Troubles Of Her Own**





Just shortly after her parents announced their divorce, Al Gore's eldest daughter's own separation was announced this week. Kareanna Gore Schiff and husband, Andrew Schiff, have been married for 13 years, and have three children together. A source close to the couple told [People](#) that the split is amicable. During their marriage, the couple balanced their busy personal and work lives to remain involved in each others' lives. They are not formally divorced, and are seeing a marriage counselor during their separation.

**Can a separation really lead to something other than divorce?**

### **Cupid's Advice:**

Gore Schiff and her husband have always found a way to make their marriage work, even if it meant becoming involved in each others' professional lives. While a separation may lead to divorce, it can also be a time of healing and solving problems – leading to a better marriage in the future.

**1. Acknowledge the issues:** Separation happens for a reason.

It's important to talk about things without bias. Both parties have contributed to the split, and in order to move on, each person needs to recognize their respective faults.

**2. Learn to live alone:** In marriage, many people live for for each other and forget who they are without the relationship. It's important to be on your own again. You must be confident in yourself as an individual before you can be confident in your relationship.

**3. Move one step at a time:** Working from a separation back to marriage takes time, and won't be solved overnight. It's a process. If it doesn't happen, at least you know that you've tried.

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## Al Gore Splits From Wife





Al and Tipper Gore were high school sweethearts, and their relationship has withstood the Vietnam War, the near death of a child, and a failed presidential campaign attempt in 2000. Now, the couple that seemed unbreakable, announced that they have chosen to go their separate ways.

**How do you pick up the pieces after spending half a lifetime with the same person?**

**Cupid's Advice:**

Many couples feel pressured to stick together, even when they are worlds apart in their own lives. If you find that you don't know who you're living with any longer, consider the following to help understand your situation.

**1. Pay Attention:** For duos that celebrate yet another anniversary but suddenly realize that they aren't the same two people that got married, it's time to open your eyes and see yourselves as individuals.

**2. Clear the cobwebs:** This may sound cliché, but one of the best ways to start fresh is getting rid of any obstacles you

think are blocking your path.

**3. Focus on your future:** One thing many longtime couples forget is that while they may be 'one' within a relationship, they're still separate people, and are entitled to their own road in life – even if this means traveling in different directions. If splitting up is necessary, know that you can find yourself in the process. Picking up the pieces may take awhile, but it can be done without guilt or pain if done right. \_\_\_\_\_