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Friends -- With Benefits

By Kwame DeRoche

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We've all been there. That long, seemingly endless drought during which time you get no play. No action. No sweet lovin'. The dating life is mediocre, and you've got no prospects. But as we've proven time and time again, we're a resourceful bunch. Many take matters into their own hands. In the Appalachians, many fall into the arms of a sexy sibling. But there's a number of us that decide to try... 'Friends with benefits.'

Yeah, that old song. You start workin' your mojo on your friends. And try to stay friends. And, it usually ends in disaster.

FWB finds its origins in some breakup many years ago. The guy, sick of all her crap yet still lusting for her body, voiced a proposal. An agreement, if you will. Sex without relationship complications. Totally need-based, not emotion based like what those other suckers are doing. Just for a little while. It's the perfect plan. Kinda like a severance package for his package, until it finds 'new employment.'

The mistake didn't lie in the idea. Because people come up with stupid ideas every day. And trying to have sex with your ex isn't exactly original. The mistake, my friends, is that she agreed to it. So opened a new loophole for commitment-phobes everywhere. Sex with no strings. The multiple-night-stand.

The 'friends with benefits.'

In later years, FWB made way for other dating loophole innovations like Revenge Sex and the Booty Call. But I digress.

So there you are, still complaining about not being able to find someone special, but now with a big grin on your face. Why? You gettin' sum.

In order for the FWB plan to work, there must be rules in place. You must both be single. You're probably not getting any from anyone else, otherwise you wouldn't be looking for FWB. You can't get emotionally attached, jealous, needy, or any of that crap. You probably try to keep it a secret, too. And,

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most of all, you can't let it interfere with your (or your friend's) dating life. You know what? With all those rules, it starts to sound an awfully lot like a...uhm...what's it called? A relationship. Or worse, a JOB.

Anyway, in theory, it's like finding a gold mine. Pack up the wagon, Ma, you're a free sex 49er. You can't believe that you're the only one who thought of this. No anniversaries to remember, no hearts and flowers, no explaining where you were Friday night, you're in heaven. But like the great gold rush, you never know when it's all gonna run out.

Disaster comes into play when one of the two friends in the agreement is harboring a crush. Only one. And think about it folks, any friend who would just up and agree to start having casual yet semi-exclusive sex with you has to have an agenda of their own. (The fact that they look at you and

lick their lips is a give-away too.) Chances are they not be fully aware of it themselves. This accounts for 90% of the FWB files. So, when the drought is over, and the emergency FWB rations can be put away, that pre-existing crush is enough to cause BIG (yet sudden to you) jealousy. The casualty? Your platonic, un-awkward, normal friendship.

That's assuming you're good. And compatible in bed.

Which leads to another kind of disaster. What if you don't click in bed? What if you chicken out as soon as they get naked? What if you end up laying there saying 'what the hell did we just do?' What if you can't finish? What if you can't even get started? These are things that start to mess with confidence and self-esteem. And make for an awkward game of Scrabble next time you two are hanging out alone. Assuming that you're even able to hang out alone after that point.

Then there are the resentment issues. Eventually, someone will start to feel like the other person's libido band-aid. Because sex without all the lovey-dovey relationship-type stuff leaves you a lot of time to think about what you just did, especially when your lover just jumped up to play a video game or to call the guy she's really interested in.

It's rare to find someone mature enough to have continuous sex with someone and not develop feelings for them. It's even more rare to find someone who can deal with those feelings if and when they show up. In the end, you've got awkwardness, jealousy, resentment, and all the other things that can stop a relationship in its tracks. And guess what, Chachi, a friendship is a relationship. And it sucks worse than the relationship that got you into this mess, because you can end up losing a lover AND a friend.

So in trying to avoid Melrose Place drama, you backpedal your way into 90210. You're stuck. You're alone. And the booty train's done left the station without you.

In the end, you ain't boinkin' like a rabbit, and you ain't no friend o' mine.

But sometimes, you look over at that other person and realize that you're having sex with someone you like to hang out with. Who likes all the same stuff you do. Who knows all your secrets and still wants to

hang out with you. Sometimes, they realize it too. Then things work out.

Except in the Appalachians. Dude, she's your sister. That's just nasty.

That's the rant.

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I'm a 27-year-old Advertising/Marketing Senior Writer with a slightly skewed perception of the world. I've been writing my rants since early 1999. They're humorous brain-dumps, all about relationships, TV, movies, driving to work...you know, LIFE. And as long as humans are humans, I'll always have something to write about. See more or subscribe at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kwamrants>

Friends with Benefits – Can it work?

By Imagine We Meet writing staff

Is there ever such a thing as "No Strings Attached?" Can a friendship between two people withstand casual sex? Or is that just an idealistic concept?

One night stands aren't as in as they used to be. Now lovers are coupling up for more long term sex. It's called "Friends with Benefits". They get all the benefits of a relationship without the commitment. They start out as friends. They enjoy each other's company and then one night start sleeping together.

They don't date. It's not a traditional "significant other" type relationship. In many cases, the other friends don't even know about their sex on the side. It's set up as a mutual gratification, friends helping friends arrangement.

What most Friends with Benefits fail to do is set up the rules. It generally starts out as either happenstance or perhaps a small dialog exchange, "I don't have anyone, you don't either, so let's do it, no strings attached. What do you think?" It all sounds well in good; at least initially when both are hornier than a unicorn. But can friends who sleep together remain friends once it ends? Or is the start of mutual sex the start of the end of their friendship?

Sex creates a bond, no matter how discussed up front it is. Someone always gets hurt in the end of a no strings attached, Friends with Benefits arrangement. Booty Calls always start out with mutual orgasms as the sole purpose. Yet when two people share that kind of closeness, and if it's a recurring buddy booty call, then they spend time together. Someone is doing something very intimate with and to the other. Who isn't always appreciative of a good orgasm?

One or both may know that they don't want a commitment and that's why the No Strings Attached agreement was conceived. But when the "ooh baby, ya that feels so good, I love what you do to me" occurs regularly, how can they NOT start to feel something for the other? One person will inevitably

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feel a stronger emotional bond than the other; it's not male/female bias. One will still only love the physical benefits and the other will enjoy the great sex so much that they get attached, even though they weren't looking for any relationship.

Or perhaps one person may have always been secretly attracted to the friend and knew the other didn't want a relationship, yet figured a Friends with Benefits arrangement was better than nothing. Hence they verbally agreed to the arrangement but emotionally they were already hooked.

Develop some rules before entering into any such arrangement. Consider these suggestions: No going out with each other unless it's in a group situation or you know the night will end in sex, therefore the outing is part of foreplay, no public affection, no gifts and any other boundaries you want to instill. Before it starts, decide how it will end. If starting out as friends, the goal is to end as friends. If new love interests were previously discussed among friends, shouldn't those types of conversations still be allowed?

Use your head to consider wisely what may be lost if you enter into a Friends with Benefits arrangement

This article as for many others was written by the writing staff at

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