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What not to do this Valentine's Day



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I've always thought of Valentine's Day as a mid-range event on my holiday ranking scale. I'd probably place it somewhere above the binge-drinking mess of St. Patrick's Day but not nearly as exciting as Canada Day. I know the whole thing has very little to do with true love and a lot to do with selling expensive gifts but I'm a sucker for candy conversation hearts and cheesy greeting cards nonetheless.

February 14 doesn't have to be the most romantic day of the year, but if you find yourself coupled up this Friday and you'd like to stay that way then you should probably try to put in a little effort. There's still plenty of time to plan something special for your significant other, so here are some guidelines on what not to do this Valentine's Day.

Do nothing. Disappointment abounds during this time of year, especially when people aren't up front about their expectations. You don't have to deliver a dozen overpriced roses or orchestrate a private dinner for two in a candlelit restaurant, but the least you can do is pick up a card and scribble down a few heartfelt sentences. When it comes to matters of the heart, no one ever regrets being over prepared.

Break up with your beau. You'd think this was a pretty obvious V-Day "don't," but according to a recent survey by online dating site AYI.com, 22 per cent of individuals polled said that they had been dumped on Feb. 14. It's hard to believe that so many people possess such poor timing but perhaps it's understandable given all the stress that surrounds this particular holiday. Even so, try to have a heart and wait 24 hours before delivering the bad news to your soon-to-be ex.

Protest just for the sake of it. We all know Valentine's Day is special because of the person you spend it with and not because of how much money you spend on them. However, restaurant owners, florists and purveyors of gourmet chocolates count on this annual event to bring in some cash during an otherwise slow winter season. Rather than self-righteously boycotting the Hallmark holiday, why not show your love by supporting small businesses in your area. Find your sweetheart a unique and thoughtful gift from an independent local retailer and it'll be a win for everybody.

Give in to social media envy. Let's face it, this Friday your various social media newsfeeds are going to blow up with heavily filtered images of bountiful floral bouquets and sickeningly sweet proclamations of love. Some digital sentiments might be touching; the majority will be annoying and may leave you feeling jealous and depressed. Do yourself a favour and step away from the keyboard so that you can focus on your own relationship.

Feel obligated to leave the house. Never underestimate the appeal of a low-key night in. With chilly temperatures outside and season two of House of Cards debuting on Netflix this Friday, a cosy date on the couch is a perfectly lovely (not to mention inexpensive) option. It might not look as impressive on Instagram but nothing says long-term relationship success like sweatpants and takeout Chinese food.

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