

Excusing Yourself from **Group Texts**

Should you **stay**, or should you **go**?

Let's be honest. We love group chats—sometimes. These joint conversations can teeter between two worlds. It's flattering to be in the circle of trust, receive Monday morning puppy memes and instantly hear if someone in the group needs a virtual hug. When it's irritating: During intense 9-to-5 hours, when alerts buzz like a beehive way past your bedtime or if someone in the group scored the perfect flats on clearance—which is awesome—yet the comment landslide arrives at a not-so-great time. What if you're utterly desperate to leave the chat just because? It can be tricky.

Before you permanently end the conversation, **here are a few things to consider:**



End the Conversation

If your patience has run out, or your phone continues delivering YouTube clips when you've asked the senders to cease, it may be time to part ways—politely. Before you sign off, inform the recipients why. Withhold any blame and tell them why with nothing but love.

Don't be the Conversation

Have you considered how your text thread buddies may feel when you leave? Feeling rejected is a real consequence and can cause unintended emotional hurt that rivals physical pain. Remember, you're not having this conversation in person or even over the phone. It's in a group text where no one can hear your tone of voice, see your facial expressions or interpret body language. What you may intend as innocent could spark division and aggression in others.

Mute the Conversation

Adjust your phone's settings to "Do not Disturb." Turn off the ringer. Eliminate your phone's ability to vibrate when muted. Tuck your phone away. Simply ignore the pings and dings and, when you're ready, catch up and join in.

Have a Conversation

Be honest about how the frequency and timing of texts affect you. Is it anxiety-inducing while at your day job that 52 exchanges occurred and you have yet to scroll through and see what the deal is? Is your laptop tied to your smartphone, meaning alerts ping during online meetings with clients? Let the group know that you love to chat, yet during certain hours it's okay for them to have a sidebar without you.

Don't Overkill the Conversation

Try not to be that person who makes others question remaining in the group. Respect the hours of those who work and go to bed early. Keep one-on-one conversations on the side, not public fodder. Stay on topic. Include only those who know one another in a discussion, and if not, introduce everyone right away and explain why you've brought them together. Know when to participate, stay in the background, and when conversations, like all things, should come to an end.

