

How To Ruin A Warm Friendship

(Ed. Note: There are lots of ways to put the freeze on a warm friendship and the colorful characters described below have discovered most of them. This satirical collection of kooks based on a psychologists' summary and prepared by Florists Transworld Delivery reveals some common foibles sure to turn

the trust in any relationship straight into bust, with practical advice on how to avoid them.)

The sit-in, shoo-out, hang-up and put-down are just four of the common ways in which wonderfully warm friendships are ruined — sometimes turning in-laws into outlaws, and taking the "r" out of friend.

Though a really good friend is hard to find, losing one is often far too easy. Nobody wants to change from a pal to a pill and a recent psychologist's report describes some colorful characters whose foibles usually turn affection to rejection . . . with some sage suggestions on how to avoid them.

1 Bad News Bernie.

Bernie is a wonderful friend as long as you're having a tough time. If your mother-in-law moves in or your wife moves out, Bernie is always the first to know and to call — full of sympathy. But when you get that big promotion or your first son weighs in at a lusty 9 pounds, Bernie is strangely absent . . . and stays that way till fate deals you another blow.

Don't be a Bad News Bernie. Your friends need you around to celebrate as much as to commiserate. So when good news comes their way, be the first to call or write. Even better — send flowers. It's surprising how pleased folks are to be remembered when things are going well!

The "We'll Be There" Wilkinsons.

Almost everyone has friends like the Wilkinsons — for a while, anyhow. They're always the life of every party and they never miss one. If you decide

to ask a few neighbors in, the Wilkinsons turn up as a surprise. And when you rent that little cottage by the lake, they just happen to be driving by — for the weekend. Obviously, the Wilkinsons are so busy with their gregarious gadding, they never have time to entertain you. And, since they're never at home, you can't just drop in on them.

Needless to say, the Wilkinsons have ruined a number of warm friendships — as you will, too, if you lack common consideration and fail to reciprocate with your own invitations. Even when friends say "Drop in any time" its tactful to call before you do. And after an overnight visit, it's a must to send a thank-you note a bread-and-butter gift or a thoughtful bouquet of flowers with your own individualized message.

Good Time Gilda.

You may have at least one Good Time Gilda on your list of friends . . . temporarily. The opposite number to Bad News Bernie, she's just as obnoxious in her way. Gilda is one of those blithe spirits who gravitates toward fun and runs from trouble. Whether you lose your job, your boyfriend or your apartment, Gilda is the first to know — and go. She won't be around till you're fully recovered and by that time — who needs her?

Many people instinctively shun misfortune as though it were contagious. But this type of behavior is guaranteed to turn the trust in any relationship straight into bust. Do be a friend in need, offer positive help as well as sympathy and you'll be pretty sure to have a friend around when you need one.

"You-Poor-Thing" Pattie.

Pattie is a remarkably sympathetic friend. In fact, she fairly overflows with sympathy but, unfortunately, that's all she has to offer and as she continues with condolences on your latest haircut, most expensive dress, brand new draperies, your husband's business affiliations and your children's behavior you start by feeling awfully sorry for yourself then decide you may be allergic to Pattie.

Expressing the right amount of sympathy at the right time is certainly in order. But don't overdo it. Belittling a companion is one sure way to rub the "r" right out of friendship.

How-To-Do-It Harry

Harry's the kind of friend who loves to give advice, solicited or not. Whenever you have to make a decision, Harry makes it for you. And, if you fail to follow his suggestions, regardless of the outcome, he is certain to say "I told you so." Harry is also an amazing second-guesser, given to such endearing expressions as "How could you have . . ." "What, you mean you've never heard of . . ." and "I'm surprised you didn't . . ."

Of all the ways to ruin a warm friendship, offering unwanted advice or criticism is probably the most potent. Even when friends ask for your advice, they usually prefer to make their own decisions and want to be respected for it.

There are a number of others on the list — some of whom may be among your own acquaintances. Catastrophe Cate who goes from one ghastly crisis to another and insists on phoning you about each, usually at 3 a.m.; the Two-Faced Tams who ooze with compliments and chumminess in your presence, but run you down mercilessly behind your back; the Borrowing Barclays who are always in debt and find it's

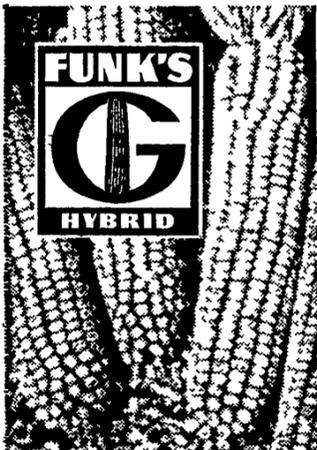
easier and cheaper to borrow from you than a bank; Name-Dropping Ned who knows everybody you don't and loves to rub it in; Boring Benjie who only stops talking about himself long enough to repeat the same old jokes which weren't even good the first time and Awkward Annie who inevitably manages to break up the furniture, burn a hole in the rug or smash your best china whenever she's a guest.

The fictitious characters described above are obvious exaggerations. Few real persons are so consistently poisonous yet, according to psychologists, everyone commits some of these unfriendly acts occasionally — even to their nearest and dearest. However, with a little effort and self-examination you can eliminate most of them and thus manage to keep on good terms with those friends you most want to keep.

● Have You Heard? (Continued from Page 15)

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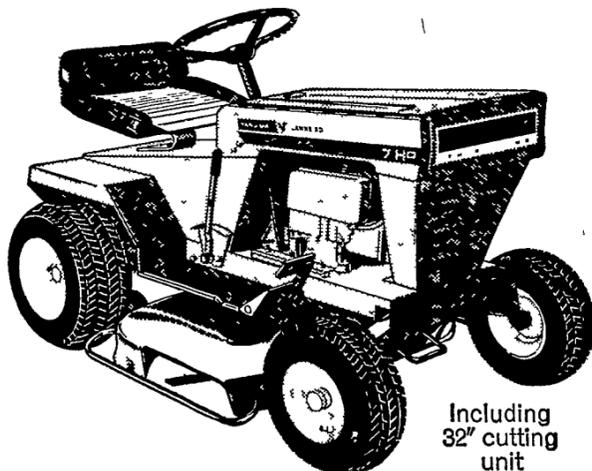
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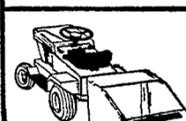
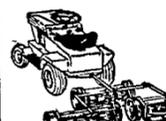
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