

Four-hour commute is iffy investment in relationship

DEAR ABBY: I have been seeing my boyfriend, “Casey,” for a year. He has said throughout our courtship that we could get married in four to five years.

Over the past couple of months, he has become distant and less romantic. I drive four hours to see him almost every week, and he seems fine then, but when we’re apart, he rarely texts me and seems disinterested.

On one of my recent visits, Casey said he NEVER wants to get married! When I asked what had changed his mind, his response was that he has decided that marriage is a trap. When I asked if he still wanted to be with me, he said yes.

I know I don’t want to be Casey’s girlfriend forever. I don’t want to waste my time if he’s not going to marry me, but I really want to be with him. Do you think he’ll change his mind again, or is it time for me to end things? — **WAITING AND HOPING IN MARYLAND**

DEAR WAITING AND HOPING: If you’re doing all of the four-hour commuting, you’re not only waiting and hoping, you are also doing most of the work in your relationship with Casey. From your description of his attention span, when you’re out of sight, you are not on his mind.

You didn’t mention how old you both are, but it appears Casey has some growing up to do. Marriage isn’t a trap; it’s a partnership. And like any strong partnership there is commitment involved. If



DEAR ABBY

Casey isn’t up to making a commitment and marriage is what you’re after, you should save the wear and tear on your car and the expense of the gas and find a man who is less gun-shy.

DEAR ABBY: We live near my wife’s sister “Bree” and her husband, “Joe.” We socialize often at one of our homes or at a restaurant. They have recently become good friends with another couple, the “Russells,” who are delightful.

Bree and Joe sometimes invite us over when the Russells are there. The problem is, when I try to carry on a conversation with Mr. Russell, Joe gets bent out of shape. He interrupts and changes the subject or says something to make me look bad. If that doesn’t stop the discussion, Joe walks off in a huff. I think he’s acting like an immature middle-schooler. (It also triggers memories I have of being bullied and excluded as a child.)

I’d like to avoid these three-couple get-togethers, but I don’t know how many times I can do it without raising questions. An alternative would be to avoid the

Russells and converse only with other guests who may be present. Either option, or mentioning it, risks making me look like the jealous 12-year-old instead of Joe. Any ideas? — **ODD MAN OUT IN KANSAS**

DEAR ODD MAN OUT: It appears that your brother-in-law is insecure, or he wouldn’t behave the way he is. How sad – for him.

Start limiting the time you spend as a threesome. Ask your wife to find out in advance if the Russells will be visiting when you are. If Bree asks her why, your wife should tell her that Joe seems upset when you try to carry on a conversation with the husband and you don’t want to make him uncomfortable. Perhaps if she tells her husband to knock it off and grow up, he will. However, if the problem continues, explain to the Russells that as much as you enjoy their company, you’ll be seeing them less often, and why.

It isn’t necessary to mention to any of them the grief you experienced in middle school because, frankly, it is none of their business. If it’s any comfort to you, it appears Joe had insecurities back then, too, but he never outgrew them.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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8			3	6		2
	1	5		7		3
	3					9
3			9	7		6
6			4	8		9
	9					4
	8	3		4	2	1
1			2	5		7

Instructions for play: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

That’s all there is to it. There’s no math involved. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic. It’s fun. It’s challenging. It’s addictive!

Solving time is typically from 10 to 30 minutes, depending on your skill and experience. The solution for today’s puzzle will be published in Saturday’s paper. Or you can go to www.sudoku.com to find the solution.

9	1	4	8	2	7	6	3	5
7	8	3	5	4	6	2	9	1
2	6	5	9	1	3	8	4	7
4	9	6	7	5	8	3	1	2
8	7	1	2	3	9	4	5	6
5	3	2	4	6	1	9	7	8
1	5	8	3	9	2	7	6	4
6	2	9	1	7	4	5	8	3
3	4	7	6	8	5	1	2	9

HOROSCOPES

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, delay your plans for the time being. A number of unexpected tasks that will require your undivided attention in the coming day, so clear your schedule.

TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21

Assume the role of the strong and silent type this week, Taurus. You do not have to share your opinions with everyone, as an air of mystery may boost your popularity.

GEMINI - May 22/Jun 21

It can be easy to allow excitement to overtake your logic, Gemini. But you need to be patient and not allow exuberance to interfere with the tasks at hand. That is a recipe for trouble.

CANCER - Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, a hefty workload at the office may zap your desire to do much else. However, don’t pass up the opportunity when a social engagement beckons this week.

LEO - Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, you will have to continue your rather hectic pace this week, even when you start to feel tired. Fortunately, you are excited about some of the things on your to-do list.

VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, getting involved with the right people now opens doors that previously may have been closed to you. Do not squander the opportunity to use these new contacts.

LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, conflicting emotions arise in the week ahead. You have the desire to fulfill people’s expectations of you, but you also just want some time to yourself.

SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, maintaining your focus on chores is nearly impossible this week, when you are easily distracted by anything else that sounds interesting. Try to get your work done.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21

Reestablish your priorities, Sagittarius. Doing so will help you live up to your end of the bargain on various commitments. If necessary, ask others for help.

CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20

Expect to be busy for the rest of the month, Capricorn. With potential birthday celebrations and holiday tasks to complete, spare moments are few and far between.

AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, learning a new skill this week will only add to your already vast repertoire of abilities. This is one more reason to have a positive attitude.

PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20

Emphasize feeling good about yourself this week, Pisces. Doing so will enable you to help others in the near future.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER 1
Bette Midler, Singer/Actress (68)

DECEMBER 2
Aaron Rodgers, Athlete (30)

DECEMBER 3
Amanda Seyfried, Actress (28)

DECEMBER 4
Tyra Banks, Model (40)

DECEMBER 5
Gary Allan, Singer (46)

DECEMBER 6
Lindsay Price, Actress (37)

DECEMBER 7
Sara Bareilles, Singer (34)

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Outfits

5 With 20-

Down,

African

capital

10 “No

Turn —”

12 “Loma —”

13 Hot spot

14 “... like I

need

— in the

head”

15 Belief, in

brief

16 Flock

father

18 Crude

shack

19 Kath-

mandu

native

21 Tex-Mex

snack

22 Science

fiction

genre

24 Pricing

phrase

25 Have a

long

sleep

29 Dunham

of “Girls”

30 Film

awards

32 Outmoded

33 Fitting

34 Custodi-

an’s tool

35 Letter

feature

37 Gladden

39 Make

law

40 Museum

piece

41 Wise ones

42 Dealing

need

DOWN

1 Fiddler’s

need

2 “Hold

on!”

3 Cross

4 Capitol

Bldg.

worker

5 First

person

6 Cry from

Homer

7 Co-star

of Nimoy

and

Shatner

8 Fortunate

9 Handle

25 Western

capital

38 Headed

T	O	D	O			A	C	E	D
O	P	E	N	S		B	R	A	V
P	E	S	T	O		O	I	L	E
I	R	E		C	A	R	D	I	N
C	A	R	T	I	N	G		C	E
S	T	E	A	K		S	O	D	
				A	L	A	M	O	
S	A	M		R	E	A	M	S	
S	E	T		C	A	R	P	I	N
C	A	R	V	I	N	G		M	A
A	W	A	I	T		E	V	O	K
D	A	I	S	Y		R	O	S	E
S	Y	N	E			W	A	D	E

Previous Puzzle

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13						14			
15				16		17		18	
19			20				21		
22						23			
24									
25	26						27	28	
29					30				31
32									
33				34					
35			36			37	38		
39						40			
41								42	

11-30

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 River

vessel

5 Resorts

for the

pampered

9 Maga-

zine’s

front

10 Must

12 Without

help

13 Spanish

hero

14 Pizza

servings

16 Last part

17 Shore

eroder

18 Plug parts

21 USN rank

22 Alternative

to curtains

23 Paris river

24 Set upon

26 Campaign

pro

29 Dr.

Jekyll’s

alter ego

30 Cougar

31 “— we

there

yet?”

32 Cook’s

collection

34 Puccini

opera

37 Low joint

38 Take an

oath

39 Ranch

animal

40 Went

under

41 Database

option

DOWN

1 Arrive, as

fog

2 Steers

clear of

3 Backyard

barrier

4 Forest

unit

5 That

woman

6 Chum

7 Climb

8 Wasp

attacks

9 Social

group

11 Casino

figure

15 Joins

together

S	L	A	W			S	H	O	V
T	O	U	R		S	P	E	W	E
A	C	R	E		P	A	I	N	T
R	O	A	S	T	E	R	S		
				T	O	A	S	T	E
S	T	A	L	E	R		T	I	E
T	O	N	E	S		B	L	A	D
A	R	K		T	A	I	L	E	D
B	O	A	S	T	E	R	S		
O	P	E	R	A	S		E	P	E
P	A	R	A	D	E		N	I	N
T	R	A	P	S		S	C	O	T

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	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	
9						10				11
12						13				
14					15			16		
17					18	19	20			
21					22					
					23					
					24	25				