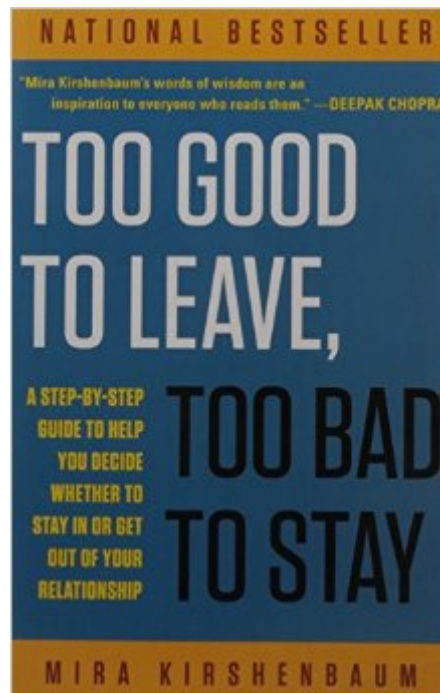


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# Too Good To Leave, Too Bad To Stay: A Step-by-Step Guide To Help You Decide Whether To Stay In Or Get Out Of Your Relationship



## Synopsis

â œBrilliant.â •â "Shere Hite, author of *The Hite Report*Â To make up or break up? Whether youâ™re just getting serious or have a long-term commitment, no other question causes so much heartache and self-doubt. Many other books tell you how to fix your relationship. This groundbreaking bestseller is the first one to help you choose whether you should tryâ"or you need to go.Â Psychotherapist Mira Kirshenbaum draws on years of research and her work with real-life couples to help you make the right decision. She shows you how to diagnose your unique situation with self-analysis and questions like these, which get to the very heart of your problems:Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â What sins are forgivable and which ones are unpardonable?Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Is your partner questioning your opinions to the point where you doubt yourself?Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â What is your sex life really like, and how important is it?Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Is there real love left between you, and how does it stack up against all that you find unlovable?Â Mira Kirshenbaum provides expert guidelines that are the key to making all your choices, concrete steps that you can implement right now, and the ultimate way to determine your personal bottom lineâ"what you need to be happy. This remarkably insightful and probing guide offers advice that lets you see the truth about your relationshipâ"and with wisdom and compassion, it helps you act with the confidence of knowing that whether you decide to go or stay, you are doing the very best thing.Â â œA powerful self-help resource for anyone caught in a web of relationship distressâ | Excellent.â •â "Christopher L. Hayes, author of *Our Turn: Women Who Triumph in the Face of Divorce*Â â œFew have written with such common sense and clarity about how to come out of the trap of ambivalence in marriage. Iâ™ve recommended the book to colleagues and clients.â •â "CloÃ© Madanes, co-founder, The Family Therapy Institute

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## Customer Reviews

After a 20+ year marriage to a decent guy who was a good provider but not in any way my true friend, lover or life's partner, I had tried everything imaginable to make sense of my commitment -- especially because we had two children. I sought years of psychotherapy, read a library's worth of self-help books, listened to every "relationship expert" from Tony Grant to Barbara DeAngelis to Dr. Laura, always searching, concentrating to the point of exhaustion, to glean that essential kernel of truth that would illuminate the path I should take to find acceptance and happiness. But I could find no peace, no resolution, no answers. FINALLY, this book gave me the tools I needed to understand the many issues and problems that weighed so heavily in my marriage. Mira Kirshenbaum provided the template I needed to lay over my decades of ambivalence. Her direct, snappy writing style was a breeze to read. Her observations cogent and concise. She makes no bones about taking a clear stand and expressing a firm opinion about whether people were happier that they stayed or left a relationship when the issues she explored were identified as problems. She gave me the language to articulate and define my marital problems. It became undeniably clear to me that I would be happier if I left. With tremendous relief and some real trepidation, I gave myself the freedom to leave for my 46th birthday present. Fast forward two years -- I have never been happier! I recently reread the book and my second thorough reading reinforced my initial interpretations. I am now using Kirshenbaum's criteria to judge whether my current relationship meets my needs in the categories that are most important to me. YEAH! Success!

I first needed this book -- okay, I needed it before I married. I recognize now that I needed it in 1988, when the pain and confusion were enormous, and the counseling I received was, to put it generously, ridiculous. But Kirshenbaum hadn't yet written the book. Then I needed it in 1995, when I was totally on the fence. But Kirshenbaum hadn't yet published. Finally she did, in 1996 (hardcover), and even though I'd already made the decision to leave, and knew somehow it was right, I bought the book. Gosh, how come I wasn't taught all this stuff before?!? Too Good To Leave is not only the book you pick up when you're on the fence. It's not just the book you turn to to make sure you made the best choice under the circumstances. It's the book you refer to again and again and again to help you learn what IS a healthy relationship, what IS love. Because in showing us what ill-health can

look like, Kirshenbaum also teaches those of us who just didn't get it what we can look for in the future, when our hearts decide to risk again. This is an easy read: each chapter is structured the same way, with the issue, circumstances, diagnostic questions, couples examples from Kirshenbaum's practice (she provides therapy in the Boston area), and guidelines...are most people in this particular situation happier if they leave or if they stay? She begins with the incredibly painful (are you being beaten?) and moves through the book toward less and less clearcut circumstances. Take Chapter 8, for example: "What Is This Thing Called Love?" The issue: is there any real love left?

My wife and I have been married six years and have had marital troubles for nearly a year. However, we are taking very concrete steps to try to address them and we're making good progress. We're learning a lot more about ourselves and each other, about personalities and temperaments and what influences them. Now we are better able to appreciate how those factors manifest in our day-to-day behavior. It is hard work, but we both agree that in the end it's worth it -- regardless of the eventual outcome of our marriage. This book was recommended to me by a person that I have generally known to have good judgement, so I took a look. I can say without a doubt that if I had read this book a year ago, my wife and I would now be divorced and that decision would have been the biggest mistake of our lives. Several of the so-called guidelines pointed to behavior on my wife's part AND others on my own part that would have caused each of us to conclude that we would be more happy if we left than stayed. The method of decisionmaking suggested by this book is bereft of the kind of hard work it really takes to evaluate the future of a relationship and the behavior of people in relationships. It fails to explore personality types -- a cornerstone to understanding why your partner may behave the way he or she behaves. It also assumes the problem MUST reside within your partner, not within yourself. In my relationship, the problem was 80% of my own creation. But, through self-evaluation and study we have been able to LEARN more about our own personalities so that now we can better appreciate our differences and give our love for one another a chance to flourish.

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