

For Keeps



Don't let friends speed up your biological clock.

► A few weeks ago, two close friends invited me to a “girls’ lunch,” although I didn’t realize at the time that this meant they would bring their infant daughters along. And while I desperately tried to nudge my way into the conversation by asking questions about diaper rash and fake-laughing about their chapped nipples, it felt like we no longer spoke the same language or shared the same humor. Is there any way to shake this odd-man-out feeling...aside from having a baby immediately?

Peer Pressure 2.0

Though my BFFs say they felt destined to be parents, my husband, Scott, and I have trouble relating since we’re not quite there yet. Even though I’ve made that clear, my friends still urge me to have a little one of my own ASAP. A few have offered to set me up with reproductive doctors, which eerily reminds me of how they once tried to marry me off to their husbands’ college buddies.

When Your Buds Are in “Baby Comas”

Every month, author and journalist Kristina Grish contemplates the sweet, surprising, and often totally confusing world of marriage.

Pushiness aside, I envy the bonds my mom friends have made with each other, and unless I have a child before brunch on Saturday, I can’t entirely connect with them or, frankly, enjoy myself in their company. At times like this, Jessica Leroy, clinical director for the Center for Psychology of Women, says I need to understand part of my friends’ desire for me to embrace motherhood may be so we can all relate again. For now, I should get over the guilt I feel when I realize it’s not always a blast to hang out with them, and I should also adjust my expectations.

“New moms are juggling a lot, and they’re exhausted. Don’t assume they’ll care if you’re redecorating your place or expect them to come to parties,” she says. But baby comas aren’t forever: Leroy says my friends will bounce back when they realize they need more in life than just their kids.

Adults-Only Fun

In order to have my neglected friendship needs fulfilled, psychologist Ellen Walker, PhD,

author of *Complete Without Kids*, says it’s important to have at least one buddy I regularly hang out with who doesn’t have children and can understand what I’m going through.

As for my current friends, she suggests meeting them at a fancy spa for mani-pedis, so they’re forced to leave the little ones

behind, and steering the convo away from nap schedules. I just need to sincerely ask about the tots another time, so they know I appreciate their full lives. And if conversation ever becomes too pushy about my family plans, Leroy tells me to simply say, “We’re not ready, and I’ll let you know if things change.”

While parenting alters friendships, I know it will also transform my marriage, and that’s not a relationship I’m ready to tweak just yet. So for now, Scott and I are enjoying lots of non-baby-making sex...and the luxury of sleeping in the next morning. ■