

LIFE: [ARTICLE](#)

## MONEY AND RELATIONSHIPS

## Till Debts Do Us Part

Arguments about cash contribute to half of all divorces. Here's how his-and-her money personalities can work together instead of rip apart

Paul Kita and Loren Chidoni

### Guardian & Rational

Danger level: Medium

You both have the same destination—financial stability—but see very different paths to get there. Guardians have never met a nickel they didn't want to rush to the bank, whereas Rationals analyze and number-crunch before making any investment decision. The result: finger pointing when investments dip. Solution: Split portfolio responsibility evenly, says Yvonne Fulbright, Ph.D., a relationship expert and founder of [SexualitySource.com](#), and compete to see who does better each year. Both money types will appreciate the freedom, and because Rationals are so goal-oriented, they'll enjoy the challenge.

### Artisan & Artisan

Danger level: High

You're on the same page—and that's the problem. "There's no short-term friction because you agree, but you're heading toward huge financial problems in the future," says Dan Ariely, Ph.D., a professor of behavioral economics at Duke University. Solution: Take a back-to-basics approach to retirement planning. Max out your companies' 401(k) plans, wear yourself off credit cards, and funnel automatic paycheck deductions a rainy-day savings account and, if applicable, a 529 plan to pay for your kids' college education. What you have left each month is your play money. If you're budget is still in the red, try this: Set limits on the amount you can spend each month on specific things like groceries, clothes, coffee, and so on. Stick the cash into separate envelopes. "This will prevent you from spending indiscriminately," says Ariely. "The envelopes provide limits that can't be broken."

### Guardian & Artisan

Danger level: Medium

One of you is a saver, the other a sucker for impulse buys. Your biggest risk: "If you don't communicate," says Brad Klontz, Psy.D., a financial psychologist and author of *Wired for Wealth*, "the artisan will start to hide spending and the guardian will start secretly saving." Solution: Play to each other's strengths, says Klontz. Let the guardian handle the finances and investments. Then, for the artisan, create a budget line for fun. "Each person should be allowed spend a certain amount without having to consult the other," says Klontz. "Any purchase above that amount requires a conversation first."

### Guardian & Guardian

Danger level: Low

You both have your eyes on the long-term prize—a comfortable retirement. But because you're both risk-averse, your portfolio may be too conservative. Also, you may forget to live a little, says Dan Ariely, Ph.D., a professor of behavioral economics at Duke University. Solution: If you're both uptight about money, hire a financial advisor. He'll push a more aggressive asset allocation than you're naturally comfortable with, says Ariely, and also help you create near-term spending plans that won't jeopardize long-term saving goals.

### Guardian & Idealist

Danger level: Low

Watchful spenders (Guardians) sync well with emotional buyers (Idealists), so you'll largely complement each other. The only potential problem here is a somewhat rare species of Idealist who spends more like an Artisan—that is, without thinking. Solution: "Play off the Idealist's teamwork attitude," says Fulbright, "and work together to reign in spending."

### Artisan & Rational

Danger level: High

And you thought Jim Cramer could yell. While one of you strategically plans for retirement, the other bets the savings on black. Solution: Adopt the 90/10 rule. The Rational manages 90 percent of the portfolio, says Ariely. The other 10 percent, which the Artisan is responsible for, goes into a separate account that's for high-risk investments. "It's the equivalent of poker chips at a casino," says Ariely. "You can set a limit and still enjoy yourself."

### Artisan & Idealist

Danger level: Medium

Both of you like to spend, but not budget. "The danger here is that neither will deal with money at all until they're broke," says Liz Weston, a finance columnist and author of *Easy Money*. Solution: Hire a financial planner to create a budget for you and suggest a retirement portfolio. Yes, this will cost a few thousand dollars, but it's probably the best investment you'd ever make on your own. "Both of these money types spend a lot of time in the clouds," says Weston. "The fewer mundane details they have to deal with, the better."

### Rational & Rational

Danger level: Medium

Rationals are all about the facts, but as the name suggests, they're good at rationalizing as well. That means one can talk the other into just about anything, as long as there are facts to support the assertion. That means if your investments sour, you'll go down in flames together. Solution: "Set up an automatic deposit into a back-up bank account," says

Bonnie Eaker Weil, Ph.D., a New York City psychotherapist and author of *Financial Infidelity*. "If your investments start tanking, you'll have a safety net." And before you make any big investment decision, give yourself two weeks. "During that time, ask for the advice of your family, your financial planner—anyone with a differing viewpoint," says Eaker Weil.

**Rational & Idealist**

Danger level: Low

The Rational is calculated with money. The Idealist doesn't care much about it. How could they possibly be good for each other? "In this case, the money opposites neutralize each other," says Eaker Weil. "The Idealist wants to spend money only when it'll do some worldly good, which is perfectly fine with the Rational." The only potential conflict comes if the Idealist is responsible for managing part of the portfolio. Solution: This is easy—the Rational handles all investing and does the bills.

**Idealist & Idealist**

Danger level: High

Money is useless to both of you. That means danger ahead. Solution: Spend an hour together making a budget. "In the short term, you'll turn this abstract idea of money into something more concrete," says Eaker Weil. "In the long term, you'll be able to see how much you spend, and where and when you're spending it." If this doesn't work—or if ensuring your financial stability doesn't seem to be worth an hour of your precious time—hire a financial planner. Like, right now.

Last updated: March 18, 2009 Issue date:

---

You can find this article online at: [www.WomensHealthMag.com/life/money-and-relationships](http://www.WomensHealthMag.com/life/money-and-relationships)

---



The advertisement banner features a dark grey background. On the left, a white box contains the text "Do you know?" in a large, white, sans-serif font, with "How Many Calories You've Burned This Week?" in a smaller font below it. In the center is a black GoWear fit wristband with a green circular display. On the right, the "GoWear fit" logo is displayed in white and green, with the tagline "The Lifestyle and Calorie Management System" underneath.