

Exercise 1 Moving Up . . . and Moving Out?

Anil, Beth, and Carlos have been friends since the sixth grade when all three were in the school band. Throughout middle and high school, some subset of the threesome would be taking classes together, attending school functions, and participating in extracurricular activities. They stood by each others' sides through failed romances, school-related disappointments, and other challenges. One such challenge was when Anil and Beth were accepted to State College while Carlos, who had a weaker application, was forced to complete two years at the local community college in order to have a chance at being accepted as a transfer student at State College. Despite this setback, the three friends remained close, visiting one or two weekends a month and on extended breaks.

Things changed two months ago. Carlos got his acceptance letter from State College and the three spent time over the summer finding the perfect apartment to share. The first week living together was bliss—conversations until the wee hours of the morning; taking turns shopping and cooking dinner, and the appearance of an occasional guest or two. By week two, tensions began to mount. Though each had a private bedroom, it appeared as though Beth moved into the living room. All of her books, electronics, and various clothing items were strewn about the sofa and coffee table. Carlos kept his room fairly neat, but his large and growing array of hair products and colognes began to clutter up the bathroom he shared with Anil. Anil's course load—twenty-one units—plus a part-time job (ten hours a week in one of the college's computer labs) kept him busy; he rarely spent time in the apartment or doing any of the chores he agreed to do back when they signed the lease.

Then the bills came: cable, phone, electricity, trash. Beth's parents sent her a monthly allowance, but the last check she sent to the cable company was returned. "Insufficient funds," Beth explained to her roommates, while simultaneously realizing that the 500+ text messages she sent last month created a \$150 overage on her cell phone bill. "I'll have to get unlimited text messaging," Beth thought to herself. The bills were divided equitably initially, but Carlos added several sports channels (adding \$20 per month to the cable bill), and the hotter than normal fall made for higher than normal electric bills.

Even the cost of groceries had gone up; however, since Anil was spending less time at the apartment—eating many of his meals on campus, he felt that the even three-way split on groceries was no longer equitable. Plus, he fumed to himself, Beth's boyfriend stays over every weekend and has yet to replace any of the food—or beer—he consumes.

Lately, the three of them are rarely talking to one another. It's almost as if they're avoiding the issues. Their friendship of eight years is on the verge of destruction if they don't talk and renegotiate shared costs, chores, and even guest arrangements. Deborah, their next door neighbor and a psychology major, has offered to mediate their negotiation if need be.

Step 1: After roles are assigned, each person should spend time planning his or her goals, BATNAs, and other components of his or her negotiation strategy. Consider using the Negotiation Strategy Outline at the end of this exercise.

Step 2: Have the negotiation. Each person present should introduce himself or herself (and the role he or she is playing) and share any relevant information. Consider jointly developing an agenda. Your instructor may allow up to one hour for this negotiation.

Step 3: Debrief/self-assessment

1. Discuss the actual implementation of the negotiation concepts, for example, as shown here.
 - What role did your strategy preparation play in the negotiation?

