

Can't Face Facebook

A friend of mine (I'll call her Stanza just to screw with her mind) talked me into opening a Facebook account recently. Either my immune system was weak or my friend had done some kind of hypnotherapy on me with the pendant she always wears because usually I say "No" to things that require me to learn stuff like how to send plants that don't exist to people I barely know to plant in their virtual gardens.

Now that I'm on the Facebook train, I've found yet another thing I suck at royally. I make a lousy online friend. When I do occasionally log on because I've got three free seconds between items #14 and #15 on my To Do List, I'm overwhelmed by all the good karma and IQ challenges and love bites or whatever that people have sent me. And the truth is, up until that moment, I haven't actually been thinking about them. Please don't hate me for that.

I apologize to all my friends out there on the Internet. I'm really not a horrible person, it is just that my real life is so doggone time and thought-consuming, my most pressing thoughts are usually of the "It's been four hours, I bet I should breathe" nature.

Really, I promise that when your birthday rolls around or the holidays or you call me in a crisis of some kind – boyfriend dumped you, heron has eaten all the koi from your pond, your favorite shade of lipstick is the same shade Sarah Palin wears, etc. – I will be there. I'll send you cards, talk to you on the phone, take you to lunch, give you a shoulder to cry

on... hell, I'll even go into a dressing room and assure you that those jeans definitely do not make you look fat. I just can't bring myself to send you fake plants.

The problem is – I mean besides not having the kind of spare time I wish I had and preferring to go get my hands dirty in my real garden when I do – I don't really understand the purpose of all these virtual gifts. If I can't drink the cup of coffee and feel the buzz coursing through my veins, what good is it? Really, I'm asking. If you can tell me, maybe I can jump on the virtual exchange bandwagon and fire off good luck charms and martinis and feral cats to all my friends. And I do mean all. Somehow, despite my lack of reciprocity (ain't that a grand word for late in the afternoon?) in the virtual friendship arena, people are signing up by leaps and bounds to be my friend. I fear they may have ulterior motives. Perhaps they're planning an intervention?

Stanza attempted to explain to me that with some of these non-existent gifts, every time one is sent real money is raised for real charities. My head virtually exploded. Can't I just get out my checkbook? I've still got envelopes and stamps in my desk drawer. I am that old fashioned.

If you're wondering why I haven't returned your lawn gnome of luck or answered Dan Vogelburg's question of the day, I'm really not dissing you. I'm probably at lunch with another friend. Give me a call and we can go out too. You won't believe how good a cup of real coffee is these days!

