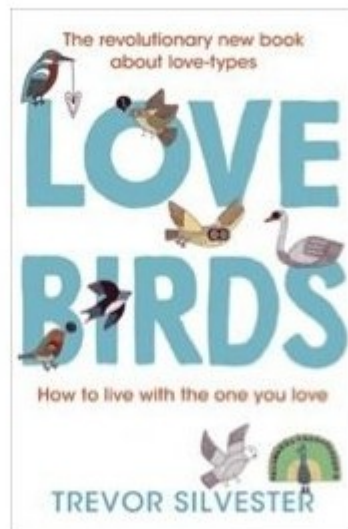


# Trevor Silvester Shares How 'Lovebirds' Can Help Us Better Understand Our Relationships



By Leslie Chavez

When it comes to love, the phrase “treat others the way you want to be treated” doesn’t always ring true. When we’re all so very different, it only makes sense that we would want and need to be treated in different ways specific to our individual personality types. Relationship coach Trevor Silvester agrees: He says that a lot of the difficulties that we come across in relationships are from the fact that we treat each other as if we’re the same. Once we understand how we’re different, creating intimacy becomes simple.

In his new book *Lovebirds: How to Live with the One You Love*, Silvester explores romantic relationships and personalities through a bird analogy. A series of quizzes divide people into two categories, sky birds and ground birds. They are then sorted into eight subcategories loosely based on the Myers Briggs Personality Inventory: sight, song, feeling, and thinking birds. After these differences are established, he explores the relationship dynamics between each personality type. We had the chance to talk to him more about this.

**Related Link:** [When Do Opposites Not Attract?](#)

**Congratulations on your book! You were a police officer before you became a cognitive hypnotherapist...so what inspired you to study relationships and write a book about love?**

Thank you! I think two parallel paths led me to the book. The first was discovering that, while I was in the police force, my calling was really to be a therapist. The second path was my spectacularly unsuccessful relationship history. Just about everyone I loved left me for someone else, and I think it made me curious about what goes on between people who start out loving each other but then can't sustain a relationship. The answers I got from working with couples with this question in mind led to *Lovebirds*.

**You have said that one of the biggest mistakes we make is to treat other people as if they are just like us. What's the first step in better understanding our lovers and their differences?**

Read my book! Seriously, assume that they've got a good reason for doing what they do and being the way we are. It's so easy to take it personally when a partner goes against the way you like things or sees the world a different way. When you see differences between you as just things to work out – and not as name-calling opportunities – you've got a chance to turn potential weaknesses in your relationship into strengths.

**With these differences in mind, you compare people to birds and define personalities as being either ground birds or sky birds. Can you describe these two types of birds in more detail?**

Ground birds are people who like order. They have rules for how things should work and tend to think that their way is the right way. They like to know the detail of things and work steadily toward a decision. Sky birds get bored by detail; they don't tend to have rules – or be very good at following them – and tend to make decisions intuitively. You can probably see how a combination of these types could create conflict very quickly.

**Related Link:** [Five Reasons Why Opposites Attract](#)

**On another note, you explain that relationships are never done – love is about relating, and relating never ends. So how can we get better at maintaining positive interactions and keeping communication open?**

That's a great question. I've often helped couples who love each other, but couldn't make each other happy, become closer by learning the things I point out in the book. One big bit of advice is to never make the argument about the relationship. Make that you're staying together a given, which then makes whatever the dispute is about something smaller that you can work on. I work on the basis that all behavior has a positive intention, so even when your partner is doing something that annoys you, assume that, at some level, they have a good reason for doing so.

**Would you say that types of people who are similar (two ground birds, for instance) will naturally get along better than types who are opposite (a ground bird and a sky bird)? Are there any celebrity couples that come to mind to support your answer?**

Yes, I find that they do. A saying I have is that opposites

attract, and then, they drive each other mad. People tend to like people best who are like them, so similarity is a good basis for any relationship, but – and it's a big but – our lives can be made so much richer by learning to embrace other people's differences. My wife sees the world very differently than me, and I think we both feel that that makes our world's bigger and more fun.

I hesitate to label people I haven't met, but I would say that President Obama is likely to be a sky bird, possibly an owl. The First Lady, I think, is a ground bird, probably a swan. Sticking my neck out even further, I'd say Brad Pitt is probably a sky bird, and Angelina Jolie is a ground bird. She seems to be the engine of the relationship.

**Related Link:** [Celebrity Couples Where Opposites Attracted](#)

**And finally, do you have any upcoming projects that we can share with our readers?**

I'm hoping to run some Lovebirds Workshops in the United States this year. My next book is called *How to Click*, and it's using *Lovebirds*-type information to help single people date. I also have another book in the pipeline: *Grow! Lessons from a Therapist's Chair So Your Child Never Has to Sit in One*. It's about raising resilient children, and it'll be out in the United Kingdom in 2014.

*To get more advice from Trevor Silvester on how to understand your lover, purchase his book at [lovebirdsbook.com](http://lovebirdsbook.com).*