

Celebrity Interview: Relationship Coach Lee Wilson Talks Negative Effects Reality TV Has on Relationships



Interview by Carly Silva. Written by Carly Silva.

Guilty pleasure reality TV shows are a great way to pass the time, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, but according to relationship coach Lee Wilson, they may have a negative effect on our relationships. Coach Lee, who is the founder of [My Ex Back](#) and specializes in helping men and women save their dwindling relationships, sits down with us to shed some light

on the psychology behind romance-focused reality TV shows.

In our celebrity interview with relationship expert, Coach Lee Wilson, we get some insight on the potential effects that romance reality TV shows have on real-life relationships.

As a Verified Expert on [Marriage.com](https://www.marriage.com) and as someone with numerous certifications, Coach Lee talks to us about the psychology of reality TV dating shows, such as the *Bachelor* Franchise, *90-Day Fiance*, and *Love is Blind*. He points to why these shows are so popular, not only because they are versed in “stirring up drama,” but also because they provide a “romantic sport,” and viewers love to root for who will win the prize of love. But, can these shows have a negative effect on our real-life dating behavior? Coach Lee, who has over 20 years of experience as a relationship coach, believes so.

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Although he does admit that the relationships formed on these shows can sometimes lead to lasting and successful true love, he notes that many contestants are often “put in a situation to rush their feelings completely in artificial and unrealistic ways” in order to compete and ultimately win the show. He not only acknowledges that this path to love can be unhealthy, but also says that this method is “not how it is best for two people to develop a relationship.” He advises viewers to recognize the misconceptions that are promoted in the “artificial world” created in these shows, even if they

are undeniably entertaining.

While we all love to admire and root for our favorite contestants to find love on these TV shows, Coach Lee cautions that the romance portrayed in reality TV shows often promotes unrealistic expectations and can give viewers the “idea that dating is this competition with a prize, rather than having a healthy mentality” about getting to know somebody. He also mentions that these dating shows can present viewers with a false idea of how love is developed, and they can display misconceptions where people are left to assume that they can find love by “being artificial, rushing themselves and rushing the other person.” Coach Lee notes that emulating this fantasy world in real life can result in people comparing their relationships to the “magical romantic times” that are presented in reality TV shows, and that viewers comparing this “Hollywood level” romance to their real-life relationships can make them believe that something is wrong with their own relationships.

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The question is, why are the relationships cultivated on reality TV shows so unrealistically romantic? Well, according to Coach Lee, it’s because of a phenomenon called [“limerence.”](#) He defines “limerence” as a “chemical addiction or chemical dependence on dopamine, and serotonin changes in the mind,” which explains the addiction some people have to the “fireworks” of a new relationship or the “new high” that occurs when a relationship is just starting out. He says that shows, such as *The Bachelor*, “romanticize limerence and almost make it into the idea of what true love should be.” Because reality TV shows idealize this “limerence level of obsession,” Coach Lee explains that this makes viewers think that their relationships, especially older relationships where limerence has faded, should be more like the ones we see on TV, which is

“unrealistic.”

So, what about those of us who love watching these romance-focused reality TV shows? How can we continue to watch these shows now that we're aware of the toxic nature they promote? Luckily, Coach Lee also gives us some tips on how to navigate our guilty pleasure TV habits without falling victim to the unrealistic standards these shows set. He tells us that his personal trick is to “approach it with a good sense of humor, and be able to be vocal and express that this is not real life.” He recommends viewing these types of shows as pure entertainment, or even playing a fun drinking game with friends, and reminding yourself along the way that “this is a game show.”

For more expert advice from Coach Lee Wilson, you can follow him on [Instagram](#) or check out all the latest videos on his [YouTube channel](#)!

Coach Wilson has lectured at several universities, and has assisted with multiple Ph.D research projects on relationships. He is a Verified Expert on Marriage.com, and has received Family Dynamics certifications and His Needs/Her Needs Certifications. He is the founder of [My Ex Back](#), where he developed the Emergency Breakup Kit, along with the Emergency Marriage Kit.