

10 Signs You're Ready For a Relationship



 By Marianne Beach, GalTime.com

I'm admittedly a recovered relationship addict. I went from relationship to relationship with little or no break in between. Luckily, I was finally able to break that cycle and stay single for two years – before finally meeting my dream guy (and now husband).

But staying single for a serial monogamist is often easier said than done. After all, you're used to having a second opinion, someone to take to dinner parties and curl up with in bed. An empty house can be frightening for someone addicted to love.

But Jennifer Oikle, Ph.D., relationship psychologist, dating coach and founder of **MySoulmateSolution.com**, insists that though it's difficult, it's also ultimately rewarding and will prepare you for the relationship of your dreams.

So how do you start? First, she says, forget being committed to a relationship and start becoming committed to yourself instead. "Become delighted by the idea of discovering who you are, without having to please someone else."

In fact, she suggests not dating at all for a certain amount of time, so you don't fall into old habits. "Avoid all of the typical ways you usually behave to find a new beau (going to bars, trolling the Internet, etc)," she says. "Ask a friend to be your sponsor and help you stay single."

During that dating fast, start living for yourself. "Become involved in new hobbies, activities and same-sex friendships to help you discover who you are, what you love, what you

don't love," Dr. Jenn says. "Allow yourself to discover new strengths, become aware of patterns which no longer serve you and begin trying out new behaviors so that you become a strong, confident, self-sufficient person, before you head back onto the dating field."

When you are feeling more secure with yourself – and you don't need a relationship to survive – start with casual dating first, rather than jumping in with both feet.

"By casually dating, often more than one person at a time, you can slow yourself down, by spreading your attention over more than one person – keeping you from getting over – invested in any one person too quickly," Dr. Jenn explains. "You want to keep dating until it's comfortable – until you aren't running into a relationship to get away from the insecurities of dating."

How do you know when you are finally ready to enter a real relationship? Dr. Jenn suggests you look for the following signs:

1. You've been on your own for at least 3-6 months and you no longer feel like you NEED a relationship just to survive.
2. You feel like you are good on your own.
3. You feel confident.
4. Your mood is stable – you don't let the little ups and downs of life throw you overboard.
5. You can hear other people's opinions and criticism and not take it personally.
6. Your worth isn't directly related to what other people think (as long as it is, you are too vulnerable to date).
7. You aren't preoccupied with your ex and your emotions are no longer raw.
8. You can think of the past and just feel mostly gratitude for what you learned AND you can explain what you learned, how you contributed to the cycle and how you will proceed differently. If you can't name those things, you aren't ready

to date because you'll just make the same mistakes.

9. You now have interests, hobbies and friendships that you are passionate about and invested in and you are serious about not dropping them for ANY man!

10. Ask your friends – they will know! ☐