

Elisha Cuthbert Proves Patience Can Pay Off



By Relationship & Sex Talk, Jane Greer, Ph.D., for Galttime.com

relationships and timing

Elisha Cuthbert, one of the stars of the ABC series *Happy Endings*, is proving that sometimes people do live happily ever after. It was recently announced that she and longtime boyfriend Dion Phaneuf, the Toronto Maple Leafs NFL hockey player, are engaged to be married after dating for four years. For some, that could seem like an eternity to wait.

But, what about the rest of us? It raises the question, how much time do you give a relationship before getting a proposal? And how long is too long?

There are many things that can keep one or both members of a couple from taking that big leap toward marriage. Sometimes

these issues are never resolved, or worse, they are just excuses. Other times they really are honest concerns that just need time to work themselves out, as was the case with Elisha and Dion. So how can you know the difference?

The most important thing to keep in mind is that despite the fact that your partner's reluctance to commit can feel like a rejection of you, try not to take it personally. You can do this by recognizing that very often when one partner is holding back on taking that huge step, it often has more to do with their own individual issues and fears than with how they feel about the other person. They might be worried about career success, or making enough money to support a family, or maybe they were betrayed before and have trust issues. If someone has already been married, there might be all sorts of concerns keeping them from trying again.

Talk to your partner about why they are not ready to go forward. See if you can jointly determine what it might take for them to get beyond their fears. Set goals to work toward making those changes and then you can set a time limit for yourself, maybe six months or a year, to see if anything is being done. As long as your partner is trying, then your relationship is still viable and worth fighting for. But if your partner is all talk, and has made no attempt to move toward the goals you set together, sadly, it might be an indication that nothing will ever change. At that point, you can do what they have not been able to do, take the next step yourself and move on.