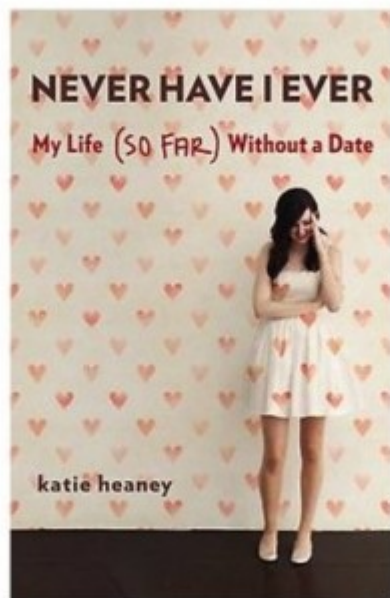


'Never Have I Ever' Author Katie Heaney Says Love Should Be “a Supplement to a Full Life”



Interview by [Whitney Johnson](#). Transcription by Maria Darbenzio.

Katie Heaney turned her status as “being permanently single” into a funny memoir that sheds light on searching for your soul mate in the 21st century. In her new book *NEVER HAVE I EVER: My Life (So Far) Without a Date*, the 27-year-old shares her dating (or non-dating) experiences as she attempts to find romance on her own terms. We recently caught up with the author to glean a few more words of wisdom on looking for love and spending Valentine’s Day alone.

What do you hope readers gain from your book?

I hope that young women reading it are able to first find it entertaining and relatable but also find comfort in it if they haven't dated a lot or even at all. It's important for them to know they're not the only one. And I also want readers to know dating doesn't have to be their number one priority. Focusing on friendships with each other is equally valuable and a good use of time, especially when you're in high school and college.

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Why do you think there's so much focus on women to find The One instead of to embrace being single?

Even though we've made so much progress – it's because we're being educated at higher rates than guys these days and things like that – it's still supposed to be our primary goal to be looking for a husband so that we can start a family. I think that pressure starts incredibly early, and it doesn't really let up.

I think that what I realized in writing this book is the differences between the way the pressure is directed at me or my friends versus the way that guys experience it. Guys just don't have the same pressure to be constantly focused on love. If they want to focus on their career, nobody judges them. But, if a woman says the same thing, people say "Well, aren't you worried about getting too old? What about your biological clock? Don't you think you should at least be putting yourself out there in case you meet him?" We talk about it like it's this job. We should see it as a supplement to a full life that we create for ourselves.

Do you think this pressure causes women to settle for less than they deserve?

I do. I hear a lot of girls talking about dates they have, and

they're not looking forward to them. Or a guy that they've been seeing is clearly not the type of guy they want. There's some weird impotence to kind of keep giving him chances and chances and chances. That's because there's this pressure to find him.

I think that there needs to be more trust in ourselves to know who we're really interested in and who we're not. We need to trust that it's better to be single than to be with someone you aren't interested in. The guy that you *are* interested in will come along.

What's the best dating advice you've ever received from a friend?

The best advice that I've ever been given is just to be comfortable thinking of myself as someone who other people want to date. It's not because I felt bad about myself; I just didn't really see that as a possibility because it wasn't happening. So thinking of yourself as attractive, appealing people who other people want to spend time with kind of affects you in all these tiny ways that impacts the way other people perceive you.

And conversely, what's the best advice you've ever given someone?

I tend to be the friend who tells everyone to break up with their boyfriends because I'm always like, "It's so clear you don't like him."

I think it's important to listen to what the other person is saying and to not be bossy in how you talk to them, helping them to listen to what they're saying and to recognize that if they're not sounding happy or they're complaining more than not, then something is probably wrong. And you need to remind them that it'll always be okay to be single and make them feel that that's true by being there for them.

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With Valentine's Day coming up soon, what's your advice for single ladies who let the romantic festivities bring them down?

I hate Valentine's Day, but I think the thing to remember is that couples usually hate it too. I sort of think it's a holiday like New Year's Eve where everyone pretends to be so excited and everyone feels the need to make huge plans, but then everyone is disappointed.

So I would remind yourself that just because someone's a couple doesn't mean they're having a great Valentine's either. That's not to say that you should take delight in other people's misery, but just remember that a lot of people hate it. The best thing you can do is make plans for yourself doing something that you know that you love, even if it's watching *Law & Order* for four hours and ordering in food. Treat it as any other day and know that it doesn't mean anything and that when you're a couple, you're probably going to feel the same way about it.

Heaney has an event at The Strand in New York tonight! For more information, check out her www.facebook.com/KTheaney.