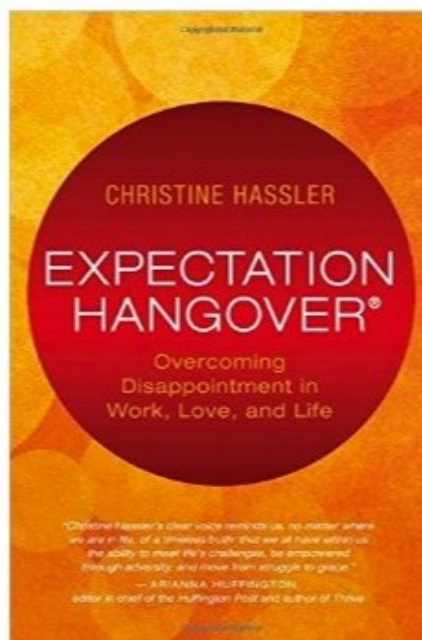


Author Christine Hassler Teaches Us How to Deal with an 'Expectation Hangover'



By Shannon Seibert

Life is a cycle of ups and downs filled with both happiness and discontent. With this thought in mind, author Christine Hassler used her unmet expectations as a catalyst for profound transformation. In *Expectation Hangover: Overcoming Disappointment in Work, Love, and Life*, she writes about leveraging frustrations at any age. CupidsPulse.com had the pleasure of speaking with Hassler about her own expectation hangovers and her book, which was released on October 14th.

How did you come up with the idea of expectation hangovers?

I was very much a planner my whole life. I had this vision of what I wanted to do, and I just started having expectation hangovers. I came up with the term because I knew what it felt like to wake up and have my life not living up to my expectations. It was similar to or worse than a hangover from alcohol! I'd have a headache; I'd be spinning in confusion; and I'd lack motivation. It was just a miserable feeling.

I thought, "Wow, I suffer so much from my reality when my expectations don't match." When I started coaching people 10 years ago, I noticed that this mismatch is the biggest reason people suffer. This is why I am so passionate about the concept of expectation hangover because it truly is our plans and the way that we want to control things in life that not only create suffering but also create tunnel vision so we sometimes miss opportunities.

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Was there an expectation hangover you experienced that really changed your life?

Getting married in my twenties and getting divorced in my thirties! That's why I'm so passionate about this idea: I have walked this walk many times. I've left a successful career; I've survived health problems; I've had strains in my family; I've had to move unexpectedly – there are so many things! Now, I can look back on those situations, and even though they weren't what I expected, they were for the highest good. I'm still so grateful for what's happened or what hasn't happened.

What's the best way to go into a relationship in an effort to prevent one of these hangovers?

I think what we have to remember is that no one is your soul mate. We project so much on our partners to be our *future*

partners, and that's a big burden to put on someone. To find one person to complete us, to make us happier, and to fulfill every need that we have is way too much pressure.

Instead, I encourage people to go into a relationship knowing your non-negotiables. Do you want someone with family values? Someone that isn't a cheater? What kind of religion or spiritual passions matter to you? That's more important and healthier than having a bunch of expectations. Any time we have expectations, we set ourselves up for disappointment. People are clinging so hard to those things, so it's better to go into any type of dating situation with a clear vision of what you want and what you value. Really allow that person to show up how they are.

Similarly, how can you avoid these hangovers if you're already in a committed partnership?

The most important thing is communication. Women don't really hear what men are saying, but men are really clear. When men say they're not looking for a serious relationship, they mean it.

In terms of communication, we need to be asking for what we need or for what is important to us. We really set ourselves up for an expectation hangover when we assume that people will read our minds and know what we like and how we like to be communicated with. Really explaining our needs, our desires, and our wishes is what we need to do.

On the other end of the spectrum, how can you help a partner who is experiencing an expectation hangover?

You just need to listen. When someone is in an expectation hangover, the first thing they need to do is feel their feelings about it. You shouldn't try to problem solve with them or give them pep talks or advice. Just say, "I'm here for you. Anything you want to say, anything you want to share, I'm here." Vulnerability is a big part of treating the expectation

hangover, so really allow them to share their feelings about it rather than trying to fix it right away.

Then ask them, “How can I support you? What would help?” And really let them tell you rather than thinking that you know. Try not to be their coach. A lot of couples get in trouble when one partner starts coaching or being the therapist. Instead, you just want to be there for them.

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Lastly, are there any words of advice you’d like to leave our readers with?

I hope people read my work and use the tools and spread the information. I’m really on a mission! The most important relationship that you have is the one you have with yourself. The degree in which we have self-honor, self-love, self-care is the degree in which we are able to retract any pain in relationships that we suffer. The more we love ourselves, aren’t mean to ourselves, and are proud of ourselves, the more we are able to show up with less expectations of a partner and more of an open heart.

I know we all heard the news of Robin Williams, and it really cuts deep because so many people suffer from pain, from feelings of loneliness. When you’re in an expectation hangover, you’re feeling this pain, this loneliness, and I think we need to help each other not feel alone. The biggest thing to remember is that we’re not alone. When you feel alone, reach out for help. It’s always important to remember that there are people around us.

Pick up a copy of Expectation Hangover: Overcoming Disappointment in Work, Love, and Life today! You can also visit Christine’s website ChristineHassler.com and follow her on Twitter @ChristinHassler.