

# Best Friends and the Search for Love



By Patricia Bubash, Ed.S., LPC for [Hope After Divorce](#)

“He is my best friend.” These words came from the lips of a wife. It isn’t the first time I have heard a wife say this about her other half, but it is the first time that I really thought about the impact of a “best friend” relationship in a marriage – and even more impacting, in a remarriage.

Statistics show that most divorced men and women are still desirous of finding a lifelong partner. More than half of first-time divorced spouses choose to walk down the aisle again. We really don’t need to read the statistics; observation is enough. The overwhelming number of dating

sites, divorce support groups, and friends trying to “set” single friends up easily convinces us.

Research will show we indeed live in a couples’ society. Most people feel the need to have a partner, a companion, a person to share interests, socialization, and good and bad situations – a soul mate. Finding that someone special is a desire shared among the single. We are inundated via all modes of communication – television, radio, written word, and personal conversations – with the necessity of “being in love.” Unhappily for the love-seeker, many of their hopes for the real thing are relationships founded “in lust” rather than “in love.”

**Related Link:** [Daniel Radcliffe Says Girlfriend Erin Darke Is “Definitely” His Best Friend](#)

An author friend, Pam Evans, is an expert on finding love. Her problem wasn’t finding love but *keeping* it! As a self-proclaimed “multiple marrier,” she is familiar with the search for a soul mate, a replacement for a previous spouse. In her book *Ring ExChange*, she shares her misdirected view of what was important in a relationship. It was this perception that led to her four failed marriages. A good thing for the readers of her book, she didn’t give up easily.

A lesson from her book coincides with my premise to find a best friend first. If the new love meets her criteria, then chances are high that a soul mate will follow. She provides these words of wisdom: “When two individuals approach a relationship first in the spirit of friendship, then true bonding leading to the deepest unconditional love, where affection, respect, compassion, sensuality, and kindness join together, can develop.” I reread this lengthy quote several times to really “get” the depth of it. But, once I did, I heartedly agreed with her “friendship first” suggestion.

We know, typically, a physical attraction is usually the

“first” connector for two people looking for a serious, long-term relationship with the end result being marriage. Through our own personal experiences or those of friends, we know that physical attraction is short-lived. No matter how gorgeous or how handsome, if our choice is based on exterior qualities rather than best friend qualities, our relationship will soon end, and a new search will begin again.

**Related Link:** [Can Love Be Better the Second Time Around?](#)

A close friend who has a PhD in counseling with many years of private practice and is also one of the divorced who is “searching” shared some personal and professional insights: “In the past, I found myself trying to be who my date wanted me to be. I found myself trying to please, to make him happy. In doing that, I wasn’t making me happy, and I was being dishonest.”

I think in our anticipation of making up for the loss of our marriage, our need for finding love again, a replacement for that lost love, we aren’t always true to “me.” First, I believe it is essential to be a best friend to yourself. Then, find that “best friend” who will be a true love.

Returning to this “best friend first then love” theory, ask yourself this question: “What qualities or virtues do I need in deciding that someone has achieved best friend status with me?” For me, it is the following:

1. Be supportive and honest. I don’t want someone to agree with me just because disagreeing might hurt my feelings.
2. Be willing to listen to me *without* giving advice. My view of advice: “Fools never heed it, and wise men don’t need it.” So skip the advice, just listen.
3. Let me know about the spinach between my teeth!
4. Encourage me in my goals.

When you find that someone who fills these four (my best friend) criteria, I believe you have found someone worthy of being your partner. Also worth thinking about: Don't rush it! Best friends tend to evolve over time, but once in place, they last forever. One day, you will be repeating the words of the woman whom I interviewed: "He is my best friend."

*For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).*



*Patricia Bubash received her M.Ed. in Counseling from the University of Missouri, St. Louis. Working with students and families has been her true calling for over thirty years. For more than twenty years she has presented workshops at the community college on a variety of topics relating to parenting issues, self-esteem and issues relative to divorce. Patricia is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Missouri and, a Stephen Minister. She submits a variety of articles related to relationships, marriage and divorce to several internet sites, and, frequently, is interviewed on internet radio stations. Volunteerism, writing and family are most significant in her life. Patricia writes for DivorceSupportCenter.com, HopeAfterDivorce.org, CupidPulse.com, andFamilyShare.com. She can be reached at [patriciathecounselor@successfulsecondmarriages.com](mailto:patriciathecounselor@successfulsecondmarriages.com).*