

Love Advice: Can Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper's Work Marriage Work?



By Dr. Jane Greer

The on-screen chemistry shared by actors Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper is so true to life, it's hard to believe it isn't real. The two can be seen everywhere from *Silver Linings Playbook* to *American Hustle* to their upcoming project, *Serena*. Both admit to being each other's work spouses, but insist there is no sex in their faux celebrity marriage. Having a close relationship with someone at work can happen to anyone, not just celebs. You don't actually have to be "playing" husband and wife on screen to feel like you are

just that, to an extent. It can happen in any job setting.

The love advice question is, how entangled can you become with a work spouse, and where do you draw the line so the relationship doesn't negatively affect other parts of your life?

Define Boundaries

Defining the boundaries and being clear about how far and where you can take the connection can, in fact, make the friendship better and allow you to fall into the zone where flirting can be fun, but safe. It also makes room for your chemistry to kick in because it eliminates the constant question of whether or not you're going to take this relationship to the next level. You know the answer is "no," so that gives you room to express yourself more freely.

Attraction is Good

Many friendships between men and women are punctuated by attraction which is never acted on, but keeps the relationship exciting and alive. In the end, though, it isn't just about that energy and flirtation. It is more about knowing each other well, working well together, having each other's backs, and especially experiencing the security of the trust you share. While people often joke that the relationship has the dimensions of a marriage, it is, in fact, really about the camaraderie.

Know the Limits

The most important piece of love advice when it comes to work

marriages is if you aren't in a romantic relationship outside of work, knowing the limits of your "work marriage" is important so you won't end up disappointed if it never goes beyond what it already is. If you are dating or married to another person, knowing those limits is even more important so it doesn't spill over the walls of the office and create jealousy or a perceived threat to your partner. With that in mind, if you are spending time with your "work spouse" outside of work, invite your significant others to join you. That way they will feel included in your friendship instead of excluded. Along those lines, if you spend personal time together, make sure it is work-related, rather than simply going out to have a good time, so that there is no question about what you are doing when you're together.

As "work spouses" and actors, Jennifer and Bradley might be put in more questionable situations than most who are close and share an office because of the specific roles they are playing. Even so, as long as they hold onto the agreed upon boundaries, they will be able to leave their "work marriage" on the set and live their personal lives without complications.