

# An Introduction for a Lifetime: Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick



By Bari Lyman, author of *Meet to Marry*

With so many options for meeting a potential partner these days, like dating sites, speed dating or singles events, we often forget that one of the most successful ways to find that special someone can be through an introduction. It's a time-tested and successful model for creating a good match and since the person introducing you is usually a close friend, family member or mentor, they typically have your best interest in mind.

An example of a happy celebrity couple who met via

introduction are Sarah Jessica Parker and her husband, Matthew Broderick. The duo have been happily married for 14 years and were originally introduced through her brother.

If you're looking for a way to meet someone special, following are some Meet to Marry, Date To Marry tips I share with singles who want to find "the one." Hopefully this advice will lead you toward a wonderful and inspiring union.

**Be marriage ready, make dating a priority and be open to all possibilities!**

Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick met when her brother introduced the two during a trip to the movies. Shortly after their initial meeting, they were inseparable. Because they were both open to the possibility of love, they still have a successful marriage to this day.

**Never marry potential.**

Broderick told *People* magazine in 1998, "We love each other and let the other person be themselves. We don't try to convince the other to be something they're not." A key element for a successful relationship is to be happy with your partner without trying to change him or her.

**When it's right, it will flow.**

This celebrity pair was clear about who they were in their relationship and they were both ready to become involved in a serious commitment. Throughout their marriage, Broderick says that the two have never spent more than two weeks apart. Marriage-ready people understand that a relationship requires maturity, generosity and self-awareness in order to work.

**Be clear about your vision, values, and goals when dating for marriage.**

While these two celebrities are from different parts of the

country (Ohio and New York City), they share the same important underlying vision. They are both half-Jewish, so their backgrounds reflect similar religious values as well. Having a common ground is important for building a family. They also share mutual admiration for each other and find the same characteristics (such as humor) to be important.

If you're looking for your happily ever after, try out the tips above and let us know how they work.

Were you introduced to your partner through a friend or family member? Share your experiences below.

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## 10 Restaurant Ideas to Help Your Relationship Grow Stronger





By Molly Borter

You've heard it before: "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach." While men all over the world "eat up" this saying, what they forget is that food is a major way into a woman's heart, too. More to the point, couples who share a mutual love of food form stronger bonds with each other.

Statistics show that 75% of Americans eat out at least once a week, so why not spend that meal with your special someone?

Here's a list of restaurant genres that should be on every couple's food forecast:

### **1. The Quiet Café**

They say that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, so why not find a café that both of you love that's calm and cozy. It will make waking up every Saturday morning even better, and there's nothing more comforting than a place that knows exactly how you like your eggs and coffee, without even asking. The best cafés are less crowded and more secluded, so find a low-key spot that not a lot of people know about. For extra intimacy points, opt for al fresco seating!

## **2. The Favorite Pizza Joint**

On nights when neither of you really want to cook, pizza makes a great fail-safe plan. Better yet, pizza can be taken to go, when a Friday night spent cuddling in front of the DVR is in order, or eaten right at the “joint” itself, when a laidback, Italian atmosphere is just what you need to relax and wind down. Having a favorite pizza joint to turn to, where you can enjoy some quality, casual conversation, is the perfect pair pleaser.. Bon appétit!

## **3. The Swanky Bar**

Every once in a while, a couple needs an excuse to dress up and enjoy a few cocktails and hors d’oeuvres over sultry music and hushed voices. A swanky bar makes it easy for you and your significant other to spend a sophisticated evening together – sipping, snacking, and schmoozing. On evenings like these, let loose and explore the city together, because you never know where it might lead you.

## **4. The Neighborhood Park**

It’s not technically a restaurant, but a park can be the best place to snuggle up together on a blanket and enjoy a homemade meal, especially if there’s live music playing nearby. Whether it’s hummus and pita chips or a new dinner recipe, grab a picnic basket, throw a bottle of wine into your cooler, and have yourself an instant (and affordable) meal full of deep conversations and quality time stargazing.

## **5. The Local Brewery**

What guy doesn’t love beer tasting with his babe? Local micro-breweries are popping up left and right these days, and they’re the latest choice for a fun date night. Not only will the beer be a hit with your man, but with menus that feature all the American classics, like juicy burgers, hearty

sandwiches, and baskets of fries, these bustling establishments score points on all levels. Go spend a rowdy evening together and enjoy one of the newest dining phenomenons around.

## **6. The Ice Cream Shop**

Not just for after dinner anymore, spending a random afternoon at an ice cream parlor, with one hand clutching a giant waffle cone, and the other hand intertwined with your significant others, can be a playful way to eat together. Spontaneous moments like these can spark childhood nostalgia and help you connect to the memories you're creating at the moment.

## **7. The Go-To Ethnic Food**

Some like it hot. Others like it with chopsticks. Decide on your go-to ethnic food, whether it's Mexican or Thai, and make an attempt to visit every restaurant in town specializing in your favorites. For example, become sushi experts together by sampling different types of rolls at each place. You'll not only love trying dishes together you previously might not have eaten alone, but you'll be able to recommend your top picks to other couples as well.

## **8. The Quirky Diner**

Most towns have an old diner that everyone loves because of the endless menu, eccentric wait staff, and a hodge-podge of tacky décor. Diners have a little bit of this and that, from chicken to pancakes, and usually serve a majority of their items all day long—which is perfect for when you two get the craving for breakfast at dinner time. Channel your old-fashioned side as a couple.

## **9. The Trendy, Upscale Restaurant**

An upscale, modern restaurant is ideal for the times when you want to create perfect evenings together under dim lighting

and listening to soft background music. And with fresh, innovative food, whether it is a premiere seafood restaurant or the latest steakhouse, you both will enjoy the chance to bond on a whole new, elegant level. Special restaurants make you feel special together.

## **10. The Classic**

This is probably the easiest to choice on the list, because you've already been there. Perhaps it's the place you went on your first date, the place you got engaged, or the place you find yourselves going to over and over again. It's the restaurant where you relive special memories, and it never fails to keep the spark alive.

As you start to find your favorites spots to frequent from the list above, your choices will shape and shift to include the atmospheres and menus you both love. Soon, you'll find that each restaurant becomes a classic, where you can sit and talk for hours, sharing hilarious and meaningful conversations and creating memories together that earn the coveted title, "Your Place."

*Molly Borter is a writer from Fishers, IN, who specializes in women's sunglasses. She loves trying new restaurants with her chef boyfriend, keeping up with the latest celebrity gossip and fashions, like the must-have sunglasses for fall, and giving helpful relationship advice to her girlfriends.*

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# **10 Tips for Dating Your**

# Friend's Sister



Submitted By Donna Cullen

It's not uncommon for guys to become attracted to sisters of their friends. When the attraction is mutual and a dating relationship develops, there are some guidelines that should be followed in order to keep the original friendship intact. Here are ten tips to avoid issues when you're dating your friend's sister:

**1. Don't take sides:** If there's a disagreement between your friend and his sister, do not take sides. Insist on remaining neutral and not being brought into the middle of the argument. It is a no-win situation for you, should you voice any opinion at all.

**2. Don't share stories:** This works both ways. Don't share



stories about his sister with him, and don't share stories about things your friend has done with his sister. Keep your lips sealed tight.

**3. Don't double date:** There may be some brothers and sisters who would be comfortable on a double date, but most would not be. You don't want your friend watching your every move with his sister, and she probably doesn't either.

**4. Stay on good terms:** This would not be a good time to get your friend upset with you. He has the ear of your girl, and he could do irreparable harm to your relationship with her, if he was inclined to do so.

**5. Gain inside knowledge:** Use your relationship with your friend to gather some insight into what his sister likes and doesn't like. You have access to a great resource, if he's willing to assist.

**6. Treat her well:** If he hears news from her, or anyone else, that you have been anything, but a knight in shining armor, you could lose a friend and gain an enemy, very quickly. Be on your best behavior with this lady.

**7. Watch what you say:** This can be applied in several ways. Anything you say about your friend, may be carried back to him via his sister. Anything you say about her, could be carried back to her through her brother. Do not discuss your relationship with one, with the other.

**8. Remember the relationship:** This fits along with the previous tip. Be careful about what you say about the sibling in front of your friend or your girl. Always remember that, in their eyes, you're talking about their brother/sister, not 'your friend' or 'your girl'.

**9. Don't break her heart:** This is one of the biggest dangers that you risk in dating the sister of one of your friends.

What will happen when you break up? If she feels wounded or betrayed, her tears are not likely to go over to well with her brother. Ending your relationship with her could potentially end your relationship with your friend.

**Don't neglect him:** Be careful not to give the impression that you're no longer interested in your friend, or don't have time for him, once you start dating his sister. See #4 for one good reason; the other is that you don't want to give the impression that you were using his friendship to get connected to his sister.

Weigh out the complications before deciding to enter into one of these sibling relationships. They can get a bit sticky at times, depending on the maturity of those involved.

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## Top 5 Ways to Get Him to Propose By Labor Day





There may only be three weeks until Labor Day, but that's still plenty of time to encourage your beau to pop the question by the end of the summer ... or at least get him in the right mindset to do so. **Dana B. Myers**, sexy lifestyle expert and author of *The Official Booty Parlor Mojo Makeover*, has a unique take on how to do just that. Here are her top five tips:

**1. Work It Out:** Boost your confidence by adding some extra gym or spa time to your routine this summer. Taking this time to yourself will give you a new self-assured attitude that your man will find to be oh-so-sexy.

**2. Take Charge:** Plan a date night that is all about him. Incorporate some of his favorite date night activities and make a reservation at his favorite restaurant. Then, prep your bikini area because if everything goes well, your night will just be getting started when you return home. Dana suggests the painless at home hair removal device, no! no! Hair. And another tip: share your little secret at the beginning of the night so that the anticipation to see what you've done will make the date even better.

**3. Heat Things Up:** The best way to a man's heart is through his stomach, so make him an old-fashioned, home-cooked meal, like roasted chicken or lasagna. The traditional meal will remind your man of family and starting his own. And, if you're in with his mom, ask if you can borrow one of her recipes.

**4. Get Hands-on:** Let your man know you're there for him after a long, stressful day of work by setting up some special pampering time just for him. This can be as simple as giving him shoulder, neck and/or foot rub. For a full body treatment try the Don't Stop Massage Candle. The candle provides a seductive glow, and when you're ready to start the massage simply blow out the flame and drizzle the warm oil onto bare skin for a uniquely intimate, exciting massage experience.

**5. Change Locations:** Plan a romantic summer getaway together. The vacation could present the perfect opportunity for him to pop the question, or inspire him to plan a special event on his own.

**Have some ideas on how to get your man to pop the question? Share your thoughts below.**

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## **Do's and Don'ts of Flirtexting and Sexting**





By Olivia Baniuszewicz and Debra Goldstein

We were eating dinner the other night with our best guy friend, and the topic turned to sexting. Not too soon after, he handed us his cell phone to show us close to a hundred naked photos of different girls. Can you believe he actually created a folder on his phone to archive them because there were so many? Sigh. Anyways, all of these girls sent him photos for one reason and one reason alone ...because he asked. He didn't think twice about showing them to us nor is he shy about sharing them with his boys.

Ladies, we don't particularly want to see your privates on our friend's phone, in the news (yes, you Andrew Weiner, Blake Lively, Vanessa Hudgens...) or anywhere else for that matter. We thought a nice refresher on some do's and don'ts of sexting may be just what we all need to keep our privates, well, private.

### **What is Flirtexting?**

Flirtexting is what you do in the beginning stages of a relationship to build a connection.

## **What is Sexting?**

Sexting is sending suggestive flirtexts that are bold and blunt and used to spice up an existing relationship.

### **Do's:**

- Sexts should be used by mature adults in a committed relationship to avoid risky backlash
- Stay classy by sending simple sexts telling him what you want to do when you see him later, or what you plan on wearing
- Use the casual and safe environment of text to forgo shyness by sexting to reveal your fantasies
- Spark fire in a long distance relationship with an exciting bedtime sext
- Send a flirtext to spice up an existing relationship during work
- Less is more, send sexy photos of new lingerie or a picture of your legs to get him aroused

### **Don'ts:**

- Never include your face in a naked photo text.
- Avoid your kids seeing these photos by deleting them immediately from your phone after sending them.
- Don't reveal everything in a text message exchange, leave him wanting more.
- Stay away from racy photos unless you're in a serious relationship to avoid unwanted leaks and criticism.

### **You Should Know:**

- Guys have said that they will often test girls by sending them a sext to see how they will respond.
- Nothing is going to happen if you refuse to take it all off for a sext, except for maybe gaining more respect from the person asking you for it.
- Unlike phone sex, you don't need to be anywhere private to send a sexy text.

Flirtexting: How to Text Your Way into his Heart is a dating guide that spells out the rules, the guidelines and the do's and don'ts of the dating phenomenon of flirting over text message. "We date, therefore we text," was Debra Goldstein and Olivia Baniuszewicz's motto and inspiration for writing Flirtexting. Once guys stopped calling and started courting them over text, they decided to equip themselves, their friends, and the greater cell carrying public, with the tools to cleverly respond to get what they want. [www.flirtexting.com](http://www.flirtexting.com)

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## Five Dates That Will Brutally Backfire



By Sam Greenspan

There's a fine line between thinking of innovative ideas for dates and ending up with disastrous thoughts for dates. About five years ago, I happened to see that a circus from Mexico was here in Los Angeles. I had a first date that night and took the girl to that circus, even though neither of us spoke Spanish. I thought it was brilliant and would help us bond. She got an "emergency call" from her "grandma" who had suddenly come down with "dying" and left after 45 minutes. That's a date backfire on a grandiose scale.

In my semi-bestselling book *11 Points Guide to Hooking Up*, I have a list of 11 Dates That Will Brutally Backfire. Because I blew through 25 percent of my allotted words for this guest post with that circus anecdote, I will only be able to relay abbreviated snippets of five of them:

**1. Comedy club:** Because somehow, every comedian on the planet has a built-in radar for a nervous couple on a first date. It must be a side effect of cheap beer and mild depression. Anyway, he'll joke you guys right into never seeing each other again.

**2. Massages:** The problem is, a good masseuse takes you to a place in a different realm than sex. Afterward, you and your date won't want to be physical with each other – it'll just ruin how good your neck and shoulders feel.

**3. Your friend's party:** You know everyone there. Your date doesn't. It'll be hard to get to know each other while you talk to your friends and he or she just kinda awkwardly hangs at your side like you're Tom Hanks and he or she is Rita Wilson.

**4. Errands:** Twice in my life (with about 10 years' separation in between), a girl ran errands while we were ostensibly on a date. And all I could think of both times was, "You think our



date's going so poorly that *errands* are going to liven it up?" Especially the time the girl diverted us to a post office so she could mail her taxes. In January. She wasn't in that much of a rush.

**5. An overnight trip:** Save the overnight trips for when you actually know each other. There's nothing worse than realizing 20 minutes into a two-day trip that you really don't like each other. (Other than realizing it 20 minutes into a two-year relationship, like Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez.)

*Sam Greenspan is the founder of the website 11Points.com (because top 10 lists are for cowards). His first book, the 11 Points Guide to Hooking Up, just came out in June.*

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## 8 Alternative Wedding Trends for 2011





By Cara Davis

Today's brides and grooms aren't settling for what has always been done. They're infusing creativity, personality, cultural trends and most of all, they're having fun. They're creating memorable experiences not just for themselves, but for friends and family who contribute to their big days.

Author and marketing guru Seth Godin recently spoke at a Chick-fil-A Leadercast about how the new normal is not normal at all. People are questioning why we do things the way we do, thereby turning tradition on its head. It's affecting all industries, including the wedding industry.

Here's a look at eight alternative wedding trends that are popping up in 2011:

**1. Mini Wedding Dresses:** Whether it's glammed up, vintage or breezy casual, knee-length wedding dresses are more practical and personalized for today's bride. As more stores roll out wedding boutiques like J.Crew and White House Black Market, brides can pick up a wedding dress from their favorite retail store. And let's not forget that for some, that's Etsy, where

they can pick up a custom hand-made gown for as little as \$40.

**2. Fun with Color:** From black accents to bold color blocks, color is king this year and it's not limited to the bride!

Non-matching bridesmaids are coordinating in patterns or complementary color combinations like this crafty DIY wedding of mega-blogger Elsie Larson. In addition to bold color palettes, shades of gray and stripes continue to be the big color trend for the year.

**3. Alternative Gift Registries:** Many couples are registering for gifts that will help them in a practical way. Travel agencies are starting to offer honeymoon gift certificates and some auto dealers are offering gift certificates toward the purchase of a new vehicle. CardAvenue.com allows couples to create a gift card registry for national retailers. Couples can get as creative as they want; they can request gift cards to home improvement stores to offset costs of home renovation or register for local restaurants so they can continue dating as newlyweds on a budget.

**4. Punchy Personalization:** While the structure of the wedding remains the same, (you've got a bride and groom, an officiant, a group of family and friends, a ceremony and reception) the look is anything but. The time may be different (think brunch), the seating may be smarter (seated at tables & staying put for reception), the furniture may be funky (varying size and shape or non-traditional choices) and forget the wedding favors – today's couples are giving personalized takeaways, like souvenir photo booth picture strips.

**5. Eco-friendly Finds:** Outdoor spaces, reclaimed furniture, flea market finds and even wooden rings are helping eco-conscious brides and grooms celebrate in a big way without the environmental impact. Green weddings can feature locally grown food and seed-lined wedding invitations that can be planted.

CarbonFund and Terrapass offer wedding carbon footprint calculators, where air travel is most likely to be the big offender. Couples can purchase carbon offsets to lessen the impact, or request contributions as gifts.

**6. The Rustic South:** There's been a rise in rustic weddings in the past several years and it mirrors a growing hunger in popular culture for all things Southern (think The Civil Wars, J.Crew fashion, artisan jeans and home-brewed beer). Today's vintage and rustic weddings are all about embracing simplicity and infusing new life into old things. From location (barns or old warehouses) to furniture & decor (antiques and flea market favorites) to apparel (vintage clothes and even brooch bouquets), many couples are going for the nostalgic feel of the old South.

**7. Cultural Cues:** Couples who are looking to add levity to their big day are incorporating pop culture trends. Food cart fare is showing up in pre-wedding cocktail hour and the after-party. Culturally significant themes like retro Asian flavors and ethnic icons like sushi, ninjas, geisha girls and Chinese lanterns are being used in inventive ways. Vintage board games are showing up as Monopoly pieces in bouquets and Scrabble letter tiles as signs for the buffet.

**8. Death of the Wedding Cake:** The exorbitant cost of traditional tiered wedding cakes has given way to nontraditional desserts like square mini-cakes and cupcake tiers. Furthermore, dessert buffets may feature pies, macarons, Whoopie Pies, cake pops, color-coordinated candy and even ice cream sundae stations or cookies and milk bars.

*Weddings expert Cara Davis is the author of Cheap Ways to Tie the Knot. She also blogs from her home in Orlando, FL about cheap ways to spend and save at CheapWaysTo.com.*

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# Why Kourtney Kardashian and Scott Disick Don't Need to Get Married



By Brea Gunn

Okay, okay...I'll admit it. I'm a reality TV junkie. I LOVE watching the train wrecks, drama, and outright ridiculousness that has become entertainment. Sometimes, though, a show truly hits a chord. I was watching Keeping Up With the Kardashians and stumbled upon the episode where Kris is pushing Kourtney and Scott to get married ... But they don't want to tie the knot.

This may seem strange to you, but it really irked me that their mom, Kris, was pushing the issue. Now, I'm all about weddings. It's what I love to write about, talk about and blog about, but sometimes weddings are not the best thing. Take Kourtney and Scott, for example. If her mom wants a commitment, why not have a commitment ceremony instead of a wedding? You can still have the dress, the big bash and the DJ without ending up with a legally binding piece of paper.

Take a look at some other celebs that have kids and aren't married ... Johnny Depp (together with his partner for more than 10 years, he has 2 kids) and Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie (together for more than 5 years and they have six (right?) kids) ... And both couples are very comfortable in their relationships.

And then there are the celebrities that have gotten married after they have kids, like Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz, and Britney Spears and Kevin Federline. Now, they're separated or divorced.

So where's the middle ground? And more importantly, what does any of this have to do with us 'normal' people? I think that weddings are fantastic, and I love every single one of them, but they're truly not for everyone, as I think the Kardashians (among others) have shown us. So when do you know it's right?

If you can't imagine the rest of your life without your love's best and WORST features, then (more than likely) you're probably on the right track with the wedding plans. But if you're happy being your semi-single self, consider a commitment ceremony or party to celebrate a milestone year in your relationship instead.

Sure, Mom may be upset (even famous moms want to plan their daughter's weddings), but I think that if you sit down with her (do not take a page from Kourtney on this one) and calmly explain your choice, then chances are she'll be on board ...

especially if you let her plan a party.

Brea Gunn is a monthly contributor for Cupid's Pulse and writes for a Hudson Valley weddings site for real weddings, reviews and inspiration from local wedding business resources.

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## Five Tips to Help Your Partner Feel Comfortable Around Your Friends



By Ashyia Hill

You've managed to make a romantic spark turn into a

comfortable relationship, and now you want to bring your new partner around to meet your friends. Meeting your closest friends and family could be a make-or-break moment—especially if he doesn't connect with them or even like them for that matter. Thankfully, there are steps you can take to help make your lover feel more relaxed about the meet and greet. In fact, many of these tactics are ones that we see celebrities using in their relationships. So, let's take a cue from a few famous couples with the following five steps:

### **1. Don't force your friends on your partner**

Some independence in a relationship is healthy. AskMen.com put together a profile of Tom Brady and Gisele Bündchen's relationship that shows how the celebrity power couple has maintained independent careers that take them all over the world, while still cultivating a sizzling relationship. This independence can also be applied to your friendships. One way to do that is by scheduling time to meet up with your friends separately. That way, when it's time to plan a get-together, you can focus on helping your partner feel at ease instead of trying to catch up on your friends' lives.

### **2. Give them talking points**

Just as celebrities prepare for their TV and magazine interviews, you can help your sweetie feel a little more prepared around your pals with a little prep time. Give them some background on the people they'll meet and match up any commonalities they may have with your friends. Another idea is to provide them with some fun factoids that will help get the conversations rolling and break the ice.

### **3. Plan a double date**

Arrange a double date with another couple you know. This way, your honey can socialize one-on-one and get to know your



friends better. Of course, you'll want to steer clear of double dates with friends whose partners you don't care for or you think your significant other won't get along with!

#### **4. Take a trip together**

You see celebs doing this all the time. Of course, you don't need to fly off on a private jet to a world-class resort to get the same effect but a weekend away can bond people immediately. If you're tight on budget, keep it close to home.

#### **5. Steer clear of friendly exes**

Tabloids often publish pictures of celebrities remaining friendly with their exes. But getting your current flame together with a fizzled out one isn't the best idea. Instead, focus on life-long friends who have always been and will forever remain platonic.

**How do you make your partner feel comfortable around your friends? Leave a comment with your perspective.**

*Ashyia Hill is a social media advocate at the cash back credit card website, CreditDonkey.*

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## **Mending Hugh Hefner's Broken Heart**





By Ronnie Ann Ryan MBA, CCC – The Dating Coach

Less than a week after fiancée Crystal Harris called off her nuptials to Hugh Hefner, the scorned husband-to-be rebounded by publicly showcasing his new girlfriend— Shera Bechard, the November 2011 Playboy Playmate. To me, that's the definition of a true playboy, and it suits Hef perfectly. After all, he is the original founder of the Playboy brand.

When questioned by fans and hecklers about moving on so quickly, Hugh claimed that Shera is the remedy for his broken heart. As a professional dating coach, one thing I know for sure is that the heart takes time to heal. If Hefner was truly crushed by Harris leaving him, then he's certainly in no position to have already moved on. Whether you're a man or a woman, a new love interest is not the antidote for heartbreak. Finding someone else so quickly is not a healing strategy; it's simply a rebound. In my opinion, the chances of things going well for Shera and Hugh are quite slim at best.

If you want to heal and find lasting love, you'll have to recover from the pain of breaking up with your past partner first. Otherwise, you could be leading yourself and the new

flame down another hurtful path. Here are some tips to help you move through the healing process in a healthy way:

**1. Give yourself time to recover:** Spend time alone, with friends and family. Be with people who love you so that you can regain your inner strength.

**2. Take good care of yourself:** Get a massage, energy balance, makeover, new hairstyle, or start working with an exercise trainer. Take healthy steps to improve your self-confidence.

**3. Shift negative thinking to positive self-talk:** If you spend a lot of time blaming and berating yourself, stop. Learn how to speak nicely to yourself with positive inner dialoguing. It's a lot like being your own dating coach! Tell yourself that love is out there, and it's only a matter of time before you find it.

**4. Relax and enrich your life:** There's no hurry. Rushing will only lead to mistakes again. Instead, take your time, and build a rich and interesting life for yourself. When you're enjoying yourself you inevitably become more attractive.

*Ronnie Ann Ryan – The Dating Coach has helped thousands of people transform their love lives from disaster to finding healthy, loving relationships. You can find her on her website, [www.NeverTooLate.biz](http://www.NeverTooLate.biz).*

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## **How to Deal With Life After Divorce**



By Mark Shields

Divorce can be a truly painful experience, and people deal with the aftermath in different ways. Some begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel quickly, while others continue to foster darkness and deeper feelings of pain and loss. The key is to choose the path that leads you towards the light by keeping yourself active, staying close with friends, developing new relationships and becoming a healthier person mentally, physically and spiritually.

### **Stay Active**

Once divorced, you may find you have much more time on your hands to participate in activities you've always wanted to do. Have you ever wanted to take a tennis lesson? Now is the time to do it! You might also consider joining an adventure group who experiences the wonders of the outdoors and who climbs, bikes, hikes or simply meanders through the paths and trails

of nature. There are organizations of all kinds that don't necessarily call themselves 'support' groups, but just turn out to be supportive. It's a great way to meet new and interesting people and to get in touch with yourself. Some other ideas include: book clubs, ballroom dancing and taking fitness classes at a gym. No matter what your interest, do some research to find your niche.

## **Write**

Writing is another way to exfoliate your pain. Grab a leather journal, and begin a journey. Write down everything you feel, think and dream without anyone looking over your shoulder. There should be no one there to judge you; you're just answering to yourself. It's a great way to cleanse your system of all of the hurt and pain you've recently experienced.

## **Hang with Friends**

Staying close with those you care about is important. How many times have you been there for your friends when they were having a tough time? Just try to remember that you're not burdening your friends when you need them during the divorce process. Feeling lonely in an empty house? Call up a pal and go for a walk or watch a funny movie together. Being surrounded by love in this hard time is one of the best forms of medicine, as long as you open up and allow them inside to comfort you.

## **Be Healthy**

You will also want to get on a health routine if you haven't already started one. Working out helps boost your endorphins and can turn sadness and sorrow upside down, giving you hope and happiness. Join a gym, a hiking club or a sports team. Even just getting out there for and walking your pain away can be just what you need.

No matter what you do, let go of your past and live in the present. Once you've used these ideas to fully move on, you can look forward to your future.

*Mark Shields is a partner at the law offices of Gillespie, Shields & Durrant. His specialties as a Phoenix family lawyer include Paternity and Grandparent's rights. He has been practicing law in Arizona since 1997.*

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## 5 Post-Wedding Tips for Newlyweds



By [Terri Orbuch PhD](#)

Adapted from her book, "5 Simple Steps to Take Your Marriage from Good to Great"

Congratulations! You've survived one of the most difficult and stressful events in your relationship: the wedding. Now the two of you are settling in for the long haul. If you're like the vast majority of newlyweds, the next 6-12 months will be some of your happiest. Relationship researchers call this "the honeymoon period," and it's characterized by a sense of newness and possibility.

But how can you keep that freshness and optimism going after the initial glow wears off? Here are five post-wedding tips that have been shown to build and strengthen marriage bonds, derived from my landmark Early Years of Marriage (EYM) study:

**Don't hide anything when it comes to money.**

When happy couples in the EYM study were asked if their spouses were completely open and honest about money, their answers differed significantly from those of the unhappy couples in the study. Nearly 8 out of 10 happy couples said they "never" feel their spouse tells them things that aren't completely true about money, compared with only 54% of the other couples. **The take-away:** Money secrets and lies erode marital happiness.

**Empty your "pet peeve pail" frequently.**

My study found that couples who failed to talk about the small things that bothered them, letting those pet peeves grow into big resentments, were more likely to be unhappy in their marriages down the road. If you hate that she leaves her hair in the sink, tell her nicely. If you hate that he smokes cigars in the car, discuss it fairly. **The take away:** If you ignore small annoyances, they add up to major discontent over time.

### **Make each other feel appreciated—daily.**

My research shows that the accumulation of small acts of kindness is more essential for building a strong marital bond than occasional grand gestures and big pronouncements. At least once a day, make your spouse feel loved, appreciated, noticed, valued, or respected. Give her a surprise kiss or ask her advice; make his favorite meal or give him a heartfelt compliment. **The take away:** Frequent acts of caring reinforce long-term intimacy in marriages.

### **Don't forget to have fun—together.**

The happiest couples in my EYM study characterized their spouse as someone they enjoyed spending time with. Too often, as marriages mature, partners tend to look outside the marriage for friends and entertainment. Seek out fun activities to do with your spouse. Incidentally, studies show that doing an activity that's new to both of you restimulates the feel-good excitement associated with dating. **The take away:** Avoid relationship ruts by actively seeking fun, laughter, and novelty.

### **Make your circle bigger.**

My research found that husbands, in particular, are happier when their wives have good relationships with their extended family. Also, the couples in my EYM study who made an effort to get to know—but not necessarily share—their spouse's friends were more likely to be happy in the long term than couples who maintained separate friends. **The take away:** It takes a village to make a marriage happy.

*Psychologist Terri Orbuch PhD, known as The Love Doctor, is a research professor, a long-time marriage and family therapist, and a popular love advisor on radio, TV, and [peoplemedia.com](http://peoplemedia.com), most recently seen on NBC's Today. Project director of the landmark, NIH-funded Early Years of Marriage Project, the longest-running study of married couples ever conducted, she*



*is author of 5 Simple Steps to Take Your Marriage from Good to Great (Random House). You can find out more about her at [www.drterrihelovedoctor.com](http://www.drterrihelovedoctor.com).*

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## Top Five Reasons Why Women Fall Out of Love



By Julia Slovich

Although stories of cheating men have been dominating the news lately and falling out of love seems to be happening a lot more frequently than people are falling in love, the situation isn't exclusive to men. Losing those loving feelings for your

husband or boyfriend can happen just as easily to women. If you've experienced this in the past or maybe you're going through it with your partner now, the first step is to be aware of why it's happening. Follow these five reasons your fairy-tale romance could be slipping away:

### **1. Feeling Adored**

It's important that a woman feels appreciated by her partner.

Men are usually good at this in the beginning of a relationship when it's still new, but as the novelty ends, the attention may die down, too. Just look at Jennifer Aniston and John Mayer. She broke up with him because he was obsessed with Twitter, telling her that he was too busy for her, but in the meantime, his Twitter page was saturated.

### **2. Bored to Tears**

We want excitement! And, if we can't have that, give us variety. If a relationship gets into a rut and you end up doing the same things every weekend or having sex in the same positions every time, a woman can get bored and lose interest altogether. Both people need to put some work into the relationship or they'll find themselves quickly falling out of love.

### **3. Honeymoon is Over**

Sometimes, we can be completely unrealistic and think that our relationship will turn out alright because "we love each other so much." Unfortunately, that's not always the case. Once the honeymoon phase is over, the reality of the relationship can be a slap in the face. Pamela Anderson and Kid Rock were married for a mere four months before they called it quits. Both agreed that it was time to end it, and Pam said that they just weren't meant to be together. It's easy to ignore all of the red flags when you're caught up in romance and passion.

#### **4. Lack of Chemistry**

Most women are looking for that spark that makes them feel all tingly and giggly whenever their man touches or looks at them.

However, a relationship can't be built on sparks alone. Eventually they will fade if the relationship doesn't have substance.

#### **5. Emotionally Disconnected**

Poor communication (or no communication at all) is one of the main reasons women fall out of love. We need to feel connected to our partners emotionally as well as physically in order to love and be loved. When there's little communication, some women will shut down. Maria Shriver was extremely unhappy in her marriage to Arnold Schwarzenegger. Apparently, they hadn't been spending much time together in the last few years, and she was frequently absent from Sacramento where Arnold was the governor. If that doesn't signal a problem, nothing does.

It happens to the best of us. Sometimes we just fall out of love, but if you don't want to be another divorce rate statistic and want to make it work with your partner, use these five signs as a starting place to determine what may be going wrong and see if there's a way to fix it before it's too late.

*Julia Slovic is a writer passionate about health, fitness & blogging. When she's not running with her dog she can sometimes be found writing about [laser liposuction](#), cooking and a myriad of other topics.*

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# Choose the Perfect Perfume for Your Guy



By Sarah Ellis

A smell can ignite a flood of memories. Your mom's perfume may remind you of snuggling with her as a child, and your fruity body splash may remind you of awkward middle school days where you passed notes to your best friend and giggled about your crush. Your first boyfriend's cologne may remind you of your first kiss and innocent love. And like these memories all hold a special place in your heart, you want your perfume to be a sort of signature, right?

Perfume is personal. It's meant to be an intimate adornment – something that's noticed when your guy leans in to give you a kiss or gets a whiff when he whispers in your ear. And I'm

here to tell you there's more to buying perfume than choosing it by how it smells in the bottle.

Have you ever noticed how you'll spritz a perfume sample in the air at the store, fall in LOVE with it, make the purchase, but later realize that it doesn't smell quite as good as you remember? Perfume actually reacts with your body chemistry, which can affect the way it smells after you wear it.

There's one rule you MUST follow when choosing a scent: Don't choose a perfume based on which celebrity endorses it or by how adorable the product packaging is, no matter HOW posh they make the bottle look! If you're investing in perfume, you don't want to be wasting money on a scent that you'll end up hating. Trial and error is crucial.

### **The most common scent categories:**

- Musky
- Floral
- Fruity
- Fresh
- Amber or Oriental
- Wood or Pine
- Citrus
- Gourmand (a fancy term for dessert fragrances, typically vanilla, cake, or other decadent treats)

Perfumes are pretty complex in nature, as they're made up of "notes" that take on different layers. There are top, middle and base notes that, when played together properly, mix into a lovely scent. The top notes are immediately recognizable when you apply the perfume. The middle notes will emerge right after the top note dissipates, and you may not notice the base notes for up to 30 minutes after you've applied the scent.

Different combinations of these categories make up different fragrances. Mixologists spend their days playing with different essential oils and finding unique combinations.

If you're unsure of what type of fragrance you prefer, get playful! Although most of us run away from perfume counters while shopping, discussing fragrance with an expert is truly fascinating. Take a shopping pal and ask some questions!

Have fun playing, but don't be pressured to purchase immediately. Spritz the fragrance in key areas: wrists, neck, decolletage (because it sounds classier than cleavage), or behind the ears. But don't overdo it! Perfume is meant to be intimate, not overpowering.

And ask your guy what kind of scent he prefers. Everyone has different tastes, and while you should ALWAYS choose for yourself first, it's fun to indulge your guy in this way. My high school boyfriend *loved* vanilla perfume, and it was fun to get compliments on how lovely I smelled!

Find your signature scent, and it will serve you through the years. It will also bring back a flood of memories as you grow and change.

*While Sarah Ellis wouldn't exactly label herself as a perfume expert, her time spent working the beauty counter certainly did give her a one up on the average shopper! In her day job, she enjoys sharing style advice for pairing affordable handbags with equally fabulous ensembles at Handbag Heaven. And she's always on the lookout for affordable ways to be more fabulous.*

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## 5 Royal Summer Wedding Trends





By Brea Gunn

If you're like the rest of the world, you've heard about the royal wedding. And if you're like most brides, you were there in front of your television taking copious notes. It's a good thing you did, too, because this summer, it's all about royal inspiration.

You need not copy Kate and William exactly, as there's plenty of room for interpretation. Because Kate's taste is so classic, many of your guests may think that you came up with these ideas all by yourself!

## **1. The Ring**

The talk of the year leading up to the wedding was Kate's ring. The beautiful sapphire has rekindled the wedding world's romance with gemstones. Sure, there are diamonds, and they'll always be a girl's best friend, but how about thinking outside of the box for your rings? There are a number of beautiful choices, from sapphires to rubies, to opals and beyond.

## **2. Fascinators**

If you loved all of the fascinators, raise your hand! And for the record, they do not have to be large, ugly hats. They can be simple, eye catching and brilliant. Large or small, fascinators can compliment the bride's ensemble or dress up the wedding party. If you want to pull in a full royal wedding feel, ask your guests to wear their own hats and fascinators.

## **3. Blushers**

Blushers, though once reserved for solemn church weddings, are definitely making a comeback this summer. Whether you choose a short birdcage-style blusher, or decide to go the full yard with an elbow dusting blusher, you really can't go wrong. The accessories are beautiful, and they create a soft frame around the face, which is truly elegant.

## **4. Lace**

Kate brought lace back in a big way. Once considered too traditional, Kate's use of delicate lace was brilliant. You can add lace touches to your wedding gown, your bridesmaid and even your decor. Lace is a great way to soften the focus and add a touch of old-world elegance.

## **5. Monochromatic Color**

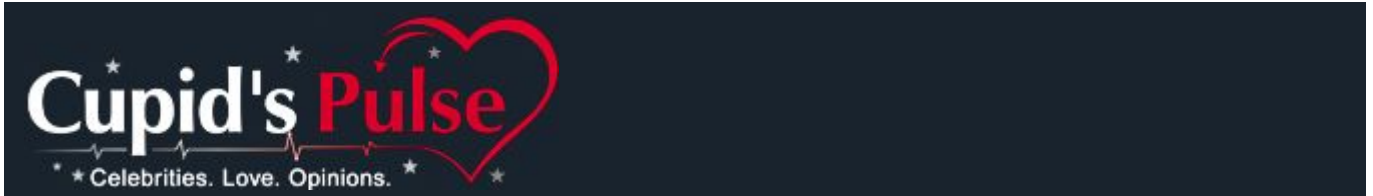
Monochromatic colors for the bride and bridesmaid have also increased in popularity, thanks to Pippa's stunning gown. More and more brides are favoring a simple elegance for their palate, and an all-white wedding is a fantastic way to accomplish this. The sheer elegance will stun your guests, and the white backdrop just screams for brilliantly colored flowers, accessories and decor.

*Brea Gunn writes about New York weddings and shares wedding business marketing tips for the bridal business.*



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# Lessons To Learn from Hugh Hefner and Crystal Harris



By Single City Guy

As we all know, Hugh Hefner has gone through another breakup. His ex-fiancée, Crystal Harris, dumped Hugh days before their wedding. Hugh had his reaction to the situation, causing everyone to laugh and then sympathize. For a man who started an empire based on beautiful women, it's hard to believe he still hasn't found "the one." In honor of the Hef, here are three lessons we can learn from the now-ended relationship:

## **Don't Give Up Everything Unless It's Worth It**

Crystal Harris came into the light after the reign of Hef's ex-girlfriends Holly Madison, Bridget Marquardt and Kendra Wilkinson, the original *Girls Next Door*. This also comes after Holly and Hugh's relationship (a whole other drama-filled story, which we won't get into). Originally, Crystal wasn't alone, as she filled the role of the head girl, paired with twin sisters. Eventually, Hef gave up the twins to focus all of his attention on Crystal. While giving up extra girlfriends isn't exactly what I'd call noble, Hugh was willing to give up a part of his lifestyle to please the one he loved. Everyone has done this at some point in their lives. We've given up something we're used to in order to appease another.

Before making sacrifices, here are two questions you should ask yourself: 1) Is he or she worth it? and 2) What is he or she giving up?

## **Know What You're Getting Into**

I'm often surprised by the breakup stories that I hear. It seems that a lot of them stem from one member of the couple thinking that the other should make drastic changes for him or her. The thing is, if you're a Boston Red Sox fan and you fall in love with a New York Yankees fan, he or she isn't going to change team allegiance just because of you. You have two choices when it comes to a relationship: either accept who someone is, for what they are, or don't date them!

When Crystal Harris told [People](#), "It doesn't make sense to have so many women around, but still have a marriage," she has a very valid point! If she were talking to any other guy, *but* Hugh Hefner, I would agree with her statement 100 percent.

However, Hugh had been living the same lifestyle for a long time prior to meeting Crystal. She knew his style before getting married, but chose to ignore it until the last

possible moment.

## **When Life Gives You Lemons, Find A New Date**

At 85, you would think a guy would give up on finding new women in his life. Not Hugh Hefner. It's the reason every guy admires him and hopes to be just like him. In the last six years, Hugh has had six different girlfriends, and according to reports, is on girlfriend number seven. The lesson here is, when everything is down and out, try, try, again.

*Single City Guy is a 30-something blogger, from New York City, who writes about dating in the city from the male perspective. Having started the blog in his late twenties, Single City Guy is written a way to help bridge the gap that existed for male dating advice, while providing a male voice in the world of dating blogs.*

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## **Top 10 Qualities George Clooney Looks for In a Woman**





By Greg Buckskin

Single ladies around the world can now rejoice! George Clooney has officially separated from his latest girlfriend, Elisabetta Canalis.

The couple has called off their relationship, leaving the dating pool wide open for Clooney, one of Hollywood's most attractive men. If you've got your eye on this "sexiest man alive," you're not alone. But do you have what it takes to attract this notorious bachelor? Here are the top 10 qualities he looks for in a woman. See if you measure up!

**1. Foreign beauty:** If you're from a country outside of the U.S., your odds of landing Clooney have significantly gone up. Celine Balitran (France), Mariella Frostup (Norway) and Canalis (Italy) are just a few of his "foreign affairs."

**2. Big name actress:** One of the most successful men in Hollywood would surely be attracted to an equally successful actress. And rightfully so, since both understand the demands and stresses that come with the job. Clooney's past women have resumes almost as impressive as his; just take a look at

Julia Roberts, Charlize Theron, Kelly Preston and Renee Zellweger. But don't plan on starring in a movie alongside George to win his affection. It appears he doesn't date his co-stars – at least, not during filming.

**3. Piercing eyes:** Clooney prefers a few physical features on women, one of them being incredibly piercing eyes. Preston, Roberts, Theron, Lucy Liu and Canalis all share the striking eyes trait.

**4. Pouty lips:** Going along with physical features, Clooney's also attracted to a pouty lips. Exes Karen Duffy, Roberts, Theron, Zellweger and Canalis have incredibly full lips that they use to their full advantage.

**5. Exotic:** This actor gravitates toward exotic looking woman. We need to look no further than Huma Abedin, Liu and, of course, Canalis to determine that this is certainly a look that draws George.

**6. Astrological sign? Scorpio:** Yes, it must be in the "stars" for a relationship with Clooney to work. Three of his ex-girlfriends – Celine Balitran, Roberts and Mariella Frostrup – are Scorpions. He certainly likes a determined, passionate and exciting woman in his life – all famous Scorpio characteristics.

**7. Age:** No cougars need apply! Clooney tends to date women much younger than himself. Sarah Larson was 18 years his junior, while he had a good 17 years on his latest ex.

**8. Not the marrying kind:** If you're the kind of person who wants a commitment that ends with a diamond on your finger, go ahead and look elsewhere. This bachelor is notoriously famous for steering clear of husband-territory. In fact, out of all of his exes, Clooney has only married one – Talia Balsam. After their relationship ended, he declared that he would never marry again. So far, no other woman has been able to

convince him otherwise.

**9. Attention seeking:** When you're with Clooney, all attention is on him. If it's your time to shine, move on to the next man. He's dated some pretty famous names, but when it's time for the red carpet or movie premieres, all eyes, all attention and cameras immediately focus on him.

**10. Model-esque looks:** And lastly, if you don't have long lean legs, stunning facial features and gorgeous hair, don't waste your time. This man is definitely attracted to model-type women, including Vendella Kiresbom Thomessen, Traylor Howard and Lisa Snowdon.

Do you measure up? If you can count yourself among at least a few of the top 10 qualities Clooney covets, then what are you waiting for? It's time to see if you can catch the most recent eligible man in Hollywood!

*When he's not out skiing the Utah powder, Greg Buckskin is a writer and blogger for Comcast.USDirect.com – home to Comcast Cable Deals.*

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## 9 Frugal Dating Tips for Cost-Conscious Lovebirds





By Andrea Woroch

Summer is the season for romance as singles and couples seek magical moments amid the sunny and hot weather. However, creating a magical date can be a nerve-wrecking experience, depending on the dating situation. Thinking about what to wear, wondering if he/she will like you or stressing over what you will talk about is enough to make someone go crazy. With so much to think about, the last thing you need to worry about is your wallet.

Lucky for cost-conscious lovebirds, there are plenty of ways to spark a romantic connection without blowing your budget. Here are nine ways to enjoy a memorable yet inexpensive summer date:

**1. Time-sharing babysitting:** Finding a competent and dependable babysitter is often an expensive nightmare. It's almost enough to make a parent want to stay home. When you think about it, however, many others face the same situation. Why not swap services with neighbors, co-workers, family or friends for a free night or afternoon out? Otherwise,

consider sharing one babysitter among a couple of families and splitting the cost. Consider searching SitterCity.com for vetted babysitters in your area who will match your needs and budget.

**2. Avoid alcohol:** Even if you find a cut-rate meal (early bird special, anyone?), a couple drinks can greatly add to the bill. You might want to hit a restaurant that doesn't serve booze or make it an afternoon date. Otherwise, plan to drink and dine at a restaurant or bar that offers happy hour prices which is usually in the early evening. You can enjoy most drinks and food at very reasonable prices.

**3. Date with gift cards:** Buy a gift card at a discount from sites such as CardAvenue.com. They will save you anywhere from five to 50 percent on restaurants and other entertainment activities.

**4. Plan a freebie:** Dating doesn't always have to mean dinner and a movie. Some activities – like hiking, biking or visiting farmers' markets – don't cost a dime and tend to reveal more about your partner than a standard date.

**5. DIY date night:** Create your own dinner with a picnic in a local park. For a romantic touch, pack portable speakers with a pre-mixed playlist on your iPod as well as a bottle of wine and a few chocolate-covered strawberries for dessert. Not only is this DIY date an inexpensive alternative to a night on the town, but you'll score extra brownie points for taking the time to plan this special event.

**6. Get smart advice from smartphones:** Use your mobile phone to find local deals and date ideas. The Date Night iPhone app for example will help you find unique, interesting and affordable events that are sure to impress. The app randomly selects a "thing to do" for your next evening on the town, some of which won't bust your budget.

**7. Dial into daily deals:** Groupon, Living Social and other



group-buying coupon companies offer some great deals – up to 50 percent off – on such entertainment experiences as wine tastings, boat tours, museums and comedy clubs. If you're worried about appearing "cheap," redeem the offer when your date is in the restroom.

**8. Go cultural:** Many libraries and coffee shops offer free poetry readings and musical entertainment. Look for art gallery tours or free museum days to improve your cultural IQ while impressing your date.

**9. Create a thrifty movie night:** Instead of dishing out \$20 for two movie tickets plus cost of popcorn, candy and soda, plan a romantic movie night at home. Pick-up a free DVD from your local library or a new release for just a dollar from Redbox. Then dim the lights and serve some freshly popped popcorn or your date's favorite candy for a theater-like experience.

Consumer Savings Expert Andrea Woroch has been featured as a media expert source on NBC's Today Show, FOX & Friends, MSNBC, ABC News NOW and many more. For more savings tips follow @AndreaWoroch.

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## A Healthy Romantic Dinner for Two





By Brian Steele

Making a meal with your partner can be one of the most romantic things you can do. It's a fun and cheap way to enjoy yourself on a date night, and a simple way to get closer to your partner. The best part about this is getting a home cooked meal – and who can resist the simple pleasure of eating in the comfort of your own home?

However, you *do* want to make sure you're enjoying your meals, not suffering through them. Many individuals find it hard to maintain healthy dining habits because they don't want to sacrifice taste for a decrease in calories and fat. Luckily, you don't have to compromise taste for health, as it's possible to have a dining experience that satisfies both your taste buds and your body.

What's more is that it's simple and rewarding to cook a great meal at home and share it with that special someone. Your significant other will appreciate that you care about their health. In addition, dining together will go far in strengthening the romantic bond you already share with each other.

Make the meal with your partner and feed each other while you're cooking. This can be a very intimate and sensual experience, so get creative!

The following is a recipe for two that will not only satiate your hunger, but will provide a romantic evening at home:

### **Ingredients:**

Four Portobello mushrooms  
Shredded mozzarella cheese  
8 tablespoons of tomato sauce

### **Steps:**

1. Wash the mushroom and remove the stems. Once removed, the stems should be put aside as they will be chopped and used as a topping.
2. Place the washed and dried mushroom caps in a baking pan. Place two tablespoons of tomato sauce on each cap. Then sprinkle the mozzarella cheese over the sauce. When you are finished, set your oven to preheat at 350 degrees.
3. Take the stems that you had removed earlier and chop them up. Once chopped, spread evenly over the four mushroom caps.
4. Once the oven is ready, place the baking pan in the oven and let it bake for 30 minutes.
5. After 30 minutes remove and serve. The cheese may be really hot at first, so be careful!

### **Wine:**

This dinner pairs well with red wine – in particular, a merlot or cabernet sauvignon. Red wine has two major benefits: It helps set a romantic mood and is also chock full of antioxidants, which research shows is advantageous to the promotion of good health.

### **Dessert:**

This main course can be followed with a simple dessert of tea and Greek yogurt. Tea has additional antioxidants and Greek yogurt contains probiotics. Probiotics has been shown to aid in proper digestive health and no healthy lifestyle would truly be complete without them.

If you are looking for a great romantic evening in, consider trying this delicious, healthy recipe for two. Your partner (and body) will thank you!

*Brian Steele is a contributing writer at various sites like Probiotics.org.*

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## 5 Best Wedding Movies Ever



By Jeanne Bowyer

If you love weddings – and let's face it, in their heart of hearts, who doesn't? – there's nothing like a nice wedding movie to fill up a quiet weekday evening, especially if you're spending a lot of time and energy planning a wedding of your own. Break out the popcorn, because we're about to give you a list of the five top wedding movies you won't want to miss!

**1. 4 Weddings and a Funeral:** How much funnier can you get than this movie? The opening scenes alone are enough to make grown men cry with laughter, and the rest of the film has long rendered it a comedy classic. Interlaced with moments of real humanity and poignancy, this film will have you laughing – and crying – all the way through. The characters are real and the storyline will touch your heart – and, of course, it's the first starring role for the swoon-worthy Hugh Grant, too!

**2. The Wedding Singer:** Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore make the silver screen come to life with their romantic antics in this gorgeously sweet comedy about love in the eighties! Set in 1985, the story follows the falling in love of Robbie Hart – the wedding singer – and Julia – a waitress – who are both initially engaged to the wrong people. Possibly one of Sandler's finest career moments, this movie is bound to become a favorite and a resident in your DVD or Blu-ray collection.

**3. Father of the Bride:** Who could forget this absolutely awesome classic? A very fine remake of the 1950's original, this movie stars Steve Martin in an endearing and captivating role as the father of a bride-to-be (played by Kimberly Williams). His wife Nina, played by the ever-stunning Diane Keaton, is the perfect sidekick, and of course, who could forget the flamboyant Franck – the wedding planner – as he rushes around installing geese on the lawn? ... Unmissable!

**4. My Big Fat Greek Wedding:** This movie is one of the sweetest wedding flicks ever made. It's not sensationalist or bold in

the classic Hollywood sense; it's simply the following of a couple as they fall in love and start planning their wedding. Of course, that doesn't mean there's no drama. It's quite the opposite, as it's full of real down-to-earth comedy as the bride's Greek family attempts to mesh with the groom's middle class white American family. The laughs are huge and the film worth every second spent watching it!

**5. The Princess Bride:** It's impossible not to put this utter classic on the list of wedding movies; it's just simply one of the most fun romantic comedies ever made! Follow Westley (played by Cary Elwes) and his Buttercup (played by Robin Wright) as they prove that the course of true love never does run smooth, but can be very entertaining! The Dread Pirate Roberts, the Six Fingered Man and an early appearance by Mandy Patinkin (who played Gideon in Criminal Minds) provide many a humorous moment. It'll have you kissing your sweetheart with gusto for days to come, as well as whirling around in the grocery store boldly declaring "you killed my father...prepare to die!"

*Jeanne Bowyer writes tips about how to plan the best Westchester weddings. Check out what the wedding business marketing insiders have to share.*

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## The Premise of Monogamy





By Richard Woods

In our celebrity-driven American culture, it's become all too common for us non-celebrities to sit on our expanding posteriors and criticize public figures whenever they make headlines for being romantically reckless. The truth is that despite our moral indignation, there are fewer of us who could resist similar temptations than we'd like to admit. For many, monogamy is merely caused by a lack of opportunity.

But much of the difficulty we have coping with monogamy and infidelity may very well be due to how we operate. Is monogamy instinctive, or even healthy? For many, our natural inclinations are in direct contradiction to what we've been taught to believe regarding how we should express love for one another in committed relationships. However, this contradiction leads to dishonesty, which is the root of infidelity in the first place. In a modern world where Americans have their libidos constantly engaged, the reality is that monogamy is becoming a less realistic expectation.

Still, even though most Americans know better, we continue to

engage in this failed romantic notion. Moreover, when we correlate committed relationships with celebrity gossip, it often comes at the expense of being able to make rational choices within our own relationships. We tend to view the entire concept of “cheating” as if loving commitments occur in a vacuum, and that circumstances, emotions and a suppressed libido are incidental dynamics where it concerns monogamy. It’s rarely as black and white as we’d like to believe.

Consider what our collective view might be if we took the lie that accompanies the romantic premise from which we operate out of the equation? What if honesty about expressing our intimate predispositions became the standard? What if we were able to stop apologizing for our libidos without fearing any social reprisal? What if we were able to put jealousy in its proper perspective? What if, rather than “cheat,” we were able to negotiate non-monogamy?

Whether we like it or not, the very nature of the way men and women romantically interact is evolving. And as with other forms of evolution – unless we’re able to unlearn many of the “vanilla” precepts we have been inundated with regarding monogamy as the singular marital standard – there will be unnecessary pain associated with the process.

*Richard Woods is a Published Author, Public Speaker, and Syndicated Columnist. You can order Rich’s recently released book **Unlearn Vanilla Marriage – A Different Approach to a Failing Institution**. To get more information, you can visit his website [www.unlearnnow.com](http://www.unlearnnow.com), or watch his weekly Socio/Political Satire “Unlearn with Rich & Tony” @ [www.unlearn.tv](http://www.unlearn.tv) . Catch it Live every Tuesday @ 7pm EST.*

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# How To Approach Financial Issues In a Relationship



By Stephen L.

Being in debt can be an embarrassing situation, but talking about it can feel even worse; especially when discussing it with someone you plan to live with for the rest of your life. However, it's important that you explain any financial problems that you have with your partner and that they discuss theirs with you before you head down the aisle. There are many problems that can arise if you hide your situation and the deceit could cause the end of your relationship before it has the chance to begin.

**Hiding Does Not Help**

Hiding your debt will never help you or your relationship with your partner. Not to mention that the people you owe that money to will eventually find you. If you know you owe money, arrange to pay it off slowly; most people, even big companies will be more inclined to do this if you call them early on and let them know your situation. You also need to make a list of all of your debt, as scary as it may seem. When it's done, sit down with your partner and explain that you want to talk about finances. This will show them that you are serious about the relationship; and it may give them the platform to open up and do the same. You should go through the entire list of debt with your partner and explain if and how you are trying to pay it off. This can help significantly when it comes to discussing living together and how much you can both afford in rent, or if obtaining a mortgage is out of the question.

### **Credit Cards are the Biggest Downfall**

Having a credit card can be beneficial if you have an emergency, but you have to stay on top of payments and not let the debt and interest accumulate each month. Before you head into forever after, it's important that you ask your partner about their credit cards. If you both happen to own a Master Card issued by the same company, see if you can consolidate your cards and maintain a joint credit limit. Coming to an agreement to clear the debt as soon as you can, and making extra payments each month, will put you in a situation where the debt is worked off much quicker than you had anticipated.

### **Consolidate Your Debt**

Another idea is to consider consolidating your debts with a bank loan. If you can't get a loan due to your credit rating, but your partner can, see if he will get the loan for the both of you. If you aren't married, and you're worried what will happen with the loan if you break up, ask your partner to sign an agreement to pay it off.

When you do marry, your credit ratings will be joined together; an unfair advantage if one of you has bad credit and the other person's credit is good. That's why it is important to talk this out and be open with one another. If your partner has hidden debt and you decide to put your home in both of your names, you could find it repossessed if you aren't aware of the situation. Discussing it does not have to be hard but it is one of the best things you can do for your relationship.

*Stephen L. is a guest writer for Brookside Patio Furniture which specializes in resin wicker patio furniture that one can store in this recommended Toledo storage facility.*

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## **How to Get Back Into Dating After a Divorce**





By Elizabeth Cutten

Divorce can be a stressful process, especially when you consider all of the worrying you have to do about what you're getting, what you're going to owe, and the attorney fees. It may seem like it's going to never end! That said, it's important to stay positive about love. Eventually, you'll find that there's going to be a point where you will want to settle down with someone again.

The question is, how do you date after you get divorced? While I haven't personally been divorced, I have had some friends that went through the process, and this is what I've learned.

### **Things to Do Before You Start Dating Again**

**Be patient:** Make sure not to jump into anything too quickly. While you may feel lonely without a significant other, it's not good to rush a relationship. Set your priorities straight and know what you want in life before you take your leap of faith.

**Fix the problem:** Why did you get divorced in the first place?

Be honest with yourself. Were you the problem? Did things you used to do annoy your significant other? While you can't be perfect, try your best to fix your own issues before you start dating again.

**Enjoy yourself:** Find your single friends and hang out together. Check out all of your favorite bars and restaurants. The more you do, the more you can take your mind off of things. This is a great way to release stress and avoid sitting at home thinking about your ex.

**Don't get revenge:** Don't start dating someone because you want to get back at your ex. Not only is this going to hurt another person, but it's going to cause more stress for yourself. Set out to find someone that you want to start a relationship with, and move on.

## **How to Start Dating Again**

**Try online sites:** There are a lot of great dating sites out there that can match you up with others similar to you. Sites such as OkCupid.com and Match.com are a great place to start. While many frown upon online dating, be open to it. Just make sure that you always meet in public places.

**Speed dating:** Find speed dating clubs that can help you meet with people in your local area. The cool thing is that if you instantly know there's no connection with someone, you're on to the next person in less than five minutes!

**Hang out with friends more:** By doing this, you're able to let loose and have fun. Plus, you may even be able to network with some single friends of theirs. You will find that just like your career, networking is always a good idea.

Keep your head up high, and keep your stress level low. You're going to find that as long as you don't jump into things, a new life can work wonders in the long run. Good luck!

*This was a guest post written by Elizabeth Cutten. You can find more of her work over at [FindSecuredCards.com](http://FindSecuredCards.com), a blog /resource helping those in debt get out of it for good!*

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## How Internet Dating Creates A New Mindset



By Dr. Simon Casey

Internet dating has created a different mindset among individuals and has changed the dating game forever. There are some people who may give the appearance of exclusive dating, but they aren't giving up their online profiles.

There are two major reasons for this:

**1. Doubt:** About 40 percent of people fall into this category. What happens is, after the first couple of dates, one person starts realizing that something is missing in the relationship and/or that the other person doesn't completely meet his or her expectations. As casual dating slowly starts turning into more of a relationship, one partner becomes more committed (while believing that the other person is feeling the same way), and the other one choose to be pretentious and somewhat dishonest with his/her feelings. Keeping an online profile active is a clear indication that someone wants to keep his or her options open. This is what I call "emotional cheating."

Any relationship that starts with this kind of dishonesty is doomed to fail. If you find out your partner is still involved in the online dating community after you've committed to each other, walk as far away from that person as possible. Any person who starts a relationship in this fashion is more than likely to continue their dishonesty even after marriage.

**2. Inability to commit to one person:** There are many people who love the excitement of internet dating. Creating relationships without leaving your home can also be called "fantasy dating." This built-in excitement is a modified addiction and a large ego booster. The score and mind games are a priority. There's always an agenda and being honest in order to form an intimate and loving relationship is not one of them. But don't fret! There are ways to find out about your date's motives providing you are willing to ask the right questions. If you're somewhat emotionally involved or have some feelings for the other person, it may blind you or hold you back. Remember, desperate people end up finding other desperate people. Knowing what you want comes from achieving emotional mastery. Don't ever settle for less because, you're worth more!