

Who Gets Custody of the Friends?



By Kelly Rouba, GalTime.com

As the Neil Sedaka song goes, “Breaking up is hard to do.” And it gets even harder when friends take sides in the process—something Diana Young recalls all too well.

After splitting up with her longtime boyfriend RJ to pursue another relationship, Young felt abandoned by many of her friends. “RJ got all our friends in our ‘divorce’,” Young joked. But since many of their friends weren’t entirely aware of all that went on behind the scenes, Young said they were quick to take his side.

Unfortunately, this is all too common, says Stacie Ikka, a

relationship expert and founder of the dating consultancy Sitting In A Tree. "There are always casualties of war, so to speak, and the loss of friendships during a breakup is no exception."

In Young's case, she did manage to maintain relationships with some of the friends she had met before dating RJ. After a breakup, "(one) factor that determines the extent of the 'fall-out' is whether these friends were acquired by the couple together or whether the two people in the couple came into the relationship with their own friends, who then became friends with the partner," Ikka says.

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CHOOSING SIDES

"When a couple with shared friends breaks up, it's natural for friends to take sides. The more tumultuous or less amicable the breakup, the more divisive the 'siding' becomes," Ikka explains. Typically, "it's when breakups or divorces are contentious and one or both parties carry residual anger, resentment, hurt or disappointment that friends feel they need to pick a side. When emotions are involved, it's very difficult for people to remain objective and fair. What happens... depends on the nature of the breakup, the two individuals involved, and how integrated their friends were in their relationship."

If you have a friend who is going through a rough relationship ender, try not to get too involved. "Friends who take sides can add fuel to an already heated fire," Ikka warns.

REMAINING NEUTRAL

Carlee C., of New Jersey, said she felt torn and a bit frustrated after two of her friends broke up last fall. "Amanda* asked me to stop talking to Tom* after they split up," Carlee said. "I felt like I shouldn't have to stop

talking to him because he was my friend before they started dating. Plus, they had only dated for a few months and since he was my boyfriend's friend, it was illogical to think I wouldn't see him again anyway. Amanda was not too happy with that decision."

As difficult as it was for Carlee to try to remain neutral, Ikka says she made the right decision.

"When friends take sides, it can further exacerbate an already emotionally trying time for the people going through the separation—especially if those friends take on any unproductive or destructive behaviors displayed by the couple. A good friend is one who offers support, an ear to listen, and a shoulder to cry on," Ikka says.

Depending on how the couple handles the split, it is possible for friends to remain neutral, Ikka adds. "There is such a thing as an amicable breakup and, although rare, in these instances friends feel less pressure...to 'pick a side.' If the separated couple is able to be amicable, or at least civil, there is less reason for the friends to feel caught up in the middle of the drama.'

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And if that isn't possible, Carolyn Kingman Javick, a married mother of two from New Jersey, says, "They should do what they learned in kindergarten—and that is to share! Otherwise, it puts friends in a very uncomfortable situation having to choose. It will pan out over time who they become closer to."

Ikka agrees. "My philosophy is that when a friendship is authentic, it stands the test of time, including breakups. And it is possible for an individual or a couple to remain friends with both parties who have gone their separate ways. It takes honest communication, a commitment by all parties and some organization and planning, but it's certainly possible."

MAKING BREAK-UPS EASIER ON FRIENDS

If you're concerned about losing friends after losing a significant other, Ikka offers a few tips to keep in mind:

Don't bash your partner in front of friends: Ikka says it is OK to talk to your friends about your experiences, feelings, doubts and fears, especially while the breakup is raw because, after all, what are friends for? However, "it would be unfair to your friends to introduce any character assassination, unnecessary negativity or untruths about your ex-partner that may influence how your friends then behave around your ex."

Stick to the facts: Although this depends on your own level of self-awareness and emotional maturity, try to "be as forthcoming and transparent as possible when discussing your breakup and/or ex."

Explain how friends can help: Tell your friends how they can best support you, Ikka says. "Sometimes, friends in this situation just don't know what to do, what's expected of them or what the 'right' thing might be. Any guidance you can provide will make the situation easier for everyone."

**Name has been changed.*

Are You Dating Someone with Narcissistic Personality Disorder?



By Tina Swithin, HopeAfterDivorce Expert

The term, “narcissist” seems to be spreading through the world like an out-of-control wildfire. The term itself doesn’t always have a negative connotation since, ironically, we are all narcissistic by nature and there actually is a certain degree of self-love that is healthy. However, there is a line that separates healthy confidence from the Å¼ber toxic Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD). That’s what we need to be mindful of when we date someone.

The celebrity world seems to be brimming over with unhealthy narcissism. The spotlight that shines in Hollywood is highly attractive to a person with NPD. Celebrities are equipped with fame and power, which feed a narcissist’s ego. While many celebrities forge a balance through grace and humility, there is a significant number who bathe in the spotlight in complete self-indulgence.

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In 2006, Dr. Drew Pinsky and Mark Young conducted a scientific study with over 200 celebrities using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI). The results showed that celebrities are 17.84% more narcissistic than the general public. It isn't surprising, given that most aspiring celebrities are driven by fame, money, and admiration. What better place for a narcissist to be than in the limelight? It's the equivalent of flipping on the porch light and watching moths come to life!

There are a vast number of celebrities who display many characteristics of narcissism (if not full blown NPD) such as Tom Cruise, Paris Hilton and Kim Kardashian. While many people enter the celebrity arena with pre-existing characteristics of NPD, their egos balloon to extreme levels with every flash of the paparazzi camera, VIP entrance admission, limo service, and autograph request. These things often lead to a sense of entitlement as Reese Witherspoon displayed during her husband's DUI arrest.

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When it comes to the business world, narcissists are generally successful individuals. This is why the political arena and corporate scene is another area with a high concentration of NPD. These individuals generally attract their mates with their charisma, larger-than-life persona and their successful careers. Those with extreme NPD believe that they are the best, and such confidence can certainly be attractive. Narcissists consider themselves special and those who are accepted into their circle *must* be special by default.

Prince Charming

In 2000, I met a charismatic man named Seth who offered me the

world on a silver platter. There were times in which I questioned whether our courtship was too good to be true. His parents had been married for 25 years, he was on his way up in a very promising career and I felt like I was living a fairytale. Seth told me all of the things that I wanted to hear and showered me with poems, flowers, shopping sprees, and vacations. My friends and family stood by in awe as this modern day Prince Charming wooed me and everyone around me. While there were red flags, the good outweighed the bad in the first few years and I swept my concerns under the rug and left them there.

Six years into our marriage, I sat on a therapist's couch and confided in the woman sitting across from me. I told her about Seth's lies and the manipulations which included financial schemes, stealing his parent's retirement savings and racking up 1.6 million dollars in debt – much of this was done behind my back. I described Seth's lack of remorse and his inability to show empathy. I explained that I had never felt so alone and unloved in my life. In a six-year period of time, I had been reduced to a shell of my former self. When I looked in the mirror, I was ashamed of the fake life that we were living. To those around us we were the golden couple, but behind closed doors my life was a living hell.

My therapist walked across the room and handed me a book from her bookshelf. The words seemed to jump off of the page, "Narcissistic Personality Disorder." To my naïve mind, it was thrilling to have a name for the hell that I was living. With a name, there was hope, or so I thought. My therapist went on to explain that NPD is not curable and that, in fact, most mental health professionals will not treat those with this personality disorder. Her next words stung, "You either learn to live with this or you leave. There is no cure."

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I spent the next year and a half trying to block out my

therapist's words. However, our marriage finally ended in 2009. In short order, I discovered that the only thing worse than being married to a narcissist is divorcing a narcissist. I quickly went from a 4,000 square foot luxury home to a local women's shelter. From there, I spent two years fearing for my life, sleeping with a hammer under my pillow and holding a can of mace in my hands as I made scrambled eggs for breakfast. I jumped at every noise. My modern day Prince Charming was actually a modern day Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Part of my healing has come from educating others on the red flags that I chose to ignore in the beginning of our relationship. I have listed them out for you below:

10 Red Flags

1. Excessive charm: Question a person that seems too good to be true. Narcissists are masters at wooing their targets. If you are receiving tickets to your favorite ballet and bouquets of flowers larger than your Christmas tree before the third date, you may be dating a narcissist. Offers to whisk you away to Paris for New Year's Eve are fabulous but could be considered odd behavior if you just met last week and don't know his middle name!

2. Overly confident: A healthy dose of self-esteem is a good thing, but remain cautious if he seems to be the president of his own fan club. In short order, you are likely to become the secretary of that fan club.

3. Haughty: Pay attention to elitist comments and general arrogance toward those who are "beneath" him. Narcissists will often put down co-workers, friends, and even family members. People with NPD are skilled at making you believe that they are superior. If you find yourself in their chosen circle, this attitude can rub off. Being chosen by someone so superior must mean that you too are superior, right? Wrong. That feeling will be short-lived. Trust me.

4. Bragging: Narcissists do not care about your feelings, views, or opinions. Narcissists are generally too obsessed with telling you how great they are to even ask about you. Their bragging rights carry over to a wide variety of topics including their family, heritage, money, cars, physical appearance, elite gym memberships, clothing and shoes.

5. Grandiosity: Narcissists seem to live by the phrase, "Go big or go home." They like to be seen and known. Grandiosity is often their middle name. A narcissist will pick up an enormous group drink tab or buy everyone in the bar a round of shots. Their motivation is to be showy and to attract attention. These gestures could be easily interpreted as kindness, but this is the furthest thing from the truth. While a narcissist is signing the tab for drinks, he is also scanning the group to take inventory on how he can personally use each person to maintain his inflated self-image.

6. Success: There is a reason why the political and celebrity arenas are brimming over with narcissists. Narcissists are often found in leadership roles where they have free reign to dominate and dazzle those around them. They flourish in big cities where there is less accountability and less risk of developing a reputation that will haunt them.

7. The Band-Aid: Narcissists are professional Band-Aids. They will seek out your weaknesses (abandonment issues, poor self-image, etc.) and will morph themselves into your savior. Whatever voids you have, they will fill. This may sound great, but it will not last. Once you are hooked on them, they will rip off the Band-Aid and leave you bleeding.

8. Hypersensitivity: Fluctuations between extreme confidence and extreme insecurity seem to be a common trait with narcissists. They will often perceive non-existent criticism and will respond by shutting down and sulking, or acting out in a rage. Any interpreted attack or criticism against the narcissist is dealt with in an unhealthy manner. In his mind,

you are either with him or against him; there is no gray area.

9. Moving Quickly: Narcissists have a tendency to move at the speed of light. Has he extended an invitation to meet his parents after the second date? Did he have towels monogrammed with your initials as a gift for your first sleepover? These are red flags. By the way, beware of the monogrammed towels. I haven't found any studies to back my claim but there is something very suspicious about people with their initials sewn into hand towels!

10. Lying: You may initially notice a few white or grey lies. Take stock of these. Expert manipulators are well versed at twisting reality until you find yourself doubting reality.

Anyone in the dating world should be well versed on the red flags of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. Dr. Craig Malkin, author, clinical psychologist and Instructor of Psychology at Harvard Medical School provides a list of five early warning signs to watch for in his recent article in the Huffington Post which discusses narcissism in the dating world. "In real life, the most dangerous villains rarely advertise their malevolence," states Dr. Malkin. This could be why narcissists are commonly known as wolves in sheep's clothing.

Tina Swithin is the author of "Divorcing a Narcissist: One Mom's Battle" and the popular blog, "One Mom's Battle". Tina is a Huffington Post contributor. She is also a contributing writer and expert for HopeAfterDivorce.org and FamilyShare.com, LAFamily.com, and CupidsPulse.com. Tina's writing covers sensitive topics including, how to navigate your way through a high conflict divorce. She is a family and child advocate. Tina is happily married, and resides in sunny California with her two daughters and three-legged tortoise named, Oliver.

10 New Celebrity Dads



By Jennifer Harrington

Pregnancy, babies and parenting are always some of the hottest topics when it comes to celebrity news. Much of this news revolves around the mom and baby (think of how much time we spend on “bump” watch and anticipating Hollywood baby name choices), and an important part of the equation is often overshadowed: the celebrity dad. There are some great fathers in the celebrity world, and we wanted to shine a spotlight on them to celebrate their dedication to their children and fatherhood. Here is a list of our top 10 celebrity dads:

Brad Pitt

Hollywood heartthrob Brad Pitt is a father of six (Maddox, Zahara, Shiloh, Pax, Knox and Vivienne) with longtime love, Angelina Jolie. Often when Angelina is working, Brad plays the role of stay-at-home dad with the kids, and it seems to be a duty he relishes in. In a 2012 interview with *People* magazine, Brad revealed that fatherhood has made him a better man and explained that being a dad “takes you right off yourself.”

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David Beckham

Soccer superstar David Beckham is the dad of four (Brooklyn, Romeo, Cruz and Harper) with wife Victoria Beckham. David has confessed that he hopes his children will be independent and lead normal lives, despite their parents’ star status. He is open about how challenging it is to spend time away from his family for his soccer commitments. He’s also very proactive when he’s with the little ones (he was recently spotted having some quality one-on-one time with Harper in Paris).

Chris Noth

Sex and the City star Chris Noth is the father of one child (Orion) with his wife, Tara. Despite a long list of acting accomplishments, Noth is emphatic about his favorite role. He said, “I love being a dad... being a dad is by far my favorite role!” It may be difficult for some to imagine Mr. Big as a devoted dad, but Noth is frequently photographed as a hands-on dad (we have even seen him sport matching Halloween costumes with his little one), and has even said the sound of his son crying is “music” to his ears.

Tom Cruise

Major movie star Tom Cruise is a dad of three (Isabella, Connor and Suri). While Isabella and Connor are grown and

embarking on their adult lives, Tom is famously undertaking the role of single dad, in light of his recent divorce from Katie Holmes. While Suri calls New York City home with Katie, and Tom is frequently traveling for his movies, Tom remains committed to daddy duty for Suri. The duo has been photographed at Disney World together, and most recently, celebrating her 7th birthday together. Tom has also remarked that Suri can call him whenever she needs him!

Ben Affleck

Boston-native Ben Affleck has three kids (Violet, Seraphina and Sam). After a whirlwind year of work and accolades for Ben, his current focus now is parenting his children, so his wife, Jennifer Garner, can go back to work. The couple has agreed that while one is working, the other will stay at home with the kids. Of his summer plans, Ben has been quoted as saying, "There's going to be a little Mr. Mom action."

Matt Damon

Ben Affleck's best buddy, Matt Damon, is also a fantastic dad. Matt is a father to three daughters (Isabella, Gia and Stella) and a stepfather to Alexia, from wife Luciana's previous marriage. Matt has a simple rule that guides his life and establishes his commitment to his daughters: the family can't be separated for more than two weeks at a time. Matt is open about the fact that his feelings toward his family are much more than he ever expected, and has remarked that parenthood is "really quite something."

Will Smith

The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air star is a father of three (Trey, Jaden and Willow). Will famously rapped about fatherhood in the 1990's song "Just the Two of Us", and he's watched with admiration as Jaden and Willow, his children with wife Jada Pinkett Smith, have launched their own acting/music careers.

Will is very involved and supportive of their blossoming careers, and is always available to provide them with counsel as they navigate Hollywood. He has remarked, "I love producing my kids and my wife's TV show and all that. I think that's my most natural space in the business."

Seal

The singer is father to four children (Leni, Henry, Johan and Lou) with ex-wife Heidi Klum. While Seal and Heidi are no longer married, Heidi knew that Seal would be a good dad the first time she met him because of his "kindness and compassion." She has publically stated that he is a great father and always puts the needs of the children first (even Leni, who is not biologically Seal's child), noting that he "does everything in his power" to make sure the kids are happy and safe. Time will tell how Seal adjusts to fathering without Heidi by his side, but we have no doubt he will continue to be a fantastic papa.

Matthew McConaughey

Matthew is dad to three kids (Levi, Vida and Livingston) with wife Camila. His recent acting schedule has been packed, but when he's not on set, Matthew's favorite activity is story-time with his tots! Matthew shared with *People* magazine, "My favorite thing is reading a five-minute story that turns into a never-ending story. When it's story time and I get to the end, there's no the end. The kids hate the end!" Matthew also loves long phone chats with Levi, when he's away shooting movies!

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Barack Obama

President Barack Obama has two daughters (Sasha and Malia) with wife Michelle. Despite his schedule loaded with meetings with world leaders and policy negotiation, Obama makes

spending quality time with his teenage daughters a priority. Sasha and Malia absolutely know where they stand with their father; Obama told *Essence* magazine, “I want my girls to know that no matter what else is going on, they’re my first priority.”

What qualities make a terrific celebrity dad? Any other celebrity dads we should include on this list of Hollywood’s finest?

Don't Settle: Get Him to Commit



By [David Wygant](#)

How do you get a man to commit? This is the one million dollar question I get asked every single day.

My answer is that first off, you need to make a commitment to yourself because it all starts from knowing and loving who you are. You can't get a man to commit until you've accomplished this and until you've worked through any relationship issues. This includes dealing with all of your past relationships and knowing exactly what makes you happy.

How can you get a man to commit if you don't really know what makes you happy? The biggest mistake women make is that they don't know what they want from a relationship. They don't understand their own needs and desires. So ask yourself, what are your needs, wants, and desires?

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One of the biggest questions that I help women answer during my seminars is how do you want to be loved? You really need to think about this question. Take a moment right now and write down exactly how you want to be loved. What would it feel like to be with your perfect man? How do you want to be touched?

How do you want to be held? How do you want to be listened to? What's the sex like? Write down every single detail about how you want this relationship to feel in your heart, because that's the key to understanding what type of man you want.

If you don't figure this out first then you're going to end up trying to get the wrong man to commit to you because you'll be dating men based on potential. Let me tell you, this is a huge mistake women make and they do it all the time. They think he's going to be more loving when he stops working or that he's going to be more attentive when he has less stress. Forget the excuses, forget what it will be like after. You need to know how you want to feel right now because that's the

most important thing in the world.

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So, how do you get the right guy to commit once you know these things? You satisfy his needs, wants, and desires. You find out exactly how he wants to be loved. What's important to him? How does he like to be talked to? What's important to him sexually? What's important to him mentally? What's important to him emotionally? Then, you ask yourself can you meet those needs? Can you actually look this man right in the eyes and know that you can fulfill him and every desire he has?

A man commits to a woman when that woman fulfills his needs. One of the key things is that you need to love somebody the way they want to be loved and not the way you want to be loved. True love is allowing yourself to step outside of your boundaries. To step outside of your comfort zone and not be afraid to love them based on their needs, wants, and desires.

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As a man, I have no problem committing to a woman that will satisfy my needs, wants, and desires, because that's what I want to do for her and she should expect it from me. That's how simple this whole thing can be. That's how easy it is. That is how you meet each other's needs, with an open heart.

You'll know when a guy doesn't want to settle down with you if he's not trying to satisfy you on all levels and if you're constantly battling him to love you the way you want. Listen, relationships should be easy and fulfilling. You shouldn't settle for a boyfriend that gives you anything less. After all, why would you? The next time you're in a relationship if he's not satisfying you then he obviously doesn't want the same things as you. Maybe he's not ready to be in a committed, healthy, loving relationship. And if he isn't, why waste your time with him?

You deserve that healthy, committed, loving relationship that's going to make your heart pound; a relationship that's going to satisfy you; and above all a relationship that's going to make you feel complete.

David Wygant is a dating coach and author of Always Talk to Strangers and Naked. For more relationship advice you can follow him on Twitter @DavidWygant, facebook.com/therealdavidwygant, or check out his website <http://www.davidwygant.com/>

Wait To Marry Until You Are At Least Old Enough To Legally Drink!





By Susan Trombetti, CEO of Exclusive Matchmaking

Before you take the loooong walk down the aisle, make sure you are mature enough to make that commitment for better or for worse! Miley and Liam have been getting cold feet for years. Now, and before you warm up to the idea of getting hitched, hear matchmaker and relationship expert, Susan Trombetti's reasons why you may want to say "I don't" until you are older.

Top 5 Reasons Why Not to Get Married So Young:

1. Money Matrimony Mess

Unless you have a decent savings account, think twice before you book that chapel. Money is the number one reason couples divorce, so take some time to allow yourself and your hedge fund to mature. It is sad to say, but financial stability usually leads to marriage stability. No money, no fun.

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2. Room For Growth

Don't go straight from living in a room in your parent's house to sharing a space with your spouse. Learn to live alone! Learn to live independently first before you wind up dependent on someone else.

3. Love Yourself Before You Love Someone Else

Get to know yourself. You may not reach your full potential as a person if you have obligations to a spouse and a family. Live *your* life. You need to get out there, let your hair down, have fun and experience the world. There is a greater chance you will change as a person and your priorities will change if you and your partner don't change together... this spells a relationship disaster!

4. 'Till Death Do You Part With Your Problems

Remember, marriage is supposed to be a lifelong commitment. Yes, there are the good times, but with those times do come some bad patches. If you marry someone too young you may not have the maturity to handle such a serious commitment and navigate the pitfalls.

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5. Stop In The Name Of Love Before You Become A Statistic

Unless you want to end up like Kim & Kris in a 72 day divorce debacle... think twice and then a third time before you say "I DO". Bottom line, divorce rates are higher among younger couples... and no one wants to end up on the receiving end of a Taylor Swift song.

Susan Trombetti is an expert matchmaker and relationship expert. She is CEO and founder of Exclusive Matchmaking and a certified executive member of the matchmaking institute. She has helped many upscale, discerning singles discover long-term relationships and partnerships that are both rewarding and fulfilling through her business, Exclusive Matchmaking. She

has also been featured several times in Cosmopolitan, Shape, MSN and many more. You can find Susan sponsoring local charity events or scouting for matches for clients at A- list parties and events.

Amanda Bynes: When Help Is Needed But Not Wanted



By Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

Amanda Bynes has been in the news recently after a flurry of erratic behavior both in the real world and on Twitter. Drama peaked this week when she was allegedly caught in possession

of drug paraphernalia and arrested. Two mug shots were circulated, one of Bynes wearing a flamboyant, platinum wig and the second with the wig removed revealing a new super-cropped haircut. Since the incident, she's lashed out at Rihanna on Twitter saying she had been beaten by Chris Brown for being "not pretty enough."

The child star has been having trouble for a while, including an arrest in 2012 for a DUI. Last month, she announced that she had an eating disorder and posted a photo of herself wearing only a bra. Since then, she's been sharing increasingly inappropriate photos of herself on Twitter. For those of us on the outside, it is like watching a train wreck: we can see it happening but there really isn't anything we can do. But what about those close to her? Is there anything they can do? And what can you do if you have a friend or family member spinning out of control?

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In Bynes' case, it is hard to know if she is dealing with a drug problem, a mental health condition or something else, but one thing is for sure, she needs help. The reality is, though, she doesn't seem to be taking it. This is something many of us can relate to, the desperate pull to want to help someone in trouble who is flat out refusing to accept it. Your instinct is to throw them a rope, but they just swim in the other direction and cut themselves off from those who love them.

Sometimes friends and family coming together as a united front and doing an intervention can cut through the refusal to help. If that doesn't work, you might consider getting out of their way; on occasion a person has to hit rock bottom before they really take their problem seriously and are willing to accept help. So often people deny the severity of their situation and continue to think they can handle themselves and that they are

OK. Realize that unless and until they experience the full impact of their behavior, they may remain unwilling to do anything about it to change.

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It isn't until they reach their lowest point that they can fully appreciate the seriousness of what they are dealing with, and grasp the importance of getting assistance. It is only then that they will want help and reach out to get it, or accept what is being offered. Of course, stepping aside isn't an easy thing to do. You might feel helpless because they are at risk – if they are dealing with a drug problem the fear is an overdose, if they are mentally ill then you might be worried that they will be self-destructive. The truth is, though, that the more you attempt to help them, the more likely it is that they pull away and isolate themselves further. If you can curb your desire to help so you stop battling with them, then the only person they are fighting is themselves and they might finally be able to reach out and/or accept help.

Know also that if their out-of-control behavior continues to escalate, at some point either the legal system or the mental health system is likely to get involved so that seeking help will no longer be a matter of choice, but rather a necessity.

As difficult as it can be, sometimes the only option when someone is refusing help is to stop offering. Hopefully this will be the case for Amanda and those who know and love her, and she'll be ready to accept true support on her own soon.

Rom-Com 'Finding Joy' Is a Journey



By April Littleton

In this film directed by Carlo De Rosa, Kyle Livingston (played by Josh Cooke) is a self-absorbed writer until he gets the chance to rediscover all aspects of his life through the meeting of Joy Bailey (played by Liane Balaban). Joy is a spirited woman who helps Kyle come to terms with himself and guides him on the journey to happiness – all the while asking him to write her obituary.

Should you see it:

If you're a fan of independent films and seeing fresh faces up on the big screen, this is the movie for you. If you enjoy the

work of Nicholas Sparks, Rob Reiner (think *When Harry Met Sally...*) and Cameron Crowe, *Finding Joy* will surely make you gush and maybe even cause you to tear up a bit as well.

Who to take:

You should take someone who appreciates the occasional indie film. This movie is perfect for a night out with a hot date, or can be viewed with a relative as a little afternoon splurge. *Finding Joy* is both romantic and family-oriented, so it can be enjoyed with an array of people.

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When is it time to change your ways for a new love interest?

Cupid's Advice:

No one is perfect, but there are times where a person's flaws or behaviors can cause a new relationship to self-destruct. It's even worse when your partner is the type of person who doesn't tell you exactly what they want – they just hope change will eventually come. If that's the case, it's up to you to take responsibility and make some changes for the sake of your new relationship. Cupid has some advice:

1. Change will help you improve: It's time to make some changes for yourself as well as for your significant other when you know it will help you become a better partner and become a happier person. Don't be resentful toward your love, especially if you know your bad behaviors are not only causing damage to your relationship, but also harming you internally as well.

2. Your partner is threatening to leave: If it's the early stages of relationship and your new boo is already threatening to call it quits, you may need to think about what you could be doing to cause your partner to feel this way. Communication

is key in all aspects of a relationship. You want to show your significant other the best and worst side of you, but if your worst is just too much to handle, you may need to tone it down.

Related: [What Does Unconditional Love Look Like?](#)

3. You're ready to be committed: You think to yourself "This is it. This is 'The One.'" You're ready to fully commit to another person and you want to make sure you do all you can to keep your partner happy. If you're aware of the not so desirable traits you have, find the tools you need to improve on yourself and become a more capable person. Seek outside help, do whatever is necessary to make your new relationship last. Show the person you love you're ready to become the person they know you can be.

When did you know you had to change some of your bad habits? Comment below.

5 Ways Your Relationship Can Overcome His Loss of Ambition





By Ashley DelBello

All relationships struggle at some point and in many cases more than once, but it puts even more of a strain on it when your significant other loses his focus or sense of purpose. It's 2013, but most men still have that "provider of the family" mentality and feel it's necessary to be the one – for lack of a better term – "bringing home the bacon." So, what happens when your boyfriend or husband loses their job and doesn't have it in him to move on?

First, figure out if you're in it for the long haul.

Typically, new relationships won't succeed in this type of environment, but whether it does happen with the new guy you're dating or your husband of five years, you will need to decide if this is something you're able to help guide him through while he figures things out. You also need to examine what you're looking for in a relationship if this has been an issue between the two of you for some time. His laid-back attitude may compliment your more assertive, goal-oriented personality and you may enjoy taking the lead in the

relationship. However, if you're looking to be a part of a power couple, then this will be an ongoing source of disappointment and frustration for you.

Related: [7 Things NOT to Do in a Relationship](#)

Support, support, support.

There has to be that balance between support and pushing too much. You can want the best for someone, you also have to understand that they will also need to want it for themselves. You need to keep that in mind as you both navigate through this situation.

Suggest starting over professionally with an internship.

Maybe his lack of ambition is stemming from a lack of passion for what he's doing. If he or as a couple you can afford it, see if he would be interested in looking into internships to explore where he wants to go next in his career. We've seen it happen in Hollywood and while it may seem unrealistic, the storyline is coming from somewhere real so if nothing else works, then why not try something that could help lead him to finding something he gets excited about.

Guy time. As well as girl time.

Any activity that gives you both some time away from each other on a regular basis will be beneficial to the both of you so the focus isn't always on your relationship. It also allows the both of you to talk candidly with your friends – as with everything, venting is healthy in moderation.

Professional counseling.

It's OK to seek outside help – they provide an objective third-party perspective and are also trained to help you both figure this out.

Related: [The Key to a Lasting Relationship](#)

Last of all – know that it might not be possible to move forward with your relationship. When you feel like you have given it everything you have and don't think you can continue with the way things are, recognize that it's OK to walk away. It's not a decision to be made lightly or quickly, but sometimes approaches to life are just too different for relationships to work well on a long-term basis.

Have you been in a similar situation where your partner lost his ambition? If so, what did you do to overcome this and keep your relationship on track?

Best Selling Author Sylvia Day Discusses Crossfire Series, Love and Having it All





By Nicole Cavanagh and [Lori Bizzoco](#)

#1 New York Times Best selling author, Sylvia Day chats with CupidsPulse.com about her new novel, and shares where her inspirations come from. A true romantic herself, Day knew she wanted to be a romance novelist when she was just twelve years old! She speaks about current trends between relationships, love, and reading and tells us how she wants to spread her message about happy endings. Plus, find out about her newest project, the upcoming groundbreaking collaboration with Cosmopolitan and Harlequin. Day believes women really can have it all and reinforces pursuing your dreams both in life and in love.

For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our youtube channel, www.youtube.com/user/CupidsPulse

5 Cue Cards for New Couples



By Christina Steinorth MA MFT

Here's a piece of folk wisdom nearly every newlywed has heard: "If you can survive the wedding, surviving the marriage will be a piece of cake!" Weddings are indeed stressful because they involve a massive amount of planning, cooperating/compromising with your spouse-to-be, the convergence of diverse family and friends, decisions about religion and family traditions, and of course, lots of money.

After the wedding, many newly married couples experience what social scientists call "the honeymoon phase"—a period of several months in the beginning of marriage, characterized by passionate love and intense happiness. But in my experience working with couples, I've found that new marriage also comes with new stressors.

To sail through the first few months of marriage with minimal problems, here are 5 Cue Cards, or quick behavioral prompts, to help you navigate around the most common obstacles to newlyweds' happiness.

Cue Card #1: Managing your own family is your job.

Even in well-adjusted and accommodating families, social slipups will occur. You or your spouse will inevitably get your feelings hurt by someone in your extended family or your partner's family. If your relative acts in a hurtful manner, it's your responsibility to address the issue with the offending family member and, if warranted, to ask that person to apologize to your spouse. When you manage your family, you show respect for your love partner.

Related: [What To Know Before You Say 'I Do'](#)

Cue Card #2: Keep disagreements between you.

When you have a disagreement with your spouse, one of the best things you can do for your marriage is to not talk about it with your family of origin. Families can be a wonderful source of support, but in new relationships it's essential for a couple to establish an identity that's separate from their respective families. This engenders trust in one another, strengthens your bond and helps you make decisions that are right for the two of you, free of outside meddling and the resentment that can create.

Cue Card #3: Establish your own family traditions.

When holidays come around, it's normal for new couples to grapple with whose family they'll visit, which traditions to adopt and how to juggle in-law demands. A good solution is to choose one holiday a year to establish your own tradition, and then alternate other holidays between families. This way, everyone gets to spend equal time with you. You can avoid the

stress of having to travel to multiple holiday events. And it gives you an opportunity to create a holiday that's all your own—with the food, friends, fun and rituals you get to choose together.

Cue Card #4: Don't take it personally.

One of the best ways to get your marriage off to a good start is to practice this one behavior over and over, and master it: Pause before you take what he or she said personally—it's usually not about you. When your partner is angry, sullen, or rude, stop and ask yourself, "Did she/he do or say this to be mean or to hurt me?" It's not easy to do, but if you can get good at controlling your knee-jerk reaction, it gives both of you the opportunity to find out what's really going on, and to talk about it calmly and with genuine concern.

Related: [Why 'Bachelor'-Inspired Values Matter In Relationships and Marriage](#)

Cue Card #5: Let unimportant things go.

Before you engage in an argument, try to stop for a moment and ask yourself, "How important is this?" It's inevitable that you'll get on each other's nerves. And it's common to want to control your partner's behavior. But try to put the issue into the context of your entire relationship and then pick your battles wisely. This single piece of advice will help you minimize the number of arguments you have, and you'll learn how to love each other for who you are and the way you are.

*Christina Steinorth MA MFT is a psychotherapist and a popular relationship expert on radio and in print. Her advice has been featured in publications such as The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Woman's Day, Cosmopolitan, and The Chicago Tribune, among many others. Her new book is **Cue Cards for Life: Thoughtful Tips for Better Relationships** (Hunter House, 2013). Learn more at www.christinasteinorth.com.*

Can People Really Fall In Love Too Fast?



By SMF Marcus Osborne for GalTime.com

All of our lives, we're advised against allowing ourselves to fall in love too fast. They (whoever "they" are) tell us love should happen deliberately, gradually, over a moderate amount of time to have truly legitimate long-term potential. That certainly sounds like sound advice. A cautious approach to new love is never in any way inappropriate. Better safe than sorry.

The problem is that even though this sounds like the right

thing to do – *feels* like the right thing to do – it seems to me that there's very little control over our emotions. Yet there are those who truly believe we have some kind of real power and control over our feelings. Whenever I've heard someone proclaim they wouldn't "let themselves fall in love" with someone, I can only laugh. Certainly, as human beings we have the ability to make choices. As people, we can acknowledge feeling a certain way without acting upon whatever powerful emotions may be brewing.

Don't get me wrong, it's not easy.

Related: [Why So Many Women Couldn't Care Less About Getting Married](#)

The experience of falling in love with someone is extraordinarily powerful – almost impossible to resist. We have no ability to just turn it off. If we could do that, there wouldn't be nearly so many shallow husks of decayed relationships strewn across the ages. But this notion that we can fall in love too quickly – that we somehow will fall in love too soon if we don't exercise some sort of discretionary power over that emotion, I theorize that has been all wrong for years.

I posted a question on my Facebook fan page asking the question, "On average, how soon after you begin seeing a new suitor do you realize that you're falling for them?"

The overall response was generally in the range of 3 to 7 dates. Now this was a small sample size so it's hardly scientific, but I think it's indicative of something nonetheless. It may indicate that most people fall in love far sooner than we would care to admit and definitely sooner than we would like.

Think of your current or past relationships. How many of them took you more than a few dates before you felt the opening pangs of what you would eventually come to realize was you

falling in love?

Related: [6 Clues To Look For in a Keeper](#)

When you really fell for someone, how long did it take?

Probably much sooner than you think. How many times have you heard people in successful relationships tell the story of how they “just knew right away?” I use myself as an example of this. My ex-wife and I moved in together two weeks after we met. We were together for the next ten years. Have you ever started to fall someone after more than ten dates? I’m guessing no. I theorize most of us know fairly quickly, in spite of how we’re all told we *should* feel.

There’s always that awkward period where you’re each waiting to see who says “I love you first.” You want to say. You want to tell that person what you’re feeling, but you can’t, right? Why is it awkward? Because we’re told not to. Too soon. May scare him off. May not feel the same way. Which may possibly be true in any given situation. But life is filled with risks. By the way, research shows that generally guys are the first to drop the L-bomb.

I guess my point in all this is that sometimes trying to adhere to conventional wisdom may not be the best route for you to take in a fledgling relationship. You should be cautious, but you can be cautious and still embrace the fact that you’re falling for someone without concern over some artificial timetable. All these rules take the fun out of new love!

But I ask you again: How soon do you know you’re falling in love?

Short Term Celebrity Marriages (Learn From Their Mistakes)



By Andrea Surujnauth

Celebrities seem to always be in and out of marriage faster than the rest of us. Take Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries, for example. The couple dated for a mere six months before deciding they were ready to tie the knot. Then lo and behold, 72 days later, the story of their split hit newsstands everywhere. A 72-day marriage is not something you hear about everyday, but in Hollywood, short-term marriages happen all the time. Kim and Kris may be getting a lot of heat for their marriage, but believe it or not, they are not the shortest-lived marriage to ever hit Hollywood. Let's take a look at

some celebrities who jumped the broom then called it quits shortly after:

Britney Spears and Jason Alexander:

This couple tied and untied the knot faster than Kim and Kris! This pop princess had a little too much fun in Sin City with a childhood friend, and it ended with a drunken wedding ceremony. Spears and Alexander were married for a total of 55 hours. The couple got their marriage annulled. We doubt they will be partying that hard ever again!

Dennis Rodman and Carmen Electra:

These lovebirds seemed to have fallen under Las Vegas' spell as well. At 7a.m., these two decided to jump the broom. The two denied intoxication and said their holy union was legit. However, actions speak louder than words because 9 days later, the couple got their marriage annulled.

Related: [4 Hollywood Breakups That Offer a Lesson In How Not To Behave During Divorce](#)

Mario Lopez and Ali Landry:

This *Saved By The Bell* heartthrob married actress Ali Landry in April 2004. Sadly, their marriage didn't even last long enough to make it to the honeymoon. The couple had their marriage annulled 18 days later. After dating for 6 years, Landry found out that Lopez had been unfaithful to her throughout their time together. Too bad she didn't find out 19 days earlier.

Renee Zellweger and Kenny Chesney:

This couple got hitched in the Caribbean after dating for only 4 months. They met at a tsunami-relief event and thought it was love at first sight. After 225 days, they annulled their marriage. Zelleger cited "fraud" as the reason for the split.

Pamela Anderson and Kid Rock:

This bizarre pair had an on-and-off relationship from 2001 to 2003. In 2006, they opted for a drunken wedding on a yacht, Anderson wearing a string bikini and Kid Rock wearing a t-shirt and baseball cap. 122 days later, the two raced to the court to file for a divorce. Kid Rock beat Anderson by 53 minutes.

So the moral of the story is lying, cheating and alcohol is definitely not the basis of marriage. These celebs made the mistakes, so lets all learn from them!

What mistakes do you think celebrities make when choosing their spouses? Comment below and let us know!

Brad Pitt Shows What 'Unconditional' Means To His Celebrity Love





By Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

It isn't surprising that everyone is talking about Angelina Jolie's recent celebrity news of her preventative double mastectomy. The news sparked conversations about the procedure itself and the decision to go public, but I want to talk about her rock-solid support system. In a *New York Times* op-ed piece she wrote, "I am fortunate to have a partner, [Brad Pitt](#), who is so loving and supportive." She mentioned her celebrity love was present for all of her medical procedures and surgeries at the Pink Lotus Breast Center. He has, in turn, recently called her decision to have the radical procedure *and* be public about it, "absolutely heroic."

While It Seems That Pitt Agreed With His Celebrity Love's Choice, That Isn't Always The Case. Does That Mean a Relationship Is

Destined To Fail?

Related: [Relationship Advice: Why Are Women Attracted to Unavailable Men?](#)

Sometimes a spouse or partner has a harder time accepting the other's decision to have a procedure whether it be preventative, corrective, or plastic surgery. They might feel the timing isn't right or the surgery isn't necessary. In order to be supportive and give unconditional love, a partner might have to put his own needs and judgments aside the way Pitt has clearly done.

What To Do In Your Relationship and Love When Your Partner Is Having A Surgery

That might require some work on your part if you are the one offering the support. Being there for your partner in a relationship and love not only means in a hands-on physical way, but also an emotional one. There is no question that this sort of thing can be very disruptive. Say, for example, that you both usually share the responsibilities of the household – you take out the trash and walk the dog, and he/she cooks and gets the kids off to school. Now, as your partner recovers, it is likely that all those tasks might fall to you. On an emotional level, the person who had the surgery might be irritable, upset, short-tempered and, at times, reactive and even lash out at you. If you can remember that your partner may be feeling vulnerable, helpless and out of control, it might help you understand where she/he is coming from, and then you won't take it personally and get into arguments. Realizing the distress doesn't stem from you can go a long way in helping you navigate the terrain of a caregiver and help you remain supportive throughout.

Related: [Relationship Advice: When to Stop Wearing Your Wedding Ring](#)

Know that the upheaval and distress will be time-limited and your recovering partner will get better. Things in the relationship and love will go back to normal at some point – hopefully soon. Remind yourself that, in the end, this will be better for everyone. Remaining positive during the recovery period will be good for both of you and get you through it with greater ease. Pitt's words and support for his celebrity love are an excellent example of what to do if you find yourself in a similar situation. The Hollywood couple seems to have their priorities in place as they do what they must to build a long and healthy life together. With that goal in mind, being supportive is easier.

Single Advice: Can You Handle Casual Dating?





By Meghan Fitzgerald

Here's a question for all the single ladies and gentleman out there – do you think you are capable of casual dating? Casual dates usually start off a relationship before it blooms into something more. Casual dating is nonchalant, laid back and non-committal. It is a form of dating that comes without any serious intention or definition, allowing you to explore the field and keep your options open for a possible partner. This type of dating gives you the opportunity to be fun, open and discover the type of person you should be with for the rest of your life.

If you believe you can handle casual dating, read the questions below and think again:

- **Do you have the ability to put aside your emotions from acts of sexual relations?** Make sure you are able to handle the casual aspect of this type of dating, and don't allow your feelings to get in the way.
- **Are you able to experiment with relationships?** With casual

dating, it is common that you will experience different types of partners. You will not like all of them, but with casual dating – experimentation is essential.

– **Can you be honest?** With dating, it's usually a little game played back and forth until you both agree you like one another. If you are not interested in a serious relationship and solely want to casual date, you need to be able to tell the person you may be involved with up front.

Related: [QuickieChick's Video Dating Tips: Flirting With Your Man](#)

– **Are you emotionally independent?** Casual dating will not give you the same emotional fulfillment as a serious relationship would. Hence, you need to be able to take care of yourself and not depend on your casual partner.

– **Can you go with the flow?** For this style of dating, going along with whatever the dating world throws at you is necessary.

– **Are you able to constantly go on dates?** With casual dating, you will spend nights at the movies, your local restaurants and bars and you may even try your hand at miniature golf. If you prefer to sit on your couch, eat leftovers and watch Netflix – casual dating may not be for you.

Related: [Date Idea: Cuddle With a Furry Friend](#)

– **Can you handle rejection from a person of the opposite sex?** Casual dating is not for everyone, and sparks don't fly every time. Don't be upset if someone rejects you because the chemistry simply isn't there.

– **Do you have the ability to stay true to yourself?** If you don't have a connection toward someone, you need to be able to stick to your thoughts and confront them about it.

– **Can you think carefully about who you let in?** You should

have the ability to make sound choices on who you choose as a partner, as well as who you choose to date and allow to come into your life.

Have you tried casual dating before? Share your experience below.

Dating Advice: 10 Great Date Ideas Under \$50



By Laura Seldon for GalTime.com

Great dates don't have to come in the form of a helicopter ride at sunset or a weekend spa getaway (although a massage

does sound nice right about now...) No, contrary to what *The Bachelor* would have you believe, romance doesn't depend on spending money in big flashy ways. To prove it, here are 10 fun and unique date ideas that will cost you less than \$50!

1. Hit up a video arcade

Tired of playing games in relationships? You won't feel that way when the games are part of a video console! "This kind of date makes you feel like a kid again," says Tripp, a dating coach in Los Angeles and the founder of TrippAdvice.com. "Playing games and building up the tension of competition can make for a steamy date!"

2. Plan a picnic

Seems a bit cheesy for a date, right? Well, think again! Planning a picnic is a great way to get to know someone new beyond the walls of a coffee shop. "Go to the grocery store with your date and pick out the food together," suggests Tripp. "Make sure you have a blanket in your car and pick a scenic spot."

3. Visit the farmer's market

Like planning a picnic, heading to the farmer's market allows you to spend some quality time with your date in a relaxing outdoor space. "Check out your local farmer's market and make a nice afternoon of it," says Tripp. "Pick out some fresh food and eat while you enjoy the day together."

4. Compete in a game night

Nothing stokes the romance flames like a little competition! "Invite your date over to play an array of games together while you eat some snacks or have a few drinks," says Tripp. However, Tripp also suggests you go beyond playing innocent board games. "There's nothing like a risqué game of strip poker when the mood is right!"

5. Make it a group date

“Get a bunch of other couples to screen a movie on the side of someone’s garage,” suggests Dr. Nancy Irwin, a therapist and life coach in Los Angeles. No place to screen a movie? Throw a potluck picnic in your backyard. “This is really fun because it is a party with as many other people as you like.”

Not only will you reduce your costs if you get a few other couples in on the fun, but you’ll also be bonding with your friends and your date all at once.

6. Visit a museum

Museum tickets don’t necessarily have to add up to a pricey date. “In many cities, there are usually free museum days,” says Larry Moore, a relationship expert and blogger in Houston, Texas. “Museums are great for dates because there’s always something in the museum that sparks conversation or serves as an ice breaker, giving each person a chance to get to know more about the other person.”

7. Show ‘em your hood

Consider spending a romantic evening touring your neighborhood with the object of your affection. “What better way is there to show a date who you really are than to show that person where you are from?” asks Sujeiry Gonzalez, a relationship expert and author in Los Angeles. “Besides, you have home advantage. You know the little shops and restaurants that won’t bleed out your wallet!”

8. Explore your hobbies

Always wanted to learn a few skills in the kitchen? Longing to try out rock climbing? Ready to take your love for dance to the next level? Then do it... but with a date! “Not only will you build your relationship, but you may also end up realizing you both have another shared interest,” says Marni Kinrys,

founder of MarniWingGirl.com. "It's also great for conversation starters!"

9. Peruse a thrift store

Take a date shopping at a thrift store and compete to see who can find the silliest outfit. You can even take pictures and have a few mementos from your date. "Showing your fun side while trying on silly hats and taking pictures will create a lasting memory for both of you," says Jeff Callahan, a dating coach in Little Rock, Arkansas. "I believe that having a fantastic date shouldn't crush your wallet."

10. Browse your local bookstore

Judge a few books by their covers while perusing the romance novel section of your local bookstore. Not only is it free, but it's also utterly entertaining. "Reading trashy romance novels aloud to each other will make you both laugh," says Callahan. "And possibly set the mood for romance." So, head to a local book shop and tell your date to read between the lines!

Relationship Advice: Must We Remain Friends With Our Ex-Husband?





By Nancy Lang for Hope After Divorce

The Universe can have a very ironic sense of humor. I recently had an altercation via e-mail with my ex-husband (about money, of course), and all of my old buttons were not only pushed, but they got stuck in “I’m hurt, I’m not respected, I’m not appreciated, I’m pissed, and I hate you!” mode. For two days, I stewed and chewed on the not-so-pretty file in my memory drive, as I was reminded of the many reasons why we got divorced. Several days later, funny enough, I find myself with the opportunity to write about maintaining a friendship with one’s ex-husband.

In recent news, Denise Richards (perhaps we should call her Mother Denise?) has raised the bar for all ex-wives: she offered to have temporary custody of her ex-husband’s (Charlie Sheen) kids from his last marriage to Brooke Mueller (his third ex-wife), who is in rehab for the twentieth time. This arrangement has been approved by L.A. County Juvenile Court.

Related Link: [Making Sure You Do What’s Best for the Kids](#)

Clearly, Richards has put the needs of these children before anything else. They are, after all, half-siblings to her children with Sheen. She is providing them with a more stable environment than either of their parents can provide. I'm guessing she would open her heart and home to them even if she and Sheen weren't getting along. So, while it's great that they are able to co-exist or even co-parent, whether everything remains copasetic or not, the priority is the well-being of the children.

Is it possible to remain friends with your ex-husband? This depends on the reasons for the split and the level of hostility. There are also other things to consider:

- If you don't have kids, and you think friendship is possible, first give yourself some time to move on and adjust to who you are as a single person.
- There is a difference between being buds and maintaining a good relationship. If there are children involved, you will always be connected to your ex, so it's best to at least get along. Kids hate when there is tension between Mom and Dad.
- If regular communication would bring up old hurts, then keep it peaceful and keep interaction to a minimum.
- If you can't be friendly, try not to bash your ex to your children, no matter their age. I made the mistake of saying my ex was a short name for Richard. Not my best mommy moment.

Related Link: [The EX Word](#)

Yes, the Universe works in mysterious ways. Many years ago, when I was beginning my acting career in Los Angeles, I was an extra in a movie starring Martin Sheen. He played a man with a wife (Blythe Danner) and kids, who discovers he fathered a child from an affair. The mother of this child dies, so his wife, understanding of the circumstances, suggests they take the child into their home.

Six degrees of Charlie Sheen. We come full circle. Thank you, Universe, for the laugh and the lesson!

✖ *Nancy Lang is a Certified Life Coach, published author, professional actress and M.D. (Maven of Dating!). It was her role in life as a divorced woman that inspired her to write the book, You Want Me to What?!—The Dating Adventures and Life Lessons of a Newly Divorced Woman (available on Amazon) and www.you-want-me-to-what.com. She was co-writer and co-star of the original musical sketch comedy, Shtick Happens! which played to crowds from West Hollywood to Minneapolis. Nancy is on a mission to empower women.*

Nancy writes for HopeAfterDivorce.org, FamilyShare.com, LAFamily.com, CupidsPulse.com, [Huffington Post](http://HuffingtonPost.com), [Life After 50 Magazine](http://LifeAfter50Magazine.com), and many other publications. To read more about Nancy's adventures, her poignant and humorous view on life's lessons, visit her Nancytellsall.com and [Facebook](#). Nancy is the mother of two amazing young adult children.

Author Roy Sheppard Bridges the Gap Between Mothers and Daughters In His New Book





By [Andrea Surujnauth](#)

Growing up in today's society is full of challenges, especially for teenage girls. They tend to forget, though, that their mothers went through similar difficulties when they were young. In his new book, *Dear Daughter: what I wish I'd known at your age*, author Roy Sheppard hopes to connect mothers and daughters, revealing their similarities and making communication easier.

Drawing on his experiences as a psychotherapist, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) practitioner, journalist and [relationship expert](#), he reaches out to everyday mothers and gives young women helpful advice about topics ranging from financial issues to [boy problems](#). These words of wisdom come straight from the hearts of moms who want to help their daughters grow but have a hard time reaching out to them. Here, CupidsPulse.com chats with Sheppard about his varied career path, his inspiration for his new book and his advice for girls as they search for [love](#).

You used to be a reporter for British Broadcasting Corporation

(BBC), and then, you became a hypnotherapist and NLP practitioner. What influenced you to make such a big change?

My proper job is interviewing people, so after I spent years working at BBC, mainly doing live reporting, I switched to the conference industry and interviewed executives. I wanted to be a much more effective journalist, not just talking about data and information. I wanted to be more [insightful](#), so that's the actual reason I trained to be a hypnotherapist, which might sound a bit bizarre. As a therapist, you're taught to notice more details, and as a hypnotherapist, it's almost a forensic understanding of how people think, how they perceive the world. So when you can tap into that ability, your interviewing becomes so much more perceptive. It totally changed my life.

Related Link: [Use Your Five Senses For a More Fulfilled Love Life](#)

Once in the therapy field, you focused on relationships. What drew you specifically to relationship coaching?

I wanted to write about [relationships](#) but with a different spin on them. I found that most relationship writing is by women, for women. As a man, I have a different perspective. I always make sure that I make it very clear that I have a male point of view. If women are open-minded, when they read my writing, they get a perspective that they won't get from a female writer. So the big thing that I try to do is bring men and women together; I want to be able to help them understand each other better.

Let's talk about your new book, *Dear Daughter*. What inspired you to write a self-help book for young women?

I wanted to write something that would be relevant for young people today. I realized very quickly that you can't do it in one book, so I decided to split it up: *Dear Son*, which was published late last year, and *Dear Daughter*. *Dear Daughter* is

about 15 percent longer – there's more information that [girls](#) need to know! I had the most fantastic conversations with women, talking about stuff that they wouldn't normally talk about with a man. I felt very privileged.

You include a lot about relationships, and you discuss why it's unwise for women to overanalyze men. Why is this a bad habit to develop?

I just don't think that it's a productive use of your time and energy. There are two types of men: good guys and [bad guys](#). Most men are actually straightforward, and if they say one thing, they mean that. Men are not as complicated or Machiavellian as women. We both know that there are some women who are extremely calculating and who behave atrociously to other women, but men don't do that. Because women think in this way, it's easy for them wrongly apply the same sophisticated analysis to a man as they would to a woman.

We've all heard of the book *He's Just Not That Into You*. How can a woman tell if a man is into her?

He calls. It really is that simple. A man will find any excuse to talk to a woman if he [likes](#) her.

Related Link: [How Not To Scare A New Man Away](#)

What would you say are some of the most important things that women should do when looking for Mr. Right?

Don't look for [Mr. Right](#)! Just be somebody who, if Mr. Right comes along, he decides to stop. If you focus on being a special person for yourself first, that makes a huge difference.

I think dating is the new addiction. It's so easy to [date](#). But I genuinely believe that, if you put energy into being a decent human being, it makes the process so much easier. As a therapist, the biggest problem I see is that people – women in

particular – create a fantasy figure in their head. They compare Mr. Perfect to the man in their life, but no person will ever live up to that fantasy figure. Why? Because that fantasy figure doesn't exist. Focus more on enjoying your partner and accept that your differences actually add richness to your relationship.

Do you feel that daughters who are close with their mothers have a better chance at finding a healthy relationship? If so, why?

I definitely agree with that. I hope that my *Dear Daughter* and *Dear Son* books can be something that parents give to their kids and say, "Look, I know you don't want to talk to me about a lot of this stuff, but read this book. Afterwards, if there's anything that you want to talk about, please do." A number of friends of mine who have teenage [daughters](#) were reading the manuscript separately from each other, and they all asked if they could share it with their daughter. Every single time they did, they had the most amazing conversations. It brought new topics into the open, and they talked about some really important things.

And finally, if you had one piece of advice that you would give to our readers, what would it be?

Of course, I want them to read the book!

In the introduction, I say that I want to build a bridge between [parents](#) and young people. Remember that a bridge is built from both sides. Even though you may believe that adults have no idea what it's like to be you, listen to them a little bit more. Before you decide that somebody's wrong, just be silent and think about what they're saying. If you decide later that they're wrong, that's fine, but don't let "no" be your knee-jerk reaction to everything.

The book is now available from [Kobo](#) as an e-book. You can currently purchase a copy of Dear Daughter from

www.TheSensibleUncle.com, and it will be more widely available on July 8, 2013. For more information about Sheppard, please visit www.royspeaks.com or follow him on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

5 Hot Celebrity Bachelors: Will They Ever Settle Down?



By [Whitney Baker Johnson](#)

The ultimate celebrity bachelor and twice-named Sexiest Man Alive George Clooney has been dating model and *Dancing with the Stars* contestant Stacy Keibler for almost two years now.

Is he thinking about settling down again? With that silver fox off the market, we thought it was time to come up with a list of those hot guys who are *still* bachelors. So ladies, pay attention – you still have a chance with one of these famous faces!

1. Chace Crawford: This *Gossip Girl* actor was recently spotted courtside with model Rachelle Goulding, but since the pair hasn't confirmed that they're dating, it was only natural for this Texas boy to top our list. We can't help but swoon over his blue eyes and all-American smile.

2. Bradley Cooper: After splitting from Zoe Saldana, Cooper has been seen out-and-about with model Suki Waterhouse. The 38-year-old actor has had a string of serious relationships, and he was even briefly married to Jennifer Esposito. Still, the only leading lady in this golden boy's life is his mother Gloria, who often accompanies him to premieres and award shows. They even live together!

Related Link: [Jennifer Lawrence Plays Cupid for Bradley Cooper](#)

3. Alexander Skarsgard: Since breaking up with longtime girlfriend Kate Bosworth in 2011, this *True Blood* hunk has been single. Not much is in the tabloids about his personal life, making him all the more appealing. With his strong features and sexy accent, we'll happily take him off the market.

4. Adam Levine: The Maroon 5 front man has been linked to more than one Victoria's Secret Angel, but as of this spring, he's a single man once again. The sexy crooner is keeping busy though, currently appearing on the fourth season of the hit reality television singing show *The Voice*. He also had a recurring role in the second season of *American Horror Story: Asylum*. Constantly on our televisions screens, this bad boy has stolen our hearts.

Related Link: [10 Bad-Boy Celebrities We'd Love to Date](#)

5. Leonardo DiCaprio: Leo first captured our attention in romantic films like *Romeo + Juliet* and *Titanic*. Since then, this leading man has had high-profile romances with beautiful blondes like Gisele Bundchen, Bar Refaeli and Blake Lively, but he doesn't seem ready to settle down just yet. Instead, he's focusing on his acting career, currently lighting up the big screen in *The Great Gatsby*.

Who is your favorite celebrity bachelor? Tell us in the comments below!

Dating Advice: Technology, Social Media and Dating – The Good, the Bad and the Oops!





By Robert Manni

It is the best of times. It is the worst of times...for dating.

The deepening integration of technology into modern life has in many ways pulled the world closer together. Unfortunately, when it comes to developing basic social skills and maintaining a sense of privacy and decorum it has also pushed us further apart. Dating is a prime example of the fall out with both men and women paying a price. Here is a quick snapshot of how technology and social media can make dating easier and more challenging.

Related: [The Most Powerful Tool to Help You Find Your Soul Mate: Intuition](#)

The Good.

Hooray for online dating. I scored many dates with hot women while sitting at home in my tighty whiteys. My wife likes to say that she found me online. This saved me years of hanging in clubs, bars and gyms in search of Ms. Right. Dating online is fast, empowering and fun. All you need is spell check, a

handful of flattering photos, and the mindfulness to read between the lines of another person's profile before investing your valuable time. Once you meet, it's business as usual. And when you meet online, you can end things swiftly. There's an unspoken rule that makes anyone we meet online more disposable. It's not necessarily fair, but I think you'd agree.

The Bad.

Just because you meet someone online doesn't make him or her less deserving of respect. That's the flip side of eliminating someone via one keystroke. What is intended as expediency can come across as cold. Although there is an endless pool of prospective partners available online, an itchy trigger finger on the delete button can prevent you from getting to know someone you met via your handheld device a little better before tossing them back. Not everyone is at the top of his or her game on that first coffee [date](#). That's not to suggest that you waste time on a bad fit. Just keep in mind that everyone has feelings. After an awkward first date a woman I met online wrote to me and stated that she did not "feel the sparkles". How could I be upset?

The Oops.

Between Facebook, Twitter, Google +, Instagram, etc. we live in an age of maximum exposure. Once it's online, it's there forever. You need to be mindful when being photographed at the party wearing just your tats and drinking directly from a bottle of Rang Tang vodka. This might not be something you want to share with future paramours or potential employers. My policy when dealing in the online space is if you can't keep it positive; don't put it out there. That goes for this post, too.

Related: [Returning to the Dating World](#)

Technology and social media can be a dater's best friend or worst enemy. It's up to you to decide. Be kind, be mindful, be

loving and technology will serve you well.

Robert Manni is the author of the critically acclaimed novel, THE GUYS' GUY'S GUIDE TO LOVE. Visit his website www.robertmanni.com to read his syndicated blog and listen to his weekly Guy's Guy Radio podcast at www.blogtalkradio.com/guys-guy-radio. Robert is currently working on his next book.

Relationship Advice: Making Sure You Do What's Best for the Kids





By Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

Denise Richards, ex-wife of Charlie Sheen and the mother of two of his children, now has temporary custody of Sheen's sons with his *other* ex-wife Brooke Mueller. Brooke and Charlie have both struggled publically with substance abuse for many years. Though Brooke is not making comments at this time, US Weekly confirmed that the removal of the children from her home was due to an "'unsafe environment' caused by "[her] ongoing alleged drug use." The children, four-year-old twin boys Bob and Max, have moved in with Denise and are living with their sisters, Denise's children with Charlie, Sam and Lola, and Denise's adopted daughter, Eloise. Denise, who has not remarried since her divorce from Sheen in 2005, is now a single mom to all five kids under the age of 12. She has cared for the twins before, saying the boys are "family" and she would, "do anything for them." It has been reported that Charlie is supportive of the idea.

Taking the children in is an impressive choice on Denise's part; with all the turmoil and strife that she and Charlie clearly shared in their marriage and then in their divorce,

her ability to do this is a terrific example of putting the children first. His acceptance of it is equally positive. It isn't easy to put all those negative feelings to the side so the children involved can be properly and well taken care of. Bad marriages that then lead into bad divorces are often a tough place to be for the kids who are a product of that relationship because so often they are used as pawns or even weapons in the fight. But Denise isn't letting that happen. She is managing to maintain the family unit and step up to the plate, keeping the priorities where they should be. It is commendable because it is such a difficult road to travel.

When moving toward or out of a divorce, people tend to be in reactive mode and aren't always able to think things through as Denise seems to be doing. Instead of just getting angry, she was able to respond to the situation and handle it. While it is easy to get caught up in competitive and rivalrous feelings toward the new wife, in this case Charlie's third ex-wife Brooke, Denise didn't let that get in the way. Being able to move beyond that is an act of maturity.

For anyone in this situation, those feelings that follow the aftermath of a divorce are real and often quite overpowering. But you don't have to let them interfere with doing the right thing on behalf of the children. Denise is adult enough to know when it's time to put her differences aside for the sake of the children involved. Kudos to her.

Relationship Advice: Your Partner Has Cheated. Should

You Reconcile?



By Samantha Menjor

You notice that your partner has been acting differently lately. The occasional late night work meeting now falls on every day of the week. He or she has been constantly texting and having secret telephone conversations in the bathroom. The scent of a different perfume or cologne lingers on their clothing. There's an emotional distance in your relationship that ceased to exist before. You have a gut feeling of what is really going on, but you don't want to believe it. Plus, there is no proof ... until you get a call from a friend letting you know they have spotted your other half in a compromising position with another person at a local restaurant. You rush over to find your beau holding hands, kissing and gazing lovingly into the eyes of someone else. All you see is red through the blurred vision of your tears.

Fast forward to a few weeks later. You're feeling hurt, pain, betrayal, confusion and anger. Your partner has admitted their wrongdoing and has apologized countless times. Friends and family are all trying to give you their best advice, but you're hearing conflicting resolutions of what you should do.

If you've never been in this situation, you most likely know someone who has. It may not have happened exactly like the given scenario, but we've all had a friend come to us for advice on infidelity in their relationship. So what do you tell them? What would you do if you were in a similar situation? Here are some questions you need to ask yourself and your partner when deciding between reconciliation and a breakup:

Related: [When Can You Trust Him?](#)

1. Was the affair short-term or long-term?

Some affairs last months, even years and others are just a night of poor judgment. While you may not want to know the details of your partner's infidelity, it's important to know how much time was spent cheating. This allows you to better understand whether there was an emotional investment, whether it was strictly physical or both. Either situation would be difficult to rectify, but it helps in getting to the root of the issue.

2. Why did this happen?

There had to be something your unfaithful partner felt was lacking in the relationship for an affair to happen. Did they feel you were working too much and not showing them enough attention? Did having children cause you to lose your spark as a couple? A decision to reconcile is often dependent upon what caused the infidelity. Is it something that the two of you can fix through compromise, communication and counseling? If not, then the chances of reconciliation are slim.

3. Do you still love each other?

How did your spouse react to being caught? Did they express remorse and shame, or were they trying to justify their actions by putting the blame on you? A partner who shows regret for their actions is a better candidate for reconciliation than the latter. While their profession of love for you and endless apologies could be just words, it shows they are willing to try and do whatever it takes to get you back. It's imperative for you to consider your partners past behaviors in your relationship as well. Have they always shown their love for you or have there been signs of cheating before? More importantly do you love your partner enough to try and work it out? The answer to these questions will help you figure out whether you choose the path of reconciliation or separation.

4. Will you be able to forgive and move on?

For many people cheating is a deal breaker. No amount of love, good behavior or money will allow them to get past the fact that they were betrayed. Many couples try to stay together and work through their problems only to find out that trust was never regained and forgiveness was never given. Before you consider reconciling, sit and think about whether you can get past the infidelity. If not, it may be time to part ways.

Related: [Can Love Conquer All?](#)

Countless other questions should be considered when deciding upon reconciliation. Each relationship has different factors to reflect upon after dealing with infidelity. Forgiveness and resolution take a lot of effort, time and healing for both parties involved. While many couples have split due to cheating, many have resolved their issues forming an unbreakable bond.

Have you ever found yourself in this predicament? Let us know how you resolved it below.

Dating Advice: Mario Batali Shares His Tips for Cooking at Home on Date Night



By [Whitney Baker Johnson](#)

In this exclusive video interview, chef Mario Batali shares his tips for cooking at home on date night and prepares a chicken pasta salad, a recipe that he put a spin on in honor of Hellmann's 100th birthday. Plus, he chats about which of his restaurants is the best spot for a romantic night out, the importance of bringing your family together for dinner and his sons' new cookbook, *The Batali Brothers Cookbook* – which they

originally put together as a Father's Day gift!

For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our [YouTube channel](#).

Celebrity Relationships: Why Celebrities Prolong Their Engagements & Hide Their Wedding Plans



By Lori Zaslow and Jennifer Zucher, founders of Project Soulmate

It's no surprise that famous faces from Hollywood are pressured by their intense jobs and hectic schedules. The spotlight is always on them, but they don't want the same burden in their personal life. So how can they keep their romantic relationships out of the prying public eye?

Related Link: [Use Your Five Senses for a More Fulfilled Love Life](#)

One way to feel in control is by prolonging their engagement, which ultimately adds time to the courtship phase of a relationship. After all, what's the rush? For example, Miley Cyrus wants to focus on her career instead. She's young, and it's important that she accomplishes her goals first so that she can truly enjoy the engagement phase. Similarly, Kristin Cavallari, who's currently planning a July wedding, has been engaged to Jay Cutler since 2011, but they decided to focus on raising their son Camden before tying the knot.

Your relationship is supposed to be one of the most sacred parts of your life – which is why many celebrities also hide their [wedding](#) plans from the press. For instance, Jay-Z and Beyoncé tied the knot in 2008 in a top-secret ceremony that Beyoncé didn't speak about for six months after the fact! Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel's wedding guests didn't even know the location of the event until right before the big day. Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied as well as Anne Hathaway and Adam Shulman are two more examples of celebrity couples who planned secret ceremonies.

Related Link: [Justin Timberlake Refers to Wedding Day as "Magical"](#)

Of course, there are a few perks of a longer engagement, like lots of engagement gifts and more attention from friends and family. The only downfall to a longer engagement is...will they ever make it down the aisle?

For more information about Project Soulmate, click [here](#).

Lori Bizzoco Speaks to Graduate Students at William Paterson University



On Saturday, May 4, 2013, our founder and executive editor [Lori Bizzoco](#) spoke to graduate students at [William Paterson University](#) in Wayne, New Jersey. She discussed the challenges and benefits of being an entrepreneur as well as what's it like to run a digital media company.