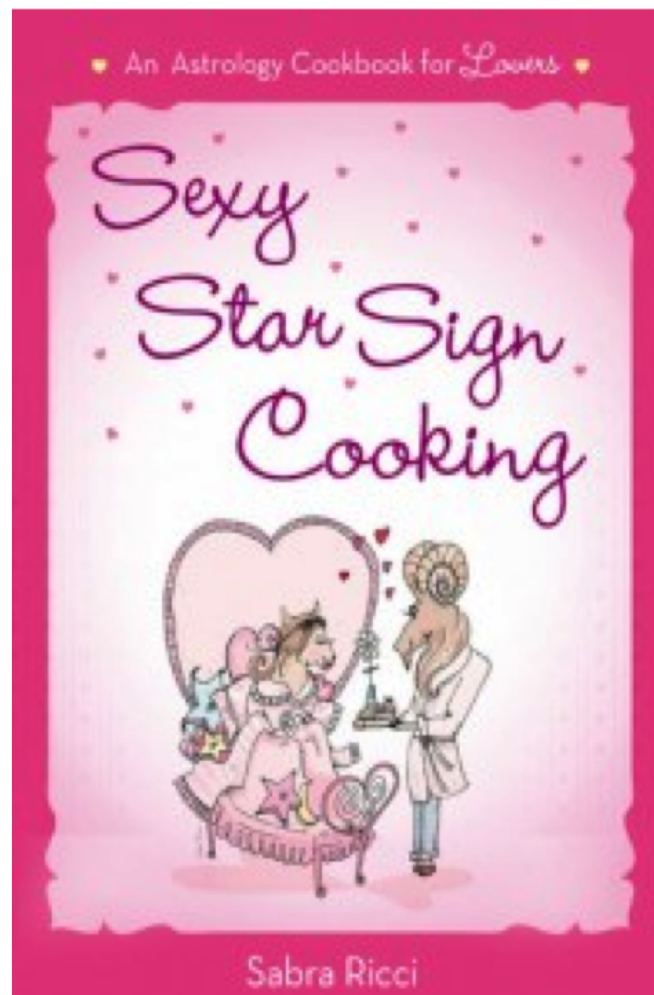


Sabra Ricci Couples Astrology with Food in 'Sexy Star Sign Cooking'



By Whitney Baker

Learning your sweetheart's favorite foods is something that takes a lot of trial and error – and it may even involve throwing your hard work in the trash. However, celebrity chef and acclaimed astrologist Sabra Ricci knows a secret: if you pay attention to your partner's astrology sign, you'll have a better chance of pleasing his or her picky palate. Her newest book, *Sexy Star Sign Cooking*, which was released on January 8, 2013, is the perfect guide if you're hoping to impress your girlfriend or boyfriend and make your next date night unforgettable. As Jenny McCarthy said of the book, "Sabra Ricci's passion for cooking for Hollywood stars and her lifelong fascination with astrology come together."

Ricci took some time out of her busy schedule to share why astrology and cooking go hand in hand as well as her tips for cooking a romantic meal.

Your first book, *Lobster for Leos, Cookies for Capricorns*, told readers how to use star signs to prepare delicious and healthy meals. Why is your new book, *Sexy Star Sign Cooking*, a logical follow-up?

While health is important, everyone is interested in improving his or her love life. So I wanted to provide a fun and entertaining guide to help people find their perfect match.

Can you define "foodstrology" for our readers?

"Foodstrology" is a word I coined for combining food and astrology. Each sign rules different parts of the body, so I created recipes based upon foods that support each part.

How do you determine the "romantic foods" for each sign?

The romantic foods are aphrodisiacs. I chose aphrodisiacs that support each part of the body – brain, heart, immune system, etc. – to put any sign in the mood for love.

Are there any astrological signs that are most compatible when

cooking together?

Generically speaking, like attracts like, so all three fire, water, earth, and air signs are compatible with each other. Opposites also attract, but if you really want the magic formula for compatibility, have your chart done by a professional.

Related Link: [Wolfgang Puck of 'Top Chef: Seattle' Says Taste Is the Most Important Part of Cooking for Your Loved Ones](#)

Let's say a couple is on their second date – what's the safest bet if the man decides to cook for the woman? Is it important that he know her sign before determining the night's menu?

We've been playing it by ear for most of our lives, sticking with the following formulas: candlelit dinners of steak and champagne, lasagna and wine or some other delicious meal. If he knows her sign beforehand, he will be more assured of cooking what she will love, but it is not crucial.

What about a woman who is hoping her long-term boyfriend proposes? What should she cook for dinner?

They always say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. So by choosing the right aphrodisiacs for his sign, he will be putty in her hands, and she will soon have a big rock on her ring finger!

What's your all-time favorite meal to cook for your husband?

Ossobuco, a Milanese specialty of cross-cut veal shanks braised with vegetables, white wine and broth.

Related Link: [Celebrity Nutritionist and Trainer Jackie Keller Says, "Those Who Exercise With Support From Their Partners Do Better Overall"](#)

Have you ever been a chef for celebrity couples (like Julia Roberts and Danny Moder or Jenny McCarthy and Jim Carrey

before they split)? Any fun stories to share?

I've actually worked for both couples several times. They are amazing, and it's always a memorable experience. One occasion that comes to mind was Julia and Danny's third anniversary party with twins in tow and 10 of their best friends for a tropical extravaganza.

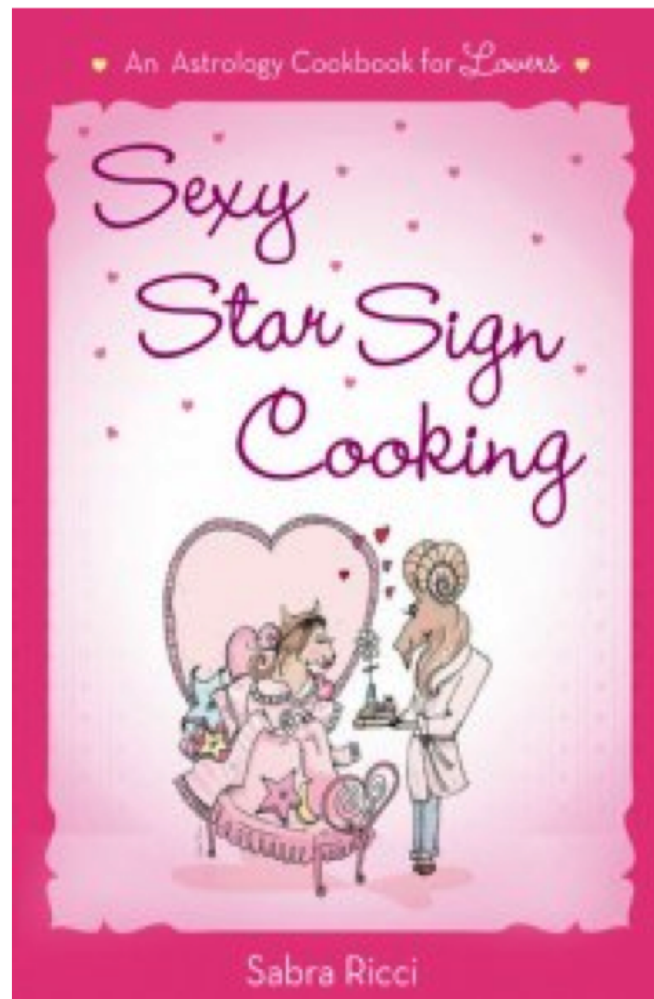
And finally, do you have any plans for future books?

Yes, there will be additional books as part of the series. In conjunction with the cookbooks, there will be an exciting announcement too, so stay tuned!

To purchase 'Sexy Star Sign Cooking,' visit Amazon. For more information on Ricci, visit her cookinproductions.com or follow her on Twitter.

Ways to Remain Confident In Your Long-Term Relationship





By Samantha Menjor

It has been a little over a year since the beginning of your official relationship with your significant other. While things are still going strong, you can't help but to feel that your lives together have become more of a routine than the unsolicited passion you once held for each other. Weekly lunch dates and the occasional Saturday night movie have become the staple of your relationship.

While there's nothing wrong with schedule and structure in your life, the lack of excitement and surprise in a long term

relationship can cause a lack of confidence in you, your partner, and your future together. It makes one think that if the spark is gone only a year later, will your bond survive another year or even more, the next levels of a union such as moving in together and marriage? This common issue in the realm of love and relationships is one with several solutions that will not only increase the confidence between you and your beau, but bring the both of you closer and more in love than ever:

Related: [4 Steps to a Stronger Long Term Relationship](#)

1. Know your “love languages” – Receiving Gifts, Acts of Service, Words of Affirmation, Physical Touch, and Quality Time. According to NY Times Bestselling author and marriage expert Gary Chapman, these are the five different ways in which people communicate and understand love. Understandably we need a little bit of each category; however there is usually one that speaks to each of us individually. While quality time may be most important to you, your partner may express their love best through words. Once you figure out which language you each relate to you can truly strengthen your long term relationship.

2. Spend Time Apart – Many times we forego our hobby interests, and friends to make time for each other in a relationship. With our busy schedules spending time together is often hard. However, it is important to still engage in those activities that made you happy before you met your partner. Whether it's a night out with your friends or going to the gym be sure to take moments for yourself. This will make time spent together much more appreciated.

3. Don't Settle into a Dating Rut—Dinner and a movie makes a good first or second date. However after several months of being together it may get a little boring. You are way past the point of getting to know each other so get adventurous with your dates. This is a great chance to experience your

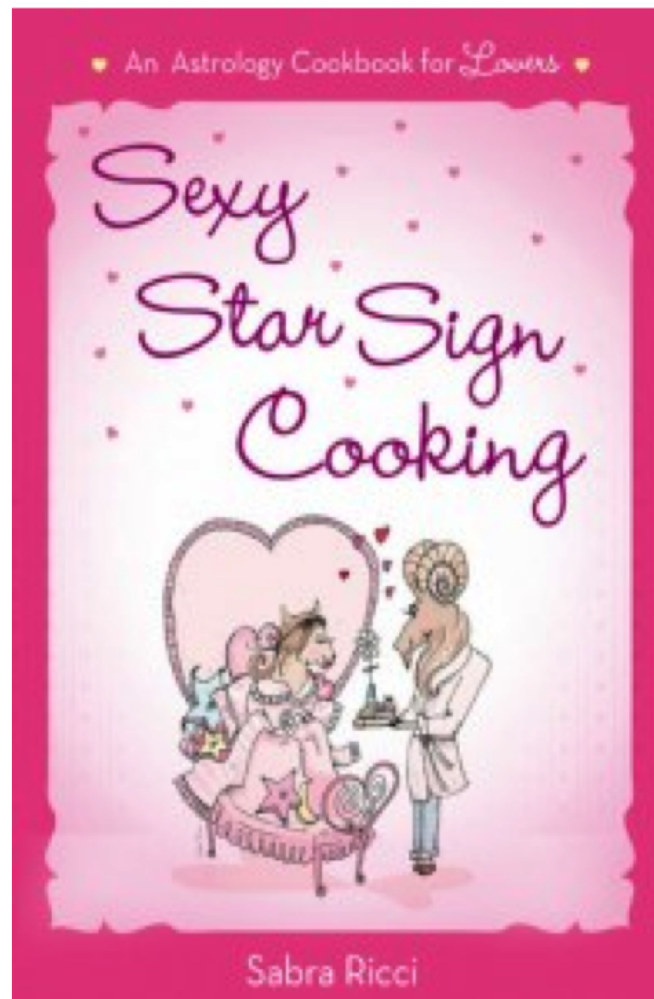
partner's pastimes and maybe adapt it as your own. If you both enjoy the outdoors, for example, a nature stroll with a picnic at the end is a good way to switch it up. When you get creative with your dates you'll never have to worry about a lack of excitement in your relationship.

Related: [Top Three Dating Faux Pas](#)

If you think your long term relationship has come to a standstill, take these suggestions into consideration. These are just three out of several ways to revive and better your bond for years to come. It's important to realize that because you and your partner have been dating long term everyday will not be as thrilling and passionate as the first stages of your relationship. Increasing the confidence in your long term relationship is vital them to success and happiness of you both for the future.

Girls: Would You Pass The Bride-To-Be Test?





By Girls Meet Guys

We've all been there before, as a dutiful bridesmaid, friend or even as the bride herself. How well do you know your partner and what things should you know?

I've been to more than one hen's night before as each of the above – friend, bridesmaid and bride. Invariably, at some point the bride takes part in a game in which she is asked ten to twenty questions about her husband-to-be, just to see how well she really knows him or perhaps, doesn't know him. Whether you've answered the questions yourself or been an

onlooker chances are you've uttered the words, 'I wouldn't know that about him'. Of course, you could be forgiven for not knowing the name of his third grade teacher, but some things you really should know.

Related: [What Kim Kardashian Taught Me About Marriage](#)

His Forte

We all have something we do really well, so do you know what your partner's special skill is? Maybe he has the MacGyver factor and can get out of any situation with a paper clip. Maybe he's so handy he could have his own home improvement show. It doesn't have to be a news-worthy skill though; it could be as simple as his ability to give the best foot massage known to man. Big or small there will be something, so if you don't know what your man's skill is you might want to ask. It could even surprise you and you get the chance to lavish him with praise and score some brownie points along the way.

The Secret

He doesn't have one? Wrong! He has one. It could be funny, tragic, criminal, heart breaking or embarrassing, but he will have one. He may not care that you know but just didn't think to mention it or he may really prefer that you didn't know. You may say, 'Wow! I didn't know that about you.' You may also be completely shocked. How you move forward depends on what exactly he reveals and how strong your relationship is.

Related: [Kirstie Alley Reveals Her Past Secret Relationship with Patrick Swayze](#)

Idiosyncrasy, Quirk Or Annoying Habit

He's a noisy eater. He grinds his teeth in his sleep. He will only use white towels. He taps his foot when he's anxious. Chances are you won't notice these things in the honeymoon

stage but as time rolls on you will. None of us are perfect and we all have things we'll find odd, amusing or down right annoying about our partner. Relationships are all about understanding and tolerance, so without a good dose of each, your relationship may feel the strain.

Dreamtime

What were his childhood dreams and aspirations? Whether they were real or fantasies of grandeur they are a window into the heart of your partner. The innocence of youth becomes dulled by the layers of time and to peel these back is to reveal a greater appreciation of who your partner is.

Is He A Giver Or A Taker?

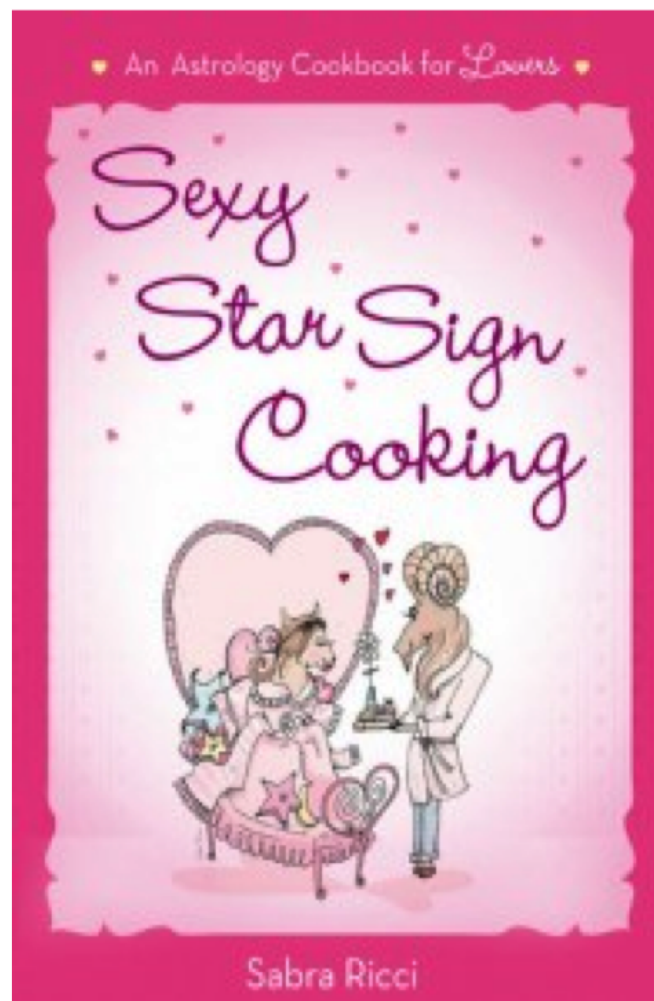
It's easy to be kind to the ones we love, but how would he score if a perfect stranger were involved? Would he give to a beggar on the street, offer an elderly person his seat on the train, or stand up to a bully? We all like to think we would pass if tested and likewise with our significant other. So how would your man stack up?

You may know all these things about your other half and pass the bride-to-be test with flying colours but if you've never considered these things maybe it's time to ask.

Girls Meet Guys is a free dating site for Australian singles who know how to have fun! Girls Meet Guys provides genuine free dating sites Australia reviews for serious singles.

Are You Making Requests or

Demands in Your Relationship?



by Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

Prince William canceled an important appearance to stay home with his wife, the Duchess of Cambridge, while she dealt with a second round of severe morning sickness. Many times you want your partner to support you, but work or personal needs take

priority. So what was different in this situation, and how can you communicate your needs to your partner? Sometimes, it is all in how you ask.

You know what it's like to have something demanded of you, right? From the time we were little kids and we were told to wash our hands and look people in the eyes, to our romantic relationships when we're told to get the dry cleaning or to make that dinner reservation, we know it doesn't feel very good. If anything, it puts you on the defensive and makes you not want to do something. So imagine how your partner feels when you tell them to clean the house or take the dog for a walk. Who wants to do something nice for someone when they are forced to do it?

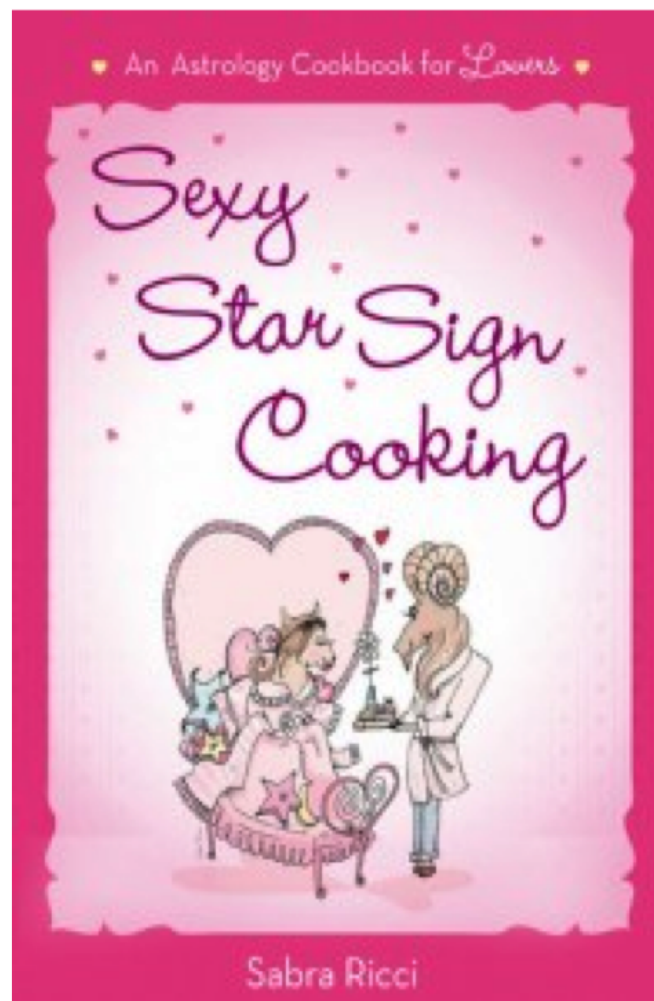
In my book *What About Me? Stop Selfishness From Ruining Your Relationship*, I talk about this as being one of the important rules of engagement.

Learn how to make a request rather than a demand.

To put it simply, ask nicely. This will tell your partner that you respect them, and will give them the opportunity to make a choice. When you make a demand of your partner, they often feel manipulated and controlled by you because they feel they have to do what you are telling them to do. So rather than being cooperative, they'll be resentful. When you make a request, however, it gives your partner the freedom to make their own decision about the task at hand and lead them to, hopefully, decide to follow through because they want to please you. It gives your partner the chance to take ownership of whatever it is you are asking of them.

In the end, it allows you to have a conversation about what you want to get done, and offers the opportunity to have a give and take. It also lets you move away from a parent-child dynamic and into an equal partnership, which is where every healthy and happy relationship should be.

How Celebrity Moms Keep an Active Dating Life



By [Whitney Baker Johnson](#)

Dating as a single mom is never easy, especially if you're trying to balance a busy career with raising your children. Even for celebrities, who have luxuries that not all single moms can afford, it's still a tricky thing to manage. The famous faces below have figured out a few ways to find love while still playing the most important role of their lives:

1. Make It a Family Affair: Before she got hitched, Reese Witherspoon was often seen with Jim Toth and her kids from her marriage to Ryan Phillippe. Rather than try to make time for romance *and* family, she simply included Ava and Deacon on her dates. The newlyweds even took her children on their honeymoon to Belize!

Michelle Williams has taken a similar approach in her relationship with Jason Segel. The couple is constantly seen with Matilda, Williams' daughter with Heath Ledger, and they even split their time on both coasts based on the little girl's school schedule.

Related: [Three Tips to Stress Free Holiday Dating](#)

2. Date a Blast From Your Past: Sometimes, it's easier to date a guy from your past instead of searching for someone new. Denise Richards, mom to three girls, took this route, dating Heather Locklear's ex Richie Sambora. While it may have ruined her friendship with Locklear, she is still in an on-and-off relationship with the rocker.

Perhaps taking a cue from her former friend, Locklear, who has a daughter with Sambora, dated Jack Wagner, her costar from *Melrose Place*, for over four years before ending their engagement.

3. Meet Your Match on Reality TV: Emily Maynard, single mom to daughter Ricki Hendrick, has tried not once but *twice* to find

love on reality television. First, she won the heart of *Bachelor* Brad Womack, only to end their engagement a few months later.

Rather than give up, Maynard tried again, becoming the most recent *Bachelorette*. She accepted Jef Holm's proposal, but they too broke up less than three months after the show ended. Despite this double dose of heartbreak, she has no regrets because she says she did fall in love with both men.

Related: [5 Bachelor and Bachelorette Couples We Can Learn From](#)

4. Stay In Your Inner Circle: Dating someone who your kids already know eliminates the need for awkward introductions and potential tension. Heidi Klum, who split from Seal after almost seven years of marriage, is now in a relationship with her bodyguard, Martin Kirsten. Luckily, her four children are already comfortable with him and are used to him being around.

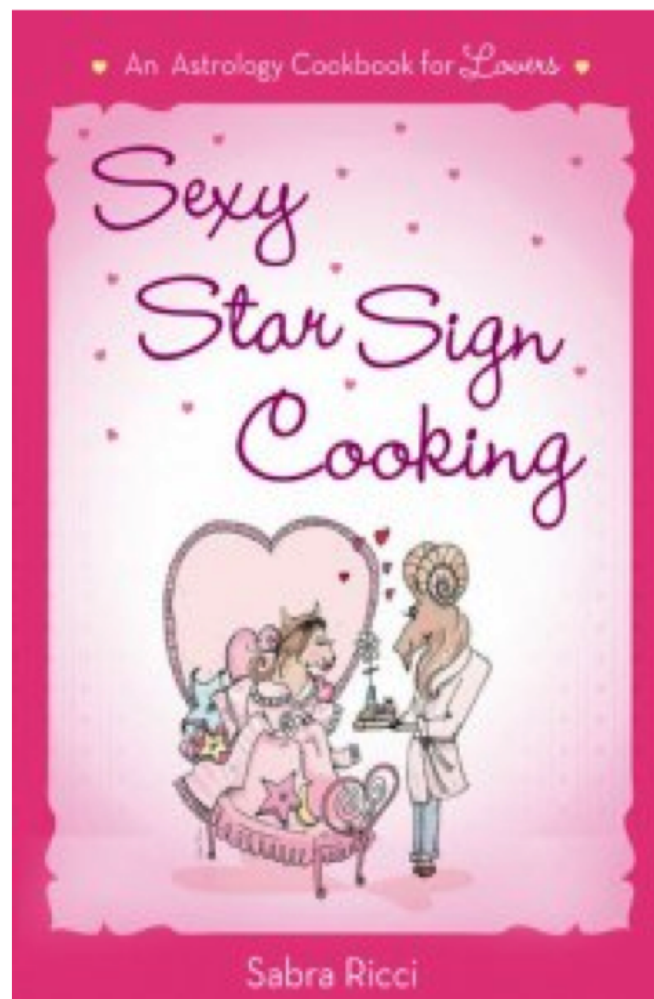
Similarly, Courteney Cox has been rumored to be dating her *Cougartown* costar, Josh Hopkins. Coco, her daughter with David Arquette, knows Hopkins from her time spent on set, making the transition easier for her mom.

5. Depend On Your Ex: Staying on friendly terms with your ex can help your dating life as well. Jennie Garth, who recently split from her husband of 11 years, Peter Facinelli, has already been spotted with three different men. Thanks to her co-parenting routine with Facinelli, she has time to date while her three daughters hang out with their dad.

Likewise, Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz split time with their four-year-old son, Bronx. They both are frequently seen out and about with their significant others and even reunited recently to celebrate their little boy's birthday.

What's the best dating lesson you learned from celebrity moms? Tell us in the comments below!

Date Idea: Bring the Beach to You



By Sarah Ribeiro

Escape the cold winter months and bring the beach to you. Have your own island getaway by planning a romantic and private stay-cation.

The first step for this amazing date weekend is to crank up the heat in your house. Forget about how chilly it is outside by keeping your thermostat set to summer temperatures. You and your sweetheart can pretend you're on the beach while lounging around in each other's arms, blasting Bob Marley and dreaming of the sunshine. To really relax, dim the lights and lead each other in a soothing yoga and meditation session.

For dinner, enjoy grilled pork and pineapple kebabs and picture yourself in paradise. To really set the mood, keep a beach-themed film on in the background; 'Forgetting Sarah Marshall' is a great romantic comedy set in Hawaii. After you're finished eating, head back to the kitchen and have a friendly dessert-making competition with your partner: prepare the the most tropical dessert you can think of, like key lime pie, fried ice cream or chocolate-dipped coconut macaroons. For something a bit easier, keep a bowl of fruit handy and feed each other. Passion fruit is tropical and in season in January, and it tastes great cubed and frozen.

For some added fun, turn your bathtub into a Jacuzzi. You and your honey can soak in the tub, drinking pina coladas and margaritas. Perhaps you'll even be inspired to plan a real vacation together. Grab some travel brochures or pull up a travel website, pick out your favorite tropical locations and consider what activities you can do there: horseback riding in Hawaii, nightclubbing in Ibiza, hang gliding in Brazil. Figure out ways that you and your sweetheart can start saving up for your romantic getaway.

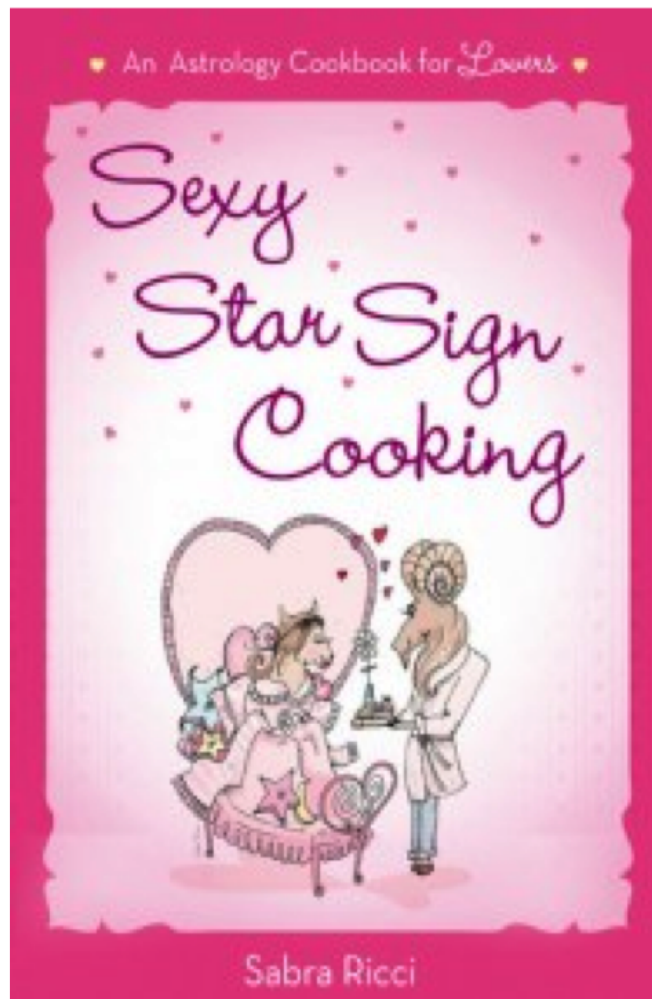
After a nice long soak, break out the coconut oil and give your love a tropical spa treatment: spread some beach towels

on the bed and take turns giving each other massages. Find your favorite massage bar at lushusa.com – their Heavanilli bar is made specifically for the bedroom. If you want a challenge, create your own home spa treatments, like a simple seaweed wrap, or try a home-made facial with fresh fruit, olive oil or yogurt. No matter what, keep each other pampered in true vacation style.

Have any ideas for a faux beach getaway? Let us know in the comments.

Jessica Alba: My Husband & I Are “Kindred Spirits”





By Jenny Schafer for Celebrity Baby Scoop

Mom-of-two Jessica Alba, 31, covers the February issue of [InStyle](#) and opens up about life with husband **Cash Warren** and their two daughters **Honor**, 4½, and **Haven**, 16 months.

On her connection with Cash: "I just knew when I met him that I was going to know him forever. It was weird; he instantly felt like family. I'd never felt like that with anyone. We got each other. We're kindred spirits. On a weekend Cash might say, 'Go get your nails done with a girlfriend. Haven is down

for a nap and Honor and I will play. I know you work hard. You deserve some time for yourself.' That, to me, is romantic. He's saying, 'You matter,' and that I'm more than just the mother of the kids or the wife who goes out to events with him."

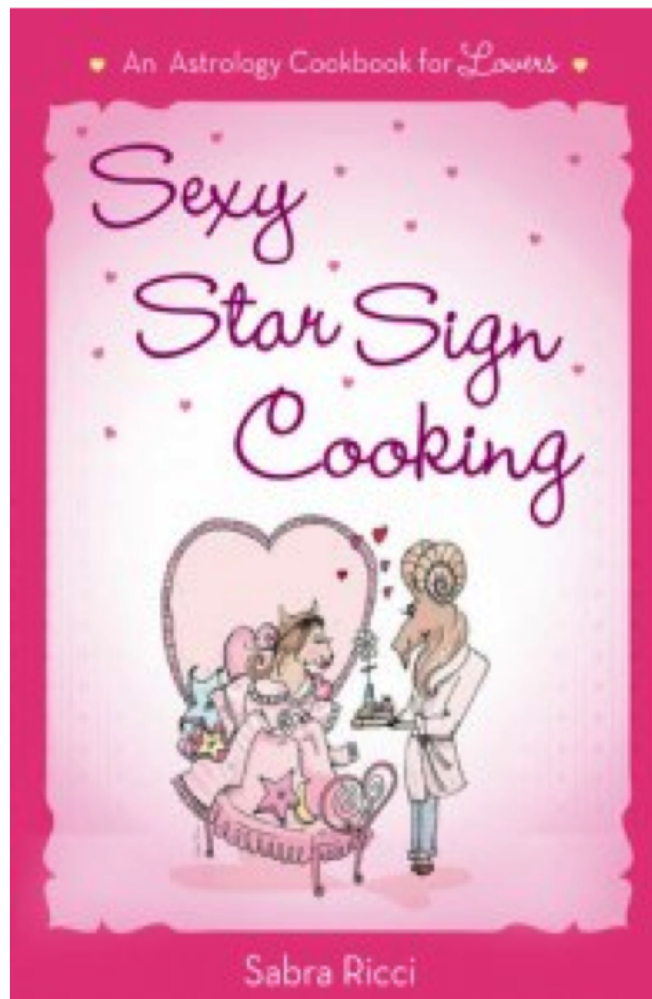
On celebrating their ancestry: "When Cash and I moved into our family house, we collected hundreds of pictures of our aunties, great aunties, moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas, and sisters and brothers. Then we mounted them in the foyer of our home, covering the wall from top to bottom. Our daughters are continually reminded of where they come from."

On multitasking: "Sometimes I can take multitasking to a level of insanity. Then all of a sudden the bath is too high and I've forgotten to give my daughter the thing she needs for school."

On being a perfectionist: "Before I had kids, I was very responsible and serious. I used to be all about controlling my environment; Everything had to be just so. Now my idea of perfection is different. You can label bins and have a place for stuff, but when the kids go into the playroom, you're not going to say, 'We can't paint because how are we going to clean it up?'"

Falling Out of Love and Back into Life





By Kimberly James

With the recent announcement of Bethenny Frankel and Jason Hoppy's marriage coming to an end, "soon-to-be divorced" becomes their current relationship status. This transition period of deciding to no longer be together to a finalized divorce can be a lengthy and emotional time period. Similar to the limbo period between heaven and hell, the waiting for closure can create a place of purgatory for even the strongest of people.

It would be very easy to spend this time in mourning for the

death of a relationship. Although this is a normal and healthy process to acknowledge the ending, it's also a time to recognize a new beginning. This time can be used for self-improvement and re-evaluation. Although painful and unexpected, Jennie Garth used the transition time before her divorce to Peter Facinelli finalized to focus on her children, new work projects and on improving her health and fitness. Finding healthy outlets to transfer emotions to is not only beneficial to healing, it's a way to reconnect with life.

While falling out of love, there are various ways to start the process of falling back into life:

Related: [Top 5 Reasons Why Women Fall Out of Love](#)

1) **Connect.** Spend time with friends and family members who will support you and the decision that is being made. Being around others who have your best interest at heart can help you draw love and support from them. They can pick you up when you are feeling down.

2) **Involve.** Get involved with other parts of your life that you may have been neglecting. Become more active in your children's activities, do an early spring cleaning on your house or pick up a new hobby. Becoming active in the things that bring you joy will bring more happiness into your life.

Related: [Fishing for Mr. Right – Types of Guys to Throw Back](#)

3) **Exercise.** It can be as simple as a daily 3 mile walk or as challenging as preparing for an upcoming marathon. Exercise is a stress reducer and naturally increases endorphins, the feel good brain chemical associated with happiness. Get your body moving and you will be start feeling better, one step at a time.

4) **Plan.** Envision and begin to design how you want your life to look a year from now. Create a vision board or start a

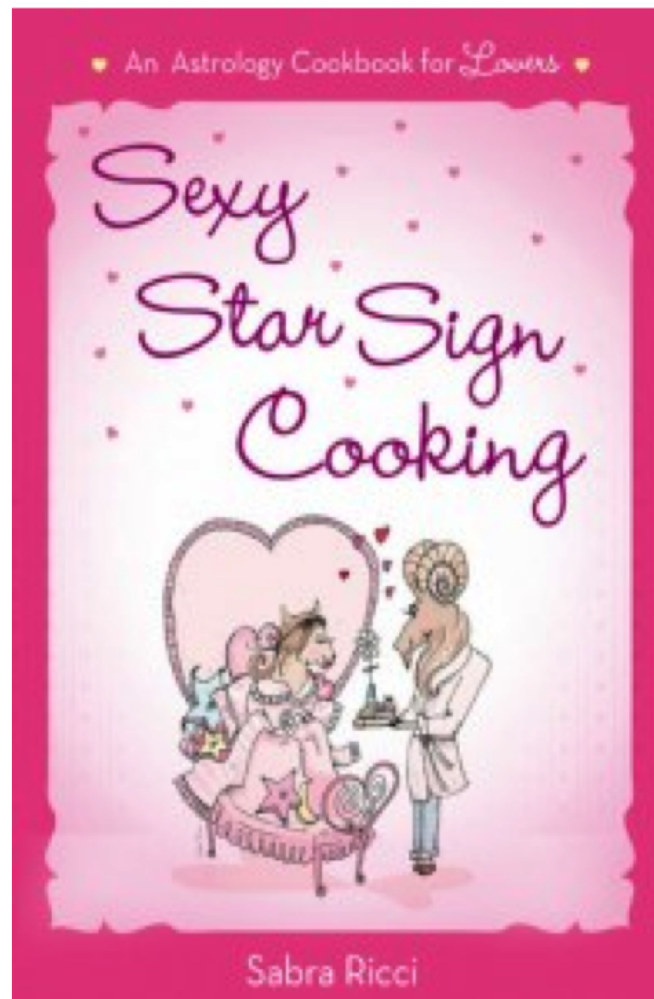
journal. Plot out how you want your life to be and move in the direction of making those new dreams come true.

The end of a relationship is also the start of a new beginning. By embracing the “what could be” with positivity and grace, you are allowing yourself a gentle compassion and kindness needed as you go from one stage of your life to the next.

Kimberly James is the Founder and a MatchMaster for FindYourPlusOne.com, an online dating and matchmaking service for members in the United States and Canada. Visit www.findyourplusone.com/advice for more dating advice and tips. Follow twitter.com/findyourplusone for daily updates.

Dating after Divorce: Lessons We Can Learn from Taylor Swift, Queen of Heartbreak





By Marni Battista

Taylor Swift has been splashed across almost every magazine in the past few weeks, telling story after story about yet another failed relationship and her tendency to get over someone by getting "under" someone new. The twenty-something country crooner is beautiful and successful, but it seems she can't break the three-month relationship cycle.

Perhaps it's because she has a "broken picker," or maybe it's just that she's 22 years old and has no idea what she really wants. Whatever the case, Swift is repeating the same mistakes

in each and every relationship. Her romantic trysts are unable to move past the infant stage. With actors and boy-banders alike (even a Kennedy!), the songstress dives in head-first each time – and comes out like a drowned rat within a few months.

When you begin dating after divorce, you're actually in a similar position to Swift. You might not know what you want; you might be jumping in too fast; or you might believe that someone new can take away the heartache of a failed relationship. And, unlike Swift, you are most certainly very out of practice. So what lessons might we be able to learn from the Queen of Heartbreak herself?

Related Link: [How to Find Love Amidst Holiday Crazyness](#)

1. Don't jump into a relationship too quickly. After a relationship's gone wrong, take time to assess what you learned and how it can inform future choices. We call this the "Dating Fast" at Dating with Dignity because a "cleanse" from a relationship can help you reconnect to who you are outside of that relationship, help you refine your relationship goals, and aid you in making adjustments to your "picker."

Once you're in a space where you want a partner rather than need or crave companionship, you're most likely ready to return to the dating pool. When you're dating, take time to get to know someone fairly well before either of you decides you want to take it to the next level. This phase of "data dating" (collecting data about him/her while simultaneously having fun and creating new shared experiences) can last somewhere between one and three months, which is generally a good time frame for figuring out if this new person meets your needs.

Deciding after one coffee date that you're madly in love, that you should spend every minute together for the next five days, and that you're in a serious, committed relationship is almost

always a recipe for disaster. Be conscious of the pacing of the relationship and strive to really get to know the other person, based not on who you want him/her to be but rather on how he/she shows up consistently over time!

2. Have clarity about what you want. If you find yourself confused about what you really want to create in your next relationship after a recent divorce or breakup, take comfort in the knowledge you're not alone. A great idea is to take an hour or two and create a list of what it is you're looking for based on what you were *not* getting from your marriage or last relationship. Also include a list of your values and the traits you admire in other relationships. Combine the lists and choose five characteristics to be your ultimate non-negotiables. By choosing just five, you can ensure you're selective but not too picky.

Check in with yourself periodically and confirm that what you were looking for two weeks ago is the same thing you're looking for today. If you're not looking to get into a serious relationship right at the moment, date casually to your heart's content and practice the art of setting boundaries, flirting, courting, and having fun. If a long-term relationship is your end goal, then date with that intention. Just be sure you know what you truly want.

Related Link: [5 Bachelor and Bachelorette Couples We Can Learn From](#)

3. Give relationships time to evolve. When you get comfortable in a relationship too soon, you often find out things about your partner that you didn't know before you started seriously dating. What happens, then, is that you begin to ignore or rationalize the importance of these possible red flags.

Ignoring the "quiet voice within" is not a smart move. Instead, communicate your concerns while remembering that your perfect match will want to work through speed bumps to

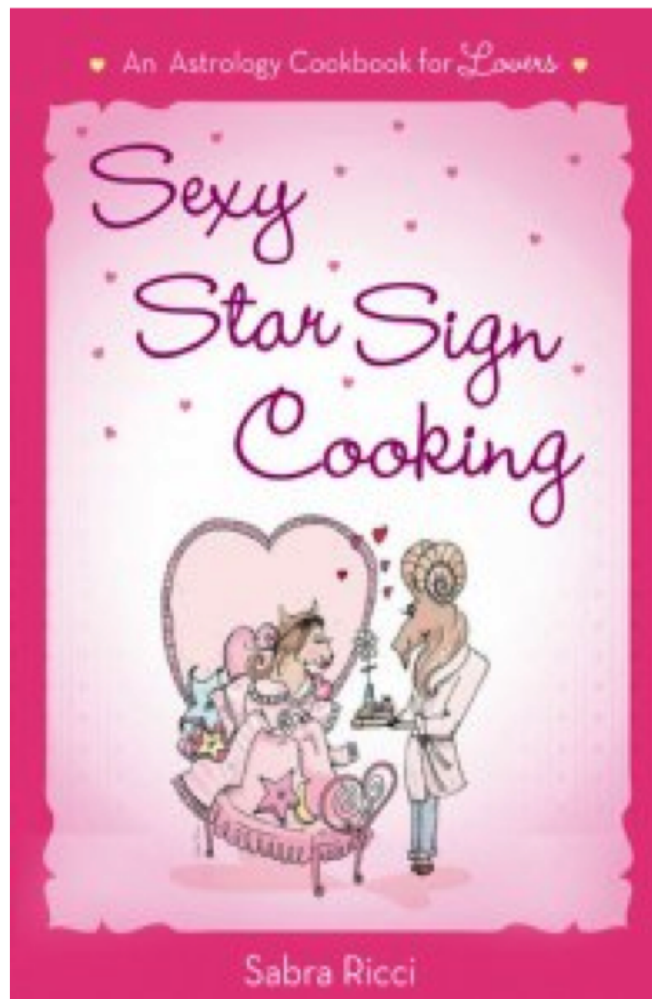
come to a real win-win. If it's not something that's appropriate to share with your partner, make sure you have a coach or therapist (not your best friend) who can help guide you in making informed relationship choices.

When you don't let relationships progress at an organic, natural speed, you may skip over important characteristics of your guy, or he may miss something important about you that's a deal breaker. So be yourself and let the getting-to-know-you part last, and then make that decision for a full commitment in a conscious way. Choosing someone just because he/she chose you is a Mr. Right Now move rather than a move toward finding Mr. Right.

Marni Battista, founder of Dating with Dignity, is an expert dating and life coach with a 10-step system to manifesting love for your self and others. You can contact Marni at marni@datingwithdignity.com.

Why Are Women Addicted to Twilight?





by Dr. Niloo Dardashti for GalTime.com

NYC Psychologist Deconstructs the Allure of the Twilight Series

About ten years ago, Stephanie Meyer had a dream which inspired her to write one of the most esteemed series ever created. One could say that Meyer tapped into a collective unconscious of the female psyche, appealing to both adolescent girls and their grandmothers alike. *Twilight* is now over a \$6 billion franchise. But what draws so many women to vampires and werewolves that make them borderline obsessed with it?

Now, The Twilight Saga is nearly a \$6 billion franchise. Sales of the series' books have eclipsed those of Harry Potter, and its newest installment has already grossed nearly \$600 million. But what is the Twilight allure really about? What draws so many women to report being "addicted" to the saga and appear to be borderline obsessed with it?

As a couples therapist and psychologist who is fascinated with pop culture phenomena and the underlying aspects involved in peoples' preoccupations, I created a documentary on this issue. Through a series of interviews with women and experts in the field of sex therapy and consciousness, and using Twilight as a vehicle for exploration, I ask classic questions that come up surrounding male-female dynamics: *What do women want? What do men want? What makes relationships work? How can we keep connection and passion alive in a relationship?*

Here is what I found out.

Women want connection and challenge

Twilight appears to tap into a universal longing for a partner with whom one shares a deep, distinct connection. Through speaking to many women (both in session and for the documentary), it seemed that a major aspect that women yearn for in men is that he be accepting and attuned, while maintaining a sense of unpredictability and gently challenging her.

Women long for the first-love feeling

While reading or watching Twilight, many women reported that they experienced memories of first loves and a longing for the intensity of feelings associated with a first love experience.

Foreplay still counts

There was also a consistent draw to the sexual tension between Edward and Bella and many women expressed their paradoxical feelings of appreciation for women's sexual liberation while

still nostalgic about a time when couples did not rush into sex, (thus lengthening the tension if you will). And we all know that by tension, we are also referring to most women's favorite part of sex: foreplay.

We see ourselves in others

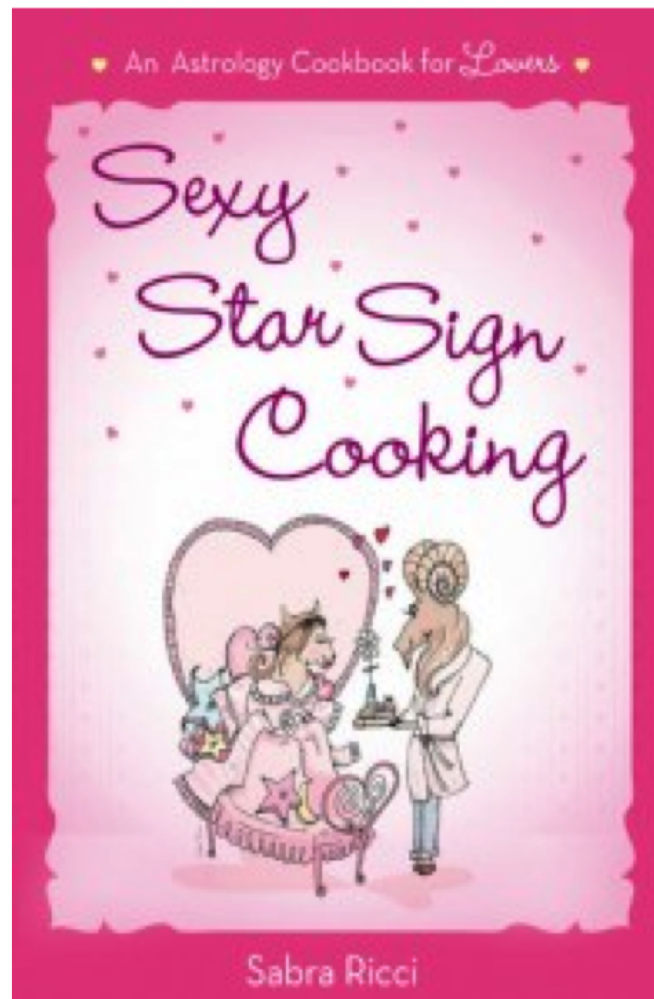
At the heart of the appeal of *Twilight*, we find that it triggers a fundamental longing to feel accepted and mirrored by an "other" and, in my opinion, a desire to accept oneself.

While the flourishing of a relationship takes consistent attention, effort, self-awareness, and an open heart, the issues that arise for many couples are timeless and often inevitable. *Into the Twilight Haze* attempts to deconstruct and explore several of these matters to help viewers discover different perspectives, offering concrete suggestions to men and women alike.

Is any of this true for you? Why are you addicted to the series?

Find 'Love at First Click' with Some Helpful Online Dating Tips From Laurie Davis





By Michelle Danzig

With more online dating sites available than ever before, and the world of social media integrated into our lives, meeting someone new and having a successful relationship is so much different than it was just a few years ago. Take it from Laurie Davis, a former marketing consultant turned online dating expert, with her own personal story of finding love on Twitter. Davis, Founder and CEO of eFlirt expert and first-time author of *Love at First Click: The Ultimate Guide to Online Dating* prides herself on her uncanny ability to match

up happy couples. In an exclusive interview, she talks with us about her new book, and shares some helpful tips for anyone who wants to give online dating a try.

Can you tell us why you left your job in marketing? Of all of the things that you could have done, what made you choose the relationship industry?

I was burned in the Maddoff scandal. I worked in marketing as a consultant for Fortune 500, and one of my biggest clients was invested with Bernie Madoff. Needless to say, I lost that contract and a lot of others. I was really struggling to figure out how to pivot my knowledge and experiences into my next job, knowing that marketing consultant jobs were going to be hard to come by.

Then, one of my friends called and said that he was moving in with his girlfriend; I realized that I had helped him meet her online. In fact, I helped many of my friends meet their significant others online. It's a lot like marketing, so all of the skills I learned professionally really applied. I started my business within 48 hours with 50 dollars in my pocket and a Twitter account.

Related Link: ["No More Duck Lips!" And Other Dating Profile Rules](#)

What would be the number one piece of advice you would give to someone new to online dating?

My best tip is to experiment. Remember, online dating isn't just dating sites; it is any technology that touches your life. Online dating is still really important, but I think it's great to use "pop tech flirting," which are other ways of meeting people online. Just be sure that the outlet is something natural to your life; I wouldn't join Twitter to find dates if you don't normally use Twitter.

What is the biggest challenge people face when starting out?

I think the biggest challenge people face when entering the online dating world is that they are too judgmental when viewing profiles. Remember that nobody is perfect on paper – even your perfect match probably won't look that way on their profile. So, if someone sounds interesting, go ahead and start a conversation with him.

What is the biggest mistake someone can make when creating an online profile?

Writing too much. It is really easy to go on and on about yourself and what you want in a partner. Your profile should be a conversation *starter*, not the entire conversation. Keep your "About Me" section to three paragraphs: two about you and one about what you are looking for.

What are the three most important things that someone needs to do to find a successful relationship online?

First, you should join a site and develop your profile. Next, be active on the dating site. I know these sound super simple, but a lot of people think that if they simply put up a profile, they'll automatically find love. You need to be an active participant in your dating life. Even if you are getting a lot of traffic to your inbox, it's not only about the people who are interested in you; it's about the people who you like too. And finally, get offline because that is where the relationship really happens. I have a very important rule that you should get offline after six emails. If he keeps dodging your request to meet in person, move on to the next guy.

You met your fiancé via Twitter. We'd love to know more about how your relationship developed!

When I first started my business, I searched for people on Twitter who were single and I thought may need my help. I also

searched for other people in the industry. I was just getting a feel for what to expect with my new career path. Eventually, I came across Thomas; I thought he was so cute, and I loved his avatar. His tweets were so insightful, and he was giving such great advice.

So, I retweeted something he said, and we started chatting via Twitter. We found out that we both grew up in Boston, where Thomas was living at the time. When I was visiting my parents one weekend, I direct messaged him and asked him out for a drink. That was the beginning! We still flirt in 140 characters or less, even though we live together.

Related Link: [Q&A: Where Does Social Media Draw the Line on PDA?](#)

Of all of your clients, which success story stands out the most?

One of my favorite stories is about a guy who was living in the south. When he came to me, he just wanted to meet new people in his area, not find a serious girlfriend. I helped him with his profile, and eventually, he realized that he was ready to make a commitment. A girl actually reached out to him and said, "I've never messaged anyone before, but your profile made me feel like I needed to say hi." Now, they are actually married!

Any additional advice you can offer to our visitors?

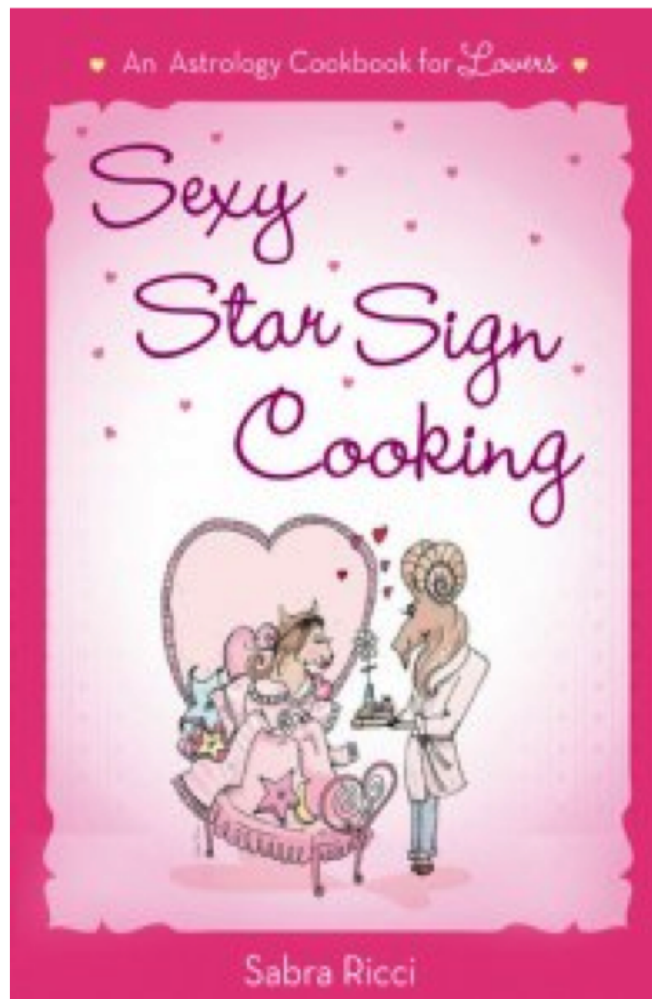
Whether you're looking for love online or offline, you just never know when or where you will meet someone. This is why it is so important to use online dating as an empowerment tool—so that you are in more control of your dating life. Hopefully if you take the time, you will find love at first click.

You can purchase a copy of 'Love at First Click: The Ultimate Guide to Online Dating' in bookstores and online from Amazon. For more information about Davis, visit eFlirtExpert.com. You

can also follow Davis on Twitter and Facebook. Don't miss her live tweets during MTV's 'Catfish' on Mondays at 11 p.m. EST!

Celebrity Relationships in Need of a New Year's Resolution





By Courtney Allen

The New Year is here, and even the biggest celebs in Hollywood know what that means: it's time to pull out the glorious pen and paper. There is no better time like the present than to leave the daunting past behind in the tabloids, whether it is love drama with exes, juicy scandals or shocking infidelity. 2012 may have proved to be rocky for these celebrity couples, but the upcoming year just may be looking up if they write their New Year's Resolution list with these things in mind:

Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson: These two *Twilight* stars

had us watching in amazement as their seemingly perfect relationship flourished both on-screen and off. It wasn't until this summer that their 'fairytale' took a turn for the worst. Stewart became the center of a cheating scandal between her married *Snow White and the Huntsman* director Rupert Sanders. Stewart caused jaw drops amongst her *Twilight* fans and co-stars as news of the flaming affair became public. Speculation over whether Stewart and Pattinson would stay together swirled for months. The answer to the question we were all once dying to know? Yes. The couple is together today. But one piece of advice for their partially tainted relationship: keeping Kristen's deceit in the past in order for it to successfully recover in the new year.

Related: [Is Your Past Interfering with the Present?](#)

Rihanna and Chris Brown: Chris Brown and Rihanna have quite the troubled past. The two world-famous singers started dating back in 2008. Between Rihanna's stunning face and body and Chris Brown's undeniably handsome facial features and lullaby-like voice, they instantly became one of the hottest, power couples in Hollywood. But in February of 2009, tragedy struck for the lovebirds. Brown was arrested for allegedly assaulting the "Disturbia" singer after a pre-Grammy bash. The two obviously went their separate ways as Rihanna filed a restraining order against Brown which was later dropped in 2011. Shortly after, rumors began to fly about the two rekindling their flame with the release of Rihanna's "Birthday Cake Remix" featuring the R&B singer. Looking back, the rumor seemed nothing less than the truth. Brown recently dumped ex-girlfriend Karrueche Tran and now appears to be dating Rihanna based off pictures on her Instagram. Let's just hope these two have a healthier relationship this time around. If they commit to this New Year's Resolution, nothing can stop them.

Halle Berry and Oliver Martinez: Halle Berry and fiancé Oliver Martinez seem to be doing just fine besides one small problem: her ex. Model Gabriel Aubry is causing trouble in paradise for

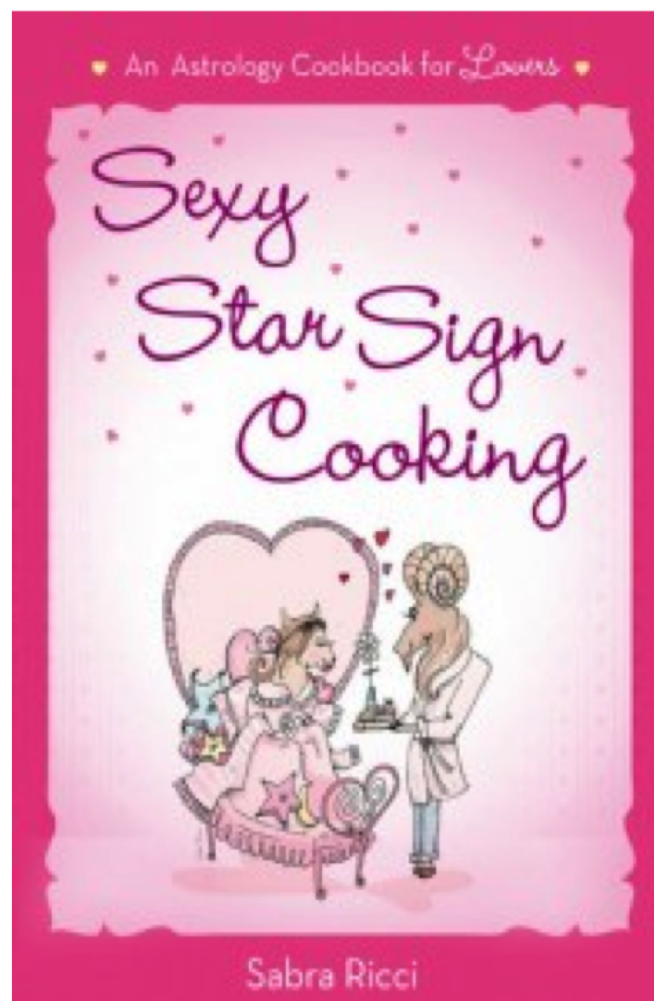
the couple. Berry and Aubry are right in the middle of custody battle over their four-year old daughter Nahla after splitting up back in 2010. Things got pretty heated over Thanksgiving when Aubry got into a physical altercation during a custodial hand-off with the bombshell's current boyfriend, French actor Gabriel Martinez. Aubry seems to be creating quite the mess for Berry and her new relationship. The cause of the fight is unknown, but pleasant words are definitely out of the question. Sounds like the three need to somehow find a way to kiss and make up for the New Year and for the future. With Nahla in the picture, Aubry isn't going anywhere.

Related: [How to Master Being in a Relationship](#)

Rupert Sanders and Liberty Ross: The couple on the other side of Kristen Stewart's cheating scandal has been through trying times since the infidelity went public last summer. Turns out *Snow White and the Huntsman* director Rupert Sanders was not only in a relationship, but was married to English model Liberty Ross. The couple was not seen together for several weeks following the scandal, leaving us to wonder if Sanders' position as director in the *Snow White and the Huntsman* sequel was the only thing he had lost. Luckily for Sanders, Ross seems to be giving him another chance after his slip-up with 22-year old Stewart. Sanders will now be walking on thin ice with his wife as he enters into 2013. All the New Year's resolving between them should come mostly from his end: proving that he can be trusted again; and of course for Liberty, giving him the fair chance.

What are some of your New Year's Resolutions for your relationship? Share your ideas with us!

How to Fall in Love With Yourself in 2013



by Marina Sbrochi for GalTime.com

10 Love Resolutions to Make to Yourself

Here we are at the beginning and end of a year, all in one. That means it is time to set some resolutions. Maybe you're thinking, "Oh, no! Not me! I don't do resolutions." Not to worry. We're not talking about anything that has to do with a weight scale or bank account or de-cluttering that junk drawer in the kitchen. This is the year you can really focus on yourself and build great habits to take good care of you every single day.

Here's how to get started:

1. Love Thyself and Count the Ways – You rock, you know you do. Take a piece of paper and write down 10 great things about you. Now tape it to your bathroom mirror and every morning when you wake up you read them as you brush your teeth. It sounds hokey, but it really does feel good way to shower yourself with compliments and acknowledge all the good stuff you've done rather than look in the mirror with criticism.

2. Bubble Bath Sundays – Why the heck not? You've got a tub. Get yourself some bubbles and a candle and have a date with some hot water. Wash away the week and get ready for another. When the time is right, you can invite your special someone to join you.

3. Honor Your Breath – Take a brief moment each night before you fall asleep and take a long deep breath. Say thank you for the breath you breathe.

4. Take a Chance – Make this the year you will take the chances you get to be more YOU. Always wanted to go rock climbing? Go ahead and say hello to that cute guy standing in line in front of you at the coffee shop. Feel ready to look for a new job? Go out on that blind date. Sign up for an online dating site. Try out the hot pink lipstick. See how well you can rock a sheer shirt. Reconnect with a grammar-school friend on Facebook. Write a poem. Say out loud what you'd like to make happen in 2013. You never know what can

happen when you take a chance!

5. Be More Kind – Look for opportunities to show little acts of kindness here and there. Go ahead and let that car get in front of you. Open the door for someone. Write a love letter or thank-you note. Call your mother. Hold the elevator even though you are in a hurry. Take notice and be kind.

6. Here's to Your Health – You want to live to make many more New Years Resolutions, right? You have to be healthy. Make small changes. Cut the soda. Eat more fruits and veggies. Walk instead of drive. Quit smoking. Join a gym. You have to treat your body right to really love it.

7. Watch "The Notebook" – It's the loviest love story and Ryan Gosling is smoking hot in it too. Remind yourself of what type of love you want in your life.

8. Design Your Love Potion – Go ahead and love something yummy. Plan your signature love cocktail for 2013. Something special will happen every time you drink it, you will meet someone fabulous. (May I suggest Three Olives brand Bubble Vodka with soda and a splash of pink lemonade?)

9. Never Say Never – This is no Debbie Downer year. This is the year of YES. The old you maybe NEVER used to dance. But the new you – dances.

10. Let it Go – This year you aren't going to be hyper focused on finding someone. You are just going to be you and do things for yourself. Take ownership of you and do everything you have ever wanted to do. In time, that right person will come to you.

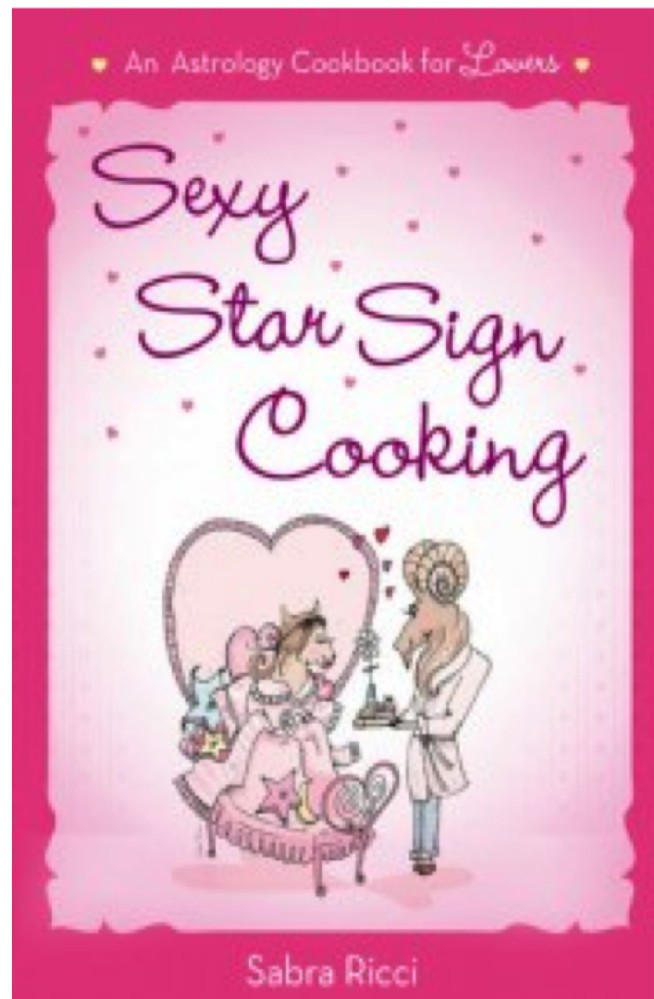
11. Say "I Love You" More Often – Life is short. This is a lesson we have learned too many times this year. Say I love you to your family, your friends and anyone that means something to you. Say it often.

12. Find Your Signature Scent – Sniff around until you find something that works with you. Something subtle, but noticeable. Something that not every else wears. Buy the body cream too. Wear it every time you go out. People will learn to know you by your scent.

How will you be good to you this coming year?

5 Signs He's Not Ready to Commit





By Susan Trombetti, Matchmaker and Relationship Expert

It's the New Year and the emails are flying, with women trying to decide if he's a keeper for 2013, or if they should cut their losses and kick him to the curb and start fresh this year. Many single women were hoping and praying for that all important sparkle on their left finger. What to do if you didn't get it? Heaven forbid, should you wait until Valentine's Day. How long to hang on desperately waiting ? I think you know the answer yourself. You don't need to reduce yourself to that point of an awkward conversation and beg, "Will you please finally marry me ALREADY ?" Check out these

five signs he isn't ready to commit, which tell you all you need to know about the status of your relationship:

1. There are long periods of unaccounted for time, physically and emotionally: If it's been a few days since you've heard from him or spent time with him, then throw up the red flags. In a healthy and committed relationship your man won't go off the radar from you, whether it's not answering calls, not making plans or not spending time together in the bedroom.

2. He's breaking promises(big or small): From a call he didn't make to your nephew's soccer game that he missed, any sort of promised action he breaks is a sign he's not as committed as you thought.

3. He lives by himself and you can't drop by when you want: You should be able to stop by his house at random, when he's home. Don't accept excuses.

Related: [How to Kick That Bad Relationship to the Curb](#)

4. He still puts his mom first in every case: If you're his girlfriend, his mother shouldn't win every argument that you have. You should be the Number 1 woman in his life, not his mother.

5. His dad is a marriage-a-holic (married more than twice): If his Dad, or another strong male influence in his life, has been married more than two times, this could affect your chances of getting married. Many times these son's are often hesitant to get married for the first time because

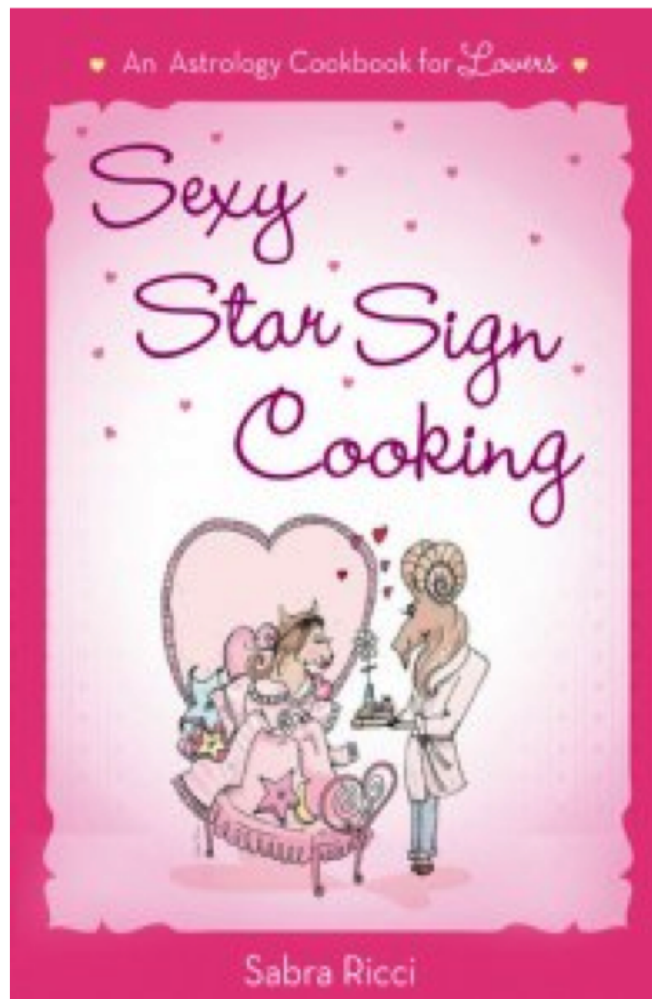
Get your confidence back this year. Don't spend another minute with the wrong guy if he displays any of these behaviors because he isn't ready to commit. Good luck in 2013. The signs are right in front of you. No need to feel so powerless.

Susan Trombetti is an expert matchmaker and member of the Professional Matchmakers Association. She has helped many

discerning singles discover long-term relationships and partnerships that are both rewarding and fulfilling through her business, Exclusive Matchmaking. She was also recently featured in a Cosmopolitan Article, about the 5 Text Messages Not to Answer.

Mario Lopez Wants “At Least 4 More” Children





By Jenny Schafer for Celebrity Baby Scoop

Newlyweds Mario Lopez and **Courtney Mazza** teamed up with NIVEA for its "Kiss of the Year" contest on Facebook in search for America's greatest love story. The winning couple rang in the new year with Mario and Courtney – parents to 2-year-old daughter **Gia** – in New York City's Times Square.

The *Extra* hunk opens up to Celebrity Baby Scoop about his favorite family recipe at the holidays and his hopes for "at least 4 more" children.

CBS: Did you practice your kiss for your recent nuptials?

ML: "No, we've had plenty of practice."

CBS: Are you hoping to have a big family? How many children are you planning on? Do you want a mix of boys and girls?

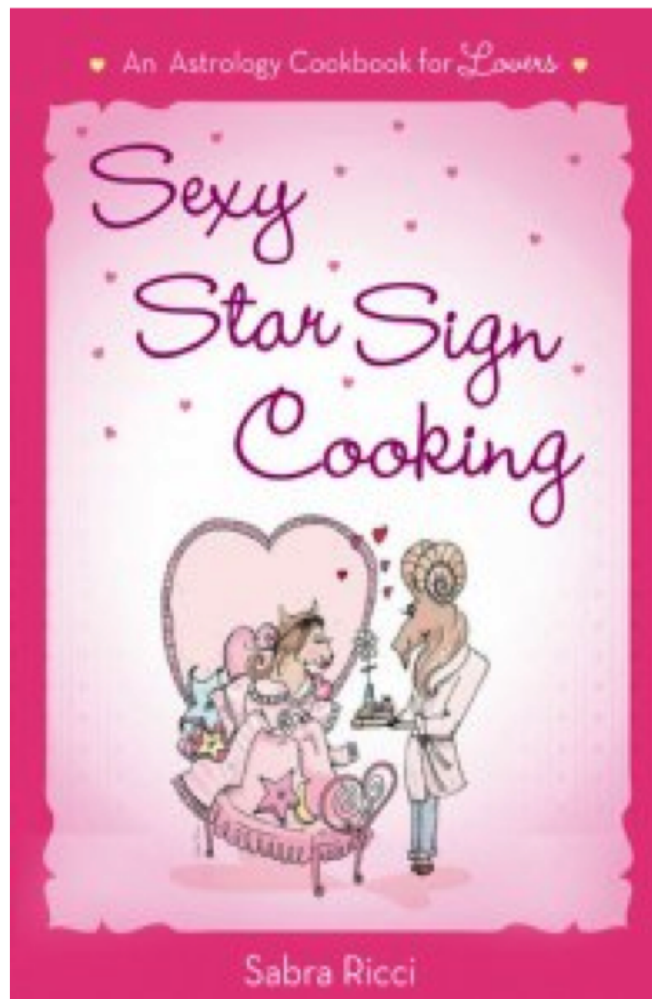
ML: "Yes, at least 4 more. Either boys or girls would be great."

CBS: Happy Holidays! Do you have a favorite family recipes you can share with us?

ML: "My nana's tamales...they're a secret family recipe though."

Ring In The New Year With A New Relationship





By Jennifer Ross

The New Year is always that time to let go of the old and stagnate parts of your life to make room for the new and exciting ones. With all the spine-tingling sensations coming your way, now is a good time for you to start a new relationship. This does not mean that you dump your current relationship to find a new one. Rather, view this as making a new start with your current partner. To create a memorable 2013, filled with an invigorating romance to last well beyond the year, here are five steps to lead you to a "new" relationship:

1. Your mindset: The number one step to starting a new relationship with your current love is to mentally vow to have a new relationship with your current love. Sound too simple? It actually is that easy. You don't need to know all the answers on January 1. Instead know this. Your relationship is on a new journey, with you and your partner as co-pilots. Once your new relationship takes off, there is no going back! Feel yourselves veering off course? That doesn't matter; just nudge your relationship slowly back on track. And remember, as long as you and your mate are still heading towards the direction of love, you are always making progress to your final destination.

Related: [Shrink Wrap: Has Your Relationship Hit a Speed Bump?](#)

2. A new language: With a new relationship comes new vocabulary or rather a new way to speak to each other. Think of this as your relationship's very own language of love, fluently spoken by only you and your partner. Instead of saying "I" or "you," use the word "we." Instead of saying "problem," use the word "challenge." Instead of saying "but," use the word "and." Instead of saying "can't," use the word "can." Finally, instead of saying "why," use the word "how." An example of the old language is, "You have a problem but I can't fix it. Why can't you fix it?" Your new language is, "We have a challenge and we can fix it. How can we fix it?" The difference is to focus on a solution and not the problem. With a little practice, it will come natural.

3. Remember what year it is: If you are holding on to issues from 2012, it is time to let go. That doesn't necessarily mean you act as if the issues never happened. Can anyone do that? Instead, have those conversations with your partner, talking about how each of you feel. The best way is to listen to your mate without interrupting. Don't keep a tally, while he/she is speaking, of what you think he/she has done wrong. Honestly try to understand only from their perspective before reacting. Remember, you love each other. No one is deliberately hurting

the other. Often the case is, both of you are reacting to preconceptions of intentional pain.

Related: [Does Your Past Interfere with Your Present?](#)

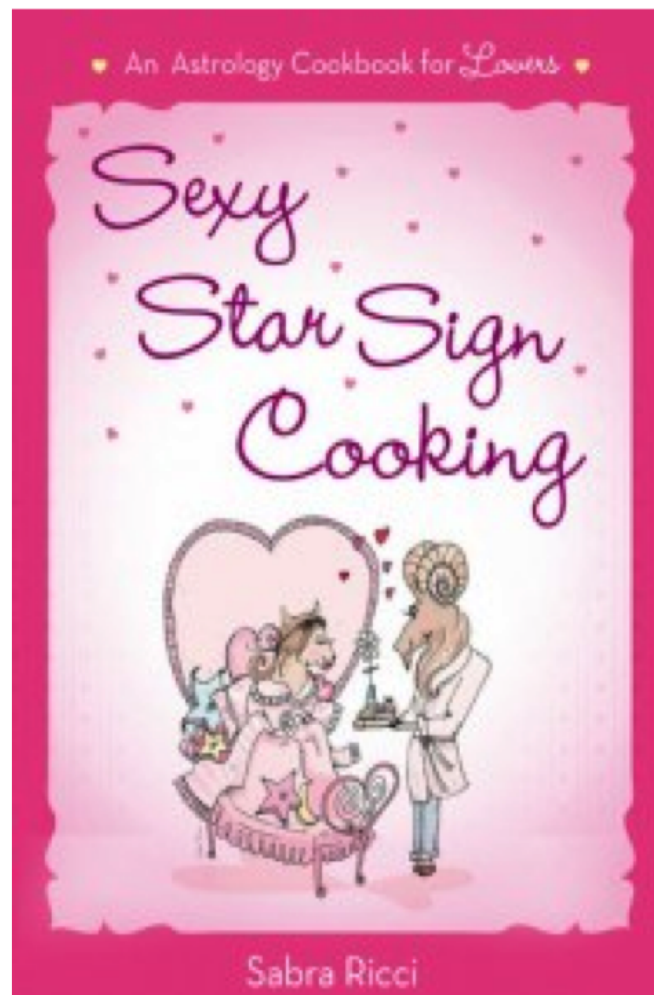
4. Be Open: In the late 1800's, inventor Thomas Edison, and his team, experimented with thousands of different filaments in order to get the right material to make a long-lasting light bulb. What does this have to do with your relationship? Throughout 2013, you and your partner will also experiment with thousands of different ways to make a long-lasting relationship. Just like Edison, be open to other interpretations or ideas. More importantly, ask for help or advice when needed. Edison didn't succeed alone and neither will you.

5. Control only what you can: Realize that just like last year, there will be situations to create setbacks in 2013, times where you will feel personally hurt or your relationship threatened. That doesn't have to halt all progress. Make the decision to continue forward. Just because someone or something has attempted to hurt you does not mean you are required to react negatively. You cannot control what happens but you can control how you react. Once you master this, you will see that the negative issue is only 10% of the situation and how you react is 90%.

How do you plan to re-new your relationship in 2013? Share your ideas with us below.

'Deception' Star Katherine

LaNasa Says New Husband Grant Show Surprises Her All the Time



By Nic Baird

The golden era of soap operas didn't really end in the nineties. When TNT revitalized *Dallas* last year, it gave fans hope for a new wave of the serial dramas. Genre loyalists might have felt threatened when NBC ended *Passions* in 2007, but they've responded with an interesting mid-season replacement this winter.

Katherine LaNasa stars as Sophia Bowers in *Deception*, which premieres tonight at 10/9c. This soap opera centers on the mystery of a famous dead socialite, Vivian Bowers, and her childhood best friend, Joanna Padget Locasto, a narcotics detective who returns to uncover the true story of her friend's death. LaNasa, who recently starred in the summer comedy *The Campaign* as a peppy and ambitious senator's wife, now plays the much more sombre and maleficent stepmother of the Bowers' family. She describes her character as dark, brooding, smart, alcoholic, tricky and slippery. "It's a fun role to play," she says.

It's the first time that LaNasa's been able to play a woman with this much weight, darkness and stillness. Underneath all the poise of a cultured matriarch, there's a deep sort of power she unleashes to protect her family. LaNasa admits she doesn't exactly know what her character is scheming, but she definitely makes the detective's investigation even more challenging. "When Sophia yells, she's not screaming; she's roaring!"

LaNasa is eager to play someone who takes themselves so seriously, so Sophia is a nice change of pace from her recent roles. As a New Orleans native, she's often called upon to play southern belles; even so, her characters range in intensity from her upbeat portrayal in *The Campaign* as Will Ferrell's wife to the pious school teacher she portrays in the upcoming film *The Frozen Ground*. "I get a lot of really different parts."

Deception will, of course, feature all the

romance, love triangles and twists that are known as soap opera staples. As for her own character, LaNasa hints that Sophia may not be as malicious as she seems. "I really think she just doesn't understand where the danger lies," she says. "It keeps coming up in these weird places."

Related Link: [Kristen Stewart Says She Understands That "Whole Love Triangle Thing"](#)

Besides her new series, LaNasa landed a new husband this summer. Fellow soap opera star Grant Show, best known for his role as Jack Hanson on Fox's *Melrose Place*, and LaNasa exchanged vows this summer. "He's a total sweetheart," she says. "And very loving."

While neither one was looking for another spouse, LaNasa says that she eventually wanted more from her man, and Show obliged. The two tied the knot in a romantic ceremony set in the scenic canyons of Topanga, California on August 18, 2012. Months later, she still gushes about her husband. "He's just so handsome," she says.

After two previous marriages, one to Dennis Hopper and another to French Stewart, the actress approached her most recent courtship with caution. "I was very careful getting to know Grant, and I didn't have any expectations of it, " she shares. "I wasn't looking to get married again. It wasn't a goal or a destination for me."

Of her husband, she adds, "I'm just surprised by him all the time!"

Related Link: [Bachelorette Stars J.P. Rosenbaum and Ashley Hebert Tie the Knot](#)

Despite her hesitation, LaNasa finds herself completely enamoured with Show. The newlyweds don't have any problem spending time together, and they often have simple dates where they can just enjoy each others' company. The pair find a lot

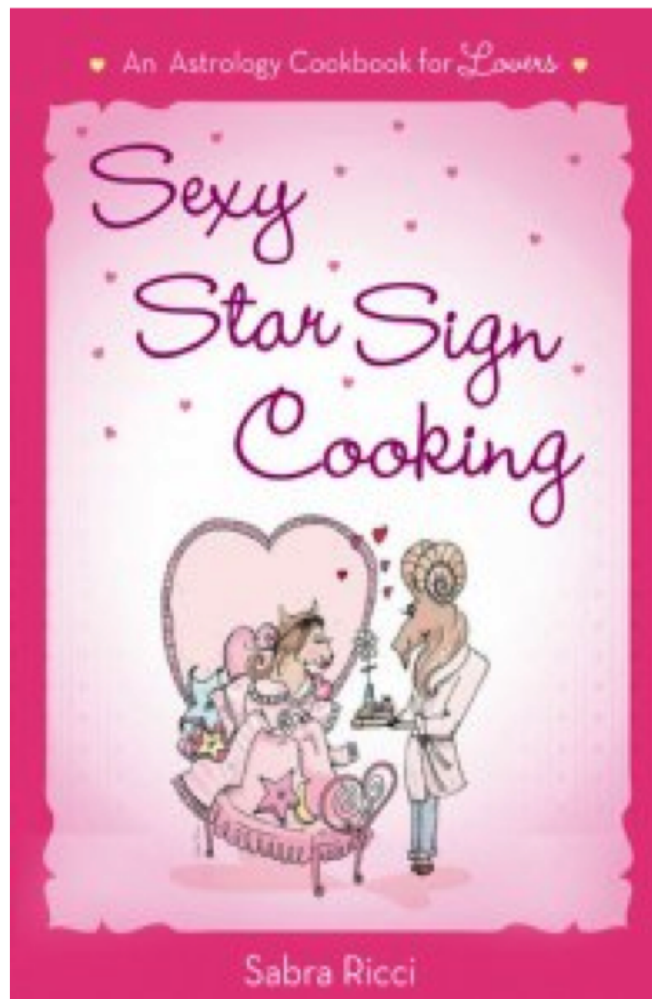
of couples' activities to do, she says.

LaNasa also mentions high energy dates like bowling and karaoke as well as romantic evenings at a lighthouse and spaghetti dinners. The couple has plans to play at Susan Sarandon's new ping pong club SPiN Galactic in Manhattan too. "I have so much fun with him," she shares. "We're really in love!"

Currently, LaNasa lives in New York where she works on 'Deception,' which airs on January 7, 2013 at 10/9c on NBC. She can also be seen in the upcoming films 'Jayne Mansfield's Car,' directed by Billybob Thornton, and 'The Frozen Ground' opposite John Cusack.

Forever is Overrated





by Terri Trespicio for GalTime.com

...unless you're a vampire

In the final scene of *Breaking Dawn, Part II* (trust me, this is hardly a spoiler), our immortal lovers make out in a field of daisies, promising they will love each other forever. As the scene fades to black, the word "forever" burns across the screen.

After watching *Breaking Dawn* one night, it occurred to me why we love these two wan-looking lovers: They are never ever

breaking up. Ever.

And it occurred to me shortly thereafter, in the bathroom at Davio's, staring over my knees at the polished marble floors, that this is why we love these two wan-looking lovers: They are *never ever* breaking up. Ever.

Of course, that's pretty easy for them to do, right? They don't have to work, sleep, eat, or pay bills. All they have to do is raise their daughter for a few weeks until she's full grown, hunt the occasional mountain lion, and have crazy hot vampire sex in a cottage designed by Thomas Kinkade.

Imagine that: A true love that could last for centuries, untested by pestilence or famine, financial woes or demanding careers, age or exhaustion. For many, that would be ideal. For others, a kind of hell.

True Love is Forever, Right?

The idea, brought to you again courtesy of Hollywood, is that true love is impervious to boredom or strife—and that it never, ever ends. And while the *Twilight* series is hardly a dictate for modern mortals, it promotes this idea that anything worthwhile lasts, period. And anything that doesn't is a failure, or makes you a failure. Prioritizing the 'forever' over the 'now' is one of the reasons why you stick with and struggle in a relationship that isn't working, for instance. It's choosing a fairy tale future over what's right in front of you and plain as day.

OK. So, let's look at another, and arguably far superior film, sure to sweep the Oscars this year: *The Sessions*, starring Helen Hunt and John Hawkes, which tells the poignant story of real-life poet and writer Mark O'Brien who was confined to an iron lung after contracting polio as a child.

At 38 years old, O'Brien knew what he wanted: to experience physical love—now, before it was too late. And he does. Sex

surrogate Cheryl Cohen Greene exposes him to intimacy for the first time, and changes his life. He goes on to have a romance with a woman named Susan that lasts until he dies at 49.

He was not focused on whom he'd be with 30 years from now; it didn't matter. He wanted to love *now*, and he took brave measures to give himself that opportunity. Are you?

Get Out of Your Iron Lung

We're not that different from Mark O'Brien, you and me. We're weak, scared, desperate to love and be loved. We may not need apparatus to survive, but we live in an iron lung of our own making, a machine that runs on conjured ideas about how life and love should be. We hide inside its protective armor, rather than venturing, vulnerable and breathless, into the world like he did. Maybe you're paralyzed, too—by your own fears about love and intimacy, and think if you only “knew” for sure something would last, you might have the strength and fortitude to pursue it.

True strength lies in an awareness and acceptance of our vulnerability, not the lack of it—and that means doing what feels right to us, regardless of what the future holds.

Rethink ‘Relationship’

If the *only* successful relationship is one in which they pry you from your dead partner's corpse, you are limiting your potential to love and be loved. Because sometimes things end—and that doesn't mean the relationship didn't serve a rich and vital purpose.

I don't take commitments, especially marriage, lightly. But if you only make decisions based on some image you have of yourself 50 years from now, you're not acting in real time. And it's hurting you. And you know it.

One woman told me her ex-husband was the perfect person for

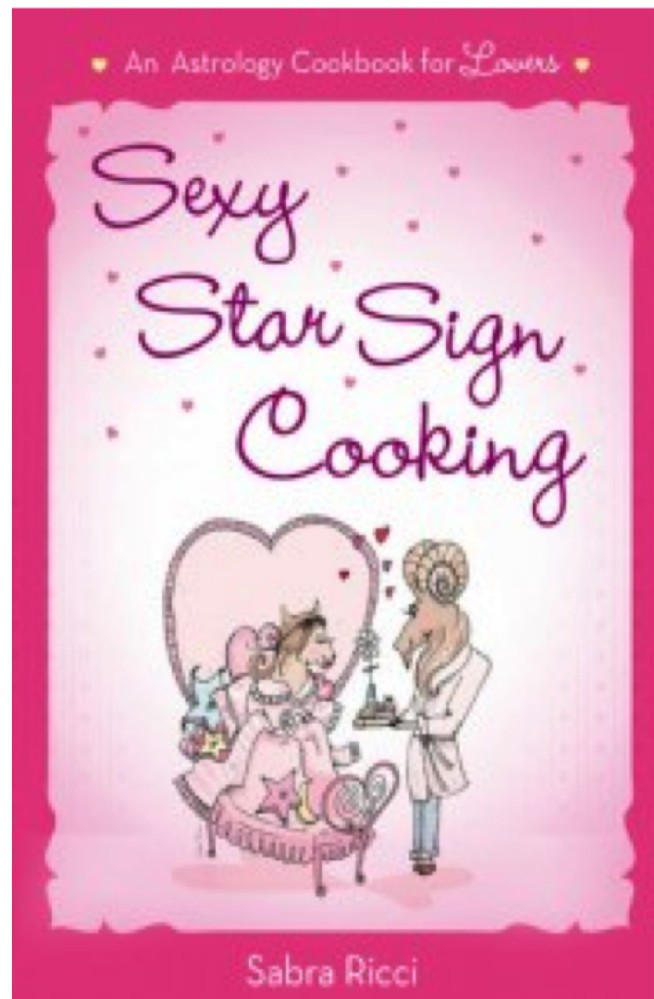
her to marry when she did—and the perfect person to divorce. They have children they adore, and no regrets. Wouldn't it be great if marriages lasted forever and people stayed happy? Sure. Does it always happen? Nope. Does life go on and do people play vitally important roles at different points in our life? You bet.

How many times have you gone out with someone or found yourself interested and then wrote it off because you're sure it wouldn't last? Or, the opposite: Started every new relationship thinking that THIS would be IT—and it would surely carry you the very end...and when it didn't, thought you made a mistake?

Love makes us feel immortal and so we think we should be impervious to everything. But we're not. And we need to get over this idea that forever is the only thing that matters. All you can do is the give to and nurture the relationships you have as long as you have them. Forget forever. For now.

Tips for Making a Long Distance Relationship Work





By TJ Barea

Long distance relationships can be successful. Just because there is distance between you physically does not mean the relationship should suffer. There are a number of things you can do to help bridge the gap from your heart to your partner's:

Skype

Skype is cam-based chat software that can be downloaded. Skype is better than messaging, texting or online chatting.

It has a real-time cam that enables the participants of the chat to not only exchange messages, but see each other as if they were face-to-face. Skype can help bridge the gap by enable partners to see each other and talk at the same time. It can be the next best thing to meeting in person.

Related: [How Can Social Media Help My Long Distance Relationship?](#)

Texts

Texts are a quick little message that can be sent all hours of the day. The nice thing about texting is if the other person is tied up, they do not have to answer it, like a phone call or Skype call that has to be answered right then. The downsides to texting are it can take a while for the other person to respond if they are busy and the fact that you can't always read emotions in texts.

Phone Calls

A simple phone call can brighten anyone's day. Thanks to cell phones a call can be placed and received anywhere. When you're having a rough day, or just want to share a moment with your partner, a phone call is the perfect way to connect the gap caused by the miles apart. With a phone call, you will not get the misunderstandings and lack of emotions that texts can have. The sound of your partner's voice on the line is sure to bring a smile to your day.

Related: [4 Ways to Make Your Long Distance Relationship Work](#)

Letters

As old fashioned as it may seem with today's technology, letters are a great way to communicate and keep a long distance relation healthy. Remember back to when you were a kid, running to the mailbox just to see if you had mail. Even though we are all grown up, doesn't mean we don't still like

receiving letters. In addition to the excitement of finding a letter in the mail, there is a certain freedom that comes from writing. Some people are able to communicate better once they can think about what they want to say and have a chance to put it on paper. Face-to-face or voice-to-voice calls can prove to be limiting for fear of rejection. Writing a letter gives you a chance to say your heart's deepest thoughts and wishes without rejection as it is being written.

Deliveries

Much like the excitement of getting a letter, your partner will enjoy receiving deliveries. The deliveries can be anything from a gift, care package, chocolates or flowers. Some places will even deliver special dinners, too. A delivery, especially surprise ones, is a great way of saying you were thinking of your partner.

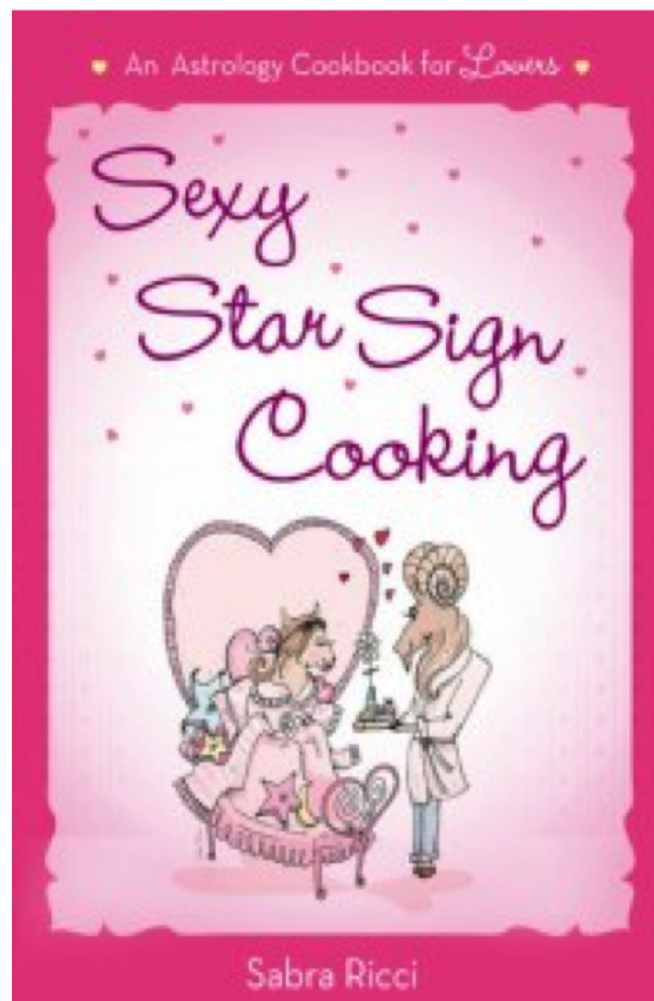
Alternating Trips

Make plans to see each other. Since travel can be expensive, try suggesting alternating who travels each time. One month or every few months you travel and the next time, your partner can travel. Depending on distance, you can set up the timeframe and frequency of the trips. You could even meet in the middle someplace romantic to split the cost of traveling.

Long distance relationships can work. They just take a little bit of work to ensure communication lines stay open. Also, your partner needs to know you were thinking of them, since you do not see each other daily.

This article was composed by TJ Barea for the team at badoo.

The Art of Making Up



by Straight Male Friend Marcus Osborne for GalTime.com

As a man I can personally attest to men's particular brand of cluelessness. The countless missed signals contributing to ineffectual attempts at communication by the Adam gender has caused many Eve's heads to explode. Sure, a gargantuan chunk

of couples' misunderstandings could be avoided with ease if women would...oh, I dunno...maybe be more direct. Instead of expecting guys to "just know", perhaps being a teensy-weensy more literal would be helpful.

Every man would agree with me.

See, guys will happily admit that they do not understand women. Conversely, women tend to believe that they've got men all figured out. Which leads to...*wait for it*...more arguments! Disagreements are bound to occur. If you and your partner don't have the occasional flare up, one of you is being lied to. But that's another argument for another day. I'm more concerned with what occurs *after* the fighting is over.

Once you stop throwing the verbal grenades, how do you get back on track? The art of making up is truly an art and like anything else, it requires commitment and work to achieve maximum efficacy. Unfortunately, getting into the fight is easier than making up. So here are a few things to consider next time you've exhausted yourself in conflict with your guy.

Resolution – It's cliché, but sometimes you accept that the other person IS another person – and you simply agree to disagree. I mean, the greatest thing in the world is the moment where the two of you get it figured out. When the light bulb comes on and you both actually *hear* what message you're each attempting to send to the other. It's vital to do this – *when it can be done*. But sometimes people simply have divergent perspectives on a particular issue, even *after* they've heard one another. But recognize that a *disagreement* with you is not generally a *judgment* of you or an indictment of your relationship. You're simply different. And that's okay.

Let It Be Over – Nothing is worse than feeling like your conflict has reached its zenith, only to have it re-ignited by a careless comment or an insensitive assertion. Don't keep

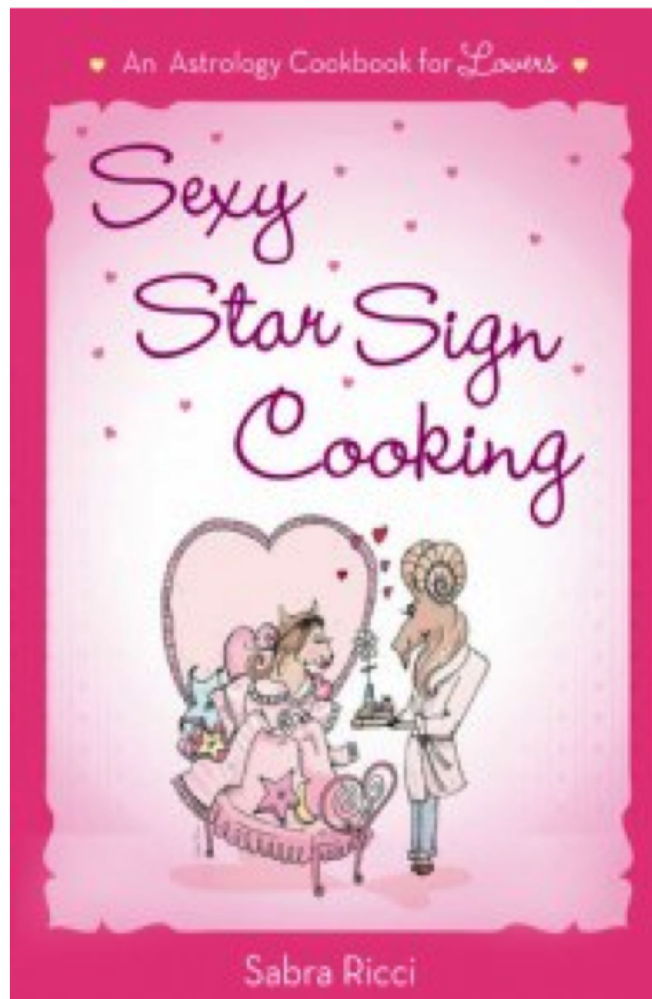
trying to “win” because ultimately no one will. By accepting that the disagreement is not a competition, but a desire to be heard, understood, and respected you will ensure that the door to reconciliation is wide open.

Reconnect – It’s vital to reconnect, I believe, as soon as possible. Some people need “space” after conflict; some need immediate, overt acknowledgement that the fighting is over. That could be in the form of an apology, a hug, or both. But something that clearly says, “I’m done arguing – and I love you.” There are those who can simply separate from the heated disagreement and proceed on with ease. Then there are those who need a deeply intimate experience (make up sex) to feel that reconnection. Whatever method works best for you and your partner, figure it out and act on it as soon as appropriate because the more time that passes between the end of the fight, the more difficult this part of making up will be.

How about you? What tips can you share that have made making up easier in your life?

Dr. Brandy Engler Says, “‘The Men on My Couch’ Taught Me That Love Is Hard and Complicated”





By Whitney Baker

When Dr. Brandy Engler opened her sex therapy practice for women in New York City, she was shocked that it was mostly men reaching out for her help. As she began working through their heartache, she discovered that she had her own issues to face as well. In *The Men on My Couch: True Stories of Sex, Love and Psychotherapy*, Dr. Engler, along with David Rensin, weave together her personal story and her patients' journeys, sharing the lessons both learned and taught throughout her first year as a psychologist. We chatted with the first-time author about her new book and what she has coming up next.

Why were you surprised that more men than women came to you after you opened your practice?

Traditionally, men tend to seek psychotherapy less than women for issues like depression or anxiety. Similarly, I hadn't seen any statistics that showed that men were more interested than women in sex therapy.

What question about love and relationships do you find your clients asking most often?

The question that they tend to come to therapy with is: Should I break up with my significant other? They feel confused about a decision, which drives them to therapy. The second thing that most often brings people to me is feeling broken-hearted and wanting to know how to stop hurting.

Once in a while, couples that are about to get married or are newly married come in as well. They want to know how to communicate or understand each other better. They're usually in pretty healthy relationships but are just looking for guidance.

What motivated you to write a book about your experiences during that first year?

Because of my time spent with these men, I gained a lot of new insights that really excited me. The more I sat with them and explored their true motivations for being there, I felt like I was uncovering answers that went far beyond the simple and conventional conclusions that we draw about men – things like men just want to have sex, men want sex more than women or men are less emotional about sex. The more I listened to them, the more I saw how vulnerable they were.

The first chapter of *The Men on My Couch* talks about a guy named David, who was a relatively happy guy. He recognized that he was cheating a lot, which led him to the question, "Am I even capable of love?" I thought that was such an

interesting question. It ended up becoming a theme in the book, which is why I put it in chapter one.

Can you tell our readers a bit of your personal story, as discussed in *The Men on My Couch*?

Originally, I wasn't going to include my personal story; I just wanted to focus on what was happening during my sessions with the men. But I realized that I was learning a great deal, which I thought would be important, particularly for female readers.

Initially, I felt taken aback by some of the men's behavior. Like the guys who were total womanizers. They made me nervous, and I started to become super jealous and unsure of myself. I had to start working through my own anxiety. I started looking at my relationship and asking myself, "Is this really love?" I had to assess my own notions about love.

Related Link: [Top 10 Dating Dos and Don'ts](#)

What lessons learned during your therapy sessions most impacted your own life?

Psychologists are necessarily trained on "what is love" – that's more of a social or philosophical question than it is psychological. So I had to really examine that idea, and throughout the book, that's really what I'm learning. I learned that love is much more of a skill and that it's actually kind of hard and complicated.

I had to learn to be patient and understanding with each of my male clients even when it was hard for me. It felt amazing when I was actually able to be very loving towards my clients. My ability to do so became very healing for them; instead of me just reaching them in a cognitive way, I was now fully present and invested in helping them.

If you had one piece of advice to share with our readers, what

would it be?

This is another theme of the book: to truly understand your own motivation. You need to become more conscious about the way that you love. Instead of really loving each other, a lot of people bring fear and deficit to a relationship. They're trying to get a need met instead of bringing fullness to the relationship. People don't realize that though; they feel some sort of want, and they go after gratifying it, so they're basically using the other person. When people become more aware of what's driving them, they become very full and happy and satisfied in their relationships.

We understand that ABC recently optioned your book for a TV series – anything else you can share with us about this deal?

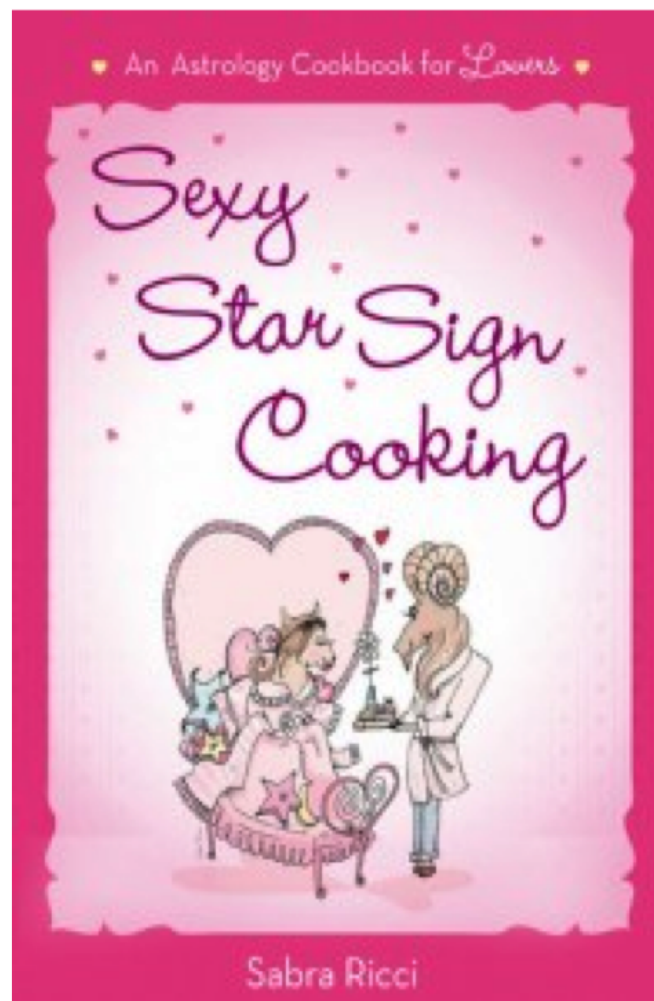
Yes! We have an amazing writer – she worked on 'Will and Grace' and 'Ugly Betty' – who wrote the pilot. In January, the networks will decide what shows to pick up, and ABC is interested this year. It was a contender this past January as well, and it made it to the final round.

And finally, you're already working on another book called *Libido*. We'd love to know more about this project!

Libido will be all about women and how they get in touch with their desire, which was the original focus of my work. It'll be conversational in tone (as was *The Men on My Couch*) and include some history as well. In the past, women were viewed as very sexual – even more sexual than men. So this narrative that we have that men are more sexual than women is only a couple of hundred years old. It's a totally manufactured story that a lot of people buy into, but it's not true.

To purchase 'The Men on My Couch,' click here. You can also learn more about the book by visiting her site or following her Twitter.

Celebrity Couples Who Have Turned Over a New Leaf



By Courtney Allen

Hollywood just may be the one place where the phrase “love is a battlefield” is an understatement. The land of fortune and fame is the forefront for some of the most scandalous relationships and splits we’ve ever witnessed.

But finding love is not the problem for these celebs; it’s keeping it. For many, passionate romances and ‘I do’s’ end as suddenly and tragically as their last. But luckily, every love story has a different ending... and some endings turn into new beginnings. These four celebrity couples came armed the second time around on the battlefield of love and came out on top:

1. Kourtney Kardashian and Scott Disick: Kourt and Scott’s relationship has been public since the debut of *Keeping up with the Kardashians* in 2007. Their relationship proved to be the most entertaining in the E! hit reality show thanks to Kourtney’s headstrong, sarcastic personality and Scott’s wacky, drunken behavior. The couple was known for their rocky relationship, the majority of the blame being placed on Scott’s infidelity and immature lifestyle. Kourt pulled the plug on Scott multiple times during their relationship as well as her pregnancy with their first child, Mason. By this point, we all thought Scott had crashed and burned for the last time. Scott finally straightened up his act after Kourtney banned him from seeing Mason. And now seven seasons later, the two are going stronger than ever with the recent birth of their second child, Penelope. If this couple can bounce back, there’s hope for us all.

Related: [Celebrity Couples Who Made Love Last](#)

2. Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth: The relationship between Miley and Liam is nothing but a match made in heaven. The grown-up Hannah Montana star met the blue-eyed Aussie in 2009 while filming *The Last Song*, where they played the roles of young adults who fell in love over summer break. As it so

happens, their love story transferred off the big-screen into real life... taking both the good and bad. In the movie, the couple actually breaks up, much like they way they did in 2010. The exact reason may not be known, but the two just couldn't stay away from eachother. Cyrus and Hemsworth gave it another try in 2011. The actor popped the question to the singer earlier this year and have been engaged for nearly six months. If there was ever a sequel to "The Last Song," this would be it!

3. Sammi Giancola and Ronnie Magro: If you've ever seen *Jersey Shore*, you know all about Sweetheart Sammi and Ronnie the Guido. The only thing their relationship was known for was extreme inconsistency and drama. Ronnie's unfaithfulness led us to believe their relationship was practically doomed. Sammi and Ronnie's relationship was without doubt unhealthy, opening doors to verbal and what appeared close to physical abuse. After breaking up countless times throughout multiple seasons, we all anticipated when their rocky romance would end for good. We now know the answer to that: apparently never. The couple is still together today. The good news is that they seem to actually be in a functioning relationship these days. Their love has proved strong enough to overcome their seemingly irreparable past.

Related: [Celebrity Couples Who Are Better Off Apart](#)

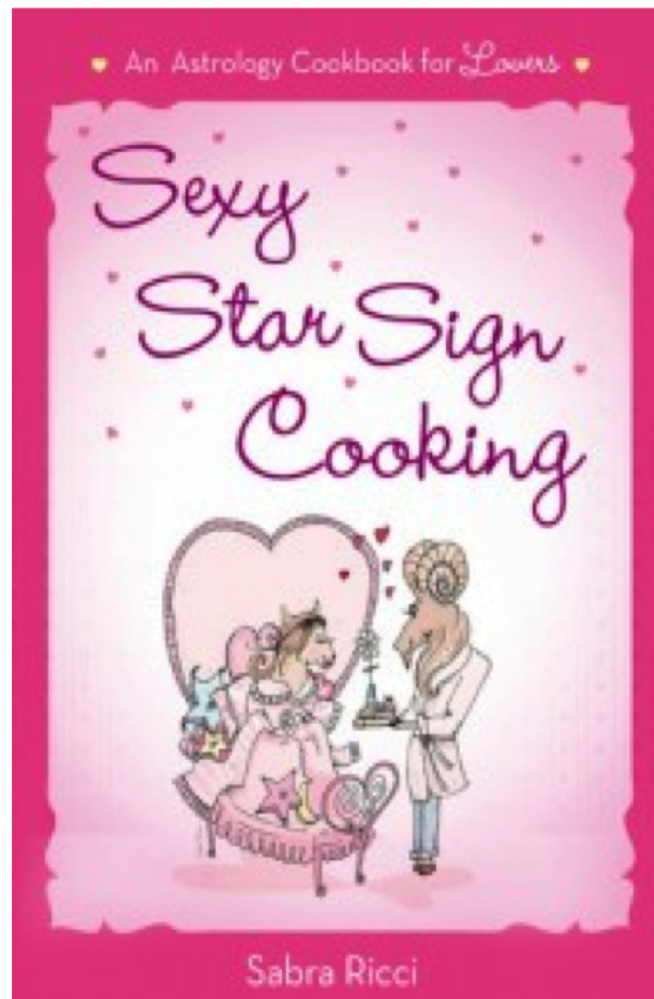
4. Audrina Patridge and Corey Bohan: Audrina Patridge is known for her role on *The Hills* but her relationship with BMX biker Corey Bohan was displayed on her VHL reality show *Audrina*. Her Aussie beau was prince charming until the show revealed one of his less favorable qualities: possessiveness. Throughout the season, Audrina struggled with her controlling boyfriend who proved to also have a bit of a temper. By the end of the season, Patridge dumped Bohan with the support of her mom. But little did we know that the couple would rekindle their flame a couple months later. Since the show's end, we haven't heard much on their relationship besides the occasional romantic

getaway or public event, but everything seems to be in the clear. They have been going steady since the summer of 2011.

What other celebrity couples have made the biggest comeback in their relationships? Share your thoughts with us!

Single Life: To Play or Not to Play





By Celeste Friedman

In recent weeks, there has been a deluge of articles, advice columns, radio and television interviews and panel discussions on infidelity, due to the General Petraeus scandal in the United States. Having invested in 38 years of marriage, Petraeus threw caution to the wind, having an affair with a woman he had employed to write his biography.

You may be asking still how Petraeus, the director of the CIA, kept his affair concealed for so long and if he actually believed he could be successful in this kind of deception.

Inevitably, America and the rest of the world became privy to a plethora of graphic details regarding the relationship with his mistress that we didn't really need to know.

Related: [5 Reasons Why Powerful Men Like Arnold Schwarzenegger Cheat](#)

On HealthGuidance.org, Elizabeth Danish began her November article, *"Dating A Married Man"* with stark reality, that a wise woman never dates a married man. She states that if you are searching for a life-long commitment, you are sabotaging your own success by snaring another woman's husband.

Are You Simply His Toy?

Once a boy is tired of playing with a toy, he abandons or throws it away. If you've run a comparison, you've most probably found that the cons out-weigh the pros when it comes to having an intimate relationship with a married man. Danish also brings home the point that a cheating man is the one in control of the relationship. He sees an affair as something that is romantically and sexually thrilling. It makes his life once again exhilarating and full of passion. Some men who cheat often have reinvigorated intimacy with their wives, according to Danish, in an attempt to cover their tracks, thus double dipping, if you will, between wives and mistresses.

Advantage- the Cheating Man

As long as he remains in his marriage, his priorities will be his family, as it should be. However, his mistress and best kept secret will be alone on Thanksgiving, Christmas and if it's that important to her, Valentine's Day. He will attempt to spend time with her before or after the holidays, to make up for not sharing in the celebrations.

Finally, Elizabeth Danish asks, *"What was your goal when you started the relationship with him?"* It is likely that you

wanted to have a lasting relationship with someone who is mature and sensitive. If you reconsider the goal, is it really achievable?

Related: [You Cheated, So Now What?](#)

Cheaters who Cheat and the Fools who Fall for Them

Stephany Alexandre, author of the book *"The Cheat Sheet"*, leads you over to the dark side and into the secret lives of philanderers by giving first-hand accounts of cheating stories. Alexandre says the cheating experts know how to justify their acts, handle guilt, cope with double lives, and juggle the search for commitment with outside gratification. What are some of the signs that say he's cheating on you? Ariana Huffington, Editor of The Huffington Post states, *'texting is the new lipstick on the collar'*.

Single 101's take . . .

Men who pursue extra-marital affairs develop a confidence that they will never get caught, especially when they meet all of their responsibilities as a husband, a father and bread winner. The majority of cheating spouses do get away with cheating on their mates. In one study, 70% of married women and 54% of married men had no idea their spouse was involved in an affair.

No matter how deep you have fallen for a married man, it is best to pull back and wait to see if he is serious about ending his marriage. If it ends in divorce, give yourself plenty of time to see if his love for you, (if that exists) is strong enough for him to emotionally invest in a real relationship with you. The emotional cost of waiting, if he's worth it, cancels out the shock and hurt you would experience if he cuts off the affair, due to the demands of keeping his marriage together and his infidelity unknown. Time will reveal true love. In some cases, does absence makes the heart grow fonder?

After publishing *Single 101: 101 Reasons to Celebrate Being Single*, I met a woman who had made a personal commitment to living out the rest of her life as a single person. She had finally freed herself of relationships that left her feeling empty and filled with disappointment. After several years, she adapted well to flying solo. If she was introduced to a man, especially someone who was also single, she looked beyond any element that would create attraction or interest. Her goal was to enjoy a life filled with true friendships where she never had to deal with a jealous spouse or boyfriend anymore.

That Unexplainable Spark

Unsuspecting to fall, she was swept off her feet by a married man who initially dropped hints of having an unsatisfactory marriage for many years and stating that it was over. As the single girl and the man grew closer, they began sharing their attraction toward each other.

In her late fifties, she does not consider herself to be desirable and have anything to physically offer a man. Self-esteem is not an issue for her within the protective walls of living independently. She has dealt with a crippling disability for many years and disturbed by the opinion of many men and women that a man will sleep with 'anything'. However, she stepped over the threshold that she was determined never to cross and set herself up for the possibility of being disenchanted, alone and ashamed of being an 'anything'.

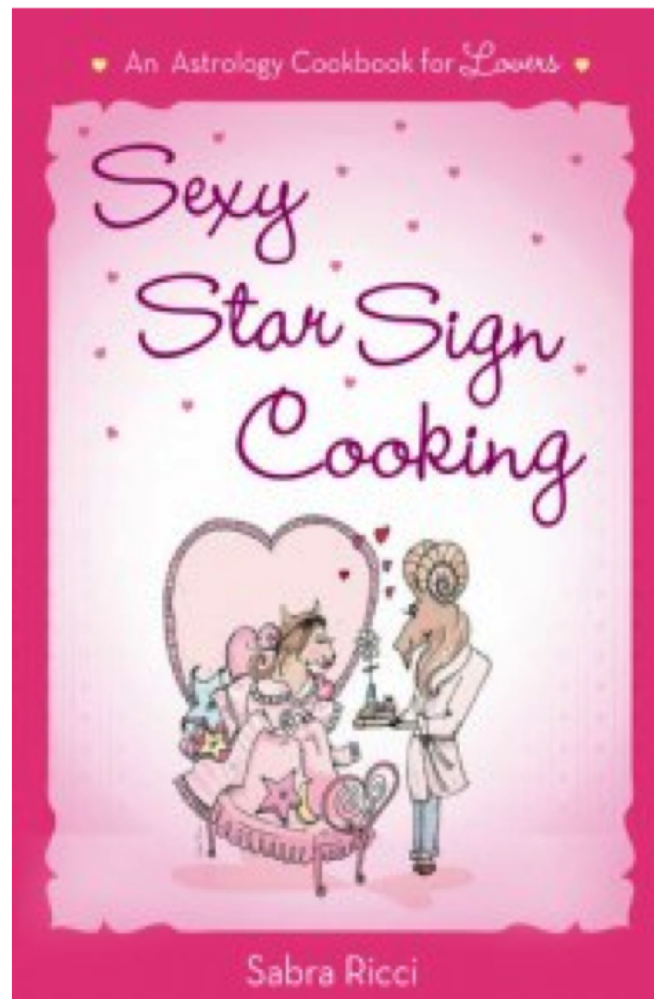
She imagines what the future would be like if she were to become the next woman he cheats on, yet she cares for him so much, she cannot bring herself to label him as a cheater. As much as we try to fight or ignore it, there is unrelenting power in attraction for the right or wrong reasons. When your feelings are so strong for someone, you are blind to the realities of deception. The need to be as close as possible to someone can overpower the risk of deeply hurting others who may become affected.

Statistics show that an extremely low percentage of these affairs develop into actual committed relationships. So, do we protect ourselves and try to prevent emotional pain or do we take a chance, follow our instinct that craves intimacy, hoping that our actions may lead to real love and happiness?

To quote the lyrics from Train's "Drive By"- *"on the up-side to a downward spiral, my love for you went viral and I loved you every mile you drove away."*

Singles and Couples: 5 Ways to Celebrate the New Year





By Sarah Ribeiro

We all have our idea of the perfect New Year's Eve: spending the night with your loved ones, dancing the night away and counting down to midnight where you can pop champagne and share a kiss with your sweetheart. While tradition may be romantic to you, sometimes breaking that tradition can give you a unique, memorable experience that can make this the best New Year ever. Cupid spoke to some experts to find ways to celebrate the holiday and resolutions to keep through the year for both couples and singles:

1. Save your money: One of the most fun-wrecking part of the New Year holiday is having to work around your budget. Andrew Schrage, co-owner of Money Crashers Personal Finance, says your best bet this holiday is to find free entertainment options in your community on New Year's Eve, or go out early and skip late-night cover charges. "Set a budget for yourself for the evening and stick to it," Schrage advises, "and if you're going out with your partner, look for budget packages that include the price of a meal, parking, and a hotel room so you won't be tempted to drink and drive."

Related Link: [Celebrate Being Single This Year](#)

2. Don't just go out – Go abroad: What better way to start the year off than spending the holiday in a different country with all of your friends? Marina Sbrochi, author of Stop Looking For a Husband: Find the Love of Your Life says, "A destination location is a great way for a group of singles to ring in a New Year – pick somewhere fun and do it up. Who knows? You just might meet someone great on New Years Eve."

3. Meet new friends: Zuhairah Scott Washington, the creator of Kahnoodle, a mobile app for busy couples, says couples can have their romantic New Year's Eve in the company of new friends: "Keep an eye on daily-deal sites like Groupon and Living Social for holiday specials on group activities like overnight ski trips, cruises, and parties. These are great for active couples who want to spend quality time together while meeting other like-minded people. These deals also will save couples a decent amount of money on a fun New Year's getaway, which is always nice right after gift-giving season."

4. Stay in with your sweetheart: While it may be tradition to ring in the year with your friends – or out with strangers – try having an intimate night with your love. "Instead of hitting the party scene," Washington says, "think about renting a private bungalow in the mountains or a sleepy town

nearby to say hello to 2013 in a private, intimate setting. Run a hot bath, add the bubbles, pop the champagne, and soak the night away in each others' arms."

Related Link: [Important Decisions to Make As a Couple](#)

5. Make reasonable resolutions: Of course, it can't be a New Year without a resolution. Both couples and singles alike can make **realistic** resolutions that they know they can keep.

Couples can start the year off by making a short-term, broader goal that's easier to keep. "Instead of promising to have date night at least once a week, try agreeing that each partner will plan the date of

their choice once a month," advises Washington. "This type of resolution has more room to breathe, and each partner can appreciate that the other is doing something for them on a regular basis."

For singles, Shrage says, "It is important to set specific goals. It's real simple to say, "I'm going to save more money this year," but it's those who put together specific strategies who have the most success. If you're looking for love, a great New Year's resolution is to improve your overall health as that will not only make you seem more "eligible" in the eyes of bachelorettes, but will also allow you to focus on finding love rather than worrying about your health."

What are some ways to celebrate the New Year? Share with us in the comments below.