

'That's My Boy' Can Teach You a Thing or Two About Surviving Your Crazy In-laws



By Jessica Smith

Adam Sandler has been playing “dad” throughout his career, ranging from an unlikely role model in *Big Daddy* to a fun-loving parent in *Grown Ups*, but *That's My Boy* might be his most unconventional role yet. At thirteen, Sandler's character knocks up his teacher and then becomes a single parent when she's put in jail. His son, played by Andy Sandberg, leaves as soon as he's eighteen and becomes incredibly successful, but his new life is threatened when his low-life dad stumbles back into the picture. As the boys attempt to develop the father-son relationship they never had, tension builds with Sandberg's fiancée, played by Leighton Meester. The trailer is full of laughs and the slapstick humor that has become Sandler's signature, which should make this a great choice for

people looking for a laugh among the summer's more serious films.

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Should You See It? This movie has some great A-list actors and an outrageous plot that will create a conversation you're going to want to be a part of.

Who To Take: This would be a great film to see with some friends who are looking for a good laugh. There's going to be some great humor coming from all the actors with some special appearances from stars like Vanilla Ice.

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Do you have a hard time getting along with your in-laws? Here are some tips to help you out:

In *That's My Boy*, Sandler plays the role of a hardly-lovable soon-to-be in-law, and Meesters' character, her family and her friends are forced to embrace Sandler's wacky personality. They have a hard time adjusting to this unpleasant surprise, especially since they're in the midst of engagement celebrations and wedding plans. Here are some tips to keep your in-laws from driving you crazy:

1. Be Civil: You're not always going to agree with your in-laws, and giving in to their wishes isn't the best solution either. Whether you decide to take their advice or not, you should at least be civil and take their thoughts into consideration.

2. Be Understanding: It may seem like your in-laws are trying to make your life hell, but they actually just want what's best for their child. Sometimes letting someone else

make those decisions can be difficult for them to grasp, so avoid pointless bickering and try to see the situation from their point of view.

3. Be Positive: Instead of constantly trying to find ways to bother your in-laws, be proactive! The easiest way to keep them from driving you insane is to build a better relationship with them so you can eventually see eye-to-eye on things. This will make life easier for both you and your partner.

Do you know the secret to a happy relationship with your in-laws? Share your comments below!

Five Ways Being Friends With Your Ex Can Ruin You





By Ashley DelBello

Let's be honest: remaining friends with your ex usually doesn't work. It might sound like a good idea in the beginning, especially if your relationship ended amicably. However, a few months later, you're sure to find yourself either pining away for them when they only see you as a friend or participating in late night hook-ups while one or both of you are dating someone else. To remind us about these consequences, here are Cupid's top five reasons why being friends with your ex isn't such a great idea:

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1. You will be single forever: Okay, so maybe that's a little extreme, but being friends with your ex can keep you from moving on and looking for someone new. Not only is hanging out with them precious time you're wasting when you could be finding someone who does want to date you, but it also prevents you from opening yourself up to the idea of being with someone else.

2. It will damage your new relationship from the start: With your ex still in the picture—even if you claim your feelings are just platonic—how can you be fully committed to your new

relationship? Give the new person a chance and dump the ex. The beginning of a new relationship is always a little hard, so don't make it any harder by keeping your ex around.

3. You will end up with a jealous partner: This is related to the second point, but it's a little more specific. Think about how your current partner must feel with your ex still hanging around. Jealousy might not be attractive, but it's definitely warranted if you're constantly spending time with your ex.

4. Your ex won't be able to move on: While this won't necessarily ruin you (unless they become a stalker), it's not fair to your ex if you're giving them a false hope that there might be something more. While it may seem innocent on your end, there needs to be time after a relationship when both of you go your separate ways.

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5. You could hook up with your ex while you're dating someone else: Whether you're the one with the new partner or they are, hooking up with each other isn't going to end well, and it's easy to consider doing so if you continue hanging out together. Remember this though, you broke up for a reason.

Maybe being friends with your ex won't always ruin you, but it's likely to cause additional heartache when you've already had your fill.

Has remaining friends with your ex actually worked? Share your comments below and let us know what you think.

EXCLUSIVE: Happily Single 'That's My Boy' Actress Abigail Klein Says Love "Will Happen When It's Supposed to Happen"



By Jessica Smith

You may have already caught glimpses of Abigail Klein cheering for the Dallas Cowboys or appearing on the CW Network's *90210*. Now, you'll be getting another peek of her in a role that she hopes will launch her acting career. The rising star, who's been compared to model Brooklyn Decker, still pinches herself when she thinks about playing a bridesmaid in the upcoming Happy Madison film, *That's My Boy*.

As a young actress, she says that she is flattered to be

working alongside A-list celebrities, including Adam Sandler, Andy Sandberg, Leighton Meester and James Caan.

“It was insane,” Klein says. “Everyone was so brilliantly funny and wonderful. That was the most pleasing thing, I think, because everyone was so welcoming.”

Klein describes being on set as the “best of both worlds,” especially considering she spent a month in Cape Cod. “It was really cool to work with these amazing actors and then watch them in their everyday lives too.” Klein explains how Adam Sandler had his children on set and how amazing it was to see him go from actor to dad. “Although I play one of the bridesmaids who is there to have fun and take part in the wedding festivities, I also got to observe how all these amazing actors interact both personally and professionally.”

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Her best piece of advice, however, came from costar Meagan Fay. “I remember chatting about how to take on the industry with the right mindset. We talked about people in the industry and how having good qualities for yourself, in your everyday life, translates into your work.

Positive things come from being positive,” Klein recalls. “At the end of the day, it’s a career, and you have to love it. Meagan had a lot of good advice.”

Although her acting career seems to be taking off, her love life remains at a standstill – something that she doesn’t really mind. Despite rumors that she’s dating legendary quarterback Troy Aikman, she claims that she’s “as single as they come.” Instead, she’s focusing on becoming a better actress and going with the flow.

“I’ve always thought of romance as something that will come along when it’s the right time, so for now, I’m focused on myself and what I’m doing with my life. Everyone says it

happens when you're not looking, but I'm at the point where I'm almost hoping it *doesn't* happen," she adds. "I want to focus on my career, and I want to focus on me. I want to experience things by myself."

She also wants to encourage her peers to think about themselves and their own happiness before they start worrying about partnering with another person. "When you do meet that person, you get to share your life and come together and be proud of the experiences that you've had as individuals. Then, you make new experiences with that person," advises Klein. "I think it will happen when it's supposed to happen. I think it should be easy and just feel right."

Don't let her fool you, though. If she landed a role with action star Chris Hemsworth, she might change her mind. "[He's] a big reason why I liked *The Avengers*," she says with a laugh.

Related: [Which Avenger Would Be the Best Date?](#)

If Klein had her choice, she would love to make an action film, but for now, the starlet is keeping an open mind. "I'm just excited to take things day by day and see what else is out there," she reveals.

Don't miss Abigail Klein in That's My Boy, which hits theaters on June 15! You can also follow her on Twitter @abigailklein.

Date Idea: Dare to Romance





By Amanda Martin

Let go of your inhibitions this weekend and do something daring with your other half. Why not face your fears together? Experiencing a riveting, heart-thumping activity with your partner is a perfect way to bond, especially when you're holding onto each other for dear life.

For truly brave couples, get off the ground and go sky diving. Many companies will videotape the whole experience, and although it's an added fee, it's worth the memory. While the actual jump may seem like too short of a date, you'll be taking your romance to new altitudes.

If jumping out of a plane at 13,000 feet in the air, plummeting to the ground at Mach speeds isn't for you, try something closer to the ground. Indoor rock climbing is a fun, gutsy activity that requires a couples effort. For anyone who's new to the sport, most venues that provide rock climbing offer lessons for beginners. When you're ready to climb up the wall, have your partner remain on the ground and hold your rope. This will be the ultimate trust building experience since they're responsible to catch you if you fall.

Whatever it is that you choose to do, get out of your comfort

zone and be there for each other in the process.

What's your idea of an adventurous weekend activity for two?
Let us know in the comments below.

Five Top Tips On How To Find "The One"



By Chris Owen

If you're single, bored and playing the field, there's never been a better time to get the job done and find a new person to date. Though most relationships start in the workplace, you can still find love anywhere if you're willing to work at it. By acting the part and grabbing fate by the throat, you can easily find "the one" and be happy in love. Here are some

simple tips to help bring you closer to the object of your affection:

Related Link: [Nine Unexpected Places to Find Love](#)

1. Be caring. Even if you're a mean or moody person, you still have a heart, so show it and get involved! Find out how you can run, walk, swim or cycle for charity. As soon as you're passing around that sponsorship form and subtly letting colleagues know you've turned over a new charitable leaf, you can guarantee that you'll be raising both dollars and pulse rates.

2. Be nice. Don't just care about causes, care about the people around you as well! Even little things like opening doors, giving compliments and being nice are all great ways to get yourself noticed by members of the opposite sex. Fill your day with smiles, laughs and cheery greetings and you're sure to be well-liked. If you adopt a pleasant attitude towards everyone, the object of your desire is sure to notice you sooner or later.

3. Be there. If your intended "catch" always takes the same bus, always brings lunch to the park or they're hitting a particular bar at five o'clock every Friday, then learn that pattern and make sure you're there, too. Of course, I'm not advocating stalking, but if you just so happen to be in the park, on the bus or down at the bar once a week, then there's no harm in that. If you slightly adjust your own schedule, you won't even have to acknowledge them. Just be there, and after a while, they'll speak to you and romance can blossom.

Related Link: [10 Ways to Get Into a Summer Romance](#)

4. Be interesting. How hard is it to read a great novel and leave it casually on the corner of your desk or go to the theater and drop it into a conversation within earshot of your "partner-in-waiting?" Learn a language, play the guitar or go

on vacation to an exotic country. If you make what you want to do seem interesting, you'll be noticed for sure.

5. Be exciting. If you're the kind of person who enjoys warm baths, NPR and an early night, then good for you. There's a lot to be said for the comforts of home, and I hope you'll be very happy with your partner Tim the cat. However, for all of you who are still looking for someone who's slightly less feline, you need to actually get out there and make it happen. Being perceived as exciting doesn't mean you have to ride a Harley Davidson or go on adventure holidays every other weekend. Stay out late every so often, watch a few live rock bands, do the odd bungee jump or get yourself pierced or tattooed. Even small things like these can make you seem like a great person to date. Plus, the more out of your comfort zone you step, the more likely you are to book some safari holidays down the road.

Remember, if you're hoping to date someone, the only one who can get you there is you! Keeping simple ideas like these in mind can turn you from single to taken before you know it.

Chris is happily married after meeting his wife in the middle of the jungle while undertaking his adventure holidays in deepest darkest Asia.

Dr. Ian Smith Reveals 'The Truth About Men'





By Nisha Ramirez

Dr. Ian Smith is known for helping people succeed in weight loss with his books, 'The Fat Smash Diet' and 'The 4 Day Detox.' But, now the author is determined to help you succeed in your relationship too. From the importance of looking good on the first date to waiting until the right time to label yourself as a girlfriend, *The Truth About Men: The Secret Side of the Opposite Sex* is a tell-it-like-it-is guide to understanding the male gender. We had the chance to talk to Smith about the inspiration for his book as well as his secrets to a successful marriage.

America knows you for your expertise in health. Why did you choose to write a book about relationships and how men think?

The inspiration behind this book came from the women I have helped over the years who would randomly ask me about men. When you help people with their weight loss journey, you often find yourself giving advice on things other than nutrition and exercise. I would get a lot of questions from women about the men in their lives and what their behavior meant. They were confused by what their partners were saying or not saying and why they were doing what they were doing. A couple of the

women said that the answers I gave them were not only correct but would be greatly appreciated by others. They recommended that I write a book to make the information accessible and direct, even if some of it might be tough to read.

I decided to do that and thus named it 'The Truth About Men.' It's not about whether men are right or wrong. It simply tells women what men want them to know – even if they won't share these things themselves.

Do men prefer au natural women or women who have had work done?

The answer is plain and simple. Men much prefer a natural body with flaws vs. one that has been surgically-enhanced. Women are making a questionable decision when they go under the knife thinking that they'll be more physically-appealing to men. Men realize that our bodies change as we age. That's a fact of life, but there's a way to look your best without having surgery. So natural is always better.

Also, men should not demand of women more than we demand of ourselves. It's totally hypocrisy for a man to want the perfect physical specimen when his gut is hanging over his belt.

You wrote that a woman will lose her man if she loses her body. How can a woman or man avoid the "boyfriend 15"?

I didn't mean that literally, of course. Men love women for more than just their body. I exaggerated to emphasize the point that maintaining your body is not just important to you but to your partner as well. Men, regardless of their age, are visual and physical creatures. I also believe that men should be held accountable to maintain their bodies; it works both ways.

As for avoiding the "boyfriend 15"? Check out the *Fat Smash Diet* – it's all in there.

Related: [How to Keep Weight Gain from Ruining Your Love Life](#)

What is the number one myth that women believe about men?

The number one myth that women believe about men is that men don't want to commit. It's not that men are afraid of commitment; they are afraid of committing to the wrong person.

There's a way to talk to men about settling down without causing fear to develop. I reveal many studies and surveys in the book that dispel a lot of myths about men. In one survey, men were asked about their opinion of the greatest male status symbol, and the number one answer was not a fancy car or beautiful women. The answer was to start a family. Men *do* want to settle down and move to that next phase, but they want to do it on their own time and on their terms. I talk about how to have this conversation without chasing him away.

Should a woman ask her boyfriend for a key to his apartment or wait for him to give her a copy?

A woman should almost never ask for a key to her boyfriend's apartment, unless there's a strong undeniable indication that he wants her to have it. A lot of men feel a need for their own space – not because something sinister is happening there but because he wants his privacy. It has nothing to do with how much he cares about you. A man's home is his retreat, and he'll give you a key once he's ready. It's better for both of you that way.

Related: [How to Communicate to Get What What You Need](#)

What do you want women to take away from this book?

Finding Mr. Right is not as difficult as you might think. He's probably right in front of you, and you don't even see him. Understanding what men are and aren't saying is key. Having some knowledge of their inner most thoughts and motivations can make a big difference. For those who have been in long-

term relationships, this book shows them that there are many ways to keep their romance fresh and exciting. The sizzle should never go flat, regardless of how long you've been together.

To learn more about how men think, you can purchase 'The Truth About Men: The Secret Side of the Opposite Sex' at Amazon. Be sure to follow Smith on Twitter and Facebook.

Five Celebrity Couples Who Had a Low Profile Wedding



By Creshawna Parker

Planning a wedding is hard work. You have to pick a date, send out invites, take engagement photos, find the perfect dress,

choose the hall, get a caterer – actually, the planning really doesn't end until the big day. And if you're a celebrity, add trying to shun paparazzi and other camera toting individuals to your to-do list and this task can become even more stressful. Contrary to this belief, thanks to reality TV and celebrity magazine contracts, some celebrities [insert Kim Kardashian here] have the pleasure of publicizing their exchanging of vows for millions of Hollywood enthused fans to see on TV in trade of cashing a multi-million dollar check. While, this gives off a semblance of an easy pay day for celebrities, these Tinseltown twosomes traded in the cameras and the public access to celebrate their intimate moment with family and close friends:

1. Beyonce Knowles and Shawn 'Jay-Z' Carter: This power couple started dating back in 2002 and after years of speculation, the duo officially tied the knot on April 4, 2008. The ceremony was followed by a lavish party thrown at the rapper's New York Tribeca apartment and was decorated with 50,000 to 60,000 white orchid blooms from Thailand. In attendance was the couple's closest family and friends including the singer's parents and sister Solange, former Destiny's Child members Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams and actress Gwyneth Paltrow. Normally a private person about her love life, the new mom stated in *People* back in January 2006, "I never pictured myself as a bride, but after my sister's wedding, I did start thinking about what kind of wedding I want. I don't think I want a big one."

2. Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon: These two lovebirds started dating in March of 2008 after Cannon appeared in the singer's music video "Bye Bye." After dating for only a few weeks, the couple said "I do" on April 30, 2008 in front of a dozen of their closest family and friends at Carey's Bahamian ocean-side estate while enjoying live Maine lobster and Dom Perignon that was flown in for the special occasion. Not only did the couple seal the deal in just a few weeks, they also marked the

event with permanent ink. “We got tattoos,” Carey told *People*. “His is on one shoulder to the other and it says ‘Mariah.’ [Mine is] on my lower back and it says ‘Mrs. Cannon.’ “

Related: [Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon: New Parents on Their Anniversary!](#)

3. Megan Fox and Brian Austin Green: It took two engagements before this Hollywood pair tied the knot in Hawaii on June 24, 2010. The couple, who met in 2004 on the set of the sitcom “Hope & Faith,” wed at the Four Seasons Hotel resort in a private ceremony while vacationing on the island. Before calling off their first engagement, Green described his ideal wedding to *People*. “Originally we were talking elopement and now we might have a few people there,” he said. Obviously a man to get what he wants, the two reportedly exchanged vows in front of a half dozen guests including Green’s son, Kassius.

4. Jessica Alba and Cash Warren: When it comes to low-profile weddings, this actress and producer take the cake. Opting out of having a glamorous Hollywood wedding, these two tied the knot May 19, 2008 at the Beverly Hills courthouse’s ceremony room under an arch of green silk foliage and white flowers, with Alba dressed in a long blue gown and her hair in a ponytail. Although the pair considered having a fall wedding, they were evidently satisfied with keeping their nuptials low-key.

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5. Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck: There was nothing gaudy about this couple’s wedding. Married on beautiful Parrot Cay of the Turks and Caicos Islands, a makeup-less Garner, wearing her hair in a loose ponytail wed Affleck on June 29, 2005, in a private ceremony with no family-including their parents- or friends in attendance. “They didn’t need or want a crowd. They just wanted each other,” Affleck’s pal, director Kevin Smith,

told [People](#). Perhaps, the secluded time away from the Hollywood glam and cameras made for the best wedding gift for the couple. “They’re in it for one another, not for anyone else,” Smith said.

Who are some other celebrity couples that had a low profile wedding? Share your comments below.

Making the Most Out of Your Long Distance Relationship



By Grace Pamer

For some people, a long distance relationship can seem like a tremendous hurdle to overcome, and many couples who are apart frequently see these relationships as positive instead of

negative. Celebrities are no exception.

One celebrity couple that speaks openly about the benefits of long distance partnerships is Victoria and David Beckham. Their busy careers frequently keep them apart, forcing them to have separate homes oceans apart. However, they feel the distance doesn't take from their love. Instead, they think that the extra space enhances it.

The key to understanding how to make the most out of your long distance relationship is to change your way of thinking. A long distance relationship can improve your life! Take a look at some of the many benefits:

Related: [Jesse James and Kat Von D Split Due to Distance](#)

1. It Can Lead to a Happier You.

Having a lot of time to yourself, as long as you use it to your advantage, can lead to a healthier mind, body and spirit. You'll have more time to follow your own dreams. You can work on your career or further your education, so that when the time comes for you and your partner to settle down, you'll be in a better place in your life. You can take time to care for your body by getting fit or relaxing in a hot bath, which will enhance your self-esteem and overall well-being.

2. You Get to Have it "All."

Many singles yearn for companionship and love, while many people who are in relationships yearn for the freedom they had when single. In a long distance relationship, you have both a loving, supportive partner and time to yourself. It's the perfect combination of some of the best elements of single life and dating.

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

3. No One Will Resent the Relationship.

If you talk to many unhappy couples, you will hear stories

like, "I was going to get my Master's degree, but I met my love and settled down." In the passion of love, it is easy to put aside dreams because it feels as if nothing else matters. But years later, that can impact a relationship negatively. There is plenty of time for you to pursue becoming your own person when your partner is far away.

4. It Can Make the Relationship Stronger and Healthier.

When two people in love are also fulfilling their own hopes and dreams, that positive energy will spill over into their relationship. A couple is only as strong as the two individuals who form it. If either partner feels they have no free time, missed out on their dreams or lack fulfillment, the relationship is bound to suffer.

5. You Can Still Keep the Romance Alive.

Being apart doesn't mean that you'll be treating each other like strangers. You can find ways to connect every day, and even tell your lover goodnight each night. With modern advancements like Skype, you can even see each other's faces and talk about your day while eating dinner at the table. Don't think of these types of relationships as dispassionate and lonely! Absence can make the heart grow fonder. You'll be even more passionate and romantic if you find unique ways to stay bonded though physically separated.

For reasons like these, long distance relationships can definitely be very healthy. Being able to be the best "you" while having a deep, loving commitment to one another can truly be the best of both worlds.

Grace Pamer is the author of www.RomanceNeverDies.com, one woman's on going quest to get the world reacquainted with the art of writing love letters.

The Independent Woman: Do We Need A Do-Over?



By SMF Marcus

Osborne for GalTime.com

If you've been a regular reader of StraightMaleFriend.com or if you've been following this column for the past year or so, you already know that one of my steadfast beliefs is individual independence.

In other words: "Be honestly you."

When it comes to love, dating and relationships, the very best advice anyone could ever offer is for you to be who you truly are. But what happens when being yourself is pushing your love one away?

That simply means that when it comes to love, dating and relationships, the very best advice anyone could ever offer is

for you to be who you truly are, as opposed to what you believe people want/expect you to be. Sure you can (and many people do) fool the masses into buying into some image you've manufactured. Pretending to be "outdoorsy" when you're a couch potato. Acting as though you love foreign cinema when you abhor the idea of reading anything more than the credits during your favorite motion pictures. Passing yourself off as less accomplished than the high-powered executive that you are in order to massage the ego of your latest date.

Related: [Don't Objectify Me... Just Tell Me I'm Hot!](#)

I've long supported women going out and exercising their power in their communities, in the workplace, in the home and in the marketplace. Why not? You've earned it. You've gone to school, fought for your education, worked your way up the corporate ladder and established yourself as a pillar of the community and yet... you're still unfulfilled. For all that you've achieved, there's still a glaring vacancy on your life's resume.

Unmarried and childless... and full of regret. Does that description fit you?

I've made no secret of my deep respect and admiration for the woman who get out there and chase their independence, but on more than one occasion recently, I've had heavy conversations with women who harbor some real regrets about their life choices.

We've gone from a culture that once pushed the idea that women needed to stay at home, raising kids, cooking dinners, and pampering their husbands in order to society to thrive. In essence, women were considered domestic servants with benefits. With the rise of the women's movement, we've reached a point in time where having women outside the household is not a luxury but in most cases, a requirement for the survival of families.

Related: [Has Feminism Ruined Relationships?](#)

Now, maybe this is a small group of professional women feeling the angst of being over 35 and unmarried and without kids, but it's an issue that deserves a conversation. My friend lamented, "Marcus, I'm 40 years old. I'm not married. I don't have kids. And I WANTED all those things, but it may be too late now. Most of the decent guys are already married and even if I met someone TONIGHT, fell in love, got married, and had a baby (if I can still even HAVE a child) it'll still be another two years."

She went on to say that at a young age she decided that she would pursue a career and get settled professionally before settling down to start a family. But throughout the course of her life, career consumed her because that's what she was always advised as a young girl: marriage and family should come after you've established yourself.

Related: [The Truth About Single Men and Strong Women](#)

In hindsight, my friend was wishing that she had given more weight to that life goal. Her feeling was that if she had to do it all over again, she'd have put more stock in long-term relationships and perhaps gotten married and even had those kids. In her mind, even if the marriage hadn't worked out she'd still have had that experience and the children to show for it.

I found her reasoning interesting, but I found her belief that her pursuit of independence had actually been an obstacle to her long-term happiness... absolutely fascinating.

Where do you stand? After all your success, are you feeling like you'd go back and make different choices if you could?

Is That You, Mr. Right?



By Melissa Caballero

Is there such a thing as 'Mr. Right?' Hollywood and the movie producers have made us to believe so! It is very difficult to sift through reality and sweep our fantasies under the rug when it comes to our own personal love lives. We watch our favorite female celebrities being lifted off their feet (many times) on the big screen while riding off into the night hand-in-hand with a George Clooney or Zac Efron while we are left drooling and fantasizing about our own love story. We leave the movie theater captivated by this notion of 'Mr. Right,' and we're deceived by love more than ever. Let's take a look at a few important factors to keep in mind when aiming to find your 'Mr. Right':

1. Reality vs. the big screen. It's important to take the concept of 'Mr. Right' off of a pedestal. While finding love is a wonderful thing and we are creatures who were made to share this emotion, the reality of how love can exist escapes us. We take mental notes while watching movies and make bullet points of all the things we think are important to find in a man, ultimately fabricating in our minds this person we call 'Mr. Right.' We all need to accept that love comes in many different shapes and sizes and usually in the most unexpected places. These places are often times not found in the movies. Keep an open mind, and you may find yourself pleasantly surprised by what comes your way.

Related: [Do Fairytale Relationships Only Exist in Hollywood?](#)

2. The man resume. When you're dating or analyzing the relationship you are already in, we all have a set of standards and guidelines. However, if you only like his qualities because they look good on paper, you may get caught up in thinking he is "the one." We get so wrapped up in the fantasies we have created for ourselves that we forget to see him for who he really is instead of someone you may or may not be able to grow with in the future.

3. Love yourself. You are the most important person, so be right for yourself first. Finding the right man will not make you happy in the long run, despite what you may think. A man will not fill the voids in your life, so that's why it's essential to love who you are inside and out, alone or in a relationship. Whether your physical appearance has you troubled or you find yourself wishing you went back to school for another degree; go out and do something about it! Once you embrace yourself for everything you are, you will shine, and that is sexy to any guy.

Related: [It's Time to Stop Asking, 'When Will It Be My Turn?'](#)

4. Never settle. You should never feel that you have to modify

yourself in order to fit the needs of any man. If you are not being yourself in an effort not to lose him, it will start to catch up to you and cause an eruption of frustration and unhappiness. While a man may not be able to fill our internal voids, he should be encouraging you to be yourself, and no conflicts should arise because of it. In the beginning of a relationship, those couples that are right for each other will come across far less problems and issues. And, even when you do face troubles, getting out of it will be must faster. When you find the right person to share your life with, they will only enhance your true self.

What do you look for when searching for 'Mr. Right?' Share your comments below.

Why You Don't Need the Perfect Body





By Lisa Moore

Many women obsess about having the ideal body, model looks and flawless hair. In fact, one survey suggests that 66 percent of women are so unhappy with their bodies that, despite the recent recession, they would spend money to achieve a perfect look. 90% of the 3,000 women questioned said their bodies depressed them, and 75% of women think about their shape and size every day. Gill Todd, a clinical nurse specialist at Bethlem Royal Hospital in South London, says that women are getting the message that they need to be thin in order to be happy and successful, especially in the romance area. It seems like women hate their bodies.

The question is, why should they? Why do women want these “perfect” bodies? Here are some misconceptions that put unneeded stresses on a female’s relationships and keep her from loving who she is:

Related: [Kasey Kahl Says He’d Love Vienna With Any Size Nose](#)

1. There is only one acceptable body type.

One beauty website invited shoppers to select their favorite famous body parts, and then combined the results to create the ultimate celebrity. This pseudo-celebrity ended up as a

combination of Kate Middleton's hair, Cheryl Cole's eyes, Keira Knightley's cheekbones and Gwyneth Paltrow's chin. Her eyebrows were shaped like Megan Fox's, she had Kate Beckinsale's nose, Angelina Jolie's lips and the chest of Kelly Brook.

The fact is, there isn't a single body type that is perfectly appealing. Think about it: The fact that two opposite procedures, breast augmentation and breast reduction, are just as popular is concerning, as it supports the idea that it's impossible to have universally "acceptable" breasts. So, why try?

2. Thinner is always better.

Though society often seems to think that being incredibly skinny is the perfect choice, an Australian study revealed that a man's ideal female shape was represented by those of average women, not by supermodels. One woman explained that men can't help loving women who have curves. They're genetically drawn to rounded women, because curves signal a woman who will successfully conceive, carry and then nurture a man's offspring. It's a sign of fertility.

And, she adds, who can blame guys for loving curves? They're more comfortable than being poked by sharp elbows and holding a set of ribs.

Related: [How to Keep Weight Gain from Ruining Your Love Life](#)

3. Cosmetic surgery will please your partner.

Almost two-thirds of women believe that their love lives would be better if they had better looking body parts. Similarly, many women believe that cosmetic surgery will make their partners happy. A 42-year-old book-keeper stated that she probably would not have had a breast enhancement if it hadn't been for her man. She said that he wasn't as much in love with her as she was with him. Surgery might help, she thought. Did

it, though? What do men really like?

The truth is, guys find a too-perfect look boring. A gap-toothed smile like Georgia May Jagger's, or Alexa Chung's style of messy hair can actually serve to keep up your man's interest level. Many women also overlook the fact that men appreciate beauty in their hair, eyes, skin, neck curves and even belly buttons. Chances are that your man already loves how you look. You should, too.

So relax, ladies, and realize that the natural you is more enchanting to your man than a frazzled you that's stressed over your parts. Love who you are, and your man will too.

Lisa Moore, senior editor of Interactive Service Group, has written several articles focusing on women, body image and parenting issues. Her articles have appeared on number of sites including HerExtra.com, ProfessorsHouse.com, and Eurweb.com.

5 Ways Facebook Can Help Mark Zuckerberg Keep His Marriage Strong





By Amy Osmond Cook

On May 19, Mark Zuckerberg married longtime girlfriend, Priscilla Chan, in a private ceremony the day after Facebook went public. She wore a traditional white wedding gown, and he even put on a suit for the occasion. As the [Washington Post](#) reported, fewer than 100 guests were in attendance, and they all arrived thinking they were celebrating Chan's graduation from medical school.

Mark and Priscilla are famously low-key and grounded. For the past nine years, their relationship has grown right along with Facebook. In fact, Mark and Priscilla can use principles learned from Facebook to strengthen their personal relationships. Below are five Facebook-inspired ways that the couple can keep their marriage strong:

Related: [7 Ways to Flirt in a Web 2.0 World](#)

1. Keep your relationship status public:

No one wants to be left wondering what about his or her relationship status. Experts agree that communicating your feelings is a vital component of a good relationship. Nothing is worse than coming home to a spouse who is angry but won't tell you why. A person who withholds his feelings to

manipulate a partner is similarly despicable. So whenever possible, Mark and Priscilla need to check in with each other and keep their feelings out in the open.

2. Don't invite strangers into your inner circle:

When you're married, you have to be each other's biggest fan and keep any naysayers at arms' length. Mark does this well. He recently gave ABC News a glowing report about how hard Priscilla worked to make sure her pediatric patients were well cared for: "She'll see them getting sicker and then all of a sudden an organ becomes available and she comes home and her face is all lit up because someone's life is going to be better because of this." Clearly, Mark is proud of his wife, and the feeling is mutual. No matter who you are, there are always going to be haters who criticize your spouse or your relationship. You just have to have enough sense not to "friend" them.

3. Don't waste your time looking at other people's profiles:

There is no such thing as a perfect relationship. Most people don't like to air their issues out in the open, and serious problems can exist underneath the gloss of a perfectly touched-up family portrait. A friend of mine had long-term problems in her marriage. When it finally ended in divorce, people were stunned. "I had no idea there was a problem," friends said repeatedly. This couple kept their problems private, but they were still there eating away at the relationship. So the next time your frenemy posts an Instagram photo of herself and her movie star husband vacationing in Italy, remember that appearances can be deceiving.

4. Block the games:

There are endless ways to waste your time on Facebook. Messages, comments, causes, alerts, Farmville—so many ways to become distracted. My personal nemesis is Words with Friends. The same holds true in a relationship. Whether it's working

long hours or going out excessively with the girls, anything that distracts a couple from their relationship is a threat. Priscilla knows this. *The Daily Beast* reports that she is mitigating the workaholic tendencies of her husband by laying down some ground rules for the relationship: 100 minutes of alone time and one date per week.

Related: [Don't Just Drop Hints When You Want Commitment](#)

5. “Like” everything:

It's easy to get bogged down in what is wrong with a relationship instead of what is right. When your three-year-old clogs the toilet with a Barbie and the boss is making extreme demands at work, it's hard to look at your partner with the same starry-eyed perspective as you did when you were dating. But keeping a positive attitude is one of the best things you can do for a relationship. As Norman Vincent Peale outlines in his famous book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, the key to becoming a positive, happy person is to be aware of your thinking patterns and replace negative thinking with positive thinking. For example, instead of saying, “My husband is so messy,” look at the flip side: “I'm so glad my husband doesn't bark at me about every little household chore.” Whenever possible, give your relationship a big thumbs-up.

Mark and Priscilla are off to a good start. The Facebook founder is famously low-key (still donning his hoodie from college), and his new wife is focused on humanitarian causes. As Priscilla's former science teacher said to the *Daily Mail*, they want to change the world together and are blessed to have the resources to do it. With a few Facebook-inspired relationship reminders, this royal couple of the tech world can beat the odds and establish a secure foundation for a happy, healthy marriage.

Amy Osmond Cook, Ph.D. is a faculty associate at Arizona State University, where she teaches Communication and English

classes. She is the publisher of Sourced Media Books and co-author of *Hope After Divorce* and *Full Bloom: Cultivating Success*. Amy and her husband, Jeff, have five children and look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

The Single Love-Guru: Author Devan Sipher Discusses Relationships and 'The Wedding Beat'



By Joseph Weissgold

Dating and searching for “the one” is an imperfect art. Gavin Green, the protagonist from Devan Sipher’s debut novel *The Wedding Beat* (New American Library), knows this better than anyone. As a sentimental, neurotic, middle-aged, Jewish man, he tries to use his profession as a wedding columnist to find a strategy to fix his own miserable love life.

The author, Devan Sipher, is also a single, Jewish wedding-columnist at the *New York Times*. But thanks to his years of romantic journalism, this book can be read as a dating guide for sensitive men as well as for its witty prose and fast-paced story.

We had a chance to speak with Sipher, and he revealed some of the conclusions he’s drawn about love, relationships and marriage based on the many interviews he’s done with happy couples on their road to tying the knot.

Why are some singles so anxious to get married?

I could say it’s cheaper to be married, but that’s not a very romantic response. Really, most people crave love. As a journalist who focuses on weddings, I learned how true that is for both sexes. On the other hand, people also aspire to show that their relationship is real, and somehow, marriage, that ceremony, the license, the certificate, it’s proof that it’s not illusory. It’s not easy to be in a relationship, but making the vow in front of a community means there are people supporting you and ultimately supporting your relationship.

Have you ever been hired to cover a wedding where people ended up asking you advice?

Yes, people ask me, but I try not to give it. I would never give someone advice in terms of whether they should or should not get married. Usually, that’s just jitters, and I have to reassure them that it isn’t unusual to get scared. I let people talk, and I listen to what they have to say. By asking

questions about their relationship, I get what I need for the story, but it also gives them what they need. When they focus on the relationship rather than the big wedding or even the marriage, everything becomes a little less frightening.

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

In *The Wedding Beat*, your protagonist Gavin struggles with a lot of advice that he receives. Is the problem the formulaic advice or just the way Gavin applies it?

Gavin's biggest issue is that he has problems making choices, which I may or may not have in common with him. My favorite line of my book is, "Everything in life is a choice, and I'm choosing to be happy." The dating-guru in the book tells Gavin to "be the bee," referring to the idea that a woman is a flower and a man is a bee. The bee goes to the flower; the flower doesn't go to the bee. It sounds cliché and somewhat ridiculous, and yet, there's a certain logic there. And actually, there are women I've talked to who agree. You can analyze entire relationships with that one sentence. Things become cliché for a reason.

Having heard so many successful love stories, are there any common themes that you've come to recognize?

Yes. Love is not something that hits you over the head with a choir singing in the background. What you get is a spark, and then it's up to you to decide what to do with that. That spark can happen at any time. I've done stories of people who met just passing each other on the street. I've done stories where they met when they were six years old. I did a story about a woman, who was an MIT professor; she fell in love for the first time when she was like sixty years old. It really is different times for different people. Another true saying is love is blind. People often describe their [partner](#) as very good looking or incredibly funny; sometimes they're right, and sometimes they're wrong, but it's beautiful because in each

other's eyes, they really are that way.

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

Are there any red flags, that you've seen, that can determine if a marriage is doomed before it even begins?

Putting people on a pedestal is the biggest danger. If they can't say anything specific about what they like about the person or they just say that they like the way they are treated, well, that doesn't seem like enough to sustain itself for a long-term relationship. A lot of times, it has to do with falling in love with the *idea* of the person instead of who they really are.

What's the final verdict: love comes when you give 110 percent or love comes when you stop trying?

The spark comes when you're open to the experience. It can be a focused openness, but more often than not, the challenge is to not become obsessed. Instead, choose to relax, and just let things happen. On the other hand, when it does happen, it does take effort. So to say, "I'm just going to count on fate to make it happen" – I don't think that works either. Like in my book, Gavin meets Melinda, but then she gets away. The trick is to not let that person slip away. In short, relationships require effort, but feelings should not.

Visit Amazon to pick up your copy of Devan Sipher's new novel The Wedding Beat. You can also meet Devan at the Writing About Love & Passion Panel on June 20th from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. EST at the NYU Bookstore. To keep up with him, follow him on Twitter or Facebook.

What to Wear to a Summer Wedding



By Sarah Thaman

Spring has arrived, and along with it comes prime wedding Season! If you have a relative or friend getting married this summer (and you didn't get called to bridesmaid duty), you may be wondering what appropriate attire might be. How can you dress to impress while still embracing the summer style? While the rules vary, here are some great ideas for three common types of weddings: Formal, Semi-Formal, and Casual/Beach.

Formal: Formal, or black-tie, affairs typically call for full-length dresses. Channel your inner goddess with a color block maxi paired with a headband and silver bangles. Mint green is a hot trend, and pairing this hue with an emerald jewel tone make it ideal for day or night. Wear your hair down, or stun with a low, loose bun. A small black clutch is a perfect

complement, holding all of your night's necessities.

Related Link: [What to Wear on a First Date](#)

Semi-Formal: Semi-formal weddings are often harder to decipher. It's always better to be more dressed up than underdressed, so opt for a flirty cocktail dress. A chiffon dress with bright-colored accessories will always hit the mark. Nails are another great accessory – and they often go overlooked. Choose a pair of neutral peep toe heels and perfectly pedicured toes for an added pop of color.

Casual/Beach: If the event calls for casual attire, such as a beach wedding, choose a feminine sundress. This is a perfect opportunity to sport a trendy print such as florals. Dress it up with a pair of adorable wedges, or dress it down with a pair of flat sandals. A peachy cheek and a cute, pastel bag complete the look.

Related Link: [What to Wear to Meet His Family](#)

When choosing a color of dress, consider when the wedding will take place. If the event is during the day, opt for lighter colors. Remember that while you want to look your best, this is the bride's day. Out of courtesy, stay away from ivory, or all-white dresses. If the event is taking place in the evening, consider darker, jewel tone frocks. Follow these tips and you can't go wrong. Who knows, you may just end up meeting your future husband – possibly a groomsman?

Author Bio: While I may not be a professional stylist, I pride myself on choosing fashion that looks polished and classic, and I'm always helping friends choose their date outfits. Although I'm a writer for HandbagHeaven.com by day, outside of work I take joy in being a matchmaker, a newlywed, and a momma to my precious puppy, Luna.

Host a 'Bachelorette' Viewing Party



By Andrea Woroch

I don't watch much television, aside from an hour of news to go along with my morning latte. Yet there's something about this sappy, reality dating show that makes me scramble to the couch every Monday evening. Though I hate to admit it, I eagerly awaited the premiere of season eight of 'The Bachelorette' as America's favorite past contestant and single mom, Emily Maynard, took the stage in her quest for love.

Though Emily weeded out some of the weirdos in the first episode, there's still plenty of drama, tears, exotic destinations and heartfelt goodbyes to enjoy. So whether you're looking to gossip with some gal pals over your favorite

eligible bachelor or you simply have nothing better to do on Monday nights, consider hosting a 'Bachelorette' viewing party, using these tips to make it memorable and fun.

Related: [Reality Stars Who Found Real Love](#)

1. Create an Entrance: What's a 'Bachelorette' party without any roses? To set the mood, hand out red roses to each guest upon arrival. Depending on the number of friends attending, you may consider red carnations as an inexpensive alternative. Otherwise, pick up some faux flowers from a nearby craft supplier.

2. Dress to the Nines: Request Rose Ceremony-appropriate attire. Ladies should come dressed in fancy gowns, and men should sport a suit or coat with a tie.

Related: [First Date Outfit Ideas: Dinner and Drinks](#)

3. Be Refreshing: 'Bachelor' and 'Bachelorette' contestants are always sipping on a cocktail, enjoying a glass of wine or toasting with champagne, so decide what drink you'd like to serve at your party. Ask guests to chip in with their favorite beverage to keep costs under control, and pick up inexpensive plastic flute glasses from the dollar store.

4. Serve Exotic Food: In addition to festive cocktails, you may also consider offering ethnic finger foods based on the show's upcoming destination. Check out Pinterest for recipe ideas, and load up your supermarket loyalty card with mobile coupons from CouponSherpa.com to score savings.

5. Drink Up: Reality TV drinking games are an exciting way to get your friends into the show, especially those who could care less about which bachelor is sent home. Identify a common word or phrase that gets overused by a specific character, and ask everyone take a sip of his or her drink each time it is said.

6. Vote On It: Ask guests to vote on which bachelors they think will be picked for a one-on-one date and which guys will be sent home during the Rose Ceremony. Make sure that anyone who read a spoiler blog keeps his or her lips sealed!

Related: [Date Idea: Couple Up with Game Night](#)

7. Try Trivia: During commercials, quiz your guests on their [‘Bachelor’](#) and ‘Bachelorette’ IQ. Grab details about past episodes and contestants on TV.com, and create a trivia game using index cards.

8. Offer Goody Bags: You can’t play games without handing out prizes to the winners. Keep it cheap with inexpensive treats like candy and candles for the goody bags.

Andrea Woroch is a nationally-recognized consumer and money-saving expert who helps consumers live on less without radically changing their lifestyles. From smart spending tips to personal finance advice, she transforms everyday consumers into savvy shoppers. Woroch has been featured on top news outlets such as Good Morning America, NBC’s Today, MSNBC, New York Times, Kiplinger Personal Finance, CNNMoney and many more. You can follow her on Twitter for daily savings advice and tips.

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‘Snow White and the Huntsman’ is a Blockbuster Rooted in

Romance



By Matthew Dougherty

Yeah, yeah, yeah, it looks like an action movie, but you and your youth know that any story about Snow White must be centered on romance. The film actually focuses on a love triangle between Snow White, the Huntsman and Snow White's childhood love, Prince William. The evil queen orders The Huntsman to kill Snow White, but he takes pity on her and decides to help her defeat the queen. But who will Snow White choose? The Huntsman or the safety of the prince?

Starring *Twilight*'s Kristen Stewart as Snow White, this is likely to be one of the highlights of the summer:

Related: [Which Avenger Would be the Best Date?](#)

Should You See It? Yes, considering the romance, the action and the visuals, this is a must-see film for the summer.

Who To Take: Anyone really. Your significant other might enjoy the action and special effects. Your friends might enjoy the romance. With a PG-13 rating, you can also take your younger siblings or even your mother. It's a blockbuster designed to appeal to everyone.

Related: ['I Don't Know How She Does it,' Featuring Sarah Jessica Parker](#)

Do you have two people vying for your affections? Here are some tips on how to handle the situation:

In *Snow White and the Huntsman*, Snow White has two men for which she has feelings. These choices can be extremely difficult in life as two people usually offer completely different things. Here is how you can decide which one is "fairest of them all":

1. Consult the people who know you best: Sometimes our friends and family know what is good for us more than we do. Perhaps they can point you in the right direction.

2. Think of the future: What is your future with each of these people? Does one look a lot brighter than the others? If so, then you have your answer.

3. Know yourself: Look at both people and simply figure out who makes you happiest. You have to determine who is best for you. If you don't do this, you could end up regretting your decision for the rest of your life.

Have you ever had experience with a love triangle in your own life? Share your experiences below.

Celebrity Couples Who Let Money Ruin Their Relationship



By Lily Rose

It's 2.6 inches wide and 6.1 inches long, and we all want it. We're not sure what you're thinking, but we're talking about the Benjamin's, dough, loot, c-notes, otherwise known as ... money. The green stuff may not be the root of all evil, but it certainly is the root of a lot of relationship woes. Just ask these celebrity couples:

1. Sir Paul McCartney and Heather Mills: In June 2002, model Heather Mills and former Beatles member, Sir Paul McCartney, married, but then divorced just four years later. Money may not have ruined this couple's marriage, but it certainly made an amicable post break-up relationship seem improbable. Once the divorce papers were filed, the mudslinging started. Mills branded McCartney an abusive drug user, while she was labeled

as a high-class prostitute. Watching the nasty insults and allegations flying back and forth was like watching a fast moving tennis match—it left the public dizzy and a bit nauseous. With a model on one side of the court and music royalty in the other, our bets were on McCartney. Mills ended up with a £24.3 million settlement, a mere fraction of McCartney's total net worth.

2. Rihanna and Chris Brown: It's all in the tweets, folks. Pop star Rihanna and long time ex-beau, singer Chris Brown, may be doing a little something-something on the down low. Brown's new girlfriend, aspiring model, Karrueche Tran, and Rihanna have even engaged in a little social media sparring on Twitter. If Rihanna and Brown are privately seeing each other, money is a likely factor in their unwillingness to publicize their reconciliation, as Rihanna fans may never forgive the pop princess for taking back her abusive ex. And seeing Rihanna and Brown together is just one more reminder of Brown's assault conviction— a reminder his career may not survive.

Related: [Rihanna Explains Why She's Still in Contact with Chris Brown](#)

3. Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson: No one can argue that reality television is financially lucrative. But, many celebrity couples pay the ultimate price – their relationship. Just ask Jon and Kate Gosselin, Travis Barker and Shanna Moakler or Carmen Electra and David Navarro. Maybe it's the stress of having each of your private moments taped and shared with the public, or maybe it's having a camera crew following you around, hoping for controversy. Who knows? But one thing is crystal clear – couple-centered reality TV shows are almost always a precursor for divorce. For singer Nick Lachey and *Fashion Star* judge, Jessica Simpson, however, divorce may not have been such a bad thing. On July 15, 2011, Lachey married television host, Vanessa Minnillo and on May 1, 2012, Simpson and fiancée, Eric Johnson welcomed their daughter, Maxwell.

Related: [What Attracts Us to Bad Boys?](#)

What are some other celebrity couples who let money get in the way? Share your ideas below.

Date Idea: Cuddle while Counting the Stars



By Amanda Martin

There's nothing more romantic than lying with your significant other under a big, fluffy, cashmere blanket while stargazing in the great outdoors.

Since the best stargazing begins about an hour after sunset, you can have an early dinner and then head to your area's best location for admiring the bright lights. If you live in a

populated area, try to get to the outskirts of town so you and your honey can admire the brilliantly-lit night sky. If getting out of the city is impossible, you can try moon gazing instead. For some added romance, bring along a bottle of chilled chardonnay, music and light fare to nibble on.

As the sun sets, the stars will become more visible and you'll want to have binoculars in order to get a closer look.

Another good idea is to invest in a constellation map so the two of you can tell the difference between Zenith and Polaris.

You could even make a game out of figuring out the different patterns.

In the midst of enjoying the starry night together, be sure to communicate openly. Look out for shooting stars, and don't forget to make a wish.

What's your idea of a perfect starry night? Share with us by commenting below.

When Dates Go Bad: 5 Ways to Find the Funny in Dating





By Sujeiry Gonzalez

We've all had our share of bad dates. Even gorgeous celebrities like Katherine Heigl have dished on terrible romantic encounters. She admitted to once having an awkward date with a personal trainer, who not only gave her his headshot, but also shaved his legs. Total turn off!

My latest bad date was with a Miami artist who was new to New York City. I met him at Bryant Park and demanded dinner, as opposed to sitting on a bench with a basket of fruit. He obliged, and we ended up at BBQ's in Times Square. As he discussed his career goals in a monotone voice (I thought I was on a date with Ferris Bueller's English teacher), I realized I was on yet another bad date.

So, what can we do in this common situation? For my survival, I decided to find the funny in the ever present bad date. Here's how you can, too:

Related: [Spring Cleaning: 5 Types of Guys to Dump](#)

1. Imagine yourself on a deserted island.

If you picture this, you can appreciate your date's company even when he chews with his mouth open. Besides, wouldn't you

rather have someone to laugh ~~at~~ with than be alone?

2. Chow down as if you're with a girlfriend.

You don't need to impress a bad date, so why not unbutton your jeans and order a real meal? On my date with Miami Monotone Man, I ordered a quarter chicken, French fries and a piece of warm cornbread. Leave the salad for the one you want to impress!

3. Drink yourself into a tizzy.

Drinking will make your date seem funnier, hotter and much more pleasant. When he slurps his soda, slurp your drink. When he picks up his cell phone to text, take a shot. It's like your very own drinking game! That said, don't let it get *too* out of control. Bad decisions, anyone?

4. Make a mental list of things to tell your friends.

This won't be difficult when you're on a bad date. Just make sure to jot down what's funny. You could focus on the bad, but that's less challenging. Plus, what fun is that?

5. Test out different dating techniques on your bad date.

You're already out, so why not use him like a guinea pig? You can flirt in different ways or ask questions you wouldn't dare ask a man you want to impress. This experiment can be a fun twist to a dud of a night.

Related: [Five Conversations to Avoid on the First Date](#)

Next time you're on a bad date, remember that it's supposed to be fun even when you're not hitting it off. Try these tips and have a laugh while you're out with Ferris Bueller's English teacher.

Sujeiry Gonzalez, often referred to as the "Latina Carrie Bradshaw," is a funny and vibrant relationship (non)expert

that tells it like it is – with just add a little more sass, a lot more Bacardi and ton of laughs. Recently she penned her first book, **Love Trips: A Collection of Relationship Stumbles**, a poignant and witty collection of personal essays in which she chronicles her relationship stumbles. For more information on Sujeiry Gonzalez, visit lovesujeiry.com or lovetripsbook.com.

Christelyn D. Karazin Discusses How ‘Swirling’ Can Help those in Interracial Relationships



By Daniela Agurcia

These days, maintaining a healthy and long term relationship is tough work. Not only is it hard to stay committed for a long time, but it's also difficult to overcome the criticisms from the world around you. Now, imagine being in a relationship with someone of a different race. Even though we'd like to think our society is wholeheartedly accepting of interracial relationships – we know it isn't always that simple. We had the chance to interview one of the authors, Christelyn D. Karazin, of *Swirling*, a book about interracial relationships and what to expect once you are in one. *Swirling* isn't only insightful, but it is a guidebook on how to approach various situations you will find yourself in when involved with someone of a different race. *Swirling* is an honest book that many people can find comfort in.

What triggered you to write 'Swirling' ?

It really boiled down to the experiences that I had in my life. I didn't think that they could be so unique that other women weren't going through this too. I wondered if other people were also worried about meeting their partner's parents for the first time in an interracial relationship or even being stared at. There was just nothing out there about this, and I've always wanted to be the type of person to share my experiences. I wanted it to be the 'what to expect when expecting' but for "swirling" couples, people who were engaging in interracial relationships for the first time. I wanted them to have a guidebook, something they could go back to and reference about certain things as well as to read other people's stories. Sometimes when you're in a relationship where the person is from a different culture, race, or religion you can feel isolated. I think it's natural to look for resources that will shed light on what other people have gone through in a similar situation.

Related: [5 Don't Tips For Interracial Dating](#)

Do you think that 'Swirling' is just what society needs in this day in age?

Yes, I do. Just look at the data. Interracial relationships are the highest they've been in American history. The world is changing. While studies are showing that people are more amenable to interracial relationships, it's still rather new. You have people who have been raised in the 60's, 70's and 80's who would've never dreamed of dating outside their race. And now you have the situation with social networking where you're able to connect with someone from the UK, and you can fall in love with them and get married. You have these situations, which make the world smaller and facilitate those connections that may never have been there before.

My mother-in-law had never associated with a black person before. She grew up in Manhattan in the late 1940s. There's a funny story in the book of how her and my father-in-law went to the south for a little while and she had to wash her clothes at the laundry mat. Outside it said, "colors only." And she asked, "Where do I wash my colored clothes?" And they told her, "lady that's for colored folks." She didn't know. She was raised completely colorblind. It was a new experience. She had always been around a very homogenous society, so when her son brought me home, it was something that she had to get used to. But, she went out and bought books on interracial relationships. She was really worried for her son. She thought that it would make his life super hard.

What would you say is the most important advice that your book offers for those who are struggling in this type of relationship?

The first and main thing is that you have to choose character above color. Once you do that, you're able to field out a whole bunch of people who wouldn't be good for you. Second thing is, don't let race be the complete center of every conversation that you have. Race shouldn't be something you

concentrate on the first or second date. You need to get to know each other. You need to leave your racial baggage at the door. Unless your date is 150 years old, they have nothing to do with racial issues of the past. Third thing is, that you have to be prepared. People are going to scrutinize your relationship, be curious, fascinated, or envious. They're going to ask questions, and you have to be prepared for it. You have to sort of look at it with humor, not necessarily that they're trying to be malicious. If you're always looking for negativity, you will find it. The key is to always focus on you and your mate and not to focus on other people. You have to let it be about you guys. Because people read your body language. If they feel that you are insecure about the other person, they'll sense that something isn't right.

How do you feel about celebrities in interracial relationships?

They're very validating. If you see it on TV, you think that it must exist because it's on TV. It also gives people exposure to something they might not necessarily see in their neighborhoods. You can see how things have changed through commercials and interracial families. Marketers and people who pitch TV shows are looking at the data like we are. They know the world is changing and that these partnerships exist. They have money, so they need to cater to them too. It's kind of like a perpetual thing: life imitates art, and art imitates life.

What would you say is the number one mistake people make when they enter an interracial relationship?

The number one mistake is when they get into an interracial relationship simply because of their skin color. Preferences are fine, but it's when you have a disdain for people in your own race. If you're dating interracially for some sort of revenge, then that's a problem. That's the number one reason why it won't work in the long term. You're not seeing that

person as a human being, but as a tool. You're using them.

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

How do you think the approach 'Swirling' takes is different then other books on interracial relationships?

There are a bunch of books out there on navel gazing. You have books that present the fact that black women should start looking into their options, but there's nothing on what happens after you've made that decision. I'm not in the business of convincing anybody of anything. A person who reads this book has opened their minds and their options already, and they want to know what to expect. Such as specific tips on how to react in certain situations once you have already been in an interracial relationship. It's an actively engaging book, where people can keep going back and forth. We've organized it in 16 chapters, including the single perspective, from my co-author Janice Rhoshalle Littlejohn. She supplied the research and background and I gave the "what to expect" information. It covers pretty much everything.

How has your blog, BeyondBlackandWhite.com, helped you with the insight you provide for the readers in 'Swirling'?

It has been priceless. I started this blog to just write my thoughts on the book as it came along, but it has become this haven for people who are in these relationships. It became a safe place to discuss all of these things. The richness of the comments of the people changed the outline of the book, because I realized where I needed to channel my focus based on the feedback. It's blown up, we get 7 to 10 thousand visits a day.

Do you believe in online dating, and if so how do you think men and women can benefit from this?

I do! I met my husband online. He was just really funny and cute, so I knew he couldn't be a bad person, and it worked out

for us. People have had mixed experiences. But I could say that a huge percentage of specifically black women who have found non-black mates have done so through online dating sites. It's possibly because they're exposed to people they otherwise wouldn't have met. You can get to know the person through the inside out, rather than the outside in. There are a lot of people who feel more comfortable expressing themselves through their writing than they do outloud.

To get more detailed and insightful advice on interracial relationships, purchase *Swirling* at Amazon. Also, visit Karazin's blog, www.BeyondBlackWhite.com.

What Role Does Ambition Play In a Relationship?





By Steven Zangrillo

Women and men have ways of motivating each other for the greater mutual success. The need for a partner with drive and ambition is an overarching common criterion among people looking for healthy relationships. Ambition affects how we choose our partners and is an attractive quality when a person gives you the confidence that they will always be looking to improve on their successes. It begs the question of what role ambition plays in the dynamic of our relationships; how do we reconcile our need for better things? It is important to know that when ambition, positively or negatively motivated, is driving or dragging on your partnership. Here are just a few ways ambition plays a significant role in a relationship:

1. Career: This is where the prospect of ambition becomes a two-pronged situation. Ambition is a dangerous factor in the scope of a relationship – it can bring goal-oriented love birds together or it can split you in two different directions. Someone ambitious for a life as a successful writer who is dating someone ambitious for immediate success in a finance career might have a hard time making that work. Our level of ambition affects the way we make career and social choices.

Related: [Snooki's Pregnancy – Can You Salvage Your Image?](#)

2. Finances: The whimsical notion that “love conquers all” is difficult to uphold when you have a mortgage to pay. This, of course, is different than gold digging. However, when people are looking for their potential life-long mate, they are essentially searching for someone who is, or plans to be, financially stable. In that reality, ambition walks hand in hand with how far you're willing to take your relationship.

Related: [Celebrities – Love, Marriage and the Money in Between](#)

3. Love: Ambition should, at the very least, determine what kind of partner you pursue. It's unfair to pursue someone who won't help you achieve the things for which you're ambitious. While it isn't someone else's job to adjust their entire life strategy in the interest of solely supporting the life you want, you should find someone who is willing to compromise in the means of supporting both you and their endeavors. In this sense, you should also make sure that you are both following paths that are more or less on the same track. The search of lasting love, being taken care of emotionally and being loved for who you are all timeless notions. People want that, and will go to great lengths to ensure they are in an emotionally stable and healthy relationship.

There is no universal advice to be given on how ambition should define the scope of your relationship. Everyone is ambitious for different reasons – success, money, healthy love, being taken care of financially or being able to provide. How that ambition affects the steps you take together is up to you. Don't put yourself in a position to be disappointed. Above all, the things that we are ambitious for determine the arc of our life paths; so, if you're ambitious for happiness you'll never fall short.

What role does ambition play in your relationship? Share your comments below.

Hollywood Relationships: Love, Marriage, and the Money in Between



By Victor McGlothin

Katy Perry was in love with Russell Brand. They got married, and then 14 months later, they experienced a celebrity divorce. When Hollywood relationships heat up so fast and end just as quickly, we all go running to blogs and message boards looking for answers. Often, reasons why celebrity couples break up are obvious...and it usually involves money.

Causes of Failed Hollywood Relationships

In Perry's case, she was a popular singer before marrying Brit uber-talent Brand. Both of them were exceedingly busy on photo and movie shoots, concert tours, and everything else that accompanies stardom. With so much time spent apart, it's no wonder they experienced problems that ultimately resulted in a failed celebrity marriage. The question is: What makes celebs think they can sustain a healthy relationship and love while living apart and chasing the almighty dollar rather than the connection that keeps the home fires burning?

Related Link: [Why Celebrities Fall In and Out of Love So Quickly](#)

Perry and Brand aren't the only culprits to this type of demise. Perhaps the biggest wedding sham of all time was Kim Kardashian's televised nuptials to NBA power forward Kris Humphries of the New Jersey Nets. After 10 million viewers watched the choreographed broadcast on *E!*, 72 short days later, it was all over. Once it occurred to Humphries that Kardashian got what she wanted – astronomical wedding coverage gracing dozens of magazine covers and an \$18 million payday for the exclusive rights – he filed to have the marriage annulled, citing fraud allegations. It was merely an attempt to save face after being used and branded in the national tabloids as the villain and then subsequently lambasted online by Kardashian's family.

Kardashian refused to ante up the \$9 million owed to Humphries for his role of a lifetime in the wedding plot, but then, she offered \$7 million as a consolation prize. Over 90 days after the 72 day scam marriage ended, their celebrity divorce is still pending and adoring fans are still choosing sides. Yet another hot mess caused by money!

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

Money, Relationships, and Love

Stories of Hollywood relationships like Brand and Perry's or Kardashian and Humphries's are all over the place, and there's usually the issue of money behind all of them. Even if money doesn't destroy a relationship and love, it always has a place. Even famous couple Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie use money to buy happiness on occasion (see her massive engagement ring and \$25 million donation toward children's image rights).

Although us normal folk don't typically have the type of cash that popular celebrities bring to the table, it's still good to learn from the often careless ways in which they throw that money around. We should keep cash in the back of our minds, if at all possible, while pursuing a deep connection.

Victor McGlothlin is a best-selling novelist and writer for [wastedcash.com](#), providing commentary on celebrity spending and consumerism.

Memorial Day Getaways for Lovers





By Deana Meccariello

Kick off a new summer with your beau the right way by getting away! Memorial Day is a time for fun, sun and relaxing with that special someone. Here is a list of places you and your loved one can take off to celebrate the arrival of summer as well as your feelings for each other:

Related: [Three's a Crowd: Four Perfect Couples Holidays](#)

1. Montauk: Long Island, New York is home to Montauk, which not only offers a romantic and picturesque setting for couples to enjoy, but an array of fun filled activities for you to enjoy over the course of your weekend. Intimate outdoor restaurants and bars and beautiful beaches where you can take in a breathtaking sunsets are just some of the activities you and your partner can enjoy.

2. The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel: One of the benefits of vacationing in Florida is that it offers beautiful beach getaways. While visiting this romantic wonderland, you and your lover must be sure to visit what the state deems to be its "most romantic park," Lovers Key, which overlooks the Gulf of Mexico. Here you can partake in beautiful walks along the beach or thrilling water sports with your beau like

parasailing or jet-skiing.

3. The Delaware Water Gap: Enjoy a day floating along the Delaware River or rent a raft and float along with your lover. If you're looking to get more than just your feet wet, go for a swim or unleash your inner dare-devil and partake in cliff diving, which is available in certain areas along the way. Surely, after enjoying all morning tubing down the river, a meal will be long overdue, so enjoy a romantic lunch while taking in the sun and each other's company.

4. Wine Country: For the romantic, low-key couple, San Francisco's Wine Country offers a gorgeous place to indulge in wonderful wine and great food. This place offers many secluded cottages for you and your love to find solitude together. Napa Valley and Sonoma County are also infamous for the wine and their activities. Depending on which destination you choose, you and your partner can enjoy live music, BBQ oyster among other foods at Sonoma's "Oysterpalooza" or sip organic tea and honor the memory of a loved one at the "Tea & Memories in Rose Garden." If you and your mate have your heart set on Napa Valley, "Sterling Vineyard's Greek Festival" and "Tres Sabores Movie Night" are just some of the activities you and your lover can enjoy

Related: [Date Idea: Plan a Picnic with Love](#)

5. Lake Tahoe: California's Lake Tahoe is a wonderful place to spend Memorial Day with the one you love if you're the outdoorsy type of couple. It offers an escape from the heat and fog present in other parts of California and leaves you with beautiful landscapes and fun activities such as mountain biking and hiking. It truly is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise.

What do you and your partner have planned for Memorial Day weekend? Share your comments below.

Do Fairytale Relationships Only Exist in Hollywood?



By Keryl Pesce

When Richard Gere came galloping back on his white horse (AKA stretch-white limo) to rescue Julia Roberts (AKA Cinderella), a not-so-small piece of the dreamer in us melted as we sighed and secretly wished real life were just like that. I mean, fairytale relationships only exist in childhood stories and movies, right?

If you want to get closer in touch with what relationships are really like, tune in to *The Real Housewives of NJ*, *NY*, *Atlanta* or wherever. That's more like it. Relationships are hard work, next to impossible to maintain and filled with drama, jealousy and cruelty. Umm, how about not!

I'm going to let you in on two very big secrets:

Secret #1. What you believe equals what you receive.

Secret #2. Fairytale relationships DO exist in real life.

There. I said it. I know it's not what you're used to hearing. That's precisely the problem.

Related: [It's Time to Stop Asking, 'When Will It Be My Turn?'](#)

We're bombarded with statistics, negative news stories and a personal thorn in my side – reality TV which hammer into our brains that divorce, affairs, selfishness and crap relationships are the norm and what we should expect. Make a note. What we focus on expands.

Related: [How to Avoid the Reality Show Relationship Curse](#)

If you're wondering why you've had a difficult time finding Mr. Right or why your "was hoping he would turn into Mr. Right" made a left, I've got good news for you. There are fantastic people and amazing relationships waiting to be had. They exist. They are real. I know, because I'm in one.

I had the "get married in case no one better comes along" relationship. He cheated. I left. And truthfully, I'm not knocking him. It was simply the wrong two people coming together.

Fast forward to today and the newer, younger (by 8 years – go me!) version is quite frankly, a fairytale. My happiness is more important to him than his own. He cooks, helps with laundry, is generous in bed and yes, calls me "Baby." Hate me if you wish, but I'm not here to brag. I'm here to raise your expectations. Because that is the one and only thing you need to do to bring yourself closer to the same thing.

The problem isn't you, life or the lack of quality people. The

problem is that we believe (wrongly) that we should expect all the negatives about relationships. That's the bad news. The good news is that the solution is pretty simple. Hit reset.

You attracting an amazing relationship begins with deciding what you want and believing you can get it. When I crawled out of the pitiful depths of despair, I began to think in terms of what I wanted, not what I didn't want. From there, it was simply a matter of training myself to stay focused on that and to trust. Think and act out of faith that what you want will come to you, not fear that it will not. Make this one small shift in your thinking, and watch what happens.

Keryl Pesce is the author of "Happy Bitch – The girlfriend's straight-up guide to losing the baggage and finding the fun, fabulous you inside." She is co-host of the weekly talk radio show "Happy Hour" and is co-founder of Happy Bitch wine.