

Five 'Down-to-Earth' Celebrity Couples



By Melissa Caballero

It's hard to deny how infatuated our society is with the lives of our favorite celebrities and their relationships. We sit with our friends and gossip about each of them on a first name basis as though they're our best buds. We fawn over their fame, fortune and good looks. But it's the rich and famous stars who handle their popularity with a dose of humility that give us a real reason to love them. Having it all and making top headlines in the media is one thing, but the way they act off screen or outside of the studio is what really exemplifies who they are as people. So, let's put aside the celebs with an attitude and stuck up demeanor, and give credit to the ones who have their feet planted right here on Earth.

1. Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner. This pair has seen and

done it all. But, starring in box-office hits and walking the red carpet doesn't seem to change them. They find happiness simply by being together, spending time with their two daughters (with a third one on the way) and laughing.

Related: [Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck Are Expecting Third Child](#)

2. Kristen Stewart and Rob Pattinson. Despite all their vampire fame, this duo has yet to sink their teeth into the unfortunate attitudes that Hollywood is known to bring out. Staying true to themselves and their values, Stewart and Pattinson just want to be treated like everyone else. Even after bringing in the big bucks, we see no change in what they choose to wear on the red carpet, and they always show genuine appreciation towards their fans.

3. John Krasinski and Emily Blunt. There's no denying that this tandem is adorable. It is so refreshing to see a pair who truly loves one another, without all the drama in Hollywood. This couple seems to fly under the radar and in fact, they seem a bit camera shy. Krasinski and Blunt didn't even feel the need to broadcast their nuptials; instead, they had a private, romantic ceremony in Italy. It isn't about the glitz and glamour for this normal, down-to-earth love struck team.

Related: [John Krasinski and Emily Blunt Wed](#)

4. Hilary Duff and Mike Comrie. Simple but sweet, their relationship is on the way to an everlasting love. Staying in, cooking together and hanging out are on the top of their list of date night activities. As one of the youngest items in Tinsel Town, we embrace their normalcy and realistic outlook. With the struggles of being in a long distance relationship, these two leave the drama at the door and take advantage of the time they have together. We hope they enjoy this alone time, as a soon-to-be new addition will undoubtedly

stir things up.

Related: [Hilary Duff is Excited to Have Kids with Husband, Mike Comrie](#)

5. Ellen DeGeneres and Portia De Rossi. These two made their love official in 2008 and can be viewed as a great role model for other homosexual couples. They don't feel that there's anything to hide about their relationship, and it's very clear how they feel about each other. However, they never over do it and never let public criticism get the best of their relationship.

Who are some of your favorite 'down-to-earth' celebrity couples? Share your comments below.

Date Idea: Enroll in a New Class





By Ché Blackwood

This weekend, step out of your comfort zone and learn something new by enrolling in a class with your partner. With a little research, you can easily find sites that connect you to local shops where you will learn to paint, make the perfect bottle of Merlot, or write a romantic poem. Whether you want to create a mouth-watering sushi roll or bowl the perfect game, there are plenty of classes available for couples to experience together.

Dating Advice to Incorporate Your Love's Interests Into Your Relationship

Related Link: [Date Idea: Take a Risk and Be Daring](#)

Here's some [dating advice](#) from Cupid: For a special gift, enroll your significant other (and yourself) in a class that aligns with their interests. If they've been hinting at learning how to do the Downward Dog, search for a yoga studio in your area. If your partner's favorite movie moment is Demi Moore's pottery scene in *Ghost*, spend a few hours learning how to sculpt together and reenact the film. The two of you

can create fun moments while aligning your interests.

If you're a busier couple, review your planners and look for upcoming special events that could spark the desire for learning something new. For example, if your best friend's wedding is approaching, take ballroom dance lessons. If a company dinner is on your agenda, then an etiquette or networking course could be fun to take. By combining your future obligations with an educational class, you'll be ensuring that your hectic schedule is helping, not hindering, your time together.

Related Link: [Prince William and Kate Middle Take Cooking Classes](#)

For the romantics among us, schedule a cooking class. Choose your favorite type of cuisine and spend a few hours sipping on a glass (or two) of wine as you whip up a special meal. Or, if you're the adventurous type, sign up to go skydiving with your sweetheart. You're bound to feel like you're on a date meant for your favorite reality TV show!

What kind of classes would you want to take on this date idea? Tell us your best dating advice in the comments below!

**It's Time to Stop Asking,
'When Will It Be My Turn?'**





By Danae Matthews

The short answer is, I have no idea. I have no idea when you will meet your significant other, if you will be bound to singledom the rest of your life, or if you will in fact run into your future spouse on the train today. Any of these scenarios has a chance of happening.

Recently, I was reading a book that suggested that if you're single, it's probably because you just haven't met "the one" yet. It said that if you're currently single, you should stop thinking about it and rest assured knowing that love and commitment just hadn't happened yet. If you tend to be annoying, no worries, because there is still someone for you.

Are you emotionally unavailable? According to the book, one day your prince will come.

Although I don't necessarily want to believe that certain people are bound to live their lives in solidarity, I also think that ignoring the possibility of it happening is ill-advised. I mean, it *could* happen.

The thing is, the idea that the reason you aren't in a relationship is because "it just hasn't happened yet" buys into beliefs about fate, omnipotent planning and the notion that everyone has a soul-mate. Although those beliefs are

beautiful, I wouldn't be so fast to take the bait. Let's face it: No one would give that advice about your career, physical appearance or personal achievements. If the "it just hasn't happened" way of thinking isn't good enough for the things that take real effort, why would it ever be good enough for your love life?

There's going to come a time where you may have to take an inward look as to why it is you are dateless. Maybe you're insecure, too loud or maybe you smell. There's a great chance you have halitosis, and no one has ever told you about it.

Seriously, your breath may wreak! By re-evaluating yourself, you are ensuring that when you meet people you are presenting the most put together, emotionally sound and happy version of yourself.

Regardless, anything worthwhile is going to take at least a minute amount of effort on your part. You have to be willing and able to put the work into your love life if you want to be in love. You may have to get off the couch, and go out on the weekends or attend therapy sessions. You may have to stop dominating every conversation in which you participate. The bottom line is, you may have to really put yourself out there.

Getting yourself together in hopes of getting a date is sure to benefit your life in multiple ways. You'll value yourself more and will therefore make better decisions about who to date in the first place. Basically, you're telling the world, "Look at me. I'm *fabulous!* No smelly breath here!"

The bottom line is that you have to stop sitting around wondering, "When will it be my turn?" Instead, get out there and really *try*. It's going to be scary, and at times it will probably suck. Nothing good in life was accomplished without trying, so in the meantime, embrace being single and enjoy the time you have dating around!

Danae Matthews writes for the on-line women's health resource

Arielle Ford Shares Relationship Wisdom in Her New Book 'Wabi Sabi Love'



By Amanda Martin

From Disney movies to romantic comedies to romance novels, most of us have grown up with the belief that a “happily-ever-after” ending is commonplace in reality. Not only are these endings not guaranteed, but anyone who finds true love will admit that sustaining a serious relationship is no easy feat. Arielle Ford, author of *Wabi Sabi Love: The Ancient Art of Finding Perfect Love in Imperfect Relationships*, talked to us

about her new book and how to master being in a relationship without trying to attain perfection. Wabi Sabi is an ancient Japanese art form that honors the beauty in imperfections, and according to Mrs. Ford, it's the key to the expected happily ever after.

We had a chance to speak to the author herself, and here's what she had to say:

Do you believe it's possible to sustain love without Wabi Sabi?

No, I don't, because if you're constantly striving for perfection, you're constantly going to be disappointed in yourself and everybody else; it's just not reality. If you go to wabisabilove.com/video, there's a short YouTube video, Imperfect Husbands, which really demonstrates the essence of a long relationship. At the end of the day, it's the quirky, weird, strange things that we come to love and remember about each other. It's not the "he was so perfectly groomed and mannered 24/7" that we remember. Who wants to be with somebody like that? We want to be challenged, have interesting conversations, and, sometimes, even fight and complain. That's just love.

Related: [Did Over-Complaining Kill Courtney Cox and David Arquette's Marriage?](#)

What did you practice in your own relationships before you knew about Wabi Sabi and how does it compare?

I was fortunate enough to learn about Wabi Sabi more than 20 years ago and before that I wasn't in any serious relationships. But before I learned about it, in the early 80s, I went on this crazy fitness kick where I was determined to become perfect. I was running, lifting weights everyday, and even measuring every ounce of food that went into my body. I had this idea that when I reached a certain weight

and certain measurements, I would reach perfection. When I did meet that perfect day, I couldn't tell anyone. I spent a whole year hyper-focused on attaining perfection only to discover that the day I reached it was like any other day; I wasn't any happier; life didn't change. Wabi Sabi really freed me up from the compulsion I was under. It totally set me off on another path to really discover how one becomes happy, and it's really about loving yourself, accepting life and choosing that path.

So, it seems like you use Wabi Sabi in many aspects of life, not just in your relationships...

I use Wabi Sabi everywhere. I'm a very messy eater; when I eat my food goes on me and it goes on you, but now it's just these kind of things that I accept. For me, it means that I have a strong appetite for life and I have this love of food and energy; if it gets a little sloppy then so be it.

In the introduction you talk about not accepting harmful or unhealthy behavior, but where does one draw the line?

I think the line is different for everybody, depending on what your comfort level is and what you can tolerate. Sometimes your partner will do something that genuinely requires confrontation, and there's no way to gloss over bad behavior.

For example, you can't Wabi Sabi your way out of addiction. For the less serious issues, you have to find your own level and not be afraid to talk about it. You can say "I love you to death, but what you're doing right now just grosses me out." If they say "I'm sorry, but I'm never gonna change," then you'll have to try to find a way to reframe it, or lobby with him by saying "tell me something I do that you don't like and lets negotiate here."

Related: [Three Tips to Enjoy Marriage Despite the Battles](#)

How can somebody convince their partner to practice Wabi Sabi with them?

I don't think your partner has to do anything. I think it's all an individual, internal change. We spend a lot of time hoping and wishing that somebody else is going to change. It's about putting on rose colored glasses for yourself and your significant other. People will rise up to your expectations of them, so if you're expectation becomes 'I'm enough just the way I am and so are you (so are they)' and your expectation is that they are a good, loving person, and you hold them that way, energetically they begin to feel that and they morph into that. The expectation you hold for somebody helps them to rise up to meet it.

What advice do you have for couples who can't seem to love what their partner loves, or get used to their annoying habits? Does that mean it's the end?

You have to think of what you love most about this person and where in the relationship you are most fulfilled. Then think about what you can do to make it work for you if they're not willing to change. There are solutions, but they may require some creativity.

Do you think Wabi Sabi can be applied to an existing long term relationship or marriage?

Absolutely, I don't think it's ever too late. That's what keeps things fresh, new and interesting. If I were married for 30 years and read the book, the number one thing I'd want to know is what are the things I do that drive my partner crazy.

*For more information about Arielle Ford, visit ArielleFord.com or follow her on twitter @arielleford. To purchase a copy of Arielle Ford's book, *Wabi Sabi Love: The Ancient Art of Finding Perfect Love in Imperfect Relationships*, go to Amazon.com*

Celebrity Couples Who Shy Away From the Spotlight



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Some celebrity couples flaunt their relationship for the entire world to see, posing for the paparazzi as if they're at a photo shoot (hello, Kardashian sisters!). Other couples, regardless of whether they've just begun dating or have been married for years, choose to hide from the spotlight and stay mum about the details of their love. Below are five Tinseltown two-somes who are keeping their lips sealed when it comes to romance:

1. Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson: Although this cute duo has refused to officially confirm they're a couple, they did come close to doing so on *Oprah* in 2010. The two jokingly

referred to Kristen Stewart's "baby" when asked if they were dating. Also, an Oprah insider insists that Pattinson and Stewart revealed their relationship to the queen of talk shows before the taping. More recently, Stewart casually mentioned her "English boyfriend" in an interview for British *GQ*. Even so, don't expect too much PDA from this couple – despite their intense love scenes in *Twilight's* latest installment.

Related: [Rob Pattinson Thinks Kristen Stewart Looks "Amazing" as a Bride](#)

2. Sarah Michelle Gellar and Freddie Prinze, Jr.: Gellar and Prinze first met while filming *I Know What You Did Last Summer* and have been together for more than a decade. After a two-year hiatus from acting, Gellar is now starring in *Ringer* on The CW and is learning the ins-and-outs of balancing a career and motherhood. In a recent interview with *Self*, Gellar calls her daughter Charlotte "my best friend" and says that she values time with her family above all else.

3. Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin: The Oscar winner and Coldplay frontman have been married for over eight years, but have been tightlipped about their relationship and are rarely photographed together. That's not to say that they don't realize how lucky in love they remain. As Martin recently told *CBS Sunday Morning*, "From being a loser to going out with an Oscar winner? It's a giant leap. Let's face it: It's like winning the lottery."

Related: [Chris Martin Calls Gwyneth Paltrow His "Beard"](#)

4. Emma Stone and Andrew Garfield: With this rumored romance, Stone, who starred in *Easy A*, *The Help* and *Crazy Stupid Love*, has met her match. Garfield is well-known for his role in *The Social Network* and is currently filming *The Amazing Spider-Man*, making him another one of Hollywood's hottest twenty-somethings. This publicly-shy couple has been spotted hiking

and going to the movies, but they haven't yet officially confirmed their relationship.

5. Carrie Underwood and Mike Fisher: Since Fisher's trade to the Nashville Predators early last year, country's all-American sweetheart and her hockey-playing beau are enjoying a low-key life in Nashville. The couple is still relishing their status as newlyweds, often opting for trips to the local Whole Foods Market and cooking at home as opposed to fancy nights out.

Related: [Celebrity Couples You Just Might See at a Sporting Game](#)

Who are some of your favorite low-key celebrity couples? Share your comments below.

Important Decisions to Make as a Couple





By Dee Mason

Recently, Emma Watson's boyfriend Johnny Simmons had a life-changing decision to make. It's been reported that Watson asked him to move not only states, but countries, to be with her. Specifically, she asked Simmons to move to London as she completed a year at Oxford University. At the time, the move was even more monumental because it was still early in their relationship. In November this year, reports surfaced that the duo were suffering from problems related to Simmons' refusal to follow her to England.

Moving to be near your partner is no small choice ... and there are many more decisions where that came from. Here are four important choices you'll inevitably encounter in your serious relationship, and factors to consider with each:

Going on vacation

It may seem like a fabulous idea, but before you book any last minute cruises, it's imperative that you think carefully. A getaway will see you either cementing your relationship, or realizing you're just not meant to be. Being in someone's company all day is a challenge to many couples when they're just starting out. Think before you grab that bargain on impulse, as it may come with more consequences than you're

ready to handle.

Related: [Take a Walk on the Wild Side of the Caribbean](#)

Moving in together

Meeting your partner for drinks and dinner is one thing, and seeing their dirty socks lying on the floor is quite another.

Moving in together a big step, which can either spell the end of a blissful relationship or the beginning of something really special. If your partner's a keeper, then you'll have to make the decision sooner or later.

Getting married

People tend to know, deep down, if their partner is the right one for them. Ask yourself if your partner is your best friend and if you want the same things in life. If you don't feel you can ask them anything or you get bored in their company, it may be time to reconsider the relationship. If you can imagine wanting to be with someone else eventually or you don't consider them a priority, it's probably cause for concern. If, on the other hand, you can confront these issues positively, then it's safe to say you're on to something.

Marriage is always a risk, but both an educated and emotional decision can lead to a new and exciting phase of your life.

Related: [Vanessa Minnillo and Nick Lachey Get Married](#)

Having a baby

This choice is a big one. You no doubt love your partner, but are you both ready for the patter of tiny footsteps? Although there is no right answer, it's important to be aware of all of the difficulties and responsibilities that come with parenting. Whatever you do, never make this decision on impulse. Your body sometimes decides for you, so put your sensible hat on until you've talked it through properly.

Related: [Hugh Grant Has Baby Girl with Mystery Woman](#)

These decisions are whoppers. The key is to make sure you want to know the answers before you ask the questions. Emma Watson and Johnny Simmons may have just found that out.

Celebrate Being Single This Year



By Steven Zangrillo

If questions about your singledom are still echoing in your head from your last family visit and you feel down about your relationship status, this is the year to make a change. That doesn't mean going out and finding the first online suitor you fancy or tying the knot in Vegas with someone you just met.

Instead, make a resolution to yourself and celebrate the positive aspects of flying solo.

Can't think of anything but the negative? Well, soak it up, because despite what others tell you, there are many reasons to celebrate. If you need some help with your list, here is a jump start so you can start smiling about being stag:

1. Singles are the Majority: What makes being unhitched exciting this year is that singles now account for a majority of households in the United States. Yes, it's true. According to a recent Census Bureau report, married people have dropped below half of households, to 48% and only a fifth makeup a traditional family which consists of a married couple with children. So, when your Aunt Ida says, "You need to settle down and get married," you can let her know that the times are a-changing.

Related: [Career and Motherhood: Can Women Do It All?](#)

2. Singles are just as Happy as Married Couples: The holidays are an evocative time and people often engage in self-evaluative thinking. You measure where you are in your life professionally, socially and romantically. While the "single" stereotypes call for the image of a forlorn, lost, puppy-dog with no one to love, reality would suggest otherwise. As the marriage rate in our country dips below 50 percent, there has been a consequential growth in the single-and-happy demographic. A recent study in *Psychology Today* analyzed by Dr. Bella DePaulo found that being in a marriage with financial and social support does not necessarily denote consequential happiness. Whether married or single, having a strong support network is the key to quality of life.

3. Singles Have More Options and Don't Need Permission: Discussions and arguments about equally sharing the weight in finances, parenting, and other mutual obligations is a moot point for singles. It's one less stress to consider. Plus, you have the freedom to travel, make career changes and move to a new state or country without answering to anyone about

your decision. You haven't merged your life with a partner, so you still have the opportunity to enrich yours in a way that is unique to being single.

Related: [When Friends Have Babies and You Have Your Career](#)

While others lament your romantic misfortune, you should consider the perks. Aside from the aforementioned financial and emotional benefits, you have the advantage of spontaneity. So, if you were looking to book a holiday getaway – do it. It can be less expensive to travel solo and you can set your own budget. Even if you overspend, you won't have to listen to someone else's ranting and raving about it.

4. Take care of yourself: The most important reason to celebrate is that right now, you can completely focus on y-o-u. Spend this time to grow into a person of strength and dignity that is willing to be part of a team. Maybe you aren't in a relationship because you aren't ready. Self-awareness about where you are in life and if you're available emotionally to be with someone else is important.

There are plenty of reasons to celebrate being single this year. And, if you do it the more open you'll be for someone to come into your life. This is a great time to explore yourself, your needs and better yourself for finding a potential match in the future. Everything is relative, after all.

Date Idea: Create a List of

New Year's Resolutions with Your Partner



A new year is here, and you know what that means: Time to make a few resolutions! This year, try something different and make a list with your partner. Setting resolutions together is not only a fun weekend date idea but a great way to strengthen your relationship. Figure out what you both need to do as a couple to keep things moving forward. Then, write down your suggestions for each other and for yourself. Take Cupid's [relationship advice](#) and make sure to commit to more quality time together.

Cupid's got relationship advice just in time for the New Year! What

resolutions will you and your sweetie work on together?

It's hard to find time when you're busy with work, but with a little creativity, you'd be surprised at how easy it can be. For instance, instead of sitting in front of the computer alone or running errands by yourself, invite your other half to work on projects or tasks with you. That's a great way to sneak in some time together.

Related Link: [Dating Advice: 7 Things All Healthy Relationships Require](#)

Don't forget to include communication on your list of resolutions. If you were to ask any relationship expert, they'd probably tell you that for a relationship and love to be successful and healthy, you *must* listen to one other. So why not make a date out of it? Express your needs to your partner and listen to theirs in return.

You can even turn to your favorite celebrity couple for inspiration. For instance, if you've always admired how easily [Jennifer Aniston](#) and Justin Theroux show their love for each other, talk to your significant other about it and let them know that you'd like to be more open about your feelings in front of your friends. Or, if you're struggling to fit romance into your busy lives, read some recent interviews with celebrity mom [Carrie Underwood](#) to see if she has any helpful love advice.

Related Link: [Celebrity News: Justin Theroux Constantly Tells Jennifer Aniston She's Beautiful](#)

If you run out of unique ideas for your list, you can always fall back on the tried and true resolutions, which include eating healthy, exercising, and getting rid of bad habits like smoking. Think about your use of technology too: Try putting down the phone and texting less while you're

together. You can also schedule one date night per month that *doesn't* involve staring at a screen: Instead of watching television or going to the movie theater, head to a nearby museum or just take a stroll in the snow.

Do you have any more relationship advice for couples writing New Year's resolutions together? Let us know in the comments below!

Can Cheaters Ever Change?



By Sarah Foulkes,

GalTime.com

It can be a devastating blow to a committed relationship. One partner strays and the other is left picking up the pieces—and left with difficult decisions. If your significant other cheats on you— can he or she change? When is there hope to

salvage the relationship... and when is it hopeless?

The latest example: after ten years of marriage and sticking by her husband through his self-admitted infidelity in 2003, Vanessa Bryant has filed for divorce from NBA star Kobe Bryant citing 'irreconcilable differences'. Reports say Vanessa believes the basketball star was up to his old tricks again.

It's obviously a difficult time for the Bryants, who put out a joint statement through their publicist:

"The Bryants have resolved all issues incident to their divorce privately with the assistance of counsel and a Judgment dissolving their marital status will be entered in 2012. We ask that in the interest of our young children and in light of the upcoming holiday season the public respect our privacy during this most difficult time."

Which leads us to the question, can cheaters ever change?

According to Sharon Rivkin, a licensed marriage and family therapist, and expert in dealing with extramarital affairs, ***some cheaters change and some don't.***

"The cheaters that don't change are the ones where the cheater feels a huge sense of entitlement, is a narcissist, lacks any sense of remorse, and has virtually no impulse control,"

Rivkin says. "The cheaters that can change are the ones who do not have a character disorder or addiction and who have cheated because they were very unhappy in their relationship, their relationship had deteriorated to the point that they were not getting their needs met, and they had very poor communication skills."

Rivkin emphasizes that an affair never happens out of the blue— and is actually an extreme symptom of a relationship that's been in trouble for some time. It actually serves as a powerful catalyst that can either end a relationship or take

it to a greater level of intimacy.

So what are some signs that a cheater will (or will not) change? Those willing to change show that willingness with their actions, Rivkin shares.

Signs that a cheater will change are:

1. A sense of remorse and pain over cheating.
2. The willingness to get help individually and/or as a couple to change the issues that caused the cheating in the first place.
3. The willingness to show their partner their cell phone, emails, etc. without getting defensive.
4. The ability to break off the affair to work on their primary relationship.
5. Admitting that they DID cheat (no excuses) and that it was wrong.

Signs that a cheater will not change:

1. No remorse.
2. History of cheating in other relationships and reluctance to seek help.
3. Continuing to be secretive with their phones, emails, texts, etc.
4. Inability to stop the cheating. Character disorder, i.e., narcissism, sex addiction.
5. Inability to actually admit that what they did was wrong...lots of rationalizing, excuses, and blame.

Of course not everyone is dealing with a husband who plays professional basketball and who is allegedly cheating on them.

But when is it time to give up and get out of a relationship?

“When the cheating continues even though the partner is saying they aren’t cheating,” Rivkin affirms. “If a person continues to cheat, like Kobe Bryant, there is virtually no hope that this behavior will change.”

According to Rivkin everyone needs to explore their own relationship and circumstances.

“When couples don’t stay together, it has less to do with the particular circumstances of the affair than with the couple’s long-term history, and with their willingness and ability to explore it,” Rivkin says. “Sometimes it seems the reservoir of resentment and hostility is just too overwhelming, and that so much damage has been done that there is little left to salvage. For some people, they are done with one indiscretion and some aren’t. The only right answer is what is right for you.”

After all is said and done, Rivkin expresses that if you feel you can’t trust them again, even if they show signs of change, you may need to walk away.

“It’s not a failure or a sign of weakness to leave a destructive relationship,” Rivkin states.

What are your thoughts on cheaters changing? What about the Kobe divorce?

Ring In The New Year Celebrity Style





By Steven Zangrillo

With 2012 approaching fast, it's time to plan the festivities!

Whether you're hosting a party with a group of friends or having a romantic dinner for two in New York City, it's important to plan ahead on this special evening. To get you started, we've outlined ten celebrity style activities that will ensure you have a 2012 celebration for the ages:

Related: [How To Snag The New Years Eve Kiss You Want](#)

1. Hit the Club

You can catch celebrities making New Year's Eve appearances at the most exclusive hot spots from New York to Miami and out on the West Coast too. If you want to hang at the same location as your favorite star, make sure you have your ticket in advance and you're dressed to impress.

2. Take a Vacation

Maybe you can't afford to schedule a jaunt to St. Barts or Lake Como, as Diddy and George Clooney have been known to do, respectively. However, there are many exotic and affordable locations around the world that you can explore. Websites like Expedia.com work hand-in-hand with resorts and airlines

to put together affordable packages for couples and families looking for a New Year's getaway.

3. See a Show

If you're like Lil Jon, you'll be hanging out backstage rubbing elbows with your favorite DJs and popping endless amounts of bubbly. What better way to celebrate the New Year than to rock out to your favorite artist? DJs, singers, rappers and other talent flock to Vegas, New York and Miami to put on their most grandiose display.

4. Keep It Simple at Home

Stars like Ben Affleck maintain a low-key status by kicking back quietly at home with loved ones, especially as he and Jennifer Garner await the birth of their third child. You might also benefit from a little rest and relaxation. A home cooked meal and quietly watching the ball drop in front of the television may be the perfect way for you to start the New Year fresh (and hangover free).

Related: [Romance Resolutions For 2012](#)

5. Host a Cocktail Party

In Los Angeles, Drew Barrymore has been known to host a cocktail party with her closest friends. If you have a big enough place, why not pull off a stylish rendezvous of your own? If you're ballin' on a budget, have your friends bring their own booze. Just provide some finger food, a comfortable area to relax and a TV to watch the clock tick down with the rest of the world.

6. Head to Las Vegas

Las Vegas is America's playground. Do we really need to elaborate? You can experience the strip, the lights, the gambling (do it responsibly, please!), the shows and everything in between. Jamie Foxx is infamous for hosting

various events, including his comedy tour, in Sin City. You can't lose, unless you sit at the Blackjack table a little too long.

7. Take To The Slopes

Aspen is the go-to destination for celebrity skiers looking for a chic and celebratory weekend in the mountains. New Year's Eve at the St. Regis is the area's premier event which has included celebrities like Billy Crystal and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Chances are that your nearest mountain resort will also be engaging in festivities. Go check it out.

8. Enjoy Dinner

Another successful formula for ringing in the New Year is by making reservations at a nice restaurant with your partner. Since it's one of the busiest times of the year, don't forget to call in advance to get your spot. You may even spot a celebrity or two eating at the table next to you.

9. Give Back to Your Community

Giving to a cause is a uniquely satisfying endeavor and can be done in a multitude of ways. For example, Tiger Woods, Peyton Manning and Former Met and Yankee Daryl Strawberry have been known to host charity golf tournaments. Local organizations in your area may host a benefit or be looking for volunteers to help them on New Years' Eve. If you have a cause dear to your heart, and they need help on this special night, this may be a good way to begin 2012.

10. Celebrate in New York City

There's nothing quite like New York City on New Year's Eve. Times Square can be an absolute zoo but it's definitely an experience to try it out once. If you're looking for something a bit more sophisticated, you can join the likes of Alec Baldwin and get tickets to see the New York Philharmonic

at Avery Fisher Hall in Lincoln Center. The one thing about New York is that you don't need to plan your evening. The best moments in the city usually happen when you're being spontaneous.

How will you ring in the New Year? Share your ideas below.

How to Determine the Expiration Date of Your Relationship



By Allison

Pescosolido, M.A. and Andra Brosh, Ph.D.

When you think the milk in your fridge has gone bad, you look on the side of the carton for the expiration date. If the

date of expiration has passed, you simply toss it in the garbage, and buy a new one.

Relationships can also have expiration dates, but unfortunately there is no stamp on your partner's forehead that tells you it's time to move on. As a result, many people stay too long in a sour relationship, which can be toxic and damaging for everyone involved.

Sometimes the last breath of a dying relationship happens early on, like with Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries. In other situations it comes much later, like with Al and Tipper Gore. Deciding to stay in a relationship or get out is complicated. While there are no hard and fast rules about when it's time to leave, here are a few tips to help you finalize your decision:

Related: [When Is It Time To Break Up](#)

1. Have a bottom line: Be very clear about what you are willing to accept as part of your relationship. Ask yourself if you are sacrificing your own integrity to save the relationship, and decide on what you are willing or are not willing to live with going forward. For example, once Sandra Bullock discovered that Jesse James was a serial cheater, she knew that the time had come to move on. She quickly separated and began a new life on her own with her adopted son.

2. Know thyself: Knowing if a relationship is healthy can be tricky, especially if you don't have any good role models to draw from. Many people know that their loves lives aren't happy, but can't really figure out why. Happiness comes from within, and knowing how and when you feel happy will help you decipher if it's you or the relationship that isn't up to par...or maybe both.

Related: [How Do You Know When It's Time To Call It Quits](#)

3. Trust your gut: If you know in your heart of hearts that the relationship has not felt right for a long time, trust your gut. It's easy to rationalize away the negative to avoid confronting what you don't want to face. Telling yourself lies so you don't have to leave will prevent you from making a rational decision. Look at the whole picture, not just the one you want to paint for yourself.

Allison Pescosolido, M.A. and Andra Brosh, Ph.D. are experts in Divorce Recovery and starting over. They co-founded Divorce Detox, a full service center to transform the lives of individuals transitioning through divorce. Both have advanced degrees in the field of Psychology and are certified Grief Recovery Specialists®. Andra and Allison are proactively changing the stigma of divorce on a national level by treating divorce as an opportunity for personal growth and a new life. The Divorce Detox programs transcend traditional forms of treatment by providing the tools, support and guidance for efficient and lasting results. www.divorcedetox.com

Matt Damon and Scarlett Johansson Learn to Love in 'We Bought a Zoo'





Benjamin Mee (Matt

Damon) is a single parent, journalist and widow. While attempting to balance school lunches, fight off single moms and deal with a lousy editor, Mee spontaneously quits his job. Instead of worrying about how to pay bills and get by raising his 14-year old son and 7-year old daughter, he buys an old house in the countryside with amenities like lions, tigers and bears. His zookeeper, Kelly (Scarlett Johansson) is often his saving grace. *We Bought a Zoo* highlights the fact that a small amount of courage and a lot of love can get people through any number of tough situations.

How do you support a loved one in tough times?

Cupid's Advice:

Stress on a relationship is like carrying a heavy weight on your shoulders. It slows you down, but the will to keep moving is the best way to survive. Here are some tips on how to do so:

1. Get involved: The best way to show your significant other

support is to get involved with projects in which they are involved. It will also give you both some time together.

2. Give an ear: Some days, your partner just needs to vent and have someone listen to them. Offer a shoulder for them to lean on.

3. Spin the cynicism: It's okay to have doubts and to share them. It's more important for a relationship to have no hidden truths.

Release Date: 12/23

How do you support your significant other? Share your thoughts below.

Romance Resolutions for 2012





By Steven Zangrillo

With the New Year right around the corner, many of you may be starting to stress about those ten pounds you stacked on courtesy of Grandma Anna's sugar cookies; or how you'll manage to get those last minute gifts shipped to your beloved in-laws and cousins you don't know very well. Instead, take a deep breath.

Now is a great time to step back, look around and re-evaluate your relationships. Whether you're a wife, husband, boyfriend, girlfriend or in the throes of a fleeting fling, there's never been a better time to understand your tendencies (good or bad) as a lover and a partner.

Right under our noses lie some of the most common and simple adjustments we can make that will help get you started on the path of relationship improvement. Take to heart some of these "romantic resolutions" that you may want to put into practice as 2012 approaches:

1. "I will not expect the world of my partner."

To be clear, you should expect your partner to make the effort to give you the world. We all want our special someone to feel happy and satisfied at all times, and vice versa.

However, it's borderline lunacy to expect that person to actually deliver on all of your wildest dreams. Newsflash: this isn't an Old Spice commercial, and no, we're not going to bake you a triple chocolate mousse cake in your dream house kitchen while singing your favorite song. But we'll try, or at least give you a great foot massage.

Related: [Is Brad Pitt Ruining Your Love Life?](#)

2. "If they want to go to the movies, then take them to the movies."

Your significant other loves a hobby that you purely loathe. It could be going to cheesy romance movies or ridiculous action flicks, blasting gangster rap at earth-shattering volumes from your apartment, or eating at a restaurant that triggers your gag reflex. If they know you hate these things, they probably shouldn't make you experience them. But that's selfish, wouldn't you agree? So stick it out... sit down and watch "The Notebook" with her. You'll reap the benefits later when she buys you those Eminem tickets next month.

3. "I will tolerate his or her friends, even if it doesn't go smoothly at first."

This is particularly difficult in new relationships where you may not have many mutual friends. Say you've moved to a new city with your flame and just met his friends. Because they are his or her friends, not yours, territoriality plays an integral role in this situation.

What's key to remember is that these people care for the person that you love, just like you do – albeit in different ways. Maybe they aren't your type of people, but if you treat each other with respect, the relationship with your significant other can grow. Integrating into each others' lives will be much smoother if you go into this with an open mind. And who knows, eventually you may grow to love them.

Related: [Plan a Party with Friends](#)

4. "I will allow myself to be present when I am away from you."

Ever have that friend who, whether it's at the club or in a study group, that is constantly and obnoxiously in contact with their significant other? You may even be guilty of it yourself. It's an all-around annoying disposition.

If you're always on your cell phone, shutting out the world around you, you are probably aggravating all of the other people that enjoy your company in the process. Don't be the guy leaning on the bar, texting his girl, while everyone else is having a great time.

Furthermore, this could be a warning sign to you that you don't trust each other. Do you really want to be in a relationship where you find yourself having to give a detailed explanation of how dinner is going with your parents? If not, it's probably time to shed that relationship.

5. "I will put myself first, but not at the detriment of my partner. I'll support everything they are passionate about."

This rule speaks for itself. No one worth being in a relationship with would ever make you feel bad for pursuing your interests, on both professional and personal levels. If the dynamic of your partnership is that of mutual respect and support, your significant other will be your biggest cheerleader.

It is, indeed, easier to give the previous advice than it is to follow it. However, if you adapt an attitude that incorporates a little bit of everything discussed above, there's a good chance that you and your lover will have a relationship that will stand the test of time in the New Year!

NY Ink's Ami James Chats about New Season and Inking Your Partner's Name



By Jennifer

Harrington

The holidays are the perfect time to catch up on television shows, new and old. If you're a fan of tattoos and drama, we have good news for you! The TLC reality hit show 'NY Ink' will be kicking off Season Two on December 29. We had the opportunity to catch up with renowned artist and main character Ami James, the driving force behind the show and Soho-based tattoo shop- Wooster Street Social Club. In our chat with Ami, we discussed his inside perspective on the series, as well as current tattoo trends. Here's what the

reality star had to say in the days leading up to the start of the second season of 'NY Ink'!

Related: [Jon Gosselin Gets Tattoo In Honor of New Girlfriend](#)

Tell us about your experience so far in New York. What's been the biggest challenge?

New York has been home for me for 15 years, although I live in both Miami and New York. I'm constantly going back and forth between the two cities, so I would say the biggest challenge has been giving the Miami and New York shops equal attention, and juggling my family and personal obligations as well.

How does New York differ from Miami?

Miami is very laid-back, where New York is more hustle and bustle. You can really feel the energy in the air in New York. So the cities are different, and the shops in the cities are different as well. The one common thread is really the clients.

Tattoos used to be considered pretty taboo, but it seems there has been a shift in perception. Do you agree?

The world of tattoos has really changed in the past decade, and with the television shows, tattoos have been brought into people's living rooms. The timing of the shows was right. People have learned more about tattoos, and there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of the population with tattoos.

What's the biggest tattoo trend you are seeing right now?

There are always trends in tattoos, but thought and education are important when considering a tattoo. Be sure to think long-term and know that the tattoo will likely last a lifetime. That being said, the biggest trend I'm seeing right now is women getting tattoos on their ribs. The upside of this location is the ribs are usually covered by clothes, but the downside is this is a very painful location!

So many people ink the name of their significant other on their body. We all remember when Kasey Kahl got a tattoo to declare his love for Bachelorette Ali Fedotowsky. What do you think motivates people to do this?

It's popular to get these types of tattoos, but I don't recommend it unless it's somebody you absolutely know you will love forever. I respect the freedom of choice, but I do try to give people insight that the tattoo is permanent. And I can speak from personal experience; I have a portrait tattoo of my ex-wife [Jordan]! Today, we're best friends so I can honestly say I don't regret the tattoo. I embrace it as part of my personal history.

Related: [Angelina Jolie Inks New Tattoo for Brad](#)

For people who decide to get a tattoo with their partner's name, is there a place on the body you recommend that is best for this type of statement?

In our business, we don't typically provide recommendations as much as we advise customers of locations on the body that might not work very well. For example, some spots on the body are very painful to get a tattoo. It's all about making sure the customer is informed and making the best decision for their body.

We all know tattoos are permanent, but sometimes relationships are not. What advice do you give to people who may have a tattoo of a former lover?

Well, we know relationships have the potential to end up as disasters. I'm thinking of Tiger Woods right now, and we all understand what it's like when a relationship ends.

Personally, I have a tattoo linked to my ex-wife, but we were lucky. Although our marriage didn't last, we ended the relationship really respecting each other, so I'm okay with the tattoo. If you end up with a tattoo you don't want, you really have two options, cover it up or laser it off.

How many tattoos do you have, and which is your favorite?

I have so many great tattoos. I especially like a tattoo I had done in Japan, because it really taught me a lot about the Japanese culture. I also really like my tattoo that is a portrait of my daughter [Shayli Haylen James].

Thanks to Ami for sharing his perspective into the world of tattoos! In case you missed season one of NY Ink, you can pick up the DVD (available on December 20) and catch up before the second season begins.

Date Idea: Volunteer Together this Holiday Season



The holiday season is filled with celebration, family time and giving. And, there's no better way to give than by volunteering to help the

less fortunate. Find a cause that both you and your significant other think is important, and enrich the lives of others.

Rather than going out for a meal, serve meals together instead. Volunteering at a soup kitchen is a selfless act that you'll later appreciate and if you do it with your partner, it'll definitely bring you closer together. Check out volunteer opportunities at soup kitchens near you.

Another way to volunteer is by visiting residents in retirement or old age homes. Family time is practically synonymous with holiday cheer and often families can't make it to see their loved ones. Take time to bring joy to others by playing cards, baking, reading or simply telling them stories.

If none of the above ideas work for you this holiday, try giving back to your community by making gift baskets with your mate. Gather non-perishable food items and donate them to the underprivileged. The two of you can also bond over cooking meals and delivering them to homeless shelters.

Acting selfless as a couple during a season of indulgences will help you work on your own relationship and appreciate the fact that you have one another at this time.

Let us know how you are giving back as a couple this holiday season and what your favorite volunteering activity is.

How to Handle Your Crazy In-

Laws Over the Holidays



By Evan Fischer

While Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries may no longer have to worry about dealing with the in-laws, there are plenty of newlyweds out there facing the first real test of their matrimonial commitment this holiday season: meeting their new family members. For Jerry O'Connell and Rebecca Romijn, who recently renewed their vows, this will be old hat. But celebrity couples like Wills and Kate and Blake Shelton and Miranda Lambert will find themselves in the same boat as every other newly joined couple in the world; facing the uncertainty of several days trapped with their in-laws. The good news is that there's no need for stress. By following just a few simple guidelines, newlyweds everywhere can have an enjoyable and relaxing holiday, even if the in-laws are a little bit crazy. Here's how:

Related: [Ways To Impress Your In-Laws](#)

1. Offer to help: The best way to get in good with the in-laws is to offer assistance here and there. Your mother-in-law may not want you in the kitchen while she's cooking, but perhaps she'll let you watch her make her special recipe (no doubt she'll be flattered by your interest). And you can always offer to set the table, wash some dishes or otherwise make yourself useful. Don't be pushy, but offer frequently.

2. Clean up after yourself: Even if you're treated more like a guest than a member of the family, you need to be a responsible adult and try not to make more work for your hosts than necessary. This means picking up after yourself, doing your own laundry (towels included), washing dishes (or at least putting them in the dishwasher) and generally making an effort to leave a room just as neat as you found it.

3. Set aside "me" time: There's nothing wrong with taking a little time out for yourself, especially if it saves you from a meltdown. No matter what you do, there's going to be some pressure to perform for your new partner's family. So give yourself breaks here and there to decompress; take a bath, a nap or a walk to get away. And any time you can manage it, drag your new spouse along for some alone time.

Related: [Dealing With Difficult In-Laws](#)

4. Participate: You've joined a new group, but you'll always be an outsider unless you integrate yourself. Even if you don't want to play board games, sing carols or look at family photo albums, be a sport. It will help you become a family member a lot faster than opting out.

5. Delegate "handling" responsibilities: This is a biggie, and it could just save your holiday. Each spouse needs to handle their own family, including making arrangements and dealing with any issues that arise. The person that approaches in-laws in an aggressive manner is going to be seen as an interloper, so don't try to be dominant. You handle your

family, and let your spouse handle the in-laws. Less stress over the holidays will greatly reduce your chance of winding up in relationship counseling in the New Year.

Evan Fischer is a freelance writer and part-time student at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, California.

Author Discovers New Outlook about Love by Going on '31 Dates in 31 Days'



By Erika Mionis

After several bad breakups, it can be difficult to stay positive. Long-time television producer, Tamara Duricka Johnson proves this in her new memoir, *31 Dates in 31 Days*, a

heart-warming tale about Johnson's own experience with finding love. In celebration of her 31st birthday, the author decides to embark on a dating challenge to find romance by going on *31 dates in 31 days*. The last date culminates on Valentine's Day, and is marked with a second date with one of the 30 men. In this fun-filled memoir, Johnson puts her experience to paper and shares the lesson she learned along the way: if you want love, give it away.

Cupid had a chance to speak to Johnson about her project and book:

When you started your project, did you expect to actually find love? Or were you doing it as a learning opportunity?

No, I had no intention of finding love or faith that finding love with a carefully calculated project was even realistic. I was in an extremely cynical mode about men and was self-aware enough to realize that I needed to change. I wasn't sure exactly what I needed to change. All I knew was that I needed to change something. So I figured the project would help me get back to the basics of dating, beginning with first dates.

Related: [Fall 2011 First Date Outfits](#)

Were you surprised at how much news coverage your project received?

Having been a news producer for so long, I could see the lure in a story like mine. I was nervous when the media began showing interest because the project began as a way to improve my poor dating skills and to get over my broken heart. It was a little embarrassing and humbling. But, by that time I had seen how much other people were gaining from my experience, so I knew it was important to share my story.

You had a fantastic attitude throughout the book. How

important was optimism to your project?

Optimism was essential. Around ten dates through, I had a girlfriend tell me that she wanted to hear a little more drama. I told her that this project wasn't about drama or gossip. I figured if people only wanted to hear the bad stuff about the guys I was going out with then they were missing the point.

The book is very personal. Did you have any reservations about sharing the details?

OF COURSE! This book basically feels like I've published my diary for everyone to see. It shares my vulnerabilities, my insecurities, my embarrassing stories. I had many reservations about sharing my personal details, but I figured if I were going to tell the whole story of what I learned then I needed to share the truth about where I'd been.

Related: [Why Amazing, Confident Women Remain Single](#)

What inspired you to share your story?

Once I started writing the blog, I received some really interesting feedback from people, and not just single women like me. I heard from men, married women, people who weren't in relationships, heterosexuals and homosexuals. I started to realize that this project was way bigger than I was – and affected more than just me and my 31 dates. As people shared their feedback, it helped me change my outlook on others and life. Not necessarily because I ended up finding love in one man, but because I ended up finding love everywhere. That's when I started to realize that this was a story that needed to be told.

Cupid would like to give a big thanks to author Tamara Duricka Johnson for her time. Check out her new book on Amazon and for more information on Johnson, be sure to visit her website at www.tamaradurickajohnson.com.

Last Minute Holiday Shopping Guide for Your Partner



By Thomas Doane

With the holidays just around the corner, some people are starting to panic as they worry about what to buy for everyone. Of particular concern for many is what to buy for their significant others. Whether you are newly attached or longtime lovers, everyone wants to find a gift under the tree.

Believe it or not, even celebrities have these worries. After all, behind the fame and glamour, they are flesh and blood humans. Just like us, they have similar worries and doubts.

In that spirit, here's a guide to holiday shopping for your significant others, whether you're famous or not:

Related: [10 Holiday Gift Ideas For That Someone Special](#)

If you've just started dating, think small.

Not only will your new love not expect a large gift, but it may freak them out a little, which is definitely not what you want or need at this time of year. Try to find something small and meaningful for under \$50. This could be something simple like an item of clothing, or you could be a little more personal and plan a candlelit dinner at home. Whatever you choose, be sure to look for deals, and don't feel pressured to overspend.

George Clooney and Stacy Keibler should take this advice! The pair has only been together for a couple of months and shouldn't worry about lavishing each other with expensive gifts. In fact, due to George's infamously skittish nature, Stacy may want to go the dinner-at-home route, in order to appear appropriately aloof.

Related: [Simple Ways To Please Your Man](#)

If you have crossed the one-year threshold, then you can splurge...a little.

Still keep spending to a reasonable amount, but try to find a gift that reflects your feelings for one another. Once you have reached the one-year mark, it is likely that you are in love, so go for something romantic, if all else fails, like a weekend getaway for two, or a small piece of jewelry.

This would be a good guide for Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez, who recently celebrated their first year together. While this pair is awfully young to be worrying about jewelry, they obviously like vacationing together, and should feel comfortable expressing their feelings for one another. In doing so, they can be assured of one another's affections, and their budding love will continue to bloom.

If you are in it for the long haul, then go all out.

Whether you are married or in a long-term relationship, the holidays are the perfect time to show your devotion and hope for a bright future together. Accordingly, buy your loved one something that shows how much they mean to you, and emphasizes your familiarity with their likes and dislikes.

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie are preparing for yet another Christmas together, and despite repeated rumors of their demise, it looks like they are still going strong. Now would be a great time for them to travel to another country, away from their passel of children, and reaffirm their love to one another so that next year will be even better than the last.

Regardless of where you stand in your relationship, the thing to remember is that the holidays are *not* about who gives the best gift or how many you receive. The true reason for the season is spending time with your loved ones and preparing for a great new year. So, just relax and spend the day with your sweetie. Happy holidays!

Thomas Stone is a freelance writer and frequent contributor at the SprightlyShopper.

Engagement Rings of the Rich and Famous





By Nan Gibbons

If we're being honest with ourselves, we know that a 2 million dollar engagement ring probably isn't in our future. Although you may not be able to afford a multi-million dollar rock, you can still channel inspiration from celebrities to choose a quality, stylish ring for your upcoming engagement. Your personal taste and style mixed with the splendor of celebrity rings will result in the perfect look for you. Here are some styles to consider:

Related: [Rosie O'Donnell Proposes with a \\$100,000 Ring](#)

Classic Elegance

You can never go wrong with classic engagement rings. The timeless beauty of a studded band like Carrie Underwood's or a simple set of diamonds will always do the trick. Underwood's ring combines the style of a wedding ring with the sparkle of an engagement ring and makes for a pretty amazing result!

Standard rings with diamonds in the center of a plain band never fail to draw "oohs and aahs" from family and friends.

Vintage Charm

If you're drawn to the idea of a vintage ring, there are

several ways you can work this angle. You can choose to go with an older style or base it off of family history. Prince William combined both of these tactics when he gave his then fiancé, Kate, the same ring his mother Diana wore when she was engaged. The gem had the splendor of an older style, plus the emotional value of family tradition. Going for an older style ring or re-purposing a family heirloom can be a great way to re-create the style of Kate's gorgeous ring.

Related: [Five Celebrity Couples Who Got Engaged During The Holidays](#)

Bright and Colorful

Thinking outside the box and considering a less traditional ring is great for couples who enjoy being one-of-a-kind. For her recent engagement, Jessica Simpson was given a stunning bright red ruby framed by two diamonds and set in a gold band.

It looks much more unique than the standard, but still incorporates the classic timelessness of diamonds.

No matter what your style preference, there is a great and affordable ring with your name on it. Whether you prefer sparkly diamonds or colorful gems, you can use celebrity styles to inspire you in order to find the perfect ring for your budget.

The Holidays: 8 Ways to Ruin Your Relationship



By SMF Marcus

Osborne for GalTime.com

It's well documented that the holidays are the toughest time of the year for millions of people. Depression rates skyrocket because people confront various personal demons and/or a multitude of interpersonal crises.

This got me to thinking about the myriad of ways the holidays can be ruined when you're in a relationship. I sat down with one of my partners at StraightMaleFriend.com, Matt Staudt, and we came up with a pretty strong list of 8. Now, once we'd finished the list, with perhaps a couple of exceptions, it was clear that men and women probably aren't that different when it comes to this topic. You be the judge.

1. Not "Keeping It Real": Don't be coy about your excitement surrounding the holidays. Let's not pretend like it's not a big deal when it really is a big deal. Don't say, "Oh, the holidays don't really matter to me" and then when your guy decides to boycott the commercialism of the holidays by

boycotting your gift – don't get mad!

2. Being shallow: Your guy has gotten you a gift. The correct and proper response is "Thank You." Don't be the woman whose holiday cheer is grounded in the price tag of said gift. Hey look, the economy is in the tank. Remember it's the thought that counts (allegedly) so try to be appreciative. This shouldn't need to be said – but unfortunately this is one holiday tenet we often forget. Whether he got the gift off of Ebay, the clearance rack, or Tiffany's – he got it for you. Of course if he spent 20 bucks on your gift but buys himself a two-thousand dollar flatscreen there may be reason to gripe.

3. Don't Take Him Shopping: This is cliché but absolutely on point. Shopping is mostly recreational for women. For guys not so much. There are few experiences less thrilling than standing around department stores for two hours. Although it seems that many stores have gotten hip to the man's waiting game dilemma by setting up "man areas" where there's mens magazines and a couch for the guys who happen to be in shopping purgatory.

4. Pulling Out The Baggage: We've all got our personal "stuff." The holidays sometimes dredges up old feelings about an ex or some other notable experience from your past. You may feel an intense urge to bring those issues up while we're decorating the Christmas tree. Please resist that urge. Let's talk about it after New Year's Day. This is supposed to be the season of joy. Save the baggage for a trip.

5. Selfish Hint Gifts: Oh you don't know what "hint gifts" are? You've been telling me to lose weight for the last six months. Christmas morning you give me a gift card for one free round of liposuction. "Hint Gift." I've been out of work for 6 months, Christmas morning you hand me a ribbon-wrapped Starbucks application. Hint gift. Big no-no.

6: Don't Hate On Dinner: You may not like his mom's cooking.

Suck it up and keep it in. There are no winners in that game. Unless you're planning a break up that night, let it go and keep that opinion to yourself at least until the holidays are over.

7. Holiday Break Up: Pretty self-explanatory.

8. Dying: Yeah, this is a pretty dark thought but also pretty self-explanatory. Actually, this particular one has been known to be a downer all year-round.

Ok, your turn....your worst holiday break up or near break up story. Share!

How to Get Over a Broken Heart During the Holidays





By Abbi Compel

and [Whitney Johnson](#)

There are so many things to be excited about during the holidays: fun-filled family time, delicious home-cooked meals, presents waiting to be unwrapped and perhaps a much-deserved vacation. However, if you're nursing a broken heart, this festive time of year may seem burdened with only cold and lonely days. You may never forget your heartache, but someday, you will be healed and happy again. Just make sure to get some solid [relationship advice](#) in the meantime.

Until then, the ten tips below may make your holidays seem a bit more bearable and that damaged heart feel a little less painful:

1. Volunteer: No matter the time of year, giving to others can mend a hurt soul and fix any frown. During the holidays, the opportunities to volunteer seem to multiply, making it extra easy for you to make a difference in someone else's life.

Related Link: [Kendra Wilkinson Opens Up About Sleeping with](#)

[Hugh Hefner on 'I'm a Celebrity'](#)

2. Listen to holiday music: There's something so innocent and child-like about holiday music. It'll take you back to those days when your biggest worry was whether or not the item at the top of your wish list would be waiting for you to unwrap it. Although Nick Cannon and Mariah Carey had a rough [celebrity divorce](#), Carey still is positive and puts out beautiful holiday music that you can listen to!

3. Take up a new hobby: Attend a cooking class (Whole Foods offers great options) or take a knitting course and make a homemade gift for someone special. If you live in a snow-filled spot, give snow skiing a try. By being outside of your comfort zone, you'll not only distract yourself from your heartbreak, but you'll also regain your confidence.

Related Link: [Nicole Porter Discusses "The Break-Up Cookbook"](#)

4. Enjoy hot cocoa by the fire: A cozy spot and delicious drink are sure to warm your heart during this holiday season. Snuggle up with a good book or have some girl-bonding time with your mother, sister or best friend. When [Taylor Swift](#) broke up with celebrity ex Harry Styles, she spent time with her best friends during the holidays to make her feel better.

5. Watch a feel-good holiday movie: It's important to remember that you *will* find love again, and a holiday movie is the perfect way to do just that. The options are endless: *The Holiday*, *Four Christmases*, *Miracle on 34th Street* and more. As Hugh Grant's dreamy voice tells us in *Love Actually*, "If you look for it, I've got a sneaking suspicion...love actually is all around."

6. Reconnect with old friends: Re-establishing a friendship that was lost due to distance or busy lives will boost your spirits and remind you that there are plenty of people who love and support you. When former celebrity couple Selena

Gomez and Justin Bieber split, Gomez surrounded herself with her closest friends again.

7. Book a quick getaway: Whether it's a snowy vacation in the mountains or a relaxing weekend on the beach, pick a place that makes you feel like yourself again. Most of the time when a hollywood relationship ends badly, the two in the relationship probably end up taking a quick trip to themselves. It can be very relaxing.

8. Buy yourself something special: Yes, it *is* the season of giving, but sometimes that giving needs to be self-directed. Use the money that you would've spent on your ex to buy yourself that much-desired handbag or new pair of shoes.

9. Cook a new dish for your family's annual holiday get-together: Tackling a challenging recipe will surely keep you busy – from picking out the dish to shopping for the ingredients to pulling it all together, you'll hardly have any time to think about that broken heart.

10. Meditate. It sounds so simple, but closing your eyes and paying attention to each breath allows you to shut out the rest of the world and focus on yourself. You can let go of those negative thoughts and sad memories and be ready for your next adventure (in love or otherwise) by New Year's Eve!

How did you recover from a broken heart? Share your thoughts below.

10 Love Lessons from Bruce

Springsteen



By

TopDatingSites.com

When it comes to the ups and downs of love, The Boss has shared some valuable lessons with us over the years. Here are some of the most important points in a romantic education, Springsteen style:

1. Love Makes it Impossible to Sleep – In the oft-covered “I’m On Fire,” Bruce rumbles the line “at night I wake up with the sheets soaking wet/ and a freight-train running through the middle of my head/ but you/ you cool my desire.” Anyone who’s ever felt the pangs of a complicated love affair can immediately identify with this exhausting sentiment.

2. You Can Be Your Own Worst Enemy– We’ve all done our share of damage to our love lives, but the gravelly voice of the Boss can make us feel the pain of those regrets when he pours his heart into the apologetic “Back In Your Arms.” His plea

for forgiveness is wrenching with lines like “All the love I’ve thrown away and lost/ I’m longin’ for again/ Now darlin’ I just wanna be back in your arms.”

3. Love Isn’t Easy – Even the best relationships come with their share of struggles; few songs capture the reality of love on a day-to-day basis like Springsteen’s “If I Should Fall Behind.” This plainly stated, touching ballad is a mature realization of the ups and downs that come in any love affair, especially during the last verse: “Now everyone dreams of a love lasting and true/ But you know and I know what this world can do/ So let’s make our steps clear that the other may see/ And I’ll wait for you/ If I should fall behind/ Wait for me.”

4. Lost Love Can Be Haunting – This 2003 gem is a great example of how lost love can haunt you, long after it’s gone. The atmospheric backing sounds paired with the edgy, effects-laden guitar serves as a perfect vehicle for lyrics that show The Boss at his tortured best; it’s almost impossible not to think of a love gone wrong when he says, “There’s nights I still hear your footsteps fall/ Your key in the door, your voice in the hall/ Your smell drifts through our bedroom/ I wake, but I don’t move.”

5. Love Really is All You Need – Despite his frequent pessimism, “This Life” finds Springsteen in a point of contentment. The toe-tapping rhythm and doo-wop vibe is infectious; when he sings “This life and then the next/ With you I have been blessed,” it’s easy to believe that sometimes, love really is enough.

6. Being in Love Means You Never Fight Alone – The straightforward folk sound of “When You Need Me” might bring Townes Van Zant and even Gram Parsons to mind, but the message is pure Boss: life is hard, and everything goes wrong, but love gives you strength. The pared down arrangement is a far cry from the arena-anthem hits that most people associate with

Springsteen, but lines like “And when those mean days come along/ We’ll stand together and we’ll take ‘em on” still bear his trademark blue collar, ready-to-fight fingerprints.

7. You Have To Be Willing To Take a Chance – The rollicking, sing-along chorus of “Countin’ On a Miracle” perfectly captures the moment of throwing caution to the wind and hoping for love to work out against all odds. From the first verse promise of “If I’m a fool, I’ll be a fool/ Darlin’ for you,” to the shouted ending of “I’m countin’ on a miracle to come through,” this 2002 track shines.

8. Love Gone Wrong is a Kind of Prison – This synth-driven track builds from an almost somber first verse to a bombastic chorus that perfectly frames the feeling of an ill-fated, inescapable love affair. As he almost whispers, “I know someday I’ll walk out of here again” before the passionately shouted “Well, now I’m trapped,” he paints a painful picture of the kind of captivity that only comes from loving someone who will never treat you well.

9. A Broken Heart Leaves Scars – The bluesy “All the Way Home” from Springsteen’s 2005 album *Devils & Dust* tackles the fear of giving love a chance after being burned one too many times. The aw-shucks appeal of the second verse, “Now you got no reason to trust me/ My confidence is a little rusty/ But if you don’t feel like bein’ alone/ Baby, I could walk you all the way home,” is the Boss at his best: honest and unflinching.

10. Love Never Really Fades – Everyone has a love they can’t quite let go of, even if it’s long gone. “Hearts of Stone” is a perfectly executed boardwalk ballad about those late-night phone calls, after you’ve both moved on. When he wails “I can’t talk now, I’m not alone/ So put your ear close to the phone/ ‘Cause this is the last dance/ This is the last chance for hearts of stone,” you can almost hear doors to the past slamming shut. “Hearts of Stone” is a testament to the fact

that the lines of love are rarely drawn clearly.

With a career that spans more than three decades and over two dozen albums, there are few lessons in life that Bruce Springsteen can't teach.

The Most Romantic Hotels for Couples –and Celebrities!



By Isabel Eva Bohrer

Finding a secret hideaway as a famous couple is difficult. Paparazzi follow you everywhere, and you need some good fences and security to really make that vacation a relaxing one. Despite these difficulties, there are some places that make it possible. Read on for information on the most romantic hotels and which famous couples have stayed the night

there. To make your very own reservation, check out www.luxury-hotels.com.

1. GoldenEye Hotel & Resort (St. Mary, Jamaica)

Once owned by James Bond creator Ian Fleming, this hotel is a purely romantic experience with a celebrity twist. It is not an ordinary hotel, but instead a compound of luxurious private villas. Each of them offers its own private world, set amid spectacular tropical gardens and embellished with extraordinary comforts, amenities and service. Fleming's three-bedroom villa is particularly popular as it still contains the writer's Jamaican red bullet wood desk. This also includes three individual bedrooms (each with outdoor garden bath and rain shower), a private swimming pool and a secluded beach. During the day, you can explore the coves and at night, sit at Fleming's old desk to write a love letter – or perhaps even the next great spy novel.

Related: [Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel Show PDA at Chateau Marmont](#)

2. Chateau Marmont (Los Angeles, USA)

Ever since its opening in 1929, the Chateau Marmont hotel has been a discreet movie star getaway. In addition to the private guest bungalows, the establishment comes with the popular Bar Marmont, and a see-and-be-seen restaurant. Kate Bosworth and True Blood's Alexander Skarsgard were spotted kissing at Chateau, while Lindsay Lohan and Avril Lavigne had a bar brawl here. Twilight stars Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson spent the night together at the hotel, whilst Tila Tequila and Meghan McCain were seen lunching.

The courtyard has welcomed Jennifer Aniston, John Mayer, and Billy Crudup, and the patio has been home to Eva Longoria and

Christina Applegate. The restaurant's living room is where Sienna Miller and Josh Hartnett cozied up and on one single night, actresses Lindsay Lohan, Charlize Theron, and Mary-Kate Olsen all graced the halls. You won't just feel like a star at Chateau Marmont, you may actually see some while you're here.

Related: ["The Bachelor" Spends Time in South Africa](#)

3. Oyster Box Hotel (Umhlanga, South Africa)

Prince Albert and his wife Charlene Wittstock went all the way to South Africa for their honeymoon (after all, the bride is a native). Here, they decided to stay at the Oyster Box Hotel. Set on the Indian Ocean and opened in 1947, this hotel quickly gained a legendary reputation thanks to its combination of colonial charm, impeccable service, lush tropical gardens and breathtaking seaside setting. If you want the presidential suite where Prince Albert and his wife stayed, be prepared to splurge – it has its own terrace and private dining area for \$7,350 a night.

4. Gramercy Park Hotel (New York City, USA)

The Gramercy Park Hotel is the place to be if you want to be hip, famous and beautiful. Even if you're staying the night elsewhere, you can still visit the Rose Bar, whose velvet-heavy décor has made it the epicenter of the New York bar scene. Janet Jackson was recently there to admire the artwork on view at the Rose Bar, while Kid Rock smoked a cigarette outside. Chace Crawford, in turn, met some business partners there, while Sting was also seen staying at the hotel. The celeb legacy dates all the way back to Humphrey Bogart who got married here, and Babe Ruth who was a regular among the bar guests.

Date Idea: Enjoy a Date by the Fireplace



Follow [Cupid's relationship advice](#) and spend this weekend indoors with your sweetheart. Cuddle up next to the fireplace and have a night filled with love.

Relationship Advice for a Cozy Night In

Take a cue from famous couple Chrissy Teigen and [John Legend](#), and turn your kitchen and dining area into a winter wonderland. Rather than worrying about being on a date in the cold weather, bring the romance into your own home. Set up a table and dine by a lit fireplace, or arrange a

comfortable area on the floor and light your favorite winter-scented candles. Once you have your location, order in some comfort food to enjoy with one another.

Related Link: [Chrissy Teigen Slams Rumors About Her Celebrity Pregnancy](#)

After holidays filled with smoked turkey, your grandmother's stuffing, and green bean casserole, it's time to indulge in that Chinese food craving. Order a few different entrees to split, like General Tso's chicken, beef and broccoli, and fried rice. Don't forget the egg rolls too.

It's not only about dinner! Dessert can make or break a good night. So instead of ruining the evening with a boring end to dinner, get cozy by roasting marshmallows and making s'mores. To complete this sweet treat, have hot chocolate with a twist. Not sure how? Add Peppermint Schnapps – and a mini candy cane for decoration! – and relax after a long week at work. This drink is called The Snuggler for good reason, so cuddle close with your partner while enjoying it!

Related Link: [10 Ways to Give Thanks To Your Partner](#)

Most importantly, spend time working on your relationship and love during your time together. Make this night about the two of you and talk about your lives and maybe even the future. It's common for couples to start thinking about marriage and babies after a family-filled holiday season, so use this opportunity to find out what's next for your partnership.

What's your favorite indoor date idea for the winter? Let us know by sharing your relationship advice below.