

Expert Dating Advice for How to Manage Valentine's Day Expectations



By Joan Barnard

When it seems like every woman you know is getting the royal treatment on Valentine's Day, it's easy to feel disappointed when the man in your life does not meet your expectations—and you wouldn't be the only one.

According to a new study published by the National Retail Federation,

Americans are expected to spend over \$18.9 billion on Valentine's Day gifts this year.

With jewelry commercials on loop and Valentine's Day card nostalgia in full swing, it's no surprise that people feel the pressure to spend—and that the spending adds up to almost \$150 for the average person.

Related Link: [Relationship Expert Shares Hot Valentine's Day Gifts](#)

Spare yourself (and your guy) Valentine's Day stress by following these three pieces of expert dating advice. They're sure to keep your expectations in check:

1. Let him know how much (or little) you care about Valentine's Day: Men understand that women have expectations for Valentine's Day, but many have a hard time distinguishing just how high (or low) those expectations are. If it's your first Valentine's Day together, give him a heads up that you're looking for an evening fit for a Hollywood couple, or if you'd rather just stay home, let him know—the earlier the better.

2. Make suggestions: Saying, "I want to do something fun on Valentine's Day" won't cut it; it's too subjective. Making concrete suggestions about what you want will set the tone. You might say, "Wouldn't a couples massages be fun?" or "This would be the perfect time to try that cute French restaurant." Sharing suggestions will give him some parameters: how much to spend, how romantic the gift should be, etc.

3. Make sure your suggestions match the level of your relationship: If you have suggestions in mind, make sure they match where you are in your relationship and love. If you're

expecting a card and receive a diamond necklace, you'll feel overwhelmed—the same way your partner would feel if he's expecting to give you a card and you ask for a diamond necklace. Be realistic. Save expensive gifts for your serious established relationships.

Related Link: [Love Advice: 3 Signs He's the Right Guy to Be Your Valentine](#)

When it comes to your relationship and love, don't let one day decide how things will or won't progress—think about the big picture. Does your partner value you? Do they value your happiness? Do you feel consistently happy with him? My expert dating advice would say that if the answer is “yes,” a bouquet of flowers—or nothing at all—won't change that.

Joan Barnard is the resident dating and relationship expert and blog editor for Zoosk, the online dating site home to 29+ million users worldwide and the #1 mobile dating app. She authors the weekly Joan Actually advice column, responding to dating and relationship questions from 14+ million readers who are in, out of, and between relationships. She hosts a weekly dating advice series for nearly 9,000+ Zoosk YouTube subscribers and also records 15-second dating advice spots on Instagram.

How to Get Through Valentine's Day Single





By Elizabeth Kim and Molly Jacob

You check the calendar and realize February 14th is coming up sooner than you'd like. You wonder if you can call in sick or at least stay away from social media all day so you don't have to deal with the cheesy Instagram photos your friends will inevitably post about their significant others. But, before you burrow into bed so that you don't have to deal with the inevitable love parade, Cupid has some advice on how to get through Valentine's Day single, unscathed, and maybe even happy.

While it seems like Valentine's Day is all about relationships and love, check out Cupid's tips to help you enjoy this day even if you are single:

1. Take part: Remember in elementary school when everybody

would pass around tiny boxes of conversation hearts and fold-up cardboard Valentine's Day cards? Distribute goodies to co-workers and friends! Whether or not you buy bulk cards from your local drugstore or personalize each and every gift with great detail, not only will you be bringing a smile to someone else, it will serve as a good distraction from all the couple-themed activities surrounding you.

2. Ignore the holiday: February 14th is just another day in your week, so plan a day of fun activities that have nothing to do with relationships and love! You might decide to take the subway to a part of the city you haven't been to before so you can explore cafes and parks. Or, plan a day at the spa followed by lunch at your favorite Italian bistro. Whatever it is, don't use V-Day as an excuse to be miserable — have fun with it!

Related Link: [Dealing with a Valentine's Day Breakup](#)

3. Band together: You're certainly not the only single girl this Valentine's Day. Have a pseudo date night with a friend or spend the day with all your fellow single ladies. Have an old school slumber party, complete with delicious snacks and trashy magazines. Misery loves company, so even if you decide that you all just want to mope, at least you won't be moping alone. Sure you might shed some tears, but you will end up sharing a lot of laughs.

4. Treat yourself: Make this day all about you instead of relationships and love. Go ahead and buy that Michael Kors bag you have been saving up for, or splurge on a fancy manicure. You will be distracting yourself from all the love in the air while rewarding yourself for surviving the day!

Related Link: [Making the Most of Valentine's Day Even If You're Unhappy](#)

5. Remind yourself: This one is the toughest but ultimately you just have to remind yourself that it is just another day

on the calendar. You shouldn't equate going on a date or being in a relationship with self-worth. And here's a bonus tip: Valentine's Day chocolates are super cheap on February 15, so stock up on delicious treats as soon as this day of love is over!

How do you get through Valentine's Day when you're single? Tell us in the comments below!

Relationship Advice: How Should We Raise Our Kids?



By [Courtney Omernick](#)

Relationships and love can be complicated, and when it comes time to decide how to raise your children, there's no doubt that you and your partner might have opposing viewpoints. These three pieces of relationship advice will help you agree on the best approach!

Relationship Advice to Help You Determine How to Raise Your Kids

Consider the relationship advice below:

1. Consider your own upbringing: Not all of us like every aspect of how we were raised, but it's definitely a conversation that you can have in order to put some ideas on the table. Think about what your parents or guardians did or didn't do while raising you that you would or wouldn't like to see incorporated into your own child's upbringing.

Related Link: [Celebrity Pregnancy: Kate Middleton Says She Can Feel Baby Kicking](#)

2. Look at the research: There's plenty of research that has been done on how and where to raise children. Doing a simple Google search can tell you some of the most effective tips when it comes to certain situations. You be the judge. Is what relationship experts are suggesting going to work for you?

Related Link: [Celebrity Pregnancy: Former 'Bachelorette' Emily Maynard is Expecting!](#)

3. Make a list: Once the both of you have decided what you absolutely have to do/can't do as parents, come together and compromise. Write down your "must haves" as a couple while raising your children. This way, you lay the ground rules for raising your kids and each person has input and some of their rules incorporated.

What relationship advice would you give on how to raise children? Comment below!

Hottest Single Celebrity Ladies of 2015



By [Courtney Omernick](#)

A new year is here, and that means that some of the hottest, female celebrities are newly single, while others are carrying their single status over from 2014.

Below is a list of the some of the hottest, single celebrity women of 2015:

1. Jennifer Lawrence: After her split with on again, off again boyfriend Nicholas Hoult, Lawrence went on to become a member of one of the most famous couples with Coldplay front man, Chris Martin. But, their relationship quickly ended when scheduling became an issue. Jennifer started off 2015 as a single woman, despite rumors of getting back together with Martin.

Related Link: [Gina Rodriguez Says Celebrity Love Henri Esteve Tears Up During 'Jane the Virgin'](#)

2. Khloe Kardashian: Who wouldn't want to date a Kardashian? After officially announcing that it's over between her and French Montana, Khloe is single in 2015 and ready to mingle.

Related Link: [New Celebrity Couple Selena Gomez and Zedd Face Doubt From Her Friends](#)

3. Anna Kendrick: The *Pitch Perfect* star might have had love interests in the films she's been featured in recently; however, there's been no such luck in her real life. The actress dated director Edgar Wright from 2009-2013, but she hasn't had a relationship since.

4. January Jones: You love her as Betty Draper in *Mad Men*, and she could very well be someone's next love interest in 2015. This celeb has always been quiet about her relationships in the past; however, she could meet Mr. Right in 2015!

5. Jessica Szohr: Better known as Vanessa Abrams from *Gossip Girl*, Jessica has been linked to her co-star, Ed Westwick, and NFL MVP, Aaron Rodgers over the last few years. But, she's starting out 2015 as a powerful, single lady. Szohr has worked

on popular films such as *The Internship* since the end of *Gossip Girl*.

Who are your picks for the hottest single ladies of 2015? Comment below!

Celebrity Couples Who Met Through Other Celebrities



By [Courtney Omernick](#)

It's not always easy to find a partner, especially one who is a good match for you. Sometimes fate and circumstance helps you find your significant other. Other times, your friends

step in to play matchmaker.

The celebrity couples below found each other with the help of a fellow celeb friend.

1. Louis Tomlinson and Eleanor Calder: This couple has One Direction member, Harry Styles, to thank for their Hollywood relationship. Styles brought Tomlinson along to meet a friend that he used to work with at a bakery. His friend brought along Eleanor.

Related Link: [Elton John and Partner David Furnish Marry in England](#)

2. Benji Madden and Cameron Diaz: This couple met through Benji's sister-in-law and Cameron's good friend, Nicole Richie. After a whirlwind romance that lasted under a year, the celebrity couple tied the knot in an outdoor ceremony at Diaz's home recently.

3. Ed Sheeran and Claire Donald: Ed Sheeran and Taylor Swift have been fending off romance rumors for years. So, what does Swift do? She sets Sheeran up with one of her good friends, Claire Donald. Donald is an aspiring model/actress who worked with Swift on her *We Are Never Getting Back Together* campaign.

Related Link: [Stevie Wonder Welcomes 9th Child with Girlfriend Tomeeka](#)

4. Nick Jonas and Olivia Culpo: This adorable celebrity couple met through a mutual friend, namely Nick's brother Joe. Joe Jonas was a judge at the 2012 Miss USA pageant where Culpo was crowned, and when the Jonas Brothers performed at the same event the following year, Joe is said to have introduced Nick to Olivia.

5. Kim Kardashian and Kanye West: Though these superstars didn't technically meet with a celebrity, they did get to know each other because of one. While on Jimmy Kimmel's show, Kardashian said: "I should thank you right now, right? I did meet [Kanye] years before, but we really got to get to know each other on a shower that you guys produced together."

What other celebrity couples met through other celebrities? Share what you know in the comments below!

Dating Advice: How to Date & Get the Best Results



By Deborah Downey

The most important aspect of dating is to be confident. Men and women want different things from relationships and love as they age. Consider the following dating advice, as it's perfect for those of you who want more options when it comes to the dating pool and are determined to find true love in a monogamous, committed relationship filled with passion and purpose with the person of your dreams.

7-Step Dating System for Relationships and Love

To begin, design your search path and ask yourself what you want your love life to look like. Dating is a fact-finding mission; it's a process of elimination. You will attract someone with the exact amount of self-worth that you possess. Follow these steps:

Step one: Define what you want. Not who you want.

Related Link: [10 Relationship Myths](#)

Step two: Evaluate your readiness and check your motives.

Step three: Revise your needs and make sure they are realistic and that you have attainable goals.

Step four: Build your mindset and lose any doubt.

Step five: Create a "want ad for love" to the universe (not to print or show or tell anyone). Also, construct a strategy / plan to meet your loved one.

Step six: Prepare, Practice, and Poise

Step seven: Support Sorting and Sex

Related Link: [Dating Advice: Six Tips for Meeting Someone](#)

Check out the following conversation topics to use as dating advice:

Talk about books, movies, interests, hobbies, parents, work, hopes and dreams, spirituality, habits, relationship to money, health, their financial health... any debt? Last relationship? Why it ended ...how long it lasted...what they found really unappealing? What they learned about themselves?

Final Thoughts:

Make sure to watch and listen carefully on a date. People will show you who they are by how they treat wait staff or drivers. Take your own car for the first few dates, and go to places where there are lots of people. Stay away from his or her place for a minimum of 3 dates.

A date for the first 3 weeks is best if it lasts no longer than 3 hours.

Don't take or be taken hostage by spending multiple days on a date with someone. Only see them once or twice a week for the first 3 weeks and try to see other people while dating them until you mutually agree to be exclusive. Do ask them about sexually transmitted diseases, and make sure they've been tested recently.

Deborah Downey's experience spans 25 years of recovery in various 12-step programs around the country. Holding certifications as a professional life coach and as a chemical dependency counselor, Downey has dealt with addiction in its various forms, both as the child of alcoholic parents and as a confidant for others. In her self-help book, "What Are You Worried About!" (<http://www.coachdeborahdowney.com/>), Downey, who has multiple sclerosis, details a proactive approach to

training one's mind to think positive.

Dating Advice: Six Tips for Meeting Someone Special in 2015



By Dana Michel

The holidays are over, and 2015 is here! Like many of us, you've probably made a New Year's resolution to step up your game in the area of relationships and love. If that resolution includes finding a partner, you might not succeed if you're

searching the old fashioned way.

Below are six pieces of dating advice to help you in your journey to find that special someone and improve your relationships and love life in 2015.

1. Eliminate those that are not marriage material: Don't waste time with someone you would never introduce to your family or colleagues, much less marry. He/she is only standing in the way of your true happiness.

Related Link: [Justin Bieber Confirms He's 'Super Single'](#)

2. Become the person that attracts your type: This important piece of dating advice shouldn't be ignored! If you're looking for a physically fit partner, but you have succumbed to watching Netflix from the couch while eating fast food, you may want to start hitting the gym this year. You may find Mr. Right while lifting weights and running on the treadmill.

Related Link: [Four Changes You MUST Make to Avoid Prey to the Unavailable Man](#)

3. Do not put your life on hold or defer happiness until you meet "The One": Take that trip overseas, become a homeowner, get a new hobby or entertain more. These dating and relationship advice tips can help make you a much more interesting and confident person. Raising your appeal increases your chances.

4. Sign up for online dating: Choose the service that works best for you and remember to be true to yourself. If you're looking for a serious relationship, don't sign up for a casual

hookup site. Online dating gives you the chance to expand your options.

5. Ask friends to introduce you to eligible people: Consider getting help and introductions to men from those pesky relatives who don't understand why you're still single.

6. Become more active outside of your home and work: Start a new hobby, volunteer, and deliberately attend social events where you can mingle and strike up conversations with new people.

Thankfully, love can happen very quickly when you meet the right person. Look at celebrity couple George Clooney and Amal Alamuddin, for instance. The duo became engaged in less than a year. Most men say they knew their fiancé was special very early on in their relationship.

A new dating site, Marriage Material, is not your typical dating venue. Founder and President, Dana Michelhas, created a place where only marriage-minded singles can go to find their true love. Marriage Material has over 20,000 members, and their services are available in selected areas. For more information, visit www.marriagematerial.co. To arrange an interview with Dana Michel, please contact danna@blinkpr.com.

Relationship Advice: 5 Basic Workouts to Do With Your Partner



By [Courtney Omernick](#)

You are half way through the first month of your 2015 resolution to get in shape and the gym is starting to feel routine and tiring. Don't give up just yet. Instead, get your partner involved in your plan by taking into consideration some of the dating and relationship advice below that can really help you build a stronger and more physically connected romance,

Below is some great relationship advice that involves getting physically fit with five basic workouts that you can do with

your partner:

1. Squats in sync: Stand facing each other, while looking into each others eyes and see who can go the lowest doing a squat! Deep squats can really work your quads and glutes and staring at each other doesn't hurt either.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Workout Together](#)

2. Lunges: Like squats, face each other and alternate forward and backward lunges. Remember to alternate legs in order to work both sides! Lunging in sync with your partner can be a lot of fun and you can challenge one another to see who can do the most.

Related Link: ['Top Chef' Alum Richard Blais on Healthy Holiday Cooking with Benefiber](#)

3. The tricep dip: Make tricep dips more interesting by having the person doing the dips puts his or her hands on his partners knees or quads. Innocent touching while working out is much better than exercising on a cold bench.

4. Bodyweight partner press: This move is a lot of fun. The key for women is to trust your man with knowing your weight (lol) and the key for men is helping your partner benchpress yours. Be there to spot them through and never attempt this if you don't think you can bench the weight of the other person.

5. Double tree pose: If you are looking for relationship advice that will help you bond with your partner during a work out then the yoga is the perfect solution. And the double tree pose is the perfect move. With your hips touching each other, try to stretch them out while working on your balance and posture. Hold this move for a few counts and then switch sides.

What are some other great workouts you can do with your

partner? Comment below!

Dating Advice: How to Ring in the New Year with Your New Partner



By Molly Jacob

New year, new couple! A new year holds the promise of great times ahead, especially when it comes to relationships and love. Celebrating this time of year with someone new in your life makes the holiday season even better.

There are many ways you can celebrate the beginning of 2015 with your significant other. Cupid has some dating advice to help you get started:

1. Host a party: New Year's Eve is one of the biggest party nights of the year, but you and your partner can host a get-together anytime during the holiday season. Invite your mutual friends for a night of celebration (and don't forget the champagne!). Planning the guest list, putting up the decorations, and welcoming your friends into your home is a smart date idea that will strengthen your relationship and create memories for years to come.

Related Link: [5 Celebrity Couples Who Got Engaged Over The Holidays](#)

2. Plan a getaway: Feel like greeting 2015 with some romantic alone time? This is dating advice we can get behind. Instead of celebrating with others, pretend you're on a celebrity getaway and plan a trip for two at a ski resort, lake house, or anywhere else secluded and romantic. Every new couple needs alone time, so take the opportunity to get away from the stresses of everyday life.

3. Start a scrapbook: Begin collecting photos, letters, and other mementos documenting your relationship if you have not already done so. Keep everything in a special scrapbook so that when 2016 arrives, you two will have a great collection of the past year's memories.

Related Link: [Sofia Vergara Is Engaged to Joe Manganiello After Only Six Months of Dating](#)

4. Create resolutions: The start of the new year is not just about celebration, but it is also about planning how the coming year will be a success. Now that you are a couple, you can help each other create (and stick to) your resolutions, whether it is saving money or getting a gym membership. The strongest couples are the ones who encourage each other to become the best they can be.

What other ways will you be ringing in 2015 with your new partner? Share below!

How to Celebrate the New Year with a New Baby





By [Courtney Omernick](#)

You may think that all of the fun of New Year's is over because you have a new baby in the house, but guess again! Just because your newborn is taking control of how you spend your time doesn't mean you have to have a dull New Year's celebration. Check out some fun ways to celebrate New Year's with your baby in tow:

1. Host a slumber party: If you have enough space in your home, consider inviting a few of your friends who have children to party at your place. Yes, your house will have even more chaos because of the extra children, but this gives your friends an incentive to get out of the house and celebrate too! You can even have it catered to take some of the pressure off of you and your partner.

Related Link: [Scarlett Johansson Secretly Married Romain Dauriac in October](#)

2. Dress up: If you're planning a night in, you don't have to resort to sweats! Add some sparkle to the event by wearing a

skirt or dress (for her) and a bowtie and suit (for him). Make sure to include your new baby in the festivities by dressing them up in a cute outfit too!

Related Link: [Did 'Bachelor' Winner Nikki Ferrell Reveal She Has A New Man?](#)

3. Bring your baby to the party: Obviously, this option depends on the type of party you're attending. After all, you won't want to bring your baby to a loud bar. But if you're going to a friend's house, you might be able to bring your newborn along. If there's a place in your friend's home where you can put your child down for bed, you won't even have to worry about interrupting their usual routine.

How else can you celebrate the New Year with a new baby? Share your ideas in the comments!

Is It Okay to Hook Up With Your Ex?





[By Katie Gray](#)

Often times in life, we are torn between our emotions and the feelings we have towards other individuals. When we breakup with someone, we are then faced with a series of questions. Are we done for good? Will we get back together eventually? Is that what I even want? Separating from someone you were once close with is hard. It's not always cut and dry, and it can be easy to get into a situation where you have to decide whether to hook up with your ex or not.

Under what circumstances is it a good idea to hook up with your ex?

Celebrity life coach Lisa Haisha weighs in, saying, "If you have a child together and you think there is hope of rekindling the old flame, then do it. Also, if you ended on bad terms, it might be a good idea to heal those wounds and have another hook-up and talk rationally with each other, it's okay to pursue things again." In other words, if there is hope for a brighter future, then give it a shot if it's what both parties involved want. If there is no hope of getting back

together, don't bother because it will only lead to more hurt.

Related: [Life Coach Lisa Haisha Shares Her Best Relationship Advice](#)

Suzanne Casamento, founder of Fantasy Dating, believes that hooking up with your ex is never a good idea. She warns about future hurt if you hook up with an ex and explains, "Even the most mind-blowing sex is not going to bring your ex back. It's only going to make you crazy. You'll feel like you've reconnected when you really haven't, like you have some sort of claim on that person when you don't. All sex with your ex does is prolong the breakup misery." Plus, you have to remember that you can't meet someone new if you don't let go of someone in your past. Casamento adds, "If you're still sexually connected to your ex, how will you make space for your future?"

If you want to hook up with your ex, should you wait a certain amount of time after your breakup or dive back in?

According to Haisha, it depends on what you want. "If you still have feelings for that person, but you know they're wrong for you, then wait a bit," she says. "If you don't have deep feelings and can't get hurt and neither can your ex, then dive back in." Either way, make sure you're on the same page before you move forward.

Related: [Will You Witness 'The Walk of Shame'](#)

What are some possible precautions to take?

While it's tempting to consider only the pros of hooking up with your ex, it's important to look at the cons too. "You or your ex's heart could get broken, or it can prevent you from moving forward in another healthier relationship," Haisha shares. "They say that you need at least six months of not having sex with your ex before you can truly move on and start fresh without bringing in old baggage."

How do you avoid the pitfalls?

“Be careful and have conscious communication with yourself and with your ex,” says Haisha. “If you both understand what you’re doing from your higher, evolved selves, you should be okay. If you’re needy, inner child wants to act out, it can be an unhealthy choice.”

At the end of the day, it’s like anything else: The choice about whether to hook up with your ex is entirely up to you. As Jason Weberman, a certified dating and relationship expert, says, “You’re not alive unless you’re taking risks!” Do what makes you happy and what you feel is right.

Do you think hooking up with your ex is a good idea? Share your thoughts below.

5 Celebrity Couples Who Celebrate Hanukkah





By Molly Jacob and Melissa Tierney

It's time to light the Menorah and get ready for gifts from Hanukkah Harry, and celebrities are no exception. These famous couples are embracing their roots by participating in Jewish traditions together. Here are five of our favorite celebrity couples who are spinning their dreidels this Hanukkah:

1. Ben Stiller and Christine Taylor: *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* star enjoys embracing the Hanukkah traditions every year with his wife and their two children, daughter Ella Olivia and son Quinlin Dempsey. They're all ready to light the candles on the Menorah in hopes for another healthy and successful year.

2. Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied: The superstar and her French-born dancer and choreographer husband met on the set of *Black Swan* and married a few years later. Millepied announced last January that he would be converting to Judaism, so the dynamic duo will surely be together for a holiday that is important to Portman: Hanukkah. The Israeli-born actress has even been quoted as saying her heart belongs in Jerusalem.

Related Link: [Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied Get Married](#)

3. Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick: The fashion trendsetter and her actor husband sure have their plate filled. Between building a fashion and movie empire and raising their children, the couple still has time for the important things, like celebrating the holidays. Of course, the *Sex & the City* star most likely has a pair of Manolos for each of the eight days of the Celebration of Lights.

4. Adam Sandler and Jackie Sandler: As if it weren't already obvious, the actor and comedian is all about Hanukkah tradition at his house. The funny man loves getting together with his family and embracing the holiday season. He even wrote a song about the Jewish holiday called "The Chanukah Song" for *Saturday Night Live*.

Related Link: [Ashley Hebert and J.P. Rosenbaum Celebrate Holiday Traditions](#)

5. Robert Downey Jr. and Susan Downey: The bad boy actor may be a trouble maker in Hollywood, but when it comes to celebrating the holidays, he's all warm and fuzzy inside just like everyone else. This couple needs to take a break from their acting, producing and film making to sing some Hanukkah songs and celebrate their good fortune.

What other celebrity couples do you know who are lighting the Menorah this holiday season? Share your thoughts below.

How to Treat Your Partner to 12 Dates of Christmas



By Molly Jacob

Carols, presents, and mistletoe! Christmas is one of the best times of the year...and it can be the most romantic. What are some ways to spend this festive time with your loved one? While the 12 days leading up the Christmas are fun, it's time to have an even better time getting into the holiday spirit with these 12 "dates" of Christmas:

12. Decorate your tree: The best way to get your home ready for the holidays is by putting up a tree. Decorate it with your honey and spend time reflecting on the special meaning of each ornament that you hang on the branches.

11. Shop for tacky Christmas sweaters: Hit up the local thrift store with your love, and go hunting for the craziest Christmas sweater you can find. The two of you will laugh at how silly you look, and now, you both have a great ensemble to wear to those ugly Christmas sweater parties.

10. Go Christmas shopping: The holiday season is one of the biggest shopping seasons of the year, so the stores go all out. Not only will you be able to enjoy all the beautiful storefront decorations, but you'll also be able to see what catches your partner's eye. You can get some inspiration for their gift and surprise them on Christmas morning.

9. Wrap presents: Put on a little holiday music, find your scissors and tape, and get out the ribbon. Get some creative wrapping ideas from your significant other when you wrap your gifts with him or her. Lend a finger where necessary!

8. Check out holiday lights: From the house down the street to the National Zoo, everyone's putting up lights for the holidays. Grab your babe and head over to a Christmas lights display so you can enjoy the sights and get into the holiday spirit together. Extra benefit: This date is free!

7. Go ice skating: One of the most classic winter activities is ice skating, so go visit your local indoor or outdoor rink. If you or your partner trips on the ice, the other one can catch the more clumsy skater in their arms! Afterwards, enjoy a cup of hot cocoa for two.

6. Make a gingerbread house: Buy a pre-made kit at the store or make your own gingerbread house together from scratch. Better yet, each of you can make your own house and have a competition to see whose is more creative. The loser buys dinner!

5. Go sledding: If it snows this month, grab your loved one and a sled! Find the nearest hill and go sledding, just like you both did when you were kids. If you don't have a sled, a

garbage can lid or lunch tray will do just fine.

Related Link: [Budget-Friendly Tips for Holiday Weddings](#)

4. See a holiday play: Take the money you would spend at a nice restaurant and go buy tickets for a local performance, such as *The Nutcracker* put on by a kids' ballet class. You'll be supporting your community, and you'll also have a great time seeing a classic show.

3. Volunteer at a soup kitchen: Christmas isn't just about getting gifts; it's also about giving back. Take your honey to a local soup kitchen and give some of your time back to your community.

2. Make holiday goodies: Treat your sweetie to some sweets! Find out what types of cookies your partner loves and look up some delicious recipes online. After baking them, wrap them up in cling wrap and holiday ribbon and then give them to your loved ones.

1. Watch Christmas movies: Transform your living room into a movie theater. Check out Netflix or Redbox for some of your favorite Christmas movies, including *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Santa Claus*, and *Love Actually*, and snuggle up under the glow of the Christmas tree while sipping hot chocolate. There's no better way to enjoy the holiday spirit.

What other holiday dates do you plan on going on this season? Share in the comments section below!

5 Celebrity Couples Who Got

Engaged Over The Holidays



By Maggie Manfredi

Whether you are a first-time reader or a frequent peruser of us here at Cupid's Pulse, we want to wish you a holiday season full of joy, peace, and, of course, love! What better way to celebrate than by looking back at some of our favorite celebrity couples who got engaged over the holidays? Check it out:

1. Matthew McConaughey and Camila Alves: This famous couple makes our holiday engagement list, and they did it amidst a lot of joy. The *Magic Mike* star proposed on Christmas Day and shared the happy news with fans almost immediately on social media.

Related Link: [Celebrity Couples That Always Get Caught Hooking](#)

[Up](#)

2. Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel: These hot newlyweds got engaged in late December. JT popped the question in the mountains in Jackson, Wyoming because of his now-wife's love for winter outdoor activities.

3. Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied: This celebrity duo like to keep their relationship fairly private. Their holiday engagement news came out around the same time as the news that they were expecting in December!

4. Drew Barrymore and Will Kopelman: This engagement was Barrymore's third try at true love. The couple continues to stay strong since their holiday engagement while vacationing in Sun Valley.

Related Link: [If Men Were Like Reindeer, Which Would You Choose?](#)

5. Mario Lopez and Courtney Mazza: 3, 2, 1...engaged! This gorgeous pair got engaged on New Year's Day in Ixtapa, Mexico. Talk about out with the old and in with the new!

Are you ready to celebrate the holidays with your loved ones? Share your favorite memory or engagement story below!

3 Ways to Support Your Anxious Partner





By Sherianna Boyle

Having a partner who tends to worry about the past and future can be both physically and mentally exhausting. Some of the symptoms of anxiety include fear, self doubt, dread, and negative thinking. Over time, this can take its toll on both partners. Relationships that start close and caring may become tense and hurtful.

When this occurs, the relationship itself is a trigger for old fears and wounds. Science shows what you think and believe about stress and anxiety matters. If you want to support your partner, yet you secretly believe their stress is the source of your problems, this is likely to exacerbate rather than diminish the symptoms. Supporting your partner is not as much about what you *will* do but how you **are** being. Below are three basic guidelines to support you through this process:

Related Link: [Reducing Dating Anxiety in 5 Ways or Less](#)

1. Watch your language: Notice if you hear yourself say (either silently or out loud) statements such as, *He is so*

anxious or She is so reactive. When thoughts are repeated they can turn into beliefs. Unconsciously, your partner is likely to pick up more on what you believe rather than what you think. If what you believe is judgmental in nature know that nothing changes from a state of judgment. It is a growth barrier. People grow and learn from being heard, appreciated, and loved. When negative thoughts come your way, visualize wiping the words from your mind. The key is to do this from a place of playfulness, meaning keep it light and non-aggressive.

2. Practice neutral observations: Now that you have erased the words from your mind, take a deep inhale and exhale. On inhale, puff out your lower abdomen. On exhale, pull in your navel. Watch how the breath lands on your skin. Notice any sensations and tingly feeling as you continue to breathe three to four more times (slowly). As you practice observing yourself through a more neutral state, you can then practice this with your partner. Next time your partner complains or worries about something, return to neutral observations. This allows you to break free from feeding anxious behaviors. Often, couples unconsciously get into the habit of being stressed around each other. Neutral observations allow you to break this neurological pattern.

Related Link: [4 Tips to Reduce New Year's Eve Dating Anxiety](#)

3. Exercise gratitude: Anxiety and gratitude cannot live together. You cannot be grateful and fearful at the same time. One of the best ways to support your partner is to express your appreciation and gratitude. It could be as simple as saying thankful or acknowledging something you appreciate.

Sherianna Boyle is the author of [The Four Gifts of Anxiety](#). She is also the co-host of the television show, 'Thriving from Anxiety.' Her background includes working as a school psychologist, adjunct psychology professor, parent educator, seasoned yoga/mediation teacher, professional speaker, and

mother of three children. Additional resources, such as her video download on Yoga for Anxiety, visit www.sheriannaboyle.com.

3 Celebrity Couples That Waited to Have Kids



By [Courtney Omernick](#)

These days, it seems like once two celebrities get together, the world wants to know when they plan on having children. Well, we've found a few celebrity couples who actually waited to have children. Check out the list below!

1. Kate Middleton and Prince William: The second this couple was married back in April 2011, the media began speculating every week as to whether or not the Duchess of Cambridge was pregnant. However, it wasn't until over a year later that the couple announced they were expecting their first child.

Related: [Prince William and Kate Middleton Arrive in NYC](#)

2. Beyonce and Jay-Z: This celebrity power couple started dating in 2002 and married in 2008, but baby Blue Ivy didn't come into the picture until 2012.

Related: [Beyonce Shares Eifel Tower Picture with Jay-Z and Blue Ivy](#)

3. Sarah Michelle Gellar and Freddie Prinze Jr.: Their first child, daughter Charlotte, came into the world a few weeks after their seventh wedding anniversary. The couple also took some time in between children, as their second child, son Rocky, was born three years later.

What other celebrity couples waited to have children? Comment below!

10 Relationship Myths





By Dr. John Demartini

We have all read about happily ever after and other misleading fantasies in story books. Even in adulthood, most people buy into these childhood ideas. However, believing in these common myths will keep you from fully experiencing the riches that every relationship has to offer.

Here are the top ten relationship myths:

MYTH 1: A New Relationship Will Make Me Happy

During the initial infatuation phase of a relationship, you see mostly the positive side of the person. There is a strong attraction, positive traits, and potential for lasting happiness. However, that is just a delusion. Regardless of how well a relationship begins, you will eventually experience both sides of the person. A relationship will not change this natural experience of human emotions.

MYTH 2: When I Find My Soul Mate, I Will Feel Complete

Living as if your soul mate will complete you will only lead to heartbreak. The illusions that you project onto your soul

mate will inevitably fall apart when they sometimes behave in a manner that is not supporting you. A soul mate can be one person or several people in your life that fully complement you and help you find your own wholeness.

MYTH 3: The Right Relationship Will Last Forever

For every relationship beginning, there is another one ending. So, the idea of forever is an unrealistic expectation. A relationship lasts as long as both people communicate in each other's highest values or priorities.

MYTH 4: Once We Get Past These Rough Waters, It Will Be Smooth Sailing

Relationships are not static and no one remedy will eliminate all your supposed troubles. As I mentioned above, life involves a balance of difficulty and ease; of liberty and constraint.

MYTH 5: A Good Relationship Requires Sacrifice

Sacrifice tends to breed resentment. Anytime you do something you do not want to do, or see no benefit to yourself in doing it, then you will become resentful. This may happen immediately, or unconsciously. It is wiser to master the art of communicating in each other's values.

MYTH 6: Great Sex Happens Only at the Beginning of a Relationship

Both lust and intimate lovemaking can continue to grow and evolve throughout a relationship, as long as you understand and disable any unrealistic expectations that might shut it down. This includes the myths listed here.

MYTH 7: In the Right Relationship, I Will Not Have to Work at It

Many people hang on to the idea that being with someone should happen naturally. However, a fulfilling relationship requires concentration, organization, effort and skill.

MYTH 8: If I am Not Involved with Someone, I Will Be Lonely

People can feel lonely in a crowded room. Loneliness is a function of how you perceive yourself relative to your environment. You can sleep right next to someone and yet feel a thousand miles distant or be a thousand miles distant but feel as if they are close.

MYTH 9: Children Complete a Marriage

Children are unlikely to complete a union just as romantic partners are unlikely to complete each other.

MYTH 10: Opposites Attract

There is no true opposite only an apparent opposite. Every human has the same potential for love, anger, greatness, hope, despair etc. What you see in a romantic partner is also present in you. It is just expressed in a different way.

[Dr. John Demartini](#) is a world-renowned human behavioral specialist, author, and educator.

Celebrity Couples That Always Get Caught Hooking Up





By Molly Jacob

Are you and your partner masters of PDA? Do you two show your love to the world by kissing and cuddling in public? Celebrities are not any different! See what celebrity couples are seemingly always caught by the paparazzi cameras showing off their romance.

1. Dougie Poynter and Ellie Goulding: After breakup rumors from last spring, the couple has confirmed that they are together. The tight-lipped pair has been spotted cuddling and holding hands, even when paparazzi cameras are around. Before they even announced their relationship, they were seen with “arms wrapped each other” at a Taylor Swift concert and quietly leaving a London Fashion Week party together.

2. Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher: Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher are always caught showing their affection in public. They have been caught kissing and canoodling many times, from the Stagecoach Festival in April to a Dodgers game in June. The celebrity power couple welcomed their first child, baby girl Wyatt, last October.

Related: [Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher Welcome a Baby Girl](#)

3. Sarah Silverman and Michael Sheen: Comedienne Sarah Silverman and boyfriend *Masters of Sex* star Michael Sheen have been spotted being cutesy all around town, including at the Met Gala in May when she was copping a feel of her beau's bum. Last February, the couple was caught getting "hot and heavy" at Soho House in West Hollywood. They were first seen leaving Sheen's 45th birthday party together, and the two have been an item ever since.

Related: [How Celebrities Celebrate Thanksgiving](#)

4. Naomi Campbell and Michael Fassbender: Naomi Campbell has moved on quickly after her breakup with Russian billionaire Vladimir Doronin. The supermodel and *12 Years a Slave* star Michael Fassbender were all over each other at a London restaurant last spring and were shown being very lovey-dovey in the VIP section.

What other celebrity couples are always getting caught hooking up? Share in the comments section below!

If Men Were Like Reindeer, Which One Would You Choose?





By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

We know their names from those famous lines in Clement Clarke Moore's poem *A Visit From St. Nick*: "Now Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now, Prancer and Vixen! On, Comet! On, Cupid! On, Donner and Blitzen!" Since the writing of this poem – 1939, to be exact – Rudolph joined Santa's team, and they were complete. Each of these reindeer have very unique personalities, and here at CupidsPulse.com, we couldn't help but wonder what men would be like if they were reindeer. Would you want to date a strong leader like Comet or an affectionate lover like Cupid? Read on to figure out what reindeer you would choose.

Dasher: Dasher is known for his speed and energy – it's in his name, after all! He is the most excited reindeer when the time nears to load up the red sleigh. His quickness makes him a very valuable member of Santa's team. A man like this would be the same in terms of efficiency and speed. He'd be a natural-born athlete and a busy-bee at heart. Everything about him would be fast! You'd have to remind him to slow down and make sure he's not out the door every time you you want to relax and snuggle by the fireplace.

Dancer: Dancer is popular among the other reindeer for having the most flare and elegance. He is extremely extroverted. Dating a man like this would mean putting on your best dress and heels and going out quite often. He would surely be the most fun date, but you'd have to remind him to share the limelight with his lady love.

Related Link: [Top Ten Most Romantic Holiday Getaway Spots](#)

Prancer: This reindeer likes to look his best at all times. Pulling the sleigh is important to him, and he never knows who he's going to meet! His impeccable posture contributes to his high performance on Christmas Eve. A man like Prancer would be very put-together and would make an exceptional impression on your friends and family. Be careful, though: This kind of man may become a little too obsessed with what's on the outside.

Vixen: The flirt and comedian of Santa's team is loved greatly for his positive attitude and talent of performing magic tricks. Vixen can really brighten up the night (metaphorically speaking, unlike Rudolph) and keep the other reindeer entertained while they wait on the rooftops. Dating a man like Vixen would mean lots of jokes and laughter, but he may have a difficult time taking some things seriously.

Comet: The leader of the team is the most looked up to by children. Although he can be quite stubborn and strong-willed, he's got his team's best interest at heart and always makes good decisions. Men like Comet tend to be the most loyal and dedicated to their lovers; just make sure that he lets *you* take the reins every once in a while.

Cupid: Cupid is the most loving and affectionate of all the reindeer. He sees his team as his family and loves to give and receive lots of hugs and kisses. Cupid can really warm a heart during the holiday season! The romance is unforgettable with a guy like Cupid, so long as he doesn't become too needy.

Related Link: [Do THIS When Meeting His Family Over the Holidays](#)

Donner: The most confident and proud of all the reindeer, Donner has always loved what he does. His name comes from the German word for “thunder,” which is fitting because of his strong presence. A man like Donner will make you feel safe in any situation. He’ll also be very proud of his relationship with you, but be sure his confidence doesn’t spiral into cockiness.

Blitzen: This reindeer loves a good challenge. He is the most savvy of all the reindeer and loves to outsmart his friends. You could learn a lot dating a man like Blitzen, as guys like this are usually the most interesting. You’ve just got to remind him to have a little fun every once in a while!

Rudolph: The most famous of all the reindeer, Rudolph is known for his bright red nose that helps him guide his team through the night. He has really proven himself to the other reindeer since his days of being teased and now earns the most credit for helping Santa get to every single child on Christmas Eve. A partner like Rudolph would always provide you with insight and advice to guide you and loves lending a helping hand to his community. Just remind him that it’s okay to focus on himself sometimes too!

If men were like reindeer, which one would you choose? Tell us in the comments below!

Should You Date More Than One

Person at the Same Time?



By [Courtney Omernick](#)

Juggling work, life, family, and friends can be hard enough. Now try adding dating. No, let's make that dating multiple people at once! Sounds like a bit of a challenge, doesn't it? Well, it can be done, and it can be done right if it's something you're looking to do. Below are a few points regarding dating more than one person at the same time.

1. Honesty may be the best policy: We're not suggesting you make this the first thing you tell your date right after you've stated your name, but you may want to tell them that you're interested in openly dating because they may have different expectations. You wouldn't want to figure that out after you're a few weeks in.

Related: [Sofia Vergara and Joe Manganiello Celebrate Thanksgiving Together](#)

2. Compare and contrast: While dating multiple people may be hard to balance, it does give you the option to compare and contrast each person. This way, you can speed up the process of finding 'the one.'

Related: [Snooki Marries Jionni LaValle](#)

3. Gaining skills: Like a job interview, dating multiple people at once helps you practice what to do and say on the first date. After a few tries, you'll be a pro, and the first attempt hopefully won't be so nerve wracking.

Do you think dating more than one person at the same time is a good idea? Comment below!

5 Women Who Got Famous After Celebrity Divorce





By [Courtney Omernick](#)

Sometimes, the not-so-glamorous side of one's life is showcased and talked about more than their positive, beautiful moments. And when it comes to divorce, especially if you're a celebrity, get ready to be eaten alive by the tabloids!

Below are five women who had a rise in fame after they dropped the ax on their marriage by getting a celebrity divorce.

1. Camille Grammer: The famous ex-celebrity wife of Kelsey Grammer became even more famous when the couple went through an ugly celebrity break-up in 2011 after 14 years of marriage. While her [celebrity divorce](#) was being finalized from Kelsey, Camille signed on to the reality show *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*.

Related Link: [Four Changes You MUST Make to Avoid Falling Prey](#)

[to the Unavailable Man](#)

2. Katie Holmes: While Katie had a great run on *Dawson's Creek* from 1998-2003, the actress didn't get a lot of attention until she surprised Tom Cruise with celebrity divorce papers in 2012. Since that time, Katie's been scouted for multiple film roles and received copious amounts of attention from the paparazzi.

Related Link: [Solange Knowles and Alan Ferguson Honeymoon in Brazil](#)

3. Heather Mills: This celebrity wife was only married to Beatles front man, Paul McCartney, for four years. But, she turned heads after her split from Sir Paul because she claimed that he was 'abusive,' 'a drug taker,' and more. McCartney was also forced to give Heather \$46.6 million after their split.

4. Elin Nordegren: Since her crazy divorce from Tiger Woods in 2010, every newspaper wants to know how she's moved on, if she forgives Tiger, and what she's been up to. Prior to the cheating scandal involving Woods, not many people could recall the name Elin Nordegren.

5. Ivana Trump: Soon after her divorce from Donald Trump in 1992, Ivana started making a name for herself. Since that time, Ivana signed on with William Morris Agency and developed lines of clothing, fashion jewelry, and beauty products. She has also written several books and starred in her own reality television show.

What other celebrity women have gotten famous after their divorce? Comment below!

Top Ten Most Down-To-Earth Celebrity Wives



[By Katie Gray](#)

It's wonderful to know that there are still kind-hearted, charitable and polite people in the world! When it comes to Hollywood and celebrities in the public eye, there are frequently discussions centering around which stars are down to earth and which are not. Ever wonder which celebrity wives are the sweetest? Cupid has the top ten most down-to-earth:

1. Miranda Lambert: Country cutie Miranda Lambert is not only a talented singer/songwriter, but she is also extremely charitable. Lambert is an animal activist and started MuttNation Foundation to raise awareness for shelter pets and

to improve existing shelters. Frequently, she rescues dogs and has taken an active role in finding pets the homes they deserve. The country singer is married to fellow country singer, Blake Shelton and remains down to earth even after her enormous success; she still enjoys a nice BBQ, a cold beer, hunting and having friends and family by her side. This southern belle truly embodies southern hospitality, manners and values.

2. Sarah Jessica Parker: The *Sex and the City* actress is known for being stylish and fabulous, just like Carrie Bradshaw, the iconic character she portrayed. However; Parker has even more to offer. On top of being a successful actress, she is a model and has her own shoe collection. There are numerous reports of encounters that civilians and celebrities have had with the star, and they are all extremely positive. The Emmy winning actress is married to fellow actor Matthew Broderick and is a proud mom to the three children they have together. She is involved with many charities, volunteers often and was even a bridesmaid in her former assistant's wedding.

3. Princess Kate, Duchess of Cambridge: Just because one is Royal, doesn't mean that they are a royal pain. Princess Kate is one of the most gentle and down-to-earth figures in the world. She seems to be taking after her mother-in-law Princess Diana, who once stated, "Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you." The Princess is full of purpose, and donates her time, notoriety and money towards a tremendous amount of charities and nonprofit organizations. Just last year she added three more to her long list: Place2Be, SportsAid and The Natural History Museum.

Related: [Celebrity Couples Who Make A Difference In The World](#)

4. Meryl Streep: Megastar, Meryl Streep, is the epitome of being an actress. Her work in the film industry alone has captivated audiences in ways like no other has done. She

shines not only on screen, but through acts of kindness, too. Multiple stars who have worked with her say she is gracious, kind and talented. This includes fellow actress Anne Hathaway, who co-starred with Streep in the hit movie *The Devil Wears Prada*. The leading lady also donated \$1 million dollars to New York Public Theatre. Her charity endeavors include Actors Fund of America, Artists for Peace and Justice, Entertainment Industry Foundation and many more. It's touching she helps fellow actors and gives back. The celebrated actress has an estimated net worth of \$66 million dollars and she puts it to good use.

5. Diane Von Furstenberg: Creative mastermind and top luxury brand designer, Diane Von Furstenberg, has graced the world with her humble presence, amazing collections and acts of charity for quite a long time. She is most notable for the iconic wrap dress and fun prints. However; she is also quite the philanthropist. In 1999, the Dillver-von Furstenberg Family Foundation was created to address global issues and support organizations that provide opportunities for people who wouldn't otherwise have access, in efforts to improve the community as a whole. There are even the DVF Awards, that honor strong and courageous women who rally and overcome adversity to make positive changes in the world. She's also involved in Vital Voices, which trained 5,000 women leaders in 150 countries, which led to having mentored 100,000 more females. Diane is a shining beacon of hope for a better world.

6. Ivanka Trump: Ivanka Trump is a gorgeous, well-educated, powerful, working wife and mother. And she also happens to be the daughter of billionaire magnate and mogul, Donald Trump. Some in her position may have chosen not to work, because she doesn't need to, being a trust fund baby, heiress and socialite. That being said, she is a successful businesswoman all on her own, a fashion designer, philanthropist, writer and model.

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7. Nicole Richie: You may originally know her from the reality show *The Simple Life* where she co-starred alongside best friend Paris Hilton, for her role as a judge on *Fashion Star*, her reality show *Candidly Nicole*, being the daughter of music legend Lionel Richie, or for her own career as a singer and DJ. But; wife and mother, Richie, has even more to offer. Richie is married to Joel Madden, and together they have two children. When she had her baby shower, she used the Wizard of Oz themed event to benefit charity.

8. Jennifer Garner: Is there anyone sweeter than actress, wife and mother, Jennifer Garner? Nope. Garner rose to fame on the hit television series *Alias*, and has starred in numerous films. On top of that, she is married to fellow actor, Hollywood hunk, Ben Affleck. Together, the couple has three beautiful children. Garner is an activist and serves on the board of trustees for Save the Children, appeared in videos for the Ban Bossy campaign, hosted The Women's Cancer Research Institute benefit dinner, donates to countless additional charities and remains a positive ambassador and role model. *People* named her one of the Most Beautiful at Every Age.

9. Victoria Beckham: Posh Spice is a well-rounded woman. She is always immaculately dressed and is a frequent target of the tabloids. Her marriage to David Beckham is widely publicized, as well as their personal lives and being parents to their four gorgeous children. She's a pop star, fashion designer, author, model and businesswoman. With her net worth of \$300 million, she gives back in a variety of ways. She teamed up with The Outnet and sold more than 600 pieces of her own personal wardrobe pieces, with proceeds that benefited the organization Mothers2mothers. The star also even donated a ton of shoes to help victims of the Philippines typhoon. Some may think she is just a diva, but she is actually a dear. She once explained the reason behind her serious faces on the red carpet saying that if someone is smiling all the time they will appear "daft."

10. 'Real Housewives': Teresa Giudice/Melissa Gorga/Dina Manzo/Kelly Bensimon: Bravo TV's hit reality franchise *The Real Housewives* has garnered millions of viewers and created stars. Just because they are wives and mothers though; doesn't mean they aren't contributing to our society. Teresa Giudice, Melissa Gorga and Dina Manzo are no strangers to charity. All three women donate to good causes and have been reported as being super friendly in real life, even when cameras are not rolling. Teresa Giudice went on *Celebrity Apprentice* and raised money for NephCure the kidney disease charity foundation. Dina Manzo has her very own charity she started called The Ladybug Foundation which aids children with cancer. They all have children and still find the time to give back and put their fame to good use. Who said reality stars are famous for nothing? Bravo, ladies!

Who are some other celebrity wives who remain down to earth? Share your thoughts below.

Four Changes You MUST Make to Avoid Falling Prey to the Unavailable Man





By April Kirkwood

Something mystical occurs when a beloved arrives and touches our heart. We become mesmerized as if we're under a spell, and we are deaf to all rational thought. We are cut off from cognitive reasoning and common sense as he slips his hand in ours. We blindly ignore the wedding ring on his hand, the calls from his kids during love making, and holidays alone as he spends time with family and friends.

Eventually, the dream of landing the unavailable man starts to crumble. Weeks fade into years, turning us into hateful, bipolar lunatics lost in lies and deception. The eventual breakup ends badly. He calls us crazy, a mistake, or denies "us" altogether.

For months after, we stumble through our days half drunk with deep pain. Confused and broken, our eyes are forced open by the glaring sun of truth. Our mind spins out of control with a million feelings. We go over details and ask questions that will never be answered. We toss and turn night after night, get lost in glasses of wine, and we pour out our hearts to

anyone who will listen. In short, we are a total train wreck.

Sound familiar?

The truth is that the 'unavailable man' is a part of our culture. Cheating is as permanent as the stars in the sky. The cheating man is not going away. On the contrary, because of social media and technology, these scoundrels can get away with more than they ever have before.

However, the Unavailable Man does not have to be a character in your life's story. After years of counseling, I have found that many women (from various demographics) carry with them certain thoughts and beliefs that lead them straight to the Heartbreak Hotel. Beliefs that don't serve and support what we all truly want and deserve; a monogamous relationship with a honest man who is capable, willing, and ready to love us.

Smart UP Ladies

1. Quit being DEAF to what men say: "I'm a mess." "I just want to have fun." They often tell the truth to make themselves feel less guilty. However, you are too busy selling yourself to hear it clearly. Be a fly on the wall and watch the lies fall.

Related: [How to Defend Against Four Emotional Vampires](#)

2. Stop acting DUMB: Never give anyone the benefit of the doubt. Check him out. It's not being mean; it's just being smart. If your research checks out, he never needs to know.

Related: [Miley Cyrus Celebrates Birthday with Patrick Schwarzenegger](#)

3. Get rid of being BLIND to the obvious: He keeps his life a bit of a mystery because he is hiding the truth.

4. Don't act like a CHILD: Get rid of fantasy ideals like: Dreams do come true, wishes come true, and love conquers all.

Seriously! Grow up and get real. You are not Cinderella!

Most importantly, always be kind and classy. Years later, it will be you not him who has something we like to call, integrity. That's the best revenge of all.

April Kirkwood is a graduate of Youngstown State University with two masters in education—in school and community counseling. April worked for more than 25 years in public education and in the mental health field as a social worker, teacher, guidance counselor, and mentor for new teachers. April is also the author of “Big Boys Do Cry: Why May Affair with Frankie Valli Matters” which is set to release in 2015. Learn more about April Kirkwood by visiting aprilkirkwood.com or by Subscribing to her new Youtube Series AprilofCourse.

Does Taking a Break Help or Hurt Your Relationship and Love Life?





By Molly Jacob

Your relationship and love is all roses and chocolate, but then reality hits. You and your partner used to be googly-eyed during the first part of your relationship, but the happier times are now over. You decide to have the dreaded talk where you conclude that taking a break is the best for both of you.

The question is, will a break help or hurt your relationship and love life? Find out Cupid's take.

When taking a break in a relationship helps:

1. Experiencing "me" time: You've spent the past months or years focusing on making your relationship better, but now's the perfect time to work on improving yourself. By picking up new hobbies and rediscovering how you can enjoy time on your own, you'll come back into the relationship with a better head on your shoulders.

2. Having new experiences: During this time, you may be going out on your own, meeting new people, and going on a few dates. These experiences (that you can only have if you take a break from your relationship) may help you realize that your honey is the only one for you and that you're much happier when you're together.

Related Link: [Psychologist Breaks Down Relationship Fears in New Book, 'Love Me, Don't Leave Me'](#)

3. Giving each other space: Sometimes the arguments that end a relationship can be petty. By taking a break, you can step back and look at the big picture, allowing you to realize that all those disagreements do not seem so important anymore.

When taking a break in a relationship hurts:

1. Becoming jealous: Although many people use a break as a time to see other people, this can lead to problems if you two get back together. One partner may become envious of the people the other partner has dated during the break, which could lead to a loss of trust in your relationship.

2. Ignoring problems: Just because you two temporarily step away from the relationship, that does not mean it will be fixed when you get back together. The issues between the two of you might still be there and could result in a permanent break.

Related Link: [Jason Derulo Confirms Split from Jordin Sparks](#)

3. Growing apart: Spending time not together may make you realize that maybe you should be apart permanently. By not being together, you might become different people. When you take a break in a relationship, you may realize that you are happier on your own.

Do you think taking a break hurts or helps a relationship? Reply in the comments section below!