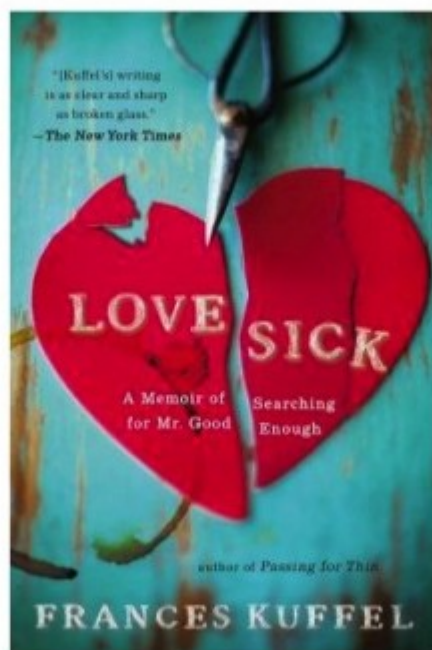


'Love Sick: A Memoir of Searching for Mr. Good Enough' Recalls the Humorous and Insightful Journey of Looking For Love



By Brittany

Stubbs and Laura Seaman

Love Sick: A Memoir of Searching for Mr. Good Enough is a sharp and irreverent memoir recalling Frances Kuffel's quest to replace her on-again, off-again lover with someone new and preferably less unstable. As Shakespeare said, the course of true love never did run smooth, but for Kuffel, it seemed like

one pothole after another. Fifty-three and never married, she opens her mind to all possibilities: She goes out with an Orthodox Jew, is almost the victim of a scammer, stays out all night with a man twenty years her junior, encounters food fixations and shoe fetishes, and generally reads a lot of strange emails. Brazenly honest and insightful, the author comes through the experience with a new understanding of love and, most importantly, herself.

For starters, what inspired you to write this memoir?

I fell in love with a younger man with whom I had a friends-with-benefits situation. He did not reciprocate my feelings, although he very much wanted to remain friends. The best way to get over a broken heart is to fall in love with someone else, and as a memoirist, I could see my challenge was ripe for writing about.

Related Link: [‘He Texted’ Authors Lisa Winning and Carrie Henderson McDermott, Discuss Dating in the Digital Age](#)

Your determination to find love is inspiring. What kept you going through the rough patches? What would your advice be to other women who are having a difficult time and thinking of giving up?

There were rough patches, and then, there were really rough patches. It took a while to go out on some decent dates, and it was my friends and their senses of humor that buoyed me through the tough times. I have always said you go out with other people, but you date your friends: It’s friends you go to with the stories, and it’s friends who laugh it off with you, psychoanalyze with you, tell you to get over yourself, or hand you tissues.

My advice to other women is to give yourself a certain amount of time for several days a week to read profiles and answer messages because people who are constantly logged in look a

little desperate. If you see your Saturday night coming up without a date, do something with friends or on your own that you keenly enjoy. Take a break if you have a great date that doesn't lead to a second one – respect your heart. And get out in the world! One problem with online dating is that it's solitary until you meet someone. Remain a citizen. And the big one? DON'T TAKE ANYTHING PERSONALLY.

Your book mostly focuses on your search for love past age 53.

What are some of the differences you noticed between dating in your twenties as opposed to dating in your fifties?

It's an entirely different activity. There was biological imperative in our twenties, pushing us to make babies. Looks mattered more then than now, to a certain extent. Dating in your fifties means forgiving weight, hair loss, hair color, etc. I did a lot of group activities in my twenties too – a gang of friends would go out for pizza and beers or to the movies or “just hang out.” We paired off within the gang. I don't have a gang like that any more, and what social circles I move in tend to be dinner parties or the occasional outing.

We had school and new careers in our twenties, but we could also stay up all night. Now, we have positions in our careers and less energy. Many people have children or grandchildren, which entail a whole other set of obligations. We're also more entrenched in habits and hobbies. If someone announces himself to be a golfer on his personal ad, he's saying, “This is what brands me; it's where my leisure hours go.” We were more amorphous in our twenties, more willing to try golfing or give it up, according to whom our partner was.

Related Link: [Find How Strong Women Find Love in “The Alpha Woman Meets Her Match”](#)

As you wrote this book, I'm sure you learned a lot looking back at your dating experiences. If you had to pick the most valuable lesson learned about dating, what would it be?

If I'm not comfortable dating myself, I'm not ready to date anyone else. If I can't treat myself with the same care, tenderness, romance, admiration, and surprise that I would expend on someone else, I'm going to get short-shrifted by a man. And when it's all over, I'll be empty and blaming myself for the failure.

You've spoken a lot about weight loss in your books and in interviews. How has your journey with the loss and gain of weight impacted your search for love?

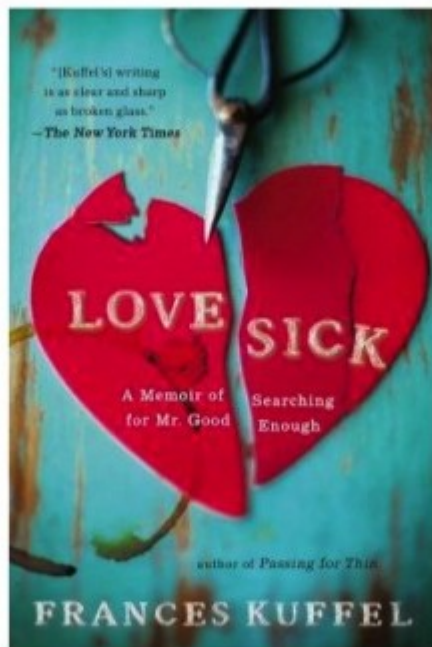
When I lost weight, I gained the confidence to really try dating for the first time in my life. I kept enough of that confidence to keep dating as I regained weight. My weight has turned a few men off. It's turned a few men on too – and I tend to hear about that because not many guys are going to say, "You're too fat." They'll just fade out instead of risking rudeness.

I say I kept "enough" confidence. I know I'd be a higher ticket item if I were a size 10 than a 22. But I've come to understand that weight is a journey – in my case, it has been one of a few journeys that define my life. If I don't accept where I am today, I'm not going to accept myself at size 8, which as it turned out, I didn't really.

Learn more about Frances Kuffel in her new book, [Love Sick: A Memoir of Searching for Mr. Good Enough](#).

What Singles Can Learn From

Weddings in 'Save the Date: The Occasional Mortifications of a Serial Wedding Guest'



By Liz Kim and
Brittany Stubbs

Weddings come in as many varieties as there are brides and grooms, and with them come some great receptions and some equally terrible ones. With each ceremony, you play a different role, and at a time where people are getting married later in life, weddings give us a little peek at what we want and don't want in our relationships. And when you've gone to as many weddings as author Jen Doll, you get a pretty good handle on wedding guest culture. In her memoir *Save the*

Date: The Occasional Mortifications of a Serial Wedding Guest, she recounts many of the different weddings she's been to in her life (which is nearly 30 at this point!) and what they have taught her about herself and love.

What inspired you to write *Save the Date: The Occasional Mortifications of a Serial Wedding Guest*?

From the time we are very young, wedding culture surrounds us in so many ways. I grew up seeing pictures of my parents' wedding, watching televised weddings of celebrities and fictionalized wedding stories, and, of course, perusing photos of myself at weddings as a child. As a kid, I thought about my own future wedding; I considered it something that was just inevitable. You grow up, you fall in love, and you get married. But as I got older, I realized it's not always that simple – and just because it's not simple doesn't mean it's not good.

I was inspired to look at my own wedding-going life because I think we've all been there in some way or another; while the specific stories may be different, the things we face at weddings – in the external situations or with our interior selves – are in many ways universal. The feelings we bring to these events play into our experience, just as those weddings also shape us and our feelings. I wanted to write about it so we could start to talk about it. Wedding guests have their own stories too.

Related Link: ['Never Have I Ever' Author Katie Heaney Says Love Should Be "a Supplement to a Full Life"](#)

What would you like readers to learn from reading *Save the Date*? Do you have one message you're hoping they take to heart?

I'd like people to come away with a sense of openness and possibility, to be relieved of some of the anxiety we tend to bring to weddings, and to feel that there is a community of

wedding guests who have all been there too. I'd like for people to feel like they can tell their own wedding guest stories. We can have each other's backs! I'd also like people to feel that they don't have to judge themselves so harshly for failing to live up to old expectations. We should all just be the real selves that we are, acknowledge our inherent complications and occasional mortifications, and try to be good to ourselves and each other as we learn and grow and have as much joy as we can in life.

Since you've been to your fair share of weddings, can you give our readers a few of your dos and don'ts when attending a pal's nuptials?

If you have concerns about the person your friend is marrying or about the marriage, do not get drunk and decide it's the right time to talk to her about it. I would recommend, if it's possible, addressing your concerns beforehand. She has her feelings, and you have yours. You are not the same people, and all that is reasonable and fair. But if you are good friends who love each other and want to stay close, you have to tell each other how you feel.

As for drinking in general, it's so easy to overindulge at a wedding. Waiters are constantly refilling your glass, sometimes without even asking! So just be careful. Sometimes, in the festive atmosphere, things turn a bad corner without you noticing, and then it's too late to get a handle on it.

And oh yeah, if you hate the bouquet toss (I hate the bouquet toss), leave the room!

You reference the single woman's perspective in your book. What have you found to be the most difficult part about being a single woman at weddings? Do you usually bring a date or go solo?

I have gone to weddings in each and every way it is possible to go to weddings as an unmarried person. I think the most

difficult part of going to a wedding as a “single woman” (and probably guys feel this too) is just about going to anything alone. It’s nerve-wracking to show up by yourself, and you can feel awkward. But this also means that going as a single person to a wedding can be really expanding. You learn to be on your own and feel the power and freedom that comes with that. You can move seamlessly between conversations; you don’t have to worry that your date isn’t having a good time. You are just you. That’s kind of awesome.

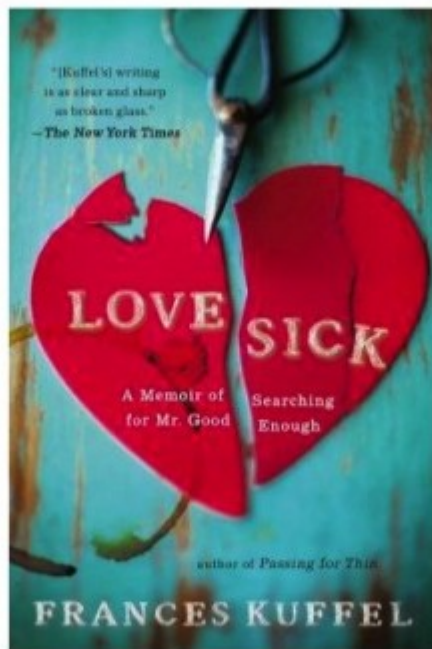
Related Link: [‘The Bridesmaid’s Manual’: A Guide to Wedding Planning And Friendship](#)

Any advice for other singles attending a wedding or two this summer?

It can be really fun to go to a wedding on your own! If you are going by yourself to a wedding, I recommend really owning it. If it’s in a nice destination, stay for a few more days before or after. Treat yourself to a massage, a new dress, a great haircut. Admit how you’re feeling to yourself – because with repressed feelings come disaster, at least in my experience. Even if you are feeling a whole lot of confusing or complicated emotions, admitting that fact frees you up a bit. You can say, “Yes, that’s there. I feel that, but I don’t have to let it determine how I’ll behave or prevent me from having fun in this moment.”

You can get your hands on ‘Save the Date: The Occasional Mortifications of a Serial Wedding Guest’ on Amazon. Keep up with Doll on Twitter @thisisjendoll.

Create Lasting Love with 'Marriage Meetings'



By Brittany

Stubbs

Despite the scary divorce rates, couples *can* make love last; they just need to learn how. Dr. Marcia Naomi Berger, a psychotherapist and clinical social worker, has created a way for couples to keep their relationships strong and healthy by encouraging an interruption-free meeting each week. Following an agenda, a marriage meeting includes the kind of appreciation that fosters intimacy and paves the way for collaborative conflict resolution.

In her new book *Marriage Meetings for Lasting Love: 30 Minutes a Week to the Relationship You've Always Wanted*, Berger

teaches you how to effectively communicate and connect with your spouse each week with step-by-step guidelines. The communication tips and techniques explained in her book are the same ones that Berger has used to guide hundreds of couples towards deeper, more lasting love. Although the title of the book is *Marriage Meetings*, don't let that fool you. This book is not just for married couples but for anyone in a committed relationship, and the skills you use in marriage meetings will transfer to and benefit all relationships in your life.

Can you explain what a marriage meeting is for our readers?

A marriage meeting is an occasion that happens once a week between married or committed couples. Ideally, they last from 30-45 minutes with an agenda that covers 4 areas of a relationship: Appreciation, Chores, Planning Good Times, and Dealing with Problems or Challenges. The purpose of these meetings is to increase romance and intimacy, to foster teamwork, and to resolve issues that come up in any relationship.

Related Link: [Dr. Sue Johnson Discusses How to Develop Your 'Love Sense'](#)

You make the point that marriage meetings are for all couples, not just those going through a rough patch, correct?

Definitely. Ideally, a couple will begin having marriage meetings when things are fairly calm. The meetings aren't designed to fix a crisis; they are more of a proactive kind of solution for preventing problems from building into a crisis.

Besides having 30-45 minutes of uninterrupted time with your partner, are there any other ground rules for having a successful marriage meeting?

Absolutely. There's a whole chapter on preparing for your meeting. One rule is scheduling the meeting at a time where

neither partner is tired, hungry, or intoxicated.

Also, both partners should be in a calm state of mind so they're able to communicate in a positive and respectful manner, even if they might be upset about something. Make sure that your phones are off and that there's no television in the background – or anything else that will distract one another. Another rule is using the positive communication skills described in detail in the book.

What is the main difference between having a marriage with your partner versus going to a counseling session?

Marriage meetings are for couples that have a healthy relationship. Couples that go to therapy can also have a healthy relationship and maybe just one aspect they really need to work on. But in my experience as a couples therapist, couples often come to therapy after they've let their relationship deteriorate to the point that they're not able to have a civil, respectable conversation about the issues they're dealing with or not dealing with.

What would you say to a couple or specific partner that is hesitant about trying marriage meetings?

I would encourage everyone to read the book and truly understand what the meetings entail before making up your mind. In every relationship, there's always room for growth and improvement. Even if everything is going well, these meetings and skills are simply a tool to make your relationship even better.

I would also tell anyone hesitant that these meetings aren't meant to make anyone feel criticized; they focus on positive appreciation and encouragement. Men, who are usually more hesitant at first, often like the meetings even more than women because the meeting structure is positive and direct and there's a time limit. I even encourage the less-verbal partner to speak first to ensure they'll be heard.

Related Link: [Aaron Paul Says 'Marriage is Easy'](#)

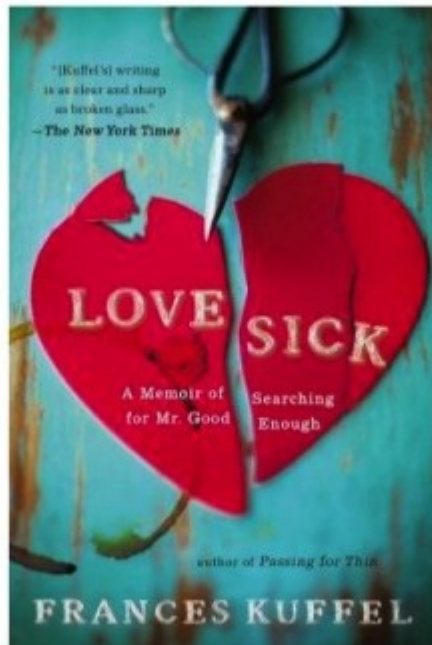
Besides marriage meetings, what advice to you have for our readers to make their love last?

Use those positive communications skills every day. It may be difficult when something is going wrong, but don't forget to acknowledge all the things still going right. Ask for what you want in a respectful way rather than just stating what is going wrong. For example, instead of saying, "You never bring me flowers," say, "I would love for you to bring my flowers." And if he doesn't want to bring flowers, ask yourself if it's really such a big deal. Let go of those little things, buy your own flowers, and focus on the positive things.

In a marriage, you have to remind one another that you're in it together. It's not going to always be a fairytale and you're going to have to put in energy and effort every day to make it better and continue to be strong.

To purchase Marriage Meetings for Lasting Love: 30 Minutes a Week to the Relationship You've Always Wanted, check out Amazon or your local bookstore!

'He Texted' Authors, Lisa Winning and Carrie Henderson McDermott, Discuss Dating in the Digital Age



Interview by [Lori](#)

[Bizzoco](#). Written by Maria Darbenzio.

Lisa Winning and Carrie Henderson McDermott, founders of HeTexted.com, are two women with different relationship statuses, but they both know the difficulties that come along with dating in the age of technology. In their new book, *He Texted: The Ultimate Guide to Decoding Guys*, they help women through various situations and suggest how to handle guy problems. With how rapidly digital media continues to expand, this guide is a must-have for every girl's bookshelf.

What prompted you to create the site? Did you just want to help women?

L: That's exactly what it was. There was nothing out there, and at the same time, my girlfriends who were asking these questions were really clever. They were journalists; they

worked in finance; and they had these really interesting, steady careers. Yet they would have a dating question and absolutely freak out over it. It just seemed like the most obvious thing in the world to create somewhere to go and ask questions like “How do I get a second date?” or “Why haven’t I heard back from him yet?”

Related Link: [Dating Apps to Manage Your Love Life](#)

I remember when texting first came out, and there would be these crazy conversations with my girlfriends about what a certain text meant, how to interpret what a guy said, and what to say back to him. I can’t believe it’s still like that today – I figured this new generation of millennials would have texting all figured out by now.

L: There’s still so much ambiguity. When something isn’t face-to-face, there are so many layers and so many different ways you can take it. And now things are even trickier with Facebook and whether you should add him as a friend or not, which is something we address in our book. It’s just an absolute minefield. I think that’s why so many people find dating quite confusing. It’s no longer just seeing a guy; it’s also social media and whether you should be following him on Twitter, etc.

C: Every chapter takes a different situation where you’re not face-to-face with a guy and talks about how to handle it.

Now, let’s talk about a few specific instances. First, we’ve all met that guy who refuses to call and only texts. What’s the best way to handle someone like that? Do you think a relationship can be built on texting alone?

L: I think that texting is increasingly how everyone’s interacting. We get inquiries all of the time like, “This guy’s been texting me for three months now, and I still haven’t seen him” or “I met this guy on Tindr, and we’re chatting every day, but he hasn’t set up a date yet.” At the

end of the day, you have to remember that *nothing* replaces face-to-face interactions. Obviously, spending time with someone is the basis of any sort of meaningful relationship. So if he's not calling you and you're not seeing him, then it's just a distraction. It's a form of entertainment rather than a real relationship.

Say a guy goes out with his buddies and tends to drunk text his ex a lot. Is this a red flag for a relationship?

C: We get this question a lot, and it's a completely common situation. At the same time, if he gets drunk and the first thing he thinks to do is text his ex-girlfriend, that means absolutely nothing good for you. You don't want to be in a relationship with someone who, when all his guards are down, is thinking of his ex instead of you. You want to run from that situation because you want to be with a guy who only thinks of you and wants to be with you always. You never want his ex-girlfriend in the back of his mind; that never ends well.

We get a lot of ex-girlfriend questions too. Social media makes it easier to leave a trail. So you go to the Facebook page of your new boyfriend; you click his profile pictures; and his old ones are with his ex-girlfriend. And you're like, "Oh, I don't like that." Or you see he's tagged in a picture, and you click on her name on Facebook to see what her profile looks like. It's human nature.

Related Link: [Lori Bizzoco Discusses Hollywood Love Lessons at Single in Stiletto's Event](#)

Lastly, could each of you share your top tip for dating in the digital age?

L: More than anything else, you still need to go with your gut instinct. I think we all spend too much time thinking about "Should I text him?" or "He Facebooked me two days ago. How long should I wait before responding?" It's good to keep

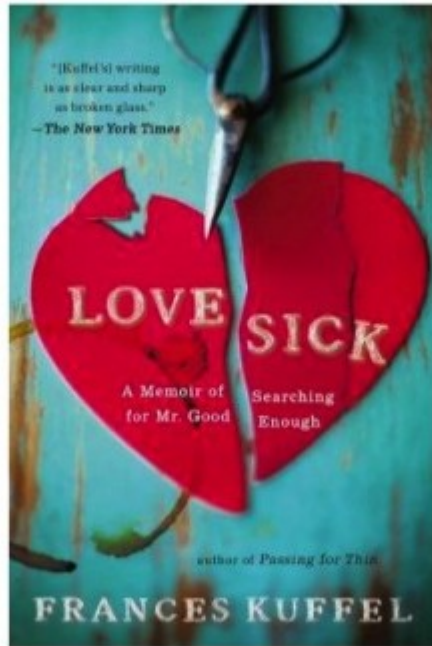
those things in mind, but nothing replaces that moment when you first meet someone or when you first do something really meaningful together. You recognize that the relationship has significance. So I think you need to go with that feeling.

C: The biggest thing to me is open communication. There are so many different ways to talk now, and people aren't always being honest. Direct communication and really sharing your true feelings instead of what you *think* you need to feel is most important.

Check out HeTexted.com for more digital dating insights and to order a copy of the book!

Find Out How Strong Women Can Find Love in 'The Alpha Woman Meets Her Match'





By Brittany

Stubbs

Although the 21st century has made it seem like ambitious women often end up alone, Dr. Sonya Rhodes assures us that this message is completely false. In her new book *The Alpha Woman Meets Her Match: How Today's Strong Women Can Find Love and Happiness Without Settling*, the relationship therapist argues successful, modern, career-driven women can meet The One without changing – and she shows them how.

Rhodes advises women to look past the overly competitive, domineering alpha male and instead find a man who's in touch with his inner beta qualities – someone who is communicative, responsible, thoughtful, and collaborative. Demonstrating that most people are a combination of *both* sets of qualities, she includes a revealing test to help readers define where they (and their partners) are on the spectrum.

First of all, what inspired you to write about this concept?

I was finding more and more of my clients were identifying

themselves as alpha women. Most had devoted their twenties to their education and careers, and they now wanted to shift their focus to dating and finding a life partner. They were very daunted by the messages in the media, saying that it was too late for them and that they should've married sooner, and they panicked.

This idea is actually nonsense though. When I started doing research to help them, it turns out that women are getting married between the ages of 30-45 now more than ever before. They haven't missed the boat! And furthermore, even better news, you decrease your chance of getting divorce for every year you delay marriage.

Another aspect that inspired me to write this book was identifying one of the main problems my female clients were having: They were going for the alpha male. They thought the macho, traditional, breadwinning guys were the right matches for them. But that's not the case, because these strong women need a *partner*, not a boss.

Related Link: [Avril Carruthers Reveals How to Maintain 'Freedom From Toxic Relationships'](#)

So you encourage your clients and readers to look for a beta man. Can you describe the beta man and tell us why his qualities are important for an Alpha woman?

The beta man is accommodating, not compliant. He is assertive but not confrontational. He has a strong work ethic, but he's not a workaholic. While alpha men are often threatened by strong women, beta men aren't. Their egos are strong enough that they can support ambitious women, which is why I've begun to refer to the beta man as the "new catch" for the alpha woman.

When it comes to dating, females are often told to "be the woman" in the relationship. What is your response to the advice that you have to act like a "lady" in order to get a

“gentleman?”

The term “act like a lady” is so retro because what it means to be feminine today has changed. In 97 percent of the cities in America, single, college-educated women under the age of 30 are making more money than men. This is not only a startling and inspiring statistic for women, but it shows that the feminine role is no longer a narrow, scripted identity. Similarly for men today, they’re becoming just as comfortable changing diapers as women. So the whole gender role dynamic has changed; no one has to fit into a box anymore.

When it comes to how to act in a relationship, don’t hide who you are. There’s nothing wrong with showing that you’re a strong woman. The guys who are scared off or intimidated by successful women are not the guys for you. Of course, there’s a point where you can become a negative alpha, which I talk about in the book as well, where you’re too bossy and domineering...but this behavior is not desirable in women or men.

Your book includes a quiz that allows readers to determine what level of alpha or beta they are. Why did you feel it was important to include that in the book?

I developed the gender neutral continuum quiz to help you find out what ratio of alpha and beta you are because *everybody* is a mix of alpha and beta characteristics. There are two major purposes for this graph: First, it informs you of what your personality traits are and helps you improve yourself. If you rank as a very high alpha, you can develop your beta more. It gives you the tools to help you grow.

Second, it helps you choose a partner who is a good fit for you. If you’re very alpha, you want a partner that balances you out by being more beta.

Related Link: [‘A Million First Dates’ Author Dan Slater Offers New Insight about Online Dating](#)

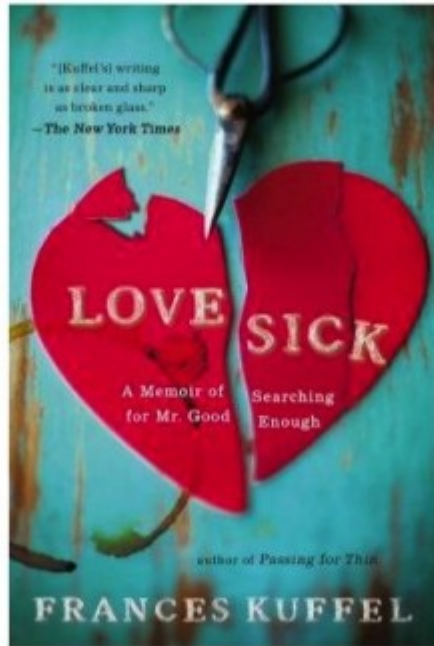
We often think of alpha women as the ones that have that have the corner office and successful career. Can you still be an alpha woman if you choose to *not* be the breadwinner of your family?

Absolutely. These women are all over, whether working in an office, organizing the PTA meetings, heading up volunteer work, or running their families. The alpha title is not limited to career women but to strong, confident women who stand up for what they believe.

To learn more about strong women finding love, purchase The Alpha Woman Meets Her Match. To get more advice from Dr. Rhodes, check out her new Huffington Post Blog, www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-sonya-rhodes/.

Author Tonilyn Hornung Shares Her Tips for 'How to Raise a Husband'





Interview by [Whitney Johnson](#). Written by Maria Darbenzio.

Author Tonilyn Hornung has used the 153-plus years of marriage experience accumulated by her grandparents and parents as well as herself and her husband to bring other married couples advice. Now, with five other married women, she is sharing her first book, *How to Raise a Husband: A Whole Bunch Of Ways to Build A Strong And Happy Marriage*, to help other wives raise not only a better husband but also build a stronger relationship. Read on for some of the advice that Hornung shared exclusively with CupidsPulse.com!

The title – *How to Raise a Husband: A Whole Bunch of Ways to Build a Strong and Happy Marriage* – certainly grabs people's attention. What exactly is the meaning behind "raising" a husband?

The title was really inspired by my girlfriend. After telling me a story about how she caught her husband watching television instead of playing with their child, it occurred to me that she not only had to raise her kid but also her

partner. That's when I started thinking about my relationship with my husband and of the times that I might have helped him come to a more *mature* conclusion about a disagreement we were having or supported him in seeing a different perspective than his own – that's how we raise each other. One partner helps the other see a little more clearly or communicate better. Sometimes we women just happen to be wearing thicker relationship glasses than our partner. We're more fashionable that way.

Related Link: [Couples Therapy: A Way to Rebuild a Struggling Relationship](#)

You teamed up with five married women. What made you decide to take this approach – using their personal stories (and your own) to give advice to others? While working with these women, did you learn anything that helped strengthen your own marriage?

Even though my husband provides me with great material, I decided to interview other wives because I felt that this would allow me to give a broader picture of what marriage is really like. These women were wonderful. They held nothing back and opened themselves up to looking less than perfect, and for that, I applaud their honesty.

In my own marriage, I learned that awareness is a huge component of good communication – that and a slice of chocolate cake can work miracles. If I am able to stay aware of what I'm feeling, I am better able to communicate that calmly and lovingly to my partner. Then, we can work on what we need to from a place of honesty.

Along those lines, is there one story that impacted you the most?

There are so many stories that I love and identify with. That was one of the great joys of writing this book. I could feel each wife's dilemma instantly and take her journey along with

her, wondering what her solution would be. Some of my favorites include *Gender Profiling*, *The Football Widow*, and *Not Waiting for Waits*. *Not Waiting for Waits* has such a great message: staying true to yourself.

How has your relationship with your husband changed since writing the book?

My marriage with my husband has only grown and deepened. Some of our conflicts have found new balance since the book was written, and some stay the same, but I do know that, without his openness and support, I never would've been able to start a project like this in the first place.

Related Link:

Now, let's talk about a few specific situations. How can a woman approach her partner if they're struggling with communication?

From my own experience and after talking to other wives, I know that that trying to communicate while you're upset can be tricky; it's not a good way to communicate effectively. The best approach is to be aware of how you're feeling in the moment and try to share that feeling as calmly and directly as you can. Or if you only know you're mad but don't know why, take some time to write it down and then confide what you've written to your husband. Even five minutes of writing can make a huge difference.

What if the husband isn't doing his fair share of the household tasks? How can a woman let him know that she'd like him to help out more without offending him or causing a fight?

From letting the housework pile up until he has no choice but to help to offering a specific "reward system," this is a very popular topic addressed in *How to Raise a Husband*. However, I've found thrusting a vacuum cleaner in my man's hand and ordering him to "suck it up" doesn't always do the trick. But

explaining to him *why* I'd like his help (most men seem to like things explained – a lot) works much better. If that doesn't work, check out Sophie's ingenious incentive in Chapter 15 (and it's not cake).

Related Link: [How Fighting Can Strengthen Your Relationship](#)

You also have a series of blogs dedicated to your experience as a first-time mother. Do you see yourself possibly writing a follow-up book focused on motherhood?

YES! I have a baby blog for *Pregnancy and Newborn Magazine* dedicated to the first year of my son's life. It has been a wonderfully crazy emotional ride. From pregnancy on, I've kept copious notes and am gearing up to write a humorous book exploring the joys of elastic pants and spit-up.

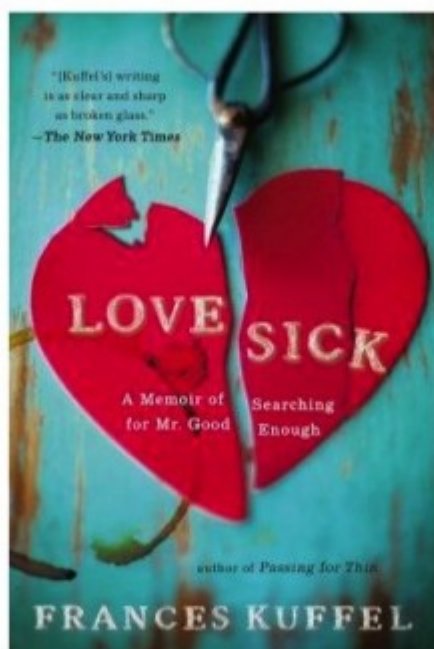
And lastly, what is the best advice you could give a woman on how to keep her marriage strong?

In writing *How to Raise a Husband*, I learned that everyone's key to a good marriage varies. At the core of everything, some women want a little more understanding; some need more acceptance; and some just want to be heard. That's where awareness comes in to play. If, as a wife, you can become aware of what your key might be, that helps you communicate with your partner more effectively.

After writing this book, I know that I always crave a little more understanding. When I'm feeling misunderstood, I can tell my husband that's what is happening before we start an argument – and that's the first step to helping raise each other to our full potential (and getting a slice of cake).

To purchase How to Raise a Husband, check out Amazon!

Author Jennifer Buhl Talks About Her Time Spent 'Shooting Stars'



Interview and written by [Whitney Johnson](#). Transcription by Louisa Gonzales.

Jennifer Buhl spent three years in Los Angeles working as a paparazza (the word for a female singular paparazzi), and as a top-earning photographer, she was one of only five women in an industry dominated by men. Her work was published in *People* magazine, TMZ, and E! News, to name a few. Having since escaped the California lifestyle to move to Boulder, Colorado, and run a family photography business, she took the opportunity to reflect on her time in the field and wrote her

new book, *Shooting Stars: My Unexpected Life Photographing Hollywood's Most Famous*. Read on for our exclusive interview with the author and find out more about her experiences with the rich and famous!

Related Link: [Brian Austin Green and Megan Fox Are Accused of Assaulting a Paparazzo](#)

You write about how paparazzi are often portrayed as being the villain, but in reality, they aren't the bad guy. Has this perspective affected the way your friends and family viewed your career?

I think everybody outside of Los Angeles kind of thought I had this cool new profession, but people in LA sort of have an attitude about *their* celebrities – like, “How dare you?” The people who are most offended by my profession are the people who follow celebrities the most...because they feel like they're friends with them. And, of course, it's kind of ironic because they know all about them because of the photographs that paparazzi take.

It's important for people to understand that, a lot of the time, celebrities actually *want* to be photographed. It's also good to note that paparazzi are just the photographers; we're not the buyers (magazines, blogs, etc.) or the consumers. Honestly, I don't really care that much about celebrities; I was just doing my job!

You mentioned that your favorite experience as a paparazzi was one with David Beckham. Can you elaborate?

David is one of those celebrities that I put in a different category – like this mammoth, mammoth star. He's like Tom Cruise or Brangelina. They operate in their own world, and they always have a ton of security around them. They've really changed their lifestyle because of their fame, so it's hard to get a good shot of them. You rarely see pictures of David just

out and about because he knows how to avoid us (which isn't hard to do). So to have an encounter with him is a really special thing.

One day, I followed him to soccer practice knowing that I probably wouldn't get a photograph because it'd be on his terms. He had two security guards with him; he saw me following him and kind of waved at the car I was in. Then, he pulls up to a drive-thru Starbucks window – and I'm like, "Did he do that for me?!" We were both in line and had our windows down, so we started chatting.

He knew I was a paparazzi and I was following him, but I didn't pull my camera out because there was no shot. All he had to do was put his hand over his face, and his security would've come running. We just talked for a while, and at the end of the conversation, he let me have a picture. It wasn't an amazing photo – he was just grabbing his drink from the window – but for me, it was a really special moment.

Were there any celebrity couples that you enjoyed shooting?

I photographed the Beckham's on the soccer field or out as a family. But interestingly, the paparazzi rarely follow a man by himself. Unless he's with his partner or kids or has a big bouquet of flowers in his hand, we typically focus on women. It's women who mostly read magazines, and we really want to see what other women look like – what they're wearing, how they've done their hair, who they're dating.

As an example, I was sitting on Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck's house one day – that's a paparazzi term for "staking out" – along with several other paparazzi. Ben pulls out in his car, and nobody moves. We were all waiting for Jen.

Related Link: [Lessons from Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck](#)

To shift gears a bit, we wanted to ask your thoughts about the recent petition from couples like Kristen Bell and Dax Shepard

who are trying to stop photographs of their kids from being published.

Well, I think they are barking up the wrong tree when they are talking to paparazzi. But I actually think Kristen and Dax are going about it the right way; they're trying to target the people who print the pictures. Those are the deciders and consumers of what the paparazzi do. So if they want those pictures to stop printing, they need to talk to those people, and I think some of the media has agreed to it.

I don't think the paparazzi really care that much because, frankly, the publications and blogs are going to use our photos no matter what. Whether you buy the ones with Kristen and Dax's kid or you buy one with somebody else, it doesn't matter.

And how has the resurgence of social media affected the paparazzi's careers?

Social media has given celebrities a lot of power. Our biggest competitors today are celebrities themselves. And that's because they're tweeting and Instagramming their own photos that the magazines and blogs can use for free. Publishers don't really care where the photos come from as long as they're good pictures, and the celebrities love it because they're able to drive their own media and their own look.

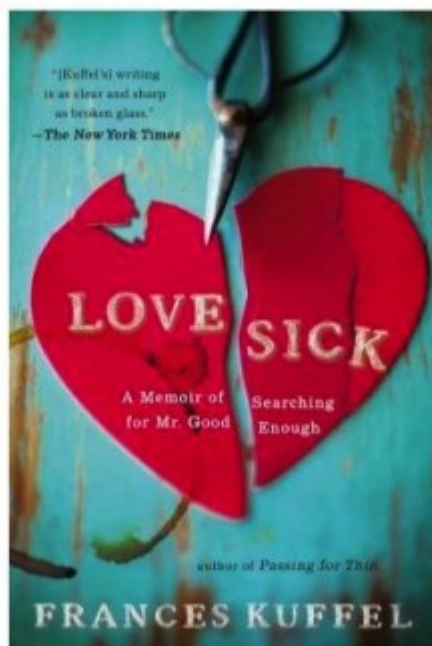
On a personal note, as a working mother, do you have any tips for our readers who are trying to balance parenthood with their careers?

I guess my biggest piece of advice is to look into attachment parenting – it really works for me. I would also say that, if possible, it's really important to have a flexible work schedule. It totally changed my life and just allows me to be a mother. If you read the book, then you know that motherhood is the most important thing in my life. So for me, it comes first. I still need to work, and I still love to work, so I

put myself in a situation where I am able to be a working mother.

For more information about Jennifer, check out jenniferbuhlphotography.com. You can order Shooting Stars from Amazon!

Mandy Hale Empowers Single Women in 'I've Never Been to Vegas, But My Luggage Has'



By Brittany

Stubbs

Blogger-turned-author Mandy Hale is affectionately known around the world as “The Single Woman.” With a heart to inspire single women to live their best lives without settling, she cuts to the heart of the matter with her inspirational, straight-talking, and often wildly humorous take on life and love. Her message reaches millions of women across the world every day through her blog, and with followers from all over the world, she has made a name for herself as the voice of empowerment and sassiness for single women across the globe.

In *I've Never Been to Vegas, But My Luggage Has: Mishaps and Miracles on the Road to Happily Ever After*, Hale delivers heart-warming and hilarious stories from her life filled with love and loss, glamour and goose bumps, faith and friendship, big dreams and battle scars. She shares even her darkest moments in witty, winsome ways that make her readers not only feel her pain but also laugh with her and apply her hard-won nuggets of inspiration to their own lives. In the end, “happily ever after” rarely looks and feels the way we imagined it would, but as Hale is learning – and as we can learn along with her – it is often *better!*

CupidsPulse.com had the pleasure of interviewing the author and getting to know more about her latest book.

We love the title of your book! Can you explain why you chose it and what it means?

The title is based on a crazy experience that found me getting off a plane in Vegas and not completing the trip. At the time, it was this mortifying and awkward moment, but now, I can look back and laugh hysterically. I just found it such a great parallel for my journey and the journey of a single woman in general. We all have this idea of where we think we'll end up or where we're supposed to end up, and where we actually end

up is rarely anything like that picture.

But what is so great about life is it usually turns out a million times better than what we ever would have expected. So I wanted to hit on the point that I may not have ended up where I thought I would, but I ended up where I belong. I hope that, by sharing these stories, I encourage other women and remind them that no matter where they are or how crazy things might seem, there is significance to everything. They will end up where they're meant to.

Related Link: [Finding Your True Destiny After Losing Love](#)

Since you refer to your stories as “Mishaps and Miracles on the Road to Happily Ever After, “ we’d love to know: How do you personally define “happily ever after?”

For me, happiness is a choice. It's realizing that “happily ever after” is one unforgettable adventure at a time, not some far off destination. Single women often think their ultimate goal is to be married and ride off in the sunset with Mr. Right. I think that's great, but you don't have to wait for that to happen to find happiness in the here and now. And honestly, if you don't find happiness in the here and now, I feel that ultimately hurts your ability to eventually attract someone to share in your “happily ever after.”

You share some personal secrets and struggles in your book. Did you find reliving some of these experiences challenging?

I'll be honest, it was absolutely terrifying at moments. Writing it, re-writing it, editing it, reading it for the book tape...I definitely got to a point when I wanted to be done reliving some of the stories I share!

But in the same respect, I found it helpful. Knowing some significant people from my past are basically reading my diary is really scary; I've compared it to standing naked in Times Square. But in order to make an impact, I believe you have to

go to those places. If even one person is encouraged to make a positive change based on something I went through, it will be totally worth it to me.

Have you ever found dating difficult because of what you write about for a living?

I'm actually struggling through this right now! It's hard to know sometimes if a guy is just totally freaked out about what I do or if he's just not that into me. Dating in a normal situation is challenging enough, so dating in the situation I'm in makes it even more difficult. I feel like men often think I've essentially branded myself "single" for life, but unless you see me walking around dressed as a nun, I'm not planning on staying single forever. I would love to be married and have a family one day, but my heart will always be to inspire single women, and that's why the blog is called the "The Single Woman."

Related Link: [Is He In It For the Long Haul?](#)

So what's the best advice you could give a single woman looking for love?

First of all, make sure you're open to love. I encourage all women to be confident, strong, and independent, but I also think that in order to find love, you have to break down some of your walls and be vulnerable at times. Single women often get in the habit of doing everything and taking care of everything themselves, and it's important to step back and remember that you don't have to rule the world by yourself. You can let your guard down every once in a while and invite someone else in.

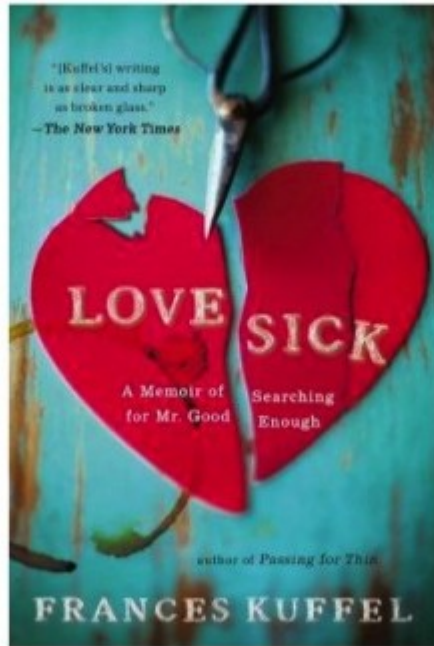
That being said, I think it's also important for single women to have a clear sense of self. Be aware of your boundaries and standards, and don't apologize for them. You should never sacrifice who you are to cater to someone's issues or insecurities.

Last but definitely not least, never settle. I feel like women reach a certain age and get so frantic if they're not married; they feel like they should settle for whatever guy is standing in front of them or risk being alone forever. This is so not the case! When you settle for someone out of fear, you'll eventually regret it. Forever is a long time, and investing your heart, time, and life into a relationship you're not 100 percent about is never a good choice.

*To learn more about Hale, check out her blog, <http://thesinglewoman.net/category/blog/>. Be sure to purchase your copy of *I've Never Been to Vegas, But My Luggage Has* today!*

'Marry Smart' Author Susan Patton Wants Young Women to "Plan Ahead For Their Happiness"





Interview by

[Whitney Johnson](#). Written by Liz Kim.

Maybe it's the native New Yorker in her, but newly-minted author Susan Patton is not afraid to tell it like it is. Although she is first and foremost a human resources consultant and an executive coach, she is perhaps best known for a letter she wrote to *The Daily Princetonian*, the newspaper of her alma mater, in March 2013.

Her note advised Princeton's young female students to find their husbands while at school rather than dating men post-college who probably won't be of the same standard. She also suggested that female students dedicate less energy solely to advancing their careers and more towards finding a good mate and preparing for children. Naturally, the responses were visceral and immediate. The sheer amount of comments not only shut down Princeton's website, but word quickly spread and soon, Patton was on every talk show imaginable defending her words.

Here, she talks to CupidsPulse.com about her controversial letter and new book *Marry Smart: Advice for Finding THE ONE*,

which was released yesterday.

What motivated you to become vocal about the current state of young women and write your letter and then your book *Marry Smart*?

It's become so politically incorrect to suggest to our young women that embracing traditional roles is wonderful. I can't really explain it because I don't understand it myself. But certainly the women's movement has become so extreme and so vitriolic in their message of women being identical to men, that they don't need men, that they can do it alone – but none of that is true. Instead of empowering women, it's become is sort of a bullying organization that is pushing women to want what *they* want for these women, not necessarily what women want for themselves.

What's empowering for any woman is to be with a man in a committed relationship who adores her, who values her and treasures her and worships her. *That's* empowering. Sleeping with a different man every night who you wouldn't even want to have a cup of coffee with isn't empowering.

I think *Marry Smart* is absolutely vital for any young woman who is thinking about how to best plan for her own personal happiness. I think it's a book that will help young women who are interested in being a wife and mother.

Related Link: [Are You Too Young For Marriage?](#)

Do you think your advice applies to women across the board or only for women who attend universities like Princeton?

The reason why I initially wrote this letter to the women in Princeton is because it's my alma mater, and I feel close to the university. I wanted to warn the undergraduates to not let this happen to them, to not be so all consumed with their careers that you get yourself to a point where you're in your

mid to late 30s and realize that you have missed your opportunity to be married and have children. And sadly for many of them, they do.

My letter applies to smart women everywhere. You have to plan for your happiness with at least the same commitment and dedication as you're planning for your professional success. In fact, I think you have to invest more effort and energy in planning for your personal happiness because you can make up lost time at work, but you can't make up lost time if you've missed your opportunity to have children.

What would you say to women who don't want marriage and kids in their 20s and instead want to focus on their careers?

I think that's wonderful if that's what they truly want. I'm certainly not saying that you shouldn't pursue a career; I've always had a career – many careers, in fact. I'm not suggesting that women focus only on their personal happiness. What I am saying is that, if you're a young woman and you know you want children in a traditional marriage, you have to plan for it.

If you don't want to get married or don't want children, then this advice isn't for you. I'm not critical of a woman who chooses career and only career.

Do you think the attitudes of male undergraduates toward marriage have changed as much as those of female undergrads?

I think, in college, it's hard for anybody to really think about marriage because of the workload and classes, but I think that young men do have marriage in the back of their minds. Then again, my concern isn't really for the guys because if they don't find the women of their dreams in their 20s, it's not like they missed any opportunity. But a woman who is in her late 30s or early 40s has a very different story. If that woman hasn't found a man yet and hasn't had babies yet, she pretty much knows that that ship has sailed.

Related Link: [Is Priscilla Presley Waving the Flag for Older Women?](#)

Readers might misinterpret your advice on looking for love in college while there are the greatest number of single men. Do you think it's ever too late to find somebody?

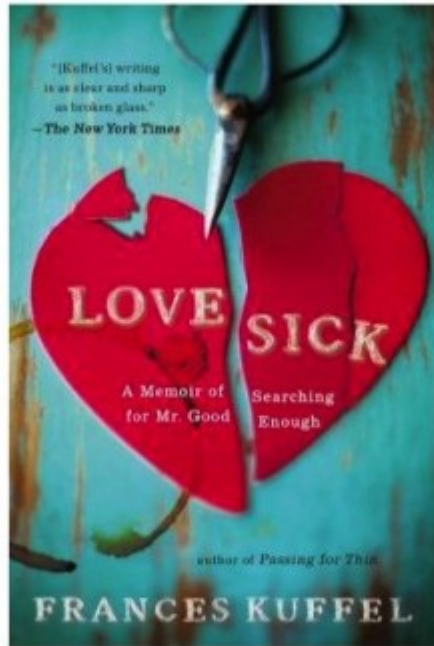
Different groups will misinterpret my words for their own purposes. But how could you argue with the idea that young women should plan for their personal happiness? Who argues with that? Of course, we should encourage young women to plan for their happiness! I think I've been misinterpreted in the sense that I'm not suggesting you don't pursue a career.

No, I don't think it's ever too late to find a partner, but I do know that there is definitively a hard stop on her ability to have children if that's what she wants.

If you'd like to purchase Marry Smart, visit Amazon. You can keep up with Patton on Twitter @ThePrincetonMom.

**'Never Have I Ever' Author
Katie Heaney Says Love Should
Be "a Supplement to a Full
Life"**





Interview by [Whitney Johnson](#). Transcription by Maria Darbenzio.

Katie Heaney turned her status as “being permanently single” into a funny memoir that sheds light on searching for your soul mate in the 21st century. In her new book *NEVER HAVE I EVER: My Life (So Far) Without a Date*, the 27-year-old shares her dating (or non-dating) experiences as she attempts to find romance on her own terms. We recently caught up with the author to glean a few more words of wisdom on looking for love and spending Valentine’s Day alone.

What do you hope readers gain from your book?

I hope that young women reading it are able to first find it entertaining and relatable but also find comfort in it if they haven’t dated a lot or even at all. It’s important for them to know they’re not the only one. And I also want readers to know dating doesn’t have to be their number one priority. Focusing on friendships with each other is equally valuable and a good use of time, especially when you’re in high school and college.

Related Link: [Celebrities Who Are Unlucky in Love](#)

Why do you think there's so much focus on women to find The One instead of to embrace being single?

Even though we've made so much progress – it's because we're being educated at higher rates than guys these days and things like that – it's still supposed to be our primary goal to be looking for a husband so that we can start a family. I think that pressure starts incredibly early, and it doesn't really let up.

I think that what I realized in writing this book is the differences between the way the pressure is directed at me or my friends versus the way that guys experience it. Guys just don't have the same pressure to be constantly focused on love. If they want to focus on their career, nobody judges them. But, if a woman says the same thing, people say "Well, aren't you worried about getting too old? What about your biological clock? Don't you think you should at least be putting yourself out there in case you meet him?" We talk about it like it's this job. We should see it as a supplement to a full life that we create for ourselves.

Do you think this pressure causes women to settle for less than they deserve?

I do. I hear a lot of girls talking about dates they have, and they're not looking forward to them. Or a guy that they've been seeing is clearly not the type of guy they want. There's some weird impotence to kind of keep giving him chances and chances and chances. That's because there's this pressure to find him.

I think that there needs to be more trust in ourselves to know who we're really interested in and who we're not. We need to trust that it's better to be single than to be with someone you aren't interested in. The guy that you *are* interested in will come along.

What's the best dating advice you've ever received from a friend?

The best advice that I've ever been given is just to be comfortable thinking of myself as someone who other people want to date. It's not because I felt bad about myself; I just didn't really see that as a possibility because it wasn't happening. So thinking of yourself as attractive, appealing people who other people want to spend time with kind of affects you in all these tiny ways that impacts the way other people perceive you.

And conversely, what's the best advice you've ever given someone?

I tend to be the friend who tells everyone to break up with their boyfriends because I'm always like, "It's so clear you don't like him."

I think it's important to listen to what the other person is saying and to not be bossy in how you talk to them, helping them to listen to what they're saying and to recognize that if they're not sounding happy or they're complaining more than not, then something is probably wrong. And you need to remind them that it'll always be okay to be single and make them feel that that's true by being there for them.

Related Link: [Finding Your True Destiny After Losing Love](#)

With Valentine's Day coming up soon, what's your advice for single ladies who let the romantic festivities bring them down?

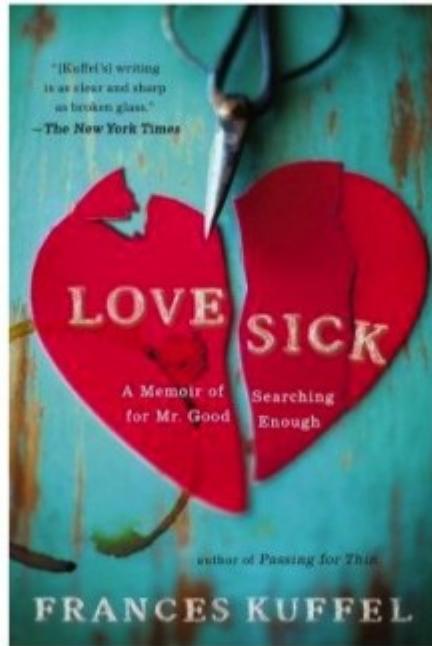
I hate Valentine's Day, but I think the thing to remember is that couples usually hate it too. I sort of think it's a holiday like New Year's Eve where everyone pretends to be so excited and everyone feels the need to make huge plans, but then everyone is disappointed.

So I would remind yourself that just because someone's a couple doesn't mean they're having a great Valentine's either. That's not to say that you should take delight in other people's misery, but just remember that a lot of people hate it. The best thing you can do is make plans for yourself doing something that you know that you love, even if it's watching *Law & Order* for four hours and ordering in food. Treat it as any other day and know that it doesn't mean anything and that when you're a couple, you're probably going to feel the same way about it.

Heaney has an event at The Strand in New York tonight! For more information, check out her www.facebook.com/KTheaney.

'A Million First Dates' Author Dan Slater Offers New Insight about Online Dating





Interview by [Lori Bizzoco](#). Written by Brittany Stubbs

When it comes to meeting The One, we're no longer stuck sitting alone at the bar or praying that our next blind date will work out. Today, millions of singles are turning to dating websites to help them find their better half. Although a new success story happens every day with the help of these online matchmakers, the unlimited profiles and possibilities these sites provide pose some issues as well.

In his second novel *A Million First Dates: Solving the Puzzle of Online Dating*, journalist Dan Slater invites us behind the scenes of the fascinating online dating business. He shows how this industry is changing our culture in more profound ways than we can imagine. By altering our perception of what's possible, these sites are reconditioning our feelings about monogamy and challenging the traditional paradigm of adult life. Slater examines the questions that the digital revolution is forcing us to ask: Why should we settle for someone who falls short of our expectations if there are thousands of other options a click away? Can commitment thrive

in a world of unlimited options? Can chemistry really be quantified by math geeks? In our interview below, we talk to Slater about the answers to these questions and more.

What inspired you to write on the subject of online dating?

A few things sparked my interest in this subject. The fact that my parents met by one of the first computer dating websites in the 1960s definitely gave me a reason to go back and research the beginning of this trend; after all, I wouldn't be here today if my parents hadn't met this way. I'm also one of the first generations that latched on to online dating – my friends were doing it, and people were always talking about it – so it was a subject that sort of surrounded me and seemed relevant.

Related Link: [10 Tips to Being Successful with Online Dating](#)

What advice do you have for people exploring online dating?

As far as finding the right site, look for results. If you're going on several dates and you're not finding anything, maybe the community isn't right for you. I encourage people to use a few different dating sites.

When it comes to looking for a partner, I had the most success with online dating when I sort of threw away my checklist of things I was looking for and focused on maybe a single thing I wanted to find in a person. Maybe you just want to find someone who will go bird watching with you. If so, forget about what people look like, where they went to school, etc. and just focus on finding someone who shares this interest. Online dating is a commitment, and it's sometimes scary, but if you're going to jump in with both feet, take advantage of trying to find that one thing you're really looking for.

In the book, you state that “Internet dating has helped people of all ages realize that there's no need to settle for a mediocre relationship.” But it appears that we have higher

expectations now on what is good. Can you expand on this idea?

In the past, I think people would settle because there weren't as many opportunities to meet new people; a new person didn't just pop up every day. With online dating, people are popping up with the click of a mouse. I don't see this as a bad thing or mean to imply that more people are running away from good relationships, but I do think people in relationships that are on the fence will be more liberated by all the opportunities that online dating provides. People are now less likely to stick around in a so-so relationship just because they're afraid to be alone or afraid they won't meet anyone else. I think the majority of people still want relationships and will commit when they find something really great, but again, I think it lowers commitment for those on the fence.

Related Link: [How to Deal with Online Dating Rejection](#)

Do you think technology or a dating website can truly determine if two people are going to have chemistry?

I think online dating can predict to an impressive degree whether two people are going to hit it off on that first date, whether they're going to sit down and have that spark where they can talk about common interests as an hour flies by. Online dating is getting better and better at determining if two people are going to get along. But I think that is a huge leap away from long-term compatibility, such as marriage, living together, and sticking with one another for a long time. I don't think that's something that can be quantified by these websites yet. I don't want to rule it out, but I don't think technology is there yet.

What are some positive aspects of approaching love this way?

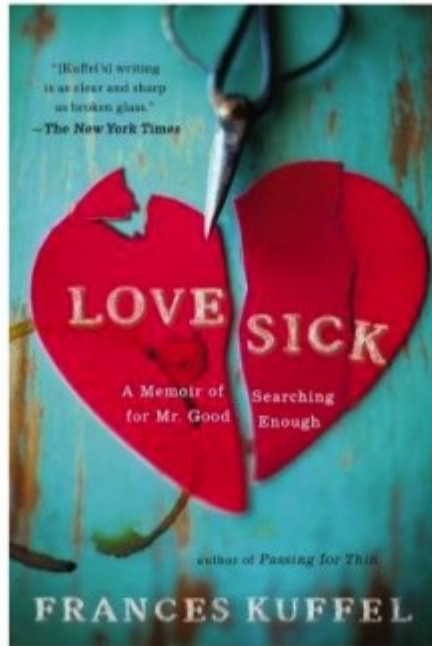
For one, it does allow you several options. I think another positive is that they provide you with more dating experiences, and these experiences are going to benefit whatever relationship you finally end up in. They grant you

real life opportunities versus received wisdom from your parents or friends and allow you to discover the kind of relationships and people that work or don't work for you, which helps you ultimately understand what you're actually looking for and need in the end.

To learn more about online dating, purchase Dan Slater's new book on Amazon!

Avril Carruthers Reveals How to Maintain 'Freedom from Toxic Relationships'





By Leslie Chavez

When it comes to our romantic lives, so many of us have been stuck in a toxic environment, trying desperately to escape without success. Enough is enough! Life is way too short to be entangled in poisonous partnerships. Author Avril Carruthers paves the way for lasting love in her new book, *Freedom From Toxic Relationships: Moving on from the Family, Work and Relationship Issues that Bring You Down*, a guide that explains where these toxic relationships begin and what kind of psychological pain they entail. She teaches her readers how to observe these patterns, making it possible to truly move on. It's time to leave those destructive relationships behind and start creating more loving and meaningful connections.

You say that our love lives can become toxic without us being aware of it. How can a relationship that began with true love end up filled with anger, fear, and resentment?

Relationships go through phases. We might be aware that the initial "honeymoon" stage is called that for a reason. As the relationship deepens, we trust that our beloved will be kind,

but at the same time, we fear that they will see something in us that we don't like about ourselves. We then project our fear of rejection and make assumptions based on the inevitable baggage we've brought with us from previous relationships. We might react with anger or resentment based on what we imagine our partner is thinking or saying. Many relationships flounder at this point, when we cannot perceive past our projected insecurities.

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

What are some signs that we can look for in order to avoid this from happening? How do we maintain an awareness surrounding any negativity we may be giving off?

A major red flag is whenever we find ourselves having a strong emotional reaction. At that point, we need to take a step back and ask ourselves: Where is this reaction coming from? When might we have felt this before? Sometimes, we can see that our reaction is similar to a time when we were younger. What wisdom and resources do we have now that we had no access to then? How would we prefer to behave instead?

If your partner seems to be the cause of the toxicity – they might be inconsiderate, unreasonable, demanding, or cruel – we need to see how and in what way we might be inadvertently hooked into the dysfunctional dynamic and change what we can. If communicating with them doesn't work, the best way to handle this situation is to move away, just as you would from a dangerous creature.

Shifting gears, the book explores the concept of “energetic psychic cords.” Can you explain this idea to our readers? How do the cords develop in our relationships? At what point do we need to “clear the cord”?

An energetic tie or psychic cord is a transference of emotion or thoughts that appears to have a life of its own; they occur between people who are in or have been in an intense

relationship. We *feel* the effects of this cord when we find ourselves behaving in ways we wish we'd rather not or getting lost in the other's emotions or projections.

They sometimes develop to the degree in which we become needy and insecure and have low self-esteem and hold unrealistic expectations based on fantasies. The process of clearing a cord starts with awareness of the dynamic: How does this attachment control or affect us? If we can differentiate between what is the other person's "stuff" and what is our's, we may not need a cord clearing. But if it's an old, engrained cord that's hard to disentangle, we might need the help of the structured process that culminates in the ritual of a formal cord clearing.

You say that energetic cords can form instantly when people fall in love at first sight. So tell us: Do you believe that love at first sight exists? How can someone distinguish the difference between love and lust in the early stages of a relationship?

In my experience, instant attractions are likely to be chemistry based on physical or emotional appeal. It's not always lust because we can have a crush on someone when we are six years old with the same intensity as when we fall for that stranger across the room when we are in our twenties. Whether these instant attractions ever develop into something more lasting depends on whether we appreciate them as they truly are or have projected something unrealistic onto them.

If you find it difficult to distinguish between love and lust, try keeping sex out of the equation for a period. Can the relationship be sustained with conversation alone?

Related Link: [Five Ways to Stop Sabotaging Your Relationship](#)

And finally, what advice can you give to singles in order to attract a healthy, loving, and positively transforming relationship?

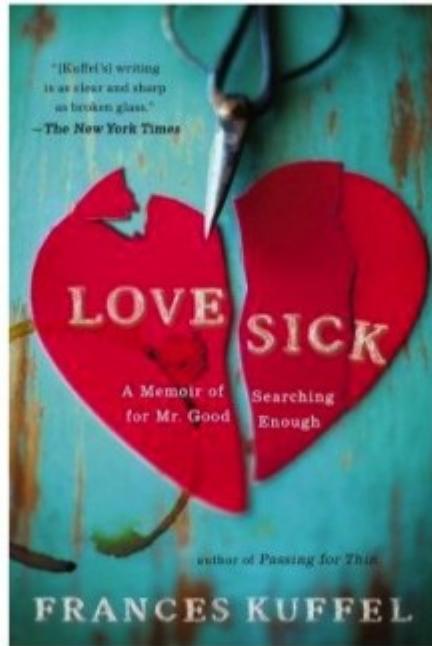
Be in the present; be genuine; appreciate the best in people; and respect yourself as well as others. This is difficult when a relationship represents comfort and familiarity – it's too easy to do what we've always done and not question whether we are being authentic to ourselves and to our partner.

It also helps to know what you want. Work to improve those things in yourself that you believe you want in your partner. This way, you will attract and recognize that person as the one you are looking for. But be discerning and remember that the universe doesn't only send us what we really want; it tests us to act in our own best interests.

For more information on Carruthers and her new book, click [here](#).

Trevor Silvester Shares How 'Lovebirds' Can Help Us Better Understand Our Relationships





By Leslie Chavez

When it comes to love, the phrase “treat others the way you want to be treated” doesn’t always ring true. When we’re all so very different, it only makes sense that we would want and need to be treated in different ways specific to our individual personality types. Relationship coach Trevor Silvester agrees: He says that a lot of the difficulties that we come across in relationships are from the fact that we treat each other as if we’re the same. Once we understand how we’re different, creating intimacy becomes simple.

In his new book *Lovebirds: How to Live with the One You Love*, Silvester explores romantic relationships and personalities through a bird analogy. A series of quizzes divide people into two categories, sky birds and ground birds. They are then sorted into eight subcategories loosely based on the Myers Briggs Personality Inventory: sight, song, feeling, and thinking birds. After these differences are established, he explores the relationship dynamics between each personality type. We had the chance to talk to him more about this.

Related Link: [When Do Opposites Not Attract?](#)

Congratulations on your book! You were a police officer before you became a cognitive hypnotherapist...so what inspired you to study relationships and write a book about love?

Thank you! I think two parallel paths led me to the book. The first was discovering that, while I was in the police force, my calling was really to be a therapist. The second path was my spectacularly unsuccessful relationship history. Just about everyone I loved left me for someone else, and I think it made me curious about what goes on between people who start out loving each other but then can't sustain a relationship. The answers I got from working with couples with this question in mind led to *Lovebirds*.

You have said that one of the biggest mistakes we make is to treat other people as if they are just like us. What's the first step in better understanding our lovers and their differences?

Read my book! Seriously, assume that they've got a good reason for doing what they do and being the way we are. It's so easy to take it personally when a partner goes against the way you like things or sees the world a different way. When you see differences between you as just things to work out – and not as name-calling opportunities – you've got a chance to turn potential weaknesses in your relationship into strengths.

With these differences in mind, you compare people to birds and define personalities as being either ground birds or sky birds. Can you describe these two types of birds in more detail?

Ground birds are people who like order. They have rules for how things should work and tend to think that their way is the right way. They like to know the detail of things and work steadily toward a decision. Sky birds get bored by detail; they don't tend to have rules – or be very good at following

them – and tend to make decisions intuitively. You can probably see how a combination of these types could create conflict very quickly.

Related Link: [Five Reasons Why Opposites Attract](#)

On another note, you explain that relationships are never done – love is about relating, and relating never ends. So how can we get better at maintaining positive interactions and keeping communication open?

That's a great question. I've often helped couples who love each other, but couldn't make each other happy, become closer by learning the things I point out in the book. One big bit of advice is to never make the argument about the relationship. Make that you're staying together a given, which then makes whatever the dispute is about something smaller that you can work on. I work on the basis that all behavior has a positive intention, so even when your partner is doing something that annoys you, assume that, at some level, they have a good reason for doing so.

Would you say that types of people who are similar (two ground birds, for instance) will naturally get along better than types who are opposite (a ground bird and a sky bird)? Are there any celebrity couples that come to mind to support your answer?

Yes, I find that they do. A saying I have is that opposites attract, and then, they drive each other mad. People tend to like people best who are like them, so similarity is a good basis for any relationship, but – and it's a big but – our lives can be made so much richer by learning to embrace other people's differences. My wife sees the world very differently than me, and I think we both feel that that makes our world's bigger and more fun.

I hesitate to label people I haven't met, but I would say that President Obama is likely to be a sky bird, possibly an owl.

The First Lady, I think, is a ground bird, probably a swan. Sticking my neck out even further, I'd say Brad Pitt is probably a sky bird, and Angelina Jolie is a ground bird. She seems to be the engine of the relationship.

Related Link: [Celebrity Couples Where Opposites Attracted](#)

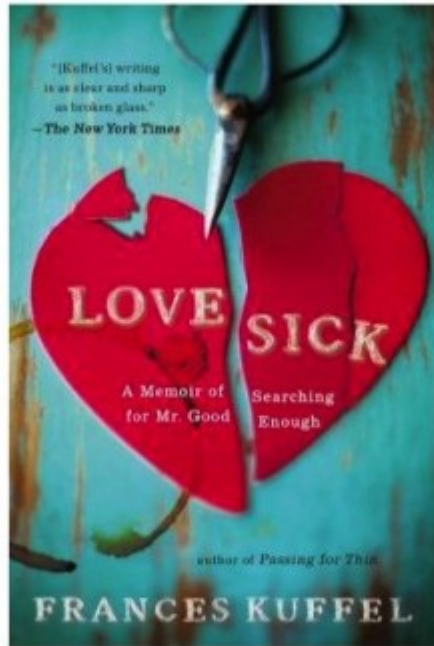
And finally, do you have any upcoming projects that we can share with our readers?

I'm hoping to run some Lovebirds Workshops in the United States this year. My next book is called *How to Click*, and it's using *Lovebirds*-type information to help single people date. I also have another book in the pipeline: *Grow! Lessons from a Therapist's Chair So Your Child Never Has to Sit in One*. It's about raising resilient children, and it'll be out in the United Kingdom in 2014.

To get more advice from Trevor Silvester on how to understand your lover, purchase his book at lovebirdsbook.com.

Dr. Sue Johnson Discusses How to Develop Your 'Love Sense'





Interview by [Whitney Johnson](#). Written by Brittany Stubbs.

In a society constantly questioning monogamy and companionship, Dr. Sue Johnson, a clinical psychologist and developer of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy, uses cutting-edge research to help ordinary people understand why and how we love. In her new book *Love Sense: The Revolutionary New Science of Romantic Relationships*, she presents scientific evidence to show how human beings are meant to mate for life and how to develop one's own "love sense," which is our ability to develop long-lasting relationships. In our exclusive interview with the author, she shared her inspiration for the book as well as her thoughts on our culture's fascination with failed love.

What inspired you to write this book?

I didn't actually want to write books for the public. I'm used to talking to mental health professionals, but I noticed how many people came to our practice and were in need of an emotional connection with their partner. They were talking

about the pain involved in watching a relationship dissolve before their eyes. So it felt urgent for me, as a researcher and academic, to share this amazing information on adult bonding and love that has been denied from a more general audience. We know more about love, and we have more control of love than we think. It's my responsibility to help ordinary people know that they need love and tell them about this new science.

Related Link: [How Fighting Can Strengthen Your Relationship](#)

You discuss the idea that humans are meant to mate for life, which is controversial in our society given the high divorce rates and infidelity. What led you to this belief?

There's a good amount of chemical evidence that human beings are suited for monogamy. For example, we're flooded with Oxytocin (often referred to as the "bonding hormone"), which only occurs in mammals that are meant to stay together, cooperate with one another, and look after their young when they're vulnerable.

In our society, we're taught to fully depend on someone in a relationship, and when that relationship doesn't work, instead of fixing it, we go and look for another relationship and try to make that work. When relationships end, you see all the stages of grief people experience before they go on to the next relationship. For me, this is just proof that it's obvious humans depend on and need monogamy, despite all the arguments society has about how we're all so naturally promiscuous.

There's evidence that we're most healthy and happy when we're in these close relationships: with parents, with children, with close friends, and certainly with partners that we make love with. All these chemical and bonding hormones that go on make it obvious that we're meant to be monogamous, but the real issue is that we don't know how to pull it off.

You talk about how romantic love is an attachment bond, like that between a mother and child. If two people don't feel that way, does that mean their relationship is doomed? Or is that a feeling that can be learned between lovers?

If people really don't have that longing for each other, they usually just accept that they're friends. But longing for one another is something that's wired in us, and once that's triggered and you start to feel this closeness, it doesn't mean you know how to take the next step. If you can stay with each other through that longing and reach each other in those moments of disconnection, it's almost like you will fall more and more in love.

Building on all of this, let's go back to the title of your book. You give your readers the ability to build on their own "love sense." So what would you say is the most important rule someone should follow to sustain that long-term love?

One of the most important rules is to accept the most basic thing about us as human beings: We were never designed to be single or face life alone. Self-efficiency is a lie. So accept that you're a mammal and that you have these needs wired inside and that you need other people's support and comfort – these things are what make you a human being. And if you can accept that you have these needs, then you don't have so much trouble listening to them and sharing them with a partner.

Speaking specifically about the women's movement, for example, part of this time was to empower women and teach them to be assertive and strong, which is really great. But it seems to me that the strongest thing about women is that they know how relational they are. They know they are stronger when they can turn to one another and connect with them. And that's something that I think the feminist movement has sometimes missed. It's something we need to teach men. We get so obsessed with being these powerful individuals, but we're actually wired to be most powerful when we're connected to

others. So accepting your needs of longing, of closeness, of support – that helps a lot in building that long-lasting love.

Related Link: [Ways to Help Your Single Friends Find a Partner](#)

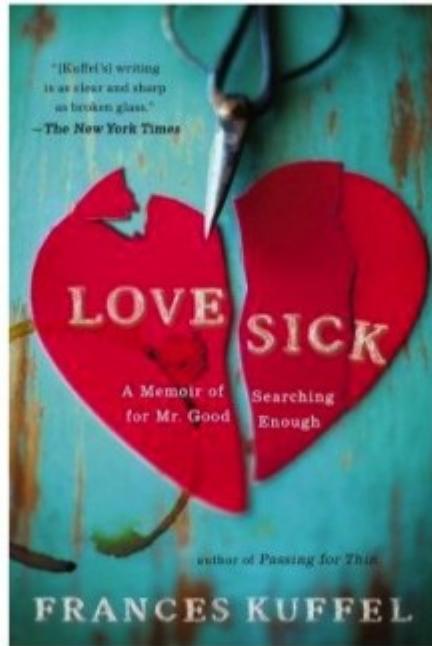
So much of our society focuses on breakups and divorces. Do you think that fixation on failed-love has an impact on the way we perceive love in general?

I understand that bad news and gossip grabs people's attention, and that's why we focus on these topics. But I think focusing on instances where marriage doesn't work or doesn't last generates this pessimistic attitude about relationships. It's demoralizing. And the irony is it's not true anymore. Scientist like myself are beginning to make it clear that we need love relationships, and we know how we can hold on to them and better them. The sensationalism around affairs and divorces just kind of obscures the fact that we are getting a handle on love and understand it more than we ever have before.

To purchase Love Sense, check out Amazon or your local bookstore.

Eric Smith Helps Nerds Sail Through the Waters of Love in 'The Geek's Guide to Dating'





By Kerri Sheehan

In the *Mario 64* video game, the title character wins over Princess Peach's heart by saving her from Bowser, a villainous kidnapper. *Spiderman* characters Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson fell in love despite Parker's nerdy demeanor and web-slinging abilities. In *Star Wars*, Han Solo wowed Princess Leia by showing her that he was more than just your average galactic player. So how did all of these "nerds" manage to navigate the dating world and find their special someone? Chances are they got their hands on a copy of *The Geek's Guide to Dating* by Eric Smith!

Smith is the cofounder of Geekadelphia, a popular blog covering all-that-is-geek in the City of Brotherly Love. In his newest book, the blogger hopes to help his fellow nerds and give them a step-by-step guide to put their heart on the line and fall in love. Throughout the book, he makes references to *Star Trek*, *Firefly*, *Pokémon*, and many other fandoms. A self-proclaimed geek himself, Smith was able to connect these ideas to the dating world so nerds can really grasp the concepts he discusses. The author also encourages

his readers to switch off the “pick-up artist” technique in favor of showing understanding and respect for women. Featuring eight-bit pixel art by Juan Carlos Solon, *The Geek’s Guide to Dating* will make any gamer feel like they’re right at home.

Related Link: [‘Chuck’ Star Vik Sahay Shares Love Lessons from ‘Nerd Herd’ Member Lester Patel](#)

In Chapter One, you outline the different types of geeks and talk about their strengths and weaknesses when it comes to dating. Which kind of geek do you identify with the most? How has this description helped and hindered you in the dating world?

I would probably identify most with the gamer and the book geek. Sometimes, I play a crippling amount of video games, and I’ve been known to take days off of work just to play a new release. My co-workers can tell because I won’t show up on a Wednesday if the video game comes out on a Tuesday. The only reason this hobby has hindered me when it comes to dating is when people aren’t really open to joining in and trying something new like video games. As for the book geek, I spend a lot of time scouring flea markets or used bookstores, trying to get rare titles and exciting finds.

In terms of how these qualities have helped me, I think I have the ability of recall, which is a really nice thing. I love remembering random dates and unique moments of my fiancé’s relationship with me. I still remember what my fiancé wore on our second date when we went to this really small restaurant in Philadelphia – it was a pink dress that she got from this place called Smak Parlor in Old City. And on our first date a year and a half ago, she wore this green eye shadow that I’m never going to forget. It’s fun to know little things like that because mentioning those things can really make someone’s day.

You refer to readers as Player One and their potential love interests as Player Two. You pointed out that players must look inside of themselves before finding a Player Two. Can you delve deeper into this advice?

We're talking about the whole "Manic Pixie Dream Girl" concept. Many people tend to think that there is someone out there with a quirky, Zooey Deschanel nature who is going to make you a whole person again. It's like her character in *The 500 Days of Summer* when Tom (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) thinks she's going to fix him. I think it's really important to love and take care of yourself because you probably won't be good for someone else otherwise.

What do you say to a girl to change her mind about dating a geek?

There are always new things to learn in life, and you never know what someone will show you. My fiancé was super weirded out by the fact that my OkCupid online dating profile talked about the fact that I have a bunny. His name is Rorschach (after a character on *The Watchmen*), and I laid it all out right there on my profile. She told her friends about it, and they were like, "Really, he has a rabbit? Are you sure you want to meet this guy?" And, happily, she did because we're getting married!

Related Link: [5 Tips for Creating a Perfect Online Dating Profile](#)

Do you have any advice for gamer guys who are currently attached to a non-gamer girlfriend?

Introduce your significant other to a game that has an interesting storyline. *Bioshock Infinite*, *Vengeance*, and *Assassin's Creed* were great when I was showing my fiancé the video games that I was really into. It got to the point where she wouldn't let me play *Bioshock Infinite* unless she was sitting right there with me, so we spent two days playing

together, and it was really romantic. She'll play games, but she really likes to watch the ones that have a riveting and intense plot.

If you're dating someone who does want to play and try them out, then you can pick out games that have two-player opportunities. You don't want to make your significant other watch you slog through a football game when they can't jump in at all. It reminds me of when I was a kid and went over someone's house to play video games; you would really just be watching them because they wouldn't let you play!

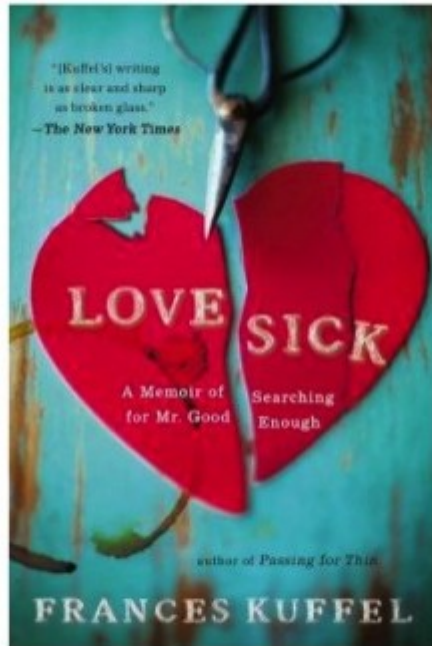
Lastly, you give a lot of advice to male geeks looking to get a lady. Do you have any advice for female geeks who want to find love?

It's really a lot of the same stuff that I say to the guys. Share your ideas and pursuits, and don't close someone out because they're not into the same things as you are. Remember that we're long past the days when it was strange for a girl to ask out a guy. Just go for it!

*For more information about Smith, you can check out his web series, [The Geek's Guide to Dating](http://www.quirkbooks.com/post/geeks-guide-dating-webseries-chris-shannon) at www.quirkbooks.com/post/geeks-guide-dating-webseries-chris-shannon or connect with him on Twitter @ericsmithrocks. To purchase *The Geek's Guide to Dating*, visit Amazon.com.*

**Dr. Barton Goldsmith
Discusses How To Become 'The**

Happy Couple'



By Priyanka Singh

When it comes to being happy in a relationship, Dr. Barton Goldsmith, a multi-award winning psychotherapist, believes that little things can go a long way. In his new book *The Happy Couple: How to Make Happiness a Habit One Little Loving Thing at a Time*, he discusses how couples can transform their bad habits into good ones, just by doing simple tasks such as talking for 20 minutes a day and asking clarifying questions to resolve conflicts. It all boils down to communication. We recently chatted with the author about how to strengthen and rebuild a relationship from the ground up. Here's what he had to say:

How do bad habits start in relationships?

It starts by people being complacent and not really talking about things that are bothering them. Bad habits develop over a period of time, and if someone doesn't say something that makes you aware of it so you can change it, the bad habits continue. They happen within every relationship. You get used to your partner doing something nice for you, like bringing you a cup of coffee in the morning, and then you forget to thank them for it – that's a bad habit!

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

Do couples take each other for granted after a period of time?

That's something that does happen for many couples and also something that you want to prevent. No one wants to feel that way. You need to be reminded by your partner that you want to be in this relationship every day. That comes from the little things: the hellos, the goodbyes, the kisses, the hugs. All of that's going to make a difference.

What if your partner struggles with communication? How do you get them to open up to you?

I think the thing that I would say to my partner is, "Look, I've read that communication is the most important thing in the relationship, and if we don't get it together, we're going to be in trouble down the road." In the end, communication is all that you have, so I would approach it very seriously and say that we need to work on our communication. We can either do that on our own or with books; we can go to therapy or watch self-help videos on YouTube. There's a lot of things we can do, but we have to start communicating! We can set up our own time to talk about our days – maybe 30 minutes after dinner or even during dinner. Then, you create communication as a habit.

Many women say they have a hard time getting their guys to open up. Why's that?

It's a learned thing. A lot of guys wouldn't know how to respond. Emotional communication is something that takes time to develop. By opening up to her man, a woman is setting the example.

There's a very simple exercise in the book to teach your partner how to communicate. You ask them a question; they ask you a question; you ask them a question – and you do that for a half an hour. Ask questions like: What's your favorite movie? What's your favorite color? Tell me about the nicest thing your mother ever did for you. If you're not a communicator, it takes a little practice to get there. The first chapter of the book is on communication, so I would say read the chapter together and do the exercise as a couple.

Also in that chapter, it talks about learning how to ask clarifying questions. That's a very important part of communication, especially for guys, because when a woman presents a problem, the guy goes right to solving it. What the guy needs to do is ask clarifying questions to learn more about the problem before he dives right in. A lot of times, a woman doesn't even want the man's solution; she just wants to talk about what's going on. Guys have to learn how to listen.

Related Link: [Five Ways To Get His Undivided Attention](#)

Let's say you have a hard time coming up with creative and fun things to do for and with your partner. What are some go-to suggestions?

If you just put a smile on your face, in the beginning, that's going to make a big difference, and that's a very simple thing. You need to change negative thoughts to positive ones. Take a walk; read a light book; write down your feelings; play with the dog; play with each other; give each other a massage; do something outside of the house, in the house, with the house! Do things that add to your environment. Do things that are light and easy that are going to make what surrounds you

better.

One of the things I tell couples that get into a negative feedback loop is to be nice. Remember what it was like when you were dating, when he would pull out the chair and open doors for you. Go back to that, and do those nice things for each other again. That creates a lot of positivity in a relationship.

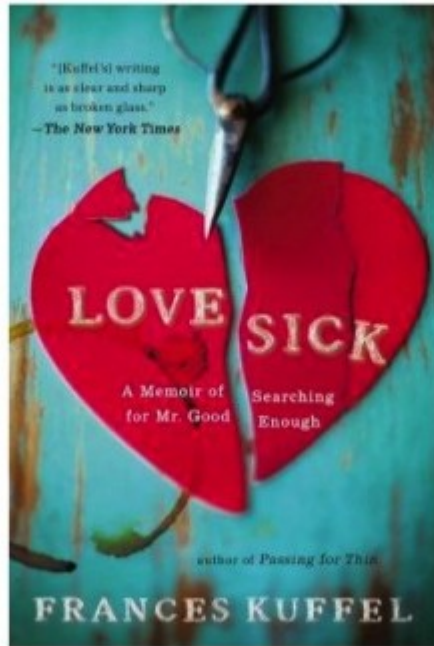
Sum up your best relationship advice in one sentence.

Keep it simple: Love each other every day, and don't be afraid of saying "I'm sorry."

To purchase The Happy Couple, check out Amazon or your local bookstore.

**Ryan Casey Caricatures
Celebrity Romances in 'But
You Like Really Dated?!**





By Priyanka Singh

It's not easy to find love in Tinseltown, but it's certainly entertaining to see just how high or low our favorite celebrities aim in the world of A-list dating. While a lot of their fame stems from their blockbuster hits and platinum albums, stars are notoriously well-known for their long lists of Hollywood romances. Award-winning illustrator Ryan Casey recently released his "celebropedia of Hollywood hookups" with his new book *But You Like Really Dated?! and exposed some of the most interesting, surprising, and strangest star interactions. This spunky webcomic artist caricatures celebrities and provides hilarious commentary to go along with the even funnier depictions of famous faces like Claire Danes – who he calls "Hollywood's ugliest crier" – Oprah, Jennifer Lopez, and so many more. Casey maps out some of the most scandalous romances as well as the most bizarre hookups and even caricatures some of our favorite celebrity kids. In an exclusive interview with CupidsPulse.com, the illustrator shares his take on the wonderfully strange world of Hollywood and why celebrities struggle so much at the art of love.*

Related Link: [Celebrity Divorce Attorney Laura Wasser Gives Tips on Divorcing Peacefully In New Book](#)

First, what really inspired you to shed light on so many Hollywood hookups?

I saw a few lists online about celebrities who used to date. Rihanna and Shia LeBouf, Christian Bale and Drew Barrymore, Nick Lachey and Kim Kardashian– these couples really blew my mind, and I wanted to give this information to the world in a fun, illustrated way. I knew that, if all this information were in one place, it would be a real conversation starter and a great reference guide for people who love celebrity gossip.



What message do you want your readers to extract when they look through your book?

I want people to laugh, turn to a friend, and say, “WTF? Tiger Woods dated LeAnn Rimes?!” My main goal for *But You Like Really Dated?!* is to entertain people, introduce them to my work, and teach them something new about Hollywood hookups.

We have to ask: Why do you think people are so obsessed with the love lives of celebrities?

Honestly, I think we all enjoy being judgmental. We like to have an opinion about who is going to last in love, what kind

of man Jennifer Lawrence deserves to marry, and what exes will have the messiest divorce. The love lives of these celebrities are so entertaining because they have a ton of money and fame – the possibilities are endless. And we might be a little jealous! Well, I am at least.

Can celebrity couples teach us any smart dating tips?

I definitely think we can learn something from these couples. These stars have huge egos, but honestly, we all have egos, and I believe egos destroy relationships. For instance, do **not** look at Jennifer Lopez for smart dating tips because her ego is out of control. She needs to check herself, go back to her “block,” and have a humble moment if she wants to find a lifelong partner. So from J. Lo, we can learn that, if you want to find everlasting love, you need to check your ego, not take yourself seriously, and not become famous!

Related Link: [Short Term Celebrity Marriages \(Learn From Their Mistakes\)](#)

What’s the most valuable piece of advice you would give to celebrities regarding their complicated love lives?

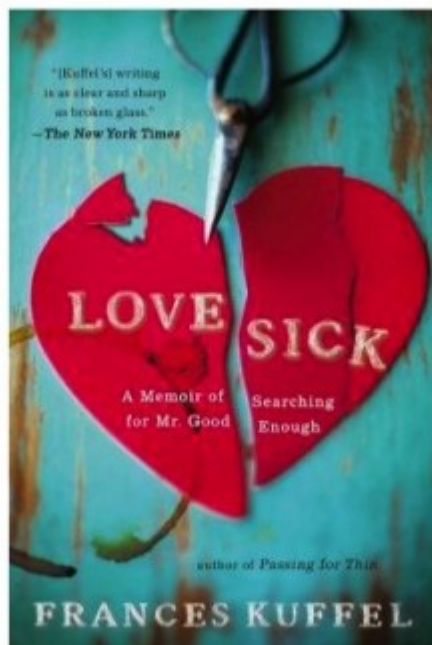
Chill out. I really respect the twosomes that stay out of the spotlight and strive for a normal life. Can’t they all just move out of Hollywood? Check out Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively in Bedford, New York. I think they’re doing it right. On the other hand, we have Kim Kardashian and Kanye West. The social media blitz about their engagement at AT&T Ballpark in San Francisco really makes me want to throw my hands up and scream, “Can’t you two just have a private moment?”

Finally, what celebrity couples were you most surprised to learn dated?

Lisa Cudrow and Conan O’Brien! Tom Cruise and Cher! Justin Timberlake and Fergie!

To purchase *But You Like Really Dated?!*, check Amazon or your local bookstore. You can also see more of Casey's work on his website, ButYoureLikeReallyPretty.com.

Maggie Scarf Breaks Down Unique Family Dynamics in 'The Remarriage Blueprint'



Interview by Gabriela Robles. Editorial by Kristin Mattern.

Maggie Scarf, *New York Times* bestselling relationship expert,

fellow of Yale University, and member of the advisory board of the *American Psychiatric Press*, shares with readers in-depth stories of seven remarried couples in her newest book, *The Remarriage Blueprint*. Though almost 40 percent of new marriages in the United States are remarriages, little has been written about the unique challenges that these couples face. Scarf has dealt with the subjects of divorce and remarriage for over thirteen years, and with this book, she delves into the core of the five major challenges remarried couples will confront as they work towards becoming a unified family: the impact of insider/outsider forces, the losses children face, the task of parenting, the unification of disparate family cultures, and the extension of family boundaries. Through interviews, the author touches on the every day difficulties of combining families, such as stepparenting, household routines, exes, alone time, and finances. She explores what works and what doesn't and reveals the complications of remarriage.

We recently talked to Scarf about this must-read book.

Related Link: [Patrick Stewart Marries for the Third Time](#)

***The Remarriage Blueprint* shares seven stories of married couples. Can you tell us about your process for collecting their experiences?**

I started in 1998, and I interviewed 40 volunteers. During my work, I found that there were no good theories or research on remarriage and stepfamilies, so I tucked the project away for later. Research about remarrying and stepfamilies is taught nowhere, even though a huge segment of the population struggles with these unique issues. Around 2009, I saw that there was this wonderful theory that had been set up on the basis of the evidence that has been collected since the late '90s. So I started a new set of interviews but also went back and talked to the couples from before. This way, I had a

longitudinal and fresh approach to work with with this theory, which boils everything down to the fact that there are five major factors – that aren't discussed – that couples who are remarrying with children have to face.

How do you think that a remarriage differs from a first marriage?

It is said that "remarriage is the triumph of hope over experience." Remarriages are ten percent more fragile than first marriages. Even though we have a very high divorce rate in our country, remarriage divorce rate is ten percent higher than that. The truth of the matter is, at the very worst, 60 percent of remarriages fail. These people really need information and answers to their questions.

Many remarriages happen later in life when people more settled and have a career. How do you think this affects remarriage?

You may be choosing a much better partner, one who is kinder and more accepting or maybe one who is less abusive verbally or even physically. But it may also include children. Two partners have fallen in love and chosen each other, but the kids haven't chosen them, and they may have been through a lot of loss and change already.

The biggest difference between first marriage and second marriage is, in the first marriage, you have time to iron out your differences and work out your habits. You can work out issues like: Do we sit down to dinner? Can you start eating before everyone is at the table? What is a decent curfew? Are kids allowed to have tantrums? Where do you keep the silverware? It sounds silly, but it can cause huge upsets when the outsider comes in and says, "Hey, I want some changes here. I want some more order. I want some more authority."

Usually, the biological parent and kids are resistant. The outsider, the new stepparent, is hammering, "Let me in, let me in," and the biological parent is trying to make sure his new

partner is happy while also trying to reassure the kids that nothing will change. That's impossible, though, because changes have to happen.

Think of it like architecture. You can think of one building, that's the first marriage building, and the second building is the remarriage building. The second one has design challenges. It's not a conventional building like the first one it's going to have to be worked out overtime. The whole *Brady Bunch* idea that we all simply meld together doesn't work. You have to cope with the unique difficulties involved.

Related Link: [Second \(and Third\) Marriages: Destined For Divorce?](#)

And finally, do you have any tips for our readers who are trying to keep their remarriages alive?

I would suggest they look at the five challenges because it gives them a way to think about the work of remarriage. For example, parents are sensitive about the way they raise their children. Let's say the stepdad says to the biological mother, "My heavens! The way your daughter came in last night and left her snack out and her shoes on the floor – was she raised in a barn or what?" That is a huge message – you're a bad parent. Change that to an I statement: "When I came down, I found all the cheese and crackers out. I'd really appreciate if you could get Trish to clean up after herself. It leaves the kitchen messy, and I don't want mice. How can we handle this?" That's not a fight; that's a discussion.

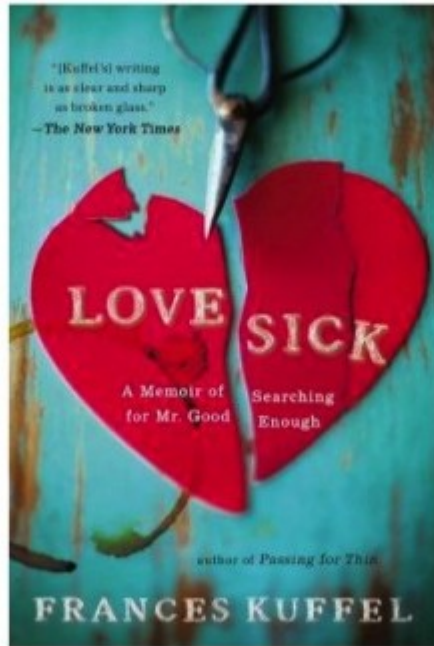
Now, what about if the mom and the stepdad have Coke with dinner and the other set of parents have milk? One way you can deal with that is to say that Mom's house and Dad's house are different. It is just like two different classrooms; in one classroom, you have to raise your hand to do anything, but in Mr. Smith's classroom, you can just get up and walk around. In other words, it's never that one house is good and one's bad.

Keeping parental conflict down is the most important thing a couple can do.

If you want to purchase The Remarriage Blueprint, visit Amazon.com. For more information on Scarf and other books she has written visit her website, <http://maggiescarf.com/books/the-remarriage-blueprint/synopsis/> or connect with her on www.facebook.com/Maggie-Scarf-175903732441707/ or Twitter @Maggiefirst.

‘The Body Language of Liars’: Dr. Lillian Glass on Spotting Pretty Little Liars





Interview by [Lori](#)

[Bizzoco](#). Editorial by Kristin Mattern.

Respected body language expert Dr. Lillian Glass is a professional when it comes to reading through the lies people tell and discovering the truth hidden in their non-verbal movements. She has lectured on body language and deception at the FBI and has been a jury consultant, expert witness, and mediator. Already an author of over a dozen books, *The Body Language of Liars*, which comes out today, proves to be the one of the juiciest. The book focuses on photographs of celebrities like Bill Clinton, Lance Armstrong, Kim Kardashian, and Lindsay Lohan, and Dr. Glass uses her skills to reveal the moments in which these famous individuals lied to their adoring public.

Dr. Glass also teaches her readers how to pick up on signals of deception. Analyze the body language of divorced couples like Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes to see how they're *really* feeling about each other. Plus, she provides the eight reasons why adults lie and tells you how to spot liars by looking at facial expressions, voice tone, speech content, and

more. The author chatted with CupidsPulse.com in an exclusive interview and dished insider info on how to see through lying eyes and false statements.

Related Link: [Author Janine Driver Shows How Catching Someone in a Lie Can Save Your Relationship in New Book, 'You Can't Lie to Me'](#)

Tell us: Why *do* people lie?

People want to make themselves look better in the eyes of another person. So they lie that they went to this party or that they met this person. People also lie to manipulate for bad reasons, to really do harm to other people. When you look at lying, it's not really a bad thing – nature even lies! If you look at cats when they sense an enemy, they puff out their fur to make themselves look bigger and more powerful. You see? That's lying.

What are some of the signs of lying?

Well, there are four dimensions. You can't just look at one part of the elephant – you have to look at the body movement, the facial movement, the tone of voice, and the context. All of that together is what tells you if someone is lying or not. For instance, if I scratched my nose right now, that doesn't mean I'm lying. But if we were supposed to have a lunch date, and you saw me at another restaurant, even though I had told you I wasn't feeling well, you busted me. If I scratched my nose while I was telling you my excuses, you know I'm lying because of the situation.

Should you listen to your gut reaction when it comes to someone else lying?

Yes. Your instincts kick in, and you know that you know what you know. You just don't want to believe it most of the time. For instance, when you watch the news and a celebrity you love

comes on, you may see that they're lying. Because you don't want to see it, you continue blindly doing what you do.

It's the same in relationships, but the key is to observe *what is*, not what you want it to be. You can't be in denial. Your gut *knows*. There is a thing in your brain that's called the limbic system, and primitive men had it because they lived in a fight or flight world. Now what happens is other emotions come out. Whether it's anxiety, fear, or happiness, that reaction causes your muscles to move in a certain way. That's how body language happens; that's why the body doesn't lie.

Speaking of relationships, what are some signs that someone's in love?

First, they're going to lean towards you. You'll see their toes will be pointed right at you too. When I did celebrity analysis for different magazines and saw a couple whose feet weren't facing each other, I knew it was over. Second, they're going to breathe differently, so the sides of the nose will flare a little bit more, but you'll also see a change in their breathing pattern. And third, you'll hear a softer voice tone.

What body language should a girl look for if she thinks her significant other is going to break up with her?

Usually, he doesn't have as much time for you. His tone of voice changes too – he's more monotonous in his speech patterns. He also has an edge to him, an attitude you've never seen.

Related Link: [Quickie Chick's Video Dating Tips: 'Bachelorette'-Based Ways to Know if He's Using You](#)

Anything else you want to share with our readers?

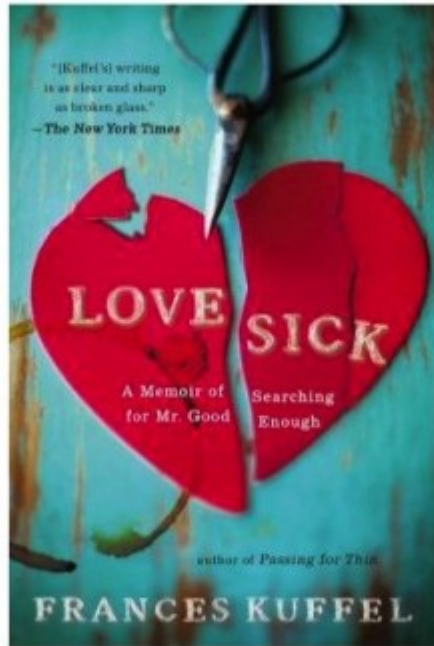
The message is really you've got to put your game on now. This is a new world, a new way to live, and with technology, if you

don't know how to spot deception, then you're done. You won't succeed in your professional life, in your personal life, in your family life. If you understand how to read people, especially if they're telling the truth or not, it's going to save you money, heartache, and so much more. You're going to gain a lot as well.

The Body Language of Liars is available today. To find out more about Dr. Glass, visit her website <https://www.drlillianguass.com/> or connect with her on www.facebook.com/drlillianguass and Twitter @drlillianguass.

Celebrity Divorce Attorney Laura Wasser Gives Tips on Divorcing Peacefully In New Book





By Priyanka Singh

With the climbing divorce rate reaching over 50 percent, many Americans fear the catastrophic events of a messy split. However, celebrity divorce attorney Laura Wasser has some words of wisdom to help divorcees in her new book, *It Doesn't Have to Be That Way: How to Divorce Without Destroying Your Family or Bankrupting Yourself*. The author's southern California location opens her up to a world of A-list celebrity clients, including Kim Kardashian, Britney Spears, and Heidi Klum. Even though the private lives of these stars are under constant media scrutiny and exposure, Wasser explains that divorce disputes have the potential to be fairly painless, particularly in the familial and financial aspects of a settlement. She also spends quite a lot of time working with pro bono cases for the Harriett Buhai Center for Family Law, calling divorce a "great equalizer" because of the emotional distress couples experience is the same across the board.

In an exclusive interview with CupidsPulse.com, Wasser talks about the evolving world of divorce and provides some tips to

guide you through a separation as seamlessly as possible.

Related Link: [Short-Term Celebrity Marriages \(Learn From Their Mistakes\)](#)

You've been in your line of work for nearly two decades. What is one common mistake that you see couples make during their divorce?

Over the past twenty years, particularly during the last five, it occurred to me that parties going through the dissolution process often go in hugely uninformed. Ignorance paired with an emotionally and financially devastating life crisis can be dangerous. Family law attorneys will often make a lot of money to the detriment of clients and their families. There are so many clients who have said, "If only I knew then what I know now."

I have a message in my book to give to people contemplating or going through this experience, one that spans socioeconomic, gender, and age groups: *It doesn't have to be that way.* Our generation has the tools available to us by virtue of education, the Internet, and mental health and counseling opportunities that our parents' generations and those before them didn't have. By employing these tools and having a relatively user-friendly guide, I believe the divorce process can be simplified and improved.

What are some tips you can give our readers about how to maintain financial and emotional stability?

Marriage is a contract. Dissolving that contract should be handled as an arm's length business transaction. Remember that this person will no longer be your spouse, but he or she will continue to be your co-parent, family member, and possibly business partner in certain assets or entities. Be nice; be reasonable; and be brief. Try not to let emotion, hurt, fear, or anger dictate the circumstances of your discussions or

negotiations.

Do you think the divorce rate will continue to rise in the coming years?

It is my hope that it will be reduced because people are waiting until they are older before getting married and people are making a more concerted effort to work through their marital differences. Although divorce has become a far more viable option than it was in the past, it certainly should not be used as the easy way out.

You've acknowledged that current generation's realities have evolved a lot in recent years. How has this change played a role in the divorce rate?

The American family culture has changed significantly in the past 50 years. There are same-sex couples who marry or register as domestic partners and become parents; couples who live together for prolonged periods of time and have children; and stepparents who are integrated into family life more than ever before. An attitude of "it takes a village" often permeates our culture.

There is a whole new way to dissolve your relationship – really a whole new choice of ways to do it. The evolution in family law has been accompanied by advances in mediation, collaborative practice, and self-representation. Plus, there's been a substantive body of data that impacts dissolution, direct and indirect, on all parties. There is also a movement of divorce attorneys – like me – who know how to help their clients navigate this territory and emerge from it strong in mind, spirit, and resources and eager to move on to the next stage of their lives.

Related Link: [Second \(and Third\) Marriages: Destined for Divorce?](#)

It's no secret that you're a supporter of prenuptial

agreements. Why do you think they're so important?

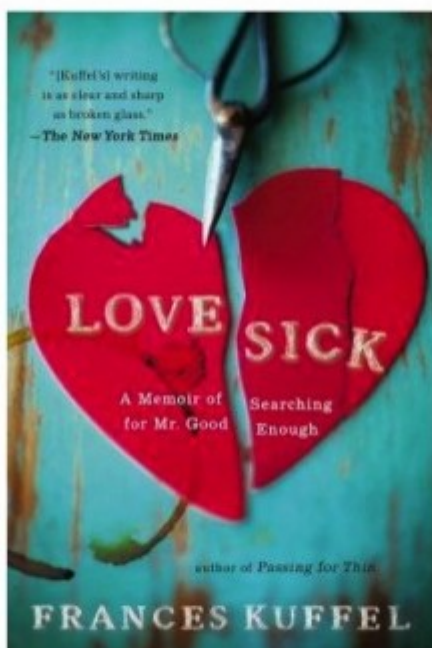
A prenuptial agreement is appropriate when a couple is seeking to opt out of the laws regarding marital property and/or spousal support which govern the state in which they live or are planning to live. Not everyone should have one; they're appropriate on a case-by-case basis. They're not only based on income levels but can clarify an individual's assets coming into the marriage, certain testamentary issues, gifts between spouses prior to and during marriage, and more. It's important to discuss financial expectations and expenses *prior* to entering into the marriage contract, and a prenuptial agreement is one way of leading into that conversation.

I am always astounded at the couples who come to me after being married for some period of time and reveal that they never had such a conversation, whether a prenuptial agreement was in place or not. Conversations about money certainly aren't sexy or romantic, but they should give each of you some clarity and enable you to enter into your marriage with a better understanding of each other.

To purchase It Doesn't Have to Be This Way, check Amazon or your local bookstore. You can also read more about her background at www.wcmfamilylaw.com.

'The 50 Fridays Marriage Challenge' Authors Talk About Maintaining Intimacy In Your

Marriage



By Gabriela Robles

Jeff and Lora Helton, authors of the marriage-transformation book *The 50 Fridays Marriage Challenge*, are a husband-and-wife duo who coach, counsel, and consult other married couples. Between them, they have an impressive background: Lora earned her Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology from Wheaton Graduate School and was in private practice for seven years, while Jeff spent nearly three decades as a pastor, offering spiritual guidance to men and families.

Now, they're offering their expert advice to an even broader audience. In their new book, they encourage their readers to ask themselves one question each week. Their hope is to spark

conversation and open up the boundaries in a relationship, allowing spouses to better understand each other and thus increase the intimacy that they share. Here, Lora and Jeff give CupidsPulse.com the inside scoop on their game-changing challenge.

Each chapter in *The 50 Fridays Marriage Challenge* includes a question, a biblical quote, a message and a quote from other literature. Why did you choose this format?

J: The idea for the book developed about five years ago when our oldest son was entering his senior year of high school. I started writing weekly letters to him, and I found myself thinking, “Oh my gosh, does my son know these things before he leaves home?” So I covered everything from how to change a tire to how to cook a steak. As the letters evolved, I began including a quote that gave more substance to what I was saying. Then, since my family is faith-based, I added in a Bible scripture, just something to encourage him. And it was during this process that I thought, “These are some really good benchmarks for Lora and I to write about marriage.”

I think to ask a question about marriage is a helpful tool for people. But I thought it'd be better to also reference experts to add some weight to each chapter. So each of our passages or quotes are connected to the question of the day. We want people to have three different types of content: something from us, something from a passage of Scripture, and something from everyone from celebrities to Mother Theresa.

Related Link: [5 Conversations Every Couple Should Have Before Getting Married](#)

Why did you choose a 50-day timeframe? Is that really enough time to improve a relationship?

J: In our introduction, we talk about how we live in a culture that wants a 50-minute fix. Marriages are far more like a

crockpot than a microwave. They take time, even in crisis. Our process is two weeks short of being an entire year. Instead of couples thinking, "If things don't get better in three weeks, I'm out," we want people to say, "Let's just slow down and take our time. We didn't get into this mess overnight, so it's going to take longer than overnight to get through it." It gives couples a new way of relating to each other.

Why do you specifically advocate having deep conversations once a week? What if a couple wanted to talk about an important topic every single day?

J: We definitely encourage that. There's some type-A people who will go through our book in only two months. I don't think couples can have this type of conversations too often. We are writing to a market where a vast majority of people have no intentional conversations for weeks or months at a time. We've asked a group of 600 people if they've had this sort of chat with their partner in the past week – and not a single person raised their hand!

It's so easy to get into the routine of life where you talk about your kids, your family, and your work, but you never really get a chance to ask, "How are we doing? How do we intentionally grow intimacy?" We wanted to develop a tool that would help couples do just that. So if they do it daily, that's awesome. But our hope is that we just help create a rhythm in their marriage.

It's no secret that men typically have a harder time sharing their feelings than women. How does *The 50 Fridays Marriage Challenge* address this issue specifically?

L: We tried to do some questions that weren't really emotion-focused. There are questions about dream vacations or how would you like to spend time together on your next date.

J: There are some questions throughout the book that talk about sharing your heart, and we just hope that, over time,

men will start to feel safe enough to talk about their fears and hopes. We also tried to have two- or three-page chapters to help engage men. To really engage men, we wrote something that you can get in and out of quickly with questions that are non-threatening and meant to start a deeper conversation.

Related Link: [Secrets to Staying Married for 50 Years \(Or More\)](#)

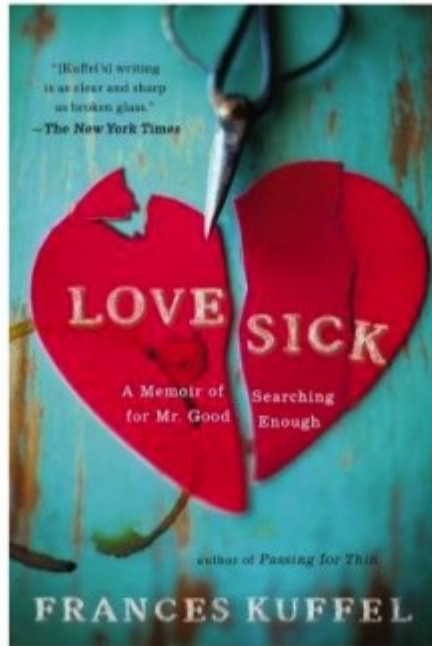
And finally, what would you say is your number one tip for maintaining intimacy in a marriage?

L: Communication is the most important thing – you have to be willing to share your expectations and desires. Many times, we try to guess what our partner wants. Instead, just talk about it. Sex is a topic that some couples find hard to discuss with their significant other. Talk about what you want it to be like and how you want it to be a part of your marriage. Movies and television shows make sex seem so easy, but it's not that way, especially when you have a house full of kids. You have to keep the communication line open.

You can purchase your copy of The 50 Fridays Marriage Challenge on Amazon. To learn more about Jeff and Lora Helton, visit their website, <http://50fridays.com/>.

Ruthie and Michael Dean Tell Us Why 'Real Men Don't Text'





By [Whitney](#)

[Johnson](#)

Country crooner Carrie Underwood and *Gossip Girl* star Chace Crawford ended their fling via text. Similarly, rumor has it that John Mayer called it quits with on-again, off-again girlfriend Jennifer Aniston by text. Most recently, Katy Perry revealed that Russell Brand, her husband of 14 months, announced his intentions to divorce via text. These celebrity examples – and countless real-world stories– are the impetus behind Ruthie and Michael Dean’s new book, *Real Men Don’t Text: A New Approach to Dating*. While the title suggests that the book is aimed at women, in truth, it’s meant for anyone who’s single and searching for love. The couple’s new approach to dating comes down to a simple idea: “You have to be the right person that the right person is looking for,” explains Michael. Find out who *you* want to be and then go out and find a guy – one who will call you instead of text.

Here, we chat with the newly-minted authors about the love lessons shared in their book as well as what keeps their marriage strong.

What was the spark that inspired you to write this book together?

M: My sister was dating this guy who would text her last minute to get together or just disappear for a few weeks, and she eventually got broken up with via text. It was really annoying for me to watch her go through the emotional ups-and-downs of dealing with him. So I wrote a post for Ruthie's blog ranting about the experience and called it *Real Men Don't Text*. It got a lot of traction and some really great responses from the readers. Ruthie and I started talking about how it was a prevalent issue, something everyone had an opinion on – how technology has taken over some of the important steps of communication in relationships. And from there, the book was born.

Related Link: [Is It Okay to Break Up With Someone via Text?](#)

Part of the book's title is "a new approach to dating." How would you explain this new approach?

M: It's about taking a personal inventory. Ask yourself: Am I pleased with my relationship? If you would just take a step back and set new standards for dating, you'd be much happier. You may not get asked out as often, but ultimately, you'll end up in a relationship that makes you much happier. So the new approach to dating is developing real standards and understanding that you're worth setting standards, that you're worth having a guy call you instead of sending a late-night text message.

One of my favorite chapters in the book was about women embracing their own beauty and worth. Why is self-love an important part of a relationship?

R: As I observed my peers and my own dating choices, I realized that low self-esteem and feeling inadequate was often at the root of our decisions. It's important to find our worth apart from what men say about us because we accept the kind of

love we think we deserve. It can be a quick downward spiral when we start letting men define who we are – one that can lead women into detrimental relationships lacking mutual respect. The hard part is that our friends often encourage bad dating decisions and that no one is talking about the importance of self-worth.

You provide a lot of advice for avoiding or breaking up with Mr. Wrong. What are some signals that women should look for to know that someone isn't right for them?

R: The first signal is his communication style. It's not that texting is bad, but asking a man to call you instead will help determine if he's really in it for the right reasons and isn't just lazily texting and looking for a hookup. Some other red flags are he doesn't make you feel special; he's insensitive and lacks empathy for others; he can't hold down a job; and your friends and family think he's all wrong for you.

Now, let's talk a bit about your relationship. Given your own experiences, do you have any tips for our readers who are dating long-distance?

M: I always encourage people to be open to being vulnerable – especially guys. That's what we learned during the months of talking. Since we weren't seeing each other face-to-face, it opened up a new avenue that allowed us to discuss some bigger issues sooner than we would've otherwise.

Ruthie, how did you know that Michael was The One?

R: I used to hate when people said, "You'll just know," but with Michael, I really did. We talked on the phone for four months before meeting, and I think that gave us a strong foundation of communication – without chemistry and the physical aspects of a relationship clouding our vision.

Related Link: [Five Secrets Truly Happy Couples Know](#)

How do you balance your busy careers and your marriage?

R: Balancing career and marriage is tough, but the main way it works for us is we're committed to putting our phones and computer away after 7 o'clock each night. Quality time without phones buzzing goes a long way towards a healthy relationship.

Was it a challenge to work closely together on *Real Men Don't Text*?

M: It was definitely a challenge – we work very differently from each other. She's such a talented writer, and I'm more of an idea-oriented person, so once we found our stride, we really enjoyed the process. If a marriage can survive writing a book together, it can survive anything!

And lastly, why did you feel like including your own love story was an important piece of the book?

R: My desire in writing *Real Men Don't Text* was to show women that they're not alone by sharing my mistakes but also to show that there *is* hope for an amazing relationship in the future. I think it was necessary to share our story in order to show that dating differently than our friends actually works! No one wants to read a dating book by a single woman, right? I always knew I wanted to write about relationships, but I didn't feel 'qualified' until my choices to date differently actually resulted in a great husband.

You can purchase a copy of Real Men Don't Text on Amazon and on their site, <http://www.realmendonttext.com/>. For more information, follow the authors on Twitter – @Ruthie_Dean and @michaeldean10 – or check out Ruthie's blog, <http://ruthiedean.com/>.

Relationship Author Kailen Rosenberg Gives Dating Advice for Finding ‘Real Love, Right Now’



By Gabriela

Robles

[Kailen Rosenberg](#), Oprah’s “Love Ambassador” and co-host of the revolutionary television show *Lovetown USA*, knows what it takes to find a lasting relationship and love. The relationship author has a method that inspires people to put aside their bad habits and find their true self – and she has proof that the dating advice works in many happy famous couples that she’s helped. Her new book, *Real Love*,

Right Now, is a set of guidelines that focus on discovering what really matters in a romantic relationship. The dating expert touches upon physical, mental and emotional self-appraisal before explaining her 30-day plan to help singles succeed in their search for The One. *Real Love, Right Now* even comes with it's own set of fun "homework" assignments to deepen its impact.

Dating Expert Opens Up About New Book About Love

What inspired you to write this book about love and share your advice for finding your soul mate?

This was something that I've wanted to do for many, many years. Whether I was doing something on television or doing something with my clients, I continued to hear, "Oh my goodness, when are you going to put this down in writing? When are you going to get a book out so I can take what I'm learning and follow it in my path everyday?" And I was just so grateful that what I was doing was touching people and helping them move and shift their love lives in a positive way. It was definitely time, and I was really blessed with the opportunity with Howard Books to put this book together. I'm just hoping and praying that it really helps my readers.

Related Link: [Oprah's "Ambassador of Love" Kailen Rosenberg Tell Us How to Experience the Love We Deserve](#)

You start by discussing the importance of physical, mental, and emotional self-appraisal. Why do you feel that it's important to consider these three aspects of yourself before beginning to look for love?

I think so many people believe that, because they're single, they're ready for love. Most people actually aren't, which is why we end up hitting a lot of walls and get stuck in

marriages that end in divorce. It's really crucial for us to ask ourselves why we want love in our lives. If we believe that we know what we want from someone else, then we must know what we have to offer to a relationship for it to be happy, sexy, and amazing. All of those things that we want from someone are things that the other person deserves as well. Many times we don't think about that, and it comes off as very one-sided. We need to really be in the best place that we can be in terms of our physical, emotional and spiritual states. Otherwise, roadblocks happen, and we unknowingly sabotage our relationship.

You have “homework” assignments at the end of each chapter. How important is that work to your method?

Those assignments are really important because they get people in touch with themselves. They realize that maybe they were connected to the wrong truth, that maybe there's a different self that they were meant to be. It's one thing to just sit and read a book and kind of take it in. But if you take that time to do the homework and dive into who you were in the past, who you are today and who you want to be in the future, you start to become your own true friend in a way unlike ever before. You honor yourself, and those lessons learned really stick with you. I'm hearing from readers that, after they finish the homework, set the book down and enter the real world, something will remind them of the work they just did and the chapter they just read. It'll make them realize, “Oh wow, I'm already moving and growing.”

Related Link: [Is He In It for the Long Haul?](#)

Relationship Author Gives Readers Her Best Dating Advice

So what's the trick? What are people who have found love using your method doing differently from people who aren't?

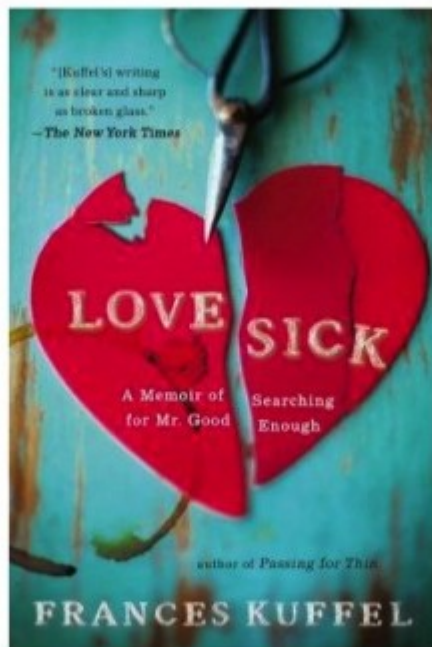
They are learning, for the first time in their lives, how to stop ignoring their inner voice, how to stop ignoring red flags and how to truly understand what they want. That's one of the greatest ways that we can really love ourselves and honor our true value. We often end up abandoning ourselves more than we realize, and when we do, we end up with the wrong partner and in the wrong relationship. We need to really, really pay attention to that inner voice, that wisdom that's there to guide us. It's not there to hurt us, and it's not there to steer us wrong. I'm not kidding you – if everyone could learn to listen to it and to trust it, we would all be in such an amazing place.

And finally, as a relationship author and dating expert, what is your number one tip for people trying to make themselves ready for love?

You need to sit down and have a reality check with yourself. Who were you in past relationships? Who have you been? Are you proud of your behavior? Do you think you've been honest with yourself and those you've attracted? My number one tip is just to get raw and real with yourself and discover who you are and what you want. You have to be in that place where you're listening to your inner voice and where you know you will never settle due to desperation or fear. That's never a reason to stay in a bad relationship or start a new one.

You can purchase a copy of Real Love, Right Now on Amazon. To learn more about Kailen, you can view her biography on The Love Architects or check her out on www.facebook.com/kailenrosenberglovearchitect/ and Twitter @kailenrosenberg.

'The Bridesmaid's Manual': A Guide to Wedding Planning And Friendship



By Sarah Ribeiro

Sarah Stein and Lucy Talbot are seasoned bridesmaids, so they know a thing or two about surviving your friend's big day. Now, they're trying to help all women overcome the biggest test of friendship a girl can face: being a bridesmaid. *The Bridesmaid's Manual: Make It To and Through The Wedding with Your Sanity (and Friendship) Intact* covers everything from dress shopping and planning the bachelorette party to bridesmaid etiquette and time (and budget) management. But,

most importantly, the book focuses on the best part about being a bridesmaid: the relationships you create (or strengthen) while helping your friend with her special day. We spoke to co-author Sarah Stein about her inspiration for the book and her experience being a bridesmaid.

First, we'd love to know about your inspiration for the book!

Lucy and I used to live together, and during that time, we were both bridesmaids plenty of times. One night, I came home from an awful experience, just feeling soured and complaining. I was having a problem with the last of the bridesmaid duties and thought, "Why isn't there a book for bridesmaids?" We did a ton of research on it, and there was absolutely nothing out there. That inspired us to write our first book, *The Bridesmaid's Guerilla Handbook*. The old book is dated now, so we needed a book for the new generation. Weddings have changed, and the expectations for bridesmaids have changed; the Internet has a lot to do with that.

Related Link: [Girls: Would You Pass The Bride-To-Be Test?](#)

What is the toughest thing to manage as a bridesmaid? And what's the best part?

The toughest thing is, without question, the different personalities of the wedding party. You are all so vested in this one event, and you're trying hard to not step on people's toes.

The best part is being able to see your friend, sister, cousin, someone who is so dear to you, travel through this process from singlehood to marriage. It really can stir you to your core; it's a beautiful thing to be a part of if it all goes well.

What has been your favorite experience? Your worst one?

There have been so many good moments and so many bad moments.

My best friend from college took me dress shopping with her – it's not something that bridesmaids always get to do, but getting to help pick out my best friend's wedding dress was my favorite. It was such an intimate, beautiful and fun experience. I know there are shows like *Say Yes to the Dress* that make it look like hell, but it's really not like that.

My worst experience was the one that convinced me to write this book. A "friend" from college asked me to be in her wedding. Months went by, and I didn't even know if I was still in the wedding party anymore. As the wedding approached, I heard from other people that she'd picked out the dresses. She just dropped me from the party without saying anything! I e-mailed her and asked if I needed a dress, and she replied, "I didn't think you wanted to be a part of my wedding."

What are some ways to help the bride and fellow bridesmaids during the wedding-planning process?

First, know that all creative decisions go to the maid of honor and the bride. It's really important for people to understand that there's a hierarchy. Everyone has an idea of what they want, but it's not their day. It's the bride's day. Problems occur when very strong-willed members of the family or party decide that their idea is the one that will happen.

Second, be verbal about being able to help. Check-in with members of the party and ask what you can do. Being proactive is infinitely more helpful than waiting to be asked to do something.

Related Link: [Add a Little "Luck O the Irish" to Your Wedding Day](#)

What are some clear-cut ways for bridesmaids and brides alike to set boundaries with one another so they don't drive each other crazy?

There are some brides who actually do wedding contracts to set

clear expectations. I think it's insane. That is one way for a bride to lay out expectations, but the only agreement that leads to success is one to be open with each other. If there's a problem, you should agree to listen to each other. If there's dissent in the bridal party, you need to work it out. The one thing that festers is when people harbor anger. That's when problems happen. You have to be willing to say what's on your mind; just be sure to do so in a way that isn't going to impose your point of view on the bride or hurt anyone's feelings.

You talk a lot about the strain planning a wedding can have on a friendship. How can you avoid this stress affecting relationships in your life?

You have to agree not to talk about the wedding. Come home and say to yourself, "I'm not going to think about it tonight." You have the right to take a moment to check in with yourself and unplug from all the wedding stuff. Do things that are not wedding-related, that are purely you. If you don't, all that stress can build up and lead to a tremendous amount of resentment. You're a bridesmaid! You're not an indentured servant.

The Bridesmaid's Manual *can be found on Amazon. You can also find Sarah and Lucy's first bridesmaid guide, The Bridesmaid's Guerilla Handbook, on Amazon.*