

What Now? Transitioning From Married to Single



By Patricia Bubash

for [Hope After Divorce](#)

“The marriage of Harold Ray Mann and Patricia Mann is now dissolved.” Hearing these words, I didn’t understand how this new status – single – would change my life, a life where I previously had checked “married” on all forms. So what was my future and the future of my daughters in our now one-parent household? “What now?” were the words in my mind that I never verbalized.

The process of our divorce had taken almost two years, and now, it was over. The time, emotions, and energy of finalizing the end of a fifteen-year union was also over, and all I could think was “what now?” What was the future to

bring? Was I going to be able to continue living in my house? Would I be financially stable? Would my daughters emotionally survive their parents' divorce? Who would continue to be my friends now that I wasn't part of a twosome? Would my parents, who married for life, be able to accept the divorce of their eldest child? And the big one: Would I ever find love again?

Paula Patton may be asking herself the same questions since recently separating from her longtime love and husband, Robin Thicke. Marriage is hard. Looking at the possibility of divorce is hard as well, especially when children are involved. The divorce process can take a long time from beginning to end, but maybe Patton and Thicke can work through their issues to rebuild their marriage and give their child the chance to live with them both together.

Related Link: [Robin Thicke Takes Son to Disneyland Before Split with Wife](#)

The possibility of divorce during the last three years of my own fifteen-year marriage had been a reality for me. I had collected several college hours, and a month before our divorce, I finished my program, receiving a diploma in education. No job, but a diploma, three wonderful daughters, and good friends. I was the only divorced person in our neighborhood, but luckily for me, my neighbors were very supportive of my single-parent status.

Social media and networking wasn't developed at the time. I was a desperate single mom needing work. But...there was the grapevine! Friends called friends and co-workers, and within a month, I had a job. Life flowed into a routine of working, driving kids to their events, attending church, shopping, and taking care of a house – all the normal activities, minus one adult. But it was okay. "What now?" had become a faded thought. I was living the "now," and it was going well.

Transitioning from married to single life can be stressful,

difficult, frustrating, disappointing, and even exciting. Yes, all of these emotions are felt as you reinvent yourself and your family composition, making the changes that are necessary as you leave married status behind you.

Related Link: [Did Robin Thicke and Paula Patton's Body Language Indicate A Breakup Was Coming?](#)

Even exciting? How can that be? Because change of any kind, no matter how painful it might be, is also exciting – *you* are in charge of making this new life just as you want it to be. How you choose to acclimate to your new status, how you choose to view the experience of your previous married life is all your's to decide. You can look at those years as wasted, or you can look at them as time spent learning about love, how to love, what's really important in a relationship, and what you want out of the next relationship. And you are better equipped, more knowledgeable, and more mature for the next time love comes your way.

To those who are experiencing the end of a marriage and asking "What now?"...breathe, breathe, breathe. Live each day fully and notice all the positives around you. Focus on the now, enjoying the moment. Reach out and make new friends. Join Parents Without Partners, a singles group, or other positive support groups in your community. Be open to new friends or a new love. Open yourself to the possibilities of what's to come – the joy of life – as someone who has experienced love and will again, when the time is right.

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).



Patricia Bubash received her M.Ed. in Counseling from the University of Missouri, St. Louis. Working with students and families has been her true calling for over thirty years. For more than twenty years she has presented workshops at the community college on a variety of topics relating to parenting issues, self-esteem and issues relative to divorce. Patricia is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Missouri and, a Stephen Minister. She submits a variety of articles related to relationships, marriage and divorce to several internet sites, and, frequently, is interviewed on internet radio stations. Volunteerism, writing and family are most significant in her life. Patricia writes for DivorceSupportCenter.com, HopeAfterDivorce.org, CupidPulse.com, andFamilyShare.com. She can be reached at patriciathecounselor@successfulsecondmarriages.com. Follow Patricia on www.facebook.com/patriciathecounselor.

Did Robin Thicke and Paula Patton's Body Language Indicate A Split Was Coming?





By [Jared Sais](#)

By now, we've all heard the news that power couple Robin Thicke and Paula Patton split after nearly a decade of marriage. The high school sweethearts appeared happy and in love on red carpets and at award shows in the past few months, so their separation announcement came as a surprise for many. So I can't help but wonder: Did we all miss the signs that their breakup was imminent? With this thought in mind, I took a look at three recent photos of the couple and analyzed their body language:

Photo 1 (from left to right above): In this picture, we see the couple at the 56th Annual Grammy Awards on January 26, 2014. Thicke is still wearing his wedding ring, but their non-verbal cues say more than a piece of jewelry ever could. Both the stars are walking this red carpet as if they're single already. If you cover up one of the them, you'll see they're posing separately. When two people are in love, they become a unit when taking a photo, and that's not the case here.

Additionally, if we take a look at Thicke, we can see that he's a bit stiff: His shoulders are squared off, and he's facing the opposite way of Patton, showing that the couple are

not in sync.

Looking forward a bit, you'll notice that Patton has the same stance in all three photos. She's got one hand on her hip (which conveys dominance) and is facing the camera. Girls often do this pose, with either one or both hands, to make themselves stand out more in the photos. Think of it like the Superman – or Superwoman – pose of power. Some girls also do this stance because they don't know what else to do with their hands. Either way, it's so culturally expected that it's now done subconsciously.

Related Link: [Robin Thicke Takes Son to Disneyland Before Split with Wife](#)

Photo 2: Here, the couple is at the Clive Davis and Recording Academy's Pre-Grammys Party on January 25, 2014. Both Thicke and Patton look very comfortable together, and she's genuinely smiling this time. As you may recall from my previous posts, the following signs indicate a real smile: The corner of her lips are raised; her teeth are showing; there's wrinkling at the corner of her eyes (called crow's feet); and she has puffed cheeks.

But one thing is still missing. Although the couple *look* like they're mirroring each other's body language (a sign of flirting and interest) with their faces, their bodies don't follow suit. For instance, there should be some sort of touching with their outside hands. Instead, we see Patton's typical hand on her hip and Thicke's hand in his pocket. This lack of touch tells me that, while she may be laughing and he might be leaning in, things are still not the same between them.

On the other hand, it also tells me that there's still attraction between them. Thicke is indicating that he wants to get close to Patton both emotionally and physically, which makes sense seeing as he's publicly tried to win Patton's

heart back in the past week or so.

Related Link: [Celebrity Couple Predictions: Paula Patton, Miley Cyrus and Catherine Zeta-Jones](#)

Photo 3: Both the singer and actress were rocking their typical poses at the *Baggage Claim* premiere on September 25, 2013. This photo is more generic than the previous two though; they're just posing for the cameras. The only thing worth noting is that Patton's head is tilted towards Thicke, which is a sign of affection.

I think it's a bit ironic that they're posing in front of a sign for the film, as both of them have some baggage that they need to claim. Based on these three photos, I can tell you that Thicke is still very much in love with Patton (a feeling that he's confirmed) and that Patton is still in love with Thicke. I believe that they'll get back together, but I am sure that Patton will create some guidelines (like no more twerking with Miley Cyrus).

If I could wrap up their relationship in two sentences, I'd say: Thicke was famous first; he found fame and then let the fame go to his head. Reality quickly set in though, and now he understands that being famous can't give you the same thing as love.

[Jared Sais](#) is co-author of the website www.nonverbalgame.com/, where you can find free downloadable content. He is an expert in non-verbal communication, who specializes in body language, micro-expressions and lie deception as they relate to life and love.

NoGamesLove Video Dating Tips: First Date Conversations That Will Get You a Second Date



By [E!'s Famously Single Dating Coach, Laurel House](#)

Dating Advice from E!'s *Famously Single* Laurel House on First Date Conversations

In this week's [dating advice](#) video, from relationship expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, [Laurel House](#), find out

what first date talking topics and tips will up your chances for a second date. Remember that conversation is a “give and a take,” the dating expert explains. “I say something; you respond. You say something; I respond.” Listen up for more great advice to win your new guy’s heart!

For more information about our dating mentor, click [here](#).

For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our [YouTube channel](#).

What’s your go-to topic of conversation on a first date? Tell us in the comments below!

Celebrity Couple Predictions: Jordin Sparks, Nina Dobrev and Gwyneth Paltrow





By [Shoshi](#)

For today's column, let's take a look at three celebrity couples that keep the gossip mills churning – whether it's because of a potential engagement, a possible new love affair, or never-ending separation rumors.

Jordin Sparks and Jason DeRulo: Lately, all eyes have been on this couple, wondering when they're going to get engaged. DeRulo made the smoothest move ever on Valentine's Day by gifting his girlfriend with 10,000 orange roses. How in the heck is he going to top that? What also has people buzzing is that the sultry singer proposed to Sparks in his latest video for "Marry Me."

Calm down, and stop waiting for your wedding invitations. They're only 24 years old – why is everyone trying so hard to marry them off? They're still figuring it out. That's not to say that they haven't started talking about marriage; right now, it's out on the table and being discussed. The two of them are best friends, so it's looking really good.

DeRulo is still trying to decide how and when to propose. I see it coming on a holiday or a birthday; New Year's Eve keeps

popping up.

Related Link: [Jason Derulo Surprises Jordin Sparks with 10,000 Roses for Valentine's Day](#)

Nina Dobrev and Liam Hemsworth: Are these two Atlanta-based actors a new couple? They have recently been spotted on a date and sharing a few kisses.

If they do decide to pursue a relationship, don't look for this one to last a long time. No offense to Dobrev, but she's in a rebound situation after her split from longtime boyfriend (and *The Vampire Diaries* co-star) Ian Somerhalder.

Similarly, Hemsworth's energy is all over the place when it comes to his heart. Can you blame him? By the end of his relationship with Miley Cyrus, it had become a train wreck. He has a bit of healing to do. He isn't sure what he wants in a relationship, so he's just having a good time and looking to see who's out there. The *Hunger Games* actor has a few wild oats to sow before settling down again.

Related Link: [Find Out About Liam Hemsworth Post-Miley Hookup with Eliza Gonzalez](#)

Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin: Oh, how the gossip is flying on the marriage of this longtime pair! Her reps have denied that she's having an affair with lawyer Jeff Soffer; there have been other names thrown around as well. The question remains is any of it true – and who knows? Only those people directly involved with the couple know the real deal.

When I look at the marriage of the actress and musician, it's in deep trouble – and not just because of affair rumors or because Martin may not be a happy camper living in Los Angeles. Long story short, the Coldplay frontman is bored to tears with their relationship, and he looks disconnected. If things don't turn around soon, look for a divorce announcement. Martin is going to want to split, but Paltrow

will make sure that it looks like she's the one who wants to end their marriage, as her image is very important to her. Martin will be fine with that as long as he gets to move on.

For more information on Shoshi, click [here](#).

Learning to Compromise: My Way or the Highway!



By Monique

Honaman for [Hope After Divorce](#)

"Marriage is about compromise; it's about doing something for the other person, even when you don't want to." – Nicholas Sparks, The Wedding

I had a great conversation with two friends, both widowed, the other day. They're dating each other, and it's starting to get serious. While not pointedly addressed quite yet, it's clear that the "we should spend the rest of our lives together" conversation is not that far off in the future. How wonderful for them! To have found love again – and all the joy, happiness, and elation that comes with new love – after both having lost spouses is wonderful and very sweet to see. Of course, they should spend the rest of their lives together. Thank goodness for second chances and the fact that they met each other.

Once example of a celebrity couple who will be tying the knot soon is Christina Aguilera and Matthew Rutler. This will be Christina's second marriage; again, thank goodness for second chances! She has a young son, who Matthew will become a stepparent to, yet another transition that will hopefully be smooth for everyone involved.

Related Link: [Christina Aguilera Dating 'Burlesque' Assistant Matthew Rutler](#)

Deciding they want to spend the rest of their lives together is the "easy" part. The more practical and more difficult part comes when the discussion turns to where to live. His house or hers? Her family room couches or his? His china or hers? His toaster or hers?

It's crazy, but *this* is where it can become overwhelming. The reality is that both people own their own beautiful homes, fully stocked with every practical item (the blender, ironing board, and beach towels) and also filled with all sorts of things that are meaningful (grandma's mirror, great-grandma's gravy boat, and the painting bought on vacation in Italy many years ago). Their styles may differ: His Victorian period furniture may clash with her Asian influence.

What to do? Of course, it's essentially no different than when

two divorced people choose to marry and frankly no different from when two established single adults (never married, divorced, or widowed) but well on their way to being “real” adults (with more than a studio apartment outfitted with milk crates and a mattress of the floor) enter into marriage.

Often times, both partners come to the relationship with established “goods” as well as established habits, ideals, and traditions. Perhaps one likes to eat dinner by 6 p.m. each night, whereas the other enjoys eating much later. Maybe one likes to be up and out each Saturday morning by sunrise, whereas the other relishes the idea of lounging in bed reading the paper until lunchtime. Perhaps one likes to spend Christmas out of town surrounded by the chaos of dozens of family members, whereas the other likes to make the holiday a more quiet, intimate celebration.

Related Link: [Make Your Relationship Count This Year](#)

Younger and less-established couples certainly need to compromise as they begin their lives together, but it’s often easier, as they don’t generally have decades worth of “baggage” (both literally and figuratively) that they bring to the marriage. It gets tougher as we get older!

When I remarried several years ago, my husband and I brought together two households. As crazy as it sounds, we literally did have to decide to keep my silverware or his, my dinner plates or his, my toaster or his...and on and on! That was challenging in and of itself (actually, he had a lot of things that were “nicer” than mine, so it made for some easy decision-making). Some people might say that the best solution is to start new with everything, and as fun as that sounds, it’s just not practical. Who has that kind of money to throw around, and why get rid of things that are meaningful to one person or the other?

In addition to compromising on the things, we also had to

learn how to merge our family traditions and our expectations for everything from how to save, how to spend a Sunday morning, what temperature to keep the house at, how many blankets to put on the bed, etc. This can be much tougher. After all, we were established in our routines. We had our “normal,” and defining a “new normal” isn’t always easy.

You know what, though? Defining a “new normal” can be fun if approached with the right attitude. If you aren’t open to compromise when dating, how in the heck are you going to compromise if you get married? Open yourself up to learning something new or even just experiencing something with a new lens. You might surprise yourself at how much you enjoy the change. After all, change keeps us vibrant and alive. Don’t become too set in your ways. Be open to new experiences, new traditions...even new toasters and new beach towels!

Does compromise become tougher as we get older? Are we more set in our ways? What do you think?

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).

✘ *Monique A. Honaman, JD, MLIR, wrote “The High Road Has Less Traffic: honest advice on the path through love and divorce” in response to a need for a book providing honest, real, and raw advice about how to survive and thrive through one of life’s toughest journeys. The book is available at [HighRoadLessTraffic.com](#) and [Amazon.com](#). Monique writes for [HopeAfterDivorce.org](#), [FamilyShare.com](#), [LAFamily.com](#) and [CupidPulse.com](#). She can be reached at Monique@HighRoadLessTraffic.com. Follow Monique on Facebook and Twitter.*

Dealing with a Valentine's Day Breakup



By Lori Zaslow and

Jennifer Zucher for [Project Soulmate](#)

According to AYI.com, one in five people were dumped on Valentine's Day. The best way to combat that seemingly horribly timed breakup is to get right back in the saddle! Look at this negative occurrence as a positive opportunity.

Good news is, it's still the beginning of the year. Make it your new New Year's resolution to let go of the one who broke your heart and focus on your fabulous self.

Related Link: [5 Celebrity Exes That Became Famous After the Breakup](#)

To start the forgetting process, make a list of what you don't like about your ex. Think about those times when he made you feel bad and didn't lift you back up. Then, write about the life you want. Who knows, thinking about your future may even inspire you to write a book or open your own business.

Erase all of your photos of him; if it's too hard to relive those memories, ask a friend to do it. Delete him from your phone too. The less you're reminded of him, the better.

Don't go on social media to check his status – and don't use mutual friends to do it either! Don't reread old emails, love notes, and text messages; you'll only make yourself upset. Don't listen to old voicemails either. The key is to remove all the triggers that relate to your ex.

Now, take a step back to get organized and then dive into your goals.

Go to the gym and take a spin class or drink some of that increasingly popular green juice. (It tastes decent but makes you *feel* great.) When you take care of yourself physically, your mental health and self-esteem improve too.

Not into the gym? Learn something new. Sign up for a French class or dig out your cookbooks and try different recipes. You won't have time to think about your broken heart when you're trying to figure out what “l'indépendance va vous libérer” means or how to not burn the soufflé that's in the oven!

Related Link: [How to Get Through a Breakup and Heal Your Heart](#)

Use this time to tap back into your responsibilities and remain active. My sister met her fiancé through the kickball league that she joined with her girlfriends. You never know when or where you'll stumble across The One!

This is also the perfect opportunity to explore new avenues of dating. Why not create an online dating profile? Let the positive feedback you receive from people messaging you boost your confidence. Just be sure you don't compare your new potential mate to your ex. It's time to start completely anew. Good luck!

For more information about Project Soulmate, click [here](#).

Any tips for dealing with a broken heart? Tell us in the comments below!

Dating with Dogs: What to Discuss Before Getting a Pet





By Eric Bittman,

CEO/President of [Warren London](#)

So you've been dating your significant other for a while. It feels like true love, and you decide to take the next step: buying or adopting a cute puppy together. Before you pick up your fluffy Fido, there are a few conversations that you need to have.

Related Link: [Picking Out a Pet Together](#)

While two people may seem like a perfect couple, their ideas on dog training may be totally opposite. One person might think crate-training is the way to go, while their other half might cringe at the idea of keeping their pup in a cage during the workday. Your mate might think a dog should eat Purina puppy chow and nothing else, while you might want Spot to eat only home-cooked, human-quality meals. The list goes on and on.

Before you bring home your new dog, it's crucial to sit down and talk about these sort of things with your partner. This will save you the stress of screaming at each other while little Rufus is happily chewing your shoes. Think about the

dog's feeding plan, walking schedule, sleeping arrangements, and exercise routine, and think about your own disciplinary techniques. If the conversation becomes hostile with no compromise in sight, it might be better to wait a bit – for the sake of your relationship and that sweet dog.

Note that there's not always a "right" way to train your pet, but taking your dog to a local professional may help shape your decisions. Once the issues are settled, enjoy every minute with your new friend. Raising a puppy will definitely bring you and your partner closer.

Related Link: [When Your Pet is a Deal Breaker](#)

This month, I asked actor Michael Rosenbaum, who recently wrote, directed, and starred in the movie *Back In the Day*, a few questions about dating with dogs:

Q: What is your favorite dog breed?

A: German Shepherd. My grandmother always had Shepherds running around the house while I was growing up.

Q: How many dogs have you owned?

A: My family had a St. Bernard, some poodles and a Golden Retriever growing up, but the first dog that I've ever owned is Irv, a German Shepherd.

Q: If you dated someone who demanded a little dog, such as a chihuahua or a yorkie, would you give in or push for a bigger dog?

A: I like more of a manly dog. Someone I can wrestle with and not have worry about stepping on by accident.

Q: You meet someone that insists that her dog sleeps in the bed with you guys. Is that the end of the relationship?

A: Irv sleeps with me every night. Maybe this question should

be for the person I'm dating!

Q: What is your favorite brand of dog shampoo? (Hint: I will only accept one answer to this question!)

A: I like Warren London. It's all-natural, and that has to be good, right?

For more information about Eric Bittman, click [here](#). Stay tuned for next month's Dating with Dogs column!

NoGamesLove Video Dating Tips: Hair Color and Online Dating





By [E!'s Famously Single Dating Coach, Laurel House](#)

Dating Advice from E!'s *Famously Single* Laurel House on Hair Color

What hair color do you think gets the most attention when it comes to online dating? In this week's [dating advice](#) video, relationship expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, Laurel House shares findings from AYI.com to answer this question and more. "It's actually blondes for women and silver for men," the dating expert reveals. Watch the video above to find out how your hair color affects how guys respond (or don't respond) to your online dating profile!

For more information about our dating mentor, click [here](#).

For more videos from [CupidsPulse.com](#), check out our [YouTube channel](#).

How does hair color influence your opinion of potential online dating matches? Tell us in the comments below!

How To Plan A Guy Friendly Valentine's Day



By [David Wygant](#)

First of all, ladies, there's no such thing as a guy friendly Valentine's Day. We know this day is all about you. As far as guys are concerned, our Valentine's Day already happened: It was when the Seahawks destroyed the Broncos at the Super Bowl. Men love football, and we love hanging out with men.

Now, it's the end of the football season, and it's painful for us. It makes our eyes tear, and it's hard to let go. We just had six months of our addiction, and now, we're not getting any football again until September. We've had to say goodbye

to our faithful love of football.

Related Link: [Making Valentine's Day Fun Again!](#)

The official Valentine's Day is for you: the flowers, the cute little teddy bear, the box of candy, and the romantic dinner. It's taking you to that delicious dinner we pay double the price that we'd have paid the day before.

So how can you show your man that you're different from all the other women out there? By ensuring that your man has a Valentine's Day date that he'll enjoy using the five tips below.

1. Buy him tickets. Take him to a sporting event or to a concert. Instead of doing the whole cliché of going out for dinner, do something more fun and something you can do together. Go against the grain. You want to show him he's special to you. He'll think you're the coolest woman in the entire world.

2. Try a fun class. Head to a local winery and learn about the grapes that grow near you. Or sign up for an Italian cooking class and add some new pasta recipes to your weekly menu. You could go to Color Be Mind and do some pottery together.

3. Create new traditions. Instead of doing the usual clichéd activities, come up with something fun that you can do every year and start your own holiday traditions. If you enjoy traveling, head to a new locale every February 14th. Or if you like extreme sports, try sky diving or backcountry skiing.

Related Link: [Creating Love That Lasts](#)

4. Be nice to us. Know that Valentine's Day makes a lot of guys uptight; it puts us under a bundle of pressure. We have to make sure the flowers turn up to the right place; we have to make sure we manage to book a table at the restaurant you want before it fills up; and we have to be original with our

gifts.

5. Think outside the box. When it comes down to it, the key to a successful relationship is keeping things fresh and exciting. To keep the fire burning, you need to find new ways of loving each other and having fun together. It's something we should be doing every day, not just on Valentine's Day.

For more information on David Wygant, click [here](#).

Making the Most Of Valentine's Day Even If You're Unhappy





By Michele

Sfakianos, RN, BSN for [Hope After Divorce](#)

unhappy valentine's day? it doesn't have to be

After a divorce, many holidays can be depressing, and Valentine's Day can be the most depressing of all. The media promotes this day for lovers, and those not in a relationship – or just getting out of one – may feel left out. The holiday can also leave you feeling as if something's wrong with you because you don't have someone special to share it with. But don't worry – you can still have a happy Valentine's Day!

Related Link: [Surviving Holidays as a Stepparent](#)

If you have children, celebrate your holidays with them. After all, they're a special part of your life. If you don't have visitation that day, then pick another day and celebrate. Children love special celebrations, especially when you tell them that *they* are the reason for the celebration. If you don't have children, why not plan a special outing just for yourself?

It is time to adjust how we feel about our holidays. We

shouldn't feel pressured to have a significant other in our life. We should love ourselves and celebrate that love every day, not just on holidays.

Look at celebrity couple Hilary Duff and Mike Comrie, who recently announced their separation. They have a one-year-old son and are both very dedicated to co-parenting, loving, and raising Luca as a team. The exes still spend a lot of time together with their son. For example, on New Year's Eve, Duff shared an Instagram of the three of them at Disneyland the week before. I wouldn't be surprised if they spent Valentine's Day as a family as well!

Related Link: [Hilary Duff and Mike Comrie Announce Their Separation](#)

Here are some great ideas for your special celebration:

- Call a close friend or a family member and go to a movie, get a manicure and pedicure, or bake a sweet treat.
- Turn off all of your electronic devices and read that book or magazine that's been sitting on your nightstand for months.
- Take your children on a nature walk or to a local park. Don't just send them off to play; go play with them!
- Make yourself a fancy dinner. Use your best dishes and make sure to put fresh cut flowers in the center of the table as a present to yourself.
- Take a warm bath with essential oils. Don't forget the candles! Just totally unplug during this time. Read that book or magazine I mentioned earlier.
- Share your time with someone in need. Volunteer at a local shelter or serve dinner at a soup kitchen.
- Turn on the tunes and dance!

– Set the evening aside to look at old photos, especially those that bring back great memories.

Celebrations don't have to be expensive, but it is important to acknowledge the holidays. Valentine's Day is what you make of it. It is a day to celebrate love. No matter if you are alone or part of a couple, celebrate yourself and the power you have to make others feel valued. Remember: The most important thing you can do to bring true love into your life is to love *yourself*.

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).

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Can You Really Find Love on 'The Bachelor'?





By [Marni Battista](#)

The reason for our culture's collective obsession with *The Bachelor* franchise is obvious. What single, soul mate-seeking dater wouldn't dream of being presented with 25 gorgeous single men or women and a period of 6 weeks to strategically whittle down that group to a proposal at the end? The all-expenses-paid fairytale dates, exotic destinations, and expensive sports cars probably don't hurt either.

The conducive environment of 'The Bachelor' makes finding relationships and love seem like a breeze. But the real question is, are the happy celebrity couples really as in love as they look?

But underneath the fluffy fanfare that leaves us hopeless romantics watching at home with hearts a-fluttering, at the show's core is a promise of two people finding everlasting

relationships and love. After all, the show has resulted in a few happy marriages, with last month's nuptials of happy celebrity couple Sean Lowe and Catherine Giudici from *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette* Season 1 couple Trista and Ryan Sutter's ten-year vow renewal.

Related Link: [‘The Bachelor’ Stars Sean Lowe and Catherine Giudici Are Married](#)

However, in an environment so unrealistic and clouded with so many distracting factors, I can't be convinced *The Bachelor* process is conducive to building the foundation for lasting relationships and love. Do I think it's possible to fall in love on the show? Taking into account the myriad of other ways couples meet these days, sure. Still, I think the success stories are the exception rather than the rule, and here's why:

1. The Isolation: Before they even meet the star of the season, the 25 contestants who make it through the arduous casting process are then sequestered in a Los Angeles mansion for the remainder of the process. At the beginning of any relationship, I advise daters to make space in their schedule to reflect and allow true feelings to come to the surface. With no escape from this microcosm and no contact with anyone other than the bachelor, crew, and other contestants to distract you, it's easy for the show to become your world, distorting your judgment and emotions.

2. The Game: As much as the creators would like you to think that the show allows one lucky man or woman to naturally select a lifelong partner, it's simply impossible for one person to get an accurate impression of 25 different people's personalities in one night. From the get-go, the show becomes a strategic game where the more extroverted contestants come out on top and those who take a little bit longer to open up often get shafted without a fair shot. Even the contestants who make it past the first couple of rounds of elimination

still have to be pretty brazen to stay on the guy's (and camera's) radar, and as a result, many of them get caught up in the competition while losing sight of their true purpose.

Related Link: [How to Listen to Your Heart and Take Back Control of Your Love Life](#)

3. The Entertainment: Ultimately, the show's creators prioritize entertainment value over all else. That means there's a whole other slew of factors that make this dating game less natural and more complicated. The over-the-top dates to exotic locales with private performances by the latest up-and-coming country artist may be fun for the viewer to watch, but it distracts the two people from truly getting to know one another. I mean, who wouldn't fall in love with someone in a rose petal-dotted hot tub overlooking the mountains of Thailand while Josh Groban serenades them softly in the background?

The show's creator, Mike Fleiss, has also openly admitted that they make sure to stock at least half the cast with potential villains or loose screws because they know their audience wants to see drama more than they want to see a proposal. So before the show even begins, cattier girls are selected over more compatible mates, and those stroking the drama are kept around longer than they should be.

To put it simply, any situation that brings people together that normally wouldn't meet carries with it the possibility of true love. But considering the numerous reality-distorting factors involved in *The Bachelor*, I'd steer you toward taking your chances in the real world.

[Marni Battista](#), founder of Dating with Dignity, is an expert dating and life coach with a 10-step system to manifesting love for your self and others.

NoGamesLove Video Dating Tips: How to Get a Guy to Commit



By [E!'s Famously Single Dating Coach, Laurel House](#)
In this week's [dating advice](#) video, relationship expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, Laurel House talks about getting a guy to be in a dedicated relationship – much like the girls on *The Bachelor* hope to do when it comes to the handsome Juan Pablo. First, she encourages viewers to see the popular reality show as a real-life scenario: “He’s dating multiple people...just like you might be casually dating a couple of people until you decide to be in a serious,

monogamous relationship.”

Dating Advice from E!’s *Famously Single* Laurel House on How to Get a Guy to Commit

Related Link: [The No Games Love Guide to True Love](#)

Then, the dating expert shares her dating tips for getting that special guy to commit to you. Most importantly, be in the moment, be uplifting, and be vulnerable. “Become your best self!” Watch the video above for the rest of Laurel’s advice and discover what else you can learn from this season of *The Bachelor*!

For more information about our dating mentor, click [here](#).

For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our [YouTube channel](#).

What do you do when you’re ready to be in a committed relationship with someone? Share your tips in the comments below!

Celebrity Couple Predictions: Amber Heard, Kaley Cuoco and Hilary Duff



By: [Shoshi](#)

For today's column, let's take a look at three celebrity couples who have made headlines lately for shocking relationship moves – whether it's a surprise engagement, a quickie marriage after a whirlwind romance, or a separation announcement from a seemingly happy couple.

Amber Heard and Johnny Depp: Depp recently announced his recent engagement to actress Heard. Two words that came to mind when I heard this news were “hot mess.” Not because I think it's too soon for the actor to be in a serious relationship, but because this relationship has signs of doom written all over it.

The 27-year-old actress met her 50-year-old fiancé while working on *The Rum Diaries*. There have been so many allegations about their romance that it's hard to know what to believe. The main rumor that stands out is that Depp and Heard broke up not that long ago so that she could date a woman. He

somehow won her back and put a ring on it.

The only thing that is clear in this relationship is that Depp is trying his best to keep Heard around. What better way than to get married! Their relationship energy is two lost souls floundering around. The biggest question is how long can the actor can keep his partner entertained before she wants to leave again. I hope he's smart enough to get a good prenup, as there's no way this relationship is going to last.

On another note, the media keeps trying to make it seem like Depp's ex, Vanessa Paradis, is jealous over his engagement. This rumor couldn't be further from the truth. Paradis left Depp; *she* was the one who didn't want to get married. Depp has repeatedly confirmed this truth in interviews since their split, and his ex has moved on.

Related Link: [Johnny Depp and Amber Heard Are Engaged: Find Out Why](#)

Kaley Cuoco and Ryan Sweeting: The *Big Bang Theory* actress ended a relationship with Henry Cavill and pulled the ultimate bounce back: She fell in love with tennis player, Ryan Sweeting, and got married. If you blinked, you may have missed the whole thing. The couple dated for only five months before sprinting down the aisle.

There is something rather awesome about this marriage. It's a classic case of "you know when you know." Sure, they got married quickly, but when I look at their relationship, it looks like they both knew it was meant to be. Cuoco was looking for something different when she met Sweeting. They've been together before in a past life, which is why it felt so comfortable when they met this time around.

The bets have started on when they'll divorce, but save your money. These two are going to be together for awhile. Don't be surprised if a baby announcement comes within a matter of months. Baby energy is swirling around the blonde beauty.

Since they're having so much fun together, Cuoco would like to wait a little bit before having kids, but babies have a way of sneaking in when they're ready.

Related Link: [Kaley Cuoco Celebrates Bridal Shower with Famous Friends](#)

Hilary Duff and Mike Comrie: Looks like one Disney princess is about to get a divorce from her Prince Charming. This move comes as a surprise to many people who thought that Duff and Comrie were a happily married couple. As I look at the singer's energy, she's in a totally different place than she was when she got married. A part of her looked up to Comrie as her older and wiser lover. Well, getting married and having a baby will make a woman grow up really quickly. Long story short, she snapped out of it.

Duff will always have love in her heart for Comrie, but it's not the kind of love that keeps a marriage going strong. The passion between the two of them left a long time ago. It also looks like Duff considers Comrie a big turnoff, and once a woman is turned off by a man, it's hard to go back.

It's great that they tried everything in their power to stay together, but it's time for them to both move on. Duff is going to come back with a resurgence in her career. She's going to gain some new fans with her hot MILF status, but dating will not be her priority; she will be focused on being a single mother during this new chapter in her life.

For more information on Shoshi, click [here](#).

New Years: Changing Your Life in Those Quiet Moments



By Sharon M. Rivkin,

M.A., M.F.T. for [Hope After Divorce](#)

Enjoying the fire blazing with my cup of coffee on New Year's morning, I took a big sip and a deep breath and thought to myself...“I need more moments like this.” Then, I realized that if more of us, including myself, paid closer attention to those particular moments in our lives, we might hear the quiet message that alone time brings.

Related Link: [‘Get Some Headspace’ Author Andy Puddicombe Shares Ingredients for Perfect Relationship](#)

What did I conclude from how I felt on New Year's morning? That I needed to slow down and take more time for myself. That

was a powerful moment because it made me realize that, by doing those two things, I would be a more balanced and less stressed person. Plus, those around me would also benefit from this change.

This experience made me reflect on the whole concept of creating New Year's resolutions and how most resolutions are task-oriented rather than internally driven. For example, resolutions often include losing weight, lowering blood pressure, exercising more, and quitting smoking or drinking. These are all tasks that don't cause you to think or reflect; you just do. But internally driven goals come from a more quiet state where important messages come out of the stillness. And these are the messages that are full of information about you and quite possibly about what you should be doing to have a better life. And, if you think about it, having a better life will create more peace within yourself.

So here are five ways to create stillness among the madness and busyness of our daily lives:

Related Link: [The Most Powerful Tool to Help You Find Your Soul Mate: Intuition](#)

1. Walking to reflect. Most of us walk to lose weight and get our heart rate up. But did you ever think to walk mindfully? This means noticing the flowers, the trees, the sound of water, the beautiful architecture, and the birds. By experiencing the beauty and feeling of the outdoors, you'll glide into a more reflective state where your problems take a back seat and out-of-the-blue thoughts come to the forefront.

2. Journaling. The purpose of journaling is to write about your inner thoughts, uncensored, which help you uncover and release feelings that you may have not let surface because you've been so busy. Once you write down what you're feeling, you may acknowledge what's *really* going on under the surface. It'll grab your attention, leading you to make changes in your

life, whatever they might be.

3. Meditating. The point of meditation is to quiet your mind from its constant chatter. The chatter makes things bigger and insurmountable, which causes more stress and anxiety. By quieting your mind on a consistent basis, it creates a cumulative, calming effect in your daily life which, in turn, gives you more opportunities to reflect. And it's in those moments of reflection where you gain clarity and perspective.

Related Link: [Four Tips for Stress-Free Dating](#)

4. Listening to music. Music that touches the heart instantaneously calms you and smoothes out the daily turmoil. In fact, you almost forget that you have any problems when beautiful music touches your soul. We've all experienced the power of music, so we need to make listening to it more of a priority in our daily lives.

5. Sharing with your partner. Sharing is different than talking. It's part of that reflective process where you feel safe enough to reveal your thoughts and dreams to your partner. By doing so, communication gets more intimate, and you feel closer with one another. In contrast to quieting your mind, this mutual feedback reflects the information back to you in a different way.

Just as I experienced a message in the stillness of my New Year's morning, by using these five ways to create calm and quiet within, you, too, have the ability to hear your inner voice above the daily noise and make significant changes in your life.

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).



Also known as the "last ditch effort therapist," Sharon M. Rivkin, therapist and conflict resolution/affairs expert, is the author of Breaking the Argument Cycle: How to Stop Fighting

Without Therapy and developer of the First Argument Technique, a 3-step system that helps couples fix their relationships and understand why they fight. Her work has been featured in O Magazine, O Newsletter, Redbook, Reader's Digest, Time.com, CNN.com, Prevention.com, and WebMD.com. Sharon's appeared on Martha Stewart Whole Living Radio and makes regular radio appearances nationwide. Sharon is also a contributing expert at HopeAfterDivorce.org, DivorceSupportCenter.com, FamilyShare.com, and CupidsPulse.com.

Five Tips for Falling in Love in 2014





By Melanie Mar

It's 2014 – a new year to rejoice new beginnings, celebrate new possibilities, and just maybe embrace a new love affair. It's time to shake off 2013! If you're single, here are some tips to get you ready to mingle:

1. Get ready for love: Forget bitter memories of the past and live in the present moment. Be ready for all of the opportunities that will arise in the new year. Start with a brand new idea of what love is and with a positive outlook on love to allow magical things to happen. It's your year, and bright and positive love adventures are coming your way.

Related Link: [Top 10 Things to Know About Hiring a Matchmaker](#)

2. Rock your body: It's safe to say that, when you look great, you feel great. Staying healthy is another way to prepare for love to flow into your life. You should be excited to have fun meeting people and enjoy dating again. Don't give up on your regular workouts. In order to be fully ready and open for love, keep working hard on being your best self. Positive, healthy people do a better job of receiving love into their lives.

3. Become a chatty Cathy: Make it a point to talk to at least five people a day. Strike up a conversation at the gym; make small talk in line at Starbucks; smile while waiting to checkout at the grocery store; and give someone a compliment today. Watch how you are changed and how love comes in as you reach out. This exercise will help you become more relaxed talking to people and make first dates seem less awkward. Remember: Feeling comfortable in your own skin is key to truly enjoying the moment.

4. Believe: Simply having faith is significant for being able to fall in love again or even for the first time. Believe that it *is* possible to love and be loved this year. Don't give up hope! Love is attainable. It exists, and it's ready to enter your life when you make space for it. Remind yourself that you are worthy of a romantic miracle this year. Be conscious of creating a "clear head and clear heart," an openness and eagerness to change your current way of thinking.

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

5. Laugh: If you really want to fall in love this year, embrace laughter. When hoping to meet a potential mate, keeping a light-hearted spirit is important to letting love in. Laughter has been described as good medicine because it helps us feel better; it's infectious; and it gets our pheromones ramped up. So make a point to find humor in everyday situations and share funny moments when talking to someone new. These good feelings will leave a lasting impression on both of you.

Keep these basic tips in mind as you open up your heart and get ready to receive and enjoy all the love that is out there for you.

[Melanie Mar](#) is a celebrity relationship specialist, matchmaker and life coach.

NoGamesLove Video Dating Tips: I Miss Your Smile...But I Miss Mine More



By [E!'s Famously Single Dating Coach, Laurel House](#)

Dating Advice from E!'s *Famously Single* Laurel House on Toxic

Relationships

In this week's [dating advice](#) video, relationship expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, Laurel House shares her tips for recognizing when it's time to end a toxic relationship and honor yourself and your intuition. "Sometimes the hardest breakup is when you have to do the breaking up," the dating expert explains. "You have to finally admit that this relationship isn't working."

For more information about our dating mentor, click [here](#).

For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our [YouTube channel](#).

How do you know when it's time to end a toxic relationship? Tell us in the comments below!

Make Your Relationship Count This Year





By Dr. Tranquility

– Lydia Belton, PhD, Ct. H.A.

how to improve your love life in the new year

Many couples come to me as part of my Date Therapy for Couples protocol and ask how they can make their relationships healthier. Being each other's strongest support system and not taking each other for granted is key. These underlining core values are the bond that makes it all possible. So whether you've been married for over a decade or you're in a brand new relationship, you can still keep the romance alive. Here are five tips to help make your partnership the best it can be in 2014.

Related Link: [Create an Action Plan to Make Every Date Feel Like Valentine's Day](#)

1. Date night: Love is easy and exciting in the beginning, but as we settle into real life, there's a noticeable shift. We're not always on our best behavior – which we automatically engage in during the courtship or “honeymoon” phase – but a date night can make a big difference. Keeping your romance fresh and making time for just the two of you is a great way

to keep your love strong.

A date night can be as simple as preparing a romantic meal or as complex as planning a weekend getaway at your significant other's favorite bed and breakfast. Those of you staying at home can add a little extra romance with flowers and candles. Dress up and pretend like you're enjoying a fancy night out. Get creative and make this night your own!

2. Conflict resolution: All long-term relationships experience ups and downs, and it's important that you address the issues head-on. Find a moment in the nearby future to discuss it so neither one of you let the problem fester and get even worse. Gently, calmly, and thoughtfully share your feelings with your partner. Be sure to avoid using a fussy, loud, or defensive tone; instead, think of your situation as telling a story. Once you have the initial conversation, give yourselves about 15 minutes of alone time to fully digest everything; when you reconvene, I bet you'll work things out without any trouble.

Related Link: [3 Ways to Know He's Just That Into You](#)

3. Trust: Trusting each other enough to allow your partner the space they need is important. Take Jada Pinkett-Smith and Will Smith, for instance: While they are each other's strongest support system, they trust each other enough to enjoy their space apart as well. This time is key in allowing yourselves the blessing of missing each other. After all, they say that absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Plus, taking care of your own needs outside of your relationship will help you be a better partner. When we are nourishing ourselves, we can better nourish our joined energy, our love.

4. Real expectations: As we spend more time together, it's natural to inadvertently take advantage of your partner and vice versa. As I've said before, healthy boundaries are key. Be fair in your expectations of your partner. For those of you

who are workaholics, even if you work with your significant other, your work is your work, and your relationship is just that: your relationship. Take time to nurture and enjoy it, and it will thrive.

Think of all of the celebrity couples that have experienced long-term love: Kyra Sedwick and Kevin Bacon, Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell, and Pauletta and Denzel Washington, to name a few. There are good and bad times in all relationships, but remembering why you love your partner and what first attracted you to them will help you get through the rough patches.

We all grow and change, and we need to allow our relationships to do the same. Making new memories to tie into your growth as a couple will keep your love strong.

Related Link: [Kyra Sedgwick Opens Up About Love for Husband Kevin Bacon](#)

5. Gratitude: Remember that, in this day and age, whether you're married, living together, or only dating, you always have the choice to stay or leave. Take your relationship day-by-day. Visualize where you want to be in five or ten years, and share this exercise with your partner. If you start each morning with gratitude for your partner, a day becomes a decade before you know it. True love is a gift, so be grateful for it!

Going Solo Again: Bold New Beginnings



By Cynthia MacGregor

for Hope After Divorce

Ah...we're moving into a new year, and don't we all love new beginnings? It feels like a fresh start, a new chance, a do-over. It feels like an opportunity to "get it right this time." The reality is that we can make a new beginning, a fresh start, *any* time. We don't need a special date marked in red on the calendar or a month that we know is at the head of a whole fresh year.

I've never believed in New Year's resolutions, but that doesn't mean I'm against making a fresh start. I just don't confine such activities to the first month of the calendar year. For instance, the beginning of spring is a time of rebirth. Your birthday is always a good day to re-evaluate your life and see what needs re-calibrating. In truth, *any* time is a good time to begin anew.

Related Link: [Finding Yourself Again](#)

The point of this column, then, is to advise you *not* to limit your new beginnings to the start of the new year. Now, I am not telling you not to make a fresh start now. I am just telling you that, if your life is not satisfactory or it feels like things have grown stale, *any* time is a good time to take matters in your own hands and *do something about it*.

You did that when you got divorced, assuming you were the one who initiated the split. Your marriage was – for whatever reason – not what you wanted it to be. And instead of “putting up with it,” you did something about it. You got divorced – a bold step, especially if it also meant that you would be raising your kids pretty much single-handedly from here on out.

Josh Brolin and Diane Lane are one A-list couple who recently broke up. They were introduced in 2002 by Brolin’s stepmother, Barbra Streisand, and the two married in 2004. After being married for eight years, they announced their split last February. Sources reported them stating, “This was a hard decision for both of them to make; the relationship just ran its course.”

Related Link: [Josh Brolin and Diane Lane Are Officially Divorced](#)

Maybe now you’re finding that being a solo, like Brolin and Lane, is a tougher gig than you anticipated. What you shouldn’t do is find the first available unmarried male and hitch up with him just so you’ll have help with the kids. Does the phrase “out of the frying pan and into the fire” resonate with you?

The same is true in other areas of your life too. Don’t assume that any change is automatically a change for the better. Sometimes it is; sometimes it isn’t. Maybe the change resolves one problem or set of problems but dumps a whole different problem or set into your lap and your life instead.

What are you unhappy with in your life right now? Is your income too low even with the child support money? What can you do about it? Can you switch jobs? Do you want to go back to school and study for a whole new career that pays better? Or do you want to approach your employer about a raise?

Do you see too little of your kids because you work eight hours a day and also have to figure in commuting time? Is it time to think of a job at which you can telecommute from home? Maybe it's time to be really bold and start a business of your own from home.

Is your home unsatisfactory for whatever reason: too small, too difficult to maintain, dicey neighborhood, inconvenient location, or simply too many memories of when you lived there with your former husband? It may be time to move to a different place – even a rental house or apartment where the landlord or building super is responsible for repairs and upkeep and all that falls on your shoulders is housecleaning. Or a large house you can share with another single mom who can help you with childcare, cooking, housecleaning, and expenses. Don't assume that, just because you're living now in a single-family dwelling that you own, you should confine your search for a new home only to another single-family dwelling you own. Be bold! What other arrangement would work better for you?

Related Link: [Maintaining a Positive Image During Divorce](#)

Are you dating a man you know you have no future with, just so you have "someone" in your life? Sure, that type of situation offers you companionship and perhaps other advantages as well. (Does he help with the kids? Fix things around the house for you? Make himself useful in other ways?) But if you don't love him – or even if you do, but you realize he's not your best choice in a life partner – now's as good a time as any to end the relationship. If you don't, it will be harder to meet your Mr. Right.

It's the start of a new year and a good time for new beginnings – but remember, as 2014 unfolds for you, that *any* time is a good time for new beginnings. Whenever you aren't happy with the status quo, stop and consider just what you could do to improve the situation at hand. Think creatively. Think outside the box. Be bold. And make the best of this year all through the year!

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).



Cynthia MacGregor is a multi-published author. She has over 100 books to her credit. They include "After Your Divorce," "Divorce Helpbook for Kids," "Divorce Helpbook for Teens," "Solo Parenting," "'Step' This Way," and others. Forthcoming books include "The One-Parent Family," "Why Are Mommy and Daddy Getting Divorced," and "Daddy Doesn't Live Here Anymore." She hosted and produced the TV show "Solo Parenting," which was broadcast in South

Florida over WHDT. Cynthia writes for HopeAfterDivorce.org, FamilyShare.com and LAFamily.com. Contact Cynthia at Cynthia@cynthiamacgregor.com, and visit her website.

Q&A: When Is It Appropriate to Send an Event Invite via Facebook?



Question from Amanda

G.: My college roommate just invited me to a wedding reception via a Facebook "event". While I understand the family's need to save money, I find it classless and tacky. So when is it appropriate to send an event invite via Facebook? Should I let her know that I didn't find this appropriate?

Answer from Our Love Experts:

[Suzanne Oshima, Matchmaker](#): While I'm not an etiquette expert by any means, if she sent you a Facebook event invitation to the wedding ceremony, that would be quite inappropriate. However, this is an invitation to the wedding reception. While a formal invitation to the reception would have been ideal...let's face it, wedding receptions are very expensive. Apparently, she's on a tight budget, so I'm sure she felt this was one of the ways she could cut back on expenses.

It is her wedding, so try not to be so judgmental about something so trivial as an invitation. And just try to be a

good, supportive friend who is happy for her about her wedding – I'm sure you would want her to do the same for you!

[Robert Manni, Guy's Guy](#): Being invited to a friend's wedding is an honor. Although you wouldn't choose a Facebook event for your own wedding invitations, this is a personal decision, and it isn't *your* wedding. If you feel strongly about her choosing to use Facebook for the invitation, you can always decline...via the Facebook event page.

If you decide to attend her special day, leave your judgements at home. After all, you don't know why she elected to use Facebook events for her wedding invitation. It could have been a financial issue, and if so, as a friend, you have to respect that and have the tact not to make her feel bad about it.

[Paige Wyatt, Reality Star](#): Finding new, innovative ways to make a wedding – and the wedding planning easier – is important to every bride-to-be. That being said, a Facebook invite may be a little inappropriate for a wedding, but there is no point in bringing it up to your roommate since it's already been sent. Everyone has their own style and vision for their wedding, and maybe the reception invitation was less important to her than the other factors.

An appropriate event to send a Facebook invite for would be much more casual soiree, like the housewarming party *after* the wedding.

For more information on our three dating and technology gurus, click [here](#).

If you have any questions you would like answered by our experts, please submit them on our [Contact Page](#).

When do you think it's okay to send an event invite via Facebook? Share your story below!

NoGamesLove Dating Video Tips: Dating Power Tools



By [E!'s Famously Single Dating Coach, Laurel House](#)

Dating Advice from E!'s *Famously Single* Laurel House on Dating Power Tools

Have you ever wondered what you need to bring on a date – not literally but mentally? In this week's [dating advice](#) video, relationship expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating

coach, Laurel House reveals the dating power tools that “make you feel better and look better and prepare you for a date.” The dating expert covers everything from eating a base food (did you know asparagus helps to minimize your chances of having a hangover after a drinking date?) to depuffing to calming those butterflies in your stomach and increasing your confidence (hint: wear red). Good luck!

For more information about our dating mentor, click [here](#).

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Cupid wants to know: What are your dating power tools?

Celebrity Couples: What True Love Looks Like





By Jared Sais

The start of a new year gives everyone a renewed sense of hope, and with this thought in mind, I decided to consider three celebrity couples who are happy in love.

Amanda Seyfried and Justin Long: These lovebirds have become a paparazzi favorite lately. In many photos, the couple appears surprised at their picture being taken. You'll see their eyebrows and eyes raised and their mouths just a bit open. Note that surprise is one of the seven micro-expressions that people make to indicate an emotion.

In another recent photo, we see the actress leaning towards her man, either for a kiss or to whisper something to him. This behavior shows how comfortable they are with each other. When people feel comfortable, they tend to get even closer into your "personal space bubble." It's an easy way to identify if two people are dating or just really close friends.

Related Link: [Amanda Seyfried and Justin Long Bond Over Her Dog](#)

As a side note, when flirting, if you're talking to someone you're interested in, whisper something every once in a while so the person has to lean in to hear you. It's a great trick for getting closer and making a move.

Notice Seyfried's eyes in many photos of the couple. They're often locked on Justin's lips; this is what desire looks like. As she gives a slight grin and looks at her man's wanderlust smile, there is nothing but attraction and lustfully gazing eyes. Likewise, the actor has a very loving smile with deep eye contact, which tells me he is very romantically invested in the blonde beauty.

You can also see the lack of space between them in the photo above and other photos, which indicates a romantic relationship or at least a very close trusting relationship.

Drew Barrymore and Will Kopelman: We have something special here: best friends *and* lovers. They have a dynamic that many couples strive for. You can tell they are truly happy in many of their photos; the facial expression of smiling is categorized as high cheeks, crows feet in the corners of the eyes, and raised outer corners of the lips. Sometimes, this body language is easier to see in photos than in live action. But knowing the difference between a true smile and a fake smile can make the difference between catching someone in a lie or knowing if your partner is truly interested in you.

When people are comfortable with someone, they usually talk with the cup in their hands; put the cup down and continue to use their hands in a conversation; or put the cup to the side of their body. In a picture of Barrymore and Kopelman at a sporting event, we see the actress talking with her cup in her hands, showing us that she's very comfortable in her husband's presence. She also leans in towards him, putting her weight on him – another sign of trust and love.

Related Link: [Drew Barrymore Goes Public with Second Pregnancy](#)

Heidi Klum and Martin Kirsten: You'll often see this pair walking at the same pace with locked hands or their arms around each other. This body language is considered mirroring each other, and all signs tell you that their relationship is going strong. They are a very real couple; they run together and share that interest. There's nothing better than an early run and coffee in the morning with your loved one.

Listen up, guys: Real man wear pink or hold their woman's purse. Yes, Kirsten often holds his girlfriend's purse, showing us what a gentleman he is. He is confident with himself and their relationship. Plus, it reveals just how close they are as a couple.

Author's Note: If you're looking for more in-depth non-verbal tricks, I will be holding a class in the New York City area. The class focuses on everything non-verbal, including confidence building, how to become a better flirter, how to spot flirting that is directed your way, how to find quality men/woman, fashion tips and tricks, and etiquette coaching. Please email me at jaredsais@gmail.com for more information and to sign up. Tickets are going fast, and there is a 20-person limit! See you there.

[Jared Sais](#) is co-author of the website [The Non-Verbal Game](#), where you can find free downloadable content. He is an expert in non-verbal communication, who specializes in body language, micro-expressions and lie deception as they relate to life and love.

Keep Talking to Your Kids

After Divorce



By Rosalind Sedacca,

CCT for [Hope After Divorce](#)

It can be tough – but necessary!

As a divorced parent, you can never pay too much attention to your communication skills with your children. It keeps the doors open for a healthier, more positive relationship with them. It makes you more sensitive to issues of concern early on, so you can nip them in the bud. It also encourages your children to talk about what they are feeling, questions they have, and situations that are creating conflict for them.

Related Link: [Solo Parenting: Reconsidering Your Ex](#)

Don't sit down and say, "Let's talk." Instead, find a comfortable time and place where conversation can flow

naturally and easily. Then, bring up related subjects in a casual way. Watching television or movies at home can often be a catalyst for valuable conversation. Driving in the car together is another great time for discussion, questions, and sharing feelings.

Consider Bruce Willis and Demi Moore. Despite being divorced for over a decade, they're often seen at red carpet events with their three daughters, Rumer, Scout, and Tallulah. By maintaining a friendly connection with each other, these exes ensure that they both have a positive relationship with their kids and that their family unit stays intact.

Here are some tips that can help you ease into more productive communication with your kids.

- Asking *why* can be intimidating and close off your conversation. Instead ask *what happened* questions, which keep the dialogue open. Then, move into talking about *feelings* which provide insights into what's *really* going on with your child. Validate their right to their feelings, even if you're uncomfortable hearing about them. When they feel safe in expressing their emotions, you'll get real clues as to how your divorce is affecting them – and whether there are changes taking place worthy of your special attention.

- Be patient. Don't react or respond until you get the full message. Sometimes, it takes some meandering for your child to reach the crucial point of what they want to say. Don't coax – or shut them off too soon!

- Remember that preaching, moralizing, or “parenting” comments can put up barriers to clear communication. Listening is your most valuable skill and tool. Paraphrase back what you're hearing to make sure you're getting it right. “So you were annoyed at dad for forgetting to call you last night” is far different from saying “I don't blame you for being angry at dad. He's so undependable.”

– Watch your judgments and put-downs, even with upsetting information. Don't belittle your children, call them names, or insult their behaviors. Talk *to* them – not *at* them. The difference is felt as respect. Be careful never to put down or disrespect your child's other parent in your conversations...as tempting as that may be at times. Keep your kids out of the divorce drama as much as possible. That's when real emotional damage is done.

Related Link: [How to Cooperatively Co-Parent After Separation or Divorce](#)

– Acknowledge your children for coming to you or sharing with you. Praise their braveness. If you were at fault, apologize honestly and discuss how you can make changes for the future. Sometimes, post-divorce parent-child communication can be a very slow process as you rebuild trust and a sense of security.

– Show that you accept and love them – even when their behaviors are not acceptable. Help them come up with some acceptable solutions they can understand and feel good about. Support and positive role modeling go a long way toward influencing your children in the right direction.

Put yourself in your child's place, and you will likely make wiser decisions when it comes to talking about sensitive areas in their life. Afraid to talk about touchy subjects? Get some help from a counselor. Good parents know it's essential to talk to your children and be there for them when they need you – especially when they're reluctant to start the conversation. Don't let them down!

For more information on Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).

✘ *Rosalind Sedacca, CCT is a Divorce and Parenting Coach and author of the ebook, [How Do I Tell the Kids about the Divorce? A Create-a-Storybook Guide to Preparing Your Children – with Love!](#) Acclaimed by divorce professionals, the book*

*provides fill-in-the-blank templates that guide parents in creating a family storybook with personal photographs as an ideal way to break the news. Rosalind is a contributing expert at HopeAfterDivorce.org, DivorceSupportCenter.com, FamilyShare.com, and CupidsPulse.com. For her free ebook on *Post-Divorce Parenting: Success Strategies for Getting It Right!*, her free ezine, articles, coaching services, and other valuable resources, visit Rosalind's [site](#).*

Dating with Dogs: Picking Out a Pet Together



By

Eric

Bittman, CEO/President of [Warren London](#)

Picking out a pet as a couple can be a cause of stress in a relationship. The biggest choice is usually deciding whether you want a big dog or a small one, but it can be much more complicated than that.

There are many factors in determining what breed you and your partner should choose. First and foremost, consider your family size and future plans. Some dogs are known to be great with kids, while many breeds are too aggressive for little kids. Some of the best breeds with small children in the house are Beagles, Poodles, Labs, and Golden Retrievers.

Related Link: [When Your Pet Is a Deal Breaker](#)

Another factor can be how much exercise you're able to give to your dog. Some dogs – like French Bulldogs and Pugs – need walks and exercise but would be great apartment dogs. Other breeds, including Huskies and Labs, require a lot more space and are quite energetic. If you and your partner aren't home much or live in a very harsh climate, a dog who is happy spending most of his time indoors would be ideal for you.

And sometimes, you have to choose a dog because of his personality. When my wife and I lived in New York City, our main concern was getting a pet that would be happy in a small apartment. My allergies to longer-haired breeds and a dislike for heavy shedding also narrowed our options, but we still had a big number of breeds to consider. One day, my wife told me that she saw a cute Boston Terrier on the street with the funniest personality, and after a little research, we were able to make a relatively quick decision. We loved the breed so much that, after a year, we added a friend for Maurice – our new pup, Brittney, also a Boston Terrier. We can't imagine our lives without these cuddly black and white pals.

Related Link: [Brandon McMillan Chats About Finding Homes for Pets on 'Lucky Dog'](#)

No matter how you decide what kind of breed to bring into your family, you'll know when you find the right dog!

For more information about Eric Bittman, click [here](#). Stay tuned for next month's Dating with Dogs column.

Giveaway: Keep Your Dog Clean and Happy with Warren London Products



This post is

sponsored by Warren London.

By [Whitney Johnson](#)

It's no secret that many pet owners want what's best for their furry friends, and Eric Bittman was no different when he created [Warren London](#). Eric and his wife Sara are the proud parents of two Boston Terriers, Maurice and Brittney. When Maurice was six months old, he developed a number of skin allergies. Unfortunately, the recommended shampoo only left his skin drier and itchier, which is why Eric decided to develop his own line of grooming products.

Warren London's main goal is to make innovative luxury spa and grooming products that get great results. The company uses only natural ingredients to ensure that all items are top quality; they're even human tested on top of being dog tested. Each product is made with a simple belief in mind: "Every dog deserves a spa day!"

From shampoos and conditioners to paw revitalizers and facial cleansers, Warren London sells a wide range of products that are sure to keep your dog looking (and smelling) his best. We all know that a clean dog makes a happy partner; after all, nobody wants to come home from a week-long business trip and be greeted by a smelly pooch who leaves muddy paw prints on their dry clean-only suit.

Plus, for a bit of added fun, the company also has quick-drying, non-toxic, water-based Pawdicure Polish Pens, available in 13 colors and perfect for dog nail art.

My husband and I used the Coconut 2-in-1 Shampoo + Conditioner on our Lab mix, Finn. Just a puppy, he loves to play and run around outside, which means he gets dirty quickly; even so, three days after his bath, he still smelled like coconuts. His coat was particularly shiny and seemed more moisturized despite the Colorado winter air.

We also used the Instant Ear Cleaner on Finn's sensitive ears. He happily obliged while we massaged the solution into his ear canals, and his floppy ears stayed much cleaner than usual.

Lucky for you, one lucky CupidsPulse.com reader will win a Warren London gift bundle that includes: Lavender Shampoo, Hydrating Butter, Deep Cleaning Paw Fizz Tablets, Paw Sani-Scrub, Cucumber Melon Foaming Facial, "Wet Kiss" Dog Cologne, Grapeseed Oil, Instant Ear Cleaner, three Polish Pens, Nail File, and Buffer Block. Grooming your dog should be easy, effective, and, most importantly, fun – and thanks to Warren London products, it can be!

~~**GIVEAWAY ALERT: To enter for a chance to win the Warren London gift bundle, go to our [Facebook](#) page and click "like." Leave a comment under our giveaway post letting us know you want to enter the contest and telling us something fun about your dog. We'll contact the winner via [Facebook](#) when the contest is over, and they will have three days to respond back with their contact information. The deadline to enter is Monday, January 13th at 5 p.m. ET. Good luck!**~~

Congratulations to Melissa Mazzur!

Open to US residents only.