

Relationship Advice: Maintaining a Positive Image While Going Through Divorce



By Joanne Pittman of Pittman Consulting & Image for Hope After Divorce

The teenage son of a dear friend of mine said something one day that really stuck with me. He was speaking about a relationship his mother was building with a new boyfriend, and he flatly stated, "He is not the star of my show!"

As an image consultant who has worked with celebrities, models and public figures as well as professionals and individuals, I see all of my clients as "stars of their shows." Life is filled with transitions, and divorce is one of them. While in

a transitional state, it's common and needful to make adjustments to our images that allow us to circumvent needless and costly detours on our road ahead.

In fact, we are each the stars of our show – train wrecks, triumphs and all. We have our own paparazzi in the form of friends, peers, colleagues, parents and children. Dare I mention the long line of predators ready to take advantage of our tender state while undergoing divorce and all of its rigors?

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While most people don't have the advantage of having a team of public relations (PR) experts ready to announce or confirm rumors of personal relationships in failure, the need to have help managing the distress of divorce is no less significant. In order to attract the best people into your world, I impress upon you the importance of maintaining an authentic and clear image statement during this precarious time in your life.

Two celebrity couples that have navigated their divorces brilliantly are Jennifer Aniston and Brad Pitt and Courteney Cox and David Arquette. Each leading lady maintained consistent appropriate looks and, with the help of her PR team, was clear about her messages. They both managed to appear simple, chic and tastefully put together and demonstrated their resolve to stay true to themselves while going through divorce with dignity.

Pitt and Arquette also managed the very public ending of their marriages gracefully by preserving a well-defined message and image presence. Despite the media blitz making Pitt out to be the man who broke the heart of America's sweetheart, he maintained his impish good looks by keeping his intentions clear. Similarly, Arquette has kept his understated look with a slight modern edge while being committed to a healthy and friendly co-parenting relationship with his former wife.

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Consider your image just as important as that of a public figure or a rising actor.

Here are a few tips for you as you move forward with reshaping your storyline. As the leading character, choose your look wisely. Be clear about who you are and why you matter. This isn't always easy to ascertain when going through the metamorphosis of divorce, but I assure you, now is the time to create your outline, your plot and your script.

– Create a personal mission statement. Use key character traits that you possess like integrity, loyalty, highly-organized, etc. Then include character traits that you wish to improve or that you admire in others. Doing so helps keep you focus on goals and desires which are meaningful.

– Rid your closet **and** overall image of anything that is incongruent with your intended message. For example, if you have the goals of becoming "holistic, natural and healthy," refrain from elective and excessive plastic surgery, implants, hair extensions, filler injections, etc. We all know those choices are fake and far from holistic! For clothing, you would choose natural fibers and textures as well as colors and prints that are soothing.

– Create a budget and acquisition plan. You're not an A-list celebrity; you're not going to be offered free clothing from the A-list designers so they can use you for their PR campaigns. However, **you are a star** and should dress yourself accordingly. Therefore, take time to work out a budget that will allow you the **BEST** for your needs. Don't settle for less!

While you may not live the dream of receiving an Oscar, Tony, or Emmy, you can live the dream of a happy and authentic self as the star of your show!

For more information about Hope After Divorce, visit our

Experts page.



As founder of Pittman, Lamitie & Associates, Joanne has developed their proprietary IMAGE Authenticity™ Training Programs which address the multifaceted work and lifestyle demands on employees and executives in the corporate world today. Her innovative approach has evolved over the past twenty three years in the fashion, fitness, luxury retail and image consulting industries. Joanne has been writing training curriculum and presenting developmental workshops to large and small audiences for over eighteen years. She is known for raising new questions and expectations which successfully foster authentic corporate and personal brand presence.

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Bachelorette 9, Episode 5: Finding Love in Germany





By Jared Sais

Things got intense in this week's episode of [The Bachelorette](#)! Get the skinny on what was really going on in the minds of the [bachelors](#) as passions became more apparent and rivalries heated up.

Related Link: [Bachelorette 9, Episode 4: Atlantic City](#)

Chris' One-on-One Date

There's no doubt about it: Chris is head over heels for Desiree. Even if you missed him saying that he was falling "slowly but surely" in love, there were plenty of non-verbal signs that he's into her. His eyes widen when he sees her; his smile stretches from ear to ear; and when his voice lowers into a whisper and his eyes lose focus, you can tell that he's thinking only of her. Smiling with a wrinkled nose is another indication of playfulness. Other cues of trust and affection to look for include: leaning in close to one another, cuddling, nuzzling against the chest or shoulder, the ability to act goofy and maintaining eye contact.

The Oregon native clearly loves Desiree, and the bubbly brunette is into him too. When she kissed him, she put both of her hands behind his head and – almost forcefully – pulled him towards her. It was very passionate and sexual non-verbal communication. It looks to me like Des might already like Chris more than she ever liked Sean Lowe on last season's *The Bachelor*. But is it love? I'm not sure yet.

It's important to note that she got a bit tipsy during dinner. She tripped; her speech slowed; and her pupils were dilated. It seems like she gets emotional when she's drunk, and she showed micro-expressions of sadness throughout the date.

Bryden's Exit

It turns out that my instincts about Bryden were spot on – almost. In my Quote Me Now article, I mentioned that his non-verbal cues suggested that he was trying to distance himself from the bachelorette. While my suspicion that he had a girlfriend back home proved incorrect, Bryden did leave the show. Oh well. Goodbye and good luck, Bryden!

Group Date

Brooks definitely stood out the most on the group date. These two hugged and kissed as if they were magnetically attracted to each other. As they kissed, Des grabbed the arm of his jacket, suggesting that she truly missed him and wanted to be with him again. There were some serious fireworks between them! Though she has definite chemistry with Chris, her reaction to Brooks is much stronger.

Related Link: [The Bachelorette 9, Episode 3, Dangerous Dodgeball Date](#)

Two-on-One Date

This date with Michael, Ben and Desiree was certainly a spectacle. The two men were battling for the bachelorette the

only way that men know how: by trying to prove their dominance. Their attempts backfired though, as their target was clearly uncomfortable. During the date, both men were pinching their lips, and Michael even made a fist at one point, a very strong indication of anger. He was ready to hit Ben (no surprise there – he's made his feelings about the single dad very apparent). I thought the funniest part of the date, though, was seeing Des drinking to avoid having to speak. The date turned out to be more about the guys than about star of the show.

At one point, the bridal stylist leaned back in her chair to give them space to duel it out. Her body position was very expressive. When people are attracted to someone, their bodies usually tilt *towards* the individual. Desiree, however, kept her shoulders, body and feet pointed straight ahead and didn't lean towards either man, suggesting that she's not interested in either of them.

Overall, this was a disastrous date. Honestly, it didn't matter who got the rose at the end of the night – neither of guys will be end up with her heart.

Join me next week to further analyze the non-verbal communication between Desiree and her men as the competition grows more intense and the number of contestants continues to dwindle.

Let me know your thoughts on the men so far and who you think will be Desiree's future husband!

Dating Advice: Top 10 Things to Know About Hiring a Matchmaker



By Melanie Mar

A matchmaker works on behalf of a client to set that person up on dates and ultimately find them a happy and healthy relationship. In today's society, more and more people are turning to matchmakers as they look for a qualified mate for a long-term, committed relationship that may eventually lead to marriage. Below are ten things that you should know about hiring a matchmaker:

1. Your time is premium. A matchmaker acts as a personal agent

for your love life. You can go on with your busy day-to-day schedule, while matchmakers like myself are working behind-the-scenes to find your other half. It's an effective, timesaving approach.

Related Link: [What Does Unconditional Love Look Like?](#)

2. A professional matchmaker has the intention to orchestrate *quality*, not quantity, introductions. They only select matches that offer you the maximum chance of success. Identifying mutual compatibility in important areas such as religion and children help them decide who your potential matches are.

3. Your safety is of paramount importance. Matchmakers' clientele are screened for your security, allowing you to feel confident meeting the individuals selected for you.

4. Matchmaking is offline and highly personal. Matchmakers get to know you and find out what you think is most important in an ideal mate. All potential candidates are interviewed in person too. After all, you are hiring a professional to handpick someone who is perfect for you.

5. Matchmakers elicit feedback from both parties after each date, allowing them to better understand what you are looking for and to refine their search. They'll also gain insight into behavior patterns that you may not be aware of.

6. They keep your privacy in mind. Most matchmakers do not post your photographs or personal information on the Internet. Unlike online dating websites, it is a discreet way to handle your private life.

7. Matchmakers generally have a higher caliber of clientele. People who pay to enroll a matchmaker's services are serious about relationships and not interested in wasting anyone's time.

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8. A matchmaker will coach you through the whole first date process, from what to wear to breaking the news to your match if you didn't feel that crucial connection necessary for a relationship. Chemistry is the only thing a matchmaker cannot guarantee.

9. Matchmakers specialize in the different needs of you, the client. Whether you are retired, religious or gay, find a matchmaker who caters to your very specific requirements.

10. Matchmaking services, especially those designed to be boutique or elite like mine, do not necessarily take every paying client who is interested in working with them. They have to feel that they will be able to match you and that you will meet the high standards of their current clients.

Once you have made the decision to hire a matchmaker, choose someone that you can truly trust and be honest with when it comes to what you want. Finding true love is one of the most important things in life, and emotions will be involved. Therefore, you must feel safe enough to share your feelings. Open your heart and mind and let your matchmaker guide you, even if they sometimes lead you down the road less traveled. Most importantly, remember that love is waiting for you; you might just need a little help finding it.

Melanie Mar is a celebrity relationship specialist, matchmaker and life coach. For more on Melanie, you can follow her on [Twitter](#).

QuickieChick's Video Dating

Tips: Summer Love...



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 summer romance!

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

Have you ever had a summer romance? QuickieChick and lifestyle coach Laurel House has – and she says it enriched her summer and made it that much more memorable. Unfortunately, it ended up being only a fling that left her broken-hearted. Lucky for you, in this week's video, the dating expert shares some tips

for making the most of your summer love. Your inhibitions are down; your energy is up, and the heat is on. It's time to have some casual and carefree (but still safe) fun!

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

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

Have you had a summer romance? Share your story with us in the comments below.

Bachelorette 9, Episode 4: Atlantic City





By [Jared Sais](#)

Now that season 9 of [The Bachelorette](#) is well underway, some of the contestants' true natures are coming out. Furthermore, we're learning that Des doesn't necessarily see a future with a guy just because they share one romantic date together. So let's get started...

Related Link: [Bachelorette 9, Episode 1: The Animal Kingdom](#)

Brad's One-on-One Date

Desiree emphasized the word "great" when she was describing her day with Brad, saying, "We are having a *great* time." This emphasis indicates sincerity – she really did have a blast with him. Think about when you're describing a delicious meal to someone. You emphasize the adjectives. For example, you might say, "I just had the most *amazing* sushi. So *fresh*! You have to try it." It's an easy way to decipher someone's true opinion.

However, just because the bachelorette said that they had a "great time" doesn't mean that she felt any chemistry. You

don't have to be a body language expert to know that this date wasn't going well for Brad. Even so, let's analyze the most common nonverbal indications of discomfort that Desiree and Brad exhibited during dinner:

- Silence and long pauses
- Nervous laughs
- Concentration on food or other objects
- Short conversations and abrupt endings
- Awkward looks with rolled eyes and pinched lips with a forced smile
- Lack of eye contact

It's no surprise that this single dad didn't receive a rose at the end of the night.

Group Date

Now on to the Bachelorette Mr. America Pageant! Only one person with actual talent managed to make Des blush, and that was Zak W. with his guitar and sweet lyrics. All of the other men tried their best but ended up treating the talent competition as more of a joke. Though Zak didn't win the competition with his song, his performance was the one that stood out the most to me. I always say that, in the dating world, it's important to stand out by taking a creative approach. If you play the game the same as everyone else, you'll blend in. If you're brave enough to express your individuality – like Zak W. was – then you'll win the heart and mind of that special someone.

Chris also had a successful week, solidifying my confidence that he'll make it to the top five.

Let's take a look at Bryden's body language too. In my [Quote](#)

[Me Now](#) article, I said that he was “not feeling” Desiree. Sure enough, in this week’s episode, Bryden came out and admitted that he wasn’t into the brunette beauty as much as he wanted to be at this point in the show. I think Bryden will leave soon, and I still get the feeling that he isn’t there for the right reasons. There was one non-verbal cue in particular that proves my prediction correct: During the rose ceremony, when Desiree called his name, Bryden showed shame by lowering his head. Even more interesting was when Bryden gave her the “I got you” look, which is given when someone either lies or manipulates another person and gets away with it. In short, he is manipulating Desiree and isn’t who he claims to be. A big warning to Desiree: stay away from Bryden!

Related Link: [Bachelorette 9, Episode 3: Dangerous Dodgeball Date](#)

James’ One-on-One Date

James definitely likes our leading lady more than she likes him, but they still had a solid date. I didn’t see any sparks fly when he received the rose, and even though Desiree leaned for the kiss, there was no passion in it for either of them. I don’t see James making it too much longer. He’s a good guy, but he has no real connection with Desiree.

This week’s episode was certainly an eventful one! Here’s my current top five with one slot still open: number one is Brooks, number two is Chris, number three is Zak W. and number four is Drew. What will happen next is a mystery, but I’m already excited to see if my predictions are proven correct when the gang heads to Germany next week.

Let me know your thoughts on what men you like so far and who you think will be Desiree’s future husband!

Is Your Perfect Man Criteria Keeping You Single?



By [Whitney Baker Johnson](#)

When you're looking for love, it's tempting to want to find the "perfect" man, someone who embodies all of the qualities that are on your checklist. In truth, doing so could be detrimental to your love life. You may end a relationship with that nearly perfect guy because you're so focused on the one thing he's missing. By the time you realize it, chances are he's already moved on to someone who loves him and thinks he's enough. Here are five reasons why your perfect man criteria is keeping you single:

Related Link: [Why a List of Requirements Won't Get You Mr. Right](#)

1. You focus on the wrong things. “The fact is that you’re not looking for a walking list. You’re looking for a feeling,” explains dating mentor and QuickieChick Laurel House. “With your list, you’re essentially putting blinders on.” Instead, look for someone who brings the best out in you, who makes you feel happy, fulfilled and who is a true-life partner.

2. You lose sight of what really matters. You automatically assume someone isn’t the right fit for you because he’s got dark brown hair or he’s not at least six feet tall. Maybe’s he been married before and you never saw yourself with a divorced guy. Ask yourself this question: In ten years, are those things really going to matter? Open your heart up to every possibility, and you may find a man with qualities you didn’t even know you wanted.

3. You put too much trust in “paper perfect.” Sure, you’ve had an idea in mind – and maybe you even put it down on paper – of your perfect man since you were a little girl. You pictured meeting him when you were 23, getting married a few years later and starting a family shortly after that, but reality doesn’t always live up to expectations. As House says, “Like when a smile doesn’t touch the eyes, just ‘paper perfect’ sometimes doesn’t touch the heart.”

4. You miss out on the good parts of love. We all know that nothing is perfect, yet we want a perfect connection, a perfect partner and a perfect relationship. By trying to make your love life flawless, you fail to truly take in those moments that make finding The One so special. Without the negative experiences and broken hearts, you’ll never know when you come across that one guy who makes you feel just right.

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5. You begin to veer away from “must-haves” when developing

your list. It's easy to get caught up in superficial desires rather than only including your "can't live without" qualities. If you must have a list, it should focus on your belief system. "At the end of the day, what matters is if your core values mesh. You may find your 'paper perfect' man some day, but you'll be disheartened if your morals don't match or if you have zero chemistry," House shares.

Don't set yourself up for disappointment. Instead, throw away your list – or at least whittle it down to only a few "must-haves" – and let your heart lead the way.

Are your standards too high? Share your experiences below.

Reducing Dating Anxiety In 5 Ways Or Less





By Dr. Tranquility – Lydia Belton, PhD, Ct. H.A.

Let's face it, dating can be stressful but "participatory anxiety," as we say in the mental health community, is completely normal. What's important is that you deal with this anxiety in a healthy manner. That's why, I've provided some tips below to alleviate dating nerves.

Step 1: Focus on all of the things that make you the unique, wonderful person that you are. We are all beautiful in our own way and we should accentuate those features that make us feel good about ourselves. For example, if a favorite outfit or blazer brings out the best in you, then make sure you wear it on your date. Doing so will help ease your nerves and remind you of how attractive and amazing you are. Confidence is always sexy!

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Step 2: Take the time to get to know your prospective partner by calling him or her up before the date. A pre-date phone conversation can be a laid-back way for you two to chat about

your shared likes, dislikes, hobbies, favorite foods, sports teams and so on. This can be a crucial conversation that sets the foundation for the date itself- especially if you have never met yet. Think of it as a crash course in getting to know each other. You won't have to worry about running out of things to say on your date if you've already established mutual interests and favorite topics of conversation. If you've utilized Date Therapy, your date will be someone who is right for you on all levels, someone with whom you share similar values and beliefs. Established sexual boundaries and similar expectations can (though don't always) determine if your date is a one time thing or the beginning of a new relationship.

Step 3: Take time to prep for your date. Make sure that you choose your outfit and get your hair and nails done ahead of time- especially if your date is scheduled right after work. During your pre-date phone call, it's also helpful to decide on the location of your date so that you can prepare to dress appropriately. A pre-planned outfit will alleviate some of your pre-date jitters and ensure that you are confident and comfortable.

Step 4: As many of you know, boundaries are a favorite topic of mine because they're so important. Healthy boundaries are a necessary component of a good relationship. You should always be true to yourself and partake in activities that make you feel comfortable. If you find yourself feeling pressured to be someone that you're not, then you need to seriously reevaluate who you're with because something isn't right.

Step 5: Have fun! Dating is a process. Not every date will be "the one." Dating is about gaining confidence, meeting new people and enjoying yourself. Lighten up on yourself and others and get out there! Above all else, remember that every date offers us the opportunity to grow in self-confidence and maybe even make a new friend. Friendships can evolve and are often the foundations for strong relationships later on down

the road.

Developed by Lydia Belton PhD, Ct.H.A., Date Therapy® is an effective protocol that helps people get in touch with their criteria for an ideal mate. DrTranquility's protocols® have been featured most recently on Forbes.com & Yahoo, ABCNEWS.com, ABC's the View, KISS FM, CupidsPulse.com, Metromix for the Chicago Tribune, British Glamour, REDBOOK, Cosmopolitan Magazine & promoted by Match.com.

Are You Dating Someone with Narcissistic Personality Disorder?





By Tina Swithin, HopeAfterDivorce Expert

The term, “narcissist” seems to be spreading through the world like an out-of-control wildfire. The term itself doesn’t always have a negative connotation since, ironically, we are all narcissistic by nature and there actually is a certain degree of self-love that is healthy. However, there is a line that separates healthy confidence from the $\frac{1}{4}$ ber toxic Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD). That’s what we need to be mindful of when we date someone.

The celebrity world seems to be brimming over with unhealthy narcissism. The spotlight that shines in Hollywood is highly attractive to a person with NPD. Celebrities are equipped with fame and power, which feed a narcissist’s ego. While many celebrities forge a balance through grace and humility, there is a significant number who bathe in the spotlight in complete self-indulgence.

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In 2006, Dr. Drew Pinsky and Mark Young conducted a scientific

study with over 200 celebrities using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI). The results showed that celebrities are 17.84% more narcissistic than the general public. It isn't surprising, given that most aspiring celebrities are driven by fame, money, and admiration. What better place for a narcissist to be than in the limelight? It's the equivalent of flipping on the porch light and watching moths come to life!

There are a vast number of celebrities who display many characteristics of narcissism (if not full blown NPD) such as Tom Cruise, Paris Hilton and Kim Kardashian. While many people enter the celebrity arena with pre-existing characteristics of NPD, their egos balloon to extreme levels with every flash of the paparazzi camera, VIP entrance admission, limo service, and autograph request. These things often lead to a sense of entitlement as Reese Witherspoon displayed during her husband's DUI arrest.

Related Link: [Reese Witherspoon and Jim Toth Arrested and Jailed for DUI and Disorderly Conduct](#)

When it comes to the business world, narcissists are generally successful individuals. This is why the political arena and corporate scene is another area with a high concentration of NPD. These individuals generally attract their mates with their charisma, larger-than-life persona and their successful careers. Those with extreme NPD believe that they are the best, and such confidence can certainly be attractive. Narcissists consider themselves special and those who are accepted into their circle *must* be special by default.

Prince Charming

In 2000, I met a charismatic man named Seth who offered me the world on a silver platter. There were times in which I questioned whether our courtship was too good to be true. His parents had been married for 25 years, he was on his way up in

a very promising career and I felt like I was living a fairytale. Seth told me all of the things that I wanted to hear and showered me with poems, flowers, shopping sprees, and vacations. My friends and family stood by in awe as this modern day Prince Charming wooed me and everyone around me. While there were red flags, the good outweighed the bad in the first few years and I swept my concerns under the rug and left them there.

Six years into our marriage, I sat on a therapist's couch and confided in the woman sitting across from me. I told her about Seth's lies and the manipulations which included financial schemes, stealing his parent's retirement savings and racking up 1.6 million dollars in debt – much of this was done behind my back. I described Seth's lack of remorse and his inability to show empathy. I explained that I had never felt so alone and unloved in my life. In a six-year period of time, I had been reduced to a shell of my former self. When I looked in the mirror, I was ashamed of the fake life that we were living. To those around us we were the golden couple, but behind closed doors my life was a living hell.

My therapist walked across the room and handed me a book from her bookshelf. The words seemed to jump off of the page, "Narcissistic Personality Disorder." To my naïve mind, it was thrilling to have a name for the hell that I was living. With a name, there was hope, or so I thought. My therapist went on to explain that NPD is not curable and that, in fact, most mental health professionals will not treat those with this personality disorder. Her next words stung, "You either learn to live with this or you leave. There is no cure."

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I spent the next year and a half trying to block out my therapist's words. However, our marriage finally ended in 2009. In short order, I discovered that the only thing worse than being married to a narcissist is divorcing a narcissist.

I quickly went from a 4,000 square foot luxury home to a local women's shelter. From there, I spent two years fearing for my life, sleeping with a hammer under my pillow and holding a can of mace in my hands as I made scrambled eggs for breakfast. I jumped at every noise. My modern day Prince Charming was actually a modern day Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Part of my healing has come from educating others on the red flags that I chose to ignore in the beginning of our relationship. I have listed them out for you below:

10 Red Flags

1. Excessive charm: Question a person that seems too good to be true. Narcissists are masters at wooing their targets. If you are receiving tickets to your favorite ballet and bouquets of flowers larger than your Christmas tree before the third date, you may be dating a narcissist. Offers to whisk you away to Paris for New Year's Eve are fabulous but could be considered odd behavior if you just met last week and don't know his middle name!

2. Overly confident: A healthy dose of self-esteem is a good thing, but remain cautious if he seems to be the president of his own fan club. In short order, you are likely to become the secretary of that fan club.

3. Haughty: Pay attention to elitist comments and general arrogance toward those who are "beneath" him. Narcissists will often put down co-workers, friends, and even family members. People with NPD are skilled at making you believe that they are superior. If you find yourself in their chosen circle, this attitude can rub off. Being chosen by someone so superior must mean that you too are superior, right? Wrong. That feeling will be short-lived. Trust me.

4. Bragging: Narcissists do not care about your feelings, views, or opinions. Narcissists are generally too obsessed with telling you how great they are to even ask about you.

Their bragging rights carry over to a wide variety of topics including their family, heritage, money, cars, physical appearance, elite gym memberships, clothing and shoes.

5. Grandiosity: Narcissists seem to live by the phrase, "Go big or go home." They like to be seen and known. Grandiosity is often their middle name. A narcissist will pick up an enormous group drink tab or buy everyone in the bar a round of shots. Their motivation is to be showy and to attract attention. These gestures could be easily interpreted as kindness, but this is the furthest thing from the truth. While a narcissist is signing the tab for drinks, he is also scanning the group to take inventory on how he can personally use each person to maintain his inflated self-image.

6. Success: There is a reason why the political and celebrity arenas are brimming over with narcissists. Narcissists are often found in leadership roles where they have free reign to dominate and dazzle those around them. They flourish in big cities where there is less accountability and less risk of developing a reputation that will haunt them.

7. The Band-Aid: Narcissists are professional Band-Aids. They will seek out your weaknesses (abandonment issues, poor self-image, etc.) and will morph themselves into your savior. Whatever voids you have, they will fill. This may sound great, but it will not last. Once you are hooked on them, they will rip off the Band-Aid and leave you bleeding.

8. Hypersensitivity: Fluctuations between extreme confidence and extreme insecurity seem to be a common trait with narcissists. They will often perceive non-existent criticism and will respond by shutting down and sulking, or acting out in a rage. Any interpreted attack or criticism against the narcissist is dealt with in an unhealthy manner. In his mind, you are either with him or against him; there is no gray area.

9. Moving Quickly: Narcissists have a tendency to move at the

speed of light. Has he extended an invitation to meet his parents after the second date? Did he have towels monogrammed with your initials as a gift for your first sleepover? These are red flags. By the way, beware of the monogrammed towels. I haven't found any studies to back my claim but there is something very suspicious about people with their initials sewn into hand towels!

10. Lying: You may initially notice a few white or grey lies. Take stock of these. Expert manipulators are well versed at twisting reality until you find yourself doubting reality.

Anyone in the dating world should be well versed on the red flags of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. Dr. Craig Malkin, author, clinical psychologist and Instructor of Psychology at Harvard Medical School provides a list of five early warning signs to watch for in his recent article in the Huffington Post which discusses narcissism in the dating world. "In real life, the most dangerous villains rarely advertise their malevolence," states Dr. Malkin. This could be why narcissists are commonly known as wolves in sheep's clothing.

Tina Swithin is the author of "Divorcing a Narcissist: One Mom's Battle" and the popular blog, "One Mom's Battle". Tina is a Huffington Post contributor. She is also a contributing writer and expert for HopeAfterDivorce.org and FamilyShare.com, LAFamily.com, and CupidsPulse.com. Tina's writing covers sensitive topics including, how to navigate your way through a high conflict divorce. She is a family and child advocate. Tina is happily married, and resides in sunny California with her two daughters and three-legged tortoise named, Oliver.

Don't Settle: Get Him to Commit



By [David Wygant](#)

How do you get a man to commit? This is the one million dollar question I get asked every single day.

My answer is that first off, you need to make a commitment to yourself because it all starts from knowing and loving who you are. You can't get a man to commit until you've accomplished this and until you've worked through any relationship issues. This includes dealing with all of your past relationships and knowing exactly what makes you happy.

How can you get a man to commit if you don't really know what

makes you happy? The biggest mistake women make is that they don't know what they want from a relationship. They don't understand their own needs and desires. So ask yourself, what are your needs, wants, and desires?

Related Link: [What Does Unconditional Love Look Like?](#)

One of the biggest questions that I help women answer during my seminars is how do you want to be loved? You really need to think about this question. Take a moment right now and write down exactly how you want to be loved. What would it feel like to be with your perfect man? How do you want to be touched? How do you want to be held? How do you want to be listened to? What's the sex like? Write down every single detail about how you want this relationship to feel in your heart, because that's the key to understanding what type of man you want.

If you don't figure this out first then you're going to end up trying to get the wrong man to commit to you because you'll be dating men based on potential. Let me tell you, this is a huge mistake women make and they do it all the time. They think he's going to be more loving when he stops working or that he's going to be more attentive when he has less stress. Forget the excuses, forget what it will be like after. You need to know how you want to feel right now because that's the most important thing in the world.

Related Link: [How Not to Scare a New Man Away](#)

So, how do you get the right guy to commit once you know these things? You satisfy his needs, wants, and desires. You find out exactly how he wants to be loved. What's important to him? How does he like to be talked to? What's important to him sexually? What's important to him mentally? What's important to him emotionally? Then, you ask yourself can you meet those needs? Can you actually look this man right in the eyes and know that you can fulfill him and every desire he has?

A man commits to a woman when that woman fulfills his

needs. One of the key things is that you need to love somebody the way they want to be loved and not the way you want to be loved. True love is allowing yourself to step outside of your boundaries. To step outside of your comfort zone and not be afraid to love them based on their needs, wants, and desires.

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

As a man, I have no problem committing to a woman that will satisfy my needs, wants, and desires, because that's what I want to do for her and she should expect it from me. That's how simple this whole thing can be. That's how easy it is. That is how you meet each other's needs, with an open heart.

You'll know when a guy doesn't want to settle down with you if he's not trying to satisfy you on all levels and if you're constantly battling him to love you the way you want. Listen, relationships should be easy and fulfilling. You shouldn't settle for a boyfriend that gives you anything less. After all, why would you? The next time you're in a relationship if he's not satisfying you then he obviously doesn't want the same things as you. Maybe he's not ready to be in a committed, healthy, loving relationship. And if he isn't, why waste your time with him?

You deserve that healthy, committed, loving relationship that's going to make your heart pound; a relationship that's going to satisfy you; and above all a relationship that's going to make you feel complete.

David Wygant is a dating coach and author of Always Talk to Strangers and Naked. For more relationship advice you can follow him on Twitter @DavidWygant, facebook.com/therealdavidwygant, or check out his website <http://www.davidwygant.com/>

Bachelorette 9, Episode 3: Dangerous Dodgeball Date



By [Jared Sais](#)

They called it right in the trailers when they said “drama” was about to go down on last night’s episode of ‘[The Bachelorette](#)’! There were dangerous games of dodgeball and one mad ex-girlfriend who came out of the woodwork.

Desiree has quite a cast of men vying for her attention. All of these guys were flexing and puffing their chests out, showing nonverbal portrayals of dominance.

Guys usually do this when they see a girl they like; men will

take up more space to show how big and strong they are to impress the girl in question. It's right out of the rules of animal kingdom, and not much different than gorillas beating their chests.

Related Link: [Bachelorette 9, Episode 1: The Animal Kingdom](#)

Brooks

When Brooks injured himself while playing dodgeball he held Des's hand and she did a comforting rub both on his hand and back. The tone and pitch of her voice changed and you could tell that she really cared. She also toasted Brooks while all the other guys were surrounding her. He remained on her mind and at the end of the night, the kiss between them was full of romance and passion.

Body Language of Chris and Des

There was a lot of leaning in happening with Chris and Des and the two weren't shy about caressing each other. This is one of the easiest ways to identify if someone likes you or not. They also rested their heads on one other which is a big tell of how comfortable they feel together. I am very comfortable with moving Chris into my top 5. Although I am not sure I would put him over Brooks. As of right now, I am still predicting a Brooks win and Chris in 2nd place.

Brian's Ex-Girlfriend

During the whole Brian's ex-girlfriend fiasco I started asking myself if Des was truly upset? I have to say it was a bit staged and I am sure she got the news before going on camera. Des had responses that appeared forced and she did more acting than naturally caring about what was happening. Des also had pinched lips which is a tell-tale sign that she was angry about the situation, but I don't think she was all that into Brian anyway. She acted angry but my guess is that she was

probably feeling more awkward.

Tears were not real from Brian's ex-girlfriend and though she was screaming a lot I didn't see much anger. I think Brian was guilty of something but not everything. Did Brian sleep with his ex before he left for the show? Yes, but they truly could have been broken up before the show started. You could actually see Brian's ex-girlfriend smile as she got back in the limo. I think she was purposely trying to get Brian kicked off the show. I also want to point out her facial expressions didn't even show 50% sadness nor anger. When trying to portray sadness the inner corners of her eyebrows barely rose up and though her voice seemed sad there were no tears or dimples in her chin. As for anger, she was good at screaming but other than that she only had a hint of glaring eyes, which are a telltale for anger. There were a lot of facial expressions that were lacking, maybe she had Botox before coming on the show. The full story was not told and I know Brian was telling the truth about his feelings not being there for his ex-girlfriend.

Casey

I think Casey and Des are better friends than lovers. I didn't really see crazy romance. Not to mention that although they shared a crazy experience together, their date never really did heat up due to the Hurricane that was taking form when they were on top of the roof.

Related Link: [Bachelorette 9, Episode 2: Quote Me Now](#)

The one-on-one with Juan

Who Juan? Juan Pablo won. Well he won the contest but I didn't see any nonverbal cues that told me they were so romantically crazy about each other. Their date was cute but not steamy. Des never dropped her hand full of popcorn as they kissed. Either their kiss was not the kiss of a soulmate or that popcorn was unbelievably amazing.

On to Bryden

Des stated that he is “reserved” and “doesn’t make the first move.” Bryden reserved? Doesn’t make the first move? Hmmm hmmm please tell me more about how he’s in this to win Des’s heart. This guy is definitely seeing someone at home or is not feeling Des. When he stated, “When we kiss it’s awesome,” he closes his eyes and actually shakes his head no. This tells me it’s not as awesome as he wants to portray. He also does a shoulder shrug which is usually a nonverbal tell of a lie.

Ben and his evolving game

Ben took the words right from my post that I wrote last week. I stated he would have to stop playing the single dad card and play a different game to show he’s a bachelor and fun, just as he did this week. I guess I know just as much about the game of dating, as I know about reading people’s body language, micro expressions, and lie deception.

So lets recap the big news of this week. Chris will definitely be in the top 5, I have him going number two overall, maybe number three if Drew picks up his game. So far three guys made it into my top 5: Brooks, Chris, and Drew. With two spots left we will see within the next week or two who fills the full list of top 5 bachelors.

Let me know your thoughts on what men you like so far and who you think will be Desiree’s future husband.

Q&A: Should I Let My

Girlfriend Look at My Phone?



Question from Colin B.: *I'm very territorial about my property and am very particular about the fact that no one looks at texts and e-mails on my phone, including my girlfriend. She and I just got into a fight over this issue, and she's calling me paranoid. Am I taking my privacy too far?*

Answers from Our Love Experts:

Tristan Coopersmith, Love Stylist: There is a big difference between giving your girlfriend carte blanche access to your personal belongings and her snooping. Snooping undermines trust, while giving access builds it. By being territorial, you're telling your girlfriend you have something to hide and don't trust her – and these two things are not good foundational elements to a healthy relationship.

So ask yourself: do you have something to hide? And do you distrust her? If you answer yes to one or both questions, this relationship needs help. If you answered no to both, then I recommend working on your own issues of vulnerability, which you are calling territorialism, so that you can create space in your relationship for trust and true connection to blossom. Good luck!

[Suzanne Oshima, Matchmaker](#): No one should ever go through their significant other's phone without asking them first. It's just a matter of respecting each other's privacy. If your girlfriend is snooping through your phone because she doesn't trust you, then that's a sign you have an unhealthy relationship.

Now, that being said, I would question why you're making such a big deal about it. If you would prefer she not touch your phone, then just explain it to her. Don't get into a huge fight over something so trivial. Blowing it out of proportion like you have only makes her think you're hiding something.

Paige Wyatt, Reality Star: You are not taking your privacy too far. It's important to have some boundaries and it's also important to be sure that you two have your own lives. If you don't, your relationship could suffer. Keeping your phone private is not being paranoid, it's just you keeping your space. Your girlfriend may not understand this so she's most likely thinking there's something sketchy going on and unless you've given her reason to feel this way, it's something she is going to have to figure out how to deal with. Help her if you can, but don't give in, it will set a bad precedent.

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

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

Tell us: Are you paranoid about people looking at your phone?

Why or why not?

QuickieChick Video Dating Tips: 'Bachelorette'-Based Ways to Make a Great First Impression



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

In this week's [dating advice](#) video, dating expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, Laurel House says to get

real and get raw.

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

We all know that making a great first impression is essential for carrying on a successful relationship. ABC's *The Bachelorette* is proof of this idea as we saw on last week's season premiere. Men were either given roses or sent home based on their actions during the first evening. So how do you make a memorable impression when you meet someone? Be vulnerable. Be honest. And most importantly, be yourself.

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

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

How do you make a good first impression on someone new? Tell us in the comments below.

Bachelorette 9, Episode 2: Quote Me Now





By [Jared Sais](#)

The episode last night was very insightful. Before you read this post and the non-verbal communication cues that I saw on last night's episode, I want to clarify that I am a fan of Desiree! I know it may not seem that way given what I am observing, but I am just calling it what it is from my years of training in body language. Please note, that I like Desiree a lot! My head is shaking "yes" and my hands and feet are NOT crossed! So on to the analysis:

Last night, I focused on three specific competitors as I was watching the show, these were the guys that caught my attention when it came to reading their physical cues. I think you would agree:

Ben

If you read my first post, I was a bit iffy on Ben using his kid to get an advantage with Desiree. Though brilliant, I thought it was sneaky when it came to playing this dating game. It appears that my first impression was correct! I am

not saying that Ben is a bad guy. What I'm saying is that he's sneaky. I feel that he's looking at this as a competition and game. He might be genuine when it comes to winning Desiree's heart but, in doing so, he will play all angles and win at any cost.

One thing is for sure, he will need to change up his approach soon. This means that he can't use his kid anymore. "Why," you may ask am I saying that? Well, though Ben's kid came to the rescue again in this episode, I noticed that Desiree pulled back a bit. Desiree showed signs that she was open to the idea that he had a kid but pulling out this card every time is going to hurt him.

It's simple, "If I say 'yes' but I shake my head 'no,' this should send a signal to you that I am not being honest, as my body is contradicting my words." When Desiree said, "I am very open" –referring to the idea of Ben having a child–her body language was very closed off. Her hands, though under a blanket, were interlocked and her body was pulled in tight. Though Desiree is always cold, I have studied her body language enough to determine when she's cold vs. when she is defensive and not open to the situation. I know for a fact that if Ben keeps talking more about his kid, Desiree will soon find issue with it. Right now it's cute, but soon reality will sink in and Desiree will be turned off. For Ben to make it to my top 5, he has to make himself a bachelor and move away from being labeled as the single father.

Related: [Bachelorette 9, Episode 1: The Animal Kingdom](#)

Additionally, Desiree said about Ben's son, "he is your love and your joy." Then she pinched her lips, which usually is a sign of anger or disapproval. She also disconnected her eye contact, meaning she lost some interest in what he was saying on the topic. Finally, she rolled her eyes. All of this equals anger or jealousy. Her nonverbal language stated that she wants to be the love, the joy of the man she chooses to be

with for the rest of her life. She wants to be the center of attention, not number two. And for a young girl, I think that's more than fair. Right now, Desiree hasn't come to grasp the reality surrounding the responsibility of entering a relationship with a man that she won't really get to know as well as she should when marrying someone with a child. Not to mention that she will have to be the stepmom of his child which creates a lot of added responsibility. This is probably more than she bargained for initially. Ben knows that he is playing a different ball game and it is most likely why he is playing dirty and pulling out all the stops to keep this reality from Desiree.

Desiree will eliminate Ben but it won't be for another few episodes.

Bryden

From ever lasting smiles to their double arm hold, you might think he's your pick to be Desiree's husband! But, I noticed that he wasn't fully enjoying himself. He was a bit disconnected at times and not willing to commit. In fact, the big nonverbal cue that gave me the impression he was not feeling Desiree (and I will go as far as saying he might have a girlfriend back at home) was during the pool scene. Bryden's arm was relaxing on the side of the pool as his forearm came right in-between him and Desiree, he was creating space and putting up a barrier. What probably seemed to come off as shy, came off to me as defensive and pulling back. Bryden seemed to show contempt when speaking to Desiree, telling me he wasn't feeling it as much as he was trying to portray. Also, he showed a lot of fake smiles, meaning he would smile only with half of his face, usually the mouth region.

From my past articles, I have written about the difference between a genuine smile and a fake smile, but an easy way to know the difference between the two is by thinking of a forced smile when taking a picture. You smile with only your mouth,

but when you really find something funny or are really happy, you smile with your entire face, mouth, cheeks and eyes. So when Bryden was only smiling with his mouth, I knew he was faking this emotion. Finally, I think Desiree likes him more than he likes her. I am looking forward to seeing how this plays out, all I know is that he is not into her as of now. Feelings can change and you can start to like someone more as time goes on but I just don't think this is the case with him. I just don't see him going to the end.

Related: [Desiree Hartsock is the New 'Bachelorette!'](#)

Brooks

The second guy that I am picking for my top 5 is Brooks! My first was Drew. I think both of them will easily make it to the hometown episodes, though I don't have the other picks just yet. Let's talk about Brooks...

There were long looks of passion and genuine smiles. Both were sincerely laughing and having so much fun. What really popped out to me was the double kiss. That's something people who have been in relationships for a long time tend to do, not something you see on a first date. This was a very telling sign to me, as it should be to anyone reading this column.

If Brooks is just himself and the genuine, caring man he has portrayed to be so far, he will be Desiree's husband. I know this is a wild prediction as it is so early in the season but they held each other like they were soulmates and looked into each others eyes like they never wanted to look anywhere else. They danced the same way and the vibe was totally different with them than anyone else so far. Yes, I know, "so far," but I have been studying flirtation for about a decade now and I know when something is real, and this was 100% real and passionate and, most importantly, telling. They showed their hands and I am sure Brooks will be in the top 5 if not her husband by the end of the show.

Here is a side nonverbal fun fact on tonight's episode. When Desiree was "lost" driving, I knew she wasn't really scared or lost. The nonverbal micro expression of being scared includes:

- eyebrows raise
- eyes widened
- lips stretch back towards the ears

Desiree did a micro expression of fear in episode one when interacting with the guy who kept wanting to take her to the room alone. So, When I didn't see any of these signals of her being scared, I knew she knew exactly what she was doing and where she was going.

Let me know your thoughts, on what men you like so far and who you think will be Desiree's future husband.

Celebrity News: Should We Be Worried About Ben and Jen's Marriage?





By Jared Sais

It all started during the Oscars when Ben Affleck stated his marriage to Jennifer Garner was “work.” He recently hosted *Saturday Night Live* (SNL) and addressed his choice of words in his monologue. So after analyzing both speeches, there’s something you all must know. There is no better place to start than by looking at the couple’s non-verbal cues at the Oscars.

Jen appeared to be genuinely touched and demonstrated loving support for her husband. Before he even spoke, the actress was already showing signs of joyful tears, the same emotion you would see at a wedding. These feelings get even stronger when Ben starts to speak about her.

First, her inner eyebrows are raised, indicating that she was very emotional. When her inner eyebrows are raised, you also see wrinkling on her forehead. This cue is just a side effect of her raised inner eyebrows, but it helps to indicate that she’s truly feeling this emotion since deep wrinkles are hard to fake. Finally, she shows the trifecta of strong emotional feelings as her chin dimples and bulges.

You may think these three non-verbal cues indicate sadness, but don't be fooled! Jen was extremely happy and proud of Ben. In addition to the cues above, she showed the following cues of joyfulness: smiling with the addition of dimples and crow's feet (wrinkling at the corner of her eyes). Crow's feet is a powerful cue used to identify a sincere smile versus a fake smile, which only happens near the mouth. A true smile includes the mouth, cheeks and eyes – everything that Jen was showing.

Of course, we all want to know what Jen was thinking when Ben started talking about their relationship being "work." She showed three notable non-verbal cues. First, she tilted her head to the side, which indicated that she was wondering a bit about where Ben was going with his speech. She was surprised but not offended by what he said.

She also sat up straight and slightly tilted her chin upwards, indicating that she was curious about what Ben was saying and perhaps getting a bit uncomfortable. You may have thought the Oscar winner was digging himself in a hole with his comments, but his wife didn't show any signs of anger. Instead, she appeared to just be pondering what he said.

Finally, Jen did a shoulder shrug when Ben said, "It's a lot of work, but it's the best kind of work." This shrug demonstrates complete agreement. She knows he's speaking the truth and saying it with all the [love](#) in the world. Relationships do require a bit of work, especially in the hectic celebrity world.

Related Link: [What We Can Learn from "the Work" Celeb Couples Do](#)

Now, let's move on to Ben's non-verbal cues during his Oscar speech. First, you will see Ben do a double-take (look twice at Jen or at least in her direction), as if he was almost reminded to thank her in his speech. In this case, the

spontaneous nature actually made his speech more from the heart rather than prepared or scripted.

When Ben mentions her name, his voice cracks slightly. As we all know, when we are very emotional, our voices will sometimes crack. Usually, it's in an effort to hold back further emotions like tears. We will see this happen again at the end of his speech when he thanks his kids.

One other thing worth mentioning is that Ben has open arms when he says, "There's no one I rather work with." This motion tells me that he truly means what he says. Open arms when talking is a clear sign of trustworthiness. We might not think of work meaning love, but for this celebrity couple, "work" means just that.

SNL is where we see that everything is okay between the twosome. Before Ben brings Jen out, he speaks about the public and media misunderstanding his statement that their marriage is work (around 2:00). When Ben says, "That's just not it," he also starts to shake his head no. His non-verbal cues are reinforcing his words, a clear sign that he's telling the truth. So I can immediately confirm that he didn't mean anything but love for Jen in his speech.

When his wife comes on stage (about 2:30), both of them show strong eye contact right from the beginning – a primary sign of intimacy and romantic chemistry. If they weren't so connected, Ben would have been more involved with the audience. Instead, they both light up when they see each other. It almost seems like they're distracted by one another's presence – a sure sign of true love, especially when on television. When the duo hugs and kisses hello, Ben's right hand moves to Jen's lower back as he rubs her. People who are very attracted to each other usually show it by touching the lower back, and rubbing is a very [intimate](#) and comforting non-verbal gesture.

Related Link: [Ben Affleck Says Wife Jennifer Garner is "More](#)

Perfect Than I Am"

Jen returns the affection but putting her right hand on Ben's chest, which is also a very loving gesture that reveals an intimate relationship. Her left hand goes to Ben's lower back as well. Throughout all of these hand movements, they are maintaining eye contact and smiling very proudly and sincerely at each other.

The most important non-verbal cue of all occurs when you see Jen almost fall. This misstep happens because she is so secure with Ben that she puts all her weight on him. Once Ben moves, she has to regain her balance because she was using Ben as her pillar, something that only happens when you truly trust and love someone.

When they say goodbye to each other (about 4:00), the SNL host pulls his wife closer and whispers something along the lines of "I love you very much" in her ear. We see Jen's eyes roll towards Ben to give him her full attention. She then shows a real smile and says "I love you too" before she walks off stage.

So the only thing between Jen and Ben is love and lust. Yes, there is work involved in maintaining a long-term relationship or a healthy marriage, but it's similar work to a stay-at-home mother or father. It's hard work, but it's work we put in to make something special last.

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.

Relationship Advice: Must We Remain Friends With Our Ex-Husband?



By Nancy Lang for Hope After Divorce

The Universe can have a very ironic sense of humor. I recently had an altercation via e-mail with my ex-husband (about money, of course), and all of my old buttons were not only pushed, but they got stuck in “I’m hurt, I’m not respected, I’m not appreciated, I’m pissed, and I hate you!” mode. For two days, I stewed and chewed on the not-so-pretty file in my memory drive, as I was reminded of the many reasons why we got divorced. Several days later, funny enough, I find myself with the opportunity to write about maintaining a friendship with one’s ex-husband.

In recent news, Denise Richards (perhaps we should call her Mother Denise?) has raised the bar for all ex-wives: she offered to have temporary custody of her ex-husband's (Charlie Sheen) kids from his last marriage to Brooke Mueller (his third ex-wife), who is in rehab for the twentieth time. This arrangement has been approved by L.A. County Juvenile Court.

Related Link: [Making Sure You Do What's Best for the Kids](#)

Clearly, Richards has put the needs of these children before anything else. They are, after all, half-siblings to her children with Sheen. She is providing them with a more stable environment than either of their parents can provide. I'm guessing she would open her heart and home to them even if she and Sheen weren't getting along. So, while it's great that they are able to co-exist or even co-parent, whether everything remains copasetic or not, the priority is the well-being of the children.

Is it possible to remain friends with your ex-husband? This depends on the reasons for the split and the level of hostility. There are also other things to consider:

- If you don't have kids, and you think friendship is possible, first give yourself some time to move on and adjust to who you are as a single person.
- There is a difference between being buds and maintaining a good relationship. If there are children involved, you will always be connected to your ex, so it's best to at least get along. Kids hate when there is tension between Mom and Dad.
- If regular communication would bring up old hurts, then keep it peaceful and keep interaction to a minimum.
- If you can't be friendly, try not to bash your ex to your children, no matter their age. I made the mistake of saying my ex was a short name for Richard. Not my best mommy moment.

Related Link: [The EX Word](#)

Yes, the Universe works in mysterious ways. Many years ago, when I was beginning my acting career in Los Angeles, I was an extra in a movie starring Martin Sheen. He played a man with a wife (Blythe Danner) and kids, who discovers he fathered a child from an affair. The mother of this child dies, so his wife, understanding of the circumstances, suggests they take the child into their home.

Six degrees of Charlie Sheen. We come full circle. Thank you, Universe, for the laugh and the lesson!

✘ *Nancy Lang is a Certified Life Coach, published author, professional actress and M.D. (Maven of Dating!). It was her role in life as a divorced woman that inspired her to write the book, You Want Me to What?!—The Dating Adventures and Life Lessons of a Newly Divorced Woman (available on Amazon) and www.you-want-me-to-what.com. She was co-writer and co-star of the original musical sketch comedy, Shtick Happens! which played to crowds from West Hollywood to Minneapolis. Nancy is on a mission to empower women.*

Nancy writes for HopeAfterDivorce.org, FamilyShare.com, LAFamily.com, CupidsPulse.com, Huffington Post, Life After 50 Magazine, and many other publications. To read more about Nancy's adventures, her poignant and humorous view on life's lessons, visit her Nancytellsall.com and [Facebook](#). Nancy is the mother of two amazing young adult children.

Bachelorette 9, Episode 1:

The Animal Kingdom



By [Jared Sais](#)

You may remember my recaps from season 17 of [The Bachelor](#) with Sean Lowe. Well, I'm back to analyze Desiree Hartsock and her suitors on season 9 of *The Bachelorette*. To get ready for last night's premiere, I brushed up on my notes from last season and examined Desiree's past non-verbal cues (her baseline) to help me determine what man will be the last one standing. Join me for another amazing, shocking and addictive season of [The Bachelorette](#)!

First, let's take a look at the men worth talking about.

When Desiree first met **Drew**, her eyes widened; she smiled from mouth to eyes; and she even did a little "mmm" sound when he

walked inside. The attraction is there, but will he be a winning personality? I would say that, with his dashing smile, he'll be around for a while.

Tone and pitch are two of the most important ways to tell if someone is attracted to someone else, and when **Robert** started to speak to the lovely bachelorette, his voice went lower, and her voice shot up. These two definitely have chemistry. Another non-verbal cue was Desiree widening her eyes. When someone likes what they see, their eyes widened to let more light in.

Related Link: [Desiree Hartsock Is the New 'Bachelorette!'](#)

I can't decide what I think about Ben bringing his son with him, but I know one thing for sure: Desiree was melting. Her inner eyebrows rose; her eyes got a bit wet; her lips puckered; and her head did a side tilt. These are four non-verbal cues that signify the "aww" reaction. After she showed these quick facial expressions, I knew that all Desiree wanted to do was hug Ben and his little boy. *She* even asked for a hug, whereas the first 24 guys went in for the hug. Desiree was eager to find similarities during her one-on-one time with Ben, and once she did, he got the first rose. He definitely has some tough competition though.

And then there was "ab man." Desiree was attracted to Zak W., which was his saving grace because it's a risky move to make a first impression like that. So why didn't he wear a shirt? Because it's like *Animal House*. Some guys are peacocks and dress up to showcase themselves, while other men are bulls and clash it out.

I think Juan Pablo is the most interesting man in the world. The only thing he's missing is a Dos Equis, but he made up for that with what he first said to Desiree, "Who's Juan? Juan Pablo." Yeah, he has a catch phrase. Very smooth. He also has a relaxing way of speaking; his voice is soft, slow and

charming. It's not always what you say but how you say it, and whatever that guys says sounds good. There will be plenty of non-verbal information on him to come, but sadly, his time was cut short due to a random soccer game. Of course, a competition broke out to prove to Desiree that they could kick a ball well. Very animalistic, right?

Now, let's take a look at the men who will make an early exit. Knights, magicians and bad dancers – oh my! What the heck was going on? #youarenotgettingarose

Will won't stick around for long, but I'll take a high five on the way out.

Related Link: [Who Is Your #PerfectBachelor? Tell Us and Enter to Win a Pair of Brilliance Diamond Earrings!](#)

As for **Jonathan**, I have no words other than wow. He has no game and no class. During their time together, the brunette bachelorette showed extreme non-verbal cues of fear and stress: the corners of her mouth stretched straight back to the ears; her eyes widened; and her eyebrows raised. She showed these micro-expression a lot and was also very defensive around him, tightening her body and pulling herself a way from him.

When you're in extreme stress, your body goes into alert mode as you try to put space between you and the stressful object or person. Desiree put her hands in front of her as he was leading her away. In other situations, people may do the following non-verbal signs: arms folded across their chest, leaning away to create space, hands clutched in front of themselves and/or an object (like a purse or glass) held directly in front of themselves. Given Desiree's response to Jonathan, I knew he would be eliminated.

Diogo came out in a full suit of armor, which is worse then coming out in a wedding dress. Need I say more?

And finally, there was Larry, who reminded me of Superman: bad dancer by day (with his glasses on) and superhero doctor by night (with his glasses off). If you also want to see a great expression of awkwardness/fear, take a look at their introduction scene: Larry rips Desiree's dress while teaching her a dance move, and then he curses as he walks into the house. The camera pans to a quick shot of Des, and you see the corners of her lips pulled back to ears and her eyes widened as they roll down. *That is a fearful, awkward look.*

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.

Celebrity Relationships: Why Celebrities Prolong Their Engagements & Hide Their Wedding Plans





By Lori Zaslow and Jennifer Zucher, founders of Project Soulmate

It's no surprise that famous faces from Hollywood are pressured by their intense jobs and hectic schedules. The spotlight is always on them, but they don't want the same burden in their personal life. So how can they keep their romantic relationships out of the prying public eye?

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

One way to feel in control is by prolonging their engagement, which ultimately adds time to the courtship phase of a relationship. After all, what's the rush? For example, Miley Cyrus wants to focus on her career instead. She's young, and it's important that she accomplishes her goals first so that she can truly enjoy the engagement phase. Similarly, Kristin Cavallari, who's currently planning a July wedding, has been engaged to Jay Cutler since 2011, but they decided to focus on raising their son Camden before tying the knot.

Your relationship is supposed to be one of the most sacred parts of your life – which is why many celebrities also hide their [wedding](#) plans from the press. For instance, Jay-Z and Beyoncé tied the knot in 2008 in a top-secret ceremony that Beyoncé didn't speak about for six months after the fact! Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel's wedding guests didn't even know the location of the event until right before the big day. Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied as well as Anne Hathaway and Adam Shulman are two more examples of celebrity couples who planned secret ceremonies.

Related Link: [Justin Timberlake Refers to Wedding Day as “Magical”](#)

Of course, there are a few perks of a longer engagement, like lots of engagement gifts and more attention from friends and family. The only downfall to a longer engagement is...will they ever make it down the aisle?

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

QuickieChick's Video Dating Tips: Have You Been Cheated On?





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

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

Once a cheater, always a cheater – fine. But can you cause your boyfriend or girlfriend to cheat? Yes, you can! In this week's [dating advice](#) video, relationship expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, Laurel House talks about how to drive your partner into someone else's arms – and what you can do to avoid it. The dating expert believes that confidence is key to keep your partner from straying. Don't let your insecurities rule your relationship by focusing on everything that's wrong with you or your partnership; instead, let your confidence be your guide and always have fun with your love. Make them feel lucky to be with you! Watch for more great tips to keep your relationship a happy one and ensure that your significant other remains faithful.

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

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

How do you keep your partner from cheating? Share your tips with us below.

Relationship Advice from Justin and Selena: Should You Get Back with Your Ex?



By Marni Battista

In recent years, Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez have had quite the whirlwind romance. The two pop stars were in a much-talked-about long-term relationship before they broke up and have subsequently reunited multiple times...although as of publication, their relationship status could easily have changed again. One thing we do know: breaking up and getting back together multiple times is mostly a good indicator that you should NOT get back together. So should *you* get back with your ex?

There's no simple black-and-white answer. The answer will differ for each person and each situation. For example, if you ask your mom, she'll have a bevy of "solid" advice based on her experiences. Your sister will issue forth another set of breakup rules she created during her formative relationship experiences. Perhaps one best friend says "forget him," while the other, who just reconciled successfully with her ex, urges you to take it slow and give it a try.

If you're considering taking your ex back (and it isn't the fifth time around like Justin and Selena), what do you need to know first? Here are five things Dating with Dignity advises that you think about before you get back together with your ex.

Related Link: [Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez Confirm Rumors That They're Back Together!](#)

1. Why do you want to get back together? Is it because you're lonely? If you feel as if you'd literally be in a relationship with ANYONE – including the Starbucks barista – because you're missing a warm body next to your's each night (and he's not half bad-looking), you might need to reevaluate getting back together with your ex. However, reasons such as "I don't think we gave it a good enough shot" or "We've both been doing a lot of internal work, and I actually think it will be healthier and more fulfilling if we try again" are both good reasons to

give it another go.

If you need to think about it, take at least a few hours and really make sure you're getting to the core of why you want to try again. Our best advice is don't respond to his text, email or call immediately. Let it soak in. Consider all the options and **then** form a responsive (rather than reactive), solid reply to his request.

2. Why did you break up? If any of the reasons for breaking up include addiction, behavior dysfunction, physical or emotional abuse or cheating, the answer is always going to be a clear-cut no. According to most addiction specialists, a person must be sober at least one full year before engaging in a relationship. That said, make sure the timing is right if the reason you broke up involved any form of addiction.

However, if it was a reason such as one of you wasn't fully out of a prior relationship or one of you needed to focus on some "loving myself" time to really be ready for a relationship, a redo could be a good idea to consider.

3. Is the issue something that's consistent or a one-time event? If cheating was the reason you broke up but it was an isolated incident, getting back together can be put on the table. However, if it was consistent cheating or a repetitive cycle of adultery or being disrespectful, the chances your relationship will be successful the second time around are very low. One-time events can be something that each individual can work on over time, but it still absolutely needs to be addressed.

Related Link: [Lessons We Can Learn from Queen of Heartbreak, Taylor Swift](#)

4. How has your life changed since the split? Evaluate your current lifestyle. Has it improved since your breakup? If yes, it's probably a good idea to steer clear of your ex. Perhaps you just didn't feel as good about yourself when you were with

him, or your health wasn't a priority because you were so focused on the relationship. In that case, don't even think about it.

But if you feel like giving it another try could improve your quality of life, it may be worth reaching out or responding to him if he's been attempting to contact you. The reason to get back into a relationship isn't because you feel like you need him to be complete or happy. Instead, make sure you're coming from a place of "wanting" the relationship to enhance an already fulfilling and sweet life.

5. Let him show you, not tell you. Is your ex starting to show up repeatedly? Can you see the changes in his life? Did he finalize his divorce or get a new job? Has his demeanor changed? Are your interactions different? Does it really seem as though he's worked on the shortcomings that led to the end of your relationship? Words are great, but actions are everything. So if you can see notable changes in someone, it can be a great indicator of a high chance of success in your "new relationship."

Remember, if you get back together with an ex, you must start over. The time you spent apart allows you a clean break for you to begin to date again. Don't rush into anything and don't try to pick up where you left off. Have realistic expectations and pace the relationship just as you would with a brand new suitor. Hopping into bed with your ex right away and assuming you'll be back to exactly how you were before is a great way NOT to be successful in trying again. Collect data, have fun, make sure to keep your non-negotiables in place, and make sure you keep your three c's top of mind: compatibility, chemistry and communication!

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. You can contact Marni at marni@datingwithdignity.com.

Relationship Advice: The EX Word



By Monique Honaman for Hope After Divorce

I recall speaking to a divorce support group a few years ago. Whenever someone referenced their EX-husband or EX-wife, each person was careful to use the phrase “my former husband” or “my former wife.” This wasn’t just something that one person used but rather everyone in the group. I thought it was interesting. After all, using the term “EX-husband” seems pretty common. When I asked what this was all about, I was informed that they believed that EX- implied a negative connotation, and they preferred to approach the word a bit

more positively. OK! To each his and her own!

But I would like to stand up for EX- words and suggest that there are a number of EX-traordinary EX-words that should be fully embraced post-divorce. One can wallow in EX-cuses and get stuck in the EX-crement of what they just went through, or one can focus EX-clusively on moving forward and on the EX-citement and EX-cesses that this new life will bring!

Related Link: [How to Get Financially Stable After Divorce](#)

Whether your divorce was your idea or not, it is now a part of your story and part of the journey that defines your life. Someone made an EX-it, which EX-empted you from EX-tending your commitment to your marriage. I speak with countless people who are stuck in the EX-istence of “what was” as opposed to eagerly anticipating the EX-pectation “what will be.” One of my favorite quotes that got me through my divorce was, “I can’t control what happens to me. I can only control how I react to it.” I love it when I encounter others who hold a similar attitude. No one is EX-empt from divorce. To those who say, “It will never happen to me” (like I did), you may find yourself in shock one day. Divorce EX-tends to all corners of our society and EX-cludes no one.

(I’m having fun writing this piece, so EX-cuse me while I keep going!)

To those people who are stuck EX-aming their unplanned lives collapsing around them, I say this: No EX-cuses! Inhale, then EX-hale. Now, pick up the pieces and become an EX-ample of how to move forward successfully after hitting a bump in the road. No one can do this EX-cept for you. Let the world EX-plode around you with new opportunities. EX-press your emotions. Don’t let your ability to love or to be loved go EX-tinct.

Having a failed marriage and becoming a divorcee at age 40 was not part of my EX-pectation for my life. That being said, it

did become my EX-istence and part of my story. I was one of those people who opted for life to go on positively. I met an EX-traordinary man. I am EX-tremely grateful that he came into my life and the lives of my kids. It's nice to be confident in the EX-clusivity of our marriage. We have a common passion and bond around our EX-tra-curricular activities and have EX-plored the world together. We have EX-panded each other's horizons. I feel EX-alted and respected by him, and in EX-change, I try to honor him in the same way. The bottom line is that this relationship and marriage EX-ceeds anything I ever imagined before.

Related Link: [How to Make Sure Your Divorce is Amicable, Fair and Fast](#)

Mae West said, *"All discarded lovers should be given a second chance, but with somebody else."* EX-actly!! My point is this: whether you call someone your EX- or your former-, make peace with that part of your past and move forward. Take advantage of your second chance, and make it EX-traordinary. I think I've EX-acerbated my point. There are some fabulous EX- words. Use them. Live them. Celebrate them. Just think: what a great way to celebrate getting rid of one EX by introducing several new and more powerful ones!

By the way, I also met a woman once who didn't use the term "EX-husband" or "former husband." Instead, she had me laughing when she started taking about her "wasband." I thought I misunderstood. Then she clarified and EX-claimed, "The man who **was** my husband is now lovingly referred to as my 'wasband.'" Love it! I thought that was EX-tremely clever.

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 www.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.

Dating Advice: How To Decode Your Man's Texting Habits



By David Wygant

What does it mean when a guy waits a while to text you back? What if he gives you a short answer to a long question? How can you tell if he's bored and only texting you because he wants something to do? These are questions that most women

have asked at one time or another.

So here are a couple of pointers to decode man-talk in texting. These answers are a simple guideline to help you understand the way that men think and communicate.

Related Link: [How to Understand Man-Talk](#)

If a guy waits forever to reply back, he's playing games. He's basically a guy who's pretending to be busy, pretending to have other things to do, and he's making you wait, thinking that's a way to increase your attraction to him. He's the type of guy who thinks that you're going to want him more if he creates a false sense of busyness.

Texting is pretty simple. Most of the time a quick response – something like, “Hey, I'm busy right now and can't really talk” – is far greater than making somebody wait all day.

If a guy gives you a response that's short and sweet but doesn't really answer your question, he isn't paying attention to who you are and what you're about. He's too caught up in himself.

Or maybe you're texting him at the wrong time or he just doesn't like to communicate via texting. That's not such a bad thing. It's okay to confront him and find out his preferred communication style. We've become lazy as a society: sure, texting is quick and easy, but it's not the only way to stay in touch.

Related Link: [The Real Reason He Didn't Call You Back](#)

But how can you tell if a guy's interested? Not only should he text you back in a timely manner, but he should also make plans to see you soon. A guy who texts back and forth but never asks you out is someone who just likes the attention. He's not interested in you as a lover; he's only interested in you as a text buddy.

So if you text a guy on and off for more than three days and he doesn't ask you out on a date, then you need to stop the texting madness and realize he's just not that into you.

Texting is fun, but it doesn't substitute real conversation. Keep the texts short and simple, and make an effort to learn someone's texting style. When you do those two things, you won't be freaking out, showing the text to your girlfriends, trying to interpret it. Just pick up the phone and call him. Otherwise, there's going to be a big miscommunication. When it comes to texting, never read between the lines.

David Wygant is an internationally-renowned dating and relationship coach, author of the new book Naked and speaker. Through his boot camps, personal coaching and his website (davidwygant.com), his advice has transformed the dating lives and relationships of hundreds of thousands of people from every corner of the globe.

QuickieChick's Video Dating Tips: Seven Reasons to Kiss





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

In this week's [dating advice](#) video, dating expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, Laurel House shares seven reasons to kiss. It's time to get busy!

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

Did you know that kissing helps to fight those pesky springtime allergies that so many of us face? If you kiss for at least 30 minutes, it helps to slow histamine production, which means you won't be sneezing and dealing with a runny nose. Kissing not only makes you healthier and happier, but it also makes your relationship healthier and happier.

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

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

How Can Celebrity Couple Jennifer Aniston Justin Theroux Make Her Love Last?



By Amy Osmond Cook, Ph.D.

Can it be true? It appears that Hollywood's All-American sweetheart Jennifer Aniston has finally found lasting love with fiancé Justin Theroux. As they get ready to walk down the aisle, here are a few tips that can help them (and all of us!) build healthy relationships with our loved ones.

Create Your Own Space

Happy couples carve out their own little piece of the universe—a place where only they have the final say. They listen to their mom-in-law pontificate about the advantages of hardwood floors but choose carpet if their partner has a penchant for shag.

They enjoy each other's company but support independent hobbies. They watch *Vampire Diaries* together—of which separate viewing constitutes a personal betrayal—but also welcome independent golf trips and weekends at the spa. In essence, they build togetherness but foster autonomy.

Related Link: [7 Ways to Build a Love That Lasts](#)

Fireproof

To prevent a house from burning down, you take certain precautions. You blow out the candles before you leave the room. You don't leave the dishrag next to the gas stove. And you certainly don't let your three-year-old daughter play with matches.

Happy couples fireproof a relationship in much the same way. They create a safe place for conflict by avoiding inflammatory communication, like name-calling, stonewalling or derogation. They deal with an issue specifically and avoid making blanket statements. Pizza on the wall after Monday Night Football? Game on. But it doesn't snowball into comments like, "You don't pull your weight in this relationship." And the pizza on the wall five years ago after a bachelor party? Off-limits.

Go Organic

There's something about growing your own food that makes you appreciate nature's magic. It's exciting to see the first tendril break ground, then another and another. And when those sorry little tomato plants in chipped clay pots are weighed

down with ripe, red fruit—well, that’s something to celebrate, especially when you find out how much better homegrown tomatoes taste than their store-bought lookalikes.

In much the same way, happy couples know that a relationship needs constant nurturing—emotional, sexual and social—to grow. If even one of these areas is neglected, the relationship can become diseased and die. Happy couples rally when they’re really too tired for sex because their partner is in the mood. They say, “You do not look fat in those jeans” for the thousandth time and still manage to sound sincere. And they laugh at the same old story that their partner has been telling at parties for years, even when everyone else groans.

Related Link: [The Key to a Lasting Relationship](#)

So how can Jennifer and Justin make it work for the long-term? If they create a space for their relationship, fireproof it and cultivate it into something special, they have a great chance of keeping it strong and making it last.

Amy Osmond Cook, Ph.D. is a faculty associate at Arizona State University, where she teaches Communication and English classes. She is the publisher of Sourced Media Books and co-author of Hope After Divorce and Full Bloom: Cultivating Success. Amy and her husband, Jeff, have six children. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

Celebrity Couple Predictions: Halle Berry, Jada Pinkett-

Smith and Heidi Klum



By Shoshi

A celebrity's love life tends to be packed with things that create a hot mess. At the end of the day, when it comes to their relationships, they're just like everybody else: simply trying to figure it all out.

For my first expert post, I took a look at the energy (aura) of some hot couples: the sexy Halle Berry and Olivier Martinez, open marriage lovers Jada Pinkett-Smith and Will Smith, and last but not least, Heidi Klum and her bodyguard boyfriend, Martin Kirsten.

Related Link: [Spring Cleaning: 5 Signs It's Time to De-Clutter Your Love Life](#)

Halle Berry and Olivier Martinez: I have been keeping a psychic eye on Halle Berry since she announced that she's dating Olivier Martinez. From the very beginning, their energy as a couple looked vibrant and stable. While women envy Berry and assume she can have any man that she wants, her love life tends to be filled with drama and heartache. Berry was always into the "pretty boy" types, not that that's a bad thing. However, Martinez is an upgrade; Berry finally has a grown man by her side.

Recently, Berry revealed that she is pregnant with Martinez's baby. Berry has never looked happier on the outside, but there has been a shift in her energy on the inside too. She is more settled and comfortable in her own skin. While she has made a shift to fully embrace self-love, Martinez has been a big part of healing Berry's energy in her heart. Looking at their relationship as a whole, they have a wonderful connection.

From what I can see, it looks like Berry will have a bouncing baby boy. I also predict that Berry and Martinez will pull a Janet Jackson move by getting married at a secret sexy location in Paris.

Jada Pinkett-Smith and Will Smith: Finally, Jada Pinkett-Smith decided to address the rumors about having an open marriage with Will Smith. Not so fast, though: she actually did *not* come out and say that they have an open marriage. We did find out that Smith is his own man who can do whatever he wants and that Pinkett-Smith trusts him since they have a grown-up relationship. Some people are confused about what the heck she means since it wasn't a direct statement.

This couple has a very interesting energy that looks strained in certain areas. It look like they were talking about divorce, which was coming more from the side of Pinkett-Smith, but she changed her mind. Smith appears to be exercising their rule of doing whatever he wants more than her. She was feeling a bit neglected, but it made her hubby realize that he has to

prioritize what he has at home, or it shall be lost.

Although there is love in their relationship, it looks like the type of love that is friendship-based. There is a lack of passion between them at this point; if that doesn't shift, this marriage will be over for good.

Related Link: [Will Smith Says Family Is All About Love and Communication](#)

Heidi Klum and Martin Kirsten: When Heidi Klum started dating her bodyguard, Martin Kirsten, it raised a few eyebrows. Hopefully, Kirsten will guard his heart in this relationship since Klum's energy has rebound written all over it. What Klum was missing in her marriage with ex-husband Seal, she is getting from Kirsten; however, she isn't allowing her feelings for him to run deep.

Kirsten is completely smitten with Klum and her kids. In fact, he had feelings for her before they started dating. It's not looking good for him though. Klum isn't ready to fully open her heart to anyone. One day soon, Kristen is likely to get a kiss goodbye from Klum, and he won't even see it coming.