

Beyonce's NYC Sleek Style



By Ann

Csincsak, Vintage Sweet & Chic

Beyonce is not only a Grammy winning recording artist, actress and mother she is also a fashion style icon whose sleek look is full of glamour and edge.

The first look below blends spring fashion with a white blazer and light colored cropped skinny jeans by Free People. Braids are all the rage for spring and summer. So, even if you're meeting that special someone after the gym, a side braid can glam up any date instantly. Keep your makeup light for daytime with this great Dior Gloss or rev it up with a deep blush for a night out. Beyonce is wearing a pair of vintage Chanel hoop earrings. If that's out of our budget, find a stylish simple pair that will make your outfit look equally great. No matter what the occasion Beyonce knows how to look like a movie star without too much effort and now so can you!



In this next look, Beyonce shows us how to glam up a summer dress with some jewelry and a great studded bag. It's always fun to match your metals in any outfit. Gold with gold looks great with a bracelet and a bag or earrings and a belt.



No matter what the date or occasion, keep it simple with great statement jewelry and pick special pieces for your main outfit whether it's a dress, blazer, skirt, or top!

Five Steps To Turn a Date Into a Relationship



By Dr. Tranquility –

Lydia Belton, PhD, Ct.H.A.

For many people who seek lasting relationships, the first date

isn't the big issue. In truth, the actual challenge is to use that first date as a litmus test for whether to move forward or not. You can't hope to follow in the footsteps of Kyra Sedgwick and Kevin Bacon or Sarah Jessica Parker and Mathew Broderick directly after the first cocktail. However, as these celebrities would surely tell you, a lengthy partnership is rooted in loyalty and consistency. Once you get past that initial encounter, you may be ready to take steps towards a lasting and meaningful relationship. Here's how to go about it, step by step:

Step One: Focus on the Attraction and Ignore the Distractions

Many, if not most, first dates are over drinks or a meal with plenty of potential distractions swirling around the room – televised sports, side table conversations, interesting people, etc. You were attracted to your date for some reason or you would not be there in the first place. So keep your attention where it needs to be – your date is the Attraction. Continuous eye contact is the key, as it will also work to keep your date's attention focused on you. Eye contact also will help with active listening and make the conversation flow easily.

Related: [5 Conversations to Avoid on the First Date](#)

Step Two: Listen Actively and Be Engaged in the Conversation

Eye contact should foster concentration on your date and what your date has to say about values, beliefs, understandings and even issues. If you let your mind drift to the pressures of work, finances, where you need to be next week, you will end up excusing yourself for not paying attention – the last thing that a date leading to a relationship wants to be told. You risk losing the areas where you connect, and the important elements of the foundation for forming the relationship. Worst case – you will convey to your date the impression that you do not care to move past the dating stage. So, concentrate and

stay engaged!

Related: [4 Steps to a Stronger Long Term Relationship](#)

Step Three: Flirting and Body Language

Understanding your limits, particularly if consuming alcohol, will enable you maintain all the positive elements of your body language and appropriate level of flirting. Smile and laugh. Make your gestures inviting – keep your palms up. You want to be open and inviting, conveying an open mind and interest in exploring something new. Reach across the table and touch your date's hand (the eye contact and active listening will lead to this), and before you know it, you will be holding hands and gazing into each other's eyes. You too can flirt like Pamela Anderson and Katy Perry.

Step Four: Time is Important and Valuable

Aside from simple good manners, being on time and respecting the time of your date is important. Be punctual and respect the time parameters of your date.

Step Five: Agree on the Next Step

If this is going to be a relationship, before you part ways, talk about what, when and where for the next date. If you have followed the first four steps, setting the next date will come naturally.

With these several steps in mind, it should be a little easier for you to gauge whether or not you're ready for a long term situation with your new fling.

Developed by Lydia Belton PhD, Ct.H.A. of DrTranquility.com, 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'ss the View, KISS FM, cupidspulse.com, Metromix for the Chicago Tribune, British

Glamour, REDBOOK, Cosmopolitan Magazine & promoted by Match.com.

Giveaway: Nicole Richie “Fashion Star” Casual Chic Style



This post is

sponsored by LOL0 Jewellery.

By Ann Csincsak

One of the hottest new shows on television and a personal favorite of mine is Fashion Star! Nicole Richie shines every week with fashion forward styles and gorgeous Jewelry from her company “House of Harlow.” Although her ensembles may be a

little out of most people's price range, I have developed some great styles from her that everyone can afford and look spectacular in.

The first look (image above) is a classic casual get-up that maintains some of spring's favorites trends...Bangles, Pops of color, and Headbands. Pair this daytime look with some heels and your ready for an evening out on the town.

The next outfit sports spring's hottest trend and that's the romper. Nicole shows us that although shorts are mostly considered casual, this romper takes your look from daytime drag to everyday chic! Wear this on any date and make your guy's jaw drop with how you can make casual look SEXY!

For more information on any of these styles or to purchase any of the STELLA AND DOT jewelry from these articles check out <http://www.stelladot.com/sites/anncsinacsak>. Stella and Dot has the best jewelry for any occasion.

GIVEAWAY ALERT: This week we have a GORGEOUS piece from LOLO Jewellery. This is a show stopper and a must have for any jewelry box. In order to win this fabulous piece you need to follow LOLO on Facebook and leave a comment asking to enter the contest. It's that simple.

LOLO striking large blue oval Swarovski crystal and sterling silver cocktail ring.



Here is the [link](#) to their facebook page. Make sure to 'LIKE'

and leave a comment saying you want to enter. You can also follow them on twitter and leave a comment as well. Either way you are entered.

Twitter: @lolo_jewellery

Relationship Advice from the 'Hunger Games'



By Amy Osmond Cook,

Ph.D.

If any of you saw the *Hunger Games* recently, you were in for a bloodbath—a very entertaining, very well produced bloodbath.

I'm a huge fan of Suzanne Collins, and the movie was one of the best I've seen in a long time. But while I cheered for Katniss, cursed the gamekeeper, and threw popcorn at President

Snow, I couldn't help but notice that some of the lessons of *Hunger Games* could also be applied to relationships:

Hunger Games Tip #1: Don't Let Him (or Her) Own You

Before going into the *Hunger Games* arena, Peeta and Katniss spend a quiet moment looking over the city. With a wistful glance at his would-be lover and soon-to-be fellow Gladiator, Peeta tells Katniss, "I keep wishing I could think of a way . . . to show the capitol they don't own me. That I'm more than a piece in their games." And show them he does.

Healthy relationships are built on equality. If you feel owned or used, there's a good chance that you are being played in someone's game. You may be their most important game piece. But regardless of whether you are a queen or a pawn, if your relationship feels like a chess match, run!

Related: [Can Celebrities Actually Have Enduring Healthy Relationships?](#)

Hunger Games Tip #2: Don't Eat the Berries

While Katniss is out hunting for food, Peeta tries to be helpful and unknowingly picks poisonous Nightlock berries to eat with the meal. Foxface watches Peeta and picks berries of her own, thinking they are edible. She dies instantly upon ingestion.

Affairs, abuse, and drug and alcohol addiction are common forms of relationship Nightlock. While they are possible for some couples to overcome, they can be instant relationship killers. So if you are tempted to stray, to use, or to be otherwise despicable, be aware that you are putting your relationship seriously at risk.

Related: [You've Cheated, So Now What?](#)

Hunger Games Tip #3: Just Be Yourself

When Katniss first arrives at the Capitol, she is told that she needs to make people like her. Sponsors, Haymitch (her mentor) states, can make the difference between life and death. Katniss fails miserably at this until Cinna, her stylist, tells her, "Don't try to make people like you . . . Just be yourself." When she forgets about public opinion and is true to herself, she becomes beloved by district and Capitol people alike.

It goes without saying that it's important to be yourself in a relationship. There's nothing worse than sushi and ballet when all you really want is barbeque and line dancing. Don't pretend to be someone you're not, if for no other reason than it's just plain tiring—and it's impossible to keep up the façade forever. When the walls come down and the real you shows through, don't you want someone who shares your secret passion for all things Woody Allen, or at least loves you for it?

Suzanne Collins is more about opposing the Man and the media than providing commentary on romantic relationships. But forging relationships based on equal power dynamics, avoiding toxic situations, and having personal integrity are lessons as applicable to the bedroom as the Hunger Games arena.

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 five children and look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

Get the Latest Fashion Style from 'Hunger Games' Star Jennifer Lawrence



By Ann Csincsak

One of the hottest stars on the planet right now is Jennifer Lawrence, star of the hit movie *The Hunger Games*. Not only is this gal a sensational actress she is also becoming a style icon with her laid back, chic fashion. Right now she is wearing some of the hottest trends for spring and summer. Make sure for your next date out that you copy her easy style with some of these great looks.



Keep it simple with neutrals and flared jeans for spring. Remember dark polish can take your date look from day to night.



I love this look because of the classic touches she brings in while still sporting some great trends. High waisted pants, classic Ray Ban's, and the boyfriend blazer! All of these items will fit your budget and keep you right on trend for spring. To dress up this [date look](#) throw on a great pair of nude colored heels and your ready for a night out with your favorite someone.

Make sure to check back next week for more great celebrity styles for any budget. Leave a comment to let us know your favorite looks or who you want to see featured here next week. Until then, enjoy the weekend and make sure to check out 'Hunger Games.' I already have my own [date](#) planned with my husband to see this one.

Giveaway Alert: Here is a chance to win a beautiful gemstone necklace! To enter, all you have to do is:

- 1) Go to <http://www.facebook.com/CayetanoLegacy> and hit "Like" as well as post a comment on the page saying you want to enter the contest.
- 2) Follow them on twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/-CayetanoLegacy>

That's it. You'll be entered to win this amazing piece of jewelry. Contest Deadline is Friday, April 6 at 12:00 p.m.



A beautiful fusion of color, this hand embroidered bib style statement necklace compliments the season's colors, with its

eye-catching stone combination. Seven natural gemstones make up this design: turquoise, pink agate and yellow agate are surrounded by rows of gold Japanese seed beads.

Stop Bickering Before it Starts with Pre-Marital Counseling



By Melanie Mar

We are living in a fast paced world. We eat fast, drive fast and as statistics show, we divorce fast. It is so quick and easy to exit when the going gets tough, what can you do to ensure you are giving your all to making your relationship work?

My advice for if you are thinking, talking or planning to get married is to try pre-marital counseling. Most people believe counseling is only required when they actually have relationship issues which need resolving. I say: On your best day, remember, this too shall pass.

I am a fan of the Covenant marriage, which was initially introduced in Louisiana in 1997 in an effort to control divorce rates, it is offered to couples before they get married with the view that it is harder to end the union. In simple terms, you enter a covenant by signing and agreeing to certain stipulations in order to save the marriage before filing for divorce. The first of which is mandatory pre-marital counseling.

Surprisingly, sometimes the best counseling can be achieved when there are seemingly no problems at all. When you are both calm is when you are most likely to mentally receive the information, tools and suggestions given. You are not defensive, you like your partner and it is a pleasure to gather ideas of what to do to help each other when problems arise, which they invariably do. It can be something you both look forward to, it can be a relief to talk about how you are doing and to keep each other in check and it can stop you sharing your private life with friends. Prevention is better than cure and ultimately, you will be stronger as a couple and united as a team to face life's hurdles together.

Melanie is a relationship and life coach, as well as co-owner of the Millionaire's Club International Matchmaking Agency for the U.K. and Europe. She is certified by the WANT Institute in Androgynous Semantic Realignment and a Transaction Analysis practitioner certified by the United States America Transaction Analysis Association.

David Wygant's Book 'Naked' Teaches Us How to Reveal Ourselves When Dating



By Daniela Agurcia

The “rules” of dating can be complicated, and most of the time, we can’t figure out what we’re doing wrong. Dating expert, David Wygant, wrote *Naked* to get rid of those “rules,” hoping that we could finally learn to love ourselves and be ourselves when entering the dating world. He successfully coaches both men and women in dating by analyzing their situations and helping them figure out what they’ve been doing wrong, so they can move forward and have a happier and more successful dating life. We had a chance to interview David about his book, and here’s what he had to say:

How would you say your book *Naked* is different from anything else you've written?

Most of the time, I write about how to meet someone and ways to be more aggressive in your dating life. This book is a lot different because I really strip people down from the inside out. Most women date like resume shoppers. They miss finding their needs, wants and desires because they're constantly looking for the perfect picture or that romantic comedy instead of really just embracing the beauty of how you feel in the presence of somebody. I decided to take it from the inside out so that you're able to have those checks and balances.

Related: [5 Ways Playing Hard to Get Can Damage Your Love Life](#)

What are some exercises or techniques you find most important that are mentioned in your book?

One is stripping yourself down to 100 percent naked to figure out what you want. Write down what you want and how you want to feel when you meet that special person. That way, when you do meet someone, you will immediately know if they're the right person because you're in tune with what you need to feel.

Another thing that is really important is get rid of the past, something I think a lot of people focus on when they're dating. A lot of women will meet a guy, and if he's confident, it'll remind them so much of a player they once dated. Because of these assumptions, they end up feeling like they're going to be used sexually or cheated on because they were cheated on in the past. I call these people past-ers.

If you're a past-er, you need to accept your past and embrace it. All of your lessons from the past are lessons that you needed to learn. If you didn't *learn* them, then you're just going to go repeat them with different men. That's the reason why you haven't been satisfied in a relationship. So it's

about accepting the past and realizing the beauty of what's ahead of you.

Related: [5 Ways to Stop Sabotaging Your Relationships](#)

On your website, it says that you have discovered secrets from the universal human nature. Can you tell us what that means and what are some of those secrets?

Human nature is that we repeat the same things that we're programmed to repeat. My relationships have all been wrong because of the programming I had as a kid. While I was growing up, my mother was not happy with my dad. She was pretty much miserable the whole marriage. So as a little kid, she used to tell me all the time, "You're going to have a beautiful relationship one day. I love you. You're going to meet your soul mate." When I was 17, I was broken up with by my high school sweetheart, and my mom looked at me and told me, "That's not your soul mate." Afterwards, every time a beautiful woman mentioned "soul mate" to me, it would trigger off my programming that told me, "This is my soul mate, this is a sign." All because my mother used to tell me to look for that sign. There are so many "signs" that we give meaning to, and I finally realized after a couple of bad marriages that this is my trigger point. I actually don't want to be with these women who present the sign. I actually want to be with a woman that I'm most current with. Once we recognize the pattern and learn to understand those things that have been programmed in us since birth, we're able to get real and grow.

What are the top three tips you can give single men and women when looking for a partner?

1) Be 100 percent present. Go out every single day, and people shop. Get off your Blackberrys and iPhones. Smile at someone you're attracted to, and push yourself out of your comfort zone. Look at some guy in the elevator instead of looking at the ground and say, "Hello." If you're at a café,

sit down next to someone, and make yourself available.

2) When you go out on a date, stop going for the repeat cycle. If you went out on a date, and the guy didn't call you back, screw it! If he didn't call you back, he's not interested. Stop overanalyzing it with your friends. I don't want you beating yourself up to that point; it's ridiculous.

3) Accept where you are right now. Not in six months when you lose twenty pounds. Not in seven months when you get a better job or get your hair done. You're a beautiful, evolved, amazing person right now. You're a work in progress, but it doesn't mean you can't be loved right now. That's what's important.

What is the number one mistake people make when starting to date someone?

They're in fantasy land. They don't look at what's really going on. They don't trust their gut instinct because they date from a need instead of dating from power. I look at it this way: I'm an incredible, amazing man, and if I'm not with somebody who feels the same way, then I'm with the wrong person. That's okay, because I believe there's an abundance of great people out there. Most people come up with excuses. For example, people who are in their forties say, "No man my own age will want to meet me." Well, if you think negatively and have that belief in the world, then you're 100 percent right. It's all in your belief system, and that's what I want to help people change. I mean, you have to be realistic; not everyone is going to want to date you. If some guy doesn't call you back, it's their choice, just like it's *your* choice to call someone back. Be realistic, and you're going to be fine.

To get more insight on dating, you can purchase David Wygant's new book Naked at Amazon. For more information on his practices, visit his website at www.DavidWygant.com.

5 Ways Playing Hard to Get Can Damage Your Love Life



By Ashley

DelBello with contributions by relationship expert, Melanie Mar

“You value the things you have to work hard for, not the things that are handed to you,” says a mid-twenty something male friend of mine when discussing if a woman should play hard to get when she first meets a guy. While that may seem to sum up the answer to this ultimate singleton question, it’s a bit more complex than that. A guy may think a girl is really cool, but if she’s too available at first, then he will question it. The opposite is true, too. If a girl plays too hard to get and is unavailable, then he will lose interest.

So, throw out the “dating rules” – you don’t have to wait

three days before calling or texting back, but you do need to consider each situation and act accordingly. For instance, don't be available every time he asks you out, but be sure to offer an alternative day to meet up. Celebrity life coach and relationship pro Melanie Mar chimed in on what women should do when they first meet a guy and how to keep his interest:

1. Understanding men: "I do not advocate any game playing, but there is certainly an element of truth to the theory that men 'like the chase,'" said Mar. "Nature is that reason, as men are built to compete, conquer and control." Mar goes on to say that there is a big difference between women playing hard to get and men enjoying the thrill of the chase. That said, there does come a point when the chase has to stop. It's important to keep it fun and light in the beginning, but if after a while it starts to seem that the relationship's not going anywhere, then you might want to move on.

Related: [7 Ways to Flirt in a Web 2.0 World](#)

2. If we're not into playing the game, but men like the chase – what do we do?: "Well, you let him chase you," says Mar. "But if you don't show a man some acknowledgement, he will move on to someone who does. Always respect and respond to his efforts, but remember easy is not interesting to a man. He wants to pursue you as it is in his innate, natural design. Remember the sperm chases the egg!"

Related: [How to Master Being in a Relationship](#)

3. Dropping the hanky: To subtly let a man know that you are interested in him, hold his gaze for a few seconds and smile. It's not easy for men to approach women, so give him an opening signal to put him at ease and prompt him to come to you. Be engaging by playing ping pong with the opening.

4. Showing interest beyond the first interaction: It's simple – if he contacts you, return his call. If he asks you out and

you don't have other plans, then go. Ladies, do the 3 to 1 ratio: if he takes you for dinner three times, return in kind by cooking him dinner once. "If a woman is being non-responsive in the beginning of a relationship when a man is actively engaging and pursuing her, she definitely will experience a feeling of control, but it will be short-lived. Eventually he will grow tired of chasing someone who acts as if she's not interested – even if she truly is – and he will stop the chase," said Mar.

5. Finding that balance: As my guy friend said, men question if a woman is always available to hang out, so you need to show that you have your own life, too, and quite frankly that others think you are the amazing person that you are. While this may seem a bit ridiculous, men are ego driven and do want that validation that you are someone worth investing time in.

Mar added, "Men don't want you perfectly presented on a silver platter – they want to get to know you. Their focus in the early stages of a relationship is chemistry; there has to be something about you that makes him want to see you more.

Maybe in the way you touch his arm when you laugh or the way you hold eye contact when he's talking to you – these are the things that make a man stay interested in YOU, not your unavailability."

Getting Physical on the First Date: And as for the other question that all women want to know – if you get physical with a guy the first time you meet him or on the first date does it ruin your chances of a relationship forming from that?

There's no right answer and every guy is different from what I've been told. If there is a real connection there, then for most guys it won't matter. But, there has to be a pretty strong connection for that to not matter. So again, read each situation before you decide how far you will go with a guy and trust your instinct.

Playing hard to get is all about balance – because if you play

it too much, you'll end up having relationships that won't go anywhere past the first interaction; but if you don't succumb to human nature and play it a little, well you'll mostly likely end up in the same boat – single.

Do you think a woman should play hard to get? Share your comments below.

Steal Jennifer Lopez's City Style!



By Ann Csincsak

Known for her dating, marriages and, of course, fashion, our favorite style of the week goes to our favorite American Idol judge, Jennifer Lopez! Always looking chic and polished J. Lo knows how to accentuate her curves and vamp up the color.

This first look is a chic and colorful outfit for spring. This could be worn for a lunch date in the city or while going to your favorite Broadway show. No matter what the date or occasion, this outfit will never go wrong. Letting one piece of clothing be the standout piece is a great way to wear your winter neutrals into spring. Finish this look with a pop of coral on your nails and you're ready for any date.

This next look is ideal for a weekend brunch or catching a movie with your favorite date. Faux fur is perfect for spring and is a great way to dress up your favorite casual jeans and boots.



Make sure to leave a comment about your favorite J. Lo style! Check in next week for more Celebrity Date looks. For more information on any of these styles or fashion tips, visit www.anncsincksak.com or find me on Twitter @anncsincksak.

Giveaway: Steal Lauren Conrad's Fashion Dos for Date Night & Enter to Win a Stella & Dot Necklace!



This post is

sponsored by Stella and Dot Jewelry.

By [Ann Csincsak](#)

After watching this gorgeous gal on our favorite guilty pleasure, *The Hills*, Lauren Conrad not only became a household name but also a fashion trendsetter. She looks great no matter what the situation and that's why this week she is our featured celebrity for her fabulous date looks! Lauren is perfect at using accessories to make her casual daytime outfits turn into fabulous fashion statements.

This first look (image above) is ideal for grabbing coffee

with your guy. Lauren wears this neutral dress with some amazing accessories. Browns and neutrals look great with gold accessories, pink polish, and all the new spring colors.

This next look works for weekend brunch or a weekend away. Remember: men love when women look effortless, so even if you spend 45 minutes to do your messy bun and red nailpolish it's the little things that take your outfit from a 2 to a 10!

GIVEAWAY ALERT: This week, we are giving away a piece from one of my favorite jewelry companies so that you can take some of these great looks home with you. No one does it better than Stella & Dot Jewelry and we are giving away one of my favorites that was recently featured in People magazine and worn by the upcoming ABC Season 8, *Bachelorette*, Emily Maynard.

~~For a chance to win the giveaway, just go to the this [Facebook](#) page, click on the 'LIKE' button and leave a comment saying you want to enter the giveaway and you are immediately entered! We will contact the winner on their Facebook page when the contest has finished. Don't wait, this necklace is valued at \$198.00, so ENTER NOW! Remember: click on the [link here](#)! If your interested in ordering this gorgeous necklace click [here](#).~~

This giveaway is now closed. Thank you to all who entered!

3 Ways Date Therapy Can Help You Connect



By Dr. Tranquility-

Lydia Belton Ph.D.Ct.H.A.

Treating ourselves and others with love is the most important aspect to dating. That said, it can sometimes be difficult to bond in a loving manner when you're nervous in a dinner date environment. Date Therapy can help! It's a new protocol that helps people connect in three very important ways. People like Demi Moore or Kim Kardashian, who have both very publically just fallen out of high profile relationships, should take note.

1. Set Healthy Boundaries

Love yourself enough to begin your relationship with healthy boundaries. Understanding what our realistic wants and needs are helps us to set these boundaries and to understand what we absolutely cannot tolerate. It's important to remember that we have worth and deserve a loving relationship that we feel safe living within.

I am very proud of Demi Moore and so many other people who

recognize when it's time to apply the brakes, hit the reset button on our boundaries and set out to live full lives. Date Therapy empowers us to take the steps to find out if we've found "the one" by asking the correct questions from the beginning and not being afraid of the response. Because we love ourselves enough to say "no" when something's not right, Date Therapy helps you find your true criteria and your ideal mate.

Related: [Demi Moore Proves There's Hope After Divorce](#)

2. Insist on Self Full Existence

Love yourself enough to insist on a self full existence. This means acknowledging that we have the right to include ourselves in our wants and needs list without stepping on the wants and needs of others. We need to allow ourselves to realize that we exist for ourselves as well as for our partners.

How many of us have been surprised when "the one" turns out to be "the awful one," and we ask ourselves, "What was I thinking?" Somewhere along the way, the healthy boundaries where your needs and wants exist were either not set or were overlooked in the [passion](#) of the moment. At one point, you had a wonderful amount of comfy space, and now this partner is standing on your toes. A fantastic example of this is Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries' 72-day marriage. Really, you can ask the right questions by the second date, but you just have to be open to the answer.

Related: [What Kim Kardashian Taught Me About Marriage](#)

3. Apply Tools

Now that you've set healthy boundaries and insisted on a self full existence, it's time to bring the tools of Date Therapy and your subconscious mind to find your ideal mate. You now have the recipe for success, and you will soon find the life

and love of your dreams!

People often ask me, "Can I reset my feelings so that I fall for someone I feel that I *should* like if I am not really attracted to them?" The answer is "no," and you also can't force others to modify their behaviors, so don't try to force it or make it fit. If you are just coming out of a relationship, have fun with phases 1 and 2 before taking on phase 3. Watch your favorite comedy or read a book. Take a bubble bath with your favorite fragrance and drink a glass of champagne. Go out with your pals if you're not quite ready to date. You'll still have an amazing time, and you will find that Date Therapy + healthy boundaries = The relationship of your dreams.

DrTranquility-Lydia Belton is a mental health expert with a background in Psychology, Relaxation Physiology for Mind-Body Medicine from Harvard University's Mind- Body Institute, and Columbia University's Rosenthal Center in Botanical Medicine.

She is known for her exclusive B Well TV productions which have aired on Current and various Internet TV platforms, including on the B Well TV channel. She's also the co-author of the book Let the Sun Shine In.



How to Get Jessica Biel's

Perfect Date Looks



By [Ann Csincsak](#)

It's not always easy to replicate your favorite celebrity looks, but this weekend it is! We have some of Jessica Biel's iconic looks that are perfect for any date situation this weekend. Whether it's a weekend getaway, a romantic dinner out, or a casual walk around your favorite city Jessica Biel knows how to pull off the perfect look and now SO DO YOU!

Jessica Biel's Getaway Date

Love this look (image above) for a weekend getaway! Always remember black is always a great option, just spice it up with some color pops. I love the way the animal print scarf becomes the center of this outfit.

Daytime Date

A great pair of boot cut jeans and a blazer are always a casual look for daytime that anyone can pull off. Jessica wears this perfectly with a dressier necklace and a great pair

of wedges. This Basic Blazer shown below is from Forever 21 so don't forget you don't have to break the bank to look fabulous!

Most of us can't wait for spring and this next look is a great way to incorporate some lighter spring colors into your fall wardrobe. Remember suffering for fashion is one thing but freezing for it is another so dress warm with lots of cute layers.

Make sure to leave comments on your favorite looks, for more information, or to tell us how YOU wore it! Make sure to check in every Friday for how to steal more of your favorite celebrity looks. For more fashion tips and stories check out www.vintagesweetandchic.com.

Valentine's Day Love Advice: How to Survive the Holiday





By Melanie Mar

Congratulations, you survived! During the past couple of months you plowed through the relationship equivalent of a marathon. You survived the agony of choosing the perfect gifts for your loved one during the holidays, then rang in the new year with great cheer, good spirit and much love. So, now it's time to sit back, relax and take it easy on the romance front, right? Wrong!

Before you can even catch your breath, Valentine's Day is upon us, the most romantic day of the year – so we are told. Contrary to what popular culture wants us to believe, for many people, Valentine's Day is less fun and flirty and more stressful and sad. Maybe it highlights that another year has passed and you're still not in a relationship, or recently have suffered a hurtful separation. Perhaps you just simply don't know what to do to make this day as special and romantic for your partner as societal pressure dictates. Talk about unneeded anxiety!

There is no escaping this pressure, either. All the shop windows have comical, over-sized hearts displayed and cheeky cherubs pointing their arrows at you, not to mention

the red bows and the red ribbons and the cute cards and the cute teddy bears ... STOP! Take a deep breath – we will get through this together.

If you are single, I want you to create your own ideal Valentine's Day. View it as the one opportunity this year that you can truly pamper and spoil yourself. Whether you buy flowers, light candles, listen to music, get a massage or find a jacuzzi and relax, make this day about romancing yourself.

This is your special day! Do it for you, because you love you and try not to get too wrapped up in the hype.

Another way to enjoy Valentine's Day as a singleton is to celebrate those you love. Your lucky valentine can be your parent, your friend or your dog whose day you have chosen to brighten. It's a fabulous excuse to show extra love to those you care about.

When you are in a relationship, one of the biggest pitfalls is gift expectations. I suggest you buy a joint journal – you may even call it your dream journal. You both can write in this journal at anytime, expressing anything that either of you would like to receive from the other. These dreams can be both sexual and non-sexual; they can be a highly sought after material item or a simple request that costs nothing.

Whenever the fancy takes you, jot down these thoughts, ideas, things, web sites or photos, knowing that at some point they will be seen and read by the other person. Do not expect anything of each other and you may well be pleasantly surprised!

Happy Valentine's Day!

Love, Melanie

For more information, visit Melanie's Mar's Facebook page or contact her at info@melaniemar.com. A complete overview of her services can be found at www.melaniemar.com.

Heidi Klum and Seal: Marriages Don't End Overnight



By Melanie Mar

When a seemingly “rock solid” celebrity couple separates – as with Heidi Klum and Seal’s divorce announcement after seven years of marriage – the first public reaction is always surprise. Thanks to the sheer volume of attention paid to celebrities’ lives via television, tabloids and other media, it is easy to believe you actually know these stars. You feel a connection to them that makes their relationship issues cause you to feel like a personal friend’s relationship has broken up. You begin to analyze the celebrity relationship in the same manner, questioning what happened and what went wrong. Of course, the tabloids add fuel to your frenzy when they get down and dirty with many and varied rumors: He cheated. She cheated. He has anger issues. She has an

alcohol problem. You begin to feel dismayed, thinking, "Again? Another one bites the dust?"

Related: [Heidi Klum and Seal – What Blew Up Their Marriage?](#)

Having had the pleasure of socializing with Heidi and Seal, I found in them a friendly couple with open affection towards each other. There is no doubt in my mind they still love each other and may have the possibility of a potential reconciliation; however, the only people who truly know what is happening behind closed doors are the two in the relationship themselves.

Related: [Finding Love After a Breakup – Should You Jump In?](#)

Marriages, especially those that have young children, do not end overnight. Heidi and Seal were together almost a decade, and their marriage could not have ended over only a matter of days or weeks. There is usually the constant chipping away of the relationship that causes the cracks and ultimately the break. Some of the warning signs of this are; infrequent sexual intimacy, apathy, disrespect and/or lack of cherishing.

The most important thing is to be aware and look for these signs. As soon as you think they are beginning, address the issue immediately. The longer the behavior pattern exists the harder it is to stop. Most every relationship problem can be helped with concise communication. State what you want and don't want in a non-threatening, respectful, loving manner.

Ask how you can help each other do better and feel better. Learn how to listen and also be heard. With that in mind, write down the following and read it daily to help keep yourself in check.

Beware of your thoughts, because they become your words.
Beware of your words because they become your actions.
Beware of your actions because they become your habits.
Beware of your habits because they become your destiny.

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Heather Locklear: What Is She Running From?



By [Dr. Jane Greer](#):

Marriage & Family Therapist, Author, Radio Host & *Shrink Wrap* Celebrity Commentator

No matter how talented, beautiful, or rich you are, none of those things are sure antidotes for misery. Heather Locklear is a clear example of this. The Melrose Place actress was rushed to the hospital last week, reportedly because she mixed alcohol with prescription drugs, after her sister found her unconscious. This newest crisis follows years of trouble and

heartbreak including two stays in rehab, an arrest for a DUI, two divorces, and her more recent break up with Melrose Place costar Jack Wagner. With all this in mind, it seems that Locklear's latest episode might be part of her attempt to outrun her unhappiness, but unfortunately she doesn't seem to be getting any traction.

There are many ways people try to escape their sadness. Alcohol is a big one. Illegal and prescription drugs are another way. Sometimes the two are mixed which can lead to dangerous consequences as we saw with Locklear. As a result, the substance abuse becomes the problem that is focused on, but what really needs to be looked at is what got her to the place of needing to use it and what is it that she is unable to deal with.

Related: [Amy Wine House Sadly Joins the 27 Club](#)

Lots of times we see the troubled behaviors – drinking excessively, using prescription drugs, the rehab visits, the DUIs – as the issue when, in fact, they are the person's best effort to bury whatever is torturing them. It is in the core of that sorrow where the real complication that is holding them back from moving forward lies. Instead of focusing on what they are doing to block it out, it can be more helpful to look at what is underneath and when it started.

It is hard to know exactly when Locklear's depression began and what she is working so hard to avoid. With Wagner, it seemed that for a while she was trying to walk down the aisle but, for whatever reason, was unable to get there. Could she be considered a runaway bride even though she had been married before because she may be afraid to remarry after her two failed marriages? I do know that one of the awful things she had to deal with in her past was the betrayal of her second husband Bon Jovi guitarist Richie Sambora when he cheated on her with her best friend Denise Richards. In a situation like

that not only are you reeling from the betrayal of your husband but from a best friend as well, leaving you confounded and wondering who can I trust? Sometimes these emotional assaults take their toll not just when they happen but in the future where they can rage on below the surface. As a therapist I see this every day, people soldiering on in the face of upheaval, be it an unfaithful partner or a broken marriage, and for many the aftermath of that event can become too much to handle. It has leveled their foundation, oftentimes destroying their ability to trust themselves let alone another person. In my book *How Could You Do This To Me? Learning To Trust After Betrayal*, I talk about how so many people get on with it, but they don't get over it. They try to leave their pain behind but it is always at their heels. The broken trust becomes too much to bear and often they are left scarred. Consequently it feels almost impossible to trust again. Perhaps this is what is keeping Locklear from making another trip to the altar.

Related: [Keith Urban Says Wife Nicole Kidman Saved His Life](#)

In order to avoid the rollercoaster that Locklear and so many others have been on, it helps to appreciate the blow you sustained and not only give yourself time to get over it, but realize you have to take measures to come to terms with what happened and begin to fix the damage. With support you can do this so you can give yourself room to heal from broken trust.

This means redefining what you base your trust on, and learning what to look for so you can determine if someone is trustworthy. Then you can avoid jumping into a new relationship before you have gotten over your fear that you will get kicked in the teeth again, and feel safe to trust again.

For Locklear it may be that her fears of the past have become her fences of the present. Hopefully she will get the help she needs to be able to tackle the underlying problems, instead of trying to numb what she is feeling, so that perhaps

she can finally be able to stop running. Sometimes the best thing to do is to stand still.

Please tune in to "Let's Talk Sex" which streams live on HealthyLife.net every last Tuesday of the month at 2 p.m. EST, 11 a.m. PST. We look forward to listener call-in questions, dealing with relationships, intimacy, family, and friendships, at 1.800.555.5453.

Katy Perry and Russell Brand: What Went Wrong?



By [Amy Osmond Cook](#),

[Ph.D.](#)

The fairy tale marriage of Katy Perry and Russell Brand is over, fourteen months after it began. Katy and Russell join

the ranks of celebrities whose wedding nuptials were . . . temporary. Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries lasted only 72 days. Britney Spears and Jason Alexander lasted two.

We've all heard a jumble of less-than-educated guesses as to why many celebrity relationships don't last: "They spend too much time apart." "They have intimate scenes with other people." "They're too obsessed with themselves." "They only care about fame." But what are the real reasons for so many celebrity break-ups?

According to Judith Wallerstein and Sandra Balkelee, authors of *The Good Marriage: How and Why Love Lasts*, all good marriages have one thing in common: Both partners feel *respected and cherished*.

In a study of 50 married couples who described themselves as "happily married," Wallerstein identified nine building blocks that created a foundation for a good marriage, which we can condense into three major take-home recommendations for a happy relationship: (1) create your own space; (2) fireproof; and (3) go organic.

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 mom-in-law pontificate about the advantages of hardwood floors, but choose carpet if their partner has a penchant for shag.

Happy couples 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.

Katy and Russell certainly had autonomy, but they had trouble

staking a claim and prospecting together in the gold rush of marriage. Katy's parents may have been toxic. Russell may have sown his seed in places it didn't belong. But certainly, as time went on, it became clear that the couple didn't have a real sense of "place." They failed to make the transition from "you and me" to "us."

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 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, "You don't pull your weight in this relationship." And the pizza on the wall five years ago after a bachelor party? Off-limits.

As Katy and Russell's marriage progressed, it was clear that they lacked fireproofing skills. According to Rick Mahr, a music executive and friend of Katy, their communication skills needed an overhaul—they fought almost every time they were together. It was clear that their reactions to life's stresses were creating a wedge (not the hoped-for solidarity happy couples experience) as they spent more and more time apart, even on holidays.

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.

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.

It is clear that Katy and Russell felt passionately about each other; but their frequent fighting and long stints apart prevented them from cultivating a relationship in which they both felt respected and cherished. (Russell’s tweeting of unflattering pictures of his wife probably didn’t help matters, either.) Their relationship withered because they weren’t able to give it the nutrients it needed to grow.

Conclusion

Now, there’s no doubt that Katy and Russell are exceptional people. They exude talent, personality and charm. Perhaps the time wasn’t right for this couple to make a go of it, or perhaps they still have more to learn about creating happy relationships. But we *can* learn from their all-too-public divorce. Create a space for your relationship, fireproof it, and cultivate it into something special.

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 five children and

look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

What Your Gifts Say About Your Relationship



By Amy Osmond Cook,

Ph.D.

When it comes to gifts, I am an expert—at receiving them. I love gifts of any kind ... from other people. (No, I'm not going to buy myself a \$285,000 pink Bentley like Paris Hilton did last year.) The problem is, when it comes to giving gifts, I am a nervous wreck.

Gift giving represents two things: (1) that you care about a person enough to give a gift, and (2) that you know a person

well enough to give something that he or she will like. Mess one of those up, and it does some damage to your relationship.

Related: [Valentine's Day Gift Ideas](#)

Take, for example, the gift I gave to my husband five years ago. We were newly married, and I wanted to get him something personal and meaningful. He loves golf, and he's a funny guy—so I thought the trick remote control golf ball (that you can move when your opponent is about to swing) was going to be a hit. I waited in anticipation as he opened the box and saw a momentary look of confusion before he masked it with a smile. He thanked me and said that he loved it, but the damage was done. In that one look, I knew that my gift had tanked.

Fast forward five years. After watching him play golf (a lot!) and listening to his golfing adventures with his buddies (a lot more!), I would never give him a remote control golf ball. I now know that, for him, the rules of golf are sacred.

A serious golfer never tries to move an opponent's ball—especially for a laugh. It violates one of the cardinal rules of sportsmanship. (So does laughing at someone when he shanks his shot – I found out the hard way!) My gift bombed because I didn't know my husband well enough. I knew that he loved golf, but I missed the intricate details.

Stories like mine are a dime a dozen—a woman receives a vacuum cleaner from her husband, and she runs to her room and cries.

A man receives a toolbox and feels ashamed that he doesn't know how to use the tools inside. For better or worse, we attach special meaning to gifts, especially over the holidays.

So if you want to put some currency in your partner's emotional bank account this holiday season, buy . . .

Related: [10 Gift Ideas](#)

1. Something intimate. Take note if your partner voices his

wish list for Christmas. If he cares enough to say what he actually wants, paying attention to that will make him feel valued and understood. If he doesn't have a Christmas wish, try to find something that will have special meaning between the two of you. Still have those Angels tickets from your first date? Frame them!

You can also make a gift meaningful by giving to something your partner cares about. For example, many celebrities, like Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, care deeply about charitable causes and prefer donations to their favorite charities to extravagant gifts.

2. Something valuable. Take this relatively. If you want to take your relationship to the next level, give your partner something that says, "You are so valuable to me, I would sacrifice anything to have you in my life." That's what women hear when their boyfriends buy them expensive jewelry or spend all day helping them cook. It's not the money or the time, exactly—it's the fact that someone would sacrifice to give them something beautiful or meaningful. You don't have to be like Nick Cannon and buy your significant other a \$400,000 Rolls-Royce Phantom or pull a Jude Law and buy your love a \$200,000 diamond-and-sapphire ring, but it should be better than the pack of bubble gum my friend got from her boyfriend one year.

If you're like me, gift giving is a nail-biting phenomenon. That said, if you give your partner something meaningful and valuable, you can move that relationship dial to the next level. Then again, you could always take your chances and buy a pair of two-person mittens that Chelsea Handler and Chuy are sporting this year!

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 five children and look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

How to Communicate with Your Ex Over the Holidays



By Amy Osmond Cook,

Ph.D.

Reese Witherspoon is my favorite actress. Not only is she a beautiful woman and a classy mom, but she also starred in *Legally Blonde*, a girl-power movie that I watched every day (I kid you not!) for the first three months after my divorce. I cried when Warner dumped Elle and cried again when Elle emerged triumphant at Harvard. I kept thinking, "If Elle Woods can do it, so can I." So this year, I am cheering for

Reese. She has moved on from what she called a “humiliating” and “isolating” divorce (*Elle Magazine*, April 2009) and has found happiness with Jim Toth and a peaceable relationship with her ex, Ryan Phillippe.

While it sounds like Reese has got it all together, she may have a little bit of anxiety as she and Jim manage their special occasions together for the first time. As a divorced and remarried mother of five children, I know what it’s like to try to manage innumerable family get-togethers over the holidays. There are too many schedules, too many conflicts, and (let’s face it) too many cookies. So, for what it’s worth, here are my suggestions for surviving the holidays with a newly blended family:

Related: [Ways to Impress Your Future Family](#)

Give your ex a present. Yep, a real one. His old razor that he left behind or a picture of the children that he doesn’t visit often enough don’t count. The other day, my ex complimented my son, Jake, on his new orange SkullCandy headphones as he was picking him up for the weekend. I had accidentally bought two pair, so I gave Jake’s dad one for his approaching birthday. In the eight years that we have been divorced, I don’t think I have ever seen him more excited. He has smiled more lately, and I swear it’s because of the headphones.

Buy presents together. When it comes to holiday presents, is so tempting to compete with your ex. I admit I have asked the question, “What did your dad get you for Christmas?” with the secret hope that my present was better than his. But there are two reasons to give your children joint presents. First, it is a symbol of solidarity and communicates to your children that you and your ex are united in your parenting endeavors (even if you’re not). Kids need to feel loved by both parents, and a joint gift communicates that effectively.

Secondly, gifts become increasingly expensive as children age. They want iPods instead of Barbies. If you can swing a joint present, you can give your kids what they *really* want without spending too much money.

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

Know your limits. When I was divorced and single, it was sometimes difficult to see married couples enjoying their lives. This was especially true during the holidays. I tried to focus on the things I could enjoy, but when it got too hard, I left. I could do parties, but not dates with couples.

I enjoyed Christmas with the family, but not New Years' Eve (banging pots at midnight with toddlers—Nuff said). And I never held babies, because if I did, then I wanted one—but not without a husband. As Reese aptly told *Marie Claire*, divorce is “really, really stressful” (October 2011), and it's okay to flee the scene when the stress starts to mount.

Celebrate the holidays . . . whenever. Who says Christmas has to be December 25? When the holidays get crazy, flexibility is truly a virtue. For example, this year my family is celebrating Christmas on December 23, so we can celebrate it with everyone. My kids love it, because they get two Christmases instead of one and don't have to feel left out of one family's traditions. If you can change the family party so your kids can be there, do it. If you can't, then create a few traditions that they can look forward to before or after the holiday.

The combination of exes, children, and the holidays can be as distasteful as a cup of wassail gone bad. But if you are flexible, know your limits, and reach out to your ex, you might find yourself tolerating—and even enjoying—the holiday season.

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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 five children and look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

'Bachelor' Alumna Ann Csincsak and Partner Katie Meyer Open Vintage Sweet & Chic Boutique



By

Lauren

Kochendarfer

Get ready to shop! Ann Csincsak (née Ann Lueders) of *'The*

Bachelor' Season 13 and her business partner, Katie Meyer will be opening a new clothing boutique in Breckenridge, Colorado called Vintage Sweet & Chic on November 12, 2011.

Although formerly a dream of Katie's, when she met Ann, the two joined forces to get the business off the ground. During a recent interview, both ladies expressed their overwhelming excitement about the venture and emphasized the need for a place on Main Street that carries cute and trendy pieces.



"Breckenridge's staple clothing piece is snowboard pants and tall tees," Ann said. "So unless we wanted to dig through our husband's closets to fit in them, we decided to make a change rather than conform." The ladies also decided to keep the name of the place simple. "Vintage Sweet & Chic, comes from 'Vintage' which speaks for itself, 'Sweet' is the old fashioned candy wall, and 'Chic' defines that it's a totally



awesome boutique for the ladies.

Despite the fact that Ann and her husband **Jesse Csincsack**, the

winner of 'Bachelorette' Season 4, are both very busy with their newborn son Noah (the store mascot), Ann does plan on being at the store as much as possible. In fact, for the time being she and Katie will be the only employees. "We are everything from the cleaning crew to the head buyers to the personal stylists of the store," Katie noted. For the single ladies traveling to the area, Ann and Katie say that if you happen to meet someone on the slopes, come by their shop. They will help make sure that your outfit turns that weekend fling into a lifelong romance! Vintage Sweet & Chick inspires great date night clothing pieces and also offers vintage fur coats, an essential winter piece in a chilly place like Breckenridge.

This is one Grand Opening event that you don't want to miss. In addition to Ann's husband, Jesse, here are a few names of famous reality stars you may see on the red carpet:

Natalie Getz – Bachelor 13 / Bachelor Pad 1 Co Winner
Erica Rose – Bachelor Rome / Bachelor Pad 2 / VH1 Cut off
Jeff Medolla – Wine Maker / Bachelorette 7 = THE MASK
Nikki Kaapke – Bachelor 13 / Bachelor Pad 1
Eliza Orlins – Survivor
Richard Mathy – Bachelorette 4
John Hardesty – Bachelorette 5
Kirsten Pittman – Bachelor 14
Mark Huebner – Bachelorette 5
Suzie Williams – Bachelor 5

Also attending are some ladies from the upcoming season of "The Bachelor" with Ben Flajnik and survivor 'South Pacific' contestants. The event is being sponsored by Popchips, Freaky Muscato and Rubywood at Paragon Lodging.

Demi Moore Proves There's Hope After Divorce



By Amy Osmond Cook,

Ph.D.

It's unclear as to whether Demi Moore is going to file for divorce from Ashton Kutcher after he allegedly cheated on their sixth wedding anniversary. At least, that's what the *Vancouver Sun* and other media outlets are reporting. Though both parties have declined to confirm the split, it's certainly apparent that this is a difficult time for both of them.

It's no surprise that many marriages crumble when there is a serious betrayal. For most Americans, marriage remains the highest expression of commitment that they can imagine. Most also believe it's unacceptable to cheat, lie, or keep secrets in a marriage—and that number has continued to fall over the past 40 years, according to Stephanie Coontz, the author of the article *The Origins of Modern Divorce*.

While the difficulty of this situation cannot be overstated, Demi has navigated this terrain before with grace and poise.

If she handles a divorce from Ashton like she did her divorce from Bruce Willis, we can expect the couple to stay friends and find happiness amidst the devastation. So, what can we learn from this actress?

1. Keep it classy. Demi has yet to talk about her situation with Ashton in a public way. Until a final decision is made, she's probably going to keep quiet about it. She and Bruce were models of restraint during their divorce and continued to build each other up even as they separated.

2. Remember that love conquers all. Somehow, Demi and Bruce continued to love each other while no longer remaining "in love" with each other. Bruce told *Vanity Fair Magazine* in 2007: "It's hard to understand, but we go on holidays together. We still raise our kids together—we still have that bond. . . . I love Demi, and I know she loves me." We can expect Demi to go through a grieving process, but then come out on top—choosing love and forgiveness over bitterness and acrimony.

3. Put the kids first. In 2007, Demi stated: "I'm the product of divorced parents, and my brother and I were the pawns in my parents' game. I never wanted that for my kids." She explained, saying: "You know, I didn't get married and have children so I could get a divorce, get remarried, and get along with my ex-husband. But since that is what happened, I am grateful it turned out this way." Ashton has been a father figure to Demi's children for years, so Demi will most likely continue to support that relationship.

Divorce is certainly difficult. Many of us know that from personal experience. But if anyone can handle a public divorce in a classy way and continue to find the good in her relationships, it's Demi Moore.

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 five children and look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

RHOBH EXCLUSIVE: Taylor Armstrong's Life Coach, Melanie Mar Answers Our Questions



By Ashley DelBello

Last Monday night, the world was introduced to Melanie Mar on *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills* (RHOBH). As we all saw, she was giving life coaching advice to Taylor Armstrong and helping her through her marriage woes to her now late husband, Russell. We published an interview with Melanie the day after the episode aired, where she offered advice for both couples looking to strengthen their relationship and singles searching for Mr. Right. This week, Melanie shares insight with us that answers our burning questions about the Armstrong's, what it was like to work with Taylor, and what type of counsel she gave to her over the past six months.

We loved watching you on the show. Can you tell us a little about your history with the Armstrong's and how you came to be Taylor's life coach?

I've known the Armstrong's for about a year now. We met through mutual friends. Initially I was brought into the RHOBH to help resolve the marital problems of both Russell and Taylor. However prior to filming, Taylor privately disclosed personal details (since made public) within the marriage which made it unprofessional for me to counsel them as a couple on the show. It was my opinion and suggestion that I would be most beneficial as Taylor's life coach.

How long have you been a coach to Taylor?

Our first session began in March. I found her to be very forthcoming and open. This is an incredibly important characteristic as it enables me to assist the person with understanding what they want and don't want in their lives and relationships. Once I have established that, we can begin the process of putting in place the actions needed for change. Pain indicates change is needed or change is in progress.

What were you doing to help Taylor and her marriage? What were your sessions like?

As with all my clients, I begin with educating a different way

to communicate within relationships. I teach the biological differences of men's and women's brains and why they think and feel things differently. Ultimately, if a relationship is beyond repair I then have to progress onto alternative options available for that individual or couple and help them to make the best rational, logical decision depending on their circumstances.

Related Link: [A Reminder About Relationship Mistakes to Avoid](#)

On the episode it appeared that you were trying to help Taylor with her marriage, not sway her to leave like the rest of the women were convincing her to do. Can you tell us more about that?

I work with what I have. If someone tells me they will do anything to make their marriage work, then I will do my utmost to give them all the tools, information and support necessary to make it possible. If someone tells me they want to leave their marriage, I will give them all the tools, information and support to make it possible. I cannot tell anyone what to do – they have to tell me what they want to do and my job then is to assist them in getting there.

According to reports, Taylor and Russell were also being counseled by psychiatrist Dr. Charles Sophy. Did you work with him?

I have not worked with Dr Charles Sophy. Unlike psychiatrists, I am not licensed to prescribe medication. What I teach is a form of cognitive behavior therapy. I am working with the left lobe of the brain responsible for making logical decisions. Most people regret something they have said or done when it has come from a state of being irrational, emotional or illogical. I help people deal with conflict in their life, whether it's with loved ones, friends, co-workers or family, in a rational way.

What counsel do you provide someone who is not only having

relationship and communication problems, but domestic violence issues as well?

My advice to anyone suffering from domestic violence is to contact the experts who specialize in domestic abuse cases.

Related Link: [Hollywood Portrayals of Domestic Violence](#)

How is Taylor now? Are you still her life coach?

I have not seen Taylor since the funeral, but she knows I am here for her when she is ready to talk privately.

What are some reasons a person would hire a life coach?

Everybody needs to talk to someone during trials – it is unhealthy to suffer in silence. However, most people, particularly women, who share their intimate problems do so with several people. This causes more confusion because everyone is giving different and uneducated advice. I am unbiased and am certified in what I do. My coaching is based on scientific studies. I teach specific tools to enable my clients to take control of their life, to get what they want by knowing what they don't want.

If someone wanted to hire you to coach them in the same way you did Taylor, what would that look like? What's the process?

My first session with a client starts with me explaining my qualifications, who I am and what I do. I give a brief background into the brain and why men and women do, say and behave in certain ways. I ask what their particular problem is and then begin teaching the behavior modification techniques. In each session after that, we continue working together on their issues, implementing the tools and following up on their progress. I end every session with a "contract" for that individual or [couple](#), something that they are verbally agreeing to do or stick with.

What other services do you offer?

Other than coaching, I offer complete makeovers. As a former runway and photographic model, fashion and style are paramount to me. I am a big believer in the thought that when you look good, you feel good. I think first impressions do count and, whether you are on the market for a new relationship or a new job, making the best of yourself never is a bad thing. I garner great joy from helping others transform themselves and seeing their confidence soar.

Visit Melanie's Mar's Facebook page or contact her at info@melaniemar.com if you're interested in learning more about she helps others in their lives and relationships. A complete overview of her services can be found at www.melaniemar.com.

Can Celebrities Actually Have Enduring, Healthy Relationships?





By Amy Osmond Cook,

Ph.D.

Cheating. Scandal. Divorce. Too often, celebrity relationships end as a result of one of these unfortunate scenarios. Just this summer, George Clooney and Elisabetta Canalis, J.Lo and Marc Anthony, Derek Jeeter and Minka Kelly, and Cameron Diaz and Alex Rodriguez called it quits. Even Buzz Aldrin and his wife of 23 years couldn't make it last.

As celebrity breakups continue to provide headlines for the supermarket tabloids, we are sometimes left wondering, "Does anyone stay together, anymore?"

Fortunately, the answer is "yes." Celebrities who take "for better or worse" seriously may not make the headlines, but they are out there. Two of those people are my aunt and uncle, Donny and Debbie Osmond.

Donny and Debbie were married in 1978 and have survived the highs and lows of show business together for 33 years. I asked Debbie how she and Donny have made their relationship last when so many have failed. In characteristic humility, she credits God and her family for helping to keep their relationship strong. But she also has a few practical tips:

Keep the Pressure Low.

Donny is a perfectionist and rues over a single note gone awry. While he was performing in *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat* on Broadway, he was struggling with considerable anxiety. Debbie eased his stress by keeping the pressure low.

Every afternoon as he left for work, she would say, "Go have an average night, tonight." She made him feel valued as a person apart from his performance on stage; and as a result, their relationship and his vocals were both stellar.

Keep Your Personal Life Private.

Sometimes celebrities (like everyone else) allow work to consume them. As Debbie said, "The business can really take over your life if you allow it to. I enjoy having my family away from Hollywood so Donny can come home to a bit of reality, like enjoying the kids' school activities, hiking, and just being a father. It helps everyone feel like show business is not our life, but just a job."

Love the High-Tech Communication.

When Donny is away, he and Debbie constantly talk via phone or webcam. As Debbie says, "I love Skype! We laugh because we have a virtual dad!" It helps Donny, Debbie, and the kids and grandkids to feel connected when they can see and hear each other every day.

Unfortunately, there is no magical recipe for making a relationship 100-percent breakup-proof. But there are many celebrities who continue to keep their relationships strong—it's just that we may not hear about them very often.

Regardless of whether we are actors or actuaries, keeping the pressure low, guarding our personal lives, and utilizing technology to communicate are great practical tips that we can all use to make our relationships strong.

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 five children and look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

Taylor Armstrong's Life Coach from The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills Offers Tips for Today's Relationship and Finding Mr. Right



By Ashley DelBello

“I teach women to be ladies and men to be gentlemen,” says

model turned relationship coach, Melanie Mar who has worked with Hollywood's most elite celebrities and couples to help them find love in their life and more importantly, within themselves.

Melanie Mar is the founder of Melanie Mar International and a partner of Patti Stanger's Millionaire's Club Matchmaking Agency. You may also recognize her from last night's episode of *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*, where she is seen coaching Taylor Armstrong about her marriage to Russell Armstrong. We had the chance to catch up with Mar and get her advice for couples in a relationship, as well as for those who are navigating the single scene. She offered some amazing insight. Ladies take note.

One of the most common dating challenges for single women who live in big cities like LA or NY is that they find it too hard to meet a man. "Women have become much more independent and now they're competing with men," says Mar. "There's a lot of masculinity out there these days and it takes so much courage for today's man to approach today's woman. He has no idea what reaction he'll get," she explains.

Mar continues by noting that anytime women are working, it means they're using their left brain, which is their logical and doing mode, it's the one that's needed to do a job successfully. The opposite lobe is where our emotions lie. Interestingly, the left brain is also the lobe that men use, hence where the competitiveness comes into play.

"There are four people in every relationship because we're all masculine and we're all feminine. You know when you're being one or the other. In fact, one of the things that I tell my women [clients] when they're struggling with this is when you've finished work, come home and take one hour and do something feminine. I don't care if it's taking a bath, walking the dog, or playing music. I don't care what it is, but get into that feminine side."

A Harvard study on why we marry found that approximately two-thirds of women marry for status and stability and the other 33 percent marry for sensual and sexual pleasure. However, the study found the exact opposite for men – where two-thirds of men marry for the sensual and sexual. When these men come home after work, they want to come home to a sensual home – meaning they don't want to work or compete once they've walked in the door.

“If you're a woman who wants a “real” man, turn it off when you get home,” Mar advises. “It's so crucial to take that one hour – and you should tell your partner that you need to do this to become a better girlfriend, wife, or significant other. It's so important for women not to compete, control or conquer their men because you won't respect them and the men if they're real men, won't tolerate it. You'll be banging heads every time you open your mouth.”

Mar's generously offered some tips for those looking to find that special someone:

– **Stop going out in groups:** It takes a lot of guts for a guy to approach a woman, much less a group of women. Mar advises if you're specifically going out to meet a guy, then don't go out with more than one girlfriend. If a man does approach you, remember to be nice to him even if you're not interested (unless he is a drunk or a creep of course!), since he mustered up a lot of courage to come talk to you.

– **Make your body language very clear:** Look around. Find a guy you're interested in. Make eye contact, hold it and SMILE. Melanie calls that “dropping the hanky” and men need a hanky dropped! It's very difficult for men to understand what women are doing so Mar always says to “drop the hanky,” hold the look, smile, and be open and inviting because he's taking cues from your body signals.

– **Do not sit there, huddled in a deep conversation with your**

girlfriends: Enough said.

– **Do not go up to him:** Let him come to you. And if he still doesn't approach you, then you know that you did your part. He's either in a relationship, not interested or gay.

– **Keep the ball in his court:** If he gives you his business card, turn it over, write your number on the back, and hand it back to him.

– **Let him chase you:** "That's another mistake today's woman is making," says Mar. "Women are calling, texting, inviting – making it far too easy for men. He doesn't want it to be that easy. He might think he does, but he doesn't. He wants to work for it."

– **Flirt five times a day for five minutes:** Practice on guys that you're not interested in. Smile at a guy at Starbucks. Catch the eye of a guy in the grocery store. Wherever you go – practice. You may not be into them, but you're practicing flirting. Some of them will come up and want to talk to you, but that's more practice (just don't forget to be polite when exiting the conversation). Eventually, you'll see a guy who you like and it won't be difficult because you've done it so many times.

– **Ask yourself what type of guy you like and go where they would go:** If you want a business guy who is worldly then go to an elegant hotel bar like the side bar at Beverly Wilshire. If you want a younger person who is more hip, then go to a trendy restaurant like Boa. If you want a church guy, then go to church. Make sure you've answered these questions before you step out the door.

Not wanting to leave anyone out, Mar's also offered advice for those who are already in a relationship:

– **Get a verbal contract:** "I'm not a moralist, but when you decide to sleep with a guy, it does make a difference." Mar

says that having a verbal contract is important so that you both are clear about what you're doing. "I don't care what that contract is. I don't care if you have one that says this is a one night stand but you need one. "There's nothing worse than a woman having sex with a man and presuming that they're in a monogamous relationship. Just because a woman spends a month or two getting to know a guy doesn't mean he isn't dating other people. A verbal contract will let you know where you stand so that you're both clear on your expectations.

– **Negotiate time, sex, money and space:** Take "time" for example. You say it's important to have a certain amount of time to yourself – negotiate with your partner how much time that is. For each of these categories, you should also negotiate "I," "We," and "Us." The "I" is time by yourself, the "We" is what you guys do together, and the "Us" is what you're doing together with other people. "It's really important to negotiate these things in order to keep the lines of communication open. If you do this, then the arguments are less and the peaceful atmosphere is more." Melanie advises couples to negotiate often: every two months during the first year, every three months during the second year and every six months after that.

– **It always comes back to communication:** "If you can't communicate, you're in trouble. If you can logically communicate with each other, then you're already ahead of the game."

– **Sex is important:** You need to negotiate what's right for each of you and find that middle ground that you're both happy with. "If it happens more than what you negotiated, and you both were in mutual agreement, then that's great. If it's less, then you need to work on it," says Mar.

– **Reconnect with your feminine side:** Take a bubble bath, drink a glass of wine, do your nails – just do something feminine.

– **Communicate clearly and often:** “What I teach is so important because verbal communication only takes up 15 percent of our communication ... so you better make sure what comes out of your mouth makes sense.”

To learn more about Melanie Mar and where she’s taking her advice next, visit her Facebook page or www.melaniemar.com.

Charlie Sheen: The Greatest Loss of All



By Dr. Jane Greer,
Marriage & Family Therapist, Author, Radio Host & Shrink Wrap
Celebrity Commentator

People are still transfixed by Charlie Sheen. Some clinical speculation about his behavior has suggested the ravages of

drug addiction or an untreated bipolar episode. While all of this may be true, to me, it looks like unbridled narcissism in full fury.

The go-to definition of narcissism is thinking only of oneself. However, when you use the word narcissist you are really making a much bigger statement. A narcissist is not only selfish but actually lacks the ability to think of anyone else. Most narcissists are masters at turning things around so they're the ones being wronged, and they make it appear that they are doing you a favor by letting you make it up to them. They are typically self-righteous and have an exaggerated sense of entitlement that leads them to believe they deserve everything and more. When they don't get what they want, they get angry and their rage knows no bounds.

You could be dating a narcissist and not even realize it. In fact, at the beginning of a relationship, it can be easy to miss the signs. If you're not sure, take a minute and consider these questions. Are most of the conversations you have centered around your partner? Are you always the one being flexible, making changes to your schedule or agreeing to new plans? If you're out to eat, does your date help themselves to your food without asking, not seeming to think twice about it and never offering you a taste of theirs? When you visit them, do they get up and greet you at the door or expect you to just walk in and join them in whatever they're doing? While each of these things might seem insignificant alone, together they are the signature behaviors of a narcissist.

The epitome of this is a specific personality type that in my book, *What About Me? Stop Selfishness from Ruining Your Relationship*, I call an ultimate controller. Their slogan is "it's all about me." They talk about how great they are, how successful they are, how they know more than anyone and how they're better than everyone else. Charlie certainly brings

this to life. We see this in his public tirades on Twitter and his webcast "Sheen's Korner," along with his declaration of "winning." Ultimate controllers have little if any empathy for their significant others and they are unable to accommodate the needs of those around them. To try to get them to is likely to lead to frustration, disappointment and unhappiness. This is what each of Charlie's wives realized, and why they ultimately got out of their marriages. For ultimate controller's, when their needs aren't met they are quick to get mad and attempt to control others with their anger in an effort to intimidate so they get their way. All of this comes through loud and clear with Charlie's reported death threats, along with his talk about trolls, fastballs and tiger blood. If you pay attention to some of the indicators you will hopefully avoid getting in so deep.

Unfortunately, because Charlie is such a money-generating celebrity he's been able to make his narcissism work for him and his out of control antics actually perpetuate his image as "the quintessential bad boy." The irony is that despite all that Charlie has lost, the one thing he is indeed the 'winner' at is being the best narcissist around.