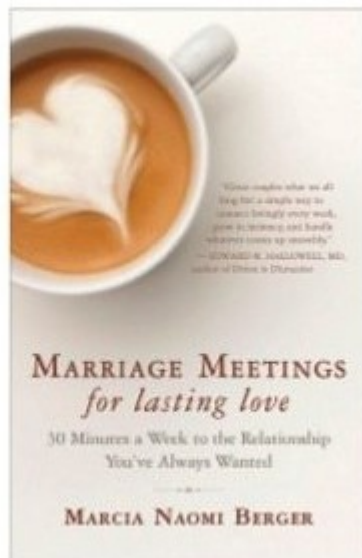


Create Lasting Love with 'Marriage Meetings'



By Brittany Stubbs

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

In her new book *Marriage Meetings for Lasting Love: 30 Minutes a Week to the Relationship You've Always Wanted*, Berger teaches you how to effectively communicate and connect with your spouse each week with step-by-step guidelines. The communication tips and techniques explained in her book are the same ones that Berger has used to guide hundreds of

couples towards deeper, more lasting love. Although the title of the book is *Marriage Meetings*, don't let that fool you. This book is not just for married couples but for anyone in a committed relationship, and the skills you use in marriage meetings will transfer to and benefit all relationships in your life.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Absolutely. There's a whole chapter on preparing for your meeting. One rule is scheduling the meeting at a time where neither partner is tired, hungry, or intoxicated.

Also, both partners should be in a calm state of mind so they're able to communicate in a positive and respectful

manner, even if they might be upset about something. Make sure that your phones are off and that there's no television in the background – or anything else that will distract one another. Another rule is using the positive communication skills described in detail in the book.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Besides marriage meetings, what advice to you have for our

readers to make their love last?

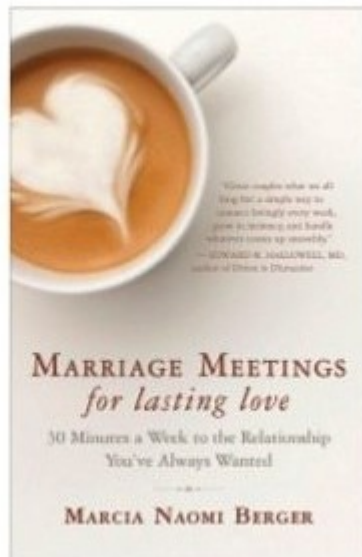
Use those positive communications skills every day. It may be difficult when something is going wrong, but don't forget to acknowledge all the things still going right. Ask for what you want in a respectful way rather than just stating what is going wrong. For example, instead of saying, "You never bring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

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

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

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





Interview by [Lori](#)

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

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

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

L: That's exactly what it was. There was nothing out there, and at the same time, my girlfriends who were asking these questions were really clever. They were journalists; they worked in finance; and they had these really interesting, steady careers. Yet they would have a dating question and absolutely freak out over it. It just seemed like the most obvious thing in the world to create somewhere to go and ask questions like "How do I get a second date?" or "Why haven't I heard back from him yet?"

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

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

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

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

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

L: I think that texting is increasingly how everyone's interacting. We get inquiries all of the time like, "This guy's been texting me for three months now, and I still haven't seen him" or "I met this guy on Tindr, and we're chatting every day, but he hasn't set up a date yet." At the end of the day, you have to remember that *nothing* replaces face-to-face interactions. Obviously, spending time with someone is the basis of any sort of meaningful relationship. So if he's not calling you and you're not seeing him, then it's just a distraction. It's a form of entertainment rather than a real relationship.

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

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

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

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

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

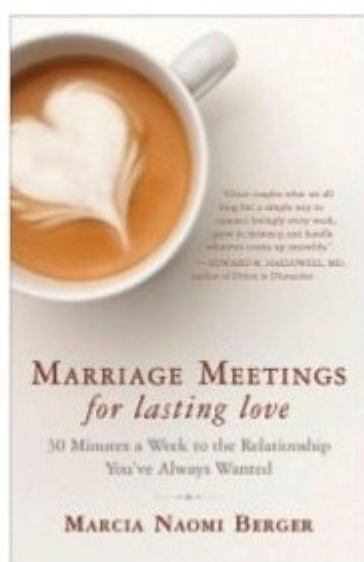
L: More than anything else, you still need to go with your gut instinct. I think we all spend too much time thinking about "Should I text him?" or "He Facebooked me two days ago. How long should I wait before responding?" It's good to keep those things in mind, but nothing replaces that moment when you first meet someone or when you first do something really meaningful together. You recognize that the relationship has significance. So I think you need to go with that feeling.

C: The biggest thing to me is open communication. There are so many different ways to talk now, and people aren't always

being honest. Direct communication and really sharing your true feelings instead of what you *think* you need to feel is most important.

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

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



By Brittany Stubbs

Although the 21st century has made it seem like ambitious women often end up alone, Dr. Sonya Rhodes assures us that this message is completely false. In her new book *The Alpha*

Woman Meets Her Match: How Today's Strong Women Can Find Love and Happiness Without Settling, the relationship therapist argues successful, modern, career-driven women can meet The One without changing – and she shows them how.

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

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

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

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

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

Related Link: [Avril Carruthers Reveals How to Maintain](#)

'Freedom From Toxic Relationships'

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

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

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

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

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

Your book includes a quiz that allows readers to determine

what level of alpha or beta they are. Why did you feel it was important to include that in the book?

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

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

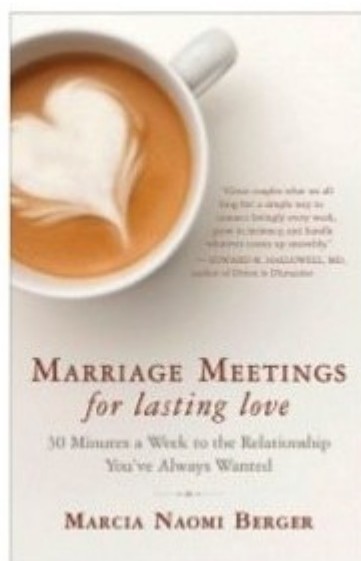
Related Link: ['A Million First Dates' Author Dan Slater Offers New Insight about Online Dating](#)

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

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

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

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



Interview by

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

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

The title – *How to Raise a Husband: A Whole Bunch of Ways to*

Build a Strong and Happy Marriage – certainly grabs people’s attention. What exactly is the meaning behind “raising” a husband?

The title was really inspired by my girlfriend. After telling me a story about how she caught her husband watching television instead of playing with their child, it occurred to me that she not only had to raise her kid but also her partner. That’s when I started thinking about my relationship with my husband and of the times that I might have helped him come to a more *mature* conclusion about a disagreement we were having or supported him in seeing a different perspective than his own – that’s how we raise each other. One partner helps the other see a little more clearly or communicate better. Sometimes we women just happen to be wearing thicker relationship glasses than our partner. We’re more fashionable that way.

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

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

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

In my own marriage, I learned that awareness is a huge component of good communication – that and a slice of chocolate cake can work miracles. If I am able to stay aware of what I’m feeling, I am better able to communicate that

calmly and lovingly to my partner. Then, we can work on what we need to from a place of honesty.

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

There are so many stories that I love and identify with. That was one of the great joys of writing this book. I could feel each wife's dilemma instantly and take her journey along with her, wondering what her solution would be. Some of my favorites include *Gender Profiling*, *The Football Widow*, and *Not Waiting for Waits*. *Not Waiting for Waits* has such a great message: staying true to yourself.

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

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

Related Link:

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

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

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

From letting the housework pile up until he has no choice but to help to offering a specific "reward system," this is a very popular topic addressed in *How to Raise a Husband*. However, I've found thrusting a vacuum cleaner in my man's hand and ordering him to "suck it up" doesn't always do the trick. But explaining to him *why* I'd like his help (most men seem to like things explained – a lot) works much better. If that doesn't work, check out Sophie's ingenious incentive in Chapter 15 (and it's not cake).

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

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

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

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

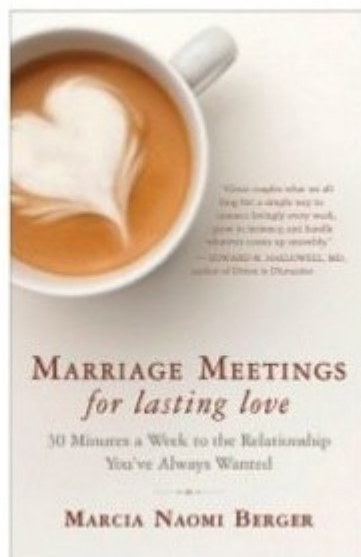
In writing *How to Raise a Husband*, I learned that everyone's key to a good marriage varies. At the core of everything, some women want a little more understanding; some need more acceptance; and some just want to be heard. That's where awareness comes in to play. If, as a wife, you can become aware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

After writing this book, I know that I always crave a little more understanding. When I'm feeling misunderstood, I can tell

my husband that's what is happening before we start an argument – and that's the first step to helping raise each other to our full potential (and getting a slice of cake).

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

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



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

Jennifer Buhl spent three years in Los Angeles working as a paparazza (the word for a female singular paparazzi), and as a top-earning photographer, she was one of only five women in an

industry dominated by men. Her work was published in *People* magazine, TMZ, and E! News, to name a few. Having since escaped the California lifestyle to move to Boulder, Colorado, and run a family photography business, she took the opportunity to reflect on her time in the field and wrote her new book, *Shooting Stars: My Unexpected Life Photographing Hollywood's Most Famous*. Read on for our exclusive interview with the author and find out more about her experiences with the rich and famous!

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

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

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

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

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

David is one of those celebrities that I put in a different

category – like this mammoth, mammoth star. He's like Tom Cruise or Brangelina. They operate in their own world, and they always have a ton of security around them. They've really changed their lifestyle because of their fame, so it's hard to get a good shot of them. You rarely see pictures of David just out and about because he knows how to avoid us (which isn't hard to do). So to have an encounter with him is a really special thing.

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

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

Were there any celebrity couples that you enjoyed shooting?

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

As an example, I was sitting on Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck's house one day – that's a paparazzi term for "staking out" – along with several other paparazzi. Ben pulls out in

his car, and nobody moves. We were all waiting for Jen.

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

To shift gears a bit, we wanted to ask your thoughts about the recent petition from couples like Kristen Bell and Dax Shepard who are trying to stop photographs of their kids from being published.

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

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

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

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

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

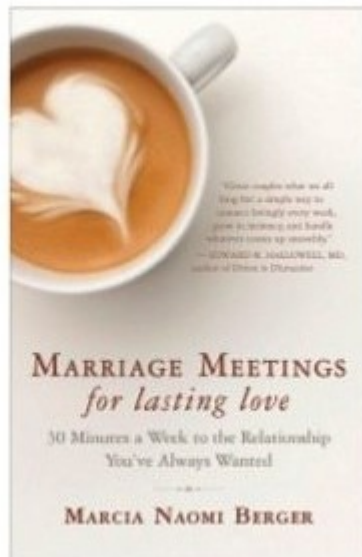
I guess my biggest piece of advice is to look into attachment

parenting – it really works for me. I would also say that, if possible, it's really important to have a flexible work schedule. It totally changed my life and just allows me to be a mother. If you read the book, then you know that motherhood is the most important thing in my life. So for me, it comes first. I still need to work, and I still love to work, so I put myself in a situation where I am able to be a working mother.

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

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





By Brittany Stubbs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But in the same respect, I found it helpful. Knowing some significant people from my past are basically reading my diary is really scary; I've compared it to standing naked in Times Square. But in order to make an impact, I believe you have to go to those places. If even one person is encouraged to make a positive change based on something I went through, it will be totally worth it to me.

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

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

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

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

First of all, make sure you're open to love. I encourage all women to be confident, strong, and independent, but I also think that in order to find love, you have to break down some

of your walls and be vulnerable at times. Single women often get in the habit of doing everything and taking care of everything themselves, and it's important to step back and remember that you don't have to rule the world by yourself. You can let your guard down every once in a while and invite someone else in.

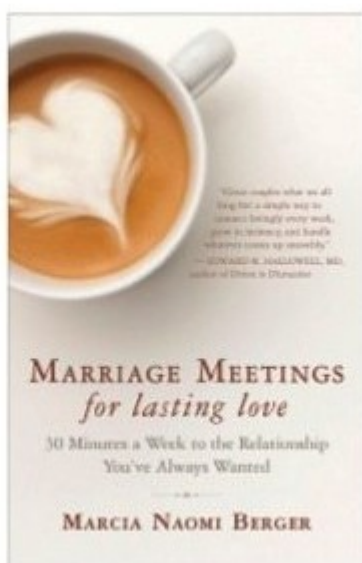
That being said, I think it's also important for single women to have a clear sense of self. Be aware of your boundaries and standards, and don't apologize for them. You should never sacrifice who you are to cater to someone's issues or insecurities.

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

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

'Marry Smart' Author Susan Patton Wants Young Women to

“Plan Ahead For Their Happiness”



Interview by

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

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

Her note advised Princeton's young female students to find their husbands while at school rather than dating men post-college who probably won't be of the same standard. She also suggested that female students dedicate less energy solely to advancing their careers and more towards finding a good mate and preparing for children. Naturally, the responses were visceral and immediate. The sheer amount of comments not only

shut down Princeton's website, but word quickly spread and soon, Patton was on every talk show imaginable defending her words.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The reason why I initially wrote this letter to the women in Princeton is because it's my alma mater, and I feel close to the university. I wanted to warn the undergraduates to not let this happen to them, to not be so all consumed with their careers that you get yourself to a point where you're in your mid to late 30s and realize that you have missed your opportunity to be married and have children. And sadly for many of them, they do.

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

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

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

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

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

I think, in college, it's hard for anybody to really think about marriage because of the workload and classes, but I think that young men do have marriage in the back of their minds. Then again, my concern isn't really for the guys

because if they don't find the women of their dreams in their 20s, it's not like they missed any opportunity. But a woman who is in her late 30s or early 40s has a very different story. If that woman hasn't found a man yet and hasn't had babies yet, she pretty much knows that that ship has sailed.

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

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

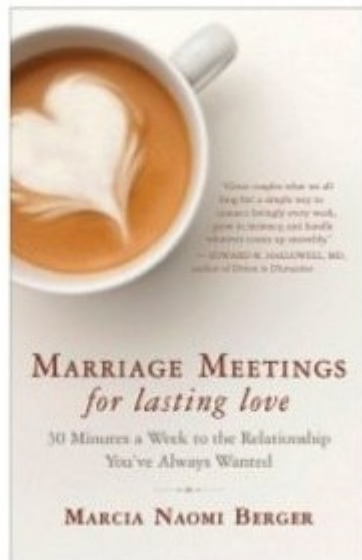
Different groups will misinterpret my words for their own purposes. But how could you argue with the idea that young women should plan for their personal happiness? Who argues with that? Of course, we should encourage young women to plan for their happiness! I think I've been misinterpreted in the sense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

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

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

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

Life”



Interview by

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

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

What do you hope readers gain from your book?

I hope that young women reading it are able to first find it entertaining and relatable but also find comfort in it if they haven’t dated a lot or even at all. It’s important for them to know they’re not the only one. And I also want readers to know

dating doesn't have to be their number one priority. Focusing on friendships with each other is equally valuable and a good use of time, especially when you're in high school and college.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

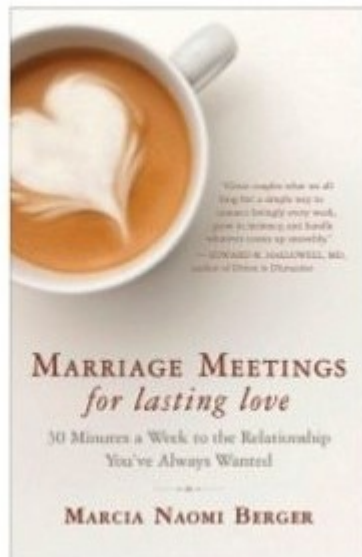
I hate Valentine's Day, but I think the thing to remember is that couples usually hate it too. I sort of think it's a holiday like New Year's Eve where everyone pretends to be so excited and everyone feels the need to make huge plans, but then everyone is disappointed.

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

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

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





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

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

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

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

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

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

What advice do you have for people exploring online dating?

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

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

In the book, you state that “Internet dating has helped people of all ages realize that there's no need to settle for a mediocre relationship.” But it appears that we have higher expectations now on what is good. Can you expand on this idea?

In the past, I think people would settle because there weren't as many opportunities to meet new people; a new person didn't

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

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

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

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

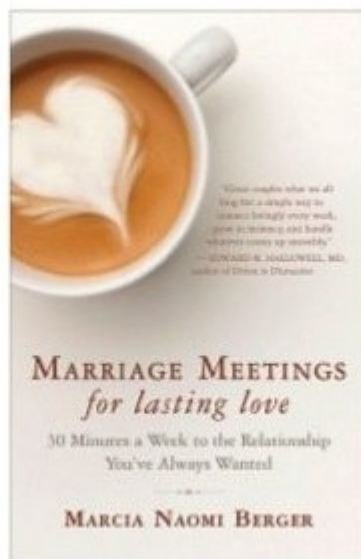
What are some positive aspects of approaching love this way?

For one, it does allow you several options. I think another positive is that they provide you with more dating experiences, and these experiences are going to benefit whatever relationship you finally end up in. They grant you real life opportunities versus received wisdom from your parents or friends and allow you to discover the kind of relationships and people that work or don't work for you,

which helps you ultimately understand what you're actually looking for and need in the end.

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

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



By Leslie Chavez

When it comes to our romantic lives, so many of us have been stuck in a toxic environment, trying desperately to escape without success. Enough is enough! Life is way too short to be entangled in poisonous partnerships. Author Avril Carruthers

paves the way for lasting love in her new book, *Freedom From Toxic Relationships: Moving on from the Family, Work and Relationship Issues that Bring You Down*, a guide that explains where these toxic relationships begin and what kind of psychological pain they entail. She teaches her readers how to observe these patterns, making it possible to truly move on. It's time to leave those destructive relationships behind and start creating more loving and meaningful connections.

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

Relationships go through phases. We might be aware that the initial "honeymoon" stage is called that for a reason. As the relationship deepens, we trust that our beloved will be kind, but at the same time, we fear that they will see something in us that we don't like about ourselves. We then project our fear of rejection and make assumptions based on the inevitable baggage we've brought with us from previous relationships. We might react with anger or resentment based on what we imagine our partner is thinking or saying. Many relationships flounder at this point, when we cannot perceive past our projected insecurities.

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

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

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

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

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

An energetic tie or psychic cord is a transference of emotion or thoughts that appears to have a life of its own; they occur between people who are in or have been in an intense relationship. We *feel* the effects of this cord when we find ourselves behaving in ways we wish we'd rather not or getting lost in the other's emotions or projections.

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

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

In my experience, instant attractions are likely to be

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

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

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

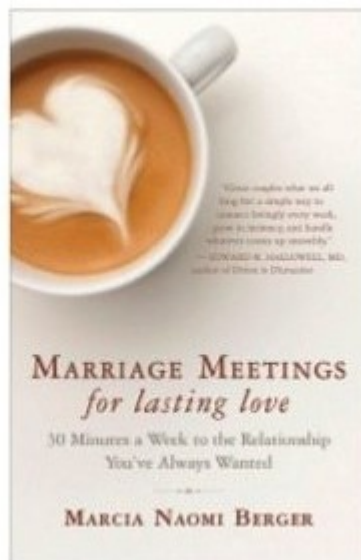
And finally, what advice can you give to singles in order to attract a healthy, loving, and positively transforming relationship?

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

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

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

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



By Leslie Chavez

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ground birds are people who like order. They have rules for how things should work and tend to think that their way is the right way. They like to know the detail of things and work steadily toward a decision. Sky birds get bored by detail; they don't tend to have rules – or be very good at following them – and tend to make decisions intuitively. You can probably see how a combination of these types could create conflict very quickly.

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

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

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

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

Yes, I find that they do. A saying I have is that opposites

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

I hesitate to label people I haven't met, but I would say that President Obama is likely to be a sky bird, possibly an owl. The First Lady, I think, is a ground bird, probably a swan. Sticking my neck out even further, I'd say Brad Pitt is probably a sky bird, and Angelina Jolie is a ground bird. She seems to be the engine of the relationship.

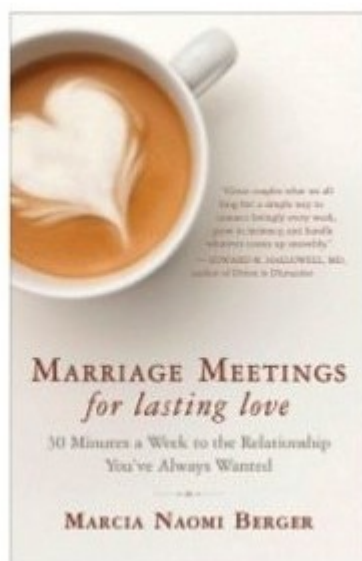
Related Link: [Celebrity Couples Where Opposites Attracted](#)

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

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

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

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



By Kerri Sheehan

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

Smith is the cofounder of Geekadelphia, a popular blog covering all-that-is-geek in the City of Brotherly Love. In

his newest book, the blogger hopes to help his fellow nerds and give them a step-by-step guide to put their heart on the line and fall in love. Throughout the book, he makes references to *Star Trek*, *Firefly*, *Pokémon*, and many other fandoms. A self-proclaimed geek himself, Smith was able to connect these ideas to the dating world so nerds can really grasp the concepts he discusses. The author also encourages his readers to switch off the “pick-up artist” technique in favor of showing understanding and respect for women. Featuring eight-bit pixel art by Juan Carlos Solon, *The Geek’s Guide to Dating* will make any gamer feel like they’re right at home.

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

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

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

In terms of how these qualities have helped me, I think I have the ability of recall, which is a really nice thing. I love remembering random dates and unique moments of my fiancé’s relationship with me. I still remember what my fiancé wore on

our second date when we went to this really small restaurant in Philadelphia – it was a pink dress that she got from this place called Smak Parlor in Old City. And on our first date a year and a half ago, she wore this green eye shadow that I'm never going to forget. It's fun to know little things like that because mentioning those things can really make someone's day.

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

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

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

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

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

Do you have any advice for gamer guys who are currently

attached to a non-gamer girlfriend?

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

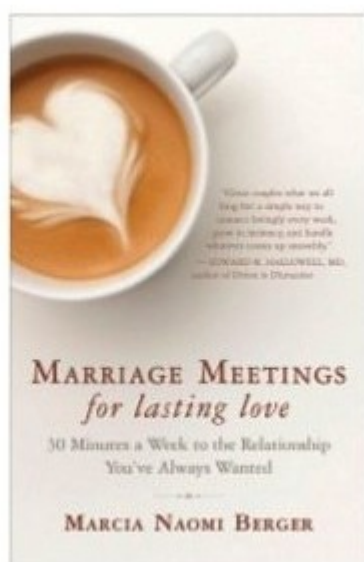
If you're dating someone who does want to play and try them out, then you can pick out games that have two-player opportunities. You don't want to make your significant other watch you slog through a football game when they can't jump in at all. It reminds me of when I was a kid and went over someone's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

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

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

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

Dr. Barton Goldsmith Discusses How To Become 'The Happy Couple'



By Priyanka Singh

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

to say:

How do bad habits start in relationships?

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

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

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

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

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

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

dinner or even during dinner. Then, you create communication as a habit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

If you just put a smile on your face, in the beginning, that's going to make a big difference, and that's a very simple thing. You need to change negative thoughts to positive ones.

Take a walk; read a light book; write down your feelings; play with the dog; play with each other; give each other a massage; do something outside of the house, in the house, with the house! Do things that add to your environment. Do things that are light and easy that are going to make what surrounds you better.

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

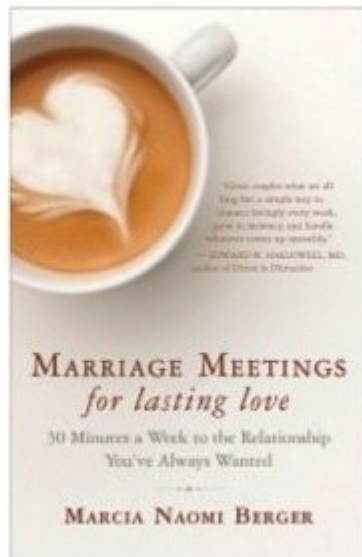
Sum up your best relationship advice in one sentence.

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

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

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





Interview by [Lori](#)

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

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

Dr. Glass also teaches her readers how to pick up on signals of deception. Analyze the body language of divorced couples like Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes to see how they're *really* feeling about each other. Plus, she provides the eight reasons why adults lie and tells you how to spot liars by looking at facial expressions, voice tone, speech content, and more. The author chatted with CupidsPulse.com in an exclusive interview and dished insider info on how to see through lying eyes and false statements.

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

Tell us: Why *do* people lie?

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

What are some of the signs of lying?

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

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

Yes. Your instincts kick in, and you know that you know what you know. You just don't want to believe it most of the time. For instance, when you watch the news and a celebrity you love comes on, you may see that they're lying. Because you don't want to see it, you continue blindly doing what you do.

It's the same in relationships, but the key is to observe *what is*, not what you want it to be. You can't be in denial. Your

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

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

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

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

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

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

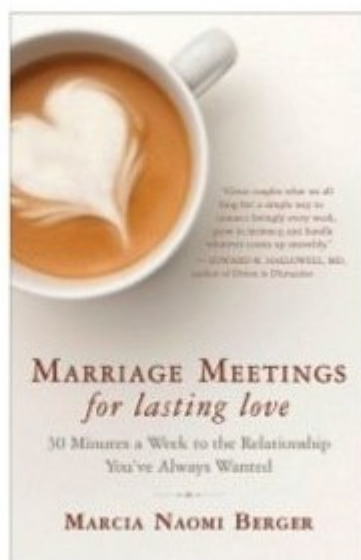
Anything else you want to share with our readers?

The message is really you've got to put your game on now. This is a new world, a new way to live, and with technology, if you don't know how to spot deception, then you're done. You won't succeed in your professional life, in your personal life, in your family life. If you understand how to read people, especially if they're telling the truth or not, it's going to save you money, heartache, and so much more. You're going to

gain a lot as well.

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

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



By [Whitney Johnson](#)

Country crooner Carrie Underwood and *Gossip Girl* star Chace Crawford ended their fling via text. Similarly, rumor has it that John Mayer called it quits with on-again, off-again girlfriend Jennifer Aniston by text. Most recently, Katy Perry revealed that Russell Brand, her husband of 14 months,

announced his intentions to divorce via text. These celebrity examples – and countless real-world stories– are the impetus behind Ruthie and Michael Dean’s new book, *Real Men Don’t Text: A New Approach to Dating*. While the title suggests that the book is aimed at women, in truth, it’s meant for anyone who’s single and searching for love. The couple’s new approach to dating comes down to a simple idea: “You have to be the right person that the right person is looking for,” explains Michael. Find out who *you* want to be and then go out and find a guy – one who will call you instead of text.

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

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

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

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

Part of the book’s title is “a new approach to dating.” How would you explain this new approach?

M: It’s about taking a personal inventory. Ask yourself: Am I pleased with my relationship? If you would just take a step

back and set new standards for dating, you'd be much happier. You may not get asked out as often, but ultimately, you'll end up in a relationship that makes you much happier. So the new approach to dating is developing real standards and understanding that you're worth setting standards, that you're worth having a guy call you instead of sending a late-night text message.

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

R: As I observed my peers and my own dating choices, I realized that low self-esteem and feeling inadequate was often at the root of our decisions. It's important to find our worth apart from what men say about us because we accept the kind of love we think we deserve. It can be a quick downward spiral when we start letting men define who we are – one that can lead women into detrimental relationships lacking mutual respect. The hard part is that our friends often encourage bad dating decisions and that no one is talking about the importance of self-worth.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

How do you balance your busy careers and your marriage?

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

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

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

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

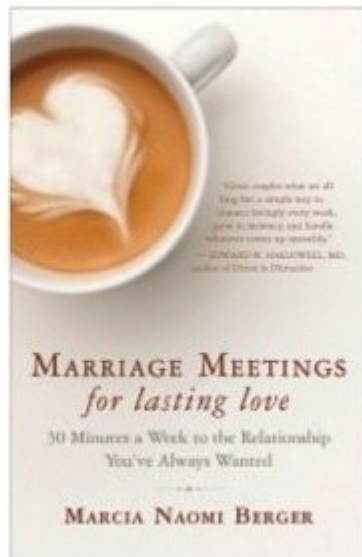
R: My desire in writing *Real Men Don’t Text* was to show women that they’re not alone by sharing my mistakes but also to show that there *is* hope for an amazing relationship in the future. I think it was necessary to share our story in order to show that dating differently than our friends actually works! No

one wants to read a dating book by a single woman, right? I always knew I wanted to write about relationships, but I didn't feel 'qualified' until my choices to date differently actually resulted in a great husband.

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

Relationship Author Kaileen Rosenberg Gives Dating Advice for Finding 'Real Love, Right Now'





By Gabriela Robles

[Kailen Rosenberg](#), Oprah’s “Love Ambassador” and co-host of the revolutionary television show *Lovetown USA*, knows what it takes to find a lasting relationship and love. The relationship author has a method that inspires people to put aside their bad habits and find their true self – and she has proof that the dating advice works in many happy famous couples that she’s helped. Her new book, *Real Love, Right Now*, is a set of guidelines that focus on discovering what really matters in a romantic relationship. The dating expert touches upon physical, mental and emotional self-appraisal before explaining her 30-day plan to help singles succeed in their search for The One. *Real Love, Right Now* even comes with its own set of fun “homework” assignments to deepen its impact.

Dating Expert Opens Up About New Book About Love

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

This was something that I’ve wanted to do for many, many

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

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

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

I think so many people believe that, because they’re single, they’re ready for love. Most people actually aren’t, which is why we end up hitting a lot of walls and get stuck in marriages that end in divorce. It’s really crucial for us to ask ourselves why we want love in our lives. If we believe that we know what we want from someone else, then we must know what we have to offer to a relationship for it to be happy, sexy, and amazing. All of those things that we want from someone are things that the other person deserves as well. Many times we don’t think about that, and it comes off as very one-sided. We need to really be in the best place that we can be in terms of our physical, emotional and spiritual states. Otherwise, roadblocks happen, and we unknowingly sabotage our relationship.

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

Those assignments are really important because they get people

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

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

Relationship Author Gives Readers Her Best Dating Advice

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

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

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

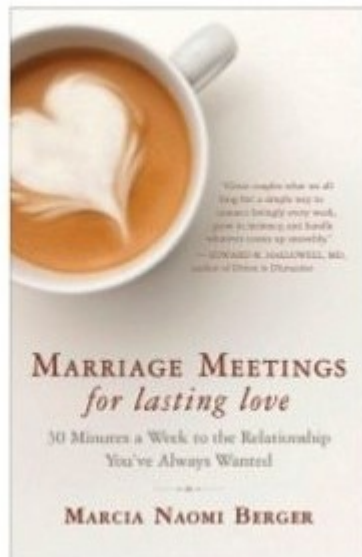
ready for love?

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

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

Royal Young Explains Why Fame Isn't Everything In His Memoir 'Fame Shark'





By Marisa Spano

There is something special about Royal Young, and it's not just his name. Perhaps it's his hefty quantity of charisma and understanding of the world around him. The 28-year-old writer was born Hazak Brozgold to a Jewish family on New York's lower east side. He spent much of his young life looking for a spotlight, and now that he's finally got one, he's urging people to understand the downsides of fame.

To the American culture, fame means money, mansions and adoring fans. Most people think of the perks instead of the downfalls. But is fame a good thing? That's the very question that this author and [Interview Magazine](#) writer answers in his recently-released memoir, *Fame Shark*. Young's memoir outlines his past obsession with being famous and uses his history to illustrate to young people why a fixation with celebrity can be damaging. When CupidsPulse.com chatted with Young, he opened up about initial resistance to his memoir, the story behind his name and his new perspective on fame.

At what moment did you realize that you wanted to write a memoir?

When I was 18 years old, I was kind of crazy. I was drinking a

lot and chasing all of these different means of getting attention instead of looking for love from my parents and relationships in general. One of the ways I was doing that was modeling. I met some shady people in that industry, but I also got to meet someone amazing at Wilhelmina. I sent him some of my writings and photos of myself. He sat me down and was like, "Dude, I read your writing, and you have a real talent here. You can keep being a crazy downtown New York City kid and messing up your life, or you can write a book. I think you have that in you." That was the first time I had heard that from anyone. I was so excited by it that I actually started a very tiny piece of *Fame Shark* right then and there.

Related Link: [Amanda Bynes: When Help Is Needed But Not Wanted](#)

What was the initial reaction to your book?

Honestly, it was hard. So many people were very skeptical, and I dealt with a lot of rejection and resistance. But for me, being so young is kind of the point of writing the memoir. I think we live in a culture that is very obsessed with celebrities and very obsessed with youth, and I think that can be taken to a dangerous extreme. Writing a book like *Fame Shark* at a young age is kind of a comment on that culture.

Are you still obsessed with fame? If not, what changed for you?

It has definitely changed. When I started writing the book, I was still under the kind of weird, narcissistic delusion that the book itself would be my final catapult to celebrity. However, writing a book doesn't really work that way because it's such hard work and there's so much rejection. I have worked incredibly hard for seven years as a journalist – that delayed gratification was so helpful to me in terms of these disillusionments. Do I still want to be famous? No. Do I still want to be successful and visible? Do I want my work to get to the largest audience possible? Absolutely.

In your book, you have an infatuation with Winky, a 14-year-old girl you meet on MySpace. She's the one who gave you your name, Royal Young. Tell us about that!

Winky had nicknames for all of her *Gossip Girl*-type, upper Westside friends. She would call us "The Lost Boys." It felt awesome – she was like this weird Wendy figure, and I was like a drunk Peter Pan. It felt great to be a part of that and be saved from my horrible Hebrew name, which always set me apart and made me feel like an outsider. I legally changed my name eight years ago, and it changed who I am. Even my old friends call me Royal now. It's a persona and a personality that I have grown into and that I feel so comfortable with.

Related Link: [The Pros and Cons to Taming a Bad Boy](#)

You say that you went to art school to live out your father's dreams of becoming a famous artist. Do you feel like you were living your father's life instead of your own?

I certainly felt that way. I think the peril of trying to fulfill someone else's fantasies is that you really end up resenting them. That's something that my dad and I had to work through, but what's so cool now is I feel like I am in a position to help him. My dad's images are in the hard copies of the book. So in that sense, I am still connected to my dad's dreams. I still want to help him live them out, but I'm not the one who is doing the living – he is.

What advice do you have for young people looking to be famous?

Don't do it! Get rid of your grand ideas; get paparazzi, flashbulbs, money and all of that out of your mind. Just enjoy your life and work hard at your passion. I think it's so important to stay grounded and really keep those connections to friends and family. Work on those key relationships in your life because that'll help you; pursuing a path of solitary success is very dangerous and scary too. Focus on knowing yourself before you go out into the world.

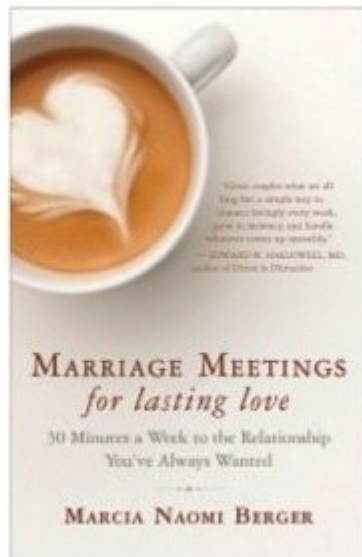
And finally, what's next for you?

I want to go silver screen. I want *Fame Shark* to have a red carpet premiere. I'm negating everything I just told you! I really do see *Fame Shark* as an evolving brand though. When it started off for me, the definition of fame shark was someone who is so lonely that they mistake success or being a celebrity for love, and now, I feel like that's changing. Now, it's about tenacity; it's about hard work and hustle. So I would love to see where that goes next. I'm also working on a novel.

Fame Shark is available now on Amazon. You can follow the author on Twitter @RoyalYoung

Author Roy Sheppard Bridges the Gap Between Mothers and Daughters In His New Book





By [Andrea](#)

[Surujnauth](#)

Growing up in today's society is full of challenges, especially for teenage girls. They tend to forget, though, that their mothers went through similar difficulties when they were young. In his new book, *Dear Daughter: what I wish I'd known at your age*, author Roy Sheppard hopes to connect mothers and daughters, revealing their similarities and making communication easier.

Drawing on his experiences as a psychotherapist, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) practitioner, journalist and [relationship expert](#), he reaches out to everyday mothers and gives young women helpful advice about topics ranging from financial issues to [boy problems](#). These words of wisdom come straight from the hearts of moms who want to help their daughters grow but have a hard time reaching out to them. Here, CupidsPulse.com chats with Sheppard about his varied career path, his inspiration for his new book and his advice for girls as they search for [love](#).

You used to be a reporter for British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and then, you became a hypnotherapist and NLP practitioner. What influenced you to make such a big change?

My proper job is interviewing people, so after I spent years working at BBC, mainly doing live reporting, I switched to the conference industry and interviewed executives. I wanted to be a much more effective journalist, not just talking about data and information. I wanted to be more [insightful](#), so that's the actual reason I trained to be a hypnotherapist, which might sound a bit bizarre. As a therapist, you're taught to notice more details, and as a hypnotherapist, it's almost a forensic understanding of how people think, how they perceive the world. So when you can tap into that ability, your interviewing becomes so much more perceptive. It totally changed my life.

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

Once in the therapy field, you focused on relationships. What drew you specifically to relationship coaching?

I wanted to write about [relationships](#) but with a different spin on them. I found that most relationship writing is by women, for women. As a man, I have a different perspective. I always make sure that I make it very clear that I have a male point of view. If women are open-minded, when they read my writing, they get a perspective that they won't get from a female writer. So the big thing that I try to do is bring men and women together; I want to be able to help them understand each other better.

Let's talk about your new book, *Dear Daughter*. What inspired you to write a self-help book for young women?

I wanted to write something that would be relevant for young people today. I realized very quickly that you can't do it in one book, so I decided to split it up: *Dear Son*, which was published late last year, and *Dear Daughter*. *Dear Daughter* is about 15 percent longer – there's more information that [girls](#) need to know! I had the most fantastic conversations with

women, talking about stuff that they wouldn't normally talk about with a man. I felt very privileged.

You include a lot about relationships, and you discuss why it's unwise for women to overanalyze men. Why is this a bad habit to develop?

I just don't think that it's a productive use of your time and energy. There are two types of men: good guys and [bad guys](#). Most men are actually straightforward, and if they say one thing, they mean that. Men are not as complicated or Machiavellian as women. We both know that there are some women who are extremely calculating and who behave atrociously to other women, but men don't do that. Because women think in this way, it's easy for them wrongly apply the same sophisticated analysis to a man as they would to a woman.

We've all heard of the book *He's Just Not That Into You*. How can a woman tell if a man is into her?

He calls. It really is that simple. A man will find any excuse to talk to a woman if he [likes](#) her.

Related Link: [How Not To Scare A New Man Away](#)

What would you say are some of the most important things that women should do when looking for Mr. Right?

Don't look for [Mr. Right](#)! Just be somebody who, if Mr. Right comes along, he decides to stop. If you focus on being a special person for yourself first, that makes a huge difference.

I think dating is the new addiction. It's so easy to [date](#). But I genuinely believe that, if you put energy into being a decent human being, it makes the process so much easier. As a therapist, the biggest problem I see is that people – women in particular – create a fantasy figure in their head. They compare Mr. Perfect to the man in their life, but no person

will ever live up to that fantasy figure. Why? Because that fantasy figure doesn't exist. Focus more on enjoying your partner and accept that your differences actually add richness to your relationship.

Do you feel that daughters who are close with their mothers have a better chance at finding a healthy relationship? If so, why?

I definitely agree with that. I hope that my *Dear Daughter* and *Dear Son* books can be something that parents give to their kids and say, "Look, I know you don't want to talk to me about a lot of this stuff, but read this book. Afterwards, if there's anything that you want to talk about, please do." A number of friends of mine who have teenage [daughters](#) were reading the manuscript separately from each other, and they all asked if they could share it with their daughter. Every single time they did, they had the most amazing conversations. It brought new topics into the open, and they talked about some really important things.

And finally, if you had one piece of advice that you would give to our readers, what would it be?

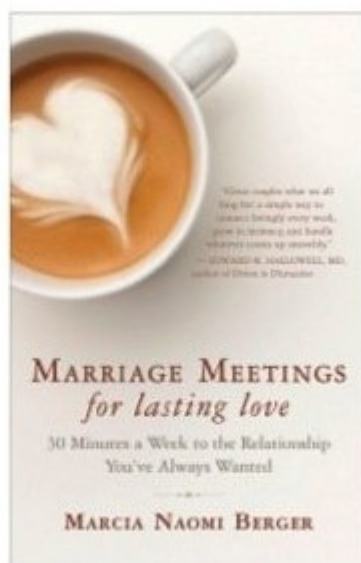
Of course, I want them to read the book!

In the introduction, I say that I want to build a bridge between [parents](#) and young people. Remember that a bridge is built from both sides. Even though you may believe that adults have no idea what it's like to be you, listen to them a little bit more. Before you decide that somebody's wrong, just be silent and think about what they're saying. If you decide later that they're wrong, that's fine, but don't let "no" be your knee-jerk reaction to everything.

The book is now available from [Kobo](#) as an e-book. You can currently purchase a copy of Dear Daughter from www.TheSensibleUncle.com, and it will be more widely available on July 8, 2013. For more information about

Sheppard, please visit www.royspeaks.com or follow him on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Niecy Nash Explains Why ‘It’s Hard to Fight Naked’



By [Whitney Baker](#)

[Johnson](#)

We all know and love Niecy Nash as an actress, television host and comedienne. What you may not know, though, is that she's quite the matchmaker as well. In fact, it was at her first matchmaking party that she introduced best friend and *The View* co-host Sherri Shepherd to her now-husband Lamar Sally. From there, she began hosting an online show on Yahoo! called "Let's Talk About Love," which eventually developed into her

new book, *It's Hard to Fight Naked*. In it, she invites her readers to think differently about matters of the heart and shares her tips for finding true love. We chatted with the newly-minted author about the book's eye-catching title and many words of wisdom.

Related Link: [Video Exclusive: Sherri Shepherd Chats About the Three Men in Her Life](#)

What inspired you to write a book of relationship advice?

I fell in love! After I experienced the best part of a relationship, I wanted that for all of my girlfriends. I feel like we struggle most at the thing we were created for, which was love.

What can readers expect to learn from *It's Hard to Fight Naked*?

First, you will attract what you are. So inevitably, you should be what you want to receive. If you're dating and all of your potential partners are crazier than the last person, then you need to look in the mirror and say, "Good morning, crazy!" That's part of what you're bringing to the table.

Also, it's one thing if you just want to hang out and have fun. But when you're looking to settle down, then you have to move into a place where you date with your priorities versus your preferences. There are certain things that you require in a relationship that are more important than superficial things. You have to find someone who meets the priorities of what you want in a man, and then you can consider the outer wrappings of a relationship.

Let's talk about the title!

It has a figurative and a literal application. Figuratively, when you are exposed and vulnerable, you're at your truest self. And you have to walk in the truth. I think people

sometimes approach relationships like they're a game – they don't really want to show their hand or their feelings or their fears. When you're honest, though, you're exposed, and that's when you're most “naked.”

The literal meaning takes us back to Adam and Eve when they were really naked and unashamed in the garden. If you have your clothes off, there's a party! I'm a lover, not a fighter, so I'd rather stay in any state that leads to love as opposed to fighting.

Related Link: [Harlan Cohen Shares Why 'Getting Naked' Will Help Us Find Love](#)

And did this type of vulnerability help you meet your husband, Jay Tucker?

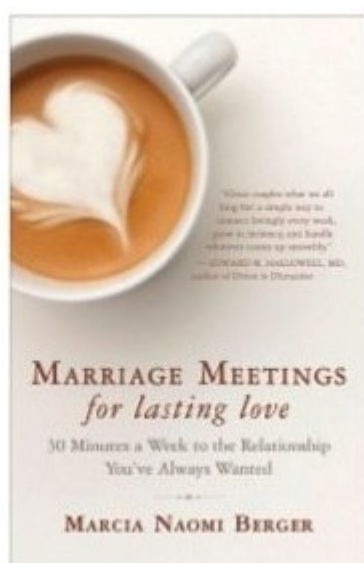
I was very honest with him. When you're deciding to marry someone, there has to be a like-mindedness. Your partner needs to know the truth about how you think, you feel.

Finally, what advice do you have for someone struggling to show her true self?

You have to work on being honest with yourself. You see women who say they don't care if they ever get married or have a family, yet every Sunday morning, they watch a marathon of *Say Yes to the Dress*. Knock it off! You have to be honest with yourself first. Once you walk in your own truth, you'll be better able to communicate that to a man. If you're living a lie, of course, it's going to be hard to be open with someone else.

You can purchase Nash's new book [It's Hard to Fight Naked](#) on [Amazon](#). To keep up with the author, follow her on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Be sure to check out [www.niecynash.com](#) too!

'DATA, A Love Story' Author Amy Webb Tells Us How to Find Love Online Based On Her Own Experiences



By Michelle Danzig

After countless failed dates, author and digital strategist Amy Webb decided to try online dating in a whole new fashion. To better understand what makes an online dating profile attractive, Webb created an online dating profile disguised as a male. Then she created nine more.

In her book *DATA, A Love Story: How I Gamed Online Dating to Meet My Match*, Webb brings the expression “put yourself in

someone else's shoes" to an entirely new level. Dating can be hard enough without adding the pressure of creating an online dating profile that represents you at your best.

Using the data recovered from the multiple profiles and their different characteristics, Webb discovered what information is needed to help you boost your online profile, ultimately helping you get the most out of your experience. We had the opportunity to interview Webb about her new book, learning the dos and don'ts of online dating and how to make your online dating profile more appealing.

I find it so fascinating that you created a fake, male profile (actually 10 of them) to "game" the online dating system. Why did you take this approach? What surprised you most about your female competition?

My goal was to make the best possible profile that I could. In order to do that, I wanted to find out more about my competition, and the only way to figure that out was to sign up as a man. The first time I did that, it was really shocking to me to find this big of gap. I was looking for a very specific type of guy, a very specific type of relationship. So I created a profile that had all of the attributes of the type of guy that I wanted. I asked myself, "If these are the women attracted to the same men as me, how can I present myself better online so I can get the guy instead?" That's what it was really about.

I was surprised to find out that people were lying about their height, although I think we all round our numbers a bit. Men are rounding up on their height; women are rounding down, which I also found interesting. I was always told that men are typically the ones making the first moves. What I realized was that people who are really great at online dating and seem to be really popular are the ones who aren't afraid to make the first move, male or female. They were willing to reach out

first, which was a happy surprise.

Related Link: [5 Low Profile Online Dating Strategies](#)

You gathered a lot of data and uncovered specific characteristics that make an online profile “attractive.” What are some of the top characteristics?

Well, photos matter, but that’s common sense. It’s obvious when the photo is eight to ten years old. The photo should always be current and, of course, make you look great. Women should show some skin, and there should be no one else in the photo.

Keeping the profile shorter rather than longer is always a good thing. Creating an online profile is really branding and marketing yourself. You should always be optimistic in what you’re saying; try not to sound negative. I think the most important thing to keep in mind is that the dating part doesn’t happen online; the dating part happens in real life.

What are some key characteristics that users should eliminate from their profile?

I’ve never dumbled down who I am, but one thing I learned is that you can’t list all your accomplishments. When you first meet somebody, you wouldn’t give them a five minute speech about your life (although we’ve all certainly met people like that), so why on earth would you do it online? Try to paint a picture for whoever is looking at your profile; make it seem like you’re approachable and like you’re a really fun person to be around.

After you analyzed your data, you went back and changed your personal profile based on what you learned. What changes did you make?

I changed everything. I had to scratch the entire thing and start over again. From the photos to the description –

everything.

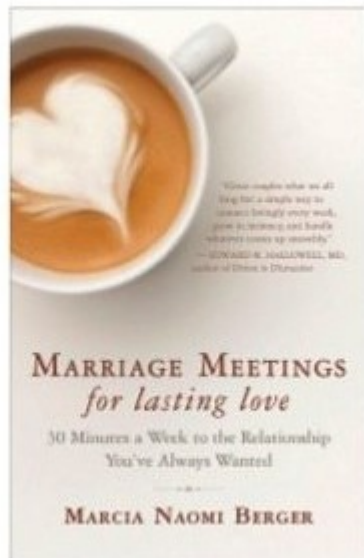
Related Link: [No More Excuses: 10 Ways to Ditch Bad Dating Habits](#)

The majority of our visitors are single women looking for love. What advice can you give them for finding someone online or even offline?

Figure out exactly what you want. I think a lot of people who are in unhappy relationships aren't being honest with themselves. Everyone who is looking for someone should start off with his or her own list of attributes, and they should be very specific. Market yourself appropriately. Digitally, that means using the right information and presenting yourself the right way. However, in the real world, it's the same thing. Make sure you look and feel your best. Have a lot of confidence and present yourself well when you meet people.

You can purchase a copy of 'DATA: A Love Story: How I Gamed Online Dating to Meet My Match' in bookstores and online from [Amazon](#). For more information about Webb, please visit [DATALoveStory.com](#) or follow her on [Twitter](#).

**Get Dating Advice From
Classic Literature With the
Help of 'Much Ado About
Loving'**



By Michelle Danzig

What does your love life have in common with the love lives of the characters in classic, century-old literary novels? Some of you may be thinking back to your high school and college reading lists when you dreaded those 500-plus page novels assigned to you by an outdated teacher or professor. There couldn't possibly be any similarities between you and those fictional characters, right? Two book lovers and advice columnists challenge that notion. In their new collaborative book, *Much Ado About Loving: What Our Favorite Novels Can Teach You About Date Expectations, Not So-Great Gatsbys, and Love in the Time of Internet Personals*, authors Jack Murnighan and Maura Kelly address today's relationship issues, apply them to the plots and character traits of classic novels and suggest ways that their readers can learn from these stories. In an exclusive interview with CupidsPulse.com, Murnighan and Kelly discuss what sparked the idea for the book, what you can learn from these novels and what they personally discovered

while writing.

Jack, Maura's introduction states that you instantly recommended *War and Peace* to help her with her dating troubles. Where did you come up with the idea to learn about relationships from fictional characters in classic literature?

JACK: If you spend a lot of time reading great books, you can't help but learn, feel and grow right alongside the characters; that's much of the joy (and point) of turning those pages. What really separates great literature from merely good is how much it can teach and inspire you. Alain de Botton wrote that Proust can change your life, but that's true of most great writers – and that's why we wrote this book.

In the book, you compare modern-day problems to the plots and characters of fictional literary novels. Which modern-day problem was the hardest one to match?

MAURA: Well, we didn't really say, "Okay, let's take some modern-day problems and look for their analogs in classic novels." We did it the other way around – a more natural approach. As we read novels, we thought, "Hmm! There's a lot in here that sounds familiar. There's a lot here that we can apply to our own dating lives." And then, when I was talking to a friend about how Jack and I were looking for romantic wisdom in novels, she said, "Pass some of that insight over to me!" That's when I began to think that we should write a book.

JACK: I take it as an open dare to find a current life situation that I can't find some analogous set-up in great literature. Even some theoretically contemporary-only situations, like online dating, can be illuminated by quality literature, as in Maura's chapter about *Love in the Time of Cholera*.

Related Link: [Five Steps to Turn a Date into a Relationship](#)

Do you feel that today's generation is facing the same

scenarios in love (with the exception of new technology) as what we read in classic novels?

MAURA: Absolutely. One of my favorite proofs that we moderns, living in the age of the iPhone, are facing the same kinds of romantic conundrums that people faced in the time of hunting and gathering – or, at least, in the time of stagecoaches and petticoats – comes from Jane Austen. In *Sense and Sensibility*, there's a great little set piece during which Marianne Dashwood, one of the main characters, sends a note to her crush, Willoughby, through a footman, and then begins waiting, immediately, for his letter back. She waits and waits and waits – and checks at the window and looks at the door and listens for the sounds of a horse's hooves and makes herself sick wondering when she will receive the response she wants. The same kind of thing happens all the time today, even if what we're doing is staring at our computer screens and endlessly refreshing our inboxes.

In your opinion, what are the modern-day catalysts that cause relationships to fail?

JACK: Assuming that you have real chemistry together, in some ways, I think it's all about timing: both parties have to want the relationship to work, and that requires a good time sync. Each party also has to be mature enough to have a sense of what they need and be able to communicate that (and the disappointment of not getting it). That's a fair amount of personal development. I fear most of us, most of the time, brush things under the rug, and eventually, that deteriorates everything.

If you could each chose one fictional character in the novels you studied and give them jobs as relationship experts, who would you pick and why?

MAURA: I don't know if there's a character I would pick. We like characters and relate to them, in large part because they

don't know everything about relationships and love – and we often read novels to see what they learn about romance. I'll point to Austen again because she's an author so many people know and love. Her characters learn, for instance, that the charming guy whom you just feel so connected to and so passionate about isn't always a good bet for the long haul; sometimes the less dashing – and more cantankerous or even less sexy – guy is the one who's going to make you feel adored and respected.

But if I had to pick an author to be a relationship expert, I'd vote for Tolstoy. That guy really seems to know the human heart inside and out. A "Dear Leo" syndicated advice column? Awesome. Of course, we'd need to do as we say and not as we do – Tolstoy's wife was deeply miserable in their marriage, and I'm sure any of us would've been too. It sounds like Tolstoy was cruel and emotionally abusive.

JACK: Yes, sadly, the wisdom of his books wasn't exactly put into play in his personal life. Not that either Maura or I have that problem...

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

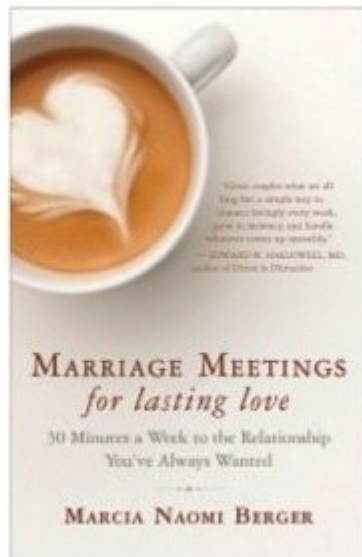
What are some of the biggest lessons that you learned from studying these novels? How do you apply them to your own love lives?

JACK: My favorite lesson comes from Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*, where there's an old married couple, the Bagnets, that provide excellent examples of how to keep love alive. Mr. Bagnet is utterly full of appreciation for his wife, and the palpable love he feels for her, the pains he takes to try to show it and the degree to which he trusts and leans on her all add up to a portrait of an incredible husband. (And all of this occurs in only a few short scenes!) I'd like to marry a woman whom I love as much as he loved Mrs. Bagnet, and then I'd try to be an equally good partner to her.

You can purchase a copy of 'Much Ado About Loving: What Our Favorite Novels Can Teach You About Date Expectations, Not So-Great Gatsbys, and Love in the Time of Internet Personals' in bookstores and online from Amazon. For more information about Maura Kelly, visit MauraKellyWriter.com. For more information about Jack Murnighan, check out his biography [here](#). You can also follow both authors on Twitter: [@jackmurnighan](#) and [@Maura_Kelly](#).

Dr. Brandy Engler Says, “‘The Men on My Couch’ Taught Me That Love Is Hard and Complicated”





By Whitney Baker

When Dr. Brandy Engler opened her sex therapy practice for women in New York City, she was shocked that it was mostly men reaching out for her help. As she began working through their heartache, she discovered that she had her own issues to face as well. In *The Men on My Couch: True Stories of Sex, Love and Psychotherapy*, Dr. Engler, along with David Rensin, weave together her personal story and her patients' journeys, sharing the lessons both learned and taught throughout her first year as a psychologist. We chatted with the first-time author about her new book and what she has coming up next.

Why were you surprised that more men than women came to you after you opened your practice?

Traditionally, men tend to seek psychotherapy less than women for issues like depression or anxiety. Similarly, I hadn't seen any statistics that showed that men were more interested than women in sex therapy.

What question about love and relationships do you find your clients asking most often?

The question that they tend to come to therapy with is: Should I break up with my significant other? They feel confused about

a decision, which drives them to therapy. The second thing that most often brings people to me is feeling broken-hearted and wanting to know how to stop hurting.

Once in a while, couples that are about to get married or are newly married come in as well. They want to know how to communicate or understand each other better. They're usually in pretty healthy relationships but are just looking for guidance.

What motivated you to write a book about your experiences during that first year?

Because of my time spent with these men, I gained a lot of new insights that really excited me. The more I sat with them and explored their true motivations for being there, I felt like I was uncovering answers that went far beyond the simple and conventional conclusions that we draw about men – things like men just want to have sex, men want sex more than women or men are less emotional about sex. The more I listened to them, the more I saw how vulnerable they were.

The first chapter of *The Men on My Couch* talks about a guy named David, who was a relatively happy guy. He recognized that he was cheating a lot, which led him to the question, "Am I even capable of love?" I thought that was such an interesting question. It ended up becoming a theme in the book, which is why I put it in chapter one.

Can you tell our readers a bit of your personal story, as discussed in *The Men on My Couch*?

Originally, I wasn't going to include my personal story; I just wanted to focus on what was happening during my sessions with the men. But I realized that I was learning a great deal, which I thought would be important, particularly for female readers.

Initially, I felt taken aback by some of the men's behavior.

Like the guys who were total womanizers. They made me nervous, and I started to become super jealous and unsure of myself. I had to start working through my own anxiety. I started looking at my relationship and asking myself, "Is this really love?" I had to assess my own notions about love.

Related Link: [Top 10 Dating Dos and Don'ts](#)

What lessons learned during your therapy sessions most impacted your own life?

Psychologists are necessarily trained on "what is love" – that's more of a social or philosophical question than it is psychological. So I had to really examine that idea, and throughout the book, that's really what I'm learning. I learned that love is much more of a skill and that it's actually kind of hard and complicated.

I had to learn to be patient and understanding with each of my male clients even when it was hard for me. It felt amazing when I was actually able to be very loving towards my clients. My ability to do so became very healing for them; instead of me just reaching them in a cognitive way, I was now fully present and invested in helping them.

If you had one piece of advice to share with our readers, what would it be?

This is another theme of the book: to truly understand your own motivation. You need to become more conscious about the way that you love. Instead of really loving each other, a lot of people bring fear and deficit to a relationship. They're trying to get a need met instead of bringing fullness to the relationship. People don't realize that though; they feel some sort of want, and they go after gratifying it, so they're basically using the other person. When people become more aware of what's driving them, they become very full and happy and satisfied in their relationships.

We understand that ABC recently optioned your book for a TV series – anything else you can share with us about this deal?

Yes! We have an amazing writer – she worked on ‘Will and Grace’ and ‘Ugly Betty’ – who wrote the pilot. In January, the networks will decide what shows to pick up, and ABC is interested this year. It was a contender this past January as well, and it made it to the final round.

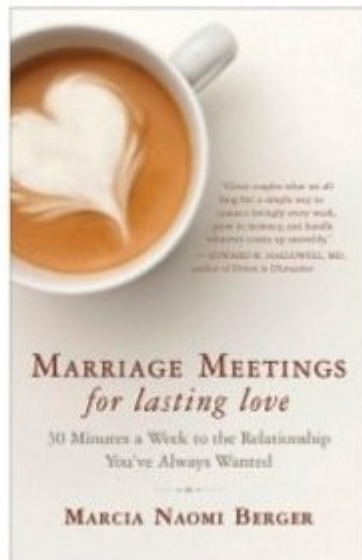
And finally, you’re already working on another book called *Libido*. We’d love to know more about this project!

Libido will be all about women and how they get in touch with their desire, which was the original focus of my work. It’ll be conversational in tone (as was *The Men on My Couch*) and include some history as well. In the past, women were viewed as very sexual – even more sexual than men. So this narrative that we have that men are more sexual than women is only a couple of hundred years old. It’s a totally manufactured story that a lot of people buy into, but it’s not true.

To purchase ‘The Men on My Couch,’ click here. You can also learn more about the book by visiting her site or following her Twitter.

Andy Puddicome, Author of ‘Get Some Headspace,’ Shares the Ingredients for a Perfect

Relationship



By Whitney Baker

As a former Buddhist monk, Andy Puddicombe knows a thing or two about meditation. Considered to be the United Kingdom's foremost expert on mindfulness, he founded the Headspace organization in an attempt to demystify the practice of meditation. To further this goal, Puddicombe wrote *Get Some Headspace: How Mindfulness Can Change Your Life in 10 Minutes a Day*; he was inspired by his "desire to make meditation accessible, practical and relevant to modern-day living." CupidsPulse.com had a chance to interview Puddicombe about the importance of meditation and how finding balance can lead to greater happiness and improved relationships.

Can you define "headspace" or "mindfulness" for our readers?

Mindfulness is the ability to be present and in the moment. Most of us have experienced this at some time, perhaps whilst

watching a sunset or listening to music. The problem is that it seems to pass quite quickly, and before long, we are caught up in lots of thinking or struggling with difficult emotions.

So we need some way of training the mind to be more familiar with the state of being present and engaged with what is happening now. This is where meditation comes in. It is simply a technique that allows us to become more familiar with this quality.

And headspace is the result of both. When we are present in life, there is a sense of being grounded; we are not easily put off balance by challenging emotions, and at the same time, we are fully aware that our thoughts do not control us. When we have a sense of headspace, we are at ease with our thoughts, our emotions and our body; perhaps just as importantly, we are at ease with those around us as well.

For people interested in finding more balance, what is the number one technique you recommend using to clear the clutter in their heads?

I always recommend starting with something simple. Go to www.getsomeheadspace.com or download the Headspace App, and you can learn a classic mindfulness technique for free. It takes just 10 minutes a day, and it provides all the essential elements for learning how to step back from thought and to experience a greater sense of calm, clarity and balance in the mind.

What areas of our lives will be enriched by daily meditation?

When we meditate, we are fine-tuning the mind. It doesn't just change our relationship to one or two particular things; it changes our relationship to everything in life. It fundamentally changes our perception of everyone and everything. It allows us to stop projecting what we think and instead see the world for what it really is.

Related Link: [Get Back In the Dating Game This New Year](#)

When it comes to love, how can mindfulness help us be our best selves and thus attract our best matches?

Mindfulness has been shown to reduce stress, worry and anger, whilst increasing the qualities of happiness, openness and empathy. Needless to say, when we are looking for love, we want the very best of us to shine. We want to be able to let go of our impatience, nervousness and maybe even our desperation. At the same time, we want to be able to connect with our partner, to meet them where they are in life, to see them for who they are and not what we want them to be. That is the starting place for any healthy relationship.

For someone who is still nervous and unsure about a new relationship, can mindfulness help calm their fears and give them confidence? How so?

Absolutely. In fact, a study at University of California-Los Angeles showed that, by learning to be more aware of our emotions through the practice of mindfulness, we can reduce the intensity of anxiety by up to 50 percent.

But perhaps more importantly still, as we get to know ourselves better through the practice of mindfulness, we're able to recognize the tendency to run away from difficult situations or to get very defensive when we feel unsure or insecure. This is replaced by the ability and willingness to just stay with that uncertainty, to embrace it and allow it to be part of the journey. There is a certain feeling of freedom that comes from the certainty that nothing is certain. This, in turns, tends to have a very positive effect on the relationship.

Related Link: [Three Steps to Stress Free Holiday Dating](#)

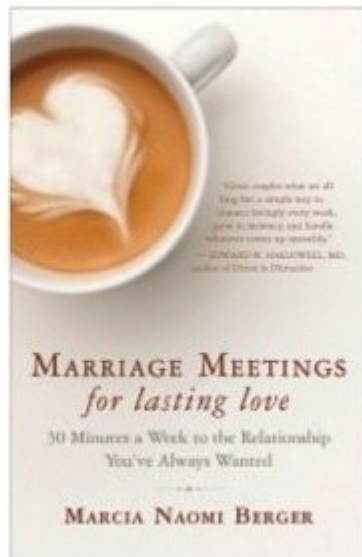
And finally, how can mindfulness help us get the most of our current relationships?

Mindfulness helps us to be present. This means that, when we are with others, we are actually with them rather than simply being there in person but elsewhere in our mind. It allows us the space of mind to listen to others, to understand others, to be less critical and judgmental of others. At the same time, it encourages the qualities of openness, flexibility and empathy. Most of all, it allows us to give others the opportunity to be themselves, which is the only way either person is ever going to be truly happy. If you were putting a mix together to make the perfect relationship, it is difficult to imagine a better list of ingredients.

To purchase Andy Puddicombe's 'Get Some Headspace,' visit Amazon. You can also follow him on Twitter, Facebook and his site at www.GetSomeHeadSpace.com.

Dr. Greg Smalley Reveals How to Fight Your Way to a Better Marriage





By Jennifer Ross

Dr. Greg Smalley was fortunate to be raised in a loving family who believed in the sanctity of marriage. From a very young age, he attended marriage conferences held by his father, Dr. Gary Smalley. This foundation ultimately led to his own passion and to the marriage counselor and author that he is today. In his latest book *Fight Your Way to a Better Marriage: How Conflict Can Take You to Deeper Levels of Intimacy*, Dr. Smalley explains what it means for a relationship to benefit from the opportunities that fighting presents and how a marriage can succeed because of disagreement. We had the chance to interview Dr. Smalley and hear what he had to say about his upbringing and how it influenced his life.

When watching your father's conferences, what principles did he speak about that really struck a chord with you?

I think one thing that stuck with me was my father's passion for doing something that made a difference. And I never forgot that. Something else that I saw from my dad is that he was the same person at home as he was up on stage. He worked to implement the things that he was teaching.

He also taught us the concept of honor, the importance of viewing your wife, your kids, your loved ones, as priceless treasures. I want my heart in my marriage. I want my heart with my kids.

Let's talk about that concept of honor. Do you think that's the main principle that most adults are misunderstanding or misinterpreting in their marriages?

When we become comfortable with someone, it's easy to lose sight of honor. When we lose sight of someone's value, we are likely to treat them in hurtful ways. If I don't value myself, then it's pretty hard to value other people as well. If we just did those two things every day – cherish our loved ones and value them – then we would also be nourishing them. If that's all we did, can you imagine how strong our marriages would be in this country? But again, it's hard to do that because we've got all this other stuff going on.

Can you briefly explain how fighting can improve a marriage? It sounds so counterintuitive.

The problem is that, culturally, we tend to perpetuate that myth that conflict is a bad thing. We see fighting as a sign that your marriage isn't that strong. There's amazing benefits if we are willing to walk through the doorway of conflict. Some of the greatest things that I've learned about my wife have happened on the other side of conflict.

I hate the words "conflict resolution," and I never use that term. Sometimes it's not about an issue to resolve. It's about how to manage the situation when we bump into a difference. Every relationship will have conflict. It's a normal part of life. So really, my book focuses on how to find success in these times of arguments.

Related Link: [Elisha Cuthbert Proves Patience Can Pay Off](#)

You state that fights are really about fear and not about

money, kids, etc. If that's the case, then why do we focus so much of our energy on fighting about money or kids?

I think that's what we are taught to do. We see it on TV and in movies. Conflict is driven by something deeper than the surface level issue. I call it an emotional button. It's like an iceberg. The topic is what we see, so we spend all our time worrying about that. But man, there's a lot going on down deep, and that's the stuff that we have to learn how to handle. I need to learn what my buttons are because ultimately to break out of conflict, I've got to learn to deal with me first.

You talk about the unproductive fights between you and your wife. Considering the amount of experience you have with understanding marriages, how did you find yourself falling into this common trap?

I have my bad days, and I'm no different than anybody else. I may know more things, but I'm still gonna get my buttons pushed. There's only two types of reactions: when we fight or when we flight. What this does is create a reactive cycle. My button gets pushed, and I react. The way I react pushes my wife's button, and she reacts, and we just keep spinning around. It's what we all do.

And finally, what is the one thing that you want readers to take away from your book?

What I like is the sequence for breaking this cycle; I show a very simple way to figure out how to solve things as a team. We're usually taught that we need to talk through our arguments – and that's really the worst advice you can give someone. It really does need to go in order. I gotta deal with me first, get my heart open, and then I can go after my spouse and care for her heart. Together, we can solve whatever needs to be solved.

You can purchase a copy of 'Fight Your Way to a Better

Marriage' in bookstores and online nationwide beginning November 6, 2012. For more information about Dr. Smalley, you can visit his website at smalleymarriage.com.