

Author Discovers New Outlook about Love by Going on '31 Dates in 31 Days'



By Erika Mionis

After several bad breakups, it can be difficult to stay positive. Long-time television producer, Tamara Duricka Johnson proves this in her new memoir, *31 Dates in 31 Days*, a heart-warming tale about Johnson's own experience with finding love. In celebration of her 31st birthday, the author decides to embark on a dating challenge to find romance by going on *31 dates in 31 days*. The last date culminates on Valentine's Day, and is marked with a second date with one of the 30 men. In this fun-filled memoir, Johnson puts her experience to paper and shares the lesson she learned along the way: if you want love, give it away.

Cupid had a chance to speak to Johnson about her project and book:

When you started your project, did you expect to actually find love? Or were you doing it as a learning opportunity?

No, I had no intention of finding love or faith that finding love with a carefully calculated project was even realistic.

I was in an extremely cynical mode about men and was self-aware enough to realize that I needed to change. I wasn't sure exactly what I needed to change. All I knew was that I needed to change something. So I figured the project would help me get back to the basics of dating, beginning with first dates.

Related: [Fall 2011 First Date Outfits](#)

Were you surprised at how much news coverage your project received?

Having been a news producer for so long, I could see the lure in a story like mine. I was nervous when the media began showing interest because the project began as a way to improve my poor dating skills and to get over my broken heart. It was a little embarrassing and humbling. But, by that time I had seen how much other people were gaining from my experience, so

I knew it was important to share my story.

You had a fantastic attitude throughout the book. How important was optimism to your project?

Optimism was essential. Around ten dates through, I had a girlfriend tell me that she wanted to hear a little more drama. I told her that this project wasn't about drama or gossip. I figured if people only wanted to hear the bad stuff about the guys I was going out with then they were missing the point.

The book is very personal. Did you have any reservations about sharing the details?

OF COURSE! This book basically feels like I've published my diary for everyone to see. It shares my vulnerabilities, my insecurities, my embarrassing stories. I had many reservations about sharing my personal details, but I figured if I were going to tell the whole story of what I learned then I needed to share the truth about where I'd been.

Related: [Why Amazing, Confident Women Remain Single](#)

What inspired you to share your story?

Once I started writing the blog, I received some really interesting feedback from people, and not just single women like me. I heard from men, married women, people who weren't in relationships, heterosexuals and homosexuals. I started to realize that this project was way bigger than I was – and affected more than just me and my 31 dates. As people shared their feedback, it helped me change my outlook on others and life. Not necessarily because I ended up finding love in one man, but because I ended up finding love everywhere. That's when I started to realize that this was a story that needed to be told.

Cupid would like to give a big thanks to author Tamara Duricka

Johnson for her time. Check out her new book on Amazon and for more information on Johnson, be sure to visit her website at www.tamaradurickajohnson.com.

Tiffany Current Tells Us 'How to Move in with Your Boyfriend (and Not Break Up with Him)'





By Amanda Martin

Many couples don't realize the pressure and work it takes to move in with a significant other. Lack of communication, romance, bad habits and finances can all take a toll when two people shack up for the first time. "Will you move in with me?" seems like a benign question for so many couples who've been together and are ready for the next step before marriage. However, you may never make it to the alter if you don't set boundaries and expectations.

Tiffany Current, dating guru and author of the new book *How to*

Move in with Your Boyfriend (and Not Break Up with Him), gives us her personal experience and advice about sharing a home with that special someone in order to make a live-in relationship last:

What inspired you to write “How to Move in with Your Boyfriend?”

It’s basically from my own experience. I moved in with my boyfriend and after a month I was ready to call it quits, break up with him and go back to being single. Then I went out to a women’s luncheon and that was actually what inspired me to write the book. I was complaining about my live-in relationship and everybody went around the table and said “I’ve been there” or “I know somebody who has been there,” and they were naming the same problems I was going through. As I was listening I was thinking, “Why didn’t someone key me in to all these problems we would hit, all these things I should’ve talked about?” Nobody had talked to these ladies; nobody had given them advice, so that was the reason I decided to write the book.

Related: [Jennifer Aniston and Justin Theroux Move In Together](#)

What advice do you have for those who don’t feel comfortable moving in with their partner before marriage?

I would definitely recommend sitting down and talking about everything. If you’re not living with the person, you won’t know if one of their bad habits could be one of your biggest deal breakers. You want to have a conversation before it becomes a legal situation. It’s a lot harder to leave once you’re married, so I would definitely say discuss your deal breakers. Everybody handles their finances differently; some people are good with their money, some people are bad with it. You don’t want to get married and discover that your partner is \$30,000 in debt.

How soon is too soon to move in together?

Anything before three months is probably too soon. In the first few months of a relationship, you're on your tiptoes. You're on your best behavior, putting on this great front, acting really romantic, and being the best that you could possibly be. Your partner has not seen you at your worst. I would definitely wait six months before moving in. I was with my boyfriend, now husband, for a couple of years before we lived together. Still, once we were moved in, I was like "Wow, I had no idea you were like this." I had no clue.

Related: [How to Communicate to Get What You Need](#)

What would you say are the most important chapters of your book?

I'm a big fan of my "Reality Bites" chapter because it talks about communication. For me, to be able to talk openly with my partner is the most important part of a live-in relationship. You constantly have to discuss what is and isn't working, and how you can fix your problems, whether it's chores or finances.

The other chapter couples should read is "Some Like it Hot." Romance is a huge deal when you're living together. Your partner can easily become your roommate instead of your lover. If you remember to keep the romance alive and do all the little things you used to do in the beginning, your live-in relationship will be a success.

Want to find out more about how to make the big move? Buy Tiffany Current's book, *How to Move in with Your Boyfriend (and Not Break Up with Him)* on Amazon.com.

**Author Linda Yellin
Chronicles Her Search for
Lasting Love in 'The Last
Blind Date'**



By [Jessica DeRubbo](#)

You may think that you'll never find lasting love if you've been part of one failed relationship after another but Linda Yellin, author of *The Last Blind Date*, is here to tell you that there is hope for a happily ever after. In her new book, she chronicles with wit and hilarious detail, the lead-up to her current marriage to Randy Arthur and her subsequent move to New York City. She lets it be known that although there are no steadfast rules to a lasting relationship there are things you can do to keep a healthy and happy outlook on life with your partner.

We had a chance to interview Linda Yellin about her book, and this is what she had to say:

What inspired you to write a book about your experience with love?

Now that's a good question. I'd written a book eons ago called *Such A Lovely Couple*. That book was about my first marriage. Interestingly, all my husbands get books written about them, whether they need one or not. (This might be the appropriate time to note that there have only been two husbands and two books. And that I'm currently not planning any sequels.)

I loved my first book, but it was totally unread. (Second note: I said *unread*. Not *unreadable*.) By the time anyone in the bookstore got to the "Y" section, they'd already bought two other books and gone home. So I figured if I wrote a new book, maybe people would like it enough to go read the first book...which Mr. Simon and Mr. Schuster have thoughtfully just re-released.

Of course, I still have that end-of-the-alphabet problem, which just goes to show I'm an idiot, since I'm now married to Randy *Arthur* and could have moved up to the A's.

Related: [Going from 'It's Complicated' to Monogamy](#)

How would you explain the book's title, *The Last Blind Date*?

I went through 8,000 titles. If I'd strung them all together, they would have added up to another book. But my Editor-in-Chief picked *The Last Blind Date* out of the "short list." I think the short list only had 500 titles on it. Randy's the last blind date. At least I thought he was, until I moved to New York from Chicago to marry him and found myself "dating" for friends. That was one thing I hadn't considered before moving – that I'd be starting all over without any girlfriends. So really, Randy's my last *guy* blind date.

Related: [How to Campaign for a Better Relationship](#)

Many reviews focus on the way in which you use humor to tell your story. Was this a conscious decision during the writing process?

No. I'm not that self-aware. If I could make a conscious decision to add things into my writing process, I'd be Aristotle or Plato. Or at least Jim Patterson.

What advice would you give our readers when it comes to finding lasting love?

Well, you won't know if something was lasting love until you're at your own funeral. And if Randy outlives me (and boy do I hope he does; it scares me silly to imagine myself as The Widow Linda, without him – to say nothing of having to come up with all those corned beef platters for his relatives) – even if yes indeed, we've had as great of a relationship as I think we're having, there's no doubt that before my casket's halfway into the ground, women will be throwing tuna casseroles at him and offering him tickets for a night out at the theater.

So assuming everything is hunky dory until then, one of the most romantic things Randy ever said to me was that he didn't

want to change me, and that if he tried, he'd just mess it up.

(I'm wondering... maybe that wasn't romantic... maybe that was seduction; but it worked at the time.) Regardless, I make a point to remind myself that I'm his lover, not his mother. If I was his mom, by now he'd know to put the toilet seat down.

So we don't *pick* at each other, which is a little thing, but maybe a big thing, too. And we're always saying, *I love you*. Sometimes I'm saying it to a black and white cookie, but most of the time I'm saying it to Randy, and he's saying it to me.

When I first told him that I loved him (yes, I said it first – so sue me!) he gave me this whole big speech about how he didn't like saying all that love stuff because if one person says it then the other person feels obligated to say it, and then the first person... blah, blah blah... Basically, it was the biggest dodge in the history of [romance](#). So I stopped saying *I love you* until he started saying *I love you* (took another two months), but now we tell each other *I love you* all the time, which I like. Plus, it fills in the gaps when we run out of conversation.

So there you have it! For more information about Linda Yellin and her book, visit LindaYellin.com. To purchase your own copy of the book, check out Amazon.

**Happiness Expert Sophie
Keller Gives Us Some Tips
about Having a Happy Love**

Life



By Linda Guma

Are you looking for a happier love life? Happiness expert, author, life coach and TV personality Sophie Keller gives us 50 key ideas for improving your relationship in her upcoming book, *How Happy Is Your Love Life?: 50 Great Tips to Help You*

Attract and Keep Your Perfect Partner.

The book is part of a four-book series coming out November 27. Keller notes her goal for the 'How Happy Is' brand is that [her] practical, easy to use advice will help you discard outdated attitudes, habits and beliefs in order to make more positive choices in your life.

We had the pleasure of interviewing Keller to find out just how she does it.

What motivated you to become a happiness expert?

When I was young I didn't feel particularly understood. But I knew I was meant to be happy, so when I searched for how, I found it inside. I realized that when you drop the masks, armors and pretenses, you will find who you are. The person you should be with will magnetize to you. Otherwise, you will magnetize people who have the same armor. That's why relationships don't work. Someone's armor must come off.

What is happiness?

Happiness is about feeling complete within yourself, feeling like you're making a difference in your life and the lives of others. It's about expressing yourself fully and completely.

It's interesting that on a worldwide scale, happiness and wealth don't correlate with each other. Happiness is about focusing on the moment. For example, those in third world countries focus on feeding themselves and their children. They value their relationships above material things. I always say we're human *beings*, not human *having* or human *doings*. The more "human being" we are, the happier we'll be.

What sets this book apart from other love advice books on the market?

Everything is actionable. Also, it teaches you how to focus

and work on yourself. Most of all, this book teaches you to break down defense mechanisms that have been holding you back.

What would you say is the most important tip you have for those who strive to be happy in their love lives?

Be yourself to the fullest and be really positive. Relax, have fun and have faith. There is someone out there for you. You also have to work on your self development. Clear out your insecurities. You need to shift how you think about yourself and any past issues that keep resurfacing.

How do you know when it's right to tie the knot?

Every cell in your body says "yes," with no doubt. You never know what it's going to feel like but when it happens you'll know. The person you end up marrying could surprise you.

Sophie Keller is the creator of [Howhappyis.com](http://www.howhappyis.com). She has been a featured life coach for Martha Stewart's *Whole Living* magazine, a contributing expert for Sirius radio and she appears frequently on *KTLA 5 Morning News*. She also appears on *FOX, NBC, ABC, and CBS* where she gives happiness tips and lifestyle advice. She was recently appointed the 'Good News' Ambassador for LG Electronics. She lives in Santa Monica, California.

To order a copy of her book, visit <http://www.howhappyis.com/books/love-life/>.

The Secret to Staying Married



By Marianne Beach, GalTime.com

Ever wonder the secret to staying happily married? Why some people make it look so easy, while you're feeling like you're in a struggle for your life? A new book, *The Secret Lives of Wives: Women Share What it Really Takes to Stay Married*, rounds up a diverse cast of happily married characters who have the tenacity and audacity to make their marriages work.

We interviewed the author, Iris Krasnow, who calls her book “an antidote for divorce”, and asked her to spill her own secrets of wedded bliss.

What made you decide to write on this particular topic?

Marriage can be hell, we need to know that truth, and not be fooled by the gauzy myth portrayed throughout much of modern history – that a wedding is a ticket to perpetual bliss. After reading this book, every young woman will know that there’s no happily-ever-after, there’s happy, there’s sad, there’s heaven, there’s hell.

You do throw a dish once in a while and hope it misses your husband’s head. You do storm out the door in your bathrobe some mornings and perhaps call a divorce lawyer on your cell phone while driving around the block. You may loathe your in-laws. It can be disgusting to share a bathroom. Alas, then there’s the peace and the contentment that comes with knowing you don’t have to date anymore, that you can count on someone, that you have found a partner to be by your side while you navigate child-rearing, your parents’ illnesses and the woes of the world.

I love my 23-year imperfect marriage that has produced four perfect sons – that’s when I don’t detest it!

You call the book an antidote for divorce – tell us what that means.

The Secret Lives of Wives is THE book to pick up if you feel like you’re on the brink of divorce. You’ll read stories in here of cheating and lying and frustration and even emotional abuse. Still, many of these wives in those situations have weathered the storms with guts and tenacity and come away with better marriages than ever.

One of the big problems with the myth of happily-ever-after in marriage that has prevailed for decades is that brides and grooms go into the institution believing that getting hitched

is going to fix their lives. They believe there's a gold standard marriage in which the man and the woman become soul mates, that they become twined as one. My book delivers the raw and real truth: There's no gold standard marriage toward which we all should aspire. Couples who seem blissful and hold hands all the time and call each other "sweetie" may be flinging pots at each other at home. No one knows what goes on in a marriage except the two people in it.

And that's good news! That means you get to write your own rules, create a marriage that's based on individual needs and desires and not feel like you have to surrender to pack mentality. I interviewed a wife of 30 years who swings with other couples! Do I want her marriage? No. Does it work for her and her husband? Yes. Who are we to judge? You'll hear plenty of other juicy strategies and secrets that are hardly status quo, but they have helped wives stay in long marriages and have it both ways: A committed marriage and adventures in uncharted territory. People get divorced often because they're bored or frustrated with a perfectly good spouse. Lower your expectations: Don't expect someone else to make you happy, you must do that for yourself, and this book shows you the way!

Talk a little bit about the women you interviewed for this book.

They're an awesome and assorted cast. They were rich, poor, black, white, Muslim, Jewish, evangelical and old hippies. They were diverse in backgrounds and experiences, yet they share this common and significant trait. All the women in *The Secret Lives of Wives* are determined to make their marriages last, and some of them are sustaining their relationships in conventional ways and some of them need to be naughty once in a while.

I'll tell you about one of favorite stories in this book that really speak to the resilience displayed on these pages.

Beth's husband routinely told her she was fat and ugly and when they argued in the car, he would pull over to the side of the road, open the door and push her out. This went on for years. She was beholden to him with three small children and no job of her own so she stuck it out. That's until one day, when her kids were older, she got really smart, really angry and decided she had enough. She started losing weight, got a job, started to stash her money away and began to hatch a getaway plan. Then one night when he was belligerent, she fired back. Beth told her husband that she and the children were leaving and if he kept acting like an ass, he'd be a sad and lonely old man without any family ties. She spewed all the pain and anger she'd stored up during the entire course of their marriage. And, well, he crumbled. He cried. They talked. Over time he realized he didn't know how to give or receive love because of the cold family he was raised in.

Beth and her husband on that day were re-born. They spent evenings together, talking and drinking wine. They started to have great sex again; hot, hot lovemaking. They even texted during the day about sex. "My kids would die if they knew what their parents are doing at night!," she said. She's one of the heroes of this book.

If you could only give one vital piece of advice to a wife – what would it be?

At every stage of your marriage, make sure you have your own work and projects that are yours alone. Stay engaged in YOUR life. The happiest wives I've interviewed over a 30-plus year journalism career have their own sense of purpose and passion and adventure outside of the home. It's a cliché, but true: Get a life! The first question I ask every woman who writes me about her dissatisfaction with her spouse, is this: "What are YOU doing to make your life better, richer, more exciting?" No one can make you happy in the long run, that must spring from within.

There are a lot of women struggling with their marriages right now. Is there hope for them?

If Beth can turn an ass into a prince and turn a lousy marriage into a steamy love affair at midlife, most women can make their marriages succeed. We all hit periods of malaise in long-term love relationships. Often there's an eggshell-thin line that separates love from hate; there's even a very fine line that separates staying married from initiating divorce.

After reading this book, I believe that most wives will find strength and wisdom from the stories about older women who have pushed through waves of sadness and rage and are now deeply grateful that they have loyal mates at their sides. Life is tough. Our parents die. Our children grow up and leave home. I love knowing that my husband, Chuck, who watches too much hockey and doesn't talk enough, is loyal, predictable and wants nothing else than to keep our family intact. For better or for worse, and yes I've thrown a dish or two, we've been able to stay married and create a safe harbor for ourselves, for our children, for their children.

The book is available Monday 10/3! Connect with Iris on: www.iriskrasnow.com

Dr. John Townsend Helps Deal with Painful Unions in his New Book, 'Beyond Boundaries:

Learning to Trust Again in Relationships'



By Tanni Deb

After a relationship ends, it's sometimes difficult to have hope again when it comes to finding love. Insecurity can get

the best of you, and you may not know how to heal from your previous experience. In his new book, *Beyond Boundaries: Learning to Trust Again in Relationships*, clinical psychologist, Dr. John Townsend, helps people to open up. *Beyond Boundaries* provides steps and skills to assist those who are battling honesty issues and are trying to regain confidence, either in a new union, or an old one.

Cupid had a chance to interview Dr. Townsend about his book, and this is what he had to say:

What inspired you to write this book?

As a psychologist and an executive coach, I've worked with many people who have struggled with their partners. Over and over, I see people who have had to set limits or leave a bad pairing, and then they don't know how to open up and accept someone else into their lives. They're sort of stuck knowing they need to be connected in some way romantically, or at least with a family member or friendship, but at the same time, they're afraid to try. So, I wanted to give them a book to help them to have the skills to re-enter a trusting relationship.

What challenges did you face while writing about how to trust again in a relationship?

There were several challenges. One is that people often give up and settle for less. They get busy with their work or their activities, and they tend to abandon any type of closeness. So the challenge was to help them see again that they can really have a great friendship, family, marriage, or dating situation, and they don't have to settle for less. I had to sort of set a fire inside them to try again, to get them to experience a vision for a better future.

At what point in a relationship should you move on if honesty is an issue?

I believe it's generally when you see three factors from the person who has been dishonest.

First, they show no awareness of the problem, even if they've lied, or if they've been unfaithful. That's a bad sign.

Second, they aren't concerned about how deeply that impacts their partner. If they minimize that or make it no big deal – or say that you are overreacting – that's not a good sign.

Third, if they do say they know how deeply what they did impacts you, and they're going to work on changing, but instead of working on it, they go back to their old patterns. Now, it doesn't always mean you need to break up, but it does mean you have to put strict limits on your partner until they become a safe person.

How do you regain faith in a partnership after it's been broken?

There are three parts to this as well.

First, you have to know when you're ready; that your mind and heart have been healed, so you've learned that not everyone is untrustworthy, and that some people can change. There are lots of skills in the book about becoming ready to trust.

The second part is how do you know the other person is ready? Have they changed, have they seen what they've done, or have you seen patterns change? There are skills in the book for that too.

The third part is how do we act towards each other in a safe way? How do we both take risks towards each other to establish closeness so that nobody gets hurt? What I want people to see in the book, is that this isn't just about whether or not the other person has changed. We can have trust issues from an old relationship that get in the way of trusting again in a new one. Whether it's issues with someone

you're trying to be with again, or a fresh start in which you don't want to make the same mistakes, that's what the skills in the book are about.

Have you had personal experience with the issues you touch on in your book? If so, how did you overcome these obstacles?

I've learned and grown from my experiences in business and with friends and family. Also, it's helped me to be more of a trustworthy person myself, because the sword cuts both directions. My expertise came from my training as a psychologist, and thousands of hours of working with clients and in executive coaching, where people unburden their lives, and I help them find solutions.

What piece of advice would you give to someone who can't help transferring their old issues into their current circumstance?

The first piece of advice is that you can't do this in a vacuum. You've got to be around two or three other people who are safe, and that you can talk about your fears with. When we have trust issues, we're not sure if we can ever trust. So be around people who are going to be a good feedback system for you, and who will support and help you make good decisions.

What is the most important lesson you hope readers will learn from your book?

That learning to trust again is one of the greatest things you can do in your life. You don't have to give up and settle.

Learn the steps in building a healthy relationship by registering for Dr. John Townsend's free Facebook webcast on **Tuesday, October 4, at 8 p.m. EDT**. Or visit Amazon to purchase *Beyond Boundaries: Learning to Trust Again in Relationships*.

For more information on Dr. Townsend, check out his Facebook and website at www.DrTownsend.com.

Video Exclusive: Jackie Collins Talks About New Book, Goddess of Vengeance





By Royal Young

In Jackie Collins' world, romance is sexier, Hollywood stars burn brighter and revenge runs deeper. The London born lurid legend looks at American culture through a savvy, satirist's eye, using iconic pop culture figures as her inspiration. In Goddess of Vengeance (St. Martin's Press) the author's famed femme fatale Lucky Santangelo is back, with a cast of sexy, wicked characters all clawing for positions of power. Fierce, funny with a sensual shot of fame, Collins teaches us how to claw to the top and stay there. We spoke with Collins about

how far she would go for love, why vengeance is so attractive and the surprises she still has in store. To order a copy of her new book you can go to www.JackieCollins.com and follow her on Twitter at @jackiecollins.

Royal Young writes for Interview Magazine and just completed his debut memoir, FAME SHARK. Follow him at [Twitter.com/RoyalYoung](https://twitter.com/RoyalYoung)

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

Relationship Expert, Andrea Syrtash, Teaches You How to “Cheat on Your Husband (with Your Husband)”





By Diamon Hall

To outsiders looking in, marriage is a sign that your life is complete, and both people are still “head-over-heels” in love. Privately, however, the husband may be thinking, ‘my has she changed,’ while the wife is often silently wondering, ‘is this really what I signed up for?’ Andrea Syrtash is a dating and relationship expert, on-air personality and author. With her new book, *Cheat on Your Husband (with Your Husband)* ready to hit the stands in September, she gives women solutions and advice that will help their marriage prosper for years to come.

Although she is married herself, Syrtash says the book isn't only from personal experience (although there are some personal lessons shared), but also from interviews she conducted with other women and by citing the latest research on marriage, giving her readers a wide variety of opinions. Syrtash didn't want the book to come off as a desperate attempt to save your relationship, but rather as a source of tips and advice to rekindle the romance. This book is ideal for anyone who feels they've lost track of why they're married and don't know where to go from here.

Recently, Cupid had a chance to chat with Ms. Syrtash, and here's what she had to say:

How did you come up with the title of your new book?

The original title was *How to Date Your Husband* and that became the subtitle to *Cheat On Your Husband (With Your Husband)*. I chose the word 'cheat' because too often we feel guilty when we focus on ourselves and our marriage when we have so many other competing demands; but cheating in this case is a good thing! I wanted a title that was fun, playful, and a little provocative. I didn't want it to be a relationship rescue book, but rather a relationship renewal book.

What made you choose this career field?

I actually went into it undecided, but I knew I loved journalism and connecting with people about their experiences. I was always the advice-giver amongst friends and family, but didn't know that I would eventually do that professionally. After journalism school, I earned a certificate in life coaching. Over the last decade, I've interviewed hundreds of people and spent thousands of hours focused on relationship research. I love it.

Is the book more so you speaking from experience, or is it

mostly advice?

The book opens by telling the readers that I'm not just interested in lecturing them, but I do want to inspire them into action. It's not a memoir, but I do share my marriage experience so that I can have a little more intimacy with my readers. My advice is driven by my journalism and coaching background. I know the best advice I can share comes from interviewing real women in different situations.

What is the best piece of advice you give to couples in the book?

Marriage is a choice that you have to make every day. People need to realize they can't just be complacent because that's the easiest option. Another theme in the book came from an 80-year-old woman I interviewed. She said, "The most important thing you can offer in a relationship is your presence." One of the big elements of my book is "Small steps will create big changes."

How does being a dating and relationship expert come into play in your own life?

The irony is that sometimes I'm not taking my own advice! As I'm writing about a topic and researching it, sometimes I get a wake-up call, because I'm immersed in the material. In my last book *He's Just Not Your Type (And That's a Good Thing)*, I talked about how I was writing advice columns to follow your heart, and I discovered I wasn't. I don't wanna be a hypocrite. I definitely want to practice what I preach.

I know you interviewed our founder, [Lori Bizzoco](#). What type of advice did she give, and what was it about her story that interested you?

I love that Lori is a mother of two and has her own business. She strikes me as a person who's loyal to her passion. She models advice in my book very well: You can't be passionate in

your marriage if you're not passionate in your own life, and I saw that in Lori. She's featured in my "Sweat the Small Stuff" chapter, and that's because I see her and her husband doing small things for each other all the time, just to show their appreciation. I dedicated the book to jugglers (women who are juggling a lot of different responsibilities). Lori is definitely a juggler.

Do you think women need a book like this, and why?

I hope that people see my brand of advice as upbeat and inspiring. My advice isn't driven from a place of fear or scarcity. I try to focus on what is there already – and how to make it better. This is intentional because I want to inspire my readers to try new things...not because things will be doomed if she doesn't, but because her life will be great if she does.

In addition to the release of the upcoming book, Syrtash has also been a regular advice columnist and contributor to numerous popular sites, including Yahoo, The Huffington Post, and Oprah.com, as well as being the on-air host of 'On Dating', produced by NBC Digital Studios. She has shared advice in various media outlets across the country, including *The Today Show*, *USA Today*, VH1 and NPR, among others. Syrtash also speaks regularly about effective relationships at conferences and workshops across the country. For her upcoming schedule, refer to www.andreasyrtash.com.

Syrtash feels the book will give readers' marriages a boost! She stresses the fact that this isn't heavy relationship self-help; but a positive, encouraging tool full of keys to a successful (and fun!) marriage.

Cupid wants to give a big thanks to author, Andrea Syrtash for giving us some of her time. Be sure to check out her new book *Cheat on Your Husband (with Your Husband)* at Amazon..

**'TORN' Author Samantha
Walravens Addresses Career
and Motherhood: Can Women Do
it ALL?**





By Melissa Tierney

In the world of modern motherhood, it's believed that powerful professional women should be able to "have it all" without a problem. By watching celebrity moms like Angelina Jolie and Reese Witherspoon who are able to maintain loving relationships with their beaus, amazing careers and happy and healthy family lives, it inspires the rest of us to think, 'Hey, why can't I have that, too?'. Samantha Walravens, author of the new book *TORN: True Stories of Kids, Career and the Conflict of Modern Motherhood*, shared with us her wisdom and

insight on what it actually means to “have it all” and just how normal a little bit of chaos can be.

In addition to her take on modern motherhood, she also shared her personal take on how to maintain a healthy and loving relationship with your spouse, a successful career and a great family life, something she happens to know quite a bit about. Walravens is an accomplished writer, wife and mother of four, giving her enough life experience to navigate the everyday conflicts even the most organized moms are facing today.

If you feel like you are about to have a meltdown because you just can't manage it all, worry no more! Our interview with Walravens will reassure you that you're doing just fine. Here's what she had to say:

How do you manage it all (successful career, family and a healthy loving relationship)?

Honestly? I don't. One of the key messages of my book, *TORN* is that women today are admitting—and learning to accept—the fact that nobody can “do it all.” Trying to be the perfect mother, the perfect wife AND the perfect professional—all at the same time— is a recipe for a nervous breakdown. And I'm only stretching the truth a bit when I say “nervous breakdown.” What I have learned— with age, wisdom, and each successive child (I now have 4)— is that by trying to do it all, I am not doing anything at a level of 100 percent effort or enjoyment. There is simply too much to accomplish to feel 100 percent about anything other than my stress level.

What made you go back to writing after having children?

One of the keys to being happy—as a mother, worker and wife—is to find a vocation or hobby that brings you joy. Writing is, and always has been, my joy. From childhood on, I've kept journals and written stories and poems. I'm one of the lucky few that have been able to combine my passion with my work. If

you can't combine the two, you just need to look outside your job to find your passion—be it gardening, tennis, reading, or just enjoying time with friends.

How do you keep the “spark” alive with your husband? Do you have date nights?

We've been married for 15 years and together for 20, and we actually still like being with each other. Imagine that! I agree with Michelle Obama when she said of her marriage to the President: “I think in our house we don't take ourselves too seriously, and laughter is the best form of unity in a marriage.” My husband and I work hard on our relationship—we've done a weekly date night since we started having kids 13 years ago, and we've had our share of marriage counseling. But we try to remember to have fun together and to laugh often. At night, we like to watch a funny show in bed together—30 Rock or Modern Family. It's nice to go to sleep with a smile on your face.

In your opinion, what are the 3 most important things to maintaining a healthy, loving relationship?

Managing conflict in a healthy manner. Recognizing that conflict is not the end, but a situation awaiting resolution. This has been an essential component in helping my husband and I deal with arguments and conflict. Early on in our relationship, I used to think that if we had a serious difference of views on something, it meant that he didn't love me anymore and would possibly leave me. Over time I learned that it was safe to disagree and that we could talk our way through problems.

Feeling appreciated and letting your partner know that s/he is appreciated. With four kids, my husband and I feel like we are both “on” at all times. Coming home from work isn't a break—it's just more work, but with the kids and the household. We have learned to tell each other frequently how

much we appreciate the other person's efforts and to say "thank you" even for the little things, like putting the garbage out. Since we are both working, we are in murky territory when it comes to who does what—with the kids, the house, etc. And we have learned to take turns doing things: One night I will be in charge of dinner; another night, he will be. One night, I will put the baby to sleep; another night, he will. Gratitude is one of the key things that keeps our romantic relationship alive. The old complaint, "My husband doesn't appreciate me" or "My wife takes me for granted" points to what happens when gratitude is not expressed often enough.

Keeping your sex life alive! Let's call a spade a spade. If you are not having sex with your partner, then there's a good chance your partner will seek sex elsewhere. Don't fall into the trap. If you are having problems in your marriage that make you NOT want to be intimate with your spouse, seek help. The money spent on a marriage counselor is well worth it—and it's a lot less expensive than what it costs to get a divorce these days. Sex can definitely get better with time as you feel more comfortable communicating your desires with your partner.

Are there any celebrity couples that you feel are doing a good job at "having it all"?

One celebrity couple I feel is doing it really well is John Travolta & Kelly Preston. John and Kelly have been married now for 29 years. Believe it or not, lists are John and Kelly's secret to marital bliss. The couple uses lists to make sure they make enough time for each other, and for sex, among other things. According to John, "We make lists of what we need and want from each other and check them regularly, we list everything, from how much sex to what kind of food we want". This may seem like a chore but according to them, it helps them find out what the other person needs and reminds them that they are going the right direction. Sounds a little un-

romantic but hey, if it works!

Cupid wants to give a big thanks to author, Samantha Walravens for giving us some of her time. Be sure to check out her new book *TORN: True Stories of Modern Motherhood* at Amazon and for more information on Samantha, check out her website at www.SamanthaWalravens.com.

Marla Martenson Talks 'Diary of a Beverly Hills Matchmaker'





By Tanni Deb

Finding love doesn't come easy, especially when you have unrealistic expectations of your partner. If you don't believe me, just ask professional matchmaker **Marla Martenson**, the author of *Diary of a Beverly Hills Matchmaker*. Martenson gives readers an inside scoop of what really goes on behind the scenes when it comes to matchmaking. Featuring real letters from clients where elite men search for supermodel look-alikes and women are on a quest to find a wealthy soul mate in one of the richest cities in California, the book is

sure to shock and entertain readers.

Cupid had a chance to interview Martenson via phone about her book. Take a look at what she had to say:

Why did you become a matchmaker?

It was really a fluke that turned into a career. I got a job as a videographer at a video dating company back in 2001. I had been an actress and a waitress for 20 years in Los Angeles and Chicago, and I didn't want to be in the restaurant business anymore. I was still acting, but I never could make a living out of it. When I was offered the position at the video dating company, I jumped at the chance. I loved it and felt like I was the director doing these videos for the people. While working there, I thought about writing a dating book from talking to all these people. After that job, I moved over to an upscale matchmaking service in Beverly Hills where I became the vice president of matchmaking. I was there for seven years.

What challenges do you face as a matchmaker?

The challenges would be the people who are so picky. They're very selective here in Southern California. The guys want the girls to look like models and the girls hope the guys are super wealthy. So I think the initial challenge is that everybody has on their wish list their prince charming. It's really about what you want in a partner and getting them to see that it's not always about that first superficial wish that they might think they want.

Your book review in Amazon said that you've had clients who were very unrealistic. For example, "old, nerdy, overweight, and balding man" who is searching for a "supermodel look-alike who has to have an Ivy League education but prefers to be a 1950's housewife." How do you handle people with unrealistic expectations?

A lot of times I will do some coaching. A woman has come to me recently for some coaching, but sometimes people are not open to changing; they want what they want. I try to deliver and if I can't, I can't. But I tell them that I'm a matchmaker, not a magician.

Is it possible to find them someone who matches their criteria?

I have to say I really love my clients; they're great people. But a lot of them have unrealistic expectations. Luckily, in Los Angeles there are a lot of beautiful women so I'm able to match the guys. And there are a lot of guys who are doing very well and are successful. It's understandable that a woman wants a man with something going on. She wants to get married and have a family. She wants somebody who has a good career and who can take care of her. I can see where some of it comes from.

Have you had clients who return continuously because they aren't satisfied with who they were matched with?

I do show them photos, so they'll see the pictures first. Now when they get on a date, there might not be any chemistry or their personalities might not match. But, generally, they won't say that the person didn't look good at all because they've seen the photo. So they're not too disappointed that way.

What do most men and women search for in a significant other?

It's interesting because women's top desires that they tell me in a man is sense of humor, honesty, loyalty, looks and healthy lifestyle. The men want what they see first. They say they want a woman who is attractive, they love a great sense of humor and someone who is easy going.

What advice do you have for those who have been single for quite some time now because they have unrealistic expectations

of the opposite sex?

Be a little more open-minded and try dating someone who maybe doesn't fit the exact picture in your mind. If you go out with somebody, it doesn't mean you have to marry him or you're going to spend your life with him. It's just a cup of coffee or lunch or dinner. So give the guy a try if he has a lot of great qualities you're looking for.

Cupid thanks Marla Martenson for her time! To get a look into the world of matchmaking, visit **Amazon** to purchase *Diary of a Beverly Hills Matchmaker*.

**Be the Toast of the Party
Without Breaking the Bank
with Elyse Luray's 'Great
Wines Under \$20'**





By Imani Brammer

If you're looking for the perfect date wine or a bottle to celebrate a special occasion, take note that the higher priced ones aren't always the best. For a long time, it's been a common misconception that the greatest wines are the most expensive. But, thanks to Elyse Luray, author of *Great Wines Under \$20*, we now know better. After starting to believe that it was normal to drop \$100 on a nice vintage, Luray, a licensed auctioneer for high end wine, decided to halt her way of thinking by doing a little experimenting to see if there

were any great tasting wines under \$20. Thankfully for all of us, there are and now she's sharing them with the public. You'll no longer be stumped about the taste that will come out of that \$16.00 bottle of Merlot. Luray teaches all of us how to choose an affordable and appealing wine as she introduces us to over 200 great ones in her book and they're all for less than \$20.

Here are some things you'll learn:

- A wine's vintage refers to the year it was produced
- Only expensive wines get better with age. Inexpensive wines are best when they are no more than three-years-old
- When it comes to choosing the right wine for a particular food, it's best to match the wine's region of origin with that of the meal.

For those of you who are new to the wine scene, the author advises not to act like you know more than you do. It could add unnecessary pressure and your date could call your bluff. You should always be yourself.

"Nothing is worse than listening to someone brag about wine and what they know when it turns out they have no clue what they're talking about," says Luray. "If you know about the vintages, regions and wines themselves, it's great to share this information. But if you don't, just try and find some great bottles under \$20 and enjoy learning."

Though a wine expert, Luray is nervous too when it comes to dating. "I hate cooking, so you can imagine the stress when I invite a date over for an intimate dinner," she says. "I always start with a great glass of wine and some simple appetizers. It gives us time to talk and chill."

When asked about her opinion of wine as an aphrodisiac on the first date, Luray showed no signs of a closed mind. "Many

people find wine relaxing,” she explained. “I say, whatever works for you. If it makes you feel sexier and have more desires, then go for it. Nothing is better than good food, good wine, and good vibes with another person.”

To purchase a copy of *Great Wines Under \$20*, visit Amazon, where you can even get a sneak peak of the first few pages. Cheers!

Find Out if Your Partner is Unfaithful with ‘The Cheat Sheet’





By Melissa Caballero and Krissy Dolor

Have you ever had that aching suspicion that your partner was cheating on you? You find yourself pacing back and forth worrying where they are, who they're with and not knowing what to do? Maybe you start beating yourself up even though it's not your fault. *The Cheat Sheet* by Rea Frey and Stephany Alexander can help ease your nerves and give you the tools to find out for yourself if your partner really is bunking up with someone else. Stephany Alexander is an infidelity expert and founder of WomanSavers.com, a forum for women to speak to each other about men, abuse and infidelity. *The Cheat Sheet*

will help guide you and give you the advice you need to find out if your man is being unfaithful. We had the opportunity to speak with Stephany to find out more about this common issue. Here's what she had to say:

What was the inspiration behind WomanSavers.com?

I started WomanSavers.com in 2002, after getting out of a bad relationship. I've had a history of abuse throughout my life. I was abused as a child and experienced date rape as a young adult. I even had to file a restraining order against one of my boyfriends who became physically violent with me. I tried online dating and when I signed up for all the matchmaking websites, I experienced a lot of bad dates. I thought I knew what I was doing and it was just a numbers game. However, I found that there were a lot of men who were misrepresenting themselves on the Internet. I became very bitter after all of this. Then one day I was walking along the street and an idea just hit me like lightning. The only way women are going to survive in the future is by sharing information with each other. Now, they have an open forum to speak to other women about men.

What were some of the obstacles you've had to overcome when launching WomanSavers.com?

WomanSavers.com was very controversial and I had to alter the terms of agreement many times. I had to build a shelter against lawsuits, death threats and stalkers because men were not okay with this sort of information being leaked out. However, we do follow very strict rules that comply with U.S. laws that third-party providers are not held liable for what someone else writes as long as we do not edit the post. In fact, before a woman submits a post she has to agree that she is telling the truth or she can be sued in a court of law. It has been a very stressful process.

What can we expect to find in your new book, *The Cheat Sheet*?

The Cheat Sheet is a book about how to catch a cheater. It also shows you the best way to catch them, what to do once you have, how to move forward and how to fool proof your relationship to avoid cheating. The book has a lot of real-life stories about infidelity ranging from all races and genders.

Do you think there is a surefire way you can prevent cheating?

There is no surefire way, but there are steps you can take in order to improve your relationship. For example, keep yourself out of situations where cheating can occur. I would never go to a happy hour and have cocktails with a male that I work with, especially one I may be attracted to. That's one way to help prevent the possibility of cheating. You have to be especially careful when you or your partner has a profession that requires you to travel because it creates more opportunities to cheat. One way to help overcome the long distance is by calling your wife throughout the day or scheduling Skype videos with each other for more intimacy.

Why do you think people stay with partners who have cheated?

Well, some people have a lot more to lose. People stay in bad relationships for 3 reasons: One reason is their children. Parents don't want to break their family unit. Another reason is finances. A lot of people would rather keep their comfortable living situation rather than downsize. The third reason is co-dependency and insecurity; people are scared to be alone.

What is the number one piece of love advice you have for singles out there who are dating?

The most important thing that you can do is research and gather all of the information you can about the person you are about to go on a date with. Get his or her first and last

name as soon as you can. Run a background check, especially if you're serious about them. Google them. Go on WomanSavers.com. I know it sounds a little stalker-ish but if you allow the wrong person into your life it can ruin you emotionally, financially and physically. The more you screen, the more likely it will be in your favor to end up Mr. and Mrs. Right. Also, don't take anything for truth if it sounds fishy. Many times women fight their own gut instinct.

Cupid thanks Stephany Alexander for her time! You can find *The Cheat Sheet* on Amazon. For more on Alexander, visit her website at www.StephanyAlexander.com. Here's to confirming your sneaking suspicions!

Cupid Exclusive: The Double Life of Alfred Buber





By **Vincent D. Scebbi**

Every man has a virtual life that he lives in his imagination. Much of it surrounds fantasies about women. However, most keep their deep dark desires in check. [*The Double Life of Alfred Buber*](#) by David Schmahmann tells the story of a man who acts out his repressed urges. It is the story of a successful lawyer who feels deeply dissatisfied with his life. In an effort to find consolation, he secretly ventures to the brothels and bars of Southeast Asia while telling people he is in Paris or London. "Of course it doesn't end happily," said

Schmahmann. The double-life can't end happily. But, some people do get away with it." To write the story, Schmahmann admits he didn't need to go far into his mind to get into the head of his character. Like Buber and many men, Schmahmann lives in a world of "what if" scenarios.

This scandalous novel was ironically released around the same time as the "sexting" controversy involving U.S. Representative, Anthony Weiner. Other notable scandals that have appeared in recent history include athletic figures such as Brett Farve and Rex Ryan, along with politicians such as former California Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and John Edwards. Schmahmann has been asked many times if there is a correlation between powerful figures and sex scandals and he believes there is. It's been something that has been with us forever. "Jimmy Carter lusted after women and then you see characters like Al Gore who admitted to hanging out with hookers," Schmahmann said. "I think men, by and large, are a boiling mess of unacquired desires when it comes to women." Politicians' desire for power and sense of feeling "bulletproof" carries over into their sex lives."

Though the Monica Lewinski scandal is cited as wrecking Clinton's political credibility, his marriage to current Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, remains intact. Schmahmann's character isn't married, however, he believes there is no definite reason why a woman chooses to stay or leave her partner. "Clinton's wife stuck with him. Jefferson's wife stuck with him even though he was raising a second family with her half-sister. Weiner's wife stuck with him on the other hand, Schwarzenegger's wife has left," stated Schmahmann. The author suspects these urges that can cause a double life stem from youth and perhaps a solution can be found there. "These impulses are a residue of adolescence, I think, even if you look at popular culture references such as *American Pie*, boys spend their teenage years attempting to understand and get access to girls, and I think to some

extent, healthier adolescences make healthier adults, but that's too much to ask," Schmahmann said. Schmahmann does offer some advice for anyone struggling in a double life, quoting the Dali Lama, "don't confuse pleasure with happiness. Happiness is a much more stable, long-term goal."

David Schmahmann was born in Durban, South Africa. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College and Cornell Law School, and has studied in India and Israel and worked in Burma. His first novel, *Empire Settings*, received the John Gardner Book Award, and his publications include a short story in *The Yale Review* and articles on legal issues. He practices law in Boston, and lives in Weston, Massachusetts with his wife and two daughters. You can order his book online at Amazon or BarnesandNoble.com.

The Authors of 'The Little Black Book of Big Red Flags' Help You Avoid a Dating Disaster





By Tanni Deb

Ever had a relationship with a boyfriend that spent more money on himself than he did on you, expected you to pay (in full) while on dates, or constantly spoke about a past romance? You probably assumed you were both meant to be together – until he dumped you a few months later and you finally recalled the red flags in your relationship you shouldn't have ignored. According to *Little Black Book of Big Red Flags: Relationship Warning Signs You Totally Spotted... But Chose to Ignore* by Natasha Burton, Meagan McCrary and Julie Fishman, you aren't the only one. These three have all encountered several flags

in their love lives and they're sharing their stories with you. Alongside their dating disaster tales, the book also offers advice on how to handle similar situations and figure out what kind of relationship will make you happy.

While you might have disregarded that prickling sensation that your relationship is on the rocks, ignore no more. Read on for our author interview:

Why did you guys write this book?

Meagan: The three of us were sharing stories about ex-boyfriends when we came up with the general idea of "red flags" – those *I-should-have-known-then* moments we often dismiss. We figured that if we had so many over-the-top stories, women across the country would as well. The next step was to build a blog and find out.

Natasha: When we first launched the blog, we hoped to some day turn the material into a book of women's red flag stories, just because it really hadn't been done.

Julie: But after receiving thousands of submissions, we started to notice some trends in the types of big red flags being sent in. Simultaneously, readers began asking us for advice on what they should do in certain situations. We thought a book was the best way to share the stories and answer these questions. Plus, we knew we'd have a ball writing it.

On the website it says, "If you spot a red flag, the offense doesn't necessarily mean you need to kick the person to the curb..." After how many red flags should you break up with your partner and why?

Julie: There's no secret number: One really bad flag, like a man threatening to break up with you if you don't do things in bed that you've told him make you uncomfortable, may hold more

weight than a series of smaller flags, like if he's sloppy or a momma's boy.

Do you think some acts – like cheating – should be forgiven?

Meagan: Really, it's up to the woman. There are no black and white rules for relationships, and if you try to impose them it's going to be a long, brutal journey. There are many couples who have worked through major issues, such as cheating, so to say such acts should or shouldn't be forgiven is irrelevant. But working through a red flag is very different from ignoring or not dealing with one because you just don't want to break up. Our book really encourages awareness and sticking to what you know, in your gut, is right for you.

The book contains Red-Flag Rules, signs that tells you it's time to get out of a relationship. What kind of research was done in order to create these rules?

Natasha: After reading thousands of stories we've received from women as a collective group, we took some of the more prominent themes to create our rules – which can serve as a cheat sheet women can refer to as some of the most prevalent and egregious flags.

What's the best advice you can give to those who have been in difficult, red flag relationships?

Julie: Using our book and your own dating experience, note the qualities you must have in a partner and the ones you will not stand for. Reflect on past relationships to determine what worked and what didn't. Then proceed with caution and don't settle for just anyone. There are tons of terrific guys out there, but you'll never find one if you don't know what you're looking for. Lastly, keep your head up – you may not have found your Romeo yet, but you're closer than you were yesterday.

Natasha: I'd say it's also important to recognize what your pattern is. Like, if you tend to date guys with emotional problems (the kind who need you to "save" them), you have to look at yourself and understand why you're attracted to guys like that. Only then can you have the self-awareness to start searching for the right kind of guy for you.

Meagan: I'd encourage people who have been in difficult relationships to work on their personal happiness and self-worth. While I don't think a person can't date while doing this, it's difficult to focus on yourself when there's a relationship to attend to. It sounds super cliché, but you have to love yourself first, and once you're in a place where you don't need someone else to help you feel good, the guy who's right for you will typically come along.

Cupid thanks Natasha Burton, Meagan McCrary and Julie Fishman for their time! You can visit Amazon to purchase *The Little Black Book of Big Red Flags*. For more about the authors, check out their book trailer and visit their website at www.bigredflags.expandedapps.com.

Jennifer Grisanti Talks 'Story Line: Finding Your Gold in Your Life Story'





By [Lori Bizzoco](#)

Protégé to the great executive Aaron Spelling, Jennifer Grisanti learned the ins-and-outs of one of the most competitive businesses in America – entertainment. During her time with Spelling, she worked on shows like *90210* and *Melrose Place*, moving on years later to become Vice President of Current Programming at CBS Paramount Network Television. In 2007, she left Tinseltown’s lustrous world behind and established her own consultancy for aspiring writers, mentoring them on how to dig deep, find their truth and put it

into words. In her new book, *Story Line: Finding Gold in Your Life Story*, Grisanti offers advice on how to make your story the best it can be, while drawing from her own experiences in life, love and the workplace. As she notes, her book “is a writing book for television and feature writers, but also a business, life and spiritual book for anyone who has a desire to learn how to add fiction to their truth and bring it to the page.”

We had the privilege of interviewing Jennifer last month. Here’s what she had to say:

What was it like to have Aaron Spelling as a boss?

Mr. Spelling was old fashioned. We called him Mr. Spelling and his nickname was Mister. He was very into perfection and you respected it because he expected perfection from himself, so it made you want to deliver. Working in his office was in some ways so glamorous. You got to attend all of these Hollywood parties and hob knob with stars. There are elements of that to the business, but you worked your rear off. I mean, I would work until eight o’clock at night and then I would go home and read scripts for three hours.

I was really blessed in the sense that I came in at a very good time in his career. He was 67 when I was 24. When I came in, he was on the rise again with *90210*. Actually, the first day I started, *Melrose Place* was being cast so I really entered at an opportune time.

You speak about your own personal challenge going through divorce. Many of our readers are single and trying to balance their career with maintaining the perfect romance. What advice can you give them?

What I would have done differently and what I would recommend to younger executives is don’t make your career such a priority that you don’t have the space or energy to let

something else in. That's so important for women (and men), because as much as there is a gift in achieving an accomplishment in the work world, you need to make it work at home also. It's fascinating because my ex-husband was an actor. The whole limelight, fairy tale and painting the picture is definitely something that I did. However, the paints in my picture started to change color. I was thinking about what a relationship is supposed to be versus the reality of what it actually is. Had I done things differently, I wouldn't have been so threatened by the age of 30. I would have spent as much time on my relationship as I did my career.

You discuss 'adding fiction to your truth,' a lot in your book. What does that mean?

My feeling is that there is fiction in non-fiction and non-fiction in fiction. I am a believer that you are a part of every story you tell. When I say 'adding fiction to your truth,' I am talking about using the imagination and the fantasy of what we want something to be versus what it actually is. There is fiction to that. It's mainly the idea that life is not that interesting. The sequence of events isn't the same as the dramatic points that you need to hit in your story.

What can you tell us about your consultancy?

I have worked with 350 writers since I opened my business in 2008. Anyone can contact me – whether they're writing television features or a novel. What I've learned most about in my career is how to develop a story. I want to help others. That's what I did all day every day and I saw my notes made on five shows a week, every week. There was no better training ground to know how to make a story the best it can be.

strong>Given your history, we are anxious to know how you feel about reality TV?

I have to be honest. I like reality TV. I think there's room for everyone to succeed. I think that scripted writers can learn from reality TV. For example, when you see certain characters that are more popular than other characters, you might ask yourself why people are responding more to that person. There are lessons that can be carried over. There really is so much to learn.

Cupid thanks Jennifer Grisanti for her time! To purchase your own copy of *Story Line*, visit Amazon. For more information on Grisanti's consultancy, visit www.JenGrisantiConsultancy.com. You can also find her on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.

Rachel Machacek Discusses 'The Science of Single'





By Krissy Dolor

Ever compared navigating the dating scene to science problem? After all, there *must* be a secret formula to get boy + girl = love. Well, after dating without solving her equation for years, Rachel Machacek took matters into her own hand and gave herself one year to try different methods of dating, hoping to find the right guy. Lucky for us, she put her findings into a book: *The Science of Single: One Woman's Grand Experiment in Modern Dating, Creating Chemistry and Finding Love*. In her debut novel, Machacek shares the triumphs and failures of her

various methodological steps, including online sites, matchmakers, singles events, self-help books and the good old-fashioned blind date. While the ultimate goal was to find chemistry with that special someone, this journalist found something much more important – herself.

We spoke with Machecek via email about her book. Here's what she had to say:

You said that one of your goals in writing this book was to improve yourself as a dater. Do you think you have?

Oh yeah. While working on the book, I went out with a lot of guys (60!), so by simply practicing the art of dating for an entire year, I became better at finding dates, the process of dating (I stopped hijacking conversations with inane babbling because I felt uncomfortable with brief silences in conversation) and learned to pick myself up and brush off the dust when something didn't work out, versus analyzing the situation and beating myself up over it. Essentially, dating evolved into this thing that I did. It became the rule instead of the exception.

What has your feedback been from the guys that have read your book? Also, have you gotten feedback from any of the men you've dated and written about?

I think I might have more male fans than female. It's surprising to me because I thought for sure only women would truly relate to my stories. I get a lot of emails from men who are connecting with my book. Many of them are just getting back out there after a divorce and they say it's great to hear a woman's perspective. Others tell me their experience with dating – all the insecurities and crackpots they run into – is exactly like mine. Of course, some have called into question my integrity and felt threatened by the way I described the dates and men I went out with. Alas, you can't win them all.

I have heard from a few of the men I wrote about in the book and they've been flattered and excited. Of course, these were the guys I was positive about. For the men who had a less-than-favorable story, well, it's been quiet on that front. Crickets, in fact. I'm OK with that.

Where do you find yourself in your dating life now? And do you think you've figured out "the science of being single"?

Not a ton has changed for me. I'm single. I date. I still deal with some of the same issues. What *has* changed – and this is the clincher – is my perspective. I'm a LOT easier on myself. I allow myself to have fun with dating (I stopped thinking about the endgame – too much pressure!) and it's not this gray pall over my existence like it used to be. Much of this comes from finally feeling OK with where I am in my life. I stopped should-ing on myself. (i.e. I should be married, have kids by now.) This has been critical to being happily single – it's the science of single. I do what I want to do and I do what's important to me, so I'm more confident in general. And as we all know, confidence is half the battle in dating – and in life.

What's next for you?

I have a new idea for a book on a different topic (it's still evolving so I won't say more – bad juju), so eventually I will want to talk about that, too. However, dating will remain a heavy focus for me because I still have so much to say, and I just started a couple regular columns including Dating Disaster Day where readers can send in their worst date ever, as well as guest posts from dating bloggers. It's fun!

What's the one piece of dating advice you've learned through writing your book?

I only get to talk about one?! Oh man. OK. This one is important: Don't be afraid to put yourself out there. I used to feel so utterly vulnerable about being single – it's fun in

your 20's, but by your 30's, people start wondering about *why you're still single*. It's like a disease. Syngalitis. The horror! I felt shy about it. And shy about dating. And that makes it pretty hard to date. Once I started saying yes to singles' events, blind dates, online dating – all of it – and stopped thinking that doing these things made me look desperate, dating became a lot more fun.

I have to add one more piece of advice: We tend to be very superficial when forming our checklist for the ideal mate. So make sure yours includes important criteria that can actually make a relationship work, like “he/she supports and respects me.” Don't limit yourself to great hair and nice shoes. Those things do not a relationship make.

Cupid thanks Rachel Machacek for her time! You can find *The Science of Single: One Woman's Grand Experiment in Modern Dating, Creating Chemistry and Finding Love* on Amazon. For more on Machacek, visit her website at www.rachelmachacek.com. Cheers to solving your dating equation!

Giveaway: Amanda Goldberg and Ruthanna Khalighi Hopper Talk Love, Hollywood and 'Beneath a Starlet Sky'





This post is sponsored by Amanda Goldberg and Ruthanna Khalighi Hopper.

By Krissy Dolor

If you loved 2008's *Celebutantes*, you're in luck – authors Amanda Goldberg and Ruthanna Khalighi Hopper are back with *Beneath a Starlet Sky*, the follow up to their debut novel. In this fiction book, Lola Santisi, daughter of Hollywood royalty and CEO of a struggling fashion line, is trying to balance the New York fashion scene and her doctor beau in Los Angeles. A stroke of luck lands Lola in Cannes to work during the Film

Festival – but this balancing act is harder to manage than she realizes. And let's not forget about Kate Woods, Lola's BFF, who just went through a breakup with Lola's brother (can we say awkward?). How will a newly single Kate navigate her love life...which may conflict with her work life?

Though we can't tell you the ending, we *can* bring in Goldberg and Hopper to shed a little insight into their second novel. As these two women themselves are daughters of Hollywood bigwigs (Goldberg's father is film and TV producer Leonard Goldberg and Hopper is actor Dennis Hopper's daughter), they have taken their insider knowledge of the workings of Tinseltown and merged it with some fictional drama to create another chick lit book, worthy of your beach tote.

Goldberg and Hopper took time out of their busy LA touring schedule last month to chat with us via email. Take a look at what they had to say:

***Beneath a Starlet Sky* is a continuation of exploring celebrity lives and is set in the beautiful town of Cannes. What made you choose that location as the backdrop of your new book?**

It's basically the Oscars on a yacht for 10 days. It's chalk full of glamour and fashion. And who wouldn't want to go on a jaunt to The French Riviera?! Reading our book is a lot cheaper than actually trying to get to the South of France and hopefully we'll make you feel as though you were there.

Why did you decide to start the novel with heartbreak?

Well, who can't identify with having had their heart broken? And that theme of love is a big one for us in this book – romantic love, love between friends, love between family. The women characters go on a journey of exploring what's meaningful to them and what's not. And in the end, it's really all about love.

Do you think it's harder to find love amidst the glitz and glitter of Hollywood lights?

It's harder to find the authentic relationships that are built on deep trust and mutual respect. It can be a tough town. And the glare can be distracting. It's important to keep the people you love close.

Both of your books have been fiction – do you think you'll ever write about your real-life experiences about dating and/or finding love in Hollywood?

That's a great idea! We certainly have plenty of material!!

Will we see a continuation of Lola and Kate's journey in an upcoming book?

You never know... they could throw on their Uggs and take a spin at The Sundance Film Festival...

What love advice can you share with our readers?

Don't expect the other person to be anything other than who they are. And a good match means you: Play well. Fight fair. And laugh a lot!!

Cupid thanks Amanda Goldberg and Ruthanna Khalighi Hopper for their time! You can find *Beneath a Starlet Sky* on Amazon and on Facebook. For more on the authors, you can follow them on Twitter: @astarletsky.

~~**GIVEAWAY ALERT:** *Cupid's Pulse* has teamed up with St. Martin's Press to give a copy of *Beneath a Starlet Sky* to one lucky reader! To enter, tell us which celebrity destination you'd like to see Lola and Kate next in a comment below. Please be sure to use your real email address so we have a way of contacting you if you've won – don't worry, your address won't be shown. If your email is not included you will automatically be ineligible to win. This giveaway will run until **11:59 PM EST on Tuesday, June 21.** Good luck!~~

This giveaway is now closed.

**Contest restricted to residents of USA/CA*

Author Conor Grennan Talks 'Little Princes'





By Tanni Deb

Could you ever imagine falling in love with someone you've never met face to face? For Conor Grennan, the author of *Little Princes*, that's exactly what happened. Leaving his job to travel the world, Grennan decided to volunteer at an orphanage in Nepal, figuring it would be a great pickup line with women. During his experience, he discovered that the children of the orphanage weren't actually orphans; they were abandoned by child traffickers after they had fooled the children's parents into paying large sums of money for their

safety. During Grennan's adventure, not only does he end up finding the love of his life, but he also falls in love with the children and commits to reuniting them with their families.

This story has been covered internationally and Cupid recently had a chance to interview Grennan about his book. Take a look at what he had to say:

You spent eight years working at the EastWest Institute (EWI) in Prague and the EU Office in Brussels. Why did you decide to leave your job, and specifically, volunteer in Nepal?

I loved working at EWI, but after eight years I really needed some kind of change. So I figured, maybe it was time to move on and head home to the US. What better way than to first go on a long trip around the world? I would get all the traveling out of my system. I had saved up enough money for it, and I felt like this was a great way to spend it.

As for volunteering in Nepal, I wanted to appear impressive to girls, and saying, "I'm volunteering in an orphanage in Nepal" seemed like a pretty great pick up line! It's embarrassing to think about it now, of course, but that was pretty much my initial plan – it's about as self-centered as you can get, I admit!

You kept a notebook with you the entire time you were in Nepal, where you recorded conversations and events. What made you do this? Did you know you wanted to write a book?

I always loved to write, and when I started traveling I started keeping a blog. Writing things down had always come naturally. I had kept a journal for many years. I wanted to remember the details so I could tell the stories on my blog. I didn't just do it in Nepal, I did it everywhere – but in Nepal, the conversations with the kids were so funny that I kept a close track of them. But I never had any intention of

writing a book.

***Little Princes* is not only about your journey in Nepal, but also your love for the children there and your wife, Liz, who you met while volunteering. How exactly did you both meet? Did you ever think you'd meet your wife while volunteering?**

Liz and I met over email initially. She wrote to me because she was going out to India to volunteer over Christmas, and she'd read a small article in a local paper about what I was doing in Nepal. She thought I might be connected to some organization in India, and thought maybe I'd have some advice. I didn't, but I wrote back to her, and we just sort of started this email friendship for several months. But no, I never thought I'd meet my wife volunteering, so many thousands of miles from home!

What are you and Liz currently working on to stop child trafficking in Nepal?

Liz and I are both on the board of Next Generation Nepal. She has been to Nepal many times, and knows the children and their plight intimately. Together we help guide the strategy of the organization. Our team on the ground in Nepal works hard to find the families of hundreds and thousands of trafficked children. We also prevent trafficking at the source, by working on village development projects (such as education) to make sure families know that they are not alone and that they don't have to take such risks with their children.

Do you think your relationship with Liz is different from past romantic relationships because of how you met?

Oh, absolutely. We talk about that a lot. Liz and I met, not in a bar or on a first date, but by writing to each other. We learned so much about each other before we even met in person for the first time, three months later. It gave us a wonderful window into the other person's heart, without all the pressure of that first date. I also knew right away that

she was a deeply compassionate woman (besides intelligent, beautiful, and hilarious), and that was probably what first attracted me to her.

What is the most important lesson you've learned through your experience in Nepal?

There are so many, but I think the biggest is that having a cause can bring you the most joy of anything in life. It sounds corny, but it's true. I was only ever concerned with myself and my own life – when I found these kids who needed help, it gave my life a purpose I never expected. The fact that I could do this work together with my wife has been a dream come true.

What do you think this experience has taught you about relationships in general?

It definitely taught me to look beneath the surface. Liz and I weren't face to face when we met, so all we could go on was what the other person's values were and what they were really like on the inside. I always knew that I put a great deal of emphasis on the superficial aspects of a person – their looks, their job, their friends, their life, etc – and with Liz, I didn't have any of that. I just got to know the real her. If we can find a way to look beyond the superficial, we can find out if that's a person we are meant to be with. I think the best way of doing it is writing back and forth; it opens the window into a person's heart. We also found that we could be honest with each other so easily. It was a perfect foundation on which to build a relationship.

Cupid thanks Conor Grennan for his time! To find out more about his amazing adventure, visit Amazon to purchase *Little Princes*. For more information on Grennan, his book and the organization he founded, Next Generation Nepal, visit his website, Conor Grennan.

Joe Gumm Gives Husbands a Helping Hand with '150 Secrets to a Happy Wife'





By Loren DeLand

A sports enthusiast and former ESPN anchor, Joe has spent the majority of his career entertaining male audiences. When the work day ends, however, he heads home to a wife and four daughters. Needless to say, he has learned a thing or two about how to make women happy, and is now sharing this precious advice in *150 Secrets to a Happy Wife*. Both comedic and touching, this book is a must-read for all couples looking to share a laugh and better understand one another.

We had the privilege of interviewing Joe via about his new

book last month. Here's what he had to say:

You've become something of an expert on women and relationships. What is it about this particular subject that appeals to you?

I love talking about it because I think marriage is a funny topic, especially when you throw in kids, pets, in-laws, marriage counselors and weird siblings. There are topics about marriage that are more serious, like divorce, but that's the whole point of being married – making sure it never gets to that point. As couples, we start off as being the number one priority, but then over the years we become number two, three and four. This book is perfect for all men, especially young men just starting out. It gives a humorous, upbeat outlook into the minds of women and what makes them really happy in life.

You and your wife have four lovely daughters. Do you think this has shaped the perspective you take when writing about how men interact with women? Would you have written the same book if you'd had four sons?

Yes and no to your first question because the book is actually about women, written for men. Do I think Bubba, down on the construction site, is going to take off lunch early so he can go buy it to show all of his friends? No, and I don't think men like being told by another man how they should act around their wives. I live with five females and grew up with two sisters, so I think I know a little about what women want. Of course, living with five females, what they want changes on a daily basis. I would say yes to the second part of the question. I would have written the same book for my boys, knowing this is the perfect book for young men getting married.

Many of your secrets don't advocate for grand, sweeping gestures, but call for men to take part in daily, mundane

tasks, such as doing the laundry, replacing the toilet paper roll and carrying in the grocery bags. Can you elaborate on why the small details matter the most?

I could get a speeding ticket, burn the house down because I left a candle burning and curse my mother-in-law and my wife would really not care. But for some reason, if I don't wipe off the two scraps of food left on the plate from dinner the night before and put it in the dishwasher, my wife acts like it's Armageddon. I think most women love the little things and depend and expect them. As far as the larger, sweeping gestures, I think they appreciate them when they eventually happen.

You're quite an accomplished TV/radio broadcaster in the sports world. Can your fans look forward to a sports-themed book in the near future?

Actually, I have written a sports-themed book called *From Humor To Hormones*. It's a book about birth, and for those who don't think the process of birth is a sport, you need to read this book. For example, you have a baseball team (a pregnant wife expecting). That team has practice (three trimesters). That team has coaches (husbands). The game will have umpires (doctors, nurses, midwives). The game will have points (centimeters dilated). During the game, baseball players will grab their crotch in front of thousands of people on live TV (women deliver a baby from the crotch area in front of a lot of people in the delivery room). The team sweats during the game so they drink water to quench their thirst (the mom-to-be definitely sweats more, but instead of drinking water, her water actually breaks). The team has fans cheering them on (the wife has her husband and others cheering her to push). The team has uniforms (the wife has a hospital gown). The team holds up the championship trophy (the parents hold up their baby). Actually, there are a lot of sports analogies in the book, but NO, it's not a sports book and I don't see myself writing an official one anytime soon.

Is there any advice you can share with women about dating?

There are 10 types of men women marry. I'm going to give you five now and then your female readers can buy the book I'm currently writing to find out the other five. You have the ATHLETE, the NERD, the BUSINESSMAN, the ACTOR and the the WANNABE. In my book, it explains who the perfect man is to marry. He may be in this group or he may not. The point of the book is to literally breakdown everything each type brings to the table, as far as marriage. As far as advice, I would tell women to make a list of what makes them truly happy and start with the number one thing.

150 Secrets is now officially available nationwide. What is the next project you're excited about tackling?

I wrote a book about how couples not only deal with children with ADD/ADHD, but how they deal with each other's ADD/ADHD. It's a fun, humorous look about a man who not only had dyslexia when he was younger, but had a speech impediment as well. He had a seventh grade reading level when he graduated high school, was accused of cheating through college, and was rejected for his first book by 70 literary agents. Despite his dyslexia and ADHD, he went on to graduate college after 9 years, became an award-winning author of three books, has worked for companies like ESPN and Fox Sports, and ended up doing a fun online interview with the greatest website on the planet called CupidsPulse.com.

Cupid thanks Gumm for his time! You can find *150 Secrets to a Happy Wife* on Amazon. For more on the author, visit his website at JoeGumm.com or follow him on Twitter: @JoeGumm.

Donna Estes Antebi Talks 'The Real Secrets Women Only Whisper'



By Kari Arneson

When it comes to dating and relationships, do you ever feel confused and unsure how to maneuver around the often bumpy terrain? If so, Donna Estes Antebi is here to help. The entrepreneur, patent holder, business consultant, author, blogger and life coach has made it her mission to help women from all walks of life navigate modern-day relationships. Her latest book, *The Real Secrets Women Only Whisper* has a warning: "Keep this book away from men!" because of her real insight into the nature of men's minds. She gives women brutally honest advice about sex, love, dating, money, marriage, divorce, cheating, children and everything in between. According to Antebi, "Every single woman who reads it will absolutely utilize one piece of information in there that will change her life for the better."

We spoke with Antebi via phone last month. Take a look at what she had to say:

What inspired you to write such an honest book about relationships?

I originally wrote the book because I was asked to speak to my friends' daughters who were moving out on their own. My friends wanted me to talk to them about what it's like being a grown-up woman in the world, the kind of things mothers feel uncomfortable doing. I started putting my thoughts together, and then I thought, *Oh my goodness – if I knew at their age what I know now...and off to the races I went.*

This is the right book at the right time. It's for all the women trying to play a new game by old rules. Women no longer have the luxury of learning from their mistakes. I would continually loan it out to women who were dealing with some sort of crisis. Then we wanted to make it available to all women simply because the stakes are so high.

Where did your knowledge and advice about love, marriage and men come from?

The Real Secrets is a culmination of my life experience as an entrepreneur, a life coach, a wife, a stepmother, a mother. I found a way to humorously pass on insight into easy-to-remember segments. Between myself and my husband, we have eight children. Five of his, one of mine and two of ours.

We've been together 20 years. This book is about my experience and things that I've observed from the women around me.

Why is it important that women keep this book away from men?

I reveal to women the secrets that allow them to fully understand the nature of men. And there are so many secrets about understanding human nature that we really don't need to give men any ideas. For example, I share with women the 21st century high-tech ways men are deceiving 21st century women.

But the interesting thing about my book is men can't keep their hands off it. My book gives them anxiety. But then when they read it, they find it valuable. They feel like it's eavesdropping on a conversation they want to hear. I think it's good to have secrets. Men can't resist anything that comes with a warning: "Keep away from men." It gives women an understanding of the nature of men and insight on how to leverage that knowledge.

If women take away one piece of advice or life lesson from your book, what should it be?

This book helps woman change the domino effect of her choices. The book shortcuts the learning curve for women so they don't have to learn every lesson the hard way. The single most important decision a woman will make is who to have a child with. It really will determine the rest of your life. You can have a starter marriage, but not a starter family. I have very counter-intuitive advice to help women save their marriage. There's an infidelity crisis in America. For women with marriages in crisis, I give advice on how to save it.

Do you have any upcoming projects we should know about?

I'm still in the middle of doing a book tour, radio and television interviews and I have a couple of speaking engagements coming up. I'm an entrepreneurial mentor in the Founder Institute, an entrepreneurial incubator for small businesses. I do a lot of life coaching and work with women in business. I'm good with helping women get to where they want to go.

Cupid thanks Donna Estes Antebi for her time! For more information, visit her website at www.TheRealSecretsWomenOnlyWhisper.com, Facebook page, or follow her on Twitter: @donnaantebi. To purchase a copy of *The Real Secrets Women Only Whisper* go to Amazon.

Giveaway: Diana Kirschner, Ph.D. Discusses Building A Successful, Committed Relationship with 'Sealing the Deal'





This post is sponsored by Dr. Diana Kirschner.

By Tanni Deb

Are you or someone you know in a situation where you're having difficulty finding love? Or if you've found The One, do you feel insecure about the future because you don't know where the relationship is heading? If so, psychologist Diana Kirschner, Ph.D., author of *Sealing the Deal: The Love Mentor's Guide to Lasting Love* can help guide you through your love life. As a relationship expert and best-selling author of *Love in 90 Days*, Dr. Kirschner has helped thousands of

women find true love. In her latest work, which is based on clinical research and experience, she reveals her strategies of building the perfect relationship, creating a deeper bond, getting him to commit and how to deal with infidelity. She also discusses how to avoid mistakes that can ruin a relationship, the importance of getting a love mentor, things to know if you're considering marriage and even 13 secrets that will make love last – no matter how long the relationship has been.

Cupid interviewed Dr. Kirschner last month via email about her book. Take a look at what she had to say:

Why did you choose to write a book geared towards women who are uncertain about the future of their relationship? What was challenging about writing the book?

I receive a lot of feedback from women who used my first book, *Love in 90 Days: the Essential Guide to Finding Your Own True Love*, to find a terrific man whom they considered to be the One. But sometimes, as they continued dating him, they had anxiety and uncertainty about where things stood. They asked for further advice on how to help things move along from casual to committed.

I have also gotten many emails from women who wanted to turn around a relationship – or even marriage – that was floundering. *Sealing the Deal* is designed to help women solve these love problems. And it works. You can watch the 31-Day Love Life Makeover Challenge, a video series in which I help 45-year old Nadette use *Sealing the Deal* to reignite her relationship with her ex so that they are madly in love.

In a brief summary of your book, you said that it is possible to “...deepen any relationship – even if you have been dating two months, on and off for 10 years, or in a relationship where you feel uncertain, tense, or afraid that it is ending. Even if your partner has cheated.” Do you think that a

relationship can truly survive and be healthy and loving if one of the partners has cheated in the past?

Yes, because people can realize that they have made mistakes, and grow as individuals. Also when the affair comes out they realize that they may be losing their partner. Which sets the stage to appreciate their partner in a whole new way! So it becomes worth it to them to step up, make apologies and reparations and create a whole new level of connection and commitment.

What do you think is the most important step in having a healthy, loving relationship?

Developing loving-kindness towards oneself and towards one's partner.

Did you write *Sealing the Deal* based on the experiences you've had in your relationship and the advices you received?

Yes. I had a brilliant Love Mentor who gave me the support and advice that I used to create my own passionate, lasting marriage of over 25 years. These are the same principles I write about in *Sealing the Deal*.

What is the best advice you can give to women who have a difficult time creating a loving, lasting relationship?

Find a Love Mentor or coach who can give you the support, smart advice and a bit of a kick in the butt as needed in order to help you move forward in a love relationship.

Cupid thanks Dr. Kirschner for her time! If you're searching for The One or are attempting to keep the passion alive in your relationship, visit Amazon to purchase *Sealing the Deal: The Love Mentor's Guide to Lasting Love*. For more information on Dr. Kirschner and her book, visit her website at www.LoveIn90Days.com.

~~GIVEAWAY ALERT: Cupid's Pulse has teamed up with Dr. Kirschner~~

~~to give a copy of Sealing the Deal to one lucky reader! To enter, tell us what love problem you'd like to solve in a comment below. Please be sure to use your real email address so we have a way of contacting you if you've won — don't worry, your address won't be shown. If your email is not included you will automatically be ineligible to win. This giveaway will run until **11:59 PM EST on Tuesday, May 3.** Good luck!~~

This giveaway is now closed.

JJ Flizanes Helps You Attract Your Mate Through Fitness and Health with 'Fit 2 Love'





By [Jessica DeRubbo](#)

What if incorporating fitness into your life actually helped you meet the love of your life? Turns out there's a correlation between fitness and love, which JJ Flizanes, celebrity fitness trainer and exercise architect explains in her book, *Fit 2 Love: How to Get Physically, Emotionally and Spiritually Fit to Attract the Love of Your Life*. If you're single or looking for a better relationship with your partner and you struggle with weight loss or body issues, Flizanes' book may be just the thing you need to gain love and security through fitness and health. She says it's possible to attract

your life mate by creating the body you desire from a place of self-acceptance, rather than self-loathing. Named by *Elite Traveler Magazine* as their 2007 Global Black Book pick of Best Personal Trainer in Los Angeles and one of *Shape Magazine's* top six fitness trainers in 2003, JJ Flizanes knows what it takes to get long lasting results in both fitness and relationships.

We had the privilege of speaking with Flizanes via phone last month. Take a look at what she had to say:

How do love and fitness go together?

Love and fitness go together in a couple different ways. The first way is in how someone approaches fitness. Most of the fitness industry supports the idea that if you lose weight and have a nice looking body, then you'll love yourself. And unfortunately, that approach doesn't come from love; it comes from fear. It comes from the fear and the frustration and the disgust most people have with their bodies. And they get so upset and beside themselves that they want something different, and so they go and work out. But most of the time, that way of working out comes from a place of not liking your body ... You're coming from this attitude of negativity. There is another way, and that's honoring the body and doing things for it to support the future, and that feels differently. And that's how fitness and love go together.

I'm in an industry that loves to catch people in that very dark moment and then capitalize on it, which is why we're all fat and continue to not find solutions. And it's coming from a different place where you can empower yourself and have it become part of your life. Your self-care is a blueprint. How you take care of yourself are the exact signals and messages that you're sending out into the world of how it's acceptable to treat you. If you don't take care of your body and respect your health, why would you expect someone else to?

What were your goals in writing *Fit 2 Love*, and what inspired you to write it?

I always saw myself as different in this industry, and I was never able to quite pinpoint why until I read Geneen Roth's latest book, *Women, Food and God*. I read that book and I was inspired by her stories, and as far as I know, she doesn't have any credentials, yet her credentials are her life. She's gained and lost over 1,000 pounds throughout her life. I was sitting there thinking, "Well, what's my story?" because I'm not the trainer that's gained and lost 300 pounds in my lifetime. It didn't come from that place. It came from being in the gym and looking at the trainers and saying, "Wow. That looks good. I'd like to do that."

And then the love came from what my real story is: being able to attract my husband; being able to attract men and relationships into my life from how I was treating myself. I was watching different stages of my life and comparing them with how I was treating myself at those points. The time when I was taking care of myself on every level was the time when I met my husband. I know a ton of very smart and very attractive women who don't understand why they're single, and they don't take care of their bodies. And there's a correlation there.

Many trainers use the fear factor to get their clients in shape. Why haven't you adopted that approach?

I didn't feel right about instilling fear in people. It's different coming from a place of love than from a place of fear. I looked at my body and said, "I don't have any pain. I'd like to stay pain free." I see all these older people who have all these issues and I don't want to end up like that. I want people to feel better now; I don't want them to have to wait. You'll always have that "push, push, push," for

where you are with both your body and your relationships. And if you can't accept where you are right now, you delay the kind of results you can get. The people who get lasting results are those who accept working out as a way of life, a new habit and a transition.

One review says you are a "rare commodity" because you actually live the truth that you preach. Is that true?

Well, the "rare commodity" comment comes from my passion and my drive for wanting people to be better and to be happier ... and to not force a way of being with pressure. When there is pressure, you're never focused on the person ... you're just focused on the results. It just dehumanizes us down to these numbers. I just try to help people find what works for them.

There is no perfect body, or standard that we all have to meet. I think half the population that doesn't work out don't do it because they're fighting against the idea that in order for someone to accept them, they have to look a certain way.

It just goes back to loving yourself first and taking care of yourself. You will not have long-lasting results until you're from that place.

What would you say is the answer for women out there who are single or unhappily in a relationship?

Ask yourself how you want someone to treat you and if you're treating yourself that way.

What's the most important piece of advice you've learned through this approach to love and fitness?

Your results will come faster and last longer when you come from a place of love.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

The book outlines a 5-step process. I think these steps are very easy and very do-able for people. You can follow them in

my book or in my workshop, and actually try to apply them to your own lives. It's something everyone can do no matter where you are with your body or where you are with your relationships. It can help you attract your ideal mate and it can also help improve any current relationship you're in.

Cupid thanks JJ Flizanes for her time! *Fit 2 Love: How to Get Physically, Emotionally and Spiritually Fit to Attract the Love of Your Life* is available on Amazon. For more information about her book and workshops, visit her website at www.invisiblefitness.com.

Babe Scott Talks Men and Food in 'Delicious Dating'





By Kari Arneson

Ever heard the expression, “The way to man’s heart is through his stomach”? In Babe Scott’s hilarious and insightful book, *Delicious Dating: The Single Girl’s Guide to Decoding Men by Their Wining and Dining Styles*, the self-confessed “manthropologist” proves that a man’s eating habits are a good indicator of what kind of boyfriend he’ll be. Babe decided to test her theory by going on countless dates and interviewing more than 200 people about men, food and dating. Her research led her to conclude that there are 10 male dining types,

including the Transfat Type, who has the “culinary and romantic skills of Homer Simpson,” and the Culinary Con Man, a guy that will tell you he knows a lot about wine and food but really, doesn’t even know how to operate a hot plate. Babe took some time out and talked to us about her unique, funny and insightful look at the relationship between cuisine and courtship. Take a look at what the Aussie dating expert had to say:

What inspired you to write a book about men, dating and food?

I had an epiphany that men are what they eat during a dyspeptic anniversary dinner with my ex-fiancé. He excavated a meal out of the back of his freezer that looked it like it had been frozen before the Bosnian war. It was covered in a rubbery goo masquerading as cheese and tasted like the tread on a tire.

As I tried to suppress my gag reflex, I realized our dietary differences spelled doom for our relationship. It wasn’t even just that the meal was unsavory, but that we were two strangers across a table. My Ex had everything going for him – he was funny, successful and cute – but our palates lived on different planets. I realized that I had been unerringly dating the wrong Male Dining Type – guys with the dietary and romantic habits of Homer Simpson – and that I didn’t want to spend my life being Marge. I threw in the tea towel on my relationship and decided to research my food theory as a litmus test for lovers. I thought I would be able to change my own romantic destiny and potentially save other women from needless heartburn.

What kind of research did you do for the book and what is the most important thing you learned from your research?

I embarked on an empirical study of the male species. A manthropologist on a mission, I dined with more than 100 men and had every type of culinary experience I could – from

dumpster diving to foraging to five star restaurants. I also interviewed 200 men and women about the connection between a man's wining and dining style and his mating style. I learned that you could distill a man's true essence from his culinary style.

The research gave me an insight into the male species and what type of guy worked for me. It helped me transform my love life and I now have a relationship I relish. Most importantly, I learned to heed my own appetites. In the past, I'd focused on feeding male appetites rather than satisfying my own. Hence, my relationships had become increasingly unfulfilling. Instead, I put the emphasis on seeing if a guy could get me salivating. I honestly think seeking the Delicious is the secret to love as well as living with zest. I learned so much about myself on my dating and dining odyssey and discovered what my tastes were in food, wine and men, the three things that keep the rosy hue in our cheeks. We put so much emphasis on our degrees and our careers, but sometimes we can learn from our everyday lives.

In the book, you identify ten types of male diners, from Trans Fat Types to Culinary Con Men. Which type of man was the most appealing to you and which type should women definitely avoid?

I would avoid men that don't give a kebab about courtship. Even if a guy lacks finesse but makes an effort to whet your appetite, then he might be a keeper. It's not the money he spends, but the effort he puts in that counts. A guy is investing in you by taking you out for dinner. He is serving up a sliver of himself and trying to stir other appetites. The Pretzel Player doesn't have any nutritive value, hence his culinary totem. He is the sort of guy who texts you late and asks you out to a bar. This guy is only interested in sexual conquest, not connection. His seduction strategy involves plying you with enough vodka shots to pry you out of your pants. He will be all over you like a bad case of dermatitis but the next morning he will do a disappearing act. Even if

you are only after a lover, you are better off with someone who considers your needs and puts a value on getting to know you.

As far as the other types, I don't think there is any prescription when it comes to love. One woman's perfect male dish is another's plain unpalatable. I think it is a good idea to test-drive the testosterone smorgasbord and get an idea of what sort of man suits your palate and preferences.

What is the most important piece of advice couples and singles can take away from your book?

I think it is really important to bond over shared meals. I don't mean just a conveyor belt dinner where you talk over the kids' heads or ramble absentmindedly while you rattle off mental grocery lists. I mean a proper dinner date with wine, candles and a thought-out menu that gets both your juices flowing. We don't live by beer alone, nor do our hearts thrive on to-do lists. It is really important to keep romance alive by enjoying special dinners, whether they are at home or at a restaurant. During these dinner dates, try to talk about what you like about each other, rather than children or chores. It will help you keep the fires of intimacy burning and will remind you of what attracted you to each other in the first instance. Every person I interviewed said they had a presentiment that a relationship was going cold when they didn't make time anymore to have special dinners together.

Do you have any upcoming projects we should know about?

I am blogging regularly for The Huffington Post in the Living Section and I am also revving up the Eat, Pour, Love blog on my website at BabeScott.com. My blog will be dedicated to all things decadent. My ultimate goal is to turn it into something like an online cocktail party. I will be interviewing "Inspiring Women Who Drink," hunky chefs and also writing about all things to do with mating, masticating and

martinis. I do have a top-secret special project that I am also working on, but I'm not ready to spill the Fava beans on that just yet. But as soon as it's cooked, I will be serving up the hot gossip on Cupid's Pulse.

Cupid thanks Babe Scott for her time! You can purchase *Delicious Dating: The Single Girl's Guide to Decoding Men by Their Wining and Dining Styles* on Amazon. Visit BabeScott.com to purchase merchandise and to learn more about Babe Scott, and check out her blog on The Huffington Post.

Iyanla Vanzant Helps You Get Through What You're Going Through with 'Peace from Broken Pieces'





By Krissy Dolor

Wouldn't it be great if someone could shed a little light on why relationships end? Well you're in luck – *New York Times* bestselling author Iyanla Vanzant offers some insight in her latest work, *Peace from Broken Pieces: How to Get Through What You're Going Through*. In addition to speaking about the ending of her marriage and what she's learned from past relationships, Vanzant recounts her past TV experience (including being featured on *Oprah* and having a self-titled show, which was produced by Barbara Walters) and her daughter's illness and death. Despite the hardships she has

endured, Vanzant has managed to pull through and find success, all while offering advice to those who need a little boost of their own. In addition, *Peace from Broken Pieces* reveals just how much our past relationships influence our decisions, and why it's important to recognize patterns in ourselves.

We spoke with Vanzant via phone earlier this year. See what the author had to say:

You've been through many hardships from early on in your life, especially with your daughter's death and illness in 2003. What keeps you motivated?

What I do is inspire people. My goal is to remind people of who they are, what they're capable of, and to encourage people to do what they're capable of doing. Inspiration is so limited. And I don't want to just inspire people, but get them to do something about it. We each have a gift, and we each have a purpose. And your gift is not for you – your gift is for the world. I have a gift of reminding people – educating people – about the truth of what they are. That's why I write, that's why I teach. In my low moments, that purpose pulls me forward. I mean, I have challenges and issues like every other human, but I try not to let them hinder me as I go on.

Your latest book, *Peace from Broken Pieces: How to Get Through What You're Going Through*, talks about the dissolution of your marriage. What has that experience taught you about who you are as a person?

Well, the core of that book is family pathologies, things we inherit from our family. They are unconscious. I come from a family comprised of dysfunctional relationships. After being in a relationship for 40 years, eight of which I was married, I discovered that the relationship was dysfunctional because it was based on a poor foundation. The foundation was built on me trying to get acceptance, acknowledgment and approval

from my father. In turn, this is what I had been requiring, expecting and demanding for 40 years. When I realized that he [my husband] could not give this me, the relationship no longer had a purpose. Often our relationships are in response to our unfulfilled childhood needs, which is what I did. And letting this go led to the demise of this relationship.

In addition, what has that experience taught you about pursuing future relationships with men, and people in general?

I think what I've learned is that – actually, what I *should* say is what I've learned again, (laughs) because I did know this already – but your relationship with yourself is reflected in everything. If you don't think you're enough, your relationships won't be enough. If you think you're not worth it, your relationships won't be worth it.

The other thing I believe I learned is the absolute necessity to be authentic: know who you are, what you want, what you need to do to get that, and what you *do* to get that. If you're not authentically there, eventually, your relationships are going to crumble.

What's the number one piece of relationship advice you wish to share with our readers?

Tell the truth. Tell the truth about who you are, about what you need, what works and what doesn't work for you. And also, that relationships don't "happen." Relationships unfold. So you have to be clear and conscious about *why* you're in this relationship. Sometimes we meet someone and fall in love ... but the truth of who you are will unfold. And you have to be willing to stand in that truth. You meet someone, in social situations, relationships, etc., but as soon as there's a problem you're ready to run. But instead of running, you have to say, *Why is this in my life?* Relationships are classrooms, you know? (Laughs.) So if you want to learn and grow in a relationship, you have to tell the truth.

What's the most important lesson that you've learned through your experience that you think everyone should know?

I think that regardless of what is going on around you, that you must make peace a priority. A peace of mind, peace of heart – in your experiences, peace must be priority. Without peace, you have internal conflict and external drama. When it gets hard, go for the peace.

We create the peace based on how we react and respond. So go for the peace. When things get dramatic, go for the peace. When things get chaotic, go for peace. Because when you have the peace on the inside, you'll experience the peace on the outside.

Cupid thanks Vanzant for her time! *Peace from Broken Pieces: How to Get Through What You're Going Through* is available on Amazon. For more information about her efforts, visit her website, Inner Visions Worldwide.