

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Staying Warm With Family



By Maria Darbenzio

With temperatures remaining on the low end of the thermometer, it's easy to want to stay snuggled by the fire drinking hot cocoa. Although that sounds like a pretty great way to spend your day and night, it's smart to have some other ideas to help you stay warm with your loved ones this winter. Take a look through these articles from our partners for some great suggestions:

1. Take a trip: If the weather is getting to you and you've just about had enough, take a break from the cold winter air. Considering how busy you are between work and family, you deserve a vacation! Try somewhere warm where you can bask in

the sun while your children play in the sand. Check out these famous families that have been doing just that. (CelebrityBabyScoop.com)

2. Be careful: You're off to the beach and ready to spend your day soaking up the sun. Even though Valentine's Day is right around the corner, not everything has to be red. So make sure to keep your skin and eyes healthy by lathering on that sunscreen and wearing your shades. (GalTime.com)

3. Arrange your gear: If you can't take a trip to somewhere hot, be sure to bundle up before going outdoors. Stay organized this season by keeping all of your cold weather gear sorted neatly. The last thing you want is to be headed out the door in a rush with only one glove. (GalTime.com)

4. Stay happy: No matter what your plans are, spend each moment with your family in pure happiness. Let them know how much they mean to you. Taking time to have fun and get away from a hectic schedule is the perfect way to spend this winter, whether it be in your own backyard or on a sunny beach somewhere. (YourTango.com)

5. Appreciate the little things: Eric Micha'el Leventhal once said, "There is no greater treasure in this world than somebody who loves you as you are." Learn to fully appreciate where you are in life and celebrate your relationships. Check out some of these other awesome quotes about gratitude. (YourTango.com)

How do you plan on staying warm for the rest of winter? Tell us in the comments below!

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Celebrating Your Relationship



By Maria Darbenzio

When it comes to a relationship, you should never hide how much you love someone. After all, there are so many great ways to celebrate your romance. Check out these articles from our partners to give you some ideas:

1. Spend a night out: You may not be able to attend prestigious award celebrations while wearing the latest couture like the celebrities, but nothing's stopping you from dressing your best. You can host a dinner party, attend a cocktail night, or just gather a few friends for a meal at a nice restaurant. Not only should you celebrate your relationship but also the people who have helped you along the

way.

2. Look within: Celebrations don't always need to be fancy and require reservations. Take time to look at your relationship as a couple and let your partner know how special they are to you. Remind them (and yourself) of what made you fall in love in the first place.

3. Recreate a date: Think about what your first date was like, where you went and what you did. It can be easy to forget the details, so keep them fresh by recreating it. Revisit the spot where you first met or kissed, but try wearing a different outfit, styling your hair in a new way, or maybe sampling a sexy makeup look.

4. Leave sweet notes: It's easy to get caught up in a busy schedule. If conflicting times make it hard to sit back and relax together, take an alternative route: Slip a note into your man's briefcase before he heads for work or leave one on his nightstand. It'll let him know you haven't forgotten how much he means to you, and it's guaranteed to bring a smile to his face. Check out some of these quotes for ideas!

5. Rekindle lost love: Maybe you're looking to make amends with a former partner. Before moving forward, make sure the relationship is worth getting back into. After you win each other over for the second time, celebrate the relationship you have now and the progress you want to make. Don't let the past ruin your future.

What are some ways you like to celebrate your relationship? Share your comments below!

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Valentine's Day Date Ideas



By Maria Darbenzio

The holiday of romance is right around the corner, so now is the time to start making plans (that is, if you haven't done so already). Don't catch yourself off-guard with a last-minute dash for reservations. Whether you'll be spending the day with a special someone or going out for a single girls' night on the town, check out these great articles from our partners for some fun tips:

1. Giving gifts: Buying a gift for someone can be difficult no matter the holiday. Although your feelings should be expressed every day of the year, Valentine's Day is perfect for sharing new and exciting components of your relationship.

If you're still having trouble thinking up the perfect present, try browsing through some of these ideas.

2. Being prepared: As you ladies know, nothing's worse than smearing your makeup without having anything in your purse to fix the problem. Don't be caught unprepared! Keep your lipstick close by and freshen up when it begins to fade. Check out what else you should keep with you so you can stay radiant all night long.

3. Choosing an outfit: Sometimes, there's simply not enough hours in the day for a wardrobe change. If you need to rush from the office to the restaurant on Valentine's Day and have no time to stop home in between, find some transitional styles that can take you from that daytime outfit to the perfect date night look. You can find some fabulous pieces that will make you look glam in no time.

4. Sorting your schedules: Both you and your partner lead very busy lives. Make sure that your plans have been made at a time that works for both of you. The last thing you want is to have to postpone – or even cancel – your Valentine's Day date.

5. Embracing singledom: There's nothing wrong with spending Valentine's Day on your own. In fact, there are plenty of ways to enjoy this holiday by yourself. Use this day to treat yourself and discover new things to be passionate about. Take a look at this article for some awesome ideas!

Do you have Valentine's Day plans yet? Share in the comments below!

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Planning Your Big Day



By Maria Darbenzio

It's the end of the holiday season, which also means that the new year has brought engagements and weddings to plan. The road to your big day may seem like a long one, but with a few tips, you can get through the journey without any major detours. CupidsPulse.com gathered these great articles from our partners to help you along:

1. Prioritize: The most important part of planning a wedding is choosing a date and budget. Without knowing the timing, you'll be unable to pick out flowers, choose a color scheme, or decide whether your ceremony will be outdoors or indoors. In terms of budget, well, we all know that weddings can come

with a hefty price tag if limitations aren't set from the start.

2. Find inspiration: Writing your vows can be a fun opportunity to express your love in a unique way. If you are struggling with finding the right words, try some of these quotes on marriage to help move things along.

3. Seek comfort: What you'll be wearing under your dress can be just as crucial as the dress itself. You're going to be in your dress for the majority of the day, so comfort and functionality is what you'll want to be looking for. There are tons of options available for the bride-to-be. Do some research on what's available, and then you can try them on and get a feel for what's best for you.

4. Talk honeymoon: Much like the wedding, honeymoons can leave your wallet looking a little barren. Talk to your significant other about what type of honeymoon you'd both enjoy and how much you're willing to spend. If you're a little lost, check out this list of destinations for a wide range of budgets.

5. Focus on the positive: It's hard to stay away from news of divorce and separation of both celebrities and non-celebrities alike. Don't let the negative news get you down! Focus on your relationship and take a look at couples who are happily married. On the other hand, those who have been divorced can give you some ideas of what causes a marriage fall apart.

What's your best tip for planning a wedding? Share below.

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: How to Be a Better Partner



By [Whitney Johnson](#)

If one of your resolutions is to be the best girlfriend you can be, we're here to help! Thanks to these great articles from our partners, you'll be off to a fantastic start.

1. Reflect on your love: The New Year is the perfect time to think back on the past twelve months and look forward to the future. Consider these touching quotes from well-known authors, artists, and poets. Maybe you'll even be inspired to write some sweet words of your own!

2. Partner up: Take a cue from *Real Housewives of New York* star Jill Zarin and join your man in supporting a cause that's

close to both of your hearts.

3. Make him happy: Make your partnership the best it can be by focusing on your beau and what keeps him smiling. Guys aren't so complicated – it'll be easier than you think!

4. Fully commit to your beau: With next week's premiere of *The Bachelor*, you'll be obsessing over what lucky lady is going to win Juan Pablo's heart before you know it. Why not focus on your own man instead and help your relationship grow even stronger?

5. Take the next steps: If you've been with your someone special for the past few weeks and know that he's a keeper, it may be time to take your relationship to a new level. Consider these five tips as you plan your first overnight date.

How will you become closer to your partner this year? Tell us in the comments below.

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Find True Love in the New Year





By [Whitney Johnson](#)

The start of a new year is like a blank slate. It's the perfect time to evaluate your goals and figure out what you want to accomplish over the next 365 days. If you're single and ready to settle down, use these great articles from our partners to open up your heart to love in 2014:

1. Get inspired: Thanks to these 50 romantic quotes, you'll be more than ready to find the relationship you deserve. So snuggle up with a cup of hot cocoa and get ready to be inspired! (YourTango.com)

2. Rediscover your passion: It's easy for romance to take a backseat during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. Whether you're partnered up with someone who you think may be your soulmate or you're working up the courage to say hello to your crush, these four tips will help you reignite your love life. (GalTime.com)

3. Tap into technology: If you want to settle down in the new year, it's time to change your approach to dating. Use this foolproof advice to perfect your online dating skills and meet

the man of your dreams. (YourTango.com)

4. Take a deep breath: Former *Baywatch* star Gena Lee Nolin encourages us to enjoy this time of year – whether you're single, in a new relationship, or happily married with four children (like she is!). After all, "true happiness comes from within." (Celebrity Baby Scoop)

5. Ring in the new year with someone new: Just because you're single doesn't mean you can't have a fantastic New Year's Eve. Why not find a single guy and plan a first date for December 31st? Sparks may fly! No matter what you decide to do, reflect on the past year and set clear goals for the coming twelve months. (GalTime.com)

How will you find true love in 2014? Tell us in the comments below!

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Tips for Having a Fun Family Holiday





By [Whitney Johnson](#)

The holidays are meant to be spent with the ones you love most: your family. Whether you're a newlywed spending your first Christmas with your husband's family or new parents trying to survive those sleepless nights, it's important that you soak up this time together. With this thought in mind, CupidsPulse.com has pulled together these great articles from our partners, filled with the tips you need to have a fun-filled holiday with your family:

Related Link: [Drew Lachey Talks About Spending Time with His Family](#)

1. Bond as a family: It's no secret that your kids won't be little forever, so why not enjoy this time before it's gone? Take a look at these gift ideas to bring your family even closer. (GalTime.com)

2. Show your bestie you care: Many women find a BFF in their sister or mother, but even if you're not related to your best friend by blood, you probably still view her as family. These 37 friendship quotes will remind you how special your bestie

is. (YourTango.com)

3. Celebrate your loved ones: Making people feel loved and special is important all year long, not just during the holidays. Here are four ways to show your family and friends just how much you care. (GalTime.com)

4. Embrace your inner kid: Take a cue from Alyson Hannigan and her husband of ten years Alexis Denisof and be a kid at heart. We promise you'll enjoy the holidays even more through the eyes of a child! (CelebrityBabyScoop.com)

Related Link: [Make Your Holiday the Best One Yet](#)

5. Tell your partner you love her: With the needs of your little ones filling you and your wife's days (and often your nights), it's easy for you to feel like you're missing out on time as a couple. Use these 15 tips to make sure your actions show your sweetheart just how much you love her. (YourTango.com)

Cupid wants to know: How will you bond with your family during the holidays?

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Make Your Holiday the Best One Yet





By Kerri Sheehan

Snow falls in thick, icy blankets; winter attire adorns every shop window; and a sip of steaming hot chocolate instantly warms you up. All of this can only mean one thing: The holiday season is upon us! CupidsPulse.com has gathered some of our favorite articles from our partners this week to make your winter the best it can be.

1. Laugh a little: Nothing is better than popping in a nice comedy with your significant other on a cold winter's night and having a good laugh. These comedians will tell you just how funny love can be. (YourTango.com)

Related Link: [Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Make Your Long-Term Relationship A Success](#)

2. Cuddle up: One of the best parts about the chilly weather is that you and your guy have all the more reason to stay indoors and snuggle with each other. Here are 47 of the cutest love quotes for that person you just want to 'mush.' (YourTango.com)

3. Get the girls together: Staying in isn't just for you and

your man; your girlfriends want in on the fun too! See how Melissa Joan Hart and her closest gal pals celebrated the holiday season with a cute “girls only” get together. (CelebrityBabyScoop.com)

4. Winterize your skin: Don't stop at a girls' night when it comes to pampering yourself. The icy temperatures are sure to leave your skin screaming for thirst, so here are some ways to get your skin ready for winter. (GalTime.com)

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

5. Be the best gift giver: Now that you've given yourself a gift (or two), it's time to spread that holiday cheer! Even if you aren't a parent, there are bound to be a child or two on your shopping list. These gender-neutral gifts will have any kid wishing that Santa asked you for gifting advice. (GalTime.com)

What's your best tip for surviving the holiday season? Share below.

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Make Your Long-Term Relationship A Success





By Kerri Sheehan

Longtime relationships aren't for everyone, but for those who have a committed significant other, keeping the spark alive is of the utmost importance. After a few years together, it can be hard to look at your partner like the lovestruck school girl you once resembled. CupidsPulse.com has gathered some of the best tips and advice from our partners – read on to keep your relationship fresh, strong, and loving.

1. DIY Therapy: Any couple will agree that the seas of love aren't always easy to navigate. The best way to revamp your union is to partake in some do-it-yourself relationship therapy. This approach isn't for everyone, but give it a try; it may just work for you! (GalTime.com)

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

2. Weekly Meetings: When you and your significant other have been together for so long, you tend to let the things that bother you simmer rather than addressing them and moving on. You can only begrudgingly wash the dishes so many times before

you feel resentment that your guy never takes his turn. Holding weekly meetings where you clear the air and talk about any issues you may have will keep you both happy. (GalTime.com)

3. Express Yourself: Being in love is like winning the lottery; it's exciting and wonderful, and it adds so many new opportunities to your future. However, it can be hard to put these feelings into words. Here are 50 love quotes that say what you can't. (YourTango.com)

4. The Duggar Family: If you're familiar with the reality show *19 Kids and Counting*, then you know that Michelle and Jim Bob Duggar celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary this past October. The mother of 19 shared her top three tips for a successful marriage. (CelebrityBabyScoop.com)

Related Link: [Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Parenting and Marriage After a Second Baby](#)

5. Expert Advice: Every relationship is different, so it can be hard to give distinct advice without knowing the whole story. Here are the best tips and expert advice around for couples in any situation. (YourTango.com)

What is your best advice for couples in a long-term relationship? Share your thoughts in the comments below.

Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Navigate Thanksgiving Weekend



By Kerri Sheehan

The holidays are a time for family and friends to get together and celebrate the best parts of life – so how come no one ever mentions the stress that comes with that? The instructions that came with the turkey say it needs to be basted every hour, but proper dinner conversation topics are rarely outlined. And, of course, there are tons of Black Friday promotions, but there are none that say specifically, “Grandma Margaret will love this!” CupidsPulse.com has gathered some of the best tips and advice from our partners to help you navigate your Thanksgiving weekend:

1. Give Thanks: Thanksgiving is about just that: giving thanks! Whether it’s your husband who helps you enjoy the simple things in life, your beautiful baby girl who will be celebrating her first Thanksgiving this year, or your employer who ensures that you have the funds to stay afloat, don’t forget to show your gratitude for everyone who enriches your

life. (CelebrityBabyScoop.com)

Related Link: [How Celebrity Couples Celebrate Thanksgiving](#)

2. Easy Conversation: You can bet that almost everyone has suffered through one or two awkward Thanksgiving dinners. This holiday is a family affair, so there will likely be those of all ages at the table. Some of your relatives may have also invited new love interests. Here are five go-to dinner conversation topics to keep talk appropriate and fun. (GalTime.com)

3. Good Deals: Now that you've made it through Thanksgiving Day, it's on to Black Friday! This is the ideal time to get some holiday shopping done, as many people have the day off from work and there will be some great discounts. Learning to weed through all of the promos will help you find the best deals. (GalTime.com)

4. Family Presents: After years of buying gifts for your entire family, you may be short on ideas of what will make their eyes widen. Really, how many times can you buy Aunt Mary a bathroom set, and how many cardigans does your mother need? Here are some unique gifts that your relatives will be sure to love. (YourTango.com)

Related Link: [5 Tips for Enjoying the Holiday Season](#)

5. Gift Guide: Nothing shows how much you care like picking out the perfect gift for your boyfriend. If you do, he'll know that you not only pay attention to what he likes but also that you listen when he talks about his love for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers over the Green Bay Packers. With all of the Black Friday deals out there, let this gifting guide help you decide which presents will make your man the happiest. (YourTango.com)

What is your best Thanksgiving weekend advice? Share below.

10 Relationship Behaviors You Think Are Odd... That Are Totally Normal!



By Laura Seldon for GalTime.com

What's "normal" and what's not when it comes to dating, love and relationships? Think you and your partner align with the average couple? Or are your relationship behaviors totally out there? We've asked several therapists, marriage counselors and relationship experts from around the country to shed some light on relationship behaviors that seem odd at first, but are actually quite normal. Take a seat and see how you and

your mate compare!

1. Changing feelings

Once upon a time you loved rocking the highest of high heels. These days, however, you're much more apt to throw on a pair of flats. It may sound simple, but your ever-evolving feelings on shoes can help to serve as a reminder that feelings come and go – and that's OK.

“Love is a living entity,” explains Karen Sherman, Ph.D. “And just like people have good days and bad – so will there be periods where the lovin' feelings just won't be there. Hang in, focus on the positive and the feelings will come back.”

2. Going through “adjustment periods”

“If you decide to marry, even if you've lived together, the first year is likely to be bumpy,” warns Sherman. “You are now in a legally committed relationship, the dynamics change and there is a period of adjustment. Having lived together doesn't prevent this adjustment period.”

So, if you and your better half are not in a state of bliss at every moment, it doesn't mean your relationship is doomed – it just means you're normal.

Related: [Must Love Dogs: More Singles Getting Pets](#)

3. Enjoying different hobbies

He's into fantasy football and you're into shopping? Better yet, you're into fantasy football and he's into shopping? Either way, it's totally normal for you and your main squeeze to have different interests.

“You don't have to like all the same things to have a healthy relationship,” notes Sherman. “What matters is having the same

values.” So go ahead and enjoy your fantasy football draft, and then swoon over the new shoes your man just bought online. You both deserve to enjoy your hobbies without feeling guilty.

4. Needing alone time

Are you the kind of person who would take yourself out for a date night for one? If so, you are not alone.

“Washing a car, walking a dog or exercising alone are signs of a healthy relationship with a secure attachment,” says Lanada Williams, a licensed counselor in Washington DC and Maryland. “Remind yourself, the individual you met still needs time to breathe and thrive.”

5. Being slow to compliment

When is the last time you told your partner how hot they looked? We’re all guilty of holding back compliments, and, according to Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Holly Cox, it may even be something you’re doing on purpose!

“When you give a compliment to anyone, but particularly someone you like a whole lot, you’re putting yourself on the line,” explains Cox. “Clients tell me they are often afraid their partners will reject the compliment – or worse, say something along the lines of, ‘Wow, you’re finally noticing everything I do around here. Uh-huh. What do you want?’”

Although this may be normal behavior, that doesn’t mean it’s OK. Remember to compliment your partner and accept the praise they give you!

6. Having trouble getting in the mood

Every married couple has experienced one of those nights (or mornings) where one member of the duo is ready for a racy romp, but the other is ready for a mellow nap!

“Virtually all couples have sexual desire problems sooner or later,” says Licensed Psychologist Dr. Kate Roberts. “Couples often go long periods of time without having sex and then once they start up again, their sex life continues on its own.”

Related: [Dating Advice: 10 Great Date Ideas Under \\$50](#)

7. Withholding information

Sure you told your partner about that expensive purse you just bought – you just chose not to reveal how much you dropped on it!

“Couples often have different priorities for discretionary income and it’s not uncommon for them to keep their secret stashes of clothes, toys, candy or other discretionary items,” says Dr. Roberts.

Just remember it’s never healthy to lie about how much you spend. If your partner asks how much you blew on that new pair of Jimmy Choos, keep it real. Lying to your partner – especially about money – is never going to lead you anywhere good.

8. Sparring, bickering & fighting

As two different people with two different philosophies on life, you’re bound to disagree at one point or another.

“Fighting is normal,” explains Therapist Dana Ward. “While some couples may think fighting is the sign of a bad relationship, it actually is very important. The key is fighting with a purpose.”

So, whether you are fighting about something as trivial as how to fold socks, or as significant as a job transition, make sure to fight the topic – not each other.

9. Finding other people attractive

You may be utterly in love with your partner, but that doesn't mean you can't admire a hottie with a great set of legs.

"You can and should appreciate all the beauty and dashing good looks all around you," shares Ward. However, she notes, "Attractive and attraction is different. Find other people attractive, but stop short of allowing yourself to be attracted to them."

10. Getting scared and pulling away

Pulling away, taking a time out, going on a break – we're all human, and being vulnerable with someone else can at times be scary enough to make you run for the hills!

"Sometimes when things are getting very serious men, in particular, may pull away while they decided to move forward," explains Relationship Coach Stef Safran.

However, just because one person in the relationship needs a breather, it doesn't mean your relationship is in desperate need of an SOS. It just means you're human!

Now that you've read through these 10 strange relationship behaviors that aren't actually weird at all, hopefully you feel a little better about your own relationship. If you still think you're odd, though, then embrace the quirks that make your relationship special and take a line from Holly Golightly in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* – "It may be normal, darling; but I'd rather be natural."

Why You Should Hold 'Marriage Meetings'



By Matty Staudt for GalTime.com

I have been with my wife for over 10 years. We have an amazing relationship that is full of love and understanding. We rarely argue, never fight and are genuinely each other's best friends. The one thing that we have recently realized though, is that we don't really communicate everything that is on our mind or bothering us about the other person. We are so busy keeping each other happy that we don't make time to talk about the little bothers that can build up.

Most couples come to this point after awhile together and instead of making the time to talk, they let the little things

sit and don't address them, when they probably should. The problem with this is, similar to a pressure cooker, people end up storing too much little stuff and eventually it turns into a big thing that explodes. Exploding is never good and instead of issues being resolved, they become a giant whirlwind of accusations.

So we have started doing something new that I think has made a great relationship even better. Once a week we have a "Marriage Meeting." This is a time that we set aside once a week to talk about things that might be bothering us, or to just tell the other something that we appreciate about them. There are some rules that sound easy, but can be a little more challenging than you would think.

1. The meeting should be held at the same day and time every week. No skipping! Because if you skip one, the next thing you know you're skipping two...then three... And so on.

2. Each partner has one turn to state something that is on their mind or bothering them.

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3. One partner talks, the other listens. This is not a discussion. Anything said is to be listened to only... No responding. This gives each person time to think about what the other has said and then work on a solution.

4. If there is nothing bothering one partner, then they should use the meeting as a time to tell the other something that they appreciate about them or mention something they liked about them during the past week.

5. Again... NO RESPONDING. This can be somewhat difficult, because the initial, knee-jerk reaction is to defend oneself. But this is a meeting not an attack and anything said should be given time to resonate.

RELATED: [Does It Matter If You Have A Lot In Common?](#)

6. Each partner should take what was said and try to work on it the following week. At the next meeting you can discuss what you did about the issue or how you tried to resolve it – IF in fact there was an issue to be resolved.

These meetings have been great for us. They have allowed us the opportunity to A) discuss issues that we would normally suppress and B) voice our appreciation for things that might otherwise go unrecognized.

I believe these are fantastic tools for any relationship at any stage. Give it a try and let us know how it works for you. You can email me at matty@straightmalefriend.com

Does It Matter If You Have A Lot In Common?





By Matty Staudt for GalTime.com

Whenever anyone starts a relationship or meets someone, the first thing people want to know is, "What do you have in common?" On the surface this seems like a good question and one that warrants serious thought. The more I think about it, though, and think about my wife and I, it seems to me that what you have in common is not the most important thing. In fact, having things not in common makes for a more interesting life in the long run.

Here are some things I DO NOT have in common with my wife... and I believe add to our relationship rather than take away from it.

Music

Yes, we can agree that the Beach Boys were awesome and everyone loves the 80's, but when I really want to crank up my tunes, my wife is not around. I like to pump metal, rap and even country from time to time. And when I do, I like it full blast. My wife does not. So, on car trips we have to find alternatives to music, or just have conversations while

driving. We have amazing talks and love our road trips because we are not just zoning out to music, but rather talking about things we don't talk about in our daily lives. I still pump my music too loud, I just do it alone in traffic.

Related: [Absence Shouldn't Make the Heart Grow Fonder](#)

Food

We love to eat. Let me repeat, we LOVE to eat! Going out to dinner is one of our favorite things. But when it comes to our favorite foods, we are total opposites. I love sushi, she can't stand it. She likes SPAM, yes, SPAM. How can two polar opposites in the food department find common ground? We find new places that have food we both have never tried and on occasion she lets me go to sushi while she gets whatever hot food they offer on the menu. Food is important in relationships, but it is not a dealbreaker. That is unless they are vegan.

Sports

I love them, she can't stand them. I thought this would be hard to make work, but after pushing her to go to a few baseball games, we have found that she actually enjoys going to the ballpark. Sure it's for the beer and dogs, but still we do it together and we are both happy about it. If I need to watch sports, that is a good time for me to do my own thing with friends and let her do something for herself. (That usually means shopping.)

Related: [Why You Should Hold 'Marriage Meetings'](#)

Friends

I am a person who needs to have a lot of friends around and hates to do anything alone. My wife would be fine to keep her own company 90% of the time. We make it work because we are each other's friends. She fills that gap I need and when she

needs her alone time, I head out with my boys. Happy, Happy, Happy.

My bottom line is that not having things in common is not always a bad thing. It opens doors for both people to explore new options and new ways of thinking. Not having the same interests makes life so much more interesting for you in the long run. Let's face it, agreeing on everything is boring and having someone who challenges you and your comfort zone makes for a much more interesting long-term life.

Why So Many Women Couldn't Care Less About Getting Married





By Marcus Osborne for GalTime.com

I don't know how or why or when it happened, but somewhere along the line I realized that I have an inordinate amount of female friends. It's been a blessing and a curse really. The majority of my closest friends are female. I'm living proof that men and women really can be "just friends."

One of the stellar benefits of having close platonic relationships with women (I'll save the negatives for another column – because believe me, particularly in the dating game, there are many!) is you get some compelling, honest insight on what makes women tick. After all these years, I think I've got a pretty decent understanding of the ladies. I'll never completely figure you all out – I won't even attempt that Herculean task – but I think I know enough to stay out of the doghouse!

Your SMF's receive a fair amount of e-mails. As one of the founders of StraightMaleFriend.com, I thank you. Lord only knows where we'd be without you and your correspondence. From those e-mails and the regular correspondence with you and many

of my friends, I've noticed a surprising trend.

Women who couldn't care less about getting married. Seriously.

This is not to infer that the general female populace has suddenly become anti-marriage. Not only do I not harbor that belief, but the preponderance of evidence clearly indicates that matrimony is still the preferred path of life's journey. But what I have seen is an ever-expanding legion of women who are quite content with their lives sans a husband. Women who are cool to the idea or just flat out not interested in being a wife.

Related: [6 Clues To Look For in a Keeper](#)

What's really been fascinating is how many of these ladies still aren't comfortable sharing that perspective with other people because of the way the information is/would be perceived. And it really gets touchy when they announce that they're not interested in having kids. Just the other day, I was told, "Marcus, you know how some people's biological clock is ticking? Mine's not broken – it's just not even there."

Now understand, as a guy, this is fairly unbelievable news. What woman doesn't dream about getting married? What woman doesn't have her entire wedding mapped out by the time she sees her first Julia Roberts movie? Are you kidding? Of course you want to get hitched ... you're a woman!

Well, that's simply not the case.

Related: [Dating Advice: Deal Breakers That REALLY Matter](#)

Apparently there are a lot of women who could give a rat's a** about having a relationship, in general, not to mention marriage in particular. And I find it fascinating, brave and a spectacular display of self-honesty to admit it. As open-minded as we all like to think we are, those women get the

collective stink-eye. We're a unique society that way. We promote women's strength and independence, but we're perplexed when they exercise that independence by NOT wanting to get married, by NOT wanting to have kids, by being ... a real life Samantha Jones if she chooses.

I'd love for you to share your thoughts here ... whether you are or aren't married, how do you feel about it? If you aren't and have no intention or couldn't care less about doing so – why? Furthermore, how do you feel about the women who choose to forgo the institution altogether? Let's hear your thoughts...

Absence Shouldn't Make the Heart Grow Fonder





By Matty Staudt for GalTime.com

Recently I took a job that will require me to be gone 5 days a week and I will only see my wife on the weekends. Luckily it's only for a few weeks because I'm on day 3 and I can tell you it already sucks. I truly enjoy being with my wife and being apart is really tough on both of us.

I bring this up because I was thinking about that expression, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." I've realized that that's not the way it should be. I appreciate all my time with my wife and all absence is doing is making us both sad. Heck, even our dogs are bummed I am gone. (At least that's what she tells me.)

I think too many couples take for granted the time they spend together, and to be honest, most guys I know can't wait to do stuff without their wives. It's not that they don't love their wives, they just like to have that individual time away. I think society, in general, has kind of ingrained in people that it's an acceptable thought for men. I don't think it is.

Related: [Why You Should Hold 'Marriage Meetings'](#)

Now don't get me wrong, I think some time apart is healthy and I know my wife and I are that annoying couple that likes to do everything together. We do it for a few reasons that I'm going to share with you.

She's my best friend.

I know it's cliché that your wife should be your best friend, but I see a lot of couples that don't feel this way or have forgotten with time. Remind yourself that your mate is and should be the person you enjoy having fun with. Whether we are simply sitting together, watching TV, talking or out on the town, she is the person I want to do all of those activities with.

I am a better person with her around.

I know I am a better person with my wife by my side. If ever I don't think so, my friends are quick to remind me. Especially when I put on my jerk hat when I'm out by myself. If you are not a better person with your mate, think about why you aren't and whether or not it's something you can improve on.

Related: [Does It Matter If You Have A Lot In Common?](#)

We make each other laugh.

Laughing together is KEY. If you meet a couple that doesn't make each other laugh, then I will guarantee you it's not a healthy relationship. Whether it's doing my underwear dance for her or sharing an inside joke, we laugh a lot. Are you laughing a lot with your partner?

So absence may make the heart grow fonder, but it shouldn't. You should enjoy every day and minute with the one you love.

If this is not the case, then maybe you are not with the right person. Treat every day as if it were the last day you will see your mate for a very long time. Make each other laugh, be best friends and strive to bring out the best in one another.

What do you think? Do you travel or does your spouse? How do you keep the closeness?

8 Things Your Wedding Can Do Without



By Kendal Perez for GalTime.com

According to a survey conducted by The Knot, couples spent an

average of \$28,427 on their wedding and related events last year. It's no surprise that weddings are big business, and yet it's tough to imagine dropping 300 Benjamins on a single-day event.

There are lots of ways to trim wedding expenses, especially with the number of DIY crafts available to eager brides on Pinterest. However, there are some things your wedding can do without entirely that add up to big savings. Read on for eight such recommendations.

1. Summer setting

The cost of a wedding is not only impacted by the season, but also by the time and day of the week. For example, a Saturday afternoon wedding in July will cost you more than a Sunday-morning ceremony in March. The impact of timing on the overall cost of your wedding cannot be overstated, so check [Turbotax.com](https://www.turbotax.com) has a handy infographic for insight into the best budget-friendly times to get married.

Related: [Love Advice: 3 Signs He's the Right Guy to Be Your Valentine](#)

2. Enormous guest list

The best way to save money on your nuptials is to keep the guest list small. The number of people you invite impacts every cost associated with your event, from location to invitations to menu. The smaller the wedding, the more intimate the event. Plus, it means fewer headaches all around for those involved in planning the big day.

3. Save-the-Dates

I'm not sure when we decided one wedding invitation wasn't enough, but this trend is the bane of budgets the world over. While invitations aren't the costliest part of a wedding, they're the most redundant and unnecessary. If key people

can't make it unless they pencil you in a year in advance, pick up the phone or send them an email. Everyone else considers two-months sufficient notice.

4. Custom invitations

With save-the-dates off of your list, you can invest lots of money in the invitations, right? Wrong. Gold-flecked cardstock and lace-trimmed envelopes will be lining wastebaskets within moments of receipt, or at the very most a few days post-ceremony. Thankfully, you can find customizable wedding packages online for a fraction of the cost. For the truly frugal, free wedding printables abound, and you can buy cheap printer ink using Inkjet Willy to cut the cost of at-home printing.

5. Wedding favors

Wedding favors look charming in style shoots, but are ultimately a waste of money. Leave them out and I guarantee guests won't gripe about the lack of personalized M&M packets or monogrammed matchstick books. In fact, they may thank you – it's one less tchotchke to feel badly about tossing in the trash.

6. Full bar

A cash bar is a surefire way to save money and annoy your guests at the same time. Meet your guests halfway with complimentary beer, wine and a signature cocktail. You'll have fun creating your very own wedding drink, and you'll save on the cost of offering every spirit and mixer known to man. For signature cocktail inspiration, peruse [this gallery](#) of tasty offerings.

Related: [How to Balance a New Relationship and Love with a Booming Career](#)

7. Multi-course meal

The most expensive element of my wedding was the food. Despite guests' declarations that it was the best wedding spread EVER, I lament the cost. Before you deliberate over the chicken or the salmon, consider a more condensed eating experience to save money. Early-evening weddings can get away with cocktail hour accompanied by appetizers or small plates. Mid-morning ceremonies can have fun with brunch fare for much less than typical dinner spreads.

8. Location, location, location

Believe it or not, destination weddings can actually cost less than traditional ceremonies. The cost of travel and accommodations can be a deterrent for most guests, making your overall price tag potentially less. It all depends on the location, of course, but ultimately it's a good option to consider if you've always wanted to get married on a beach.

Mastering the Art of the 'Plus One'





By Sarah Gooding for GalTime.com

The summer is upon us, and it has brought a new love interest with it! Your mind is drifting off to clear skies, beaches and breezy summer dates – we know. However, if you're in your late 20s or early 30s, you may have found the summer months becoming suspiciously less and less about lazing in the sun and spending endless afternoons on your favorite patio. Your coveted weekends out of the office are becoming increasingly filled with wedding showers, bachelorettes and of course, the big day itself. Luckily your invite to the next wedding includes a Plus One, but there are also some major unknowns that come along with the first wedding you and your new guy attend together. Will he have fun? Will you have to babysit him the whole night? Will your friends and family like him? What if you're the Plus One? Will he be attentive? Will his friends and family be inclusive? Will he feel he needs to be by your side all night?

As the Dating Coach for PlentyOfFish, I receive many letters from our female users asking for dating advice; particularly when a relationship is first taking off. In light of wedding

season, here are some tips that will ensure your first wedding together won't be your last:

If he's the Plus One:

Introduce him to your friends before the wedding. A wedding shouldn't be the first time your new beau is meeting all of your friends and family members. The focus of the day will be on the bride and groom, not getting to know new people. Plan a casual get-together before the big day and use it as an opportunity for your friends to get to know your new guy and vice versa. If a wedding is not the first introduction, it's still a nice gesture to host a dinner party for all your friends and their significant others who will also be attending the wedding. This is simply another opportunity for your date to get acquainted with your friends and feel like he's part of your close-knit group.

Related: [Dating Advice: Are You Dating a 'Mad Man'?](#)

Ask your best friend's boyfriend or husband for help. The last thing you want to do is look after your date all night. He likely won't be a fan of this either. An easy way to ensure you're not babysitting your date but also not leaving him alone for too long is to enlist the help of one of your guy friends, preferably the significant other of one of your close friends. They'll likely be spending time together in the future (if things work out) so they'll have an incentive to get to know each other, too. While you're enjoying yourself on the dance floor with all your best girlfriends, your date can engage in some needed guy talk while bonding over drinks with a cool, new dude.

Don't force your date to dance (or do anything for that matter). If your date doesn't suggest a dance, don't force it. You want him to feel comfortable and he may not be the time to show his moves until at least a few months in. Aside from dancing, be careful not to force anything on your date at a

wedding. Try to avoid asking 10 different people to take your picture or suggesting he try to catch the garter if you can sense he isn't into it. You don't want him feeling pressured to be the perfect Plus One or that you are much more serious about the relationship than he is.

Related: [Relationship Advice: Making Marriage Work Like Beyonce](#)

If you're the Plus One:

Offer to contribute to the gift. According to etiquette, unless your name is on the invite, you don't technically need to contribute to the gift. That said, it's a nice touch to at least offer. You are getting a nice dinner and a beautiful night out of the deal. If he declines, offer to pick out a nice card instead.

Mingle. The last thing you want is for your date to feel that he needs to stay by your side all night. This is likely an exciting night for your date and a chance for him to catch up with all of his close friends. Don't sulk in the corner or attach yourself to his hip. Show him you're outgoing, independent and can make friends with anyone. All it takes is a 'Hello, I'm _____. How do you know the groom?' A little liquid courage also doesn't hurt.

Blend in with the crowd. You want to be on your best behavior at wedding, particularly when you don't know the bride and groom very well. For one night only, do your best not to stick out from the crowd or embarrass your date. When it comes to attire, stay away from pants and anything white. Also, while drinking is usually part of most weddings, be careful not to drink too much. You wouldn't want to have to cut your night short.

Handling the “Kids” Question On a Date



By Sheila Blagg for GalTime.com

The kids-or-no-kids debate is an issue for many couples. But, bring a child into a new dating relationship and the issue becomes even more complex. As people move from one relationship into the dating realm, they often wonder, “Does he want kids?,” “Will she still want to date me?”

When both parties are on the same page in regard to the kids question (either in favor of kids or not), the new relationship experiences fewer bumps. But if one wants kids

and the other doesn't, the debate may result in a huge rift that not many couples survive.

When to talk about kids

It is my opinion that the do-you-want-(more)-children question should be tackled within the first couple of dates. Why continue to date someone who doesn't have the same goals and desires as you do? Sure, there are some cases where, along the way, someone changes his or her mind, and everyone lives happily ever after, but there are more cases that end in heartbreak and anger.

Related: [Relationship Advice: Can You Have a Friendly Meeting with Your Ex?](#)

Are you willing to take that chance? Does it make sense to invest so much time in a relationship that may never work?

Most people know whether or not they want children by the time they reach adulthood. Personally, I have five children, and three of them already know that they definitely want to have kids of their own. One of my kids is a no go, and one is still on the fence (which is fine since he's only 14!). My point is that, even though my kids are still relatively young, they already have a picture of what they want their family lives to look like.

I can change his/her mind

I've heard so many stories of heartbreak resulting from one person trying to change a potential partner's mind about having or not having children. The bottom line is, if someone you're dating does not want children (and vice versa), don't try to talk him/her into it. It's important to respect the vision of what that individual has in mind for his/her future.

Stop trying to change the other person and accept that you may need to change how you deal with the situation.

When I began dating after my divorce, I decided that I wanted to date only men who wanted children. I felt that the desire for kids was one common ground on which we could relate to one another.

But, one of my very best friends approached the kid debate in a completely different way. She decided that she had no interest in dating a man with kids. She didn't feel that she was cut out to manage someone else's kids and the ex-wife that would inevitably come as part of the package.

Related: [Relationship Advice: Why We Are Insecure About Relationships](#)

Know what you want

What it boils down to is that you must first decide what your goals are for the future. Do you want (more) kids? Do you want to date someone who already has kids? Know your limits, set boundaries and stick to them. It has been my experience – and the research will back me up – that it's never a good idea to try to “change his/her mind” on something as important as having a family.

Although there are always exceptions to every rule, dating someone who is like-minded – especially when it comes to children – makes for a less complicated relationship.

Four Telltale Signs He's NOT the One



By Robert Manni for GalTime.com

We've all heard the old adage of addition by subtraction. Most women keep a mental list of the qualities they seek in their partner. Some lists are short and to the point. Many are long – way too long and they can get in the way of finding The One. Your Guy's Guy suggests that being mindful of a few red flags can save time and streamline your search process. If the man you are seeing has issues with any of these four behavioral traits, it's a good bet that you are in for a challenge and he may not be worthy of your unconditional love. Take it from a guy who learned the hard way and ask yourself if any of these traits are too familiar.

Related: [Love Advice Q&A: Is It Weird That My Man Always Texts Instead of Calling?](#)

He's cheap.

Yes, the economy's tough and the gap between rich and poor keeps growing, but you want your guy to know the difference between thrifty and stingy. Seventy-five percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck. Sad, but true. That means that your guy needs to know how to manage and grow his pile of cash. He also needs to prioritize what he spends his money on. If the first time he asks you out he assumes you're splitting the check, that's a bad sign. If he takes you to a concert or sporting event and you're craning your neck in the nosebleed section – unless it's the Super Bowl or a Rolling Stones concert – it's a bad sign. If he drinks cheap wine, buys cheap clothes and tips ten percent, it's a bad sign.

He's jealous.

Jealousy is toxic; jealousy has no benefits. Jealousy always results in hurt and resentment. It's an emotion driven by fear, anger and insecurity. Do you want to sign up for that? Of course not. You don't want your guy taking you for granted either, but if he gets jealous about your crush on Ryan Gosling or when you share a casual story that includes your ex, that's a bad sign. I know a woman whose guy became upset because the voice on her GPS was male. Seriously. That's a very bad sign.

He's controlling.

See above. Controlling behavior also stems from fear, anger and insecurity. If he doesn't allow you to have your own life, that's a bad sign. If he doesn't approve of a night out with your besties, it's a bad sign. If you can't have a drink with your colleagues, that's a bad sign. Relationships are about joy and sharing, not being held captive. Don't let any guy take away your independence. Both partners need their own lives.

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He's got vices.

I don't mean drinking socially or an addiction to the tv. But if he is doing drugs regularly and needs to in order to function or he gambles compulsively or he is a nasty drunk, you're in for a bumpy ride. These are diseases, so your partner needs help. How far you choose to go to help him with his recovery is up to you. Ultimately, he has to make the key decisions about how he chooses to live his life. If he favors drinks, drugs or gambling over you at any time, it's a very bad sign.

I hope this helps. Everyone has issues so finding the perfect partner is not easy. Your list is your list. Make it work for you. If you flip the script and factor in what you don't want in a relationship, it might make it easier to find a connection that brings you the love you deserve.

Does your guy own negative traits that prevent him from being The One?

What Women Don't Know About Men





By Robert Manni for GalTime.com

Ladies, we're all human, but the similarities stop there.

How many times have you heard from a guy, who was just dumped by his long time partner, that he had no clue there were problems? A lot. Right? There's a reason for that. Remember the time when you bought a birthday card for his mother, and he just grunted before asking you to sign it from the both of you? The point is that men and women approach life and experience relationships differently. That does not mean that men and women cannot evolve or improve their relationships. It means that there are things that men and women need to know about each other before any real progress can be made. I'm a Guy's Guy, so let's focus on men first. Here are a few pointers to help you understand how men think and what you can do about it.

1. Men are not complicated. You're probably already aware of this, but you might need a reminder. Sure, dudes have layers, but for the most part it's "what you see is what you get". Guys are straightforward and lay things on the line,

especially with each other. We don't dance around with our feelings. And if we are having a problem with our relationship, we say so. If we don't bring anything up, consider us happy. If that black bustier and thong ensemble turns your guy on, he'll probably expect you to wear it every Saturday night until hell freezes over. But if you can top it, he's game. Men can be that simple. I'm not saying that this is necessarily a good thing, but at least we're predictable and we've got to start the conversation somewhere.

Related: [Dating Advice Q&A: How Can You Know If Someone is Being Honest Online?](#)

2. Men don't pay attention. You might think and secretly hope that we're paying attention to the little things the way you are, but unfortunately we're not. So when he brings home a bouquet of fresh flowers because you mentioned liking daisies, it's a small act but at the same time a big deal for a guy. It means he's paying attention and you acknowledge it, which is really cool. Unfortunately guys suck at paying attention, so these tender moments can be far too rare. But don't abandon hope. He did bring you those flowers.

3. Men can't read your mind. This one is my personal pet peeve. I can't tell you how many times I've dealt with women in relationships and business where all of a sudden (at least it seemed that way to me) they just picked up and walked. And they seemed pissed about it. As a result, like other dudes, I've come close to having abandonment issues. It's this passive aggressive behavior that bugs me. Unlike women, men don't hold their feelings in, solemnly fuming or grouching to our friends about the relationship, prior to finally breaking up two years later. If we're no longer interested, we'll most likely say something to that effect and hear you out even if we're set on dumping you. We're just wired that way and it's much cleaner. You might want to give it a try. Of course there are guys who keep a broken relationship going for the sex, but they always end up being the one that gets dumped.

Related: [Dating Advice Q&A: How Harmless Is Sending Pictures Via Text?](#)

So what can we do? Just being aware of our differences is a good place to start. Men need to shape up quickly if they plan on keeping up with all of the strides women are making and their long overdue recognition. The best thing men can do is pay attention a lot more closely to their partner's needs. Women are amazing at this, but they can't expect men to just lock in and get it. Guys need a little prodding now and then. Try to be as clear to your guy as he is with his friends. Put your guns on the table. No secret pouting or carping about him with your girlfriends. Be crystal clear and talk it out. Guys will get the message if you communicate with them the way they talk to each other.

Do you think you know everything you need to know about men?

6 Clues To Look For in a Keeper





By Marcus Osborne for GalTime.com

If you're one of the millions of women who are single, dating regularly and yet you've had inconsistent luck in the match game, it may be time to do some introspection. I can't begin to tell you how often I hear complaints about scarcity of quality guys. I hear it in the dating echo chamber with alarming regularity: "Men don't want to commit!"

Okay, let me clear that last bit up. The idea that guys won't commit or don't want to commit is an unabashed fallacy. I've said this before, it's not that the guy won't commit – he just won't commit to you. The right guy for you will find you. That's a guarantee.

Now about this so-called "quality guys" drought...complete bunk. Seriously, most of the guys I know who are looking for serious relationships bristle at that statement. Because they know a certain general truth that women don't seem to appreciate: that the quality guys are there but you're either ignoring them or not giving them the opportunity to show you how great they are. But why does this chasm exist? There are

obviously variables aplenty that cause these missed connections. But I would submit that the idea of “dealbreakers” is a major culprit.

Related: [Dating Advice: Words That Wound Men](#)

We all have relationship dealbreakers. That handful of key traits that any potential partner must possess in order to stay in the game. Quite frankly, we all should have them. However, our dealbreakers should be meaningful. I like to have women break their do-or-dies into two separate groups: shallow dealbreakers and substantive dealbreakers. We should have both but with the understanding that the major emphasis should be placed on the substantive kind. You’d think that that would be a given. I mean, of course, the substance should take precedence over the shallow.

Unfortunately, what we know doesn’t always inform our actions. So, let this be your reminder. Keep your priorities in order. Those shallow dealbreakers:

must be this tall

must have this color hair

must have this type of degree

must make this six-figure salary

must come from this kind of family

must look like George Clooney

...Those should ultimately be seen as great-to-haves instead of must-haves.

Related: [Dating Advice: Deal Breakers That REALLY Matter](#)

The real stuff, the substantive stuff, is what’s going to get you through the years. You want to find the quality guys? Use these as your new dealbreaker template:

1. His closest friends should be great people: You want a real gauge on what kind of guy you're getting involved with? Observe his friends. The type of people in your potential partner's inner circle will say a lot about his character.

2. He should be calm under pressure: Long-term relationships are rife with emotional highs and lows. That being the case, the person closest to you had better be someone who you can count on to not only be in control of his emotions but to be a steadying and comforting influence when times aren't quite as great.

3. Must be in pursuit of his passion: Maybe he doesn't make six figures. Heck, most people don't. But he had better be driven by something other than money. Far too often women get involved with guys because they have a juicy bank account, then they get serious with that guy and realize that the man whose passion is making money may never have enough money. This then creates the real possibility that Mr. Moneymaker may only have time to make money and not have time for you.

4. Must appreciate your independence: You're your own person with your own opinions, perspectives and aspirations. Whether you're traditional and expect to be a stay-at-home mom or a lady with dreams of being the President of the United States, your guy had better be on board with you. Do NOT commit that typical mistake of trying to change your guy's mind by trying to get him to understand your position. The right guy requires no convincing.

5. Your friends should like him: This isn't to say that your judgment should be completely colored by your friends' opinions, but if there's a collective aversion to your guy by your inner circle, it's definitely time to start asking questions.

6. Laugh, laugh, laugh: He'd better be able to laugh...and you'd better be able to laugh with him. Few things in a

relationship are as intimate as a couple's ability to share the gift of laughter. You'll find that successful couples' most common trait is that the two simply know how to make each other smile.

So there you go. Take those dealbreakers to the bank and that's where you begin seeing your quality guys. Everything else, the looks, the money, the career, are all amazing icing on the cake, but for long-term potential start with those six building blocks and you're suddenly finding good quality guys to date.

Can You Date Your Friend's Ex And Keep Your Friend?





By Jane Greer, Ph.D. for GalTime.com

Supermodel Naomi Campbell is one of the most well-known faces in the fashion industry and the creator of the model-search reality show *The Face*. It was on the show that Campbell met and began a mentorship with the aspiring model and former Miss Universe China, Luo Zilin. Luo was the runner up on the show and the last model standing on Naomi's "team." She has a long history of modeling successes around the world.

But this week it was reported that her contract with MIX Model Management NYC was abruptly terminated. The agency cited an "unacceptable work ethic" and "unprofessional conduct." The firing comes just a few weeks after Luo was photographed on vacation with Russian billionaire Vladimir Doronin who happens to be Naomi's ex, leaving many to speculate that Naomi was somehow behind the firing. Naomi and Vladimir broke up earlier this year after dating since 2010.

Related: [Celebrity Couple Sarah Michelle Gellar and Freddie Prinze Jr.: How Does A Couple Cope With Illness?](#)

Naomi is known for her temper – she was charged with assault

in 2006 for throwing a phone at her assistant— and rumors abound that it was she who made sure Luo was punished for liaising with her ex. This raises the question that many face: is it ever OK to date the former flame of a friend or mentor? And if that opportunity comes up, what is the best way to handle it?

This goes to the very core of friendship or mentoring – so much is freely given and exchanged in those relationships that the lines can become blurred as to what is realistic to expect to be mutual. In particular, when it comes to exes, it can be difficult to distinguish those boundaries and, as a result, they can get crossed. So in order to maintain your friendship or the respect and support of your mentor or mentee, there are a few things to keep in mind before going ahead.

Related: [Relationship Advice: Love the Second Time Around](#)

To begin with, break-ups are rarely clean. Oftentimes couples may break up for a short period but then get back together, or at least cling to the possibility that they might. In addition, one person may continue to care more than the other, leaving feelings open and dangling out there. If you think you're interested in a friend's ex, consider the nature of the break-up before you proceed. There are times when a relationship ends with no strings attached – perhaps your friend even feels guilty about breaking up and says that the person wasn't right for him or her, but thinks that you might like them. That could be a green light that it is okay to go forward.

Whether that is the case or not, the only way to approach this without risking ruining your relationship is to be aware, open and honest. Also, before initiating a conversation about the possibility of dating your friend's or mentor's ex: first consider the timeline. If it was a very recent break-up, you might want to wait a little while not only to let things settle, but also to make sure it is a done deal. Once you are

sure, check in with them to see how they would feel about your connecting up with that person. It isn't always an easy conversation to have, but it will let you know where they stand and, consequently, where you stand. If you keep this in mind, you will be able to preserve your old relationship in the event that you do start a new one.

What do you think? Is it EVER OK to date a friend's ex or is it safer to just stay away from that situation all together?

Fend Off The Post-Wedding Blues



By Laura Seldon for GalTime.com

So, you finally met the love of your life, got engaged in the most romantic way possible and the two of you toasted your love in the biggest party you've ever thrown (which is a now a day you count among the happiest of your entire life). But after all that fun and excitement, you're finding yourself feeling a little down.

"Post-wedding blues are very normal," says Dr. Ramani Durvasula, a licensed clinical psychologist in Los Angeles. "It's as though the circus packed up and left town, and so too has the event that has motivated the bride's every thought for months, if not years!" If your wedding excitement has turned into wedding-woe-is-me, then here are five great ways to channel your newlywed bliss.

1. Talk About It

If you're feeling down now that your big day has come and gone, there is a good chance your partner knows something is up, but is unsure of what's going on.

"With every great change comes discomfort," says Cherilynn Veland, a licensed clinical social worker in Chicago. "Expect it, talk about it, even toast to it." Who knows, maybe your mate is feeling the same way. Talk about it honestly and you'll likely to start to feel better when you open up.

Related: [Premarital Counseling – The Pros and Cons](#)

2. Keep the Party Going

"Extend the fun a little longer," suggests Dr. Durvasula. "When the pictures come out, have friends over and use all of those new dishes. Or, just have friends over and let your wedding be the event that re-connected you with people you care about."

Connecting with your closest friends and sharing an evening of laughter can't help but lift your spirits.

3. Get Back to What You Do Best

Not sure how to spend all that free time now that your wedding-planning days are behind you? Put those organizational skills to good use by volunteering at a local non-profit or simply planning a BBQ or movie night for your neighbors.

“Get involved with your community as newlyweds,” suggests Carolina Caro, a life coach based in Los Angeles. “You’ll have more fun and get to know more people!”

4. Celebrate Your Marriage

We often hear that the wedding and honeymoon are the most exciting times in a relationship. “That is just not true – your marriage is,” say Doug and Leslie Gustafson, a married team of therapists in Denver, Colorado. “You are together, you are free, and you get to have all the romance, sex and excitement that you choose to have whenever you choose to have it! Live it up.”

Related: [10 Relationship Behaviors You Think Are Odd...That Are Totally Normal](#)

Celebrate your love by planning a few date nights, scheduling a romantic getaway or just surprising your mate with breakfast in bed – they’ll thank you for it and will be grateful they married such a catch!

5. Grow Your Marriage

After the hustle and bustle of wedding planning, many couples need to reconnect since they have been so focused on organizing their dream wedding for several months (or even years). Now that you’ve enjoyed that special time together, get focused on the special time you have together as newlyweds.

“Settle in to your new life and get to know each other in and out of the bedroom,” the Gustafsons suggest. “Stay involved with each other and keep the love alive by finding new ways to show your love every day.”

No doubt about it, weddings are exciting. With so much anticipation, emotions and adrenalin going throughout the months leading up to your wedding, it is inevitable you would experience some type of crash after it's all done. Keep an awareness about the feelings you are having, which are normal and natural responses to such a major life change, and you'll hopefully find your newlywed bliss in no time!

How Do You Handle Your Ex's New Partner?





By Jane Greer, Ph.D. for GalTime.com

Some people are better at romance recovery than others. Recent reports suggest that Elin Nordegren is struggling to accept the new partner of her ex-husband, Tiger Woods. Though it has been rumored that he has been dating Olympic skier Lindsey Vonn for many months, they only recently went public with their romance, stating they are “happy” together. Elin and Tiger divorced in the summer of 2010. Their marriage ended in scandal when it was revealed he’d had multiple affairs, and was soon after treated for an apparent sex addiction.

Elin has been connected to billionaire Chris Cline, but that reportedly hasn’t seemed to make it easier for her to accept the fact that Tiger’s girlfriend is spending so much time with their children, and comments have been made about restricting his custody access. Though the trio managed to be civil at the kids little league games, it’s not difficult to imagine why there may be some tension behind closed doors. What can people do to ease that tension, leaving those bad feelings behind and trying to finally let them go?

Related: [Dating Advice: How to Introduce Your Kids to Your New Partner](#)

Being betrayed is so traumatic, and then having to face feeling replaced by someone who is now taking the spot you used to occupy with your husband and children can be even harder to take. In some cases, your ex's new companion may even look like you, perhaps just younger. Adding to that, now you have to share your children with the last person on earth you would want them to be with. Sometimes betrayals are an outgrowth of unaddressed conflicts that were there for a long time and may have created a large enough rift for someone to get in between you. However, regardless of what might have been a catalyst for the infidelity, it doesn't diminish the intensity of the loss you have to face. Finding the maturity and emotional muscle needed to deal with this difficult experience can be a challenge.

Friends and family might respond by suggesting you just get on with it, and leave the other person in the past where he or she belongs. Even if that is hard to hear, it is the goal you want to strive for. Continuing to focus on your ex can unwittingly keep you stuck in your anger. Even if you have moved into a new relationship, all that negativity can hold you back and run interference in your life and with your current partner.

Related: [Can You Date Your Friend's Ex And Keep Your Friend](#)

Instead of using your anger and sadness to launch an attack that keeps you mired in the past, use it to disengage. Put boundaries in place: formalize the necessary times to see each other, be it for picking up belongings or dropping things off; begin to build up new support systems rather than looking to your ex when you have a problem in the house, a flat tire or too much laundry; if there are kids, limit communication with your ex to discussing only necessary subjects surrounding the logistics of their caretaking. Wherever you can, fill in and

replenish the areas of your life where you feel the most loss. The more you do that, the less resentful and angry you are going to be.

None of this is easy, but if you become aware of how you direct your energy, you might be able to turn things around. Unfortunately for Elin, "hating" Lindsey Vonn, or any future partner or spouse to Tiger, will not heal the wounds inflicted by a devastating divorce. That effort could be better spent investing in herself and her new life.

Please tune in to "Let's Talk Sex" which streams live on HealthyLife.net every last Tuesday of the month at 2 PM EST, 11 AM Pacific. We look forward to listener call-in questions, dealing with relationships, intimacy, family, and friendships, at 1.800.555.5453. Connect with Dr. Jane Greer on Facebook, at www.facebook.com/DrJaneGreer.