

Celebrity Dads Who Are Doing It Right



By Kelly Rouba for

GalTime.com

TV dads, like Cliff Huxtable and Ward Cleaver, often made fatherhood look easy. They effortlessly juggled their work schedules so they could spend quality time with their children and, of course, they were always around to set their kids straight if they stepped out of line. While we all know parenting isn't always as easy as it seems on TV, there are plenty of celebrity dads who've managed to set the bar pretty high when it comes to balancing fame and fatherhood as least as far as we can tell from the outside!

Sarah McKeever, a mother of three from New Jersey, thinks Will Smith is a great role model for fathers around the globe. "I adore him, and he seems like a great father and husband. I've seen a few interviews with him and his wife and kids. They

seem to keep a healthy balance with all the fame,” McKeever said. There may be a lot written about the Smith marriage and their parenting style (a la lack of punishment)” but Will is one dad who definitely focuses on his kids.

Dorothy Cascerceri, an on-air news, fashion, and celebrity trend expert for *In Touch Weekly*, agrees. “(Smith) loves his kids Trey, Jaden and Willow and has done everything possible to encourage all of their careers in the family business, Hollywood.”

Since Smith isn’t the only dedicated dad out there, GalTime asked Cascerceri to name the *Top 10 Celeb Dads Who Are Doing It Right*, and here’s what she said (in no particular order):

1. David Beckham– This ultra-hot soccer star is more than dedicated to his four kids, Romeo, Brooklyn, Cruz and Harper. He even has the boys’ names tattooed on his back!

2. Ben Affleck– Not only is this Oscar-winner an all-star dad to daughters Violet and Seraphina and son Samuel, but he’s also a dedicated hubby. He even thanked wife Jennifer Garner in his Academy Awards acceptance speech.

3. Brad Pitt– In addition to being one of the sexiest men in the world, Brad is tirelessly dedicated to his clan 6 and works extra hard to make sure the entire crew is taken care of.

4. Liev Schrieber– Forget strollers! Liev is usually seen transporting sons Alexander and Samuel around on his back and shoulders.

5. Tony Hawk– He loves his daughter Kadence so much that he Instagrammed a photo of the two of them with his nails painted with pink sparkly polish.

6. Taye Diggs– He shares everything with his son Walker, even ad campaigns! The duo flashed their milk mustache smiles for a

Got Milk? campaign.

7. Gavin Rossdale— Gavin always pays close attention to the style of his kids Kingston and Zuma, and he always makes sure they have the same rocker look as their dad.

8. Jerry O'Connell— He's a doting dad to his twin daughters Charlie and Dolly, and oftentimes brings them to the set of his latest projects so they can see their dad at work.

9. Jay-Z— This rap mogul is smitten by his daughter Blue Ivy and even wrote a heartfelt song about her when she was born.

10. J.R. Martinez— Last but certainly not least, GalTime couldn't resist adding new father J.R. Martinez to the list. Even though his daughter Belle just turned one, he's got quite a handle on fatherhood and there's no denying how deeply devoted he is to his precious baby girl.

"I believe I'm a great dad, thus far, because I don't shy away from getting my hands dirty, whether it be by changing her diaper (constantly), making the bottle or setting up for bath time. I believe these are great opportunities to bond with your child," Martinez said.

Martinez also has a piece of advice for all those dads out there who just might be reading this. "I know we're working hard to provide, but don't leave it up to the mom to be hands-on. Show them you're more than capable, because you are."

Relationship Advice: Understanding How Assets Get Divided In Divorce



By Jeff Landers for

GalTime.com

Dividing the family's property during a divorce can be quite difficult, especially if there are significant assets such as houses, rental property, retirement and pension plans, stock options, restricted stock, deferred compensation, brokerage accounts, closely-held businesses, professional practices and licenses, etc. Deciding who should get what can be quite a challenge, even under the most amenable of situations. But, if your divorce is contentious, then this can be especially complicated.

Assets should not necessarily be divided simply based on their current dollar value. You need to understand which assets will

be best for your short- and long-term financial security. This is not always easy to discern without a thorough understanding of the asset itself – its liquidity, cost basis and any tax implications associated with its sale.

However, before we go any further, we need to discuss the differences between Separate and Marital Property and why that's critically important to you. In my experience, this is an area that is not well understood by most people.

States differ in some of the details, but generally speaking, Separate Property includes:

- Any property that was owned by either spouse prior to the marriage;**
- An inheritance received by the husband or wife (either before or after the marriage);**
- A gift received by the husband or wife from a third party (your mother gave you her diamond ring);**
- Payment received for pain and suffering portion in a personal injury judgment**

Warning: Separate property can lose its separate property status if you commingle it with marital property or vice versa. For example, if you re-title your separately owned condo by adding your husband as a co-owner or if you deposit the inheritance from your parents into a joint bank account with him, then that property will most likely now be considered marital property.

All other property that is acquired during the marriage is usually considered marital property regardless of which spouse owns the property or how the property is titled. Most people don't understand this. I've had many clients tell me that they were not entitled to a specific asset, because it was titled in their husband's name – such as his 401K. This is not true!

This is worth repeating because it is that important. All property that is acquired during the marriage is usually considered marital property regardless of which spouse owns the property or how that property is titled.

(State laws vary greatly, especially between Community Property & Equitable Distribution States, so please consult with your attorney).

Marital property consists of all income and assets acquired by either spouse during the marriage including, but not limited to: **Pension Plans; 401Ks, IRAs and other Retirement Plans; Deferred Compensation; Stock Options; Restricted Stocks and other equity; Bonuses; Commissions; Country Club memberships; Annuities; Life Insurance (especially those with cash values); Brokerage accounts – mutual funds, stocks, bonds, etc; Bank Accounts – Checking, Savings, Christmas Club, CDs, etc; Closely-held businesses; Professional Practices and licenses; Real Estate; Limited Partnerships; Cars, boats, etc; Art, antiques; Tax refunds.**

In many states, if your separately owned property increases in value during the marriage, that increase is also considered marital property. However some states will differentiate between active and passive appreciation when deciding if an increase in the value of separate property should be considered marital property.

So what's the difference?

Active appreciation is appreciation that is due, in part, to the direct or indirect contributions or efforts of the other spouse (e.g. your husband helped you grow your business by giving you ideas and advice; he entertained clients with you; he helped raise the kids and did some household chores, which allowed you to work late, entertain clients, travel to conventions; etc.).

Passive appreciation is appreciation that is due to outside

forces such as supply and demand and inflation. For example, a parcel of land increases in value even though you and your husband made no improvements to it. However, if you used marital income and/or assets to pay the mortgage and/or taxes on this parcel of land, you might have a very good argument that this property, or at least the increase in value during your marriage, should now be considered marital property. As you can see, this can get quite complicated and convoluted. Hiring a good divorce financial planner can help you sort this out.

It is also very important for you to know if you reside in a Community Property State or an Equitable Distribution State. There are nine Community Property States – Arizona, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin. Community Property states consider both spouses as equal owners of all marital property (a 50-50 split is the rule).

The remaining 41 states are Equitable Distribution states. Settlements in Equitable Distribution States do not need to be equal, but they should be fair and equitable. In Equitable Distribution, several factors are taken into account, including the financial situation of each spouse when dividing assets.

Some of the factors considered are:

- The length of the marriage
- The income or property brought into the marriage by each spouse
- The standard of living established during the marriage
- The age and physical/emotional health of each spouse
- The income and earning potential of each spouse
- The financial situation of each spouse when the divorce is

finalized

- The contribution of a spouse to the education, training or earning power of the other
- The needs of the custodial parent to maintain the lifestyle for the children

In addition to these, a court can consider any other factors that it feels might be relevant. This makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to predict the outcome. The bottom line here is that you want to stay out of court, if possible. There's a good reason why more than 95% of all divorces are ultimately settled out of court.

Also, please remember that debts usually get divided in divorce as well. However, Community Property states treat debt differently than Equitable Distribution states, so please make sure that you consult with an experienced divorce specialist.

Hopefully this basic description of how assets get divided in divorce will help you as you are going through your divorce. But as you can see, this can be an extremely complicated process filled with unseen potholes. Having a competent divorce financial professional on your team can help you get your fair share of the assets that you've worked so hard to accumulate.

Plan a Summer Wedding in Eight Weeks or Less



By Kelly Rouba for

GalTime.com

If you recently got engaged and just can't wait to tie the knot, famed party planner Martie Duncan says it's not too late to plan a summer wedding.

A summer wedding can be put together in under two months, assures Duncan, who shares many of her expert tips on her website MartieKnowsParties. Duncan's experience in planning weddings on the fly began when a friend recruited her help not long ago.

"They got engaged on a Saturday and wanted to get married the next Saturday," she recalls. "It wasn't a joke, and we did it! (It turned out to be) a beautiful, simple but sweet and sentimental family wedding with a seated reception dinner for 30. We even ended with fireworks!"

Contrary to what one might expect, the planning process went rather smoothly. "The reason it was so easy is because the couple had seen my work and knew my style. They trusted me,"

says Duncan, who gained popularity as the runner up on Season 8 of Food Network Star.

After the couple first approached Duncan for guidance, they agreed to meet to go over details. “We sat down for one planning meeting to discuss what they wanted and what it would cost. Within hours, I had most of it pulled together because I knew what was important to them,” she says.

It also helped that Duncan’s friend had already found a farm to serve as the venue for the ceremony and reception. “That made things easy,” Duncan says, adding that she made sure the wedding theme reflected the couple’s personalities. “The flowers, decor, food and drinks were all very rustic—a perfect fit for both the setting and their laid-back style.”

For all those other couples out there who are ready to march down that aisle, Duncan offers these simple tips for planning a summer wedding in eight weeks or less:

SET A BUDGET

“The first big step is to decide on the budget,” Duncan says. “Often, planning a wedding quickly means you may pay more for things because you do not have time to shop around or delay making purchases.”

Also, keep in mind that the vendors you have to select from at the last minute might be more expensive, and there could be added expenses you never anticipated. In fact, while helping her friend plan her wedding, they realized there wasn’t a kitchen at the farm. “We had to create everything,” Duncan says, noting that it certainly made things more difficult, especially since they only had a modest budget.

In the end, it worked out because “we communicated openly about what was possible and what was not under the circumstances. Since we had to bring everything in, we kept it all very simple,” she said.

HIRE A WEDDING PLANNER

If the couple or their close friends have experience planning events, know vendors they can rely on, and have plenty of time on their hands, then a wedding planner might not be necessary, Duncan says. Otherwise, “I would always advise finding someone who knows the ropes to make the process easier. The biggest problem is finding trustworthy vendors who might still have the date open. A planner can certainly help, since they typically know all of the vendors in their area.”

Always make sure you have a contract in place with the vendors you select. “Don’t skip over these precautions just because you are trying to pull things together quickly,” Duncan warns.

STICK TO A SCHEDULE

“When planning a wedding in a short amount of time, you have to make decisions quickly and move on,” Duncan says. “There is no time to procrastinate or labor over the choices you have to make.”

BE FLEXIBLE

“Most importantly, the couple has to have some degree of flexibility when making decisions,” Duncan says. “For example, if the peonies you always dreamed of are not available, you might have to settle for something else. You just cannot be rigid when you only have days to plan. Decide on a few basics, like overall style and color. After that, you almost have to see what’s available and go from there.”

Your First Trip Together? 10 Packing Tips



By Laura Seldon for

GalTime.com

Packing for any vacation can be exhausting, but it gets even harder when you're deciding what to take on your first trip with your new flame. But just like in relationships, when it comes to packing for a trip, it's best to leave all extra baggage behind! To help you "pack for success," here are the top 10 things to take with you whether you are hitting the wide-open road together, or jetting away to somewhere exotic!

1. Comfy Walking Shoes

Start your trip off on the right foot with a good pair of walking shoes. While you may want to look good in front of your new love interest, it's important to bring a reliable pair of sneakers "so you can walk and explore together," says

author Carrie Knowles.

2. Picnic Provisions

What's better than a romantic meal for two? A romantic picnic for two! "Bring a small backpack with a corkscrew and knife for an impromptu picnic," suggests Knowles. This way you and your new suitor can enjoy some alone time in the great outdoors!

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3. Reading Materials

Consider sharing more than just a hotel room on your romantic getaway – how about sharing a book as well? "That way you can read to each other," explains Knowles. "There's nothing more romantic." Not only will reading together give you something to talk about, but reading something sexy (think *Fifty Shades of Grey*) could really heat up your excursion!

4. First-Aid Kit

Allergies, indigestion and bloating will cramp your style on a romantic getaway. "Bring a first-aid kit," says Bonnie Joy Dewkett, a professional organizer and packing pro. "Because nothing is worse than having your time spoiled by a headache, sunburn or upset stomach."

5. GPS & Maps

Navigate your way to romance with the help of your trusty GPS! "Couples notoriously fight over directions," says Dewkett. "The key to a road trip is to have a GPS, maps and a plan!"

6. Denim with Diversity

Be sure to pack a pair of jeans that can be dressed up or down. "Who knows what activities your romantic getaway will

entail,” says Jennifer Kelton, a dating advisor and the founder of DressForTheDate.com. “Pack a pair of jeans that can be dressed down for activities like horseback riding, but can also be dressed up for hitting a trendy pub.”

Related: [Fend Off the Post-Wedding Blues](#)

7. Unisex Toiletries

If you’re already sharing a book (as advised in #3), then why not share a few bathroom products as well, including shampoo, conditioner and lotion? “Sharing is caring,” says PR pro Stephanie Scott. “And it also cuts down on the amount of products that you need to pack. Try travel-sized goodies that couples can share.”

8. A Good Playlist

When there’s a moment of awkward silence, it’s best to fill it with the sound of music! Just make sure your playlist (for the car or bedroom) include songs you both like, advises Dr. Jane Greer, a marriage and family therapist. “It will destroy the whole trip if your car ride isn’t enjoyable.”

9. A Solid Set of Snacks

Don’t rely on a run-down convenience store for your snack supply! Instead, ask your new flame for a list of their favorite snacks (granola bars, chips, apples, etc.) and pack some provisions. “Bring some of your favorite snacks to ease tension on the road,” suggests Aimee Cebulski, author of *The Finding 40 Project*. “It will also ward off the crankies and make each of you happy.”

10. An Open Mind

One of the most important items you can bring with you on any vacation is an open mind. “It sounds cheesy,” says Cebulski. “But this might be the first time you see your sweetheart clean his ears... or he sees that you are an extreme over-

packer. Go easy on each other. It's supposed to be fun!"

The best part about taking an open mind on your trip? It takes up hardly any space in your suitcase!

Who Gets Custody of the Friends?



By Kelly Rouba,

GalTime.com

As the Neil Sedaka song goes, "Breaking up is hard to do." And it gets even harder when friends take sides in the process—something Diana Young recalls all too well.

After splitting up with her longtime boyfriend RJ to pursue another relationship, Young felt abandoned by many of her friends. "RJ got all our friends in our 'divorce'," Young

joked. But since many of their friends weren't entirely aware of all that went on behind the scenes, Young said they were quick to take his side.

Unfortunately, this is all too common, says Stacie Ikka, a relationship expert and founder of the dating consultancy Sitting In A Tree. "There are always casualties of war, so to speak, and the loss of friendships during a breakup is no exception."

In Young's case, she did manage to maintain relationships with some of the friends she had met before dating RJ. After a breakup, "(one) factor that determines the extent of the 'fall-out' is whether these friends were acquired by the couple together or whether the two people in the couple came into the relationship with their own friends, who then became friends with the partner," Ikka says.

Related: [Plan a Summer Wedding in Eight Weeks or Less](#)

CHOOSING SIDES

"When a couple with shared friends breaks up, it's natural for friends to take sides. The more tumultuous or less amicable the breakup, the more divisive the 'siding' becomes," Ikka explains. Typically, "it's when breakups or divorces are contentious and one or both parties carry residual anger, resentment, hurt or disappointment that friends feel they need to pick a side. When emotions are involved, it's very difficult for people to remain objective and fair. What happens... depends on the nature of the breakup, the two individuals involved, and how integrated their friends were in their relationship."

If you have a friend who is going through a rough relationship ender, try not to get too involved. "Friends who take sides can add fuel to an already heated fire," Ikka warns.

REMAINING NEUTRAL

Carlee C., of New Jersey, said she felt torn and a bit frustrated after two of her friends broke up last fall. “Amanda* asked me to stop talking to Tom* after they split up,” Carlee said. “I felt like I shouldn’t have to stop talking to him because he was my friend before they started dating. Plus, they had only dated for a few months and since he was my boyfriend’s friend, it was illogical to think I wouldn’t see him again anyway. Amanda was not too happy with that decision.”

As difficult as it was for Carlee to try to remain neutral, Ikka says she made the right decision.

“When friends take sides, it can further exacerbate an already emotionally trying time for the people going through the separation—especially if those friends take on any unproductive or destructive behaviors displayed by the couple. A good friend is one who offers support, an ear to listen, and a shoulder to cry on,” Ikka says.

Depending on how the couple handles the split, it is possible for friends to remain neutral, Ikka adds. “There is such a thing as an amicable breakup and, although rare, in these instances friends feel less pressure...to ‘pick a side.’ If the separated couple is able to be amicable, or at least civil, there is less reason for the friends to feel caught up in the middle of the drama.’

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And if that isn’t possible, Carolyn Kingman Javick, a married mother of two from New Jersey, says, “They should do what they learned in kindergarten—and that is to share! Otherwise, it puts friends in a very uncomfortable situation having to choose. It will pan out over time who they become closer to.”

Ikka agrees. “My philosophy is that when a friendship is authentic, it stands the test of time, including breakups. And it is possible for an individual or a couple to remain friends with both parties who have gone their separate ways. It takes honest communication, a commitment by all parties and some organization and planning, but it’s certainly possible.”

MAKING BREAK-UPS EASIER ON FRIENDS

If you’re concerned about losing friends after losing a significant other, Ikka offers a few tips to keep in mind:

Don’t bash your partner in front of friends: Ikka says it is OK to talk to your friends about your experiences, feelings, doubts and fears, especially while the breakup is raw because, after all, what are friends for? However, “it would be unfair to your friends to introduce any character assassination, unnecessary negativity or untruths about your ex-partner that may influence how your friends then behave around your ex.”

Stick to the facts: Although this depends on your own level of self-awareness and emotional maturity, try to “be as forthcoming and transparent as possible when discussing your breakup and/or ex.”

Explain how friends can help: Tell your friends how they can best support you, Ikka says. “Sometimes, friends in this situation just don’t know what to do, what’s expected of them or what the ‘right’ thing might be. Any guidance you can provide will make the situation easier for everyone.”

****Name has been changed.***

Amanda Bynes: When Help Is Needed But Not Wanted



By Jane Greer, PhD

for GalTime.com

Amanda Bynes has been in the news recently after a flurry of erratic behavior both in the real world and on Twitter. Drama peaked this week when she was allegedly caught in possession of drug paraphernalia and arrested. Two mug shots were circulated, one of Bynes wearing a flamboyant, platinum wig and the second with the wig removed revealing a new super-cropped haircut. Since the incident, she's lashed out at Rihanna on Twitter saying she had been beaten by Chris Brown for being "not pretty enough."

The child star has been having trouble for a while, including an arrest in 2012 for a DUI. Last month, she announced that she had an eating disorder and posted a photo of herself wearing only a bra. Since then, she's been sharing

increasingly inappropriate photos of herself on Twitter. For those of us on the outside, it is like watching a train wreck: we can see it happening but there really isn't anything we can do. But what about those close to her? Is there anything they can do? And what can you do if you have a friend or family member spinning out of control?

Related: [Relationship Advice: Are Your BF and Best Friend Too Close for Comfort?](#)

In Bynes' case, it is hard to know if she is dealing with a drug problem, a mental health condition or something else, but one thing is for sure, she needs help. The reality is, though, she doesn't seem to be taking it. This is something many of us can relate to, the desperate pull to want to help someone in trouble who is flat out refusing to accept it. Your instinct is to throw them a rope, but they just swim in the other direction and cut themselves off from those who love them.

Sometimes friends and family coming together as a united front and doing an intervention can cut through the refusal to help. If that doesn't work, you might consider getting out of their way; on occasion a person has to hit rock bottom before they really take their problem seriously and are willing to accept help. So often people deny the severity of their situation and continue to think they can handle themselves and that they are OK. Realize that unless and until they experience the full impact of their behavior, they may remain unwilling to do anything about it to change.

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It isn't until they reach their lowest point that they can fully appreciate the seriousness of what they are dealing with, and grasp the importance of getting assistance. It is only then that they will want help and reach out to get it, or accept what is being offered. Of course, stepping aside isn't

an easy thing to do. You might feel helpless because they are at risk – if they are dealing with a drug problem the fear is an overdose, if they are mentally ill then you might be worried that they will be self-destructive. The truth is, though, that the more you attempt to help them, the more likely it is that they pull away and isolate themselves further. If you can curb your desire to help so you stop battling with them, then the only person they are fighting is themselves and they might finally be able to reach out and/or accept help.

Know also that if their out-of-control behavior continues to escalate, at some point either the legal system or the mental health system is likely to get involved so that seeking help will no longer be a matter of choice, but rather a necessity.

As difficult as it can be, sometimes the only option when someone is refusing help is to stop offering. Hopefully this will be the case for Amanda and those who know and love her, and she'll be ready to accept true support on her own soon.

Can People Really Fall In Love Too Fast?





By SMF Marcus

Osborne for GalTime.com

All of our lives, we're advised against allowing ourselves to fall in love too fast. They (whoever "they" are) tell us love should happen deliberately, gradually, over a moderate amount of time to have truly legitimate long-term potential. That certainly sounds like sound advice. A cautious approach to new love is never in any way inappropriate. Better safe than sorry.

The problem is that even though this sounds like the right thing to do – *feels* like the right thing to do – it seems to me that there's very little control over our emotions. Yet there are those who truly believe we have some kind of real power and control over our feelings. Whenever I've heard someone proclaim they wouldn't "let themselves fall in love" with someone, I can only laugh. Certainly, as human beings we have the ability to make choices. As people, we can acknowledge feeling a certain way without acting upon whatever powerful emotions may be brewing.

Don't get me wrong, it's not easy.

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The experience of falling in love with someone is extraordinarily powerful – almost impossible to resist. We have no ability to just turn it off. If we could do that, there wouldn't be nearly so many shallow husks of decayed relationships strewn across the ages. But this notion that we can fall in love too quickly – that we somehow will fall in love too soon if we don't exercise some sort of discretionary power over that emotion, I theorize that has been all wrong for years.

I posted a question on my Facebook fan page asking the question, "On average, how soon after you begin seeing a new suitor do you realize that you're falling for them?"

The overall response was generally in the range of 3 to 7 dates. Now this was a small sample size so it's hardly scientific, but I think it's indicative of something nonetheless. It may indicate that most people fall in love far sooner than we would care to admit and definitely sooner than we would like.

Think of your current or past relationships. How many of them took you more than a few dates before you felt the opening pangs of what you would eventually come to realize was you falling in love?

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When you really fell for someone, how long did it take?

Probably much sooner than you think. How many times have you heard people in successful relationships tell the story of how they "just knew right away?" I use myself as an example of this. My ex-wife and I moved in together two weeks after we met. We were together for the next ten years. Have you ever started to fall someone after more than ten dates? I'm guessing no. I theorize most of us know fairly quickly, in spite of how we're all told we *should* feel.

There's always that awkward period where you're each waiting

to see who says “I love you first.” You want to say. You want to tell that person what you’re feeling, but you can’t, right? Why is it awkward? Because we’re told not to. Too soon. May scare him off. May not feel the same way. Which may possibly be true in any given situation. But life is filled with risks. By the way, research shows that generally guys are the first to drop the L-bomb.

I guess my point in all this is that sometimes trying to adhere to conventional wisdom may not be the best route for you to take in a fledgling relationship. You should be cautious, but you can be cautious and still embrace the fact that you’re falling for someone without concern over some artificial timetable. All these rules take the fun out of new love!

But I ask you again: How soon do you know you’re falling in love?

Brad Pitt Shows What ‘Unconditional’ Means To His Celebrity Love





By Jane Greer, PhD

for GalTime.com

It isn't surprising that everyone is talking about Angelina Jolie's recent celebrity news of her preventative double mastectomy. The news sparked conversations about the procedure itself and the decision to go public, but I want to talk about her rock-solid support system. In a *New York Times* op-ed piece she wrote, "I am fortunate to have a partner, [Brad Pitt](#), who is so loving and supportive." She mentioned her celebrity love was present for all of her medical procedures and surgeries at the Pink Lotus Breast Center. He has, in turn, recently called her decision to have the radical procedure *and* be public about it, "absolutely heroic."

While It Seems That Pitt Agreed With His Celebrity Love's Choice, That Isn't Always The Case. Does That Mean a Relationship Is Destined To Fail?

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Sometimes a spouse or partner has a harder time accepting the other's decision to have a procedure whether it be preventative, corrective, or plastic surgery. They might feel the timing isn't right or the surgery isn't necessary. In order to be supportive and give unconditional love, a partner might have to put his own needs and judgments aside the way Pitt has clearly done.

What To Do In Your Relationship and Love When Your Partner Is Having A Surgery

That might require some work on your part if you are the one offering the support. Being there for your partner in a relationship and love not only means in a hands-on physical way, but also an emotional one. There is no question that this sort of thing can be very disruptive. Say, for example, that you both usually share the responsibilities of the household – you take out the trash and walk the dog, and he/she cooks and gets the kids off to school. Now, as your partner recovers, it is likely that all those tasks might fall to you. On an emotional level, the person who had the surgery might be irritable, upset, short-tempered and, at times, reactive and even lash out at you. If you can remember that your partner may be feeling vulnerable, helpless and out of control, it might help you understand where she/he is coming from, and then you won't take it personally and get into arguments. Realizing the distress doesn't stem from you can go a long way in helping you navigate the terrain of a caregiver and help you remain supportive throughout.

Related: [Relationship Advice: When to Stop Wearing Your Wedding Ring](#)

Know that the upheaval and distress will be time-limited and your recovering partner will get better. Things in the

relationship and love will go back to normal at some point – hopefully soon. Remind yourself that, in the end, this will be better for everyone. Remaining positive during the recovery period will be good for both of you and get you through it with greater ease. Pitt’s words and support for his celebrity love are an excellent example of what to do if you find yourself in a similar situation. The Hollywood couple seems to have their priorities in place as they do what they must to build a long and healthy life together. With that goal in mind, being supportive is easier.

Dating Advice: 10 Great Date Ideas Under \$50



By Laura Seldon for

Great dates don't have to come in the form of a helicopter ride at sunset or a weekend spa getaway (although a massage does sound nice right about now...) No, contrary to what *The Bachelor* would have you believe, romance doesn't depend on spending money in big flashy ways. To prove it, here are 10 fun and unique date ideas that will cost you less than \$50!

1. Hit up a video arcade

Tired of playing games in relationships? You won't feel that way when the games are part of a video console! "This kind of date makes you feel like a kid again," says Tripp, a dating coach in Los Angeles and the founder of TrippAdvice.com. "Playing games and building up the tension of competition can make for a steamy date!"

2. Plan a picnic

Seems a bit cheesy for a date, right? Well, think again! Planning a picnic is a great way to get to know someone new beyond the walls of a coffee shop. "Go to the grocery store with your date and pick out the food together," suggests Tripp. "Make sure you have a blanket in your car and pick a scenic spot."

3. Visit the farmer's market

Like planning a picnic, heading to the farmer's market allows you to spend some quality time with your date in a relaxing outdoor space. "Check out your local farmer's market and make a nice afternoon of it," says Tripp. "Pick out some fresh food and eat while you enjoy the day together."

4. Compete in a game night

Nothing stokes the romance flames like a little competition! "Invite your date over to play an array of games together while you eat some snacks or have a few drinks," says Tripp. However, Tripp also suggests you go beyond playing innocent

board games. “There’s nothing like a risqué game of strip poker when the mood is right!”

5. Make it a group date

“Get a bunch of other couples to screen a movie on the side of someone’s garage,” suggests Dr. Nancy Irwin, a therapist and life coach in Los Angeles. No place to screen a movie? Throw a potluck picnic in your backyard. “This is really fun because it is a party with as many other people as you like.”

Not only will you reduce your costs if you get a few other couples in on the fun, but you’ll also be bonding with your friends and your date all at once.

6. Visit a museum

Museum tickets don’t necessarily have to add up to a pricey date. “In many cities, there are usually free museum days,” says Larry Moore, a relationship expert and blogger in Houston, Texas. “Museums are great for dates because there’s always something in the museum that sparks conversation or serves as an ice breaker, giving each person a chance to get to know more about the other person.”

7. Show ‘em your hood

Consider spending a romantic evening touring your neighborhood with the object of your affection. “What better way is there to show a date who you really are than to show that person where you are from?” asks Sujeiry Gonzalez, a relationship expert and author in Los Angeles. “Besides, you have home advantage. You know the little shops and restaurants that won’t bleed out your wallet!”

8. Explore your hobbies

Always wanted to learn a few skills in the kitchen? Longing to try out rock climbing? Ready to take your love for dance to the next level? Then do it... but with a date! “Not only will

you build your relationship, but you may also end up realizing you both have another shared interest,” says Marni Kinrys, founder of MarniWingGirl.com. “It’s also great for conversation starters!”

9. Peruse a thrift store

Take a date shopping at a thrift store and compete to see who can find the silliest outfit. You can even take pictures and have a few mementos from your date. “Showing your fun side while trying on silly hats and taking pictures will create a lasting memory for both of you,” says Jeff Callahan, a dating coach in Little Rock, Arkansas. “I believe that having a fantastic date shouldn’t crush your wallet.”

10. Browse your local bookstore

Judge a few books by their covers while perusing the romance novel section of your local bookstore. Not only is it free, but it’s also utterly entertaining. “Reading trashy romance novels aloud to each other will make you both laugh,” says Callahan. “And possibly set the mood for romance.” So, head to a local book shop and tell your date to read between the lines!

Relationship Advice: Making Sure You Do What’s Best for the Kids





By Jane Greer, PhD

for GalTime.com

Denise Richards, ex-wife of Charlie Sheen and the mother of two of his children, now has temporary custody of Sheen's sons with his *other* ex-wife Brooke Mueller. Brooke and Charlie have both struggled publically with substance abuse for many years. Though Brooke is not making comments at this time, US Weekly confirmed that the removal of the children from her home was due to an "'unsafe environment' caused by "[her] ongoing alleged drug use." The children, four-year-old twin boys Bob and Max, have moved in with Denise and are living with their sisters, Denise's children with Charlie, Sam and Lola, and Denise's adopted daughter, Eloise. Denise, who has not remarried since her divorce from Sheen in 2005, is now a single mom to all five kids under the age of 12. She has cared for the twins before, saying the boys are "family" and she would, "do anything for them." It has been reported that Charlie is supportive of the idea.

Taking the children in is an impressive choice on Denise's part; with all the turmoil and strife that she and Charlie clearly shared in their marriage and then in their divorce, her ability to do this is a terrific example of putting the children first. His acceptance of it is equally positive. It isn't easy to put all those negative feelings to the side so

the children involved can be properly and well taken care of. Bad marriages that then lead into bad divorces are often a tough place to be for the kids who are a product of that relationship because so often they are used as pawns or even weapons in the fight. But Denise isn't letting that happen. She is managing to maintain the family unit and step up to the plate, keeping the priorities where they should be. It is commendable because it is such a difficult road to travel.

When moving toward or out of a divorce, people tend to be in reactive mode and aren't always able to think things through as Denise seems to be doing. Instead of just getting angry, she was able to respond to the situation and handle it. While it is easy to get caught up in competitive and rivalrous feelings toward the new wife, in this case Charlie's third ex-wife Brooke, Denise didn't let that get in the way. Being able to move beyond that is an act of maturity.

For anyone in this situation, those feelings that follow the aftermath of a divorce are real and often quite overpowering. But you don't have to let them interfere with doing the right thing on behalf of the children. Denise is adult enough to know when it's time to put her differences aside for the sake of the children involved. Kudos to her.

Dating Advice: Are You Dating a 'Mad Man'?





By Sarah

Gooding, PlentyofFish for GalTime.com

Mad Men never change, regardless of how much time has passed.

Don Draper may have seduced women in the 1960s fantasy world of advertising, but his modern day version is very much alive today, especially in the world of online dating.

As a product manager with the world's largest online dating site, PlentyofFish, I can tell you Don Draper and his coworkers – Peter Campbell, Roger Sterling, Paul Kinsey, etc., are all online, looking for women and relationships.

So what would Don Draper's online profile look like if he were on PlentyofFish? He would be fairly easy to spot. In fact, you may have viewed a modern day Don Draper, or even emailed him without realizing you were interacting with a charismatic, serial womanizer.

DON DRAPER

A modern day Don Draper will ooze confidence. He won't hesitate to ask you out. Online dating is a perfect platform for a Draper-type because communication closes the deal in his world of work and pleasure.

Draper would also do very well with profile views on PlentyofFish. He would get a lot of emails from women, but not just because of his good looks. In fact, his profile pictures probably wouldn't even be close-up photos. His pictures would be full of mystique, perhaps even downplaying his chiseled good looks behind muted sunglasses. That's because Don Draper doesn't identify himself by his handsome features. His confidence stems from his ability to achieve success and women on his own terms.

You need to remember Don Draper seduces us into buying things for a living. He moves us to action through the poetry of his words. In the online world, a modern day Draper will use that charm to seduce you into believing you are special. Be careful not to fall for it. As for profile details, don't expect to see income listed under a Don Draper profile since money is a private matter. However, intelligence is important to him; his educational background will be listed.

PETER CAMPBELL

A modern day Peter Campbell doesn't have that confidence, which is why he will sprinkle status hints in both his profile and emails to women that is he from an elite class.

If you're interacting with a modern day Peter Campbell, you will hear him name drop in conversation and emails. He won't have any qualms about listing his salary on his profile.

ROGER STERLING

Roger Sterling doesn't need to create an online profile with all of his women, unless he is between his relationships. If you meet a Sterling online, you will know it by his genuine expression. If he tells you in an email that he likes your dress, he probably means it. Unlike Draper and Campbell, Sterling says what he means and means what he says. As for details, a Sterling type will list himself as "Family Centric"

and describe himself as a “Big People Person.” He might even post pictures of himself with friends and family.

PAUL KINSEY

If you watch *Mad Men*, you will know Paul Kinsey, but you may not remember him. The online world of dating is full of Paul Kinsey types who grow on you over time. They don't stand out in the crowd until you meet them in person. And when you do meet them, you will find they don't have the social graces of a Don Draper or Roger Sterling, but they make you feel at ease. A Paul Kinsey isn't going to be Type-A. He's the guy who will like to smoke and listen to jazz, so he will definitely list “Very Easygoing” under his profile.

We all know every woman has a type, so don't be afraid to hold out for that Don Draper or Paul Kinsey type. PlentyofFish knows they are alive and online.

Dating Advice: Does Getting Even Pay Off?





By Jane Greer, PhD

for GalTime.com

Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries have, at long last, finalized their divorce. Famously married in a lavish ceremony on August 20, 2011 and infamously separated just seventy-two days later – the settlement battle dragged on for a grand total of 536 days. Kim is the one who originally initiated the proceedings in October 2011, citing irreconcilable differences. Now that it's finally over, both parties seem relieved to end the ordeal. Humphries even tweeted emphatically on April 18th, "Couldn't be happier!" But that wasn't always the case.

While it was widely publicized that Kim insisted on a divorce, Humphries dragged his feet, demanding an annulment. He failed to show up for several court proceedings, and thereby slowed things down. Humphries has always insisted that he was swindled by Kim – fooled into marriage as part of a publicity stunt masterminded by her family. Consequently, he also reportedly filed for spousal support from Kim to compensate for this betrayal.

You would think that when a marriage clearly goes bad, both people would be eager to get out so they can put a stop to the bad feelings, and get a fresh start with the hope of turning

whatever they had just been through into a life lesson. But that is easier said than done. In their case, Kris dug his heels in and demanded squatter's rights. For some people, when they feel cheated and betrayed, the concept of getting even overtakes the need to move on with their life, even at the expense of their own happiness. They want to pay the person back for hurting them. It is their way of making sure that person will be sorry for what they did. For some it is about money, but for most it is simply about getting even and righting where they were wronged.

In my book *How Could You Do This To Me? Learning To Trust After Betrayal* there is a chapter called I'll Make You Pay. While doing that might offer some sense of redemption, all it really does is keep that person locked in the past along with all its negativity. Seeking revenge serves only to keep the anger alive. You know what they say, that the best revenge is living well. If that's the case, you will get back at your ex far quicker by easing up and being happy in your new life than you will by showing how you just can't let him or her go. Doing that is not the same as forgiving, or of saying the other person didn't behave in an inexcusable way.

The real pay-off here is to leave the pain behind, and gain insight into what happened so you can make sure it doesn't ever happen to you again. If you can do that, you will be the real winner.

Relationship Advice: Can You Have a Friendly Meeting with

Your Ex?



by Sheila Blagg for

GalTime.com

Keeping things friendly with the ex is a subject that often perplexes even those involved in the tamest of divorces. Many people ask, "Can I really have a *friendly* meeting with my ex?" Although, it may take a while – and some hard work – the answer is, "Yes, you can!"

The animosity that exists between exes mostly depends on the reason for the split. Did the marriage end because of infidelity? Did it end over money issues? Or did you just grow apart? The degree to which you dread meeting with your ex is often intricately linked to those hard-to-forget issues.

In many cases, when ex-spouses meet, they are blinded by the hurt that they felt – and often continue to feel – at the end of the relationship. Emotional discomfort that one feels has been caused by the other individual may make any face-to-face

meeting not only difficult, but downright painful. Still, there is a way to ensure that you and your ex work with each other and not against one another.

I have found that it helps to keep meetings with my ex short and to the point. If you are meeting to talk about your children, remember to *keep* the meeting about the children. Delving into the who-did-what-to-whom blame game will only lead to anger, fighting and more hurt feelings. More often than not, your ex will not acknowledge wrongdoing any more than you would, so no good can come out of revisiting why you split in the first place.

Try to keep in mind that your ex is someone that, in some way, shape or form, you will be dealing with for the rest of your life. You might as well make the best of it.

Also, it is beyond important that your children are not made to feel anxious when an event is scheduled that both parents are going to attend. Some anxiety is certainly normal, but your kids should never have to worry that their parents are going to fight, or make them feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. Remember, your split had nothing to do with your kids, and they should not be made to pay for the divorce of their parents.

Last but not least, if you can do nothing else, try to keep in mind that, once upon a time, you dearly loved the person you now call your ex. Your ex was not always someone that you didn't like or didn't trust; he or she was once someone that you thought you would spend the rest of your life with, and whom, on some level, you may always love. Although those old wounds may never heal completely, they will scar over, enabling you to function without your emotions in the forefront.

Relationship Advice: How to Get Financially Stable After Divorce



By Jeff Landers for

GalTime.com

As a divorcing woman, you are no doubt looking forward to having the whole divorce process over with, so you can move ahead to your new life. If you're like most women, you probably think the past few months (or years!) have been filled with enough emotional upheaval, not to mention legal and financial hassle, for a lifetime, and you'll be very glad to have it all behind you . . . at last.

Life as a single woman will bring new responsibilities, including all the issues surrounding your personal finances.

So how do you make sure you set your best foot forward?

Of course, life as a single woman will bring new responsibilities, including all the issues surrounding your personal finances. Even today, it is surprisingly common for wives to remain uninvolved in family finances. If that was the dynamic in your marriage, then it may now seem quite intimidating to face all the budgeting and bill paying, in addition to managing investments and debt, and saving for education, retirement and other long-term goals.

However, there is a bright side.

Throughout the divorce process, it's likely you've become intimately familiar with your marital financial situation. Now, as your divorce settlement agreement is finalized, you can take that know-how forward as you plan for a secure financial future.

Here are a few important practical steps to help you get on the road to financial stability after your divorce:

Do the financial housekeeping.

If you changed your name after the divorce, you'll need a new Social Security Card, driver's license, passport and credit cards. You'll also need to notify your bank, utilities, insurance companies, credit card companies, the motor vehicle department, your children's school(s), etc., about any name or address changes. Titles on all houses and vehicles will have to be modified and recorded with lending institutions, and you will also need to update beneficiaries on your life insurance, 401k, pensions and IRA accounts.

To keep all these details straight, follow this checklist of financial tasks that need prompt attention post-divorce:

- 1. Obtain a copy of your certified divorce decree**, and make extra copies so that you're able to provide them promptly when

needed.

2. Close joint credit accounts.

3. Remove your husband's name, and/or change your name/address, on all remaining accounts, including:

- Bank, brokerage and investment accounts
- Credit cards
- Driver's license, automobile title, registration and insurance policies
- Employer's records
- IRS records
- Life, health, homeowner's and disability insurance policies
- Post office (Remember to have your mail forwarded, too.)
- Professional licenses
- Social security card
- Title to real property
- Utility bills

4. Research your health insurance options and apply for COBRA, if necessary.

5. If your divorce decree requires a Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO): Provide the QDRO to appropriate banks, brokerages, pension plan advisor, 401k administrators, etc. (Even better, have this step completed before your divorce is finalized!), a quitclaim or warranty deed: Make certain the appropriate documents are executed and recorded. Also, the transfer of title to property (automobiles, boats, etc.): Sign and deliver the necessary documents to complete the transfer.

6. Open a new bank account. Consider establishing direct deposit or income withholding for child support, spousal support and/or alimony payments.

7. Open a new credit card account and request a copy of your credit report.

8. Disinherit your husband. Write and execute a new will, trusts, medical directives and/or living wills and powers of attorney. Don't forget to change the beneficiaries on your life insurance, 401k, pension and IRA accounts.

9. Establish a system to keep track of all child support made/received, alimony payments made/received, medical expenses, etc.

Establish good credit in your own name.

Good credit is the foundation of your financial future. Without it, it can be very difficult to get a bank loan, and even hard to manage regular household expenses. Get a copy of your credit report (AnnualCreditReport.com offers them free of charge), and address any inaccuracies it contains. Then, if you are employed and/or already have credit cards in your name, building your credit is relatively straightforward: use your cards regularly, pay off the balance in full and on time each month, and watch your score rise!

However, if you're not employed and don't already have a credit history, the process may not be as simple. A few years ago, new federal regulations made it difficult for women with little or no income to establish credit on their own. The Credit Card Accountability, Responsibility and Disclosure (CARD) Act of 2009 was designed to protect consumers from getting into financial trouble by running up credit card debt they can't afford to pay, but unfortunately, this legislation also makes it difficult for "at-home" spouses without paid work to obtain credit on their own.

After a public outcry, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau recently proposed changes to rectify these unintended consequences. When enacted, the modifications will allow non-working spouses to apply for credit in their own name based upon shared household income.

So, be prepared. Securing credit may require more than simply filling out an application or making a single phone call.

Develop a comprehensive financial plan for the future.

If you had a Lifestyle Analysis prepared during your divorce, you should now have a very clear understanding of what funds came into the marriage (income) and what funds went out (expenses). Use this as a basis for developing a budget going forward. You'll need to address both short-term (day-to-day expenses, monthly utilities, mortgage, car payments, etc.) and long-term (college tuition, retirement, travel) financial needs.

If your divorce settlement includes any lump sum payments (i.e., for alimony, pension rollovers, sale of a vacation home), you'll also need to develop a sound strategy for managing those assets. Establishing –and then sticking to – a financial plan is essential, both for financial stability and peace of mind.

Seek help from an experienced financial advisor.

All the fundamental components of a sound financial plan – creating a budget, investing, retirement planning, outlining your goals and aspirations, saving for college, choosing life insurance, etc. – should be completed under the guidance of a financial advisor.

Be sure to find a financial professional with expertise and experience helping divorced women, specifically. The financial needs of divorced women are very different from those of a married couple, and you should have an advisor who completely

understands those differences and knows how to properly manage their money and invest on their behalf.

In addition to an experienced financial planner, I believe most post-divorce women can benefit from the assistance of:

- An estate-planning attorney to work with your financial advisor to help with your estate planning needs and the legal issues concerning your will, medical directives, trusts, charitable giving, etc.
- A therapist or counselor to help you cope with the emotional challenges of starting your life as a single woman.
- A vocational counselor to help you re-enter the job market, or even start your own business.

Enjoy your new life!

With your divorce in the rear-view mirror, and these important steps completed, you'll be well-positioned for a secure financial future. It's likely you will find, as most women do, that it's empowering to make financial decisions on your own, and to be the one who's in control of your financial portfolio. Rest assured: The road ahead belongs to you!

JLo and Casper Smart: Should You Get a Puppy Together?





By Jane Greer,

PhD for Galtime.com

When is puppy love the smart choice?

Jennifer Lopez and boyfriend Casper Smart [introduced](#) the newest member of their family to the public recently via Twitter – a brown boxer puppy they’ve named Bear. Lopez, who has four-year-old twins with ex-husband Marc Anthony, has been dating Smart since 2011. This step seems worth noting – not only for them but for all couples who might be wondering what the next phase of their partnership might be.

It is easy to get caught up in the excitement of your love and just want to enjoy the day-to-day, but at some point things must grow in one way or another. Sometimes the next step is decided for you, with an unplanned pregnancy for example. Other times, a couple may hastily get ahead of themselves, moving in together or taking on more responsibility than they might be ready for. Or maybe they already have kids who are begging for a new sibling. Often when partners find themselves biting off more than they are ready to chew, the relationship can implode.

Instead of being taken by surprise, one way to test the waters of how you and your partner might handle responsibility in

your shared life together is to get a pet. It will give you a sense not only of how your partner will be in a traditional role, but also how you'll take to it. Think of it as a practice run. Having a pet, especially if it's a puppy, requires some of the necessary behavior that occurs when you have a baby. Your schedule changes so you can take care of the dog – walk him, feed him, train him, and comfort him when he whines during the night. It will tell you a lot about how much each of you will be able to sacrifice your personal needs and work as a team to cover all the bases. Pets might be really cute, and melt your heart, but there is no denying how much hands-on obligation they require. In many ways, it is its own form of parenthood.

Puppies might bring puppy love and tug at your heartstrings, but they pack a punch when it comes to accountability – as does building a life with another person. JLo and Casper are doing it right, they are dipping their toes into the pool of settling down more before taking that jump. They brought home Bear before adding to their already existing family, allowing them the time to find the balance between love and reality.

The bottom line is that if your biological clock is ticking and you think you want a baby, but you're wondering about the timing and what it will mean to your relationship, take control rather than letting yourself be pushed into anything before you're sure you're ready. Instead, do a dry run with a pet – after all, you are never too old for puppy love.

Should You Ask Him Out?

Cupid's Pulse

★ Celebrities. Love. Opinions. ★



by Terri Trespicio

for GalTime.com

I'm no stranger to asking out dudes. I've done it – slipped my number into someone's hand, slid a napkin-scribbled note onto a table, approached a man eating alone at a sushi bar, even walked straight up to a very hot guy in some kind of grounds crew and invited him to call me. But I'll be honest, while it can be sexy and fun and a great experiment to honing and exploring your confidence, most of those dates never transpired.

Is it a good idea for a woman to ask a man out? Are men's egos so big that they just CAN'T say yes to a woman asking them out? Find out what our expert has to say:

Women like to be chosen, plain and simple. Even the big loud-mouthed ones like me. And if you do the asking, you aren't letting the guy take that step. You undermine his ability and urge to initiate action. Another thing that could happen is that you set a precedent, that you will be the one to ask for everything you want, thus removing some initiative on his

part.

Now, every time I say this, I hear from men who say they would love it if a woman asked them out. And some men may like this, sure. We ALL want to be chosen in some way. It's how you make that choice known that matters.

In my experience, when a man takes the role of asking, he is deciding, not just agreeing to what YOU want or (god forbid) giving in. Maybe you've asked someone out and it worked and you're together and happy. Good for you! It works in some cases, sure. But in my own life, I was finding that when I was too aggressive or felt the need to "produce" the relationship this way, I was getting in my own way and actually hindering him.

Understand this does NOT mean a woman is just a passive piece of produce waiting to be picked up, palpated, and taken home. In fact, you as a woman have a very powerful role to play here because in order to have a man walk through the doorway, you kinda have to open it.

So, rather than wonder if you should come out of nowhere and ask him out like some kind of surprise romantic attack, or sit and wait like a stone, do the opposite – lay the groundwork for attraction. You can't start a fire out of nothing. Think of your efforts at flirting, connecting, etc, as laying the kindling and creating the conditions for fire to spark.

How?

1. BE interested, show interest, give him lots of opportunity to talk to you, be around you, and pick up on all your positive, attractive energies.

2. Make it clear that if he WERE to ask you out, you'd say yes (without of course saying that). No one likes being rejected, and so you want to be sure he gets the sense that he won't be.

3. Look, dudes don't always pick up on subtleties. So don't be too subtle. He can't read your mind. If he mentions a sushi restaurant bar just opened near him, you say, "I live for sushi. I could eat it every damn day." (Only say this if it's true, which, in my case, it is.) Or maybe you just tell him what you think: That he's almost too damn appealing to pass up. That'll send a message.

4. When you allow and encourage that attraction to take root and get his attention, you don't have to worry about whether you should ask him out. Because you won't have to.

And if he doesn't? Maybe he's not into it. Or not ballsy enough. Two good reasons to move on.

The Art of Making Up



by Straight Male

Friend Marcus Osborne for GalTime.com

As a man I can personally attest to men's particular brand of cluelessness. The countless missed signals contributing to ineffectual attempts at communication by the Adam gender has caused many Eve's heads to explode. Sure, a gargantuan chunk of couples' misunderstandings could be avoided with ease if women would...oh, I dunno...maybe be more direct. Instead of expecting guys to "just know", perhaps being a teensy-weensy more literal would be helpful.

Every man would agree with me.

See, guys will happily admit that they do not understand women. Conversely, women tend to believe that they've got men all figured out. Which leads to...*wait for it*...more arguments! Disagreements are bound to occur. If you and your partner don't have the occasional flare up, one of you is being lied to. But that's another argument for another day. I'm more concerned with what occurs *after* the fighting is over.

Once you stop throwing the verbal grenades, how do you get back on track? The art of making up is truly an art and like anything else, it requires commitment and work to achieve maximum efficacy. Unfortunately, getting into the fight is easier than making up. So here are a few things to consider next time you've exhausted yourself in conflict with your guy.

Resolution – It's cliché, but sometimes you accept that the other person IS another person – and you simply agree to disagree. I mean, the greatest thing in the world is the moment where the two of you get it figured out. When the light bulb comes on and you both actually *hear* what message you're each attempting to send to the other. It's vital to do this – *when it can be done*. But sometimes people simply have divergent perspectives on a particular issue, even *after* they've heard one another. But recognize that a *disagreement* with you is not generally a *judgment* of you or

an indictment of your relationship. You're simply different. And that's okay.

Let It Be Over – Nothing is worse than feeling like your conflict has reached its zenith, only to have it re-ignited by a careless comment or an insensitive assertion. Don't keep trying to "win" because ultimately no one will. By accepting that the disagreement is not a competition, but a desire to be heard, understood, and respected you will ensure that the door to reconciliation is wide open.

Reconnect – It's vital to reconnect, I believe, as soon as possible. Some people need "space" after conflict; some need immediate, overt acknowledgement that the fighting is over. That could be in the form of an apology, a hug, or both. But something that clearly says, "I'm done arguing – and I love you." There are those who can simply separate from the heated disagreement and proceed on with ease. Then there are those who need a deeply intimate experience (make up sex) to feel that reconnection. Whatever method works best for you and your partner, figure it out and act on it as soon as appropriate because the more time that passes between the end of the fight, the more difficult this part of making up will be.

How about you? What tips can you share that have made making up easier in your life?

6 Things Women Do that Scare Men Off



By SMF Marcus

Osborne for GalTime.com

Don't make these mistakes

We over at Your Straight Male Friends never claim to be relationship experts. But we are *dude* experts. We've got you covered there.

I have an inbox full of emails from ladies trying to understand the men in their lives. As I recently sifted through them, I noticed one particular question over and over again: **Why do guys seems to vanish after a few dates?** Well ladies— sometimes it IS something that you are doing or saying that makes a man want to run for the hills.

Related Link: [Top 5 Truths About Women, According to Men](#)

Here are some potential early-in-the-relationship dating fumbles that set an alarm off for most guys. Stop yourself before you make one of these mistakes with a man you just started dating.

1. Ex-Talk – Ex-boyfriends will come up. And from my perspective, exes *should* come up. I've always found that knowing a little bit about the ex and why that relationship didn't work out is healthy and informative. You can learn a lot about a person by listening to how they talk about their former partner. But when that "talk" makes it obvious that you are still carrying a torch for your ex-boyfriend– or worse, you show symptoms of stalker-like aggressiveness, you won't be getting a call back. What you should be getting is therapy.

Related Link: [Top 10 Things Guys Wish They Could Say...](#)

2. Baby-Making – Sure, it's perfectly reasonable to want kids. But no guy wants to be sized up for fatherhood at the outset of the courtship. There's a hint of desperation in bringing up the topic too early. Even if you're THINKING about babies, keep it to yourself. Let me be totally honest here. Those first few weeks of a new relationship, men are thinking about two things: "Do I like and respect this woman enough to pursue a long-term relationship... and when are we going to be intimate?"

3. Meeting The Parents – Parental introductions are a major step. Nothing puts the exclamation point on the statement, "We're a couple!" quite like meeting mom and dad. And most dudes are not down for that with just a few dates logged in. Don't push– it comes off as desperate and manipulative, especially within the first few weeks of dating.

4. Being Controlling – Some people can't help themselves. They just have to manage every situation. That behavior repels guys, in particular. Don't try to dress him, don't try tell him what to eat, don't try to get him to exercise... or to get a job. You started going out with him in whatever state he was in, accept him or move on. Don't fall into the typical trap, "He'd be perfect if I could just get him to change..."

Related Link: [When You Should Treat a Man Like a Woman](#)

5. Claim-Staking – You're not a couple until you're a *couple!* Four dates in and you're changing your Facebook relationship status? That sound you hear is the screeching rubber and a sonic boom as that guy cracks the sound barrier trying to get away from you. Have "the talk" about where the relationship stands at some point, but give yourself and him the time and space to enjoy the launch of this blossoming romance. It'll all happen in time. Or it won't.

6. Sharing Past Relationship History Too Soon – This is a delicate subject, so tread lightly. This conversation can be uncomfortable to most long-term partners, imagine how odd it is to the new guy to be getting grilled about his previous relationship history after just a few dates. It's an absolute requirement to have this talk at some point, but it's got to be handled delicately. And whatever you do, unless he's asking, do not offer up the intimate details of your physical and intimate exploits... the dude does not want to hear it. And he'll make sure he won't by not dialing your digits again. Ever.

What are some other dating don't's you have experienced?

Nine Unexpected Places to Find Love





By Kelly Rouba,

GalTime Writer

You can find love anywhere, just make sure to keep your eyes open!

Finding love is never easy— or so it seems when you're single. As many women will admit, the bar scene isn't always an ideal place to meet men and flirting with someone at work is sometimes frowned upon. So if you're "looking for love in all the wrong places" or just unsure of where to mingle with eligible singles, GalTime's relationship expert Nikki Leigh has a few suggestions that just might help you get on the right path to meeting the man of your dreams.

According to Leigh, it's possible to meet someone just about anywhere; whether it's while shopping at the grocery store or while working out at the gym. But if you're looking for a true partner, Leigh believes there is a strategy or two that can help you find someone that you're more likely to be attracted to and really interested in. "If you want to meet someone that may be more compatible with you and [who shares] your likes and dislikes, think about meeting people in places and around things that really interest you," she said. "If you love to read, you could meet someone at a library or at a book store or at a book reading or signing. If you are very health-

conscious, think about going to a gym or a health food store.”

Also keep in mind when you’re looking for love, it’s important to be open-minded. “A key to meeting people is to always be open to the idea of making new friends and reaching out to people,” Leigh asserts. Here are some more of Leigh’s tips with helping you find love in unexpected places:

9 Unexpected Places to Find Love

- The post office
- On the bus, subway, or other public transportation
- An airport
- In a night class or another type of class, such as cooking class
- At a church or church events
- At local senior events, if you’re an older adult; oppositely, many colleges are hosting “young alumni” events and some organizations even have mixers for young professionals
- Online (aside from dating sites, you may want to try gaming sites or sites devoted to hobbies of interest to you)
- In the park
- At a local store

“There can be a fine line between reaching out to meet new people and coming across like a crazy stalker,” Leigh cautions. Remember, if you do decide to approach someone at a public location or event, make sure to do so with tact.

“If you’re in the grocery store and you see an interesting guy or girl and a quick glance in their cart reveals they have similar taste, you may want to say hello as you pass them,” Leigh said. “Then, if you can meet their gaze, smile at them, a smile is very warm and friendly.” Noting that you should be careful not to leer at the person, Leigh continues “After that, if they smile back at you or, if they are pondering a decision in one of the aisles, you can subtly mention a

favorite of yours and recommend they try it, but never be pushy or get in their face.” There is a real art to being subtle yet friendly and a little flirty.

“This approach can also be used on a train, bus, or subway, especially when it’s a route you travel frequently,” Leigh adds. “I’ve talked with people who have done this with great results, and I’ve had a great number of fun conversations in the grocery store.”

Next time you see someone who catches your eye, don’t be afraid to say hello and flash him a suggestive smile. You never know where it might lead you!

5 Ways Nice Guys Can Finish FIRST





By **Romance**

Recovery's Johanna Lyman for GalTime.com

Listen up guys everywhere – I'm tired of hearing that nice guys finish last. Women, at least emotionally mature women, want a man who is nice, not a jerk. They just don't want a doormat.

Think nice, not passive. Doormats are no fun to date, but most women want to see their friends (and themselves) dating a nice guy.

To help you guys understand the difference, I came up with a list of things a man can do– nice guy or not– to finish first.

1. Act confident. If you don't believe you can get a date, you definitely won't. But remember, confidence doesn't mean arrogance and it doesn't mean you're self-absorbed. How do women perceive confidence, you ask? Smile and maintain good eye contact to start. I don't mean stare her down, or give a smoldering, "I know you want me" look (that's not nice). Just be direct and open. Your eye contact should say, "*I'm interested in getting to know you better, I'm curious about you.*" Put your drink down between sips (sips, not gulps) rather than holding onto it like a pacifier. And use your body: lean in every once in awhile for more intimacy. Just

don't forget to pull back again to give us space. Non-sexual touch is great too: rest your hand lightly on her forearm after a laugh, or give a shoulder nudge to emphasize a point.

Related: [Do Nice Guys Always Finish Last?](#)

2. Ask her questions about herself. This is a no-brainer for the nice guy, because you are genuinely interested in her. If you're not a natural nice guy, this is the best tip you can get for your money. Women can't stand it when men are so self-absorbed they only talk about themselves. We want to know about you, but we also want to know that you remember we're real people, not just a piece of meat.

3. Stop trying so hard to please. It's ok if we don't agree on every single thing. We want to know you have a spine of your own. Have a strong opinion about something and let us know about it. That doesn't mean you aren't open to a differing opinion, but it's ok to "agree to disagree." I'll give a small example: when we ask where you want to go for dinner, have an opinion. It's irritating to hear, "I don't know, what do you want to do?" all the time. I'm sure you think the same thing; you'd rather hear our opinion, even if you disagree. Here's a clue: both men and women think that someone who knows what they want out of bed will also know what they want (and not be afraid to tell us) in bed, and that is sexy as hell.

Related: [Four Biggest Mistakes MEN Make in Bed](#)

4. Make her laugh. Even if it's at your expense once in awhile, the number one aphrodisiac for women is laughter. Think improv, not knock-knock jokes. Life is pretty funny all by itself, so you don't have to be cracking jokes all the time. Nice guys are great at self-deprecating humor, so just be careful not to overdo it. It's even ok to gently poke fun at her once in awhile, as long as it's not a joke about her personal appearance. Seriously guys, no matter how confident

a woman is, jokes about her appearance are always taboo. Consider it our Achilles heel.

5. When the time comes, be the sexual initiator. I know you don't always want to be the one to initiate, but biologically women are hard-wired to expect men to initiate sex. Especially in the beginning, don't be afraid to grab your woman and plant a juicy kiss on her. See #1 on the list; confidence is a huge turn-on. You can look for clues about how you're doing without appearing too eager to please. Here's a clue: voice inflection is key. "Do you like that?" is wimpy; "Do you like that?" is not. The first implies she might not like anything you're doing, while the second (said with confidence) implies that she likes it all and that in particular.

Newlywed 911: Protecting Young Marriages





By Malia

Karlinsky, GalTime Love/Sex Editor

Sad news about one of Hollywood's hottest couples—Russell Brand has filed for divorce from wife Katy Perry. The news about the break-up does not come as a complete surprise. Celebrity gossip columnists have been buzzing about a rift between pop music princess Katy Perry and her actor/comedian hubby Russell Brand. Married for just 14 months, the often lovey-dovey pair reportedly spent this past Christmas miles apart (two-thousand miles to be exact). Photos showed Perry splashing around on a Hawaiian beach (without her wedding ring), while Brand was also snapped on a beach— in Cornwall, England— sans Perry.

What broke this celeb couple up? We may never know for sure, but Us Weekly recently reported that Brand's lack of respect for Perry's parents' Christian beliefs as the cause of some tension.

If that's the case— the problems of this glamorous newlywed couple are quite common.

Jeanine and Mark Earnhart, spouses who co-authored a book titled Marriage Works, cite the in-laws as one of the biggest issues that cause problems in new marriages. According to the

Earnharts, there are some very predictable problems that plague the newly married.

Related: [Delve Into a Modern Day Marriage With 'The New I Do'](#)

Top 5 Issues Newlyweds Face

1. In-law issues
2. Finances
3. Sex
4. Time spent with friends (without the spouse)
5. Household chores.

Jeanine Earnhart suggest communication as way to get over these newlywed “speed bumps” on the road to a happy marriage. “It may seem like a simple answer, but it works for every one of these problems,” she explains. “If a couple gets their communication skills down right from the start, they can talk about anything and solve most problems.”

Tina B. Tessina, PhD, (aka “Dr. Romance”) a psychotherapist and author of *Money, Sex and Kids: Stop Fighting about the Three Things That Can Ruin Your Marriage*, suggests putting some work into the relationship before *putting a ring on it*.

Tessina shares that there are several questions every couple should consider **before** moving in together or making joint financial commitments.

Related: [Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Rushing into Marriage](#)

7 Questions Every Couple Should Talk About

1. What is your definition of commitment? If you don't know what your relationship means to the both of you, you risk repeating past mistakes, getting stuck in uncomfortable roles, or fighting about what a healthy relationship is.

2. Have you discussed finances? Different financial habits (one likes to save, the other spends more, or doesn't keep

track) can become a source of argument.

3. What about household responsibilities? If you're not yet living together, take a tour of each other's homes. Drastically different decorating styles, neatness, and organization levels can become sources of argument, and so can housekeeping and chores.

4. How close are you to family or friends? If one of you has a lot of family or friends, and the other does not, find out what those relationships mean. Where will you spend holidays? If there are family members who have problems, such as addiction or mental illness, how much will that impact your relationship?

5. How do you handle anger and other emotions? We all get upset from time to time. If you are usually good at diffusing each other's anger, and being supportive through times of grief or pain, your emotional bond will deepen as time goes on.

6. How do you show love to each other? Sharing what actions and words mean love to you may be surprising. Even if it's a struggle, discussing how you give and receive love will improve your relationship.

7. How well did you discuss these very questions? Asking yourselves these questions are excellent tests of your ability to define and work out problems. Constructive discussion that leads to a mutually satisfactory solution means you know how to solve problems in your relationship. If not, get counseling before going further.

So how can bickering newlyweds resolve their issues— and create a stronger relationship? Tessina suggests some simple steps.

Related: [Pamela Anderson Says 'Marriage Has Its Ups to Downs'](#)

Simple Steps to Create a Successful Marriage

- **Talk frequently and honestly to each other:** Discuss everything from your frustrations to your appreciation of each other.
- **Strive to work together to solve anything that comes up:** Don't get stuck on who's right or wrong, focus on solving the problem.
- **Keep your connection going:** Connect through communication, sex, affection, understanding and concern for each other.
- **Have a sense of humor, give the benefit of the doubt, care about each other.**

Our hearts go out to Katy and Russell.

How to Communicate to Get What You Need





By Dating With

Dignity's Marnia Battista for GalTime.com

While some men just aren't Mr. Boyfriend Material, others just need clear communication from you about what you want, need and expect from them. To make things trickier, many women have difficulty articulating exactly what they're looking for. That said, imagine if you knew the following:

- Exactly what you want in a partner, including his values and goals in life.
- How to effectively communicate your needs and expectations without having to be bitchy, brash or judgmental.
- Simple ways to set boundaries to allow the possibility of a relationship to unfold before you knee-jerk kick him to the curb.

In order to get your needs met, you have to be able to articulate exactly what you need and then be able to communicate those needs in a way that is appropriate, kind, compassionate, and reveals your true, authentic self.

Here are three steps you can take right now to begin to clearly express your desires to the man in your life so you can begin getting what you want:

1. Decide exactly you want.

If you're going to communicate your needs and desires to your man clearly, you need to be clear in your own mind about exactly what those needs and desires are. Whether you want him to be on time, call instead of text, move the relationship to the next level, call you his girlfriend, or propose marriage, the first step is to own those needs and desires in your own mind.

2. Tell him directly.

No matter how great a guy is, he's most likely not a mind reader. If you want him to call you instead of his usual texting, you're going to have to tell him so. He may or may not be willing to comply. If he isn't, it's up to you to decide if the issue at hand is a deal-breaker. The bottom line is this: Once you communicate, he knows what you need and expect, and you are both agreeing to whatever resolution is reached together.

3. Set boundaries—and enforce them.

This is the most difficult part of self-care for many women. One of my clients recently shared a story with me about a date that went horribly awry. She had met the man online, and then they had met in person for coffee. Upon leaving the coffee shop together, her date discovered his car had been towed. Instead of politely excusing herself from the impending drama (setting a boundary), she felt obligated to be part of his crisis-management team. He called his mom, complained loudly about the \$200 fee he had to pay to get his car back, and whined for hours while she drove him around searching for his car, an ATM machine, and so forth.

My client, who had known this man for only an hour (give or take a few exchanged emails and texts), spent the entire time she was with him fantasizing about how she might exit the drama without hurting his feelings. The result was that not

only did she see a part of him he most likely didn't want to share on a first date, but she also became annoyed with herself for not speaking up. She felt bad that she could not set the boundary immediately. Had she followed the two steps outlined above, it would have been simple from the get-go. Knowing she did not want to do crisis management for a man she had just met, she should have stated simply, "Thanks for the coffee. It's such a drag your car was towed. I'm going to get on with my day now, but I look forward to hearing how it turns out when we talk next." Instead, she wondered why he didn't give her an out, excusing her from dealing with his mistake so she could get back to her life.

Men deserve to know what you want so that they have an opportunity to deliver. It's that simple. Men are not mind readers. It's up to you to tell them what you want, need and expect.

Are Women Only Into Good Looking Guys?





By Danielle Devorah

of GalTime.com

When it comes to looks, women are typically more forgiving than men. I tend to believe that the first thing that attracts a man to a woman is her looks. On the other hand, a woman wants a man who comes off as intelligent, powerful, and strong. That does not necessarily equate to “good looking”. I remember dating a guy several years ago who was a very well known male model. On a scale of 1-10 this guy was an 11, for sure! He was tall, had a chiseled facial structure, strong arms. I remember taking him to parties with me and even my male friends said, “Wow, he’s a good looking dude”. But, he was, well, dumb as a rock. After a couple dates and many ridiculous conversations with him, I dumped him. I no longer saw how gorgeous he was and just imagined him as an immature 15-year-old boy. Years later, he actually married a very famous actress and ironically she’s very smart. I guess she didn’t need someone on her level and enjoyed the arm candy.

As for me, I began gravitating to more intelligent guys that had charisma. I actually found their minds to be sexy over their appearance. One guy I dated was an inch shorter and even bald (but I’m 6’ 2” with heels so I need to be fair). I cried over this one and totally fell for his personality. Bottom line: you don’t need to look like a movie star or male model

to land a quality girl. In fact, most of the men I was crazy about were not so great looking at all. But they were always in shape and well put together, and most importantly—confident.

I look at a couple of things when I meet a guy for the first time. Does he appear confident, what does his posture say, how is he dressed, does he have too much gel in his hair, is he overweight? If his shirt is open, I don't want to see chest hair! I also notice his watch and shoes, believe it or not. And trust me I'm not the only woman who pays attention to that stuff.

I know all of these things can come across as shallow, but at the end of the day these small details can make a difference in whether or not the guy gets the girl to say “yes” to the first date.

Learn about Jcoach Image Consultant Danielle Devorah and set up an appointment to get your special Jcoach discounted rate.

The Big Merge: 3 Tips for Moving In Together





By GalTime Dating

Diva Jennifer Oikle, Ph.D.

It's time for the big MERGE! You finally found The One and you are moving in together or getting married. Exciting, thrilling and... bumpy? When two adults decide to come together to create one life, there can be a few bumps along the way.

Even the most compatible partners will still have differences when it comes to habits, interests, and yes, even decorating taste. Now that you share a bathroom, how do you negotiate those small and sometimes ugly discrepancies while keeping your bond strong? It's easy when you keep in mind your UNIFYING VISION.

Here's a secret. Most couples create damage to their union when they forget the big picture and, instead, focus on nitty-gritty details. Before long, you can ruin an entire weekend shouting about who takes out the garbage, whether his ugly old lamp gets to stay, and if you can read in bed while the other person tries to go to sleep.

So, how do you find the right compromise on all of the little differences that threaten to weaken your love? Remember, it's never really about the little things. When we argue about the small things, it's really the big hidden issues that we are

playing tug of war over, such as feeling loved, trusted or respected.

The solution: Identify the underlying issue and bring your focus back to your Unifying Vision for your relationship.

Let's take a peek into how to make this happen.

Step 1: Create Your Unifying Vision

When you set up house together it's the perfect time to explicitly commit to the vision you have for your lives together. Sit down and take some notes on the biggest question of all: What do we really want our life together to look like?

Brainstorm on such topics as:

- What are the 5 top values or attributes that guide the way we want to interact with each other? For example: loving, trustworthy, respectful, honest, reliable...
- What are the 3 most important qualities we want our free time together/activities to embody? For example: novelty, adventure, relaxation, intellectual stimulation...
- What characteristics do we want our home/living space and routines to embody to support our bond? For example: organized, cozy, bright, romantic...

Once you have the big picture in mind, little disputes become much easier to resolve by referring back to what you agreed *really* matters.

Step 2: Identify the Underlying Concern

When a conflict crops up, before you get embroiled in your stances, take a deep breathe and step back. Ask yourself or each other: What is really bothering me here? Which of my deepest held values or needs is being triggered by this situation?

It could be that your argument about him leaving the toothpaste cap off is really about not feeling heard. Or maybe his need to be on time is rubbing your more care-free nature the wrong way.

Step 3: Decide Based on your Unifying Vision

Once you know what is really going on, go back to the big picture: the vision you and your partner have for your lives. Based on what's most important to you both, the things you do agree on – has something shifted in the way you feel about this difference?

Typically, once you truly understand what makes your partner tick, the solution comes easily. For example, once you know that your partner values reliability over all else – you'll be able to commit to being on time regularly. Or, if your partner knows how important it is for you to feel supported, it'll be easier for him to take out the trash without being hounded.

By always stepping back from any perceived difference, you can usually find what you both have in common. And once you step back onto the same team with the same goals, winning happens naturally!