

The Height Factor: Short Men and Tall Women



By [Marni Battista](#)

Choosing a mate involves enough numbers to make the process a math equation, but daters of both genders place the most importance on a lot of the wrong ones. From a bird's eye perspective, it doesn't make sense to prioritize such an uncontrollable physical characteristic as height, but as superficial as it may seem, biology is at work here. Women tend to go for taller men because of the masculinity and protectiveness it implies, while men seek out more petite girls who make them feel like a strong lumberjack of a guy.

I could tell you all day long that height is irrelevant in the long run and that, by following this primal urge, you're effectively ruling out a painful number of worthy potential partners who could make you feel just as meek or manly as someone who meets your height requirement would. But since it

would be fruitless for me to simply suggest we all fight Mother Nature, here's a Dating with Dignity guide to how men and women who weren't blessed with traditionally ideal genes can exude the right qualities.

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How Short Men Can Measure Up

If you're the guy who was always chosen last to play basketball in gym class and are a regular at the tailor to have new pants hemmed, you may have low expectations for your love life. If you hone other parts of your appearance and personality, however, you'll communicate power, presence, and an ability to protect no matter your magnitude:

Confidence: Many men express confidence by overcompensating and acting like a jerk, but simply being comfortable and carrying yourself accordingly will do. Don't forget that confidence is also associated with ambition and an overall happiness with your looks and personality. If you're not quite there yet, perhaps you're better off working on yourself for a while before hitting the dating game hard; it'll benefit both you and your romantic prospects.

Appearance: Height aside, overall appearance is an undeniable attraction factor – especially when attempting to snag a lady's initial interest. Take care to dress well but also in a way that suits you, both size- and personality-wise. A well-groomed man with an eye for fashion can make a lack of height unnoticeable. Similarly, maintaining your physical shape can give a solid sense of that protective quality women seek in men.

Personality: While you may feel as though you have to embrace an abrupt and coarse demeanor to make up for your lack of height, kindness still matters and is especially desirable in a long-term mate. Believe it or not, kindness can still be

considered masculine, so long as you express it with that confidence you've honed and refrain from becoming a doormat. Simply treat others, especially your lady, with respect, consideration, and compassion and stand up for what you believe in. That's sexier to us than being able to slam dunk a basketball.

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How Tall Women Can Appear Down to Earth

Many men find height in women imposing, no matter how charismatic and warm you may be. The key to attracting a man who may normally shy away from taller gals is to exude femininity and appear approachable, even if that means doing the approaching yourself.

Confidence: Though making the first move may seem like the opposite of appearing less intimidating, it may be your job to break the ice. Use your feminine wiles and approach him in a flirty, natural way to avoid seeming forward or "ballsy." Once he's had the chance to talk to you for just a few minutes, he'll likely see what a warm and welcoming person you are, and all the rest will fall away.

Appearance: You may be inclined to slouch to appear shorter, but improving your posture makes you appear more self-assured. Be sure to smile often and openly. Don't be afraid to sling a smile at the cute guy in the next aisle at the grocery store or across the bar; it's the most surefire way to express your effusive personality and make someone feel more comfortable and open to approaching you.

Personality: If you're into soccer and fly-fishing and have an active career, by all means go for it – but try to balance it out through your relationship's dynamic. Allow yourself to be vulnerable and maybe even have your new guy take care of some of the fix-it tasks around your apartment early on, even if you're fully capable of handling them yourself. Making your

man feel needed and giving him ample chance to take care of you will make your height difference irrelevant.

Marni Battista, founder of *Dating with Dignity*, is an expert dating and life coach with a 10-step system to manifesting love for your self and others. You can contact Marni at marni@datingwithdignity.com.

LeAnn Rimes and Eddie Cibrian Ready for Children



By Laura Seaman

There are two things Hollywood is full of: reality shows and celebrity children. LeAnn Rimes and Eddie Cibrian, who have

their own upcoming reality show on VH1, told UsMagazine.com that they are wanting to bring some children into the mix. "He's the best Dad already," said Rimes. "I have a little bit of experience with the kids now so, I feel like I wouldn't be too crazed. It doesn't feel like a real first, first!" Cibrian has two children with ex-wife Brandi Glanville, sons Mason and Jake. After Rimes' comment on kids, Cibrian joked, "Look, maybe we should just get another dog and then see how that goes." Rimes said, "Other than the reason of us wanting to work together and be home with the kids, why not have fun and poke fun at everything that's gone on for the last five years."

How can you tell if your relationship is strong enough to take on children?

Cupid's Advice:

Once a couple has been together for a certain amount of time, many might start thinking about whether their partner is family material, and questions of whether or not they want kids and how many they want can start popping up in conversations. This might be one of the most important conversations you can have in life. After all, it's not just deciding to have a baby and bask in the newborn happiness. This decision will affect you for the rest of your life, and these kids are going to become adults. If you and your partner are talking about having kids, you'd better be sure you can handle them:

1. Want the kids before you have them: Maybe you've never really liked children, or you've had a bad experience with them in the past. No matter how it came about, some people just don't like being around children. This doesn't mean you won't want kids eventually, but you have to know what you're getting yourself into. If one partner wants kids and the other doesn't, a child would only create a gap in the relationship.

Maybe the idea of a child seems nice, but you haven't been around kids much. Surround yourself with young relatives or babysit for a friend; get experience with children so you can be 100 percent sure you *want* children:

Related: [When Are You Ready To Be a Dad?](#)

2. Give them a sense of permanence: A child is a lifelong responsibility, and you should be willing to show it. An apartment that works for you and your partner might not be big enough for a child, or it might have some big safety risks. Make sure you're ready for a child to be in your life before you even plan on having one. This means buying cribs, creating a nursery, and thinking of good schools in the area. Not only will you be better prepared for a child, but you're showing your partner that you're dedicated and not going anywhere.

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3. Be ready for a big change in the relationship: A child will completely change the relationship between you and your partner, and you need to be ready for it. If you two have had the same routine for years, try making changes to your schedule and seeing how it affects your mood. Time that you spend with each other might now be spent with the baby, or trying to catch up on sleep. Not only will you be a couple, but you will be parents, completely changing the nature of your relationship. New tasks, schedules, and feelings are going to put your relationship to the test, so make sure you're ready for it.

How has having children affected your relationship? Let us know in the comments!

Screwing the Rules Video Dating Tips: Talking About Your Relationship Needs



By [E!'s Famously Single Dating Coach, Laurel House](#)

Dating Advice from E!'s *Famously Single* Laurel House on Communication in a Relationship

Related Link: [How to Get a Guy to Commit](#)

In this week's [dating advice](#) video, dating expert and E!'s *Famously Single* dating coach, [Laurel House](#) teaches you

how to communicate with your partner about your relationship needs. "Whether it's phone, e-mail, text, or in person, there are five key elements to communication," she reveals. "Those are attitude, word choice, motivation, timing, and length." Watch the video above if you're ready to improve your skills!

For more information about our dating mentor, click [here](#).

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

How do you communicate your relationship needs? Tell us in the comments below!

Are Your Dating Standards Too High?



By Liz Kim

There's nothing wrong with knowing what you want in a future boyfriend or girlfriend; in fact, you *shouldn't* settle for just anybody. But, there comes a point when unrealistic standards may actually be what's keeping you from finding Mr. or Mrs. Right. If you are turning down a potentially great relationship because he has a funny hairstyle or she has "man hands," a la *Jerry Seinfeld*, then it's time to reevaluate your priorities and loosen up a little. Below are a few signs that your standards are too high when it comes to dating:

1. You model your relationships after what you see on the big screen: "Love means never having to say you're sorry." "You complete me." "I'll never let go, Jack." Although *Love Story*, *Jerry Maguire*, and *Titanic* are beautiful films that celebrate the power of love, they've also done a good job at shattering realistic expectations when it comes to dating and relationships. We all want a love like Jack and Rose, but our idea of these relationships is false because Hollywood is scripted. With good editing and a staff of writers and makeup artists, any relationship can seem perfect. If you're keeping track of your relationship by comparing it to what you see on the big screen, you are setting yourself up for failure and heartbreak.

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2. You have unrealistic physical standards: Whether it's blue eyes, brown hair, or a certain height, everyone has a "type." And while physical attraction does play an important role in dating, there may be a point when your standards become too high. "He's tall, muscular, has kind hazel eyes, and he's great with kids...*but* he has this tiny birthmark on his left cheek that's too distracting. I can't go out with somebody with a distracting birthmark." If this sounds like you, you're letting the little details get in the way of the big picture.

3. You can't remember the last date you went on: You don't

realize this at first, but after you've turned down date after date, you'll find yourself repeating the same scenario: it's Saturday night, and you're on the couch wrist deep in a pint of Ben and Jerry's and re-watching all 7 seasons of *The Golden Girls*. If you don't want this to happen, then it's time to reevaluate what you're looking for. If you refuse to shift your standards, then be prepared for frequent nights alone.

4. You've been told (repeatedly) that you're too picky: If one or two people say you're picky, you shouldn't be too concerned. However, if multiple friends and family members are pointing out that your standards are too strict, then you might have a problem. Sometimes, we forget to look at ourselves from an outsider's perspective and don't realize how our behavior is affecting our life.

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5. You are a stubborn, repeat offender: If Chad is the eighth guy you've gone out with who surfs, has sandy blonde hair, and a penchant for guitar playing, and it hasn't worked out, break out of your mold. Clearly, you don't mesh with your "type," and now it's time to branch out. Try asking out the hipster barista from the corner coffee shop who can't surf, has brown hair, and always gives you extra caramel drizzle and a smile. You've taken chances with eight Chads already, so trying something new can't hurt!

6. The problem isn't you, it's him/her: This one plays off of number five. If you're consistently dating the same type of person over and over again and it's always a nightmare, we hate to break it to you, but it's probably you. If you are one for order and routine but your dream date is someone who is always spontaneous (and kind of unreliable), more often than not, you'll walk away unhappy and unsatisfied.

7. You've more than once regretted dumping somebody: Well, now you've done it. You turned down Jamie because he was into

comic books, and a few months later you see him walking down the street with his new girlfriend. They're holding hands and can't take their eyes off of each other. You think to yourself, *was he always so cute?* And instantly you regret turning him down. Now, he's happy and in love and you're still along and sulking.

Imagine going to a buffet with tables and tables of food you've never tried before but only selecting to eat french fries. You know you like french fries, but all the salt makes you bloat and they're not good cold. Maybe it's time to try another dish. The beauty of dating is that if it doesn't work out, you never have to see the person again. Instead of boxing yourself in with strict dating standards, it might be time to take a chance and date outside of your comfort zone. Who knows? Maybe he or she will bring out a side of you you didn't know you had.

Do you think your dating standards are too high? Tell us in the comments below.

Pregnant Stacy Keibler Gushes About Husband Jared Pobre





By Sanetra Richards

Who knew pregnancy could look so good? Stacy Keibler shows off her bun in the oven on the cover of *Fit Pregnancy* June/July issue and talks about her love, husband Jared Pobre. According to UsMagazine.com, the 34-year-old actress opened up about how Pobre gave her a new outlook on wanting a family: “”Before we met, both Jared and I had told our parents we didn’t think we’d ever get married or have kids,” said the *Supermarket Superstar* host.”But when you’re with the right person, everything changes.” “My epiphany happened shortly after Jared and I started dating, and once we both knew, we didn’t hesitate,” the mom-to-be and wife added. “I just knew I was ready and that there’s no one else in the world I would want to do this with.” Keibler also gave a couple of her tricks to maintaining a slender figure and youthful skin, which are prenatal pilates and a natural beauty routine.

How do you know when you’ve found “the one”?

Cupid’s Advice:

When love crosses your path, it is indeed one of the greatest, memorable feelings. You are on cloud nine and there is no coming down. Plus, the stomach butterflies do not seem to be

going away anytime soon. And if you have not experienced this yet, you are patiently waiting on the moment. Nevertheless, knowing when you have met that special person that is the reason for your insane feelings always brings up the question “Is he/she the one?” Cupid has some advice to help you figure it all out:

1. You are 100% yourself: Coming across someone who fully accepts your personality, flaws and all, is similar to finding a four leaf clover. Fortunately, when that one does come around, they are hard to pass up – the person who understands your humor, accepts your lifestyle, and so forth. If you are never hesitant to say what is on your mind or do something completely out of the norm and they value it, chances are you are a step closer to recognizing ‘the one.’

Related: [Stacy Keibler Is Pregnant](#)

2. The fire continuously burns: A connection should always be felt between you and your partner, even if it is years down the line. ‘The one’ will constantly shower you with affection and appreciation.

Related: [Stacy Keibler and Michael Chiarello Are Looking For the Next ‘Supermarket Superstar’](#)

3. Mutual understanding: A confirmation on if you genuinely have met your match usually comes about in certain situations, such as you and your partner working out a problem instead of arguing and remaining stagnant. The conversations evolve and include “we” and “us” instead of “I” and “me”. If you notice more growth individually and together, then you have probably found “the one”.

What are some ways to know you have found true love? Share your thoughts below.

Adventure Date: Do Something Daring



By Leslie Chavez

If you're tired of your go-to movie and dinner date, shake things up this weekend then plan an **adventure date** that will lead to a spontaneous and exciting day that you'll both be talking about for weeks to come. Get inventive and think of something that you two have always wanted to do together but have never found the time, money or...courage.

Try skydiving! In addition to the adrenaline rush, this adventure date will help you de-stress, forget about your worries, and enjoy the simplicities of life with your love. Being in a situation where you feel like you're doing something dangerous or overcoming an exhilarating challenge with your partner will bring you closer together. Plus, what

could be more intimate than grasping on to each other as you plummet quickly to the ground with the air rushing past your face at unimaginable speeds? Oh, the things we do for love!

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Indoor rock climbing can be another adventure date. You can experience the vertical world of bouldering from the safety of an indoor gym. Climb along sheer drops and sculpted edges and feel the rush as you clutch onto the rocks twenty feet above the ground. You can encourage and support each other as you bound up the wall and race to the top.

It will also give you a chance to admire your man's strength – and his sexy back muscles! Reward yourself with some ice cream or a smoothie afterward, and you can swap climbing strategies for next time. IndoorClimbing.com has a great directory of gyms all over the country for you to choose from.

If you have a need for speed, then go-karting is the perfect adventure date for you. Experience the thrill of driving fast and battle it out with your lover to see who can get the quickest lap time. Guys love a girl who's a little competitive and brings her A-game. Lap him at the last second, and it'll drive him wild. Trying any new sport is sure to bring some extra excitement to your romance.

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For something a little more romantic, head to the beach at night. Bring a blanket and a bottle of wine and gaze up at the beautiful star-filled sky. You'll feel like you're doing something bad by being on the deserted sand in the middle of the night. Savor the intimate moment together under the stars on your own private oasis. If you're feeling a bit more adventurous, you might even suggest skinny-dipping in the moonlight.

Have you been on a spontaneous date before? Share your story

below!

Social Media Etiquette for Your #Wedding Day



By Laura Seaman

Sharing your engagement on Instagram, sending out rehearsal dinner invites via Facebook, and getting wedding ideas from Pinterest – social media is everywhere these days, and weddings are no exception. Well, for most people anyways. According to the eighth annual “What’s on Brides’ Minds” survey by David’s Bridal, 44 percent of brides think that digital rules are important at weddings, while 14 percent are completely banning cell phones from their special days. That means no photos, tweets, or status updates! It’s rumored that

Kim Kardashian and Kanye West have set this rule for their wedding this weekend.

Even if social media isn't allowed at your ceremony and reception, that doesn't mean it won't be part of your wedding at all. Page after page of Pinterest boards are dedicated to wedding décor ideas, and brides are known to bring a friend to judge their dress over Skype if she can't be there in person. These are both simple ways to use technology to make your wedding exactly how you want it.

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

Other couples use social media to make their wedding an Internet sensation. There's the usual practice of putting wedding photos on Facebook, but some people go the extra mile and put videos of their wedding on YouTube or broadcast the entire occasion via video chat. In fact, 36 percent of people surveyed thought that Skype was a good way to open the chapel doors to guests who can't attend in person.

The survey further shows that many brides have acknowledged the role social media plays and have their own dos and don'ts for their weddings. For example, 62 percent of brides believe that the bridesmaids should not post photos of the bride in her dress before the ceremony, while 58 percent of brides think that they or their husbands should be the first people to post wedding pictures. A smaller number of brides – only 22 percent – think that they should be the only ones posting wedding photos at all.

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Of course, pictures aren't the only way to let people know about your wedding. 56 percent of brides will update their social media profiles with their new name within a day of the wedding, and 10 percent will even do it while the wedding is still happening!

So whether you plan on letting your wedding become the next YouTube sensation or you're going to put cell phones on hold like Kimye, it's clear that social media will probably play some part in your big day. Just don't forget to #livehappilyeverafter!

**What is your opinion on social media etiquette at weddings?
Let us know in the comments below!**

Hollywood Couple Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt Are Starring in a New Movie Together



By Sanetra Richards

Another [Angelina Jolie](#) and [Brad Pitt](#) movie is in the works! However, it is not a *Mr. and Mrs. Smith: Part Two* . . . yet. Although their first project together was a memorable action film, the next one with the [famous couple](#) will be the exact opposite. According to [UsMagazine.com](#), the 38-year-old actress opened up in an interview with *Extra* on Tuesday, May 20, about the new film. "It's not a big movie; it's not an action movie," the *Maleficent* star shared. "It's the kind of movie we love but aren't often cast in. It's a very experimental, independent-type film where we get to be actors together and be really raw, open, try things."

The Oscar winner and mother of six also gushed about her celebrity love: "He's my family. He's not just a lover and partner, which is wonderful, but he's my family now...We have history; we work hard to make it great; and we don't kind of relax about it and take each other for granted." Jolie admitted that the Hollywood couple does run into a few trials and tribulations, saying, "Like everybody, we have our challenges, but we're fighting to make it great."

When this Hollywood couple films another movie, they'll be spending a lot more time together. What are some drawbacks to working with your partner?

Cupid's Advice:

You may imagine working with your partner as another way to spend time together. The commute to work won't be such a hassle; it'll be easier, and you'll save money on gas. It's important to consider the downside too. Cupid has some issues

for you to keep in mind:

1. No alone time: Believe it or not, there is a thing as spending *too much* time with your significant other. Work is no longer a place for you to do your own thing because your beau is now just a cubicle away.

Related Link: [Celebrity Couple Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie Are Filming a New Movie Together](#)

2. Nothing to talk about: Most couples enjoy coming home from work and discussing their days. If you work together though, the conversation may be limited because you both experienced similar situations with the same co-workers.

Related Link: [Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie Enjoy Date Night](#)

3. Jealousy: Imagine if you received a promotion that your significant other had secretly (or publicly) been longing for or vice versa. Your partner will either be genuinely happy for you or envious of your success. If they are in the second boat, you'll notice tension between the two of you within days, which will eventually cause a strain on your relationship and love.

What are some negative aspects to working with your partner? Share your thoughts below.

How to Recover From a Hurtful Split



By Melanie Mar

When CupidsPulse.com asked me to write an article on this topic, I stopped for a minute to reflect upon two emails I received this week, both requesting my help: one from a man who was struggling terribly to let go of his ex-girlfriend and move on, and the other from a lady with the subject “heartbroken.” The end of a relationship can be extremely difficult, and I never underestimate the pain of a breakup. In severe cases, it is truly debilitating, causing mental anguish and physical turmoil, affecting your health, and leading to weight loss and other associated illnesses.

Of course, the degree of distress is dependent on how a relationship ends. For example, if both of you have come to the conclusion that the relationship has “run its course” and each have apathy for the other, then the most likely feeling you’ll have is melancholy. You’ll wish each other well and mean it. In these cases, I recommend doing things that bring you joy to counteract the blues: dance, sing, surround yourself with friends, whatever makes you happy.

There's also the "chipping away" of a relationship from bickering, lack of sex, lack of respect, etc. If these things have ultimately led to the end of your relationship, then relief is usually the first emotion felt. During this stage, I suggest doing things to rediscover yourself, like taking up a hobby or interest, pampering yourself, or taking some much needed "me" time.

Related Link: [Could You Be Friends With An Ex?](#)

If your relationship ends because of betrayal or immoral or unethical behavior, you will experience deep agony. The ending is usually swift and extremely hard to comprehend. Understanding the process (and yes, it is a process) will make it easier for you. Know that what you are going through is not uncommon and that having the right tools in your tool belt will assist you as you handle your loss.

Here are some other feelings you may experience during a hurtful split:

Pain can be both emotional and physical. I always tell my clients that "pain indicates change is needed or change is in progress." Do not push away the pain; instead, *feel it*. If you deny the feeling, you're only prolonging the inevitable. People ruminate when they are in emotional distress, which is perfectly fine for a short time. However, if extended, it can cause sickness.

Within weeks, you have to move on from the feel-think, feel-think, feel-think merry-go-round and do something positive to make it better. Remember that the way out of any negative thought is to follow it with a positive action.

Anger is a very frequently expressed emotion. As a certified transactional analysis, I use "child" and "adult" as forms of communication styles. With that in mind, there are four types of anger:

1. Frustration is created from a deep dissatisfaction from unresolved problems or unfulfilled needs.

2. Resentment is a bitter feeling of persistent ill will.

3. Denial is a defense mechanism in which confrontation with reality is avoided by denying the existence of the problem.

The three angers above are all child angers and are not healthy in the aid of moving on and letting go.

4. Indignant is adult anger in its simplest form, and it merely means you are logically angry about the situation. It's perfectly healthy to display your anger if done with facts and reasoning and not for an extensive amount of time.

Sadness comes after the pain has eased and the anger has subsided. It is, of course, sad to acknowledge that someone you loved deeply betrayed your relationship and that the future plans you had together will not happen. You miss that person and the special moments you shared. It's okay to mourn; in fact, it's normal, and it would be highly unusual if you didn't.

Just make sure that this phase doesn't continue for an extended period. Remember to keep reminding yourself the reason why your relationship ended.

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Acceptance is the last stage. There will be a day when you wake up and realize that it's over and that you survived. It didn't kill you, but it did make you stronger. When looking back at the relationship, you understand completely that it wasn't what you initially thought and that your ex was less than you deserve. It's the relationships that don't last forever that teach us the lessons that will.

You now have what I call a "clear head, clear heart" – both of which are necessary to start dating again. So get out there

and enjoy the excitement of meeting someone new. You never know what it might lead to!

[Melanie Mar](#) is a celebrity relationship specialist, matchmaker and life coach.

Single in Stilettos Show: Where Are All the Good Men?!



On this week's [Single in Stilettos](#) show, dating coach Jonathon Aslay talks to founder Suzanne Oshima about the five best places to meet men. If you're ready to find a new guy, he recommends that you: think about what you like to do and what you're passionate about; head to high-end business seminars; go to your church or synagogue; try online dating; or look more closely at other forms of social media, like Facebook or Twitter.

Related Link: [Jonathon Aslay on Why Men Disappear](#)

Of course, the most important thing is that you put yourself out there. Open yourself up to love, and it will come to you!

For more information about Single in Stilettos shows, click [here](#).

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

Where do you go to meet men? Share in the comments below.

Zoe Kravitz Dating Noah Becker Spotted Hand-in-Hand in NYC



By Louisa Gonzales

It seems like Zoe Kravitz has a new man in her life. According to [People](#), **Zoe Kravitz dating Noah Becker**, 20, was spotted in New York City on Thursday afternoon hand-in-hand. The newly formed couple, may in fact be new, but already have history thanks to the Divergent actress's dad, Lenny Kravitz, who served as best man when Becker's mom, Barbara Feltus, tied the knot with Belgian artist Arne Quinze. Kravitz last relationship was with the former Gossip Girl actor Penn Badgley and the two haven't been linked together since 2013 at a New York party.

How do you know when you're ready to move on after a breakup?

Cupid's Advice:

Everyone moves on from a breakup at their own pace, like Zoe Kravitz, and most of the time it depends on how it ended. Moving on can be hard, especially if the split really devastated you, but it's something we must all do. Cupid has some advice on how to know when you're ready to move on after a breakup:

1. You've stopped thinking about it: You usually have already moved on once you stopped thinking about the person and breakup. Once you have done this your heart has a better chance of being open to finding new love. Sometimes people start dating and move on without realizing it,

Related: [Are Penn Badgley and Zoe Kravitz Back Together?](#)

2. You're ready to let go: Letting go is one of the biggest steps in being ready to move on. It's good to let go and not let the ghost of relationship past haunt you in your new relationships. Yes, it's okay to keep some memories or things, but if you want to give your new relationship a chance you have to let your ex go and not hold onto the past, otherwise you're never truly be able to move on and start dating .

Related: [Zoe Kravitz and Penn Badgley Engage in Poolside PDA](#)

3. You find yourself falling in love again: If someone new is making your heart flutter, is catching your attention and the mere thought of them is making you smile, you're probably ready to move from your ex. Love is complicated, it can change, evolve, or disappear, but it's always good to give it a chance and let your heart decide what's best for you. When you're ready to move on with someone new, you'll feel it.

How do you know if you're ready to move on after a breakup? Share in the comments below.

Create Lasting Love with 'Marriage Meetings'



By Brittany

Stubbs

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

In her new book *Marriage Meetings for Lasting Love: 30 Minutes a Week to the Relationship You've Always Wanted*, Berger teaches you how to effectively communicate and connect with your spouse each week with step-by-step guidelines. The communication tips and techniques explained in her book are the same ones that Berger has used to guide hundreds of couples towards deeper, more lasting love. Although the title of the book is *Marriage Meetings*, don't let that fool you. This book is not just for married couples but for anyone in a committed relationship, and the skills you use in marriage meetings will transfer to and benefit all relationships in your life.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Also, both partners should be in a calm state of mind so they're able to communicate in a positive and respectful manner, even if they might be upset about something. Make sure that your phones are off and that there's no television in the background – or anything else that will distract one another. Another rule is using the positive communication skills described in detail in the book.

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

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

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

I would encourage everyone to read the book and truly understand what the meetings entail before making up your mind. In every relationship, there's always room for growth

and improvement. Even if everything is going well, these meetings and skills are simply a tool to make your relationship even better.

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

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

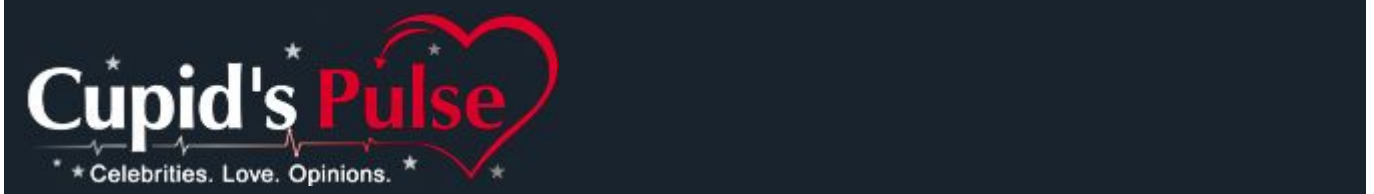
Besides marriage meetings, what advice do you have for our readers to make their love last?

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

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

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

Divorce with Dignity



By Tammy Greene

for [Hope After Divorce](#)

It would be hard to ignore the latest buzz in celebrity couple news. There has been little else talked about than the separation and impending divorce of Hollywood darling Gwyneth Paltrow and front man rock star Chris Martin. This marriage of 10 years has been closely protected and kept out of the public eye, so news of the breakup has come as a surprise and a blow to their adoring fans.

There has been endless speculation on what went wrong in their relationship, but it is, at this time, just speculation. After recent news of many Hollywood breakups, it certainly would seem that celebrity status puts an added stress on a marriage that many are not able to rise above. Although no divorce is easy, it does appear that this illustrious couple has figured

out the ever-elusive secret of how to have a diplomatic and uneventful dissolution. Even as they head for divorce, this celebrated couple has much to teach us about relationships and separation.

What You See Is Not Real

The actress has built her brand on having it all together. We admire her for her strong family bonds, her pulled together style, her clean eating and healthy lifestyle, and up until a few weeks ago, her seemingly fairytale marriage. But here is the truth: What you see on the outside is not what is real. What has been portrayed through magazines, commercials, and movies is not reality. Celebrity or not, we all are dealing with our own private stuff. Everyone from your next-door neighbor to Oprah Winfrey has their own inside struggles of which we are not privy.

The lesson here is don't believe everything you see. Celebrities are people, too. Like the rest of us, they, too, are just trying to get through each day with the appearance that they have it all together.

Related Link: [Maintaining a Positive Image After Divorce](#)

Children Come First

The biggest tragedy in most divorces is its effect on the children. There is the very real concern that there will be long-term effects on the well-being of the kids. With two children, Apple, age 9, and Moses, age 7, this is sure to be among the top concerns of this A-list couple too, and it seems they have not taken this responsibility lightly. Martin and Paltrow announced that they have come to an agreement to share custody of the children. They have made it clear that it is top priority that the children's transition is as easy as possible.

Granted, while not all relationships can end as amicably as

this one seems to have, there is a lesson to be learned about ensuring that their children are made the priority in the midst of divorce. Though not always possible, the goal should be to make sure that the children still have both their parents in their lives. Even though Mom and Dad don't live together, they are still a team when it comes to parenting. Though surely difficult, couples like Paltrow and Martin show us that it can be done.

Related Link: [How to Cooperatively Co-Parent After Separation or Divorce](#)

Maintain Your Dignity

These two stars have been known for protecting their personal lives fervently. Even in the face of divorce, they are keeping the reasons and terms behind the decision for separation private and personal. In a country where divorces have become increasingly ugly and cruel, it is certainly a breath of fresh air to see two people maintaining their kindness and dignity in what is certain to be a challenging time. It is understandable that not all relationships come to an end in such a civil manner. Certainly, there are reasons for a split where maintaining a polite relationship of any kind is impossible.

That being said, it is important to always aim to be the bigger person. So many divorcees allow the process of separation and divorce to turn them into someone that they are no longer proud of. As of yet, it doesn't appear that this superstar couple will be among that list. We look to celebrities to help guide us through parenting, aging, trends, diets, exercise, and relationships. Even though many relationships in the spotlight end in a whirlwind of drama, it is nice to see that some Hollywood couples work hard to ensure their separation is done with privacy, compassion, and dignity. Paltrow and Martin appear to be shining examples of just that.

**Do you think it's possible to remain friends after a divorce?
Let us know in the comments below!**

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).

Tammy Greene is a graduate of the University of La Verne. She has worked as a Child Life Specialist and social worker assisting families who have children with illness or mental disabilities. Tammy is a producer of the national PBS children's television show, Curiosity Quest. She has a blog, Married and Naked, where she shares personal lessons learned from her own life, offering helpful ways to navigate through the challenges of marriage. Tammy is happily married to her high school sweetheart and is the mother of two. See Tammy's Curiosity Quest website at www.curiosityqueststore.com. Follow her blog, MarriedandNaked, at www.married-and-naked.com.

Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher Go On Movie Date





By Louisa Gonzales

Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher were spotted holding hands as they head to the movies at the Universal City Walk in Los Angeles on Saturday, May 17, according to UsMagazine.com. Kutcher, 36, and Kunis, 30, both went casual with the actor in a t-shirt and sneakers, while his pregnant fiancée went with a black top and sandals. The gorgeous duo recently bought a new Beverly Hills mansion, a “perfect” family home, according to a source.

What are some ways to support your partner during pregnancy?

Cupid’s Advice:

Yes, pregnancy brings a lot of new challenges and obstacles for your relationship, but it can also be an exciting new adventure for you and your partner. When your significant other gets pregnant it will bring many lifestyle changes, which is why you’ll need to lend your support. Cupid has some advice on ways to support your partner during pregnancy:

1. Be there: One of the best ways to support your partner during pregnancy is to simply be there for them. It is important for you to make yourself available to your partner when they need you, whether it’s for comfort, some one to talk

to or whatever else they need. During pregnancy your lover can experience a lot of different emotions, ups and down, and changes that is why they need someone to be at their side.

Related: [Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher Are Expecting!](#)

2. Help around the house: A women's body goes through many changes during pregnancy and some things they use to be able to do, eat, or drink they won't be able to do anymore. She is the mother of your child, show your support by helping them out with some of their daily activities, chores around the house or other errands. Not only is it admirable, but your other half will appreciate all the help.

Related: [Find Out About Ashton Kutcher and Mila Kunis' Engagement](#)

3. Prepare: A number of adjustments and changes will have to be made in the both of your lives for when the baby comes. So, help your sweetheart out by getting things ready for when the baby does arrive, by setting up the babies room, picking up supplies, baby proofing the house, or anything else that will be required. Making all the proper preparations will help you both feel and be ready for the new exciting life to come.

What do you think are some ways to support your partner during pregnancy? Share in the comments below.

New Couple: Cameron Diaz Is Dating Benji Madden



By Shannon Seibert

After weeks of keeping their relationship under wraps, Cameron Diaz and Benji Madden are finally out in the open. Diaz, 41, and Madden, 35 are considered “new” and “just hanging out” but the Good Charlotte singer is considered the first high-profile relationship for Diaz since her split from Alex Rodriguez in 2011. The pair have Madden’s sister in-law, Nicole Richie to thank for their introduction, according to UsMagazine.com.

How do you keep your new relationship on the down-low?

Cupid’s Advice:

When your relationship is just blossoming, it can be difficult to figure out your own feelings about that person if your relationship is highly publicized. With everyone giving you their input, and pestering you about the latest details of your love life, you may get caught up in the attention and neglect the fact that it may not even be working. By initially keeping your new relationship on the down-low, you’ll be able to discover your feelings for your new beau, and find out

whether or not you could really gal for this person:

1. Hold off on updating your social media status: Until you get out of the murky waters of “What direction is this going in?” you don’t need to make your relationship Facebook Official. These days defining your relationship is harder than it looks, so at first your don’t want to jump to conclusions about your relationship status with your man. Just keep cool, calm and collective, and once you both have your feet on the ground you can upload those adorable selfies you have on your camera roll.

Related: [Ed Sheeran Reveals a Greek Girlfriend](#)

2. Do a trial run: Get out of town for the day. Go to a place where there’s no pressure because you won’t run into anyone you know. This way you don’t have to worry about awkward introductions such as wondering whether to refer to your guy as your friend, boyfriend, or anything else. Now the two of you can test the waters of what it’s like to be out in public together, while still getting to know each other on a deeper level.

Related: [New Couple: Lucy Hale Is Dating Country Singer Joel Crouse](#)

3. Don’t make it a big deal until it’s a big deal: When your friends and family inquire about your love-life, keep your answer vague. You don’t want to let them in the know until there is actual information to give. It may send the wrong signals to your guy by including loved ones in your dating life. He may think you’re trying to get serious too quick, and you don’t want your family to get confused if things don’t work out.

How have you kept your new relationship a secret? Tell us in the comments below!

Avril Lavigne's Ex Deryck Whibley Hospitalized Due to 'Hard Boozing'



By Louisa Gonzales

Deryck Whibley, former husband of Avril Lavigne, went on a life changing trip to the hospital. According to UsMagazine.com, the Sum 41 frontman, 34, was recently rushed to the hospital after collapsing in his home. The rocker spoke out about experience on his website and reveled the reason behind his trip to the hospital was because of “all the hard boozing” he’d done over the years had finally caught up with him. The musician said he learned from the frightening experience and will stop drinking for good, which is something former wife, pop star Lavigne is “proud” of him for.

What do you do if your partner is abusing a substance?

Cupid's Advice:

Harmful substances can come in many shapes and forms, but one thing is for sure they all can be dangerous. It can be scary to witness someone you love and care about experiencing a substance abuse problem, especially when you have no idea how to help. Cupid has some advice on what you can do if your partner is abusing a substance:

1. Lend your support: Giving your support to someone in need is one of the best things you can do for them. There are many ways to show your support, you can talk to them, encourage them, help them out, and simply just be there for them. It's important from your loved one to know you will stick by them even during difficult times.

Related: [Avril Lavigne Parties With Boyfriend AND Ex](#)

2. Help them get help: It can be hard to admit to yourself that you need help, which is why sometimes you need it from others. Do some research and see what can help or what has worked for others. You can also look up drug side affects and what can happen if you abuse them, it can help with getting them to understand the dangers and what could happen to them if they don't receive help.

Related: [Chad Kroeger Says Wife Avril Lavigne Is an 'Amazing Cook'](#)

3. Get them to realize they have a problem: If your partner is having a hard time admitting they have a problem, the best way you can help them is by getting them to realize that they do. They are a number of ways to go about it, you can get help from their family or other people close to them and stage an intervention or you can talk to them on your own, just do what you feel is best for the both of you.

What would you do if your partner is abusing a substance?
Share in the comments below.

Rihanna and Drake Are Off-Again



By Sanetra Richards

AubRih is over, once again. According to UsMagazine.com, after working out their differences a few months ago, Rihanna and Drake decided to give the dating thing another try – only for it to lead to a breakup. “Rihanna and Drake had another fight,” says a source. “He is too in love with her, which has always been the problem. They have been fighting, but that could all change any day now. It is how it always is with

them.” The two stars were first spotted as a re-emerging couple in Paris back in February and by March the couple seemed to be hitting it off pretty hard again. However, at Rihanna’s Met Gala after party, her actor turned rapper [ex] boyfriend was not in attendance. A source added that the artists are “currently on yet another break.”

How do you know whether to get back together with an ex?

Cupid’s Advice:

There comes a time when the post-breakup emotions start to roll in and you find yourself contemplating whether or not you and your ex belong together. Cupid has a few things for you to keep in mind while considering:

1. The factors: Think about the reason why you and your ex parted ways. Was it because of infidelity? Was it because you could not agree on anything? Chances are, these problems will not go away if you decide to go another round – they are the reason why you all are not together today. Remember the saying, if you want different results, do something differently.

Related: [Rihanna and Drake Party Post-Concert in Paris](#)

2. The feelings: A lot of times, people allow their hearts overpower their intelligence. If you know for certain your ex is absolutely terrible for you, do not put in the effort trying to reconcile. Replay the good versus bad instances throughout your relationship. Question whether the good outweighs the bad. This could possibly lead you to the answer on if you and your former lover should work things out.

Related: [Rihanna Says the ‘Slightest Things’ Remind Her of Chris Brown](#)

3. The change: One of the most important conversations to have with your ex before reuniting is how will the

relationship change? If you two have not grown enough individually, then you should not want to risk it again. It will be a repeating cycle: same differences, same arguments, and same outcomes. Think about the failed relationship's faults and create methods to better them for the next time.

What are some things to consider when getting back with an ex? Share your thoughts below.

'Pretty Little Liars' Actress Lucy Hale Dating Joel Crouse



By Sanetra Richards

In actuality, she's no "pretty little liar." According to UsMagazine.com, Lucy Hale is dating country singer Joel

Crouse and is not afraid to tell all. "They are seeing each other. He is in L.A. right now to visit," a source reveals.

"It isn't anything serious just yet." The 24-year-old actress and her 21-year-old lover were recently spotted courtside at a Lakers game, in which Hale Instagram'd: "First lakers game. Was really great teaching this one the rules of the game. And seeing him looking like a kid in a candy store @joelcrouse." The two were photographed again on May 8th at LA's restaurant Crave Café.

The *Pretty Little Liars* star has also dated actors David Henrie, Chris Zylka, Graham Rogers, and The Cab keyboardist Alex Marshall.

In an interview with *NYLON* in December 2012, Hale made it know that she has "learned something good and positive" throughout all of her relationships. "I'm a woman, but I'm not fully the person that I think I will be. We're all just trying to figure it out. Some of us just have to do it publicly."

What are some ways to take your new relationship slow?

Cupid's Advice:

You are excited about your new relationship and want to shout it out to the world, on top of Mount Everest. You have all of these plans lined up and cannot wait to execute each one of them. However, you have learned from past relationships that this is not always the best idea. Cupid has a few tips to help you take this one slow:

1. First comes love: Then comes marriage. It is perfectly OK to fantasize about a dream future with your significant other-who knows, it could possibly come true! However, do not be so quick to start making wedding plans. Give yourself (and your partner) time to actually be in the relationship before jumping the broom.

Related: [Kesha Has a New Man](#)

2. Hold off the family & friends: You can never be too sure on how long a relationship will last, but you can be careful on what is done throughout that period. Introducing your partner to your family and friends is not always the best idea. Yes, feel free to tell them about the person who has your interest, but save the meeting until a later date.

Related: [Khloe Kardashian and French Montana Go Public with New Relationship](#)

3. Actually date: A major part of a new relationship is dating. This is the time used to go on dates and getting to know each other while having fun. Take full advantage of these moments and let the relationship take its course, instead of planning everything out.

How do you take a new relationship slow? Share your suggestions below.

‘Cake Boss’ Star Buddy Valastro on His Celebrity Marriage: “I’m a Lucky Man Because the Reality TV Show Hasn’t Changed Us”





By Liz Kim

Buddy Valastro isn't called the *Cake Boss* for no reason. Born and raised in Hoboken, New Jersey, he is a fourth generation baker. His childhood was spent in his family's old-fashioned Italian bakery run by his father, Buddy Sr. Father and son dreamed of making Carlo's Bakery a household name, and five restaurants (in New York City, New Jersey, and Las Vegas) and four TLC realty TV shows later, Valastro is bringing their vision to life. Now, he's helping to make the cake dreams of one lucky couple come true in *Brides Live Wedding*, an unprecedented wedding competition by *BRIDES*. Read on for more of our [exclusive celebrity interview](#) with the star!

Exclusive Celebrity Interview with Buddy Valastro

Brides Live Wedding gives one couple the chance to star in their own celebrity wedding while also supporting their favorite charity. The catch? Once the public votes which pair will get the A-list treatment, they will also be able to vote on every detail of the wedding, from the dress to the decor. For the cake, there were four options to choose from, and Valastro is excited to get started. "This is the second year

I'm participating in the contest," he says. "I think it's a cool concept; it's fun to be a part of it; and it's really great for the couple who ends up getting this amazing, huge wedding! I'm happy that I can provide the cake that they'll enjoy on their special day."

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

Baking for weddings is nothing new for the reality TV star, and after creating cakes for countless events, he knows a thing or two about what's trending in the wedding cake world. He explains, "You know, the cupcake cakes were getting big for awhile, but now I'm seeing brides looking for cakes with a rustic, natural, almost unfinished look to them." He adds that "dessert tables are very popular. They just add more variety for guests to enjoy at the reception."

Regardless of the couple's final choice, Valastro makes sure that everyone walks away happy. "I always ask my brides and grooms to give me all the wedding details – color scheme, flower choice, the dress style, the location," he shares in our exclusive celebrity interview. "All of these details are huge inspirations when designing wedding cakes. It makes it very personal."

Carlo's Bakery is a Hoboken favorite, but now, the *Cake Boss* is proving to be a reality television boss as well. In the early 2000s, he competed in several cake decorating competitions on *Food Network Challenge*. He won the "Battle of the Brides" challenge in season seven, and his quick wit and tell-it-like-it-is Jersey attitude caught the attention of producers. In 2009, *Cake Boss* premiered on TLC, and now, he has three more shows under his belt: *Kitchen Boss*, *The Next Great Baker*, and *Bakery Boss*.

Reality TV Star Opens Up About Celebrity Marriage and Family

As dedicated as he is to expanding his business, he is equally dedicated to his wife Lisa and their four children. In October 2011, he surprised his wife with a second proposal. The celebrity couple wed again in a tropical vow renewal ceremony, complete with a cake that Valastro created himself. "I think it's really important for couples to reflect on why they got married in the first place and why they decided to share their lives together," he explains. "We all get so busy and distracted with our lives, but I knew I wanted to do something special for my wife, and I wanted the kids to be part of it too."

The secret to his celebrity marriage? Finding time to appreciate the simple things. "We're not too difficult. I'll either cook one of my wife's favorite meals, or I'll take her out somewhere nice," he says about a typical date night. "It's good to have that time to yourselves, and then we come home and hang out with the kids."

Related Link: [Celebrity Couples Who Have Remarried Each Other](#)

Being on television seems to tear apart marriages rather than strengthen them, but Valastro feels fortunate that Lisa understands that his schedule is hectic to say the least. "You know, I'm a lucky man because the show hasn't changed us. My wife, my kids and I are just the same on-camera as we are off-camera."

And while he loves spending time with his children in the bakery, it's up to them whether or not they want to take over the celebrity family business. "I definitely have passed along my love of baking, and my son Buddy is really coming along," he shares. "I would love for them all to take over the bakery when they get older, but I'm not going to push it on them."

They'll make that decision."

Family, he says, is the key to success, and he credits his dad with teaching him everything he knows about baking and business. His father died when he was just 17 years old, and although still young, he took on all of the responsibilities of the bakery. "My dad taught me to look at the bigger picture. He taught me at a very young age that not only did I have to learn to become a great baker, but I also had to become a businessman," he candidly reveals. "You could be the best baker in the entire world, but if you can't run a successful bakery, no one will ever know what you can do. Being business savvy is just as important as being the best at what you want to do, and for me, that was baking."

Whether he's constructing a life-size race car cake or whipping up lobster tails, his wife's favorite pastry, Valastro puts his heart and soul into everything he does. And the *Cake Boss* has no plans on stopping anytime soon. "I'm always working the next project. I've got some fun things in the works, so stay tuned!"

You can keep up with Buddy on Twitter @CakeBossBuddy.

Taking on the Role of Stepmother





By Michele

Sfakianos, RN, BSN for [Hope After Divorce](#)

Relationships alone are difficult. When you add his kids, her kids, his ex, her ex, and both sets of in-laws, most people cannot handle the pressure. Stepfamilies require more effort and understanding because more people are involved, and this often includes young ones who didn't ask to be put into the situation to begin with.

Long ago, the term "stepmother" was used to describe the "new" parent who stepped in after the "real" parent's death. Today, the stepmom is less often a substitute than she is an added parent. We all know the story of *Cinderella*. Fortunately, there was a happy ending, but it did bring to light the "wicked stepmother." Most everything you read about stepparenting has to do with evil stepmothers, obnoxious children, responsibility with no control, resentful ex-partners, and lack of worth or appreciation.

Related Link: [How to Prevent Yourself from Rushing into a Relationship](#)

Being a parent triggers memories and emotions from one's own childhood, whether conscious or unconscious. This may or may not bring fear to those thinking about raising another person's child. Parents may raise children similar to their

own upbringing – or the opposite. Parents may strive to give their children an entirely different upbringing.

Being a mom can be one of the most rewarding things we do in our lives. It can also be one of the most difficult undertakings, and parental responsibility is not something we can take lightly. Taking on the role of stepmother can perhaps be the most difficult undertaking of all.

As mothers, we are programmed to love and nurture children. We were raised with the understanding that it is our “job” to take care of them. So we would naturally expect a loving response in return – or should we? When Mother’s Day or your birthday comes around, this opens opportunities for feeling down about being a stepmother. But don’t give in! An attitude will get you nothing but grief. Moping around because no one remembers your birthday is not the answer. You have to tell people, “Hey, my birthday is on Friday, and I want us to go out to dinner together.” Tell your partner birthdays are important to you and strongly suggest your partner talk to the kids about acknowledging it.

Related Link: [How to Date when You’re a Single Parent](#)

Before special events or days that matter to you, take the initiative to:

- 1. Be clear about your plans.** Anticipate problems and discuss them with the children.
- 2. Tell them your expectations.** People are not mind readers. Talk with your partner.
- 3. Do not expect a major deal about Mother’s Day.** The kids feel conflicted enough as it is. Acknowledging it is important, but celebrating it may be too painful. Yes, of course, it hurts to be ignored or snubbed. Try to understand the positive intent behind it. It is not meant to hurt you. It is about guilt and loyalty to the other biological parent.

The manner in which you approach the role of mother or stepmother and the attitude you put forth will differ from those around you. You must pay particular attention to your actions so as to not alienate yourself from your partner or the children. Getting into a stepfamily can be rewarding and will make for new adventures. As with every new adventure, hold on tight because there will be bumps along the way, but the ride will be spectacular!

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).

Michele Sfakianos, RN, BSN, is a Registered Nurse, Life Skills Expert, Speaker and Award Winning Author. She is the owner of Open Pages Publishing, which includes her series of "The 4-1-1" books on Life Skills, Step Parenting, and Surviving Teenhood. Michele is a contributing expert for HopeAfterDivorce.org, DivorceSupportCenter.com, FamilyShare.com, and CupidsPulse.com.

Date Idea: Beat of the Music





By Leslie Chavez

Everyone loves music, right? And listening to your favorite tunes has been known to help you relax, boost your mood, and energize you. Nothing beats seeing a singer you love play live, especially when it's with your sweetheart. So take advantage of all the great music events that the next few months have to offer!

With summer comes tons of music festivals all over the country. Find a festival with bands that you both love. From the Electronic Music Festival in Detroit, Michigan, to Soundset, a hip-hop festival in Minnesota, to Rock on the Range in Columbus, Ohio, there is something for every taste. Grab your favorite festival attire – cut-off shorts and cowboy boots are encouraged – and hit the road! Enjoy the whole weekend, basking in the sunshine and swaying your hips to the beat of the music with your lover by your side.

Related Link: [Listen to the Music](#)

You might even get the chance to dance where the wild things are. A lot of zoos around the country have summer concert series where a number of great local bands or disc jockeys play at stages within the park after regular zoo hours. As the sun sets, the zoo really comes to life; along with great dance music, delicious food trucks and even bar services fill the

gated area. This is a unique opportunity to experience the wildlife of the zoo in a whole new way. Give in to your animal instincts – we promise your man won't mind.

Don't forget about the major arena concerts that happen during the season too. This is a great chance to dress your best and buy those front row seats. Whether it's the Staples Center or Madison Square Garden, you can see some of the biggest names in music and have the night of your life. Raise your glass, let go, and impress him with your perfect pitch as you sing along to Katy Perry's go-girl anthem "Roar."

Related Link: [Pub Crawl](#)

If smaller, more intimate shows are more your thing, there are still plenty of options. Tons of bands are playing at your city's restaurants and bars on hot nights. Cool off after a busy day with a refreshing, ice cold beer and foot-stomping live music. You and your man will have so much fun unwinding in the laid-back and easygoing atmosphere. Challenge him to a game of darts or pool when the band takes a break.

Happy summer!

How will you enjoy music with your love this summer? Tell us in the comments below.

'American Idol' Contestant Alex Preston Says His Girlfriend Kept Him Going



By Liz Kim

Even before making it to the top three on *American Idol*, 21-year-old Alex Preston had a pretty impressive background in music. He can play up to 12 instruments (none of which he took lessons for) and has opened for Of Monsters and Men, Gavin DeGraw, and the Backstreet Boys. Music must be in his blood because he's also cousins with country music star Jo Dee Messina, who he's even written songs for.

Related Link: ['American Idol' Contestant Jess Meuse Says Show Affected Her Relationship](#)

Week after week, the judges praised him for this artistry, and he managed to avoid being in the bottom up until the end. A common criticism *Idol* contestants hear is about making each performance seem like an original, but this musician never struggled with that. "When I hear a song, I think of how I would do it, and then I usually take an hour or so and run through the song and run through alternative chords and chordal structures," he says of his process. "I had the most

fun arranging songs and making them my own.”

This week, the singer broke out of his comfort zone, and during his performance of Bastille’s “Pompeii,” he played both the drums and the guitar. “This competition has really taken me out of my shell, and I’ve learned a lot of myself as a performer. I’ve become more confident.”

Although covering popular songs can be a fun challenge, Preston truly enjoys performing his own music and believes allowing more original content will improve *American Idol*. “Playing original music on the show was definitely an amazing opportunity because it’s in front of millions of people,” he shares. “It’s your own lyrics and composition, and playing your own music on a show like *Idol* pushes it to the next level because it shows artistry.”

Preston was especially excited to show off his talents when he and his fellow competitors were welcomed back to their hometowns. He went home to Mount Vernon, New Hampshire and gave an “incredible” concert for over 6,000 fans. “I got to show people who I really am outside the show, and that was probably the coolest experience for me.”

Despite all of his achievements, the rising star remains humble. “I was expecting to be eliminated this week because Jena and Caleb are so good and their performances are so big,” he explains. “I knew deep down that it was going to be them in the finale, but I’m proud to have been in the top three.” His strategy during the competition was to take it week by week. “But once I hit top three, I did start thinking about the months ahead, where I want to be, and long term goals outside of the show.”

Related Link: [10 Ways to Make Long Distance Love Work](#)

Beyond improving his musical skills, *Idol* is also where Preston met his girlfriend Jillian Jensen, who fans might remember from season two of *The X Factor*. The couple met

during Hollywood Week, and while being apart has been difficult, the couple are making it work. "It's tough because we live on opposite sides of the country, but it works out because we can always talk and Skype. She came to the shows a lot too," he shares. "It sucks because we can't see each other as much as we'd like to, but since we're both musicians, we understand each other's schedules."

Being a reality television veteran herself, Jensen was a great source of advice. "She always kept me positive. She was completely honest with me whether it was good or bad and told me what she thought. She helped me through a lot in that aspect and kept me going."

Preston's time on the *Idol* stage may be up, but he knows that this is just the beginning. "I'm already starting to try to figure out a way to plan my record. I have a couple co-writes lined up that I do want to get on the album as well," he says. "If I could release a single, that would be awesome. I want to release something as soon as I can and kind of take advantage of the wave of publicity that the show has given me."

Want more of Preston? You can catch him on the American Idol summer tour, but until then, follow him on his Twitter [@RealAlexPreston!](#)

Ed Sheeran's New Girlfriend is Taylor Swift-Approved!



By Sanetra Richards

Ed Sheeran's new girlfriend is Taylor Swift-approved. According to UsMagazine.com, the 24-year-old country turned pop singer has already been introduced to Sheeran's new love interest. Although he has managed to be very discreet about disclosing too much information on his latest partner, Sheeran did tell *Us* that she "works for a food company – well not a food company, she works for a chef." So, how exactly did Swift get to meet Ms. Anonymous? "We went for dinner in London," said Sheeran. "She likes her." He added that the secret girlfriend is indeed Greek and can whip up "anything Greek."

What are some ways to keep your relationship under wraps?

Cupid's Advice:

Whilst some choose to announce their new relationship right away, others choose to maintain that bit of mystery for a little while. But exactly how do you manage to keep it under wraps until you are ready to spill the beans? Cupid has some advice:

1. Lips are sealed: Before any other step, you and your new partner must agree to keep it a secret (unless you want to tell a limited number of close family and friends). However, if you really want to keep it all undisclosed, telling absolutely no one is the way to go. It is completely understandable because you and new love are fresh and wanting to see how things go before jinxing the relationship.

Related Link: [Taylor Swift Says She Doesn't Write Songs About Every Guy She Dates](#)

2. Avoid PDA: Holding hands and kissing is certainly the way to blow your cover. Everyone knows “just friends” are not *that* affectionate with each other. Save it for the private areas if you want to keep the whole secrecy mission going.

Related Link: [Taylor Swift Cuts Off Selena Gomez Post-Reunion With Justin Bieber](#)

3. Play it cool: Try not to become too wrapped up in your partner, otherwise, people will notice. Your family and friends will begin to tell if you are becoming distant . . . and that is when the questions will begin. Balance your time with each until you are ready to announce the big news.

What are some ways you can keep your relationship under wraps in the beginning stages? Share your thoughts below.

Q&A: Should I Delete or Unfriend My Exes on Social

Networks?



Question from

Shelby F.: Whenever a guy and I breakup, I always wonder if I should completely delete him from my life. A part of me thinks it's a good idea because then I won't be tempted to see if he's tagged in any new photos with new girls, but the other part of me doesn't want him to think I'm so bitter or immature that I can't stand him coming up on my newsfeed. What should I do?

Answer from Our Love Experts:

[Suzanne Oshima, Matchmaker](#): When it comes to social media and an ex, there really isn't a clear-cut answer. It really depends on how the relationship ended and how you feel about him. If the relationship ended amicably and you feel you can still be friends with him, then it's fine to stay connected to him on social media.

However, if the relationship ended on a bad note, then why would you want to torture yourself by seeing him with his new

girlfriend? Unfriending him or deleting him really isn't about being bitter or immature; it's more about your well being and moving on with your life. What he thinks about it shouldn't really matter to you, as you are no longer together.

[Paige Wyatt, Reality Star](#): It's totally understandable if you feel the urge to check up on your ex every once in a while, but know that it's not healthy. Keeping an eye on him will never give you the chance to completely get over him and move on, especially if he posts pictures with other girls. Seeing him having fun or with another woman will drive you crazy, even if you tell yourself you're happy for him!

The best thing to do after a break-up is wait until things have settled and neither of you are upset, which might take a few weeks. Then, unfriend him. This way, he won't think it's you taking a stab at him, and he will more likely realize you're just working on getting over him, which is exactly what you're doing!

[Robert Manni, Guy's Guy](#): This is a personal decision that is entirely up to you. A lot depends on the individual circumstances of how things went down with each guy. If you had an amicable split and somehow managed to remain friends with your ex (it *can* be done), then keep your social media lines of communication open. However, if you experienced an uncomfortable break-up that left behind some emotional residue, it might be best to sever your social media ties with him, so you're not reminded of a bad situation.

Notice I have not mentioned or factored in what he thinks. That's because this is *your* decision, and what he thinks about your social media doesn't really matter. And if it does, then maybe you still have feelings for him.

For more information on our three dating and technology gurus, click [here](#).

If you have any questions you would like answered by our

experts, please submit them on our [Contact Page](#).

Do you delete or unfriend your exes on social networks? Tell us in the comments below!