

# Dating Advice: Fun Dates That are Virtually Free



By Meghan Fitzgerald

Money is not always available in times of need. Queue dating. Dating is difficult as it is...the anxiety of the date, the stress of where to go, what to do. Double that difficulty if your financial situation is not at "its' best." Plus, perhaps your mate's financial situation is also in the dumps. There are always ways to bend the rules of physics and plan the perfect date for little or no cost. Fun dates are a possibility, even if you are flat-out-broke. A relationship can loom from Ramen noodles! Here are some tips:

**-Make a time capsule.** Gather you and your partner's favorite

memories. Take apart these memories and put something into the capsule that reminds you of it. Put in the shirt you wore your first date. A picture of you two together. Items you both will cherish.

**-Picnic.** Pack a basket full of your favorite Chardonnay, gourmet cheeses from Trader Joe's, and a music player filled with a mix tape of your favorite songs. Enjoy the day outside with one another.

**-Roller skating.** As corny as it may seem, roller skating not only takes you back years. However, it is cheap and a fun night out. Enjoy some drinks, disco balls, and cheesy love songs.

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**-Play grown-ups.** Dress up in your finest, most adolescent clothes and visit open houses. Joke about where you would put your beige Northern Hemisphere Marc Blackwell love seat. What you would do with the kids in the house. Have fun with it.

**-Nature.** It is given to us people to enjoy. Go hike up Diamonds Head. Pack a bag of trail mix, water, electrolytes, and a camera. Sweat and laugh. Joke and embrace one another.

-Local farm. Spend the day with your beau picking fruits at the nearest farm. Take back all of your goodies to the kitchen and spark up some spice in the kitchen. Think of what you can use it for, make up your own recipe!

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**-Wine tour.** All you have to do here usually is buy a ticket for the venue and drink away. Enjoy the scenery, culture, and your partner.

**-Movie date:** Take your mate out to a matinee. It is immensely cheaper to go to the movie theater during the day. Sneak in candy and drinks. Buy a large popcorn and share under the dark

lights.

**-Art gallery:** Walk or cab it towards your local art gallery. Have pretentious conversations of the paintings lighting, hues, and purpose. Enjoy cappuccinos at the nearest coffee shop afterwards.

**Have you ever gone on a fun date which was virtually free? Explain below.**

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## Dating Advice: How to Approach a Spring Fling



By Dr. Tranquility – Lydia Belton, Ph.D., Ct. H.A.



If you've been reading me for the last year or so, you know that I'm all about boundaries. So when we think about having a spring fling, it's important to first figure out what that means. What's comfortable for you? What exactly are looking for in a casual relationship? Here are four tips to help you on your journey to love.

**1. Go for it.** Since this relationship is just a fling, keep it light and allow yourself to really enjoy the process. There are no strings attached, and the experience is whatever you make it. Be confident about who you are and what you want in a man (something that Date Therapy can help you accomplish). A spring fling is a fun opportunity to try something new, to veer away from what you usually look for in love. What does your ideal significant other look like? How do you want to spend your time together? Sipping wine at a local restaurant? Or hanging out on the beach? Now is the time to go after your wish list in a partner.

**Related Link:** [3 Ways Date Therapy Can Help You Connect](#)

**2. Be honest.** It's important to be open about what you need from this type of relationship. Ensure that your definition of a spring fling is in sync with your potential partner's vision. If you're expecting a phone call every day, make sure this person will do that for you. Remember that this type of relationship still involves emotional attachment; there's always a chance that you'll get hurt.

So be real with yourself – not judgmental but *real*. This way, you're better able to screen your crush objectively to ensure that he's on the same page. If you have any doubts about the importance of this step, consider Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries. Sure, their relationship was more than a fling, but these two were definitely not on the same page.

**3. Don't date where you live.** It's much harder to keep things light if you're going to see this person again and again once

the relationship ends – and a fling always end. You want to be able to make a clean getaway when it's over. So consider where your potential partner lives and make your choice wisely.

**Related Link:** [10 Steps to a Remarkable Relationship](#)

**4. Clear your mind.** As I mentioned in the introduction, you must be specific and sure about what you want. Think about what a spring fling can give you – beyond a casual relationship. You may meet someone who encourages you to try new things, someone who takes you out of your shell, someone who changes you for the better. A spring fling can be good for the mind, body and spirit, so take advantage of this well-rounded opportunity.

*Developed by Lydia Belton PhD, Ct.H.A., [Date Therapy®](#) is an effective protocol that helps people get in touch with their criteria for an ideal mate. DrTranquility's protocols® have been featured most recently on Forbes.com & Yahoo, ABCNEWS.com, ABC's the View, KISS FM, CupidsPulse.com, Metromix for the Chicago Tribune, British Glamour, REDBOOK, Cosmopolitan Magazine & promoted by Match.com.*

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## Relationship Advice: 10 Ways to Keep the Honeymoon Phase Going Strong





By Jennifer Harrington

Love takes time and hard work to nurture. And, for newlyweds, this is especially true, following the intensity and attention that accompany a wedding and honeymoon. What are some practical ways for newlyweds to keep the honeymoon phase going strong, and the spark alive as the marriage progresses? Here are ten ideas to keep your love sizzling:

### **Don't stop celebrating**

While the wedding and honeymoon have passed, it doesn't mean you have to stop the celebrations. Take opportunities to pause from daily life and acknowledge special milestones in your relationship. Have a special night together when your wedding pictures come back from the photographer. Plan a trip back to your reception venue to mark your six-month wedding anniversary. Planning these types of activities will give you a reason to look back at how far you've come together, as well as an opportunity to make new memories together.

**Related:** [Long-Term Relationships: 5 Ways to Keep the Spark](#)

## Alive

### **Pencil in a regular date-night**

As some couples settle into their relationships, regular date nights can become less frequent. Don't make that mistake. Make it a priority to schedule dates with your sweetie. Dates are important because they allow you to spend time and share experiences with your partner. You can take turns planning your outings to ensure date night is always something new to anticipate!

### **Plan thoughtful surprises**

Everyone loves a spontaneous, thoughtful gesture. Surprises can range from extravagant to simple, but it ensures your chosen one feels special and loved. They can be especially important when you know your partner is going through a rough or busy time.

### **Embrace a new hobby**

While you and your partner have hobbies you already pursue individually and together as a couple, it's also a great idea to adopt a new hobby together! Choosing a hobby together and pursuing the hobby can be a very gratifying way to learn together, and can also be an interesting way to learn more about your honey. From dancing to cooking lessons, the options for hobbies you can do as a pair is limitless!

### **Get away**

Plan a long weekend or vacation. Not only is it a great way to check out different places and experience a new destination with your better half, it's an opportunity for you to spend time together uninterrupted by the people and tasks you face every day. One great idea is to make a list of places you'd like to visit someday with your partner. Consult this list as you plan future getaways and cross things off your travel

“bucket list” together! Need inspiration? Check out this list of the 50 most romantic places on Earth!

### **Book club for two**

Reading the same book and discussing it can be a fun, easy, and thought-provoking way to bond. Aim to read a book together each month and you can take turns selecting the book. Not only will you end up reading some books different than your usual selections, but you will have guaranteed fodder for conversation as you both make your way through the novel.

### **Branch out**

While quality one-on-one time together is crucial, it's also important for you and your partner to have a close knit group of friends and family. Taking the time to nurture and build your social network together can be a great way to establish and deepen your relationships with others as you nurture your social life together as a couple. Spending time with others is fun, and will also give you the support you need as you navigate life together. An easy way to incorporate this idea is establishing a regular date night with another couple!

### **Spice up your routine**

Newlywed actress Anne Hathaway recently said, “Mellow doesn't always make for a good story but it makes for a good life.” This quote means that everyday life can be routine, mellow and sometimes boring. Cherish the fact that you've found your life partner, but always be on the ready to find ways to mix up your routine so things always feel fresh. Instead of the usual Monday nights you hit the gym together, make plans to go rock climbing instead. If you always order in pizza on Fridays after a long week at the office, mix it up and take an Italian cooking class instead one week! These are small and easy changes, but will help you escape the rut that people can sometimes feel when they are in an established routine.



**Related:** [4 Steps to a Stronger Long-Term Relationship](#)

### **Keep talking**

When relationships are new, it's easy to soak up every word and story your new love interest says. Keep this in mind, and look at each day as a new opportunity to learn more about your life partner. Listen to the stories and jokes, and be sure to ask questions when you want to know more about a particular experience or point-of-view. The more you communicate, the deeper your relationship will be, and the better foundation you will have to avoid future conflicts.

### **Don't sweat the small stuff**

When you spend every day with a person, it's easy to become frustrated and annoyed by some of their habits. So your partner sings really loud in the shower, or forgets to tell you when they used the last of the toothpaste. Is it worth it to pick a fight? Probably not, because little fights (over nothing) over time can cause problems in your relationship. Pick your battles! Remember, this is your soul mate – try to overlook a few little things and focus on the wonderful person you are spending your life with.

**What are some other ideas to help keep the romance alive after the honeymoon is over? Tell Cupid your suggestions!**

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## **Q&A: Should I Be Worried If My Man Hasn't Asked Me to Be**

# in a Facebook Relationship?



**Question from Kendall M.:** *I've been seeing this guy for a few months, and things have been really good. I've stayed over a couple times and even met his parents, but he hasn't sent me a relationship request on Facebook. I'm too nervous to do it myself. Should I be worried that he hasn't posted our relationship on Facebook yet?*

**Answer from Our Love Experts:**

Tristan Coopersmith, Love Stylist: My concern here isn't that he hasn't posted it, because honestly, guys just don't think like that. Guys aren't trained or even really motivated to broadcast their relationships status. The concern is that you're skittish about speaking up for your needs. Obviously, this is something that is important to you, and just like

anything else that's important to you, you need to feel comfortable communicating it.

I think your worry and nervousness surrounding the situation speaks volumes about your relationship with him... and with yourself. So I suggest you ask yourself where the root of the fear comes from and work with that. When we look inside at our fears, great growth can arise. Here's to growing!

Suzanne Oshima, Matchmaker: It's only been a couple of months, and your relationship isn't defined by your relationship status on Facebook. Is it really *that* big of a deal? You can ruin a good thing when you think too much about the relationship, where things are going and why he hasn't changed his Facebook status.

If everything is going great and you enjoy spending time and doing things together, then just be in the moment and appreciate where you are at in the relationship right now! Try not to worry about something so trivial as Facebook relationship status. It will all come in due time.

Paige Wyatt, Reality Star: Before you do anything or even get worried, you need to talk to him. If this guy is as great as he sounds, then you should be open with him and just ask! Don't make it serious or dramatic; just causally ask how he sees the relationship. It's very possible making the relationship "Facebook official" hasn't even crossed his mind. A lot of guys aren't as into Facebook or really any type of social media, so he may not know how meaningful it is to you.

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

If you have any questions you would like answered by our experts, please submit them on our [Contact Page](#).

**Tell us: Is your Facebook relationship status important to you? Why or why not?**



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# Relationship Advice: Can Love Conquer All?



By Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

Actors Michelle Williams and Jason Segal recently announced their official break-up after spending much of the last year trying to make their bi-coastal romance work. She lives in New York City with her seven-year-old daughter, Matilda, and he lives in Los Angeles. The couple cited busy schedules and irreconcilable distance as the reason for the end of their partnership. It raises the question, when is love not enough?

Many people would like to think that finding love is the



answer to most problems, and, in the name of it, one or both people in a relationship should be willing to uproot their lives or let go of important aspects of their individual routines. Jason made numerous cross-country trips over the course of their connection. Michelle's waterfront loft in Brooklyn became his home away from home, and he could often be seen playing at a local playground with Matilda. But despite all of that, his life remained rooted in California, where his professional commitments run deep. If the reports are true, then in the end, the pull for each of them to hold onto their own lives won out over the desire to maintain their relationship. This may have surprised fans, and forces us to wonder, when is it time to make that hard call – to call things off?

Two people can be drawn to each other and still have strong personal or professional ties that don't suit the other person. What if you're committed to a neighborhood and everything that goes along with that, wanting to give your children stability? Or what if one person's job can be found in only one part of the country and he or she must live there, no questions asked? Or you are dealing with two different religions that initially didn't cause a problem, but as you begin to make a life together, you are looking to your partner to convert to your religion and they don't want to?

When it becomes a matter of feeling that you are being asked to literally give up your identity, core values, and beliefs, so that the necessary change is equivalent to losing yourself, then that is the point when compromise can instead become too much of a sacrifice. And if one does give up their sense of self, then what is relinquished for love can really take a toll with the relationship crumbling under the pressure and resentment.

By Michelle and Jason taking responsibility for their respective individual needs, they prevented this from happening. For them, dropping everything for love was not a

viable option. And in the end it seems that Michelle didn't expect, or even want, Jason to leave his career to further immerse himself into her family. For them, sadly, love did not conquer the obstacles they faced.

**Has distance ever ended a relationship for you?**

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## **Date Idea: Personal Spring Cleaning**



By Sarah Ribeiro

Spring is here, and with it comes the ever-dreaded cleaning that comes along for the ride. This isn't anything your babe

can't help with, though. This weekend, make Spring cleaning fun: take a chance to welcome the new season early with your honey and apply spring cleaning to your daily lives.

Start off by clearing your wardrobe. Go through your closet with your love and pick out clothes you've never worn – or never will wear. Take them to your local Goodwill or consignment store to rid yourself of the clutter. Afterwards, head to the shops with your honey. Pick out outfits for each other that make you feel sexy and attractive.

Once you've had your fill of refilling your closet, head to your closest spa or salon. Pamper yourself with a massage, facial or manicure and pedicure. Most spas have couples deals that allow you to get treated side-by-side, and many of them offer a Jacuzzi or sauna at the end of your treatment. Take the time to relax and feel good about yourself; after all, if you're comfortable and confident, you'll both be happier in your relationship.

Feeling healthy is a surefire way to breed confidence both for yourself and for your relationship. You'll feel great and look great too, and you'll want to go out with your sweetheart more often. Take the time this weekend to talk over your health concerns with your partner and consider picking up a new health regime. Make a plan to stay fit together this spring. Schedule weekly bike rides, jogs or walks at sunset to keep your exercise feeling less like a chore and more like a date. Maybe a little cardio is what you need, or you could sign up for exercise classes. Many gyms provide couples classes like spinning, yoga, Pilates and even Zumba. If you can hold each other accountable, you'll be sure not to skimp.

While you start your exercise plan, make sure to include some dietary guidelines for the two of you. Pick a diet that is easy to follow. Some popular "fad diets" include the DASH diet, which cuts your salt intake and in turn your blood

pressure and cholesterol; the Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) diet, which decreases fat and cholesterol consumption while increasing fiber; or the “Real Food” or Happiness diet, which encourages avoiding heavily processed foods and eating whole foods instead – without the need to count calories. Grab a recipe book based on one of these diets and start planning romantic – and healthy – dinner dates with your love.

**How do you and your partner plan to spring clean? Share in the comments below.**

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## **Relationship Advice: What To Know Before You Say ‘I Do’**







By Nicole Noonan

Asking the right questions and identifying what issues are deal breakers for you before getting married is important for everyone, whether or not you live a life in the spotlight. Addressing possible issues enables you to work through potential differences or, in the worst-case scenario, have the ability to walk away should you reach an impasse. If there are serious warning signs before you head down the aisle, marriage is not going to fix them! Here are some important tips:

**Related:** [5 Celebrity Couples Who Said 'I Do' in Vegas](#)

### **Know the Financial History**

Marriage is a huge step in anyone's life, and it is important you prepare yourself not only emotionally, but financially as well. Love doesn't pay the rent or mortgage. When you marry someone, their credit history soon become yours too. Ask your significant other, "what is our ultimate financial goal regarding annual income? By what means and through what efforts can we achieve this?"

## **Know the Family**

When you marry someone, you also marry that person's family. Kris Humphries married not just Kim Kardashian, but the whole Karadashian/Jenner clan. Your future spouse comes as a family package, so it's important for each of you to know what you are getting into. Ask yourself, "what place does your partner's family play in our family life? How often do we visit or socialize together?"

## **Know the Friends**

The phrase "you are whom you hang out with," is one to consider. Get to know your partner's friends before you head down the aisle. Also, introduce your own friends. Often our friends can see things about our relationships that we cannot. Socialite Sale Johnson Rashad did not like Ahmad Rashad becoming friendly with Tiger Woods. Now they are divorcing.

## **Know Plans for Religion and Children**

According to reports, SNL's Fred Armisen broke up with Mad Men's Elizabeth Moss because her religion was more important to her than their marriage. Elizabeth is a devoted Scientologist. Others, such as Jennifer Lopez & Marc Anthony, and Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman and Katie Holmes also were rumored to have parted ways because of religion. It is important to discuss what religion, if any, you will embrace as a family. One or both partners might suddenly feel strongly about raising their children a certain way.

## **Know Each Other's Goals**

Are you both comfortable with the other's level of ambition? It is important that partners considering marriage understand what each believes is a success. You should be comfortable and supportive of your spouse's success as much as your own. A marriage may start with both partners at the same "level," but one partner then has greater success than another. This

could lead to envy and resentment. In the case of Chris Judd and JLo, he was a choreographer when they married and she a dancer. What a difference a year makes it cost JLo \$14 million.

### **Identify Roles**

Talk about the roles you envision for your marriage. Will one stay at home with the children or will both parties work? Do you see yourself in an “I Love Lucy”  $50\%$  role where wife stays home and husband is the breadwinner? Perhaps there is a balance, like in Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt’s relationship, where they take turns doing movies so one is always with the children. You and your significant other need to be on the same page.

### **Most Importantly Know WHO you are Marrying**

Take the time to really learn about your significant other. Regardless of what your friends and family may be pressuring you to do, or what your biological clock says, you do not need to be rushed into a marriage. It should be seen as the biggest commitment of your life. Though not everyone has the same view of marriage, Renee Zellweger and Kenny Chesney met in January 2005, married in May 2005 and had the marriage annulled that September, citing “fraud.” Other examples of rushing to the altar include Dennis Rodman and his bride Carmen Electra, and the lengthy marriage of Britney Spears and her childhood friend, Jason Alexander, married for just 55 hours.

Nicole Noonan is the Executive Director of BBL Churchill Group, a Divorce Finance company that provides essential funding to people involved in divorce proceedings, enabling them to pay legal fees, expert costs and living expenses when they are due. Noonan is dedicated to bettering the lives of her clients, utilizing her legal background and business education to provide solutions for those in need.



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# Celebrity Couples: More Like Us Than We Want To Admit?



By Marcus Osborne for Galttime.com

[Celebrity couples](#) have been the target of admonition and admiration for years. The Jekyll and Hyde reaction to whatever the latest or hottest pop culture pairing happens to be is as over the top as ever. I've always theorized that these couples' break-up rates aren't as dramatically different from the general population.



# Why Do We Love Celebrity Break-ups?

Most of these famous relationships end. But most relationships generally come to an end at some point, don't they? We pay so much attention to couples that split that we pay no attention to the ones that stick it out. And there seems to be a certain glee, an almost joyous countdown to celebrity break-ups. And each and every statement and action made by our Hollywood couples is parsed...just looking for a crack in the armor.

**Related Link:** [The Simplest Tip to Save Your Relationship](#)

The recent "controversy" is over actor/director Ben Affleck's comments about his marriage to celebrity love Jennifer Garner upon accepting this year's Academy Award for Best Picture. His quote: *"I want to thank you for working on our marriage for 10 Christmases. It's good; it is work, but it's the best kind of work, and there's no one I'd rather work with."*

In the minds of merry cynics and professional antagonists around the nation, this one statement was read as a subliminal confession of matrimonial strife. And that reaction is just silly.

What Affleck said was about as honest and realistic a statement as you'll ever hear any celebrity offer on a public stage. Marriage is work. Relationships and love in general are work. Once we get past the honeymoon stage in any coupling, we start the work. The hard work. So what message can we really take from Affleck's statements? I see the glass as half full. You've got a husband and wife who acknowledge that sustaining a long-term relationship requires dedication and diligence. It's not a fairy tale. There's a clear-eyed, beer-goggle free vision of relationships by this pair, which in all likelihood, has been the reason they've managed to stay together for ten years and two kids.

**Related Link:** [5 Things Men Want Women to Know](#)

# What Celebrity Couples Can Teach Us

So can we learn anything from celebrity couples? From my perspective, there's no more to be learned from them than from any other couple. The spotlight shines on their mistakes and break-ups so much brighter than on their successes that it would be easy to conclude that there's not a positive example among the bunch. Even in the face of overwhelming evidence, couples that have shown strength and staying power, we cast a jaundiced eye at them because they don't fit our established narrative; celebrity marriages don't last.

But in truth, if we're objective, we can use married celebrity couples' successes *and* failures as reminders and templates of what good relationship choices and a grounded perspective about what it takes to create a sustainable partnership can offer us. In other words, if you're basing your lifestyle on Taylor Swift and her boyfriend-of-the-week-club instead of Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner's brick-by-brick, love-is-work edict, you're pretty likely to be unfulfilled if your goal is something lasting and meaningful.

There are many, many examples of Hollywood couples that continue to roll on: Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson, Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen, and Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith; even Danny Devito and Rhea Pearlman in spite of their rocky times, have managed to hang on. Because they realize that Affleck was right: It's *work*...but it's the best kind of work.

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**Relationship      Author      Judith**

# Ruskay Rabinor Chats About 'Befriending Your Ex After Divorce'



By Jessica Conigliaro and Michelle Danzig

It's no secret that over 50 percent of all marriages end in divorce. But does it mean that the relationship is completely over? After spending years devoted to a spouse and family, it's nearly impossible to remove your ex from your life entirely. If you have children, it's even harder. There will be graduations, weddings and other family events that will bring you both together again. After the unpredictable aftermath of a divorce, it's hard to believe that remaining friends with your ex is even an option but it could be the

best choice when you've been with someone for a long time. 

In her new book, *Befriending Your Ex After Divorce: Making Life Better for You, Your Kids, and, Yes, Your Ex*, Judith Ruskay Rabinor, a psychologist, author, speaker, relationship expert and divorcee, explores her personal journey and shares how relationships can continue to grow and change once a marriage ends and a new family structure begins. In this exclusive interview with Rabinor, she shares her advice on how to develop and maintain a friendship with an ex –especially when there are kids involved.

**In your book, you seem to really know how to manage relationships with your exes. How did you accumulate this knowledge?**

My knowledge primarily accumulated through my ex-husband. I was also in a group of divorcees back in the 80's, and I learned a lot from their experiences. Plus, I interviewed a lot of people going through similar situations specifically for my book.

**Marriages usually don't end on the best of terms. How long would you recommend waiting to develop a friendship after a messy divorce? How can a person know when the time is right?**

It's rare that a divorce is friendly. You have a lot of negative feelings towards the other person: hurt, loss, anger and grief, to name a few.

As for how long to wait to become friends again, most data indicates two years. That amount of time is needed to create distance and boundaries and slowly inch your way back into a more comfortable relationship. That's just a statistic, and there are certainly exceptions. Some people never get past it, while others move forward within months. Remember that befriending you ex is a new relationship, not a continuation of your marriage.



**What advice can you give to divorced women when their ex-husbands have no interest in being friends?**

That's tough. I would advise them to recognize that it may take a long time, and it may never happen. Try to focus on being good parents and keep the best interest of your children in mind. Divorce is forever, so make the best of it. You have to see your ex at all types of family events; having him as an enemy would be horrible. Be generous and optimistic and realize your ex may feel a certain way now, but he won't feel that way forever.

**Related Link:** ['Hollywood Exes' Daphne Wayans on Divorce: "We're Still A Family"](#)

**You mention that certain obstacles, like anger or resentment, can prevent people from staying close after a divorce. What was the biggest challenge for you, and how did you overcome it?**

In the beginning, just acting civilized felt awkward and even phony, especially during legal proceedings. Money was definitely the hardest obstacle for us; getting over the financial battle took the longest.

**How do you develop a friendship after a split? What are some benefits of maintaining a positive relationship with an ex-husband?**

First, create a vision of what becoming friends with your ex really means to you. Do it for your children, especially during school events; avoiding public arguments with your ex makes it easier on them. Next, you should take a risk. For instance, a friend of mine invited her ex-husband and his new wife to Thanksgiving dinner. They declined the invitation but then turned around and invited my friend to *their* next holiday dinner. As it turns out, her ex just needed some time to digest the idea.

**Obviously, there will still be some touchy subjects, even when befriending an ex. What topics would you recommend avoiding?**

To develop a healthy friendship, the best thing to do is talk about the children. Don't rehash why the marriage was a failure. Leave your ex's new love life and money situations out of the conversation.

**RelatedLink:** [Dating After Divorce: How Soon is Too Soon?](#)

**What advice would you give to divorced women who are starting to date again?**

Once the relationship gets serious, it'd be nice to give your ex a heads up before you introduce him to your new partner. You may have a new boyfriend, but your ex will be your ex forever. You have to respect their feelings. You would want the same in return, right?

**What about divorced people without kids?**

Believe it or not, I've been interviewed by several people who told me they never had children but got divorced after 15 years. Since there were no kids involved, they didn't have much motivation to stay friends; nothing was tying them together. Even so, they wanted to stay friends because they had developed so many years of family connection. They had nieces and nephews, mother-in-laws and sister in-laws, who were important to them.

**For women who have been divorced for a long time, is it ever too late to become friends?**

It's never too late to become friends. In fact, the whole last chapter of my book discusses that.

**And lastly, what projects are you currently working on? Any plans for another book?**

I'm doing workshops in Manhattan and have been talking about

my new book. No plans for another one just yet.

*You can purchase a copy of **Befriending Your Ex After Divorce: Making Life Better for You, Your Kids, and, Yes, Your Ex** in bookstores and online from Amazon. For more information about Rabinor, please visit [JudithRuskayRabinorPhD.com](http://JudithRuskayRabinorPhD.com).*

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# Expert Dating Advice: When It's Best to Keep It in the Friend Zone



By Ashley DelBello

We could go on and on about different scenarios where it's best to keep it "just friends" with that particular someone within your social circle – whether it be a coworker, someone in your close group of friends or a person that one of your friends has previously dated. Most of the time we know it's probably not a good idea, but it's only natural to wonder about taking it a step further when you think there may be a stronger connection. So what about those situations where we are curious if there could be something more? Cupid spoke with the relationship experts on how best to navigate.

"The friend zone is a tricky space. We all want to make that Hail Mary pass, but we don't always prepare for it not working out," said author of "You Are WHY You Eat" and licensed clinical psychologist Ramani Durvasula, Ph.D. "That doesn't mean that it won't work since many great relationships start as friendships, but you need to be prepared."

**Related:** [David Arquette Says That He's Entered the Friend Zone with Courteney Cox](#)

**With coworkers.** The first step is to make sure they've made some sort of indication that they might also want to take the relationship to the next level and then to think about how it could impact your job and reputation at work in the future. "It's very important that you discuss beforehand what happens if it doesn't work out. Can you go back to just being friends? Will it become awkward? How will you acknowledge each other at work," said relationship expert and celebrity life coach Melanie Mar.

"Tread lightly in the workplace and think about the ramifications," adds Durvasula. "If it's all that then one of you may need to consider jumping ship from the company."

For those of you that do decide it's worth the risk, Mar advises that you need to distinctly separate your professional and social lives. "For example, if you're dating someone from



work, when you go out together on a personal level, work must never be discussed and you need to date as you would any other person – discussing family values, upbringing, future planning, those types of things, but steer away from any shop talk.”

**Related:** [‘Bachelor’ Sean Lowe Explains Why He Sent Home Leslie](#)

**With your friends.** We’ve been warned several times that friends and sex don’t mix, but we hardly ever listen. “We all like to think we are so evolved, but don’t think you can have that one night stand and go back to hanging out and hearing about each other’s new flames. Sex changes the chemistry of a friendship. Are you willing to toss it for that night if you have no intention of taking it further,” asked Durvasula. It could be potentially damaging to your friendship and you will both need to decide if it’s worth the sacrifice so take the time to really think about how it will affect the relationship down the road.

And if you do want to pursue it romantically? “You probably already know a lot about each other since you’re in the same friend group, but my advice would be to not discuss your mutual friends as you run the risk of keeping it buddy-buddy when you need to take it to a romantic level. Change your behavior patterns around each other and keep the focus on courting and romancing – even more so than meeting someone in a bar or online because you’re making a distinct shift from a platonic relationship into a new romantic relationship,” said Mar.

**A friend’s ex.** Just don’t do it – that situation is rarely ever a good idea and just ends up being more drama than it’s worth. “Karma’s a bitch. Before you take up with your girlfriend’s ex-boyfriend or ex-husband, think about the implications. She may say she is not hurt, but is it worth it? Men come and go, but honor and girlfriends are forever,” said Durvasula.

Going from friends to something more is possible – you just need to think it through and be mindful of what could happen if it doesn't work out before you make the transition.

**Tell us: When do you think it's best to keep it in the friend zone? Have there been situations that have totally gone wrong? On the flip side, any tips from those who have made the successful transition from friends to lovers?**

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## Date Idea: Shoot Some Hoops



By Sarah Ribeiro

This weekend, forget the cold weather and get active indoors with your sweetheart. Head to the gym with your love for a

little one-on-one – and some March Madness of your own.

Before you play, do some warm-ups in the gym to get your heart pumping and your muscles loosened. You and your partner can jog a few laps while discussing your favorite sports. Share some stories about your sport experiences as a kid – everyone has that one embarrassing sports story that will be sure to get your sweetheart laughing.

Go for an all-out basketball workout: do a couple “suicide” drills – the childhood favorite where you run from the baseline to the free throw line closest to you and back, continuing to run to the next furthest court line and back until you run the full court. Race against your partner and kickstart your competitive drive before you even play. While you’re warming up, work with each other to improve your skills – it’s an excuse to touch each other and to teach each other something new, which keeps the date intimate. If you’ve got a great lay-up, you can show your date how to position themselves in the right spot to get that perfect shot. Or you can ask them for advice on footwork to gain a better defense against them.

Then, the real fun starts. Play a simple game of one-on-one with your partner. You can vary what type of game you want to play: try HORSE, a trick/skill game where you mimic your opponents previous shot and gain letters when you can’t mimic the skill – five points spells HORSE and you’re out! Or just pick a maximum number of points and try to outshoot each other.

After you’ve tired yourselves out, hit the showers and get ready for the night. Keep with the hoops theme and check which teams are playing near you. You may even be able to head to a college game for March Madness. You can grab cheap tickets online, where you and your beau can cheer on from the sidelines.

If you're on a budget, hit up your local sports bar and check out the game there. For a more romantic night alone, crack open a couple beers at home and snack on the junk food you'd only reserve for sports events: hot wings, nachos, chips and more. Be sure to ice your muscles after playing hard all day!

**How do you celebrate March Madness with your partner? Leave your date ideas in the comments below.**

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## **Expert Relationship Advice: The Simplest Tip to Save Your Relationship**







By Laurel House for Galtime.com

Sure, he says he loves you even without makeup on, and that's sweet, but that doesn't mean you have permission to now only wear makeup when you get gussied up to go out with the girls!

Remember at the beginning of your relationship as you were shaving your legs and perfectly coiffing your pubs thinking "I can't imagine ever not wanting to take the time to do this..." What happened?

### **...Because He Isn't Suddenly Blind**

Like women, men want to feel wanted, needed and loved. They also want to feel like you are putting effort into the relationship. Just because you've moved in together, or you've been going out for a year, doesn't mean that suddenly he's blind. You can't just kill off the sexy girl that you once were- the one who seduced him, then wonder why the girl at the office wearing the short skirts and giving him attention is getting his attention back. It's time to put some effort into your relationship!

## **Make Up Your Mind and Your Attitude Will Follow**

But you're just not as attracted to him as you once were? You prefer lounging in sweats at home, keeping your hair in an unkempt ponytail, and wearing your cozy mismatched bra and panties? Mindset is a big part of it. Feel sexy, you will act sexy. Dress up, shave your legs, and adjust your attitude! Flirt with him when you go out. YES, flirt! You may have already gotten him, but that doesn't mean that now you should just talk about that annoying chick at work, the frustrating thing your mom said, how stressed you are that you are gaining weight, and how you found yet another gray hair on your head! Come on now... do you think that's sexy? Do you think that's going to make him want you? Do you think that kind of conversation is going to make you want him? No. The answer is no, it's not.

## **Like Using Your Fancy Silverware**

Similar to using your fancy silverware and china instead of keeping it stuffed in the back of the cabinet (really, what are you saving it for? USE your nice stuff, enjoy it! You only live once...). Wear your sexy lingerie- often! You might think that he doesn't notice it. You might feel like every time you put it on, he is too tired and passes out without getting an eye full of how hot (and uncomfortable) you have secretly been all night! And maybe you're right, maybe he doesn't notice, but he will notice if you're not wearing it...

## **Happened to Me...**

I know because I did it. It happened to me. After one too many "rumors" and inappropriate glances to other chicks, I couldn't take it anymore. Why was my guy paying so much attention to every hot chick he saw?! After two years, we ended up ending it. A few months later, when we could both be honest without fear of repercussions, I asked him why the roving eye. He said that I stopped trying. I didn't make him feel sexy or wanted.

I didn't flirt with him and give him naughty glances and say sexy things under my breath. He became... normal to me- like putting on socks with my running shoes. Just something you do. It wasn't exciting anymore. This is the same guy who I found breathtakingly sexy and couldn't keep my eyes, hands, skin, or mouth off of when we first met.

But remember the first time you put those brand new running shoes on and what a total thrill it was? Same thing... kind of. Like getting all of that coveted china for your wedding, then never using it. Like putting your treasured diamond necklace in a safety deposit box for safe keeping. Why have it if you don't use it. Any night, day, even breakfast can be a special occasion- if you make it one. I know... sexy lingerie isn't as comfortable as cotton panties. Well having a lackluster relationship is worse. Believe me. It's time to try...

AND, GUYS.... RECIPROCATE THE EFFORT, PLEASE.

xx

Laurel

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## Date Idea: Go On A Pub Crawl





By Sarah Ribeiro

Embrace the Irish holiday this weekend by grabbing a group of your friends and drinking in the tradition. Plan a pub crawl date night that your friends will talk about for years. Don't worry about your single friends, they'll have plenty to entertain themselves with on this whirlwind date. The pub scene will buzz around your crew as a mix of singles and couples join together to enjoy a few beers. This is the perfect opportunity to bridge your private and public relationship lives.

First thing's first: pick a locale. Popular cities for St. Patrick's Day include Boston, New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Savannah and Phoenix. Search on Yelp or CitySearch so you can put together a list of bars, pubs and taverns that you want to visit throughout the night. Be sure to pick out spots that offer a wide range of brews, fit your budget and have an impressive menu – no drinking on an empty stomach! An important thing to remember is to keep all of your bars in one general area; having just one bar out of the way may encourage drunk driving, and you want to remain safe on this night.



It's always a good idea to call the bars ahead of time to let them know you're coming – you'll have space reserved for your party, and they may even offer you a discount. Order appetizers and pitchers in bulk, you guys will be camping out on those bar stools for a while.

Next, plan a guest list. Decide whether you want this to be one large group date or if you'll be mixing couples and singles. Keep in mind that your single friends may be uncomfortable if there are too many couples, so make sure you keep an even ratio between the two. Don't be afraid to play matchmaker and invite friends that you think could be great together!

After all the real planning is done, get creative. Pick a theme that you all can follow for the night. Make shirts with Irish sayings or Gaelic slogans on them. Get really crafty with a theme not related to the holiday: suggest that everyone dress as a character from one of your favorite movies or video games. A popular pub crawl theme is "Mario Party," where everyone dresses up as their favorite Nintendo character. It's a great way to spot your group and have a little quirky fun.

For added fun, include a scavenger hunt with things to do. Assign points to tasks like getting a free round of shots, getting the most high fives of the night or getting a picture with the bartender. Have couples compete against each other or do couples versus singles to see who can get the most points.

Then, when the day arrives, hit the bars! Have fun drinking with your love and embrace the opportunity for the two of you to bond with each other's friends.

**How will you celebrate St. Patrick's Day with your partner? Tell us in the comments below.**

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# What We Can Learn from “the Work” Celeb Couples Do



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

When Ben Affleck accepted the Oscar for best picture on Sunday night, he thanked wife Jennifer Garner saying marriage is hard work, but it is the best kind of work. One area that takes great effort in a relationship is finding the balance between each person's needs and desires. Say football is your thing. It always has been, ever since you were a little kid watching at home with your dad. So it is impossible for you to understand why your new partner has no interest in it. You want to go to games together, talk about plays, and plan

weekends around the tailgate parties. But she says no. What do you do?

There is no question that one of the pleasures of being in a relationship is sharing the things you love with the one you love. If pizza is your thing – well, then by all means, it would be convenient if the person you're dating had similar feelings about it. If that were the case, you could be together and have your favorite food at the same time. But it doesn't always work that way. In reality, two different people often have two different sets of tastes. So how can you preserve your own pleasures, hobbies and space to do what you love while being in a serious relationship? And is there a way to include your significant other but not force feed them?

This is where a "thank you" portion can be useful. You remember when you were a child and your mother wanted you to eat the peas, right? They looked awful but you had to have a few to appease her, so you took a small "thank you" portion. In other words, you took a taste. Before you suggest this, though, acknowledge to your partner that you understand and accept this is not their cup of tea. But sometimes, when it's a play-off game or something special is going on, you would really like to have their company. Be clear that you know it is a sacrifice of sorts, but you would really love it if they watched just this one game with you. Not the whole season, just this one game; a "thank you" portion.

In that way you can share your passions and interests to some extent, while respecting your partner's interests at the same time. The key is to encourage them to be open and try to appreciate what it is that you find so fascinating. Who knows, she might actually become a football fan. Sharing pleasures, and being open to each other, simply helps to turn the wheels for more mutual passion together.

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# Date Idea: Throw a Classic Movie Night



By Sarah Ribeiro

This weekend, get to know your partner better by exploring each other's tastes in movies. Your beau might have a film close to their hearts that you never knew about. Pick out your favorite classic films and spend the weekend cuddling on the couch, sharing your film preferences with each other.

Start off your movie night by creating a real movie atmosphere. Dim the lights and bring out all your movie snacks. Load up beforehand on candy bars, pretzels and nachos



to munch on. Split up “cooking” duties with your sweetheart: one of you can pop some corn on the stove, while the other works on homemade slushies.

To set up the night, start by writing down each of your top ten favorite films on individual pieces of paper. Be sure to have one film for each genre, separating the flicks into horror, comedy, action, chick flick, rom-com, foreign, musical, western, sci-fi and indie. Mix things up and go for older movies – either from the golden Hollywood era or from your childhood. That way, you can start a conversation about what makes those films important to you, getting a better feel for each other’s interests. After writing down your list, both you and your honey can throw your personal ten into a hat, and pick out a couple slips to make the decision-making process easier. After all, no one wants to fight over a movie on date night.

If you need help picking out a movie or just want ideas for great movies to add to your list, check some online “best of” lists. The American Film Institute has posted “The 100 Greatest American Movies of All Time”, and *Time Out* has posted both “The Top 50 Movies to Watch As a Family” and “The Top 50 Sports Films of All Time” as a reference. Then, the two of you can find movies you both agree on – or even watch some all-time favorites that you’ve never seen before.

After your hours of movie watching, get yourself ready for your next movie date – and this time, head to the theaters. Peruse the internet for movie trailers and figure out which films just may be your newest favorites.

**Have an idea for a weekend date? Share it in the comments below.**

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# Relationship Advice: Can an On-Again, Off-Again Relationship End in the Real Deal?



By Melanie Mar

Happy endings happen in all different ways. So, when someone asks me if a relationship has staying potential when it's constantly on-again, off-again, the answer is "yes." Contrary to popular belief, on-again, off-again relationships can be the real deal.

All relationships, at some point, go through turbulent and challenging times, which may result in a breakup or even

breakups, plural. Even so, that doesn't necessarily mean that you won't one day be walking down the aisle together. Case in point: Jessica Biel and Justin Timberlake. If the reason for the split is not of an immoral, unethical or a very serious nature but instead due to timing, immaturity, financial stresses, etc., and the two of you have a deep, emotional and mental connection, there is a good chance that you will reconnect again physically.

If, however, the relationship is volatile and unstable with high-highs and low-lows, it's not healthy. I wouldn't recommend anybody committing to a long-term relationship of this type. If you have a steady, calm relationship that has gotten off track because of a small matter, then resolution may be achieved.

I understand you may be missing your [ex](#) and feel the need to contact him or her, but before you repeat previous behavior patterns, ask yourself these questions: What is the fundamental issue that is causing your breakup(s)? And what can you do to stop it from happening again? Maybe consider some outside assistance from a therapist. If you do make a plan to see each other again, come with a solid idea of what you're willing to commit to with regards to establishing a solution moving forward.

**Related Link:** [Can You Be Friends With an Ex?](#)

Don't call someone just to say, "I miss you." This action will lead to you both falling back into a dysfunctional relationship and making the same mistakes.

Don't jump into bed and have make-up sex either. It's tempting to do when high chemistry is present but will only mask the underlying problems temporarily.

If your relationship is consistently on and off with someone who breaks up with you at his or her whim, then you will

eventually have to up the ante. You cannot allow your ex to keep coming back into the relationship at the same level. You must stay strong and insist they commit to something deeper (i.e. from dating to girlfriend, girlfriend to fiancé, fiancé to wife). Otherwise, you have the potential to remain in this back-and-forth relationship for years with no intent of a full commitment from your partner.

**Related Link:** [10 Steps to a Remarkable Relationship](#)

Ultimately, if the pull between the two of you keeps bringing you back together, there is a real reason for that. Finding someone with whom you have a deep connection is very difficult. Think about how many people you have been on one date with – even just a coffee – and the number is probably quite high. Now, think about how many people you have told you love, and it most likely drops dramatically. And now, think about how many people in your life who you have really been in love with, and my guess is maybe one or two.

So, with this thought in mind, if you have found a special someone that you have a true love connection with, iron out the kinks and commit 100 percent to the relationship. When two people are destined to be together, it will be, regardless of what obstacles get in your way.

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## **Relationship Advice on Why Relationship Deal Breakers Hurt You**





by Terri Trespicio for GalTime.com

You've got dealbreakers. We all do. But what should be just a few hard-and-fast, values-driven rules about who you will and will not associate with, let alone date, has gotten a little out of hand. Curly hair? Dealbreaker. Have kids? Dealbreaker. Don't have kids? Dealbreaker. Glasses, a few credits shy of a bachelors degree, a previous marriage? Dealbreaker. Seriously?

Dealbreakers masquerade as conviction, but also handily counter your fear of rejection (*I reject you first*). They also make you feel in control in an area where you feel greatly out of control. If you spend a ton of time worrying about what you WON'T do or refuse to meet, well, you're busy putting limits on your learning and your loving.

How do you know your dealbreakers are running amok? Ask yourself this: Does a new one rear its head every time you

meet someone you could potentially date, maybe someone who has an interest in you? Do you find yourself bragging about who you would not, could not, will not ever consider? Your white-knuckled grip on your dealbreakers makes you seem smart and tough, but really, it's you being judgy and scared and anything but open. It's easy to have rules. It's not easy to take risks.

What astonishes me is that the people with 101 dealbreaker clauses are the *same* ones who bemoan the loss of romance and spontaneity in dating. Where do you think that spontaneity comes from? Being open to things that surprise you.

How many times have you heard someone say that, "Well, Hank didn't seem like the kinda guy I'd fall in love with, but here we are 10 years later!" Or, "Sally wasn't really my type, but I was drawn to her and couldn't explain why." I know why: Because neither love nor chemistry keeps a to-do or a to-don't list. But you do.

## **Keep Dealbreakers in Check**

It's worth saying that there ARE such things as real dealbreakers, but for them to matter, they have to stand for something. I'm not saying you should throw all caution to the wind and date willy nilly. I know: You have goals. Maybe you want to be married, have kids, or get out of Delaware. OK, fine. But again, are you a romcom screenwriter or are you a real person in real life? You're not casting a role; you're looking for a person with whom you can connect and share. And if you're ruling everyone out because of what you THINK that person would do, when you have no way of knowing, you're part of the problem.

There are pretty straightforward dealbreakers: Someone who beats, abuses, mistreats you or anyone else in his or her life. Someone who hates gay people or any other race or creed besides his own. Someone who has unaddressed substance abuse

problems (note I didn't say who *ever* had substance abuse problems). But anything short of a strong value-centered issue, I think you're crazy to rule out. You just don't know. So don't pretend you do.

## **Choose a Wild Card**

So when I coach people who are looking to start up or ramp up their dating lives, I tell them to consider at least ONE wild card. This means anyone you might not perhaps usually consider. Maybe he's under 6'0 or an artist or divorced. Or maybe she's a curvy blonde lawyer with a kid when you'd only dated tall, rail-thin brunettes.

I didn't say you have to build a life together—but you can meet for a drink.

And despite what you may think about divorced people with kids, you could fall head over heels for one. I did. For years I dated a divorced dad—and wouldn't change that for the world. I learned things that I take with me into relationships with single and divorced men alike. (More on why men with baggage are well worth exploring.) I'm continually challenging my own dealbreakers, and if you were smart, you'd do the same.

For instance, if you'd told me a few years ago I'd be dating a young musician from Bushwick who sleeps on an air mattress and doesn't own a toaster, I might have rolled my eyes and said "yeah no thanks." And for a moment that would make me seem all world-weary and wise. But what I have instead is someone who excites and intrigues me, someone who is bite-your-fist sexy and incredibly fun and fulfilling to spend time with.

Take that, dealbreaker.

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# Michael Sheen Wasn't Ready to Settle Down with Rachel McAdams



By [Jessica Conigliaro](#)

After spending the past two years together, Rachel McAdams and Michael Sheen have called it quits. The two actors simply want different things for their futures. According to [People](#), McAdams is ready to settle down and have kids, but Sheen, already a father to a 14-year old daughter from his relationship with Kate Beckinsale, has no interest in having any more children. Due to their differences in opinions, they ended their [relationship](#). Still, there is no bad blood between the [exes](#).

**How can you compromise when you and your partner want different things for the future?**



## Cupid's Advice:

Ever since you were five years old, you pictured yourself living in a big yellow house with a black lab and three kids. However, you recently discovered that your [partner](#) is allergic to dogs and detests the color yellow. So what now? Cupid offers some advice on ways to compromise with your partner and keep your relationship going strong.

**1. Decide what's most important:** Before even discussing future plans and ambitions, figure out what you want without anyone else's input or opinion. If you decide [marriage](#) is most important for you, don't let anyone stop you from going down the aisle. Find someone that wants the same things as you do so you have no regrets.

**2. Try new things:** We all know that your man's interests may drastically differ from your own. If your [boyfriend](#) is set on getting a ferret for a pet, try not to disregard his wish completely. Look into his interests, especially the ones that he's most passionate about. He will certainly appreciate it and will (hopefully) return the gesture when the time comes.

**3. Talk it through:** If you and your significant other clearly want different things, deal with the issue right away. Your [beau](#) mentions that he wants to move back to the state his parents live in some day, and of course, you panic. Try explaining to him why you don't want to move to a place where you have no friends or family. It may lead to an argument, but it will help him understand your perspective.

**How do you compromise with your partner? Tell us in the comments below.**

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# Expert Relationship Advice: 5 Ways to Have a 'Date' From

# Miles Away



By Jennifer Harrington

Being apart from your love is never easy, whether the distance is short or long term, but in today's fast-paced and mobile world, separation is a common reality. When the miles separate you from your sweetheart, here are some easy ways to keep your date night on the calendar:

**1. Dinner and a movie:** Just because you're not physically together doesn't mean you can't engage in this courtship ritual! Decide with your partner what you want for dinner (make it something accessible everywhere, like pizza or Chinese food). Once you both have your dinner ready, hop on the telephone, chat and enjoy dinner together, before starting your movie. Need some ideas for a movie? Check out this list

of the 30 most romantic movies of all-time.

**Related:** [Tips for Making a Long Distance Relationship Work](#)

**2. Cheer on your favorite sports team:** Maybe you and your sweetie share a passion for the New York Yankees or the Green Bay Packers. Commit to both watching the game and texting each other your ongoing commentary. It can be fun to hear another person's perspective on the same game you are watching! Plan to follow your text session during the game with a phone call to celebrate your team's victory together.

**3. Scavenger hunt:** Every place is full of unique and interesting spots. With a little advance planning (and sometimes a bit of research), you can plan scavenger hunts for each other. Plan to do the scavenger hunt at the same time, and enjoy all of the special places in your location that your love hand-picked out for you. Snap pictures of yourself with your phone and send so your partner can see all of your adventures!

**Related:** [4 Ways to Make Your Long Distance Relationship Work](#)

**4. Play the question game:** As well as you may think you know each other, there is always more to learn about your special someone! Pick up a copy of the book *The Book of Questions* by Gregory Stock for 265 questions you can ask each other. The questions range from silly to serious so you're sure to uncover stories and opinions on a variety of topics. You can easily swap questions and answers over email or the phone!

**5. Plan for the future... virtually:** Use a webcam or Skype to talk to your significant other about the future. Commit a hour to an important discussion, such as planning for your upcoming vacation together (here is a list of the most romantic spots on Earth) or how you want to celebrate your anniversary. Being apart can sometimes prompt deep, meaningful conversations and these conversations can give you cause to be excited about your future plans together.



So, the next time you are faced with your love being across the state or on the other side of the world, know that the distance is not a deal-breaker in your relationship. Take the opportunity to get creative and find new ways to get emotionally closer.

**Tell Cupid:** what are some ways you keep your relationship alive and well when you are apart?

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## Date Idea: Expand Your Tastes



By Sarah Ribeiro

One of the great parts of dating is getting to experience new things together and grow as a couple. This weekend, think



outside of the box and expand your tastes. You'll benefit from having a really unique date – plus, you have nothing to lose!

Do something with your love that the two of you normally wouldn't do. If you're used to the typical dinner-and-a-movie, try a new form of entertainment. Go to a classical symphony performance, a dinner theater, or a comedy club. A popular dinner show is 'Joey and Maria's Comedy Wedding,' an interactive comedy show that includes a realistic wedding reception and has toured all around the country. A date like this one is sure to be something that you and your honey will remember: eating, laughing and dancing the night away.

For a less interactive night, you can spice up your traditional dinner date and literally expand your palette – prepare your tastebuds for something new. Restaurant “experiences” like Opaque (located in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Dallas and New York) that provide a “dining in the dark” experience. You and your love can experience your food in a whole new way; ridding yourself of sight allows your sense of taste to heighten. If you're on a budget, you can try this idea in your own home. The intimate environment all but guarantees a romantic time for the entirety of the night.

If you're just plain sick of going out to eat, pick up a new skill or hobby instead. Pottery shops have been popping up across the country, encouraging couples to tap into their artistic sides and try their hand at throwing pots (or just painting them). Most even have “date night” specials that include complimentary wine or champagne.

You could even mix things up and focus on taking care of yourselves: if you're generally not an active couple, take an exercise class together. Many gyms have two-for-one deals or guest passes that allow you to bring a non-member into a class. Get competitive in a spinning or kickboxing class, or

get in tune with yourselves in a yoga class. It's a great way to start a new healthy habit for the two of you – and to leave you both with a new sense of confidence. After sweating it out for a couple hours, head home to soak your sore muscles in the tub with your sweetheart.

**Have a great idea for a date that expands your tastes? Share it in the comments below.**

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## 5 Completely Unique Honeymoon Ideas



By Amanda Hevener

Traditionally, a honeymoon is a vacation taken directly after the wedding so that the newlywed bride and groom can spend a little alone time. These vacations are usually spent at beach resorts, on tropical cruises or at exotic destinations that the new husband and wife have never been to before. However, there is something to be said about a unique honeymoon, where the newlyweds can still be together without spending time lounging on a beach. These unusual trips involve doing activities that both halves of the new couple love, or taking a once in a lifetime chance to do something adventurous.

### **Spend time at a small fishing cabin.**

A quiet, peaceful week without any interruptions, aside from fishing and hiking, of course, might be just what you need to unwind after the craziness of planning a wedding. If both you and your future spouse like the outdoors, then this might just be the right honeymoon for you. Find a quiet, somewhat isolated cabin near a freshwater lake and be prepared to spend a relaxing week boating, fishing and sitting around a campfire.

**Related:** [Three Far Flung Honeymoon Destinations](#)

### **Go on an Alaskan cruise.**

Many people spend their honeymoons on a cruise – only they choose to travel to warm, tropical locations, for example, Mexico, Jamaica and the Bahamas. For a change of pace, go to Alaska instead. The state is beautiful, and amazingly full of things to do. Plus, most of the cruise ships that go to Alaska are smaller, so you will not have to deal with as many crowds.

### **Tour historic sites, like Civil War battlefields.**

If both you and your new spouse are history buffs, then spending your honeymoon traveling around to different historic sites is a great idea. Plus, if you decide to go by car, you

will save money on your travel expenses! Some ideas include touring various United States Civil War battlefields, spending time in Washington DC taking in the many monuments and museums, and wandering the back roads along the Lincoln Highway, viewing all of the small towns along the route.

**Related:** [5 Post-Wedding Tips for Newlyweds](#)

### **Book a trip to Nepal and climb Mount Everest.**

For a real once in a lifetime adventure, consider going mountain climbing. This is only a good idea if both of you are experienced climbers, since it can be very dangerous for everyone involved, especially those new to rock climbing. Sure, mountain climbing is not a very romantic experience, but it will leave you with memories to look back on when you are old and gray, and that is all that matters.

### **Go backpacking throughout Europe.**

This can be interpreted in several different ways, as one person's backpacking involves staying in hostels and following a budget, while another person's version of backpacking might revolve around four star hotels. Either way, spending some time traveling around Europe is an excellent bonding experience. You can try new foods, see new places, and even visit some of the most romantic cities in Europe: Rome, Florence and Paris. It will be the trip of a lifetime!

*Amanda Hevener writes about the wedding business and dishes out wedding business tips.*

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# Create an Action Plan to Make Every Date Feel Like Valentine's Day



By Dr. Tranquility – Lydia Belton, PhD, Ct. H.A.

The feelings and emotions we experience during the Valentine's Day season can be enjoyed any time of the year. In order to begin, it starts with yourself. When we love ourselves, we resonate a vibration of love, and as it goes out, it comes back to us. So if you've had a breakup recently, let go and let love in – not for your ex, but for you! Our boundaries tend to be in a healthy place when we achieve this goal, giving way to much happier and healthier relationships.

**Related Link:** [How to Keep the Spark in Your Relationship After Valentine's Day](#)

What if you're single? A great way to make the feelings of Valentine's Day last if you're not partnered up is to surround yourself with friends. Take them by the hand and do something that will bring love to others. A great example is volunteering. Help an elderly neighbor, head to a local soup kitchen or join the Red Cross. Getting out of your own head and helping others, brings loving resonance. Take a page from Prince William: when he was single, he followed his mother's example and gave back to those less fortunate.

If you're single but dating, drop the dinner and drinks. Hint at ideas that are fun and non-traditional. For example, horseback riding, hiking in the park, or planning a picnic can take your relationship outside the comfort zone and build a stronger connection. These suggestions give you a chance to really get to know each other and to be able to *hear* what the other person is saying. This step follows the initial phone call we chatted about last year in "Four Steps For Stress Free Dating," so quite of a bit of the "getting to know you" stage is already out of the way. After a few dates, you could also try cooking together and watching a movie at home.

**Related Link:** [10 Steps to a Remarkable Relationship](#)

If you're attached, keep the love going: flowers, romantic games and bubble baths aren't just for Valentine's Day! Instead, pick one fun and sexy activity to enjoy for the night. Take five minutes where you are solely focused on each other; don't say a word and just relax into each other. This behavior gets the PEA going (brain chemistry of attraction). Give it a shot – you can thank me later!

What if you're married and perhaps have a family? Keeping things interesting can be a challenge, so in addition to the exercise in the paragraph above, I have some special

tips. According to Redbook, the First Lady has said her 17-year-marriage to Barack Obama is “not perfect.” Still, even in the midst of the crisis in the Gulf of Mexico, the two had date nights. And the President has been known to bring home flowers for his wife.

Another celebrity couple that’s still going strong is Patrick Dempsey and Jillian Fink, who have been married for 11 years. Fink says, “You have to make time to spend together and to work through your issues.”

Kevin Bacon and Kyra Sedgwick have been together for 22 years – a century by Hollywood standards. Here’s Bacon’s advice: “I think you’ve got to keep the fights clean and the sex dirty!”

Consider these examples and remember that is possible to keep the love alive. You must make your relationship a priority. Wherever you find yourself on this list, relax, have fun and enjoy each other’s company. A few minutes a day goes a very long way!

*Developed by Lydia Belton PhD, Ct.H.A., Date Therapy® is an effective protocol that helps people get in touch with their criteria for an ideal mate. DrTranquility’s protocols® have been featured most recently on Forbes.com & Yahoo, ABCNEWS.com, ABC’s the View, KISS FM, CupidsPulse.com, Metromix for the Chicago Tribune, British Glamour, REDBOOK, Cosmopolitan Magazine & promoted by Match.com.*

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## **How to Avoid Arguing Over**



# Money



By Jennifer Harrington

Unquestionably, two things that can be difficult to navigate in life are relationships and finances. And, if you're involved in a serious romantic relationship, at some point, you are going to tackle the topic of finances and how they will be handled in your joint life with your sweetie. Here are some tips to avoid the conflicts about money that can frequently plague romances:

## **1. Always communicate.**

Clear and timely communication is crucial. Make sure you convey all wealth-related issues and concerns with your significant other, and have regular, honest talks about your money, expenses, and financial priorities for the short and



long-term. Last year, it was revealed that Alicia Keys husband, hip-hop producer Swizz Beatz, owed the government more than \$2.7 million in unpaid taxes. It's likely this financial misstep caused discord in the duo's romance, as it was exposed that the couple had to make several important asset-related decisions in light of the money that was owed to the government.

**Related:** [Celebrities: Love, Marriage and the Money In Between](#)

## **2. Make a budget.**

Take the time to talk through your cash flow and upcoming expenditures with your partner. While communication is an essential first step of establishing a healthy financial relationship together, it also helps to [create a financial plan by using a monthly budget template](#) and, most importantly, stick to it. That way you are both clear on the plan of how you will handle money as a team, and can hold each other accountable with a budget. Even Will Smith recognizes the importance of budgeting and spending responsibly. The Men in Black superstar, and longtime husband of fellow star Jada Pinkett Smith, once said, ""Too many people spend money they haven't earned, to buy things they don't want, to impress people they don't like."

**Related:** [Celebrity Couples Who Let Money Ruin Their Relationship](#)

## **3. Try to see your love's perspective.**

Each person has an unique approach to managing money. No doubt, your significant other will do things with his or her money that will anger you. Try to keep your frustration under control and hear your partner out about why they made a particular spending choice. Taking the time to listen and empathize can go a long way in diffusing a fight. Viewing a situation from your partner's perspective also provides you with a valuable opportunity to see things from their eyes and

through the lens of what they value.

When money matters bring strife into your romance, remember this famous Judy Garland quote. *The Wizard of Oz* star was quoted as saying, “I can live without money, but I cannot live without love.” Being financially healthy is important, but don’t lose sight of the fact that money can’t buy (or keep) love.

**What are some other ways to avoid arguing over money? Share your thoughts below.**

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## **Date Idea: Warm Up With Winter Cocktails**





By Deanna Atkins

You and your special someone can enjoy what's left of this chilly winter with warm cocktails that are perfect for this time of year. [Indulging](#) in a hot spiked apple cider or learning how to make a hot toddy will set you up for an intimate night that's different from just cracking open a couple of beers or sipping on a glass of wine.

If it's a night for two, you and your [honey](#) can relax by the fireplace with drinks that will make you feel warm inside – and maybe even a little lovey too. Look up recipes to make so you each can try your best at perfecting your own beverages.

Have a soft spot for hot chocolate? Add tequila or peppermint schnapps to this classic drink – and don't forget the whipped cream. Another twist to attempt is adding Kahlúa® to the concoction. If you have a bottle of red wine that has overstayed its welcome in your home, uncork it and add spices, citrus, sugar and brandy to achieve a delicious mulled wine. Light some candles, put on soft music and enjoy tasting each other's signature drinks.

For more [fun](#), host a (warm) cocktail party at your place. Invite close friends over to celebrate winter's end. Have each guest bring over a bottle, a mixer and a garnish, but make sure they know to stay in the theme. Some easy suggestions include eggnog, rum, Tuaca, bourbon, cinnamon sticks, dried cherries, vanilla and miscellaneous spices. Then, taste everyone's homemade cocktail and judge who made the ultimate drink at the end of the night.

This weekend's date idea can also be done at a bar with your friends and a professional mixologist. Be sure to step out of your comfort zone and try something new. Testing out a variety of unique flavors and spoiling your senses with a delicious drink will spice up your night and refuel your [connection](#) with your man.

**What is your favorite winter cocktail? Share below.**