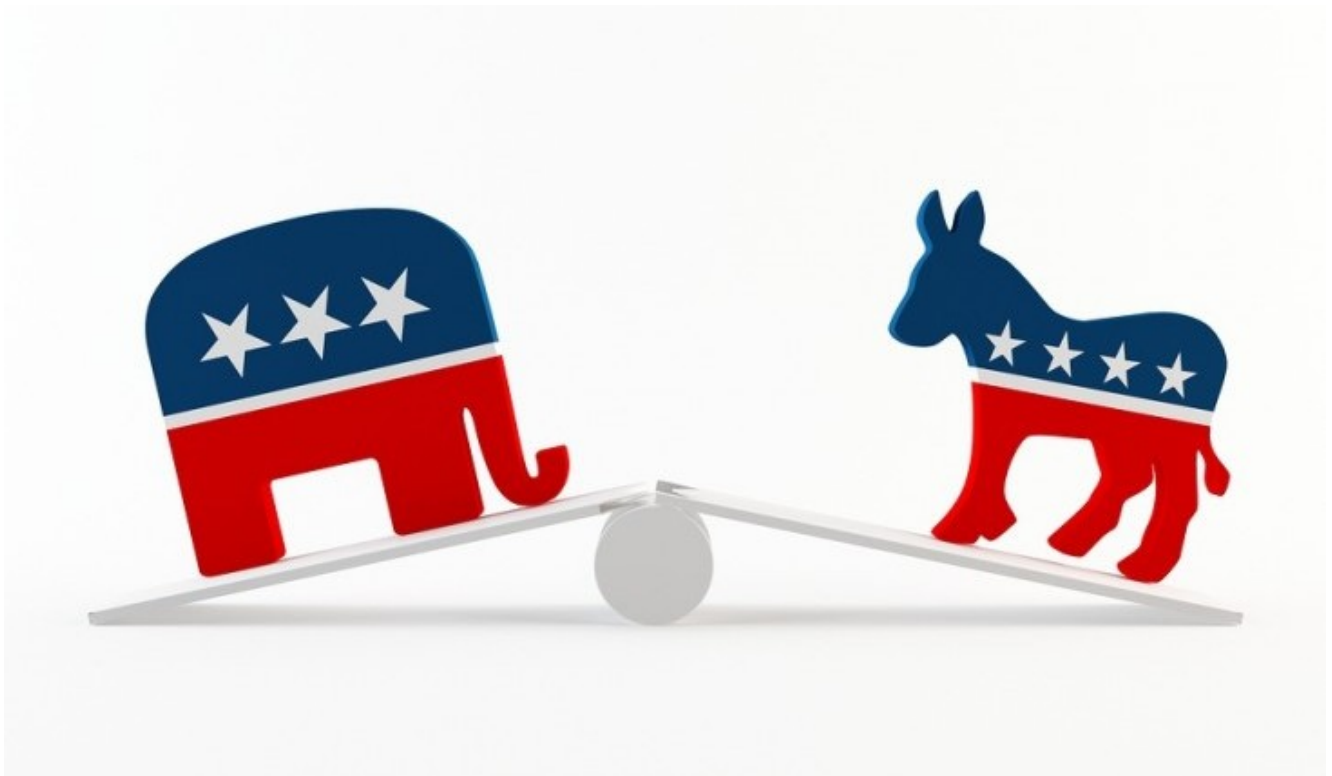


Can Politics Ruin Your Relationship?



By Mark Miller for GalTime.com

Relationship Politics...

There aren't many outstanding "inter-political" couples we can look up to. Up until last year we could cite Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger and Democrat Maria Shriver as peaceful partners, but they've since said "hasta la vista, baby." Arnold's back making movies and Maria's no doubt back dating human-sized men.

The most high-profile couple with opposing political beliefs (that is still together) is Democratic Strategist James Carville and Republican Consultant Mary Matalin. The two were

married in 1993, one year after they staffed opposing Presidential campaigns, and have said they don't talk politics at home. (Which is probably a good idea for relationship longevity for couples on opposite sides of various spectrums – not to talk politics, religion, or which of your spouse's friends or relatives you would "do" if given the opportunity).

So what about us normal folk – the people who don't make a living working and breathing politics, but still have opinions on the issues? Here are some additional tips on how to keep the peace with a partner of a different political party as this nasty election season heats up.

Don't bring it up: What's the first rule of Fight Club? "Don't talk about Fight Club." Politics can be just as brutal – though you usually don't have to wear a protective cup.

Agree to disagree: Even if we like to think of ourselves as "open-minded," most of us have our minds made up about major political issues. Your efforts to change your partner's mind will not only be unsuccessful, but could result in having heavy objects thrown at your head in a heated fight. You can often spot such people walking down the street. They're the ones with an omelet pan embedded in their skulls. Just smile understandingly and say, "I know... I know."

Focus on the positive: Your partner must have some other redeeming qualities besides their politics, right? After all, Albert Einstein and the Kardashians were able to carve out entire careers without mentioning politics, and how often do you even hear their names in the same sentence? Instead of emphasizing your differences, focus on your shared hobbies and opinions. Some middle-of-the-road interests to get you started: Pizza, football, puppies, The Beatles, light bondage. You know, those sorts of things.

Be up front: Sure, lies are fun and exciting, and lying gives you a thrill that nothing else can match, but... where was I

going with this? Oh yeah – be honest with your significant other about your beliefs, and be honest with yourself about how important those beliefs are to you. And, of course, be honest about how that spanking the other night was just a tad more painful than you'd expected. Or am I just bringing up too much of my own experience here?

Be respectful: Making fun of other people is great – but not when you're trying to develop a relationship. You don't have to agree with one another, but at least don't belittle the other person's beliefs. So, get in the habit of saying things like, "While I don't share your feelings about Mitt Romney (or President Obama), I respect them."

Share the remote: Don't watch Bill Maher in front of your partner if he or she is a Bill O'Reilly fan. DVR all your favorite programs, and sneak out of bed to watch them in the middle of the night while your partner sleeps. Or, watch clips online at work, like a real American. Or, use those shows as punishment for one another. If she overcooks or burns dinner, she must watch an episode of Bill Maher's show. If you forget her birthday, get ready to watch Bill O'Reilly's.

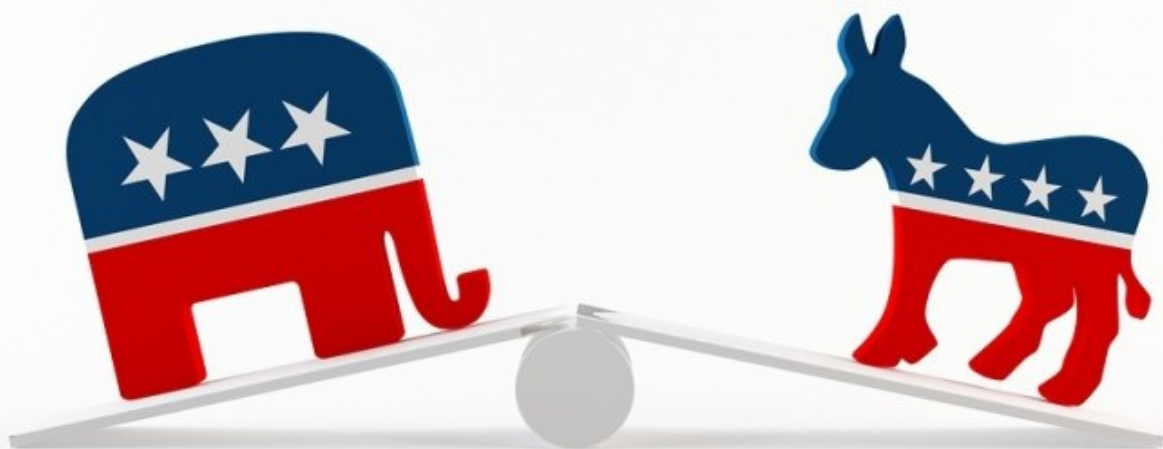
Show your true colors: If you're really itching to show your pride, passive-aggressively support your political party by wearing red or blue garb. Your significant other will never know that you are secretly campaigning, and if they call you out, you can make THEM look crazy. "OMG, you can't even look at the color red without thinking of Sarah Palin?!?" This is a technique known as "Gaslighting" – making someone think that they are actually going crazy. And romantic relationships don't get much more fun than that.

If all else fails, cut and run: Americans only get worked up about politics every four years (or two, if you're a midterm person). Tell your partner you've been called out of town on business until November 9. That will give him or her a few days after the election to stop gloating and/or crying.

Meanwhile you can sip drinks by the pool in sunny Canada. Dysfunctional? Of course. What's your point?

Politics aside, a wise person once said that the four most important words a man can use to ensure longevity in a relationship are "I'm sorry" and "Yes, dear." Although I'm also a big fan of flowers and an evening of love-making. Just be sure that neither the flowers nor the bed sheets are red, white and blue.

Is It Time to Update Your Facebook Relationship Status?



By Ashley DelBello

It's not official until it's on Facebook. We've all heard this before. And as Facebook recently hit its one-billionth user, it's becoming truer in almost every aspect of life, including relationships. With some, Facebook has even replaced having the "the talk" with "can we update our relationship status on Facebook yet?" A little extreme, but as Facebook is the one of the most prominent social networking sites relationship statuses are now an important milestone in dating.

So when do you update your Facebook relationship status? Too soon and you may have to publically face going from "in a relationship" back to "single" before your next date (which has now been cancelled). If you wait too long, your significant other can become irritated and it could start to cause problems as it may be more important to them than you realize.

Follow these simple rules when considering updating your relationship status:

Related Link: [5 Ways Social Media Can Help Your Relationship](#)

New Relationships. Have you already had "the talk?" Deciding that you're exclusive should definitely take place prior to updating your relationship status and should also be a safe indicator that it's ok to announce that you guys are dating. While we all want to shout from the top of our lungs when we are in a new relationship, it's usually best to wait and make sure it's going to work out. No one wants all the annoying questions you'll receive from people you haven't heard from in years when you have to change your status back to "single."

The Break-Up. There's no need to rush to update your status as soon as you leave your ex's house, but you will want to change it before it too much time passes and you're left looking a little pathetic. However, your Facebook profile is highly

visible to almost everyone and it's not something you want to change lightly. Give it a few weeks and when you're absolutely sure that it's over, go ahead and make the change. If the relationship ended [amicably](#) and you were together for a long period of time, it couldn't hurt to give your ex a heads up that you are going to change it.

Related Link: [Q&A: How Can Social Media Help My Long Distance Relationship?](#)

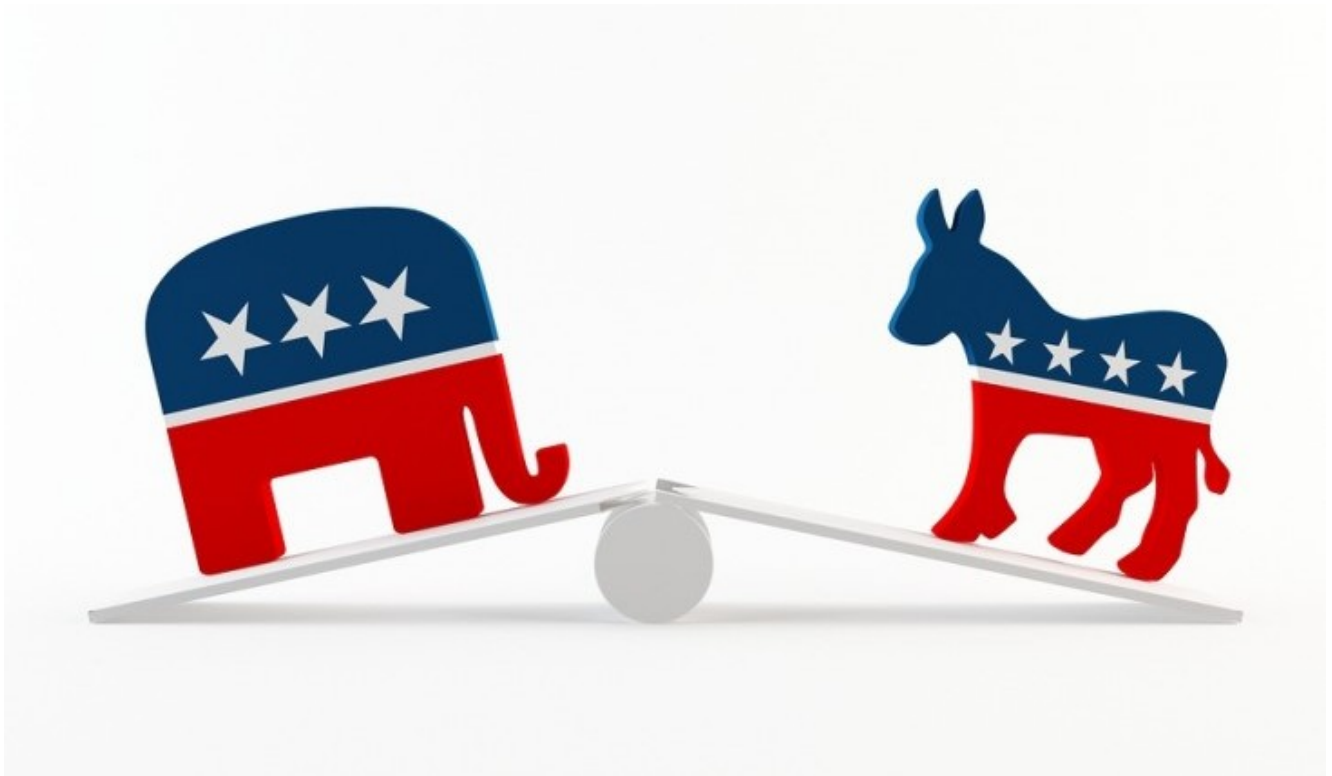
Making Your Status Private. Of course, you could avoid all of this by simply clicking "only me" for your relationship status. Not as fun and there will most likely be a time you'll have to make it less private, but if you're currently in a situation that allows you to keep it to yourself, then it's definitely something to ponder.

Any Public Relationship Status Update. Think it through and consider all the possibilities of making a change – you certainly don't want to be the one constantly making updates to your relationship status or be on the receiving end of unsolicited advice so make sure it's worth it.

Tell us: When do you update your Facebook relationship status?

Date Idea: Take An Autumn Stroll





By Samantha Mucha

Now that the leaves have changed colors and the intense summer heat has died down, take a walk hand-in-hand with your lover. This Friday night head out together and chat about your tedious workweek. Relieve the stress and unwind as you stroll through your neighborhood park in the crisp autumn air. Romance doesn't have to be intense and fiery, so take this time to let go and let yourselves be present with one another.

Going for a leisurely walk has plenty of perks. You get to catch up with your sweetheart, swapping stories you didn't get a chance to share before your morning commute, or late dinner.

It's also the perfect way to squeeze in a little exercise that you may be skipping over now that it's getting chillier outside.

The best part about this date idea is that it's free! You and your partner can enjoy bike trails, paths, parks and walk along the waterfront for absolutely nothing. The bigger the park the better, the more free space you get to enjoy. If you are in New York, Central Park may be exactly what you're

looking for to leisurely get away. If your mind is set on something a little less crowded, then check out the High Line for a cozier, more scenic route.

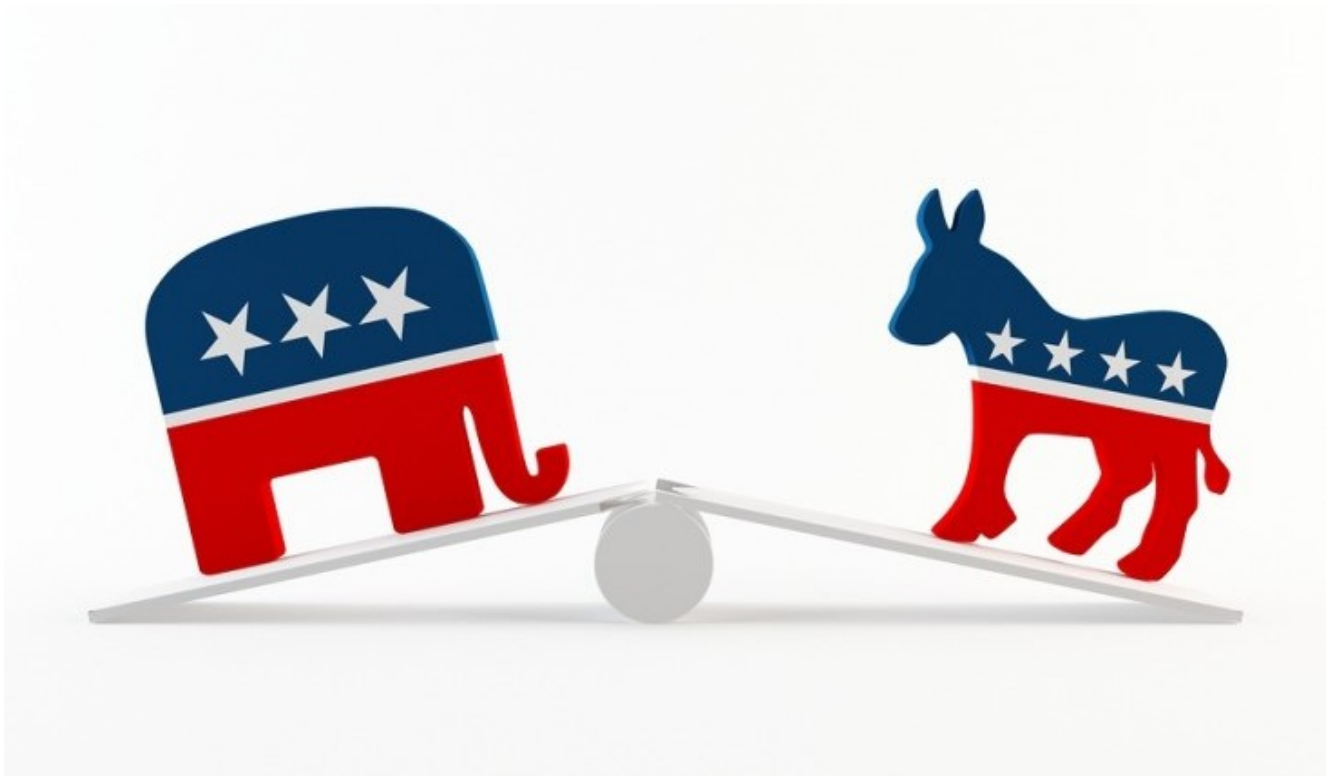
If you are not near New York or any city in general, casually stroll through your neighborhood, or a hiking trail near your home. The walk you take doesn't have to be complicated; it's all about spending valuable time with your sweetheart and getting to know them even better.

The less of a plan you have the better. Start walking and talking and see where you end up, you just may find a new special spot. Throw on your jacket, grab your lover and head on out.

What date ideas do you have planned for November? Tell us below.

What's Love Got to Do With It?





By Paul N. Weinberg

Here's the myth: Cupid's arrow strikes you in the heart, you fall in love and you live happily ever after.

But we all know that real life doesn't quite work that way. A more familiar story goes like this: You meet someone. The two of you have great chemistry, and you really hit it off. You jump into a relationship and you fall in love. This seems like "the one" ... except that six months or a year later, you're no longer together and you are once again single. Now repeat until emotionally exhausted.

Does this pattern of falling in and out of love sound familiar? I've observed it in singles for years so I'm no longer surprised each time I hear that a friend who was in love the last time I saw them is no longer with their partner. And very often, he or she is already in love with someone new.

Related Link: [Why Celebrities Fall In and Out of Love So Quickly](#)

So if love often condemns us to a series of relatively short-

term relationships – and with all due respect to Tina Turner – the obvious question is: “What’s love got to do with it?” In other words, why isn’t falling in love enough to establish an enduring, long-term relationship. And what does it take to keep us together after the emotional thrill is gone and the sexual excitement has faded?

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

The simple answer is that for most people, the long term glue that binds together our personal relationships is emotional intimacy.

What is Emotional Intimacy?

Although intimacy and love often go together, love is not intimacy, and love in a relationship does not guarantee intimacy. And although a sexual relationship may lead to an emotionally intimate one, you can have sex without intimacy and intimacy without sex. So sex is not intimacy either.

Put simply, emotional intimacy is about connecting and being connected on an emotional level to your partner. It’s the sharing of your innermost thoughts and feelings, coupled with all the ways of being together – a glance, a touch, a silent moment, a laugh, or just being present and attentive – that provide the foundation for an emotional connection in a personal relationship.

Intimacy is the complement to love that requires trust, openness, vulnerability, safety, empathy and honesty and involves deeper levels of communication that are conveyed through the sharing of feelings and emotional needs. Intimacy exists at the deepest level where each of you is able to not only feel and understand the other but also be felt and understood by the other.

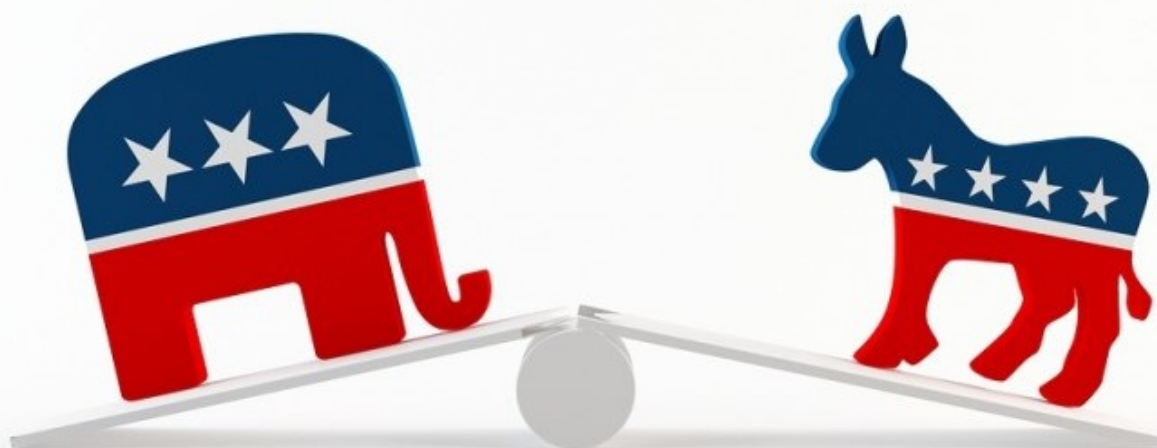
So love is just one part of the larger landscape of connection in personal relationships. And it is intimacy rather than love

that brings emotional depth to the connection, permits a deeper knowing of yourself and your partner, and adds longevity to your relationships.

*Paul N. Weinberg is the coauthor of **The I Factor**, a new book about intimacy and connection in personal relationships. Available in print and ebook versions through Amazon and the Apple iTunes Bookstore. www.theifactor.com*

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Is Your Career Killing Your Relationship?



By Relationship & Sex Talk, Jane Greer, Ph.D., for GalTime.com

is your career your first love?

Russell Crowe and his wife of nine years, Danielle Spencer, have separated, according to Australian news sources. The two were on opposite sides of the globe when the news broke, she in Australia shooting *Dancing With The Stars*, and he in Los Angeles shooting the film *Noah*.

Like many other split couples with big careers, extensive travel schedules and calendars packed with commitments, could their whereabouts be an indication of what went wrong with their marriage? Did their careers take priority over their love lives?

Have you ever asked yourself this question: Which comes first my love life or my career?

Most of the time, there's no easy answer. For celebrities, the choice can be particularly hard since their work often takes them far away for long periods of time. But you don't have to be a star to grapple with this tug-of-war. At some point, if you have a career, you will be forced to make tough decisions when your job and your relationship collide. While having a career should not preclude being in a relationship, the questions often become: How much is too much? And how much of a toll does it take?

If you're the one left alone on a Saturday night (as one of my patients was when her boyfriend couldn't make it to her sister's wedding because he had to work) what is important to keep in mind is to not take your partner's working overtime personally. It is easy to fall into the pattern of feeling they are choosing the office over you, while they may just see it as their professional responsibility. If this is going on for you or the person you're seeing, what you can do is look

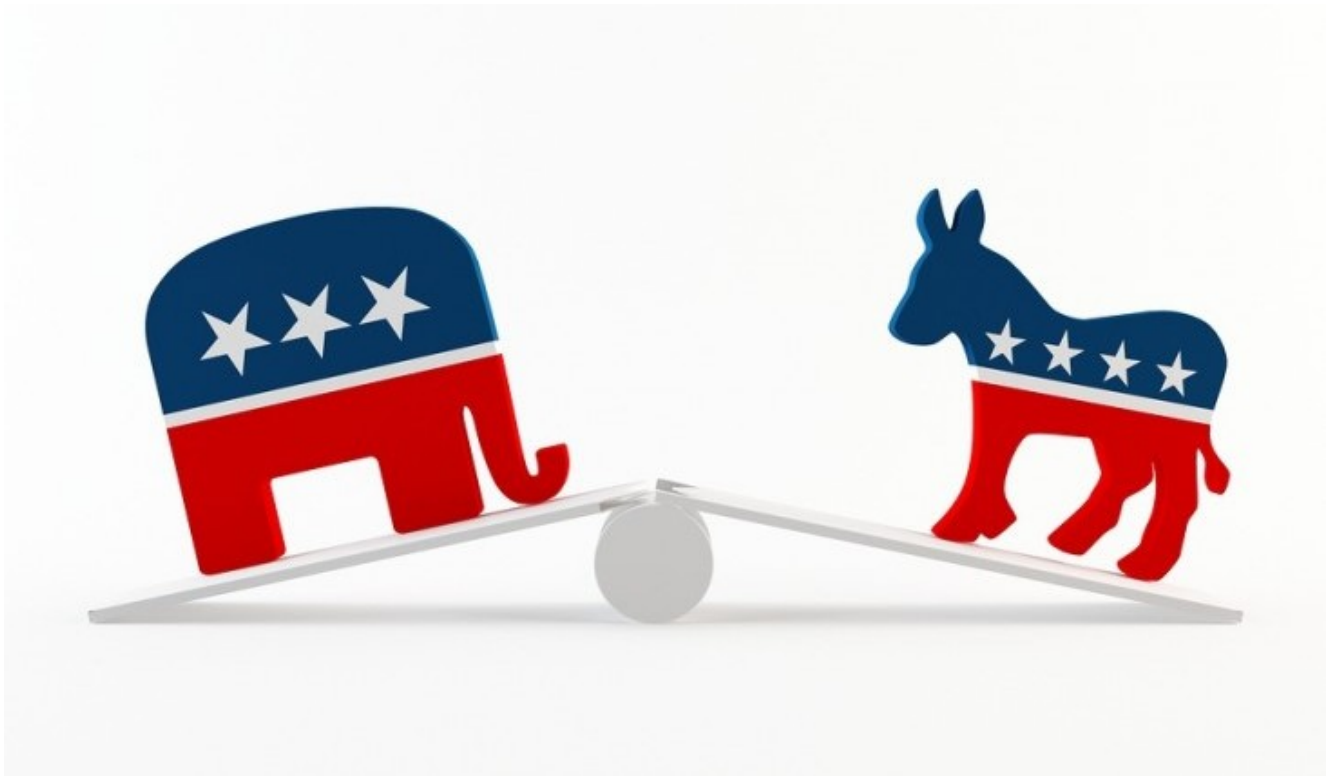
to put some checks and balances in place. If it's the sixth night in a row that you haven't been home before midnight, it may be time to have a talk with the boss and set some boundaries.

The other thing you can do if you know you are going to be overwhelmed with work and anticipate being exhausted is to give your partner fair warning. That way, they can make other plans and not feel ignored or abandoned.

You want to preserve the emotional intimacy you share with your partner because that can ultimately help sustain you as you make your way in the world. If you work to balance it you can maintain your career and your love life, rather than ending the relationship as Russell and Danielle have done.

Date Idea: Hang Out At a Haunted House





By Steven Zangrillo

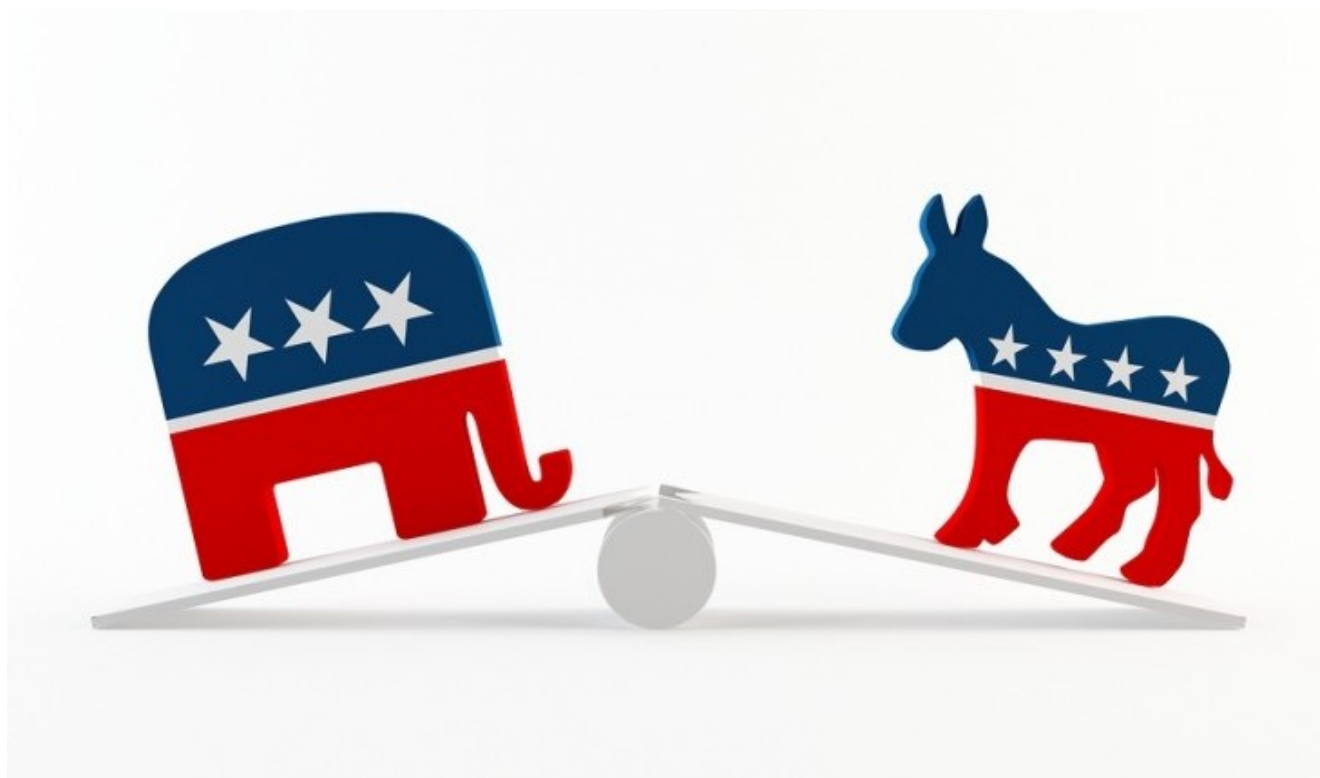
Don't let the kids fool you: Halloween is a time for grown-ups, too. Even though adults approach this day differently, there is no excuse for us to restrict our inner child to dormancy. Don't let yourself and your sweetheart yawn yourselves into a stupor at another monotonous Halloween cocktail party. Readjust your weekend plans for some scary, romantic excitement. Grab your honey and head to the nearest Haunted House.

Haunted Houses, mind you, are more than just a bunch of scary rooms. There are hired actors to guide you along the journey to provide an experience that is sure to bring you into a horrifying, almost-too-real adventure. Rural areas are known to feature haunted hayrides, forest walks, or even creepy farm houses. Those couples who are closer to urban areas will be pleased to find huge, multiple floor walk-up living nightmares. Take to Google and search out the best-reviewed offerings in your area. Wear something comfortable, because if this Haunted House is worth the trip, you two will be snuggling – or clinging – to each other.

The hired actors for these productions are an absolute riot. In some Haunted Houses, you might find yourself in a room full of vampires trying to seduce you and your man. You'll make it out alive, and maybe even a little flattered!

Where is the scariest haunted house you've ever been to? Let us know below.

Halloween Weddings: Fab or Frightening?



By GalTime Lead Ambassador, Yakima/Tri-Cities, Jenny Tiegs,
for GalTime.com

A bridal party dressed as fairies and pirates? Freshly carved pumpkin centerpieces? Frankenstein groom and a equally frightening bride? A hand-tied bouquet crawling with rhinestone spiders? Halloween weddings are a real thing, and it might be the theme of your upcoming nuptials.

We checked in with a Nadia Digilov, author of best-selling wedding book, *Getting Married in New York*, to find out how to plan an All Hallow's Eve affair that's more treat than trick.

"A wedding is a celebration of a marriage between a couple and therefore should not be confused with a tacky Halloween party," Digilov said. Instead, Digilov encourages the couple to infuse the holiday spirit with subtle touches that can add the aura of mystery and romance to the wedding day.

"Anytime I tell people I had a Halloween wedding, they always kind of laugh," explains newlywed of two years and teacher Meghan Robison.

So why would she or anyone else set a wedding date of October 31?

"Halloween has long been a favorite in my family," explains teacher and Halloween newlywed Meghan Robison. "We decorate our houses for Halloween the way most people would decorate for Christmas. We both have Halloween trees – mine was actually a wedding gift from my parents. Halloween is non-stressful, involves no gift-giving or expectations, and it lets creativity and magical imagination run wild!"

To keep it all organized (and not kitschy), Robison organized her ideas on inspiration boards (remember how we did this pre-Pinterest?) and kept on track with a binder so she or a vendor weren't tempted to get too crazy.

This is the trick with a Halloween wedding: Celebrating the holiday and the marriage without crossing the line into tacky

territory. Of course, you'll want a bit of "wow" – that's what Halloween is all about. Digilov suggests doing this while still keeping the event elegant.

Here's what our wedding expert Digilov and holiday-enthusiast Robison advise to making the event gorgeous, not ghastly.

Too freaky: Anything plastic! Say no to the fake Halloween pumpkins, skeleton heads, jewelry and fangs, Digilov says. Also, no masks or hiring actors to wear monster costumes and scare your guests as they make their way to the bathroom. No one wants to be responsible for sending Aunt Barbara to the hospital after a big fright. Also be mindful of children who might be attending as the line between imaginary and real is hard to decipher for a young child (and even some adults after a few cocktails).

Fabulous: Robison set the stage with vendors and friends by referring to the event as "masquerade" theme and being clear there would be no "blood, guts or gore" (full disclosure: her bridal party did don masks and her parents did don Dracula teeth as the bride and groom left the ceremony). These details made the day, she says, without going full-throttle Halloween.

Use textures, colors and lighting to enhance your wedding. When picking fabrics, think luxurious like velvet and silk. When accenting with colors, use rich and deep tones like reds, purples, golds, and bronze. Lighting is also very important and can be used to create a mysterious ambiance. Dimmed lighting is perfect when using candelabras, fireplaces and antique looking lanterns. Digilov reminds brides and grooms that you want your guests to be intrigued and looking forward to the mystery of what is going to happen next, not looking over their shoulder with fear and anxiety.

Start planning: If your wedding is next year, don't rush to buy up everything Halloween at the craft store now. Since you'll be skipping plastic skulls, there's no need to panic

about the season passing while you plan. Elegant ways to infuse Halloween, as Digilov suggests below, are available year-round.

Here are some ideas to infuse Halloween into your wedding day:

Mysterious Venue. Let the venue dictate the ambiance. Do you live in an area with historical building or a place that is rumored to be haunted? These physical structures lend themselves to immediately giving your wedding that spooky feel.

Mood Lighting. The lighting should be dim. Sources for lighting should include candles, either placed in candelabras, in the fire place or safely on the table. If your venue has a working fireplace, building a real fire is also a perfect way to create ambiance and light, not to mention some heat on a cold, fall night. Keep your eye open for antique looking lanterns to use with candles as well. Robison's loved ones danced in a hauntingly dim hall lit by moons, stars and tiny votives that dangled from the chandelier.

Sumptuous Colors. Veer away from bright orange and black paired together. Consider golds, dark purples, black and rich chocolate to convey the feeling of the season, not just pumpkins. While the flower girls in Robison's ceremony donned bright orange dresses and fairy wings, the adults were swathed in black and eggplant, with rhinestone pins to class up the creep-factor.

Signature Cocktail. Pour your theme into bright orange, spicy cocktails crawling with sugar-spider garnish and served next to bowls of eyeball candy. The bar can be a little more outrageous than other areas where guests dine, dance and watch the couple take their vows. Robison chose smoking green and purple beverages and treated guests to a late-night candy bar with spiced pumpkin cakes and cinnamon donuts.

Surprising Guests. Instead of providing guests with a program

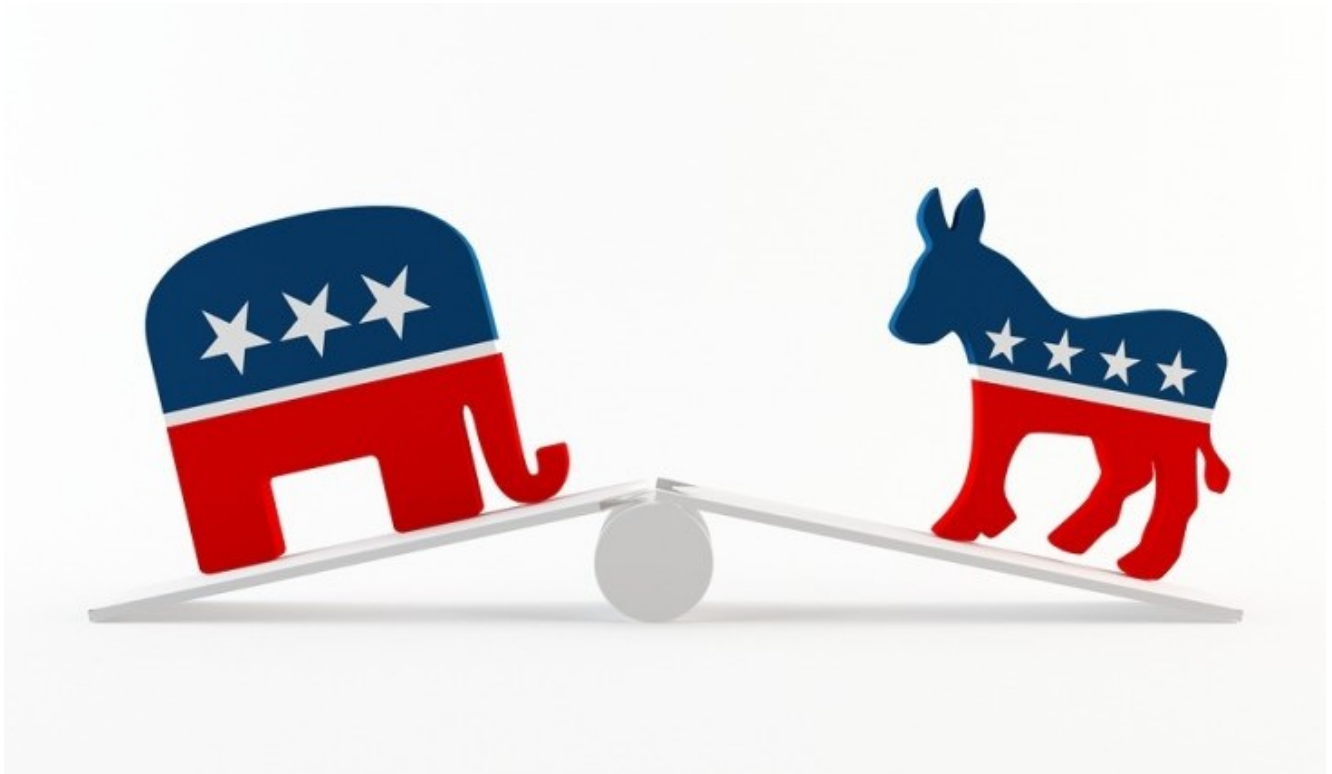
outlining what is happening next and in what order, Digilov says to find a way to reveal what is next to your guests shortly before it happens. By doing this, you are keeping your guests in anticipation mode. For an example, instead of advising everyone of a Halloween theme wedding when sending out the invites, surprise the guests as soon as they arrive by having staff at the entrance hand out small lanterns to each guest/couple to carry in order to “lead the way” into the ceremony room. As guests wait for the wedding to start, provide them with a short piece of paper on their chair that explains that they just walked through a haunted hallway or provide them with a scary story about the venue to get them in the mood. After the ceremony and upon arrival at the reception, have entrance staff provide guests with masquerade masks, instead of encouraging your guests to wear costumes. When the guest walk in, they will see lighting and decorations that hint at Halloween, but won't feel the need to use a tablecloth as a ghost costume.

“I know people were skeptical about the theme from the beginning,” Robison admits. “I think they were...blown away by how off-base they were. It was like a magical fairytale dreamland! People still tell me how much fun it was and how much they would love to do it all over again! I would do it over again in a heartbeat.”

I having glittery pumpkins rather than bouquets of roses makes your heart skip a beat, then do what makes you happy, Digilov says. It's always important to represent yourselves as a couple at your wedding, but also wise to make sure you're not cringeing at your wedding photo five or ten years down the road.

A beautiful fall background with hints of orange, black and gold is stunning and timeless. A plastic skeleton hanging from the rafters and you with spider webs and fake blood standing next to a ghost groom? Not so much.

Dana Adam Shapiro Reviews the Lessons he Learned While Writing 'You Can Be Right (Or You Can Be Married)'



By Michelle Danzig

After making a list of all the people that he knew, under 40, who were divorced, filmmaker and serial monogamist, Dana Adam Shapiro decided to answer the ultimate question: Why does love die? His book, *You Can Be Right or (You Can Be Married)*, contains 30 intimate interviews, where real people share the

reasons why their marriages ultimately failed and their own important advice for others on keeping relationships alive. In an exclusive interview, Shapiro shares what it was like to write this intimate book, discusses the common reasons why he believes marriages fail and shares advice on what can be done to prevent this from happening.

You have become pretty successful in the film industry, what made you want to write a book about divorce?

The reason I was interested in the topic of divorce was because many of my friends started getting divorced. It started happening when I was 35. I guess people must have been going through that '7 year itch' (people that got married in their late 20s). I didn't realize how common divorce really is. I was incredibly surprised to hear that they were getting divorced each time because people are really good at putting on a show. Marriage is a great mystery: you never really know if they are happy, or even what the idea of happiness is. Some people may find it difficult to address the reasons they got divorced. Inevitably, because the interviews would not be anonymous on camera, there really was no way to make a documentary about it.

What was it like asking people to open up about their failed marriages?

I think the key to being a good interviewer is being genuinely interested in the topic. I was just genuinely, personally interested in what they were saying. This wasn't just an assignment, it was something I was truly curious about and wanted help with. I was literally asking for their advice. I wanted to learn what went on behind closed doors and what they did wrong that they could have done better. I think that came through. There were definitely times when I was listening to a story and I thought, "Wow, you really did that?" But of course, you can't say that in the middle of an interview. It's very rare that people are allowed to speak about these types

of things. How often can you really open up to a therapist? I don't think there are that many opportunities for people to really open up about themselves. Most of the people said that they've never spoken so deeply about the issues before and at the end, the interview almost felt like an exorcism. I got to know these complete strangers in one interview better than their own friends know them.

Related Link: [When One Partner's Needs are More Important](#)

Almost all of the interviews are extremely intimate. Why do you think these first-hand accounts of failed marriages will benefit your readers?

I think this type of hard-worn wisdom, for me, is more powerful and more provocative. All great drama has conflict and that is what these stories are about; the break ups. It was kind of the opposite of *When Harry Met Sally*, where everybody was sitting on the couch telling you how amazing their marriage is or their love-life is. My book, on the other hand, is really about how to learn from other people's mistakes.

What was the most common reason marriages failed for the people you interviewed?

Personally, I think it's because people marry the wrong person. I don't think that most of the marriages that ended could have been saved. Many people get married too young and too quickly. Most of the time, in the courtship phase, when we're dating, there is a lot of 'airbrushing' going on; we really want to present ourselves to be as good and as strong as possible. Maybe we're even afraid to show our true selves because we just want so badly to get married. I think we tend to not see characteristics in our partner that may bother us. There is always the thought that, "Maybe they'll change." This alludes to how everyone talks about this idea of compromise. I believe it is essential, but there is such a thing as too much

compromise. So many people woke up seven years into their marriage saying, "Where did I go?" or "Who am I?" People are so focused on trying to please their partner and becoming their ideal that in doing so they've lost themselves. The most important and first chapter in the book is called 'Accelerating the Inevitable'. Honestly, I think that the inevitable is that you're going to become yourself. Any attempt to alter your character in some way and please another person, or think that someone can fundamentally change to please you, is a recipe for disaster.

What do you think are the most important things someone can do to prevent love from 'dying' in their relationship?

I think you have to genuinely enjoy putting the other person before yourself. Because of fairy tales and movies, I think the idealization of love is corrupting what we believe it is supposed to be. To have a realistic idea of love is to really understand what it means to put another person completely before yourself. As a culture, I think we are getting more and more selfish. I think that's the problem because marriage is really about the two of you. One of the things that kept coming up again and again, if you traced it back to the beginning, was that one spouse felt under-appreciated or neglected for some reason. I think it sort of festers into resentment or withdrawal. In many cases, this makes someone susceptible to the affection of other people and can lead to adultery or an affair. Ultimately, the reason the marriage ends is because two people simply grew apart and are living in the future thinking maybe it will get better.

Has this helped you, in any way, in your own relationships?

Yeah. It has definitely forced me to acknowledge all of these things about myself; to really just encourage my partner to be honest about who they are and for both of us to be vulnerable; to say, "If it doesn't work out, it's alright, it's not that you're wrong or I'm wrong, it's just that we are wrong about

each other.” I think to prioritize marriage or eternity is a slippery slope. If marriage can work out then that’s great, but it’s not the only result.

Related Link: [The Great Marriage Hoax: Why There’s More to Life Than Getting Married](#)

After writing this book, would you ever get married?

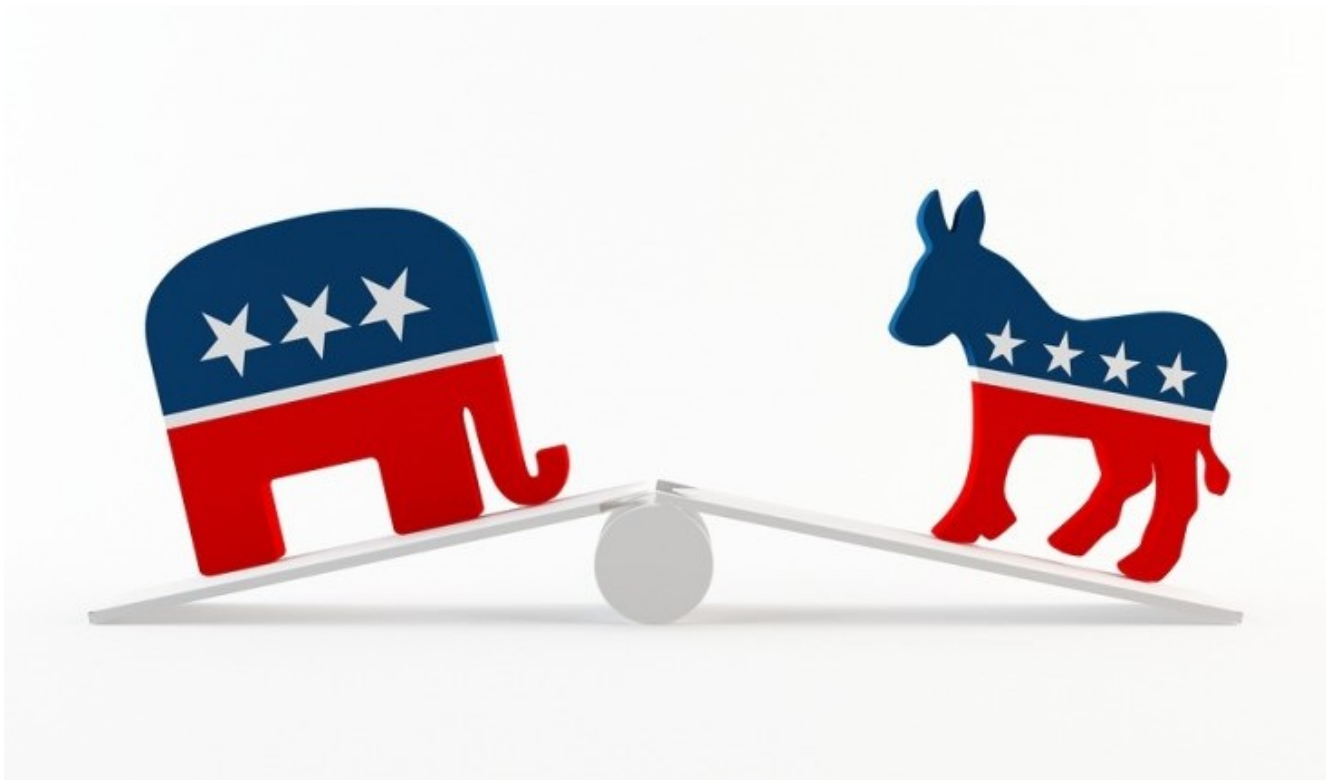
Yeah, I would like to get married. I think that is the ideal. If it is a great marriage, then yes. I think bad marriages, however, are far more common and the idea of happiness is definitely a tough concept when it comes to marriage. I think this idea that ‘You’re mine until the day that I die’ is a dangerous idea.

Lastly, will there be any other books in the future?

I’d like to do a book on alternative marriages; anyone who isn’t doing the traditional marriage like swingers, bachelors, or communes. It could be interesting to see whether these situations are created by chance or by choice.

You can purchase a copy of ‘You Can Be Right (Or You Can Be Married): Looking for Love in the Age of Divorce’ in bookstores and online from Amazon. For more information about Shapiro, you can visit his website DanaAdamShapiro.com.

Date Idea: Coffee House Cider and Pumpkin Pie



By Steven Zangrillo

Sometimes you and your babe need to have a sweet snack, and it doesn't really matter in what form. It was once described to me as "the need to pour a bag of sugar in a bowl and eat it." Since it's culturally reprehensible to eat like that on a date, you may want to take your loved one for some hot apple cider and pumpkin pie instead.

A low-key, cozy coffee house setting will do this idea justice. You could go to Starbucks any day. Instead, try to find a place that's off the beaten path. A fun fact about this type of date is that it is also cost effective. Cider and pie can be cozy and romantic while costing less than a mere \$20 dollars.

Don't be shy. Cuddle close to each other and share a slice of pumpkin pie, carrot cake, or whatever your tastes call for.

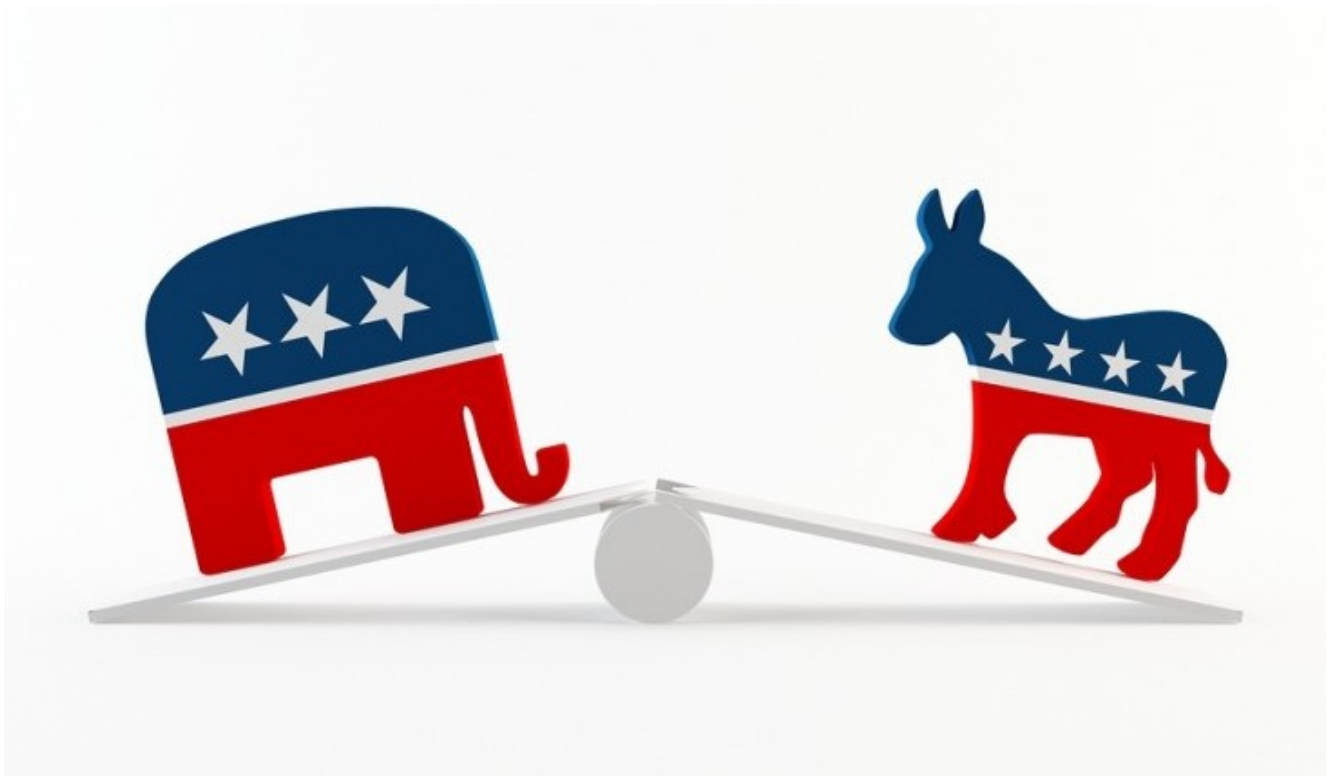
Many of these coffee shops have love seats and couches. You can kick back and relax, sipping gently as the quirky, coffee house world buzzes around you. If you're lucky, they will have booked some acoustic entertainment for the night. Do you two have a "song?" Request it secretly, if you can. Watch your sweetheart get all giddy when it starts to play.

Overall, this is the kind of date that is light on your wallet and heavy on the good vibes. Dig in.

Tell us about your last date at a coffee house by sharing your feedback below.

Sources Say Rob Pattinson and Kristen Stewart Are a Couple Again





By Jennifer Ross

The love story of Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart – take two! Several sources have confirmed to [People](#) that the Twilight on-and-off-screen couple is back together at last. To recap, the two broke up back in July when Stewart, 22, admitted to having a short affair with her *Snow White and the Huntsman* director, Rupert Sanders, who himself was a very married man. Soon after, Pattinson, 26, put their L.A. home up for sale and moved out. After much time separated, the two decided to meet up in L.A. around September 15 and have been practically inseparable since then. The newly reunited couple has yet to make their formal public debut on the red carpet, which is scheduled to happen while promoting *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Part 2* movie at the end of this month.

How do you know when to forgive and forget in a relationship?

Cupid's Advice:

No matter what horrible thing has happened, letting go of the bitterness and anger surrounding it will benefit your love life. It's imperative that you do this, If not for the sake of

your relationship, then for your health and peace of mind. The alternative only imprisons you in a cell you create. Understanding these few tips below will give you strength to let go and lead you towards a better attitude within:

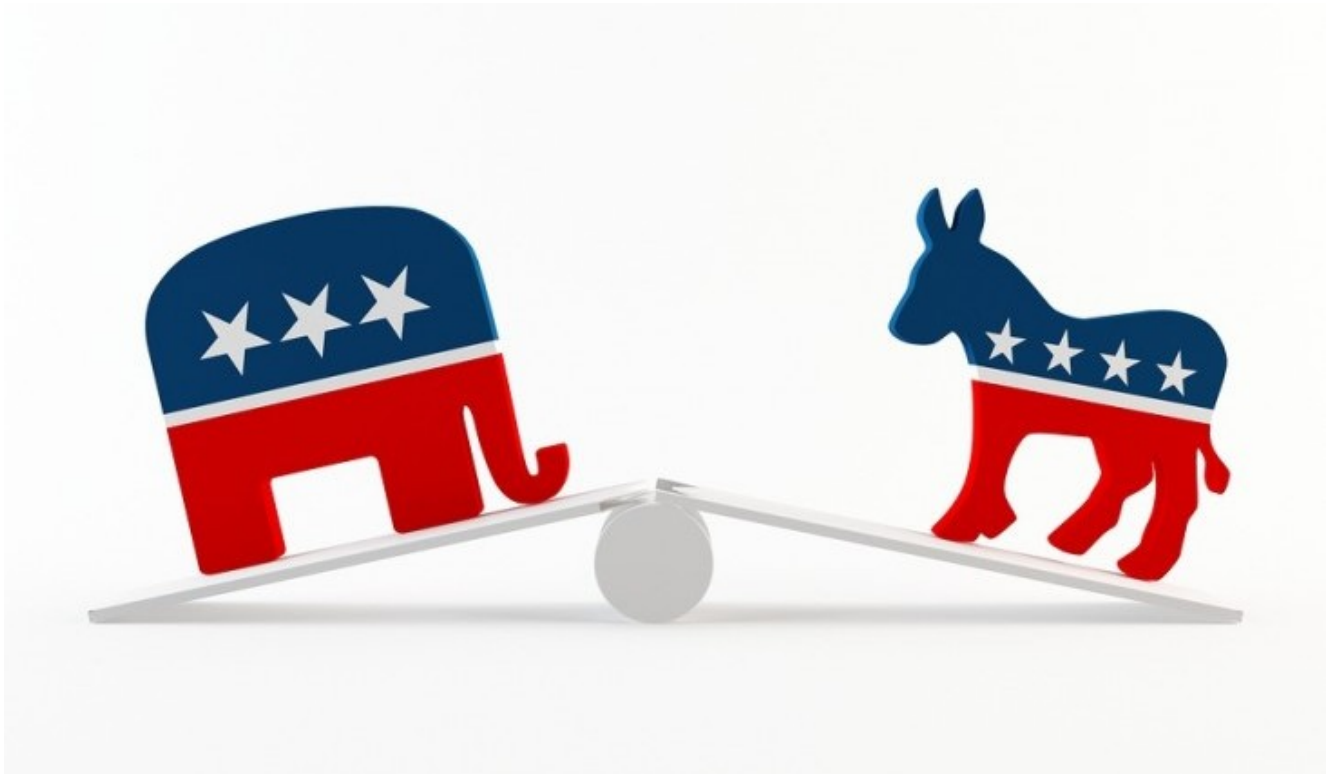
1. Get rid of the resentment: When being interviewed by the *New York Times* in 1998, author Malachy McCourt said, "Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die." He could not be any more correct. Holding on to resentment will not only kill your inner self, it definitely stops your relationship from strengthening and growing. Learn to let it go.

2. Look for the lesson: Some spiritual people believe that bad events are a test of our character, a challenging of our inner strength. Whether you believe this or not is up to you. However, when working on forgiving and forgetting your partner, focus on the lesson behind your situation. Something emotionally within you may be hindering your self-growth. Here is a perfect chance to find out what.

3. Purposefully forgetting: Obviously some situations are going to be too difficult to naturally forget. In these instances, look at it from a different perspective. Each time you remember this bad moment, teach yourself to associate it the happy times that came as a result of it. It is not a matter of never forgetting the pain, but a determination of consciously choosing to remember the good.

Were you able to forgive and forget in your relationship? If so, how did you do it? Share your story with us below.

Date Idea: Seasonal Ale-House Excursion



By Steven Zangrillo

The first weekend in October whips in on the back of those brisk Fall gusts, blowing leaves past you and your partner as you stroll down a block of your favorite city. Where are you two lovebirds headed? The nearest Ale House, of course. October is the time of year when the best micro-breweries from around the country release their Autumn-themed lagers and ales. It's about time you two pulled up a stool and enjoyed a frosty brew together.

The last decade has yielded a bountiful assortment of new specialty breweries, taking American beer and morphing it from

a pale swill into a flavor culture with an intricate identity. Try a multitude of options and compare them with your significant other. You can even consult your server about the best beer and food pairings. There's nothing wrong with learning something new together, right? You can choose from pumpkin spice, fresh hop, or the various Oktoberfest varieties.

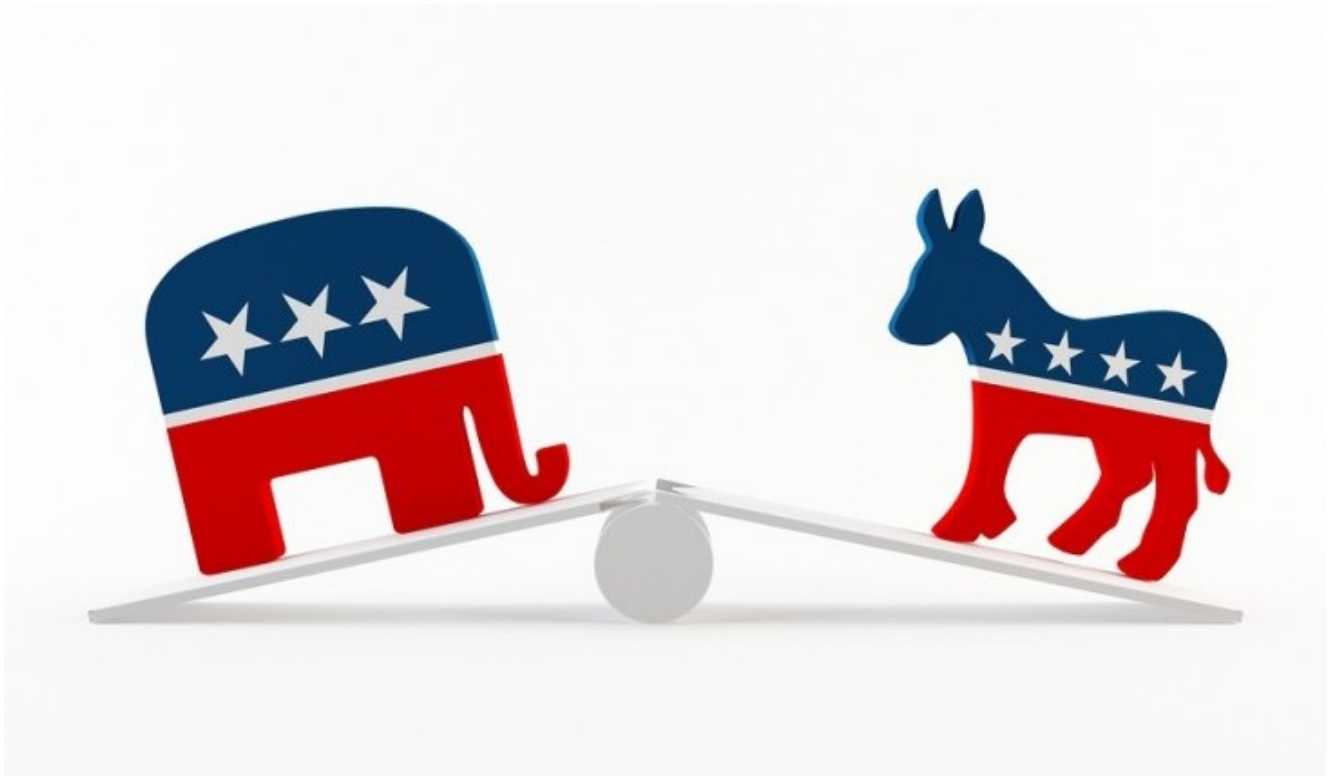
The best part of all, of course, is the opportunity for you two to relax together on your date. Some of the best conversations start with a smile, a laugh, and a clink of the glass.

You might call it just "going for a beer," but relationships are rooted in friendship. This kind of excursion can strengthen your foundation and leave you with great conversation that will create memories for years to come.

What is your favorite type of Ale? Send us your thoughts in the comment section below.

7 Steps to Recover From Ending A Relationship





By Stan Popovich

Sometimes it can be difficult to deal with the stress and depression of going through a breakup with someone. You feel sad, anxious and defeated. Here are seven suggestions that can help you manage the stress of ending a relationship:

1. Give It Some Time

At first, you will feel sad and will not want to do anything, however things do get better as time goes on. Give it a month or so and you will feel a little better. You'll be up and participating in all of the hobbies you left behind when you were with your ex.

Related Link: [Is it Time to X Out Your Ex?](#)

2. Stay Active

During this time you might feel alone. In this case, think about doing some volunteer work to meet some people and make new friends. Getting involved by helping others will make you feel better and your help could assist many people who may be

worse off than you. Go to your local church and see what kinds of volunteer activities are available in the community.

Related Link: [He's Texting His Ex: Should You Be Worried?](#)

3. Follow Your Interests

Instead of doing nothing, try to determine what interests you may have and pursue new things. Maybe you always wanted to travel somewhere and never had the time, or maybe you wanted to try a new hobby. This would be a great time to do it.

4. Work With Animals

Get involved at your local animal shelter. Animals can be a great source of companionship, and they can help uplift our spirits. Animals are a great way to prevent loneliness and many of them need your help. You won't be sorry if you spend some time playing with a dog, cat or other animal.

5. Manage Your Negative Thoughts

When you are depressed, you will tend to think of negative things. When this happens, remind yourself that worry exaggerates the problems you have and that things will get better. Try to avoid negative thoughts and remain positive.

6. You Will Meet Others If You Try

After ending a relationship, try to remind yourself that you will meet other people and make new friends. Try to go to places where you can meet other people and just be yourself. You never know when you might make a new friend. The trick is not to sit at home and feel depressed. You need to go out and be around people. This will increase your chances of developing new relationships.

7. Talk To A Counselor

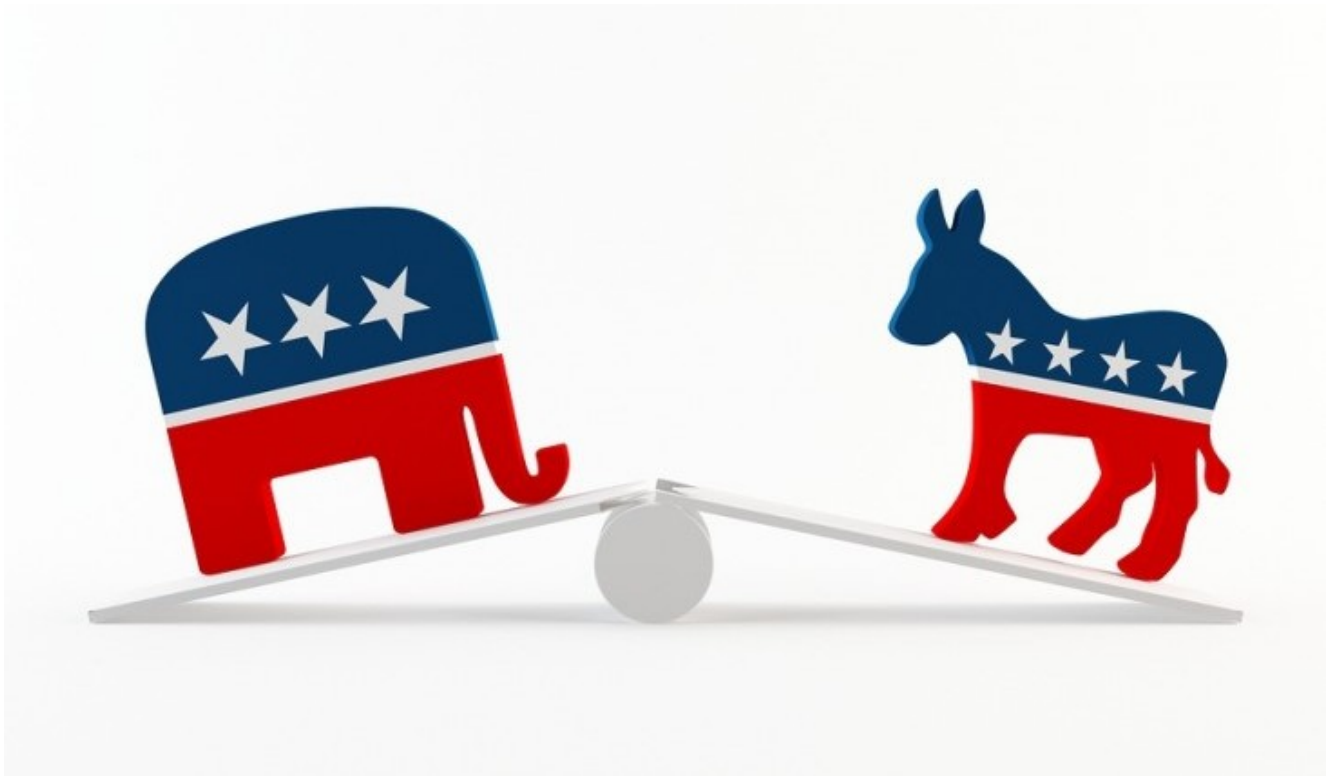
A counselor could give you additional insights on how to get

over a relationship. They will be able to provide you with additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current problem. By talking to a professional, a person will be helping themselves in the long run because they will become better able to deal with their problems in the future.

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods". For additional information go to: www.ManagingFear.com.

Q&A: How Can Social Media Help My Long-Distance Relationship?





Question from Tara M.: *I just moved a couple states away from my boyfriend for a new job. We're having trouble adjusting to the distance and need some new ways to keep in touch and keep our relationship strong. How can social media help my long-distance relationship?*

Answers from Our Love Experts:

Tristan Coopersmith, Love Stylist: Ok, so maybe there's no app (yet) to teleport couples to each other in a time of need or desire, but these days, technology truly is a long-distance relationship (LDR) couple's best friend! Since you have probably already exhausted phone, texts and Gchat, here are a few more inventive ideas to try.

1. Send your honey an evite for a TV night. You can watch a show together via Skype, while munching on your favorite treats. During commercials, catch up on your day.
2. Use Google Hangout to arrange for double dates with other LDR couple friends.
3. Play a game together like Words with Friends, Scramble or

Gems with Friends. You can even create a weekly game night and play all night together. Don't forget to send cute chat messages in between plays!

4. Create a photo calendar where each day has a theme, such as silly picture day or naughty picture day.

Don't forget though, too much technology can get burdensome and boring, so be sure to take a tech break once in a while. Instead, send an old fashioned letter or care package.

Suzanne Oshima, Matchmaker: A long-distance relationship can be tough on both people, but with technology and social media today, there are so many creative options to help you keep the relationship alive and going strong.

Let's start with texting. A simple "good morning" text is the best way to start the day, and a sexy, steamy "good night" text is a great way to end it.

When you can't see him in person, there's nothing better than Skype. Be creative and plan a dinner date night over Skype. You can make dinner together, catch up on each other's day and then sit down to a candle-lit meal. It's one of the best ways to remain a part of each other's daily lives.

During the day, when you don't have time to talk to each other, just send him a sexy voice note or quick video to let him know your thinking of him. Trust me, it will make his day!

And lastly, when it comes to Facebook and Twitter, posting a "thinking of you" status update or photo can light up his day...but one word of caution: don't go too overboard, or you will become that annoying couple to all your friends.

Just remember, if you're creative at utilizing social media and technology, it can actually bring you closer together as a couple, making you feel like less far apart physically.

Paige Wyatt, Reality Star: The first thing that comes to mind

is video chat! Video-chatting with your boyfriend gives you two a whole new means of communication. It allows you to actually see each other, which is sometimes exactly what you need. It's much more personal than just talking on the phone and definitely more personal than talking through text. When you video chat with your boyfriend, make sure you have enough time to devote to him and your conversation. Get rid of any potential distractions, and you should be golden!

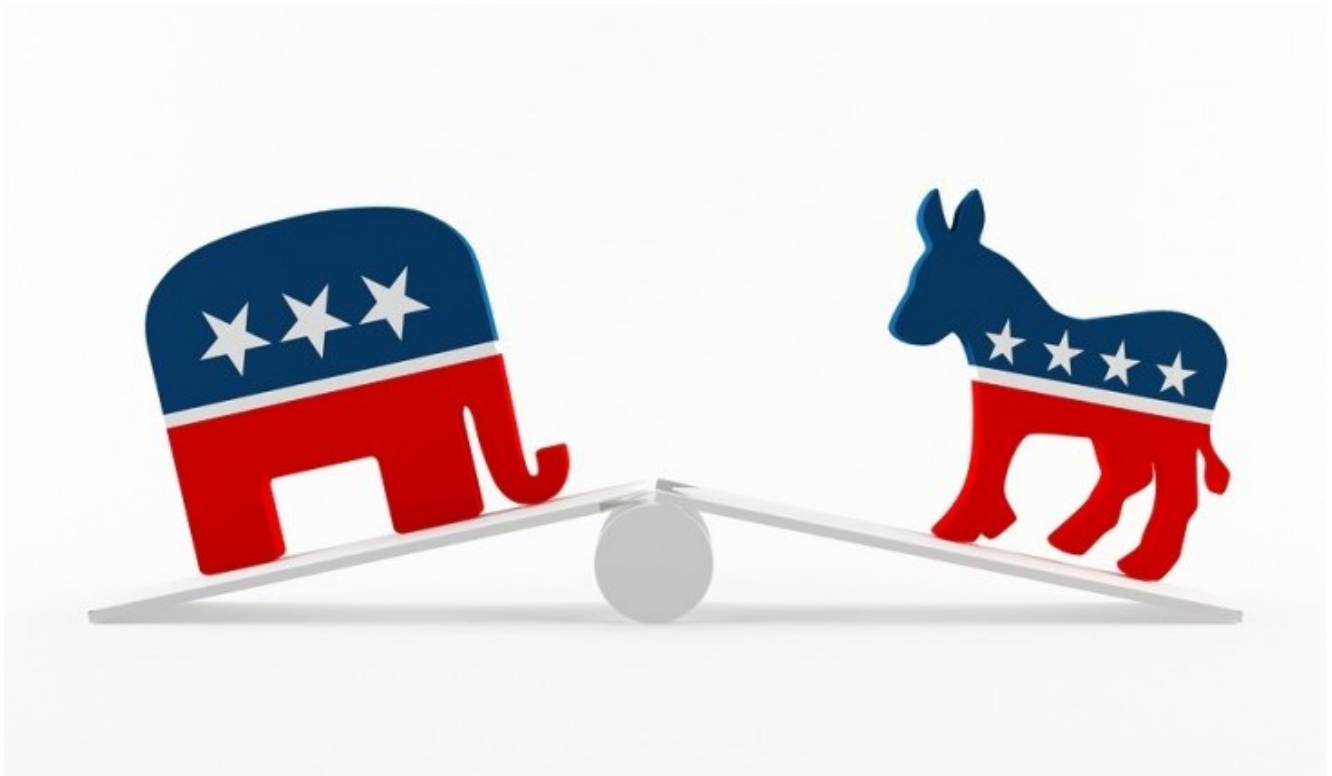
For more information on our three relationship gurus, click [here](#).

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

Are you in a long-distance relationship? How does social media help you? Share your story below.

Breaking Up Without Breaking Down





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

While breaking up is a part of dating, going back to a single life can be scary. It's time to stop worrying about lost love and start taking care of yourself. By enjoying life and staying positive, you'll climb out of this rut in no time. As Russell Brand told host Liz Hayes. "Sometimes it goes well, sometimes it don't. But if you sort of sense there's an incompatibility, then in any relationship, regardless of the status of the individual, it kind of is best to go separate ways."

Here are four tips to help you get back on the horse and have fun while doing it. Let's start with our post breakup tips.

Related Link: [Letting Go of Past Loves](#)

1. Don't call them under any circumstances

Once more, don't call them under any circumstances. If you're a woman – and you know who you are – just say no. We have a need to communicate our feelings. It is our way of processing. This is not as true for men. Write a simple e-mail, which

states your feelings factually without gushing. Keep it as short as possible. Using bullet points can be helpful to keep you on point. If it truly has been a loving relationship they will eventually call you, if only to say hello and wrap up any loose ends. At this point, you may be concerned it will be too late. You will be looking ahead to a new relationship. It may very well be too late. That is their problem, they blew it. This is why you don't sit around pining!

Related Link: [6 Things Women Should Never Do In A Divorce](#)

2. Occupy your darn time

Book yourself up continuously. Now is a great time to hang with friends, go to dinner, go to the movies, stay home and watch your favorite show with the girls and, even better, popcorn. Try wine tastings, spas and gallery events. You name it! It's also good to hang out with your male friends. Get some of that testosterone energy to keep you strong and reduce the sobbing. You will be less tempted to call him as well.

3. Date like crazy

Dating like crazy accomplishes two goals. One, it keeps you busy. Two, it releases PEA and endorphins. This works particularly well for women. You'll feel more secure, sexy and desirable. This shifts your attention off of him and back to you where it belongs. You will do far less pouting, and because your self esteem is stronger, you will get over your old flame far more quickly. So log into a dating site, go see a matchmaker, write a personal advert and let all your girlfriends know you are single so they can fix you up. Now, you may not be that attracted to some of these guys. Some you may not like that much, and a couple not at all. The point of this exercise is to get you out and about again. One thing I can promise is if you sit at home pining the only men you are going to meet are doing pizza and Chinese delivery. Even if your former romance is gorgeous, he's probably not the one for

you.

4. Take advantage of quiet time

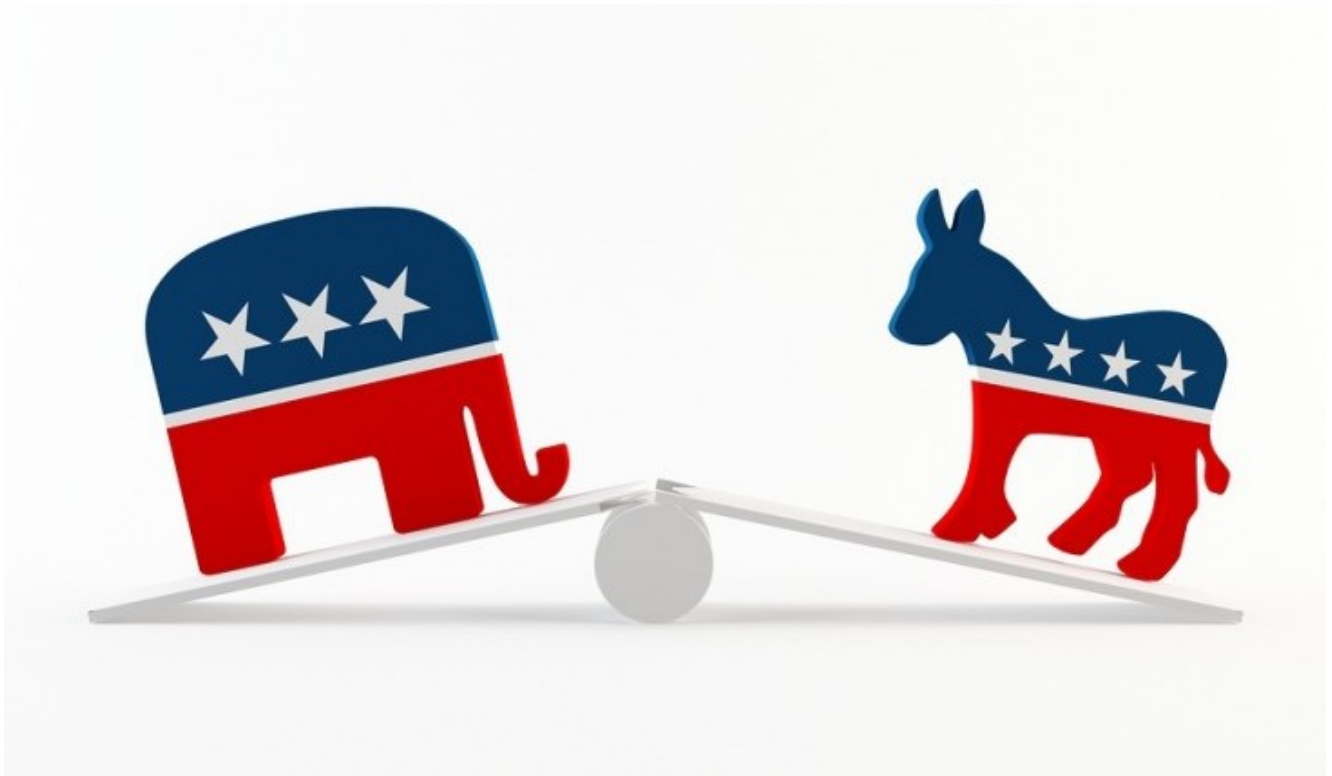
Know there will be some quiet times. When you find yourself with peaceful moments, try meditation on for size. Do this whenever possible and visualize positive thoughts: times and relationships that are supportive and loving. This past one wasn't, or you would still be together. Having more time with your thoughts isn't bad!

Remember, you deserve to have someone in your life who is caring, honest and faithful to the terms of your relationship. Take solace in the fact you're free from guy problems for awhile. You are now set to find the right person and have a good time finding him.

Developed by Lydia Belton PhD, Ct.H.A. of DrTranquility.com, 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.

7 Behaviors That Are Keeping You Single





By The Women's Insider, Camille Perkins, for GalTime.com

are you scaring mr. right away?

Ladies, have you been wondering why your friends have an easy time dating and maintaining their relationships but somehow you have difficulty maintaining your romances? Have you been noticing a trend in the way that your relationships end? If you answered yes, it may be time to consider that the problem may be YOU. Admitting that we may be the problem is never easy, but if you're doing the same things and reaping the same results, it's time for some self-reflection.

As a Love Coach, I've coached many single women on forming and maintaining healthy, successful relationships. Over time I've noticed several recurring themes that prevent women from doing just that. I'm going to share these behaviors with you.

1. BEING INTIMATE TOO SOON: Many women feel pressure to be intimate with a man because they feel that it will keep the man's attention. Doing so with a man who is not emotionally connected with you will keep his attention – but only for the short run.

Solution: Resist the urge to be physical with a man before you're ready. Also, do not be intimate with a man before there is a mutual emotional connection. Think: If you got pregnant, would he be there for you, or would he run for the hills?

2. NEGATIVE ATTITUDE: If you have the attitude that all men are dogs, all men cheat, all men are pigs, this attitude will definitely repel men. Even if you do not vocalize these thoughts, it will be evident in your actions.

Solution: Be positive. Be present. Smile with every man that you meet.

3. WASTING TIME: Too often women stay in dead-end relationships or put up with being the booty call / friends with benefits girl. Settling to be in a dead-end relationship or the booty call girl will only waste your time and prevent you from meeting the right guy.

Solution: Look at your relationship. Where is it going? Is it what you want? If not, you are missing out on meeting the right guy. Don't settle.

4. LOW SELF-WORTH: Having low self-worth is never a good thing. It can prevent you from realizing when you are in a bad relationship. Usually when a woman has low self-worth, she will only attract negative men.

Solution: You are beautiful and you deserve to be with a great guy. For the next two months, take note of all the compliments that you receive from family and friends. Make a list of the compliments you receive and write down the name of the person next to each compliment. Each night, read the list of compliments. In no time your confidence will be boosted and you will agree that you are amazing!

5. TOO PICKY: You will not date a man if he does not match your long list of requirements.

Solution: Make a list of three non-negotiables. Take 10 minutes to write down traits that you must have in a man, then prioritize your list and select the top three things that you ABSOLUTELY must have in a man.

6. LOSING YOURSELF: Something that I see very often is that once a woman starts dating a guy that she's interested in, she forgets her friends and the life she had before meeting him. For example, have you ever had plans with your girlfriends, but immediately dropped your girlfriends because your new guy invited you out on a date? Men (and people in general) are attracted to people who have a well-rounded life full and are more appreciative of you and your time when you fit them into your schedule.

Solution: Don't make your life revolve around his life. Don't be afraid to have a life of your own.

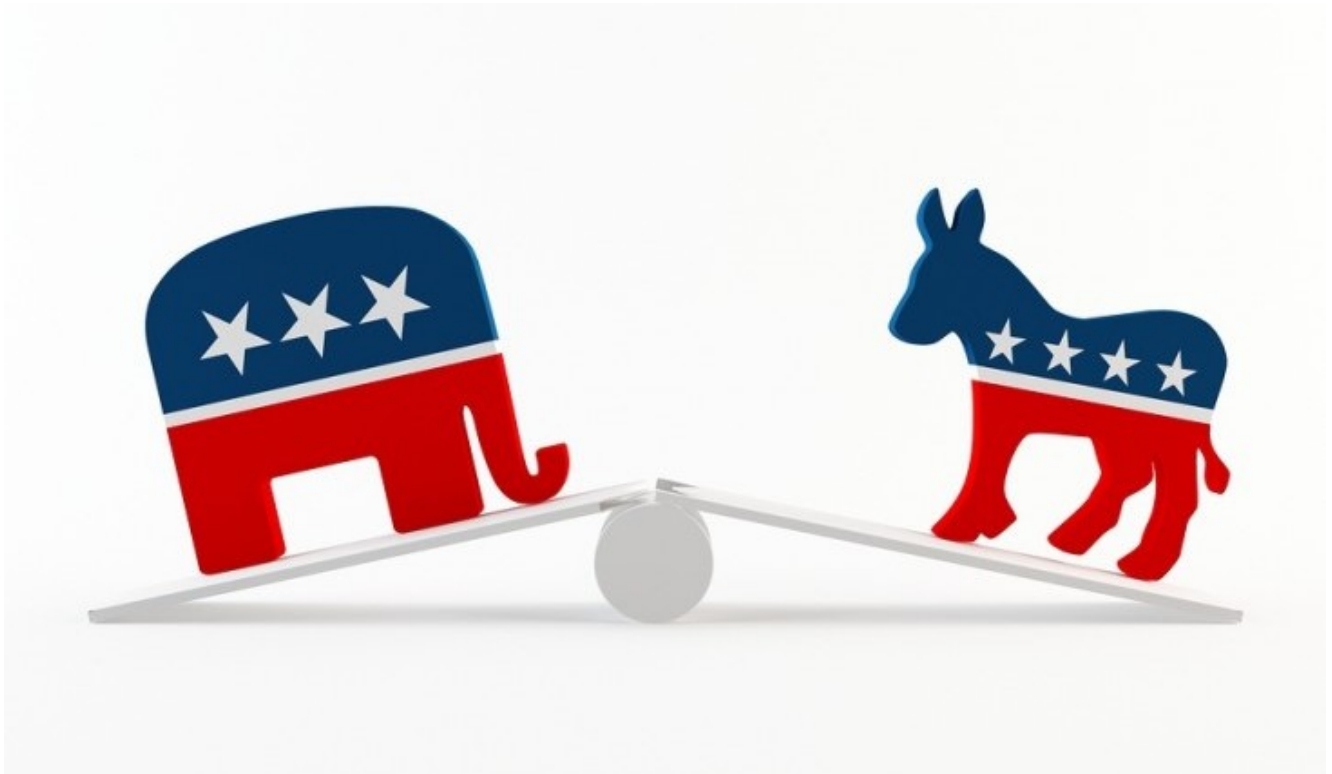
7. BEING OVERLY AGGRESSIVE: Typically, men do not respond very well to what they view as pushy women. Generally speaking, men enjoy the chase and want to be the one to pursue you. If you try to push for a relationship or marriage with a man before he is ready, it will only push him away.

Solution: Keep your cool. You're amazing. Allow the man to court you.

What are your thoughts? Do you agree? Are you guilty of these behaviors?

Taylor Swift and Conor

Kennedy: How Fast is Too Fast?



By Relationship & Sex Talk, Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

building a base for love

Superstar Taylor Swift and boyfriend Conor Kennedy hadn't been dating long when he took her to a family wedding in August, despite reported requests that she not go because some worried Taylor's presence would take away from the bride's attention.

That's a problem most of us don't have to worry about, but it does raise the question: When is it a good time to meet your new flame's family? And is it a good idea to attend a big family event early in a relationship?

A patient of mine was in this situation recently. She had been dating someone for a few weeks, and was over the moon about him, when he asked her to his best friend's wedding. She was thrilled, to say the least, and read his desire to take her as a sign that he was really into her and wanted her to meet his inner circle. Not only was she flattered, but she attached great meaning and expectation to their blossoming relationship because of the invitation.

Hearing her enthusiasm and high hopes, I was concerned about the possibility that for her new boyfriend, this was more about the upcoming occasion – and not wanting to go solo – than it was about actually beginning a serious relationship with her.

That is not unusual, that you meet someone around the time of a big event and have it in mind during those first few weeks of dating. In other words, the new excitement and romance which for her was all about getting to know each other, may have been for him simply about having a great time at the wedding. Or, perhaps his intention was to get to know her better, but his sister didn't like her, or his best friend gave her the thumbs down. Whatever the case, it didn't go well for my patient. After the wedding, she never heard from him again.

Sometimes the timing can't be helped. You have been dating for a short time and his sister just happens to be getting married next week. Or it is her older brother's birthday bash and everyone will be there. On the one hand, it can feel very encouraging that your new partner seems to like you so much that they want to bring you to a big family party and meet the important people in their lives. On the other hand, you might be walking right into a judgment fest in which, if you haven't established your own strong connection yet, your newly significant other might be too easily swayed away from you should their family suggest you aren't the right match. Instead of gaining favor, you run the risk of getting the seal

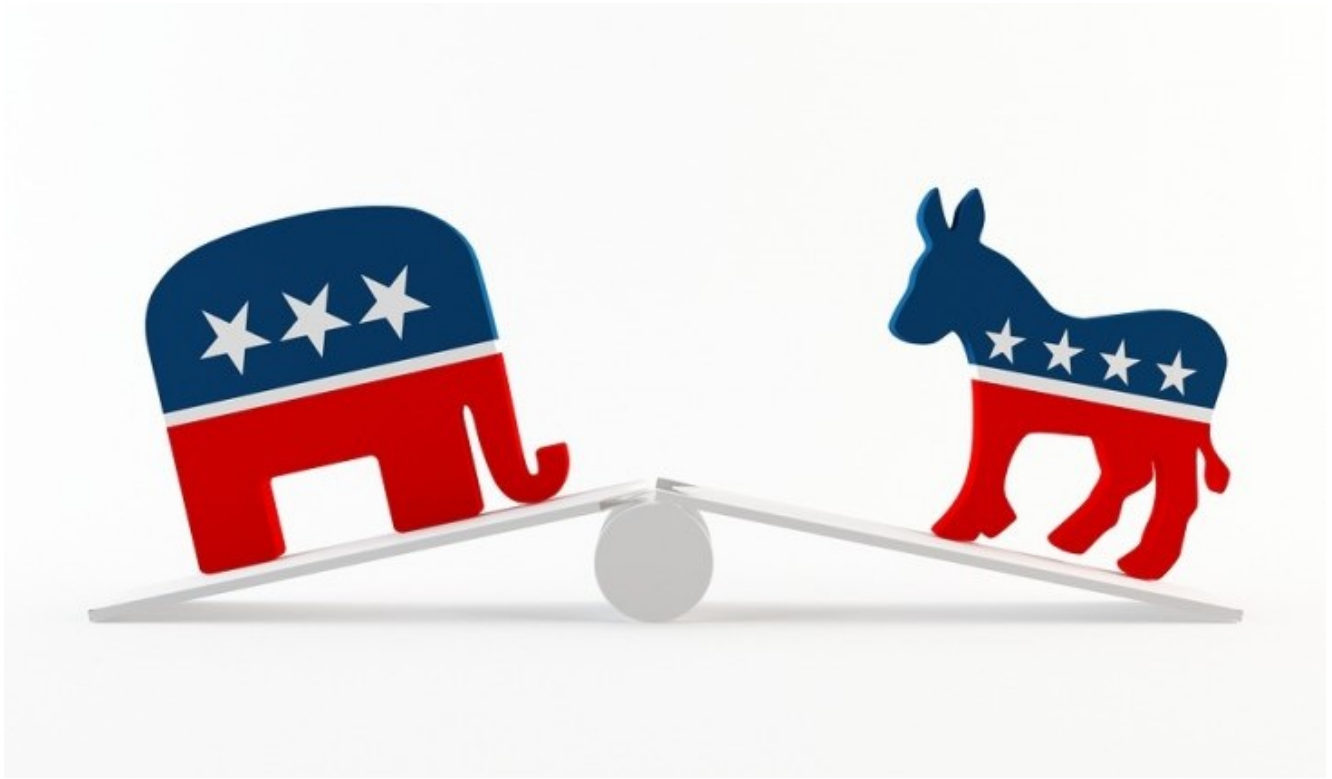
of disapproval.

Think of it as building a good fire. Sometimes the top takes off right away, burning high. But if there isn't a hot smoldering base, that fast fire can quickly fizzle out. Take the time to establish a foundation before opening yourself up to any possible criticism. If you are asked to that wedding or birthday celebration early on, you can politely decline, adding that you would love to go to the next occasion. That will give you a chance to build a solid relationship so when you do meet the family you are already an item, and your new partner can better withstand any negative comments that might come your way. And if, in fact, the motivation to pursue you stems from wanting a date for the event itself, you will have your answer before you got in too deep.

Taylor and Conor didn't choose this path, but jumped right in. She has met the family, attended big events, and even, sadly enough, visited the grave of Conor's mother who died recently. For him, obviously, it wasn't just about having a date to the wedding, but only time will tell if their foundation will be strong enough to sustain them.

What do you think...how fast is too fast to introduce someone to your family, bring them to a big event, move in, propose, etc?

5 Red Flags to Be Aware of In Your Relationship



By Grace Pamer

I am a fan of the show *Dexter*, and was probably just as surprised as everyone else that the two stars, Jennifer Carpenter and Michael C. Hall, filed for divorce. The couple appeared happy, like best friends, being married and working as a team on the award winning show. When Michael C. Hall was diagnosed with cancer, Carpenter was at his side helping him through it all. But later, Hall's break trust via rumors of infidelity made their way into the relationship, resulting in its dissolution.

We may, as a society, idolize stars and follow the ups and downs of their relationships. But the truth is that their partnerships are very similar to us "normal folks," minus the millions. We may be in shock when a famous couple that appeared so committed announces their divorce, but it can happen to any couple at any time. Though couples are, by

definition, a team – they are also two unique individuals, with their own thoughts, feelings, experiences and emotional baggage.

The seemingly best relationship can go wrong, even mine. Noticing that there might be trouble is the key to trying to work things out before it is too late. Keep in mind that there can be valid reasons for the following relationship warning signs and that they in no way are intended to imply certain doom. There can be stress at work, grieving a loss, a family member moving in or a health issue that appropriately explains away any concerns in the short term.

Related Link: [Demi Moore Proves There's Hope After Divorce](#)

But sometimes there are no valid reasons for the following five red flags, which can appear in even what seems to be the healthiest relationship:

Red Flag 1: Losing Trust

If we find ourselves beginning to doubt our partner's honesty, we need to listen to our inner voices. Whether catching a mate in frequent, little lies is the trigger or there is a bigger concern because our lover is keeping longer hours and coming home late each night, losing trust is a signal to us that something could be wrong.

Related Link: [Red Flag or Quirk? How to Tell the Difference](#)

Red Flag 2: Avoidance

If we begin to see our partner less and less, without explanation, this is another red flag. It can spell trouble when rituals such as watching favorite shows on weeknights, doing crosswords in bed, eating meals together or weekend date nights begin to disappear. Keep in mind that avoidance doesn't have to equate to infidelity – it could signify fear and distraction over a health concern, depression and a host of

many other things.

Red Flag 3: Acting Guilty

Humans are curious creatures and sometimes, without even knowing it, their actions speak much louder than words. A lover who traditionally was never one to bring home flowers or expensive gifts, if feeling guilty, might subconsciously begin to do just that.

Red Flag 4: Less Intimacy

If we notice less intimacy, that could also be a warning sign that there is an underlying problem. Intimacy isn't just about making love, though that is a big part in healthy relationships – it is about touching a lover's shoulder when we walk by, holding hands when taking a walk, massaging feet when lying on the couch. If usual intimacy levels begin to decline, we need to recognize the warning sign that something is awry.

Red Flag 5: Lack Of Respect

Respect is so important in any successful relationship. Being respectful is when we don't ridicule our lover for having his/her own opinion. It is about sharing the load and responsibilities of daily life. Respecting a mate also involves making sure both people's needs are met, not just our own. If the partner begins to criticize, ridicule or take the other for granted, there could be an underlying problem.

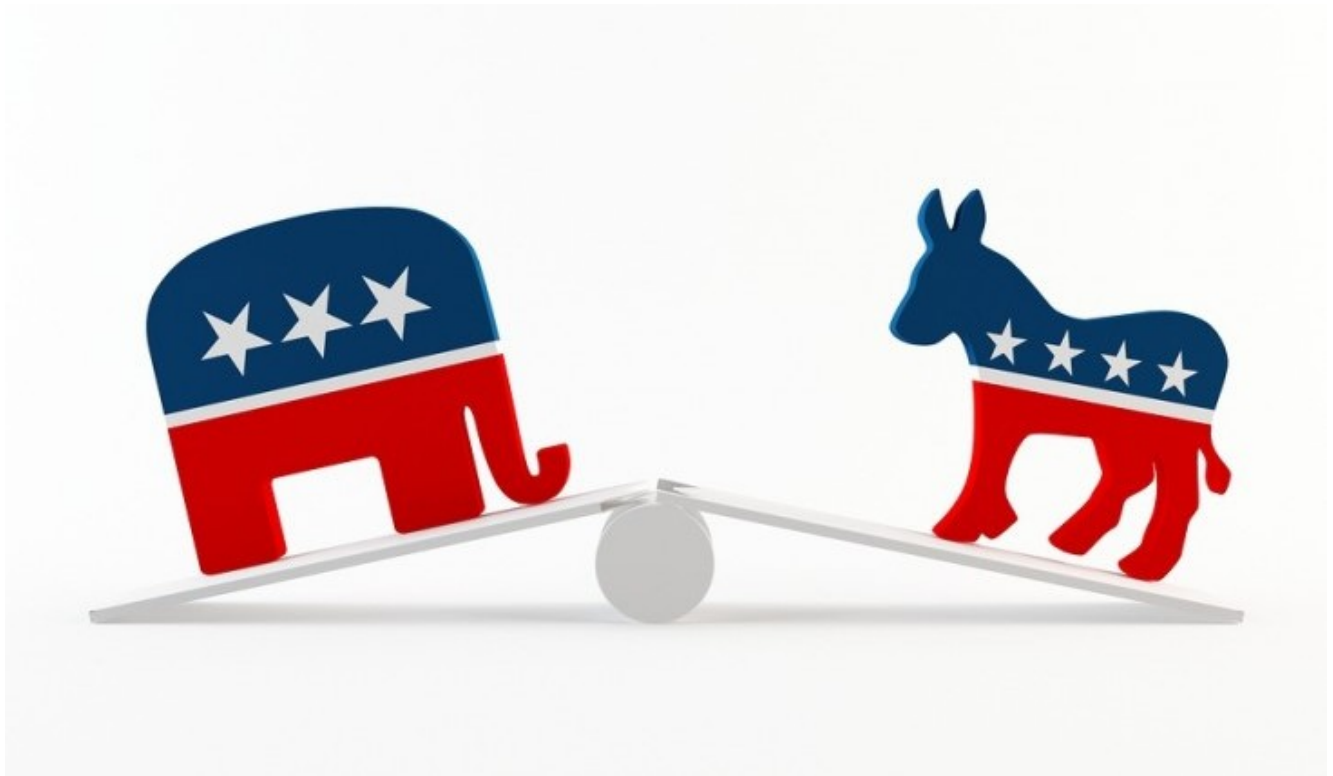
Aside from the red flags mentioned above, we need to simply be aware of any unexplained changes in the relationship. The goal here isn't to play detective and "catch" our partner in a misdeed, going on the offensive. That could backfire because an innocent partner being accused of guilt could cause irreparable damage. Consider how a lover would act if he or she didn't want to burden us with the stress that there are rumors of layoffs at the workplace. There can be many valid reasons why a person starts acting differently.

It is our job to simply communicate our concerns in a peaceful, loving manner – stating only how we feel, not criticizing behaviors. When red flags appear, the only goal should be to find a block of time in a quiet environment where open, honest communication can take place. Behavior changes aren't always about infidelity and red flags aren't always bad – they can actually lead to a healthier, more stable relationship, because they force us to put our love first.

Grace Pamer is a work from home mom and author of www.RomanceNeverDies.com which provides a resource for all those seeking romantic ideas and inspiration whether for a date, a marriage proposal or in a long term relationship.

6 Things Women Should Never Do In A Divorce





By David Wygant

In the crazed battle of the exes (or soon to be permanent exes) we too often tend to act on our emotions. We're angry. We're annoyed. We're upset. We're devastated. Divorce is like going through death, and it affects more than just the couple: kids, parents, friends – it's the ultimate division of assets. For those of you who have or are going through it, you know what it feels like. It sucks. So, I want to give a few tips to those out there in the arena -especially the ladies. Here are a few things that women should never do in divorce and why:

1. Make the man the bank: If you were not the earner in the relationship and you attempt to turn your ex into a Bank of America during the divorce process, you're going to get far less in the settlement than you ever would have, than if you showed a little prudence and appreciation. Nothing makes a man more irritated than knowing he's being used for money. Here he is, in the process of getting a divorce..from you (whether it was his idea or yours) and he has to write you a check for the money he's earned. There's no worse feeling than seeing a hard-earned paycheck cut in half and given to somebody who's constantly belittling and just plain mean.

Whether you put off your career to raise your children or you're just expecting alimony, it's important to be thankful for every dollar he gives you because ultimately, you could be in trouble if he didn't. Showing your gratitude will help you cause – he'll give you what you need, (if you need it) so you can survive, live and breathe until you can get back to work. Remember, the two of you were married once. Somewhere deep down, a form of [love](#) still exists so respect one another for the best outcome.

Related Link: [5 Signs Your Partner is Using You for Money](#)

2. Do initiate battles: Venting your feelings or frustrations to him will only waste your own time. Accept that it's over. The time to do that has passed so now you have to act like an adult and deal with the reality of the situation. You're both disappointed and you both need to heal. If you did not have children, you probably would not be in contact with each other at all, so keep communication focused on the kids and refrain from bringing up old wounds.

If you think you're able to talk to him in a civil manner about the relationship – fine. But, if you get emotional and intentionally try to make him feel bad, then he'll get defensive and take a few uppercuts of his own, which only leads to more fighting and where did that get you guys before? Keep the e-mails simple, straightforward and only about your children or the settlement. You're now in a business relationship – get used to it. Use what you learned at work and speak with grace, class and professionalism.

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

3. Save the drama for your mama: Do not vent to your circle of friends. The division of friends is coming as it always does in almost every single divorce. You find out who your real friends are as they start to choose one side or the other. Anything can happen and it's not always in your

control. I've seen (in my 14 years of coaching) parents choose their son-in-law or their daughter-in-law over their own son or daughter.

I know you're going through pain. I know as a woman you love to talk and let everything out. But choose only one or two truly close friends to do this with. Or better yet, just chew off your Mom's ear, that's what mothers are for. If you start bad mouthing your soon-to-be ex-husband all around town, he's going to eventually hear it, and that's where the division of friends comes in full swing with no mercy. You do not want third-party battles, or to make people that are close to you feel uncomfortable. Inevitable, whenever you're venting to a large group of people, they will choose one person or another because you've forced it upon them. And that's not fair for anyone. Some of you may have life-long friends, and it's okay for them to be friends with the both of you. So be the bigger person and keep them out of it. Go out and find a counselor or therapist. But do not make your divorce the talk of the town.

4. The children are not pawns: This one should seem real simple, I actually shouldn't even have to mention this. However, it seems like in every divorce that I've ever coached a client through, the children are used as pawns. Watch your words carefully. They're hurting right now. Daddy is no longer there. They don't understand it, especially the young ones, and even the teenagers have a lot of anger.

You need to speak to your children explain to them what is going on, but keep your tone positive. This may too be obvious but to emphasize, the kids should never be forced to choose sides. Never ever make dad the bad guy. He may no longer be your husband, but he's still a father to your kids. Remember that children still need a good dad, a good role model and an authority figure to look up to.

Related Link: [Celebrity Couples Who Function as Families After](#)

Divorce

5. Your dream is over: The perfect picture that you created for the marriage that you thought you deserved is over. You're probably going to have to go back to work. The alimony will run out. You may have to get day care for the young kids. Reality is now setting in, and you need to accept it as quickly as possible in order to heal in a decent amount of time.

You can't change the way your marriage unfortunately worked out, and now you need to find a way to move on. Maybe you won't be a stay-at-home mom for five years. Maybe you won't have a country-club lifestyle. Maybe you won't have that house by the beach or the unlimited shopping sprees for organic groceries at Whole Foods, and that's going to have to be okay. The quicker you can realize what reality you're in now, the better you're going to feel.

6. Choose your preferred method of communication (phone, e-mail, or text): If you're in an angry divorce, I strongly suggest e-mail as the best way to communicate, because the phone can lead to more fighting which is the last thing you want to do. Fighting with daddy in front of the kids on the telephone while you're on your way out is not a good way to set the tone for the day. A lot of us have Bluetooth in our car. Imagine him calling and you push the wrong button and you're not able to control yourself in front of the kids and you have an argument. They've witnessed enough fights when you were together. They don't need to be consumed by it anymore. E-mail is simple. You can read and react to that e-mail, and then you can save it as a draft and then re-read it again. Then comb back through it and take out all of the venom, the hate the angst and just make it about the children. This will keep you sane and the situation under control. Like I said earlier, pick a person to vent to so you don't have to vent in your communications with your ex.

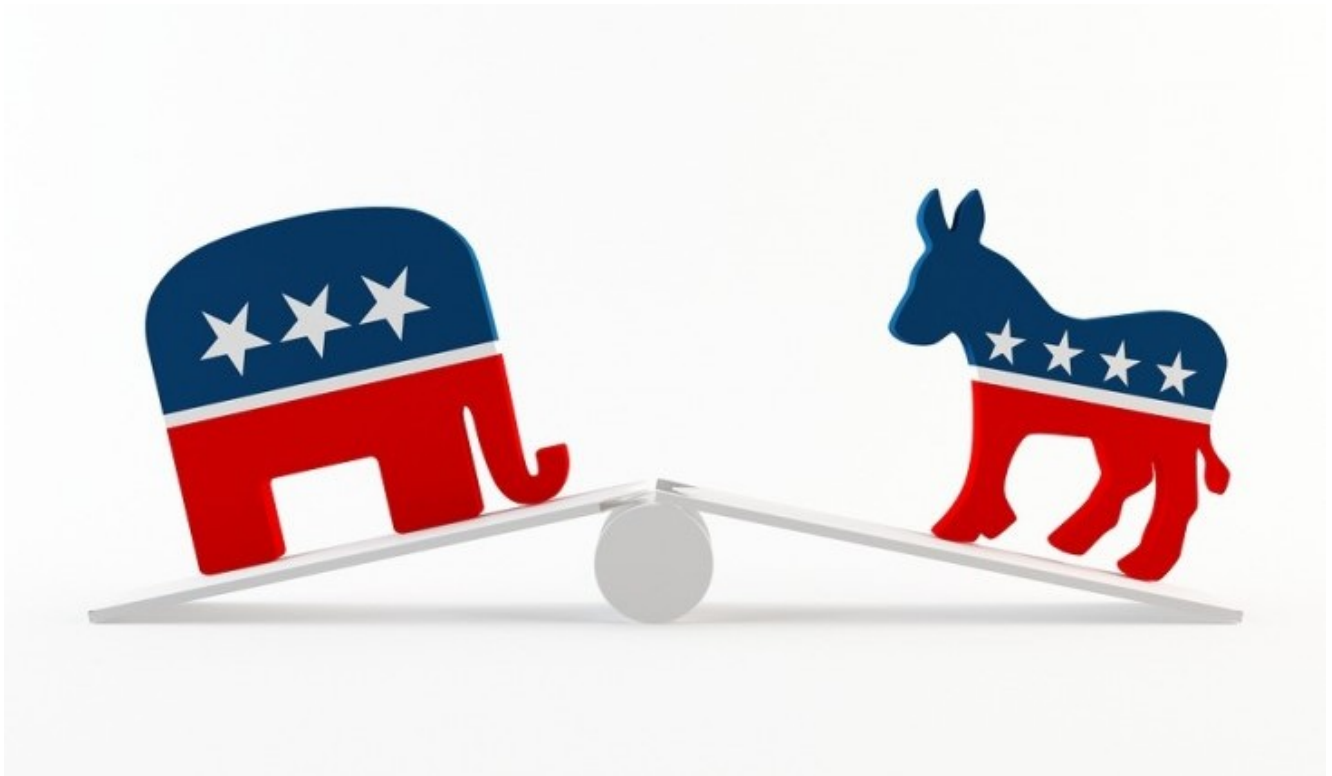
Ladies, please adhere to these easy, simple tips. It's going to make your life run so much smoother and reduce turbulence during this difficult time.

And like I said, if you really are that angry, talk to somebody. Because if you cause any of these things to happen, you're going to likely splinter a relationship with your ex for the rest of your life. Don't forget, if you have kids, your ex is somebody who's going to be family with you forever. Think about things long-term instead of short-term. There are plenty of professionals out there that can help you get through this. Remember, the most successful people in life are those who think about how their actions today will affect them tomorrow.

David Wygant is an internationally-renowned dating and relationship coach, author of the new book Naked and speaker. Through his boot camps, personal coaching and his website at www.DavidWygant.com, his advice has transformed the dating lives and relationships of hundreds of thousands of people from every corner of the globe.

How Long Should You Wait for a Proposal?





By Jane Greer, PhD for GalTime.com

In the land of quick marriages, Academy Award-winning actress Hilary Swank has taken a different tack. She was married to actor Chad Lowe for eight years, and dated him for six years before that.

Most recently, the actress dated John Campisi for five years. Swank recently announced that they broke up in May. The rumors suggest that John's not proposing might have sparked the separation. That may or may not be the reason, but it does beg the question for anyone who has been in a long-term relationship and waiting to get engaged: How long do you wait for your partner to be ready? Basically— When is enough... enough?

There is no question in your mind that you are ready to commit to your partner for life. Your partner, however, continues to drag his feet. As hard as it is to accept, sometimes relationships outlast their shelf life and stop moving forward. How can you know if your relationship has reached that point, and you have entered that zone of just wasting

your time? Is there anything you can do or are you destined to be taken along for the ride?

The most important thing to keep in mind is that, despite the fact that your partner's reluctance to commit can feel like a rejection of you, try not to take it personally. You can do this by recognizing that when one partner is holding back on taking that huge step, it often has more to do with their own individual issues and fears than with how they feel about the other person.

He may have experienced his parents' divorce when he was younger, and see marriage as destined to fail. Perhaps, he was betrayed at one time themselves and now has trust issues. If he has been married before and gone through his own divorce, there might be all sorts of concerns keeping him from remarrying. Or he might be worried about differences in religious beliefs and lifestyles, or his career success. One of my patients, for example, is ready to get married and eager to take that next step, but her partner is hesitant. They have been dating for three years, and are now living together, but he says he needs to feel more secure in his job and be earning a higher salary before he feels ready to buy her a ring.

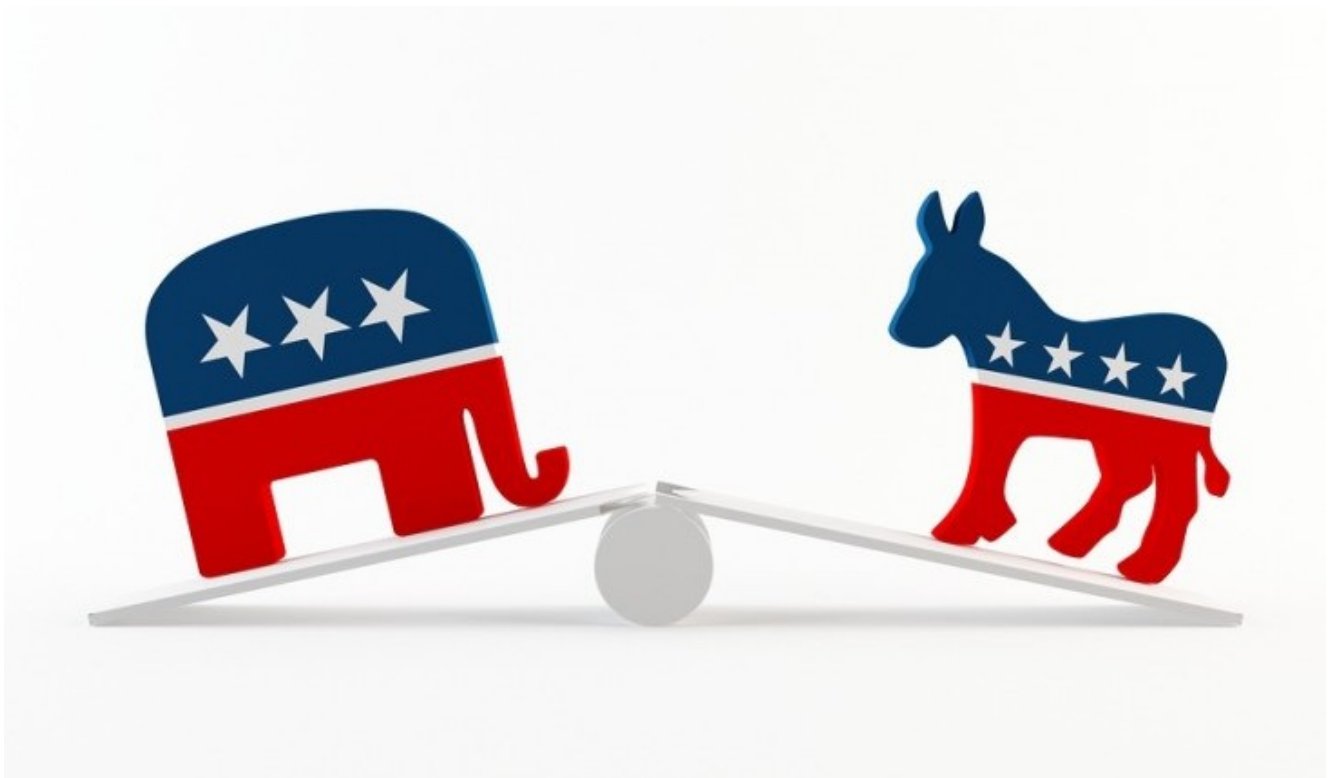
I encouraged her to talk to him, as I would suggest you talk to your partner about why they are not ready to go forward. See if you can jointly determine what it might take for them to get beyond their fears. Set goals to work toward making those changes. Maybe it means talking through the religious differences and making a concrete plan, or it could be as simple as finding a new job or asking for a raise. And then you can set a time limit for yourself, maybe six months or a year, and see if anything is being done.

As long as your partner is trying then your relationship is still viable and worth fighting for. But if your partner is all talk, and has made no attempt to move toward the goals you set together, then sadly it might be an indication that

nothing will ever change. At that point, you can do what they have not been able to do and take the next step yourself and move on.

Then you will know you did everything you could. Hopefully, if this was the issue that separated Hilary and John, these were the steps they were able to take.

Love Lessons Learned from Marilyn Monroe



By Amy Osmond Cook, Ph.D.

Marilyn Monroe had it all—fame, beauty, wealth, and some

powerful boyfriends—but the one thing she wanted most eluded her. She had three troubled marriages and a host of unfulfilling affairs, and she removed herself from all of them for various reasons.[1] Marilyn's unhappiness amidst spectacular success is nothing short of tragic, but we can learn from the path she trod in her short 36 years of life. From her brief comments about the unraveling of her marriages, here's the advice I believe she would give about how to learn from her relationships and find lasting love.

1. Find a guy you enjoy talking with:

Marilyn married her first husband, James Doherty, when she was just 16 years old. Her legal guardian was moving away from California and convinced the two young lovers to get married. The marriage was not a good fit from the beginning—he didn't approve of her modeling career, and he spent much of the marriage in the Pacific during World War II. But when Marilyn was later asked why they divorced, she said simply: "My marriage didn't make me sad, but it didn't make me happy either. My husband and I hardly spoke to each other. This wasn't because we were angry. We had nothing to say. I was dying of boredom." [2]

Love Lesson Learned: Be in a relationship that you enjoy.

2. Don't let jealousy get in the way:

Marilyn married baseball legend Joe DiMaggio in 1954, two years after they began dating. While they remained friends until the end of their lives, his jealousy of her fame and acting career contributed largely to the dissolution of their marriage. Tension grew, culminating in a verbal and physical altercation over the famed skirt-blowing promotional pictures for *The Seven Year Itch*. Marilyn filed for divorce shortly thereafter, citing mental cruelty. She stated before a judge that Joe was "cold and indifferent" to her and that days would go by when he wouldn't speak to her.

Love Lesson Learned: Don't waste your time with a jealous partner.

3. A "meeting of the minds" matters:

Marilyn's third husband, Arthur Miller, was a brilliant playwright who dazzled her with his sharp mind. Marilyn was an avid listener, but she was all too aware that she was not his intellectual equal. Regrettably, her fears were realized when she read in his journal that he had second thoughts about marrying her and considered her his inferior. After one particularly emotional conversation, she overdosed on sleeping pills, and the marriage ended.

Love Lesson Learned: Choose a partner that loves you for who you are.

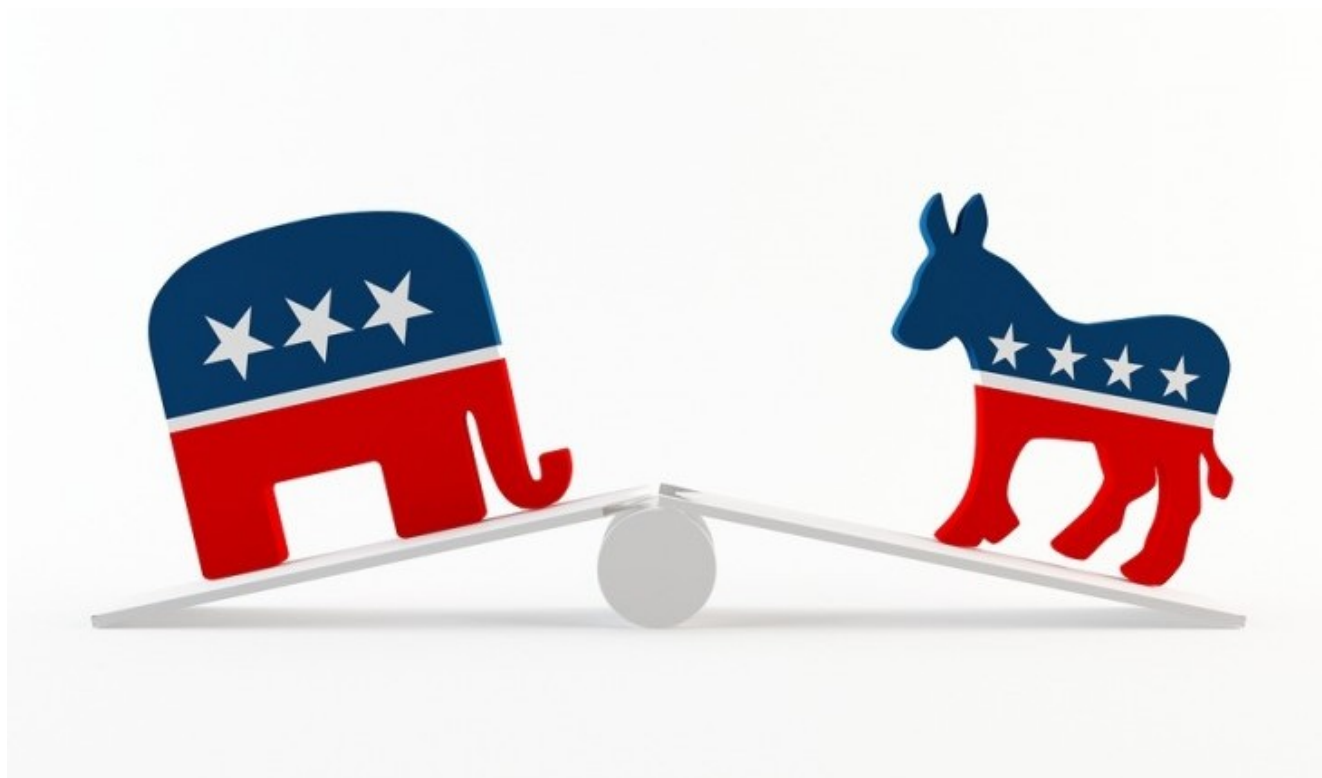
Marilyn's untimely death was mourned by millions of fans, associates, and former flames. Joe DiMaggio placed roses on her grave every week for 20 years to remember her. But she was tragically unable to find lasting love in her three marriages. If she were here today, I believe her advice to us would be to find a partner that you enjoy being with, that isn't jealous, and that loves you for who you are. Only then may we have a shot at having the one thing that Marilyn desired most—a soul mate.

[1]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-1210384/Joe-DiMaggio-wanted-Marilyn-Monroe-demure-housewife-posed-picture-beat-up.html>

1. [2] ^ *My Story* by Marilyn Monroe. ISBN 1-58979-316-1.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marilyn_Monroe#cite_note-16

After the Split: Get Past It in 4 Steps



By Marni Battista for GalTime.com

How to heal after a breakup

We've all been there. You just broke up with a boyfriend, husband, or long-term partner. Whether you thought he was "The One" or the one of the month or year, it never feels good.

Breakups are always hard because they represent the loss of a

shared commitment. Even breakups that make logical sense are still emotionally painful. Moving on can be difficult. However, there are essential steps to getting past this that can ensure less time to move from breakdown to breakthrough.

Here is the Dating with Dignity, "Break Over," 4-Step Program to help you heal post-split.

4 Steps for Getting Past a Breakup

Step 1: Give yourself permission to grieve the loss of your relationship.

Even if it was the "right choice," it still sucks. Whether it's writing in your journal or talking with your sister, expressing you're emotions will help you feel less alone. However, this does not mean that you should dwell on these negative feelings forever. Remind yourself that the end goal of your grieving process is to move forward.

Mentally check in with yourself while you're feeling low. Ensure that you're taking care of your basic needs (sleeping, eating, and exercising), maintaining friendships, and living your life while you're healing. If you feel paralyzed by your emotions, or have a thought that you'll never get out of the depression, you may want to seek professional help. This is a totally normal experience. Remember, YOU are your priority.

Step 2: Don't go through your breakup alone.

Support from friends and family is a big key to getting past your breakup. Spend time with people who value you. Even though you may want to be alone, separating yourself from friends and family is not the way to go. Keep in mind that many people have gone through a painful breakup. Therefore, your friends can help you get there and remind you that you will heal. Surrounding yourself with love and positivity is an

excellent way to heal from this painful breakup.

Most importantly, make sure your ex isn't part of this "Break Over" support system. Often it can be alluring to put him in the "friend" category prematurely because he "knows you better than anyone else." However, avoid the temptation and create as much distance as possible.

Step 3: Learn important lessons through your breakup. Every "ex" is the next right step toward a better relationship.

Although it might not seem like it now, moving through a breakup can be among the best ways to grow as a person. You can choose to come out of this experience as a stronger woman who now knows infinitely more than before the breakup.

It's important to fully understand the part you played in a breakup so you can ensure you don't make the same mistakes again. Even if he was the biggest jerk EVER and it seems like the bad ending was entirely his fault, you will best serve yourself by looking at your role in the relationship. Did you choose someone who wasn't good for you? Did you allow him to take advantage of your generosity? Did you ignore the signs that he really wasn't ready for a long-term commitment? Are you repeating the same mistakes over and over again in your relationships? Are you confused about what you really want from a relationship? Now is the time to look back at these things and clearly define what your relationship goals truly are. Take steps to change what's not working for you, and shift your energy so you can attract someone new (and better) to love.

Step 4: Take care of yourself and stop playing the victim.

The breakup didn't happen TO YOU. Choose to see yourself as something other than a victim and begin to see the pain as an opportunity to learn, grow and get closer to finding your best match.

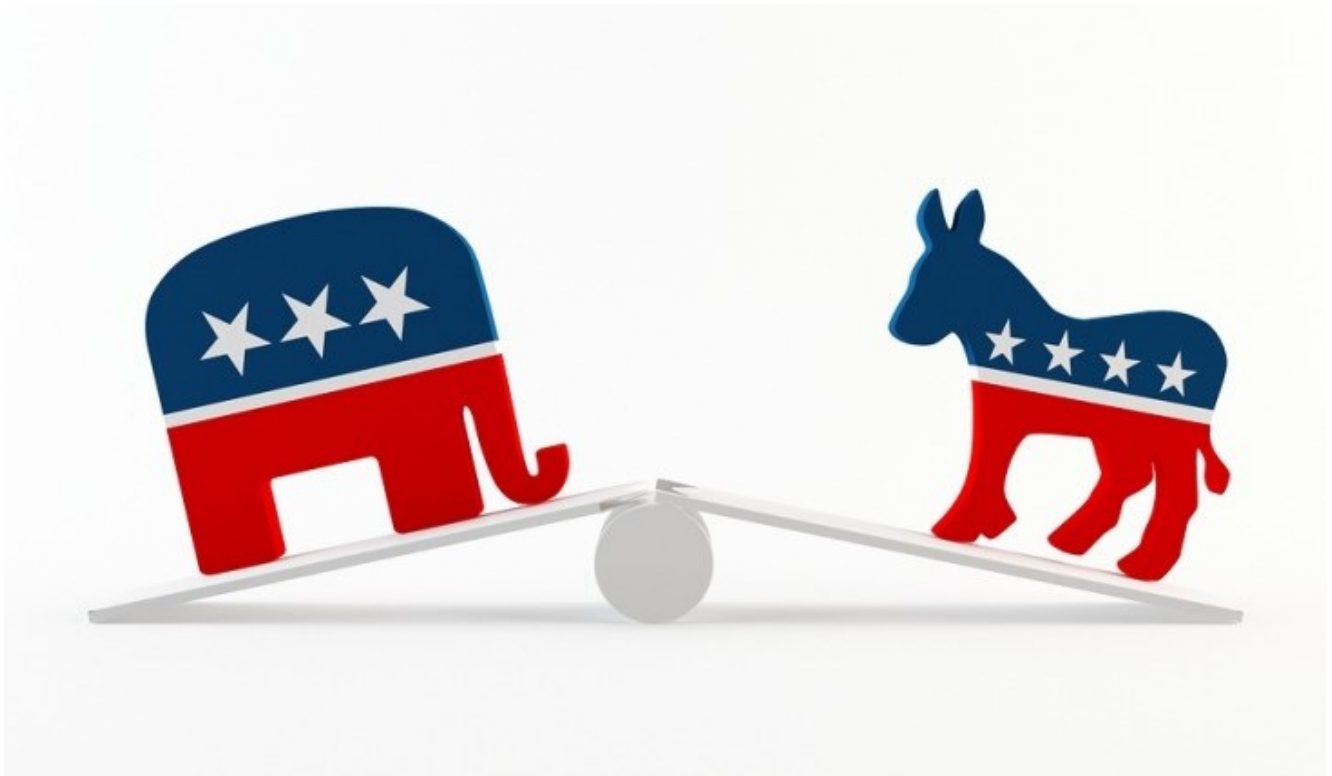
Once you embrace this mindset, the fun can begin. Make every day a time to nurture yourself. Savor your coffee in the morning; take a relaxing yoga class or enjoy being outside. Don't lose your healthy routine; make sure to keep eating balanced meals and regularly exercising. Take this time to possibly find a new hobby and explore new interests.

Also, while a breakup signifies an end, it also indicates a new beginning. Take a little time out; don't make any major decisions such as getting a new job or moving to a new city. And remember: you are not alone. You can make this time as fulfilling as the time you were in that relationship. There is a reason it ended, and you're going to be just fine.

Although it might seem like you may never get over a painful breakup, you can and you will. The Dating with Dignity, "Break Over," 4-Step Program is a great place to start taking care of yourself. Getting over your painful breakup can start today.

Do You Have To Kiss A Lot Of Frogs To Find Your Prince?





By Dr. Jane Greer for GalTime.com

learning from failed relationships

Jennifer Aniston has finally found her prince, and it wasn't easy. After several failed, and very public relationships, she has found love. Jennifer's boyfriend Justin Theroux, whom she had dated for fifteen months, asked her to marry him. And she accepted.

Now clearly John Mayer, Vince Vaughn and the other men she was involved with were anything but frogs; however, they were not the right guys for her, or the answer to her finding happiness. They were, though, testimony to her willingness to break out of her comfort zone and explore different types of men. She didn't allow herself to fall into the habit of typecasting a boyfriend, repeating the same negative patterns and thinking there was only one kind of guy for her.

I recently talked to one of my patients about the ending of her long-term relationship. She was in that difficult place that follows the aftermath of a break-up. She did, however, do something that she never would have done before. She was

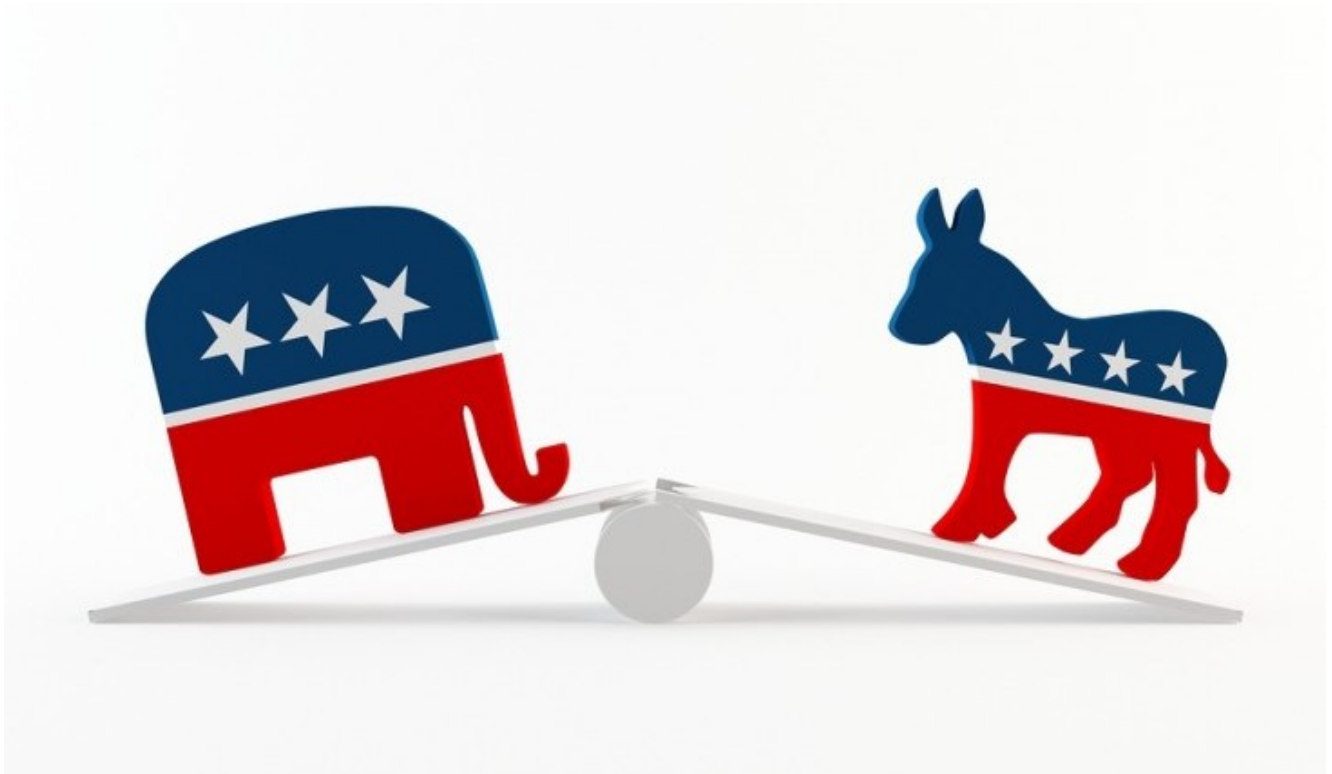
willing to take the chance of going on a blind date. Much to her surprise it went well, especially because she told me he was so different from the kind of guy she would usually consider dating. She is now in a new, exciting relationship. This reminds me of Jennifer, who remained open, rather than closing off her options, by dating various kinds of men as she searched for her dream guy.

Throughout dating different guys, Jennifer Aniston held onto her vision of what she was looking for and seeking in a partner. To put it another way, she had a clear image of her prince. In 2011, she told People, "I'm really picky. When I feel it, I feel it." She knew he was wandering around out there somewhere, and she wasn't willing to settle. Ironically enough, she connected with Justin Theroux on the set of Wanderlust, a movie they were filming together. Her instincts were right on target. Because she never gave up, even when confronted with the intense betrayal and heartache she suffered along the way, she was finally able to find the soul mate she was seeking.

Jennifer is a great role model for any woman who has experienced betrayal. Despite the hardships she's endured in her various relationships, she was able to learn and grow from them. She persevered and remained optimistic in the face of the heartbreak and the disappointment she sustained. She rose above public judgments thrown her way, and instead stayed true to herself, trusting her own judgment. Because she had the courage of her convictions and gave herself the room to explore, she was ultimately able to heal from her pain and find her true love.

May they live happily ever after.

6 Things Women Do that Scare Men Off



By SMF Marcus Osborne for GalTime.com

Don't make these mistakes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Being Controlling – Some people can't help themselves. They just have to manage every situation. That behavior repels

guys, in particular. Don't try to dress him, don't try tell him what to eat, don't try to get him to exercise... or to get a job. You started going out with him in whatever state he was in, accept him or move on. Don't fall into the typical trap, "He'd be perfect if I could just get him to change..."

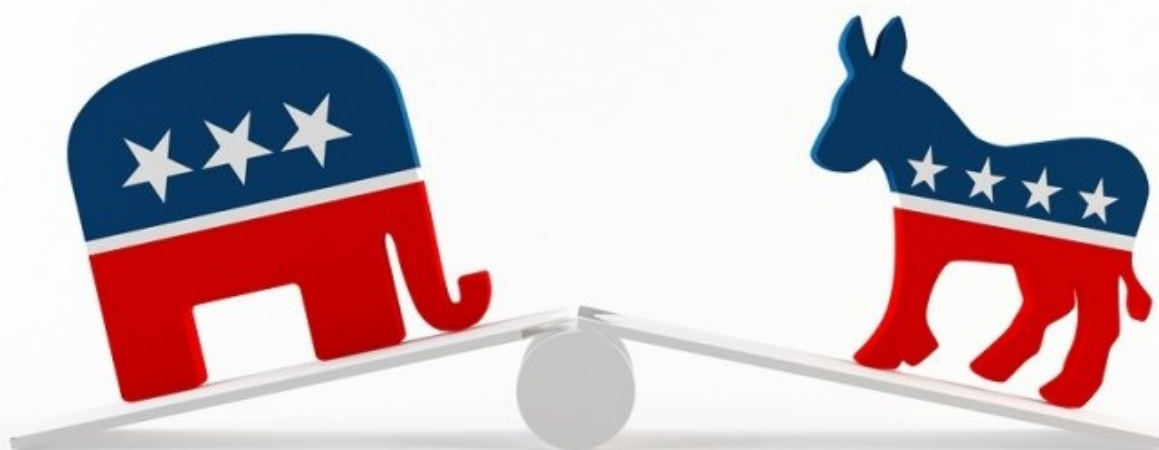
Related Link: [When You Should Treat a Man Like a Woman](#)

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

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

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

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie Resurface in France Amid Celebrity Wedding Rumors



By Erin Minty

The ever-elusive [Brad Pitt](#) and [Angelina Jolie](#) were finally spotted in France while in Le Touquet. The [Hollywood couple](#) owns a 1,000 acre estate in the south of France near Le Touquet, and both Pitt and his celebrity love are in Europe working on projects, with Jolie shooting *Malificent* and Pitt shooting *The Counselor*. According to recent celebrity gossip, their celebrity wedding is set for next spring. Though nothing has been confirmed, one insider tells [UsMagazine.com](#), “Angelina wants a simple, joyous wedding.”

Hollywood couple Jolie and Pitt may have finally picked a celebrity wedding date. What are some ways to choose your wedding date?

Cupid's Advice:

Setting a date can be an extremely stressful time for any couple about to be married. Cupid has some relationship and love advice about how to start thinking about a date for your wedding:

1. Start with a season: Is there one season that has always called out to you? Maybe you love the sunshine and beaches associated with summer, or maybe the pristine white of snow is more your style. Think about what would match your dream dress and your venue choices. By narrowing your choices down to a particular time of year, you can eliminate most of the year and have a much smaller list of dates to choose from.

Related Link: [Is Shia LaBeouf Celebrating a Celebrity Engagement with Girlfriend Mia Goth?](#)

2. Look at your calendar: While weddings are one of the most important events of the season, there are some other important events that cannot be rescheduled. Make sure you're planning your wedding for a downtime for your family. If you want everyone to be able to attend, keep in mind their schedules when picking a date.

Related Link: [Johnny Depp and Amber Heard Have Celebrity Wedding at Home Before Heading to Bahamas](#)

3. Pick a day that stands out to you: Maybe you and your partner have a special joke related to a certain date, like the first day you kissed, the day of your first date, or some

equally important milestone in your relationship. Picking a date that has importance to you, whether you guests know it or not, is another way to make your day even more special than it already is sure to be.

When do you think this celebrity wedding will take place? Let us know in the comments below!