

Celebrity Trainer Gunnar Peterson Discusses Relationships, Health and his 8-Week Gunnar Challenge



By Nisha Ramirez

Celebrity trainer Gunnar Peterson, is all about keeping celebrities in top shape for when they're on and off camera. For those who are looking to get in shape celebrity-style, Peterson is debuting a new diet and fitness program called The Gunnar Challenge. The trainer guru says that his 8-week challenge is great for couples and a must for anyone looking to boost their confidence. He doesn't advocate for training

couples together, but he did make the point that couples should have mutual fitness goals. By accepting The Gunnar Challenge for yourself first, you can make a dedication to yourself that will yield positive results. The interactive online challenge starts May 21st and Gunnar wants you to accept the challenge for yourself and your love life. Beach season is only a few weeks away, so why not get started?

To find out more about Gunnar Peterson and how you can get involved with The Gunnar Challenge, www.gunnarchallenge.com.

For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our YouTube channel.

Pros & Cons: Bonding With Your Man's Friends





By [Whitney Baker](#)

When you embark on a new relationship, you end up with more than just a great guy in your life. Soon enough, you will meet his friends, his family and his co-workers, and your social circle is immediately changed – for better or for worse. Some of these new friendships may come easy for you, while others may be a struggle. Either way, try your best to be open-minded: don't make assumptions about his friends or their feelings towards you and always be yourself. Remember that there are pros and cons to bonding with his buddies. Here are a few things to consider before introducing yourself:

Pros

1. Finding common ground with your man: It's important to understand who your boyfriend was *before* he was your man. One of the best ways to do so is by bonding with his friends. Friendships often have a huge impact on people, and by growing closer to his friends, you're often able to deepen the love that you share for him. Plus, seeing you bond with his friends is sure to charm your beau even more.

2. Going on fun group dates or vacations: Having “couple friends” is a great way to strengthen your relationship, and the best way to meet couples is through your current group of friends. Sure, a date night or romantic getaway for two is great, but it’s nice to have a group of friends for an impromptu party or weekend trip. The more, the merrier, right?

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3. Expanding your inner circle: Thanks to your man’s friends, you may meet a new girlfriend or two. These new friendships will enrich your life as well as your romantic relationship. Knowing that he introduced you to some new fun people is bound to make your boyfriend feel good.

Cons

1. Acting like “one of the boys”: Your interests most likely vary from your beau’s, but when you’re bonding with his male friends, you may start to act like one of the guys, making him see you differently. It’s great that you enjoy hanging out with your boyfriend and his friends, but make sure to give your man some time alone with them. Give him a chance to miss you!

2. Neglecting your girlfriends: Bonding with your boyfriend’s friends may keep you so busy that you forget about your girlfriends. Who are you going to call when the weekend rolls around and he decides to take a boys-only camping trip? Sometimes it’s okay to do your own thing; having separate friends and interests will give you even more to talk about when you spend time together again.

3. Causing unnecessary drama: Your man may start to feel like you’d rather spend time with his BFF than with him; or, he may think that the two of you are moving forward with your friendship without him – even though he’s the reason you’re friends in the first place. Before you get too close to his

buddies, check in with your boyfriend and make sure he's okay with your new friendships.

When it comes to bonding with your man's friends, what has your experience been like? Share it with our readers by commenting below.

Why We're Wired to Sabotage Our Relationships



By Dr. Daniela Roher and Dr. Susan E. Schwartz

In any relationship, you are bound to encounter a few bumps in the road. When this happens, you may be tempted to point a

finger at your partner, blaming him or her for your relationship woes. But years of study show that, more often than not, your partner isn't the reason you are at a crossroads. You are.

Your very own physiological wiring, biochemical makeup, and past childhood experiences can sabotage a relationship when you least expect it. And until you understand what's going on "under the hood"—what's triggering issues between the two of you—you'll end up repeating the same dysfunctional patterns over and over again.

There are three ways our minds and bodies work against us in relationships:

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1. Our bodies are wired for cruise control.

Our conscious mind is only capable of processing 40 pieces of information each second, which means that more than 95 *percent* of what goes on in our minds is outside of our awareness. This overflow of information is automatically handled by our body's limbic and hormonal systems. These systems control feelings of love and desire, whether we feel emotionally safe and happy in our relationships, and how bonded (or distant) we feel toward our partner. These systems also control what happens when a relationship heads south. When disagreements and arguments spike, the hormone cortisol spikes, too, creating high levels of stress and increased feelings of hesitation and doubt. Even after the two of you work things out, cortisol sticks around, leaving you to question the stability of your relationship, and where things are headed with your partner.

2. Our left brains meddle with right-brain emotions.

The right hemisphere of our brain plays a central role in

relationships: it processes unconscious and nonverbal socio-emotional information, and it allows us to feel empathy for our partner. Two people in love communicate in a right-brain-to-right-brain fashion: by gazing into each other's eyes, holding each other, and by touching—which is all more intuitive and emotional than logical.

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3. We are wired to recreate the past.

Our childhood experiences, including our relationship with our parents and their relationship with each other, create a scaffolding for how we experience love as adults. Adults long to recapture the love they felt (or the love they wished they'd felt) growing up, even if this fantasy doesn't reflect reality. For example, if you were raised by a single parent, and that parent was always preoccupied with work, you might easily spot and be turned off by partners who put their careers first. Finding a person who focuses selflessly on you, giving you the attention and love you've always craved, fills a personal void. However, if you don't become aware of this connection, you might unconsciously be attracted to people or experiences that recreate your past, even if your past was dysfunctional.

Understanding the connection between past and present not only explains who you are attracted to, it provides you with an opportunity to change. It's also a life preserver when your relationship gets rocky, because it will help you to understand what you and your partner are feeling, where these feelings come from, what triggers them, and why.

Dr. Daniela Roher is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist with nearly forty years in a career that has spanned three countries and two continents. Dr. Susan E. Schwartz is a Jungian analyst trained at the C.G. Jung Institute, who lectures worldwide. Together, they have co-authored the new

book, *Couples at the Crossroads: Five Steps to Finding Your Way Back to Love* (January 2012). To learn more, visit www.CouplesAtTheCrossroads.com.

4 Things Men Worry About



By SMF Marcus Osborne by GALTime

One of the fabrications in our culture that has always driven me bonkers is the myth that “real” men don’t succumb to worry or stress. It’s the idea is that guys are somehow genetically engineered to shake off the rigors of everyday life– that no guy should crack under pressure, fear or insecurity.

Never let 'em see you sweat.

We guys wish it were that easy. From an intellectual perspective, we all agree that this belief is silly. Unfortunately, the gut reaction to actually *witnessing* a man's will being broken is generally something less than empathetic. So once and for all, men DO have their own insecurities – just as many as women – and I've listed below a few of the most common concerns that men feel:

1. Making enough money: This one has mass awareness. But the depth of the anguish men feel when confronted with the possibility of not being an adequate bread-winner can be unimaginable. We've all heard the stories about what many have resorted to when money problems become overwhelming. And yet most peoples' reaction is a less-than-understanding, "It couldn't have been that bad." Apparently it was.

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2. Age. You think men age gracefully. We don't. Actually, for all the jokes and mythology about women getting older; for example, never asking them their age, facelifts, mom jeans soccer mom hair, etc., women actually seem to handle the transition overall a bit better than men. And of course, they seem to embrace their sexuality as the years tick by; for men, mid-life crisis is no joke! Men can feel frantic—trying to locate that lost hair-line, chasing the younger women, experiencing a dwindling sex-drive and becoming physically vulnerable to younger, stronger guys.

3. Body Image. Seems shallow and of course it is. But this is America...we're ALL about shallowness! Sure the typical belief is that because of a bombardment of media images and our society's focus physical beauty in women, that guys are immune to the insecurities that accompany a negative body image. WRONG. We hide it, but we're just as wrapped up in looking great in beachwear. And it's not just the ladies who are

checking out the competition on the beach and at parties. Guys do it too.

4. *Intelligence.* The only thing guys respect more than money is intelligence. More to the point, a man would rather be poor as dirt than to have the perception that he's an idiot engrained in people's mind. The guys who have it the worst? Jocks. Those dudes are fighting a lifelong battle attempting to prove that the sum of their parts is more than how fast they run or high they jump. But of course, some of them are actually idiots; but I digress. Intelligence, in spite of the conclusions you may have drawn from reality television, is a highly-valued commodity in our society. Guys want to be highly valued in our society. High value equals respect. Respect equals power. And we love power.

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Now in the grand scheme of things, these can all seem like fairly harmless issues. But I promise you that these are things about which men are concerned. I'd suggest you talk to your guy and reassure him that you've got his back, you're there and willing to listen to whatever is on his mind. Being a guy, he may simply fire back that everything is fine – even when everything isn't fine. He's keeping it to himself because he doesn't want to seem in any way weak in your eyes. That's yet another concern of his – being strong for his partner. But he'll certainly appreciate your affirmation of support and may even eventually take you up on your offer of a supportive ear.

Keep at it.

Rumored Couple Kim Kardashian and Kanye West Reunite in NYC



Rumored couple Kim Kardashian and Kanye West made their second appearance together in New York City on Saturday, reports UsMagazine.com. “They had drinks at the Mercer Hotel Friday night, then shopped all day,” said a source. Though neither party has confirmed the romance rumors, Kardashian took to Twitter to express her happiness. “Hi dolls!” wrote Kardashian. “I’m so happy to be in NYC with the whole fam! Fun week! Have a good weekend guys!”

What are some reasons to go public with your romance?

Cupid’s Advice:

Though being in a private relationship has its perks, it’s

best to go public with your relationship after some time. Here are a few reasons to announce your relationship:

1. Recognition: It's nice to be noticed as a couple. By going public, your friends can provide insight into your relationship and help you through some rough patches.

2. No hassle: Sometimes life can be easier when people know that you're in a relationship. By letting people know you're off the market, many awkward situations can be avoided.

3. Less work: Keeping your relationship private can be tough, especially with today's social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook. By announcing your relationship, you can post photos and tweet messages without worrying about what you're revealing.

Why did you decide to go public with your romance? Feel free to leave a comment below.

Top 10 Sayings that Can Destroy Your Love Life Before It Begins





By Nisha Ramirez

Whether you're on a first date or in a new relationship, the things you say can play a huge role in finding and keeping love. They say that "actions speak louder than words," but we're here to tell you that sometimes certain phrases can destroy your love life before it even begins. Check out these 10 expressions you should avoid when you're looking for Cupid's arrow to hit your target:

1. My biological clock is ticking.

Okay, we know women have to think about time when it comes to having a baby, but asking your new beau what day you should schedule a visit to the OBGYN together is just crazy. Let time run its course, and then the two of you can begin to talk about children. Rule of thumb: If you haven't discussed moving in or adopting a puppy together, chances are he is not ready to talk about babies.

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2. Do you find that guy attractive?

It happens: you see a cute guy or television star and ask your boyfriend if he thinks the guy is good looking. If you occasionally do this just because there isn't another female around, we understand. However, if this is your way of finding out if your guy is gay, stop it now! The more you question a man's sexuality, the less attractive you will become to him.

3. Do you think that girl is cute?

Asking a man if he finds another girl attractive can really make things awkward. Besides coming off as insecure (a huge turnoff), you look like you don't trust him. Don't worry about him checking out another girl unless you see him doing it. If that's the case, you have our permission to use some other sailor mouth "sayings."

4. You remind me of my father/mother.

What? No one wants to be reminded of their date's parents. Comparing your partner to your mom or dad can cause major problems in a relationship. Your significant other may begin to feel like they have to live up to be like your parent, and expectations often lead to disappointments.

5. What's the passcode to your phone?

Asking for a person's passcode is equivalent to asking for the key to a person's privacy and not their heart. Having your partner's phone can lead to constantly checking their emails, text messages, Twitter and Facebook. This unhealthy habit can really make you paranoid and might make your partner actually give you a reason to have to look through his things.

Related: [Five Bad Relationship Habits and How To Break Them](#)

6. How much do you make?

Unless you're about to make a huge purchase with your partner,

such as buying a house, this question is off limits. What if you make more money than him? That could really cause some self-esteem issues. Or if you make less than him, that could make you look like a real gold digger, when you should be looking for love.

7. Do you believe in God?

Religion and politics should be off limits. They can really cause unneeded tension and can make the both of you feel uncomfortable. In a diverse society, we still tend to categorize people based on their religion and for whom they vote. Don't put a block on potentially meeting your soul mate.

8. This is going to be a great story to tell our kids, after the wedding of course!

Letting a guy know that you want to marry him early on can really be a turnoff. You shouldn't be talking about children if you haven't made big life decisions together, and choosing what movie to go see after dinner does not count. Still don't understand? Telling a guy that you want to marry him on a date is like a guy saying he just wants to hook-up with you.

9. You look better in pictures.

In our world of tech dating, sometimes we first meet our date through an online profile picture. If you ever meet someone for the first time, don't say that they look different in pictures. You're basically saying that they look worse in person. We're all for being honest, but not when it comes to hurting someone's feelings and self-esteem right after you meet them.

Related: [Five Conversations to Avoid on the First Date](#)

10. I loved being intimate with my ex.

Conversations about exes and intimacy should not happen on first dates. Your date will think that you are not over your

ex and that will definitely stop potential love in its tracks. If you stay away from this subject, you'll have a much better chance of the relationship surviving another date.

Have you ever said or been told any of these expressions? Share your comments below.

Five Signs Your Partner Is Using You for Your Money



By Melissa Caballero

Every relationship has its ups and downs, and in our economy today, a major love obstacle is money. It takes two people to

form a stable life together, and one of the main factors to stability is the almighty dollar. There are many ways for couples to navigate through the everyday expenses of life and joint payment decisions. However, this burden should never fall on just one person, no matter what the circumstances may be. If you feel that your partner is only in this relationship for your money, step back for a moment and evaluate why you are putting up with this fact. You may feel that you are caught up in a web of guilt or obligation to your mate, but that should never be the case. Here are five ways to tell if your partner is using you for your money:

1. You often give your partner money and lend them things without getting them back.

If your partner is always broke and is relying heavily on you to pick up their financial slack, this may be a clear indication that you are being used. Your mate should respect every aspect of you and this includes your belongings. You may have just moved in together, but that doesn't mean they can abuse what is yours. If you are always paying for them or letting them use your stuff, then they are not treating you with the respect you deserve. You need to protect yourself, your money and your emotions.

2. Excuses flow freely about not being able to find a job.

You may not want to admit this, but maybe you are dating a loser. They feed you every excuse in the book as to why they are broke this month: the economy, their previous boss was a jerk or they are waiting for a check to come in. If you come home to find a filthy kitchen after working all day and you see your partner lounging on the couch playing video games, this is a clear sign of a lazy deadbeat with no motivation. It is not your responsibility to 100 percent support your mate with no reciprocation. You may think you are helping them, but in the long-run you are allowing this behavior to continue and

enabling their laziness. Instead, talk to them about how you feel.

3. When you go out to dinner, you're always expected to pay.

Chivalry is not dead. So, women if you find that your man is always leaving the dinner check for you, he is taking advantage of your hard work and income. Even if you are the breadwinner in the relationship, you work hard for your money and this fact alone does not automatically qualify you as the one to always pick up the check. On the reverse side of this equation, if you have been together for at least a couple of months and your man usually pays for every dinner and movie you attend, it wouldn't hurt to once in a while offer to pay for something as well. You do not want him to become resentful and feel as if you are taking advantage of him.

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4. He expects you to pay for everything without blinking an eye.

If your partner always expects you to pay the rent or buy any necessities for your apartment without EVER offering to chip in, question their motives. It may be the case that your partner is truly struggling to find a job and is dealing with their own personal finance issues, making it difficult for them to equally contribute to the relationship in that capacity. However, if they feel burdened about their situation and lack of ability to partake in purchases, you will know. Your partner would show you appreciation, thankfulness and love in a way that would make it clear they are not using you for your money. If not, you may be dating a [jerk!](#)

Related: ["Should I Stay or Should I Go?: A Guide to Knowing if Your Relationship Can – and Should – be Saved"](#)

5. Pure intuition.

If you are having any sort of feelings that your partner is using you for your money, you are probably right! Too many times, people ignore their intuition, denying that their partner would be in this relationship if it were just about the money. Trust your inner feelings and communicate exactly how you feel and what you need. You should never feel an ounce of doubt, and you definitely do not want to find yourself taken advantage of.

How can you tell if you're being used? Share your comments below.

Four Ways to Tell If He's "The One"





By Johanna Lyman, the JOY Professor, for GALtime.com

Finding your soulmate may take longer than you think. Take some time to get to know your partner, then ask yourself the following questions to decide whether he/she is truly “the one”.

How do you know when you’ve found “The One?” Allow me to first dispel a common myth. Most of us have more than a single “The One” in our lives. With few exceptions, we will all experience more than one great love in our lives. Each person who shows up as a great love is there to teach us a lesson (or two) and to bring us closer to unconditional love. Everyone who shows up as love in your life is one of your soul mates.

Another common myth is that you can discern true love within the first 3-6 months of a relationship. I’m sorry to say, it just ain’t so. What you’re feeling in the first 3-6 month (aka the honeymoon period) is a potent cocktail of hormones designed to make a man and a woman want to copulate to propagate the species. It feels sexy, but it’s really about the survival of the species. Please do yourselves and the

population a big favor by not falling for it. I don't mean to sound negative. There are lots of great things about that potent combination of oxytocin, serotonin and other chemicals.

I'm just saying that if you think you're thinking clearly while under the influence of the honeymoon hormones, you're mistaken.

After the honeymoon phase begins to wear off, here are some things you can look for to help you determine the staying power of this relationship.

Related: [Fishing For Mr Right– Types of Guys to Throw Back](#)

1. Are you truly yourself around him? Does he understand (or at least humor) your handbag obsession? Does he really know how much you drink, smoke, shop, or eat Twinkies, and is he truly comfortable with it? Do you act the same way with him when you're around each other's friends?

2. Is he truly himself around you? Do you know about his "Three Stooges" fetish? Do you know how many hours he spends gaming and are you comfortable with that? One way to gauge how authentic he's being is to check out if your friends see him in the same way you do. Obviously they won't know him as intimately as you do, but they should have the general same impressions. Also, does he act the same when you're alone together as he does around your friends?

3. Do you trust him? Not just about monogamy (if that's your agreement together) but do you trust him with your secrets, desires and ambitions? I believe that trust is a lot harder to come by than those emotions we call love. Trust is the number one barometer of longevity in relationships, in my experience.

4. How do you fight? Do you, or does he, bring up old wounds, or do you fight in the present, about the current hurt? Can you disagree without attacking each other? Are you comfortable with disagreeing, or do you try to smooth things

over? Couples in healthy relationships learn how to fight productively. If you weren't having being intimate with him, how much would you still like him?

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Believe it or not, you will not always be wildly attracted to your partner. Even if he is an Adonis, familiarity tends to take the spark out of the eroticism in relationships. And while I have lots of remedies for bringing back the spark, the more you like about each other outside the bedroom, the tastier those remedies will be. People tend to think that love just happens. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but long-term love takes effort. It doesn't just happen, but if you focus your time and energy on keeping your relationship healthy, the results will bring you a lifetime of JOY.

These are good questions to ask yourself, whether you've been in a relationship for three weeks or thirty years. If you don't like your answers, you can always choose again. When you change your mind you change your attitude and when you change your attitude you can change even the most worn out relationship.

**Michelle Williams to
Reportedly Avoid Heath Ledger
Mistakes With Jason Segel**





Michelle Williams is ready to get serious with new boyfriend Jason Segel. It's been a tough past couple of years for Williams, having mourned the death ex-fiance, Heath Ledger.

An insider told UsMagazine.com, "She is a romantic and always felt partly responsible for not being able to help Heath."

But, Segel has done the single mother some good, and now she's reportedly in love! The *5 Year Engagement* star is ready to commit, and having learned from past mistakes with Ledger, the two are moving forward.

What are some ways past mistakes help future relationships?

Cupid's Advice:

The best part of a faulty past relationship, is that it's in the past. You now have control of your new relationships and know exactly what to avoid. Here are some ways past mistakes can help you in the future:

1. You know how to avoid silly arguments: From past relationships, you realize that all of the little fights you had were pointless, and you know to just avoid those all

together in the future.

2. Improve communication: The biggest aspect of a relationship is communication. A lot of the time, arguments are started because there was a miscommunication. So in your new relationship, you know exactly how to say things and when to say them.

3. Don't let a relationship take over: As you can see from past faulty relationships, sometimes things just don't work out. Now you know to keep that balance between your normal life and your new beau.

What are some other things you can learn from past relationships? Share your ideas below.

What Attracts Us to Bad Boys?





By Dr. Carole Lieberman

Though we women pride ourselves on how 'we've come a long way, baby,' we still fall prey to the charms of bad boys. Why? It all starts with Daddy – the first man we've ever loved. If this relationship was dysfunctional, such as with a father who was abusive, depressed, a workaholic, or simply divorced and unavailable, we feel unlovable and grow up with a penchant for bad boys.

The Dozen Dangerous Devils, or 12 types of bad boys, include the: Fixer-Upper Lover, Compulsive Flirt, Grandiose Dreamer, Misunderstood and Married, Mr. Power Mad, Commitment Phobe, Wounded Poet, Self-Absorbed Seducer, Man of Mystery, Dramatic Daredevil, Prince of Darkness and Lethal Lover. We are attracted to one or more of these types in an unconscious effort to turn our disappointment with Daddy into a fairytale happy ending.

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For example, if a little girl's father abandoned her, such as

by death, divorce or emotional distance, she would likely grow up to be attracted to a Fixer-Upper Lover (also named the Frazzled Frog), who seems like he would be the least likely man to abandon her because his life is in need of much repair.

But, once she provides him with the nurturance he craves and helps him get his act together, he hops away to find a more discerning princess. All Dozen Dangerous Devils are heartbreakers. They just break a woman's heart in 12 different ways!

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Headlines are perpetually filled with celebrity bad boys – from Brad Pitt, who claimed to be Misunderstood and Married when he fell for Angelina Jolie; to Chris Brown, an abusive Prince of Darkness who Rihanna still can't resist; to *Bachelor* Ben Flajnik, who's become a Compulsive Flirt despite his engagement.

Some bad boys can be tamed, but a woman must be careful not to lose her self-respect or sanity in the process. Look where it got Catherine Greig, the woman who harbored mob boss James 'Whitey' Bulger, a Lethal Lover. She'd laughed about liking bad boys until it landed her in jail!

Dr. Carole Lieberman is an internationally renowned "Media Psychiatrist." On TV, Radio, the Internet, in Film, Print, as a Speaker and as the first "Shrink on Board" airline in-flight entertainment, Dr. Carole's insights help people seize the moment to live happier, more fulfilling lives. She's also the author of Bad Boys: Why We Love Them, How to Live with Them and When to Leave Them.

'American Reunion' Is a Nostalgic Love-fest



The gang is back! After almost a decade of absence Jim, Kevin, Oz, Finch, and of course Stifler are finally heading back to the big screen. On the surface these films may not seem much like a romance, but the true heart of the series is in the relationships that help these characters grow. In 2003's *American Wedding*, Jim tied the knot with Michelle, proving that this series is all about romance. Now, in *American Reunion*, the entire cast of the 1999 original is back for their high school reunion. Old flames reunite and long term relationships are tested. But all in all, this film is going to be a lot of fun and a great slice of nostalgia for everyone who grew up with these classic characters.

Should You See It? If you loved the original three, you

should be really excited for this reunion. But *American Pie* isn't everyone's cup of tea.

Who To Take: While *American Reunion* would make a great date movie, perhaps the best way to see this is with a bunch of old friends from high school. This is a big nostalgia flick and could be worth a reunion of your own.

Afraid of a run-in with an old flame? Here are some tips on how to get through the situation with ease.

In *American Reunion*, the main characters of the original film are all forced to face their old high school flames. The trailer shows a lot of potentially awkward moments, which is pretty accurate to how these things can be handled. Here are some tips on making this situation as unpainful as possible.

1. Just be yourself: Don't try and go back to the person you were when you guys dated, you both have changed and the last thing you want to do is show them that you haven't grown. Plus, who knows, if the stars align and you both grew into completely different people, maybe you can find something in each other again.

2. Keep the conversation light: High school relationships almost never end well because you are young and naïve. So seeing this person will likely bring up some bad memories. So simply just don't bring those up and you will have a pleasant reunion. Talk about the good things in your life.

3. Remember that it has been years: A lot of time has passed since your relationship. If they did something bad to you that might not be something they would do anymore. The same goes for you. A lot of growing happens after high school. Forgive and forget and just be as nice as possible. You never know what might come of it.

Do you have any experiences reuniting with an old flame? Share them below!

Can Being A Sibling Teach You To Have A Good Relationship?



By Steven Zangrillo

My sister and I grew up in Suburbia, which affords bored, middle-class children multiple opportunities for creative mayhem. My sister, therefore, functioned as a guinea pig of sorts. For instance, picture a 10-year-old and his friends chasing you around with Super Soakers filled to the hilt with pickle juice. You'd have hated me, too. When we both hit adolescence, we grew up a little bit. We went to high school and started to test the dating waters. As if being a 14-year-old, pimple-faced fat kid wasn't enough, I had to come home to

the chiding laughter of my older, hotter, more dating-tested sister whenever I failed. Good news of failed romance spreads fast in Suburbia. My immaturity blinded me from taking in the romance lessons that are now so clear to me. Let's break them down:

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1. People will always aggravate you, but how you react is dependent on how you want this situation to end.

On Easter we would have an Easter egg hunt, followed by a trip to the Sunday car show downtown. My sister would wake up extra early and find out where the eggs were, leave them there and go back to bed. When our parents woke us up a little later, Samantha would rifle through the house and snag every egg. Me? I was left in bitter tears and tuxedo pajamas (they were sweet, don't judge). She won the battle, and I didn't complain. I won the war later when I, not she, got to sit in the cars first at the show. Karma comes back around.

The lesson here is that your significant other will purposefully or unintentionally do aggravating things, just like your sibling. Whatever habits, issues, or situations you're faced with, remember that you can either continue to stamp your feet and cry while everyone goes to the car show, or you can calm down and hop your little tush into the front seat of a '72 Corvette.

2. Everyone is equally accountable under the same roof.

I had a Sega Genesis; she had a boom box. Montel Jordan was particularly popular at the time. You're already singing it in your head, "*Thiiiiis is how we doooo itttttt...*"

I was busy freezing people and knocking their heads off in *Mortal Kombat* when Samantha came bounding down the stairs, asking if she could play. I shrugged and, since I was bored

anyway, surrendered the game console to her. I began to aimlessly prance around the house as quickly as my 7-year-old body would allow me to move. I stumbled upon her glistening, gorgeous new Sony boom box. Somewhere between the chorus and the second stanza I managed to scramble up the tape deck. I was left with a mangled mess of what once was a cassette. Needless to say, my sister and I brawled that day.

The lesson here, of course, is to communicate. Want to borrow his toothbrush? Fine, just say so. The idea that "What's yours is mine, and mine is yours," is great up until that last drop of orange juice is gone and someone is forced to adjust their routine because you didn't say anything. It seems mundane, but little things add up. Give yourself few chances to be accused of things.

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

3. Be a softie- it's okay, seriously. If you don't know how to be one, open yourself to learning about it.

My sister and I have spent 24 years being absolutely obnoxious towards each other. Between the passive-aggressive verbal assaults, physical encounters, finger pointing, name-gaming nonsense, we've seen some real and palpable tough times. There have been days where I've been called on to be her little brother. That's a role that I relish and will always take seriously.

The same thing goes for relationships. It's easy to be a fun, happy boyfriend or girlfriend. Life is great when you're out on the town having drinks and dinner, going to your favorite club, seeing a movie, or whatever the case may be. The next day that person may be in need of something more concrete. You might be called on to be there for support and you better be ready for it. If you aren't, then just listen to everything they have to say to you. Be a softie. Listen, understand and appreciate. That's your job as a sibling,

significant other and a person in the world.

Do you think being a sibling has helped shape your relationship? Share your comments below.

New Couple: Michelle Williams and Jason Segel Are Dating



Longtime friends Jason Segel and Michelle Williams are the newest celebrity couple. According to a source, “They are smitten and very serious.” The duo was caught taking a romantic stroll after a meal at Frankie Spuntino in Brooklyn this weekend, reported UsMagazine.com. A source says, “They

seemed very relaxed.” The day after the pair’s stroll and meal, Segal was spotted playing with Matilda, Williams’ 6-year-old daughter. Living on different coasts makes their relationship challenging, but the source says the couple is “trying to make it work. She hasn’t been this happy in a long time.”

How do you stay close to your long distance mate?

Cupid’s Advice:

Being in a relationship is hard enough as it is, but what about when you are in separate states, or even separate countries? Here are some tips on how to stay as close in a long distance relationship:

1. Skype: Skype is a lifesaver for long distance relationships. Seeing your sweetheart’s face every day makes the distance seem much more bearable. Even if you chat for only five minutes, talking face-to-face will keep your relationship alive better than any text message could.

2. Share photos: Send each other pictures. Even if it’s only what you had for lunch, share your life with your partner. Send pictures of things you would normally laugh about together, or something you tried for the first time together and are passing in the grocery store. Keeping your partner in the know will make reuniting seamless.

3. Make countdowns: Countdowns can definitely help you through a long distance relationship. If you have visits planned, count down to those. Or, if you have a birthday coming up, count down to that. The smaller and simpler the count down, the better they will make you feel, until the ultimate countdown of being able to be together for good.

How do you stay close to your long distance partner? Share your stories below.

3 Ways to Use Celebrity Media To Assess Your Relationship



By Samantha Peters

Anyone who follows gossip news is probably well aware that the celebrity media gets plenty wrong and is far from an authority figure. But, even when the media is wrong about the status or longevity of a celebrity relationship, for example, it knows how to interpret individual and publicly-displayed signs. It knows how to assess, even if it can't always see the full picture.

The celebrity media's outsider assessment skills can actually

be used by anyone who seeks to examine their own relationship.

Now that Valentine's Day has come and gone, and now that the seasons have begun to change, it's as good a time as ever to take a step back and do just that. It's time to figure out if your relationship is growing, stagnating or declining. How is your [chemistry](#)? How happy and excited does your significant other make you feel? Though difficult, these are all good questions to ask.

Related: [How to Master Being in a Relationship](#)

That said, rather than answering these oft-abstract questions, try to instead assess your relationship from a more public, outsider perspective – and let the celebrity media give you a hand.

As an example of how to do this, we're going to look at the ongoing relationship between actor Leonardo DiCaprio and Victoria's Secret model Erin Heatherton. Heatherton is just the latest in a long line of tall, thin, blonde models that DiCaprio has been known to date. From her perspective, although Leo is 15 years older (sugar daddy definition, anyone?), we can't blame Erin for finding his charm and his fame too irresistible to ignore.

Based on their relationship (and on the celebrity media's reaction), here are a few factors that any couple can assess:

Family Involvement

Love them or hate them, but our families usually know us better than we'd ever like to admit. In fact, they can probably form a pretty solid opinion of whether a relationship will work – or should work – in the long run. At the beginning of January, Leo took Erin out for an upscale New Year's Day brunch – with his mom. The celebrity media reported Erin and Leo's mom chatting, laughing and generally hitting it off. This was interpreted as a good sign for their

relationship. *How would the paparazzi view the time you and your significant other spend with family members?*

Related: [Zoe Saldana Goes on a Movie Date with Bradley Cooper's Mom](#)

Time Together

A good relationship is one in which couples find ways to truly enjoy the time they spend together. All too often, the paparazzi spots a celebrity couple lounging on the beach for hours on end without communicating, or sees them sitting and sharing a silent dinner together. While a less communicative couple is not in and of itself a sign of a stagnant relationship, it certainly compares less favorably to the couple spotting laughing and interacting in a lively manner.

When Leo and Erin took a romantic vacation to Mexico last month, they were photographed zip-lining their way all around Cabo San Lucas. According to the celebrity media, this was another positive sign. *When outsiders view your relationship, do they see it as fun and enjoyable?*

Public Plans

Amidst recent news that Leonardo was spotted in Sydney (where he is filming *The Great Gatsby*) with top Australian models, but no Erin in sight, speculation emerged that the couple had [broken up](#). However, Leo, Erin, nor either celebrity's publicist has been willing to make any comments about the relationship in the first place. Some in the media have interpreted this as a sign that nobody involved believes that the couple has much of a future. *What do you and your significant other tell friends about your future plans?*

These are just a few things to consider while assessing your relationship. Although the celebrity media is not always to be believed, and even though Leo and Erin are certainly not reflective of every couple out there, you can still learn from their publically-displayed actions – and from the media

response – when trying to determine where you and your significant other currently stand.

Samantha Peters is a passionate follower of Hollywood celebrity relationship gossip. She loves blogging about ways to sustain successful relations, which sometimes requires assessing your relationship using a little celebrity media. Samantha lives in beautiful San Diego, California, and makes frequent trips to west L.A. to go shopping and celebrity spotting.

‘Bachelor’ Couple Ben Flajnik and Courtney Robertson Step Out for the First Time





It's been over a week since *Bachelor*, Ben Flajnik gave out the final rose and made his big proposal to Courtney Robertson. Since then, they've finally been able to make their first public outing together as a couple. Flajnik uploaded a picture to Instagram of the two, captioning it "1st pic out in public." They were spotted having dinner with two other guests in the North Beach neighborhood of San Francisco and an onlooker told UsMagazine.com, "She was wearing her ring and they looked cozy." But it took a lot for the couple to get to this point, for only three months after the engagement, Flajnik dumped Robertson and was soon after accused of cheating, being spotted with three females he later referred to as just "old friends." Hopefully that rough patch in their relationship is over, and they are able to move forward with their engagement.

How do you get your family and friends comfortable with your new relationship?

Cupid's Advice:

Starting a new relationship not only affects you, but also the

people who care about you. Here are some tips on how to announce your relationship to family and friends:

1. Let your family and friends meet them first: It's probably a lot better if they have already met the person you are starting a new relationship with. If they know them, they most likely know that you like them and it won't be such a surprise.

2. Bring your new beau around more: If you start bringing your boyfriend to family events and out with your friends, it will help build the relationship and make it easier for them to accept the new person in your life.

3. Ask for their opinion: Be open and ask your friends and family what they think about your new romantic interest. It's important to know the opinions of the people you love. After all, they have your best interest in mind.

How did you first tell your family and friends you were in a new relationship? Share your stories below.

5 Ways to Stop Sabotaging Your Relationships





By Jacquee Kahn

My mother always told me to work on myself first, and from there, everything else will follow. Little did I know that this would become a practice for me as I became a relationship “guru” for my friends (and later, clients).

News flash ladies: If you’re having a hard time with dating and relationships, it’s not about the men. It’s not because they’re players or commitment-phobes. It’s about YOU.

I meet incredibly smart, beautiful and talented women who have completely lost themselves in relationships. When they were single, they were confident and independent. But once in a relationship, those attractive qualities dissolved and these same women became needy, insecure and emotionally broken.

It’s time to stop undermining your relationship by first working on yourself. Here are five ways to get rid of those bad habits that sabotage relationships:

1. Be Yourself: Don’t be so eager to please your man that you lose yourself and become completely disempowered. Tom

Cruise's line in the film "Jerry McGuire" may be "You complete me," but it's simply not true. You don't have to be in a relationship to be a complete person.

Related: [Simple Ways to Please Your Man](#)

2. Know You're Worthy: We often become so desperate to make relationships work that we do whatever it takes to please our partners, much to the detriment of ourselves. So, don't be needy, clingy or desperate. These behaviors are a huge turn off and usually create the opposite effect.

Related: [How Decoding Your Love Map Can Heal a Broken Heart](#)

3. Keep a Loose Grip: Refrain from holding on too tight. If your man pulls away, let him go. Don't show insecurity by begging, pleading or trying to manipulate him to stay. If he comes back, it's because he wants to, not because you forced him to.

4. Don't Accept Less Than You Deserve: Don't accept crumbs by allowing yourself to settle for a "friends with benefits" or a "booty call" situation when what you really want is a committed relationship.

5. Save Yourself: Don't look outside of yourself to be rescued. Take ownership of your personal happiness, because all relationships start and end with YOU.

Jacquee Kahn dispenses "Super Nanny"-style tough love to women in need of relationship help. The author of Girlfriend 911: Decoding Dating and Rescuing Relationships One Girlfriend at a Time, her no-nonsense, straightforward advice points toward the foundation of the book.

5 Ways Playing Hard to Get Can Damage Your Love Life



By Ashley DelBello with contributions by relationship expert, Melanie Mar

“You value the things you have to work hard for, not the things that are handed to you,” says a mid-twenty something male friend of mine when discussing if a woman should play hard to get when she first meets a guy. While that may seem to sum up the answer to this ultimate singleton question, it’s a bit more complex than that. A guy may think a girl is really cool, but if she’s too available at first, then he will question it. The opposite is true, too. If a girl plays too hard to get and is unavailable, then he will lose interest.

So, throw out the “dating rules” – you don’t have to wait

three days before calling or texting back, but you do need to consider each situation and act accordingly. For instance, don't be available every time he asks you out, but be sure to offer an alternative day to meet up. Celebrity life coach and relationship pro Melanie Mar chimed in on what women should do when they first meet a guy and how to keep his interest:

1. Understanding men: "I do not advocate any game playing, but there is certainly an element of truth to the theory that men 'like the chase,'" said Mar. "Nature is that reason, as men are built to compete, conquer and control." Mar goes on to say that there is a big difference between women playing hard to get and men enjoying the thrill of the chase. That said, there does come a point when the chase has to stop. It's important to keep it fun and light in the beginning, but if after a while it starts to seem that the relationship's not going anywhere, then you might want to move on.

Related: [7 Ways to Flirt in a Web 2.0 World](#)

2. If we're not into playing the game, but men like the chase – what do we do?: "Well, you let him chase you," says Mar. "But if you don't show a man some acknowledgement, he will move on to someone who does. Always respect and respond to his efforts, but remember easy is not interesting to a man. He wants to pursue you as it is in his innate, natural design. Remember the sperm chases the egg!"

Related: [How to Master Being in a Relationship](#)

3. Dropping the hanky: To subtly let a man know that you are interested in him, hold his gaze for a few seconds and smile. It's not easy for men to approach women, so give him an opening signal to put him at ease and prompt him to come to you. Be engaging by playing ping pong with the opening.

4. Showing interest beyond the first interaction: It's simple – if he contacts you, return his call. If he asks you out and

you don't have other plans, then go. Ladies, do the 3 to 1 ratio: if he takes you for dinner three times, return in kind by cooking him dinner once. "If a woman is being non-responsive in the beginning of a relationship when a man is actively engaging and pursuing her, she definitely will experience a feeling of control, but it will be short-lived. Eventually he will grow tired of chasing someone who acts as if she's not interested – even if she truly is – and he will stop the chase," said Mar.

5. Finding that balance: As my guy friend said, men question if a woman is always available to hang out, so you need to show that you have your own life, too, and quite frankly that others think you are the amazing person that you are. While this may seem a bit ridiculous, men are ego driven and do want that validation that you are someone worth investing time in.

Mar added, "Men don't want you perfectly presented on a silver platter – they want to get to know you. Their focus in the early stages of a relationship is chemistry; there has to be something about you that makes him want to see you more.

Maybe in the way you touch his arm when you laugh or the way you hold eye contact when he's talking to you – these are the things that make a man stay interested in YOU, not your unavailability."

Getting Physical on the First Date: And as for the other question that all women want to know – if you get physical with a guy the first time you meet him or on the first date does it ruin your chances of a relationship forming from that?

There's no right answer and every guy is different from what I've been told. If there is a real connection there, then for most guys it won't matter. But, there has to be a pretty strong connection for that to not matter. So again, read each situation before you decide how far you will go with a guy and trust your instinct.

Playing hard to get is all about balance – because if you play

it too much, you'll end up having relationships that won't go anywhere past the first interaction; but if you don't succumb to human nature and play it a little, well you'll mostly likely end up in the same boat – single.

Do you think a woman should play hard to get? Share your comments below.

Five Bad Relationship Habits and How to Break Them



By Marianne Beach, GalTime

We've all heard the infamous break-up line: "It's not you,

it's me!" But what if it really *is* you that's been sabotaging your relationship— without even knowing it?

Psychiatrist Rebecca Gladding, MD, co-author of *"You are Not Your Brain: The 4-Step Solution for Changing Bad Habits, Ending Unhealthy Thinking, and Taking Control of Your Life,"* offers us the top five bad relationship habits we slip into...and how to break them once and for all.

Bad Habit #1: Pointless arguments

How to Break it: Stop, assess and refocus

Gladding says: If you find that what started off as a legitimate difference of opinion over something specific has devolved into either of you bringing up old issues or simply trying to make a point to win the fight, you need to stop the conversation and take stock of what's happening.

Rather than blame either person, simply note what just happened, take a breath if you need to and refocus the conversation on the original point. Say something neutral, like "I think we got off track, you were saying before that you thought/felt," or "I think we got off track, what I'd really like to talk about is..." By not placing blame and keeping to the original topic, you can avoid saying something that you both might later regret.

Related: [3 Habits Guys Find Most Annoying](#)

Bad Habit #2: Making assumptions

How to Break it: Ask instead

Gladding says: We've all done this. He does or says something that you take one way, when he really didn't mean what you thought he just implied; or, he doesn't do something in the way you expected him to.

Rather than assuming his intentions, thought process or feelings, ask him to help you understand where he's coming from. You might be surprised to learn he had actually thought something through more than you assumed, was planning to do something later or didn't realize how you might take his comment. So, when it's not clear, ask him."

Bad Habit #3: Endlessly seeking reassurance

How to Break it: Ask once (or twice), and then move on

Gladding says: Although it's important to ask him how he feels or what he's thinking, there is a limit to this. For example, if you repeatedly ask him the same questions to get reassurance or more information about a prior event or conversation, he might begin to think you did not believe or trust him the first time.

Rather than asking him about the same topic/event several times, ask once or maybe twice, get the answers you need, say what you need to say and then move forward.

Related: [What to Do When He Pulls Away](#)

Bad Habit #4: Checking his email/texts

How to Break it: Have a talk about trust

Gladding says: This is very tempting— and people do it for all kinds of different reasons. Is he talking with an ex? Is he cheating on me? Is he getting me that ring? Invading someone's privacy in this way almost never leads to a good outcome and often results in mistrust and resentment. Rather than snooping, look at his behavior. Is he acting like he normally does or has something changed? For example, is he coming home at night at the usual time? Is he following his usual routines? Is he attentive and loving with you or is he distracted?

The bottom line is that if you do not trust him, checking his

email and texts is not going to improve your relationship. You might need to have a conversation with him about your concerns and/or consider whether you trust him enough to be in a relationship with him at all.

Related: [Can We Have TOO Much Communication and Honesty?](#)

Bad Habit #5: Having serious conversations via electronic media

How to Break it: Wait to say it face-to-face

Gladding says: Although emoticons have helped some people, having a serious conversation via email/text is a big mistake.

Not only are you unable to tell his tone, you are missing eye contact, body language and other vital information. And, while the phone or Skype might be an alternative in urgent situations, it's still not the same as being in the same room with someone.

I can't tell you how many fights get started this way when really it was a misunderstanding in how someone read the text and assumed subtext. In most cases, the entire misunderstanding could have been avoided if the two people talked in person. This is why I always recommend meeting in person if you need to discuss something important, especially if there is a chance one of you might misinterpret what's being said.

Top 5 Celebrity Love Mistakes We Should Avoid



By Abiola Abrams

Some of us view Hollywood stars as lifestyle role models. You want Sofia Vergara's lipstick, Beyonce's curly hair or the Balenciaga bag that everybody and their mother was rocking on the red carpet recently. While it's cool to mix celeb style with your own once in a while, it's important to remember that the people who entertain us with movies, TV and music are just that – people.

That said, the famous are more human than we realize, and some of our favorite celebrities have one thing in common that we should never seek to emulate – their tumultuous relationships. In fact, let's learn from the love, sex and dating mistakes of the stars.

Here are some celebrity relationship snafus to avoid:

Love Mistake: Never Being Single.

It seemed like Jennifer Lopez was barely divorced from her crooner hubby Marc Anthony before stepping out with sexy back up dancer Casper Smart. Before that, she made a seamless transition from her Bennifer engagement to her JenAnthony marriage. What's up with that?

Going from relationship to relationship is a mistake. Taking a break between longtime loves is the best way to heal and ensure that we come to the next marriage or engagement as whole human beings.

Related: [10 Love Lessons from Bruce Springsteen](#)

Love Mistake: Marrying too soon.

Kim Kardashian and what's-his-face Humphries had the 72-day fairytale heard 'round the world. It seemed like Kimmie was set to continue the Dash girls tradition of meeting and immediately ending up happily ever after. Look at her little sister Khloe and her b-baller Lamar Odom. Their less than one month courtship has yielded a relationship that's still going strong.

Bottom line? Khloe and Lamar are a wonderful fluke. Marrying someone before you've even had the "where will we live" conversation is a huge mistake. Sorry, Kris Humphries!

Related: [Kim Kardashian's Divorce – A Reminder About Relationship Mistakes to Avoid](#)

Love Mistake: Stealing someone else's lover.

Man and woman stealing is a time honored Hollywood tradition. See LeAnn Rimes, Tori Spelling, Angelina Jolie and even old school movie star Elizabeth Taylor. It's a big world out there. If your love cheated to be with you, then how can you ever trust that this pattern won't be repeated? The answer is, you can't.

Karma is a mean goddess, and hell hath no fury like karma scorned. Just sayin.'

Love Mistake: Getting a mistress pregnant.

Arnold Schwarzenegger sure did seem preachy about family values as the Republican governor of California, didn't he? Little did we know that the Governator was not only sleeping with the maid, but he'd had a love child with her as well. Oy vey.

Obviously, this is a relationship no-no to be avoided at all costs.

Love Mistake: Bashing your ex.

When we watched Kelsey Grammer's previous wife Camille Grammer battle the divorce demon on "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills," our hearts broke for her. Her A-list husband cheated and ran. Sure, she had choice words about him on her reality show, but then Mr. Grammer behaved deplorably by bashing his former Mrs. in an interview with Pierce Brosnan.

A smarter move is always to take the high road. See Jennifer Aniston for lessons on grace under fire. Okay, it didn't work out, and she moved on. Sure, it's probably messy. Life is a contact sport.

What are some other celeb love snafus? Dating different versions of the same jerk a la Halle Berry, returning to the scene of the crime like Rihanna or falling apart after a breakup like Demi Moore are all examples *not* to follow.

Ah, le love. You're much better off copying a celebrity hair cut than imitating their love styles. Here's to shiny, happy and healthy relationships!

Abiola Abrams is a lifestyle expert and host of "Abiola's Kiss and Tell TV." Her next book is entitled The Official Bombshell Handbook. Find her fun and scandalous love advice

and interviews at <http://www.AbiolaTV.com>. She tweets @abiolatv.

Julianne Hough Reveals the Secret to Her Relationship with Ryan Seacrest



Julianne Hough does not take her relationship for granted. [People](#) reports that the dancer has a difficult time coordinating schedules with radio personality Ryan Seacrest, her beau of nearly two years. “[Balancing your career and a relationship] is a hard thing to do, especially when you’re so

caught up in your work and bettering yourself,” said Hough.

“I’m so lucky that I have a great relationship. I’m very blessed and I don’t take anything for granted. I think if you alienate people and just focus on your work then it just becomes lonely and it’s not fun anymore.”

How do you balance your career and relationship?

Cupid’s Advice:

Balancing your career and your personal life is tough, but it’s even more difficult when you have to coordinate with your partner. Here are a few ways to balance your career and relationship:

1. Plan a date night: For the extraordinarily busy worker, a date night is a must. Set aside time at least once a week where your only focus is on your partner. Put away all cell phones and laptops and enjoy the evening together.

2. Include your partner: On nights when you have too much work to go out, invite your partner to help you. Ask for your significant other’s insights on your latest project or ask for their help sorting through old emails.

3. Be open with your partner: Don’t feel guilty about your career. If you know work will soon be overwhelming, let your partner know that you’ll be a little occupied in the coming weeks. Your mate will appreciate your honesty and will help you work around your schedule.

Do you have a difficult time managing your career and a relationship? Feel free to leave a comment below.

Scarlett Johansson Has a New Mystery Man



After Scarlett Johansson's split with ex-hubby Ryan Reynolds, the rumor mill was buzzing with candidates thought to be her next boyfriend, but a source has finally confirmed the name of her current romance. The actress is dating the New York-based advertising executive, Nate Naylor, a pal of the pair confirmed to [People](#). "They've been dating for five months," said the source, who also mentioned that they're trying to keep the relationship private.

How do you keep a new relationship under wraps?

Cupid's Advice:

Getting back into the dating scene after a breakup or a

divorce can be tricky. Here are some ways to keep things simple:

1. Keep quiet: Your first few dates after getting out of a serious relationship can be a little shaky, so only tell one or two people close to you that you're seeing someone until you think the relationship is ready for exposure.

2. Social media: Keep the relationship status on your Facebook out of the situation. People love gossip, and changing your status will make the topic free game for anyone with access to your page.

3. New places: Avoid going to the same places that you used to frequent with your ex. People will realize that your old partner is missing, and without knowledge of the split, could bring up some topics that could result in awkward conversations.

How did you keep your new relationship under wraps? Share your comments below.

5 Ways Nice Guys Can Finish FIRST





By Romance Recovery's Johanna Lyman for GalTime.com

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

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

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

1. Act confident. If you don't believe you can get a date, you definitely won't. But remember, confidence doesn't mean arrogance and it doesn't mean you're self-absorbed. How do women perceive confidence, you ask? Smile and maintain good eye contact to start. I don't mean stare her down, or give a smoldering, "I know you want me" look (that's not nice). Just be direct and open. Your eye contact should say, *"I'm interested in getting to know you better, I'm curious about*

you.” Put your drink down between sips (sips, not gulps) rather than holding onto it like a pacifier. And use your body: lean in every once in awhile for more intimacy. Just don’t forget to pull back again to give us space. Non-sexual touch is great too: rest your hand lightly on her forearm after a laugh, or give a shoulder nudge to emphasize a point.

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

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

3. Stop trying so hard to please. It’s ok if we don’t agree on every single thing. We want to know you have a spine of your own. Have a strong opinion about something and let us know about it. That doesn’t mean you aren’t open to a differing opinion, but it’s ok to “agree to disagree.” I’ll give a small example: when we ask where you want to go for dinner, have an opinion. It’s irritating to hear, “I don’t know, what do you want to do?” all the time. I’m sure you think the same thing; you’d rather hear our opinion, even if you disagree.

Here’s a clue: both men and women think that someone who knows what they want out of bed will also know what they want (and not be afraid to tell us) in bed, and that is sexy as hell.

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

4. Make her laugh. Even if it’s at your expense once in awhile, the number one aphrodisiac for women is laughter. Think improv, not knock-knock jokes. Life is pretty funny all by itself, so you don’t have to be cracking jokes all the time. Nice guys are great at self-deprecating humor, so just

be careful not to overdo it. It's even ok to gently poke fun at her once in awhile, as long as it's not a joke about her personal appearance. Seriously guys, no matter how confident a woman is, jokes about her appearance are always taboo. Consider it our Achilles heel.

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

7 Ways to Flirt In a Web 2.0 World





By Jessica Smith

The World Wide Web offers us an unending sea of possibilities, and people aren't hesitating to take advantage of the dating scene that the Internet has to offer. Many of us lead busy and hectic lives, and it can seem impossible to meet someone worth dating on your own, so the convenience of dating sites can make finding "the one" easier. Of course, you can flirt with people online by sending smiley faces or winks, but all body language and human contact is lost. That said, even though you may not be able to charm your possible love interest physically, here are some ways to flirt online while simultaneously keeping your cool:

1. Wit and humor: The easiest way to break the ice is by making people laugh. If you can make someone break out into a fit of laughter or bring a smile to their face, you've already caught their interest and they're going to feel more comfortable to be themselves around you. The sooner the tension is broken, the sooner you'll be going out on real dates.

2. Step by step: When you're chatting online instead of in person, it's easy to reveal information you wouldn't normally be ready to reveal if you were face-to-face. Take things just as slow as you would if you were meeting in person. This will keep a little mystery alive in the relationship and keep them coming back for more.

3. Honesty: When you're communicating over the Internet, you can be whoever you want to be and say whatever you want to say. Your partner will be analyzing you the best he or she can, but if they find out later that you were dishonest, you've ruined your chance at love. Being truthful is a key ingredient to a successful relationship, so start it off right.

4. Friendship: Become friends before lovers. Get to know each other as much as you can virtually before you meet each other physically. You'll feel like you've known the person forever if you've both been honest with each other. This way, you already have an emotional attachment and all that's left is the physical attraction.

5. Play hard to get: The Internet is all around us. We have it at work, at home and even on our phones. That means you're available almost 24/7 to interact online. Play hard to get! Don't respond right away, or don't respond all day. The person on the other end will be checking their chat or email constantly to see if you've responded, and once you finally do, you'll have them hooked.

6. Compliments: Handing out compliments is an art. Over the web, you have to compliment each other without sounding creepy, and say something that will receive a positive response. You're probably not going to be the first guy or girl to tell them they're beautiful or handsome, so be creative. A well thought out and personalized compliment will lead to infatuation and potentially more conversation.

7. Confidence: Being confident without being cocky is a turn on. We all want someone who is sure of who they are and is always willing to be themselves in any situation. Don't pretend to be someone else, because more than likely your date will be able to see through that when you meet in person. If you can exude as much confidence as you do online in person, you just might seal the deal.

What steps did you take to meet your partner while online dating? Share your comments below.

Seal Says He's Grieving and Shocked Post-Split with Heidi Klum





Similar to our own shock over the news, Seal is upset and grieving over his breakup and impending divorce from model Heidi Klum. That said, according to [People](#), he remains amicable saying that his love and respect for Klum hasn't changed. Seal also claims that this will help "make it easier to make that transition," and that the children are the "first priority." For Seal, it's important to acknowledge that he isn't that only one who has gone through a painful split like this. He adds, "It is just unfortunately a chapter of life."

What are some ways to mourn after a split?

Cupid's Advice:

Sometimes it can be hard to get over a difficult breakup or split. Cupid shares some ways to mourn:

- 1. A specific end is helpful:** Being able to look back at the relationship and acknowledge when it was really over can help you to move on. It allows you to adjust to the breakup or divorce more easily.
- 2. Accept some responsibility:** Being able to realize what went

wrong in the relationship can be very therapeutic. It's important to be able to realize that this divorce is not really a rejection of you personally; it's just a combination of two people that didn't work out.

3. Cut off communication: Completely shutting down communication lines can be hard when you have children like Heidi Klum and Seal, but to be able to truly mourn and get over a split, you have to take some time for yourself.

What are some ways you've gotten over a relationship? Let us know in a comment below.