

Five Conversations to Avoid on the First Date



By Steven Zangrillo

Here it is, your huge, nerve wracking first date. After obsessively digging through the mountain range of shoes, dresses, belts and bags in your closet, you've nailed down the perfect outfit. Your hair looks good and you've even managed not to overdo your make-up. All signs point toward success.

Lest we forget, as great as you may look, you must "wow" him or her with your intellectual acumen. That is, don't say anything that'll earn you a trip back to Match.com. We've outlined a few conversational situations to steer away from,

should you find yourself talking yourself ... into a corner.

1. Avoid Talking About Your Ex: You'd think that people follow this rule to a tee with ardent discipline. In truth, it happens a little bit more than you think. It's easy, as well as unfair, to overtly express comparisons between your new potential mate and past flames. The important thing to remember is that the person you are considering is *not* guilty of the romance crimes your ex committed. Show this person you're interested in them, not how they stack up to someone else.

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2. Avoid Talking About Things You Dislike: No one cares that you don't like movies, spinach or *Harry Potter*. Do you know why? Ask yourself if you've ever been told to list your "disinterests" or "dislikes." Your date wants to know what you *like* so they can treat you to those things. Tell them how you like the theatre or going to football games. This way, you can determine what you have in common. Discussing the positive things will lead to a second date, and that's the goal.

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3. Avoid Talking Too Much: While not a conversational topic per se, talking too much is a dangerous proposition. While there's no doubt that your new potential partner will want to find out as much as they can about you, they probably want to talk about themselves a little bit, too. After all, they're just as invested in the conversation as you are and they're just as nervous. There's no harm in sipping your wine, while listening to them talk about whatever they want. Being a good listener is an integral pillar in the foundation of a strong relationship and shows you have communication skills. That's

a huge turn on.

4. Avoid Talking About How Much Money You (or They) Make: Your careers will be a huge topic on the first date. “What do you do?” is a classic and predictable first date query.

Generally, you’ll be able to determine how much money this person is making when they tell you they’re a doctor, public relations professional, lawyer, fry cook or waiter. If you don’t feel that you’re of equal pay grade, don’t embarrass them and don’t embarrass yourself. While “it’s not about money,” both of you should be in stable professional situations. Don’t be unfair and make anyone feel awkward though; you can figure this information out for yourself.

5. Avoid Talking About Your Physical Relationships: Don’t tell your date your “number.” You will be judged with subdued harshness. No matter what *anyone* says, don’t let this conversation happen. You’re on this first date for the purposes of getting to know each other and to have some fun.

You are, in a sense, auditioning to be in each other’s lives. Don’t screw this up by trying to figure out which one of you is more promiscuous. This conversation will happen eventually, so don’t be in a rush to have an awkward conversation with someone you don’t know very well.

What conversations are important to discuss on the first date? Share your suggestions below.

How to Keep Weight Gain from Ruining Your Love Life



It's easy to indulge in the mountain of cookies, candies and other calorie-packed goodies we stuff in our mouths over the Holidays without considering the consequences. However, if you pack more padding on your belly, it could have less-than-exciting ramifications for your love life.

Not to mention the fact that a few extra pounds can have an impact on your psyche. If you're looking for ways to improve your relationship whether it's losing a few inches or finding the self-confidence to love yourself, no matter what your jean size, here are a few tips to get you started:

1. Eat healthier: Although easier said than done, a few simple changes to your diet will kick start your metabolism – and the sparks between you and your man. Start by cutting out bad habits, such as having a daily dessert. Limit treats. Instead, save the raspberry swirled cheesecake when you are

on a special date with your partner.

Related: [Stop Counting, Start Eating: Feel Fresh for Fall](#)

2. Get moving: Jump up and start moving. Dancing with your girlfriends, going for a walk with your man or even a shopping trip are some fun ways to work up a sweat. Of course, if you challenge each other at the gym and make fitness goals together you may be surprised at how your relationship can come back alive.

3. Enjoy Ambiance: If you're a proponent of ambiance and mood lighting, candlelight or other dim lights can engage a smoldering mood. Plan a romantic evening, and fill your home with a warm glow of cinnamon scented tealights. Mood lighting will provide a calm, relaxing background so you and your partner can enjoy each other's company even more.

4. Talk to your partner: For all you know, your man is a fan your curves. Many guys enjoy a full sized woman, as there's more to love. However, if you're feeling insecure about your shape, let your partner know how you feel. When you communicate the concerns you have with your body, he will most likely be supportive.

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

5. Learn to accept your body at any size: According to *Good Morning America*, 68% of women wear a size 12. The average woman is not a size two, ladies; don't feel bad if you don't look like Angelina Jolie. Self-confidence is sexy. So what if you have a few extra pounds hanging around your middle? Find ways to work around it. The most important thing is to own your body. Have a little self-confidence and you'll be surprised at how your relationship can improve.

Is your weight gain affecting your love life? Share your stories below.

Five ‘Down-to-Earth’ Celebrity Couples



By Melissa Caballero

It's hard to deny how infatuated our society is with the lives of our favorite celebrities and their relationships. We sit with our friends and gossip about each of them on a first name basis as though they're our best buds. We fawn over their fame, fortune and good looks. But it's the rich and famous stars who handle their popularity with a dose of humility that give us a real reason to love them. Having it all and making top headlines in the media is one thing, but the way they act

off screen or outside of the studio is what really exemplifies who they are as people. So, let's put aside the celebs with an attitude and stuck up demeanor, and give credit to the ones who have their feet planted right here on Earth.

1. Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner. This pair has seen and done it all. But, starring in box-office hits and walking the red carpet doesn't seem to change them. They find happiness simply by being together, spending time with their two daughters (with a third one on the way) and laughing.

Related: [Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck Are Expecting Third Child](#)

2. Kristen Stewart and Rob Pattinson. Despite all their vampire fame, this duo has yet to sink their teeth into the unfortunate attitudes that Hollywood is known to bring out. Staying true to themselves and their values, Stewart and Pattinson just want to be treated like everyone else. Even after bringing in the big bucks, we see no change in what they choose to wear on the red carpet, and they always show genuine appreciation towards their fans.

3. John Krasinski and Emily Blunt. There's no denying that this tandem is adorable. It is so refreshing to see a pair who truly loves one another, without all the drama in Hollywood. This couple seems to fly under the radar and in fact, they seem a bit camera shy. Krasinski and Blunt didn't even feel the need to broadcast their nuptials; instead, they had a private, romantic ceremony in Italy. It isn't about the glitz and glamour for this normal, down-to-earth love struck team.

Related: [John Krasinski and Emily Blunt Wed](#)

4. Hilary Duff and Mike Comrie. Simple but sweet, their relationship is on the way to an everlasting love. Staying in, cooking together and hanging out are on the top of their

list of date night activities. As one of the youngest items in Tinsel Town, we embrace their normalcy and realistic outlook. With the struggles of being in a long distance relationship, these two leave the drama at the door and take advantage of the time they have together. We hope they enjoy this alone time, as a soon-to-be new addition will undoubtedly stir things up.

Related: [Hilary Duff is Excited to Have Kids with Husband, Mike Comrie](#)

5. Ellen DeGeneres and Portia De Rossi. These two made their love official in 2008 and can be viewed as a great role model for other homosexual couples. They don't feel that there's anything to hide about their relationship, and it's very clear how they feel about each other. However, they never over do it and never let public criticism get the best of their relationship.

Who are some of your favorite 'down-to-earth' celebrity couples? Share your comments below.

Rumor: Katy Perry and Russell Brand Celebrate Christmas Apart After "Massive Fight"





Pop sensation Katy Perry and actor husband Russell Brand spent Christmas apart this year. After a planned trip to Brand's hometown of London, Perry ended up flying to Hawaii with some friends. According to UsMagazine.com, the couple had a major argument, which resulted in cursing at each other and storming off. Perry was spotted without her wedding ring while splashing in the Pacific Ocean, and Brand was seen catching up with old friends in a local pub in Coverack, Cornwall. Although the couple denied divorce rumors in November, trouble is threatening. "The split may come soon, but they are both so dramatic and volatile, the relationship could become great again," says a source.

What are some ways to quickly move on from a fight?

Cupid's Advice:

All couples fight, but avoiding it is impossible. Moving on quickly and peacefully is easier than you think. Cupid has some tips:

1. Admit when you're wrong: We all make mistakes sometimes,

and it's okay to be wrong. The best way to move on from an argument is by pointing out your faults. Your partner will appreciate it and will learn from your example. They may admit to their wrong doings in future situations.

2. Apologize: Along with admitting your mistakes, make sure you apologize to your sweetheart. Saying you're sorry makes all the difference in an argument. Also, show your significant other how much you care by making it up to them with a personalized apology.

3. Don't let the issues hang in the air: The longer the fight sits, the bigger it will grow. Talk about your issues soon after they arise. Discussing how both members of the relationship feel will make for an easy fix. Compromising on the matter will make you both happier.

How did you move on quickly from a fight? Share your stories below.

What Your Gifts Say About Your Relationship





By Amy Osmond Cook, Ph.D.

When it comes to gifts, I am an expert—at receiving them. I love gifts of any kind ... from other people. (No, I'm not going to buy myself a \$285,000 pink Bentley like Paris Hilton did last year.) The problem is, when it comes to giving gifts, I am a nervous wreck.

Gift giving represents two things: (1) that you care about a person enough to give a gift, and (2) that you know a person well enough to give something that he or she will like. Mess one of those up, and it does some damage to your relationship.

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Take, for example, the gift I gave to my husband five years ago. We were newly married, and I wanted to get him something personal and meaningful. He loves golf, and he's a funny guy—so I thought the trick remote control golf ball (that you can move when your opponent is about to swing) was going to be a hit. I waited in anticipation as he opened the box and saw a momentary look of confusion before he masked it with a

smile. He thanked me and said that he loved it, but the damage was done. In that one look, I knew that my gift had tanked.

Fast forward five years. After watching him play golf (a lot!) and listening to his golfing adventures with his buddies (a lot more!), I would never give him a remote control golf ball. I now know that, for him, the rules of golf are sacred.

A serious golfer never tries to move an opponent's ball—especially for a laugh. It violates one of the cardinal rules of sportsmanship. (So does laughing at someone when he shanks his shot – I found out the hard way!) My gift bombed because I didn't know my husband well enough. I knew that he loved golf, but I missed the intricate details.

Stories like mine are a dime a dozen—a woman receives a vacuum cleaner from her husband, and she runs to her room and cries.

A man receives a toolbox and feels ashamed that he doesn't know how to use the tools inside. For better or worse, we attach special meaning to gifts, especially over the holidays.

So if you want to put some currency in your partner's emotional bank account this holiday season, buy . . .

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1. Something intimate. Take note if your partner voices his wish list for Christmas. If he cares enough to say what he actually wants, paying attention to that will make him feel valued and understood. If he doesn't have a Christmas wish, try to find something that will have special meaning between the two of you. Still have those Angels tickets from your first date? Frame them!

You can also make a gift meaningful by giving to something your partner cares about. For example, many celebrities, like Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, care deeply about charitable causes and prefer donations to their favorite charities to extravagant gifts.

2. Something valuable. Take this relatively. If you want to take your relationship to the next level, give your partner something that says, “You are so valuable to me, I would sacrifice anything to have you in my life.” That’s what women hear when their boyfriends buy them expensive jewelry or spend all day helping them cook. It’s not the money or the time, exactly—it’s the fact that someone would sacrifice to give them something beautiful or meaningful. You don’t have to be like Nick Cannon and buy your significant other a \$400,000 Rolls-Royce Phantom or pull a Jude Law and buy your love a \$200,000 diamond-and-sapphire ring, but it should be better than the pack of bubble gum my friend got from her boyfriend one year.

If you’re like me, gift giving is a nail-biting phenomenon. That said, if you give your partner something meaningful and valuable, you can move that relationship dial to the next level. Then again, you could always take your chances and buy a pair of two-person mittens that Chelsea Handler and Chuy are sporting this year!

Amy Osmond Cook, Ph.D. is a faculty associate at Arizona State University, where she teaches Communication and English classes. She is the publisher of Sourced Media Books and co-author of Hope After Divorce and Full Bloom: Cultivating Success. Amy and her husband, Jeff, have five children and look forward to welcoming baby #6 in April 2012. For more information about Amy, please visit amyosmondcook.com.

Romance Resolutions for 2012



By Steven Zangrillo

With the New Year right around the corner, many of you may be starting to stress about those ten pounds you stacked on courtesy of Grandma Anna's sugar cookies; or how you'll manage to get those last minute gifts shipped to your beloved in-laws and cousins you don't know very well. Instead, take a deep breath.

Now is a great time to step back, look around and re-evaluate your relationships. Whether you're a wife, husband, boyfriend, girlfriend or in the throes of a fleeting fling, there's never been a better time to understand your tendencies (good or bad) as a lover and a partner.

Right under our noses lie some of the most common and simple adjustments we can make that will help get you started on the path of relationship improvement. Take to heart some of

these “romantic resolutions” that you may want to put into practice as 2012 approaches:

1. “I will not expect the world of my partner.”

To be clear, you should expect your partner to make the effort to give you the world. We all want our special someone to feel happy and satisfied at all times, and vice versa.

However, it’s borderline lunacy to expect that person to actually deliver on all of your wildest dreams. Newsflash: this isn’t an Old Spice commercial, and no, we’re not going to bake you a triple chocolate mousse cake in your dream house kitchen while singing your favorite song. But we’ll try, or at least give you a great foot massage.

Related: [Is Brad Pitt Ruining Your Love Life?](#)

2. “If they want to go to the movies, then take them to the movies.”

Your significant other loves a hobby that you purely loathe.

It could be going to cheesy romance movies or ridiculous action flicks, blasting gangster rap at earth-shattering volumes from your apartment, or eating at a restaurant that triggers your gag reflex. If they know you hate these things, they probably shouldn’t make you experience them. But that’s selfish, wouldn’t you agree? So stick it out... sit down and watch “The Notebook” with her. You’ll reap the benefits later when she buys you those Eminem tickets next month.

3. “I will tolerate his or her friends, even if it doesn’t go smoothly at first.”

This is particularly difficult in new relationships where you may not have many mutual friends. Say you’ve moved to a new city with your flame and just met his friends. Because they are his or her friends, not yours, territoriality plays an integral role in this situation.

What's key to remember is that these people care for the person that you love, just like you do – albeit in different ways. Maybe they aren't your type of people, but if you treat each other with respect, the relationship with your significant other can grow. Integrating into each others' lives will be much smoother if you go into this with an open mind. And who knows, eventually you may grow to love them.

Related: [Plan a Party with Friends](#)

4. “I will allow myself to be present when I am away from you.”

Ever have that friend who, whether it's at the club or in a study group, that is constantly and obnoxiously in contact with their significant other? You may even be guilty of it yourself. It's an all-around annoying disposition.

If you're always on your cell phone, shutting out the world around you, you are probably aggravating all of the other people that enjoy your company in the process. Don't be the guy leaning on the bar, texting his girl, while everyone else is having a great time.

Furthermore, this could be a warning sign to you that you don't trust each other. Do you really want to be in a relationship where you find yourself having to give a detailed explanation of how dinner is going with your parents? If not, it's probably time to shed that relationship.

5. “I will put myself first, but not at the detriment of my partner. I'll support everything they are passionate about.”

This rule speaks for itself. No one worth being in a relationship with would ever make you feel bad for pursuing your interests, on both professional and personal levels. If the dynamic of your partnership is that of mutual respect and support, your significant other will be your biggest cheerleader.

It is, indeed, easier to give the previous advice than it is to follow it. However, if you adapt an attitude that incorporates a little bit of everything discussed above, there's a good chance that you and your lover will have a relationship that will stand the test of time in the New Year!

Jennifer Lopez Reportedly Brings Her New Man to 'Idol' Set



Friday was bring your boyfriend to work day, or at least it

was for Jennifer Lopez. Lopez's new boy toy, Casper Smart, was seen arriving to the *American Idol* set in Lopez's Bentley as he stopped by to visit his new lady. The new couple have been inseparable, having recently spent Thanksgiving in Hawaii with Lopez's twins before jetting off to Morocco. While the singer seems to be wearing divorce well, her ex-husband Marc Anthony, isn't quite complimenting her style. According to various sources, not only does Anthony not want smart to drive his kids around due to his arrest for drag racing, but he apparently doesn't want Smart around his kids at all, according to [Hollyscoop](#). In the meantime, Lopez and Anthony have continued working together in their Latin-American talent show venture, *Q'Viva!*

What do you do if your ex is upset with your new relationship?

Cupid's Advice:

Unfortunately, when you move on from your last relationship, it's not always going to be a smooth transition. Cupid has some advice:

- 1. Give space and time:** It's always best to allow both you and your ex time to heal and get your emotions together after a breakup.
- 2. Be understanding:** Understand that while it may have been easy for you to let your previous relationship go, depending on the circumstances, it may not be as simple for your former love.
- 3. Minimize contact:** While cutting off ties to a past relationship is an easy solution, it may not be a quick fix when you have kids, work or share the same friends. If this is the case, minimize contact to a speak-only-when-necessary basis until you can interact normally with each other again.

How did you handle your ex being upset with your new

relationship? Share your comments below.

Real Housewife Taylor Armstrong Will Release Tell-All Book



Taylor Armstrong from Bravo's *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills* will be releasing a tell-all memoir through the publisher Simon & Schuster entitled *Hiding From Reality: My Story of Love, Loss and Finding the Courage Within*. The book is scheduled to be released Feb. 7 and will outline her

relationship with her ex husband Russell Armstrong, who tragically committed suicide in August. According to [The Hollywood Reporter](#), the couple had filed for divorce only a month before the suicide.

What do you do if your ex “tells all” after a split?

Cupid’s Advice:

If an ex decides to tell all after a split, there’s really not much you can do to prevent them from doing so. All you can do is stay strong and move on:

1. Allow only positive influences: Surround yourself only with positive people and things. After all, it’s your ex who is airing their dirty laundry and not you.

2. Don’t answer questions: If someone asks you about something they heard from your ex, simply tell them that it’s none of their business.

3. Let time work in your favor: Time cures all wounds and rids all rumors. When you are in bad place in your life, time always works in your favor.

When a relationship is over, should you tell all or keep the details to yourself? Share your thoughts below.

Tiffany Current Tells Us ‘How to Move in with Your

Boyfriend (and Not Break Up with Him)'



By Amanda Martin

Many couples don't realize the pressure and work it takes to move in with a significant other. Lack of communication, romance, bad habits and finances can all take a toll when two people shack up for the first time. "Will you move in with me?" seems like a benign question for so many couples who've been together and are ready for the next step before marriage. However, you may never make it to the alter if you don't set boundaries and expectations.

Tiffany Current, dating guru and author of the new book *How to Move in with Your Boyfriend (and Not Break Up with Him)*, gives

us her personal experience and advice about sharing a home with that special someone in order to make a live-in relationship last:

What inspired you to write “How to Move in with Your Boyfriend?”

It's basically from my own experience. I moved in with my boyfriend and after a month I was ready to call it quits, break up with him and go back to being single. Then I went out to a women's luncheon and that was actually what inspired me to write the book. I was complaining about my live-in relationship and everybody went around the table and said “I've been there” or “I know somebody who has been there,” and they were naming the same problems I was going through. As I was listening I was thinking, “Why didn't someone key me in to all these problems we would hit, all these things I should've talked about?” Nobody had talked to these ladies; nobody had given them advice, so that was the reason I decided to write the book.

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What advice do you have for those who don't feel comfortable moving in with their partner before marriage?

I would definitely recommend sitting down and talking about everything. If you're not living with the person, you won't know if one of their bad habits could be one of your biggest deal breakers. You want to have a conversation before it becomes a legal situation. It's a lot harder to leave once you're married, so I would definitely say discuss your deal breakers. Everybody handles their finances differently; some people are good with their money, some people are bad with it. You don't want to get married and discover that your partner is \$30,000 in debt.

How soon is too soon to move in together?

Anything before three months is probably too soon. In the first few months of a relationship, you're on your tiptoes.

You're on your best behavior, putting on this great front, acting really romantic, and being the best that you could possibly be. Your partner has not seen you at your worst. I would definitely wait six months before moving in. I was with my boyfriend, now husband, for a couple of years before we lived together. Still, once we were moved in, I was like "Wow, I had no idea you were like this." I had no clue.

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

What would you say are the most important chapters of your book?

I'm a big fan of my "Reality Bites" chapter because it talks about communication. For me, to be able to talk openly with my partner is the most important part of a live-in relationship. You constantly have to discuss what is and isn't working, and how you can fix your problems, whether it's chores or finances.

The other chapter couples should read is "Some Like it Hot."

Romance is a huge deal when you're living together. Your partner can easily become your roommate instead of your lover.

If you remember to keep the romance alive and do all the little things you used to do in the beginning, your live-in relationship will be a success.

Want to find out more about how to make the big move? Buy Tiffany Current's book, *How to Move in with Your Boyfriend (and Not Break Up with Him)* on Amazon.com.

Simple Ways to Please Your Man



By John Powers

Contrary to popular belief, men are simple creatures. It doesn't take much to make us happy. All you have to do is find out what your man likes and then take an interest. That's honestly all it takes. Spend quality time together doing things you both appreciate and your relationship will flourish. Here are some ways to make that happen:

Enjoy each other's company.

Laugh, smile, and be silly and lighthearted. It may sound impossible, but it's necessary to eliminate stress. Do this by sharing inside jokes and special moments. A good

relationship will bring out the best in both of you, and you should look forward to being together. Most guys are low-maintenance, and we want our downtime to be carefree.

Related: [She's Got Game: The Women's Guide to Loving Sports](#)

Make together time count.

Each of us has a different schedule, and it's important to make the most of time together doing things you both enjoy like playing tennis, going wine tasting, or watching a movie.

Plan exciting activities that involve cooperation and interaction and you will build great memories of time spent together. Take plenty of pictures but avoid distractions like text messages or phone calls.

Appreciate relaxation.

Some guys like watching the game with a beer, while others prefer chess and pomegranate juice. Sit beside him, pour yourself a drink, and snuggle up to him. If you discover your guy enjoys road trips it might be fun to plan one. If your man likes playing guitar it would be good of you to listen, or take piano lessons.

Related: [Signs to Know He Is The One](#)

Rest assured.

There's nothing that will scare a man away faster than insecurity, but if your man is satisfied in bed and on weekends then you have nothing to worry about. Men are straightforward creatures and you should be confident that your man is happy unless he tells you otherwise.

So enjoy each other, relax, and stop asking questions.

John Powers is a heterosexual, single male. He does graphics for TV by day and standup comedy by night. He enjoys playing

and listening to rock music, driving around with the top down on his convertible, walking aimlessly around Manhattan, and sipping on deep red wine near the beach.

Lady Gaga Says She May Stay Single Forever



In a interview for *Vanity Fair*, Lady Gaga opened up about her love life. The singer is known less for her romantic relationships, and more so for her dedicated relationship with her fans. According to [E! Online](#), Gaga thinks that she will never know martial bliss. With the divorce plague that many

stars face, it can be hard to find love in the entertainment business. Gaga told *Vanity Fair* that it isn't the men she dates that are the problem, but herself. Whatever the issue, we hope Gaga finds love. But if she doesn't, her little monsters will still get great music out of it.

What are the advantages of playing the field and staying single?

Cupid's Advice:

Staying single can be a lot of fun, but it can also leave you feeling lonely and confused when a new relationship comes around. However, sometimes it can be the best thing for you and your future relationships. Here's how:

1. You: Being single means more 'me time'. Not having to worry about a partner's feelings lets you learn what you like or dislike for future relationships.

2. Networking: Flying solo can allow you to meet new people in places that you would have visited while in a relationship. It can open up your social circle and teach you how to communicate better in future relationships.

3. Freedom: Not having to report to anyone or make decisions based on how it will affect you and your partner will leave you free to become an independent well-rounded person.

What have you gained from being single? Share your thoughts below.

Food Network's Anne Burrell and Geoffrey Zakarian Talk Holiday Cooking and Love



By Steven Zangrillo

As the Holidays draw closer and families get together, it's easy to get roped into the manic hustle and bustle. Cooking with your loved ones, especially your special someone, can act as a great escape from all of the stress. It can even bring you and your partner closer. CupidsPulse.com spoke with Food Network's Anne Burrell and Geoffrey Zakarian and got their take on whipping up some holiday romance in the kitchen.

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

Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel Show PDA at Dinner Party



Actress Jessica Biel made a great hostess and girlfriend at her dinner party for Tod's at the Chateau Marmont. Biel and rumored boyfriend Justin Timberlake showed affection toward each other without overdoing it, and an onlooker told [People](#) that the two were "very sweet" together.

What are some ways to show affection without being obvious about it?

Cupid's Advice:

Showing too much PDA is almost never appropriate. Cupid has some advice on how to keep things classy:

- 1. Hand holding:** Taking each other by the hand in public is a subtle way of showing others that you're together.
- 2. Little kisses:** Locking lips in public can appear tacky, but a kiss on the cheek or the forehead is a cute way to display your affection. If you really can't refrain, keep your kisses to a short peck on the lips.
- 3. Affectionate invasion of space:** Flirting at an intimate distance can be a fun way to tease your partner, and others will enjoy seeing love in the air.

How do you show PDA without getting too risque? Share your comments below.

Women Have Fun Talking About Sports on 'WhileTheMenWatch'





By Andrew Pryor

To every woman who's ever gone to bed early on a Sunday night during playoff season, thinks a "pick-and-roll" is something people do when there's no Kleenex around and that a "buttonhook" is a nifty solution for a torn shirt—know this: You are not alone.

Lena Sutherland and Jules Mancuso, two long-distance best friends and self-proclaimed "sports widows," found that they had a lot in common when it came to sports. They realized this one day while talking on the phone while their husbands were engrossed in a big January football game. They chatted about their opinions on different sports, how hot the players were and how they'd always been interested in knowing just what a "sacrifice fly" could possibly mean. While talking this over, they came up with the concept of a show that would cater to other women whose husbands are married to the game. Thus, *While The Men Watch* was born.

Lena and Jules are co-hosts of their own radio program that they've described as "a cross between ESPN and Sex & The

City.” Their number-one goal is to get women involved in the discussion of sports in a way that appeals to them, not to men. “We try to have women engaged in a fun way, instead of spending their Saturday night alone,” states Mancuso.

Related Link: [She’s Got Game: The Women’s Guide to Loving Sports](#)

So how does someone introduce women into what’s always been a man’s world?

Sex appeal, for starters. On *While The Men Watch*, Lena and Jules engage in a different form of fantasy sports, one that focuses on what Jules calls the “fantasy boyfriend.” It’s a twist on the game with women in mind. “We print out the team roster, look at each player’s picture and stats, and choose the member that would make the best fantasy boyfriend,” says Jules. “It’s a fun time-waster and it makes a slow game go more quickly.” And of course, the radio program gives out prizes on occasion to lucky listeners, like jewelry and designer clothing.

But the husbands don’t always need to feel left out—Lena and Jules also encourage single women to learn about sports. “What we found was if you ask a guy one question about sports, it turns into a long conversation. Guys get excited when they find a woman that’s interested in knowing more about the sports they like—and that goes for single women as well as married women. A sports bar can be a great place to find someone new.”

While The Men Watch has covered sporting events like Games 6 and 7 of the World Series, as well as regular season hockey and football games. Jules admits that she and Lena can be a bit biased when it comes to picking a favorite team, though. “It depends on a lot of things,” says the radio co-host. “We usually favor whichever team looks like they can finish the game quicker, or the one that’s better-looking.”

Related Link: [Celebrity Couples You Just Might See at a Sporting Game](#)

While The Men Watch has over two thousand listeners per show—and not all of them are female. “We’ve had several men call into the program,” says Jules. “A lot of them just want to know what their partner’s laughing at while the game’s going on.”

So, for all of those ladies with men who leave them for their television sets or “live games,” you now have a venue to turn to—WhileTheMenWatch.com.

You can look at the program schedule online at WhileTheMenWatch.com or check out their Facebook page or follow them on Twitter.

What to Wear to Meet His Family





By Sarah Ellis

If you're in a new relationship, the looming holidays may mean you're a tad anxious about meeting "the family." Naturally, you want to make a good impression, and while it's what's on the inside that counts, your appearance will speak for you before you even open your mouth. What you wear should certainly reflect your personal style, but try to move away from anything that's terribly polarizing and stick with something simple and classic. That means no glitter or sequins, nothing too body-hugging, and nothing low cut or short. Those rules are pretty much a no-brainer, but not everyone keeps that in mind! You don't have to go as far as a turtleneck and pearls, especially if that's not "you" – but try to channel more Olivia Palermo ... and less Kim Kardashian.

Related Link: [Etiquette Expert Says Kim Kardashian Should Return Wedding Gifts](#)

Stick with structured and ladylike, instead of sexy and fitted. Olivia knows how to work the classic pieces while putting her outfit together in a modern way. She doesn't look

outdated or prudish; she looks fresh and modern – like she was personally outfitted by Ralph Lauren or J Crew. Here are some tips to help you achieve that look:

Tip 1: Choose great fitting basics. Find a color that flatters you. That might be a simple wrap dress, a great pair of boot cut jeans, or a tailored blouse. You'll want the basics to be the foundation for the rest of your outfit.

Tip 2: Build with great accessories. This helps you look more polished and professional – and keeps you from looking too plain. Don't overdo it. You want to look like you cared enough to carefully choose your outfit, but avoid looking like you're trying too hard. You can wear multiple accessories, but choose one to be the focus. Maybe it's a statement necklace, or a scarf (perfect for the holidays), or a great structured handbag.

Tip 3: Poke around and see if you can find out how his family normally dresses. You don't want to show up in jeans to his family dinner if they typically wear skirts and dresses, and equally embarrassing would be to wear a fancy dress when his family is super casual.

Related Link: [Hair Battle Spectacular's Blondie Talks Hair Tips for Dating](#)

So, it's not your appearance that will make them decide whether or not you're a keeper, but it'll ease your nerves as you meet his family and help with that first impression. Just like going to a job interview, you want to look qualified and pulled together. Look great, and you'll feel great!

Author Bio: As a newlywed, I am fully versed in making impressions on new family members. While I may not be a

professional stylist, I pride myself on choosing fashion that looks polished and classic, and I'm always helping friends choose their first date and meet the parents outfits. Although I'm a writer for Handbag Heaven by day, outside of work I take joy in being a matchmaker, a newlywed, and a momma to my precious puppy, Luna.

Happiness Expert Sophie Keller Gives Us Some Tips about Having a Happy Love Life





By Linda Guma

Are you looking for a happier love life? Happiness expert, author, life coach and TV personality Sophie Keller gives us 50 key ideas for improving your relationship in her upcoming book, *How Happy Is Your Love Life?: 50 Great Tips to Help You Attract and Keep Your Perfect Partner*.

The book is part of a four-book series coming out November 27. Keller notes her goal for the 'How Happy Is' brand is that [her] practical, easy to use advice will help you discard outdated attitudes, habits and beliefs in order to make more positive choices in your life.

We had the pleasure of interviewing Keller to find out just how she does it.

What motivated you to become a happiness expert?

When I was young I didn't feel particularly understood. But I knew I was meant to be happy, so when I searched for how, I found it inside. I realized that when you drop the masks,

armors and pretenses, you will find who you are. The person you should be with will magnetize to you. Otherwise, you will magnetize people who have the same armor. That's why relationships don't work. Someone's armor must come off.

What is happiness?

Happiness is about feeling complete within yourself, feeling like you're making a difference in your life and the lives of others. It's about expressing yourself fully and completely.

It's interesting that on a worldwide scale, happiness and wealth don't correlate with each other. Happiness is about focusing on the moment. For example, those in third world countries focus on feeding themselves and their children. They value their relationships above material things. I always say we're human *beings*, not human *having* or human *doings*. The more "human being" we are, the happier we'll be.

What sets this book apart from other love advice books on the market?

Everything is actionable. Also, it teaches you how to focus and work on yourself. Most of all, this book teaches you to break down defense mechanisms that have been holding you back.

What would you say is the most important tip you have for those who strive to be happy in their love lives?

Be yourself to the fullest and be really positive. Relax, have fun and have faith. There is someone out there for you. You also have to work on your self development. Clear out your insecurities. You need to shift how you think about yourself and any past issues that keep resurfacing.

How do you know when it's right to tie the knot?

Every cell in your body says "yes," with no doubt. You never know what it's going to feel like but when it happens you'll know. The person you end up marrying could surprise you.

Sophie Keller is the creator of Howhappyis.com. She has been a featured life coach for Martha Stewart's *Whole Living* magazine, a contributing expert for Sirius radio and she appears frequently on *KTLA 5 Morning News*. She also appears on *FOX, NBC, ABC, and CBS* where she gives happiness tips and lifestyle advice. She was recently appointed the 'Good News' Ambassador for LG Electronics. She lives in Santa Monica, California.

To order a copy of her book, visit <http://www.howhappyis.com/books/love-life/>.

How to Campaign for a Better Relationship





By Tanni Deb

With Election Day around the corner, this is the best time to campaign for a better relationship. Whether that means leaning to the left with a liberal approach or moving toward the right with a more conservative one, you deserve the best you can get. Use the following guidelines and you just may win a vote from that special someone:

To find the perfect partner:

1. Figure out what you want in a partner: Knowing exactly what you want in a partner will help you narrow down your choices just as you would with a candidate in an election. Otherwise, you'll settle for anyone.

2. Figure out what issues/things you can compromise: Figure out what things you're willing to let go, such as finding a mate who doesn't have certain features or doesn't meet your height requirement. Although compromising is important for a healthy relationship, never do it for major issues. For instance, if you want a family in the future, don't make a

life with someone who doesn't like children.

Related Link: [Three Tips to Enjoy Marriage Despite the Battles](#)

3. Search: You'll probably need to search in a variety of places before you find your perfect partner. Dating sites, clubs or even attending a party at your friend's house can lead you to your ideal mate.

4. Get to know him/her: After you've found the person you think is "The One," date seriously for at least a year. If you find that the person has way too many red flags or your feelings for him or her aren't strong enough, it's best to end the relationship so you don't drag it out for four more years.

5. Marriage: Talk about settling down and moving onto the next step in your relationship if you can see yourself married for the rest of your life. Unfortunately with relationships, it's not quite as easy as electing a new candidate whenever you hit a rough patch.

To improve your relationship:

1. Communicate: Communication is the key to every successful relationship. It helps avoid misunderstandings, fixes problems, and aids in understanding each other in order to improve your relationship. Ask your partner how their day was, if they have any new interests and any other common questions. You should also show that you appreciate your partner by complimenting him or her once in a while.

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

2. Listen: Just like communication, listening is another major factor in a successful relationship. Your interest and focus is important to your mate and when you show that they have your full attention, it means the world to them. It will also build a sense of respect and trust between both of you.

3. Think positively: When you concentrate on the negative

aspects, it'll cause tension in your relationship. The next time you have a negative thought about your significant other's actions, come up with a more reasonable explanation for his or her act and then discuss it. If an argument arises, control your tone and figure out what the major issue is or the message your partner is trying to communicate. Lastly, remind yourself frequently of the good times you've spent together.

4. Common goals: Having similar ambitions in life makes your relationship stronger. Figure out what both of you want and where you both want to be in the future. Find common goals and talk about how to achieve them together.

5. Find time for each other: Work is important, but for relationships to flourish, it's essential to have time for your significant other. Instead of taking things too seriously, spend time with your sweetheart, have fun and just relax.

If you know other methods of finding the perfect partner or changing the relationship you're in, let us know in a comment below. Best of luck this election season!

Denise Richards and Richie Sambora Are Dating Again





Being reunited must feel good for on-again couple Denise Richards and Richie Sambora. The two were seen together Sunday night at a Japanese restaurant in California, according to [E! Online](#). After a year long relationship in 2007, the couple have decided to try their hand at love together again. In Richard's memoir, she discussed her relationship with Sambora saying, "Richie and I shared an easiness I hadn't before had." She also revealed that since their split, the couple has met up a few times. It's clear that they both still care for each other, and hopefully this time around proves to be more successful.

What do you do when you haven't gotten over your ex?

Cupid's Advice:

It's important to give yourself some time after a breakup to focus on yourself. However, if after a while you still have strong feelings for your ex, maybe it's time to explore why you broke up and if there's potential for a reconciliation. Here are some things to consider:

1. The reason you can't move on: Many times it's hard to get over an ex if there was no closure at the end of your relationship. Meet up with your ex and discuss why your relationship ended to help your feelings subside.

2. Learn from your mistakes: In a lot of relationships, both parties feel like the other is at fault for a breakup. Instead of blaming your ex for everything, look at what you both could have done better to make your romance last.

3. Second chances: Sometimes it takes a split and individual growth to realize that your ex is the right person for you. Talk to your former partner and see if there's a potential future still there for you.

What did you do when you couldn't get over your ex? Tell us your story below.

How to Master Being in a Relationship





By Nan O'Brien

As a professional Spiritual Teacher and Intuitive Counselor, I am always asked, "When will I meet the right person?" You may think of yourself as a failure unless you are in a happy, committed relationship. You may feel you aren't attractive, funny, sexy, or smart enough. Ultimately, it all boils down to one question in your head: "What's wrong with me?"

The good news is, the answer is "nothing"! The most common reason people do not find happiness in relationships is because they have trouble learning the intuitive life lesson of *balance*. It can be tough to tell if this problem is at the root of your relationship issue. Ask yourself these questions:

Do you always feel you must take care of others? Do you feel guilty if you put yourself first? Are you attracted to partners who have had problems in prior relationships? Do you work at making your partner feel loved, while at the same time doubting if he or she feels as strongly as you do? Do your significant others go on to be in healthy relationships with others after leaving you?

Related Link: [Cougar Dating Love Lessons Even Demi Moore Can Use](#)

If you answered “yes” to any or all of these questions, you gravitate toward the emotionally unavailable person, and your relationships are based on *need* instead of *want*. The reason for this confusion is that feeling needed is often disguised as feeling loved. You give your all, hoping that it will somehow come back to you. You believe you must convince the other person you won’t abandon them like everyone else has. You look for reasons that prove your partner cares (the smallest gesture seems huge), and you make excuses for what they don’t do. You defend your lover to your friends and family, while deluding yourself. You know something isn’t right, but you’re so busy saving the other person that you lose yourself.

The key to the intuitive balance lesson is to learn how to give *and* receive. Before you can be in a relationship with others, you must first be in a relationship with yourself. This is *not* the same thing as being alone – because anyone can be alone! Being in a relationship with yourself means treating yourself as wonderfully as you treat others. Think about how much time, energy, and financial resources you spend on your partner in a relationship. Have you ever spent that much on yourself? You deserve the best of you; and you cannot give your best to others, or receive from them, until you have learned how to give your best to *yourself*.

Related Link: [Single Celebrities Who Rock \(and Rule\)!](#)

Once you have mastered being in a relationship with yourself, your energy shifts. You’ll not attract, nor be attracted to, relationships that are unhealthy and need-based; you will resonate with partners who are able to give and receive, paving the way for a healthy and fulfilling want-based relationship.

The intuitive balance lesson is the key to successful and sustainable relationships. The timing is determined by you and how quickly you embrace being in a relationship with yourself. You'll find the perfect partner if you start by nurturing the one you already have – YOU!

Nan O'Brien is a nationally-known Spiritual Teacher and Intuitive Counselor. She has hosted her own nationally-syndicated radio show and appears regularly on radio stations throughout the U.S.; is a frequent contributing columnist for websites and news outlets; has authored numerous non-fiction books; and is a sought-after public speaker. In addition, she conducts personal phone appointments. For more information, please visit www.nanobrien.com.

Ben Stiller Says Jennifer Aniston and Justin Theroux Are Happy





With all the flack Jennifer Aniston and Justin Theroux have been catching for their relationship, they do have some people in favor of their whirlwind romance. Ben Stiller spoke highly of the couple at the premiere of his movie *Tower Heist* on Monday. "They're both great people. I love them both," the actor told UsMagazine.com. Theroux is currently living with the former *Friends* star in her NYC penthouse. That said, no plans have been made to take the relationship any further. Aniston stated, "I've been married once and I don't know if I'll get married again." It seems that, for now, the couple are just simply having fun in each other's company.

How can you tell if your friend is happy in their relationship?

Cupid's Advice:

If you notice your friend being positive and optimistic about life and love, they are definitely happy in their current situation. Acknowledge the small changes in their demeanor and personality:

1. More smiles: Whether it's giggling at a text or beaming just because, your friend is all smiles all the time. A grin is an obvious indicator of happiness, and it's clear that their new love interest is to thank.

2. Change in wardrobe: If you notice your friend is wearing something a little more flirty and fun than usual, it's probably the result of a good new relationship. Satisfaction in love can easily seep in to other aspects of life.

3. Simple statement: "I'm happy in my relationship." is a pretty clear sign that your friend is just what he or she said. Sometimes a direct statement shouldn't be questioned.

What are some ways you can tell if your friend is happy in their relationship? Let us know below!

Tough Love Miami: Michelle Betts Talks About Life Before and After Romance Bootcamp





By Andrew Pryor

Michelle Betts is no stranger to tough love. As a personal trainer, she's the one who is usually dishing it out to her clients. So how would someone like her handle being a contestant on VH1's *Tough Love Miami*, taking part in a relationship bootcamp run by dating drill sergeant and master matchmaker Steve Ward?

Very well, as a matter of fact. "I could take it because I knew how that type of criticism worked," says Michelle. "I'm a personal trainer, and I know that sometimes you can be soft and encouraging, but other times you really have to break people down."

Before her appearance on the show, Michelle lived a very disciplined life, keeping a strict and structured schedule for every activity—including finding love. "I wasn't the type of person who obsessed over a date calling me back," says the *Season 4* contestant. "I wouldn't call someone out of desperation."

Related Link: [Learn a New Sport with your Honey](#)

The few lasting relationships Michelle did have in the five or six years before *Tough Love* she says she'd like to forget. Michelle devoted herself to living a life of positivity, emphasizing exercise, meditation, and her now-infamous "vision board," where she would build a collage of all the qualities she wanted in a man.

"*Tough Love* was rehab for my broken heart," she says. "Honestly, if I hadn't gone on the show, I would have spent 5-10 more years being held back by my own personal issues. People would always ask me, 'Why are you single?' and eventually I started saying, 'Yeah, why *am* I single?'"

Initially, it was difficult for Michelle to adjust to the new environment because she had not lived with other women before. Over time, she did form bonds with the others and even left the show with "two lifelong friends."

Related Link: [Get Fit With Your Significant Other This Weekend](#)

But Michelle never forgot the true reason she was there. "I went in for myself," says the fitness expert. "I went in not to meet a guy, but to have the tools I needed to build a relationship when I went back to California."

So did Michelle find love through the *Tough Love* process?

"I can't tell you that much yet," she laughs. "What I can tell you is that it was a difficult process, and the challenges definitely got harder as the season went on. Oh, and there's a whole lot of drama this season."

Always a good reason to keep watching!

Tough Love: Miami is on VH1 on Sundays at 8 ET/7 CT.

How to Communicate to Get What You Need



By Dating With Dignity's Marnia Battista for GalTime.com

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

- Exactly what you want in a partner, including his values and goals in life.
- How to effectively communicate your needs and

expectations without having to be bitchy, brash or judgmental.

- Simple ways to set boundaries to allow the possibility of a relationship to unfold before you knee-jerk kick him to the curb.

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

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

1. Decide exactly you want.

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

2. Tell him directly.

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

3. Set boundaries—and enforce them.

This is the most difficult part of self-care for many women.

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

My client, who had known this man for only an hour (give or take a few exchanged emails and texts), spent the entire time she was with him fantasizing about how she might exit the drama without hurting his feelings. The result was that not only did she see a part of him he most likely didn't want to share on a first date, but she also became annoyed with herself for not speaking up. She felt bad that she could not set the boundary immediately. Had she followed the two steps outlined above, it would have been simple from the get-go. Knowing she did not want to do crisis management for a man she had just met, she should have stated simply, "Thanks for the coffee. It's such a drag your car was towed. I'm going to get on with my day now, but I look forward to hearing how it turns out when we talk next." Instead, she wondered why he didn't give her an out, excusing her from dealing with his mistake so she could get back to her life.

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

Going from 'It's Complicated' to Monogamy: 5 Tips Every Woman Should Know



By Melissa Caballero

The status of our relationships in this modern day dating world have become much more complex than they used to be. Many couples go through multiple stages until they're officially declared an item. From 'single' to 'it's complicated' to 'in a relationship,' the situation can get blurry. Although the beginning of a relationship can be exciting, it doesn't always end that way. Some people date for several months without a label, and then the painstaking question "Are we exclusive?" is asked and the relationship abruptly ends with no warning.

It may not make sense, or seem even fair that one question can stir so much confusion or controversy. So, many women have learned to keep mum and stay in the 'it's complicated' stage instead of turning their status back to single. But, instead of going backwards how do we proceed forwards to the comfort zone of monogamy? We spoke to psychologist, professor, relationship expert and author, Dr. Karin Anderson and she offered five ways woman can navigate through:

1. **Play it cool.** Of course you're going nuts with the nebulous nature of your relationship and of course you're looking for a more definitive understanding as to what sort of connection you and your "friend with benefits/booty call/boyfriend(?)" actually have. But the #1 way to keep things complicated is to push the issue by having one of those, "I really need to know where this relationship is headed" conversations. Play it cool. Psychologists who study couples speak of *The Law of Least Interest*—whoever is *least* interested in maintaining the relationship holds the *most* power. Every time you bring up an issue, you lose power. And until your relationship has more concrete structure, you don't want to lose any power.

2. **Was it ever *not* complicated?** A good question to ask yourself is, "Was this *relationship* ever not complicated?" Meaning—did you ever know where you stood with your man? If not, you probably have more information than you realize. This may be hard to hear, but if this guy has known you for some time, has enjoyed having sex with you regularly, has never wanted to legitimately establish himself as your partner, then it's likely he's *never* going to go in that direction.

3. **Make him want to commit.** Naturally, we can't *make* anyone want to do anything, but we can certainly sweeten the pot. For example, when you're together, demonstrate your affection in ways men respond to (e.g, a fridge stocked with his favorite beer, a TV tuned to his NFL and college teams'

games). When you're away from each other, resist the temptation to be too available (i.e, absolutely **no booty calls**). You want him to recognize how great you and he are together, but those benefits can't be his 24/7 until you guys are an official couple. It'll keep him wanting you.

4. **You may need to pull all the way back.** If the above suggestions aren't working, you may need to create some space. Skip the drama of an ultimatum (remember, most guys think women are a little crazy because our emotions tend to run more intensely than theirs); let your behavior get your point across. If he reaches out with, "What's up with you? Where have you been?" you can reply, "I've been super busy with work and friends and I have to get my priorities straight. As much as I love hanging out with you, I need to focus my energy on aspects of my life that are more clearly defined." Leave it at that. Again, **no drama!** Just state the facts and see what he does with them.

5. **Be honest with yourself. Is this *really* what you want?** Ultimately, there's no magic formula for moving from 'it's complicated' to monogamy. But more importantly you need to ask yourself why you want this person. Hasn't it been a drag walking on egg shells, trying not to scare him off with your desire for a *real* relationship? Don't you hate the insecurity that comes with not knowing your place in his life? The reality is, most guys go for what they want—chalk it up to their DNA or the thrill of the chase or whatever, but most men will claim you if they want you. What does it say when we want a man who doesn't want us?

If none of the above works, maybe the best answer for moving forward is to let the whole thing go and find someone who's interested in the same sort of relationship that you are.

Three Tips to Enjoy Marriage Despite the Battles



By Patty Newbold, author of the award-winning marriage blog, AssumeLove.com

It can't be easy marrying into a reality TV show, as Kris Humphries recently did. Kim Kardashian and her family speak their minds, and it's all caught on camera. Kris already gets his share of it from her siblings, and it can't be long before he catches angry words or insults from his new wife Kim, too.

It's the Ratio, Not the Number

Let's hope Kim's already figured this out, but fighting words do not kill a relationship. Marriages fail when the nastygrams are not matched with at least five times as many respectful, loving and encouraging words and gestures.

Remember: Five times. Or more.

That's what psychologist John Gottman's research found. He uses it to predict, in just a few minutes, which marriages will last and which will not. It doesn't matter how many or how few unloving words, eye rolls, or shrugs are used in a relationship; only whether the good stuff happens at least five times as often as the bad.

It Won't Be What You Expected

Here's a tip for Kris. There is only one thing you should expect when you marry: love. We all show up to our weddings with a boatload of expectations, and many of them will be dashed. Your marriage will not go the way you thought it would, and you'll make yourself miserable if you tell yourself this means you are not loved or respected. Kim, like any wife or husband, will love you her own way.

Therefore, due to the unique ways we all choose to show our love, it's important to stop yourself when you hear yourself thinking, "If she loved me..." Unless she is actually doing you harm, she loves you, and you are missing it. You will make a mess of your marriage by getting angry when it's not what you expected, not what someone else you know might do. That's exactly what I did the first time around, and I could not see how much love I had overlooked until after my husband's sudden death at the age of 35.

Never Compromise

Just about now, Mr. and Mrs. Humphries are probably discovering that they disagree about things like where shoe polish should be stored and which family events cannot be

missed. Well, there are never just two options for a resolution. Instead of disagreeing and eventually compromising, look for a third alternative to the problem that both makes you happy and also delights your mate.

Disagreeing is inevitable in any relationship, and if you're not doing it, there's probably something wrong. That said, it's important to outweigh those fighting words with words full of love, kindness and respect. If you do, your relationship will thrive.