

Date Idea: Homemade Smoothies



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Mara Miller](#)

It's hot outside, and you and your beau have exhausted every effort to bare the record-breaking heat. One thing you may not have tried, though, is a day inside blending together your favorite ingredients to concoct the perfect smoothies. All you need for this [date idea](#) is a blender and your favorite fruits. A day well-spent indoors this summer is just what the two of you need to wind down and cool off!

Check out Cupid's best relationship advice for beating the summer heat

with this date idea!

Smoothies are fantastic because they're an easy and delicious homemade treat. Whether you have a sweet tooth or you're a health nut, there are dozens of smoothie recipes out there for you. The Food Network has listed fifty of their own, and you're bound to find more as you search. You can stick to traditional strawberry banana, or you can try your hand at more unique recipes. SimplyArtisanal.com has some very fun ideas that are sure to "wow" your lover like vanilla fig and peach fuzzy navel. Don't be shy about blending different recipes; the whole point is to stay in and try something new!

Related Link: [Mexican Cooking Classes: Spice Up Date Night](#)

Half the fun of this weekend date idea is in the preparation. Pick out your favorite recipes; make a list of everything you'll need; and hit the grocery store. It doesn't matter if you're on a budget or willing to splurge – you can find something that fits your desires. If the two of you want to challenge each other, split up at the grocery store and pick out your favorite ingredients. Follow this relationship advice and surprise your partner's taste buds with your creation!

Related Link: [Frugal Foodies: How to Save on Dining Out](#)

You and your partner can even have a contest to see who can come up with the best recipe. For added fun, create categories like "most original", "best tasting", or "most disgusting." Then, the date will be more about the time you're spending together and less about the actual smoothies (not that we're against that). If you're turning the smoothie-making into a day-long event, you'll want to remember to make small portions each time so that you can both try them all!

What is the best smoothie recipe you've ever made? Tell us in

the comments below!

Date Idea: A Day at Sea



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Mara Miller](#)

Embrace the other elements with your cutie and spend a day exploring the ocean. This weekend date idea can include so many different activities at sea, including jet skiing, scuba diving or snorkeling, and sailing. Being out in the vast water and so far away from dry land will allow you two to really indulge in some alone time. Consider this relationship and love advice and make a day out of conquering the great, blue sea!

Get ready for this ocean-inspired date idea!

Jet skiing is a fantastic option because it's highly accessible. There are tons of companies on every beach. Once you've found one that matches your budget, make an appointment. After you arrive, the instructors will have you sign a waiver and take a short safety course. Then, you can strap on your life jacket and head to the shore, where they'll help you enter the water. If you want to compete with your lover, you can rent two jet skis or if you want to get cozy, rent one to share. Either way, you'll be able to venture further out into the ocean than you have ever before.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Beach and Beyond](#)

In order to partake in deep-sea scuba diving, you have to take lessons and be licensed. This is always an exciting date idea, but if you're just going out for a day at the beach, you may want to opt for some snorkeling instead. You can purchase snorkeling equipment at many sporting goods or department stores, and from there, all you'll need is your ability to swim! Underneath the pier is a great place to snorkel, as a lot of sea critters gather there. You can also bring your snorkel right offshore where you'd normally swim and take a gander at what's lurking around your feet.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Bring the Beach to You](#)

If you or a friend owns a sailboat, then use this weekend date idea to spend the day lounging on the deck with your sweetie. You can even make it a couples date and invite your best friends. Boating is not only exciting, but it provides an escape from everything back on solid land. Pack some food and drinks, and you'll be able to stay out there all day!

What's your favorite way to explore the ocean? Tell us about it in the comments below!

Date Idea: Enjoy a Secret Sunset



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Mara Miller](#)

When we think of iconic images of romance, we often visualize the sunset. The soft glow of the sun going down and blanketing us in darkness makes us want to cuddle up close to the one we love. If you want to plan an unforgettable summer date night and show how much you love your partner *without* having to spend a dime, just follow this [dating advice](#) and find a peaceful spot to enjoy the sunset together.

Enjoy a beautiful sunset on this summer date night!

For this weekend date idea, finding a place to watch the sunset gives you the option of staying close to home or traveling to a more unfamiliar place. After all, who doesn't love a good road trip to the beach? Wherever you decide to go, you may enjoy the melody of crickets, the twinkle of fireflies, or the sound of the waves washing away all your worries. At the end of the day (literally), you're there to enjoy the mystifying view of your side of the world turning away from the sun. We can already envision the silhouette of that perfect kiss with your love!

Related Link: [Date Idea: Dance the Night Away](#)

Since darkness will impede on your ability to see during your date night, bring along some things that will ignite your other senses. Pack a picnic and enjoy a delicious dinner for two with no interruptions. This also gives you the opportunity to create some homemade masterpieces together before you head to your special spot. Bring speakers to play your favorite music while you dance the night away. To make the occasion even more special, create a playlist of songs that you've dedicated to your one true love. If you're able to, light a bonfire and cuddle up in its warmth. If a little ambiance is all your looking for, bring along some tea light candles to set the mood.

Related Link: [10 Great Date Ideas Under \\$50](#)

The good thing about the sunset is that it happens every day, so if spontaneity is your way of life, you can grab your babe and go catch the view any day you please. This date idea requires no planning or research – all you need is the desire to have a magical night. You could even make it into a tradition: It can be your way of commemorating the start of

summer or a weekly date until it gets too chilly. Maybe you'll even fall asleep and wake up for the sunrise! Whatever you decide, Mother Nature's wheels will always be turning.

Where is your favorite spot to enjoy the sunset? Tell us in the comments below!

Date Idea: See Sparks Fly



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Mara Miller](#)

“See sparks fly” isn’t just an old idiom or part of a Taylor Swift song – we’re talking about the Fourth of July! What else turns up the heat more than celebrating our country’s independence? If you think you see fireworks every time you

kiss your loved one or look into their eyes, then how about turning that dreamlike state into reality and finding the best fireworks in town for tomorrow's special holiday? Watching fireworks bursting is invigorating, so use this weekend [date idea](#) to share it with the person who makes you feel most alive!

Indulge in this Fourth of July date idea!

The Travel Channel determined the best fireworks displays in the country, so if your city landed a spot on this list, grab a blanket and head out to see the show. Many flock to the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., to celebrate our country's big day, and if you wanted to get especially festive on this date idea, you could book a Potomac River cruise. Even if your city isn't on this list, we all love to cuddle up with our boo, so wherever you go, you're bound to feel the magic. If your heart so desires a road trip to make the day even more monumental, just be sure to plan everything in advance.

Related Link: [Celebrity Couples Who Love Fourth of July](#)

You'll want to arrive at the fireworks location ahead of time to claim a good spot. After all, there aren't many people who stay home on this glorious day! That being said, choose a quiet area where there will be less hustle and bustle – it's not like you won't be able to see the fireworks! Just make sure a monument or skyscraper isn't blocking your view, and you'll be good to go. Because you're arriving early, remember this dating advice and pack properly as well. Bring insect repellent, water, snacks, and games to keep you entertained.

Related Link: [5 Creative Fourth of July Proposals](#)

If you're the after-party type, there's sure to be plenty to do when the fireworks are over. If you want to get really

festive, dress up in your best red, white, and blue outfits and find a bar that really speaks to your wilder side. Rooftop spots are especially popular since everyone's eyes are looking toward the sky already. This is a day for everyone to celebrate, so let loose with the one who makes every day as romantic as it can be!

What is your favorite thing to do with your partner on the Fourth of July? Share your best dating advice in the comments below!

Love Advice: Old-Fashioned Summer Fun





By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and Mara Miller

When you were a kid, there was nothing like summertime: no school for two months, water balloon fights, the classic Slip 'N Slide, and frequent pool days. Just because you're older now doesn't mean you and your boo can't enjoy some throwback fun! Follow this [dating advice](#) to enjoy all the summer activities you reveled in as a child.

Check out this fun summertime date idea!

Water balloon fights are an excellent activity for a big group, so get your honey to grab his friends while you invite yours and initiate a water war on this weekend date idea. Pinterest has tons of ideas for planning an epic water fight, so all you need is a good-sized backyard and the will to clean up all the balloon scraps when you're done! Water balloon fights are the perfect opportunity for the two of you to be extra flirty as well. Take advantage of the constant surprise attacks and your sexy, soaking wet man!

Related Link: [Relationship Advice: Should You Elope?](#)

Slip 'N Slides may have been the token summer toy in the 90's, but they're still for sale. All kinds of Slip 'N Slides can be found on Amazon. They make a great gift, so you can surprise your lover with one and then put it to good use. Chances are, you'll start reminiscing about the fun times you had playing on a Slip 'N Slide as a kid, which will make for an especially romantic date. Don't fret if it's rainy outside: The Slip 'N Slide is fun in the mud too!

Related Link: [Date Idea: Spend an Intimate Night Indoors](#)

Let your inner child come out to play when you follow this love advice and visit your neighborhood pool. Sunbathing is fun, but laying there in silence next to your partner isn't as exciting as a splash fight or ordering ice cream cones from the snack bar. Indulge in all the things you would've enjoyed when you were younger, and you'll both be overcome with giggles – which we all know is *the* way to bond. If you want to spend the entire day at the pool, pack a picnic, books, and water guns. You'll never have a moment to be bored!

What were your favorite childhood summer activities? Tell us in the comments below!

Date Idea: Finders Keepers





By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Mara Miller](#)

The beach is exciting and romantic no matter what, but if you've ever wanted to add an additional air of adventure to your trip, follow this [date idea](#) and try using a metal detector! You and your lover may find some hidden treasures while out and about...or, at the very least, find some less valuable trinkets to laugh about. Metal detecting is something we usually only see on movies and television shows, but in actuality, it's a beloved pastime for a lot of people, many of whom have found it to be very lucrative.

Dating Advice for Your Next Trip to the Beach

If you are a frequent beach-goer, it's likely you have a routine down every time you visit the shore: Spread out the towel, lather on the sunscreen, hit the water, and then return to sunbathe. Why not add a bit of exploring to your next day at the beach? The level of anticipation will allow you and your honey to grow closer as the excitement grows too.

Related Link: [Date Idea: All's Fair in Love](#)

For this weekend date idea, you'll want to make sure you know how to use your equipment before you go searching in the sand. Talk to someone at the sporting goods or department store before going wild with your metal detector – you'll need to know all its features in order to achieve optimal results. Researching metal detecting tips beforehand will not only be fun for you and your sweetie, but it'll allow you to enjoy your day even more.

It's important that you pick a proper location when considering this dating advice. Head to a beach that is known to be crowded at times, but go during off-hours. That way, there will be more opportunity for precious metals to be lost, but you won't have to weave in and out of the crowd to find them. Whichever beach you choose, consider speaking with the locals before digging in; they'll have more knowledge on where people have found impressive items in the past.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Get in the Game](#)

To make this date idea even more exciting, have a competition with your loved one to see who can find the most valuable or more ridiculous items. You can even compete to see who can bring back the best gifts for each other. If you really want to make a day out of it, invite other couples to join you in your treasure hunt.

Ever use a metal detector at the beach? Tell us what you found!

Date Idea: Stroll Through a Museum



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Mara Miller](#)

Searching for an exciting date idea this weekend? Plan a trip to a local museum! You can spend the entire day with your significant other and get an educational and entertaining experience at the same time.

Head to a Museum for a Culturally-Influenced Date Idea

When choosing which museum to visit, think about your interests. If you want to learn more about a specific event in

history, such as the Holocaust, find a museum that has a section for that. Do you live in Washington, D.C.? The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is one of the best Holocaust museums in America. If your man is a space or aviation fanatic, follow this [love advice](#) and take him to the National Air and Space Museum, also in D.C., on your next weekend date idea.

Related Link: [Tour a Chocolate Factory](#)

If you're more fascinated with contemporary art, the New Museum in New York is the best place to go. It even has a Sky Room that provides a stunning view of Manhattan's skyline. If you live in Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art is also on the list of top ten museums in America.

Planetariums and aquariums make for great date ideas too. The American Museum of Natural History in New York exhibits a variety of shows in their planetarium, ranging from outer space to the function of the brain. The New York Aquarium is also popular. From sea lions to sharks, you'll certainly stay busy!

Museums are great because of all the opportunity for conversation, especially if you're going on a first date. Still, whether it's your first or fifty-first outing together, there's always something fun to enjoy. Strolling down various corridors and stumbling upon new exhibits will give you and your partner time to bond over your mutual fascination for the museum's focus. The quietness of a museum makes for good romance too, and it'll cause you to feel closer to your partner. While immersed in a century-old Greek oil painting, the two of you will feel like you're the only ones in the room, like you're in an entirely different world.

Related Link: [How to Date Outside the Box in NYC](#)

Once you're tired of hushed voices and "Do Not Touch" signs, you can head over to the cafe or bakery that many museums

typically offer their guests. There, you'll be able to discuss all the wonders you've seen and continue your conversation. Don't forget to stop by the gift shop on your way out and pick up a memento of your day!

Do you have any great museums, planetariums or aquariums in mind? Share your date idea with us!

Date Idea: Romance at a Resort



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Mara Miller](#)

It's time to escape your everyday burdens and have a romantic

getaway with your beau. Pamper yourselves and enjoy time away from the office and with each other by venturing off to a resort. This [weekend date idea](#) will allow you to retreat to a relaxing place and rejuvenate your relationship and love for one another.

Find out how to indulge fully in a resort weekend with these date ideas!

Heat things up in this cold weather! Why not head to a fun spot like the Hamptons or Montauk and spend the days and nights on the beach with the one who makes you happy? Check out sites like LivingSocial or Groupon for deals on weekend getaways. You *can* have a vacation that won't break the bank. If you literally want to heat things up, travel somewhere with a warmer climate, like The Keys, for this date idea.

Related Link: [Valentine's Day Date Ideas](#)

Once you arrive at your destination, make a bonfire on the beach, melt some s'mores, and snuggle up. Soak in all there is about where you are. One morning, be sure to order breakfast in bed – there's nothing better than being comfy with your boo while sipping your morning coffee and watching the sunrise from the sheets. Talk about a great start to the day! After all, the point of this [dating advice](#) is to do what you can't do when you're tied down with work and other responsibilities. Take some time to do nothing except appreciate the company of your significant other.

Many resort locations offer a variety of romantic activities for couples, like dance lessons, horseback riding, couples massages, or private yoga. Any of these will add some edge and spark to this weekend date idea. If you'd rather follow the

trail of spontaneity, just explore your destination. If you prefer a laid-back day, head to the pool to soak up some rays. There's bound to be poolside service at any spa resort, so the two of you could comfortably spend all day basking in each other's arms.

Related Link: [Take a Virtual Vacation](#)

Afterward, have a candlelight dinner for two on your balcony. Talk about your trip so far and what you've enjoyed most about your time away. No matter where you go, having a romantic resort getaway is a great way to spend some quality time with the one you love.

Tell Cupid about your favorite resort spots in the comments below!

Date Idea: Dance the Night Away





By [Courtney Shapiro](#) and Sarah Batcheller

Sure, going to the movies and grabbing burgers is a relaxing and tasty [date night](#)...or it's just plain boring. But don't worry! Better nights are just around the corner. Prove to your sweetheart that you can go the extra mile for them by scheduling dance lessons this week. With this [date idea](#), you get to shake and show off while fitting in your daily exercise. Plus, you get to be close and personal with your significant other. Take this [relationship advice](#) and go dancing with your partner.

Use This Date Idea to Reconnect With Your Beau

If you're searching for something romantic with this date idea, try ballroom or Argentine tango. Not sure what the differences are? A ballroom tango is a type of dance that you've seen on *Dancing with the Stars*. There are certain moves you must learn – from underarm turns to alternating hand holds to side-by-side choreography. If you and your partner prove to

be particularly talented on the dance floor, you can even enter competitions.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Ice Skating Adventure](#)

The Argentine tango is a social dance, and because there aren't any steps involved, it relies on improvisation. In short, it means that you and your mate can learn how to dance it quickly. You can go out that night and display your new moves at a nearby nightclub or bar!

If you follow this relationship advice and want to do something that's fun and sexy, try salsa. Although couples don't embrace as much as they do in a tango, dancers hold hands most of the time and remain in one spot, often swapping back and forth. If this idea appeals to you, then get ready for all the hip wiggling and spins you'll face! Salsa is a great style for those who just want to be eye-to-eye while dancing with their honey.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Warm Up By Exercising This Winter](#)

If you still aren't sure which dancing lessons to take for this weekend date idea, see these dances in action. Check out videos on Youtube.com, or you may consider taking a beginners class for all three dances. That way, you can compare the pros and cons of each style and pick out which one is best for you and your beau.

Have you and your special someone taken dance lessons before? Let us know by commenting below!

Date Idea: Embrace the Cold Weather



By [Mara Miller](#)

With your flip flops in storage and warm weather a distant memory, it's easy to spend your weekends under a warm comforter, reading a book together or flipping through the channels for [date night](#). Although binge-watching *Orange Is the New Black* and ordering a pepperoni pizza can be great at times, your love life shouldn't cool down just because the temperature is declining. Instead, use this [weekend date idea](#) to take advantage of the season by embracing winter activities that you can only enjoy once or twice a year.

Relationship Advice: Winter Activities for Your Next Date Idea

1. Try something new and go tubing: Whether you're a pro or haven't been on the mountain since you were a kid, it's one way to keep your pulse pumping with your partner. Most ski resorts offer this activity, and since you have the option to stay a few hours or an entire weekend, coasting down a hill just may turn into that surprising [romantic getaway](#) that you've been craving.

Related Link: [Enjoy the Snow from Indoors](#)

2. Create some fun in your own backyard: Get all bundled up, venture outside, and make snow angels or build snowmen with your cutie. Better yet, when your mate turns their back, you'll have the chance to start a snowball fight. A little activity and some healthy competition will keep your blood flowing even during the coldest of days. Being silly with your sweetheart is important, and playing in the snow is a great way to do it.

Related Link: [Warm Up With Winter Cocktails](#)

3. Warm up after your outdoor adventure: Heat up some good old-fashioned hot apple cider. If you're feeling frisky, spike it with some Fireball whiskey. A warm drink with the one you love is the perfect end to a day filled with fun winter activities!

How do you and your beau keep busy during the colder months? Tell us in the comments below!

Date Idea: Spend an Intimate Night Indoors



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and Ché Blackwood

If you're craving a romantic [date night](#) but don't want to spend a fortune or you're tired of the same-old restaurant scene, then get creative and bring the excitement of a night out into your own home! There's no reason you and your partner can't share an intimate evening dancing and dining together without breaking the bank. With this weekend [date idea](#), your dining room can rival even the fanciest of dinners.

How to Plan a Date Idea at Home

Pick out something sexy to wear for your beau: Just because

you're at home doesn't mean you shouldn't get dolled up. In fact, staying in means you can actually dress a little nicer than usual. This is one time when you can feel free to overdress (or under dress) for the occasion. No matter what, you want to feel beautiful and comfortable!

Related Link: [Date Idea: Be a Cheap Date](#)

Share a drink to kick the night off: Stop by your local winery or liquor store and ask the manager to choose a good bottle of red for the best value. When you buy wine directly from the store rather than at a restaurant, the prices are drastically reduced, leaving you with a higher-priced bottle for a lesser cost. If you really want to go all out, purchase a few different bottles and have your own wine tasting. Just pop the cork, swirl your glass, and pretend your kitchen table is the most coveted spot in the house.

Cupid's [dating advice](#): take the night to the next level and plan a special menu to cook together. Choose a unique recipe to really test your culinary talents or remake the first meal the two of you ever shared together. Be sure that your dinner pairs well with your wine of choice. Red meat and pasta taste great with a full-bodied Merlot!

Related Link: [Date Idea:Hometown Hotel](#)

After you've wined and dined, relax: Fortunately, you don't have to go very far! Run a bubble bath for two if you really want to get the romance flowing, or curl up on the couch with popcorn and watch a movie with your sweetie. The comforts of being home mixed with the luxuries of a passionate date will leave you feeling refreshed and swept off your feet, without any looming stress over next month's credit card bill!

How do you like to spice up a night at home? Tell us in the comments below!

Weekend Date Idea: Head Back In Time & Enjoy A Drive-In Movie



By [Sarah Batcheller](#). Updated by [Mary DeMaio](#)

We all want a relationship and love like we see in old films like *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Casablanca* – you get the picture. Why not plan a [date night](#) that reminds you of these movies? Catch a film at a drive-in movie theater with your beau. Drive-in movies are the perfect balance of the big screen and the great outdoors. The two of you will have your seats all to yourselves, so you can snuggle as you please. Best of all,

you'll have a classic, romantic [date night](#) that you'll never forget.

Date Idea: Head to the Drive-In Movie Theater

Drive-in theaters are easy because you never even have to stand up. So, if you and your boo are torn between hanging out on the couch or getting all dressed up to go out, you can have the best of both worlds. Netflix just doesn't compare to a night like this. [USA Today](#) has described some of the best drive-in theaters in the nation, and you can always search for local ones online as well. It pays to do your research before embarking on this date idea, as you'll find which theaters are older and have a more iconic feel and which are newer with more updated features, like high-resolution screens. You'll also want to look at the movie listings ahead of time so that you can choose a film you know you will both enjoy.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Throw a Classic Movie Night](#)

To go all out, rent or borrow a convertible so that the openness creates a relaxing atmosphere. Or if you're insect-adverse, go ahead and keep the roof up. Either way, fill the car with pillows and blankets and recline your seats. Another good thing about drive-in theaters is that you don't have to sneak in snacks in your purse. Bring something homemade to munch on. You can even bring a bottle of wine and two disposable wine glasses. That way, the coziness is at 100 percent. When the film is over, you can end the date night with a midnight drive around town or stop at a local diner to really achieve that 1950's feel.

Related Link: [Movie Pick-Up Lines That Will Score You a Date](#)

This date idea is perfect for the summertime, because it will make you feel like you're in a movie yourself. Now that you've

found the relationship and love you've always dreamed of, it's time to have a date to make you feel like a star. With the summer sky twinkling above and the coolness of the night settling in, neither of you will be able to deny the romance in the air. Take this [dating advice](#) as it'll be a great way to spend quality time with your sweetheart and remind you that your love is timeless.

Have a fun drive-in movie experience? Let us know in the comments below!

10 Spooky Ideas to Strengthen Your Relationship and Love Life





By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

Halloween is one of the most anticipated holidays of the year. People of all ages decorate with faux-spider web, smear on face paint, and practice their best evil cackles, all in the name of an exciting fright! This is an especially thrilling time for lovers, who can not only comfort each other during the ghoulish hours of the night, but revel in the excitement of dressing up and going out. Many people spend the entire month of October building up to the suspense of Halloween.

Cupid has 10 pieces of spooky [relationship advice](#) you can use to strengthen your relationship and love life!

1. Carve a pumpkin: The scarier, the better! Witches and ghosts don't seem so bad when they're etched into your favorite fall vegetable. Plus, you and your sweetie can add your own touch of personality to your décor- like funny eyes

or a great, big smile- truly making it your own.

2. Bake a pumpkin pie from scratch: Only the most talented bakers make their desserts from scratch. It can be a long process, but it sure is a fun one, and the results are definitely a sweet reward!

3. Attend a fall festival: Think of it like a carnival date, but with creepy mirror houses and other activities and games. Usually, there are markets to purchase your favorite autumnal treats. You can easily research online a local Fall festival that your city is hosting.

Related Link: [Date Idea: Look into Your Future](#)

4. Enter a costume contest: A little competition may be just the trick (or treat!) for you and your lovebird to get into a team spirit. It's also an excellent way to show off your personality as a couple.

5. Have a horror movie marathon: It's the best excuse for snuggling (as if you need one!). You can opt for classic childhood flicks, or ultra-haunting thrillers. Either option is sure to set the spine-tingling mood.

6. Create a haunted house: Deck out your house in horrifying gear, getting it ready for ghoulish guests. Not only will it make for a great way to get creative together, but you can involve your friends and neighbors in your favorite holiday.

Related Link: [Top 10 Celebrity-Inspired Halloween Costumes](#)

7. Have a haunted tour: Research stories about hauntings in your area, and go scope out the scenes. You and your sweetie can explore places, like haunted houses or woods, with particularly spooky myths attached. Just be sure to use the buddy system, and: no trespassing!

8. Tell stories around a bonfire: There are more ghost stories in the world than anyone can count, so bundle up by a nice,

warm fire, and see who can tell the scariest ones. Plus, it's a great way to stay warm at the end of October.

9. Host a haunted game night: Add an eerie twist to your favorite board games, and have your friends over for a fun evening. Not only can the two of you bond over planning the night, but you can have plenty of laughs with your favorite pals.

10. Last but not least...The Classic: Trick-or-Treating! By now, you're probably too old to dress up and go knocking on neighbor's doors. But, you can dress up and greet all the little goblins and superheroes who come your way. Whether you prefer handing out sweet treats or healthy snacks, the trick-or-treaters are sure to gobble it all up...let's just hope no one's appetite is spoiled before Thanksgiving!

What are some other spooky ideas to strengthen your relationship? Share your thoughts below!

Relationship Author Dr. Tara Fields' Love Advice: "The Happiest Couples Don't Necessarily Have More or Less Conflict"





By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

Unwanted conflict patterns in relationships are just that: unwanted. Often times, couples feel helpless and like their arguments are a curse instead of something they can navigate. Dr. Tara Fields, a licensed psychotherapist who specializes in relationships and love and the author of the upcoming [self-help relationship book](#) *The Love Fix: Repair and Restore Your Relationship Right Now*, teaches her readers how to grab the reins of their negative habits and bring their love to a better place. Knowing that no relationship is perfect, Dr. Fields provides more than just love advice; she also shares usable actions to help couples weather any storm together. In this exclusive author interview, she reveals her proven techniques for lovebirds in all stages of romance.

In the book, you discuss the ways that couples can manage their relationships. What are some benefits of the HEARTwork exercises and self-assessment quizzes?

Change comes with awareness, so until an individual or a couple can take ownership of things, they can't change. What

you can do is look at your part in the conflict. I see miracles happen when even just one person starts looking at their part in the loop. One of the reasons that I created the assessment is for people to self-diagnose and start becoming aware. The second reason is for people to say, "What can I do *now*?" So I came up with the three-minute fixes – people want help now, and they also want *hope* now.

Even if things don't change immediately, it will make you feel better because, when you act in a loving way, it increases your sense of self and also makes you feel empowered. What happens with couples is that they start to feel powerless: "They're never going to change," or "They're never going to forgive me for that thing that happened five years ago." But this book lets people know there's something they can do to change things, and from there, things just keep progressing.

One of the biggest pitfalls I've seen is people wondering whether they can get their partner on board. Just be hopeful. Many people think they need to refrain from conflict, but here's something most people don't know: The happiest couples don't necessarily have more or less conflict. Instead, it's about how you handle the conflict. That's a big piece of the book – it teaches you to say, "We have an opportunity here."

What is the most important thing that keeps a relationship healthy?

Outside forces like friends, in-laws, or money can be a big problem in relationships. What's crucial, and what successful couples have, is that they're a team. The beautiful thing about a loving relationship is that you're better together. You should be able to surrender and trust and know that your partner has your back.

Related Link: [Love Advice: How to Make Your Partner Happy in 5 Minutes a Day](#)

Proven Love Advice For Couples in Budding Relationships

Can you tell us your most crucial love advice for new couples?

In the media, and especially on reality TV, we see this attitude of, "Yay, I found it!" The biggest misconception is that your partner will guarantee that you're always going to be happy. It's so important for couples to realize that you're dealing with hormones and chemicals and the newness of romance.

In the book, I discuss coming together and growing apart, which happens when you start facing real-life issues. So many couples have a plan, but then, *life* happens. For example, all of a sudden you're laid off from that secure job, and the house can't be sold. I always say to couples that, even if you've already dealt with these issues, it's a good idea to do pre-marital counseling and make sure you're on the same page. Lots of people say things like, "We never really talked about finances" or "He's saying he doesn't want to have children, but that will change once we're married." It's so important for couples to articulate their expectations.

There's an erroneous belief that, "We're different from everybody else. The divorce rate is almost 50 percent, but nobody loves each other like we do. *We're* different." That's what almost everybody thinks. The crazy thing is that people put so much planning and money into this one day, this one big party, but they don't plan for the rest of their lives.

What was one of the biggest issues you have had in a relationship, and how did you resolve it?

Well, I've been with my husband for seventeen years, and we've dealt with many challenges in terms of finance and health. Our marriage and our relationship is so much stronger because we stuck together. I've surrendered a lot of things that I

thought only I was able to do and therefore have seen what a champion my husband is. Because we both know that we're all in, we're able to overcome everything.

Furthermore, lots of couples ask if the passion is going to fade, and they're absolutely right that those things will go away. But when you build a history as a couple and go through things together, that kind of intimacy creates a passion that can only come with time.

Related Link: [Expert Love Advice: How To Tackle That Nagging Seven-Year Itch](#)

Relationship and Love Author Provides Readers with Quick, Realistic Solutions

What is a key thing that couples should do every day?

If you do nothing else, even if you can't think of anything positive to say about your mate, find a minimum of three things that you can express gratitude and appreciation for. Send a little text or e-mail. At the end of the day, instead of going into your room and opening up your laptop, wrap your arms around your partner and say, "Have I ever told you what a great mother I think you are?" Or, in the morning, say something like, "Honey, have I ever told you how much I admire that every day you go in to that job you hate?" I have every couple do this either at the beginning or the end of their counseling. Some couples say, "You've got to be kidding...I can't think of anything!" What happens is that they go from the honeymoon phase, where their partner is perfect, to only noticing what their partner does wrong – your brain gets rewired to only see the negative.

The key is to do this exercise with no expectations. If you do it just so that your mate does it back, you're not really

doing it. Research shows that doing it without expectations actually makes people feel better. Again, the one thing you can always do is make a choice to act lovingly.

The Love Fix: Repair and Restore Your Relationship Right Now is available now on Amazon. To get the most out of your relationship-repairing experience, Dr. Fields recommends each partner have their own copy. For more from Dr. Tara Fields, visit her website and read her blog at www.tarafields.com.

Dating Advice From Justin Kim of 'America's Next Top Model': "If Someone Is Already on Your Team, You Shouldn't Be Looking for Free Agents."





By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

America's Next Top Model has a knack for introducing audiences to their next, most beloved reality stars. The reality TV competition is known for being lathered in glamour, sophistication, and fun. Not to mention, some serious eye candy. This summer brings in Cycle 22 of *Top Model*, and with it an up-and-coming heartthrob, Justin Kim. Loads of social media adoration surround Kim already, as admirers anxiously await his on-screen debut. A Northern Virginia native and George Mason University alumnus, Kim is taking the modeling world by storm. In this exclusive celebrity interview, Cupid talks to Kim about the road to stardom, the adventures along the way, and his best dating advice.

Cupid's Exclusive Celebrity Interview with 'ANTM' Up-and-Comer Justin Kim

Kim wasn't apt to put any of his dreams on hold while he was

attending college. He explains welcoming a modeling career into his life, stating, "I went to [George Mason University], and I commuted, so that allowed me to do my thing on the side. Going to Mason was a blessing in disguise, because at first I'd wanted to go away to college and get the "full experience." Then, my sophomore year [a friend of mine] asked if I wanted to be a secondary model for a shoot. I told him 'no' at first, but a week beforehand he contacted me again, so I did it. People saw the shots, they submitted me to a casting call, and I ended up getting signed. I got to do shoots in D.C. and network. So, it just happened."

Related Link: [Celebrity Interview: Model CariDee English Is "Off the Market Officially!"](#)

Believe it or not, perfecting his "smize" wasn't Kim's biggest battle. In fact, he claims that living with roommates was his first real, personal challenge. "These were essentially my first roommates in my entire life!" he exclaims. "It was a huge culture shock, and there were so many different personalities."

As far as the culture shock goes, Kim explains that his upbringing allowed him a healthy perspective. "I'm blessed...My parents raised me in Northern Virginia, and that is one of the most diverse locations in the entire country. Back at home, there are so many different cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds," he reveals. "For some of the castmates I was with, that was new. For example, one person had never met an Asian-American person in their life."

The newness of the experience must have brought the cast members closer together, though, because Justin named Nyle DiMarco, Dustin McNeer, Stefano Churchill, and Mamé Adje as his closest pals while filming. Although, anyone who has participated in the aforementioned social media hype may be suspicious that Adje and Kim are more than "just friends." Maintaining full-blown mystery, Kim says of his castmate, who

is also known as Miss Maryland 2015, “Mamá is an awesome friend.”

One relationship that the budding fan-favorite does gush about, though, is that with Tyra Banks. Of the show’s host, Kim raves, “Tyra can back up all the hype around her. The aura I felt while standing in front of her is just *real*. It was amazing...She’s so genuine. Off-camera she would come and make sure we were doing okay.”

Justin Kim Offers Dating Advice for Millennials

As for relationships and love in general, Kim discloses that things haven’t changed much for him since beginning his road to stardom, but that he is mindful, and trying to make smart choices. “I try to keep everything the same, and not let anything change me,” he says. “People do tell me to be careful of who to meet now because they might have the wrong intentions, and that’s true, but at the end of the day you just have to go for who you like, and who you want to be with.”

As a recent college graduate, Kim has some dating advice for other millennials who are looking for love. When it comes to figuring out when to settle down, this Top Model has a “first things first” attitude. He proclaims, “You should take your time – you don’t want to jump into anything. Especially because nowadays everyone is so career-driven. For example, I’m all about stability. I want to be financially stable before I settle down. There’s no point in rushing – we’re still young. Experience life.”

Related Link: [Adrienne Curry and Christopher Knight Split](#)

According to Kim, experience should have its limits too. He offers some insight on finding love, clarifying, “You could be

playing the field, but if someone is already on your team, you shouldn't be looking for free agents! If you have someone who's special and who you don't want to lose, then don't mess around."

For more from Justin Kim, "like" him on Facebook, follow him on Twitter @Seoulful_J and www.instagram.com/seoulful_j/, and be on the lookout for his upcoming athletic line. Tune in to America's Next Top Model on The CW.

OWN Star Kiki Haynes Shares Love Advice: "If the Heart Behind It Isn't Genuine, Then I'd Rather Not Have It"





By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

Kiki Hayne's tremendous personality is impossible to ignore. Whether she's on-screen starring as Keisha Jones in Tyler Perry's *For Better or Worse*, which airs on the Oprah Winfrey Network, or divulging her best love advice, she never fails to make her audience laugh. The television star knew at a young age that acting was her passion. After meeting Bill Cosby and other cast members of *The Cosby Show* early in her acting career, she became determined to pursue a successful career in the entertainment industry. Since then, she's captivated fans with her riotous, sassy attitude. In this [exclusive celebrity interview](#), the New Jersey native opens up about her thriving career and the importance of keeping your head up.

OWN Star Discusses Castmates in Exclusive Celebrity Interview

The *For Better or Worse* star explains that she and her castmates are like family. "We're all team players. It's gotten to the point that we know each other so well that we play off of each other," Haynes gushes. "We just have a good

time while we're filming! It's kind of like having a best friend who you don't have to say anything to; you can just give each other that look."

In addition to having such supportive friends, the OWN star names her faith as being what helps her keep her head up during tough times. "It is everything," she says of her beliefs. "This business will tear you apart. There are always more actors than there is work, so everybody's trying to get those two or three roles. My faith in God makes me feel a comfort that, when I don't get a role, no matter how great I was or how hard I worked on the audition, it just wasn't meant for me. A lot of people think, 'What did I do wrong?' It's not that you did something wrong; it just wasn't meant for you. I know for a fact that my faith taught me that – it keeps me sane!"

Related Link: [Girl's Night Movie Pick of the Week: 'The Single Moms Club'](#)

When it comes to her *For Better or Worse* character, Haynes admits that Keisha is very different from her true self and draws her inspiration to play a villainous woman not only from people she's known in real life but from reality TV as well. "I've met people like Keisha before! They're not necessarily friends of mine, but I've been in settings where I've witnessed people bring on the drama," she reveals. "And I've watched reality TV shows like *Bad Girls Club* and *Basketball Wives*. I look at the drama they bring and use those kinds of mannerisms for Keisha. It's so much fun!

"But I also find a truthful side to her because I wanted the audience to still have a heart for her," she adds. "She is a lot of trouble, but underneath is a woman who's hurt."

Kiki Haynes Offers Old-Fashioned Love Advice

Haynes's sweet disposition is evident in her outlook on love. Like many single celebrity women, she describes herself as a "renaissance woman" but still values chivalry when it comes to dating. In our exclusive celebrity interview, she points out, "I have a modern outlook that women should be in more powerful positions and be able to be independent, but I still like tradition in my dating life. I like old-school courtship. I want a guy to actually come and ring the doorbell and open the car door for me. I also like it when guys ask me about me; I've been on dates when guys talk more about themselves. Don't just try and sell yourself to me – get to know *me!*"

The Jersey girl's best love advice comes from the early days of a past relationship, in which she claims if she could go back and do the relationship over again, she would have known better from the get-go: "On a date one night, we were talking at dinner, and he asked me about things I had never done, so I told him things like parasailing and canoe riding. On the next date, we went parasailing, went to breakfast afterward, then went on a gondola ride, had champagne and strawberries, then dinner, and finally went to a huge Latin dance concert. He had the full date planned out from top to bottom. I really felt like a princess!" she shares. "But it was too good to be true because it was all for show. As much as I enjoyed it all, if the heart behind it isn't genuine, then I'd rather not have it."

Related Link: [Celebrity Interview: 'The Real' Co-Host Jeannie Mai Shares Recycling Tips and Beauty Advice](#)

Of the same relationship, Haynes continues, "Another thing he did was that, every time he came to my house, he would spend a long time in my bathroom, and I found out he actually made a mental note of all of the products I used and stocked his

bathroom with the same shampoo, deodorant, etc. so that I wouldn't have to bring things back and forth. He did all of that in the first month! Not that anything is wrong with that, but I could probably have waited another two to three months. After six months, he showed his true character."

So what did she learn from this failed partnership? "If someone does too much too fast, they're probably on a schedule. Why did he have to plan that date in one day? It was too much, too fast! If I could go back and do it all over again, I would have known to run for the hills," she says.

For more from Kiki, be sure to keep up with her on Twitter @iamkikihaynes, www.facebook.com/kiki.haynes, and www.instagram.com/kikihaynes/.

'American Crime' Actress Gwendoline Yeo on Relationships and Love: "You Have to Have Similar Hearts"





By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

Gwendoline Yeo captivates audiences with her ability to capture the essence of every character she plays. She is best-known for her roles on *Desperate Housewives*, *Broken Trail*, and most recently, ABC's *American Crime*. While her comedic virtue keeps fans coming back, it's her knack for expressing deep human emotions that is truly unforgettable. The Singapore native is an outstanding example of a female actress whose undeniable talent demands reverence. In addition to her television roles, she has crafted her own one-woman show that reminds us all about the power of inner strength. In our exclusive celebrity interview, Yeo opens up about the representation of women in the entertainment industry, her booming career, and, of course, all things [relationships and love!](#)

***American Crime* Star Discusses the Role of Women in the Entertainment**

Industry

The actress believes that the entertainment industry should always work to increase the number of empowered female roles, particularly when it comes to women of color. During her time on *Desperate Housewives*, she recalls the ways in which the media would miss the point and celebrate women for things other than their acting talent. “I remember that there was a cover story about Eva Longoria saying something like, ‘Mexican Latina Explosion!’ Eva was like, ‘What explosion? It’s just me,’” she says.

Related Link: [Eva Longoria Says She’s Not Angry About Ex Tony Parker’s Affair](#)

She explains the importance of a diverse representation in the TV world by saying, “You’ve just got to keep working at diversity. I do think that many networks are trying to get there. *American Crime* is such a diverse show, and ABC as a network has such a diverse roster.”

She then adds, “It’s also not just about being in front of the camera. It’s important for people to want to be *behind* the camera directing and writing these roles. With all of that being said, I don’t think I work any less than other actresses. I’ve been very fortunate, and half of the roles I have booked have not been race specific. I still believe that talent and authenticity win in a room.”

As far as the behind-the-scenes work goes, the *Desperate Housewives* veteran explains that women are often times harder on her, but she describes that as “a joyful challenge” because, all-in-all, they understand each other.

Yeo is currently working on transforming her one-woman show, *Laughing With My Mouth Wide Open*, into a screenplay. The show details the true story of her journey from abuse and suppression to freedom and happiness, and her goal is to

connect with her audience through art. “I feel that, often times, when you expose yourself, people are actually very accepting because everybody has their own shame about things,” the actress-turned-producer explains. “I really wanted to impact younger women. I had a lot of women come up to me, and while none were very vocal, I think they were like, ‘Wow, I learned something.’”

She continues, “I wanted to prevent people from getting into situations where they feel compromised. Whenever people are victimized in certain ways, they always wonder, ‘Did I cause it?’ But I don’t feel that’s the case.”

Gwendoline Yeo Gives Relationship Advice to Fans

Although there was a time when her parents disagreed with her career choice, Yeo changed their minds when she realized that acting gave her a sense of wholeness. “In any family, you want stability for your children. When we came over to the states, my dad was making twenty to thirty thousand a year, and my mom sold sewing machines at five dollars an hour. All the while, they were putting us through Catholic school. They were doing their best, so I felt indebted to them,” she candidly shares in our exclusive celebrity interview. “Eventually, though, they came around completely. When I found a sense of self-esteem through acting, they had to respect it.”

Of her desire to act, she reasons, “Some people choose the art of creativity because it makes them process things and it makes them more stable people. There’s nothing more important than emotional health.”

Related Link: [5 Pieces of Love Advice From Celebrity Couples in Long-Term Relationships](#)

Sharing her best relationship advice – a tip that applies to

both family relationships and romantic partnerships – Yeo says, “I think that when you are your authentic self and when you’re moving with a purpose – I think that’s the gift that God gave me, to make people feel less alone and entertain people – people cannot deny your self-confidence. People respect it.”

When it comes to sharing her life with someone special, the actress offers sound knowledge on how to balance love with a busy career. “It’s something that I still struggle with! When you are a successful woman, I think communication is important. You have to be able to communicate, navigate, and not be selfish. You’ve also got to realize that any time is quality time. It doesn’t have to be something romantic. If you have four hours, just kick it!” she insists. “I also think you have to have similar hearts. Whether it be a passion for creativity, giving, or kids or even a racial connection, there needs to be an anchor. Whatever that ‘thing’ is – that centripetal force.” While she hasn’t had a celebrity relationship and prefers to keep her love life private, she does believe that “kindness, authenticity, and manners” go a long way.

For more from Gwendoline, visit GwendolineYeo.com and follow her on Twitter @GwendolineYeo and www.facebook.com/GwendolineYeoOfficialFanpage.

Reality TV Star Lea Black Says, “Once You Find the

Right Person, You've Really Got to be Committed to Having Equal Power"



By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

The ever-glamorous Lea Black has appeared on *The Real Housewives of Miami* since season 1. Her charm and sass – not to mention her whirlwind lifestyle among Florida's elite – have drawn audiences in. With a steady celebrity marriage and beloved thirteen-year-old son, the reality TV star has also balanced a cherished domestic life with all the glitz. She hosts an annual charity gala to raise money for troubled teens and, in addition to her philanthropic efforts, is the president and CEO of The World of Lea Black, a multi-brand company that offers everything from jewelry and handbags to

beauty products.

Now, in her upcoming novel *Red Carpets & White Lies*, Black has penned a fictional depiction of the scandalous, unpredictable lives of Miami's top socialites. In this [exclusive celebrity interview](#), we had the chance to speak with the newly-minted author about her book, the *Housewives*, and her best love advice.

Reality TV Star Discusses Her Glamour-Filled Upcoming Novel

The spunky Texas native believes that the city of Miami is one of the best in the world, so it's no surprise that she wanted to capture its essence in her novel. "Miami is a very complex city, and it's very international – there's a very diverse crowd," she explains. "So I think it is one of the most exciting cities in the world because it really is a gateway to Central and South America. It's so multi-cultural; you get everything from the really serious intellectuals to the people who came here wanting to live the American Dream to the riff-raff who come and go and sort of reinvent who they are."

Related Link: [Bethenny Frankel Calls Money 'the Root of All Evil' in Split with Celebrity Ex Jason Hoppy](#)

Of course, the best people to inspire the characters in Black's novel were none other than herself and her intriguing social circle. So we had to ask: Are her characters based off of real people? "They all are in a way," she confirms. "But they're compositions of people. I would take the personality traits of one person along with the character of another and kind of camouflage them."

Whether or not we'll see the *The Real Housewives of Miami* stars, whom readers may be able to identify in *Red Carpets & White Lies*, grace the small screen again is still up for

debate. The reality TV star says, "Bravo continues to say they haven't made any decisions, and I think that's totally true. Our ratings were certainly close to some of the other shows that were renewed, so they *could* justify bringing the show back."

The network may be rethinking the cast too. "I think that some of the personalities on the show weren't as well-received by the audience as they would've hoped...and that may include me!" she adds. Having formed friendships with other *Housewives*, including Lisa Vanderpump, whom she did business with in Los Angeles, and Kathy Wakile, it's safe to conclude that Black won't be falling off the radar anytime soon.

Related Link: [Top Ten Most Down-To-Earth Celebrity Wives](#)

Despite her busy career, her number one focus is always her family. Not only do the jewelry designer and her husband Roy love to have date nights when they travel, but they work to raise their son to be a respectable young man. "It's funny; I've sent my son twice now to etiquette and charm school! As for my husband, he does good and bad, so I point it out to my son when he does something that's not acceptable!" she reveals with a laugh. "I put a big effort into teaching my son manners. I think if you don't have an ounce of manners, then later in life, people will view you differently." As for their summer vacation plans, the family of three are planning to travel to Los Angeles, something they do each year.

Lea Black Shares Best Love Advice

The reality TV star's happy celebrity marriage can be attributed to her commitment to working at her relationship every day. She believes that communication is key. "You should communicate *before* things escalate, not after," she insists. "And you need to be on the same page in life. If you focus on the 'me' instead of 'we', then that relationship is not going in the right direction."

The beauty guru believes that, after you find the right person, you need balance. “Once you find the right person, you’ve really got to be committed to having equal power, an equal balance,” she asserts. “That’s why I’m so against guys who make girls sign prenups – because it situates the guy to have more power through money. You have to go in expecting both people to have an equal say.”

Related Link: [Celebrity Couple Gabrielle Union and Dwayne Wade Signed a Prenup](#)

Black also thinks that, if you’re facing disapproval from your friends and family, you need to make a decision about who’s worth keeping in your life. “You have to tell your friends to support you unconditionally. If not, you can be friends with them at a distance and be amicable, but they can’t be in your daily life,” she believes. “If they’re judging your relationship, then it’ll just cause problems. If they’re going to be in your life, they need to be supportive. They don’t get to criticize your spouse unless it’s something very serious that requires an intervention.”

Keep up with Lea on Twitter [@leablackmiami](#) and [www.facebook.com/LeaBlackMiami](#). Don’t forget to pick up a copy of Red Carpets & White Lies on May 5th!

**Author Ellen McCarthy
Discusses ‘The Real Thing’
About Relationships and Love:**

Find “Someone Who Appreciates Your Whole, Quirky, Imperfect, Wonderful Self”



By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

The day a bride walks down the aisle is magical not only for the lovebirds but for all those in attendance. Family and friends gather to gaze upon this unforgettable event. Weddings make us all ponder the intricate weaving of a lasting relationship and love and what it takes to create one. Having covered over 200 ceremonies as a wedding reporter for *The Washington Post*, relationship author Ellen McCarthy has crafted a warm, insightful book based on the couples she has had the privilege of interviewing. In her new book about love, titled *The Real Thing: Lessons on Love and Life From a Wedding*

Reporter's Notebook, she shares her findings on what it takes to reach this ever-magical day and make it last forever and always.

Love Advice From Wedding Reporter and Relationship Author

What did you want to capture in this book about love that you couldn't have in an article?

The articles I wrote during my time on *The Washington Post* weddings beat were really about each couple's story – how they met, fell in love, and decided to walk down the aisle. But during so many interviews, I came away with little gems of relationship wisdom that didn't seem to fit into the story. These were the things I found myself thinking about later and relating to my friends over drinks. I wanted to collect all of those insights into a single book so that they could be passed on to others.

Related Link: [Celebrity Interview: Event Producer Cheryl Cecchetto Says, "Nothing is Traditional Anymore" at Weddings](#)

How did your break-up on the day you began as the wedding reporter for *The Washington Post* impact your views on relationships and love? How did it affect your work?

Ha! I wasn't sure how that was going to work out – interviewing happy couples who were about to walk down the aisle as I was licking my wounds from a break-up. In the beginning, it was just surreal. But as I did interview after interview, I found that the reporting gave me a great deal of hope. It was a reminder that people find love all the time, in all kinds of ways. So in that regard, it had a really positive effect on my life.

I'm not sure that being newly single affected my work, but it did create some awkward moments when couples would ask about

my relationship status after I'd learned everything about theirs. Then, the nice ones would usually try to set me up!

What would you say is the most powerful piece of love advice you learned by reporting on weddings?

The most important thing I learned is that you actually *can* learn to be good at love. You can give yourself tools and skills and perspectives that will increase your chances of finding and maintaining a successful relationship. A lot of people don't want to hear this because they think it takes away from the magic of love. But you know what really takes away the magic of love? Divorce.

In your story about Lynne and Jud, you discuss how meaningful it is to find someone who is "wholly and transparently good." What do you think makes it so difficult for women to separate the good guys from the not-so-good?

All of life is a learning experience. I'm not looking forward to it, but someday, my 14-month-old daughter will touch something hot – a stove, a curling iron, a heater – and she will learn what it feels like to get burned. Hopefully, she won't do it again. I think the same thing can happen in relationships. It takes getting burned before we realize we don't want to go through that again. And we learn to protect ourselves. The trick is being willing to honestly look at what happened in the past and ingest the lesson from that experience, so we don't just repeat it again.

Ellen McCarthy Dishes on Relationships and Love in New Book

Do you think that, because of the daunting divorce statistics, people are believing in marriage less and less?

I realize that the statistics show that marriage is on the decline, and I know there are some people who choose not to

marry, but I think, as a society, we believe in it as much as ever. There's a reason people have fought so hard for same-sex marriage. Civil unions don't quite cut it. We still think of marriage as the ideal. And if anything, we expect more from it than ever before. I think that's why people are waiting longer to get married today. They want to have all their ducks in a row – a career, finances, a road-tested relationship and love – *before* they walk down the aisle.

Related Link: [Single in Stilettos Show: What Makes a Man See You as Marriage Material](#)

Finally, what is your best dating advice for a first date with a longtime crush?

Be yourself. Be yourself. Be yourself. It can be tempting to put on a façade with a crush or any first date, but it's not worth it. If this person isn't into the real you, then it's not worth pursuing. Order another drink; enjoy the conversation; and then go forth in search of someone who appreciates your whole, quirky, imperfect, wonderful self.

Check out The Real Thing on Amazon! For more from Ellen, follow her on Twitter @EllenMcCarthy and be on the lookout for her feature in The Washington Post titled This Life.

Author Vicki Reece Offers Love Advice for Moms: “I’m All for Family Date Night”



By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

When we think of motherhood there is one word that comes to mind: joy. Vicki Reece, author of *The Joy of Mom: Celebrating a Mother's Love*, has beautifully depicted the blessings of motherhood in her [book about love](#). She not only believes that childhood should be filled with positivity and inspiring messages, but she has committed much of her life to creating healthy products for children to enjoy, such as an interactive dance and exercise videos. In this exclusive interview, we spoke with Reece about her book, her best love advice, and all things motherhood.

New Book About Love Helps Readers

Understand Raising Children

You've done a lot of work to better the lives of children and parents alike. What is the most important message you want readers to take from this book?

Being a mother is the most sacred honor, gift, privilege, and blessing. We are shaping and influencing our children's spirit, growth, soul, and experiences as they navigate through life – even as busy as we are. I've always been a working mom, so I know there's a lot we've got to balance and juggle. Unfortunately, all the multi-tasking can get in the way of being present in the moment. It sounds corny, but it's so important that we are present. When I was younger, I had two miscarriages and thought I couldn't get pregnant, and now, I've got kids in college. When we look back, there are so many things we “shoulda, coulda, woulda.” So really be present in the moment because it will pass way too quickly.

Related Link: [Solo Parenting: Divorce with Children](#)

We love that you continually strive to empower women, both with your blog and your new book. What do you think is particularly empowering about being a mother?

Once you become a mom, something inside shifts forever. It's not about us anymore; it's about our babies. The greatest challenge is that we wear our hearts outside of our bodies – from the moment that we know we conceived to our last breath. It's a really tough balancing act!

When is a time that you have been able to let your children shine?

My daughter is in Germany now for five weeks by herself, staying in this tiny hotel. It was a dream of hers, and it took four years for her to save up and be able to go. The quote that I like about this gift and possibility is by

Dorothy Fisher: “A mother is not a person to lean on, but a person to make leaning unnecessary.”

To shift gears a bit, what was your inspiration for your interactive children’s dance and exercise video?

It was the height of negative products, messages, and marketing to children. There were so many violent, silly things, especially television shows. There was nothing inspiring, and if there were, they weren’t that entertaining; they were really dry. Then, there were two incidences of children acting violently in the news, and I was just horrified. Back then, we didn’t hear about those things much; nowadays, unfortunately, we do. So I couldn’t sit on the sidelines and do nothing. I turned my life upside down – that started 23 years ago. I had no resources, so I learned how to make the software. After that, I went and knocked on doors to see if moms could resonate with my idea. Then, those moms told their friends who told their friends, and I sold about 500,000 copies.

Related Link: [10 Celebrity Moms Over 40](#)

What is your best tip for mothers who are striving to teach their children positive messages?

Our words are so powerful that we need to use them lovingly and wisely. They can be our greatest source of inspiration or – I hate to say this – something that could haunt our kids forever. But positivity is food for the soul. When your kids do wonderful things, highlight and talk about them.

Author Provides Expert Love Advice for Mothers

We’d like to get your love advice as well! How can couples balance romance and parenting in their everyday lives?

Actually, my husband and I hardly do date nights! Every now and then, we'll go to the movies, but I just always want to be with our kids. It's important to have them be part of the special things you do. What may be right for people who get babysitters and go out on the weekend may not be right for other people – just listen to your gut! I'm all for family date night and other family activities. If you and your hubby want to do something special, think of something that's fun for the kids as well.

In what ways do you think the parents' relationship and love influences their children's notions about marriage?

I think it completely impacts it. What our kids see, they will look for – it will be comfortable. As moms, we should only be in the type of relationships that we want our children to be in because they will follow in our footsteps.

For more expert love advice from Vicki, visit JoyofMom.com. Don't forget to pick up a copy of The Joy of Mom: Celebrating a Mother's Love!

Rachel Brathen Shares Love Advice in New Book 'Yoga Girl': "Each Moment is New and So Full of Potential!"





By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and [Whitney Johnson](#)

In Rachel Brathen's new book *Yoga Girl*, you'll not only find the key to a successful harmony of body, mind, and spirit, but you'll also discover how to utilize this balance to achieve a fulfilling relationship and love life. The book is about more than just twisting on a mat; in it, Brathen shares her own life journey and how the physical and emotional healing process of yoga led her to understand the importance of living in the moment and appreciating all the good that surrounds us. *Yoga Girl* takes readers on an unforgettable journey from a place of uncertainty and insecurity to one of wholeness and happiness. In our exclusive author interview, we uncovered the mysteries of all the gifts that yoga has to offer.

Rachel Brathen Shares Inspiration for *Yoga Girl*

What inspired you to put your experiences and your yoga teachings into one book?

I have been writing for as long as I can remember, and I'm lucky to have an audience that's excited to listen to what I have to say right now! I wanted to share my journey in-depth – not just the life I have today, but the obstacles and hardships that brought me here.

Related Link: [Gaiam Product Review: Learn Yoga and the Art of Self-Love with Rachel Brathen](#)

In the introduction, you write that “we do not love ourselves enough.” How can yoga help someone find the self-love that's missing from their lives?

Aside from the physical benefits we get from the practice, one of the most important things that yoga teaches us is how to listen to the body. Body awareness – learning how to feel the body and be grateful for what it does for us every day as opposed to judging ourselves – is a huge step when it comes to finding love for ourselves. Yoga brings us moments of complete presence and a break from the constant labeling and drama that's created by the ego on the daily.

Can you talk a bit about acting instead of reacting? How does this behavior relate directly to relationships and love?

Whenever we find ourselves in a tricky situation, we often react to it right away, which usually means judging the situation from similar experiences we might have had in the past. Reacting with fear from past experiences is what causes us to become aggressive or insecure. It brings out jealousy and other qualities that might not correctly represent who we actually are. Looking at the situation with fresh eyes of the present moment – acting instead of reacting – allows us to take things for what they really are without tainting our experience with emotions from the past.

In terms of romantic relationships, it's important to know that just because a past love hurt you doesn't mean a new one will. There is no need to play games or be afraid of

commitment. Let go of whatever patterns you may have that separate you from love, and remember that each moment is new and so full of potential!

We loved the chapter titled “Love Over Fear.” What’s your best tip for someone struggling with choosing love and overcoming their fears?

Most of the time, we are the ones standing in our own way. The mind tends to look for worst-case scenarios, and before each big step in life, we automatically see all of the things that could go wrong. By focusing on the negative, we hold ourselves back and try to create in a space of fear. Instead, focus on all the things that could go right! There are infinite amazing experiences waiting for you. Manifest those by living in a space of possibility and love!

You moved to a tiny island with a man you only knew for five days...who eventually became your husband! How’d you know that he was The One?

I just knew right away. I can’t explain it... He made me nervous, and I’m never nervous! That’s how I knew the first time I met him that there was something special there – he stirred something in me that I couldn’t pinpoint. When I got to know him, I felt so comfortable and at home that five days may as well have been five months! Moving in was easy.

Newly-Minted Author Gives Love Advice

Now, we’d love to get some love advice from you! How do you believe that yoga can improve our relationships with our self and our loved ones?

We need to make peace with who we are and feel whole on our own before we can commit to another person. Yoga can help us get there by teaching us how to become present in the moment

so that we let go of a lot of the judgment that keeps us from living a life we truly desire.

Related Link: [How to Be Mindful When It Comes to Relationships and Love](#)

What can couples gain from practicing yoga together?

So much! A yoga practice is a very intimate thing, and it gives us a routine to stick to as couples. Watching each other grow, learn, and have breakthroughs on the mat is very rewarding. Also, have you ever held hands with your partner in Savasana? Best. Thing. Ever.

Finally, can yoga help someone heal after a break-up?

I think so. If we do it right, we can create lots of emotional release on the mat. Much of the tension we hold in the physical body is created from our inability to truly let ourselves feel and experience pain. By not expressing and releasing pain, it gets stuck. If it has nowhere to go, that tense, negative energy goes into the body. That's why the older we get and the more we experience emotionally, the tighter and stiffer our bodies become. By moving into poses with long holds and focusing on releasing tension, we can open up emotionally.

You can purchase Rachel's book Yoga Girl on Amazon. You can also check out her new yoga programs on Gaiam.com!

Exclusive

Celebrity

Interview: Kailen Rosenberg Says, “There Is No Such Thing as a Failed Relationship”



By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

[Kailen Rosenberg](#) is one of the nation’s most highly-acclaimed matchmakers. Known as “The Love Architect” and owning a company under the same name, the dating expert helps her clients discover the strong foundation within themselves so that they can then build a lasting relationship and love with their true soul mate. If you were to look at the world through her eyes, “love” would be more than just a four-letter word – it would be a way of life! After reading our [exclusive celebrity interview](#) with Rosenberg, you’re bound to feel empowered in your search for The One.

Dating Expert Kailen Rosenberg Shares Relationship Advice

Rosenberg's matchmaking services are elite and one-of-a-kind. She gets to a person's core in order to find just the right person to ignite them. The mission of The Love Architects, who have clients ranging from your next-door neighbor to your favorite celebrity, is to help people authentically find love in whatever way, shape, or form they require. "We connect true soul mates who have been waiting forever to finally meet, and we help those who are married and struggling fall madly in love with each other either again – but in a healthier way or even for the very first time," Rosenberg explains. "Every potential client starts with a deep, spiritual, therapeutic, get-to-know-your-true-self assessment."

Related Link: [Relationship Expert Kailen Rosenberg Shares Dating Advice on Experiencing the Love We Deserve](#)

Those who participate in a "Love Design" session with the relationship expert are first asked to answer a few head-on questions. The matchmaker wants to know "who you are, who you believe you are, and why" before asking why you're ready for love and what kind of partner you desire. Rosenberg continues, "From there, we get to the truth about what has kept them stuck, away from the love that has been waiting for them their entire lives, and then, we go get it!"

Once their clients have completed the first portion of The Love Architect's process, it's time to look for someone special! "Next, a personal love and life blueprint is used as a custom map to build, heal, tear down, or do whatever is necessary to bring the most amazing experience of love into our clients' lives," the love guru divulges.

Exclusive Celebrity Interview With “The Love Architect”

Before you find someone else to love though, the life coach urges you to love yourself. Sharing an important piece of relationship advice, she claims, “If we have no real clue who we are, we then spend our entire lives not really knowing our authentic selves and therefore ending up on a treadmill going nowhere but on a habitual track of unhappy, unsuccessful, unfulfilling relationships. That in turn changes our energy, which in turn affects the planet we live on.”

Of course, falling in love isn't always smiles and butterflies; it can lead to heartbreak too. To those who are trying to move on after a rough split, Rosenberg offers the following dating advice: “Realize that your break-up was one of the greatest gifts you could have ever received. It was raw and real. It tugged at your ego and your heart and gave you the chance to see something in yourself you perhaps have never seen or weren't ready to see until now.”

Related Link: [Dating Expert Kailen Rosenberg Constructs Celebrity Relationships From the Inside Out](#)

In our exclusive celebrity interview, she encourages you to take a look at your value and see what you have allowed into your world that shouldn't be there. “Life is here to love on you, to teach you, and to bring you love, and it won't allow you to be with the wrong person for too long,” she adds. “Your most recent break-up leaves you with a wonderful opening for the right person to finally come in.”

With the weather finally warming up, it's a popular time of year for “spring flings” – which are one way to get over a broken heart. You may be surprised that Rosenberg says to go for it! “There is no such thing as a failed relationship. Instead, look at it as an in-depth experience with yet another

'love teacher' who showed up to teach you about *you* and about love," she insists. "So be smart and be a great student of love. Seek to find what more there is to learn about yourself when it comes to love, where your 'blocks' still might be, and where you have clearly grown."

Real love comes in all shapes and sizes, which is why the celebrity matchmaker has partnered with Betsy Broyles Arnold to recognize Alzheimer's disease caregivers. "I am honored to have been given the opportunity to join forces on such an important and inspiring campaign. As you know, my entire life-work focuses on teaching and bringing genuine love to this world, and we all know that love is far more than hearts and chocolates, so it couldn't have been a better fit," she says of the Unconditional Love campaign. "We all want to understand love, and we all know that there will come a time in our lives when love is challenged. Those truly forgotten, unrecognized heroes – the caregivers of those with Alzheimer's – give every bit of themselves, and *that* is when love becomes unconditional."

Related Link: [Relationship Author Kailen Rosenberg Gives Dating Advice for Finding 'Real Love, Right Now'](#)

Honoring these caregivers can be as simple as sending a card to show that you appreciate their work or offering to clean their home or cook them dinner. As Rosenberg explains, "They know in their hearts they have no choice but to be strong for their loved ones, to be present, and to love unconditionally in ways they never thought possible. We need to recognize them for their efforts."

You can keep up with Kailen on Twitter @kailenrosenberg and www.facebook.com/kailenrosenberglovearchitect. Also, be sure to pick up a copy of her book about love, Real Love, Right Now: A Thirty-Day Blueprint for Finding Your Soul Mate – and So Much More!

Carmen Milian Talks Reality TV Show and Dating Advice in Exclusive Celebrity Interview: “Love Can Conquer All”



By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

The encouraging, protective, all-powerful role of momager is becoming ever more prominent in the most glamorous celebrity families, and Carmen Milian is no exception to the

population of fabulous moms taking over the entertainment industry. Mother to singer and actress Christina, hairstylist Danielle (who just announced that her third [celebrity baby](#) is on the way!), and chef Lizzy, the family matriarch has a lot of fame on her plate, as seen on the hit reality TV show *Christina Milian Turned Up*. Milian is not only a successful businesswoman; she happily raised her three equally-successful daughters following her divorce. In this exclusive celebrity interview, the celebrity mom describes life and love under her roof.

Exclusive Celebrity Interview with Reality TV Star Carmen Milian

Milian reveals that filming their reality TV show was a good experience for her family. “It actually brought us closer,” she explains. “We worked out some underlying issues throughout filming that we were able to resolve, and I think we came out better in the end by finally dealing with them.”

The mother of three also had a lot of favorite moments, but unfortunately, many of them won't be seen by audiences. “There were a lot of beautiful scenes that we shot that they didn't use. The footage showed us joking around and being silly or even a lot more lovable. I wish people could have seen that,” she says. “We also filmed an episode for Viva Diva Wines, which Christina and I own along with our partner Robyn Santiago. It was a charity event that we supported, and our wines were such a great hit!”

Related Link: [Christina Milian Talks New Reality TV Show, Viva Diva Wines and the Status of Her Love Life](#)

In regard to her high-profile business venture with her daughter, Milian makes it sound like a match made in heaven. “I love being Christina's partner!” she gushes. “I feel like

we understand and respect each other's roles now better than ever. We work better side-by-side than when I work *for* her." She then adds, "Our relationship has remained pretty much the same. The partnership is based on the same work ethic and trust that we've always had."

The entrepreneur likes to add a familial aspect to everything she does. Even while working, her children and grandchildren are at the forefront of her mind. Making it sound easy, she divulges her secret to balancing it all: "My grandkids are team players. They know that sometimes they have to be quiet while I'm on a business call, but they don't mind because those calls usually come while I'm in Toys "R" Us, at the park, or at Chuck E. Cheese. I spoil them plenty, so they are fine with me working while we play. I try not to text or email during my time with them though because I don't want them to feel ignored. "

Celebrity Mom Shares Dating and Relationship Advice

Milian is looking forward to this year, as she intends to make it a noteworthy one in terms of her relationship and love life. She believes that this is her time, saying, "The truth is that I used to date back in the day after my divorce, but it's been a while. Dating is the one thing I wish I would've taken more time for in the past, but it's never too late, and that is my intention in 2015."

Related Link: [Reality TV Star Christina Milian Talks About Her New Partnership and Being a Celebrity Mom](#)

She also has some dating and relationship advice for other single mothers looking for someone special. "Be open to it," she insists in our exclusive celebrity interview. "Date as many frogs as you like, but only introduce your kids to a few princes. Hopefully, one of them will turn out to be your

king!”

When it comes to the season finale of *Christina Milian Turned Up*, which airs this Sunday, Mar. 1, viewers have a lot to look forward to. “They are definitely going to see our worst sides at the beginning of the episode. They’ll see that my family is in no way perfect,” she candidly shares. “But at the end, everyone will see how we work through our issues and that love can conquer all.”

The reality TV star reassures fans that the closing of the first season of *Christina Milian Turned Up* doesn’t bring a halt to the family’s success. Christina will be dropping a hit single next week and is appearing in the Hulu series titled *East Los High*; Danielle is an avid blogger for *Latina Magazine* and has a line of hair extensions in the works; and Lizzy is a private chef and has just begun writing for *Latin Kitchen*.

Catch Carmen on the exciting season finale of Christina Milian Turned Up on E! this Sunday, Mar. 1 at 10/9c!

Relationship Author Susan Anderson Explains Common Patterns in ‘Taming Your Outer Child’





By [Sarah Batcheller](#)

If you've ever spent a day using retail therapy to calm what's upsetting you, then the [self-help relationship book](#) *Taming Your Outer Child: Overcoming Self-Sabotage & Healing Your Life* is for you. Relationship author Susan Anderson uses her expertise in psychotherapy to pinpoint the cause of behavior she's named the Outer Child, and she attributes these actions to our fear of abandonment. In relationships especially, fear of being left causes us to act out irrationally and push our partners away, even when we don't mean to. Analyzing our Outer Child allows us to prevent such behavior in the future. Read on for more of Anderson's fascinating love advice on how to tame the Outer Child!

Love Advice From Expert Relationship Author

We love the concept of the Outer Child, the counterpart to the all-too-familiar Inner Child. What inspired you to explore this idea in your new self-help relationship book?

My primary area of expertise is abandonment, and I've developed a program to help people heal from the primal wound. The biggest problem that many people have is that they develop patterns out of abandonment that affect their next relationships. It also impacts how they eat, drink, and shop; it gives rise to a whole host of bad behaviors. The Inner Child is about healing, but the Outer Child is about acting out. It's the part that shows on the outside, like a wart or a mole. Therefore, one of the most important parts of helping people overcome the Outer Child is helping them overcome self-sabotage.

Would you say that every person has an Outer Child and the degree in which it acts out varies or that some people have no Outer Child at all?

Everyone has an Outer Child because everyone has a way of looking for fulfillment. Not everybody can have deep personal fulfillment at every level, so everybody has little guilty secrets. For instance, they may pop a piece of candy in their mouth when they're feeling a moment of emptiness. We're all imperfectly human in that way.

Related Link: [Why We're Wired to Sabotage Our Relationships](#)

Is there a correlation between having experienced abandonment and the intensity of Outer Child behavior?

Yes. Abandonment is primal, so it's really the root of everything – it's that first fear we have. If you have a more fresh experience with abandonment, something that still throbs, then you will have lots of Outer Child behavior.

A very common pattern is the tendency to be attracted only to the unavailable, and when someone comes along who is available, you have no chemistry and you don't feel a connection. This is particularly common pattern among celebrities; they have a very difficult time because they're very eligible and everybody wants to be with them. They

struggle to feel connected with someone who is actually available.

The way this connects to abandonment is complicated but interesting. First of all, there's the fear of abandonment. If you get attached to someone, you risk losing them. So if you're going after people who are unavailable, you're constantly trying to have a relationship, but you're never really having one. You're trying to avoid the pain of really losing someone. The only problem is that, while you're pursuing someone like this, it's usually a very emotional and difficult experience.

Secondly, when you go through abandonment, the feelings are so horrible that you can't wait to get better, so you try to find ways to get rid of those feelings, maybe by meeting a new person or tackling a big project. Since abandonment is a wound and scar tissue forms over the wound, that area becomes numb, so you can't feel love unless it's in the form of insecurity. If you're with somebody who's totally available, you can't even feel that. The only thing you can feel is when somebody makes you feel like they're going to leave you any minute or that you're not good enough. Then, you *think* you're attracted to that person.

Susan Anderson Presents Compelling Dating Advice in Self-Help Relationship Book

How does the Outer Child play into compatibility or incompatibility in a relationship? For example, if two people have similar Outer Child tendencies, could that make them more or less compatible?

In the ideal relationship, two people's adult selves would be very sweet to each other's Inner Children. The Inner Child is

the vulnerable part of a person, so in a relationship, we should be very sensitive, kind, caring, and understanding towards each other. But what happens in a lot of relationships is that the Outer Children get into a power struggle because the Outer Child is always trying to create problems and has control issues.

Related Link: [Ways to Remain Confident in Your Long-Term Relationship](#)

In your book, you mention the Emotional Pendulum: Fear of Abandonment versus Fear of Engulfment. Can you give us some examples of how the Outer Child acts out as a result of these two opposing feelings?

It's a very natural to have those two opposing feelings. The Outer Child has a tendency to act them out, so when you feel the fear of abandonment, the Outer Child aims your emotional suction cup at your partner and scares them away, or it gets stiff and angry. On the other hand, when your partner is available, you now feel the engulfment. The Outer Child acts that out by leaving, being cold, being critical, or shutting down. The pendulum swings between the two.

Finally, we'd love to ask you for some dating advice! How can acknowledging the Outer Child help someone find love?

When you realize how much your Outer Child has been interfering, you realize that you need to do some healing. This involves developing a relationship between your adult self and your Inner Child. When these two are in alignment and there's a caring, nurturing relationship going on, that sets the tone for you to be able to relate well to someone else. It also keeps the Outer Child out of the picture.

For more information on Susan, visit www.outerchild.net and www.abandonment.net. Don't forget to pick up a copy of Taming Your Outer Child!