

10 Budget-Conscious Ways To Impress Your Partner



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Sure, sometimes it's fun to splurge on a fancy date, but other times, it's nice to do something simple, entertaining and budget-friendly with your guy. Regardless of what you do, he'll be excited that you took the pressure off of him and planned a cheap outing. Whether you enjoy exploring a new area of town, staying indoors (and avoiding the summer heat!) or being active, there's a date idea on this list for you:

1. Be Outdoorsy: Sometimes the best entertainment is right outside your front door – no tickets required. Take a hike and soak up the sights and sounds of the great outdoors. When the

sun goes down, take a moment to appreciate each other and do a little stargazing.

Related: [Date Idea: Cuddle While Counting the Stars](#)

2. Pack a Picnic: Using only items that are already in your pantry or fridge, fill up that picnic basket and head to your backyard for an impromptu lunch date. Spread out your blanket and chow down! Luckily, there's no pricey bill to face when you're done eating.

3. Free Booze: Take a tour of a nearby winery or brewery. Not only will you learn more about your drink of choice, but you'll pick up some ideas for the next dinner party that you throw with your man.

4. Eat In: Treat him to a romantic dinner at home. Cook his favorite meal, light a few candles and pop open a bottle of bubbly. Taking the time to treat him to a home-cooked meal will remind him how much you love him – and maybe he'll even return the favor tomorrow night.

5. DIY Projects: Spend a day tacking those do-it-yourself projects that you both keep avoiding. Accomplishing something together will remind you of how well you work as a team. Plus, you'll have a new piece of décor to show off to your friends.

6. At-Home Spa Day: Get ready for a day – or night – of pampering. Takes turn giving each other a massage and then enjoy a bubble bath together. When you're finished, wrap up in your plushiest robe and snuggle up with a glass of wine and some relaxing music.

Related: [Date Idea: Relax with a Spa Day at Home](#)

7. Game Day: Enjoy an afternoon at the ballpark. Tickets can cost as little as \$5 – they don't call them the cheap seats for nothing! By doing something that you know he loves, you'll

show him that you pay attention to his likes and work hard to fulfill his needs. Don't forget to take care of yourself too: indulge in a hot dog and cold beer as you root for your favorite team.

8. Hit the Gym: By showing him your sweaty side, he'll know just how comfortable you are around him. You can introduce a bit of friendly competition in to your relationship too: challenge him to a sit-up or push-up contest. Thanks to this active bonding sesh, you'll have a smile on your face, win or lose.

9. Be a Tourist: Sure, you'd love to take a romantic getaway to somewhere exotic, but sometimes, you can have just as much fun exploring your hometown. Check out a local art fair or weekend farmer's market. Wander around a downtown museum and broaden your cultural horizons. Or just take to the streets and do some people-watching. You're sure to have a fun stay-cation with your man by your side.

10. Go Househunting: Spend an afternoon visiting different open houses in your area – everything from a fixer-upper to that mansion with a pool and three-car garage. Even if you aren't in the market to buy, looking at homes is a good way to test your compatibility and see where your future lies. Who knows? Maybe you'll be inspired to do some work at your current house or apartment.

Do you have any cheap date ideas to add to the list? Tell us in the comments below!

'Wedding Cake for Breakfast': A Love Letter to Marriage



By Whitney Baker

Wedding Cake for Breakfast: Essays on the Unforgettable First Year of Marriage, edited by New York literary agents Kim Perel and Wendy Sherman, offers an intimate peek into the first year of marriage, as experienced by twenty-three critically acclaimed female writers. This collection of essays explores the unexpected and often difficult moments – from a surprise pregnancy to ghosts of husbands past to blending families – that brides fail to plan for as they prepare for their “big day,” and the 365 days that follow.

We had the pleasure of chatting with Perel and Sherman about

the inspiration for, and evolution of this book, as well as what they learned about their own relationships and what they hope that their readers take away from these stories:

1. The stories shared in this collection are so diverse. What is the unifying theme that links these essays?

Perel: They're all fraught with concerns, questions and exploration, but the tone is still one of "we're going to be okay." Ultimately, it has this uplifting message, but another aspect of the book is that there are bumps along the way, and that's okay. It's not going to be perfect as you figure out how to be together.

Sherman: To expand on what Kim just said, there were definitely the stories that focused on the way in which women suddenly saw themselves in the role of "new wife." You know, you wake up one day, and you're a wife. What did you think that was going to feel like? It often doesn't feel anything like you thought. So I think that the journey these women shared with us, some of it has to do with filling that role and playing the part.

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

2. Wendy, you've been married for 25 years. Do you have any words of wisdom that you learned in your first year of marriage or even in the years since?

Sherman: I think expectation is the theme that I keep coming back to when I think about my first year of marriage. I was actually cleaning out my attic recently, and I came across my wedding album. I was looking at the pictures and wondering what was going on in my mind at the time. You know, you put so much energy into going through the process: you find the guy, you get the ring, you think that you have your whole life planned, and that it's all done.

And then you're married, and now, you're living your life. I

think I was young and naïve to think I was done, because you're never done; you're always in the process of evolving and growing and changing. You have to learn to redirect yourself, your life, your expectations.

But that's the beauty of it. When you look at that first year, how can you ever think that it's the end of something? It's not- it's absolutely the beginning. What lies ahead is so completely unknown, and that's such a big part of the excitement.

3. Do you feel like you learned anything about your own relationships from reading these essays?

Perel: You so rarely get an intimate and well-articulated glimpse into other people's lives and relationships, so how can you not look at your own life after reading some of these stories? I think what struck me the most was how they worked together as a team. It was always about the teamwork and the give-and-take. That was a beautiful and interesting thing to read- how in every situation, no matter how terrible, they always pulled together.

Sherman: Another thing that we noticed throughout the collection, is how many women wrote about this underlying friendship that existed with their partners. Some relationships start off as a friendship and evolve into something more passionate and romantic, while others later develop into a friendship. At the core, that deep friendship is probably what holds marriages together over the long haul.

Joshilyn Jackson talks about friendship in, "The Marry Boy." She started off as best friends with the man who later became her husband. That story really touched me because I thought it was beautiful that a relationship could start off one way and turn out another.

Perel: I like when she writes, "It is an odd transition, to see one's best friend's head perched atop of [a] lovely, naked

male body.” That’s the moment where they truly shift from best friends to something romantic. I think anyone who’s ever moved from a best friendship to a romantic relationship would identify with that moment of strange and wonderful.

Related: [Famous Couples and Exotic Honeymoons](#)

4. What do you most hope that readers takeaway from the book?

Sherman: I think that there’s an illumination of what a matrimony can be. Some of the writers talk about the adjustment period. Ann Hood, for instance, talks about getting used to the way in which her new husband arranges their furniture.

There are so many adjustments and realignments that take place in a marriage, especially in the beginning. Your marriage is going to happen; it’s going to change and evolve. It just gets better and better if you can be flexible.

Perel: In Sarah Pekkanen’s essay, they’re blending their families. It’s one thing to blend your furniture, but when you get married, there’s a whole family element to consider. I think that the takeaway would be to roll with it. Also, you’re not expected to have figured things out before getting married; people think that they can mitigate problems by living together or just knowing the person really well, but it’s okay that marriage still changes things.

You can purchase Wedding Cake for Breakfast: Essays on the Unforgettable First Year of Marriage on Amazon. Visit the authors at WeddingCakeforBreakfast.com or follow them on Twitter @WeddingCakeBook.

Judge Lynn Toler of 'Divorce Court' Says Katie Holmes and Tom Cruise Had "Too Much to Lose By Dragging Out Their Divorce"



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Earlier this week, Katie Holmes and Tom Cruise signed their divorce settlement, reaching an agreement faster than most Hollywood couples. While details of the arrangement remain private, sources say that Suri, the couple's six-year-old daughter, will live in New York with her mother, while her father will have generous visitation rights.

In order to better understand the ins-and-outs of this process, we spoke with Judge Lynn Toler, who hosts 'Divorce Court,' the longest-running court show on television. Since 2006, Judge Toler has brought both tenacity and compassion to the courtroom, focusing on the relationship at hand and dispensing helpful advice to real litigants.

The media has paid much attention to the role of Scientology in Holmes's decision to divorce Cruise. And for good reason, according to Judge Toler. While it's not something that she sees frequently in her courtroom, she understands why it's very intense when it does happen. "Religion doesn't often have a role in divorce cases, but when it does, it is very difficult to deal with because people's beliefs aren't something you can really compromise on."

Another point of interest in this divorce case is Holmes's request for full-custody of Suri. Judge Toler, though, isn't surprised by her bold approach. "She knew what she wanted, and she moved quickly and decisively. I think that she asked for what she wanted because of the concerns that she had for her daughter."

She adds, "After all, isn't that a mother's job?"

Related: [Find Out How Katie Holmes Felt in Her Marriage to Tom Cruise](#)

In a joint statement, Holmes and Cruise said that they are doing whatever they can to keep Suri's best interests in mind. By agreeing to the terms of their divorce in such a rapid manner, Judge Toler believes that they already did a tremendous thing for their daughter. "Sometimes, the best thing you can do for your children is to *not* get everything you want. Tom gave up legal custody but settled for generous visitation rights."

While it may seem like Cruise should fight for more time with his daughter, Judge Toler supports the resolution to their

custody battle. "You have to ask yourself if dividing their time between you and your ex is the best thing for you or the best thing for your kids," she explains. "Children need a stable environment, some place they can call home where the rules are always the same."

Perhaps the most surprising part of this celebrity divorce is the swiftness of their settlement. "I believe that both of them had too much to lose by dragging it out," Judge Toler explains. "I also believe that the church of Scientology didn't want to get involved with it, which certainly would've happened. Tom didn't want to expose himself or his church to that kind of scrutiny."

Related: ['Miss Advised' Star Amy Laurent Says, "I've Always Seen Katie Holmes With Somebody Who Is More Mellow and Chill"](#)

Next up for Holmes and Cruise: They will present their settlement to the courts and wait for it to be approved before they'll be granted a divorce decree. Judge Toler doesn't foresee any future issues though, explaining that "the courts love when couples settle as quickly and amicably as these two. They really like the parties to come to a resolution on their own."

As for any advice for the pair as their divorce continues to play out, Judge Toler says she has none. "I think they're doing it right! They didn't let their emotions get ahead of what they needed to do. I say continue on and good luck."

Visit DivorceCourt.com for local listings of 'Divorce Court,' which is currently airing its thirteenth season in syndication nationwide. Keep your eyes open for Judge Toler's new book, 'Making Marriage Work: New Rules for an Old Institution,' set to be released later this summer.

‘Miss Advised’ Star Amy Laurent Says, “I’ve Always Seen Katie Holmes With Somebody Who Is More Mellow and Chill”



By [Whitney Baker](#)

As a relationship expert and executive matchmaker for the past seven years, Amy Laurent has plenty of advice when it comes to navigating the dating world. And, now she’s putting it out

there publicly starring on Bravo's new reality series 'Miss Advised,' a show that features three single relationship experts as they attempt to follow their own dating advice in the search for love.

Given Laurent's background, we thought she'd be the perfect source to comment on the most talked about divorce of the week (and most likely the year), the infamous TomKat split. By now, we've all read the tabloids or heard the news that Tom's obsession with Scientology was a huge factor in their divorce (source), but how important is religion to a marriage?

"For some people, religion is an absolute deal-breaker, and you have to respect that when choosing a potential partner," Laurent explains. "I think it's a waste of time to try to put two people together with different religious opinions."

Related: [Katie Holmes Files for Divorce from Tom Cruise](#)

Although Laurent advises against coupling up if you have religious differences, many people do marry outside of their religion and go on to have happy and healthy relationships.

However, most of them aren't A-list celebrities who live a very public life while one of them is strong-arming the other about the beliefs of the secretive practice of Scientology. In this case, Cruise's religious beliefs and intention to have Suri attend a Scientology "boot camp," according to *The Sun*, may have been more important than the views of his catholic-raised wife, Katie.

"I encourage my clients to be very open and to not have a laundry list," Laurent says. "Ultimately, if you're going to find the right match and not waste your own time or the other person's time, you have to be very honest about what's important to you."

With Katie now on the singles market, everyone is left guessing who she'll date next. It's definitely too early to

tell, but Laurent says that she's always seen Katie with someone who is "more mellow and chill."

"I see her being with someone who has more of a laid back approach to their relationship because I feel like that will really let Katie shine." As for Tom, "Definitely a Scientologist," Laurent says with a laugh. "She needs to be very type-A and a perfectionist – someone with the same level of intensity as he has."

Related: [Heidi Klum and Seal: Marriages Don't End Overnight](#)

Of course, neither Holmes nor Cruise should dive back into the dating world any time soon. For the time being, their primary focus should be on their six-year-old daughter, Suri. "Anyone going through a divorce with children needs to be very sensitive to figuring out how this new dynamic is going to work. No matter what happened, Katie and Tom still have to be a team for Suri's sake," Laurent explains.

When she's not setting up her clients or analyzing other people's relationships, Laurent has her own love life to sort out. As viewers will see on this season of 'Miss Advised,' she gives romance a shot for the first time in a long time. "I end up having a few great dates where I can finally relax and enjoy it without being totally type-A and trying to control everything. Maybe I should date Tom!," she chuckles.

"Obviously, there are things that I still struggle with throughout the show," Laurent adds. "But I will say that there is someone who I see a few times who is a really amazing guy. I'm kind of excited for my dating future – maybe there is hope for me." As fun as it may look, Laurent notes that this show provides a great opportunity for viewers to learn from her mistakes and improve their own love lives.

Related: [5 Ways Playing Hard to Get Can Damage Your Love Life](#)

Laurent is releasing her first book next month, '8 Weeks to

Everlasting: A Step-By-Step Guide to Getting (and Keeping!) the Guy You Want.' "It's very easy for me to coach my clients and give them the rules that work. But it's very hard for me to follow my own guidance, and that's where I got the inspiration to write this handbook," she explains. "It's a girl's dating bible that really breaks down, step-by-step, the first eight weeks after meeting someone new."

She adds, "I started writing this book in the middle of shooting 'Miss Advised' because I recognized that no matter who you are – whether you're a matchmaker, a teacher, whoever – everybody needs a support system. It's been helpful for me – I realized that my rules really work!"

Check out Laurent via her Web site, AmyLaurent.com Twitter or Facebook, and be sure to watch 'Miss Advised' on Mondays at 10/9c on Bravo. Also, keep your eyes open for her new book '8 Weeks to Everlasting: A Step-By-Step Guide to Getting (and Keeping!) the Guy You Want.'

Harlan Cohen Shares Why 'Getting Naked' Will Help Us Find Love





By [Whitney Baker](#)

Harlan Cohen, a nationally-syndicated advice columnist for over 17 years, knows what he's talking about. The author of *The Naked Roommate: And 107 Other Issues You Might Run Into In College* has already helped thousands of people survive dorm life. Now, with his recently-released *Getting Naked: Five Steps to Finding the Love of Your Life (While Fully Clothed & Totally Sober)*, he's taking his advice a step further. With his simple approach, Cohen offers a candid guide to falling in love and finding happiness.

"I think that what you'll see over the coming months and years is that the more people who read this book and live these ideas, the more this movement will grow," the author explains. "The idea is pretty simple. It's don't bullshit yourself and don't let people bullshit you."

Cohen discussed with us his motivation for writing *Getting Naked* and his philosophy behind the book as well as how this approach helped him meet the love of his life.

1. What inspired you to write *Getting Naked*?

Well, I have the world's greatest secret, and I wanted to share it. I figured out how to find a date while totally sober. And, as an advice columnist, I am fortunate enough to be in the position to share this secret. I've helped myself, and now, I want to share it with the rest of the world. I know that they can find what they want – I guarantee it's out there.

2. Can you walk our readers through your five-step approach to tackling the dating scene?

Before you start, it's so important to take a step back and just look at your informal relationship education. In school, we learn so much about feeding our professional passions, but we learn virtually nothing formally when it comes to our romantic relationships.

So that brings me to the five steps.

1. Embrace the universal rejection truth of relationships. Thousands of people will want you, and millions will not. We tend to focus on all the people who don't want us, and as a result, we miss out on all of the people who do. Give the world permission to either want you or not want you.

2. Train in your thong underwear. Taking risks is uncomfortable. If we aren't comfortable in our physical thong, we're always going to think we aren't attractive enough. If we aren't comfortable in our emotional thong, we're always going to think we aren't good enough. And if we aren't comfortable in our spiritual thong – meaning we have a full life outside of our relationships – we're going to become too dependent on someone else to give us something we should already have.

3. No excuses. After you embrace the universal rejection truth and train in your thong, you see excuses as things we create to cover up our insecurities. Excuses are a waste of time and a symptom of something that scares us.

4. Take the risk. Just say it or do it. In the book, I share stories about people who followed their heart and made the move.

5. Celebrate, reflect and repeat. The beautiful thing about this *Getting Naked* approach and philosophy is that even if you take a risk and don't get what you want, you still have a success. Celebrate that you've done something and have answers – know you now. Reflect if it goes as planned, and reflect if it doesn't. And the last part of step five is repeat steps one through four until you get the results you desire.

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

3. People who follow these principles often end up lucky in love. Why do these five steps work so well?

This way of approaching relationships is so powerful. There are two questions that you need to ask yourself. First, what have you done to find love today? If the answer is nothing, that's the reason you aren't finding it. And second, when you do find someone, if you know that you have thousands of people who love and respect you, would you ever put up with someone who treated you like crap? No. So then you have to ask: why do we? Because we learn that dating is more about accidents than it is about options. *Getting Naked* undoes this damage and helps people to see the world in a brand new light.

4. Why do you think it's so difficult for women to grow "big ovaries" and approach men?

Women tend to hide behind an old-fashioned idea that "I'm a woman, and I should be approached." Even though, in all other aspects of women's lives, they expect to be treated equally. I think it's because women don't want to be rejected, but here's the thing: men don't want to be rejected either. If a woman is clear about what she wants, she is going to have a lot of interesting and confident men who are comfortable approaching her.

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

5. And finally, have you applied your advice to your own love life? Any stories you can share with our readers?

Yes, I met my wife by applying these principles. I met her at Mail Boxes Etc. on a random day in Chicago. And the irony is that she had rejected me via an online dating service several months before. I'm certainly someone who has benefited from this approach. And everyone who has read the book and applied these principles? Their lives have been impacted in a profound and positive way as well.

In the fall, Cohen will be going on a Getting Naked speaking tour, visiting over 30 colleges across the country. There is also an online Getting Naked experiment for readers to visit. Additionally, you can keep up with Cohen through his Twitter handle and Facebook page.

EXCLUSIVE: Bachelor Contestants Ann and Jesse Csincsak Defend Their Family By Appearing on Discovery Channel's 'American Guns'





By [Whitney Baker](#)

According to recent polls, twenty-three percent of females now own a gun – up from thirteen percent in 2005. However, plenty of women are still fearful of this powerful weapon. Ann Csincsak, ‘The Bachelor’ Season 13 contestant and wife of ‘The Bachelorette’ season 4 winner Jesse Csincsak, knows this feeling all too well.

“I grew up in a ‘no gun home,’” Ann says. “We strongly believed in the right to own firearms but never did so ourselves. Until my late twenties, I had never even touched a gun.”

This all changed when the couple faced a string of robberies in their neighborhood. Ann and Jesse agreed that with a sixteen-month-old son at home, it was time to decide how they would best defend their family but the happy couple disagreed about keeping a gun in their home. That was until they met up with Rich Wyatt, owner of Gunsmoke and star of the Discovery Channel series ‘American Guns,’ who lives near the Csincsak’s in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. Ann and Jesse opted to take Wyatt’s

three-day self-defense course, which was filmed for the reality show.

Related: [‘American Guns’ Meets ‘The Bachelor’](#)

As viewers will see on this week’s episode, Ann was hesitant about buying a pair of handguns when they arrived at Wyatt’s store. But, her hesitancy soon turned to confidence when she ended up with the fastest draw time in the class. Not only that, but despite her fear of guns, Ann even beat out Jesse in a shooting competition.

“Because of this experience, I now understand the importance of being able to protect yourself,” Ann says. “Women are more vulnerable to attacks, so you have to be prepared to take care of yourself and your [children](#), no matter what the cost.”

Related: [Bachelorette Episode 6: The Dos and Dont’s of Trusting Your Gut](#)

Knowing how to handle a gun with confidence is a valuable skill to have, especially for single women who may live alone or be looking for love in today’s digital dating world. Of course, facing your fear is only the first step. To combat any uncertainty, Ann strongly recommends taking a gun education class.

“Carrying a gun or even just owning one will always make me a little uncomfortable, but the benefit of having one far outweighs the fear,” she says.

Watch ‘American Guns’ this Wednesday at 10 PM/9 PM CT on the Discovery Channel to see what happens when Ann and Jesse meet Rich and his family at Gunsmoke.

Celebrity Couples Who Have Worn Out Their Welcome



By [Whitney Baker](#)

There are some celebrity couples that we love to hate. Sure, they annoy us, but we can't help but wonder what they'll do next. And then there are those couples that we want to go away. They're constantly in the news – and often, for the wrong reasons. Thanks to their outlandish behavior, we've forgotten why they're famous in the first place.

From their frisky displays of public affection to their willingness to do *anything* for attention, these five Hollywood pairs have us wishing that they'd break up already:

1. Heidi Montag and Spencer Pratt: This couple first met

when Lauren Conrad introduced them on *The Hills*, and we've been following their rocky romance ever since. After their reality show ended, the couple strived to stay in the spotlight with their alleged divorce, Montag's multiple plastic surgeries and her fledgling singing career. Most recently, Speidi has attracted attention by contacting their former – and estranged – co-stars through Twitter. These messages were ignored, making us wonder why we don't do the same.

Related: [Spencer Pratt and Heidi Montag Lock Lips on a Ski Trip](#)

2. Kim Kardashian and Kanye West: Although this new couple hasn't yet confirmed their relationship, they're certainly not keeping their feelings for each other under wraps. Taking their love from coast to coast, they've been spotted getting cozy at a restaurant opening in New York City as well as a Los Angeles Lakers game. Kardashian's even made a romantic fashion statement for her new man, sporting 'KW' earrings at numerous public appearances. Given Kardashian's romantic track record, here's to hoping this relationship doesn't surpass the 72-day mark.

3. LeAnn Rimes and Eddie Cibrian: Their relationship had a memorable start: the couple met when they co-starred in the Lifetime movie *Northern Lights*, and they instantly fell for each other; although, both were married at the time. Rimes and Cibrian have never been shy about their relationship, even going on public dates during their extramarital affair. From Rimes' revealing tweets to their constant PDA, it's time for this couple to get a room.

Related: [Stars Who Go Public With Love and Affection](#)

4. Nicole "Snooki" Polizzi and Jionni LaValle: Just when we've grown accustomed to their outrageous behavior on *Jersey Shore*, Polizzi and LaValle shock us with a big announcement:

they're engaged – and expecting a baby! Since promising to change her wild child ways, Polizzi says that her partying days are over and that “pregnancy just made [her] more mature.” Still, the star can't help but attract attention, tweeting pictures of her cleavage and belly. When will enough be enough?

5. Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth: The on-again, off-again couple met on the set of *The Last Song* and quickly took their chemistry off-screen, with Cyrus sharing private details of their relationship through her Twitter account. The former costars recently got engaged, but we're starting to care less and less about their next moves.

Which celebrity couple do you most wish would disappear? Share your thoughts below.

EXCLUSIVE: ‘Bachelor Pad 2’ Winner and Newlywed Holly Durst Tells Us About Her “Perfect” Wedding and Honeymoon





By Whitney Baker

Fans know Holly Durst as the bubbly winner of 'Bachelor Pad 2,' but now, she's content just being a newlywed. Durst and Blake Julian, who met while competing on the reality show, tied the knot in South Carolina on June 2, 2012. The big day was perfect and more than she ever imagined. "I'm so happy! I love married life. It's just the best," she gushes.

Durst says her best piece of advice for brides-to-be is to hire a wedding planner. She adds, "I planned my whole wedding on Pinterest. I wanted to make sure that I remembered all of the little things."

For Durst, it was those small details that made the day so special. Even her wedding dress had a personal touch. She always thought she'd wear a Cinderella gown, but she tried "so many of them on and always felt overwhelmed." Her final pick, however, was the perfect fit. "It elongated my already long body. I made it my own by removing the rhinestones and adding a sash."

Related: [Exclusive: Bachelor Pad 2 Winner Holly Durst Plans](#)

Honeymoon in St. Lucia with Fiancé Blake Julian

Surprisingly, Durst's favorite moment of her wedding happened *before* the ceremony. "Blake and I both were in the same room, but we couldn't see each other – there was a wall in between us. We got to reach around and pray together right before the wedding," she reveals.

Even though Durst was the star of the show, she wanted to make sure that her guests felt loved too – especially the single ladies. She added a personal touch to the bouquet toss, making the lucky girl who caught it feel even luckier. "I wrote a little note and stuck it in the flowers," she shares. "I told her to be patient, and when she finds love, it's going to be perfect. I hope that, someday, she experiences the same love that I have with Blake."

As for their honeymoon in St. Lucia, Durst says, "It was so good! I didn't want to come back."

The couple took a very practical approach to planning their trip. First, they wanted to stay in the same time zone. She tells us, "We thought about Fiji or Bora Bora, but we would've wasted so much time traveling. The Caribbean was a perfect choice."

Plus, Durst let Julian make most of the decisions. "He actually did all of the searching, and I just okayed things," she says. "I planned a wedding, so I let him plan the honeymoon!"

During their time in St. Lucia, the couple enjoyed the amenities at an all-inclusive resort. They signed up for "everything" – pool and beach volleyball, paddleboard racing, ping-pong. They even rallied the other honeymooners into playing too. Durst explains, "One day, we left the resort and did an excursion around the island. We came back, and everyone was like, 'No one did anything today because you guys weren't around!' We were the ones grabbing other people to join."

Now that they've returned from paradise, it's back to reality. As they settle into life as man and wife, they are keeping busy. According to an interview with Wetpaint, Durst, who has no desire to film her love life for reality television anymore, revealed that she would love to be a judge on 'Bachelor Pad 3.' However, when we asked her about any upcoming plans to do so, she simply replied, "No." Perhaps she changed her mind when ABC announced that ex-fiancé Michael Stagliano would be one of the cast members.

As for tuning in to watch the show? Durst hesitantly replied, "We'll see. I have so much to do!"

You can keep up with Durst on Twitter and her personal website, HollyDurst.com. Be sure to check out her new children's book ['Chocolate Socks'](#) as well. Congratulations to the happy couple!

Cupid wants to know: Will you be watching 'Bachelor Pad 3' this summer?

Giveaway: Towne & Reese Jewelry – As Seen on 'The Bachelorette' Star Emily Maynard





This post is sponsored by Pea Pod Paper & Gifts.

By [Whitney Baker](#)

If you've been watching this season of 'The Bachelorette,' you've surely taken note of Emily Maynard's fabulous wardrobe. Week after week, she continues to impress us with her easy sense of style, transitioning effortlessly from date to date. Whether she's wearing jean shorts and a crochet sweater for a day by the water or a one-sleeve gown at the Rose Ceremony, one thing remains the same: her eye-popping jewelry. And now, CupidsPulse.com readers have the opportunity to win one of two Towne & Reese jewelry giveaways OR receive **15 PERCENT OFF the entire Towne & Reese collection**, including the highly-anticipated Fall 2012 Collection, from Pea Pod Paper & Gifts. Use the discount code **cupidspulse** at checkout.

Related Link: ['The Bachelorette' Season 8, Episode 5: The Dos and Don'ts for Taking Your Relationship To The Next Level](#)

~~**GIVEAWAY ALERT:** Send an email to cupid@cupidspulse.com, with **'Towne and Reese Giveaway'** in the subject line, saying that you want to enter the contest. Once you do, you will~~

~~automatically be entered to win either the Daisy Turquoise Ring or the Brooke Earrings in Crystal OR Mint Green! Both of these pieces were worn by Maynard on 'The Bachelorette. Giveaway ends at 5pm on Monday, July 9th so act quick!~~

Congratulations to our winners, and thank you to everyone who signed up!

Ashley Grulich won the Daisy Turquoise Ring, and **Elizabeth Gottier** won the Brooke Earrings in either Mint Green or Crystal.



Towne & Reese
Daisy Ring in
Turquoise. Photo:
Towne & Reese



Towne & Reese
Brooke Earrings
in Mint Green.
Photo: Towne &
Reese

Pea Pod Paper & Gifts, a one-stop shop for all things paper and gifts, is a company known for their quick turnaround time and impeccable customer service. In addition to selling personalized paper products, monogrammed gifts and party

supplies, they also have a wide range of jewelry, including Towne & Reese items.

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By [Whitney Baker](#)

Your cute neighbor – who you’ve been crushing on since he moved in – *finally* asked you out on a date. He even planned the evening for you: an al fresco dinner at your favorite restaurant followed by a romantic stroll through a nearby

U.S. Women's Soccer Star Hope Solo Chats About Her Training and Love Life



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Despite her hectic schedule as she prepares for the 2012 Summer Olympic games, Hope Solo, goalkeeper for the United States Women's National Soccer team, strives to live a balanced life – both on the field and off the field. When she's not training, she loves being social and enjoying life. As for romance? She is looking for a confident and honest partner, someone who wants the best in everything that they do.

Solo's also partnering with Unilever to promote their Simple

Skincare line. As someone with sensitive skin, she understands the importance of a skincare line that she can trust as she travels from city to city.

For a chance to win a trip to Los Angeles and meet Solo, visit the Escape with Hope Facebook page!

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

Pros & Cons: Bonding With Your Man's Friends



By [Whitney Baker](#)

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

Pros

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

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

Related Link: [Relationship Advice: Marriage Survival Guide for Tough Times](#)

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

Cons

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

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

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

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

‘American Guns’ meets ‘The Bachelor’ in Season Two



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Tonight, the Discovery Channel reloads for sixteen episodes in season two of *American Guns*. This reality television show features Rich Wyatt, a gun master and retired police officer with over 20 years of experience, and his family as they work at Gunsmoke Guns. Located in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, just outside of Denver, Gunsmoke Guns specializes in gun manufacture, trade and customization. Additionally, Wyatt, along with his son Kurt and a number of trained instructors, teach numerous shooting classes as well as a three-day self-defense course.

Jesse and Ann Csincsak, both of *The Bachelor* fame, learned firsthand the importance of taking such a self-defense class. Prior to signing up for the class, they both agreed that they needed to learn the necessary skills to protect their family. However, they disagreed about having weapons in the house: Jesse was comfortable with the idea, while Ann was against

it. Jesse reached out to Wyatt, who recommended that they sign up for the course and said that he'd refund their money if Ann didn't have a change of heart.

Of the experience, Jesse shares, "The class teaches you that a gun is a tool. If you pull your gun and you own it, the bad guy is going to run in the other direction nine times out of ten. You have to present with self-confidence."

As for Ann? "My wife had the fastest draw and shoot in the class!," Jesse says.



Be sure to tune in to the premiere of the second season of *American Guns* tonight at 10 PM ET/9 PM CT on the Discovery Channel. Keep your eyes open for Jesse and Ann's experience as well, which will be featured later in the season.

'General Hospital' Star Jen Lilley Says "Confidence is So

Sexy”



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Fans of ABC's *General Hospital* recognize Jen Lilley as the most recent actress to step into the very fashionable shoes of the sassy, Maxie Jones. In addition to her role in the world of daytime soap operas, Lilley also appears on MTV's hidden camera romance show *Disaster Date* and plays a supporting role in the Academy Award-winning film *The Artist*. Her diverse acting resume, coupled with her family history (her parents are both marriage counselors), makes her a valuable source of advice for all questions related to relationships.

Lilley's time on *General Hospital* has already taught her a lot about the choices we need to make for love. As viewers of the show know, Maxie is currently involved with both Dr. Matt Hunter and Damian "Spinelli" Spinelli. "Maxie really wants

her relationship with Matt to work because of the status it gives her versus the love and security it gives her,” Lilley explains.

Despite the complications of Maxie’s love triangle, there’s a clear frontrunner in Lilley’s eyes. “Ultimately, I really want Maxie to be with Spinelli,” she reveals. “He’s head over heels in love with her. He’s very selfless and relentless in his love for her.”

Unfortunately, Maxie could make a very common mistake by overlooking the good guy. “I think it’s a subconscious thing that girls do because we feel like we don’t deserve love.”

Lilley went on to draw her characters experience to a real life example, explaining, “Maybe that’s part of what’s going on with Maxie. She thinks she doesn’t deserve something so good with Spinelli.”

Related Link: [What Attracts Us to Bad Boys?](#)

Thankfully, Lilley’s love life is much less dramatic than that of her character on *General Hospital*. She’s been in an “awesome relationship” for eight years and is very much in love. She cites balance as one of the most essential parts of a healthy relationship and uses her own romance as an example.

“My boyfriend is an introvert, and I’m an extrovert. But it works for us,” she says. “I have these really lofty dreams, and I want to do a million things at once, but he kind of brings me back down to reality.”

Related Link: [Five Reasons Why Opposites Attract](#)

As Lilley discovered from her time on *Disaster Date*, there are a few key things that a couple should agree on, such as religion, finances and children. “Children are one of the *big* things that you don’t talk about on a first date – and I would always bring it up on *Disaster Date*,” she says with a laugh. “But it is important to know. If one of you wants kids and

the other one doesn't, your relationship is probably going to end. Hopefully, you won't have that disagreement after you're married."

Of course, Lilley grew up with parents who were marriage counselors, so many of this was ingrained in her since childhood. From the time she was young, her parents made sure she, along with her three siblings, knew how to talk about whatever was going on in her life. "Even though I wasn't in a relationship, they taught me how to discuss things rather than fight through them," she explains. "In a lot of ways, they really helped me understand conflict resolution."

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

They also ensured that their daughter developed a strong sense of self-value – an indispensable quality for a girl as she's growing up. My parents always said, "You have worth. You don't need a boyfriend. They also taught me how to have confidence in who I am and not crush on boys so hard."

Lilley reveals that this guided her decision making later in life, "I think every person, before they get in a relationship, should know their self-worth. Know that you're worth having someone love you."

Perhaps most importantly, Lilley's parents provided her with a wonderful illustration of a strong marriage. "My parents have been married for thirty years, and while no marriage is perfect, I really respect their relationship. They never fought in front of us, which was really nice. It was always very admirable that they talked through things," she says.

Based on the example that they set, she developed a distinctive opinion about relationships. "I really, truly believe that, in any relationship, the guy has to be a little more in love with the girl than the girl is with the guy," she begins. "I'm not saying that I don't 100 percent love my boyfriend – I do. But at the same time, for a marriage to

last, the boy has to be a little bit more infatuated with the girl.”

Referencing her parent’s marriage, she adds, “My mom would do *anything* for my dad. They love each other so much. But my dad is still so completely charmed by her. It’s very endearing.”

Taking a cue from her parents’ line of work, Lilley dispenses a bit of her own advice to our readers. She believes that guys are most attracted to confident women. “I just think confidence is so sexy – not self-centered confidence like Maxie but just confidence in who you are,” she says.

Another suggestion for single women? Play hard to get. “My mom would always tell me, ‘Jen, men are hunters by nature, and they don’t like an easy target.’ I hated it, but it’s so true!” Lilley says. “I don’t mean that you should be rude or be a bitch but just don’t be so available. In the beginning, leave some room, leave something to be desired.”

Keep your eyes open for Jen on General Hospital as she plays Maxie Jones and tries to decide between the hunky doctor and dorky Spinelli. For more information about what’s next for Jen, follow her on Twitter or Facebook.

Exclusive Interview: ‘Million Dollar Listing’s’ Josh Altman Says, “Relationships are

Harder Than Owning a House”



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Thanks to Bravo’s reality television hit *Million Dollar Listing*, viewers have gotten an inside peek at the high-end real estate business. And thanks to the aggressive tactics of real estate agent Josh Altman – also known as “The Shark” – fans of the show know what it takes to make it in such a cutthroat industry. What they may not realize are the lessons in love that Altman learns from selling houses to bachelors, single women, new couples and divorcees alike. Luckily, in an exclusive interview with CupidsPulse.com, he shared some tricks of *both* trades: real estate and romance.

Altman, who works with the Beverly Hills firm Hilton & Hyland, has certainly found success in the Los Angeles real estate market. He recently sold a condominium on Ocean Drive for

\$10.5 million, making it the highest sale in Santa Monica history.

“Everybody wants to know, ‘What the hell do you get in a \$10.5 million condo in LA?’ It’s one thing in New York – everything is like \$10 million bucks,” he says with a laugh. “But in LA, you get 8,000 square feet of 360-degree views. Plus, you get an 8,000 square foot rooftop deck. It’s absolutely incredible.”

He continues, “On one side, you have the entire coast, and then you turn around, and you have Hollywood Hills. It was the most spectacular condo I’ve ever seen.”

Related Link: [Three Tips for Moving in Together](#)

Of course, most people cannot afford such an expensive home. Even so, regardless of the price tag, everyone approaches house hunting from a different perspective, with single people and couples perhaps having the most distinctive viewpoints.

“It’s two totally different ballgames,” says Altman. “Most bachelors love to have a nice, plush movie theater. They want the cool, outdoor pool and entertaining area too.”

Couples, on the other hand, have a much more standard focus. “For couples, it’s always about the kitchen and the bathrooms. Always,” Altman explains. “They want to make sure there is a fence outside and not too many stairs inside, so it’s safer if they decide to have kids.”

Related Link: [Monica Pederson from HGTV Shares Advice for a Great Date Night at Home](#)

He adds, “It’s a lot of fun seeing both sides of it.”

Unfortunately, couples can sometimes struggle to compromise when it comes to buying a new home. Just like all aspects of dating and maintaining a relationship, both parties must learn to give and take a bit. “You’ve got to find a happy medium,”

Altman recommends. “But if there’s too much argument and they end up buying a house, there’s a good chance that I’ll get two more sales out of it when they divorce!”

Taking his advice a step further, he shares, “I believe that a couple should sit down and each person should come up with a list of the top five to ten things that they want in a house. Then, they can put their lists together and kind of meet halfway. As long as both sides get two to four things that they want, they can both be happy.”

It may sound straightforward, but in truth, even deciding how big of a house to buy – for either a bachelor or a couple – can be a daunting task. For a single woman, it’s often tempting to plan for the future and buy a home suitable for a family.

However, Altman cautions against this plan. “Sure, she may be a wealthy girl who can afford a big house that would be great for the future, but it can be intimidating for the guy,” he says. “He’s going over to his girlfriend’s big, beautiful house, and then he’s going home to his not-so-big-and-beautiful house.”

And the same challenge holds true for couples. “If you get too small of a house, you may be on top of each other. Everybody needs their space, so that can be a disaster,” Altman explains. “But at the same time, if you have too big of a house, it’s a different type of disaster and can lead to financial troubles or difficulty with upkeep.”

For couples just moving in together, Altman believes it is best to test the waters first and move into one of their current homes. If you take things slow, there’s less chance that you’ll end up with a broken heart. “It’s easy to buy or sell a house and not so easy to fall in love,” he says.

Related Link: [Tiffany Current Tells Us ‘How to Move in with Your Boyfriend \(and Not Break Up with Him\)’](#)

Some couples, though, are trying to escape from romantic ghosts, so moving into a new house is the best option. "I run into a lot of my clients who are either remarried or still living in a house from a previous relationship, and they want to sell. They want to start from scratch – you know, the new boyfriend doesn't want to be in the same house as the old guy," Altman says.

"It makes sense: they want a fresh start. They want to move on from the memories, and that's the best way to do it," he adds.

As much as Altman's learned about real estate from his clients, he's also picked up a few house-buying tips from his own experiences. When asked about buying his first house, he says one word comes to mind: scary. "I bought my first house in 2002, and it seemed like a huge amount of money, especially when you're borrowing from a bank," he shares. "The whole process is overwhelming, which is why it's so important to have the right realtor who can walk you through everything."

Since then, Altman has bought a new house every year or so. He explains, "I don't like to stay in the same place very long because I get bored. Most of the time, I'll fix something up and then sell it."

He also knows firsthand the importance of buying a house of the right size. A couple of years ago, he owned a house that was about 6,000 square feet. He says, "It ended up taking up all of my time. It was just too much."

Keeping in mind both his business and personal experiences, Altman boils down his opinion to one simple statement: "Relationships are a lot harder than owning a house!"

You can read more about Altman's real estate success on his Web site or follow him on Twitter. On Wednesday, June 6 at 9 p.m./8 p.m. CT, Altman will reunite with costars Josh Flagg and Madison Hildebrand for the premiere of season five of

Why Celebrities Fall In and Out of Love So Quickly



By [Whitney Baker](#)

In recent years, the divorce rate in America has hovered around 50 percent, and in Hollywood, this statistic appears to be closer to 70 percent.

For some celebrity couples, rushing into a serious relationship or even marriage is no big deal; they can always break up or file for an annulment or divorce, knowing that

their family, friends and fans will stand behind them. They are not held accountable by their vows, viewing any “easy way out” as an acceptable solution.

But why do so many Tinseltown twosomes approach romance with such a wavering attitude, in such fleeting terms? Here are just a few reasons why some celebrity relationships change with the seasons:

1. Publicity: They say that all you need is love, but in the case of some celebrity relationships, all they want is publicity. And some celebrity couples continue to demand attention even *after* the break-up. Take Jon and Kate Gosselin, for example. The *Jon & Kate Plus 8* stars are still garnering media attention for their failed marriage and exceptionally large family.

Related: [Celebrities Who Share Too Much PDA](#)

2. Rushing things: Many celebrity couples mistake lust for love and rush into something too serious when they’re still in the “get to know you” phase of their relationships. Beyond their own feelings, there may be outside pressure from family, friends and perhaps the media. For instance, Kim Kardashian’s whirlwind romance with Kris Humphries lasted only 11 months, but included a made-for-television proposal, wedding and divorce. As this relationship’s quick demise proved, infatuation can easily outweigh true love, but it doesn’t last nearly as long.

Related: [How to Avoid the Reality Show Relationship Curse](#)

3. Time apart: Relationships require both time and effort to flourish. For celebrities, time together isn’t always possible. Their busy schedules often keep them apart; such was the case with Katy Perry and Russell Brand. After only 14 months of marriage and a Christmas spent 7,000 miles apart, Brand filed for divorce. As celebrities focus on their

individual careers, they fail to make the proper commitment to build a lasting and meaningful relationship.

4. Just because they can: Among some celebrities (such as Britney Spears in her younger years and Brandi Glanville of *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills* fame), there's a sense that they can do anything they want. Spears married childhood friend Jason Alexander in a Las Vegas ceremony, only to have it annulled a mere 55 hours later. Glanville – a divorced mother of two – rushed into Las Vegas nuptials with a close friend on New Year's Eve. Calling it a "[drunken BFF thing](#)," she later admitted that they were just having fun.

5. Constant media attention: Sure, some celebrities fall in and out of love for publicity's sake, but on the opposite note, too much media hype can also lead to heartbreak. Back in 2003, Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson seemed to be living a fairytale romance until MTV cameras invaded their home for the reality hit *Newlyweds: Nick and Jessica*. Similarly, Taylor Swift and Jake Gyllenhaal dated for only two months at the end of 2011 and sources blame the short-lived romance on aggressive media coverage.

Why do you think some celebrity romances don't last? Share your comments below.

Video Exclusive: 'DWTS' Contestant Sherri Shepherd Chats About the Three Men in

Her Life



By [Whitney Baker](#)

The key to a good life is a happy life – and no one knows better than TV personality Sherri Shepherd. In addition to her co-host gig on *The View* and her work with the recently-launched Clorox Toilet Lounge, she has not one but *three* men in her life: her six-year-old son Jeffrey, her husband Lamar Sally and her *Dancing With The Stars* partner Val Chmerkovskiy. Stepping out of her comfort zone and onto the dance floor, Shepherd is sure to keep us laughing as we root for her week after week.

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

Dr. Jean Cirillo Discusses Her New Book 'The Soul Mate Myth: A 3-Step Plan for Finding REAL Love'



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Thanks to the fairy tales that we heard as little girls, many women are searching for their Prince Charming, their perfect match. In our hearts, we believe that there is one man for each of us – our soul mate. Well, ladies, listen up! In her

book, *The Soul Mate Myth*, Jean Cirillo, PhD, offers a new perspective on finding love, one filled with realistic expectations and attainable possibilities. Through her three-step program, she teaches women how to overcome their fears and fantasies so they can see love with fresh eyes and an open heart.

We had the chance to interview Dr. Cirillo about her book and she shared many words of wisdom along the way:

Can you tell us about your program and how it works?

My program involves three basic steps. The first step focuses on examining your present situation to see where your fantasy expectations have gotten you. The next step is grieving for the mythic man that never existed, much as you would grieve the loss of a real relationship. And the final step involves reprogramming your brain and emotions to pursue a healthy, realistic relationship.

Why do you feel that finding “your perfect match” is a lie?

The idea that you can find your perfect match is a lie because, even if there was such a thing as your “twin flame,” where is the evidence that you could meet him in this lifetime? Why should he live in the same country, speak the same language or even be in a position to meet you? And even if the two of you *did* meet and hit it off, where is the evidence that you would continue to grow together, in the same direction, at the same rate? Clearly, there is none.

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

How and why do you think that fairy tales progressed from imaginary stories for little kids to something that grown-up women believe in?

Fairy tales would never be so popular if they only addressed the fantasies of little kids. Remember, they are written for

children *by* adults, created from universal fantasies of a perfect life, ideal love and happily ever after.

How would someone rid themselves of unreasonable expectations that may prevent them from finding love? And which ones are most likely to get in the way?

The book takes one gently through the stages from ridding one's self of unrealistic expectations toward replacing them with realistic ones. For example, a common unrealistic expectation is that one's partner should enjoy many or all of the same activities. In truth, his need for sports and her need for shopping can easily be satisfied by other friends or family members.

As far as more difficult expectations, which usually center around characteristics such as financial status, physical traits or ethnic background, the book explores the gains and losses associated with holding onto these demands. Often, we find that they represent personal needs that have little to do with our partner and can be satisfied in other ways.

What are the top three things a person should look for when considering a man who is worth loving for a lifetime?

First, you should look for similar values and long-term goals.

Do you and your partner share similar attitudes about family, children, religion, friends, fidelity, work, money, and so on?

These basic attitudes need to be discussed, and any differences should be resolved before making a long-term commitment.

Next, you should consider how difficult times effect your romance. Have you been together when one of you was going through a crisis such as a job loss or illness? It is important to determine if he will be helpful in a bad situation or simply add more stress.

And finally, does your relationship have the capacity for

forgiveness? Can you still love and respect one another even when you are angry?

Women can easily be blinded by their desperate desire for love. How can they ensure that they love and are loved for the right reasons?

Through years of clinical practice and life experience, I've found that if a man comes out positive on the above three questions, he is someone who loves you for who you really are and not because you fulfill some momentary need or fantasy. It means you have chosen wisely, from a clear mind and not a blurred fantasy.

Related: [How to Dignify Your Relationship](#)

In your experience, what is the hardest part of finding real love?

I am often asked why it is so hard to find real love. People seem so mystified by the issue when it pertains to love. Few of us ask why it's so hard to find real money or a real house or a fulfilling career, for that matter. The obvious answer is that it takes time, effort and commitment to find anything highly desirable. Unfortunately, the fantasy Soul Mate Myth has caused people to believe that real love "just happens."

Do you have any additional tips for our visitors?

First, just as real love requires work to get, it requires work to keep. Just as you work to advance your career or maintain your house, you must work to keep the love alive.

Second, other than yourself, your partner should be the most important person in your life. If you really feel this way, doing things for him should be pleasurable. After all, an investment in your partner is an investment in yourself.

Lastly, the romantic phase of your relationship – obsessive thoughts, constant sexual desire and so on – will naturally

die down in about 18 months. We would all be exhausted if that didn't happen! That does not mean you have fallen out of love. It is the deeper form of attachment that indicates that this man has gone from being Mr. Right Now to Mr. Right. And this Mr. Right exists in reality once you overcome The Soul Mate Myth.

To improve your love life and learn more about The Soul Mate Myth, visit [Amazon](#) to purchase The Soul Mate Myth. For more information on Cirillo, visit her [website](#).

Power Celebrity Couples: Hollywood Relationships That Command Our Attention





By [Whitney Baker](#)

Some [celebrity couples](#) have the “it” factor that just draws us in and makes us interested in everything happening in their lives. Other Hollywood relationships have to work a bit harder for our attention, but still, we can’t help but take notice. They make headlines because of their enviable romances, high-profile careers, and cute kids, and we anxiously await their next moves. Below are five power celebrity couples that, for better or worse, never fail to command our attention:

Power Celebrity Couples

1. Prince William and Princess Catherine: The royal wedding lived up to everyone’s expectations, and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have continued to capture our attention – and our hearts – ever since. It seems that these lovebirds garner media coverage for every move they make, even when they do something as mundane as grocery shopping.

Related Link: [Prince William and Kate Middleton’s New Year’s Eve Plans](#)

2. Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon: Whether Carey is flaunting her post-baby body, Cannon is doing one of his many hosting gigs, or the duo is showing off their adorable twins, this famous couple seems to have a hand in everything. The attention-seeking family will certainly be captured in tabloids in May this year as Roc and Roe celebrate their first birthdays and Carey and Cannon mark their two-year wedding anniversary.

3. Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie: These superstars manage to juggle two demanding careers and multiple charitable commitments all over the world, all while raising six children under the age of 10. Despite their busy lives and hectic schedules, they still manage to make time for date nights.

Related Link: [Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt Celebrate Her Film with Dinner](#)

Private Hollywood Relationship Still Grabs Attention

4. Beyoncé and Jay-Z: This celebrity duo is famously private, but that doesn't mean they command our attention any less. Having been together for over a decade, [Beyoncé](#) and [Jay-Z](#) have been seen at sporting events and concerts as well as on romantic celebrity getaways. They recently received even more attention for their culinary choices: The new parents were both following a partially vegan diet in order to keep their energy up for their first child's arrival. Their daughter, celebrity baby Blue Ivy Carter, was born on Jan. 7.

Related Link: [Kelly Rowland Accidentally Reveals Sex of Beyoncé's Baby](#)

5. Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban: This marriage between Hollywood royalty and a country music superstar appears to be a match made in celebrity heaven. They continuously support

one another at award shows, showing their love for each other on the red carpet. Urban credits Kidman for helping him overcome his alcoholism, calling her an “extremely pure spirit.” The low-key couple has settled in Nashville to raise their daughters, Sunday Rose and Faith Margaret.

Who are your favorite power celebrity couples? Share your comments below.

“Get Married This Year: 365 Days to ‘I Do’”



By [Whitney Baker](#)

Sure, we all want to find “the right guy,” but how do we successfully approach such a task? In her new book *Get Married This Year: 365 Days to “I Do,”* relationship expert, professor and psychotherapist Dr. Janet Blair Page shares her easy-to-follow 12-month plan to help readers not only get married this year but to build a loving and long-lasting relationship with the man of their dreams. We had the chance to interview Dr. Page, during which she shared her personal story of true love. She also expanded on the steps of her program and discussed why her plan really works.

Can you tell us about your book and why you wrote it?

In 1984, I began teaching a course at Emory University called “Before a Year Is Over, I’ll Be Married.” The way people meet and [date](#) has changed over the last three decades, but the problems haven’t changed: they feel like they’re not meeting enough eligible people, or if they are, they keep facing the same relationship love blocks over and over again. As a psychotherapist – divorced and remarried myself – I was not only able to empathize with many of the women, but I have personally been on the same path and have my own backlog of bloopers. I’ve also experienced the joys of a good marriage, and it’s the most wonderful way I can think to spend your life. This book offers the experience I have gathered.

Your first bit of advice is to get to know yourself. What does a woman need to do to truly know herself?

To truly know herself a woman has to be scrupulously honest about whom she is and has been. A positive realism toward herself and all others in her life is the definition of mental health. She also needs to be aware of her effect on others – life is a team sport – be open to caring and competent critique from people with low to no agendas. If she has personal pain, she needs to have the courage to heal; and if change in her behavior or attitude would be advisable, she

needs to be willing to make it happen.

Related: [Valentine's Day Advice: How Successful Women Can Ditch Dating Duds](#)

Before a woman can “find the right guy” (month 6), she must figure out what that means to her. What advice do you have for someone at this stage in her journey to love?

“The right guy” is not only the best possible man for you but also one with whom you are absolutely willing to put in whatever it takes to make your relationship succeed. You trust and respect each other, have shared your goals and desires, enjoy the comfort of being honest with each other, and love each other unconditionally. You crave being together but are able to be apart without having to worry about the other person’s behavior. You both understand mutuality and are capable of truth telling. (The truth – as inconvenient as it can sometimes be – usually comes out one way or another. Wouldn’t you rather it be on your terms?). You feel even better about yourself being with him and loving him with your brain as well as your whole heart.

Do you believe that this timeline works for all women? If not, whom wouldn’t it work for?

It depends on your starting point. For women who have already accomplished some of the tasks – they knew what they wanted in a man and how to spot a keeper but not how to date or create a close relationship, for example – a year works. But realistically, many women won’t be able to become self-aware or good at self-marketing and dating, de-cluttering their lives, communicating, and connecting beautifully with a man in 365 days. Succeeding at every stage in the 12-month program is much more important than meeting the timeline.

I’m not worried about the women who aren’t married in 365 days as long as they have fixed their old, ineffective behaviors and are in a place to go out and find their soul mate. The

ones I worry about (and who I'd especially like to help) are the ones who continue to drag an ineligible man behind them for years. Keeping my game plan in mind can help them transition to a more effective dating strategies.

Wouldn't some relationships benefit from dating for longer than 365 days?

There's a difference between a couple who both know that they want to be married to each other and just haven't set a date yet and a relationship where one party is simply a placeholder while the other party figures out what s/he wants. After 365 days, he should know if he is interested in marrying you and will have let you know by thought, words, and actions. That said, keep in mind that men like to control the when and how, and unless you think he will never get around to it, bide your time and let him be the conquering hero.

Do you think your program can benefit a man in the same way it benefits a woman? Why or why not?

Yes! I know it can. Many men took my class, and all seem to like the "pull no punches but have a sense of humor" approach. Also, most of my clients are men, and while they are less likely to buy a book or take a class, they experience the same pain, if not more, in love. They are very welcoming of any rules that can alleviate hurt and promote success. Marriage and being in love is of tremendous benefit to men, and they know it. I've spent a great deal of time in my practice learning how men feel and interact in relationships. My program is not only effective for men, but I've developed it to help women be effective in dating them by using my experience with men in therapy.

Related: [Reduce Stress and Maximize Romance This Winter](#)

Can you share your favorite success story with Cupid's Pulse? Having helped over 1,000 couples, I'm sure it's hard to narrow it down to just one.

My favorite success story is my older daughter's. When Tasha got serious about getting married, she flew down from New York and took my course. She listened to the lecture audio and kept the workbook with her at all times. When she went back home, we scheduled regular consults about where she was going and whom she was dating. Tasha religiously stuck to the big three: going out three times a week somewhere, anywhere it was possible to meet someone to date or someone who could be a conduit to someone to date; keeping an open mind about her type of man; and only dating qualified males. She told me about a guy she met in a bar while shooting pool. Eric was younger, a writer and an intellectual. He seemed shy, and he wasn't her type, she said. I encouraged her to pursue it anyway.

She accepted the date – nothing to lose and a possible gain.

Then she told me he suggested they do show-and-tell and wasn't that "cool." I thought, "A match!" It was the request of someone who wanted guaranteed talking points and was accepted as a smooth move. Eric brought old coins that she found intriguing, and she was also impressed by the history lesson that went with them because she had wanted someone smart. And that was it. They were and are perfect together. Although it's always a great joy to me to know that that couples I've helped get together are still happily married, it's particularly great when I get a treasure for a son-in-law.

To find your Mr. Right – and get married this year – visit Amazon to purchase Get Married This Year: 365 to "I Do." For more information on Dr. Page's book, therapy and classes, visit her website, <http://drjanetpage.com/>.

Five Signs Your Relationship Won't Make It Until Valentine's Day



By [Whitney Baker](#)

For many couples, the lead-up to Valentine's Day is an exciting time filled with promise and possibility. The cold weather offers an excuse to snuggle up, while the holidays are the perfect reason to shower each other with love and affection. Unfortunately, many relationships aren't so lucky.

According to a recent study in *Men's Health*, the time span from Christmas to Valentine's Day is one of the most

common break-up times of the year.

Regardless of the month or season, when your relationship is over, you just *know*. But if you're still on the fence, unsure what to do about your love interest, here are five red flags you should watch for in your relationship. Otherwise, you probably won't make it to Valentine's Day:

1. Too much fighting: The holidays are a special time to share with your significant other; they should be filled with fun, [food](#) and family, not fighting. If you find yourself unhappy more often than not, it may be time to [call it quits](#).

Related: [The Holidays: 8 Ways to Ruin Your Relationship](#)

2. Finding other priorities: New Year's Eve marks the start of a new year and the chance for a new beginning. That said, who better to kick things off with than the one you love? If you'd rather hang out with your friends or spend a low-key night with your family, you need to consider why. Spending time with your partner should be a priority, especially on such a fun holiday.

3. No connection left: Lack of similarity emerges over time, and these differences can either bring you closer together or tear you apart. You need to feel connected to your partner, and something as simple as an impersonal present or thoughtless holiday card can be enough to make you feel distant and misunderstood.

Related: [10 Holiday Gift Ideas for That Special Someone](#)

4. Nothing to say: When your relationship is new, you always have something to talk about, but as time goes on, conversation may become stale and forced. Remember that communication is key for every successful relationship. With nothing left to say, it may be time to start looking somewhere else for love.

5. Making plans alone: The beginning of January is typically a time to reflect on the year behind you and plan for the year ahead. If you and your partner have a strong and stable relationship, then the two of you will make plans *together*. Thinking about events, vacations and getaways that take you away from your significant other could mean you're ready for a fresh start in more ways than one.

Cupid wants to know: How did you know when your relationship was over?

Celebrity Couples Who Shy Away From the Spotlight





By [Whitney Baker](#)

Some celebrity couples flaunt their relationship for the entire world to see, posing for the paparazzi as if they're at a photo shoot (hello, Kardashian sisters!). Other couples, regardless of whether they've just begun dating or have been married for years, choose to hide from the spotlight and stay mum about the details of their love. Below are five Tinseltown two-somes who are keeping their lips sealed when it comes to romance:

1. Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson: Although this cute duo has refused to officially confirm they're a couple, they did come close to doing so on *Oprah* in 2010. The two jokingly referred to Kristen Stewart's "baby" when asked if they were dating. Also, an *Oprah* insider insists that Pattinson and Stewart revealed their relationship to the queen of talk shows before the taping. More recently, Stewart casually mentioned her "English boyfriend" in an interview for British *GQ*. Even so, don't expect too much PDA from this couple – despite their intense love scenes in *Twilight's* latest installment.

Related: [Rob Pattinson Thinks Kristen Stewart Looks “Amazing” as a Bride](#)

2. Sarah Michelle Gellar and Freddie Prinze, Jr.: Gellar and Prinze first met while filming *I Know What You Did Last Summer* and have been together for more than a decade. After a two-year hiatus from acting, Gellar is now starring in *Ringer* on The CW and is learning the ins-and-outs of balancing a career and motherhood. In a recent interview with *Self*, Gellar calls her daughter Charlotte “my best friend” and says that she values time with her family above all else.

3. Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin: The Oscar winner and Coldplay frontman have been married for over eight years, but have been tightlipped about their relationship and are rarely photographed together. That’s not to say that they don’t realize how lucky in love they remain. As Martin recently told *CBS Sunday Morning*, “From being a loser to going out with an Oscar winner? It’s a giant leap. Let’s face it: It’s like winning the lottery.”

Related: [Chris Martin Calls Gwyneth Paltrow His “Beard”](#)

4. Emma Stone and Andrew Garfield: With this rumored romance, Stone, who starred in *Easy A*, *The Help* and *Crazy Stupid Love*, has met her match. Garfield is well-known for his role in *The Social Network* and is currently filming *The Amazing Spider-Man*, making him another one of Hollywood’s hottest twenty-somethings. This publicly-shy couple has been spotted hiking and going to the movies, but they haven’t yet officially confirmed their relationship.

5. Carrie Underwood and Mike Fisher: Since Fisher’s trade to the Nashville Predators early last year, country’s all-American sweetheart and her hockey-playing beau are enjoying a low-key life in Nashville. The couple is still relishing their status as newlyweds, often opting for trips to the local

Whole Foods Market and cooking at home as opposed to fancy nights out.

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

Who are some of your favorite low-key celebrity couples? Share your comments below.

How to Get Over a Broken Heart During the Holidays



By Abbi Comphe1 and [Whitney Johnson](#)

There are so many things to be excited about during the holidays: fun-filled family time, delicious home-cooked meals, presents waiting to be unwrapped and perhaps a much-deserved vacation. However, if you're nursing a broken heart, this festive time of year may seem burdened with only cold and lonely days. You may never forget your heartache, but someday, you will be healed and happy again. Just make sure to get some solid [relationship advice](#) in the meantime.

Until then, the ten tips below may make your holidays seem a bit more bearable and that damaged heart feel a little less painful:

1. Volunteer: No matter the time of year, giving to others can mend a hurt soul and fix any frown. During the holidays, the opportunities to volunteer seem to multiply, making it extra easy for you to make a difference in someone else's life.

Related Link: [Kendra Wilkinson Opens Up About Sleeping with Hugh Hefner on 'I'm a Celebrity'](#)

2. Listen to holiday music: There's something so innocent and child-like about holiday music. It'll take you back to those days when your biggest worry was whether or not the item at the top of your wish list would be waiting for you to unwrap it. Although Nick Cannon and Mariah Carey had a rough [celebrity divorce](#), Carey still is positive and puts out beautiful holiday music that you can listen to!

3. Take up a new hobby: Attend a cooking class (Whole Foods offers great options) or take a knitting course and make a homemade gift for someone special. If you live in a snow-filled spot, give snow skiing a try. By being outside of your comfort zone, you'll not only distract yourself from your

heartbreak, but you'll also regain your confidence.

Related Link: [Nicole Porter Discusses "The Break-Up Cookbook"](#)

4. Enjoy hot cocoa by the fire: A cozy spot and delicious drink are sure to warm your heart during this holiday season. Snuggle up with a good book or have some girl-bonding time with your mother, sister or best friend. When [Taylor Swift](#) broke up with celebrity ex Harry Styles, she spent time with her best friends during the holidays to make her feel better.

5. Watch a feel-good holiday movie: It's important to remember that you *will* find love again, and a holiday movie is the perfect way to do just that. The options are endless: *The Holiday*, *Four Christmases*, *Miracle on 34th Street* and more. As Hugh Grant's dreamy voice tells us in *Love Actually*, "If you look for it, I've got a sneaking suspicion...love actually is all around."

6. Reconnect with old friends: Re-establishing a friendship that was lost due to distance or busy lives will boost your spirits and remind you that there are plenty of people who love and support you. When former celebrity couple Selena Gomez and Justin Bieber split, Gomez surrounded herself with her closest friends again.

7. Book a quick getaway: Whether it's a snowy vacation in the mountains or a relaxing weekend on the beach, pick a place that makes you feel like yourself again. Most of the time when a hollywood relationship ends badly, the two in the relationship probably end up taking a quick trip to themselves. It can be very relaxing.

8. Buy yourself something special: Yes, it *is* the season of giving, but sometimes that giving needs to be self-directed. Use the money that you would've spent on your ex to buy yourself that much-desired handbag or new pair of shoes.

9. Cook a new dish for your family's annual holiday get-

together: Tackling a challenging recipe will surely keep you busy – from picking out the dish to shopping for the ingredients to pulling it all together, you'll hardly have any time to think about that broken heart.

10. Meditate. It sounds so simple, but closing your eyes and paying attention to each breath allows you to shut out the rest of the world and focus on yourself. You can let go of those negative thoughts and sad memories and be ready for your next adventure (in love or otherwise) by New Year's Eve!

How did you recover from a broken heart? Share your thoughts below.

Top Five Ski Destinations for Celebrity Couples





By Abbi Comphef and [Whitney Johnson](#)

As evidenced by the popularity of ski resorts like Park City, Utah and Telluride, Colorado, [celebrity couples](#) love sneaking away for a snowy romantic vacation – and what’s not to love? Afternoons spent on the slopes of a majestic mountain and evenings spent snuggling up by a fire or exploring the local nightlife make for a perfect wintery holiday.

When temperatures drop and snow begins to fall, there is sure to be an influx of Hollywood couples at the following ski destinations:

1. Aspen, Colorado: The slopes of Ajax Mountain or Snowmass are often teeming with celebrity duos – although it may be hard to spot these famous faces when they’re covered in scarves and snow goggles. Celebrity couple Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell keep a house here, often inviting children Oliver and [Kate Hudson](#) and their families to join them.

Related Link: [Have Winter Fun In The Sun](#)

2. Park City, Utah: Although this winter wonderland is a popular destination for tourists and celebrities alike, the rich and famous come out in droves during the Sundance Film Festival. Married celebrity couple Justin Timberlake and [Jessica Biel](#) have been long-time snowboarders and enjoyed a snowy getaway here early on in their relationship. Although these two are now celebrity exes, Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale, who played a concert during the Deer Valley Celebrity Skifest in 2011, took their oldest son Kingston to Deer Valley in Park City for a day of family fun on the slopes.

3. Whistler, British Columbia, Canada: Whistler, known as the host of some of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, is as popular for its nightlife as for its 7,000 acres of ski-worthy terrain. Seal proposed to Heidi Klum here in 2004, while Paris Hilton and boy-toy of the past Doug Reinhardt took advantage of the skiing, snowboarding and sledding during a snow-filled vacation in 2009.

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

4. Telluride, Colorado: This snowy spot is a favorite playground of the rich and famous, perhaps because of its particularly remote location. Oprah Winfrey recently sold her “log cabin” here, and before their [celebrity divorce](#), Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes would steal away for a romantic getaway to their home away from home in Mountain Village, a sister town connected to Telluride by a free gondola.

5. Chamonix, France: Located in the French Alps, Chamonix, known as the birth place of skiing, is one of the most popular ski resorts in Europe. In addition to the unbeatable snow and challenging trails of Mont Blanc, the city is known for its apres-ski offerings as well: great French food and a cozy village atmosphere. David and Victoria Beckham often choose

this spot for a family vacation.

What is your favorite snowy spot for a romantic getaway? Share your thoughts below.