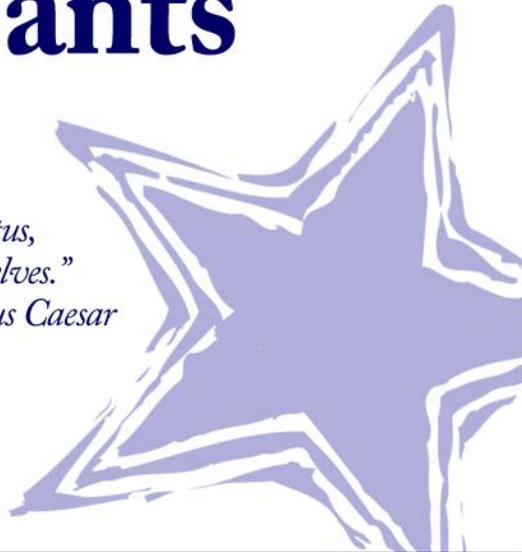


Becoming the Woman Your DREAM MAN Wants

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not in our stars but in ourselves."*
~ William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*



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(The following is my favorite information for a single woman to employ to prepare for love – and for a partnered woman to remember to keep inspiring her man's best. The ideas I'm about to share will dramatically up your odds of finding a great relationship or improving the one you've got... These tips and techniques are from the “self-effort” files of romantic wisdom, and have nothing to do with astrology – for my best astrological advice and insights, please see my book Love Is in the Stars.)

The Single Woman's Rant

“I don't get it,” Sarah began. “I'm pretty, I'm funny, and I'm educated! Why is it that less attractive, less intelligent, less interesting women are getting married every day. It's not fair! It makes no sense!”

Oh boy, here we go... Single women give me the, “Here's the reasons the laws of the Universe must need tweaking since I'm still not married,” speech all the time. I've heard it so many times, in fact, and I'm so familiar with it – where it comes from and how it holds women back - that I've put a name to it:

“The Single Woman's Rant.”

And, honestly, every time I hear it it's all I can do to not laugh. Not because I am laughing AT the women who are ranting – but because the premise or mindset they're working under rests upon the false belief that love comes if-and-when you're DESERVING of it.

As though it were about MERIT.

As though if you haven't “earned” love in the right way, you should expect to suffer.

Wrong!

And sure, I get that while the idea of *earning* or *deserving* love might sound noble or romantic, and that it can make the people who operate under this false belief feel somehow personally "justified"... it's also both laughable and harmful if you stop to think about it.

Here's why: Under this same twisted logic is a woman who is less beautiful, less humorous, and less educated therefore LESS DESERVING of true love?

Of course not!

Look around – you don't need me to tell you that life isn't fair, and very little about it is a meritocracy.

"But I eat well, I work out, and I vote," Sarah's litany continued, the veins in her neck bulging and a lovely shade of eggplant. "I have a nice house, great friends, and killer clothes. What could possibly be the problem?!"

"Gee, I don't know – perhaps YOU?" I want to say, referring to her anger, bitterness, and intensity. I was exhausted after simply being around her a whole two minutes. I couldn't imagine some poor guy getting through an entire evening with her, let alone a lifetime.

Ok, now here's where it's going to seem like I'm contradicting myself.

What I LIKE about the speech – "the single woman's rant" - is that it shows that at least Sarah and women like her at least have a clue that WHO THEY ARE as a person and WHAT THEY DO plays a part in creating their love life.

This is the "will" part of the equation of love, the only part you can control.

But when I ask them one simple question, "How much time a week do you spend looking for him?" they typically look at me confused, as though it hadn't occurred to them they should invest time in finding a man themselves - isn't it enough that they have all these fabulous qualities and accoutrements? Isn't he going to just gallop up to their front door on his trusty white steed and ring their bell? Isn't God going to magically put him on their path?

The truth is I do work with so many women who are needlessly single, virtually dateless, and unhappy about it. And they're right: They have all the "stuff" that many men would want. But I quickly recognize the mere handful

of reasons they aren't having the social and personal lives they could be, and exactly what they can do to change that.

Clearly, their astrological timing factors into the equation: They haven't hit a celestial season of love - what I call "Apple Season," (see Chapter Six in my eBook *Love Is in the Stars*) and it hasn't been time to be with "Mr. Right" just yet.

But they could be having some fun with other nice and interesting men while they're waiting, giving them valuable practice and lovely memories once they've crossed that bridge and moved on to something more meaningful and long term.

Perhaps their true love season is around the corner, but the mistakes they're making will bungle things and get in the way when the right man finally does come along.

If you find yourself proclaiming the "Single Woman's Rant" to anyone who will listen, feeling badly (and mystified!) because you're a great catch but no good men seem to get that, *or have lost faith you'll ever find "the one" because you've been so heartbroken by "the many"* then here are the three most important reasons you're probably not making the most of your romantic destiny right now...

The Big Three

There are only about three reasons to blame for the phenomena of a high-caliber woman like you suffering from having a low-caliber personal life:

Reason #1: – Hiding Out – You stay so busy in your career or otherwise, that you remain "the best kept secret in town," and thus no one man can find you, let alone knows you exist.

Reason #2: – You Hate Dating - You enjoy going out with men about as much as you enjoy having your teeth cleaned and are increasingly alarmed at your single status (see "Single Woman's Rant" above...) which, in turn, makes your experiences with romantic candidates NO FUN and makes YOU NO FUN, either!

Reason #3: – Confusing Chemistry For More – (This is the most common reason of all!). Your attention isn't focused on meeting, attracting, and only selecting the kind of man who would actually be capable and willing to fulfill your romantic vision – i.e., you have a "picker" problem – always picking Mr. Wrong. This typically involves dating and bonding with the kind of guy who makes you feel good in the moment, but not over the LONG TERM.

Instead, you take the man who makes you feel the least bit of something special, and you try to turn him into the man you want him to be...

Though THE BIG THREE seem simple, the reasons that underlie them are many and multilayered. If you're doing any of The Big Three you probably find it completely unhelpful when friends and loved ones say things to you like, "Quit hiding! The man of your dreams wasn't born with your phone number inscribed on his forehead." Or "Have fun – dating is great. You should be enjoying yourself."

Statements like these just focus on the superficial aspects of your lack of romance and don't address *what's really going on* – your fears or subconscious blocks, and don't help you get any closer to what you say you supposedly want.

These underlying issues of The Big Three all fall under the topic of "Getting Your Mind Right" before you are ready for love. "Getting your mind right" can be done several ways, but MUST, MUST, MUST be done before you even attempt to find THE ONE.

Is Life A Soup Kitchen Or A Banquet?

The first issue you must explore to "get your mind right" is at the very foundation of your entire romantic outlook and, therefore, has an enormous impact on it. Truly – it affects every aspect of how you behave around men, communicate with men you're involved with, and respond to every interaction you have with them. It's essentially the UMBRELLA issue that impacts absolutely everything else.

SERIOUSLY – I mean EVERYTHING.

What is this HUGE thing, you ask? It's your core romantic perspective.

One of the most important things needed to be successful at *anything* in life is your perspective. If your perspective is one of lack – if you believe that the good things of life are limited, that there's only so much to go around and the bigger someone else's supply, the smaller yours – then you're setting yourself up to fail.

If you believe, on the other hand, in abundance – that there's enough to go around and the more love, money, opportunity or health you have, the more you can share with others and vice versa, you'll have far more success.

Here's why: When you're focused on lack and limitation in love, seeing the world of men as a soup kitchen in which you're lucky to get any dry,

tasteless crumbs or mushy stew (translation: JERKS, LOSERS, MEN ALREADY MARRIED OR INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE ELSE, MEN WHO LIE OR CHEAT, MEN WHO TREAT YOU POORLY, MEN WHO FORGET YOUR BIRTHDAY, :ETC.) to just barely keep you alive after the humiliation of waiting in line with other hopeless souls for hours in the cold, then you'll hungrily grab at the wrong relationships and won't have the strength to wait for the right one. Or, having burned your lips on scalding soup in the past, you'll avoid relationships all together.

But, if you KNEW that life was a gorgeous banquet, that within just a few feet of you were glorious, abundant spreads of your favorite delicacies to nourish you and keep you happy (i.e. GREAT, LOVING, EVOLVED, HOT MEN WHO WORSHIP AND ADORE YOU!), that you could have anything you wanted and as much as you wanted, and so could everyone else, then you'd easily say no to any unhealthy situations and wait for the next snazzy waiter carrying a silver tray laden with some sort of scrumptious delicacy (i.e., GREAT GUY) to approach, knowing that on that tray would be exactly the thing you want.

A Soup Kitchen Girl

At this point you may be saying to yourself, "Huh? I don't get it... Why are you talking about food? Isn't this supposed to help me with my love life? I'm confused..."

Let me tell you a story of a client of mine to illustrate what a disaster it can be if your perspective is one of lack in the area of love – if you find yourself thinking that there "aren't any good men left, and if there are, they wouldn't want me," then here's what can happen:

A lovely woman named Diana called me for a reading. She'd been seeing her "boyfriend" Marc for five years – except she wasn't allowed to tell anyone he was her boyfriend. You see, Marc insisted their relationship be a secret, and also insisted regularly that he was never going to marry her. He wasn't married to anyone else, so it seemed strange to Diane that she couldn't tell anyone about the time they spent together, yet Marc was adamant. So, for five long, agonizing years she'd been regularly seeing Marc and sleeping with him as though they'd slipped into a secret, parallel universe, in which no one else existed.

I listened to Diana's story heavy-hearted. I could have given her a "pop-psychology" diagnosis of what was going on, telling her that she had low self-esteem and that by waiting and hoping for Marc to change she was living in a fantasy, that he was clearly unavailable, and was never going to marry her, let alone be her real boyfriend, and that perhaps she was playing

out aspects of her parent's relationship to each other or to her, blah, blah, blah...

Instead, I said, "Oh, you have a perspective problem."

"What?"

"You don't believe you can have more than this or that more than this exists."

"Wow," said Diana, as though hearing this answer for the very first time. "You're right."

Clearly, Diana is with the wrong man – I knew that without even consulting her stars. How did I know? A man is wrong for any woman if he DOESN'T WANT HER!!! And ISN'T WORSHIPPING HER! And there's utterly NOTHING astrology could do to change that.

Let me say this so you'll understand and grasp it for your own love life: The wrong man is ANY MAN WHO DOESN'T WANT YOU OR TREAT YOU WELL! And Marc didn't want Diana – at least not enough to tell anyone *else* he wanted her. So, for Diana to give him all her time, attention, sex, and exclusivity for years and years was a very bad way to try to get her needs met.

But obviously, she believed deep down that if she dropped him like a rock (which was what I wanted her to do!) she wouldn't get her needs met anywhere else, either. She thought that at least he was satisfying *some* of her needs (companionship, fun, friendship), though certainly not her primary ones... HIS primary needs were being met regularly (attention, loyalty, sex), while she was left waiting, waiting, waiting for him to change.

The Dianas of the world don't need an astrology reading, they need therapy! Figuring out the roots of this "I'll accept and be ever available to a man who won't introduce me to anyone in his life FOR FIVE YEARS" perspective and how to change it can require a great deal of ongoing support. But women like Diana are hoping that I can look at the chart of a man like Marc and tell them when he's going to come under the influence of some incredibly powerful astrological force that will turn him into a new man.

But Diana doesn't need a new version of Marc, she needs a *different* new man!

There's no reason to be in a "soup kitchen" relationship. To think there aren't any good men in the world requires that you be in complete, utter denial of statistical reality. Relationship expert Alison Armstrong said it beautifully to me one day on my radio show, "There are over six billion people on the planet and yet we live in scarcity. Finding 'the one' is not a

finding problem, it's a sorting problem. Quit trying to find him and get busy sorting!"

But here's the challenge: It's awfully hard to let go of the wrong guy if you don't believe there's a right guy...

Mastermind Groups

So how can a woman like Diana change her perspective for the better, and thus change her luck in love? (By the way, if you're thinking she's an extreme case, I sadly disagree - I WISH the dynamics of her so-called relationship were rare and unique, but there are TONS of Dianas in chronically miserable entanglements with the wrong men everywhere the world over.)

Fortunately, there are a few life and love-changing ways that ANY woman, no matter how unhappy with a dysfunctional cad for no matter how long, can transform her perspective, and thus, her LIFE.

I'm a big fan of the "Mastermind Principle," first written about in the classic self-help book, *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill. He explains that a mastermind group involves gathering together with others working on the same goals for mutual support, brain-storming, and the sharing of resources and contacts. I've seen virtually supernatural progress in the participants of small, focused groups in which all of the members assist one another in creating more of what they want in their lives.

Participants typically discuss their hopes and dreams with one another, come up with strategies, write down their goals, create "vision boards" on which they paste pictures from magazines of things they want (like beautiful homes, jewelry or exotic travel destinations, and yes – even GREAT GUYS), and offer each other ongoing cheerleading. These kinds of supportive activities done in a group setting are literally like magic in the lives of each person.

The reasons this works are obvious: Affirming what you want to others makes you accountable to them, giving you more motivation than you'd have on your own. You may be good at letting yourself down, but you don't want to let them down, too. Having help from others enables you to stay on track and not give in to the temptation to give up or forget your commitment to yourself (which is why in romantic stories, the heroine always has the assistance of a "fairy godmother" or army of small, singing forest animals). It's also much harder to be in denial about your life when you're reporting to a group of people who are so dedicated to your growth that they'll call you on your limiting beliefs.

Stuff that you could easily sweep under the rug when you are by yourself is harder to avoid when you have a committee of concerned “support staff” noticing and pointing out what you’re doing. And seeing others have breakthroughs and positive changes allows you to believe that they’re also in reach for you, enabling you to be bolder and more proactive.

If you’re more shy and introverted and don’t want to create or join a group, then even just having a “love buddy”– someone you meet or talk with regularly can provide invaluable support to your achieving your romantic objectives.

Recruit A Romantic Mentor

Think of the most successful woman you know in the area of love – the one who’s the envy of all of her friends, treated well by all the men in her life, worshipped by her boyfriend or husband, and followed around as if she has a secret, special pheromone men can smell above everyone else’s. She never has a lonely Saturday night in front of “The Antique Road Show,” wishing the phone would ring.

It may seem like she’s blessed by the Gods – born prettier, more confident, or with a better sense of style than everyone else, but I guarantee you that’s not why she’s successful.

Call her up and ask her to mentor you. Tell her what a goddess you have observed her to be in matters of the heart and that you wish to know her secrets. Offer to buy her lunch or walk her dog or whatever it takes. This woman knows something you don’t – I promise you! And she’ll love sharing her wisdom.

You may not know a woman like this as, sadly, there aren’t very many of them and the ones that are around are busy being adored. They spend their days being whisked to far-flung romantic locales on tropical islands, the ski slopes of the Alps, and the hills of Tuscany and thus may not have enough time to devote to you and your misery.

You can still find a fabulous mentor; you just may have to pay her. That’s right – HIRE A LOVE COACH. There are many wonderful, skilled souls who’ve made it their life’s work to help guide a woman such as you. There’s no blame or shame in asking for help. Changing a lifetime of bad habits and self-sabotaging behaviors with men isn’t going to be easy and may not be possible all by your lonesome.

Laying Cable

If you'd prefer to turn your perspective around without aid and believe that you can, there are several solutions that to employ. One of them is to focus on cleaning up your "stinking thinking." This is critical for any woman pursuing any of other "perspective enhancement" strategies anyway, because the way you think is literally the foundation of the way you behave; the confidence you feel in meeting others, and how you carry yourself.

It's quite literally the "key to the kingdom" of all your dreams come true, or all your nightmares never ending...

Here's how it works to determine your romantic destiny: If you're thinking along "soup kitchen" lines – that you're never going to find anyone or that all men are jerks, then your thoughts will determine your actions which will create your results, et voila! You'll stay alone or attract yet another jerk.

Many New-Age thinkers and philosophers talk about this phenomena in a way that many people can't relate to, saying that "the Universe rearranges itself" to send you experiences that mirror your thoughts, as if those thoughts literally reach out of your skull and alter time and space. While that may be true (and I don't know because I've never seen an actual thought burst through someone's noggin) my friend Chellie Campbell, leader of The Financial Stress Reduction Workshops and author of two beautiful books on financial prosperity, *The Wealthy Spirit* and *Zero to Zillionaire*, explains it in a way that makes far more sense to me (and involves less Hollywood special effects).

She writes in *Zero to Zillionaire*: "You wear your thoughts like you wear your clothes. Your thinking shows up on your face and in your body language and in your energy. You are projecting joy, success, and prosperity or you are projecting misery, failure, and poverty. People can see it and they can feel it. They respond, consciously and unconsciously, to the thoughts you project."

Add to this that according to brain experts, the more you think about something the more neural pathways are created dedicated to that thing in your mind. This is done by brain cells (or neurons as they're called) firing and then connecting or "wiring" together, causing some scientists to say, "Neurons that fire together – wire together."

It's like the brain is a big computer and by thinking of something or someone repeatedly and with powerful emotions, you're literally forming neurological cables in your brain that get deeper, longer, and more connected to other parts of the brain with every thought. Pretty soon there are miles and miles of cable for that one topic.

This is why habits (like the soul-crushing habit of dating SHMUCKOS) are so hard to break!

Let's use the example of a man you like to illustrate what I'm talking about – we'll call him Jerk, er - I mean Jake.

Every time you think about Jake, more and more "Jake" neurons fire and then wire together creating new neural pathways (i.e., cables) solely dedicated to the topic of HIM. Every time you see Jake, spend time with Jake, talk to Jake, focus on Jake, make out with Jake, etc. these cables connect with other cabling designated to other things in your brain until the Jake cables literally start taking over, moving and squishing cables for other things, people and habits out of the way.

Pretty soon the neural pathways devoted to Jake have a life of their own – you'd swear you aren't thinking of him of your own freewill anymore. Your thoughts are acting as though on "autopilot," causing you to do and say things related to Jake that you don't even consciously mean or want to (like cleaning his bathroom and kitchen, writing large personal checks made out to him, or ripping off your clothing in his presence without him even helping you unbutton anything... or taking you to dinner first...).

This is why breaking up is so difficult – there are the very real feelings of loss, but then there's the reality that, depending on how long the relationship, you have a lot of miles of cable dedicated to that guy. Thinking of him has become a habit with a power supply all its own! It makes it very hard to stay away even if you consciously know without a doubt that you're better off without him. To your dismay, you'll think of him without even trying to.

But don't despair – put down that mop, rip up that check, put your clothes back on and pay attention! Because you can "refire" and "rewire" your cables. YOU got your brain all in a doomed love tangle, and only YOU can untangle it.

There are two ways to intercept your thoughts and create new, positive, "this is the stuff I want" cabling! If you're obsessed with someone wrong or unavailable like an old boyfriend who treated you badly, or a married man you can't stop thinking about, or any other somehow horribly inappropriate love candidate, you MUST do these "brain interventions" to become romantically free again:

#1: Every time you notice yourself thinking of the man you're trying to let go of, visualize him doing something repulsive – like sitting in his underwear watching football, burping loudly and barking orders at you. Something along the lines of, "Woman! Where's my pizza?!"

If that's not strong enough, envision him kicking your dog, cutting up your favorite outfit with gardening shears, or throwing your cat through a closed window... Pretty soon he won't seem so wonderful anymore.

#2: Every time you catch yourself remembering him wistfully, grab yourself by the shoulders, throw ice cold water on your face, and say to yourself, "Stop this at ONCE! I will no longer indulge a pathetic fantasy that's keeping me stuck, miserable, and alone. I have a fabulous new future I am stepping into – one in which I am loved and honored." And then picture what you want. See yourself with the kind of relationship you desire with someone that treats you well – be sure to visualize someone better looking and rich, while you're at it (hey, this is the only life you've got, this time around anyway, and a well-wired brain can do amazing things – go for it!).

Affirmations And Intentions

If groups aren't your thing, and you're not interested in rewiring your brain through visualizations, there's a powerful option I guarantee you've heard of before.

But that's okay because it's said you have to hear something FIFTY times or more before you actually *really* get it (and for some people, it's more like fifty thousand). So, I'm going to tell you another solution for getting your mind right that you already know.

One of the best ways to intentionally heal your negative thoughts is with the practice of the repetition of affirmations. It doesn't matter if you believe in affirmations or not, kinda like it doesn't matter if you believe in astrology or not – they work anyway.

We affirm things to ourselves and others all day as it is so we may as well start purposely affirming what we want.

So watch your thoughts! If you're always thinking, "I never get any attention. I'm always going to be alone. I'm too old and no one will ever want me now," you'll behave that way - more importantly, you'll only notice opportunities in the world that match your thoughts (it's sort of like when you've got a crush on a guy who drives a red sports car, and suddenly – everywhere you go all you notice are red sports cars!), and your thoughts will be proved right!

So start affirming good stuff. There are a few minor rules to this, however, that I want to be clear about so you get the maximum BLISSFUL LOVE from your efforts.

1. It's important to affirm what you want in the present tense, as in, "I now have/am 'fill-in-the-blank.'" If you say things in a future tense, by saying, "I WILL have 'fill-in-the-blank'", you'll keep whatever it is that you want forever in the future.

2. Say it, either aloud or silently, every day for at least ten minutes.

3. Do NOT say affirmations about a specific person, unless it's to affirm something about you in relation to him, like, "I now forgive and release John," or "I am accepting and valuing John more every day." Affirmations work by changing YOUR thinking, but have no power over anyone else's. You also can't change someone else's feelings with affirmations, or make them behave differently; saying, "John loves me," or "John is going to call," is NOT doing affirmations, instead you're doing INCANTATIONS (trying to put a spell on John) and that'll just prove to be a waste of your precious energy (it also requires that you boil up some eye of newt and toe of frog, and that just gets downright creepy...).

4. Don't affirm how someone else will change for you or how their destiny will now be linked somehow to yours. If that isn't in the stars, so to speak, you don't want to manipulate (get it, MANipulate?) him or his circumstances as it won't last long even if it were to initially seem like it's working. Worst of all, if what you're affirming isn't "meant to be" then it could backfire – who knows? Perhaps you were going to have something or someone even better!

5. Get excited and expectant of whatever it is you're affirming. Positive emotions and enthusiasm help to keep your thoughts on track and bathe the cells of your body in happy chemicals, making you more attractive to be around, or at the very least happier and healthier while you're all by your lonesome...

Your Eyes Are Becoming Very Heavy

Another incredible way to alter your "stinking thinking" and "get your mind right" is to work with a hypnotist, or to listen to recordings of hypnosis sessions specifically to support your romantic goals.

Experts in the field of hypnosis insist that anyone can be hypnotized, and that there's no danger that you'll do anything that would otherwise be against your will (like so many Hollywood movies depict – you apparently can't be hypnotized to kill someone or become a talented "cat burglar," running around the mansions of strangers, cracking safes and stealing priceless jewels without knowing it, etc.), and that your brain waves go into

a deeper, more suggestible state than while you're sleeping, making the issue of "laying new cable" easier than ever!

I, myself, saw a hypnotist once to help me expand my romantic thinking with great success (this was before I was married, of course!). She affirmed for me, "Men find you attractive. Men want to meet you everywhere you go. You are completely at ease and at your best when men approach you."

I dozed off while listening to a recording of her saying these things nightly for just two weeks and to my delight, because I suddenly unconsciously expected it and therefore carried myself with more confidence, I became a woman in demand! Men approached and talked to me in places I'd never experienced before – asking me out while standing in line at the grocery store, the post office, and stopped at traffic lights. You'd think I was a movie star. I actually had to cease listening to the recording as the dramatic results were becoming too time-consuming!

When all of your brain's cables are harmoniously working in concert toward the same goal, it's a beautiful thing to behold...

Fake It 'Till You Make It

There's one last way that I know of to change your romantic perspective. It's less effective than joining support groups, visualizing, affirming, and hypnosis, but can still work with little effort. It's so easy, in fact, that it involves practicing something the average five-year-old has mastered – the art of make-believe.

That's right - even if you have a hard time believing that life and love are sumptuous banquets in which you can have anything you want, become an actress and pretend you do! "Act as if" and you may just be surprised by what happens.

"Acting as if" means turning down dates with men you know aren't going to ultimately have the same goals as you or be available in the ways you'd like, saying no to things that may feel good in the short run but will bite you on the behind in the long run, and holding out for what you want.

Most of us get good at this when we're sick and tired of the pain of saying yes to things we know will hurt us (and we always know, don't we?). But, despite how so many of us live our lives (bumping into walls and doing everything the hard way), it's not necessary to get sick and tired and romantically bankrupt before you can shift things – you can shift them *now*.

Know Your “Why”

Perhaps at this point, you’re thinking to yourself, “Carol – all right, already! I know life is a banquet! I’m NOT a Soup Kitchen Girl, I’m just exhausted. Dating and meeting people is so much work, and I just want it to be easy. When is it going to be easy?”

Guess what? Never. What great thing is ever easy? Ask anyone who has achieved anything of tremendous VALUE in their life and ask them how easy it was. Is running a business easy? Is becoming a doctor easy? Is having a baby easy?

Does that mean no one should do them? No, of course not!

Stop wanting your love life to be easy! This expectation that it be easy is backfiring and making it much more difficult.

This “expecting your love life to be easy” backfiring happens in several ways: Making you want to give up too soon, causing you to be bitter to be around (ensuring that no great men – who have LOADS OF ROMANTIC OPTIONS by the way, WON’T want to be around you) and by robbing you of the enjoyment of the process you might otherwise have.

That’s right, I’ll say it again – expecting your love life to be easy is actually making it much harder!

It’s common to get discouraged on the path to love, or anything significant in life that we want. Great things take great effort, and sometimes all the effort in the world doesn’t yield what we want, especially if it isn’t our astrological time for it (I write about this at length in Chapter Six - “Seasons of Love”, in my book *Love Is in the Stars*).

But I’m pointing out this issue –that of wanting your love life to work out effortlessly as if by magic – because of a very significant reason. Of the hundreds of single women that I’ve worked with, most of them aren’t making enough effort in their love lives, and have “given up the game” way too easily.

When they do finally put their toe out there, they are too quickly discouraged. They start off my workshop admitting this, feeling uneasy at the thought of making their “hunt” for Mr. Right even a part-time job.

But then they have a huge shift that changes their point of view. By the end of the workshop they have a completely different attitude and are

ready to improve their romantic tactics and give it their all, no matter how much time or effort it takes.

This happens because of a tremendously powerful experience they have. I have them participate in an exercise designed to help them get clear and excited about their romantic WHY - the reasons they want a full relationship with someone wonderful.

I do this by having them write down their dream of what their life would look like if they had the ideal partner they long for. (You can do this, too, by the way. In fact, please DO!)

I instruct the women to envision with incredible detail how their romantic vision feels for them – how it feels to wake up with the man they dream of. How it feels to share a home with him, talk with him, go out with him, entertain with him, make plans with him, etc.

Once they write their romantic vision down, I have them stand at the front of the room and read what they have written for everyone to hear (holding a lit candle to boot, a ritualistic touch carried over from when I was a sorority girl back in college). Women become extremely emotional and moved by this. The act of envisioning their ideal man and relationship, writing down a description of both, and then sharing what they've written to a room full of other women is very powerful.

Most of the women I work with have written some version of their dream list of the man's qualities before (a popular exercise promoted by New Age books everywhere), but they've never taken the time to actually envision what life would be like *with* him – where they'd live, what their kids would be like, how they'd feel in his arms, the things they would do together, etc. Thinking this way makes it feel real, and they like what they feel so much it makes them realize for the first time just how much they want it to *be* real!

When I ask them afterward, "Would it be worth internet dating a bit longer if you could have that life? Would it be worth getting set up a few more times, going to more events, talking to strangers – to have *that house* and *those kids* and *that kind of love*?"

"YES!!!" they say, finally getting it.

If you don't know WHY you want something – if you can't see the payoffs and the benefits of attaining that thing, and if those benefits aren't incredibly compelling and thrilling to you, then you'll never be able to keep up the level of focus or discipline required to reach your goal.

It's Not About Willpower – It's About Wantpower

The popular author and motivational speaker Stephen Covey writes beautifully about this, saying, "Most people say their main fault is a lack of discipline. On deeper thought, I believe that the basic problem is that their priorities have not become deeply planted in their hearts and minds."

What he's saying is that without knowing your priorities, without being clear about what you want above all else, you'll be relying on discipline alone and that will not be enough to sustain your efforts. But truly wanting your goal, believing in your vision and knowing you can have it, and knowing what it will do for you will suddenly make you the most disciplined gal in town.

In other words, as it says on the wall at my gym: "It's not a matter of having willpower. You gotta have *wantpower!*"

Think of it like this: Most people say they'd like to lose a few pounds, and those same people will blame their inability to lose those pounds on their "lack of discipline." But I would argue instead they simply don't have a compelling enough reason – they aren't having health problems or weight-related challenges large enough (no pun intended) to motivate them to do what it would take to drop the excess weight, and they don't see a big enough payoff if they did. They think their life probably won't change that much. It's not like they'll make more money or get better friends if they dropped a pant size.

But let's pretend *you* want to lose a mere ten pounds and have wanted to for years. Suddenly one day you get a phone call from George Clooney saying, "You're perfect for a part in a movie just as you are right now. There's one problem – the camera adds ten pounds. If you start running three miles three times a week and lose ten pounds in a month, I'll get you the job on the gorgeous island of Bali and you'll make TWO MILLION DOLLARS... And oh yeah, one more thing: You'll have a juicy love scene with ME."

Do you think you'd easily find that heretofore missing "discipline" you've needed? Do you think you'd find the strength to suddenly pass up desserts, cut out fat and sodas, and eat tons of fresh fruits and vegetables and throw on those running shoes at every opportunity? Me, too!

When women easily run out of steam in their love lives, wanting to give up after a few bad dates or disappointments, then I know their WHY is not strong or exciting enough.

So, if YOU are quitting the game of love before you've attained your heart's desire, then you need more of that very thing – DESIRE. If you can't muster it, perhaps you need a break from dating, which happens to many

women from time to time. But once you've had a "time out" and recharged your "love batteries," get excited and get back out there...

Know Your "What"

Once you know your WHY, you should know your WHAT. Your what is "what you want." Do you want a companion? A sex partner? Someone to live with, but aren't particularly interested in getting married? Do you want a life partner? A husband? Children? Grandchildren – the works?

There's no "right" answer. You can want whatever it is that you want. I'm just suggesting you know before you start dating, so that you don't just bumble along, not knowing what you want, partnering with men who also don't know what they want, waking up at fifty never having built anything or reached any goals. (Okay, that's dramatic, but it happens...)

Most of us want something. You may not be ready to admit it to yourself or anyone else, but you know it deep down. Even if you aren't ready for what you'll ultimately want, it's dangerous to play with what you don't want, because the next thing you know you're attached to the thing that might be nice for now but won't get you to what you really want in the grand scheme of things (that whole "cable laying" idea again) and you're stuck.

Watching Your Bottom

In any negotiation in business or in life, it's critical that you know what you can and cannot compromise, the things that you absolutely require to do any deal. It's no different in love. Knowing what you must have to be happy, what you're looking for in a partner, and what behaviors or situations you can and cannot tolerate – your "deal breakers" that would demand you walk away, can save you tremendous heartache.

Ideally, it's best if you know your "bottom lines" – the items on your "absolute essential list" in terms of the qualities of the man you want and the kind of dynamics you need to have with him – *before* you become even casually involved with someone. This can enable you to only become emotionally attached to men whom you know will promote your wellbeing and happiness.

The challenge for most of us mere mortals is that we learn by a very inefficient, time-consuming, expensive, painful, labor-intensive process called TRIAL AND ERROR. We can think we know who we are and what we need, but we don't always know until we're taking it for a "test drive."

An extreme example of this involved a woman who called in to a radio show on which I was a guest expert. "Jackie" wanted to know what to do about her husband with whom she had two young children. A few years into their relationship he announced that he wanted to practice bigamy – he wanted another wife.

Jackie loved her husband, wanted to make him happy, and thought she could handle it, so she agreed. But, once this was actually a reality – once there was another flesh and blood woman living under their roof and receiving the bulk of his attention (and yes, Jackie could hear them having "conjugal relations" from the next room – doesn't that sound like fun?) she wisely realized she couldn't go on with this arrangement.

Obviously, there are more issues at play in this example than "bottom lines." But if Jackie had known this was something she was unwilling to be a part of, she could have said no from the onset and not been a party to circumstances that ultimately caused her and her children so much pain. Believe it or not, there are some women who are not opposed to polygamy (okay, they're members of the Yanomamo Indian tribe in South America, but they exist!), but Jackie discovered she wasn't one of them.

So, before you become actively involved with someone, ask yourself what you need to be happy. Do you need to be with a man who believes in marriage, or does the idea of making that level of commitment make your skin crawl? Do you need a man who loves your family, or would you rather not see them much yourself? Do you require a relationship in which you're free to travel regularly for your business, or do you want a man who'll encourage you to quit your job? Do you need to be exclusive before you can sleep with someone, or is it enough that he promises to tell you if he wants to sleep with someone else (a bad idea, by the way – but maybe you don't mind!).

The hard part about bottom lines is they must be honored. If they are truly your bottom lines and you cross them, you won't be happy. In fact, you'll be miserable.

It can be confusing. It's often the case that your bottom lines are not actually bottom lines. For example, you perhaps have told yourself your whole life that you could NEVER be with anyone divorced with children, and then find to your amazement that the love of your life is a divorced single father and you're so glad.

I discourage you from having bottom lines that are "resume items" – things like how much money a man must earn, the country or culture he must be from, what ethnicity or race he be part of, his level of education, etc. and INSTEAD commit to bottom lines that reflect the *qualities of the man and the way you feel with him*.

People's resumes can and do change – and that guy with no education may be more intelligent, well read, and ultimately successful than another man with three PhD's. *But people's core qualities don't change, and the way you feel when you're with them is more critical to your happiness than anything else about them.*

Once you know your bottom lines you need to communicate them to the men you're dating and find out theirs. This should happen before you become exclusive and completely under their spell, by the way!

A HUGE mistake you need to be careful of making is "assuming" that you know what a man wants, and not wanting to make the man uncomfortable by asking tough questions. But you must!

Ask away (but do so with charm and grace – try to keep from sounding you're interviewing him for a job, though of course you are!) but avoid questions such as, "Where do you see yourself in five years? What are you committed to? What special skills or experience do you feel you could bring to the position and make you the man for me?"

Crazy as it may sound, people actually ask each other these things on dates! I had a guy ask me the first two exact questions on a first (and only!) date (the "where do you see yourself in five years?" and "what are you committed to?" questions), to which I wanted to reply, "I see myself with someone more interesting and emotionally CLUED-IN than you in five years, AND I'm committed to getting home as soon as possible..."

Good things to determine fairly quickly (and definitely before any serious "hanky panky") are: Does he want kids? Does he believe in marriage (to only one woman at a time)? Does he insist that he watch college football every Sunday from now until there are colonies on Mars?

Don't think you know the answers unless he's told you, and then make sure his behavior matches his words, or you may spend years thinking you're heading in the same direction but find his train is going south and yours northwest, leaving you derailed and devastated.

Know What You Know

Women have great intuition – we've all heard this. There are mountains of brain studies that show women can simply walk into a room and instantly be able to know what's emotionally going on with everyone. And yes, the part of the brain having to do with intuition is larger in women's brains, so even science backs up this seeming advantage we have.

But women are woefully good at something else, too, and it gets us into lots of trouble: Discounting what we know, especially when it comes to men. We second-guess ourselves, pooh-pooh our gut instincts about people, and talk ourselves out of what we should trust – because we want so badly to believe in “fairy tales” and we don’t want to be alone!

I used to know within thirty seconds of meeting a man how our entire relationship would miserably play itself out (and no – I didn’t do this with astrology and I’m not psychic – I’m just a chick!), but then the voice of my primary brain cabling would say, “But he’s so cute!” and off I’d go.

Virtually every woman I’ve ever worked with that was divorced has admitted to me that on her wedding day (or sooner!) *she knew something was wrong and chose to ignore it*. She thought she could overcome whatever deficit was in the relationship or her about-to-be husband, and that optimism/denial enabled her to go forward anyway, despite her doubts.

Never has a divorced woman said to me, “I thought I was making the best decision I possibly could for myself.”

So, I’d advise that unless you can say that – that a man is a wonderful partner for you and your set of needs and marrying him is the best decision you could possibly make for yourself – then don’t! If it was right, you would know.

Putting All Your Money On That “Zing”

There are numerous reasons women don’t trust themselves. One of the biggest reasons we discount what we know in regards to men is written about by my friend Christian Carter in his wonderful eBook, “Catch Him and Keep Him.” He describes a common mistake women make, falling for what he coins, “the Danger of a Connection.”

“The Danger of a Connection” is the common phenomenon that occurs when you feel an intense attraction to a man, and observe that he feels intensely attracted to you as well. You then get hopeful and excited about the potential relationship you feel you can and will have with this man, based on the fact that your “connection” is so strong, but you fail to realize that this has ZERO to do with whether or not he wants to have a relationship of any kind with you, or whether or not he’s the type of man with whom it’s in your best interest to have a relationship in the first place.

When you fall for “the danger of a connection” you trust the feelings you are having towards a man more than the way he ultimately treats you or

the behavior he exhibits in general. He may have poor character, make bad life choices, or speak to you rudely, but you keep feeling the two of you are so “meant to be” and perfect for each other because of how he makes you FEEL.

It gets even more dangerous – you’re so overwhelmed by the intensity of the feelings you have for him that you can’t imagine he’s not feeling that same level of connection as well. And if he is – then he’ll come around, right? He’ll CHANGE!

So you’ll excuse his lack of loving actions toward you or even his unwillingness to make the relationship full or exclusive as his being in “fear” or that he’s “just not ready” or “wounded from his last girlfriend,” or whatever else you can come up with to comfort yourself and allow you to stay in the relationship, no matter how miserable and mistreated you are.

As an astrologer, I often see spiritual and religious women taking this idea of “the danger of a connection” to another, much more dangerous level. I call this “the danger of a SPIRITUAL connection.”

The Danger Of A Spiritual Connection

The danger of a spiritual connection is much more painful and difficult than what I just described and sadly, it’s just as common. This occurs when you meet a man you feel an intense connection or recognition with, and you therefore decide that he is someone you are MEANT to be with before you even know if he’s a good man, if he wants the kind of relationship you want, and if he wants it with *you*.

Women in the grips of this powerful phenomenon will use terms with me such as:

- “I just know he’s my soul mate.”
- “I can tell we’ve had past lives together.”
- “This is the man God sent for me.”
- “My angels and guides say he’s ‘the one.’”
- “We have karma together and we have to get it right this time or we’ll have to come back in another life.”

This especially happens when a woman has had a reading with someone else like a psychic or medium who would use language such as “soul mate,” “past lives,” and “guides.” (By the way, I’ve seen psychics and mediums be astonishingly good – and astonishingly bad. This is in no way a negative comment on those professions – it’s just that these issues are beyond the realm of astrology.)

The reason I see this as dangerous, is that when you've DECIDED what the "destiny" or "karma" is that you have with someone you're romantically interested in or seeing, you cannot just be in the relationship as it unfolds. You can't evaluate things moment by moment because you're under so much pressure to MAKE IT WORK.

I mean, if you're fortunate enough to have actually met your TWIN FLAME or soul mate, then if you can't make it work with him you're definitely going to die alone, right? I mean, there aren't a lot of men with whom you have that much destiny. They just don't come along every day!

If you have these kinds of expectations and ideas, you'll be under so much starry-eyed, idealized pressure to succeed with this man that you can't simply and naturally let things take their course. Worse, you can't see clearly if the man is or isn't interested, ready, or able to have the relationship you want. If he's being unloving or unkind in some way, you'll justify and tolerate bad behavior more than ever. I mean, hey – this is the guy GOD wants for you. Who are you to question that?

So no matter how painful or miserable things may become, you can't get out.

And if you do actually successfully extricate yourself from him, you'll spend months, if not years, wondering if you somehow "blew it" and are now in some sort of "spiritual trouble" and if you've created further "bad karma" for yourself.

Now, don't get me wrong. I do believe in karma (I'm a Hindu astrologer, after all!), past lives, angels, guides, and soul mates. I honestly do – I just think that this stuff is way beyond what most of us mere mortals can comprehend.

When you're involved in the oh-so-important, "real world" task of mate selection, I urge you to not DECIDE what God's plan is for you, and to instead let it be revealed. It's not your job to play God. It's your job to be YOU – to know what you want, to know what you're looking for in a partner, and to accept or reject men based on that very human part of the equation.

Conversations With Your God

Fortunately, there are ways to access "higher wisdom" for your love life...

To quote Dr. Spock – “Trust yourself, you know more than you think you do.” Let yourself know what you know – and beware of basing this “knowing” on how you feel vs. a true, sincere gut instinct - especially if your “feelings” are taking the form of butterflies in your stomach, insomnia, or nausea at the very thought of him (all signs of infatuation, more than your own higher truth).

If you don't feel that your antennae is very accurate, and wish there was a way to strengthen the signals you're picking up, there are some incredible ways to do so.

A great way to cut through the psychic static in your head, bypass your intoxicating butterflies, and get straight to the core of your personal truth is to write a letter to whatever “higher power” you believe in, whether it's God, Jesus, your higher self, your dead grandmother – whoever.

For this exercise to work it is critical that you feel a deep level of respect and appreciation toward this “being” otherwise it will just feel like doing a homework assignment. It's critical that you truly feel that you are communicating with something sacred.

Write two letters, actually. The first one, a letter from you to this “sacred” higher power, and the second one a letter from them back to you, as though the power is responding.

When you sit down and sincerely open up communication with a force you believe is greater than yourself, holding your doubts or concerns up to the light of something deeply profound, it's incredible what happens. Suddenly, you know exactly what you should do, as though that “force” is speaking straight to you.

When you are with friends, complaining about the latest love drama or problem in your life, it can all sound perfectly appropriate. But when you conjure the energy of your dearly departed loved ones or of the God you believe in and you recount those same stories, it's like holding a mirror up to your life that enables you to see yourself in a way you couldn't before (like looking into those ultra-magnified makeup mirrors - you think your skin and eyebrows look fine, but reflected in one of those babies it's like seeing your face for the first time: the heavy mustache, pores the size of the Grand Canyon, and enough oil to fry an egg).

Suddenly, you're amazed by how small and silly your troubles sound. You're wasting God's time by mentioning them, and thus, by being embroiled in their grasp, you realize you're ultimately wasting your time, too.

Someone Else As The Dramatic Heroine In the Movie Of Your Life

There's another thing you can do to wipe the cobwebs out of your mind and gain instant, deep clarity about your personal life. Write the details of your love story (or lack of one), and instead of YOU being the star of the action, substitute yourself with a woman that you love very much – such as your friend, your sister, or your daughter. Every time you would write, "I'm dating Bob," it's now "So-and-so is dating Bob."

See how you feel about the situation that your dear friend or loved one is embroiled in. If it were HER doing the things you're doing, making the choices you're making, how would you feel? Would you be happy for her? Would you want more for her? Would you tell her to do things differently? Would you encourage her to stay in the situation? Why or why not?

So often we'll tolerate conditions in our lives that we would never encourage a friend be a part of. We'll be so confused about a drama until we take a step out of it, and envision the action starring someone else.

I've had women sit across from me, telling me about a situation with a man that I think is *way* beneath what they should be going through. As soon as I ask them what they'd say to a friend in the same position, they know exactly what they'd tell her...

In one session a woman named Jessica spent over an hour telling me about her boyfriend's neglect of her. "I've never felt like a priority to him," she said. "He barely spends time with me. He never wants to make love. I always have to practically beg him to get together..."

Jessica's beautiful ten-year-old daughter was in the next room. "What would you tell your daughter if she had a boyfriend like this?" I asked.

"Oh, sheesh," she said without hesitating. "I'd tell her to dump him!"

"So, why don't you want for yourself as much as you want for her? And how will she do relationships any differently if you don't set a happy example?"

Jessica didn't have a good answer for me...

Call On Your Future Self

We've all heard that old saying "Hindsight is twenty – twenty." The nineteenth century Dutch philosopher Keirkegaard said it better, "Life can only be understood backward, but it must be lived forward."

We can see the past clearly once it's behind us. We know the results of our decisions and their long-term outcomes with the passage of time.

Well, what if there was a way to do this *without* the past being behind us? What if there was a way to actually know outcomes *ahead* of time (without calling a psychic or astrologer – that's right, all on your own... for free!)

Before I tell you how to do this, let me tell you what the heck I'm talking about. This idea of seeing the outcome of our choices beforehand reminds me of an old "Twilight Zone" episode....

A beautiful young woman is out horseback riding in a large open valley. She sees a figure, also on horseback, in the distance quickly approaching. As this mystery rider comes closer and closer the maiden realizes, to her amazement, that the other rider is a middle-aged version of herself frantically trying to catch up with her and yelling something which she cannot hear. The younger woman becomes terrified that she has slipped into some alternate reality, and fears that if she meets her older self her very life may be in peril. So, she whips and kicks her horse to gallop away as quickly as possible, narrowly outmaneuvering the other rider, never hearing the message from the future.

As the episode unfolds, we see that the young woman is on the brink of marriage, and must choose between two suitors. Both men are excellent candidates; handsome, successful, and loving. She finally chooses and happily marries one of them. As the years pass, however, her husband has become a terrible, mean drunk and a complete failure in life, and she deeply regrets passing up what proved to be the other, better man.

Many years later, her home in disrepair and her life a mess, she goes out for a horseback ride. To her shock, she sees her younger self also on horseback in the distance. It's that same terrifying day she remembers from years before, only now *she* is the future, older version of herself pursuing her maiden self in the past. She tries desperately to rewrite the history that we know happens – to catch the young woman on the brink of the worst decision of her life thus alter her destiny. We are mortified right along with the older woman as the younger woman's horse charges ahead, outdistancing hers. She screams her message into the wind, her words never reaching back to the young woman she once was.

While I just told you about a fictitious episode of a classic old television show, it begs the question: Wouldn't it be spectacular to be able to sit down with your future self and ask her for HER advice? She knows EXACTLY what will happen if you do one thing over another. She can tell you if you'll be happy or not. She knows full well if she has regrets or "if onlys" that haunt her. You can dramatically help each other – she can help you to identify the right choices to pick from now to ensure she ends up where she wants to be and she can save you tons of time, effort, and heartache!

My friend, the successful psychic David Tillman, gave me the key to how to have this "time traveling" conversation with the future YOU. He's generously allowed me to include this magical technique here. It sounds crazy, but it works.

Here goes: David suggests you do a meditation in which you call on your future self – the YOU that already knows what's going to happen.

Lie down, close your eyes, breathe deeply for a while, and mentally invite this part of yourself to come forward. You can say, "The woman that I am in the future that knows what I need to know – that already knows what will happen if I 'fill-in-the-blank' (marry Bob, break up with Jeffrey, try internet dating, hire a matchmaker, etc.), please come and be with me now."

Let yourself see yourself – one year from now, five years from now, ten years from now. See what you look like and feel how you feel.

Next, visualize having a conversation with you, I mean, HER. She will happily share with you insights about your life and how to have it be as good as it can. Even if she doesn't actually talk to you, notice how she seems to feel.

When you ask her about a specific decision, is she happy about it? Sad? Concerned? Let her reveal herself. She can save you tremendous time and trouble. She knows what you should do better than anyone else to whom you could possibly turn.

Even if you don't believe that you are communicating with your future self, by going through the imaginary act of doing so, you're calling on the part of yourself that knows RIGHT NOW what you should do (because we're never truly surprised by what happens to us. We usually know what's going to happen, we just don't trust – or we don't WANT to trust – what we know).

By envisioning your life one year out, two years out, ten years out – you're letting your mind explore what will perhaps happen. It's very illuminating.

Getting “The Call”

When people ask me, “How did you decide to marry your husband?” I always tell them the same thing: I didn’t decide. It wasn’t a cognitive, mental process. I didn’t whip up a “pro and con” list, and choose to marry him based on the fact that the list of pros was longer than that of the cons.

In fact, it didn’t feel like it was my choice at all. Over time, I became aware that we *were* married, and that it had nothing to do with my will – it was simply what was SO.

I call this “getting the call.”

Therapists call this having an internal shift that precedes our external decisions, and believe it’s important for this shift to occur to successfully make our external changes go smoothly.

Unfortunately, many people do this backwards – they make the external change *first* hoping their internal, emotional landscape will follow. This approach can work, too, but it’s trickier. When it comes to any major commitment, if all of your inner “YOU” is not on board, you’re going to have problems. You’re going to act out, test the other person, try to sabotage things, etc.

A certain amount of ambivalence is to be expected when we are embarking on big things in life, but if you are way beyond ambivalent, going around and around about something, unable to decide one way or another what choice to make – then you shouldn’t make one.

Wait until you have no choice but one clear path to take.

Devising A Game Plan

Many people refer to dating and love as a game. I myself often use this terminology – that you have to “play the numbers,” “get up to bat,” “stay in the game,” etc.

The best thing about seeing it all as a game is that inherent in games is the idea of sport – and of FUN. From what I’ve observed, most single women are definitely NOT having enough fun when it comes to looking for love. In fact, instead of fun, they’re approaching the topic of love and romance with a heaviness and pressure that is obvious to everyone they meet, and that contributes to men quickly running for the nearest exits.

This is a HUGE problem, tying in with the “soup kitchen” mindset. If there were fabulous men around every corner that thrilled you, then you wouldn’t take it so hard if a date didn’t go well, or a man you liked didn’t return your feelings. You’d be excited to meet the next guy and you’d be lighter and more open when meeting new people.

Dating Is Like Shopping At Discount Stores

Women constantly complain to me that that there are so many “jerks,” “freaks,” and “losers” out in the world, they get sick of making any effort to meet people. Believe it or not, men tell me the same thing (their specific word choices are usually different, though every bit as colorful).

But here’s the deal – looking for love is like shopping at a discount clothing store. I don’t know about you, but I LOVE shopping at discount clothing stores – they’re amazing!

Yes, they’re crowded. Yes, they’re poorly lit. Yes, the dressing rooms are disgusting. Not to mention the rows of merchandise are too close together, and you have to wade through rack after rack of hideous, polyester, poorly made shirts, pants, and skirts all out of order and askew, with several items missing tags or (gasp!) stained, all the while bumping into other shoppers.

But... if you stick with it then EUREKA – there’s that perfect thing! That gorgeous Ralph Lauren down jacket for just \$15! That Polo sweat suit that fits like it was tailored just for you for a measly \$30! That Bill Blass crushed velvet blazer that exactly matches your eyes for an incredible \$13.

Before you know it, you have your dream wardrobe for a fraction of what you would’ve paid ANYWHERE else! In fact, two weeks later you see your now favorite jacket (the Ralph Lauren down one that was just \$15) at a fancy department store for a whopping \$300!

Was it worth it? Going through all the bins, the racks, the shelves, and getting elbowed by total strangers among all the poorly lit, jam-packed, catty-wampus racks of junk?

Heck, yeah!

Invest The Time

Finding “the one” or simply having great romantic adventures requires time and effort. A big stumbling block that I see women running into is they don’t want to put forward the energy, time, effort, and emotional fortitude required to reach their dreams.

But here’s the deal when it comes to making some effort: Studies show that if you are serious about having a life partner, you should go out **THREE TIMES A WEEK** with the goal of meeting him. And you should have a “multiple stream” strategy – many ways in which you could meet him. There are so many resources in the modern world to take advantage of: Internet dating, match-makers, singles events, speed dating, etc.

If those options make you break out in hives at the mere mention, then consider joining groups.

My favorite book for single women, the best-selling, *Why Men Marry Some Women and Not Others* by John T. Malloy, describes the results of interviews with almost one thousand couples over a ten-year period that were on the brink of getting married. His findings indicate that women statistically have the most success meeting men through other women – because when we find a “live one” we can’t wait to introduce him to the great women we know! For this reason, other women’s dinner parties, holiday gatherings, weddings, etc. are an amazing opportunity to meet men. You also have the emotional shorthand of having friends or acquaintances in common.

The next best option, he writes, is to join groups. Think of the kind of man you’re looking for and ask yourself, where would he be? Is he sporty? Join a hiking group or tennis club. Is he cultural? Join your local museum and attend all of their functions, or a coed book club. Is he compassionate? Join a volunteer organization.

But, I guarantee you – going home to watch *The Sopranos* isn’t going to get you one step closer to finding him! (And seeing all those men be violent and deceptive may just keep you from going out the rest of the week...)

Women say to me, “But Carol – I don’t have the time to go out **THREE TIMES A WEEK** just to meet men. I’m busy! Besides, I’m going out all the time. I meet tons of people! I just never meet anyone I’m interested in!”

I point out two important answers to this. If you don’t have the time to look for love three times a week, then you don’t have the time to have a big relationship, now do you? A relationship requires a great deal of attention

and time – talking, eating together, sleeping together, etc. will take you more than fifteen hours a week!

As for the “I meet tons of people but I never meet anyone I’m interested in” problem, this is usually because of a misunderstanding involving the mating dance of humans in which many women think that men are supposed to do ALL of the pursuing. Thus, most of these “busy” women are busy, busy, busy going from meeting to event to dinner with friends to home to their cat, never so much as smiling at a stranger! And then they wonder why no one approaches them, no one asks for their phone number, and no one ever calls.

Help A Brother Out

There’s a very important way to make the most of every opportunity you have to meet men, but it requires that you get over this fear of doing any of the pursuing. By not making any of the first moves, you tell men in your midst that you’re not interested – especially if you are attractive and charming. They’ll see you doing your own thing, not paying them any attention, and they’ll (wrongly) think, “Oh, that hottie must be married.”

This is not just my opinion, by the way. Men tell me they look to see if a woman is interested before sticking their neck out and risking rejection! And this is backed up by research as well... Studies show that roughly eighty percent of relationships are started by the woman SENDING SIGNALS to the man that it’s okay, even desired, that he approach!

So, if you’re shy GET OVER IT. Men are shy, too! They have insecurities, too! They’ve been rejected a LOT, by TONS of women – especially if they’re dating online. And that rejection stuff gets old FAST. So, help a brother out!

This requires that you DO something he can pick up on. So when you see someone that strikes your fancy, smile in his direction, turn your body toward him, flip your hair a few times. If that doesn’t seem to register with the poor distracted fellow, then get up and walk over to him and say hello, or ask for the time, or comment on the weather... if he’s interested he’ll respond. And if not, then too bad for him! He must be married, or recently dumped, or gay, and all you have to do is find another interesting looking candidate to greet with something along the lines of, “Can you believe how hot and steamy it is lately?”

The best information I’ve seen advising single women on how to meet men is in the wonderful, hilarious book, *Dating, Mating, and Manhandling – the Ornitholo-gical Guide to Men* by my friend Lauren Frances. Lauren’s a

love coach who insists that any woman can get all the “action and satisfaction” she wants, but only if she’s willing to take matters into her own hands. She gives simple, fun, effective tips to meet and connect with men anywhere, anytime!

Here’s her advice: At an event, “lap” the location - literally walk the perimeter of the party, concert hall, art gallery, hotel lobby, Home Depot store (where she says to wear high heels and ask any interesting looking men for advice on how to use anything from leaf blowers to duct tape!), etc. and check to see if there are any men there that attract you.

When you find an interesting, unsuspecting prospect, approach him and compliment something he’s wearing or doing. (She cautions against complimenting something about him like his eyes or his skin, as that can be too forward or creepy.)

If he isn’t interested he won’t give you much of a response, or the conversation will stall, or his girlfriend will run over and glare at you. Not to worry – these minor challenges are just signals that it’s time to move on to another interesting man in the vicinity and compliment something he’s doing or wearing next.

If you approach and compliment a man that’s interested, he’ll happily compliment you on something as well, and the next thing you know, you’re married!

Okay, there’s a few steps in between, but this is definitely how to get the ball rolling. To find out the steps and other brilliant suggestions, I highly recommend her book!

To Call Or Not To Call

So many successful books and relationship experts caution against following Lauren’s advice, saying you should NEVER approach a man first, speak to him first, or (God forbid!) call him or ask him out. These sources all swear that men love the thrill of the “hunt” and the “chase” and that they only appreciate and desire a woman if they’ve had to work hard for her attentions, etc.

Unfortunately, this balderdash is a big reason women are getting no action – they’re so worried about seeming too forward, desperate, or masculine that they never so much as make eye contact with anyone, keeping their energy to themselves, and thus remain unapproachable.

Men are busy, too! They're often exhausted, distracted, overwhelmed by work, obsessed by the play-offs, *whatever*, and may just need to see a great big flashing green light over your head to get the clue.

But what about the phone? "Is it okay to call a man?" you may be wondering.

To which I say, "It depends."

The things it depends on are many, but first and foremost it depends on what kind of man he is. If he's the classic "alpha male" type that I write about in Chapter Four of my eBook *Love Is in the Stars* - confident and aggressive, who takes rejection as part of the "game" of life, a man of action who makes everything else he wants happen on his own manly terms, then you probably shouldn't call him. You should instead employ all of your feminine talents such as flirting, smiling, playing with your hair when you talk to him, etc. If he's not picking up on those signals and doing something about it, he's probably NOT interested, because this guy goes after what he wants!

If, on the other hand, he's more of the "beta male" type – a nurturer and a sweetie pie with a slower and deeper emotional process, who sees rejection as a humiliating experience he'd like to avoid at all costs, who's more indirect or cautious about going after his goals, then this is the kind of man it may be necessary to call first.

It also depends on a man's history and age. Men that have been "kicked to the curb" by women in the past – left, cheated on, broken up with out of the blue – these men are more hesitant to stick their neck out, as they (wisely) fear a stiletto heel may step on it! And the older a man is, the less testosterone he has in relation to estrogen, so he'll have less of that "I'm invincible" feeling that the male hormones provide (this is especially true of men past their mid-forties). He'll feel he has been a failure at love in the past or that he was successful but ended up alone anyway (through moving, death, or loss of love for some other reason...). So, with these men, *it's not just okay to send up a flare in their direction, it's required.*

Like with everything in love, trust yourself and follow your heart. I encourage you to avoid blanket rules of behavior – take things case by case.

If you're still not convinced, if you've read *The Rules*, and *Why Men Love Bitches*, or *He's Just Not That Into You*, (a great book, by the way!), all best-selling books that just SWEAR it NEVER works to approach men or ask them out first – that they'll *never* find you attractive and return your affections, then let me give you some real-world examples of women who made the first move:

1. Me! – I approached and spoke to my husband at a party first. Sixteen years later I still haven't stopped yammering away at the fortunate fellow!

2. My good friend, Deborah - one Friday night we went out to a billiard hall. She swooned for forty-five minutes over an adorable man playing pool and then went to the ladies' room hoping to meet him when she came back. The only problem with that little plan was that as soon as she went to "powder her nose" he put on his jacket and proceeded to leave! I chased after him, told him that my friend thought he was a hunk, that he should stay and meet her when she returned but act like it was his idea... *He did and they've been married for ten years.*

3. My childhood friend, Kim – she met a man playing team Frisbee at a park. Once the Frisbee portion of the morning was over, she said for all to hear (with HIM in mind), "Who wants pancakes? I'm cooking!" and the man she'd just met said, "I do!" Soon they both said, "I do," in front of friends and family. *That was seven years and a beautiful daughter ago.*

4. My childhood neighbor and lifelong friend, Kathleen – she met her husband at a barbeque and chatted him up all night. He wondered how he'd break free as she completely dominated his time and attention all evening and wouldn't let him leave. And, when he finally started to, she made sure to ask for his phone number! *And, it was lucky for him, because they've now been happily married for eight years and have a darling son.*

5. A couple I know – they've been crazy in love for three years. They worked together on a business deal for a year, and never had a single personal conversation. She was smitten but he made no move. Once their business was complete and they no longer worked together, she took a chance and invited him to a concert via email. He emailed back saying he was busy. Weeks later, longing to see him, she invited him to another concert, again by email. He AGAIN electronically replied that he was busy. Feeling rejected and embarrassed that he'd shot her down twice, she decided she'd never contact him again. He called her the following week and asked her for a proper date.

What took him so long? His ex-wife had suddenly, cruelly left him months before and he needed to know he wouldn't get squished again, so if she hadn't contacted him he never would have reached out to her.

They just had one of the most romantic, gorgeous weddings I've ever attended.

Get it?

Don't Overdo It

I'm all for you making some of the first moves – sending those signals that you're interested, but once the "ball" is in play, I do think it's wise to see if he'll move the action forward. See if he's available and makes enough effort to make you happy.

I often do tell women not to call or otherwise contact the men in their lives, but not because I think they should play games or manipulate the man, but because I want them to sit back and let the man reveal himself. The idea is to find out if the man can attend to your needs enough to make you happy, or if you always have to take the lead to make anything happen between you.

If, for example, you went out with someone and he gave you the "Let's do this again sometime. I'll call you soon," line, I don't care if you have to break your own fingers DO NOT CALL HIM. He said he'd call you – find out if he meant it! And don't put the poor guy on the spot. He took the ball to his court, so it's in his court. Don't jump over the line and grab it from him, which will only ultimately humiliate you and embarrass him. If you have to work that hard, you're not going to be satisfied with him anyway.

Most of us have been socialized to let men lead, so it's good when you're in the early stages of dating someone, to see if he wants to, as most men initially do. And if you prefer for the man to steer the ship, you need to sit back to give him a chance to do so. If you're always the one inviting him to things, making the plans, doing all the calling, you may be having a great time, but you'll eventually realize it's going well because YOU'RE doing everything! That will ultimately make you frustrated and resentful, and plain old pooped!

A truth that all of those "let men chase you" books are tapping into that's very important and beautifully explained in *Why Men Marry Some Women and Not Others* is that typically men want a woman who loves herself MORE, which shows high self-esteem and status. So, if you're knocking yourself out to get a man's attention, and are doing all of the "heavy lifting" in the relationship, then you're putting the man's needs before your own and are NOT loving yourself more.

Worse, you're saying, "Ooh, please pick me! Please pick me! I hope I'm lucky 'cause I need your validation to feel good about myself..." Instead of, "I'm a catch - why should I pick you?"

On the whole, men don't like this! And guess what? Women don't, either! When's the last time you liked some poor shmuck who made you the center of his universe? I've talked to many women who were extremely interested in a man, wondering when he'd call, anxious to make plans with

him, wishing he'd be their boyfriend, and within hours of this same guy doing something special for them, they start complaining about something minor about him or his behavior, or feeling less interested.

What's going on here? The fact is, all of a sudden he's not so unobtainable, his status lowers as they discover they have some power over him, and he becomes less interesting.

Harsh, but true.

If you consider our history through the lens of anthropology, when you're putting the man on a pedestal and compromising what's best for you in any way, it says to a man's "survival brain" that you can't take care of yourself. If he has to go off and hunt a saber-toothed tiger, you can't be trusted to fight off other suitors and protect his children (and this will bother him even if he doesn't want children – "survival brain" thinking isn't conscious!).

In fact, one of the things the researchers for the book *Why Men Marry Some Women and Not Others* heard from men from all walks of life is that when a relationship starts to falter, the worst thing you can do is twist yourself into a pretzel to make the other person happy. What makes the man happy, instead, is when you go off and make yourself happy!

Interestingly, they found that one of the quickest ways to lose a man's respect and make your status as low as it can be, is to do his chores when you're merely dating (because we know once you're married or even just live with him, he'll LOVE that you do his chores!). It's as though you've become his servant, and no one wants to marry their maid. So don't feed his cat, take out his trash, or run his errands unless he's been doing many of these things for you for a while first. (Do you see why this is one of my favorite books ever?)

What Men Want

There are a few things that are completely in your control that can dramatically make you stand out from other women, and help to ensure your happy romantic destiny. Many of these things you'll already know – you'll say, "Duh! Everyone knows that..." and some of them you may not know. But each one individually can make your odds of attracting quality men exponentially increase.

This section of my book may annoy some of my readers, so before we go forward let me say this: I truly believe love comes for ALL OF US and that ANYONE of any age, weight, education level, income, social status, race, or

circumstance can find true love. I don't just believe this to be true, it's proven by research, it's expressed by countless relationship experts, and I've witnessed it more times than I can count.

If good looks, riches, and high achievement were enough to ensure success in love, then super models and celebrities wouldn't be plastered all over the covers of magazines for their latest love dramas, breakups, and divorces...

That said, improving your appearance, health, and the circumstances of your life can do a tremendous amount to not only make you feel good about yourself, but make you more attractive to everyone you meet.

Look Good

It's a big world full of beautiful people. And guess what? They live on another planet than people who aren't attractive – with advantages and disadvantages that come with being living works of art. But under the heading of "what men want" being attractive is definitely an advantage! And it ATTRACTS, which is why we call it "being ATTRACTIVE..."

Attractive women get noticed, approached and pursued more than unattractive women. Like I needed to tell you this. It's unfair but true.

But here's the good news – anyone can make the most of their God-given assets and move themselves up the attractiveness scale. I don't care how visually challenged you think you are, you can always improve! Surely, you've seen all of those goofy Hollywood movies and TV episodes (starting as early as "The Brady Bunch") in which some plain Jane is magnificently transformed into a glamorous, hot babe.

Why is this? Why do the attractive ATTRACT?

Chief among the reasons is that men are visual – it's just reality. I don't care if you like it, working with reality vs. what you WISH were reality is going to get you a lot more lovin' in this lifetime. The part of the brain that has to do with visuals and spatial orientation is TWICE the size in a man's brain as in a woman's. Men in neurological experiments, when hooked up to equipment to test their brain activity, are found to have the visual part of their brains "light up" when describing a woman they're interested in or in love with. This does NOT happen in the brains of women.

When you think about the survival of the species (which, as *unromantic* as it sounds, is the whole "animal nature" point of the mating dance), there's a very clear reason men are focused on if a woman is

physically attractive: In order to bring the next generation forward, it's awfully important that a woman be healthy. MUCH more than that a man be. This is because, let's be honest – her participation in procreation needs to be for at least a couple of years (made up of pregnancy and nursing – we didn't always have baby formula companies, you know!). While his participation can be for... well, uh... though we'd PREFER it be at least until Junior graduates from Harvard Medical School... *a matter of minutes.*

What communicates health? Glowing hair and skin, strong nails, white teeth, a fit body... (The fit body is possibly the most important thing as that tells a man that should a war or famine come along, you can pack up and haul your you-know-what out of there, and he won't have to throw you on his back and carry you himself, making HIS odds of survival go dramatically up!) The more of these things you have, the more healthy you'll look (and probably the healthier you are) and the more a man's brain will go, "*DING DING DING – we've got a LIVE one! This woman is a good gamble. She'll give me strong babies. Woo hoo!*"

Sydney Biddle Barrows, a woman who founded and ran the most successful high-end "escort service" (a.k.a. prostitution business) in New York City in the 1980's, wrote a tell-all book (this was, of course, after her business was busted and shut down!).

She didn't "tell all" in terms of revealing the names and naughty deeds of the many extremely rich and powerful men who were her customers, but instead told women ALL she learned that could help them to be more effective at attracting and then keeping a man faithful. In the book, *Just Between Us Girls: Secrets About Men From the Mayflower Madam* she included some amazing facts about men's preferences that I found pleasantly surprising and enormously helpful.

1. Be fit! Let me say it again – BE FIT. To Ms. Barrows' amazement, a FIT woman was more desirable to her clientele than a pretty or young one. She could easily employ the "talents" of a woman for years longer and with more "action" if she were FIT than if she were classically pretty. And, also to her great surprise, Ms. Barrows reports that men almost NEVER requested women with a specific kind of figure – they virtually never even so much as mentioned breast size! Do you understand how amazing that is? These were men paying to have sex with women they had NO EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH – you'd think all they'd have wanted was for the woman to have their dream bust size or leg length! But that's not what they asked for – but they virtually ALWAYS requested that a woman be fit.

So, instead of padding your bra or saving up your money and risking your health for that "boob job," join a gym!

2. Be blonde - it's true – gentlemen prefer blondes! Blondes were consistently the most requested, with brunettes next, and redheads the

least. But if a man liked redheaded women, they were ALL he wanted! The funny thing about the blonde issue is that it goes back to the “survival of the species” stuff again. If a woman is blonde it’s a cue that she has high levels of estrogen. The older she gets and the more children she has, the darker her hair naturally becomes, signaling that her estrogen levels are dropping! (Which could also explain why women aren’t necessarily as attracted to blondes... and we glorify men who are “tall, DARK, and handsome...” – in other words, with lower levels of estrogen!)

I’m not seriously saying “be blonde” – if you’re naturally NOT blonde, it may actually look silly if you bleach your hair (I’m thinking of the gorgeous dark-haired ethnicities of the world- Asian or South American women, for example, who – in my opinion - look so much better as brunettes!), but if it works with your coloring and you’ve been wanting a change anyway, you may enjoy more attention going a little more Marilyn.

3. Be groomed – one of the main reasons men gave for cheating on their wives or girlfriends (not that there’s ever a legitimate justification for cheating – I’m just reporting the facts here!), was that their women had stopped making an effort to look good to them. Many men actually said they felt betrayed and misled by the woman in the life *first!* Often the same woman who’d always worn makeup, her nicest outfits and jewelry in their early courtship got comfortable once the relationship became more serious – ramping up the FRUMP factor – which would then make the man’s interest go down, and his resentment and disappointment go up – as though the woman had engaged in false advertising! Kinda unfair if you think about it.

If you’re looking for love, and aren’t yet with the man of your romantic vision, then I beg of you – BE GROOMED ALL THE TIME! In *Why Men Marry Some Women and Not Others* researchers found that a woman who was regularly put together – taking care to present herself, doing her makeup, hair, and nails and dressing in flattering clothing, was dramatically more likely to end up married! The author and his researchers became so convinced of this, in fact, that he insists that a woman who is only “fairly” attractive but puts a sincere effort into always looking her best has a better chance of attracting men than a better looking woman who doesn’t make the same effort.

So I don’t care if you’re just running down the block to the mail box on the corner, that’ll be *the one day* that your hunky neighbor is out in his front yard! Or that new handsome mail man is on his rounds... Or you bump into your ex – the one you’re still pining for!

Okay, so about now you’re thinking – “Who wants a superficial a*#hole like that?! If he doesn’t love the real me – the me with no makeup on, frizzy hair, wearing faded sweats then WHO NEEDS HIM?! And why am I reading this stupid book?”

And you know what? I'm not saying you can NEVER be like that – if you have the Avian flu or you've just given birth to twins, then of course! But, other than that, I gotta tell ya the truth - you're simply not in reality.

Men, and women too for that matter, cannot help what turns them on – we don't choose to be attracted to what we're attracted to. But our culture BOMBARDS us with images of what women AND MEN should look like (and those images are mostly well-lit, touched up, airbrushed, and enhanced by computer), so we're all unrealistically programmed. Throw that on top of the biological imperative of a man to find a woman who is healthy and there you go...

Not to mention the fact that plenty of women are HAPPILY putting their best effort forward, enhancing their figure in flattering clothing, fixing their hair, putting on makeup, etc. and you're trying to draw from the same pool of men... So you may as well play the numbers, make the most of what you've got and quit looking for that blind, spiritually evolved, emotionally deep man who just loves you at your most shlumpy.

The Drawback Of Being Too Good Looking

Beautiful women sometimes tell me that their experience is the opposite of what I've just shared – that they aren't approached by men much, and they have many stunning friends who aren't either. Great news for the rest of us, eh?

Here's what they also tell me upon further inquiry: They tend to keep to themselves and send out "don't talk to me!" signals. They've learned they must do this or endure being endlessly hassled! Because the curse of being extremely good looking (*and I am not kidding, it is a kind of curse*) – is that men wishfully misread these women's intentions. If the women are friendly or talkative to the men they meet, this is often misinterpreted by the men to mean they're interested, when in truth they're just being polite. So, men ask these goddesses out or hit on them the minute they so much as make eye contact.

I grew up with a sister who was so cursed. She couldn't cross the street or sit next to a man on a plane without him making some kind of play for her attention – asking for her number, inappropriately flirting, and then becoming angry if she wasn't interested or available.

So if you're not supermodel beautiful, be glad. And if you are, when you see a man you want to connect with, send some signals his way. Chances are you've gotten so good at keeping everyone at arm's length that even the men you want to come close can't tell that you do.

If Mama Ain't Happy, Ain't Nobody Happy

You may think the most important thing to succeed with men is to look good. You probably think based on what I've written that even I think this. I honestly do not. I think it's one of the most important things to *initially* attract attention, but we've all known beautiful women who could get a few dates but couldn't sustain a man's interest beyond that, complaining that men all seem to quickly vanish.

There are three main reasons for this. She's either:

- a) dull
- b) needy or
- c) negative.

I'll explain how to avoid these three and why it's so important that you do.

Let's start with the issue of being dull... I don't care how smart or funny you may think you are or not, you cannot be dull if you are actively doing things in your life that you enjoy. If you are involved in things you care about beyond your own navel – hobbies, charities, politics, underwater basket weaving, whatever – then you will feel alive, and people who feel alive are never dull.

If you aren't doing anything that even you want to hear yourself talk about, put down the remote control, get off the couch, and go join the party outside your door! If you can't decide what to do, if you've neglected your own interests for so long that even you don't know what you enjoy, write down a list of "maybe I'd likes" and go try them all. Take a painting class, go horseback riding, attend a lecture on the films of Stanley Kubrick, *anything* and see if something clicks!

Sometimes, however, you may be dull and it's not because you don't love anything in this big world, it's because you're not comfortable or confident enough to share what you're passionate about with anyone. Or you're so busy around men or on dates worrying about how you present – *how you look, if you have food in your teeth, and if the guy is liking you* – that you're too uncomfortable to be remotely interesting.

So, relax! If you can't just decide to relax, then use that powerful brain of yours and consciously breathe deeply and intentionally, visualizing soothing images that make you feel great – see yourself lying on a beach or in a meadow of wildflowers.

As for that needy business... probably the most unattractive thing ANYONE can do on a date or early in a potential relationship is to be needy, clingy, or desperate. One of my favorite books that describe the fallout of this problem is an eBook called *Stop Your Divorce* by Homer McDonald.

Homer's been a therapist for fifty-five years so he's got some amazing advice. He says when you're needy, you're telling the other person that you're actually an idiot, or as he says, "a pea-brain" because you can't see what a big world it is and that there are endless options of lovers to choose from (the old banquet idea again!) but that you think you have to be with ONLY them or no one. He says none of us truly have romantic *needs*, we have *preferences* and we should be honest with ourselves about this. Plenty of people are happy and productive without romantic love in their lives, they'd just *prefer* to have it.

He recommends taking control of your emotions by choosing to be as attached to someone else no more than you're attached to your favorite flavor of ice cream. Sure, you might be disappointed that Baskin Robbins is out of Fudge Ripple, it's just that you can adjust your desire and be satisfied with Jamoca Almond Fudge.

His first suggestion when someone is heartbroken over an unrequited romance or the rejection of a lover or spouse is to tell them to date other people. He insists that it's the best way to get the object of your affections to care or come back to you – they'll feel your status has gone up (someone else wants you so perhaps they should after all...) and you're no longer acting as though you can't live without them. which takes the pressure off of them and makes you seem smart, making you suddenly much more attractive!

So NEVER, EVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES cry, beg, and plead with someone to love you. You can tell them you *prefer* to be with them and you'd like that they not dump you, but you'll be just fine if they do. If you have to LIE THROUGH YOUR TEETH about this, DO SO! (Unless, of course, they're leaving you because you're cavalier about the relationship, and making them feel unimportant – in which case cry, beg, and plead them not to leave, showing you care...)

In *Why Men Marry Some Women and Not Others*, the researchers repeatedly heard from men, as well as women, that women are typically ready to be a full couple in HALF the time that men are, and their advice is to play this down until the man emotionally catches up. Don't take it personally, either, if a man is not as interested as you are in being in a serious relationship as quickly. Women commonly make their relationships more of a priority in their lives and are more desirous of being in one, so this is partly to blame for our quicker internal process.

This is very serious, however – the researchers were told by men time and again that they would quickly break up with a woman if she behaved as though they were a full couple too soon.

As for being too negative: One of the most enjoyable, life-affirming things about being with another person *is if they are happy*. Life is full of challenges, stress, and responsibilities, and spending your time with someone who's happy is a powerful antidote to all of that!

When you're happy, it raises your stock in every way – it tells a man's reptile brain that you're not needy. You're happy with or without him, so you have confidence.

Studies also show, by the way, that being happy and optimistic will extend your life span and keep many diseases at bay, literally bathing the cells of your body in healing energy, so choose to be happy, already!

And notice if you're not happy. If you truly aren't (which could be rooted in a medical problem or chemical imbalance – diseases like diabetes and some cancers cause depression, so go get a physical if you have no other reason to be blue!) or if you're choosing not to be. We get comfortable in our misery and attached to drama. It is FUN to be sad and in pain. We get all sorts of secondary benefits – people feel bad for us, we have an excuse to avoid obligations, we get to be a martyr, etc.

But, more importantly, women bond with other women over pain and problems. This is borne out in the research of linguists and neurologists the world over – women bond by “trouble talk” – talking about their troubles. According to a study in 2004 at UCLA, women under stress “tend and befriend” – they release a hormone called oxytocin that makes them reach out to others and connect. This then makes them release more oxytocin which calms them down and makes them feel better.

That's right - women actually feel better complaining and moaning about the problems of their lives.

Men, however, have a different process. They, too, release oxytocin when under stress but the effects of it on their emotions are blocked by testosterone so they don't feel like talking about their problems or bonding over their struggles.

Quite the opposite.

So, when women try to reach out to the men in their lives over their problems, they can end up feeling dissatisfied and then alienated by the way men respond, or, rather *don't* respond. And the men often feel like, “Whoa – she's always focusing on the negative things in her life and whining about them. She's a drag!”

Research shows this is one of the top two reasons men stop calling a woman, or don't romantically approach her in the first place.

So, get involved in your things you enjoy, be relaxed and detached, and stay upbeat and happy! And if you must complain – call your girlfriends for that!

If you can master these three things: Doing what you love and therefore being interesting to be around (not being dull), seeing romantic love not as a need but as a preference and letting it happen slowly (not being needy), and staying positive (not being negative), you'll be amazed at how much more men will be attracted to you and greatly appreciate having you in their lives.

The Happy Ending

I hope you now feel fully informed and inspired as to how to make some empowering shifts *within yourself*, and how to take positive steps *outside of yourself* to dramatically transform your love life for the better.

The information I've shared here covers my most tried and true ideas, but is certainly not everything you can do to achieve the love life you desire. You may have other solutions up your sleeve, and other resources to assist you.

No matter what, I encourage you to keep an open mind and try SOMETHING if you've been enjoying less than the personal life you want.

You won't necessarily see immediate results – as I said, great things take great time. I urge you to implement changes over and over, letting go of your attachment to how long it should take you to attain your ultimate goal – that of meeting and partnering in the way you wish.

I have witnessed many women make even just one of the adjustments I've suggested and, much to their amazement that "slight" change led to an enormous outcome. Maybe all they did was to start approaching and talking to the men they were attracted to instead of always waiting for the men to approach them. Or they focused on shifting their perspective and believing that what they want exists for them. For many, once they got in touch with their WHY, they were able to pass up the "bad boy" types that had always lured them to heartbreak before, healing their "picker" problem.

For example, our lovely ranting Sarah from the top of the chapter never gave up. She kept working on herself and being open to love. As the

years passed, with the help of a therapist and involvement in a religious community, so did her bitterness and impatience. She continued to have a great life with many wonderful things about it that she enjoyed. She continued to grow.

She came to realize that she had two of the three problems that so commonly keep women from the love they long for: She was a homebody and rarely met new men – staying “the best kept secret in town,” and she kept choosing and falling for men who had different relationship goals than her own – making her “mistake chemistry for more.”

With the help of her therapist and the wisdom of hindsight, she changed. She began to put herself “out there” in a bigger way. She learned to find out early on what the men she was interested in wanted for their own love lives, and to quickly stop seeing men who didn’t want marriage and children – which were her relationship goals. And, after years of professional stagnation, she got serious about her career as well.

In short, Sarah committed herself to fully living the life she wanted, with or without a partner. Once she moved into her dream home and was thriving in a job she loved, an amazing thing happened - she met a fantastic man who had few of the things she thought she was looking for (his resume items) but all of the core qualities she most valued (his non-resume items). He quickly recognized how fantastic she was, fully appreciated her high-quality life, and swept her off her feet.

She fell more deeply in love than she ever thought possible and joyfully called to tell me they were engaged and looking forward to starting a family...

And the bad news? It was about five years after that day she’d ranted on my couch.

But Sarah’s not sorry – and she no longer rants! Instead, she *raves* - raves about her good man, her good fortune, and the fact that it’s possible to create the life you long for!

So, think about what you’re perhaps doing or NOT doing that’s keeping you from your own “happily ever after,” whatever that means for you, and remember Sarah and GO FOR IT!

And by all means, shoot me an email and let me know what happens.

I can’t wait to hear all about it!