

“The most significant book on love and relationship success I’ve read! I highly recommend it.”

~ Bob Burnham, author, *101 Reasons Why You Must Write a Book*

Dos and Don’ts of Relationships

Nine Steps to a Deeper, Richer Love Relationship

Or

9 Steps to a Deeper, Richer and a Wonderful Love Relationship

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Website: www.relationshipadviceforsuccess.com

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Introduction

How would you feel if you had all the answers to your dating, relationship or marriage concerns? You are not far from just that. When I started writing this book, I didn't know quite what to expect, what I would discover in the process and what would the end product be like. I am shocked by what I have uncovered along the way, and I believe that you will be, too. For sure there is more to love relationship success that meets the eye. For the most part, the important things that make relationships and marriages work is not being taught nor has it been taught to people. In this book, these things will come out of the dark.

Acknowledgements

I almost didn't want to write this book simply because I didn't have a title to work with. But part of me wanted to do it. Then, one day while I was on my way back home from the US, I began to debate in my mind what to do. Just as I arrived home and pulled out my keys to unlock my front door, I heard in my mind *Dos and Don'ts of Relationships*. Right there and then I knew what it meant.

Decision making is the beginning of success, and taking action is the next step. Tony Robbins said it best when he said, "TAKE MASSIVE ACTION."

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have been so very influential in my life. Ruth Segal, a psychologist from the University of British Columbia, has trained many psychology and peer counselling students. I was particularly fortunate to have received my counselling training from her. Ruth was a major source of inspiration to me in so many ways. She left this life in December 2008 to reside in a better world. Her untimely departure was a great loss.

I cannot forget Dr. Raabe, PhD,. I studied philosophical counselling under him. That experience expanded my knowledge and understanding of how to better use this discipline to assist others.

Ernest Quansah
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Are Women Smarter Than Men?

“Margery, if you marry me, I will give you a beautiful home, two children and take you around the world,” said Mr. Borrowes.

Mr. Borrowes knew something that most men looking for a good woman to love forever overlook. Keep this opening statement in mind as you read further. The rest of this true story between Margery and Mr. Borrowes will be told in its entirety in the next chapter. It is a story that will change the way you think about finding love and endless happiness. Richer, deeper and happier love truly exists, and you too can find it.....

Understanding the Sexes

Why men lie and women change their minds

Are lies and mind changing one and the same? One of the things all men must understand about their women is that women change their minds. At first, I thought this behaviour was a form of lying.....

I was astonished when I noticed the same behaviour in two female psychologists, one of whom was an instructor. She would tell the class personal stories and how she wanted something from her husband, but then changed her mind. If you have gone shopping with your wife or girlfriend, do you notice how she puts on a dress, looks in the mirror, decides she like it, then thinks for a while about it, and then changes her mind?

When a woman tells me that she only has interest in a man she is dating as friends only, I usually laugh. Because I know she will change her mind. I have witnessed this change of mind for the past fifteen years. It was not until I began investigating it that I

began to realize that women by nature change their minds more frequently than men do. It is part of who they are and influences the way they make certain decisions. Now, this may cause men to think that women cannot be depended on, but think with me for a minute: the changing of your mind is a brilliant move. Here is why. If women make decisions but later feel that their decision does not benefit them, they change it. By doing so, they make a new decision that is in their best interest or benefits them. Another way to look at it is.....

Men on the other hand are quite the opposite. They make decisions and stick to it, sometimes even when the consequences of doing so are quite bad.

When it comes to saying things that will cause hurtful feelings in a relationship, men decide it is better to lie—because these decisions are made to protect feelings and to make the woman happy. For example, many men I know have been asked that dreaded dress question: “Does my dress make me look fat?” or “Am I heavy?” or “Have I gained weight?” While speaking the truth is technically the most honourable thing for men to do—assuming the woman asking the question has put on weight—we all know what would happen should the man speak the truth in this situation. While telling lies may be seen as a bad thing to do, the underlying reason is to protect the woman from being hurt. Another principle that all adult men and women will agree to is that human beings have romantic feelings. In our world, most people act on these feelings.....

Human beings in general respond very well when they are offered an incentive to do something. You will read more about the power of incentives later on.

I cannot stress this enough. There are those who claim they will live on love. Nevertheless, the last time I was at the supermarket, all the couples in the line-up paid their bills with money. I have never seen love pay the bills. The reality is that a woman needs a reason and an incentive to

be with a man—she wants to know he can help provide for and take care of..... And vice versa. It's important to give a love interest a reason to want to be with you.

Man and woman are two distinct beings who also think differently. But mom and dad also have a lot to do with the differences between man and woman when it comes to their behaviour.....

These are behaviours we learn from childhood.....While certain behaviours are genetic..... emotional unavailability is learned. And the good this is, any form of behaviour that is learned can also be unlearned.

Men and women are brought up differently. They are taught to behave in certain ways based on environmentally acceptable norms. For example, if a young female child takes a fall, she is not chastised for crying. She learns that it's okay for her to cry, that there is nothing wrong with showing her emotions. Consequently, when she becomes an adult, she feels comfortable crying in front of her lover or husband. A man may not display emotion the same way a woman does, but he still feels it. What may appear unemotional to a woman may indeed be a show of emotion from a man's perspective.

The secret to understanding your mate (and avoiding a lot of frustration) is something you already know—you just haven't realized it. Remember when you were a little nutty boy or girl? You might have done something that infuriated mom or dad. Rather angry, mom or dad might have asked, "Why did you do it?" The same technique works on adults. To learn why he or she behaves a certain way, ask.

Men and women are molded differently in their upbringing. The manner in which either sex is molded and environmental norms eventually make men and women what they become as adults—and rightfully so.

The philosopher Aristotle classified friendship into three groups: *friendship of utility*, *friendship of pleasure*, and *friendship of goodness*. In my experience, love relationships can be classified the same way.....

1. Relationship of utility
2. Relationship of pleasure
3. And relationship of goodness

To explain what I mean, I will use an analogy of a cook. Let's say you meet someone who is excellent at cooking. You strike a supposed friendship with the person, but you don't contact the person. When you are having a party, you invite this person to cook for your party. When the party is over, you don't contact that person again unless you have another party and require that person's help with the cooking. In this situation, you are using the person for his or her cooking skills. Hence, the friendship is a friendship of utility.

A typical example of a *relationship of utility* is what is now commonly known as hookups or one night stands—in other words, using someone for sexual gratification.

Most love relationships fall under *relationship of pleasure*. This type of love relationship generally includes sexual intimacy but is also based on companionship. That is the reason for this type of relationship? People who engage in relationships of pleasure act on the same primal desire that all men and women have regardless of where they come from, or whether they are Christian or Muslims or another religion, whether educated or uneducated, rich or not, and that is the desire to be with the opposite sex intimately before marriage.

Relationship of *goodness* is the kind of relationship where you might refer to the other as your "best friend." You are there for each other. You take care of and protect

and look out for each other. Typically, in a love relationship of goodness, you meet someone, start dating, discover how much you care for each other, and decide to take the relationship to another level by becoming husband and wife. What is the cause? The lovers see the value in the relationship. They don't want to just be in a sexual relationship. They want more—for example, marriage and a family. Men and women who enter this type of love relationship have long-term goals in mind, including marriage.....

The secret to finding lasting love begins with dating. And your dating approach must be strategic. For example, in many businesses, the objective is to provide certain services in exchange for payment in the form of money. If a company feels that doing business with you will result in a loss, they will not do business with you. It is that simple. Apply a similar approach to your love life. When you do meet someone who is interested in you or someone who you are interested in, the question you *must ask* yourself is simple: "How is having a love relationship with the person going to bring me what I am looking for?" Thinking from this angle is important. It helps you think like a successful person, or at the very least, someone who is serious about finding what he or she needs.

Hook 'em with a powerful incentive. To hook a love interest for a meaningful lasting love relationship, you must do so with a powerful incentive..... By incentive, I mean bring something to the table that will give your love interest a reason to commit to a long-term love relationship with you, if that is what you are looking for. People for the most part respond very well to incentives. Why is that? Well, the answer may surprise you. Incentives arouse feelings in people. For example, when a man tells a woman, "I will make you the happiest woman in the world if you marry me," if the woman accepts the man, it is the feeling that she will

be getting as a result of the man's incentive that will cause her to accept the man. This means people respond very well to positive feelings.

Seek confirmation. This next step is essential. I mentioned that often when a woman is asked for a relationship and she is not certain whether to accept or decline, she might inform the man that she does not know him or that it is too soon. Have you beginning to recall that now? The reason is she needs a confirmation that if she accepts, that she has made the right decision. You can avoid another disappointment in your life by seeking confirmation that the two of you belong with each other. Another great benefit for receiving an assurance is that it increases your level of commitment. Without confirmation, if you encounter problems in the relationship, you might leave. On the other hand, if you receive confirmation that the two of you belong together, you are likely to exercise the required patience. You can receive confirmation by.....

The courage to change

Anne was a thirty-five-year-old woman who concluded that she would never find a man. She had resigned herself to the fact that loneliness was her fate. Although very beautiful and educated (she was the best looking and best educated among her family members), she had many underlying problems. She had grown up in a family where she was led to believe no man would ever want her and had a negative view of relationships and life in general. She was terrified of being touched or kissed by men. For many years she worked in the family business for minimum wage. Sadly, she was willing to work under those terms until the day she died because she had accepted that she was the black sheep of the family.

To help change Anne's beliefs about finding love, I suggested that she start dating. But she was afraid to date. She declined, saying, "But who wants me? No man will date a woman like me." I tried my very best to let Anne know that she was a very attractive woman. All she needed to do was believe there was a man out there for her. She was so afraid that no man would accept her, the thought of having to start dating made her cry. I began to feel sorry for her. I couldn't understand why she was so scared to venture outside. I eventually reached the point of giving her an ultimatum.

"Anne, you can do it," I told her. "I am willing to help you, but if you are going to come to me for advice, only to make one excuse after the other, then why bother? Don't waste my time. Anne, you must try. Give guys a chance to take you out, at least in the daytime. If you are concerned about your safety, tell someone about your date, where you will be going and what time you should be home. Give the person your date's name and phone number. Don't let your date pick you up from your mom's house. Meet him somewhere in the open. That way he won't know where you live and you won't have to worry about him coming to look for you." I proceeded to tell Anne

that unless she was willing to try dating, I didn't see any reason why she should continue coming to me for help.

At the same time, a couple I knew was visiting from the U.S. I invited Anne to have dinner with this couple and me in the hopes that the wife would befriend Anne. Anne didn't have any friends except me and some people I'd introduced her to. Unfortunately, no one wanted to befriend Anne because she was so negative about everything. People simply did not want to be around her. After dinner, we began to converse. I tried to encourage Anne to leave home and be her own woman. As we talked, the wife began to share the following story with Anne:

"Once there was an eaglet that grew up with ducks," she began. "When the eaglet grew strong wings to fly, the mother duck told the eaglet, 'You hatched with ducks but you are not a duck. You are an eagle. Eagles don't walk; they fly. So fly away to be with eagles.' The eaglet replied, 'No, I am not an eagle. I am a duck. I cannot fly.' The mother duck said to the eagle, 'Yes, you are an eagle. You were hatched by a duck but you are an eagle. You can fly.' The eaglet was afraid to try. 'No, I cannot fly,' it replied. 'I am a duck. If I try to fly, I will fall.'

The mother duck replied, 'You are an eagle. You don't belong here. Fly and be with your own kind, and you will be much happier. Try, please try. Eagles fly; they don't walk. You are an eagle. You can fly.' The eagle thought for a minute and then began to stretch and flap its wings. It bounced around a little and then jumped up and flew. As it lifted off the ground, it realized it could fly and began to soar in the air."

We all sat and listened to this emotional story. I wept and so did Anne. I cared about her so much. I wanted her to find happiness.

Not long afterwards, and with a little encouragement and support, Anne moved out of her parents' basement. She found her own apartment and a full-time job at a local hotel. She began to date and soon met a man who cared for her. Although dating was difficult and frightening at first, Anne tried, and when she did, she soared.

You can find happiness and success provided you don't allow fear to keep you from doing so. Anne found success only when she left her comfort zone and tried. Despite her upbringing and life experiences, she was able to find happiness by making choices that brought her happiness, and so can you. Settling for unhealthy or mediocre relationships—or no relationship at all—is no way to find happiness. You can achieve your true potential in all things, if do your part.

The only way to experience success is by seizing opportunities as they present themselves. You miss one, and it is gone. That is the way life works. The world is in constant motion. It will give you a chance to succeed, but if you decide not to seize it, well you have no one to blame but yourself. Do you settle for relationships that make you miserable? What is your emotional well-being worth to you? Decide what kind of life and relationships you want, and then take action to achieve it. If someone like Anne can find happiness, so can you. So . . .

What is blocking your success?

Fear: No one is immune to fear, especially when it comes to rejection.....

Don't be afraid to take a chance or make a lifestyle change even though it might be unpleasant at first.

If fear is preventing you from falling in love, I suggest you do some research to determine what is really frightening you. Ask others how they overcame their fear and what benefits they received as a result. Learn what needs to be done to eradicate your fear.

Lack of information: Information is power. When you go to a government office with a question, what happens? You are often given information in the form of a brochure. The right information can make all the difference. And just like you, in order for you to succeed in love, you need the right information. It is my belief that this book will provide you with the information you need to be happy and successful.

Procrastination: Most rich people have one opinion about those who are less financially secure, and that opinion is that people are less financially secure because they are full of excuses and are constantly putting off their own success. If you have an opportunity to change your circumstances for the better, take action now! Don't put it off for another day.

Often one week of excuses can quickly turn into two weeks, and the next thing you know several months have gone by, and then one year, and then many years will go by and no action has been taken on your part. By then, you will become comfortable in your situation and give up altogether. Life can throw you a curve ball, can't it? But that's no reason to give up or give in. Life is too short to waste, isn't it? Give yourself a winning chance.

Lack of motivation:

The best way to motivate human beings is to give them an *incentive* or reward. Incentives are so effective that even God used it. On Sundays, Christians drive themselves to church. Why? Because they believe that if they live a certain way they will qualify to go to heaven.

Understanding your relationship blueprint

You are about to learn something about you that will change the way you may view your love life if you are having problems finding that special someone. Whatever you do, please give your full attention to what you are about to read next. We all have a relationship blueprint. So what is a blueprint? It is the way things are supposed to be. For example, some people can find lasting love right away. Others have to put in a little more work. Others have to keep trying repeatedly before success is achieved. For others, their blueprint is failure. In all cases, there is a reason a person has a particular blueprint. The good news is that, if your blueprint has previously been failure to find true love, you can reverse that. Anne was able to reverse her blueprint by following a system. The system requires that she act, and when she did, she changed her blueprint of failure, fear, excuses and procrastination into success. Here are the four categories of relationship blueprints, explained in detail. When I have heard a man or woman go on and on about how difficult it is to find someone special, in most cases, it is because they don't understand their own relationship blueprint.

Group 1. People in this group don't have to struggle to find a date. It seems to fall in their laps. A woman I know tells me she can have any man she wants. According to her, when she goes to a male dentist, she is asked on a date. A trip to the dermatologist yields the same result. To see this for myself, I went shopping with her. I told her I was going to the men's department and would meet up with her ten minutes later. I stood behind some clothes racks and watched her. Sure enough, before long a man approached her. Males seem to be naturally attracted to her. People who are very successful at finding love fall into this group. Love seems to come to these people easily and effortlessly. Only a small percentage of men and women in the world are in this group. If you find that you do not have to struggle to find love, this is your blueprint.

Group 2. Finding Mr. or Ms. Right takes a little more time for people in this group. Finding that special someone takes some effort on their part. They don't quit or give up. They believe that they too can find true love, so they put in a little more time and work. Look at your love relationship history. Do you find love fairly easily but with some effort? If this has been your pattern, it means this is your blueprint.

Group 3. Men and woman in this group take longer to find that special someone. If things don't work out, they give themselves more time and keep on trying until they succeed. They are optimistic that things will eventually work out. Finally, their efforts pay off and they fall in love with the right person. If you notice this pattern in your love relationship history, this is your love relationship blueprint.

Group 4. I like to call this group "my way or the highway." Men and women in this group give up too quickly. They meet someone, ask him or her for a date, and when the person rejects them, they move on without finding out why. Yes, that's right; they don't find out why. Are you surprised that I would say that? I have a perfect explanation for why this is not a good thing to do, which you will read about in the next paragraph. People with this relationship blueprint usually struggle to find true love. Look back at your dating history. If you notice a pattern of walking away, failure has become your blueprint. Remember, relationship success or failure is *created* by you. Constant failure can lead you to become negative. (Remember the story of Rachelle and her views about men?) If you are in this group and aren't careful with your thoughts, you can become negative. Negative thoughts will weaken you emotionally and physically. It is true. And you might give up completely, and turn to a dog or other pet for unconditional love.

Two things will happen if you understand your relationship blueprint

1. You will be prepared because you will know what it takes for you to succeed.
2. Just because you don't find someone in the time frame you have set for yourself, you will not give up.

This leads us to the next topic: windows of opportunity.

Windows of opportunity

John B. Gough said it best: "If you want to succeed, you must make your own opportunities as you go." By the time you discover how powerful and essential windows of opportunity is to your own dating and relationship success, you will understand why you simply cannot do without it.

What is a window of opportunity? It is the chance that you have within a specific time to act or accomplish something. If you truly want to find success in life or love, you must recognize an opportunity when it comes and then act on it!

Example 3: A Caucasian man and a Japanese woman met and developed an interest in each other. The man decided to take his time before asking her out. He was looking to settle down and didn't want to rush the woman into a relationship and then marriage. As far as the woman was concerned, after six months of not asking her for a date, he wasn't interested. She felt rejected and moved on. The man couldn't understand why. He thought he was being a gentleman. When the man asked me what I thought was going on, I replied, "You were too slow. You snooze, you lose. I hope you learned your lesson." When Japanese women, in particular, feel rejected, they don't

waste time; they move on and may even cut the man off completely. On the other hand, some North American men and women may not give up quite so quickly.

But, how do you take notice of opportunities? If you have let an opportunity to meet a great man or woman slip through your fingers, you're not alone! It happens all the time.....The following scenario might be familiar to you:.....

You are running errands one morning and you stop by your local financial institution to withdraw funds. There are only two people in line ahead of you. As you look around, there she is—an absolutely breathtakingly beautiful woman standing at the customer service counter. Your eyes meet, and immediately you turn away. Thoughts race through your mind faster than the speed of light. You think to yourself, *I want to talk to her. I must meet her!* You want to look at her again without making it obvious. You pretend to be preoccupied. You slowly look around the room, then in the direction of the beautiful woman. She turns, and your eyes meet again. She has a smile on her face. You look away again. You worry that if you look at her too long or try to speak with her, the bank tellers might think you're trying to pick her up. The reality is that you *are* trying to pick her up, or at least meet her!

When your transaction is complete, as you are about to leave, you notice she has completed her transaction and is about to leave, too. You feel a sense of relief. In your mind you think the universe has given you a second chance. You open the door, look over your shoulder and notice that she is leaving. You have made up your mind that when she gets outside, for sure you will greet her. There she is, a few steps behind you. Your heart begins to pound so fast you can feel it in your throat. All of a sudden, you panic. Your emotions are getting the better of you. Your dream woman walks past you. You feel your heart pump faster and faster. By then your dream woman has reached her car. She opens the car door. You still have time to call out to her before she gets in the

car and drives away. But you hold back. You hear the engine start. The car backs out of the parking spot, and she drives away. Your immediate thoughts are, *why didn't I talk to her? Damn!* For the rest of the day, you regret your choice to not approach her.

The experience I just described actually happened to a client of mine. Many men and women who have perfect opportunities to meet someone end up blowing them. Regret will not bring back your missed opportunity. The solution is simple: Whenever you feel prompted to act, you must do so! In other words, when you see someone you would like to meet, go meet the person! Sure, you'll probably get nervous and sweaty and your heart will start to race. This is a normal reaction when you are about to do something out of the ordinary. But take a chance..... The worst thing that will happen is that the love interest won't want to speak to you or will decline your invitation. Until that happens, you really have no proof that someone you want to speak to will reject you. Even if you are rejected, at the very least you will have peace of mind knowing that you tried. This is far better than wondering what could have been. There are other ways that opportunities can present themselves. Sometimes, it is by fulfilling a need.

Fulfilling a need

Ruth Stafford said it best when she said and I quote,

"Find a need and fill it" An opportunity can present itself as a need. You have to be thinking on your feet to seize this type of opportunity. Here is an example. Jack and Jill had just left work on a snowy winter evening. Jack was interested in Jill, but Jill wasn't sure if Jack was the right person for her. Basically, she was looking for a hint that Jack cared about her. As they made their way to Jack's automobile, Jack noticed Jill awkwardly walking in the snow.

"I don't like this," Jill lamented. "The snow is getting in my shoes."

“That is not good,” Jack replied. “Stop and wait here.” Jack began to gently stomp the snow, making a path leading to the passenger side of his car. When he was done, he said to Jill, “Okay, walk here. Follow me.”

Jill followed Jack. When they arrived at the passenger side of his car, he stepped aside and opened the car door for Jill. Jill smiled. She put her left foot into the car and turned and looked at the path Jack had made in the snow for her. In amazement she exclaimed, “Wow, what a man! I don’t know any woman who wouldn’t want a man like you.”

Jack had succeeded in wowing Jill by meeting her needs without spending a dime! How did he do this? By simply being attentive. He noticed an opportunity—a need on Jill’s part—and fulfilled it. Too many men waste time trying to impress women, but not in the right ways....

Tips on understanding clues for dating opportunities

Many women are complex and fascinating..... they plan ahead; they weigh the pros and cons before asking a man for a date. Well, guess what? Most go as far as to even give the man a hint. If you have not taken notice of her, and she’s interested, she’ll say simple things such as “I like—.” “I don’t like—.” “My favourite food is—.” As a man, if you are too slow in figuring out their clues (or miss them entirely), they’ll move on. So think on your feet. Make an effort to understand clues for dating. The easiest way to accomplish this is to ask yourself a simple question the next time a woman says something to you that makes no sense. In such cases, she wants you be a mind reader. Think about what she said, and ask yourself what it is that she is really saying. Any man who can use this simple counselling technique will understand his woman far beyond the normal male.

Here are some real-life examples from people just like you:

1. A woman you have been courting calls to ask, "Have you had lunch yet?"
Meaning: She wants to go out to lunch with you.
2. On Friday evening a love interest asks you, "Do you have any plans tonight?"
Meaning: She has no plans and is hinting that you may take her out.
3. You have a box of your favourite chocolates. You meet a woman and begin to talk. She says, "That is a lot of chocolate. Are you going to give some away?"
Meaning: She is hinting that she wants a chocolate and doesn't want to embarrass herself by asking directly in case you refuse her
4. He or she says, "I hear a new restaurant just opened up in such-and-such a location and that the food is amazing."
Meaning: A hint that he/she wouldn't mind trying the new restaurant.
5. A woman tells you, "I want a man who has a good personality."
Meaning: She has been with a man who did not have a good personality and does not want to go through that experience again.
6. A man you are dating tells you, "I want a woman who will not use me."
Meaning: He has likely been used or taken advantage of in a previous relationship and does not want to go through the same experience again.
7. You have just met a woman. In your gut you feel that she is the right one. One day she disappears. You conclude she is not interested in you and not your true love. A few months later she calls to say hello. You tell her that you did not expect to hear from her. The woman says, "What belongs to you will come back to you."
Meaning: She is telling you that she came back to you because she belongs to you.

If you are a man who wants to be successful at meeting and dating a beautiful woman, you must keep up with the competition. Here is why: Intelligent, educated women *read* clues well and are better problem solvers. To get the attention of these women, you must be able to think on your feet just like them in order to keep up. You must recognize an opening and go in for the kill. If an intelligent, educated woman gives you an opening and you don't capitalize on it, she will be gone, and in some cases consider you less intelligent.

Are You a Dating Octopus?

Can you imagine dating as many men or women as you can? If you are not, I highly recommend it. Like I was saying towards the end of the previous chapter, I received many requests from both men and women to write about finding dates after my first book *How to Identify Your Soulmate* was published

It has been my experience that, to improve your chances of finding the right person, you must be what I call a "Dating Octopus." To accomplish this, it is helpful to understand your divine nature as a human being who deserves no less than perfect love. No, you are not crazy if you have a clear understanding that there is someone special out there with whom you are supposed to share your love, the one you were born to be with. Remember, the world is highly organized. Just as you came into existence as a woman, so has another person come into existence as the perfect man for you—or vice versa.....

there are is a great many ways to meet that special someone. The key is to try a variety of methods, or should I say, diversify. This includes giving yourself a chance to

meet and date people from other ethnicities, particularly because we are very much a multicultural society.

To explain more fully the notion of what a dating octopus is, look at the life of an octopus. They move around a lot. In the same way, a dating octopus dates freely and is open to meeting people anywhere and everywhere. A dating octopus doesn't remain in one spot, hoping a beautiful man or woman will appear in his or her path. A dating octopus doesn't commit to someone he or she just met over the weekend. Let me put it another way: If you were in the marketing business, you would contact many different companies to try and sell your product or service, right? You would then focus on those contacts you felt might potentially use your services. After that, you would narrow it down further to focus on those who were actually interested in using your services. I suggest you apply this same marketing technique to dating.

A dating octopus uses all eight tentacles to.....

Finding your Mr. or Ms. Right will be less challenging if you maximize your chances of success. For example, you have many great physical attributes about you — your eyes, your faces, your lips and so forth. You also have many wonderful personality traits. Use these attributes and traits to attract the kind of person that you want. I will discuss this idea and give you several examples of people just like you who have used these natural attributes or to find true love a little later.

Tips on finding dates

Tell your friends. I have tested this one and it works. A few years ago, I was talking to a male friend about the dating scene and his wife told me about two single South American women she knew looking to meet guys. After speaking to another male

friend about the same subject, he called me less than a month later to tell me about an Asian woman he knew. He had already told the woman about me, and he gave me her phone number.

“Ernest,” he said on the phone, “you are going to like this one. She has full lips and is very smart. The type of woman you like.”

Tell your hairstylist. Where do men go to talk? The barbershop. Where do women go to talk and confide in others? The hair stylist. If you are a human being living on this planet, chances are you visit a hairstylist or barber regularly. The next time you do, consider talking to your stylist about where to go to meet people. Women usually get their hair done when they want to look good for a weekend out on the town. Many of them will tell their stylist where they’re going. If you are a single man, and you go to your hair stylist, you cannot afford to let these types of opportunities slip by.

A dating octopus may try interracial dating

Most people will find love within their own race. But not every man or woman will. Remember, you have a product to sell—you! It is in your best interest to make your product available to everyone, not just certain people. As I have said before, just because you are white does not mean the only people who could love you will be of your race.....

Before becoming involved, my advice to you is to learn something about the other person’s race and culture. Use that as a great conversation point on a first date. Don’t say anything stupid that might prevent you from getting a second date. For example, when you are on a date with a Chinese man or woman, don’t ask if in their culture, they have money gods that they worship. Neither ask a black male on a date if he plays basket ball just because he is tall.

Ask your date, "We are from two different cultures. Can you tell me a little about your race?" Better yet, prior to the first date, it is a good idea for you to send an e-mail asking your date if there is any behaviour that in his or her culture is not acceptable on a date.

Interracial dating tips:

- In some Asian cultures, when a man is meeting the woman at for example a restaurant, it is quite acceptable for the woman to be up to forty minutes late, and the man must wait. As far as that race is concerned, it shows that the man cares.
- In North America, if you are going to be late on a date, it is expected that you call.
- If you are on a date with a Japanese woman for the first time and you compliment her beauty, she may accuse you of asking her for a date because of her looks. Tell her that she is a good woman and what character or personality traits that you like or admire about her, and she will be pleased.
- In addition, Japanese women always wait after they are dropped off from a date by the man until he leaves. If you don't know that, you might wait for her, thinking she will go into her house, while at the same time she will wait outside for you to leave first.

Knowing these small cultural norms shows that you care enough about the other person to learn something about his or her race, culture and customs.

Winning the Dating Game

One of the most important lessons I learned while writing this book is that if you want to be successful, you have to look at what successful people do, and replicate their actions. If top performers are working with what they have to achieve success, do the same.

Below are some famous women who used the best and the most effective tools in their arsenal to enhance themselves to compete. They did it by working with what they have, and you can too.

The J Lo Effect:

Many years ago I met a black woman named Ariana. It wasn't long before we formed a friendship. I observed that when we were out, she wore layers of clothing and made sure her curves and hips were covered by one of her many long jackets or coats. In 2004, I began to notice a drastic change in the way she dressed. Ariana went from hiding her hips and buttocks to wearing super-tight jeans that emphasized her curves and hips. Like a typical man, at first I thought she was trying to entice me. I decided to find out why she was dressing this way.

"Ariana," I began, "you sure like to wear, um, tight jeans these days. I've never seen you like this in the past. What is going on?"

"Ernest," she replied, "I used to be ashamed of my hips and my butt. Thanks to J Lo, now I can show them off. Men talk to me all the time!"

The Angelina Jolie Effect:

“Those lips!” as the media puts it. If you’ve ever seen any of Angelina’s movies or TV interviews, you know that she loves to accentuate her lips. Men and women have always considered full lips to be beautiful and sensual. Many women say they would love to have them. (Some women even extend their lipstick above their lips to give the impression that they possess full lips.) If your special gift is full lips, accentuate them!

The Beyonce Effect:

Many teens and adult women in North America have said that Beyonce Knowles represents beauty to them. Her full figure is highly desired by men.

The Tina Turner Effect:

Tina Turner became known for her shapely legs. She knew she had beautiful legs and accentuated them.

The famous people mentioned above used their most powerful tools to their advantage. If they are doing it and being very effective at winning admiration, so can you!

Capturing modern women’s (and men’s) hearts is an intellectual game. Even before a man opens his mouth to compliment a woman, she already suspects what he likely wants. In order to leave a great lasting impression on a beautiful, intelligent woman or a handsome, educated and financially secure man, you must deliver effective, simple compliments that carry weight and will make that person remember you in a good way.

This is what you do. When you have met someone, and gotten to talk for a few days prior to the date, learn some interesting or admirable things about the person—something he or she has done that has significant meaning to the person. On the

date, use what you have learned about the person to compliment him or her. It's that easy! This suggestion I have just made has worked wonders for my clients.

Wow her. It is not overly difficult to wow a woman. To do this, you must go into her head so that you can captivate her and stand out from other men so that she chooses you. Here is why: Often there are other men or there is the possibility that other men have interest in or are pursuing the same woman you are interested in. If not, assume that there are. One of the best ways to captivate a beautiful, intelligent woman's heart is through her feelings. Feelings are very powerful. People respond to feelings, and most women make decision using feelings and emotions. For example, when we cry, the cause of the crying originates from how we are feeling at that time. Similarly, when we pursue a love interest for a date or relationship, it is the feeling we hope to achieve with the love interest and also our imagining what it will feel like to be with the person that causes us to pursue the person.

Women in particular are good at this. When you show an interest in a woman and ask her for a date, before she agrees, she will begin to imagine how it would feel being with you, having fun with you, that causes her to agree to the date. I know from my work and personal experience that what I have just described is very common in smart, mature women. This means that simply asking for a date is not always a good enough reason for a smart, intelligent woman to agree. You must let her know where you want to take her and why. For example, you may say something like, "You are good woman. I'm interested in taking you out on a date. There is a place called ----- . It has great food, live music, fun atmosphere and you will LOVE IT." When you have said this, you have assured the woman as well as implanted in her mind that she will enjoy herself with you on the date. Remember, a smart woman will generally agree to a

date at least one time to see if you are correct. In addition, she will make the decision as to whether or not to go on another date or form a relationship based on how she felt during the first date.

I highly recommend that you captivate her through her feelings.....

If you go inside her mind and push the right button, then three things will happen:

1. She will have positive thoughts and feelings about you.
2. She will reason that you care enough about her to meet her needs.
3. She will pick you instead of another ardent admirer.

But men aren't the only ones who should go inside their woman's mind, as the following story will show:

A man who can take charge: Women love men who can take charge.....

When do you introduce a love to mom and dad?.....

Don'ts of Relationships

What are don'ts of relationship? They are behaviours you don't want to see in your lover when because they can cause the relationship to break-up. According to Sophocles, "The greatest griefs are those we cause ourselves." I mentioned earlier that success is

about decision making. Relationship failure is due to bad decision making in most cases.

According to some relationship experts, the top three love relationship killers are: *finances, adultery and incompatibility*. According to Dave Philip, a well-respected Canadian marriage therapist, the top three relationship killers are *contempt, lack of friendship, and sexism*.

I do agree that sometimes the cause of a breakup is—particularly in marriage—financial mismanagement or adultery. I do know for a fact that those have been primary causes for divorce for many years. And I also agree that contempt and lack of friendship is a major contributor to divorce in modern times.

While all of the above can seriously hamper a relationship, in this section I will be addressing some other relationship killers, namely *contention, emotional infidelity, put-downs, criticism, lies, dissent, lack of patience, sexual infidelity, negative behaviour transfer, control, and abuse*.

Emotional infidelity: Have ever found yourself in some sort of making out position with your spouse and he or she mumbled out a name and says to you, “Stop it, Steve” or “Stop it, Rachael”? You stop and ask who Steve is or who Rachael is. There is a good chance that you are being cheated on both emotionally as well as sexually. The name that was called out is an indication that your so-called significant other is with you physically but emotionally with the other person whose name he or she called out. My philosophy in this regard is simple: respect. You have the right to live as you wish. If you have fallen out of love, let it be known. Move on instead of cheating.

Put-downs: My view on this is simple: if a man or woman you have met is good enough for you to bed, that person should be good enough for you to uphold in the

highest esteem. If you don't respect someone, what's the point of being with them? To put down a person is to dehumanize and humiliate, and this destroys a person's spirit. Putting your other half down will make him or her feel devalued and unappreciated. People who are put down in a relationship often don't hesitate to put down others (e.g., vent their frustration on co-workers). You can see the extent of what put-downs can do. They affect others who have done nothing to offend the victim.

Criticism: I have heard criticism referred to as "constructive criticism." What nonsense. As far as I am concerned, there is no such thing as constructive criticism. David R. Hawkins, MD., Ph.D., has studied the effects of criticism. It has been discovered that each time a person is exposed to negative talk, it saps the person's physical as well as emotional strength. In counselling school we did a test that proved Dr. Hawkins findings. Furthermore, criticism is a double-edged sword. I have witnessed a lady criticize others for so long that one day while she went on and on, she literally collapsed right in front of me. I asked, "Kim, are you okay?" She replied, "Headaches." I proceeded to tell her, "Is what you are doing good? Always criticising others. It is destroying you. Isn't it?" In a love relationship, every negative word uttered about a person deflates that person.

Here is an example. Years ago a young lady was referred to me to discuss some problems she was having with her boyfriend. When the lady came to see me, her shoulders were slumped and her back hunched. She had a look about her that told me she was emotionally burned out.

"Are you okay?" I asked her.

The woman replied, "It's my boyfriend. I can't take it anymore. I feel...I feel..."

"So drained?" I said, finishing her sentence.

"Yes!" she exclaimed. "How did you know?"

“Look at you,” I said. “You don’t have to say a word. I can see it all over your face. You are emotionally drained.”

Instantly, her tears began to flow. She was broken, spiritually and emotionally.

If you have ever been criticized, understand that it is not because you are doing something wrong. Criticism usually has nothing to do with the person who is being criticized but everything to do with the critic’s own internal struggles and frustrations.

Negative behaviour transfer: This problem is one of those things that is overlooked by many people. But I have seen it almost destroy a few of my clients. We all have some negative habits. Some are harmless but others can be detrimental to our relationship success. *Negative behaviour transfer* is when a bad habit is carried into a new environment, in this case, into a love relationship.

The following true story illustrates how unresolved negative behaviour can prevent a love relationship from progressing.

Bob and Eva were very happy and making plans to marry. One day, Eva caught Bob looking at some inappropriate pictures and viewing adult content on the Internet. This made her feel undesirable, and she became furious. Bob and I had a long talk. By his own admission, he had been viewing adult content on the Internet for many years and didn’t see any problem with his little hobby. He didn’t recognize his addiction.

“Bob, you have a lot invested in Eva,” I told him. “You flew all the way to Spain to meet her family and friends. You brought her over to North America. She is trying her best to stop being negative. If you want your love relationship with her to work, you must stop viewing pornography on the Internet. If Eva leaves because you refuse to stop doing this, it doesn’t mean she doesn’t love you. It means you made decisions that

drove her away by bringing negative behaviour from the past into your relationship with her..... You must decide what path you want to choose.”

Bob paused, took a deep breath, and then replied, “I see your point.”

“Put yourself in her shoes,” I continued. “How would you feel if you left everything you had for a man in another country and then found him doing what you are doing?”

Bob got the message and stopped his hobby. Pornography is poison. It pollutes the mind and destroys a woman’s confidence in her man, and it is addictive.

Just as cheaters can be spotted, so can controllers.

How to spot controllers

The secret to spotting these people is to look for signs or key words. Some simple signs to look for are when you are in a relationship or marriage and are required to call your companion each hour to apprise him or her of your whereabouts and to inform him or her:

- When you will be leaving to go somewhere, such as the store or work.
- When your shift has ended.
- When you leave work for home.
- When you will be arriving home.

The above are red flags that signal big problems ahead!

How else can you know if you’re involved with a controller? There’s a good chance you’re involved with a controller if your partner asks you questions like:

- Where have you been?

- What were you doing? I have been calling you but getting no answer.
- Who were you talking to? I called, but your line was busy.
- Why didn't you answer the phone when I called a few minutes ago?
- Who were you with?

Do you notice how the controller makes accusation without any evidence at all? For example, "Who were you with?" There's a good chance you're involved with a controller if your partner comes to visit you in your home and tells you that you should change the loveseat, move the TV, etc. If you pay attention to a controller's words, you will notice that they smack of intrusiveness, suspicion and presumption. What the controller is really telling you is that you can't think for yourself and need him or her to think and make decisions for you.

It's difficult to change a controller's behaviour because most controllers fail to realize (or refuse to accept) that they are what they are. Why put yourself through all that pain? Recognize the signs, listen to your intuition and choose to avoid the controller altogether!

Abuse can come in many forms.

Psychological Abuse: Psychological abuse is neither verbal nor physical.....

Example 1: A woman called me. She was furious. She had had enough of her husband. What was the problem? Her husband would tell her how much he loves her, but when he would go out to visit friends, he would never take her with him. According to the caller, she feels that her husband feels like she is not good enough to be seen with him.

Example 2: I came home to hear a frantic message left on my answering machine asking for a call back right away. When I called, Nick's words were, "Ernesto, I am going crazy. I am stressed. This is the ending for my relationship." Yes, he did not greet me. He went directly to the point. After I called and talked with him for an hour, the real problem became clear. Nick was living with a woman who had a male friend. The woman tried to introduce her friend to Nick, but Nick did not like the man. He demanded she stop visiting the male friend, which she refused because she knew him before she met Nick. So whenever she visited the man, she would not ask Nick to come along. He would become upset and at time even angry about these visits. This particular day when he called, he had become overwhelmed with his girlfriend's friendship with the man, and everything he told me were things that he had made up in his own mind, which brought on the psychological abuse.

Abuse as a cultural phenomenon.....

The three stages of abuse

If you are a victim of abuse who has allowed the abuse to occur for too long, you may find that you have gone through the three stages: the *abhorring* stage, the *tolerating* stage and the *acceptance* stage. Here is a real case to depict these stages.

Abhor stage: Erica, a beautiful, educated young woman, met Tom, a polite but uneducated, hardworking man. Erica did not give herself a chance to get to know Tom. As soon as Tom proposed marriage, she jumped at the chance. Not long into the marriage, Tom began to accuse Erica of cheating and threatened to beat her. Erica thought Tom was bluffing.

Tolerate stage: The accusations began to escalate. Tom referred to his wife of only three months as a bitch and a whore. Soon the beatings began. Erica stayed with Tom. They ended up in a psychiatrist's office. After six sessions, the physical abuse stopped, according to Erica, but she had to call Tom every thirty minutes to inform him where she was. Erica tolerated Tom, hoping that one day he would stop abusing her.

Acceptance stage: When the abuse did not stop, Erica became used to it and accepted what was being done to her. This was followed by making excuses for her abuser. Tom abused Erica frequently. If a couple of weeks went by and Tom did not abuse her, Erica saw this as a good sign that the abuse would stop. Her psychiatrist strongly suggested that she leave her husband within a month. (When I worked with her, I gave her one week to leave her husband.)

Below are statements that victims of abuse commonly use to justify the abuse and to defend their abuser:

"But I love him/her..."

"He/she stopped hitting me..."

"I hope he/she will change..."

"He/she loves me..."

"It is my fault..."

To avoid becoming a victim of verbal or physical abuse at the hands of someone who is supposed to love you

Toxic Relationship

The below excerpt is taken from one of my articles on this topic, *Understanding Toxic Relationships*. It explains some of the damaging effects of toxic relationships.

The end result of a toxic relationship is devastating and may require some form of healing or counseling. It is the kind of relationship that can leave you emotionally drained, sap your energy, and leave you severely broken up spiritually as well as emotionally, leaving you with a feeling of emptiness. In many cases victims may feel the need to seek revenge. The victim's symptoms may be anger, discouragement, frustration, emotional pain, the feeling of not being beautiful or desirable, loss of hope, afraid to trust and the wish to give up. Toxic relationships leave the victim scared for many years and for some, a lifetime.

Men and women who inflict these kinds of devastating pain on their partners generally show signs of abuse in one form or another from their own past. The abuse could have occurred during their childhood, it could be that they were emotionally abused by their parents when they were teens, etc., and they have not healed before going into a love relationship. The red flags to look for when you are in a relationship with a person who may be a threat to your emotional health are mood swings, short temper, inconsistencies in what they say, denial, and impulsive behaviors. The abuser will sometimes acknowledge that the way he or she is treating you is wrong but may not be able to take the necessary steps to stop. When they do try, they generally give up very easily.

When confronted about their abusive behaviour, they often say things like, "Oh, you are blowing everything out of proportion." Sometimes these abusers will say things like, "It is your fault I am treating you the way I am." Unfortunately, some victims accept the blame that they are the cause of what is being done to them. This type of acceptance can lead to other problems. Sociopaths or abusers blame their partners and will not accept responsibility. Clearly one can notice the

inconsistencies in their behaviour and words. They are not able to comprehend the pain they inflict on their partners due to their sociopathic nature. Their feelings are numb, and they may only exhibit these feelings from time to time. Their feelings are not very deep due to the damage caused by the abuse they experienced in their past.

In toxic relationships:

- The abuser realizes that his/her actions are hurting him- or herself and the other person but is unable to stop the behaviour.
- The victim may not understand why he/she is being treated in such a horrible way and often feels responsible for the abuse.
- The victim often ultimately capitulates into forced acceptance, which then propagates.
- The victim may begin to treat the abuser the same way he/she has been treated in order to protect him- or herself (the “fight or flight” response). The newly acquired behaviour can spill into a new relationship if the victim feels the need to protect him- or herself. The newly acquired behaviour is detrimental to the success and happiness of the victim because potential lovers find the victim’s behaviour a turn-off.

Victims who break away from these toxic relationships toy with the idea of returning to their abusers. Some return if the abuser offers a simple apology. Unfortunately, an apology is not enough, as it will not constitute a change in the abuser’s behaviour. Many victims often do decide to return or remain with their abuser, before they can determine that they have really changed. I don’t recommend this, but sadly, too many women do it. So, if an apology is not an indication of your abuser’s change of

behaviour, then what can you do? Experts say it's very important for abusers to acknowledge the wrongs they have committed and assure the victim that they will not repeat the abuse again. In my view, the best way to go about this is to involve a therapist.

How to avoid toxic relationships.....

Don't ignore red flags. Pay attention to what the person says and does. Negative and condescending remarks should definitely be considered red flags. Remove yourself from a relationship that has the potential to become toxic. Remember, a person will not change just because you want him/her to. Neither will the person change just because you tell yourself that you love the person. Of course, it is within your right to remain in or go back to a toxic relationship. In that case, remember your role in allowing the abuse to occur.

Listen to your gut feelings. Your gut feelings never lie. Everyone I know who has experienced a failed love relationship has admitted to knowing they should never have become involved with that person. Life is about choices. If you act on your intuition, you will be fine. If you ignore it, you will pay a price.

Date people of good quality. As George Washington said, "Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company." When you associate with high-quality people, you will adopt their qualities and become more like them. If you surround yourself with positive people, you'll be happier and healthier.

Live your love life to its fullest. You will love this next point. Let's suppose there is someone you long to date but you are afraid to hear the words, "No, I am not interested." Don't give in to your fear! You have no evidence that the person will decline to take you up on your offer if you ask. And if you don't ask, the answer is already no. So take a chance at love. Don't miss an opportunity to experience joy.

When not to have an interracial relationship

Like many, you may be asking when it is not a good idea to have an interracial relationship. I will use the information below, which comes from an article I contributed to a dating service, to explain my feelings on this matter.

Having lived in a multicultural environment most of my life and having studied multiculturalism, I believe it is not a good idea to be involved in an interracial relationship when the sole purpose is sexual curiosity. There is a lot of that going around, particularly now that it has become even easier to reach any man or woman of any race in any country. I am against this because sometimes what seems to be mere curiosity about how it feels to have sex with a person not of your race may develop into strong feelings for the other person. This can cause a great deal of pain for the individual when he or she is later rejected. Even if the initial relationship is merely based on sexual curiosity, sometimes people develop romantic feelings for the other person after they have slept together. People do regularly fall in love without intending to. In some cultures, the act of sexual intercourse means love. Can you imagine the end result of falling in love with a person, only to find

out that he or she was merely curious to know how it would feel to have sex with someone of your race?

It is not a good idea to get involved in an interracial relationship when you know full well that you will not be accepted into your partner's culture or that you will not be welcomed into the parents' home—or both. Some people may wonder why it is that some parents, even in our day, still do not approve of their son or daughter having a partner of a certain race. The answer I found makes sense, however self-serving it might be for these parents. Take the example of a young Chinese woman and the black man she fell in love with. Both parties were born and raised in North America. According to the woman's brother, whom I was interviewing, he explained it this way:

"My parents raised my sister with hopes and dreams for her. My mom had already decided what kind of man she wanted her to marry. They sacrificed to put us through university. My parents went to a great effort to instil our Chinese heritage into my sister. All of a sudden she announced that she was dating a black man."

"Wow! How did your parents feel?" I asked the gentleman.

"My parents were very disappointed in my sister," the young Asian man replied. "They did not approve of her choice and became distraught."

The manner in which the woman's parents reacted may initially appear racist. What we need to understand is that parents go through a great deal of hardship from the birth of their child all the way through nurturing the child into adulthood. They spend sleepless nights, attend to emergency situations and work long

hours to provide for the child. Parents have hopes of their children becoming parents and they themselves becoming grandparents. The idea that their child has fallen in love with someone from another race is not something that some parents can easily accept. For example, I have warned my own sister to be careful if she dares touch certain men. It is not because of the men themselves necessarily but what their cultures stand for. In some cultures, parents look away and allow their sons to sleep with women from another race. These men go to clubs to pick up girls for sex so they can brag about it. In high school, they used to invite the white girls out, get them drunk, and a group of men would sleep with them and brag about it, BUT, it is not okay for other men from other cultures to sleep with women from this particular race, and when the time comes for their sons to marry, an order for a virgin is placed. And sometimes, people from their own race are not good enough for their sons and daughters to marry because of the caste system. My perspective on this issue is simple. If a woman is good enough for a man to sleep with, the woman should be good enough for the man to take as his wife—period. If a woman is not good enough for a man to marry, then he shouldn't sleep with her—and vice versa.

It is not a good idea to have an interracial relationship when you know that you will not generally be welcomed by others in your companion's race or be welcomed in the parents' home. See it this way: In many cultures, a parent's name and reputation in their community might be at stake because of the person that their child

chooses to marry. As I said earlier, I live in a multicultural environment. I see these types of things happen too many times.

It is especially not a good idea to have an interracial relationship when it is going to result in parents or family members killing their daughter or sister or relative. Does this still happen in North America? Absolutely. It is not reported frequently but it is still going on even in Canada. It perplexes me that it is always the woman who is killed. I will not even begin to talk about cultures where a man will murder his own wife by virtue that he is no longer interested in her. These practices still go on even in 2011. In Nepal, if a man marries and on their honeymoon discovers that his wife has been with a man prior, it is within his right to kill the woman. And the women from that part of the world accept it.

I myself in my mid-twenties dated a South Asian woman for three years. There was no sexual intimacy and we thought her parents would be pleased. Her mother flew in from South Asia and threatened to jump over a bridge if she married a black. My explanation to the woman was simple: I didn't want to be the cause of her mother's suicide, so I asked that we end it.

Don't try to be Mr. I Am Tough. If your relationship with a woman is going to destroy her, break up her family or result in her being disowned or murdered, understand that and do the right thing. Don't pursue the relationship.

Here are some tips for making a hit on your dates:

- ***Be respectful.*** Respect your dates' culture and beliefs. If women are respected, they will pay their men back tenfold.
- ***Be authentic.*** Smart, educated people look for partners who are authentic. For a woman, for example, this means you shouldn't excessively pad your bra to fool men into thinking you have something you don't. How embarrassed would you be if at some point the pads came off and he realized that you were a fake?
- ***Be honest.*** When you say something, mean it. It's that simple.
- ***Be loyal.*** If you love someone, love that person with all your heart.
- ***Be a good listener.*** Encourage your dates to talk about themselves. Ask questions like, "Who has influenced you the most and why?" "What brings you the greatest joy and what makes you sad?" "Who is your favourite philosopher?" "What is your greatest achievement?"
- ***Be sensitive.*** Be careful not to say or do things that will hurt your partner's feelings. This is particularly important if you are in an interracial love relationship.
- ***Be reasonable.*** Try to arrange activities that both you and your date will enjoy. Don't set your date's agenda for him or her, and demand that he or she comply with you. This is a definite turn-off!

AND

- ***Don't be late.*** There is nothing worse than being late, especially on your first date. This simply does not make a good first impression. You have met someone who has agreed to go out with you and has taken time to beautify him- or herself for you, so you don't want to disappoint. If you are running late, call to inform your date.

- ***Don't show up unprepared.*** Knowing something about the person you are meeting can be a great conversation starter and the perfect ice breaker. Find out what your date likes and dislikes. Here's a secret for men: Women like it when you take charge of a situation. If you're taking your date out for a meal, don't be surprised if she suggests you order for her.
- ***Don't bring your problems.*** It's okay for you to share some bad experiences on a first date but remember that the person is with you to enjoy your company, not to be your psychologist. While some dates don't mind if you discuss one or two problems you have had or are having, this can be a turn-off. You don't want to give the impression that you have ongoing personal issues or are "carrying a lot of baggage." People are more likely to listen to your problems once you have formed a friendship with them.
- ***Don't bash the opposite sex.*** If you are on a date with someone new, don't suddenly blurt out, "Men are pigs" or "Women are stuck up," or "All men want is sex." Ladies, if men are so bad, why are you on a date with one? Men, if women are so stuck up, why are you dating one? Consider your first date to be introducing a product to a potential investor. If your presentation is lousy, the investor won't hang around. If you bash men or women during the date, I guarantee you that a smart person will move on. He or she will not even consider calling you after listening to you bash their sex.
- ***Don't overdo it.*** First dates should be simple, fun and memorable. Too many people try to make too much out of a first date. At the end of the date, they begin to wonder if they did everything right and if their date liked them. Remember, "Less is more." Keep it simple!

- ***Don't forget your wallet.*** Men, don't take your date to a restaurant and then ask her to pay because you forgot your wallet. Women, instead of expecting your date to pay for everything, offer to chip in. Most men will say no but be prepared to pay in case your date doesn't have enough money.
- ***Don't ignore your intuition.*** Listen to your gut feelings before and after your date. Don't ignore your intuition. If you don't feel comfortable accepting an invitation, going to your date's apartment after the date, etc., act accordingly. For more information on using your intuition as your guide and protector, I suggest you read the two chapters on intuition in my first book, *How to Identify Your Soulmate*.

Stay away from outdated compliments.

One of the things that are evolving is compliments. When a date has dressed or groomed him- or herself for you, take notice and give compliments. People love to be flattered. To score big points with your dates, however, it's important to say something they haven't heard before and at the right time.

It is your first date. You have both taken time to look good for each other. You—the man—proceed to compliment her by stating that she's hot or beautiful. Such compliments are outdated. She will thank you for the remark but she probably hears it from men all the time. In addition, she may already know she is beautiful, so the line doesn't mean much to her. If she doesn't give you a chance to get to know her because of this first impression, you have unintentionally killed your chance to date that woman and potentially have a love relationship with her.

Capturing modern women's (and men's) hearts is an intellectual game. Even before a man opens his mouth to compliment a woman, she already suspects what he likely really wants. In order to leave a great lasting impression on a beautiful, intelligent woman or a handsome, educated and financially secure man, you must deliver effective, simple compliments that carry weight and will make that person remember you in a good way.

This is what you do. When you have met someone and gotten to talk for a few days prior to the date, learn some interesting or admirable things about the person—perhaps his or her values, or something he or she has done that has significant meaning to the person. On the date, use what you have learned about the person to compliment him or her. It's that easy! This has worked wonders for my clients. When a male client complimented a woman this way, she dropped the curtain that separated her from all the other men who were using the tired "you are beautiful; I will give you anything" pick-up line and allowed my client into her life. If you are a man, be careful about telling a woman you have an interest and that "you are beautiful. I will give you everything if you'll be mine." Those words will shift the balance of power—instead of it being equal—to the woman. Can you understand why? If a woman knows you want her so much that you are willing to do anything for her, the wrong woman will use you or take advantage of you. And this may be even more so with men.

The ideas you have just learned about compliments can be applied to people you have just met at a gathering, or as you are out and about. For example, you're walking down Sunset Boulevard one evening and Angelina Jolie (when she was single) walks into your path. If you don't know who she is or anything about her, you have a chat and ask a few questions, especially about her greatest accomplishments and she will tell them to you. Then, use what she told you about her achievements to compliment her. After you find out something about her, if you were to say, "You have beautiful lips" or "You are so pretty," she'd probably drive her knee into your groin or slap you silly. You

damn fool! She hears that type of compliment all the time! She is an ambassador to a developing nation. She has done a lot for poor orphans, including adopting some. Compliments such as, "You are a good human being" or "The world needs more compassionate women like you," or "You have blessed the lives of many unfortunate children" will have a powerful impact on her and leave a lasting impression.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with complimenting people on their looks, especially if your other half has gone to the trouble of beautifying him- or herself for you. A woman loves it when you, the man, acknowledge her looks. But don't let it be the only compliment you give.

Let's recap on how to give compliments. When you compliment your date the first time, use words that carry weight. For example, "You are a good man or woman." "You are a very intelligent man or woman." "You are so thoughtful" and so forth. After the first date, you can compliment your date on his or her looks because he or she has gone to the trouble to look a certain way for you. It will show that you have taken notice. And you may want to compliment a person about his or her looks the very first time you meet or go out if you sense the person has low self-esteem or low self-confidence.....

Wow her. It is not overly difficult to wow a woman. To do this, you must go into her head to captivate her and stand out from other men so that she chooses you. Here is why: Often there are other men, or there is the possibility that others have an interest in her or are pursuing the same woman you are interested in. If not, assume that there are. One of the best ways to captivate a beautiful, intelligent woman's heart is through her feelings. Feelings are powerful. People respond to feelings, and most women make decisions using feelings and emotions. For example, when we cry, the cause of the crying originates from how we are feeling at that time. Similarly, when we pursue a love interest for a date or relationship, it is the feeling we hope to achieve with the love

interest, and also our imagining what it will feel like to be with the person, that causes us to pursue the person.

Women in particular are good at this. When you show an interest in a woman and ask her for a date, before she agrees, she will begin to imagine how it would feel being with you, having fun with you. That causes her to agree to the date.

I know from my work and personal experience that what I have just described is very common in smart, mature women. This means that simply asking for a date is not always a good enough reason for an intelligent woman to agree. You must let her know where you want to take her and why. For example, you may say something like, "You are a good woman. I'm interested in taking you out on a date. There is a place called _____. It has great food, live music, a fun atmosphere and you will LOVE IT." When you have said this, you have assured the woman as well as implanted in her mind that she will enjoy herself with you on the date. Remember, a smart woman will generally agree to a date at least one time to see if you are correct. In addition, she will make the decision as to whether or not to go on another date or form a relationship based on how she felt during the first date.....

People who turn to food when emotionally distraught do so because of the comforting feeling the food gives them. They do not eat because they are hungry. In the same way, initially people do not go on a date because they know you are special. They agree because of the feeling they believe they will get from being with you. Then the person begins to care or love you as you spend more time together. It is then that you become special to the person. When you are interested in a woman, I highly recommend that you captivate her through her feelings. If you go inside her mind and push the right button, then three things will happen:

1. She will have positive thoughts and feelings about you.

2. She will reason that you care enough about her to meet her needs.
3. She will pick you instead of another ardent admirer.

But men aren't the only ones who should go inside their woman's mind, as the following story will show:

The three stages of abuse

If you are a victim of abuse who has allowed the abuse to occur for too long, you may find that you have gone through the three stages: the *abhorring* stage, the *tolerating* stage and the *acceptance* stage. Here is a real case to depict these stages.

Abhor stage: Erica, a beautiful, educated young woman, met Tom, a polite but uneducated, hardworking man. Erica did not give herself a chance to get to know Tom. As soon as Tom proposed, she jumped at the chance. Not long into the marriage, Tom began to accuse Erica of cheating and threatened to beat her. Erica thought Tom was bluffing.

Tolerate stage: The accusations began to escalate. Tom referred to his wife of only three months as a bitch and a whore. Soon the beatings began. Erica stayed with Tom. They ended up in a psychiatrist's office. After six sessions, the physical abuse stopped, according to Erica, but she had to call Tom every thirty minutes to inform him where she was. Erica tolerated Tom, hoping that one day he would stop abusing her.

Acceptance stage: When the abuse did not stop, Erica became used to it and accepted what was being done to her. This was followed by making excuses for her abuser. Tom abused Erica frequently. If a couple of weeks went by and Tom did not

abuse her, Erica saw this as a good sign that the abuse would stop. Her psychiatrist strongly suggested that she leave her husband within a month. (When I worked with her, I gave her one week to leave her husband.) Erica packed her bags but did not leave Tom.

At the acceptance stage, the victims of abuse regard any small positive change in their abuser's behaviour as a giant step forward, as a signal that the abuse will end. Below are statements that victims of abuse commonly use to justify the abuse and to defend their abuser:

"But I love him or her..."

"He or she stopped hitting me..."

"I hope he or she will change..."

"He or she loves me..."

"It is my fault..."

If you are a victim, does what you have read sound familiar?

Can you heal from abuse?

The answer is yes. As a victim of abuse, you can heal, and have a normal life and healthy love relationships. Many victims of abuse.....

Toxic relationships

Toxic relationships are dangerous, poisonous and unhealthy for your wellbeing. They come in two basic forms. The first group is made up of victims of abuse who have become toxic to have a relationship with because of what they have gone through. The second group are those who are abusers. Toxic relationships begin with abuse. Most

victims of toxic relationships say they did not know their partner was toxic before they became involved with the person. And, sometimes toxic relationships develop from a normal relationship. Victims say that it begins as minor verbal abuse or minor controlling in a relationship, and slowly escalated. Just as a victim of abuse goes through the three stages before accepting the abuse, a victim of a toxic relationship goes through similar stages.

Those who draw others into toxic relationship are often people who say that they weren't loved, cared for or acknowledged during their childhood. They can be charming at first. Many are handsome, educated men who have a void in them. Because of this void in their lives, many admit to having a lack of love for their partners. Toxic relationships really are a two-edged sword. They hurt the abuser as well as the victim. What I have seen from my clients is that, in all cases, the abusers seem to have sociopathic tendencies. They don't care about the pain they inflict—although it ruins their love relationships and even sometimes their careers—but they are aware of it. The abusers can create disruption in all aspects of their lives. For example, they could have a great love relationship or career, but something will trigger them to ruin it. It is one of those things where they know they are doing something wrong but the damage they cause does not seem to register with them.

The cycle is often a vicious one between abusive and toxic relationships. A victim of spousal abuse can become toxic to date. The person will ruin his or her relationship, and is aware of the damage he or she is doing but cannot stop. People who draw others into toxic love relationships may not be aware of the damage they are causing, but cannot seem to stop or feel reel regret for what they are doing. So you can see the danger in being abusive or of being a victim of abuse—it can lead you into a toxic relationship. If you ever find yourself in this situation, try to understand why you are being treated in a manner that hurts you, and then decide if you should remain in the relationship to attempt to heal it or if you should move on.

The excerpt below is taken from one of my articles on this topic, *Understanding Toxic Relationships*. It explains some of the damaging effects of toxic relationships.

The end result of a toxic relationship is devastating and may require some form of healing or counselling. It is the kind of relationship that can leave you emotionally drained, sap your energy, and leave you severely broken up spiritually as well as emotionally, leaving you with a feeling of emptiness. In many cases victims may feel the need to seek revenge. The victim's symptoms may be anger, discouragement, frustration, emotional pain, the feeling of not being beautiful or desirable, loss of hope, afraid to trust and the wish to give up. Toxic relationships leave the victim scared for many years and for some, a lifetime.

Men and women who inflict these kinds of devastating pain on their partners generally show signs of abuse in one form or another from their own past. The abuse could have occurred during their childhood, it could be that they were emotionally abused by their parents when they were teens, etc., and they have not healed before going into a love relationship. The red flags to look for when you are in a relationship with a person who may be a threat to your emotional health are mood swings, short temper, inconsistencies in what they say, denial and impulsive behaviours. The abuser will sometimes acknowledge that the way he or she is treating you is wrong but may not be able to take the necessary steps to stop. When they do try, they generally give up very easily.

When confronted about their abusive behaviour, they often say things like, "Oh, you are blowing everything out of proportion." Sometimes these abusers will say things like, "It is your fault I am treating you the way I am." Unfortunately, some victims accept the blame that they are the cause of what is being done to

them. This type of acceptance can lead to other problems. Sociopaths or abusers blame their partners and will not accept responsibility. Clearly one can notice the inconsistencies in their behaviour and words. They are not able to comprehend the pain they inflict on their partners due to their sociopathic nature. Their feelings are numb, and they may only exhibit these feelings from time to time. Their feelings are not very deep due to the damage caused by the abuse they experienced in their past.

In toxic relationships:

- The abuser realizes that his or her actions are hurting him- or herself and the other person, but is unable to stop the behaviour.
- The victim may not understand why he or she is being treated in such a horrible way, and often feels responsible for the abuse.
- The victim often ultimately capitulates into forced acceptance, which then propagates.
- The victim may begin to treat the abuser the same way he or she has been treated in order to protect him- or herself (the “fight or flight” response). The newly acquired behaviour can spill into a new relationship if the victim feels the need to protect him- or herself. The new behaviour is detrimental to the success and happiness of the victim because potential lovers find the victim’s behaviour a turn-off.

Victims who break away from these toxic relationships toy with the idea of returning to their abusers. Some return if the abuser offers a simple apology. Unfortunately, an apology is not enough, as it will not constitute a change in the abuser’s behaviour. Many victims often do decide to return or remain with their abuser, before they can

determine that they have really changed. I don't recommend this, but sadly, too many women do it. So, if an apology is not an indication of your abuser's change of behaviour, then what can you do? Experts say it's important for abusers to acknowledge the wrongs they have committed and assure the victim that they will not repeat the abuse again. In my view, the best way to go about this is to involve a therapist.

Interestingly, while some people in controlling relationships want to be controlled and prefer a love who will control them, victims of spousal abuse usually do not want to be abused, and yet they go back to the abusers.

Be careful not to get drawn in by the allure of a victim of abuse who is not able to heal. Having a love relationship with one can mean finding yourself in a toxic relationship created by the victim who has now turned abuser, and you playing your part as the new victim trying to have a love relationship with the abuser.

How to avoid toxic relationships

When I speak with victims of abuse and ask them how they would do things differently in their next relationship, most say they would start out as friends first. "Friends first" has not just become the buzz phrase at many relationship seminars and lectures. Many large family-oriented organizations preach this to their readers and followers worldwide. It is indeed one of the secrets of a successful relationship.

When you first meet people, they are usually at their best, so it's tempting to plunge right into a romantic relationship. The trouble with this is that most people are able to hide their character flaws for up to six months, so you won't immediately pick up abusive tendencies or other negative traits. I have heard Dr. Laura suggest that you wait for up to two years before making a serious commitment such as marriage. If you befriend that person first, you give yourself an opportunity to find out more about the individual and discover if you really want to be with that person. Don't rush into a

relationship. Slow down. Find out as much as you can about the person's background. For example, has he or she been abusive in past relationships?

In addition, to avoid toxic relationships:

Don't ignore red flags. Pay attention to what the person says and does. Negative and condescending remarks should definitely be considered red flags. Remove yourself from a relationship that has the potential to become toxic. Remember, a person will not change just because you want him or her to. Neither will the person change just because you tell yourself that you love the person. Of course, it is within your right to remain in or go back to a toxic relationship. In that case, remember your role in allowing the abuse to occur.

Listen to your gut feelings. Your gut feelings never lie. Everyone I know who has experienced a failed love relationship has admitted to knowing they should never have become involved with that person. Life is about choices. If you act on your intuition, you will be fine. If you ignore it, you will pay a price.

Date people of good quality. As George Washington said, "Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company." When you associate with high-quality people, you will adopt their qualities and become more like them. If you surround yourself with positive people, you'll be happier and healthier.

In his book, *Power Versus Force*, world renowned psychiatrist Dr. David R. Hawkins discusses the results of a scientific test that shows that when people are exposed to negative talk, it weakens them.

Do's of Relationships

Do's of relationship are things you want to see when you fall in love and are in a relationship because they make the relationship excel. In step three, "Secret to Your Success," we talked about opportunities and how they can be used to achieve love relationship success. In that section, I promised to share how you can take advantage of opportunities and use them for your success in terms of love relationships. It is okay to meet people online. It is perfectly all right to meet people in singles clubs, on the street or through many other means. The reality is there is no one best way to meet people. In fact, many people are turning online even just to make new friends. All these methods are perfectly fine. What is important are the wonderful things you do with the

opportunity you have to meet someone and to develop the love relationship. That is what this section will be discussing.

I will open this section with something that I have seen over and over again. I hinted about it in the previous step. Don't try to change your Dharma—who you are. Don't make the sad mistake that Elisa did:

Jason and Elisa met. Jason was anxious to marry, so he convinced Elisa that they were meant for each other. Elisa informed Jason that she loved him but they needed time to get to know each other. But Jason was on a mission to marry. He kept pushing until he got what he wanted. Later, he realized that he wasn't ready for marriage; he wasn't financially prepared to support a wife and child. He had rushed Elisa into marriage because she was beautiful and he had to have her before someone else did. When their marriage failed and Elisa left him, he blamed his environment.

What occurred in the above example happens all too frequently. Marriages collapse because many people marry the wrong person at the wrong time for the wrong reasons.

What should you do to make your relationship work and bring you that which you desire? These things are what I call do's of relationships or relationship builders.

Before you do something, know that what you are doing is the right thing to do. In this case, we are talking about your love relationship, your future happiness with a person who once was a stranger. To know that you have made the right choice, it is absolutely imperative that you receive confirmation.

Receiving confirmation

Just as you are created to want love, give love and select the right person to fall in love with, so are you created to be able to receive confirmation that you have selected the right person before you settle for a long-term relationship or marriage. When you change that, the relationship will fail because you are trying to change what is your true nature. Seeking a confirmation that you and another person belong with each other is the way you are made to function. To clarify this point—and most thinking adults, particularly women, will agree with me—I'll illustrate with an example. Have you ever been asked to enter into a relationship and you said to the person, "But I don't know you"? Or during a quiet moment, have you ever pondered if the person who wants a love relationship with you is right for you? Pondering is a form of questioning your heart to seek an answer.

I am a proponent of receiving assurance or a confirmation about a relationship. I teach it to as many people as will listen. Here is why. When you meet someone, or are in a love relationship, and wonder if he or she is the one, this means that your body and soul have a certain need to feel safe in the relationship. Because of that, your soul seeks assurance or a confirmation. Receiving confirmation is a natural need. There is another benefit to seeking confirmation. When you meet someone new, rather than start with friendship, there will be times when this is not possible. Questions and intimate thoughts will begin to permeate your mind, and you may have a desire for emotional and physical closeness. This can happen so quickly that you may not even be aware of it.....

Seeking confirmation is your only guarantee that you are meant for each other. It's imperative that confirmation be received. This gives you motivation to stay with

your true love, even if the relationship does not go smoothly at first during the adaptation period (as is often the case). Once you have received confirmation that you have found your true love, it is then your responsibility, as two intelligent adults, to nurture the relationship so it can blossom. In the last section of this book, I have outlined how you can accomplish success by providing you with a sample success plan.

Below are the four steps you need to take to confirm that you have found your true love:

Step 1:.....

Here are a few suggestions you can use to show your partner that you love and cherish him or her. They are part of the natural human needs mentioned briefly above.

1. Be emotionally available. One of the biggest complaints women have about men is that they are not emotionally available. This means for women, their man's emotional availability is critical to the growth of their relationship. So be emotionally available, whether you are the man or the woman. Now, emotional availability is very tricky; it is one of those natural human needs. This means it is required in a love relationship. Now, emotional availability comes in many forms. For example, it can be physical or nonphysical.

Being emotionally available in a non-physical sense could mean to listen and offer emotional support. In the physical sense, it means when your significant other is hurting emotionally, such as after the passing of a loved one like a grandparent, you are there for them. If you have been paying attention, you will notice when a woman feels sad, alone and helpless, she will try to comfort herself by hugging herself. She does this by placing one hand below her right arm while she wraps one hand around her left

shoulder or bicep, and she may even squeeze her shoulder a little as if to comfort herself. One way to be emotionally available in a physical sense is by comforting through hugs, in the manner I have just described.

You, the man, wrap your left arm just below her bust area and your right arm across and onto her shoulder, and hold firm. You will notice that she, too, will wrap her arm around yours and rest her head on your shoulder. This is a sign that she feels safe and secure. Is this not a natural human need? If you do this any other time, you may even hear her tell you, "I like this" or "I like the way you hold me."

3. Praise your partner. Human beings are at their best when they are uplifted. They are stronger and more confident in their abilities. They have a more positive attitude about the relationship and life in general. Your significant other is more likely to contribute to the love relationship if he or she feels good about him- or herself.

1. **Have an "I-thou" relationship.** In Gestalt theory, "I-thou" ("I" being you and "thou" being your partner) is considered a powerful phrase. In an "I-thou" love relationship, you and your partner are one in purpose. You connect at a much higher level and see each other through what is known as your "mind's eye" or "third eye." Gurus out of India and swamis refer to the third eye as being located behind your two eyes. They believe it is connected to your heart and "sees" more than just what your two visible eyes can see. However, seeing with your third eye really means to see each other with your eyes, heart and mind together. In other words, see more than just a physical body. When you do this, you are seeing your companion with all your mind, heart and senses.

2. **Learn to listen:** The true secret to being a good listener is to listen to your significant other with love when his or her heart is aching rather than being judgemental.

Treating your sweetheart well is not the only thing that needs to be done in a love relationship to make it blossom, and have a deeper and richer meaning for you. There is another thing you can do, which I will discuss next.

Breakup-proof your relationship

Do you go into a love relationship with the hopes that it will break up? Not likely. So then, what do you want to happen to the love relationship? Many people hope to hear wedding bells someday. But how can you make sure that your loving feelings for your significant other do not go to waste?.....

Success in a love relationship means that it is working well for both people involved and is giving them what they had hoped to achieve. Experts refer to this as having a “flow.” Therefore, when a love relationship achieves breakup-proof status and is giving the two people what they want from it, then that is a type of flow. So how can you make your relationship achieve breakup-proof status and flow? I will explain. (Just be aware, the steps you are about to learn are not the same as divorce-proofing your

marriage. I will disclose that information when we arrive at the section about making your marriage work.)

Create an incentive: Give yourself a reason why you should be with the person. And also give your love interest or the person you are in a relationship with—if you are already in one—an incentive, a reason why he or she should be with you. On a personal note, when I say incentive, I mean good incentives, such as the one Mr. Borrowes offered Margery. A bad incentive—which I sometimes refer to as being a fool—is when you say to someone, “If you be my girlfriend or boyfriend, I will give you everything. I will buy you a house. I will take you shopping.” I refer to this as being a fool because the response is induced by desperation. Desperation that causes you to make inappropriate promises in exchange for a relationship allows your love interest to gain power over you because you are willing to do anything to have that person, which tells the person that he or she can use you, and you are at his or her mercy. Don’t do that!

Decision Making

As I’ve said before, success is about decision making. When you take advantage of the opportunity to date, when you learn how the system works for love relationship success or marriage, when you take action, when you learn to resolve conflicts, you are making a decision. The true secret of success then is making the right decision that will bring you the end result that you hope for in your love life.

You are about to read a mythical story from West Africa that is a perfect way to end this book. As you read, pay attention to the decision making steps that the two characters in the story make. You will find that when you make decisions, one of two things will happen: you will either succeed or fail—period. While this story has nothing to do with marriage, it illustrates beautifully the importance of the decisions we make. Arthur

Schopenhauer once said, “Almost all of our sorrows spring out of our relations with other people.” Think carefully about your past unsuccessful love relationships. When you made the decision to become involved, what did that decision do to you?

Remember your Dharma—that is, how you were created, the needs and desires that makes you a person with feeling. Then ponder on what you feel that you need to do—the decisions you need to make—to have the love relationship that you should be having. And then do the things that you have learned in this book to make it happen.

We opened this book with a true story and now we will close it with a mythical one.

The Ancestral Cream

“I am the greatest warrior,” said the great warrior. “I have fought with gods and beaten them. I have fought with giants and won. I am strong; I cannot lose in a battle. I am the greatest warrior ever.”

In a small village in western Africa it was customary that when the king died, his dead body would be rubbed with a specific cream that could only be found deep inside the jungle. The journey to acquire the cream took seven days. Whenever an occasion called for the cream, young men in the village were asked to go into the jungle to find it and the young man who returned with the cream was crowned the next king of the village by the village elders. Most young men who tried to acquire the cream never returned. Those who did return came back empty-handed. So many young men lost their lives in search of the cream that parents began to refuse to let their sons go into the jungle to look for this special cream when a king died.

One day, after another king had died, there were only two men in the village willing to risk their lives to find the cream. The older man was the great warrior. He felt

as though he was great and deserved to be crowned the next king. The other was the giant warrior. His intention was to bring the ancestral cream home so that the dead king could have a proper burial. After much consultation amongst the village elders, it was decided that both warriors would be sent out to find the ancestral cream. Prior to their departure, as was customary, the two warriors sought counsel and blessings from the village priest; he advised both men to be very careful, and to focus on finding and bringing home the ancestral cream, and nothing else.

After their blessings and counsel, the two men set out on their separate ways to bring home the ancestral cream. They had exactly seven days in which to find and bring the cream home, or else the king's body would begin to decay. What these two men did not know was that they would be tested throughout their journey. The tests would determine their worthiness to be crowned the next king of the village.

The first test came not long into their journey. The great warrior came across an old lady sitting under a tree.

The lady said to him, "Sir, I am old and tired. Could you please help me get up so I can continue on my journey?"

"No way!" the great warrior replied. "Don't you know I am in a race to be the first to find the ancestral cream? I am going to be the next king. Don't delay me. I must go now."

The old lady pleaded with the great warrior and finally he agreed to help her. When the old lady couldn't stand straight, the great warrior became upset and yelled, "You are so old you cannot even stand on your feet. I don't have time to hold you up. Get out of my way!"

Off went the great warrior.

Next on the scene was the giant warrior. The old lady asked him for the same help and he provided his assistance. Realizing that the old lady could not stand on her

feet, he said, "You are old; you cannot stand on your feet. Can I help you get to your destination?"

With a smile on her face, the old lady thanked the giant warrior for offering to help her. When the two reached her home, she asked, "Where are you going, my son?"

The giant warrior replied, "I am looking for the ancestral cream to take to my village so that the king can have a proper burial."

The old lady pointed to a small path next to her home and said, "You see that path? I want you to take it. Walk straight, focus and don't let anyone make you deviate from your course."

The giant warrior bowed before the old woman and thanked her.

By this time, the great warrior had encountered his second test. He had come across the most beautiful woman any man's eyes could behold.

"No man has ever come here without spending the night with me," the woman told him.

The great warrior's eyes gleamed at the suggestion. "Sure," he replied. "I have walked a great distance searching for the ancestral cream. I am going to be crowned the next king. I am tired from my long journey. I will spend the night with you."

The next morning, after the great warrior had left, the giant warrior came across the same beautiful woman. When she extended the same invitation to him, he replied, "You are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. I would love to spend the night with you but I am looking for the ancestral cream. My village needs it so that the king can have a proper burial. I am so sorry I cannot spend the day with you but can you tell me how I may find the ancestral cream?"

The beautiful woman answered, "Keep going on the path you have chosen and you will find what you are looking for."

The third and final test neared for the two warriors. As the great warrior continued with his travel in the jungle, he noticed an old blind man walking in circles as if he were lost.

“Old man, why are you going in circles?” the great warrior asked the blind man.

The man replied, “I am blind. I think I have lost my way back home. Could you help me get home?”

“Help you get home? Are you crazy, old man? I have two more days of travel to find the ancestral cream. Don’t you know I am going to be the next king? Oh, I see. You know I am looking for the cream so you are purposely trying to delay me so the giant warrior will find it first.”

“Son, that is not true,” the old man replied. “If you help me get home, I will show you the hut where the ancestral cream is located.”

When the warrior heard this, his heart leapt, and he agreed to help the blind man.

“Here,” the great warrior said to the old man, “put your hand around my arm, give me the directions and I will take you home.”

The blind man put his hand around the great warrior’s arm and said, “I will lead you there.”

As they began to walk, the great warrior, anxious to find the cream first, kept telling the blind man to hurry up as he rushed through the jungle pulling the blind man with him. When they arrived at the blind man’s hut, the blind man thanked the great warrior and said to him, “You see that path? I want you to take it. Walk straight and it will take you to the hut where the ancestral cream is. When you get there, you will see several calabashes made of gold and some made of silver, all containing cream. You will also see one small calabash and one large calabash made of clay. Take the small clay one. It contains the cream you are looking for.”

“Thank you, thank you!” exclaimed the great warrior and off he went.

When he reached the hut, he could not believe his eyes, or the beauty of the gold and silver calabashes. He collected as many of the gold and silver calabashes as he could carry with him. The small and large clay calabashes sat in one corner of the hut. He looked at them and decided he didn't want the small one. He took the larger clay calabash, thinking it contained more ancestral cream, and made his way back to the village with the gold and silver calabashes and one large clay calabash.

The giant warrior's turn came next. The old, blind man asked him for help in getting home. The giant warrior agreed to help the old man.

"I will lead you to my home," said the blind man.

The giant warrior humbly agreed to let the old man take the lead. When they arrived at the blind man's home, he thanked the giant warrior and gave him the same advice and directions he had given the great warrior.

When the giant warrior arrived at the hut, he remembered what the old blind man had told him. On his way back he realized he was running late but stopped by the old man's hut to thank him. While thanking him, he felt the need to ask him for help once more.

"We were given seven days to bring this cream back," he told the old, blind man. "It is almost the end of the seventh day. I cannot make a whole day's journey in a few hours. Could you please tell me where I can find a shortcut through the jungle so I may reach home on time? I must get back on time so the king can have a proper burial."

The old man replied, "Son, don't worry; I will help you. I want you to close your eyes. When I say open them, you open them."

When the giant warrior opened his eyes as instructed, he realized they were both standing on the edge of a small lake. In a surprised tone he said to the old, blind man, "How did this happen? How did we get here? Look at the lake. I know this lake. I come here to fetch water every day for my family. Look over there! That is my village; it is just a short walk away."

“You have done well, my son,” the blind man replied. “The village elders are waiting for you. Go now.”

Poof! The blind man vanished into thin air.

The giant warrior arrived home first with the small clay calabash containing the ancestral cream. When he got home, his mother and sister and the village elders were overjoyed that he had returned. His mother was overjoyed to see that her son had returned home safely and that he would be crowned the next king of the village. Oh, the joy they felt! The women got together and danced in celebration. After the king received a proper burial, the giant warrior was crowned the new king.

Not long afterward, the great warrior arrived and saw the giant warrior sitting on the throne. The great warrior became very upset at the village elders.

“What have you done?” he cried. “You have given my throne away to him? The throne is mine! It is mine! I am greater than the giant warrior. I have fought the gods and beaten them. I am brave. I am a warrior. Here! Here is the ancestral cream. I brought some in gold and silver calabashes.”

The elders asked the great warrior to pour the cream out so they could see. As he did, all that came out of the calabashes was sand.

What is the symbolic meaning you found?

There are really two symbolic meanings we can glean from this story and they go hand in hand. One is decision making and the other is understanding how the system works for succeeding—whether it be in love, work, money or whatever. It really comes down to decision making. When you ask someone for a date, you have made a decision that will have a positive or negative result. For example, the person will say yes or no. When you go into a love relationship, you make the decision to do so. When you abuse, when you care, when you love and so forth, you do so by making a decision first. So the

decision that you are making today about your love life, where do you think that decision will take you?

Here are some other important points that you may have noted from the story you have just read. Consider the opportunity that both the great warrior and the giant warrior had to be king, and reflect on how it is similar to our opportunity to find lasting love and happiness.

1. The giant warrior learns how the system works for becoming a king.
2. When opportunity presented itself, the giant warrior seized it.
3. He worked with the system and not against it.
4. He followed a well thought out success plan.
5. He did not yield to distractions and temptations that he came across.
6. The great warrior, on the other hand, wanted success but instead of focusing on it, he wanted to play around and have fun. By his own doing, he missed his chance at finding success.

Remember, the world follows a specific order; it is highly organized and is in constant motion. Within the world are opportunities: opportunities to find the love relationship that will give you what you are created or made to have. That fact will never change, period. And these opportunities are available to you and everyone else. Everything you need to achieve love relationship success, joy and happiness exist around you. You have the power within you to decide what to do with the opportunities the world places in your path. What you don't have the power to do is stop or change what the end result will be once you have made a particular choice.

Here is another way to look at it. Let's say you are given an egg—the egg representing someone you have found and for whom you received a confirmation that the two of

you belong together. That egg is yours. You have the power to do whatever you wish with the egg. When you climb a hill and throw the egg, you have absolutely no power, once the egg leaves your hand, to stop the egg from cracking when it hits the ground. So make your decisions carefully.

Choose the path of excellence.

Good Luck and Wishing You Success!

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