

JOINING
IN THE DANCE
Finding Your Soulmate



Terra Wolfe

FINDING YOUR SOUL MATE

Do you want me to tell you something really subversive? Love is everything it's cracked up to be. That's why people are so cynical about it. It really is worth fighting for, being brave for, risking everything for. And the trouble is, if you don't risk anything, you risk even more.

~ Erica Jong ~

There is nothing like love. It is literally a drug when you begin, not unlike chocolate. It is the feeling that binds you to another person. We all want to find it and to keep it new. Perhaps if we find our soul mate this will happen. Perhaps.

After a few weeks, the drug stabilizes and you have to deal with the reality of relationship. Its not that the drug never returns, but it seldom comes back with the same rush of intensity as it had at the beginning.

Really, the best you can do is to find a Soul Mate who wants and intends to consciously participate in your life in its most growthful and in its highest order. Someone who is himself or herself evolved beyond the games and expectations of socialization, someone who can grow with you and play with you and be serious, when it is time for that. But this person must feel just right to you. If you have to force yourself to care about someone, that someone is not a soul mate. A soul mate will touch your heart effortlessly.

Remember that your Soul Mates come in to participate in your growth. The more you are already into a growthful state, the more chance of that meeting taking place.

The more you examine your life, the more you love yourself and the more you expect the best, the better the chances for meeting a soul mate of the highest order.

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RELEASING ATTACHMENTS

TO LET LOVE COME IN

Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.

Paul Boese

We all walk through life with emotional baggage. Don't blame yourself, don't blame him, and don't blame your mama. Blame is about the most counter productive thing you can do in any circumstances. It makes you a victim.

The way to stop being a victim is to take total responsibility for your own life.

The single exception I will grant to this principle is for abused children. Children are not capable of taking responsibility for their own lives and thus are seriously wronged when the adults they depend upon become their abusers.

But, on the bright side, there are lots of people now who are trained to help you work through the residue of old abuse and clean it up once and for all. As an adult you may chose not to be victimized by your past anymore.

Is it painful? For awhile, you have to touch the pain to heal it properly. But most abused adults would have the effects of the abuse surgically removed in a minute, if it were possible. Therapy is much less of an ordeal than that.

And when your work is done you are healed. So, as an adult you may still choose not to be a victim any longer.

When we are dealing with karma, we need to know that each of these people, passing through our lives is a gift and a lesson. Sometimes they are carefully disguised and appear to be very bad people. But they only do what we allow them to do. Once we learn the lesson, we do not need to allow the old energies to guide us any longer.

Until the lesson is learned and the experience is released, we will often find the same lesson appearing in different clothes over and over again. This is why it is important to understand what the past has brought us in relationships and to forgive them (because they were teachers) and to release them (because we no longer need that lesson.)

Unless the energy has been cleared and released, most of us have a fair amount of baggage. This has manifested as:

- Emotional disappointments
- Abandonment issues
- A series of bad relationships
- Deeply held negative beliefs

There are many techniques that will allow us to let go once and for all of that kind of emotional baggage.

And the greatest of these is forgiveness.

We do not forgive to release the other party of their responsibility. We forgive to release ourselves of the burden of sadness or anger or hatred. All of these emotions are too heavy to bear for your whole life.

Forgiving helps you to release them and be rid of them once and for all.

Because there is always a bit of guilt related to these feelings, it is best to forgive yourself twice for every time you forgive someone else.

You may have to do this more than once. You need to take some time with it.

Begin by finding a place where you can be alone and not interrupted. Take ten cleansing breaths. (Breathe in very deeply and release the breath slowly) As you release the breaths feel yourself becoming more and more relaxed. Let the exhaling breaths release any tension you are holding in your body.

From this relaxed position, picture yourself in strength in a safe, beautiful place. One by one see all the people you love and who have loved you, join you in a big circle. They are all around you supporting you with unconditional love. Let go of any old issues with these people and know that they are there because they love you and want to help you in this time of growth.

Now, picture the one who needs forgiveness walking into that circle of love and holding a hand out to you. Picture the person asking you to forgive him or her.

Feel the feelings that come over you now. You understand how you have been hurt. But you also see that the other person was only being what he or she knew to be. In this circle of love, it is easy to understand and to forgive. You give your forgiveness and watch as the energy of this person slowly fades from the circle and releases itself. You are left surrounded by friends and loved ones.

Let yourself feel the relief of releasing all of the old hurt and anger ... feel the old emotions dissipate. Let yourself feel the love that the universe and your circle of love within it provide to you every day.

In that spirit, holding this openness to love, take three cleansing breaths and slowly find yourself back in the present time feeling lighter and happier than you have been in a long time.

You can do this forgiveness exercise as many times as you need, to release long held emotions.

It is not necessary, in fact it might be counter-productive, to tell the other person that you have forgiven them. If this person has not moved to a higher point of understanding, there could be more resentment from recounting your forgiveness. It could start the whole negative process again and it is not worth it.

Once you feel that you have released the old emotions and learned the lessons from your past relationships, you can begin to look out at the future expecting something better.



WHAT TO REALLY LOOK FOR

The mind I love must have wild places, a tangled orchard where dark damsons drop in the heavy grass, an overgrown little wood, the chance of a snake or two, a pool that nobody's fathomed the depth of, and paths threaded with flowers planted by the mind.

- - - *Katherine Mansfield*

Fortunately, different people like different kinds of mates! There are certain qualities that make certain kinds of mates more desirable or even possible in one part of your life than in another. For instance, a person with a similar background to yours might make a really good mate to raise your children with, but later on you might really like someone a little more adventurous.

It is always best to find a partner who genuinely likes the opposite sex. A woman with men who are friends, a man with women friends can be the best partners. Communication is always better with people like this. And they are more likely to think of you as an individual rather than just a woman or a man.

A similarity of backgrounds or values makes relating easier. But if you happen to be attracted to the exotic, you will just need to cultivate more communications skills, and learn to accept and even relish the differences. Those differences can keep life interesting.

Certain things will make a relationship better. They sound simple, but the skills to make a relationship work can take a long time to acquire. If you are looking for a partner who might have acquired these skills, look at their relationships. Not only the romantic ones are important but the friendships and the family relationships will show you a lot about the relationship skills of a person.

Since most of us come from families that were in some way, dysfunctional, we must not jump to conclusions about anyone because their family life was not perfect. It often happens that the ones who show very strong forms of family attachment can, as often as not, be masking some very bad family dynamics. So don't be too judgmental here. Should you be lucky enough to find someone with a family that was mostly functional and with whom your partner has warm relationships, you will have a partner who is likelier to have some developed relationship skills.

Another quality that will point to these skills is friendships. Men's friendships and women's friendships are different, but if you see genuine warmth and concern in the interaction between friends, then you will find that these people have developed a real capacity for relationship.

You will want a reasonable match in intelligence and sensitivity in a partner, too. If your idea of intelligent company is someone who keeps up with politics and his idea is keeping up with the latest in Quantum Mechanics, chances are you have a mismatch. Yet if his idea is keeping up

with where they are catching the big bass this week and your idea of a good time is the theater...maybe, you should think again.

It sometimes works out between a fisherman and a sophisticate, but there will be other solid areas of interest that overlap.

Oddly, these things are often overlooked when the chemistry is feeling right and the nights have been lonely. Maybe you could learn to fish. But don't marry him until you know.

Now that we have been making very logical assumptions about what relationship should be, there will be the one who is clearly ringing your bells and is not necessarily the best choice you can make. If you are looking for a soul mate, those feelings can be a giveaway that something is important for you here. Don't let your logic overrule your heart every time. Often the heart knows that there is more to this one than meets the eye.

Perhaps it is your next teacher...perhaps it is your next spouse. It needs to be explored.



A FEW SERIOUS DON'TS

"How come dumb stuff seems so smart while you're doing it?"

~Dennis the Menace~

There are a few absolute bottom lines in relationship. There are some people who simply cannot have a relationship back with you no matter how hard you try. Don't expect that you can have a normal relationship with these people:

People with addictions, it can be an illegal drug or a legal one, alcohol is just another drug.. It is addiction when it affects their life.

People with mental illnesses. Unless they are being treated and are actively cooperating with the treatment, they just cannot be a committed partner in a relationship. Mental health is a bottom line that you must have for a reasonable relationship.

Very controlling or obsessive people

They are mostly not bad people, they are simply too involved with their difficulties to be capable of relating back to you in any sensible way. If you feel you must be in relationship to someone in these categories, do not expect that you can change them. They simply cannot focus their energies on relating to you. They can love you, they can need you, they can be compelling, but they can't relate.

In the case of very controlling people, there is always the chance of it escalating to an abuse situation. This is heightened if you have had abuse in your past. You need to work through and heal that area of your life before you get into another relationship because chances are, you will choose another abuser if you don't.

If you are with an addict, you must be aware of the other side of the issue, codependency. Codependency is a series of behavior that actually facilitates an addiction. It includes all the things you do to ignore the addiction and all the things you do to enable it. This can be anything from consenting to be the victim or the victimizer to always taking them back no matter how bad their behavior might have been. You can't help them if you feed into their addiction in a codependent way. There are books and groups that can help you with this issue. If you are one of these people, please get to know them.

Often the person who is attracted to an addict has had this issue for his or her entire life. There will be addictive parents and lovers over and over. This is the person who can swear off addicts (or alcoholics, it is the same thing) and decide to only meet people at the strictest church in town. And, of course, still come away in love with the only addict there.

Only changing the codependency can help this, not reforming a series of addicts. As a matter of fact a reformed addict would no longer hold any charm for a codependent until that issue is healed. A codependent needs an addict as much as an addict needs a codependent.



SOME THINGS ABOUT NEED

"In less enlightened times, the best way to impress women was to own a hot car. But women wised up and figured out it was better to buy their own hot cars and then they wouldn't have to ride around with jerks." --Adam Scott

There is a metaphysics about need. This is often the reason we feel so pulled toward relationship beyond the physical imperative of the sex drive. Because we are in this dimension of time and space to learn and grow through a series of lives, there have also been times between lives when we have felt the comfort of another reality.

In this reality, when we don't have bodies to separate us, we can feel the presence and interconnectedness of all of the cosmos as though it was a part of us. We know our divine connection intimately.

Then we chose to reenter the physical limitations of life and we find that we are separate again, alone in our own skin. It is that separation that makes us long for the profound connection that a soul mate can bring. Soul Mates are our larger family.

The reality though is that each of us is alone in our own skin in this life and even the intensity of a sexual connection with a beloved soul mate can only take that separation away for moments.

That need for connection is so profound and exists in every soul on this planet. Because of this politics and commerce and religion has taken that need and exploited it to add to the power of whichever group is involved,

That has led to the current myth of neediness and loneliness and fear.

If advertisers can keep us always looking for a mate, then think of the products we will buy. But it is unimportant to them that we be satisfied with our relationship or ourselves.

The interests of the churches and the state are different. But they, too promote their agenda by addressing our fears. And the fear of loneliness is often exploited. It is easier for both institutions to manage a populace of needy co-dependents than it is to manage confident secure individuals.

It is in the best interest of the powers that be in this world to keep us in need and fear.

Because we have this need for connection coupled with a very intense sex drive, this business of relationship can easily be manipulated. So you will find that there is a great deal of social pressure to be thinking about relationship in ways that are not productive, much less powerful.

The structures that make up our society are not served by a confident, self-actuated populace.



TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR CHOICES.

Each of us makes his own weather, determines the color of the skies in the emotional universe which he inhabits.

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen

When you learn that your life has been made of your own choices. When you can understand the error of your ways and not beat yourself for it but learn the lesson and persevere, then you are ready to make your life what you want it to be.

Much of what you have been taught all your life is not true. You do not need to be victimized. You do not need to just respond to life. You have the power to direct your life and your relationships.

But you can't do this if you spend any time assigning blame, or feeling like a victim.

If you want to have this kind of power. You must take responsibility for your whole life

If he did you wrong well, you let him. You can choose not to let anyone do that to you again. If you look at the situation, you realize that you saw the warning signals and chose to continue anyway.

"...oops, sorry, my fault, I picked a loser and let him stay even after I knew about it. I screwed up, sorry, life." Is a more powerful statement than, "All the men I meet are controlling and they all cheat."

Or, "I chose another woman who was looking for a man with money:" is more powerful than: "All women are looking for money and if they find someone with more money they will leave me."

If you stay in the mindset that insists that you are a victim of fate. Fate will prove to you over and over again that you are just that. It is because you haven't yet learned the lesson that you can chose. Until you learn the lesson, life sends you teachers to say, "you didn't get it last time, let's try it again."

One soul mate after another will come into your life disguised as the kind of victimizer you have consistently chosen. This is not to punish you; it is to encourage you to take that step that

changes everything. You take the responsibility for the kind of relationships in which you have been allowing yourself to be involved.

If your relationships have been toxic, why have you been in them? Because, you think that they happen to you. The reality is that you chose them. You can choose not to go that way anymore. If you find that you are happier alone than with him, he isn't good for you. If you think you can't be alone, it is time to learn it.

When you can be alone and be happy, you will always know that you can set limits in relationships that you chose. Then the only downside to ending the relationship is that you are alone again and you will know that it is fine to be alone. This is power.

You have choices. It is your responsibility to find a relationship that is happy and growthful. It is also your responsibility to choose not to be in a toxic relationship.

Taking responsibility opens up a world of potential in relationships. You can for instance, choose to get involved with someone just because they are fun and not because you intend to be involved with them long term but just for the moment and just because you need a little fun right now.

You can spend time with people who are quite different from you in age or background just to find out what it is all about. It becomes unnecessary to pre-qualify everyone at a potential mate.

Once you are meeting people because you are interested in them as people and not as potential co-parents, you will find that you will not stay in this kind of relationship if it does not meet your needs. You will be able to begin and end relationships with more ease and less hurt feelings. This will begin to build confidence. It is into a life like this that a growthful soul mate is most likely to appear.

You see, when you are stuck in the victim rut, you almost force people to victimize you. You behave as you have when you felt victimized in earlier relationships. You don't take responsibility for the relationship; instead, you assign it all to your partner. And worst of all you begin to expect that you will get the same kind of relationship again which, of course, draws that energy into your life over and over again.

The victim is as much a part of a victimizing relationship as the victimizer. This is similar to the co-dependent relationship. Often these people have seen a victim/victimizer relationship in their parent's relationship. Often this is learned in childhood. But many things are learned in childhood that can be changed when one becomes an adult. It is about taking the responsibility.

This allows you to be in a relationship because that is where you want to be. So often we are in a relationship because we think that the other will be able to meet some vague emotional needs and make us feel whole. But the truth is, that is something we must do for ourselves.

No one else can be responsible for our own healing and wholeness. Since most of us would like to have a partner who is healed and whole, then it is our responsibility to present them with as complete and individual as we can manage.

If you are responsible for your own life, you can try new things. You don't need to repeat patterns that were not productive; you are free to make new choices. Other people cease to have the ability to keep you from your dreams. You are free to do what you need to do to make them come true.



A COUPLE OF THINGS TO CONSIDER

We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives and connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results.

~Herman Melville~

As you seek your Soul Mate, there are a few points that you want to be careful about. First, when you ask what you want, be sure to ask for someone who wants you, exactly the way you are.

It is very important not to try to change someone else's destiny. If you do this it will not go well for you. There is in Wicca a rule of three. It means that what you put out will come back to you threefold. Any time you are trying to make a conscious change in anyone's destiny, it is a good idea to keep this in mind. Make sure that what you are putting out there is what you think it is.

You may think that you are putting love out toward someone when you are actually trying to control his or her life and change his or her destiny. This will not have a good result for you. Even if you get what you asked for it can backfire.

It is always better to ask for the right person to come into your life than to ask that a certain person to come into yours. The one exception is when you have a pretty good idea that he or she wants to be there.

I have seen many situations where manifesting the wrong way worked for awhile and then got very twisted.

The other thing you don't want to do is call out a "come here" to members of your karmic family. Because they will hear you and they will interrupt the lives they meant to have to join you but since they are not supposed to be in your life at that time, they cannot stay. So you will feel the connection and bond with them and they will have to go. You will then have to miss them for the rest of your life. It really is better and easier on your heart not to do this.

The last admonition I will give you is not to use the past life connection to try to make someone do what you want them to do in this life. It is not fair, it is not appropriate and it is bad manners. Besides, it does not work.



VISUALIZING AND MANIFESTING

Reach high, for stars lie hidden in your soul.

Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal.

~Ralph Vaull Starr~

Here is how you can change your life. This is the technique that will bring the person you need into your life. It definitely works. But...

“Be careful what you ask for, for you will surely get it.”

So before we get into the technique, it is necessary to take some time to do it correctly.



TAKE STOCK

The first thing you need to do is to learn to value yourself. Without this, you will not allow yourself to require the best or most appropriate partner for yourself. You need to know that you have qualities that are worthwhile and that will attract the partner you really want.

So make a list of your own fine qualities.

Here is are some particulars that may or may not apply to you, use what applies and feel free to add others.

Cute	Handsome	Strong	Beautiful	Caring
Gentle	Smart	Playful	Generous	Demonstrative
Careful	Elegant	Graceful	Emotional	Daring
Thrifty	Extravagant	Cultured	Down to Earth	
Fun Loving	Sensible	Reserved	Intelligent	
Sexual	Neat	Athletic	Spiritual	
Cuddly	Social	Gentle	Enthusiastic	
Logical	Well-educated	Creative	Intellectual	

Sweet Independent Experienced Home-body

It is important that you write the truth. Once you have done this, you should be able to see clearly why the perfect person for you would want you to be in his or her life. When you see yourself on paper, you will see that you have plenty to offer a person who shares your values.

Because we have many soul mates available to us, it is necessary to find the one who suits your life as it is today. The perfect person for a twenty-year-old you might be very wrong for the forty-year-old person you have become. So think in terms of where you are today and what you need for growth in your life right now.

Think in terms of what really makes you happy, not what you think should make you happy. If you really don't like to stay home but think you should "settle down", don't think that a settled mate will make you happy. If you have always loved having pets, don't overlook the fact that a person who does not like animals is not for you.

Think of the things you need in your life to make you happy and be specific in expecting a mate with those qualities that will support your happiness.



NOW MAKE A LIST OF WHAT YOU NEED

Think hard about what makes you happy. Think hard about what qualities you will need in a partner. Think about what qualities will not be acceptable, too. The biggest animal lover in the world will not do it that person is also an addict.

My list might look like this:

My List:

Intelligent	Witty	Tall and Slim	Educated
Well read	Animal lover	Comfortable amount of money	
Confident	Not controlling		Spiritual
Good grammar	Sensitive		Sensual
Honest	Sane	Not addicted	Has cleaned up his childhood issues
Has good women friends		Happy in his life	Adventurous

Make the list as long as you want. Go back and add things as you think of them. You cannot get too choosy or specific. If there is something that doesn't work for you, add it.

If you really want a millionaire, don't ask for somebody who just has a job. But remember the sort of things having a millionaire mate may require of you and think if you want to make those changes. For instance, what would it do to your friendships? Would you be comfortable with his friends?

If you are only attracted to dark haired men, add it to the list. You should be attracted to your soul mate, if the relationship is to have a potential to make you happy. Nothing that matters to you is too small or too silly to consider. It is possible that you have been attracted to that kind of man all of your life because your intuition has told you that your soul mate would have these qualities.

Think long and hard about these things. You are more likely going to have your lessons around some little thing you forgot to add or some thing you asked for that has a lot of other issues attached than from not getting what is on the list.

Now make another list. List every reason why you don't think you can have such a person come into your life.

One of the reasons why you don't have such a relationship now is that you are convinced that it is not possible for you for one reason or the other. Now is the time to explore what is keeping you from it: your own beliefs.

A belief that men will abandon you will lead that person to attract men who can't commit. A belief that people who have enough money will never like you acts like a money repellent. If you find yourself saying that there are no good men/women left in your city, you will not find good women or men.

Look around you and you will see: women who weigh twice as much as what you consider overweight with attractive men. Women who seem beyond your dreams with men who offer far less than you could in looks or position.

Your beliefs in your own unworthiness are keeping you from making these connections more than any reality of this sort of limitation you can observe in life around you.



MAKE ANOTHER LIST

Now, make a list of your limiting beliefs, then we will see what we can do about these limitations.

A list may have some of these beliefs...but is not limited to them.

- I am not pretty/handsome enough.
- I am too fat (thin, tall, short dark, light, freckled, ugly, gorgeous) to be attractive to the kind of person I really want.
- I am not smart enough.

- I am not interesting.
- I am too quiet (loud, bossy, naïve, weak, strong, stupid, brilliant)
- Nobody likes a, shy person (loudmouth....etc.)
- I don't have enough money (a house, a car, a horse, a retirement account, stock,)
- Women only look for men with lots of money.
- Men are only attracted to beautiful women.
- Women don't like short men (tall men, fat men, body builders, bald men, blonde men, dark men)

Men don't like short women (tall women, fat women, body builders, blonde women, dark women,)

Some of these beliefs may seem silly to you and some of them may seem sensible. The truth is none of them is a good reason to keep someone who loves you away.

Before you can draw what you want into your life, you must believe that it will happen and it will happen because that person will love you. You must change these core beliefs. It is not beneficial to try to go back and tell you why you feel this way. It is not important. What is important is that you know: That you are a beloved part of the interconnectedness of all things and the Universe supports you.

That however you think of the identity of the divine, God Goddess or Spirit, it is participating personally in your opportunities for growth.

That you are a personally loveable human being and that people are waiting to come forward in your life to show you that.

That the only thing you need to do to change your life is to know that you can and believe and act as though the change has already been made.



SAY THE MAGIC WORDS

It is magic and there is a reason that it works. You may think that you can think about it and change your belief system according to what you have decided it is. You can clearly see that you should change your beliefs, so they should follow, right?

Well they don't. They don't because they are stored well below and to the side of the rational part of the brain. They have become firmly entrenched and cannot be reprogrammed by thought or logical decisions.

You have to get to these places with repetitions the same way your mother did when you were little and your girlfriends did in your teens and your third grade teacher and all the people and institutions in your life that have added beliefs into your brain..

That is why you keep hearing about affirmations. They sound silly, even embarrassing. You have been taught not to brag about yourself. You have been taught to use your rational mind to make changes in your life.

The very people who have used repetitions to program your beliefs have taught you this.

So it is time to learn the magic words, and how to use them.

An affirmation is a positive statement that is in the present tense. You don't want to say..."I will have..." because it always stay in the future and will never get into your present life that way. You must put the affirmation in the present tense so that when it has cleared your old beliefs and added your new ones, it will be true in the present.

I am attracting the man/woman of my dreams is a good all-purpose affirmation for attracting love. But before we get to that one, let's clear up some negative areas.

Try this one, "The man (or woman) of my dreams loves everything I am". Or "My soul mate loves the person I really am."

Say these affirmations our loud ten times. You will notice that lots of little negative thoughts creeping in. They will be telling you all the reasons that this affirmation is not true and cannot possibly work for you. These are the little thought devils that have been keeping you from your dreams.

So line them up. Put them on paper. Make another list. As fast as you can, keep writing them down. As more come, write those. Take as much paper as it needs. Say the affirmation again when they slow down and watch as more come up. Write all of it down on paper. Keep doing this until the thoughts stop or are just repeating.

Look at that piece of paper. Look at each item. Do you believe those things? Many of them have come directly from thought that other people have put into your head. Many of them are for a different time in your life. Many of them are not true at all. Look at them. They are the things that are stopping you from meeting the person who will really be good for you. They are the ten-foot high stone fence between you and a happy growthful relationship. But that fence is not stronger than you, so tear it down. Blow it up if you must. Or just take it apart small stone by small stone. It is your choice and your style.

Carry that piece of paper around with you for a couple of days. Keep the pencil too, so when more of the little devils pop up you can capture them on the paper. Keep saying the affirmation.

It took many years for you to develop these negative thought patterns...these devils. It may take a couple of weeks to change these patterns. But stay with it, don't let one of them remain unchallenged.

When you are pretty sure that you have eliminated the thought patterns around this affirmation, burn that paper ceremoniously. Choose a full moon to do this. For the next two weeks relax with the knowledge that you are preparing to find your soul mate. On the new moon, begin your new affirmations.

Repeat each affirmation seven times and do it at least seven times a day.



LIST OF AFFIRMATIONS

My highest soul mate is coming into my life now.

My beloved loves me just the way I am.

I have everything I need to attract the love of my life.

I trust the universe to send me the highest and best soul mate.

As I love myself more, my soul mate comes lovingly into my life.

I am lovable and deserve love in my life.

I honor all the love in my life and so attract my soul mate effortlessly.

My soul mate sees my beauty and honors the goodness of my heart.

I am without need and full of love for the soul mate who is about to enter my life.

My soul mate is ready to enter my life now.

I am exactly the person my soul mate will love.



CLOSE YOUR EYES AND SEE....

Close your eyes take a couple of deep breaths and relax completely. Using the list you made earlier, visualize the soul mate you would like to enter your life now. Remember to give him or her all the qualities that you put on the list. Picture that person moving around in your home. Picture what his or her home would look like. When you are happy with the picture, add one thing to it. Add a marker.

The marker can be a color or an object, I once added a dog. It can be anything. This is the thing you will notice when you meet this person that tells you that this is indeed what you have called into your life.

Surround your vision with clear white light and watch it float away into the universe. Now let it go. It is out there preparing and manifesting for you. Don't worry about it. Have confidence that this is the experience the universe will bring to you,

Do not attach any need to this image do not attach any fears. If you do you will only manifest neediness and fear. Just let it go in the knowledge that it is out there getting ready to come into your life.

There is no need to make it happen. It is no help to feel neediness for it, as a matter of fact that might push it further out as your needs which become your beliefs, manifest.

While you are waiting to have this visualization manifest, fill your days with the things you love. Let the love that is already there come in. Children, pets, gardens, friends, relatives, wherever you feel love and know that it is being returned, is where you should be. Spend time in it and don't be afraid to give it out lavishly.

If you don't feel that you have all of the above resources for love, then look around for people you can help. Help out of love and feel the love pour back in. The more you immerse yourself in love the more you magnetize it to you.

Love is love. It is not worth any less or more from pets or children or your mother than it is from a soul mate, for indeed, they are your soul mates too.

Give thanks every day for the love you do have. Give thanks for the love that is coming to you. Don't whine. Don't feel sorry for yourself. Don't yearn.

Yearning brings yearning. Love brings love.



WHERE TO MEET,

THINGS THAT WORK

If it is your time, love will track you down like a cruise missile.

Lynda Barry

Soul mates will find you, given half a chance. I have actually seen cases where they just come and knock at the door, though this is rare. You will have better luck finding them if you actually get out of the house.

Because soul mates are part of your karmic family, meeting them through your own family connections or those connections that feel like family is often the best choice.

Spending time with family or close friends will often widen your circle of friends to include their friends and eventually friends of friends.

Widening circles is the way you meet people. The first level being people you meet directly and first, the second being their friends and the third and so on being friends who wander into the circle through the widening levels.

But most people want to make it a first level meeting. Probably because of the technical mentality of people today trying to minimize the time spent socially into something “productive”.

This might work in business the technical areas of business but even there most people know that they need to form a network. Why should finding your soul mate be somehow more direct than finding the people who you need to encounter in business?

This network can be formed almost anywhere. You can start with people who are already your friends; you can start with family and their friends. You can start from a group that has similar interests. You can start pursuing new interests.

Mostly you need to get out of the house. Be friendly, remember, most of the people you meet are trying to meet people too and are very afraid of rejection. If you can help them relax, you will have friends.

And remember to reject rejection. If someone doesn't have social skills enough to be polite, don't let that lack of taste and poise reflect on your own feelings of self worth. Sadly, there are quite a few people who don't bother to learn social skills. They should not be the ones by whom you measure yourself.

If you are pursuing interests in order to meet people, it is important to really get into the interests themselves. The people who are also interested in these pursuits will then have something to share with you.

Laura was just divorced and wanted to meet some single people. She decided that skiing was a way to do this. She had just begun skiing and enjoyed it. So every Friday she would go to the slope and fight her way down the bunny slope then back to the lodge to meet people, men people. She met no one.

But she started trying to ski a little bit faster. She took a few lessons. She tried harder slopes. She was beginning to love the sport. She signed up for a ski trip to Vermont. On the bus she met other skiers. They were better than her, they had been skiing for years, but she decided to try skiing with them. She liked it. She had to push herself. She had never had so much fun. After skiing they enjoyed meals together and dancing.

Back home, they kept in touch. She took two more trips that winter. On one of them, she met Jon through her friends. They talked all that evening and skied together the next day. On the bus going home, they made plans to see more of each other.

If Laura had stayed on the bunny slopes, she would not have made the connections that brought her to this new romance.

Another way to meet good people is to go out and try to help. Get into community activities. You can work through your church or any of the volunteer groups that always need help. People you meet there will share your values and you can meet them naturally in the course of your own work. In the meantime you will have done something worthwhile.

Sharing the love of a sport or activity is part of the connection, you can't fake it. If you have to fake it you have chosen the wrong path.

Imagine if you found someone who was avid at some sport or activity that clearly bores you. You would not enjoy that encounter. You need to find something you can honestly share.

When you find the thing that you really enjoy, you will find people who like to share it and you will have opened up your life to a new source of joy besides.



SOME THINGS WOMEN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MEN

A man falls in love through his eyes, a woman through her ears.

~Woodrow Wyatt

Men and women are different. That is usually a thing we like about each other. And sometimes it drives us nuts. But we need to understand the differences that aren't so obvious in order to understand what it is that the other gender values.

First consider this. Men naturally understand power. Women naturally understand emotions. This doesn't mean that men don't have emotions and that women don't understand anything about power. It means that these are our natural areas. There are many levels between these two poles. But power is usually the first thing a man will check out in a situation and emotion is the first thing a woman will sense.

This is very ingrained and goes back into the dawn of man. In fact it goes farther. Animals who live in troops or tribes or packs organize themselves socially in this way. The males work within a hierarchy that depends on strength and intelligence and posturing. An alpha male is the leader of the males in that particular pack.

A male who is banished from the pack has very little chance of survival.

The females also have a hierarchy but it tends to be more about care-taking than it does about power. The power that females use is more about emotional instincts and much subtler.

So here we are all sophisticated and intelligent beginning to move into outer space and we can still look around at groups of men and see the same posturing that occurs in wolf packs and gorilla troops.

But the truth is, we like them and we'd better try to understand.

A man will enter a roomful of men and he will begin to rank them: who is Alpha, who is up and who is down. They really have a sixth sense about these things.

But one of the things you need to know that nobody mentions is that the woman a man chooses has everything to do with his perception of his own power.

When a woman feels insecure, she says "I'm fat." When a man feels insecure he says, "My girlfriend is fat."

This old joke says a lot about how a woman projects the public image of a man. The whole reason a wolf fights to become Alpha is so he can earn the right to mate with the Alpha female.

This assures that the strongest genes get passed on to future generations. Men have an instinct very much like that.

Men fight to become Alpha by earning money or excelling in sports or piling up honors in a field or finding a position of power in another milieu. Once they have acquired that power they seek an Alpha female.

Should a man acquire an Alpha female before he has actually accomplished earning Alpha status, he feels that the woman will add to his perceived status and make it likelier that he will be ranked highly in the hierarchy.

When men are quite young, this perception of Alpha has everything to do with how a woman looks. To acquire this sort of projection a woman must be in the higher range of perfection in looks. At this time, this seems to have everything to do with slimness and perhaps height. It also has to do with style. It has become the scale by which young women measure themselves and their self-worth at an age before true accomplishment is possible.

This push toward Alpha status is extremely strong in the young. It is a biological function that functions as a process that insures breeding the best young and thereby the strongest humans for the future. It often seems like life or death. It is what the need to be “popular” is all about. It is why some women will starve themselves and feel completely unworthy if they are not slim enough. Slimness is not about anything but current style. Look at some of the Alpha females in the past and you will see a lot more roundness. But it is the measure of the current projected style.

Now, not all men will become Alpha. Indeed, most of them will not. They will then take whatever ranking they have earned and try to increase their appearance of power by the female partner they chose. In this way hoping that at some future point they will be higher in the ranks.

Many of the men who do not become Alphas just mellow out and find a lot of happiness in their lives. They make good parents and good partners. Others settle restlessly with the lack of the level of power they sought and feel that they got less than they deserved in this life.

It is usually in one's thirties that a man must come to terms with his position in the ranks. But some men who are not particularly competitive drop back in their teens or twenties and just try to have a life.

Even the Alpha's come to a time when they must give up their rank to a younger and stronger generation.

These are issues that women often don't consider. And for some reason very little relationship advice will include this information.

As a woman you have to decide which kind of man suits you. Many women would be very happy to be with a dropout from the ranking and just have a happy life. But often, among those women there is the idea that they have done better.

This is because in this world, the ranking of a woman has come from the reflected ranking of the man she is with. It has not always been this way as these things are in the animal world, but it has been this way politically for long enough that it is the message we get from society as a whole.

Because of this message, making the choice of being a partner to a man who has opted out of the whole business of ranking, even though he might be the very best partner, can seem like a choice to dishonor yourself in some vague way. Very often it is because of this sort of thing that women will choose an Alpha wannabe rather than being happy with an unranked partner.

Another issue is that the field this ranking is part of may not be one with which the woman identifies. For instance, if you see sports as the hero arena, then a business man, no matter how strong he is in his area, will not strike you as an alpha. Even a millionaire might seem like kind of a wimp. And conversely, if money is your marker for an Alpha then a jock won't do it for you.

If you feel that you need an Alpha Male be prepared for some realities.

Leading the group dynamic is always going to be a priority for him. He will spend a lot of his time and effort in his Alpha arena. Whether it is work or sports or organizations, the Alpha male needs a place where he is the leader and will put a great deal of energy into that pursuit. If you expect to be the only focus of his attention you will have a hard time in this kind of relationship.

An Alpha will put a lot of pressure for success on you and on his children.

Other women will pursue an Alpha even if he is married.



IF YOU WANT AN ALPHA MALE

If you want an Alpha male, you must be an Alpha female in the arena which is being pursued. Look around at the women who are pursued as partners by the men in that arena. Notice the qualities they are seeking. In addition to these particular qualities for clothes, manners etc, there are some basic attributes of the Alpha female.

She must be a leader of the other females. This does not mean taking power the way men do it but using your female sensitivity to bond with the other women in the group in a way that makes them look up to you.

She must be physically attractive in the style of the group.

She must exude a certain class and style that sets her apart from the others in a dignified way. Look at lady wolf Alpha's. They are tough, but they have an incredible dignity.

Alpha's females are intelligent, both intellectually and emotionally.

Alpha females tend to be care-takers of the group's females and offspring. They take responsibility.



Jake was raised on speed. He skied fast, raced cars and motorcycles, anything that went fast. He lived in the world of men who sought speed. A regular Johnathan Livingston Seagull, but Jake wanted speed on Earth terms, so there was gravity to deal with and injuries.

When he walked into a room, even when no one knew his history, men sort of bowed their heads in acknowledgement of an Alpha. Women loved him.

When he began dating Sarah, she just adored him, but clearly saw that she was in a unique situation. Sarah was a counselor and she had her own milieu, but it was quite different from the world Jake inhabited.

His priorities were not relating but motion. He was really very sweet in relationship, but if an opportunity came up to race or to find new ways to attain speed, he would just get caught up in it and disappear.

When he was with her, he was wonderful, loving, intense, and most of all present. When he was away, he didn't call, he didn't make dates except at the spur of the moment and for all she knew, he never gave her a second thought.

Sarah was busy enough with her own life so that it didn't bother her much at first. He would come and go and she would just make room for him.

After awhile, he began to take her to the races with him. She felt honored. Sarah was a Bordeaux type of woman, but she cheerfully spent the day in the pits drinking beer and eating whatever dusty food was available.

She liked seeing Jake on his own turf. He pretty much left her on her own as he talked to the other racers. He especially liked helping young people who were beginning and needed the advice of an old pro.

Sarah enjoyed these days. It was interesting to watch him in his own realm. It was a bit frightening to see him race. It seemed that there was danger everywhere and at high speeds, but it was exhilarating too. And Sarah felt honored to bask in his reflected honor in this place where he was clearly respected.

It was fairly easy for Sarah to live the relationship this way during the summer, but with fall came a load of work in her own area.

Jake had no interest in modifying his life in any way to make room for her needs. They tried to keep it going, but gradually the pressures of their separate lives took its

toll. They drifted apart without much stress. It didn't occur to Laura to pressure him to change and she didn't feel that she wanted to live her life as a racing groupie.

She also knew that there were always plenty of young women around him and without her vigilance and presence, he would just find one who was more flexible and live his life his own way.

And so he did.



MOST PEOPLE DON'T NEED TO BE ALPHA

You can eliminate a lot of stress and self-esteem problems if you just decide that you have no need to be Alpha Female. Most people don't have to do this. Most people are happier fitting comfortably into a life.

They like their men to come home and spend time with the family. Most people are just happier this way.

But they often feel that they haven't lived up to their potential if they haven't succeeded in becoming Alpha. This is expressed by the words, "I could have done better."

If what you want is a home and family and vacations that don't include the whole pack or the pack's activities, then you would not be happy with an Alpha.

You need to look around at the wider selection that is all around you. Find the nice, non-competitive guys who just work hard and love who they love. These men do not expect that you have to be a perfect reflection of their ambitions. They just like who you are.

They really enjoy leaving the rat race at the end of the day and coming home.

Most women are happiest with these men. But often, the same women seem to think that they need to prove themselves by pursuing an Alpha. If you are in this group you may want to give it some thought.



ANOTHER CATEGORY

There is another group. It is smaller but it is interesting. These are the people who are just independent. They are not people who work in groups most of the time, but may just take over

as Alpha if it is needed. They won't settle into that role very often. They just do it for awhile and then go on their way.

They tend to choose their mates because they like them the way they are. They are people who do not force their lives into any molds. You would need to be pretty flexible to choose a mate like this, but it would always be interesting.

It is an fascinating group. They may be male or female. They don't settle down very often into a routine or if they do they don't stay long. If you are looking stability and security, stay away from these wanderers.

They are many things, but they are not boring. You can have a nice relationship with an Independent if you are also that way. If you love a new challenge and have a lot going on in your own life, this might be a perfect choice for you. If you don't expect a life that is completely shared, or completely predictable, this could be your mate. .

If you are looking for someone to just kick around with and who will give you room to have your own life, this kind of person might be right up your alley.

What you don't want to do is to find one of these independent people and then try to change them. It won't work and you will feel rejected.

Striving for Alpha status is not everything about relationships, but it is a seldom-discussed area that needs to be considered when you are looking for reasons why your choices are not working. If you are seeking Alphas and really wanting to live the life of a more modest ranking, then you should rethink your motivation when it comes to the relationship you seek.

Two Alphas are likely to join to accomplish something together. The other ranks are more likely to be the kind of soul mates who put their relationship first. They are both legitimate soul mates, but it is important to know the difference. If you are looking for a close comfortable soul mate, despite your biological inclinations toward rising in the hierarchy, you might not find what you want with an Alpha.



SOME THINGS MEN SHOULD REMEMBER ABOUT WOMEN

A man has only one escape from his old self: to see a different self in the mirror of some woman's eyes.

~ Clare Boothe Luce~

The lessons of the Alpha apply here, too. It is important for men to know that with women the Alpha competition is very subliminal. Women will rather happily find a mate who is not competing for Alpha status and not give it another thought. This is because as men are masters of power and very aware of that quality, women are masters of emotion. Once emotion is the issue, competition is irrelevant to women.

Because men's power issues are pretty straightforward, women's emotional issues may seem very convoluted to men. The underlying condition that defines the instinctual level of women's emotional motivation has everything to do with the fact that nature made them to be mothers.

Their motivations, at least at the beginning of their desire for relationship are:

To find a mate who will be the best parent both genetically and practically.

To make a relationship that is supportive enough to make a safe place for her children.

That sounds simple until you add a couple of social changes that complicate the issue. For the last several thousand years, a woman has taken her status from the man to whom she is attached. This is pretty solidly implemented in our society.

So a woman will try to find the man with the highest status available. This is not always her wisest choice as the high status males spend a lot of their time holding that status and trying to compete to the next level. This does not make them the ideal family nurturers. But it is pretty ingrained socially.

Add to this the fact that in the last twenty or thirty years things have changed and she now feels that she must have her own accomplishment in a career area to be considered successful.

This second condition does not preclude the first; it just adds to it and works often at cross purposes.

This is one reason why women are confusing.

Men's lives are much more straightforward than women's lives.

Women, because their lives are traditionally about nurturing, are encouraged from the time they are little girls to be emotionally aware. They express their emotions, they often feel other people's feelings just like they were their own and they place a value on emotional realities.

Men, because their lives are essentially competitive are taught from childhood to put emotions aside and concentrate on the task at hand. This does not mean that men don't have emotions, because of course they do. But their emotional knowledge is not usually as developed, consequently, they are not generally as good at expressing emotions as women are.

For this reason men are not as comfortable dealing with emotional interactions that women feel necessary in the bonding process.



THE BIOLOGICAL CLOCK

There is a time in a woman's life if she hasn't had children yet, when she experiences something we often call the ringing of the biological clock. This sounds much less intense than it is.

When the time comes for a woman to have children, there are really physical and emotional cravings for a child that can be completely overwhelming. The biological clock is more like a hammer.

If you are around her at this time of her life, which can happen anywhere from about 21 to about 35, or more, sometimes, if she has no children, then you are being considered as the father of her children. You are not just her lover, not just a romantic liaison, but as a potential co-parent.

It may not be what you are looking for in the relationship but it is certainly what she needs.

The same qualities that men look for in women apply here too. But since women have certain timing and biological imperatives, she will be seeking different kinds of men at different times of her life.

It takes a different kind of man to form a family with at twenty than she might need as a companion and playmate in her forties.

There are three distinct stages of a woman's adulthood. Each of these is marked by a physiological change. The Maiden part of life begins with the onset of menses. Maiden has nothing to do with sexual experience or the lack of it. It is the time of young adulthood and courtship. The next phase is the Mother and begins with bearing a child. The last phase is the Crone or Elder and it begins with Menopause.

Each of these phases is determined with the one thing about women that people often forget when considering a relationship:

A woman is physically the vessel of life.

You might not want to deal with that if you are a man looking for a soul Mate but a great deal of why women behave as they do is in relationship to this fact. This even applies to women who

choose not to have children or to have more children. Even Menopause is intimately related to this childbearing reality.

Women may deny it; men may want to ignore it. Employers may want to pretend it is not there, but women are women because of this one thing. Or we wouldn't have a human race.

Everything physical about women is there because of this fact.

Perhaps it is because we are trying to ignore this as a society that the preferred shape for a stylish woman, at this time is a thin, slim hiped, small breasted woman. But if you look at pictures from any other time, you will notice that an attractive woman looks like a woman in childbearing years. In fact, she has the very figure that many women today are fighting to lose. Full breasts, round hips and a round belly make the shape that is supposed to be a healthy adult female. A woman is not obese because she is shaped like a woman.

Even if you have found a career woman who is absolutely not interested in having a family, these physical things will be true. She will still have monthly cycles; she will still have a body that changes shape according to the timing of her fertility. And hormones, which are a part of her reproductive system, rule her sex drive.

This should be very basic information, but men tend to forget this side of a woman's life unless they are actively trying to make a baby. It is a fact for women, whether it is convenient or not.

Now, these hormones aren't any more mysterious and compelling than, say testosterone. It is just that they operate differently. The emotions attached to them are different. And their phases are more predictable and subtle.

By the way, there is an interesting phenomenon that occurs when women spend a lot of their time in a group like an office. They synchronize their cycles. This can be pretty interesting. It means that the ups and downs are magnified. So it is a good idea to know that women's cycles are not all about moodiness. There are times of glorious ups and sexiness and outward energy at the beginning of the cycle. The second part of the cycle is about pulling inward and you will see slight irritations at being interrupted from this inner dynamic. The things that bother women now should be taken seriously, because they have been ignored during the beginning of the cycle and now present themselves. You will find that during the second half of the cycle that women are more like men. They are much less inclined to bury important issues because they want to be compliant. You will notice that they speak up and even become quite assertive about what they need at this time. During the menses, women often like to be in the company of other women or else just be left alone. It is a very inward time. Emotions and nerves might be a little edgier.

I was taught that the concept of the moon lodge, to which women once withdrew during their menses, was because the men wanted them to be separated from the group. I later learned that during that time it is far easier for a woman to be in the company of women. No doubt, the women chose this method of withdrawal from responsibilities. The expectation that one will be pleasant when one wishes to be grumpy does not exist in the women's lodge. Grumpy is allowed and there is no man getting irritated about it.

Here is a nice tip. Often when a group of women has their cycles coordinated, they follow a regular moon cycle. With the beginning of the cycle usually being the new moon, mid cycle or ovulation being on the full moon. Once you get used to this you can easily tell what to expect, by looking up.

But women's emotions come from far more than their hormones. Women are often taught that they are responsible for the emotions in the people around them. They have a second nature about these things that is developed by the teachings to girl children.

Even those women, who don't really enjoy emotional experiences as much as more active ones, have usually learned the ability to use emotions in interesting ways in their lives and those of the people close to them.

Nurturing is a part of the woman's natural role. Nurturing is a very emotional business. There is also the need to deal with the testosterone that is leading the other camp. There is a need to heal emotions of people who have been spending time enveloped all day in the testosterone and adrenaline of competition. There is emotional healing needed almost daily.

It works out rather nicely that women deal with emotions well.

These days when women spend all day in those arenas (and they have lots of adrenaline and a fair amount of testosterone too) they feel that it would be nice if they could go home to some nurturing too. That is often why they want to talk when they get home and men are dealing with the whole thing by wanting to be quiet.



THE DANCE...BEGINNING TO CONNECT

Do you want to know a good way to fall in love? Just associate with all your pleasant experiences with someone, and disassociate from all the unpleasant ones.

~Richard Bandler~

Ah, falling in love. It makes you happy, it makes you crazy; it pushes all of your alive buttons. It is wonderful and terrifying.

When you find a soul mate and fall in love the dance is faster. It is often love at first sight. And even though you are second-guessing yourself all the way, you know that this is going to be something important.

One of the first things you notice is that the soul mate doesn't seem like he or she is made of the same materials as other people. There is something more electric, something more alive and something more compelling about this person the first time you find yourself in his or her presence.

You may find yourself asking people, "Who IS that?" over and over. You may find yourself asking the same thing. Even after you finally meet and when it is supposed to be apparent who this is (in conventional terms).

Things can move very quickly when you meet a soul mate. This may not seem wise at the time. You need to really follow your instincts with this one. And of course, the soul mate experience needs to be separated from the normal attractions that are run by the sexual drive which is a formidable force of its own. The feeling is different though, even when there is a fair amount of sexual tension mixed up with the soul mates who has appeared in your life to be your lover.

There are some very obvious things that happen when men and women begin to become attracted to one another. Soul Mates often dance a little faster. The meeting itself is usually more intense. Should the soul mate be very socialized to the regular pattern he or she expects, this can be a bit scary.

It was a party. Elaine was happily perched right in the middle of things. On the far side of the little group She noticed Roger, a friend who was a writer, he was talking to someone she had never seen before.

There were several odd things about this. Even though they were talking quite quietly, Elaine could hear every word they said. She was carrying on conversations with her friends, as well as hearing their whole conversation.

It was about the finer points of motorcycles and she found it fascinating. This was an oddity in itself, because even though she had a motorcycle, years ago, and loved it, she had virtually no interest in how it worked or how to make it do anything at all better than it just did.

Elaine couldn't take her eyes off this new man. He was a bit craggy with a gray beard and a very unassuming manner. He was dressed in the everyman style: jeans, a plain shirt, leather bomber jacket. There was nothing terribly noticeable about him except that he was completely compelling her interest and he had no idea that she was there at all.

She tried to focus back on the people she was with. She still talked to them and listened to them and still heard every word that he was saying.

Soon she began to convince herself that they had a lot in common. Since she had limited common ground with motorcycle parts, Elaine couldn't quite say what that might have been.

So, as she left, she stopped by to see Roger, said hello, good night, was introduced to Dave and promptly handed him her business card and brazenly said, "you need to call me." And she walked out.

Elaine didn't hear from Dave after that, which didn't really surprise her. But they had overlapping circles of friends. She would be at a party of get together and she would suddenly feel something at the back of her neck like a tingle. She would turn around and he would be there...usually across the room and not seeing her, but there.

When he was anywhere near her, she couldn't take her eyes off him. She was still seeing someone else but he just drew her attention.

Things changed slowly for awhile, she and her current boyfriend broke up and the encounters with Dave became more regular and he slowly moved closer, it took a couple of months. Finally, one night, they had a very careful encounter. It happened like this:

That Friday Elaine wandered into the Club after a party that was ghastly she needed to see people she actually liked. It was Friday, It was crowded but she found a spot with her friends and a seat at the bar at that

She settled in next to a friend. This she was not feeling social.

The words "can you pass me my drink?" Came from a voice behind her. The finger pointed at a tall glass on the bar.

She picked up the drink and turned to pass it to the voice behind me.

"Here you go." she said and noticed it was Dave.

"Thanks" he said politely and turned to rejoin his friends who were ensconced against the wall behind her.

She resumed her chat with her friends, She kept talking and almost forgot Dave was behind her.

Then he bumped into her as someone was trying to pass by and excused himself she smiled. Her attention went back to her friends. She wasn't feeling like flirting, she just wanted comfortable talk with people she liked.

A little pressure on her back..."Uh, those two?" said the voice. She knew who it was and followed the pointing finger to another glass of the same and a beer and turned to pass them, this time she was relaxing a bit and granted him a small smile and a hair shake. To which he responded, "Do you have a light?" and held up a cigarette.

She handed him a lighter, still turned toward him. He lit his cigarette, looked at her for a minute and said "Thanks." Then he turned back to his friends.

Damn, Elaine thought, I need to get this right out of my head. I'm just being a waitress here. And she turned to talk to her little group. She was a bit mad at herself for flirting with him after all this time only to be dismissed again.

A slight pressure from the right and she looked to see him leaning against the bar, still focused on his friends, but because the place was getting more crowded, very much into her space.

Soon he turned around to order another drink and asked for still another light. She handed him the lighter and pulled out her own cigarette which he lit. Of course, he had to. "That's the longest cigarette I ever saw." he observed.

"It's a girl cigarette, see", she said holding it up, "it has flowers."

"Can I try one?" he asked.

Now this was interesting. Most men wouldn't do that. Most men are very threatened by girl things like its going to fill them up with estrogen and emasculate them or something. This man obviously:

- 1 liked women and
2. was very confident about his own masculinity.

She liked that. He bought her a drink.

She was prepared to begin to get to know him now. He turned with a smile and went back talking to his friends. Maybe, she thought, I should just go. As she was considering that, he was back telling her the cigarette tasted good. She noticed her friends had vacated the next barstool and he moved over to it.

He told her he had just gotten back from Daytona for some national motorcycle races. And that he raced dirt bikes in the summer. "Even though, I'm kind of an old man for that." he added sheepishly.

He was turning out to be not at all what she expected. As he talked he was the arrogant man's man she was expecting.

Still, he was quite accomplished in a man's man way. He had lived a great deal of his life in the world of sports. Not conventional, professional kinds of sports, but impressive.

All of this was related in a mild and self-effacing manner that was downright sweet. Who was this guy?

After excusing herself to find a restroom she returned to find both of their seats occupied and him talking to a woman she didn't know. She got her coat (actually it was a cape) and said good night as she walked by.

"You're going?" he asked...he actually sounded disappointed.

"Things to do tomorrow." She more or less lied and with a wave and a modified Loretta Young swish turn of the cape, she was gone.

With a soul mate you often find unexpected parallels in your life. You find something more than just normal attraction. Soul Mates have a compelling nature even in the first minutes. If their fear of the intensity pushes them away, something else, something they can't name, draws them back.

Thursday evening Elaine went to a visualization meeting at Unity church. On the way home, she wanted some company and stopped off at the Club to see who would be around. As she entered she noticed there were two separate groups of friends there, both glad to see her. She needed that that night, just some companionship and good talk.

On the far right was a group of creative people she had worked with off and on for years. In the corner on the left were the professors from the University, who were always good for conversation.

In the middle, there was a trench coat with its back to her. She went right first and joined the conversation with that group. From there she could see that in the big trench coat was Dave. Facing the bar, he didn't notice her at all. She walked past him to talk to the professors and get a drink.

They chatted for awhile and she returned to the creative group, she was interested to hear to hear if there was anything going on in the arts community that might result in a job.

She walked back toward the other corner after a while and an arm appeared out of the trench coat, pulled here toward the bar and Dave said "Sit down."

Interesting approach, she thought, direct, I like it.

After just a bit of small talk, he looked at her and said, "I used to be a knight in England, around thirteen, fourteen hundred."

Well, that got her attention. She wanted to be careful not to spook him. If she told him she had been having past life regressions about that time and place since she returned from a trip to England, she was sure he would not be able to handle it. She really didn't want him to run away

"No, kidding," she replied carefully, "maybe I knew you, I was there, too."

He quickly began to back pedal. "I don't know if I believe in that stuff."

She knew he was going to do that. "Well, I know I do," she replied carefully, "I've had too many confirmations to doubt it, but you can believe what you want."

He began to tell her how natural he was the first time he had been around horses a few years ago. How he won a rodeo after only two weeks of riding. "It was so natural, like I had done it before."

They spoke of Europe and a mutual love of England. She had been to the Caribbean the year before and he told her about taking a year off work and sailing around there. They talked for hours, like old friends.

She mentioned giving him the card several months ago. He said he didn't remember it at all. He held her hand while they were talking at the end of the evening he walked her to her car and they said good night.

Of course they saw each other again and that finally began a lovely relationship. Remember these relationships are meant to be. You can relax. If it is a soul mate, you will get together. Even if it seems impossible or takes years to really begin, it will happen if the beginning felt right. There is no need to let them make you crazy.



KEEPING IT WORKING

THE BEGINNING

Each friend represents a world in us, a world not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born

~Anais Nin~

As you begin a relationship with your Soul Mate the first thing you want to do is to let this relationship be what it is. Spirit has put this person in your life at this time because there are gifts in it for you both. Give yourself permission to enjoy this time.

This is a celebration of one of the wonders of your life. Consider the time to be sacred and wondrous and give this beginning all the time and attention that it deserves.

Forget everything that happened to you in relationships before this. Let go of the past, you have done all your forgiveness and release work, so you needn't expect that this relationship will be a repeat of the past. This is not the time to let little worries and fears and frustrations that are old patterns from your past, interfere.

Your new Soul Mate comes to your life full of potential and promise. Honor that. There is no need to worry; there is no reason to control. You are just where you should be, let it unfold.

Don't be afraid to be romantic. This is the time when you should do the flowers and the dinners in dimly lit places. Indulge yourself; let the moon be magical again. A long walk holding hands can set your heart soaring at this time.

Enjoy being part of your own romance. Dress nicely and wear the good perfume. This is the time for the two of you to find all the little common ground you can share. It is a time to explore potentials. If your knees are weak and your head is spinning this is as it should be. Spirit is bonding you in her most delightful dance. Be conscious in the moments as you star in your own romantic movie.

Try not to rush things. It won't be easy. The tendency with soul mates is to go early into sexual bonding. But try to take awhile with the kisses, enjoy the little thrill as your hands touch.

It is like a dance, let the man think he is leading. Relationships are best when the man gets a chance to win the woman and the woman feels that he has worked a bit to win her. It is the way our social order has been for a long time. It makes both people feel valued, so it is important. Because men and women are equal it does not mean that they are the same. We have different needs. It is all part of the dance.

Stay positive. Don't look for problems that aren't there. Don't worry that it is too good to be true, worry could be the most useless thing we ever do, but to spoil this wonderful time with worry is to dishonor your love and yourself. You don't want to fall into that trap. Don't obsess about your partner's last affiliation. Don't obsess about anything. This should be the place where you begin to let go of obsessive tendencies because you don't need them anymore.

Dream beautiful dreams and get out of the way of letting them come true.

Talk to positive people. Spend your time when you are not together with the friends who honestly wish you well. This is no time to talk to the friends who find fault with everything. You are creating your dreams now; you don't want to create negative outcomes.

Toxic people are especially taxing at any time; they can cause a lot of undue stress and misunderstandings. They have no business influencing you at this time. If this means that you have to keep a distance from some family members at this time that is ok. If you just can't do that, try not to talk to them about your new interest until you are more sure of it.

This is your time. You make the choices. You can cast your movie as well as starring in it. Don't let anyone rain on your parade!

Pay attention to your own feelings and the directions you get from your heart. Banish the little worries and fears, they have no place here.



BEYOND THE BEGINNING:

THE TRANSITION AFTER THE FIRST MONTH

Life is a series of collisions with the future; it is not the sum of what we have been, but what we yearn to be.

~Jose Ortega y Gasset~

This is the area in which you form a relationship. The falling in love part is the glue that bonds the two of you but as you move beyond that (usually at three to six weeks) you need to take each other into your real lives.

Here you will find the real story of whether it will work for any length of time or not.

A little preparation will help, as will the positive knowledge that if your soul mate cares for you, he or she will probably be comfortable with the life that formed you.

In fact, you will often find that since you're the people in your family are your soul mates for sure, and this new love is a soul mate, they might have a few lives in common themselves.

There will be a lot of give and take here. The older you are the more that is required. This is because you are pretty well formed and not likely to be able to make major life changes for someone else. However the older you are the more patience and experience you have and you can take time to work things out.

It is a good thing to be as honest as possible about the way you really operate and the things that really bother you. You might think that the little things that your partner does that usually bother you just don't when you are starting. You may even find them endearing. But these same things might get under your skin enough to harm the relationship as you go on. So tell him or her that you really don't like this or that and see what you can do about starting the habits from the beginning that will help the relationship in the long run. There is also more of a spirit of cooperation at the beginning when the bonds between you are growing.

This time of adjustment is best taken slowly. The bonding that you do at the beginning of a relationship goes a long way later on in forming the kind of patterns you need in someone you can live with.

The younger you are, the more natural this time is as you are still forming. It is much simpler to take on the patterns of another person, for each of you. But do not deny who you really are because you think your lover will want to hear something else. If you are in a relationship that

will last, your partner needs to love you for exactly who you are. This is not possible if you are not being yourself.

One of the hardest things we can do in a relationship is to expose our true selves, especially the parts for which we have been criticized in the past. In intimate relationships, political correctness only goes so far.

For instance, if your partner is going to be dealing with your temper in the relationship, don't try to pretend that you are always on an even keel. Some people need a good fight now and then to get to intimacy. I don't mean cheap shots or cruelty, but yelling and disagreements will happen. Don't pretend it won't.

If your emotional outlet tends to sarcasm, it is best to see how your partner deals with this as soon as possible. Some people really glory in this; they enjoy a good verbal sparring complete with sarcasm, bon mots and double entendre. Some people find this tedious and prefer a good yell. It is best to know who you are dealing with.

If you are at variances in temperament, that must be addressed. You can learn to deal with another style of argument, but only if you know what it is going to be.

Of course the very best thing is to find someone who has roughly the same style as you do. So you may want to add that quality to your list.

Of the things that often come up: smokers often date non-smokers, drinkers (not alcoholics, just drinkers) can get involved with non-drinkers and morning people get involved with night people. Often the non-smoker, non-drinker or morning person will be inclined to put a moral equivalent on these qualities. That is a bad idea. If you intend to continue the relationship, it will be counter-productive.

If you really cannot tolerate these habits, do not get involved with these people.

Probably you were interested in them in the first place because they were unique, non-conformist, and a bit adventurous and interesting. They know that these habits in the 90's are politically incorrect. They have taken that issue and most others into consideration and chosen what they will do.

Attempts to criticize them or shame them or coerce them will not be effective. As a matter of fact since they tend to be non-conformists, it will trigger the opposite reaction. If they are ready to quit, they'll quit, if they decide they want to get up in the morning, they'll get up. This doesn't mean that they will fall asleep easily at your appointed time. There is a reason for this that has to do with body clocks or a need for silence in which to be creative or any number of life conditions.

If you are the smoker, drinker or night person in a relationship, you will have to decide how to cope with the pressures to change. Or you will have to resign yourself to a lot of arguments or ending the relationship.

If one of you only eats Chinese or vegetarian food and the other one likes French and Northern Italian, well, that has no real moral equivalent and you will have to experiment and try to deal with it.

Sometimes one partner has a very refined taste in décor and the other likes life a bit ore crude or unsophisticated.

All these things will need working out and compromise.

But the areas you will find most difficult are the areas where one partner puts a moral judgment on the other's habits.

If you feel strongly about many of the issues in this chapter, go back to your list and change it.

It is very necessary in a relationship to accept the other and love him or her for exactly what they are too, even if they are not exactly like you. In this time, when people can be very judgmental, it is still important.

You need this kind of love and acceptance and so does your partner.



THE SHADOW SIDE

We all have a shadow side. It is that part of us that is just never politically correct. Some of us hide them very well. Some of us are completely unaware of their existence. Most are in denial of at least some part of their shadow.

You know it. You can hear it. Those little voices in your head that you know will be “unacceptable” if spoken aloud. Often they are fun, but you don’t want to admit it. You would hate hearing these things from someone else.

Everyone has this part of themselves. It is ultimately the part of you that gives you form.

Pure light is lovely. But pure light has no form. It is the light and its interplay with shadow that lets us see something solid.

In relationship this is a double-edged sword. Because, both partners have shadow sides. And in the beginning, both are hiding them carefully. We present our best, our most acceptable sides as we are getting to know someone. This is normal.

The first feelings of connection therefore are for the other person in an incomplete way. And in an incomplete way, it is for you, too.

There is a feeling that things are shaky because we have an unconscious awareness that they don’t really know us.

This takes time. We really have to learn to trust them and vice-versa before either of the partners can see the entire person, before we allow each other to even glimpse the shadow side.

Sometimes the shadow side of the other is a pure delight. Sharp edged ways of seeing things or a wicked sense of humor are often stored in the shadow.

Sometimes it is a very difficult thing to live with. It may be a lifetime of resentment or control.

This is the reason that you can’t always tell at the beginning if the relationship will be able to work. You just don’t have a clear picture of the whole person until you see the hidden side.

Once you have seen it, it is entirely possible that it will be a thing that you can live with without much difficulty. It is also possible that you cannot. But you must experience it if you are to judge.

In the best relationships, the shadow side becomes a mutual secret form of delight. You really appreciate the edge that it gives to the partnership and your partner finds that your little dark side is just a bit of spice. Relationships like this can go on for a good long time. There is far less judgment and more intimacy in this sort of acceptance.

So take your time. Don't make big commitments until you are sure that you know the whole person, not just the person that is being presented as lovable. You may find a trickster there or you may find a source of fascination, but wait to see what it really is before you make any real commitment.



A LITTLE BIT ABOUT SEXUALITY

First, your sexual body is your reproductive body. This is an easy thing to forget when you are in love. Making a baby is a beautiful thing to do. But it is not the purpose of the sort of sex that you have at the beginning of a relationship. That time is to promote intimacy.

Having sex is a pretty natural thing to do. However having sex that expands and extends your intimacy in a way that is satisfying to both partners requires some patience and sensitivity. But don't take it so seriously that you are not having fun.

An overview of sex requires an age group survey again.

Very young, sexually mature people have essentially different sex drives. Young men (under 21) are driven by sex to an extent that girls of that age can't even begin to understand.

They are having sexual thoughts most of the time. The fact that they can control it is remarkable. Girls at this age are much more romantic, seeking love and the little gestures that go along with it. This can and does often lead to sex but it is not the driving force for the woman involved.

In the twenties, a woman's sex drive might lag, but it comes back really strong in the thirties. By the thirties men have mellowed out about it a little bit and are caught by surprise at the ardor of their partner.

And so it goes. It is always an adventure, because things change. It can be a frustration. But no one is perfect until they have experience. And the learning can be a lot of fun.

It is really important to communicate when it comes to sex. But there is a real sensitivity around the subject and it can be difficult. This is no reason to stop trying.

Sex, like other parts of the relationship requires that the people involved love themselves enough to feel comfortable with intimacy. You are going to get naked with this person, you had better find a way to get comfortable with it.

It is common, when one's body is changing in the early teens, to be a little put off by the process and to want to hide it under clothes. But at some point, it is a good idea to get comfortable with your own skin.

It is also important to know that sex is about loving each other. Whatever is comfortable to you is OK. You do want sex to be the physical form of honoring your love for each other. Not just a quick, groping roll in the hay. That will leave both partners feeling dissatisfied and disillusioned.

Good sex, then, is a very important part of a relationship. It is a good idea to be very knowledgeable about the subject. The information you get from friends about sexuality is not reliable. Schools only teach the biology of the thing, sex not sexuality and are not much help.

Your parents probably shied away from giving you the real information that you need. And even adult friends who are not your parents are reluctant to talk to you about it lest they interfere with your parent's attitudes.

But there is information available. There are many books about various aspect of sexuality. If you have a question, the information is there. Don't be afraid to read the adult books. And stay away from porn, it doesn't teach much of anything. Take the time to learn the essentials.

Then talk to each other about it. Find out what each of you needs or wants.

Sex is a thing subject that you will always want to learn about. Even when you are quite experienced, almost especially then, you can learn more interesting things. The same depth that you find in emotion you can find in sex, because sex is wrapped around emotion.

The commonest mistake that people make about it is that they think that from limited experience they know all about it. Every partner is an adventure and everyone is different.

For example: a man has learned that women need foreplay. So he gets really good at foreplay, as a matter of fact, that most of what sex becomes for him. The actual sex act might just last a few minutes. Lots of women like this.

Then he meets a woman who likes a little foreplay but likes the sex act itself to go on for a lot longer. This is what he always thought he really wanted, but old habits are hard to break. Once this change has been made, he is happy about it. Then the next woman he meets is something quite different.

It is important to know your own body and your needs and it important to know what the other partner needs too. You can be sure that those two things will be different, but complimentary.

It is important to honor your own sexuality and that of your partner by remaining present, conscious, open to see what is best at any given time. Sex is communication. You will not have satisfying sex if you just sort of switch to automatic when you are participating in it.

Do take the time to honor your sexuality with knowledge and openness to new ideas.



SOME BODY AWARENESS TIPS FOR WOMEN

Many young women feel that they are not attractive enough because they don't look like the people who they consider ideal, the models. The truth is that no one expects you to be a model and a man who cares for you usually likes you just the way you are.

You are already perfectly desirable to your partner. Do not be self-conscious because you are not perfect in the sense of other people's attitudes.

The truth is neither you nor anyone you know will look like the models in the magazines. Why? Because, those women don't look like that either. Despite being taller and slimmer than a normal human they are computer-enhanced in those photos.

In the presence of a really successful model, you would want to feed her. She is so thin; She has to look this way because the camera puts at least ten pounds on her but the computer retouching takes it off again. In person, this is not a healthy look.

For a long time, the mode was a look they call "heroin-chic" That is the look of a person who is emaciated because of a drug habit. This is not a thing you want to emulate. Lately though the models appear to have been working out and look healthier.

A few other things you should know about models. Their job is not to look good, but to make the clothes look good.

The designers who hire them are often gay. These men often think that the essence of loveliness is the fourteen-year old boy. There is something alarming about a grown woman trying to starve herself to look like a fourteen-year old boy.

Women are women shaped. It is often helpful to look at the pictures of women before the current crop of designers was working. You will see things like breasts, hips and bellies. Women are shaped that way and it is beautiful.

The average size of a woman is 5'4", 140 lbs. It has been that way for years. It is not the present ideal, but it is a physical reality. It is about the size of the women the French Impressionists painted, beautiful soft nudes. It is the size of the representations of the goddesses. These were not tiny, boy-shaped women.

Be proud of who you are.

Women's bodies will change during the course of a life. This is because the body is adjusting in various ways to your relationship to reproduction. It will often be bigger here and smaller there according to the dictates of estrogen.

Some women can eat anything they want until they are in their early twenties and then find that they put on quite a lot very easily. Some women have a baby and slim right down again, some

hold onto extra weight for years. Lots of women slim down in their thirties only to turn forty and have the belly pop out no matter what she does.

In a world with only one view of beauty, this can be disconcerting. But look around. It is not only perfect looking people who have the relationships. As a matter of fact men often like women who are shaped exactly like women..

So look at the mirror when you are naked and find those things that you like about being women shaped. Consider your body as it is itself and don't expect it to be some designer's ideal. You should be the one who knows that you are beautiful. That knowledge spins glamour around you that other people will see.

You can and should get a new haircut now and then and use makeup to enhance your features and dress nicely, but it is the strut of confidence that tells the people around you that you are beautiful. And that strut comes from confidence and loving yourself.

Remember that it is you with whom your partner has chosen to be involved. There is no need to be self conscious because you don't look like those models in the magazine. He probably wouldn't like them anyway.



BODY AWARENESS FOR MEN

Men are often less self-critical about looks than women. But they do have concerns about their attractiveness. Men are very visual in their sexuality. They fall in lust with their eyes. They often expect women to be the same way. Women tend to fall in love with something more than the physical.

The voice, the gestures, the words are very important to women. The courtship ritual is a form of honoring a woman. A man who understands that is apt to be very attractive.

Younger women are looking for a man who will be able to take care of them and their children. They don't really know this at the time but the qualities that really appeal to them will often be linked to this need. This is where men get the original idea that women want men with money. What she really wants is a man who will provide security for herself and her children.

Especially for younger men: see also the chapter regarding the alpha syndrome.

There is a message that women get that if they are good enough, they will win an alpha male. In these days, though it may seem fulfilling, these men do not make the best partners for most women.

Men, too, look for women at the top levels of attractiveness to prove their own alpha qualities. These women, too, are not often the best choices for partners.

In the case of relationships when the woman is older, you will find that she is more sexually aware, but is getting a bit insecure about her attractiveness.

In every age, it is important to let your partner know that she is attractive to you. It is important to take the time she needs to work up to a sexual experience. This is especially true after you have been together for awhile.

Body awareness for men has less to do with questioning his own attractiveness that it does being aware of the body that is next to you. Although, as men get older, they can get too comfortable with themselves. They can feel that even when they are out of shape and less concerned about their appearance that a woman will see the same old handsome kid they always were. This is not necessarily the case.

Men need to pay attention too. Healthy and clean is important. Neatness counts too. It is easy to slip into a rut and as you get older it takes some effort to look as attractive as it was natural to look when you were younger. Styles change, take a look at your clothes and your hair and see if you are keeping up. Women do notice.

Men's sexual drive is usually pretty straightforward. Women operate on a different clock.

When the relationship becomes sexual, it is very important to be very aware of who it is you are with. Do not take for granted that she will be the same as other partners. Get to know her specifically and sexually.

It is very important to a woman that you want to have sex with is the particular woman you are with because she is very attractive to you. It is not important that you just want to do it now. This does not change as you get farther into the relationship.

Very often the sexiest thing you can do as far as a woman is concerned is to refrain from going into automatic pilot in the bedroom and focus on being consciously present with your partner during sex.



OTHER PEOPLE:

BLENDING FAMILY, FRIENDS AND WORK RELATIONSHIPS

“...were we to love none who had imperfections, this would be a desert for our love. All we can do is to make the best of our friends; love and cherish what is good in them, and keep out of the way of what is bad: but no more think of rejecting them for it than of throwing away a piece of music for a flat passage or two.”

~Thomas Jefferson~

Because people tend to reincarnate in groups with quite a history, it is fairly likely that when you find a soul mate, you will also find that other people in your life will have some issues with him or her.

These may make it easier and more natural to integrate him into your life. It can also go the other way and you can find old negative issues that need to be resolved. Family is the likeliest place for this to happen, but if your friends feel like you have known them for a couple of lifetimes and have since you met them, they may be involved, too.

This is all part of the plan and underscores that this is not just another relationship but a real soul mate. If this is going on, you will see this almost immediately. These people will take an instant like or dislike to your partner.

You can't completely eliminate that as an issue from this life, though. If there is jealousy or if one of your friends has a way of coming on to every relationship you have, you can't count this person as a soul mate of the person who is your partner.

It is wise to keep your individual friendships while you continue to introduce your new partner into them. There is a difference in the dynamic between two women friends and one friend and a pair. The whole rhythm of the thing changes and you will lose some of the intimacy of a friendship that took you years to create.

So certainly keep introducing your partner into activities, but keep on the phone with your friends and their concerns and meet them for lunch or play now and again alone.

It is wise to take one evening a week and use it to keep your friends close individually. As lovely as it is to have a new relationship, these people have been with you for years and you need to value the individuality of each friendship.

Work situations are usually easier. For the social functions involved everybody will be more comfortable with you as a couple. The other parts of the work situation are not that social

anyway so it shouldn't be a big deal. Unless you work in a very small, intimate company, you will probably not be dealing that much with karma at work.

Then there is the family dynamic. There is a certain amount of dysfunction that you have learned to live with and a crazy relative or two that you know are harmless, but when you think of introducing your shiny new lover to then it seems appalling.

Even the best families will trot out the embarrassing history or show the pictures of you in the seventies with outrageous hair and huge bell-bottoms or love beads. This is all normal stuff and eventually you'll have to meet his family with uncle lecher or cousin conspiracy-fanatic. So you can relax and just try to deal with the moments.

It is kind though to let your partner know if there are any unusual situations that he or she will encounter with your family. If you have an uncle who sits in a corner and hallucinates as a lifestyle, but you dearly love him, let your partner know what is going on. If Dad drinks too much and gets out of line, or sister can be expected to hit on your new beau, or uncle will hug the new girlfriend a little too long, you know it is pretty normal. So prepare your partner for this encounter, so that it is not overly embarrassing for anybody.

More difficult is the family that you have created, the children. These are the only ones of the significant others who's needs must come before those of your relationship.

It is best, at first, to introduce them slowly to your new love. Have your time together when the children are somewhere else, if possible. Children can become attached very quickly to a nice person who is loved by a parent, especially little children. They need to be protected a bit from too close an emotional tie when it is not clear what kind of relationship this is going to be.

Children need more emotional stability as they learn what a loving relationship is about. It is not good for them to get close to one partner after another who seems to care for them and then leaves. This can cause abandonment issues in your children.

So keep a bit of an emotional distance with the kids until you are sure that this relationship will be a real part of your life. And then expect some kind of assurance from your partner that the children will be considered in future issues between the two of you.



RESTRUCTURING

CHANGES THAT KEEP IT GOING

*Love is not only something you feel.
It's something you do.
~David Wilkerson~*

The first bit of restructuring you do comes rather soon in a relationship. There is a point when you have begun to move from the “in-love” state to the place where you must be integrating that love into your whole life.

This is a time to see where you are in the age groups in the part above, because your issues will be different in different age groups.

The younger you are, the simpler your life is, the easier this is. When you are older and have a more complex life, you will find it more challenging. However, the older you are and the more experience you have the easier it is to know when and how to restructure.

After we have had some experience with relationship, we can use some basic knowledge to deal with the challenges.

When you are a bit older, it is no surprise that the one you love won't change who he or she is in order to become perfectly the way you want them to be. This is rather a surprise when you are younger.

There are, however many ways to work with the differences.

You should give each other space in which to deal with the parts of your life that you do not share. Work, family responsibilities, hobbies and old friends all need attention in a well-rounded life. They need time that is not couple time in order to fulfill responsibilities and also to maintain the joy of these tasks.

For the first several weeks or months of a relationship, you may have been inseparable, but this does not mean that you will always be joined at the hip. If each of you does not maintain the things about life that you loved before you met, then sooner or later your relationship will go flat.

You fell in love with this person for who he or she was, if you change that, who will you love?

Jealousy and possessiveness have no place in a good relationship. Certainly there will be moments for each of you when you wish the other could give you unlimited time. But the truth is that if you had that kind of focus, you would begin to lament the things you love and no longer have time for.

The farther you get into the relationship, the more you will see natural changes toward

doing things together. Gradually you will begin to have friends who were friends of you both from the beginning. But that must be a gentle and almost automatic thing.

You will also find that it becomes easier to do things together that you both enjoy than to have separate activities for each all the time. But it is still necessary to have some space in the relationship so that you can each have your own growth and your own private time.

As the relationship progresses you will find that there are many times when you need to begin to get to know each other all over again. At the beginning, we tend to make adjustment in a relationship that takes it back to the best time, which is usually the beginning. After a few years, though, you have both changed and grown enough so that the adjustments that are needed may be to get to know each other all over again, exactly as you have become.

At this time, do not mistake this passage for argument. In argument, you are often listening to the other person just enough to defend your point.

At times like this, you must take time to really listen and to let your partner know that you are listening to him or her and that you care about what is being said. The only talk you should be doing at this time is to clarify in a gentle way what is being said so that you can really understand it.

There should be no judgment or defensiveness going on as you try to reconnect. This reconnection has to be made with the people you have become not who you were, so don't bring up old issues that no longer apply just to feel like you have won your point. The surest way to lose this time is to try to win.

A long-term relationship goes through many changes like this, if it is to be successful. When you stop listening and begin to judge: you lose the opportunity to make the necessary adjustments that can take you and your partner happily into the next ten years, or so.

To keep the lines of communication open after the adjustment, remember that in a relationship, power games and defensiveness are very destructive. If you use this power to join up and face the world ready to get involved in the world's business, you are stronger together. But if you use your power against each other to win points, you will lose the relationship that you are trying to control. It is not worth it.

When you try to gain power or control in a relationship, you are saying that you don't trust your partner. And that is what your partner hears. You also limit their abilities to grow as they need and to celebrate being just exactly who they are. If you love someone, you need to love them just as they are.



