

# *The EXpectation*

## Singles Workbook

by: Shaundale Hornes Johnson



*“Marriage is like a Jenga game. You never know which block will temporarily support your next move or, over time, cause the whole thing to fall.” Shaundale Hornes Johnson*

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### Dating Yourself

If you don't know who you are, date yourself. Otherwise, you are going to confuse yourself and your date (who could potentially end up being your illegitimate and confused mate). Think about it.

### Getting to Know You

Consider this: If you sacrifice your purpose for a relationship, you have failed. The following assessment will help you identify certain traits that can either help or hinder you on your journey of self-discovery. The worst possible relationship move is marrying the wrong person for the wrong reasons. You can marry the right person in the wrong season, or you can also marry the right person for the wrong reason. But, what you do not want to do is marry the wrong person at all. Let's talk about where you are, where you want to go, and the best course of action to get you there. Ask yourself the following:

- At my core, what do I genuinely enjoy? Can I do it alone?

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- When was the last time I did what I truly enjoy by myself? How did it make me feel?

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- Am I more excited about being with someone else than I am with myself?

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### Loving Yourself

If you don't like being with you, why should anyone else? Take some time and get to know who you are, what you want, and if you're even marriage material. Married people break up just like single people do. The only difference is they don't always have the ability, or the luxury, to move out or to move on. Think about it.

### Growing in the Knowledge of Who You Are

Consider this: If I am aware of who I am, then I am equally aware of who I am not. In this instance, I get to decide where to start. Am I a tiller (get soil ready), a sewer (plant the seed), a reaper (pull up the crops), or a thief (let someone else do all the work and steal)? Ask yourself the following:

- Am I okay with being single if I never end up married? (i.e. Get my exes ready for someone else to marry – tiller.) Why or why not?

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- If I end up married, will I be able to go through seasons of loneliness, or will I always need/want someone to “be” with? (i.e. Pour into my mate and deal with not always being a priority – sewer.) Why or why not?

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- Do I possess the qualities I am looking for in a mate, or am I looking to someone else to provide me a better reflection of what I see in the mirror? (i.e. Waiting for someone to show up and save me – reaper.) Why or why not?

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- Will I settle for the first thing that shows up, even if he or she is already knowingly in a relationship? (i.e. Seize the opportunity to have what I want, even if I don’t really know what it is – thief.) Why or why not?

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### Embracing Yourself

True freedom, true joy, and true peace can only be found in Christ. If you attempt to find it in someone else, it will be short-lived. However, if you chose to find it in Him, He will then add another person as an extension of that freedom, love, joy and peace that surpasses all understanding—romantic or not. Think about it.

### Testing the Waters

Consider this: If you know where you are (tiller, sewer, reaper, or thief), then you can safely acknowledge your role and responsibility for your relationship(s)—good or bad. By now the soil should be prepared for you to test the waters. If not, go back to the beginning. You need to know who you are with or without someone else; you need to know whether you would be better off single, having never been married, or single within an unfulfilled marriage; and, you need to know all good marriages are built on great communication. Ask yourself the following:

- What do I hope to accomplish by dating someone? Am I looking for temporary companionship, or long-term commitment? Why?

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- What do I know about myself now that I didn't know before that my date might think they *need* to know?

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- How will what I've learned about myself help me become the mate I am looking for?

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### Sharing Yourself

If you would deny someone the information they need to decide whether to date or marry you, then you have denied their right to an alternative happily ever after. Like asking someone else to write your vows, you are hoping your soon-to-be doesn't notice an imposter stands between them and their hopes

of relationship bliss because you are offering them a never-ending blind date with a stranger. Think about it.

**Waiting on the Promise**

Consider this: If, by now, you are not reaping the blessings of a few more positive friendships, dating or not, then keep dating you. The difference between the one who puts in the work and the thief who intentionally imposes on another person’s relationship is ethics. There are many who will wait until the perfect mate has been groomed by someone else and pounce. Then, there are others who will do their part and watch the other person ride in and out with what they think is their reward. Beware; if someone else snags your mate, they were never your mate. Keep waiting. Ask yourself the following:

- What must I accomplish to be whom and where I want to be individually?

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- What three goals will help me start enjoying the life I deserve—married or not?

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- Who can I tell that will hold me accountable to myself and not my relationship?

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- What action steps can I accomplish in support of my goals?

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- Who can I celebrate my victories with? Could this person potentially be a romantic interest? Why or why not?

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**CONCLUSION:** I like to say most people's perfect match is the friend they never noticed. It's been my experience that most of us don't really know who we are until we're at least 40; therefore, it is almost delusional to think you can meet someone, marry them, and maintain a healthy relationship 20 years younger knowing only half of who you are intended to be. So, hopefully, I have given you enough of a blueprint to continue your journey from a somewhat decent perspective of *The Expectation*.

Some wonder how long they must wait; others wonder how they will know "the one." Honestly, how long you wait depends on how long it takes you to get ready. And, knowing "the one" will depend on who you're asking. Take, for example, Abraham's servant specifically asked God to specifically let a woman say a specific thing. (Genesis 24:14) When was the last time you asked God anything? Well, maybe now is a good time to start.

#### **BONUS CONTENT:**

We attract what we are. Many people are drawn to each other in seasons of brokenness, and when we heal we simply outgrow ourselves, our marriages, and our mates. Give yourself permission to grow—even if your marriage is bursting at the seams.

- Am I Marriage Material?
  - If I wasn't happy alone, then why did I *choose* to make someone else miserable with me?
    - Did I tell him/her everything? Why or why not?
    - Did I even want to be married? Why or why not?
    - Did I just want a wedding? Why or why not?
    - Did I even love him/her? Why or why not?
    - Did him/her even love me? Why or why not?
    - Do I even love myself? Why or why not?
- Did I Perpetuate Someone Else's Chaos?
  - If I can say this one thing, then why did I *choose* to give up my peace?
    - If \_\_\_\_\_ had not happened (i.e. pregnancy, parents/friends/church getting involved, etc.), I would not have married my spouse:
      - At that time. (School, finances, health, etc.)
      - For that reason. (Secrets, lies, conditions, expectations, etc.)
      - At all. (Simply wrong person.)

Please note: Not everyone is meant to be married. Accept it. Embrace it. Enjoy it. Being single is a gift and an honor if you maximize your time with the Creator of all things—including you. That is *The Expectation*.