

The image features a romantic and evocative background. In the foreground, two hands are shown in silhouette, holding each other. The hands are positioned centrally, with fingers interlaced. The background is a soft, warm sunset or sunrise over a body of water. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a bright orange near the horizon. The water in the foreground is dark and textured with small waves. The overall mood is intimate and hopeful.

CalcuDating

Your Single Days Are Numbered

By Lorraine Adams

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

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Introduction

Finding your 'forever person' is probably the most daunting challenge a person can face. Whether you're a CEO of an international company or stacking shelves at the supermarket, your challenges are the same. Shall I call her? Did I sleep with him too soon? What do the texts really mean? When can we move in together? Singles can spend an average of three hours a day analysing every move they make in the game of love; and then there are the sleepless nights fretting about their latest fledgling romance – or the lack of one.

Whilst being single isn't the end of the world, most of us would rather be one happy half of a cosy couple. You have already taken a giant step to getting where you want to be just by purchasing this book. I can give you my assurances that in a matter of months your life could be turned around completely, if you

are genuinely prepared to take steps, and even leaps, into the unknown, challenge yourself to move outside what you know to be normal and put everything into becoming a disciple to my Life Coaching for Romance program. We shall embark on this journey together. I'll guide you right the way through until one day you will wake up and know you have arrived. At that stage you may still not have actually started dating 'The One', but you will feel so self-assured and relaxed and happy with all your new-found knowledge, you will be a 'romance in waiting'.

The Author

Let me introduce myself. My name is Lorraine Adams and I'm one of the UK's top romance experts . The media often dubbed me as 'The Simon Cowell of Dating'. Why? Because, just like Cowell, I don't take any prisoners when it comes to telling it how it is. If you are delusional about your future partner prospects I'll certainly give you an honest account of yourself. I can also tell you exactly where you are going wrong. What I have to tell you may not sit well and you will undoubtedly experience moments of frustration. However just remember, I don't make up the rules, I will just relay to you the facts about dating and relationships as I've discovered them over the years. However if you can stick with the pace you will find romance – guaranteed.

If you were to hire me privately as a matchmaker my fees can run into the hundreds, but here in my book I'll share all I know about finding, and keeping, a great partner. With hundreds of successful marriages under my belt, and lots of bouncing babies conceived by couples I've set up worldwide, I know that following my unique CalcuDating formula and entrusting my finely tuned guidance will enable you to join my growing band of romantic success stories. Whatever you are going through, whatever you have been through, you can be sure I've already experienced the same or a similar scenario with other singles and I'll know exactly how to help.

I chose to write this book because I was tired of, and even shocked by, some of the poor romance advice doled out by magazines and some so-called experts. Singles are often completely wrong footed and that's what I aim to change with my straight-talking, effective advice. My dating ethos differs in many ways:

- I consider the emotional state of a person's mind in times of romantic turmoil. While some of the advice currently available may look good on paper, and sound sensible, logic tends to disappear in certain complicated romance situations.
- I also address instinctive male and female behaviour patterns rather than simply accept the way society tells us what we should be thinking, feeling and reacting, even if it goes completely against the grain.

Everything you'll read in my book is objective and based upon years of experience seeing what really works in the world of romance. My style of romance coaching is utterly unique. While some of what I say can be hard to stomach, my aim is not to crush the life out of you, but to explore what your dating challenges are and to work on bringing the best possible version of yourself to the forefront. When working through my formula, it should become evident fairly quickly why you personally have not been as successful as you would have liked in terms of romance; You will learn how to change any negative patterns of behaviour that may be hindering your chances of success; You will discover other aspects about yourself that could help you to attract the right types of romance opportunities onto your radar. I aim to hand hold you at this crucial time of self-discovery and ensure you feel uplifted and positive whilst you are journeying through.

You may be wondering what credentials I have to help you unpick your dating behaviour and sew it all back up together? What can I tell you is where you are going wrong and what you are doing rights. Plus why friends, colleagues, and even your family, haven't been able to help you thus far. Let me tell you my story and you'll see.

I didn't actually really start dating properly until the age of 36. When I suddenly found myself single after my first real 17-year romance. Hopelessly naive, my friends nicknamed me the 'born again virgin', as I'd only ever had one partner after falling head-over-heels in love as a teenager. I approached men as I did as an 18-year-old, with the simplicity of a dizzy teen and a pair of rose-tinted glasses clamped firmly over my eyes. I'd had my fair share of male attention during the years I was loved up, so I sweetly assumed that as a vibrant, slim, sexy thirty- something I would be snapped up within weeks and I'd immediately settle down with someone new.

How wrong I was! Men seemed evasive, tricky, and either full of themselves or downright liars. The harder I tried, the less success I had. So I did what so many single women do, I chased harder. Being back on the singles scene after such a long break was brutal, and I literally watched as my self-esteem trickled away and my efforts to land a man failed miserably.

Despite living in a fashionable area of London and running my own successful PR firm, I felt having a man would validate me and give me meaning. During my only relationship I'd felt almost defined by the man I was with and the lifestyle I was living. I desperately wanted to be part of a couple again – for my own peace of mind and my two-year-old daughter.

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In the late 90s Internet dating was almost unheard of, so I tried placing an advert in a newspaper lonely-hearts column. The result was weeks spent fending off strange stalkers. Next I considered joining a traditional matchmaking agency, hoping they 'd hunt me down a husband. However, when I began researching which one would be the best for me, I realised how much these firms were letting singles down. It seemed that most of the conventional dating agencies either had a serious shortage of suitable men or they only catered for the 'desperately seeking'. All I wanted was a decent bloke and it just seemed like there was nothing and nobody out there to help me, no matter how much money I was prepared to throw at them.

I persevered and carried on dating under my own steam. I became a little tougher and more assertive along the way, not allowing myself to feel so deflated when potential little romances faltered at the first hurdle. My confidence began to grow again and my knowledge of what made men tick expanded. However, as I edged towards 40, I was no further towards settling down again. Urgent action was required and there seemed only one logical solution — I'd have to start my own dating club but run it like I wanted a dating agency to be run. I wanted to create something utterly different to anything ever seen before.

Right from the start, I was clear about who my target market would be: I only wanted to attract the interesting, vibrant, go getters into my dating club; the kind of men I'd want to marry and women I'd want to be best friends with. Working in PR I knew all about the 'door policy' where ordinary members of the public were barred from the VIP areas of clubs and bars, so I decided to set up a VIP-only dating agency, with its own door policy. My dating club had to be for the best; for 'gorgeous people' – and so my own dating concept Gorgeous Get-togethers was born.

The agency hit the market in 2000 and the press went wild. Newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations all ran features on the agency, and my phone rang off the hook with sassy, successful singles wanting to join and have me match them up with equally gorgeous people. Don't get me wrong; it wasn't just about model looks. I wanted to draw a captivating crowd into my network. To me, 'gorgeous' conjures up every aspect of an appealing person, and the most gorgeous aren't always the best looking. The marketing strapline on my Gorgeous Get-togethers website said the service was aimed at those with 'Looks, Presence and Drive', which to me said it all.

With a growing database of thousands looking for love, I very quickly took the plunge into running live dating events. I'd heard about a matchmaking concept, from the New York Jewish community, where men and women who wanted to marry were sent on a series of very short 'mini dates', and so I decided to adapt the idea for the UK. In the same year as setting up the agency, I set up the first European 'speed dating' event with a magazine. Together, the features team and I set up a famous 'IT' girl to meet several of my members and spend just minutes with each before she determined who was worth seeing again for a proper date.

Many of my gorgeous members were 'cash rich but time poor' and wanted to find love fast. At my regular weekly speed dating events my clients met eight prospective new partners. The concept was an instant hit and the media lapped it up. With regular appearances on TV and in magazines and newspapers, my skills were in demand in both the UK and Europe. Within a year my database of uber cool singles was large enough to start an online chat and dating site - 'Gorgeous Networks.com'. The members ranged in age from late twenties through to early fifties. Within a few years I'd gone from a terrified newly single to a successful forty-something with a serious business on my hands and a string of stunning men on my arm. I'd never looked or felt better, and I knew I'd found my calling in life.

Always at the cutting edge of the dating industry, I've pioneered the world's most exciting dating concepts including Hologram Dating, Aphrodisiac Dating, the Wing Woman Service and Wife Auditions. In 2007, I launched Top Dream Dates, a dating site with a difference. More of a social club than a dating site, it's like a lastminute.com concept but for love. Singles could describe their dream date, from hot air ballooning to a weekend at an exclusive spa, and hook up with others who will offer them that experience. My services evolved with my core demographic clients.

I still get as much of a thrill today as I did when I started nearly twenty years ago when I match a couple up. I'm proud to be able to say that I have become the UK's foremost romance expert. My office is crammed with thousands of letters from couples telling me what an amazing difference I have made to their lives.

My dating credentials

It's all very well sorting out the romantic lives of others, but do I practise what I preach? How has my own love life panned out? I'm the first to admit that it's been 'colourful'. In my first four years as a single woman from 36 - 40 I actually learned so much about myself and about men. I dated a variety of men including a number of sexy, younger men, who, while they looked great and were lots of fun, also taught me some invaluable lessons on how my behaviour and my actions and reactions could win or lose me a boyfriend.

During my first 17-year love affair through my twenties I'd been sweet, accommodating and attentive, but I began to realise during this new period of dating that being a doormat did not bring you what you wanted from a relationship or indeed from your man. The seeds of my dating formula were being sown. Discovering that I could be a success when it came to romance all became transparently clear to me.

In 2002, I met a fascinating man, ten years my senior. He was a multi-millionaire who ran, what was at the time, one of the UK's largest dating groups. A journalist had written an article on romance for an up-market magazine, and this successful businessman, who thought himself a hot shot in the field of dating, was furious that out of a six-page article only one page was written about him - the rest of the article was about my radical new ideas. 'Who the hell is this upstart?' he demanded, tearing into the journalist who wrote the article. However, after seeing my photo in the magazine, eyes sparkling, he got a message to me to invite me to lunch - on his private yacht that was moored off the coast of Palma Majorca!

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How could I refuse an invitation like that? So a few weeks later I was dining on the deck of an amazing yacht, being entertained by this larger-than-life, charismatic, if somewhat overweight gentleman. Never in a million years at that point did I think we'd get together romantically, but his love of life won me over. At first we became business partners; he was eager to hear how he could turn his flagging group of dating sites and agencies around and make them as exciting as mine. Gradually, as our passion for the business grew so did our passion for each other, and we embarked on a sizzling romance together.

He appointed me as a director on the board of his dating group, which had been launched on the AIM stock market months before. I travelled the world first class troubleshooting for his companies and spent the weekends at exotic five-star hotels or languishing on his yacht in the Mediterranean with my young daughter. Simultaneously I was driving my own business. Within months, my new man and I were engaged and life seemed perfect – or so I thought. Just two years after meeting, my dynamic fiancé was killed in a tragic helicopter accident. I was utterly devastated. How could this wonderful man be taken from me just when I thought my life was turning around again?

Not one to feel sorry for myself, I became single minded and channelled my grief into my work. He had taught me so much about business, and work was all I was interested in for a time; men were completely off the agenda.

It took nearly a year for me to fall in love again with a man I met in my gym. We exchanged a few glances, which developed over a couple of weeks to light-hearted chatting. He was confident but a little shy, so I left my number with the receptionist at the gym with instructions for her to pass it on to him. He got it, called me and fifteen years on we haven't looked back – I know I've found my soul mate, the love of my life. We've had our ups and downs, but I firmly believe that any relationship with such strong passions will always have highs and lows. It's not for everyone; some people will settle for a more harmonious union and that's all good too. We all have different energy flows and need to find partners who suit us on our level to ensure long-term happiness.

Through the security of my current relationship, I've spent the last ten years taking my business to a new level, fine-tuning my dating formula and CalcuDating System. I've also set up a new personal introductions concept, namely Coffee and Company and I have been drafted in on contracts to set up matchmaking divisions for other big dating groups worldwide. It's a simple but very effective formula.

Every first date I set up for my clients is for coffee only. It's a first impressions date to see if it could be worthwhile taking things further without the toe-curling embarrassment of a blind dinner date with someone you discover that you have no empathy with. Why endure hours of uncomfortable conversation when you could save time and heartache by meeting everyone initially just for coffee?

Following this initial introduction, my team and I collect, share and give clients welcome feedback to help them decipher the intricate language of love. At the end of a coffee date, if you are still in the dark about how it went, we are there to put you in the picture. While we don't relay word for word what clients say about each other, we can give out a general feeler as to whether it's a non-starter or worth holding out for.

All my 'daters' go through a gruelling one-hour 'Personal Evaluation Session' before embarking on any dates, so we can explore the reasons why romance isn't coming their way naturally and get to know them. Conducting a personal evaluation is the first step in my dating formula, so you'll find out more on this as you read through my book.

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I decided to write this book to give every unattached person out there hope. I know what it's like to be knocked back, to be sitting by the phone waiting for the call that never comes, or to want someone who doesn't want you back – I've come through it all triumphant with a wonderful partner and a ring on my finger. I've gone from fling to ring and my aim is to gravitate you towards a more triumphant wind of change in terms of romance.

I chose to team up with my co-editor, journalist Jane Hamilton to write this book. She was The Sun newspaper dating correspondent for six years. After a hopeless seven-year relationship failed, Jane took my advice and was engaged to her new partner within six months. She is now married and has three beautiful children.

Through her work, Jane has written hundreds of articles related to dating. During her single years she tried and tested every new or traditional dating trend but nothing seemed to work until she trialled my CalcuDating formula. Which will slot seamlessly into your busy everyday life. However long you've been single, no matter what age or gender you are or what you do for a living the CalcuDating formula could work for you and here's how:

- Working with me will help you recognise, understand and eliminate any of the unhelpful patterns of behaviour you may have fallen into.
- The CalcuDating System will give you a clear direction to head towards and the tools to get there.
- My unique dating formula will bring out the very best version of yourself – mentally, physically and emotionally – and you will begin to identify every area of your life where you may be failing to make an impact with the opposite gender.
- Following my guidance will help you make the most from every romantic opportunity that comes onto your radar and will ensure you go on dates with the right frame of mind and attitude to ensure you appeal to your target suitors.
- You'll have the tools and direction to ensure you make the right choices instead of settling for second (or third or fourth) best for the sake of being in a relationship.
- You will be better equipped to sustain a relationship.

Although falling in love is never an exact science, the bedrock of my dating formula is a unique scoring system which once absorbed will be easy to follow in a really easy to manage. There is a Points target you are aiming for and my system sees you earning points for every positive action you take towards finding romantic bliss. Points are deducted if you fall into bad behavioural patterns that could hinder your progress. And when you don't complete the tasks we set for you, you simply don't earn any points. The benefit for you is that it makes my advice measurable; Once you get the hang of the points system it will become easier to improvise as your dating actions and reactions will become more spontaneous. However initially keeping to the points system will give you a clear idea on where you are failing and what is really working for you.

We all think that our love life situation – or the lack of a love life – is completely unique. We empathise and relate to case studies we read about but usually believe that nobody else has our own particular dating challenges. All I can tell you is that following my dating formula will help all singles find romantic bliss whatever your own personal situation might be. If you stick to the plan; if you have a good attitude to changing any poor dating habits; and if you are open minded and not in denial, you will find romantic happiness.

How this book works

The first part of this book is divided up into four sections:

Part One is the self-evaluation section. You need to put yourself through this process to find out where you currently sit in terms of personal development related to your dating. So many people jump in too quickly before they are ready and that could be the worst possible place to be. Many of us think we know ourselves better than we actually do, so this section will be very significant and telling.

Part Two is the section where I will reveal to you what I have discovered during the many years I have worked in the romance industry. I will share with you the secrets of how to unlock the god/goddess from within. It could mean you digging deep – but you will learn so much more about yourself.

Part Three will take you through my unique 'CalcuDating' points system and explain how it all works. Following the CalcuDating System will help you to measure your progress – or deviations!

Part Four demonstrates how the new disciplines I introduce into your daily routine will make a massive impact on your love life for the better.

The second section of the book is divided into **nine chapters** that will:

- Help keep you on track and with a positive outlook.
- Keep you from falling at crucial hurdles.

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- Teach you all you need to know to progress from 'fling to ring' – though I have always conceded that a 'marriage or civil partnership' or any kind of 'label' defining your relationship is completely unnecessary. If it works for you a relationship can be as unconventional as they come.

But before we start, I ask you to promise yourself to remain completely open to my suggestions, even if they take you out of your comfort zone. The only way this book will be successful to you is if you proactively work hard to follow my formula.

Your journey starts here – best of luck.

Part One

Tough love – your self-evaluation

Never before has there been so many single people. Today a staggering 14.2 million Brits are without a partner – but more than half of these are eagerly seeking a long-term relationship.

Worryingly, the number of single women in the UK has doubled in the last 30 years – and it is still rising. Over 50% per cent of women under 50 have never been married and one in six will never have children. Around one-third of unmarried women are living with a partner, but many co-habiting relationships are short-lived, lasting a couple of years or less. These shocking statistics are set against evidence that now, more than ever before, women want to marry. Nine out of ten young women claim getting a ring on their finger is a major goal in life. Fortunately, statistics show that a similar amount of men in there 30's & 40's also have a preference for marriage and children, so why is it so difficult for people to find a meaningful relationship?

British men and women do not fare well on the world stage for self-assurance. In terms of dating the UK is currently the least confident country in the Western world. Despite millions of sources of advice from self-help books, to Internet advice sites, magazines and TV shows, half of all single men and women claim to be held back by a crippling lack of confidence and know-how when it comes to having a successful love life. So where are we all going wrong?

In well over a decade of bringing happy couples together, I've become fascinated by the science of attraction. It never fails to stun me how perfectly compatible couples have a great time on a date, then talk themselves out of taking it further because of peer pressure. Even though they got a nice feeling early into their meeting, they worry their date won't meet the approval of their friends or because they think their suitor had one or two tiny things amiss. The first dating guidance I introduce when coaching a new client is to ensure a second date is organized if:

- a) You both felt energized throughout the date
- b) There is a great rapport between you
- c) You made each other smile
- d) There was a mutual self-respect

Do not rely only on whether or not you felt an instant spark. It matters not if you feel there is scope for a future romance or chemistry during your first date(s). This is because the majority of the couples I have brought together over the last twenty years have not necessarily experienced that magical chemistry initially. Most couples found that the spark bloomed with time.

Men and women tend to get pickier as they get older. I've seen women reject great guys for silly reasons such as they have unflattering haircuts or because they didn't like their style of shoes; some men have rejected women because they don't think their career paths particularly match or they are not a perfect size ten!

So I ask you to be honest with yourself especially if you're over 40 and not yet in a serious long term meaningful relationship. Are you someone who instantly rejects a person for quite superficial reasons? Do you give yourself a chance to explore the more positive aspects of someone's personality and character?

If you are one of the swipe left brigade, who constantly screams 'next', then now is the time to rethink your strategy in terms of romance and relationships.

Almost everyone who comes to me for help thinks they deserve a person who resembles, a film star, who cooks like Jamie Oliver, earns at least £100,000 a year, has a great physical fitness and enjoys the same pastimes and pursuits. If you're thinking like this, the only thing you deserve is a reality check. Spend a few minutes with me thinking about the happiest couples you know. Do they both look like A-listers or earn six-figure salaries? Would you have ever put them together yourself? Possibly not

The cosiest couples are the ones who compromise, who play off the non-perfect parts of their relationships for the bits that they love about each other. We've all been so brainwashed into believing the only thing we should accept is an airbrushed, Hollywood-style romance, that we've forgotten the real art of attraction.

Some of the best unions I've been responsible for have developed only after I've coaxed them to actually meet. Often I receive the most ridiculous reasons from clients to avoid a date with someone I have spent considerable time matching, 'I don't like beards' or 'I don't think we have anything in common' – yet most of my success stories rarely enjoy the same interests. It is usually those who have different pastimes who are the most stimulating. They bring something exciting and different into our lives.

I've seen dozens of couples fall deeply in love and tie the knot this way, despite rejecting each other initially based on the strength of a photo or a list of likes and dislikes. Who we fancy and why is down to less superficial factors. I always encourage making the most out of every possible romance opportunity, simply because you do not know what you might find when you start to scratch the surface.

So before you even begin to think about starting or re-starting your hunt for the perfect romance, I need to take you through two initial stages:

- a) My Romance Reality Check
- b) Personal Self-Evaluation.

Romance reality check

Here's where it starts to get hard. Are you up for the challenge? Do you know how much you want this and if you're tough enough to cope? You've read the statistics at the start of this section so you have to first understand that you are competing with so many other people. If you are a woman it is even harder, because men tend to seek a partner within a wider age range. They open themselves up to meet women far younger than themselves as well as women in their own age group. Rarely do men open themselves up to meeting an older woman, especially from 30 onwards. Of course there is nothing stopping a woman looking for a younger man, however looking and finding are two different things.

Put simply, singles are waging their own war out there and creating their own problems and challenges. If everyone were to be less demanding and more open-minded long-term happiness would be easier to come by. My role is to give you a reality check about what it is really out there and to help you bring the best possible version of yourself into the forefront.

Take a look through my Romance Reality Check below. Think long and hard about each of my four questions, as they will pop up in some shape or form throughout this book. The quicker you are willing to listen and accept what I have to say, the sooner we can get to work and create a more positive shift in your life in terms of romance and relationship longevity.

1) Single is a state of mind. You may believe you hate being single, and can't wait to get coupled up, but how often have you sabotaged what could be a loving relationship before you've even given it the chance to get started?

In my work I meet far too many people who are actually very comfortable being single. They moan about the opposite gender all the time and blame their own failures in love on the opposite sex, which stops them looking inwards at themselves and recognizing their own failures. People have such busy lives and high-powered jobs that, although they may think they want a partner, they don't spend the time to devote to finding or keeping him. Often I set up a coffee date between two people and suggest a meeting time a week or so ahead, only to find that their only availability is weeks ahead – and this is just a coffee date! If you really cannot find enough time to meet someone within a week to ten days then you really need to start freeing up your diary and start making a space in your life for a prospective partner.

I won't tolerate singles that tell me there are no good unattached men or women out there or that they're all married, gay, or cheats. What rubbish! If this were the case then none of us would get married when over a quarter of a million of us say 'I Do' each year.

Before you begin to work with me, be honest with yourself. Is being loved-up really what you want? Are you prepared to put the work in? Are you prepared for big changes in your life? I can only help you if you are prepared to soul search and really make the efforts required for success.

2) Be realistic. If you are superficial enough to want to bag someone who is extremely easy on the eye, someone who has the personality, drive and captivating aura you dream about, you have to mirror everything you want. This puts unnecessary pressures on everyone from the outset. Instead be prepared to accept flaws, we all have them.

You wouldn't believe the number of frumpy; overweight 40-somethings uninspiring individuals who come to me on a partner hunt with expectations of meeting someone completely out of their league. People have this fallacy that if they throw money at something it will suddenly make it work. Every person I speak to truly believes that they look far younger than most people their age,

It may be brutal, but let's share some tough love here. Unless you are prepared to really work at what you have to offer, you may need to lower your sights. It doesn't mean you won't find a wonderful person, but they are unlikely to come in the package you imagined – the love of your life rarely does. Many a frog has been kissed only to discover he becomes a prince who will bring you just as much happiness as you're dreamed. The same go for men.

To labour this point across to you think about the research that proves that a whopping 79 per cent of couples marry someone they didn't initially find attractive in the first instance. That's right, no instant fireworks, no light bulb moment and certainly no love at first sight. Just 21 per cent of happy couples that have been together for more than five years felt an instant spark when they first met. So if you're the kind of person who dismisses a date on the strength of their photo, or something they say in their profile, or the image they have or job they do, believe it or not, you are missing out on four out of every five potential partners.

It doesn't take Einstein to work out that if you are being harshly judgmental about small things, this is bad news. My advice is to take the blinkers off. Look beyond the first glance and you will find there are a lot of amazing people out there.

3) You get what you give. Whatever your starting point is in so far as looks, sex appeal, charisma and other assets, you can up your game and dramatically improve your chances of finding someone a little nearer to your idea of perfection.

If you know that you are overweight, get down to the gym and drop the extra pounds and tone up, more for your own self-assurance than anything else. It may sound obvious, but it will certainly work better for you than lounging on the couch watching box sets with a carton of ice cream. Try being as proactive with your love life as you have been perhaps with your career or other things you have excelled at.

If you work long hours and feel you lack conversation outside of the office, join a weekend club or start a new pursuit to expand your horizons. Smarten up physically and mentally and you'll trade up in no time.

Think of it as a CV for Love. If you start improving what you have to offer, you'll land a better deal. I've never met anyone who has no room for improvement– and that includes me. I worked long and hard to make the very best of myself, and in doing so it has allowed during my life to enjoy a much wider choice of men.

I know from spending nearly twenty years in this business that Cupid certainly isn't hanging around waiting to fire arrows at you and a gorgeous stranger. Its far more likely that a potential partner is right under your nose – but you have not allowed them to come on to your radar. Be ready to remove those blinkers and open your eyes and see the jewels out there for you?

4) Listen to your heart. We all like to listen to our best friends and families for advice, but I've seen a lot of people talked out of relationships through peer pressure. Be honest with yourself – is your best mate putting your date down because he's worried you'll get hitched before him. Maybe your mum wants you to marry a lawyer and doesn't think your new squeeze's job is up to the grade. If he's a good catch in every other way, then really, who cares, look for the potential. A successful relationship is all about bringing out the very best in each other. The canvas starts off blank and you can fill in the colour.

Now for a word of warning before we really get started: don't run before you can walk. Remember to play the long game in the quest for love. I've lost count of the number of times I've seen my clients listen to my advice and then revert back to their unhelpful patterns of behaviour before they have barely got started. I know you're in a rush to find someone special, and I know you feel you have no time to lose, but patience is the biggest virtue you can have right now. If you follow my formula it will definitely happen sooner rather than later.

We need to work together to make things happen, to flag up what you have going for you and what you could improve upon - step by step.

The self-evaluation test

The next stage is to take my Self-Evaluation Test. Between us we need to establish where you stand in the 'appeal stakes'. Unfortunately, I see countless singles whose expectations far out-weigh what they have to offer every day. I always encourage people to reach for the stars when searching for a soul mate, but as I keep saying, 'it's no good trying to attract the most sought-after alluring people when we are unrealistic about what we have to offer in return'. Yes you may be a nice person, your friends and family think you are wonderful but are you unique, do you have something special about you? Being a nice person will get you far, being dynamic and charismatic and vibrant will net you someone equally alluring.

Take a look at the chart below and ask three people to fill it in. Make sure one person is a very honest friend, and that one is the opposite gender, the third should be someone who doesn't know you quite so well – perhaps a work colleague in another department or a friend of a friend. Don't cheat. The only person you'll be conning is yourself. If you opt for three people who love you warts and all, they may find it too difficult to be truly honest with you. In addition fill the form in yourself to compare and see if you are living in reality.

Your self-evaluation is vital to understand what you need to do to improve your romance rating from the perspective of (a) body, (b) mind (c) spirit. I never take on a client without first going through a stringent evaluation process. Once we know your weaknesses and your strengths, we can point you into the right direction for love.

Self-evaluation Test

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the high score – please give marks in the following three areas.

A maximum of 25 points can be given for each category, and each point is worth 4%. For example, 20 points means a score of 80%:

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Physical	Points awarded
1. Physique and looks: Where 5 is head turner & 1 means there is plenty of room for improvement	
2. Fashion, style, hair, make-up: Do they brush up well most of the time? If so mark 4 or 5	
3. Sex appeal, charisma, does this woman possess femininity in abundance is the man extremely masculine?	
4. Body language: Does this person make an impact in a positive way when they engage with other people?	
5. Vibrancy/energy: Does this person feel energizing and vibrant or can they be a tad bland and a bit draining?	

Mental attitude	Points awarded
1. Articulate, humorous, spontaneous? Then score high	
2. Positive? Glass half or brimming full? Score high	
3. Beliefs and attitude: if over bearing and self-opinionated mark low, if more self-deprecating mark higher?	
4. Does this person pose himself or herself as a challenge? Not just in romance terms but life in general – score high. Or are they a pushover? In which case score low.	
5. Interests, hobbies, pursuits, work life: Does this person appear to have lots going on in life? Score high – Or are they a bit of a couch potato?	

Spiritual and emotional wellbeing	Points awarded
1. Do they have plenty of self-esteem and confidence? Score high 5	
2. Has they an enthusiasm, passion and drive for life in general?	
3. Is the work-life balance equal in your view? Score high	
4. Are they generally caring and warm to almost everyone? Score high	
5. Are they adaptable and open? Score high if they have tunnel vision and are one-dimensional?	

Once you have the three evaluations back, tally the scores from each category using the total from each evaluator. To get the average, divide the totals of each category by three. If your scores vary enormously from person to person, then consider asking three more people to get a more accurate evaluation. Some people may be too generous; at the same time others may be too hard on you. As mentioned before, it is important that you are careful whom you choose to do the evaluations.

A. Physical	Total	Average
B. Mental attitude	Total	Average
C. Spiritual and emotional wellbeing	Total	Average

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I know this challenge is exceptionally tough, and may yield answers to questions you may not even want brought to the surface. Compare the evaluations to your own. Are you kidding yourself a bit or do you have the correct perception of yourself. If you simply do not have enough people in your life to ask, book a Personal Dating Evaluation with one of our team.

Your scores

If the total average score is 66+ (out of a possible 75 points)

As long as this was a really honest evaluation, then you really are on the right track and should take to dating like a duck to water. All you need now is probably just a bit of fine-tuning and direction. It may be just bad luck difficult circumstances stopping you from discovering the right romance opportunities. Possibly you are lacking a little bit in self-belief. Historically clients of mine who scored 66 or more are rarely single for very long.

If the total average score is 54-63 (out of a possible 75 Points). You have some way to go, but at least your friends and associates were honest. Analyse which category you lost most points on, and we can work harder to improve them. If it's the physical side, it may take a little longer to lose a few pounds or work on your appearance, but mental attitude and spiritual and emotional wellbeing won't take long to conquer. Soon you can be at the top of your game.

If the total average score is 42 or less (out of a possible 75 points) First off, thank you for being so honest – however do not despair. The outcome may have hurt your feelings, but when you're down with the dumped the only way is up.

Make the promise to yourself to stick to the formula rigidly to make the big life changes that matter. Invest in yourself and meaningful love will be just around the corner. Continue ignoring what is glaringly obvious to everyone and nothing will change!

My biggest success stories are clients who have come from rock bottom. Sure, you may currently feel like the ugly duckling, but we all know there's a gilded swan inside waiting to glide out.

Let's get going!

Part Two

Unlocking the goddess/god from within

It's a scene we've all observed. A handsome man is walking along the street with his arm protectively curled around a rather plain woman – but he's gazing at her with adoring eyes like she's the most stunning creature on earth. Or a guy that you would not have turned your head for always holds court with the most fanciable women. These people have unlocked the age-old secrets of how to release the god/goddess from within.

Once upon a time, when society was rather simpler – men and women had their traditional moulds set for them. Women were encouraged to maintain their feminine mystique and seduce any man they wanted – Men were action men and were taught from children to ignore their emotional side. Today we live in a very different society where equality is paramount. We are only just re-establishing our roles as men and women again. Whilst it is crucial to move with the times it is also important not to forget those integral differences in our DNA. Men and women are different – and always will be. Understanding how to move into the 21st century but still managing to understand and maintain your true gender strengths – and weaknesses will help you enormously in terms of attracting your target dating prospects.

If you want to know the secret of how to attract the best singles on to your radar, you will need to truly get to grips with what is actually appealing. How is it that some people, even those you think don't have as much to offer as you, seem to have the suitors falling at their feet, while you never get a look in? Why do some people effortlessly hang on to their partners, while everyone you feel yourself falling for walks away before you even get started?

What I'm about to reveal to you is as old as time itself, but somehow many of us have forgotten what actually should be instinctive. Only the true Gods Goddesses will have learned the secrets of what it takes to bag a fabulous romance and partner. I've tried and tested these pearls of wisdom over many years, I know they work! One or two things I'm about to show you may feel odd, or even go against what you currently believe, but if you follow my advice to the letter you will get to a place where you start to have the pick of the bunch. Suddenly you'll find a wealth of attention where before the dating landscape seemed to be barren. You won't have to 'settle' for someone or become what you think they want. You won't be trying too hard to accommodate and please. You won't be fretting or over thinking your dates, what to say or do, what to wear. Everything will soon begin to go with the flow and fit into place. Before you know it, you will find yourself in a great, happy meaningful relationship.

Trust me when I say it will be as easy as that, but you have to become a disciple to my tried and tested formula. Disregard my advice, or cheat on some of the tasks, and you will only be swindling yourself out of a wonderful romance.

There are just four key attributes every man and woman should possess if you want to be a hit with the opposite gender. Forget the superficial tips and guidance. What I have to tell you goes much deeper, yet you will find it much simpler to understand. Everybody has a latent ravishing God/Goddess within, and my 'Four Golden Keys' will unlock the genie from the bottle.

First Golden Key: rediscovering your masculinity/femininity

Probably the most important and appealing of all traits men and women should possess in abundance is sex appeal, yet men and women have a very different definition of what sexy means. Many women believe sex appeal is something skin deep. They mistakenly assume that all men ultimately want is glossy hair, full lips endless legs, hourglass figure and a 'peachy' bum. Most men think that athleticism or strength or height is what being manly is all about. The truth is being 'sexual' is not necessarily something that will last. There is LUST and there is LOVE. Lustfulness is a temporary state of mind if it is all you are taking into consideration; it will not stand the test of time. So if you are happy hopping from one short lived relationship to another then by all means uses the more superficial aspects as a marker. However if a long-term more meaningful romance is what you are looking, if you want to wake up in five and ten years and still feel smitten with your partner and love the bones of them then look further than the initial lustful thoughts. It's a strange thing that might come as a surprise to some people reading this but you CAN have lustful thoughts about a long term partner who you are in love with, even if initially you did not have lustful feelings towards them That old saying 'Don't judge a book by its cover' is never more true.

So what is it that men and women really want? What do men find appealing and what are women really attracted to? The secret to having heaps of sex appeal is very simple – having femininity and masculinity in abundance. However first we need to be clear about the various masculine and feminine strengths. It is not cut a dried, there are things one woman could find extremely appealing and masculine, for another woman it could be something completely different. First you need to discover your own masculine strengths if you are a man and your true feminine traits if you are a woman. Then you need to be honest with yourself about what you find attractive, which ultimately means 'masculine' about a man. Look at the lists below and place them in order of relevance in yourself and what is most appealing in the opposite gender for you personally.

Feminine traits

- 1) Family breadwinner
- 2) Multi tasker/rescuer
- 3) A thinker, a mind of information. Someone mentally stimulating
- 4) A competitor – someone who spends their life competing, even with themselves, someone with drive and ambition
- 5) Emotionally open and mature

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- 6) Totally self-assured
- 7) Compliant easy going personality
- 8) Physically more petite feminine presence

Masculine traits

- 1) Provider – often termed a hunter gatherer
- 2) A practical man – someone who can fix things on a practical level
- 3) A Thinker, a mind of information. Someone mentally stimulating
- 4) A competitor – someone who spends their life competing, even with themselves, someone with drive and ambition
- 5) Emotionally open and mature
- 6) Totally self-assured
- 7) Compliant easy going personality
- 8) Physically larger or taller masculine presence

If you are male - study the lists above and first place in order of most relevance the masculine traits that describe you the best. So if you think your strongest masculine trait is your self-assurance place that at the top and work your way down. Then look at the list of feminine traits and carefully place in order of what qualities you are most attracted to with those that hold the least importance at the bottom. So if a petite frame is really important place that at the top. If it is not significant place it towards the bottom. Bear in mind that it is almost impossible and very unlikely for someone to possess all the traits, so be realistic.

Do the same if you are female, place the feminine qualities in order of those that are most relevant in your personal make-up. Now look at the masculine qualities and list what most appeals. Be careful not to cheat yourself and be very truthful about who you are.

Following this task will help you to discover how to work to your strengths, be clear in your understanding that however your list looks there will be a large group of the opposite agenda who will be totally attracted to your personal make-up of femininity or masculinity type. Once you have discovered your 'Dating DNA' it will be easier to start to identify if the women and men you date are going to turn out to be a long term prospect. It also helps you to train yourself to look further than the initial lustful chemistry or disregard and look beyond the lack of an instant spark, whatever the case may be.

Most people feel they have a type, more often than not the person they end up falling in love with turns out NOT to be their type. Which is another good reason for singles to look further than skin deep. Look more at the less superficial factors. If you are unattached and looking for a long term partner, the initial lustful aspects of a person's character may not be enough to sustain a long term relationship. Realistically the unimportant qualities are:

- 1) Looks
- 2) Physique
- 3) Shared interests
- 4) Income
- 5) Age
- 6) Circumstance

Looks change! A person could completely change their outward appearance for better or worse. Obviously if someone is easy on the eye it will help achieve attention, so it is important for us all to make the most of what we have. However if you do not initially find someone aesthetically pleasing never switch off. Allow yourself the time to look deeper.

Too many shared interests will eventually usually lead to a bland relationship. A bit of common ground is good, however it is far more stimulating to have completely different interests and pursuits that you can introduce to each other. It does not mean you have to completely change your hobbies, but that's what life is about, constant evolution, consistently learning and trying new things. More importantly look at whether you share a similar energy aura. Are you both very proactive, or do you both like to take life in your stride and take a more calmer approach to your everyday lives. Nothing is right or wrong – only that you are on the same wavelength in terms of energy aura.

Someone's circumstances can change, so looking at their job or income, as a marker is unhelpful. During a long-term relationship people's circumstances and dynamics change for better or worse, what is more important is that couples bring out the absolute best in each other. Having someone who shows support and encouragement is crucial; you should generally feel energised in each other's company. Having someone who is inspiring will help you mutually achieve your goals.

Nothing irritates me more about dating more than people's ageist attitudes. Why should a woman be written off as a potential mother past 35? Why are women over 50 practically invisible when they use online dating sites? Why do many women in their 60's refuse to date men their own age and older? Why do women get shamed when dating younger men? It has nothing to do with finding real love and everything to do with society's stereotyping. When my team and I are matchmaking couples together we completely disregard our clients ages and we do not include this information on their profile. We match people according to the most relevant qualities and traits:

- 1) Matching energy aura
- 2) Similar life vision for the next 10-20 years
- 3) Masculine and feminine preferences align
- 4) Values match
- 5) Similar humour
- 6) Temperaments are in tune with each other
- 7) Shared sense of humour

Consider, too, how you will up your chances of romance if you are constantly aware of how you present yourself. You will certainly open more doors if you have brought the best physical version of yourself to the forefront. Whilst the way you look will ultimately be fairly irrelevant in sustaining a long-term relationship, it will certainly bring you far more romance opportunities to choose from.

Ladies take the extra trouble to get ready for a date French-style, with matching lingerie and fragrant body cream or perfume, even if you are only meeting for a coffee and he doesn't get to see the saucy lingerie, because what he will pick up on is an aura of 'all woman', surrounding you simply by the way the preparation has made you feel inside. This is how you release the inner goddess. Overwhelmingly I have found that men are more attracted to women who they feel have at least made an effort with their appearance.

Whilst appearance will also go down well in attracting more women, hygiene is of paramount importance for women when it comes to appealing to her. Another factor that is deeply resented by most women are men who do not appear to have a generosity of spirit. This is high on the list for most women.

Ladies be aware that when it comes to seeking a long-term romance men are overwhelmingly more attracted to women who have harnessed their femininity, just as the majority of women need something masculine about a man for them to appeal. The truth is we are all quite different in regards to what we personally find masculine or feminine.

Today we live in a world in the work place where we are striving quite rightly for equality. Women are encouraged to compete with men at work. We expect ourselves to be rougher, tougher, work longer hours and negotiate harder to get on in what is still sometimes regarded as a man's world. Rarely in this day and age do we try to get ahead using our natural womanly charms, for fear of offending colleagues or being seen as weak or feeble. But by trying to emulate men we risk what we do best – being real women, bringing the feminine qualities that we have as women, can actually complement our male counterparts, instead of competing. If we then bring the male version of a woman into our romance opportunities we risk weakening our natural female magnetism. Instead of seeing femininity as an invaluable tool, we have become accustomed to viewing it as something that could thwart our climb to career success. Women in the 21st century are gradually finding their proper place, alongside men as strong women in our own right but remaining in our own gender role. Achieving through empathy, compassion and strength of character.

I'm personally totally against women dumbing down, but by the same token, ultimately if we could slightly curb any urge to want to seize control of everything and instead work together alongside men complimenting and recognizing each other's gender differences then current gender stereotypical resentments could be eradicated. We do not need to manage everything to try and prove our worth as women. It is not appreciated and not expected and not really something men aspire to.

When women can properly fulfil our place in society the variance in our genders will be carried through all parts of our lives. Learning to embrace your inner femininity without it being perceived in any way as a vulnerability or weakness is a skill that will aid your route to romantic success.

By the same token, when men has finally discovered their rightful place in today's society alongside women, instead of them trying to demean or walk over us, when they do not feel threatened or emasculated, a true balanced romance will be easier to obtain for all of us.

There are men who prefer a more assertive self-assured woman and there are men who gravitate towards a slightly more, easier going compliant nature. Figure out who you are and what you are most attracted to.

We may feel we are the smarter half of the couple and be rightfully proud of our accomplishments, especially if they dwarf that of our partner. However strengths and weakness come in different forms, we would do well to embrace that. The true sense of a feminine woman is someone who does not feel the necessity to tower above the man in her life. Instead today's feminine women can holds a more sensual and self-deprecating stance without appearing as a pushover. She need never boast about her achievements to outshine her ma, just as today's masculine males should not feel the need to conquer. As soon as men and women feel completely comfortable in each of their own skin in the work place, this harmony will navigate its way into a happy and modern romantic synchronization.

Many view 'manipulation' as a dirty word in relationships. However look at the dictionary definition of 'manipulate' and it relays a very positive, powerful word: to handle or manage or use skilfully, to arrange or influence cleverly'. That's exactly what I'm asking you to do – to use all your feminine and masculine wiles to charm your suitors. To me, manipulation is a very positive skill. Men should encourage women to really be women just as women should sanction men to be completely true to their gender.

Let's swing it around. When we list the qualities we want in a partner, all women desire a masculine man. We may seek a hunter-gatherer type, but that should not be because we wish to solely rely on his skills as a breadwinner. We may gravitate towards an innate sense of self-assurance. Or it may be that we are looking for the masculinity of being a mind of information. Many view masculinity as being able to build from a flat pack, or fix the leaking sink. How we deem masculinity is very personal to each and every one of us. Knowing and recognizing what we, as women deem masculine will go a long way with recognizing your type.

Just as if men ponder on what feminine traits he is most attracted to, instead of seeking first her age or dress size, finding true romance would be far more simple and much more rapid. Whilst most women don't need a man to look after us, many would secretly desire a bit of looking after every now and then, that's being true to your feminine self.

By the same token, some guys do not necessarily need a strong woman behind him, but he certainly feels better and more content when he has one. Likewise, while many men struggle to define what constitutes a feminine woman, they will always be attracted to one when he comes across her. In his eyes, before you even speak, he has found a precious prize, and to him you're already head and shoulders above most of the other women in the room. Femininity for women and masculinity for men are the most powerful tools of attraction.

CASE STUDY

Laura is a 37-year-old PA. Growing up with three older brothers, she was always a tomboy. She wore her wild hair cropped short, refused to wear dresses and drank pints on nights out, downing them to 'impress the lads'. While never short of male mates, any man she got close to viewed her as a much-loved friend but never a potential girlfriend.

Laura's so-called pals did nothing to change her and assured her she looked great. Why? They were happy for her to stay the same way, as she brought with her an endless supply of her brothers' eligible friends and was no competition herself.

When Laura came to me I had to shock her into seeing herself as others saw her. There were tears and tantrums, but we worked to rediscover her feminine side. She grew her hair, swapped jeans for slinky dresses and toned down her loud banter and wild side.

In short, she blossomed as a gorgeous woman. Within three months, she was out on dates four nights a week. One year later, Laura was engaged to be married.

Second Golden Key: Posing yourself as a challenge

Since the dawn of time men have been hunters and to a certain extent many men have this form of masculinity, which many women find attractive. These men are programmed to go for the chase; to track down the object of their desire. Whether it's his career, saving for a new car or lusting after a new woman, many men need a constant challenge in their lives. It's an innate characteristic of certain men to feel that anything worth having must prove difficult to obtain. This includes your love. If this type of guy feels he hasn't had to 'try hard' to win over and keep your affection, then his interest in you wanes.

For men and women both posing yourself as a challenge and commanding mutual respect should be a lifelong crusade if you want to keep your partner's attention as fresh as when you first met.

Please don't confuse posing yourself as a challenge with being confrontational. Be mindful of the fact that many of us – men and women – will always feel we need to be punching slightly above our weight in our relationships. We have to feel that we are genuinely lucky to have captured our suitor's attention. Even more so the longer as your relationship grows.

Think hard; what is the first thing most women do when we meet someone who melts our heart? Many of us become all consumed and too accommodating; we shower him with attention and affection; and we try to rescue him. In an instant, we've gone from dream girl to doormat and have stopped posing ourselves as a challenge.

Many of us women can keep him guessing for a few days, even a few weeks, but then we drop our guard and become a passive pushover, because we believe it's what he wants. And what happens? Suddenly this man, who was so smitten to begin with, starts to drift away and lose interest. As his attention in us wanes, we become even more pushy and less of a challenge.

For many women, it's happened more than once. Yet we fail to recognise the warning signs and fall into the same pattern time and time again. Rather than blame ourselves, we turn it back on the man. How many excuses have you used? I bet you've claimed a former boyfriend as 'commitment phobic', only to see him wed the woman he dated after you. You'll blame it on him not getting over his ex, or that he isn't in the right place emotionally, and then see him happily settle down with someone else? Or do you wail that he isn't mature enough, despite the fact he's 55?

Most women probably do not have any trouble keeping the interest of the guys they don't fancy. They battle to try to win you over, but the more you ignore them the more they come for you. But for some strange reason, so many women think the guys who appeal to them are going to act differently? Wake up to the reality; it's not him – it's you! You need to back off to give him the 'space to chase'.

Even in a long-term relationship you must keep the balance right. Your man needs to feel that he is never quite sure how you are going to react; you need to keep him guessing in small ways every day. A man who doesn't feel there is anything to try hard for in his relationship will seek the challenge elsewhere – sometimes in the arms of other, more challenging women. Even the most loyal and trustworthy men will eventually turn their attentions away from their adoring partner, throwing themselves into work and losing interest in their woman. Or they will become obsessed with outside interests. That's why there are so many frustrated golf widows waiting for their husband to come home!

Women too hate the feeling of being smothered by a man. The right balance of communication is crucial, without feeling like you are being constantly bombarded and hassled. It is understandable that men want to make a good impression when they are first getting to know a woman they are smitten with. However less is more in this case. Try to mirror the correct balance of communication especially earlier in a fledgling relationship.

Women especially try to show the men they are very attracted to their hand in cards too soon. Yes you want him to know your long-term 'wifely/motherly' qualities to prove to him early on that you're a potential long-term mate. However what most women fail to grasp is that he can easily spot the warm aspects of a woman's personality by himself in a more subtle way. It is totally unnecessary to labour every little point at his feet. He will pick up on your kind-heartedness, your considerate nature and your compassion by the way you behave with your friends, colleagues and family and everyone around you.

I find most men I come across and have interviewed say they want a lovely, warm, friendly, easy-going woman; of course they don't tell me they want to be with anyone who is confrontational. However, I've matched thousands of men over the years and have seen first-hand that not being so agreeable and being true to your own opinions is what inspires most men to go that extra mile and show women that they have true desire. While I don't want to encourage women to be high maintenance, I do foster women to be spirited. Male of female just remember that you are the jewel in the crown; the precious prize. Women keep the men chasing forever and men be more mindful about having the correct balance of pursuit and romance will be discovered more swiftly.

CASE STUDY

Feisty lawyer, Siobhan, 34 year old, had every man she met falling at her feet. A stunning size 8 figure, razor sharp mind and chic dress sense ensured she had the whole package. But she couldn't keep a man for more than a month. Why? When she came to me, it soon became clear that although she was in control of her head, she had no control over her heart.

As soon as any man showed a flicker of interest, Siobhan was so desperate to take it further that she'd mould herself to be what she thought he wanted. She'd take up his hobbies; change her make-up and clothes and even 'accidentally' bump into him when he was out with his mates — even if it meant driving miles to his local. She'd over analyse every text and phone him angrily if he didn't return her calls within a few minutes. In short, she made herself so easily available that it rapidly became a turn-off.

What man wants a woman who throws herself at him? Guys think if you do it to them, you've done it to every other man in town too. I had to train her to hold back and be less available. It was very hard and went against everything in her nature, but she began to turn it around and make men run after her. She'd claim to be busy so guys couldn't book her in for dates, and tease men with the thought she had a better offer elsewhere.

Two years on, I watched from the back of the church as she walked down the aisle with a husband who thought he'd made the catch of his life. My job was done!

Third Golden Key: Self-belief

Are there still people who think women are the weaker sexes? Of course not! Look at the power we hold over men when they're in love with us, or how most men take more notice of their mums than their fathers. Don't delude yourself that men look upon a feminine woman as weak woman. Many men love a strong female but strong in a subtle way; not a woman who is brash and bold. The key to being strong is to have bundles of self-belief. A woman, who holds the essential power of self-assurance, is a woman who will not fold at the first sign of a drama. She is a woman who has a sense of self-worth. If a woman shows that she respects herself, men automatically respect her and believe she's worth fighting for. A woman with a low self-esteem spells 'needy' to a guy, and men can smell this neediness a mile off. Very few truly masculine men want to be with a desperate, insecure, vulnerable woman – if he does it usually means he has his own insecurity issues.

You will find the only men who actively seek out the company of women with low self-esteem are the controlling ones. These are the toxic guys who appear to be Mr Marvellous early on in the relationship, as they attempt to prise open your more vulnerable side. This type of man can appear so empathetic that we can be blinded to his true intentions and find him flattering and endearing. But ladies beware, bearing your soul and divulging you life's woes to a man you barely know will come back to haunt you in the form of a controlling bully, so steer well clear.

Every woman knows her self-esteem levels vary from day to day. We are burdened with far more hormonal mood swings than men. One moment a woman can feel wonderful, the next she'll be down in the dumps or having a 'fat day ', depending on what's going on in her world. But don't confuse confidence with self-esteem, as many strong confident women have a very low self-worth sometimes, especially when it comes to men. I have watched a woman deliver a faultless two-hour seminar to over a hundred men, then fall to pieces in the break because she received a hurtful text message from her boyfriend.

My role is to work with men and women to get you to the point where you don't overthink and soul search every time a date or budding relationship doesn't go according to plan. There are disciplines for you to follow in this book to bolster your self-esteem if it is lacking a little. Time and time again I see clients go on enjoyable dates, and after a short while come back believing they have really connected to someone whose synergy aligns. As things progress often doubt creeps in for no other reason than a low self-esteem!

Whilst men find it easier to compartmentalize, many a woman will replay every minute of her dates and communication over again in her mind, wondering and worrying. Did she impress him enough for him to want to see her again? Eventually she'll crack and think of an excuse to call or text . If he doesn't reply immediately, she'll call and text again, even adding a hint of resentment in the text if he hasn't responded.

If this all sounds familiar, and you have found yourself many a time boring your friend's silly your dates, you may be suffering from a low self-esteem.

I've discovered that very often from the man's point of view, if the woman makes contact first it takes the romantic wind out of his sails. He'll feel marginally disappointed in you. He feels conned out of his role of the hunter and could feel slightly emasculated. One essential dating tactic a woman should learn is to understand that most men will take time to respond – it's part of their dating DNA and it's not because they don't like you; quite the opposite in fact. If a man's keen, he can take days to plan his strategy for wooing you, and even longer to get back in touch.

Guys you know how you often withdraw slightly and deliberately not call or text for a few days in the hope that you do not come across as too keen and risk a woman losing interest. At this stage, guys secretly hope that they have stumbled across a stimulating girl, who poses herself as a challenge so he can forge ahead with winning her affections. But, if a woman is constantly communicating without prompt she has often blown her chances. Making it way too easy and abundantly clear that a man doesn't have to even try to win you over will not fair well if you are looking for a lasting relationship. If a guy initially appears keen, this is usually the only reason they give up their pursuit.

Guys tend to go about life very differently to women and have no problem compartmentalising each different area of their lives. While women become all consumed after a great date, talking endlessly about it to friends, family and colleagues, a man can go on a date with a girl, then put his feelings on hold while he works out his romantic plan. Men love to draw out the pursuit for as long as they can and savour the thrill of the chase. I've seen guys go up to three weeks between a first date and calling a girl for a second meet up. Possibly he has decided to get down the gym to hone his body to try to impress you next time you meet. Or he may be finishing up liaisons with other ladies, leaving himself free to concentrate on his latest squeeze – does this sound familiar? It could be that he may just want to finish a project at work so he can totally focus on dating – men and women have a different method and attitude to dating, the sooner we recognize men as men and women as women it will be far easier for us all to read the signals and for less ambiguity.

If a man finds you attractive and thinks a woman is out of his league, he'll want to be at his peak the next time they meet – so he'll bide his time until he feels he is at his best. What he won't do is call within an hour of the date to reschedule the next date weeks in advance. It's the same when men meet up with their friends, they are likely to be more spontaneous, whereas women always have a busy diary, planning meet ups weeks ahead. Even if a guy feels he would like to see you again soon, he will rarely want to arrange to meet you for the next few nights, unless it's an urgent sex-only interest. Which is even more reason not to rush into intimacy.

A woman with self-belief will come away from a date confident that the guy will call eventually or not whatever the case may be – however long that takes. She'll busy herself and put him to the back of her mind, even date other guys until the subject of her interest shows his hand. If he doesn't, a self-assured woman will brush it aside and tell herself he simply wasn't right for her in the first place, She certainly won't contact him, fret or moan to friends, and she definitely won't lower herself into an 'accidental' meeting at places she knows he hangs out.

The big problem that many women run into, especially British women, is that they often regard a good date as the beginning of a relationship. Instead of enjoying the date for what it is and being content to perhaps see each other again at some point, some women start planning the colour of the bridesmaids' dresses half an hour after meeting a new man!

Too many women want to rush things, especially those whose biological clock is ticking loudly. The irony is, by slowing down the pace and stepping back, you'll land a partner far more rapidly than trying date by date to force a guy into more quick fire dates before they are ready. These women lose out on potential romances time and time again.

Learning to alter your approach and believing in yourself and what you have to offer will serve you well. If you don't feel you have much to offer, then do something about it; spend your energy on this for a while and put dating on the back burner until you do consider yourself a genuine catch. Soon enough your dream catch will turn into reality.

CASE STUDY

Actress Leona, 36, was never short of male admirers. With tumbling dark curls and honeyed skin, she captivated men whether simply shopping in the supermarket or shaking her stuff on the dance floor. However, after every date she'd text to say what a great night she had and how she couldn't wait to see them again. Sometimes she'd even suggest a meeting place, time and venue for later that week.

When she came to me, I cringed at the messages she'd fired off after a first date. She thought she was simply being polite and carrying on the evening's conversation, but men smell an air of desperation, so rarely had her dates bothered to get back in touch.

For Leona, I devised an extreme plan with the help of her flat mate Caroline. After every date, Leona would go to Caroline's room and hand over her mobile phone. Caroline would then delete the guy's number to stop Leona being tempted to send a text or call. The men didn't know, they just thought Leona was playing it cool.

Within six weeks Leona began to see the benefits, so I trusted her to take back charge of her phone. Now three years on she's married, with a young son, and living in America with a man she waited patiently for two weeks before their second date.

Fourth Golden Rule: Be Captivating

So, you have strong self-belief, you're totally in touch with your masculinity/femininity in every way. However winning over the crème de la crème of the single population demands you to be totally captivating.

For men and women to enchant their date means they possess a certain je ne sais quoi that others warm. People feel energized by you and want to spend time in our company. It's about being vibrant and having a passion and enthusiasm for everything you do. Not being like an excited puppy but effervescent and vivacious. To have this character you do not have to be an extrovert, you can be quietly vibrant without being loud and over the top.

For both men and women it is not about 'talking' about that wonderful life you have – it shines through when you are living it. So many singles throw themselves into work and whilst the conversation and enthusiasm is initially infectious and stimulating it will soon become quite bland for your date if that is all you have to talk about. If your whole life and conversation revolves around your job then you need to start getting out more and learning, reading, watching. Only the most captivating will feel totally at ease on their dates and not have to struggle to find something to talk about.

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Many singles devote so many hours of their lives to work, they forget all about taking some 'me time' to do something solely and selfishly for themselves. Indeed, lots of people feel it's a waste of time to introduce themselves to new interests and pursuits, but indulging in a new interest, or learning about something different, creates a whole new wave of vibrancy into your life.

A person who is well travelled and well read, who is always going places and doing things, a person who takes care of their health by exercising regularly and takes pride in their appearance, is a person who usually has an adoring band of admirers interested in them.

When you have plenty going on in your life outside of work, you become a different type of person, without even realising it. You're transformed into a person who has an engaging opinion on a huge repertoire of subjects, you have something intelligent to add to any conversation, and you'll find you regularly strike up your own discussions while you hold court. People are interested in what you have to say because you deliver everything with more passion. Everyone will want to catch your eye and engage your interest. Suddenly, you've gone from all work and no play to the life and soul of the party.

It just takes a little effort to become more interesting, and it pays dividends. A new romantic interest will pick up on a vibrant energizing person without even being directly in your company. There is a natural and almost constant aura of energy surrounding a captivating person. Their presence and enthusiasm is infectious, and people are drawn immediately to you. A vibrant person is one who will light up a room; she's the girl every man wants to talk to and the man every other man wants to be.

Now just ponder on this for a moment: imagine your power if you combine your new-found vibrancy with a strong self-belief, heaps of femininity or masculinity depending on your gender and an acute awareness that you can pose yourself a challenge to anyone you meet. It will feel fantastic to know you're all woman, with men everywhere wanting to get to know you. That is a 'Relationship waiting to happen' – it won't be long before romance is on the path in front of you.

CASE STUDY

Corporate banker, Ed, 49, worked fourteen hour days and often at weekends too. Although he was rewarded with an amazing apartment, a six-figure salary and a shiny new sports car, he was exhausted. His job left him washed out with very little time for looking after himself.

When I began working with Ed I encouraged him to take a little 'me time' each day. What began with a 20-minute swim each morning before work soon developed into a love of the cycling. In two months he began to look healthier and his inner glow began to brighten.

At the gym he enrolled on an evening massage course to learn a new skill. His colleagues made saucy jokes about his choice of hobby. No longer was he just one of the guys on the trading floor, he was a fit, sexy bloke with everything going for him. Having more attention boosted his confidence, and he began to open up and even began to indulge in a little harmless flirting and banter.

In no time at all he met a woman who had set up her own successful personal training business he had another string to his bow.

They are still together and going from strength to strength.

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

Follow these Four Golden Keys and you'll unlock your inner God/Goddess. You'll be that person who suddenly has their pick and choice of dates and who embarks on the right relationship for the right reasons.

Part Three

CalcuDating

If you're single, your number's up. My easy to follow CalcuDating System will change your approach to dating for the better in such a subtle way you won't even realise at first that you are changing direction. CalcuDating is utterly unique, and it's proven to work on even the toughest cases.

I devised my CalcuDating System four years ago, and I use it regularly on the clients who come to me for a Personal Dating Evaluation. It has been tried and tested and it works a treat.

Just like top therapies, including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) or Neuro linguistic Programming (NLP), the purpose of the CalcuDating System is to help you ditch old, negative behaviour patterns and learn to take a new positive, uplifting, direction that will get you to where you want to be. Unlike some therapies that take weeks or months to kick in, by following the CalcuDating formula you can begin benefiting immediately as you attune all the areas in your life towards romance

It was Isaac Newton's third law that every action had an equal and opposite reaction. So, when it comes to love, this is the 'Lorraine Adams first law' – it's never truer in the art of finding a Partner. How you look, the way you behave, how you interact with others – every little move you make will impact on your chances of finding a long-term partner. My goal is to work with you to maximise the positive sides to your character and minimise those unhelpful patterns of behaviour that others may find unattractive. It's not about trying to change who you are; Simply helping you to bring the best possible version of yourself to the forefront.

So, how does it work? It's easy – the CalcuDating System is a point-based 'love plan'. Every positive action, like smiling at a stranger or accepting a new date, earns you a score called a Match Point. Every negative behaviour, such as obsessing over an ex, drunken dialling, or not making an effort with your appearance, docks your points. The CalcuDating formula measures your good and bad behaviour patterns in uncomplicated, numerical terms that gauge your progress in a very black and white manner. If you have the odd bad day, it's not all lost. You can cancel out your 'sins' by sticking to it and trying to recoup your lost points in other ways.

All you need to do is keep a weekly tally of your plus and minus Match Points, so that you can assess your progress. Sooner than you realise, the upbeat stuff will start to become like second nature, and this will have a knock on positive effect.

By repeating the good behaviours you will gain more and more self-assurance, and your confidence will be attractive and appealing to potential suitors. But I'll be honest with you, stage one, which is the first three months of the CalcuDating formula, is intensive – it is meant to be! You may be shifting in a direction that you have never been before, or you could simply be rediscovering your former self. Often ex partners from a toxic relationship help only brought out the worst in you and it takes time to work on yourself before even thinking of embarking on a new relationship. That old saying about 'Loving yourself before anyone else can love you is very accurate. Be prepared to move out of your comfort zone during the CalcuDating process - if it's not hurting, it's not working. Doing well now will set you up for life and help your new lifetime partner find you! Not just someone who fits the bill for now, but someone who is right for you in more ways than you will recognise, in the first instances.

Teachers have long known the best way to learn new skills is repetition – remember having your times tables drilled into you? At times you'll feel I'm repeating what you think you know, but I'll keep on at you until I believe it's become instinctive. Soon my CalcuDating formula will be part of your daily routine. You won't even need to think about what to do; you'll be flirting and attracting the right types of people naturally. You will learn to stop fretting and agonising over unimportant trivial things. The fussing is usually the thing that holds you back from getting on the dating treadmill.

One thing you need to come to terms with is that you cannot leap straight from single to couple – you need to go through the tentative stages of dating and embark on fledgling romances in order to lay the right foundations. Harville Hendrix PH.D, The New York Times best-selling author, reminds us in his book *Keeping the love you find* about people who have 'fantasy world ideas about love'. Spending time ensuring you really understand what you want and need from a relationship, instead of skipping over it in the rush to get there more rapidly, will guide you to a union with staying power. As for the people you are dating, isn't it better that they understand and discover the real you, rather than being steam rolled into to getting to know an imitational version of you?

My aim is to get you to a place where the right person discovers you, slowly and sincerely. I want to coach you to make the most out of every romance opportunity that comes your way, even if at first you don't recognise it as such. Sometimes I have clients who don't realise that the way they are behaving could be placing huge barriers along their path to finding love. Following the CalcuDating formula renders everything more transparent; there will no longer be excuses for you to hide behind. When you start losing points, it will soon hit home what is working against you and you will begin to think twice before you fall back into bad habits.

So, how long does it take to get started? All my clients have to go through a three-month start up stage – stage one. If you collect near to maximum points during this stage, you will go directly to stage two at the end of the three months. You may, however, need a little more work, and that's fine. It's crucial to get this part right. There is no point you moving ahead if you are not ready, so if your Match Points score is low each month, you'll need to repeat stage one. Effectively, this means you could spend six months on the program. I know it may seem like a long time but trust me, in the long term it will be far quicker than you making the same mistakes for the next ten years and still coming home alone every night.

The faster the CalcuDating program starts to resonate, the quicker you will be able to move to stage two – and romance opportunities will be coming your way more rapidly. The clients I have who become total disciples to the CalcuDating formula, and who follow guidance to the letter, are the ones who fall in love and become part of a couple much sooner than those in denial.

I have helped hundreds and hundreds of people to settle down with a loving partner; I know what I'm talking about. My advice is objective. I'm not your buddy or your sister, I'm your coach, and that's why I can get tough with you. I have no emotional attachment to you like your friends who advise you – they love you warts and all whereas I can tell it like it really is.

Getting started

Below is a table of the positive behaviours that I want you to start adopting. Maybe you already follow some of the suggested tasks, in which case it will be familiar and easy for you. If you are starting from scratch, don't worry; you will soon get into the swing of things.

Following the table of positive behaviours is the nasty 'negative behaviour' table, detailing the actions you really need to avoid. These are the passion killers that will lose you points, scare off every potential romance opportunity in the neighbourhood and set you back weeks in your progress. Please photocopy the tables and add up your points on a weekly basis. Later I will indicate how many points you need to reach each given week and month during your intensive three month plan.

It will be hard; you'll have to leave your comfort zone and you'll be pushed into a whole new way of looking at things. You will be taking a new, unfamiliar approach, but with the comfort of knowing that my formula is tried and tested and will achieve a lot more for you in terms of romance than your efforts so far. So many people have accomplished happy unions by following my guidance. I've fixed up more marriages and long term partnerships than anyone else I know, so you're hearing it from the best.

To make it a little easier for you, the formula is segmented into two busy, proactive months with a non-proactive month in the middle, when I won't be pushing you to accumulate quite so many points. Use your non-proactive month to kick back, not beat yourself up so much, and reflect on what you achieved so far. By the time you get to month three – your next proactive month comes around – you'll be raring to go again, with a renewed enthusiasm. It's easy to become complacent and feel you've not changed much when you have been on the plan for a few months, but you will be surprised at how much you have progressed. Before you embark on this program you will write a few paragraphs in your dating diary (see Chapter one) about exactly how you feel, so you will be able to look back and remember just how bleak everything looked. You'll be surprised at how much more positive you've become over a short period of time.

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

The first three months of the curriculum could be the most important three months of your life. If you work hard, you will find your life beginning to change. Suitors will start to show more interest, offers of dates will be coming your way, and your inner confidence will be blooming. It's my aim to build this 'virtuous circle' until you are the woman every guy wants to get to know and the guy every woman gravitates towards. Although that may be hard for you to imagine right now, and I know it may all sound unachievable at this early stage, but believe me, I have seen countless singles, some long term singles who had all but given up hope only to succeed in finding to a beautiful relationship by simply following my guidance.

OK – I hope you are clear about what you need to do, now let's get down to looking at the Match Point plan. I'm not going to shower you with points for every little smile at a stranger; you have to work hard at it to earn them.

Match point totals

- During the first proactive month, which lasts for five weeks, following the set tasks you can earn up to a total of 34 points.
- The next four weeks, month two, is the non-proactive month and you can earn a total of 16 points for tasks completed.
- On your third month, a proactive month lasting four weeks, you can earn a total of 30 points.
- Over the three months you can earn an extra 94 points if you accomplish the additional tasks set for you.

Match points positive behaviour table

There must be absolutely no cheating on points. You must complete every action in full to earn the Match Points otherwise you collect zero points. You are only conning yourself if you let yourself down and cheat! So, for example, on task one you must smile at 10 people or more to collect the two points awarded. If you only smile at five people on your 'smile' day you collect zero points.

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

Positive Behaviour patterns	Points awarded	When to collect the points	Task number
Smiling at 10 strangers or someone you haven't spoken to	2 points per completed task of 10 people	Collect total of 2 points once every week for	Task 1
Speaking to strangers after you've smiled at them (at least 2 per 'Smile' day to gain	2 points per completed task of 2 people	Collect total of 2 points once Every week on your	Task 2
Starting a new interest or pursuit	2 points per completed task	Collect a total of 2 points on each of your proactive months	Task 3
Attending two events or social happenings to widen your network	2 points per completed task	Collect a total of 4 points per proactive month (two events)	Task 4
Going on a first date	2 points per completed task	Collect total of 6 points each proactive month	Task 5
Going on a successive date with someone you've already dated (but not an ex)	2 points per completed task	Collect a total of 6 points over the whole three months	Task 6
Additional tasks to earn extra points			
Joining a new online dating site or app	2 points for each new site	Collect a total of 4 points for the three months (for joining	Task 7

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

Positive Behaviour patterns	Points awarded	When to collect the points	Task number
Additional tasks to earn extra points			
Communicating with at least two people on an online dating site or app	2 points per completed task of 2 people	Collect a total of 6 points for whole three months	Task 8
Going on a date, even with someone you don't see as potential	2 points per person you date	Collect a total of 4 points each proactive month (two dates)	Task 9
Spending five minutes three times a week On positive thinking	1 point for Each completed week only	Collect a total of 13 points for whole three months	Task 10
Spending time accessorising your outfit 5 days out of	1 point for Each completed week only	Collect a total of 13 points for whole three months	Task 11
Putting some additional make-up or guys styling their hair or	1 point for Each completed week only	Collect a total of 13 points for whole three months	Task 12
Wearing something you feel dressed up in at least three times a	1 point for Each completed week only	Collect a total of 13 points for whole three months	Task 13
Paying someone a compliment, male or female, at least three	1 point for Each completed week only	Collect a total of 13 points for whole three months	Task 14
Doing at least 30 minutes of daily physical exercise at least five times a week	1 point for Each completed week only	Collect a total of 13 points for whole three months	Task 15

Match points negative behaviour

Now look at the table of negative behaviour below. Every time you fall into one of these bad behaviours, you will accumulate points that will be deducted from your total.

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

Negative behaviour patterns	Points deducted
Rushing out of the house without putting any make-up on (girls) or with unkempt hair or generally not making an effort	1
Cancelling a date (Someone cancelling on you doesn't lose you points, but you cannot collect the points either.)	2
Obsessive communicating with someone you've dated, (Remember to pose yourself as a challenge)	2
Asking a person how they feel about you or trying to extract their feelings and thoughts on you during the first few dates	2
Not attending a planned event, activity or social happening – Unless you reschedule	2
Communicating with an ex you are trying to shake off unless its crucial, child	1
Making negative comments about your status such as 'there are No nice women around' or 'all the best men are either gay or married'	1
Having too much to drink on a date — two glasses of wine is fine, two bottles isn't	1
Giving too much away about yourself on a first or a successive date	1
Becoming intimate (sexual) with someone on a first or second date – a little kissing is OK as long as it is brief	2
Turning down a date with someone for weak superficial reasons such as age, height or profession	1

Match points accumulator table

Use the following table to record you positive and negative points during the three months and then get out a calculator to tally them at the end.

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

Tasks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Total points deducted	Total points
Proactive month																	
Week 1																	
Week 2																	
Week 3																	
Week 4																	
Week 5																	
Total points																	
Non-proactive month																	
Week 6																	
Week 7																	
Week 8																	
Week 9																	
Total points																	
Proactive month																	
Week 10																	
Week 11																	
Week 12																	
Week 13																	
Total points																	

Example accumulator table

Tasks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Total points deducted	Total points
Proactive month																	
Week 1	2	2					2			1	1	1	1		1		11
Week 2	2	2	2	2						1	1	1	1	1			13
Week 3	2	2				2				1	1	1	1			2	8
Week 4	2	2					2			1	1	1	1		1		11
Week 5	2	2		2												1	5
Total points																	48

The example table shows the Match Points the user earned for their set tasks as follows:

All Task 1 match points for "smile" day, as well as the communicated on "smile" day points.

User started a new interest or pursuit and earned total points.

User attended two events and earned total points.

User collected 28 points out of a possible 32 points for completing Tasks 1-6.

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

User also managed to collect 23 Match Points for the additional disciplines in tasks 7–15; however, they had 3 points deducted for negative behaviours. With a total of 48 Match Points the user is just scraping through, which should give you an idea of just how much effort you will need to dedicate to completing your new tasks and disciplines. It may seem a lot to take in, but once you get going, it's simple. Remember the idea is to pace yourself; the last thing I want is for you to start to lose heart and give up because you are suffering from 'dating fatigue'. Think of the tortoise and the hare scenario. Running fast doesn't mean you'll win the race. Take it slow; get it right, and that forever person is in sight.

With all the tools to hand, you are now ready to embark on the program. The next section of this book accompanies you on your journey.

Part Four

Embarking on your journey to finding your forever person

You are about to embark on what could possibly be the most empowering journey of your life, the route to romantic bliss. In this section, we'll tackle the barriers that may currently be preventing you from finding lasting love, and we'll work together on some proven tactics and simple disciplines that will totally change your approach to dating and relationships so you can unearth the relationship success you have always dreamed about.

Before we begin, let's look at your love life so far. You may be someone who has been going through life armed with a wish list for your dream person. That's all well and good, but now I want you to consider also those slightly outside your wish list. In effect, I want you to give the prospects you would normally dismiss a second look.

At its most basic level, part of the formula is designed to open up your eyes and ensure you make the most out of every romantic opportunity that comes your way. You've already read in this book the statistics that show four in five happy couples weren't instantly attracted to each other; so armed with that fact of life, I want to coach you to take a look at almost every person you could potential have a date with and to look deeper at what they have to offer. At first glance they may not seem like 'the one', however, they could have hidden qualities that didn't jump out at you the first time around. If you constantly remind yourself that not every mind-blowing love affair is going to sprout from someone who gives you goose bumps, then you'll be opening yourself to many more potential romance opportunities.

There may be other reasons you are failing to either recognise romance opportunities or to find the secret of sustaining a good relationship. In my -long experience of finding love for others, there are three types of singles who come to me – Blinkers, Freezers and the Rubber Rings.

Blinkers are by far the biggest group of singles. I find many of those unattached go through life totally blind – wearing 'blinkers'. They wouldn't recognise a romance opportunity if it got down on one knee and proposed to them. They are so busy looking for what they feel is their 'ideal' partner that they miss out on those potential loves who are much more likely to be a better match. If you fall into this category, my role is to take off your 'blinkers' so you can properly consider all the opportunities placed before you.

Freezers

Singles who are Freezers are more open-minded and happy to consider dating a person who doesn't match their wish list, but they find it difficult to open up any possibility of romance. Though they may like the look of a potential partner, when it comes to sending signals that they are up for a date, they 'freeze'. Their dates either can't read them or they find Freezers bland and move on swiftly. If this is you, don't panic. Parts of my formula will help you enormously with this dilemma. My aim is to get you to a place where being romanced and finding yourself the object of someone's affections begin to feel quite natural to you. I'll teach you how to go with the flow and surround yourself with men / women wanting more.

Rubber rings

And finally there are those singles that have no problem recognising romance opportunities, and certainly no problem opening them either, however, the Rubber Rings hit a huge hurdle sustaining a new relationship. They always fail to hang on to a potential partner after the first few dates. Rubber rings are so desperate for a relationship that they'll grab onto the first person that shows a little interest in them and practically grasping at anyone in the hope of diving into a relationship. They'll snatch out like they're drowning in a sea of singles – and a rubber ring is the only ring they're likely to get! Again, if you see a little of yourself here, don't worry. If you follow my advice, you will cruise through with ease and discover you can actually have a choice of eligible people. Instead of finding someone who nearly fits and hanging on for dear life because you don't want to be alone. You'll start to take your time with complete confidence. You will find that you will only allow yourself to settle with the right person and not just someone who looks good on paper. Soon you could have your pick of potential partners. Believe me this can and will happen, if you place your belief in this formula and throw your weight behind achieving top results.

But before you embark on this, you must be prepared for it mentally. Half-hearted attempts just won't work. Ask yourself: 'Do I really want to make changes in my life?' and tell yourself that you can make the change from being single to enjoying a happy relationship by exerting some positive effort. I have the tools and know how; I have the case histories; I have the proven track record: the only thing that needs to come from you is the effort. Don't make excuses to put off embarking on the plan – you can start it anytime. All you need to do is put your mind to it, get off your backside and go for it. I know my formula can be quite intensive, and if you are busy with a big project at work or trying to combat other downsides like weight loss or giving up smoking, then delaying for a few weeks may look like the most sensible option. However, before you do that, ask yourself honestly whether you are using delaying tactics. If the answer is yes, then put a bit of pressure on yourself to work hard – it will pay dividends in the long run. The sooner you start, the sooner you'll be on your way to enjoying life settled in a relationship. And having a holiday is no excuse – free time gives you more chances to put the plan into action.

Remember that I can't make it work for you – it requires your effort with a capital 'E'. I have the know-how and the tools, the tactics and track record, but the rest is up to you. Think of it just like a diet plan. If you cheat or take short cuts it will slow your progress, and the only one losing out is you.

Just to recap, the next steps:

- Your first proactive month lasting five weeks

- Your second non-proactive month which lasts four weeks
- The third month, which is proactive again lasting four weeks

If you accumulate enough CalcuDating Match Points during stage one you will progress to stage two. However, if after three months you haven't advanced enough, don't fret; it just means it is going to take a little longer for everything to really resonate. It is far better to get you right mentally, physically and emotionally, and feeling totally at ease with your new disciplines and tasks, before you start dating with proper relationship intent. Otherwise you are really just playing at it and getting nowhere fast. Many of my clients need longer for their new outlook and approach to set in.

If you need to repeat stage one of the plan and try to earn more match points the second time around, that's OK. It's far better to have another three-month stab at it than wasting years in no-man's land, literally. If you follow the formula to the letter, it's not going to take you much longer to achieve the results. That's why the CalcuDating plan is so superbly simple and clever; it makes you accountable to yourself.

You will swiftly see for yourself how earning the match points will bring you prizes – a noticeable change in your tactics will create a positive glow to your personality. If you're following the plan and racking up Match Points, then clearly things will be improving in your life. Knowing you're on such a great winning streak will boost your self-assurance to new levels, and this in itself will push you onwards and upwards.

Every new task and discipline has been carefully crafted to encourage a behaviour change. Psychologists have proven it's impossible to change a bad habit or leaning overnight, but when you keep on working at it over days and weeks, the negative tendencies fall away and the new, positive ones become second nature.

I know it's frustrating to take baby steps first, when you want to be out on dates looking for Mr/MS right however it's for your own good. I remember taking up boxing and training in a spit and sawdust boxing gym with my trainer as I wanted to get super fit. Ninety nine per cent of this gym's members were men, and all of them looked as though they could teach Mike Tyson a thing or two. Of course, I wanted to show off to the guys and start beating the punch bag. I turned up on day one with my shiny new gloves and professional grade skipping rope, but my trainer, a lovely bloke who went by the name of Jimmy Mac (a former British and European champion), shot me a withering look and insisted I spend at least six weeks on boring basic exercises. I was about to give up when two months in he finally let me loose on the boxing bag and speed ball. Because we'd spent so long getting the basics right, I could batter the bag looking like a pro-fighter. My stance, my footwork, it was all there; simply through repeating the step-by-step basics over and over again in the prep work. I left the gym that day with a huge smile on my face and some admiring glances from the guys training.

Following a week-by-week diary and breaking everything down into busy and quiet months, will stop you suffering from dating fatigue (see Chapter one). The last thing I want to do is for you to go steaming ahead and end up becoming de-motivated. The time-scale of the plan is designed to help you stay on track more easily and gain the maximum points.

If at any stage of the program you ever feel like you can't stick with it, try positive thinking visualisations and mentally take yourself to the end result – you in a happy relationship (see Chapter eight). It usually does the trick. There is also a great self-hypnosis CD by Edgar Cayce you could listen too – I sometimes listen to if I get stressed. Lose yourself in it for five or ten minutes and you will feel like a new person.

The formula is just like a diet and requires the same kind of willpower. I'm sure you know friends who are forever starting new eating plans and diets, only to miss meals so they can have an extra glass of wine or helping of potatoes. The result is that they end up spending the next month moaning that they didn't lose any weight. In just the same way, if you drop parts of the plan, because you find them uncomfortable or fail to make up points in each area, you won't change all of your unhelpful behaviour patterns.

Stage one of the CalcuDating plan

The CalcuDating formula requires you to adopt new tasks and disciplines into your daily routine over the next 13-week period; each task and discipline is vital to your progress. Here is more information to help you on your path to finding that new dynamic you.

Tasks 1 and 2: first discipline – 'Smile Friday'

The first new discipline is what I call 'Smile Friday'. There's no particular need to do it on a Friday – you can choose any day of the week you like – but I like Fridays as people are generally in a good mood and looking forward to the weekend. Smile Friday is aimed at helping you to become a more prolific communicator.

Communication is vital to making an impression on the opposite sex, but it's easy to forget this when we're in our own zone busy wrapped up on our device induced everyday lives, which of course makes us all somewhat insular. When you start practising 'Smile Friday' you'll realise how empowering it can be. Even if you are introvert and inhibited, you will quickly see what an effective tool a simple smile is for opening new romance opportunities.

For some people, smiling comes naturally. If you've been brought up in a close-knit community, smiling is as natural as breathing, but the city can make even the friendliest among us inwardly focused and shy away from making eye contact. I want you to step out of your comfort zone one day each week and make eye contact and smile. To earn your match points you will need to 'connect' with ten or more people every 'smile' day!

Smile Fridays can be simple once you start. Just take a deep breath before leaving your home in the morning, check your appearance and then make a conscious effort to make eye contact with whoever you meet on your daily routine. This means total strangers: people on the train, at the bus queue, in the supermarket, in the coffee shop. As soon as anyone returns your eye contact you smile. If people return your smile – and you will be surprised at how many do – progress to task two by saying hello or good morning or afternoon. If the thought leaves you filled with dread, to get used to it first try 'smile' day when you are with a friend.

Think how much friendlier you are on holiday abroad. You'll happily grin at fellow holidaymakers or inquisitive locals whom you've never met before. Grumpy looking old women and men break out into a beaming smile when you communicate with them, even if you can't speak their language. Why save this warm feeling for holidays when you can have it all the time at home? It's amazingly empowering when you instigate warmth, and others return it to you. But make sure you vary the kind of people you smile at. Instead, try smiling at old men and women, young men and women, attractive men and women, less attractive men and women. You need to smile and say hello to as many people as you can to collect your points. The only people you can ignore are strange looking or intimidating people, for obvious reasons. Don't try it late at night or in a secluded place – just stick to daylight hours or busy areas where you feel safe and secure.

When you get into a lift, don't gaze at the floor or fiddle with your mobile phone. Instead, encourage yourself to make eye contact with the people already in the lift or who join you, and make light conversation. Simple phrases like 'lovely day' or 'Oh, nice tie' are fine – just say anything upbeat and kind that comes into your head. You'll be surprised at how easy it becomes. You'll also be surprised at how many conversations you start to have with complete strangers. Even more helpful is that you're building your skills to open a conversation with an attractive man or woman of the opposite sex, when perhaps in normal circumstances you would have spluttered and blushed bright red (or even gone out of your way to avoid them). After a few 'smile' days you'll find that light-hearted chitchat comes quite naturally.

Smile Friday is a discipline that needs to be performed at least one day each week on both your proactive and non-proactive months. If you find it easy, and some of you will, you should practise Smile Friday as often as you can. If you find Smile Friday tough and outside your comfort zone, work on doing it just once a week until you are used to it. When you become more comfortable communicating with strangers, then you can practise it more frequently.

The most attractive people are those who naturally engage with everyone around them, those for whom every day is Smile Friday. With a little bit of work, being sunny soon becomes part of your personality.

Task 3: second discipline – your new pursuits and interests

The second discipline is one of the easiest tasks to get right, and will enrich your life in every single way. As we've already discovered together, one of the Golden Keys to unlocking your inner God/Goddess is to be captivating and vibrant, with an aura of positive energy surrounding you. Following the second discipline will help you to achieve this, and make you feel like it comes naturally rather than forcing yourself to try and appear interesting to others.

All you need to do – and it really is this simple – is embark on new pursuits and interests. But do it with enthusiasm. We all know people who talk endlessly about starting a language course, or enrolling in a jewellery making or pottery class, but never get round to actually doing it. Compare these people to those who have started a new class or pursuit and talk about it with sparkling eyes and excited tones. Now which one would you rather be and which one do you think attracts attention like magnets? Making an effort to learn new skills and embrace new ideas is incredibly attractive.

Think back to when you were in your teens and early twenties. Life was a whirlwind with constantly changing ideas. You embraced every week with fresh tastes in food, clothes, music, fashion and even politics. However, as we get older and progress into our forties and fifties, we often start to stagnate a little. Set in our ways, we go to the same bars, the same restaurants and become, well – boring! To keep ourselves captivating, we must constantly evolve and take on new pursuits to keep that entrancing aura of infectious enthusiastic energy surrounding us.

You may be so busy with work that you may worry you won't have time to start new interests. What rubbish. If that's the case, how on earth will you find time for a new partner? If you want this plan to work, then you'll have to make time – it's for you, after all. For the Second Discipline, I want you to start at least one new interest or pursuit on each of your proactive months. It is often said that the busiest people are those likely to take on even more; it's the lethargic people who always make excuses and put things off who lose out. Singles are not attracted to men and women who continually make excuses for not getting on and doing things.

Obviously you'll need to pace yourself and not go overboard. It may mean you change one class you currently attend for a new one, if time is a restraint. The aim is to try as many different interests as you can. Try and avoid insular or same sex dominated types of classes, such as yoga or swimming, although a female-only Burlesque class is recommended for women, as you will gain a lot out of it in other ways. Boxing is great for men and women. A woman will meet far more men at a kayaking or rowing club, A guy will meet more women at a book club so think outside of the normal range of clubs you attend. Take a look at my suggestions later in this section for some other great ideas on where to meet people.

In addition to becoming more set in our ways, as we get older, suddenly our social circle starts to shrink as well. Many friends couple up and get married; others are absorbed by work. We go out far less often once we reach 35+ so we naturally meet fewer new people. One of the key purposes of the second discipline is to start expanding your social network again – and I'm not talking about your Facebook Friends. I mean real, live people you see and meet up with!

The key here is to increase the chances of meeting suitable singles. By the end of the first stage of the plan, I want you to have a fresh batch of interesting, like-minded people for you to network and socialise with. It doesn't take a math genius to work out that love is a numbers game. The more people you meet, the greater your chances of meeting one you'll fall in love with.

Also, when you start to hang out with new people it's far easier to re-invent yourself a little. It can be tough to change your looks or style when you're stuck in the same social circle, but staying the same for years can come across as a bit bland and boring, and it has a detrimental effect on your personality. Spontaneity is the spice of life. People gravitate towards those who are spontaneous and if it just isn't part of your make up you will be less appealing than a person who has a bit of get up and go. Getting out of your comfort zone and starting a new interest, and changing your style and circle of friends, or at least adding to them, will do you the power of good and could bring out a whole subtle change in you that is so much more appealing than your old stable self.

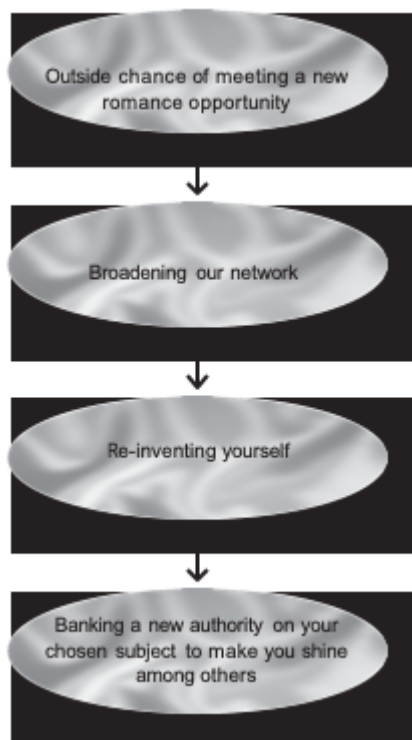
Re-inventing yourself also allows you to modify aspects of your personality that could be hindering your progress. Take the case of Aileen; a client who came to me as she found the only time anyone wanted to meet up with her was to pour out his or her woes. Aileen was a lovely, caring woman, and made a fabulous agony aunt – but really all she wanted to do was go out, let loose and have some fun. We worked together to get her started on some new pursuits, including a cookery class. When she found anyone gravitating towards her with his or her problems, she politely changed the subject and moved on. At first it was hard. She worried her new friends wouldn't want to know her if she didn't help them out, but she rapidly realised her new circle saw her as someone fun and not a dumping ground for their own upsets and challenges. In turn, this made her more confident in dealing with her family and old friends – and meant she gained a far more satisfying social life.

Trying new pursuits will up your energy, increase your aura of attraction and give you plenty to talk about with every new person you meet. Here are some ideas to get you started, but feel free to try anything new that appeals to you.

Pursuits to try:

- Running Club
- Motor Mechanics
- Garden design and maintenance
- Photography
- Graphic design
- Creative writing
- Cookery
- Wine appreciation
- Computing
- Music
- Philosophy
- Languages
- Sailing, kayaking and rowing clubs
- Animation classes
- Politics lectures and debates
- Boxing gyms
- Sports Massage
- Spin class
- Dance classes
- Book club

What your second discipline will help you achieve:



Task 4: third discipline - new monthly networking events

Just like the second discipline, the third new discipline is all about meeting more new people. You need to follow the third discipline on your Proactive Months. Quite simply, I want you to attend two or three new social events each month, with the aim of broadening your circle of friends. I don't want or expect you to go alone, so don't panic.

You may think the quickest way to broaden your social circle is in bars or clubs, but I discourage this. What was a great hunting ground in your teens and early twenties won't work as well as you get older (and the people you meet in bars will rarely be the settling kind). Nor do I want you hanging out at singles events. This may seem very strange coming from me – the lady who introduced Speed Dating to the UK – but I'll explain why. I've run plenty of singles nights in my life, but they are now so ubiquitous that in many cases it's about quantity not quality. There may be dozens of singles there, but like at bars and clubs, possibly not always the sort you'd want to meet. Fine to attend the odd one or two however do not make these your only events.

Instead, I'd like to see you try more upmarket and interesting social events. You can still scout for singles, but you won't appear in any way desperate. Try meetings like art launches, book signings, lectures and debates. Look at my list below for some fresh ideas. The great thing about these types of events is that you can trot along with anyone, your sister, your married or loved-up pals, your gay best friend, even a friend zone ex – you don't have to rock up alone.

I've found the best results come from when couples meet at a less-obvious event than a singles night. The atmosphere is more relaxed and there isn't an underlying agenda to every conversation. However, if you feel you need a little banter and flirting practice, then attending a singles night with a single friend might be helpful; just don't build up your hopes that you're about to meet a future partner. Instead, use it as a chance to try out your newfound smile power and to chat with men and move outside of your comfort zone.

You may ask me what's the point of going out if you may only meet people who are in a relationship, but what I think you'll find is that at most social events there will be a mix of people. If you find yourself attracted to someone who then reveals they have a partner, don't worry. Just use your time talking with them to build your conversation and banter skills. There's no such thing as a lost opportunity – every interaction will benefit you in lots of ways.

Whereas singles events sometimes feel a little too contrived, meeting in a less pressured environment means you can take more time to get to know men who interest you. This will lay a solid foundation for any future relationship. I appreciate it may make it more difficult to spot opportunities for romance – some people will be in couples, others may be gay – but it's a more natural way to meet. This exercise is really all about improving your social skills as much as anything else. It's the part of my formula that will prepare you for when you start to attract those people that you find appealing. Here are some superb ideas to get you started.

Community clear-ups: Meeting singles can be a stroll in the park. Offer to walk a neighbour's pooch and you'll instantly get chatting to other dog owners. Statistics show that people with dogs are generally fitter and more likely to settle down than those without.

Gallery openings: Free wine and instant conversation, as you have to talk about the art on show. Galleries openings are great informal get-togethers and you can drop even if you only have half an hour to spare.

Big Lunch a new scheme to get neighbours together for a communal lunch. Each person brings a dish they cooked. Organise one in your area or keep an eye out in the local press for the nearest one to you.

Open house and garden events: Learn about Britain's most beautiful buildings and homes, and if you are particularly interested in architecture what better way to meet like-minded men. These types of events are favoured by architects, creative types and singles that are looking to buy their own homes.

Book signings: Get yourself on the mailing list of publishers and bookshops such as Hatchards. They will email you and let you know when there is an event in your area and which book and author will be presented.

Guerrilla Dining Pop-up restaurants: These are a new trend where cooks whip up wonderful meals in their own homes and invite strangers to pay just like a restaurant.

Marketing focus groups: Focus groups pay up to £75 for your opinion on a new brand or advertising campaign. You spend up to three hours together with a group of ten to 12 others, and if you like someone, there's plenty of chance to chat.

Citysocializer.com & meetup.com: Regular organized events or create your own event. Cities all over the UK

Luxury lifestyle Management Company: quintessentially.com

Lectures: Choose a course with a weekly meeting for at least a month, which gives you time to form bonds with your fellow students. At the end of the lecture, suggest to those you meet you all go to a bar or coffee shop to carry on the conversation and catch the eye of anyone you'd like to get to know better.

Tasks 5-9: fourth discipline – more regular dating

The fourth discipline is quite simply – date much more often. You must aim for a target of two to three dates per proactive month. If the thought of so many dates fills you with fear, you can relax; the other disciplines will help you, and I have countless clever tricks you can use to find you plenty of great dates.

The key to completing this particular task successfully is not to focus solely on those people you immediately see as potential partners. Instead, you must learn to accept dates from people you wouldn't necessarily consider a prospective partner. This is vital. If you start opening your heart and mind to unlikely prospects, you'll progress far faster towards meeting 'the one'.

In my experience, every person you believe is a Mr/MS Not-Quite-Right should come with a big sign: Warning! 'Do Not Over-Look; Could Be Your Forever Person'. You're not seeing these people for what they could be and giving them a second glance (or even a first glance), as you're so hung up on finding your mind's ideal picture-perfect person. But they could have something very special that you just don't pick up on initially.

I'm not suggesting you 'settle' for second best or to forget your dream of falling hopelessly in love. I'm simply proposing that you explore every opportunity and to open your eyes wider, without any limiting or preconceived ideas about the person. Instead of seeing singles in just two categories – partner material and non-partner material – there's a middle ground, and it's usually here you'll find your Mr/MS Right. I know at this point you may not be convinced, but all I can tell you is that the majority of successful matches I have made have developed from two people who did not initially give each other goose bumps.

At the beginning of this book I relayed to readers how I met my late fiancée? I wouldn't have given him a second glance if I'd met him on a night out. He was older, over- weight and had the most dreadful dress sense, but when I got to know him, I realised what an amazing, entertaining, charismatic person he was. If you told me after our first meeting that I would fall madly in love with him, I would have bet you a million pounds it wouldn't happen. Although I found him fascinating and interesting, I could not bring myself to find him physically attractive. Even kissing him would have repulsed me in those early days.

However, as we saw each other more frequently, and as we chatted over the telephone, I felt more and more drawn to him. Suddenly his bad taste in clothes, his balding 'comb over ' hairstyle, the fact he was grossly overweight, all melted away and became unimportant. I became excited by his mind and the way he carried himself; his gestures, his drive and ambition. We fell deeply in love, and once we'd consummated the relationship, I set about sorting out that dodgy wardrobe and getting him on a diet!

So please trust me when I say it's not just talk. I've walked the path before you, and I've seen countless people walk the same route out of singledom.

Another point to remember is that dating people that you don't quite fancy also helps build your fitting skills. It aids your understanding of the banter between men and women in a fledgling relationship, and will help you feel more comfortable on a 'date' situation. Try it and see for yourself how much more relaxed you become on a date.

First dates

Don't put yourself under too much pressure. There's nothing worse than planning an expensive meal followed by a bar or club. First dates should always be 'coffee only' and you must avoid alcohol at all costs. A first date should just be a 'taster' to allow you to get a feel of what type of person he is. Also, set a maximum time limit of two hours. You can always arrange to see each other for longer next time.

If after the first date you decide your date is boring, irritating or intimidating, then don't feel pressured into meeting them again. However, if you had fun but don't fancy the person, give them another chance at suggesting another date; give them your number and see what happens.

Second dates

A woman should never have to instigate a second date, whether she fancies him or not. In fact a woman should never instigate a further date even if she has dated the guy several times. Always leave this in the hands of the guy so he has to chase you. Guys, if you like a woman and want to meet her again, for goodness sake be proactive, the longer you leave it the less likely it will happen. I know it's an age-old rule – but it is the best rule. Successful dating, which progresses rapidly into a good, stable relationship, will usually only come by abiding by this 'rule'.

Ladies of course, you can give him a clue that you are willing to meet again. Lines that work includes: 'well I really must go, but it has been interesting/lovely to meet you. Drop me a line or give me a call if you want to meet again.' But never push for a time, date and location. Always allow the man to do this, either during the date or at a later stage. Remember a man loves a feminine woman, and leaving the man to initiate a second date is a feminine trait that men will find very appealing. You can read more about posing yourself a challenge and learning the most appealing womanly arts in later chapters.

After the date

As I've mentioned before, ladies should never be over communicative after a date, leave the 'thank you, nice meeting you' or anything else. This leaves no room for the man to pursue you. Trust your belief in yourself and that you're a catch. If you project this, he'll pick up on it. If he has any sense he'll pursue you, but if he doesn't, you chasing him isn't going to instigate him suddenly falling at your feet. If none of your dates want to see you again – even the ones you find dull – then you have to go back to the drawing board. See Part one: tough love – your self-evaluation.

If you find you are simply not able to find anyone to date, then you will find the chapter on the 'worldwide wed' extremely helpful. I am not guaranteeing that you will find the love of your life immediately from an online dating app, but it will certainly aid you in your search and it will definitely give you plenty of practice.

Task 10: fifth discipline – Positive thinking and visualisation

This task is about how positive thinking and practising positive thinking visualisations can help you refocus when you are finding things a little tough. The last thing I want you to do is to give up on my CalcuDating plan or for it to weaken when it comes to you participating in some of the tasks, so if you are starting to waiver remember positive thinking. Read more about this is in later chapters.

Task 11 to 13: Sixth discipline – looking your best

These three tasks are more about the way you present yourself. Many singles tell themselves the right person will see through the visual aspects and will be interested more in her personality. The truth is being easy on the eye is more likely to drive someone to invest more time into finding out more about your 'inner beauty'. If you have made no effort with looking good many people will sadly not give you an opportunity to allow your amazing character to emerge.

Applying yourself to discipline six will also have a huge impact on your self- esteem. When people pass comment and you have extra glances, it will undoubtedly make you feel better and more positive about yourself giving you more of a bounce in your step, this will undoubtedly get picked up on.

Task 14: Seventh discipline – compliment others

Paying others compliments will give you as much pleasure as it will give them. The warmth and good feeling this generates is worth the few seconds it takes to divert your attention from whatever you are doing and tell someone they look well, their hair looks lovely or that you love their new tie. Give compliments freely to both men and women. I am a true believer in good Karma, and it's never let me down yet.

Task 15: Eighth discipline – exercise regularly

Exercise is one of the great freebies in life, so no excuses; you don't have to pay for an expensive gym membership to do this task. Think of regular exercise as your regular feel good booster, releasing those happy endorphins into your brain. It beats drink, drugs, cream cakes or cigarettes! You undoubtedly look and feel better through regular exercise, and this is why it is a vital part of my CalcuDating plan.

Stage one summary

At the end of my 13-week intensive program you will have completed stage one, mastered eight new disciplines and successfully completed the 15 tasks, and hopefully you will be confident and ready to move onto stage two. To do this you will need a score sheet with total Match Points within the following ranges.

Month 1: (Proactive)

A total of 28 to 34 Match Points for the monthly tasks

Month 2: (Non proactive)

A total of 12 to 16 Match Points for your monthly tasks

Month 3: (Proactive)

A total of 26 to 30 Match Points for your monthly tasks

Points for additional tasks

A total of 88 to 94 Match Points for your additional tasks and disciplines

If you reach the required scores well done! You can move to stage two, but before you do, you will need to look back in your mood diary and add your feelings now that you're ready for stage two. If, however, you are nowhere near the required scoring levels, the best favour you can do yourself is to keep at it and continue on a month on—month off basis until the new tasks and disciplines become easy for you to achieve. I suggest a further three months.

Stage two of The CalcuDating Plan

The second stage of my CalcuDating plan, assumes that you are now dating more regularly. If you are a woman and more men are pursuing you, or you are a chap and more women are agreeing to meet you for a second date now is all about you keeping up the great new disciplines you've learned. You may think it is over optimistic that after just three months you are regularly going on dates, but that's how positive I am that this plan can change your life for the better. I've seen it work thousands of times, on all types of people and if you follow it correctly it will also work for you.

I'm not going to presume that after three months intensive work on yourself that you are holding hands with the love of your life – but hey it is more likely to happen than continuing on the same path that has so far not come up with your desired result, or you would not be reading this book! Most of you will, at the very least, be in a completely different space emotionally and have a more cheerful and upbeat outlook. If things have not yet started working as well as you hoped after spending three months on the CalcuDating program and you still feel romance isn't coming your way, don't give up. Go back and give stage one of the plan a little more time. All of us are at different, and some of us need to feel comfortable with the new approach for it to start taking effect. Persevere for a further three months and you will get there.

CalcuDating - Your Single Days Are Numbered

If you are starting to feel more attractive and are receiving the right feedback – well done! You'll soon find with each good date it makes you feel even more desirable. Soon you'll have a large circle of admirers all vying for your attention. I hope that after three months on the plan your new disciplines have become like second nature and an integral part of your everyday life.

- If you look forward to Smile Friday and find you are making eye contact and communicating with random people more regularly – it is working.
- If you are dating every week, meeting new people and keeping an open mind to every person that you meet – then you have come a very long way in the right direction.
- If you have so much more going on in your life and you are expanding your social group – you are nearly there.

However, be warned. For stage two to work you need to ensure that you:

- Do not become complacent and slump back into your old habits.
- Do not feel deflated that you haven't met your soul mate already.

They will come soon, I promise you; just stick with it and be patient.

Day by day try to keep improving yourself. Think of the plan like an amazing diet that has lost you a stone in weight. Those who become complacent, sneaking in bread with dinner or a few extra glasses of wine, pile the pounds back on; but those who keep going can add slinky dresses to their wardrobe, get more attention from admirers, are physically and mentally healthier and feel happier about themselves.

Dating more regularly will introduce you to lots more different types of people, it will help you to understand them better: the way the opposite gender think, feel, act, react and go about things. It will help you to understand what type of people that you are more suited to and you will no longer waste time going blindly into relationships with people that you think you are attracted to.

Ladies In my extensive experience, I've identified four types of men, each type has appeal and downside.

The Dependable's

- Dependable men will adore you.
- They are thoroughly modern metro sexual men who help around the house.
- They will buy you gifts, however, these are more likely to be something practical rather than romantic.
- Dependable men will rarely stray and will often forgive you for an infidelity; they are incredibly loyal.

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- Dependable men can be ever so slightly dull. These aren't men to send shivers down your spine or make you go weak at the knees.
- They can be money conscious and picky about who pays for what.
- Dependable men will not be highly driven or ambitious but can hold down great well-paid, high-powered jobs.

The Lady-killers

- Lady-killers always look good and draw admiring glances
- They have many of the masculine traits and qualities on my list previously mentioned
- They will have a real spirit of generosity and treat you like a queen
- They will usually be at the top of their field, whatever business they are in
- Lady-killers will make your heart flutter every time their name flashes up on your phone screen
- Lady-killers are natural born flirts and try in on with other woman; You will never feel totally secure if you are not extremely self-assured
- They are not terribly sensitive to your needs and won't play a particularly supportive role in your life.
- Lady-Killers will not tolerate you getting out of shape or not looking your best
- They are selfish and self-centred; it's all about them, not you
- Lady-killers won't tolerate you flirting with other men, but on the other hand they probably won't even notice!

The Players

- A player will always take you to the best places; he's adored by everyone he meets
- He will spoil you rotten with lavish gifts and love to take you shopping
- He will be amazing in bed and make you feel like a sensuous woman
- A player will be fascinating, intriguing and usually have a sparkling sense of humour

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- A player will always have other women in his life
- He will be secretive and frequently go missing or silent on you
- He will expect a lot from you emotionally and expect you to be 100% supportive
- A player usually has a deep-seated insecurity about him and will need you constantly brushing his ego

The Chump

- There are plenty of them to choose from!
- You won't ever have to worry about him straying
- He will do anything you say and will be easy to manipulate
- He'll frequently get irritable, but will never tell you why or hold open discussions with you — he hates any form of confrontation
- He often looks a mess (but he is easy to restyle and very open to your help)
- You will always have to pay your own way
- The Chump won't be ambitious and couldn't care less about making it to the top of his chosen career

Looking through the list, you'll probably say you want a man who is a combination of the best bits with none of the negative aspects. However this will not happen – it is called 'what goes with the territory', it's

Highly unlikely he'll ever change his ways – and all men will usually fall loosely into one of these four types.

Ladies please don't feel down about this. My aim isn't for you to give up on men completely. I told you when we began this journey together that I'm known for my honesty, and I've been in the dating scene long enough to know the way men work, think and act.

It may be you haven't been lucky in love so far because you've been searching for a dream date with all of the ups and none of the downs. Now that you know he doesn't exist, you can either start your search without the rose-tinted glasses and find yourself a real living, breathing man, or you can close this book and go back to your 'leaving it to fate' fantasy-land attitude.

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If you are still reading, and accept that whomever you date will fall into one of the four types, whichever one it is, there are some wonderful positives to enjoy and embrace. If you want the spine-tingling melting moments; if you want him to look great; and if he pays for everything and treats you like a queen, then you are going to have to accept that he may stray, or at least flirt. He will leave you feeling insecure and he isn't going to be the most supportive or understanding partner. Learn to manage your expectations, and indeed manage and 'manipulate' your man, and then the drawbacks won't be so difficult to deal with.

Remember, life isn't like the movies. No man you meet will ever be the best of everything you see on the big screen. You won't be whisked away to Paris every weekend or come home to a house filled with candles and red roses. It's more likely you put your key in the door to find him snoring on the sofa, having left a trail of mud on the carpet from his dirty football boots and the loo seat up. That's real life – and if you embrace it and accept it, you'll also find real love.

Chapter One

Your personal dating diary

Now you've discovered the skills for finding lasting love, it's time to put them in to practice. To get the most from the calcuDating plan, you need to be focused and organised, and the best way to do this is with a diary. Don't leave arranging dates or trying new interests until the last week of the month, as you'll feel flustered and pushed for time. Instead, space each date, new pursuit and social event out evenly throughout the month to make the most of every new opportunity. You'll also need to keep a personal diary, so you can keep a record of your progress – and hopefully congratulate yourself on your progress.

Your dating diary

Just like a gym program, your dating diary will keep you on track, telling you what you need to do and when. Remember, if you work hard you could complete stage one of the plan within just three months, and your life could change for the better that quickly. But if you're disorganised or lazy, and don't pre-plan each and every activity, the plan will take longer. The choice is yours – you know what you need to do!

Each month enter in your diary your tasks and disciplines, to help you stay on track. The earlier you organise yourself, the more Match Points you will earn, and the closer you will be to finding your ideal person.

Your personal diary

You must also keep a diary of your thoughts. When you start out, write down how you feel and what you hope to achieve, then after each month write a paragraph about your emotions and how you feel. You should also jot down how you are feeling and all your thoughts on your progress at the end of the intensive 13 weeks that make up stage one, before moving onto stage two.

Keeping a personal diary is important. It is great to look back and see how far you have come. I'm almost certain you will forget just how bad things were, and therefore you might not realise how much you've achieved. Your diary will keep you in touch with reality.

Chapter Two

The worldwide web

Internet and app dating can be one of the most effective and rewarding adventures when looking for love. But it can also be a demoralising experience that will leave you thinking there's no hope. Recent statistics show that six in ten singles have turned to the net to find love, and cyber dating is amazingly successful. A quarter of all newlyweds now find their partner online, and 27% per cent of people meeting up through websites go on to a second date. (With my CalcuDating plan you could massively increase your second date percentage)

But on your journey to meeting Mr /MS Right online, it's worth remembering you'll meet many Mr/MS Wrongs along the way. Some people will only be looking for sex- but that's the same as the offline world; others may be looking for genuine love, but it may not be with you.

Internet dating is different to meeting people through social and more traditional methods, simply because it makes things easier. When men and women are faced with the huge choice of partners you can find online and on dating apps, you may find they forget their manners. Their profile may read like a Mills and Boon character, but if on meeting you turn out to be not their type, it's easy to feel hurt when they stop responding to your online messages and texts.

Too many times I've seen people devastated because they've been rejected in cyberspace. I've had male clients protesting that 'all women are the same' or ladies moan that 'men are only after one thing' You will find some gems if you give out the right signals. If you meet someone and find absolutely nothing to persuade you to meet a second time you could be accused of being insincere, not ready to commit, messing people around! Of course this is not the case, but people hate rejection. Try and treat people the way you would be liked to be treated should you find yourself in a similar situation. It is always very difficult to accept that you just do not appeal to that person - for whatever reason.

Men tend to accept rejection far more easily than women, or perhaps they are just better at handling it. A man rarely lashes out at a woman who he doesn't fancy or accuse her of being a commitment phobic or a time waster. He'll just get up, dust himself down and move on to the next one. Women seem to have far more false pride and take every rejection as a personal slight. I believe we have a lot to learn from men on how to behave here.

So be prepared for some rejections. Online dating is a numbers game, and you need to accept that you won't appeal to everyone out there. There are millions of singles currently signed up for online dating sites, so while not all of them will be right for you, some of them certainly will.

To gain the best from online dating you need to be armed with the right tools and know how. There are five main areas of online dating you need to understand:

Choosing your site

Most people starting to look for love via dating apps and online will automatically go for one of the obvious apps such as Tinder. While you'll certainly have a huge amount of profiles to trawl through, ask yourself honestly if you'll have much in common with any of them? I liken finding the right site or app to choosing a night out. Most average Joe's or Joanna's will be happy to choose a loud chain pub; it won't be anything special but there will be loads of people there. However, someone with more refined tastes and interests will look for somewhere more interesting and individual. And those with more cash to splash will select an exclusive venue where they want to be seen. So, deciding on which online dating site you are going to try is very similar. Make sure you pick one that reflects your personality; that way you're much more likely to find your kind of people.

The easiest way is to Google search – dating for Classical music lovers, or Dog lovers. Dating for single parents, dating for over 50's – and the search will flag up various sites or apps. Do your research and look at other related articles once you have discovered a site or app to download. Most sites will allow you to register and look through profiles for free – you only pay when you want to get in touch with someone. There are hundreds of sites to choose from and three or four will be right for you.

You'll quickly realise the huge generic sites come up in almost all your searches. This is because they have a multi-million pound marketing and advertising budget and throw cash at luring in new members. But if you scroll down the list of choices you'll start to find the more interesting niche sites that may well offer better opportunities.

Most Internet dating sites range from around £15 to £50 per month. The fee doesn't always reflect the calibre of people or even the number of members on offer. Joining the site usually becomes cheaper the more months you sign up for – but this isn't always a good idea. When you first start there's no point tying yourself into a three-or six-month membership if after just a week you realise the people on the site aren't for you; it's more effective to try the one-month option first. Even though this might be more expensive. Most sites will offer you discounts to renew so remember to check your spam folder too so that you can take advantage of the special offers to subscribe when you are ready to do so. This way you can try three or four different sites over a few months, rather than being stuck with one for months on end. Many of the apps are free to use – though apps tend to have a less serious community of singles. Free apps are ok for a bit of practice. Online dating sites tend to require better authentication and require more information from the user. This will bring you people with a more sincere attitude to finding love.

If you're looking for inspiration, I have put together a list of recommended sites, each with a brief description of the market they are reaching for – later in this book. These are sites I know, trust and recommend to my clients, and the list demonstrates the sheer range of people Internet dating caters for.

Your profile

Your profile is your advert to the world and it's vital you get it right. You are marketing your charms and all you have to offer; it's your chance to catch a person's eye before they swipe left and move on to the next profile.

Spend just half an hour online and you'll quickly realise that most people's profiles read more or less the same. Women will write 'I'm just as happy on a night out on the town with friends as I am curled up on the couch with a good box set'. Most of the men's profiles will include a line about this being the first time they have done anything like this. Even the serial daters! Men also attempt to impress by boosting their salary, height and sporting interests, while women play down their extra pounds and knock a few years off their age. Everyone and their brother will tell you they love travel!

Once men hit their late thirties and older rule out women in the same age group in their online searches, so if you fall into this category it may be more fruitful if the site/app allows you to omit your age. OK, so it's a white lie, but at least it gets your profile some consideration.

Our Coffeandcompany.com matchmaking services will not include ages as we feel it is not as important and people think. We also write our clients profiles.

One of the worst mistakes online daters make is listing everything and anything about themselves in their profile. Remember the purpose of the profile is to intrigue and get someone hooked on you so they want to make contact and find out more – it's not a job application or a CV for your entire life. A profile doesn't have to be long-winded. Most dating sites offer a separate section where you can list your likes and dislikes and your interests and hobbies, so leave this information until later. Adding a bit of humour will help and better to be a little self-deprecating rather than boastful.

Before writing your profile, take a look at the ones you like. See what catches your eye; what makes you laugh, and why you'd want to contact that person. Make sure your profile is original and avoid all the clichés that other people use. You need to stand out, not blend into the background. My best advice is to avoid talking about yourself and what you are looking for in a partner. And remember the point of a profile isn't to impress – it's simply to entice someone to find out more about you. Don't boast or try to show off; instead try to inject some humour. One of the best profiles I have ever seen was a self-deprecating list of the writer's worst qualities. It read:

'Well, I'm the wrong side of 50 and have seen better days. I'm thinning on top and no; you wouldn't mistake me for Brad Pitt, even at 50 paces. I'm grumpy in the mornings and sometimes in the afternoon, but rarely in the evenings with a chilled glass of wine in my hand. I make enough money but spend far too much – and I'm stuck in my ways with some bloody annoying habits. If you want Mr Perfect, you'd better move on to the next profile.'

The profile was hilarious, but at the same time intriguing. Any woman reading it could never be quite sure if it was serious or written in jest. But it did attract more interest and comments than any other profile I have come across – and I bet he was inundated with dozens of dates.

Another great way to enthruse people to want to find out more about you is to compare yourself to a car, or animal or even a country. Or try borrowing the traits of several well-known celebrities – good and bad. The most interesting profiles are ones that inject a bit of fun and give the reader a feeling that the writer is enjoying himself or herself. Many are tongue-in-cheek, which indicates the person behind isn't desperate for a date. Those of us who don't take ourselves too seriously are often the most genuine and interesting. Don't fall into the line of thinking that if a profile isn't serious the person writing it isn't looking for a serious relationship; nothing could be further from the truth.

If you're really lost for words, ask a friend for help. You can even pay a professional profile writer. Contact info@coffeeandcompany.com And if you're finding talking about yourself in cyberspace tough, I'm worried you may struggle on a real date, so you may find it helpful to review the information in previous chapters to boost your confidence both online and off.

The photo(s)

First impressions count – and nowhere more so than in online dating. Profiles with photos are viewed ten times more often than those without, so it's essential to include one.

Like profile writing, it's another area where many singles don't put enough thought and effort in. An amateur selfie is not going to impress anyone. The best pictures are holiday photos taken when you felt at your best and look relaxed and happy. You'll radiate happiness and this will catch the eye of anyone flicking through a string of profile pictures. Do not use too many photos; one good one is better than six mediocre photos.

Shots taken when you were unaware or not posed usually look good as do 'action' photos, as long as you avoid putting up photos where you are just a dot on the horizon. It's fine to include skiing or paragliding shots, for example, as it does show other sides to your personality, but only if you also include a close up of your face. It is also best to remember less is more – especially if you are not particularly photogenic. Make sure you have a photo that shows you at your best, if you do not have one invest in one, as it is crucial.

If you don't have a recent photo you like, you can include shots up to two or three years old providing you haven't changed your appearance. But don't cheat and upload ones where you were several kilos lighter. This is false advertising and men will run a mile when they meet you.

I often recommend getting profile photos done professionally. It doesn't cost too much if you shop around, and you can lower the price by selecting one or two of the best pictures rather than buying the whole photo shoot.

Effective communication

The best sites are those that allow you to send a quick flirt or 'wink' to the people who you find the most appealing. While normally I don't advocate women making the first approach, online the rules are different. Men tend to sit back and wait for women to give them a signal before they make an approach, so the quick flirt makes it easy for men to see you are interested.

Once you've found a handful of profiles you like the look of, send a quick flirt. Most sites have a readymade message such as 'I like the look of your profile what do you think of mine?' Send out as many as you like to profiles on your hit list, then simply wait for the response.

If you have a great photo and an interesting profile, you may get some replies. Don't be too despondent if you do not. Many profiles online and apps cannot respond unless they have paid for a subscription, so it may be they cannot respond. However, when someone does respond the secret is to keep it brief. Be intriguing and don't give too much away. Remember that most men prefer the thrill of the chase he will only pursue you if he finds you a bit of a challenge and a bit of an enigma. Don't respond to the messages immediately - nobody wants to appear too keen and desperate, however if you leave it longer than a couple of days you will find they have probably moved on.

The best method for online dating is to allocate three or four 30-minute sessions a week for searching, sending quick flirts, responding and arranging to meet. Don't spend more time on it and don't be tempted to check your inbox every few hours.

Keep your communication short and sweet, and include a little light-hearted banter. Never come across as too willing, even if you sent the first communication. Take your time to respond and don't pour out your life history in the first few messages. Also, don't get drawn into long-winded online chats. People who do this are time wasters and the sort of people who have no interests other than chatting online. Many of them are already in relationships and use the online world as a means of escapism. Others will totally reinvent themselves, as their intentions are not sincere.

Chapter Three

Men versus women: the battle of the sexes

In this chapter, I will give you some tips about men and women and an insight into how their behaviour and thinking differs so much from each other. My aim is to help you avoid misconstruing your date's actions, and in doing so, eventually throwing away another potentially good romance opportunity.

The fundamental differences between men and women

Every woman knows how difficult it is to understand men – but why is it? Quite simply, it's because we think so differently. We've evolved to be different and to carry out different roles in life. No matter how sophisticated your lifestyle is, there's no getting away from the fact that men and women have a different DNA. Men are instinctively hunters and women have more nurturing qualities. Women are generally skilful at juggling tasks, caring for people and being more thoughtful, getting on with big groups of people, and remembering everything that's needed to run a household. Do you know a single man who can do all that and retain a smile on his face?

Men on the other hand are great at concentrating on one job at a time only and getting it done. Men tend to compartmentalize things and it's this that causes more heartbreak to women than any other aspect of male behaviour. Scientific studies show men can only effectively carry out one task at a time, so if he's at work, with his friends, playing sports or driving his car, it's unlikely he'll be thinking about you or contacting you. It doesn't mean he doesn't care; his mind is just elsewhere.

A woman can spend all day thinking about a new love prospect, but also go to work, complete the shopping, call her mum, meet her best friend for a coffee and get her nails done. The net result? You've spent ten hours pining over him, while he's thought of you for perhaps half an hour, top whack. It doesn't necessarily mean the relationship is unequal. He is quite simply a man and you are a woman.

It is well worth remembering that women spend three times longer than men talking and expressing their emotions. Men on the other hand are wired to compartmentalise everything in their lives. They don't do cosy 'feelings' chats – though they would be in a better place if they did - and you shouldn't be offended by this.

A man segments his mind into separate compartments for every part of their world: relationship, work, family, friends, hobbies, sex and everything else he's interested in.

While women can dip into all (or most) of these at once, he needs to close up one box before opening another. If you don't believe me, listen to the words of renowned psychologist Dr Luann Brizendine, author of *The Female Mind*. She wisely says, 'Women have an eight-lane superhighway for processing emotion, while men have a small country road.' She adds, 'I believe women actually perceive the world differently from men. If women attend to those differences they can make better decisions about how to manage their lives.'

In other words, ladies what you may perceive as a problem in the relationship, or a sign that he doesn't like you, is nothing of the sort. It's just a man being a man. Guys, you will do to remind yourself how women's minds work – it may help you to understand them. If we could all accept the differences between the male and female way about doing things when it comes to dating, a lot more would happen from a positive perspective.

Lateral differences

From time to time, you may also get caught up in lateral differences that don't have anything to do with gender. One of these differences is that some of us are more direct and tell it like it is, or get straight to the point of what we are trying to communicate, while others prefer to suggest or beat around the bush. For example, a person who wants to go to the cinema may say, 'lets do something tonight, maybe the cinema or something' where as someone else may prefer to say, 'I'd like to go to the cinema tonight'. Differences like this are small things that can become irritants very early on in a fledgling relationship if two people are opposite types. In this example, it is well worth establishing, when you first meet someone whether they are a 'say it straight' person or a 'go round the houses' type, and arm yourself effectively if things start to develop between you.

Core values

It is even more important to establish exactly what your root values are in a relationship and thoroughly understand them so you are able to relay them as your relationship develops. YAs your relationship progresses life will undoubtedly throw challenges in your path, not necessarily will these challenges have anything to do with your actual relationship. Something might crop about family, or work. If your values are aligned couples tend to grow stronger and group as a couple to conquer life's challenges. Those people whose values are completely far apart from each other will suddenly feel like their partner is alien. Their actions and reactions will cause tension and the relationship will soon become toxic. Relationships where the couples have completely different values are seldom happy or long lasting. This is something you should ascertain at the beginning before you build too much attachment to each other. Ask each other how each of you would act or react in certain situations early in your fledgling relationship.

Contact cravings

Arming yourself with as much information about the 'science' of how a men and women differ is of course going to help you enormously when it comes to controlling and managing your emotions. However, sometimes we become so engrossed that we end up in an emotional tizz and our logic and understanding of what we should be doing just doesn't filter through to the way we act and react.

I know how it feels when you check your phone ten times an hour, as you are desperate for someone to communicate. I also know how it feels when you can't stop yourself sending pointless messages to re-engage. 'Just in case they lost your number'. However, if you want to be successful, follow my plan and guidance and reverse negative behaviour patterns.

It would be key for you to remember not to push to receive or give out your whatsapp or surname before you meet, otherwise most people will look you up and they may find something that will give them unhelpful pre-conceived ideas. So if people request this or request more photos politely decline.

The tasks and disciplines I set you will gradually start to change your life and romance opportunities for the better without you realizing it's happening. There will come a time, perhaps after the first date with someone you particularly liked, when you'll want to make contact with them immediately. You'll feel drawn to your phone or will be desperate to email and instigate contact – just to gauge their interest. If you feel these 'contact cravings' coming on, here's how to stop yourself wrecking your potential new romance.

Post date communication tips for the ladies

- 1 Ladies set yourself a target day Pick a day; I'd suggest seven days after your date. Mark it on your calendar and make sure you do not contact the guys you date before then. With luck, and if he likes you, you should hear from him within the week.
2. Extend if by the seventh day there's still no word, give yourself an extension. Add on another three or four days and stay strong.
3. If after your target 'waiting time' you want to reach out to him remember to make the engagement low key. Something in passing – a link – 'saw this and thought of you' type of thing to see if it instigates communication. If still no reply forget him.
 1. If you like her on the first date and wish to explore, for goodness sake offer at least to pay the bill. A first date should never be more than a coffee or couple of drinks anyway so it won't break the bank. Over 80% of women are notably impressed if the guy offers to pay on the first date. It shows a spirit of generosity and she will more likely want to see you again
 2. Contact her directly after the date with a polite thanks
 3. Follow up within a few days to suggest another date

Post date communication tips for the guys

Remember instinctively men hunt – this is what a woman prefers. If a woman takes the chase away from him and offers herself as immediately available – a man is likely to lose interest. Especially if he has not had much chance to get to discover her inner goddess. If a guy does not lose immediate interest, then usually it is because he just wants to get intimate, and then he will drop you when the deed is done anyway. Most men who have intentions of exploring further for a potential relationship will not want to rush into sex

When a guy decides to settle down with a woman, he wants to feel like he has worked really hard to get her; it makes him feel that she is special. If a woman has no self-belief it is difficult for any man to have belief in her.

Case Study

TV producer, Charlotte, was a 28-year-old stunning blonde. She came across as the woman who had it all: her own apartment, a great job, and natural beauty. Sophisticated and stylish, every man I introduced her to was smitten and couldn't wait to take her on a date. But despite looking and acting the part, no man wanted to take her on a second or third date. Why, I wondered? Then I began to hear the same feedback from every client. Silly Charlotte was so desperate to settle down that she became a 'virtual' stalker of every man she met.

After hearing the same story from four different dates, I decided to take action. I joined her at a singles event and watched as she swatted away every man who came near her. She was so cool; she worked those guys perfectly. Every man in the room was trying to catch her attention. But when they made an approach, she gave them the instant brush off and then she would lean in and tell me 'wow, he was gorgeous'. To me, it seemed she posed herself a natural challenge. I began to question the feedback I have received from the men she had met.

Then a male friend of mine joined us at the bar. We had a quick drink together and I left the event, leaving them together. Later that evening I got a text from my friend saying 'wow' and thanking me for introducing them. He told me he had worked very hard to win her over and persuade her to give him her number.

But the next week my friend called me and asked, 'is she always like this?' When I asked him to explain, I was staggered by Charlotte's dreadful behaviour. My friend had texted her the next lunchtime, asking if he could take her out the following weekend. But instead of graciously replying 'yes', Charlotte had fired back 'why not tonight?' He explained he had an early plane to catch the next morning and didn't want to travel miles to meet her that night. She promptly told him she would drive to his house! Against his better judgement he agreed, as he believed she was 'out of his league' and he wanted to continue his chase.

Charlotte arrived with a bottle of Champagne and pounced on him the moment he opened the door. They had wild sex. She then told him, as she'd never had a one-night stand she was staying the night and having breakfast with him! He tried to get her to change her mind, but she had brought an overnight bag and declared she had drunk too much to drive.

The next morning he fled his house to catch his flight, leaving her in bed. Before he reached the airport, Charlotte had bombarded him with 17 texts. More came thick and fast throughout the day.

Of course, Charlotte is an extreme example but there are plenty of women who have a little of Charlotte in them. Many start off the right way by posing themselves as a challenge initially. However all their strong will is wasted when they become too much of a walk-over too early on.

The 'fast forward' woman

Contrary to what most women think, men are not commitment phobic, nor are they reluctant to settle down. They simply want to ensure they are settling down with the right girl. Just as women want to find the RIGHT guy.

Most men do want to marry and have kids, but they don't want to feel rushed. The one type of woman men generally avoid is a 'fast forward' woman. These are the ladies that are planning marriage and babies after the second or third date. They want a declaration of love within weeks, and a ring on their finger in six months, or in some cases even sooner. They will ask at every step of the relationship 'where is this going' just to reassure themselves they are not wasting time.

During my many years as a coach and matchmaker I have discovered that more often than not men are just as keen if not more focused on finding a partner and settling down, men just have the good sense to invest a little more time before they totally commit. If women could allow themselves to let commitment come naturally, with him leading the milestones, it could happen a lot sooner than most women think.

Most men who join my matchmaking services tell me they are scared stiff of becoming a 'baby-making machine'. Many men in their late thirties or forties will steer clear of women the same age for just this reason. They feel dating a woman in this age group won't allow them much time to really get to know her and find out if she is his MS Right. They are terrified they 'll be bounced into being a dad and then be involved in a messy split if she turns out not to be 'the one'. Of course for post 35 women this can be a huge issue. How to convince a guy that your sole focus – important as it may be, is not to get pregnant at the first opportunity.

If you're younger, time is on your side and you have many years to make your choice of partner. When you reach your mid-thirties, things aren't quite so straightforward. Women over 35 who say they want children become practically invisible to men looking for the same thing especially with online dating. Many women may feel their time to become a mum is running out; their biological clock may be ticking; or they may have set yourself a deadline of getting married and having a baby by the time they hit forty. All these things are possible, but it's important to go about this in the right way. No man wants a woman who seems desperate. A 'fast forward' woman is hard enough for a man to handle, but a 'fast forward' woman with declining child bearing years is seen as too much of a risk, no matter how much appeal she has. Women in this situation place themselves in a vulnerable position of being taken advantage of by men who are not sincere in their search for love and a long-term relationship. These types of men will make a beeline for women they sense are desperate and end up using them.

Women between the ages of 36 and 47 need to be at the top of their game to make the most of their romance opportunities. You'll be competing for men with women in their late twenties, so this isn't the time to let the weight creep on, to be unfit, to shun stylish outfits for comfy casual wear. This is the time to push your boundaries and be the best you've ever been, to bring the best possible version of who you could be to the forefront. Those women who manage to do this and who can appear a little more casual about their motherhood hopes still have a huge chance of attaining their goal.

On the plus side, age brings sophistication and experience. Women hopefully have confidence and self assurance on their side, a 35plus woman can be far more alluring, worldly, captivating and appealing than her 20 something counterpart if she really puts all her energy behind my suggestions. Work on offering him the best from every angle, and try to appear extremely laid back about rushing into anything, and you'll have more than enough to overcome the younger competition. However, you may need to date more, meet more men, and work at it harder than a younger woman. Redouble your efforts; look at every new event and activity as an opportunity to meet someone.

Case Study

Jake was in his late 40's and came to me with the hope of meeting someone to fall in love with, get married and have kids – his time frame – within a couple of years. He proceeded to tell me that unfortunately he was not attracted to women over 35!

After fielding a couple of younger women in his direction, though it took some persuasion as most women in their early 30's would more than likely prefer men around the same age, I introduced him to 41 year old Catherine a stunning and extremely fit 41 year old lawyer with a small property portfolio. I ignored his more superficial preferences and did not tell him that she was outside his preferred age range. I asked her to avoid the 'age' question if it came up. They hit it off instantly and it was not until date 6 when he was well and truly smitten that he discovered she was 41. One year later they were married and within six months of married life she was expecting her first child. They went on to have another quite quickly after.

The Cougar

Many women ask my opinion on dating younger men. I can tell you for sure that single men in their late twenties and early thirties love an older woman. Usually they've grown tired of picking up young girls in clubs and bars every night – but they are not quite ready to settle down. They want a regular girlfriend, but not one who is after marriage and babies just yet.

Instead of 'MS Right' many men this age go for 'MS Right now'. Their perfect scenario is a fit, attractive, older woman in her mid-forties. They prefer her to have had children when she was much younger, or got past the stage where she feels broody. She is usually more confident than women of his own age; she's more worldly, well travelled and self-sufficient with her own regular income. What's more, she will usually be far more sexually aware, which every man – old or young – loves. A younger guy gains so much from this type of liaison, and many prefer it to having a regular girlfriend nearer his own age who is likely to hassle him about 'getting hitched' before he is ready.

However, the 'cougar' might be the perfect scenario for a young buck, a cougar should be mindful that she will likely only ever be his 'Ms Right now'. This type of relationship rarely has any real longevity. While some men do genuinely fall in love with their cougar, most see the partnership as a sexy 'safety net' where he has fun, regular sex, exciting dates and no real commitment. If this suits a woman's agenda then great. However if she is looking for a more serious commitment then these types of relationships should be avoided. Or at least she should keep her options firmly open whilst dating him.

Eventually, as the guy gets older, his mind turns to marriage and starting his own family – which an older woman cannot provide. Society's rules and peer pressure usually turn his attentions to someone closer to his own age that can give him the children he craves. If the cougar can handle this eventual outcome, without day dreaming that she'll grown older with her cub, then she can have a whole lot of fun. If you are eligible for 'cougar' status, I can tell you from personal experience, it will probably be one of the most fulfilling, easy going and enjoyable relationships you have ever embarked upon. However, if you find yourself in this situation, while enjoying your younger man, keep your options and eyes for a longer- term lover closer to your own age.

Chapter Four

Understanding the laws of attraction

Understanding what makes us attracted to another person is one of the biggest challenges in the dating game. During the many years that I have been matching couples it has become clear that while many of us dream of the perfect relationship, very few of us understand what it takes to reach this 'holy grail'.

Most women have a fixed idea of their 'Mr Perfect'. Perhaps he's 6ft (1.8m) tall, is a lawyer or a doctor, wears sharp suits, earns a fortune and has a manly physique and film star looks. We convince ourselves we will allow a flaw or two, but we are really looking for someone almost perfect. He is our dream man– but that's all he is – a dream. Even if you are a Victoria Secrets model and you are the female equivalent of him, stunning looks, a designer wardrobe and fabulous career, it's highly unlikely you'll land a man with all the qualities you are ultimately seeking – the perfect man or woman for that matter simply does not exist.

However, as I've relayed to you previously in this book, many women and men I meet are so stuck on meeting this dream person that they are dismissive of most of the romance opportunities that come on to their radar. They plough all their energy into trying to find a person who matches up to the fantasy, and dismiss dozens of lovely and real prospects for trivial reasons like the wrong job or being two inches too short; he already has children or she lives too far away. Superficial unimportant reasons on the scale of things.

Singles who come to me looking for love convince themselves they are open minded, but 80 per cent are hung up on this non-existent fantasy. It's only when I convince them to date outside their 'wish list', and they fall in love with some- one they'd never have looked at before, that they realise how many years they 've wasted chasing a illusion that doesn't exist.

Sometimes I get so frustrated I could climb onto the rooftops and shout: 'have the nous to kiss the frog (or froglet) that turns into the prince/princess.

The unrealistic Wish List

1. Tall and attractive (man) Size 8 resembling a Victoria secrets model (woman)

2. Successful and confident
3. Has a sense of humour (Most people have a humour – but if it is not your humour it is pointless)
4. They earn as much as you or more
5. No baggage
6. They have the same interests

If you want to find a partner sooner rather than later and you have any of the above on your wish list then it needs to go straight in the bin. Instead, start working towards the wish list below, the one that will find you real happiness.

Here is how your wish list should read

1. Has the masculine (for women) feminine (for women) traits and qualities that appeal to you
3. Has shared values
4. Has a similar humour
5. Energy aura's align
6. Has a generosity of spirit
7. Is kind and honest
8. You bring out the best in each other
9. You have a great rapport
10. Loyalty/Honesty
11. Emotionally mature

Looks

You could only be drawn to most attractive people, but once you engage with them that does not mean there is going to be anything else substantial that is appealing enough to sustain a long-term relationship. Looks are not enough. Better that you place the importance on what is beneath the looks because someone can always change and improve their looks, but their character is who they are. If you are looking for a loving long-term relationship it is crucial that looks come secondary initially.

Salary

People stress far too much about salary. As long as someone is capable of earning great money, it might just be you who brings out the very best of that person's character and strengths to help enable them. They could do the same for you. Drive and ambition and being capable are characteristics that are more important than salary.

Sense of humour

A sense of humour is a bonus but should not be something at the top of your wish list. Most people have some kind of sense of humour, what is more important is that your humour aligns with your partner. It is pointless if they have a humour that you do not buy into and do not find funny. This can turn into a toxic relationship.

Height/weight

I admit it is quite important for most people that a man is taller than his partner. So an exceptionally short man – 5'5 and under is going to struggle more than a taller guy. In the same most men can feel a little emasculated with a bigger or taller woman. This makes it more challenging for taller or larger women to find a partner, as the pool of men happy to date a taller or bigger woman is smaller. The average woman is just 5ft 4inches (1.6m) tall so it is unhelpful and quite ridiculous to insist only on meeting very tall men. Men who are the same height or two or three inches taller should be considered if a long-term happy relationship is what you are seeking. If men were more tolerant of women who have a few extra pounds it would be far easier for them to find a partner.

Loyalty

This is an essential quality on every woman's list. A man without loyalty is no man at all. I've known so many women be supportive to their partners and partially responsible for their man's success, only to see them dumped for a lustful thrill. If you find your man has been unfaithful, you may still be able to save the relationship – but only if he is genuinely remorseful and only if it happens once. If he comes crawling back begging forgiveness and realises how pathetic and weak and stupid his actions were, then you may have a chance. However, a serial cheat or a man who refuses to admit wrongdoing is someone you would be best to avoid getting involved with.

A loyal person is one that recognises your role to help make them who they are and appreciates you all the more for it. A loyal person won't look outside the relationship; Recognising and encouraging loyalty in a partner early on in a fledgling relationship can save much heartache in later years.

Chapter Five

Rediscover your femininity/masculinity and release your charms

As I explained earlier, femininity in a woman and masculinity in a man are the most powerful tools of attraction. In this chapter I'm going to reveal some very special secrets on how to make the best of yourself and maximise your charms and ultimately your appeal. A feminine woman is a woman with oodles of sex appeal – in a man's eyes this and femininity goes hand in hand. So what does a man find particularly feminine?

- A graceful woman
- A woman who doesn't want to control him
- Someone who looks and smells clean
- A girl who takes pride in herself
- The way a woman walks and moves
- A shapely figure
- A good homemaker
- A woman who has obvious self-assurance
- A woman who isn't a man hater
- A woman who has strength of character
- A woman surrounded by vibrant aura of energy

A masculine man is someone a woman respects and someone who makes her feel more womanly. Someone who is not a pushover. What traits do women find masculine?

- A man with strength of character
- A self assured man

- A knowledgeable man
- A man with practical skills
- A man with a generous spirit
- A man with a physically strong or tall physic
- Men who respect women
- A man who has a positive nature
- Men who take the initiative
- Men who are happy to be a provider if required

This list hasn't just been dreamed up; it has been compiled over many years by receiving the feedback we require post date on what they found feminine or masculine about their dates. Our feedback strategy also gives us a very clear idea of what most women and most men find unattractive in terms of feminine and masculine traits. It is unlikely that every woman and every man possesses everything on the lists, however when you scroll through the lists, if each man and each woman can work on each of these character traits they will without doubt become more attractive to the opposite gender.

Maximising your appeal

My number one piece of advice for men and women when they embark on a dating spree to find a partner is for women to build a 'band of men' and men also multi date. A person who has five or six suitors vying for their attention is going to be in a much better place mentally than someone who has little or no attention from the opposite gender. Flirt with your suitors; have some natural banter going with them to practise your conversation skills, as it will help you learn to relax around the opposite sex. You don't have to pretend to fancy them; just learn to keep them at a distance in a charming and graceful manner. It will aid your search. Banter is just another word for flirting, however 'to flirt' can often seem like a very daunting task, where as most people can banter quite naturally.

I know many singles that tell themselves they are ready to fall in love, yet very few are actually emotionally equipped. Part of my team of matchmakers skills sets are to pick up on those who are not totally ready to emotionally fall in love, we help them work on themselves initially. If you cannot love yourself and you want to find love for all the wrong reasons – such as get back at an ex, it is going to be very challenging for you to make the right decisions when it comes to choosing a partner. In trying to rush things forward you could actually be slowing down the process of finding love.

So many singles protest that they would find multi dating too challenging, they might wail that they are too busy to bother multi dating, especially if they do not consider the people they are dating as long term prospects initially. However this part of the dating process is crucial for later on and those who skip the multi dating tend to take far longer before they embark on a loving relationship. Multi-dating will have you radiating confidence and sensuality. Multi dating helps you to stall intimacy, which is crucial. Far too many people hop into intimacy too soon. A person who has not been dating regularly is rarely ready or prepared for falling in love.

Figure it out

The next issue to address is your appearance. You may tell yourself it's what is inside that matters, and to a certain extent that's true, but it is only natural that if you bring the best possible version of yourself visually into the equation. It at least gets you noticed so that someone is more willing to learn about what is inside.

If you feel uncomfortable with your weight, a great way to drop the pounds and feel fabulous is to join a burlesque dancing class or boxing class, or speed walk regularly. Combine with an eating plan and make a real effort. It is just as much for your own self-esteem as it is to attract the opposite gender.

Some matchmakers will not work with people who are over weight or men who are too short, or women over 35 who want kids. However I think that is ludicrous. It suggests you should give up on life in terms of romance if you are over weight or physically a bit short or if you have left it late to think of having a family. My matchmaking service caters for all singles, even if it might be a bit more challenging. We get there in the end.

Dress to impress

Whatever your body shape and size, you can always dress it to look better. We all have friends who may be on the larger side but have such great style. Remove unwanted hair, have a great sense of hygiene and make your date feel like you have made an effort. It will pay dividends. Make the effort every time you step outside the front door as you never know who you may meet that day!

Wing woman

I know these changes I'm asking you to make are tough. So it's at this stage I advise you to get the help of a 'wing woman/Wing man' – a trusted pal who will help steer you through so you can get to your goal more rapidly. Choose someone you admire who already has what you want, or a friend who's looking to make the same changes. Don't ask someone you think may sabotage your efforts. You'll need someone who is honest and can keep you on track as you transform your life. If you can afford it, you can pay a life coach, but they can be expensive. Your 'wing woman' should be someone you can rely on for honest feedback on how you are progressing at each stage.

Chapter Six

Avoiding the relationship agenda trap

The two questions I get asked the most from singles, especially women are: 'Why didn't they want to see me again?' after what they deemed to be a great date and 'What is stopping them from making a commitment?'

First of all, men are more instinctive. A lot of what goes on in a man's mind during a relationship is not planned. They don't think about when they are going to ask you to go away with them, or stay the weekend, or meet their friends/family. They just do it when they feel the time is right. Women on the other hand agonise and over think it all in trying to figure out when is the right time.

For women who want to know where a relationship is heading, the best advice I can give is sit tight and trust her gut.

Why didn't he call?

Let's talk about a very common example. Why do most women feel compelled to wait for the man to call us after a date? Of course it seems unfair in this day and age of equality and many women think it's ridiculous that in the 21st Century we can't pick up the phone and tell a guy what we feel. Women can get upset when I recommend waiting to let their date call them. Often they listen to their friends who whisper, 'Yes, text him, call him, what harm can it do? At least you'll know then whether you were in his thoughts and maybe move things along at the pace you want things to go.' However, from experience, those who wait will find a committed guy far more rapidly than women who take the reigns and over communicate in the early days.

Of course, it's up to you and you can 'take control' and make contact first after a date. However, by doing that you run the risk of turning him off not on. I'm telling you in no uncertain terms that even the most subtle, post-first date text can potentially smother any passion he has for you – and it's all because of the male DNA. A man is driven by testosterone to hunt and chase, and if you make it too easy then he'll lose interest.

Now I'm not saying any of this is fair – and it's certainly not very 21st century – but it's just the way it is. You can choose to fight it and be single, or accept it and fall in love.

If he doesn't call immediately it could be because he doesn't fancy you. This can cover a whole host of reasons, including:

- He didn't find you visually appealing

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- He didn't find you captivating or vibrant enough
- He didn't enjoy the way you made him feel; perhaps you emasculated him slightly
- You didn't appear to believe in yourself, so he found it hard to see you as a prize worth chasing
- You didn't allow him to use his adrenalin-driven instincts to woo you (in other words you posed yourself as no kind of challenge)

Although we like to make up 'good' excuses as to why he didn't call, the reason he didn't call is unlikely to be:

- Because he found you intimidating
- He got into an accident on the way home
- He is gay

Or it may be he does fancy you, but doesn't call immediately. This, as I've said before, could be because:

- He doesn't multi task as well as most of us women do and has a lot on in his life at that stage so chooses to put things on ice for a while
- He prefers to wait until he feels at his best before beginning the chase
- He is in another relationship and has decided to stay loyal to her
- He is casually seeing someone else and would prefer to end it before beginning something with you

Men are made to chase, hunt and fight for something worth having. If you're the type of woman that snatches that power from him, you'll also dash your chances of a great relationship with him. Don't make this mistake. If you do – and you keep on doing it – you'll stay single for a very long time to come. Remember that one of the key differences between men and women is that if you give a guy a positive signal, he will keep that positivity and believe you are still into him until he sees you again. Where as women tend to start doubting his intentions and will other think things and go over every aspect of the date in her mind. Even just understanding the way men and women differ in their thinking after a date will help ensure you fall into the most successful patterns of behaviour post date.

Why won't he commit?

For love to grow and last, men generally need to manage the agenda at every stage of a relationship. A man needs to feel he is calling the shots. In his eyes it's the only way forward, as he needs to feel he's the driving force behind the partnership. No man wants to feel that he is being forced to commit by a woman. It goes back to the masculinity thing – while you may see it that you are planning for the next stage, he may feel pushed, bullied and bounced into something he's not ready for – even if he actually is ready.

I've seen scores of women kill off good relationships by pushing their men too far too fast and falling into what I call the 'agenda trap'. Often the man was on the verge of suggesting a deeper commitment himself, but just like the first date text, if you take his power away from him he'll lose interest. The reason behind it is exactly the same – your man needs to feel he's calling the shots. For a woman to successfully manipulate her guy to start to make commitments the key is to understand this.

In a good healthy relationship, you should feel relaxed enough to trust that each stage will happen as it should. There should be a natural flow and rhythm to your partnership. There should be emotional understanding between you. If you feel the need to constantly quiz your partner on what's coming next, take this as a warning sign that things may not be, as they should.

Below I've listed the relationship killer questions a woman should never ask. Not if she wants to find a man who makes her feel that he is consistently punching above his weight throughout their relationship.

- When are we going to see each other again?

- Where is this relationship heading?

- When can I meet your friends?

- When are you going to invite me to stay at your apartment?

- When can I meet your parents?

- When can we go away for the weekend together?

- When can we plan and go on holiday together?

- When can we move in together?

- When are we going to get married?

- When are we going to try for a baby?

I understand how frustrating this is for women. I know you can manage every other aspect of your life and set your own timetable when it comes to work, social things, friends or family, so it is annoying that, in order to be a success, this is one area of your life, where you need to leave it to him to prompt the relationship progression. If he is the right guy he should actually taking you by surprise when he asks these questions.

If you accept this, go along with it and don't feel resentful that your man is controlling part of your life you'd prefer to be planning, you will find your relationship lasts longer. However, if you can't accept it and continue to force his hand at every key stage, you may continue to be 'unlucky' in love. It doesn't matter how beautiful or charismatic you are. You can be a stunning success in every other aspect of your life, career or challenges and achievements, but if you fall into the dreaded agenda trap you may never manage to pin down the right guy. If you want a pushover for a guy, if you want there to be resentment issues further down the line of your relationship then ignore my guidance.

If a relationship isn't moving at the pace you would like, don't try issuing ultimatums. This is pointless and weakens your position. You can't force a man into a decision through threats; it's unfeminine, looks desperate and is highly unlikely to work.

So ladies let's reflect — to avoid the agenda trap, you should:

- Always wait for your date to call you after you have met
- Always wait for the guy to progress the relationship at his pace
- Never give ultimatums if the relationship is not moving at your preferred pace

The fledgling relationship

There are so many men and women that I have come across, especially in the UK and it is a typically UK dating mentality, who Just because they've had a two dates with someone new, they assume they are in a relationship! The best you can allow yourself to think before you get to date six or seven is that you are in a fledgling relationship.

Try and train yourself to thinking that the first few months of any relationship is only going to be a 'fledgling relationship'. You are testing each other out, laying the groundwork, and understanding each other's values, which is crucial. Putting down boundaries for the partnership to work. It may feel very intense and you may be madly in love, but it's still early days. Take it slow, keeping your options firmly open

If the romance goes past four dates, it's clear there is a genuine interest. The fledgling stage of the relationship could go on for months, but if it gets to six months and there is still no clarity and one or the other seems evasive about normal relationship milestones (see chart over page), Then keep your options open for someone else.

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Normally if you have been dating, even on a casual basis, for three or four months and all seems well, things should be progressing. You should start to introduce each other to your friends and family, you can start to refer to each other as girlfriend/boyfriend. Four to six months is also a healthy stage of relationship development to be thinking about or embarking on a holiday or break together – then you can move on to a more permanent relationship. Take a look at my relationship development milestone charts below, so you can measure your progress.

Milestone	Relationship development	Time scale
Initial interaction	Flirting/register initial interest in each other	Immediately
First date request	Discovery	Within a few hours (the <i>one time</i> a girl can press ahead and instigate)
First date	The first big test: do you get on?	Within a couple of weeks of date request
The follow-up	If he's keen, he'll get in touch within a couple of weeks	This could take up to six weeks – stay cool
Second date	Positive – lets see if there is mileage	More likely to be sooner but – Within two weeks
Third date	A chance to get to know you more deeply	Within two weeks Of the second date
First month: how many times do you communicate in a	Starts to view you as a potential partner	Communication 2 or 3 times a week, or more
Sleep together	A big deal: are you sexually compatible	After the fifth or sixth date at least

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Milestone	Relationship development	Time scale
How many times a week do you see each other?	This could depend on location, etc.	Between once and five times a week after the first month
Meeting each other's friends/family	A big deal: will they rate you?	During first month
Meeting your friends	Watch out for interaction.	During the first Or second month
Girlfriend/ Boyfriend	The first real time he sees you potentially as for 'keeps'	Month three or four
Weekend away	A whole 48 hours together	Three or four months into your relationship
The 'L' word	This is different for everyone; don't rush it.	Three months to 12 months
Leaving items at each other's homes	Proof you're comfortable together and staking your claim on each other	Six month into your relationship
Meeting The parents	A major milestone. Vetting you as a potential long-term partner	Six to 12 months into the relationship
Holiday	A sign you are a real couple, as you're putting time and money into being with each other	Six to 12 months into the relationship
Moving on, moving in?	The next step	Eight months to three years into relationship

These time scales should give you a good idea if the relationship is progressing at a healthy level. Obviously location has a lot to do with things. If you live miles away from each other, things may take a little longer in the early stages but could quicken up later.

Keeping your options open if things are not moving fast enough

- Still meet other people, if only for a coffee (never become intimate with other people whilst in a relationship, even a fledgling relationship, or you risk losing trust)
- Keep your online dating profiles open and active, if less flirtatious or proactive
- Flirt tamely with other people on dates out
- Drop hints casually that other men/women have paid attention to you while you've been away

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If you stop doing any of these you make everything too easy for your potential partner to procrastinate. But if you carry on posing yourself as a challenge, things tend to move more quickly – but only if they are right.

I'm not suggesting you cheat or become intimate in any way in the hope you might jolt some sense into your other half, but you should keep your options open until you have both become fully committed with each other. You're doing nothing wrong. Six months into the relationship, it's far better to be taking stock of things than letting it drift on when it might not be going anywhere.

Chapter Seven

How to maintain a harmonious relationship

You've met someone and you're both keen to take it further. You both seem to get along and you have strong feelings for each other – so what can go wrong? Plenty! If maintaining a relationship were simple, no one would ever get divorced. Sadly statistics show 75 to 80 per cent of all relationships fail. Even marriages where both parties should be fully committed have a split rate of around two in five.

There are some very simple ways to 'break-up proof' your fledgling relationship and ensure you get past the first hurdles and turn it into a lasting love. The key points to understand is men view relationships very differently to women. While men generally enjoy the moment women often can't rest and constantly have their eye on the next move. Take a simple walk in the park. He's happy in the moment, holding hands and enjoying his partners company – remember men compartmentalize. The woman however, rather than living the moment her mind is often jumping ahead in anticipation. Is he going to ask tell you he loves you? Is this a good time to bring up that first holiday you are dying to go on? So whilst men focus on the moment women are trying to figure out what comes next. So often I've discovered a newly formed couple going through difficulties when actually there are not any real challenges to be fretting about. They exist mostly in a woman's head and the challenge is for the guy to figure out why she is so tense or what consuming her normally happy go lucky mind.

One happily married man I know likens relationships to asking for directions. A man will gladly bumble around with no idea where he is going but be happy he'll get where he needs to be. A woman, however, wants to plan the route and set off to her timetable and becomes furious if anyone deviates from what she wants. As we've already discovered, no man wants a 'fast forward' woman who tries to push him into commitment before he's ready. So what are the qualities men are looking for when they select a woman to settle down with?

Here's my guide to the vital Dos and Don'ts, compiled with the help of hundreds of happily married men:

Don'ts

- Try to change yourself to be what you think he wants. He fell in love with you as you are – the way you dress, your physical appearance, your interests and sense of humour. Many women change when they meet a man to try to please him further, but he doesn't want you to do that.
- Try to change him. A little tidying up like a new haircut or dress sense over-haul is fine, but don't try to change his interests or his friends. He'll resent you and end it.
- Sweat the small stuff. If he forgets to call you one night, it's not the end of the world – and it isn't the end of the relationship either. He just forgot. Or something else consumed him – I say again, men compartmentalise don't blow it up into a big issue.

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- Be a doormat. Men don't respect a woman who meekly accepts every instance of bad behaviour. If he constantly forgets to call you or always lets you down by cancelling dates to meet his mates, he'll just keep taking advantage.
- Stalk him. Calling and texting 40 times a day are not acceptable. Neither is posting intimate messages on social networking sites for the entire world to see. Men don't need as much constant contact as women.
- Push what's coming next. Be confident the relationship is progressing the right way and at the right pace. Forcing the issue won't make it happen faster; it will only leave you single and back at square one.
- Go to bed without making-up if you have had an argument, and never sulk or nag at each other. Rather talk it out in a friendly manner.
- Over-think and over-analyse everything.

Do

- Make time for each other, no matter how busy you are. Although this is easy to do in the first few months, in longer-term relationships, quality time together can easily get forgotten.
- Do get to understand where each other stand in terms of values. It is crucial your values align if you want to sustain a long-term relationship. When challenges bulldoze their way into your relationship it should be a time that you unite as a couple and grow stronger whilst tackling the challenge. When your values are miles apart you end up fighting each other instead of figuring out the issue that has rocked your relationship.
- Ensure early on that you are on the same wavelength in terms of energy aura. On a scale of 1 to 10 – ten being highly proactive and one being a 'take life in your stride low energy person'. Figure out where each of you is. If you are miles apart it is unlikely to last long. You will drive each other nuts and resentment will seep into your relationship.
- Focus on each other's positives and try to figure out if the negatives are things you can live with long term. Remember all men, like all women, will have some faults. But concentrate on what made you fall in love with him in the first place.
- Have lots of sex! If it is not happening regularly now it is unlikely to get better. Relationships go through different stages. It is inevitable that years down the line, unless you constantly work at keeping the thrills in your relationship, your sex life will not continue in the same proactive vein as it does initially. Which is why it is vital that there is a whole lot more than good regular sex in your relationship.
- Look after each other. Pamper each other, do nice things for each other and be thoughtful and kind – even if it is every so often. Don't let it all be one sided.

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- Lay down boundaries. Get your pet hates out in the open as early into your relationship as possible. It could be something as simple as insisting he does half the housework or doesn't leave wet towels on the bed, but a man with rules to follow is a happy fellow. Men need rules, whether they are playing football, fishing or buying rounds in the pub with their mates.
- Take care of yourselves emotionally and physically. Stay attractive to each other and try to be positive about your life together, even when you are going through a bad patch. Be that person your partner fell in love with.
- Still date. Have fun together, visit places you went when you were falling in love, and make time for a night out at least once a week to keep the special magic alive.
- Praise each other and make each other feel wanted. Even if it's only asking him to reach for something from a high shelf or put out the heavy bins, men like to feel needed, it gives them a sense of their masculinity. Tell her she looks amazing when she does, admire her hair or outfits. Tell her you love her sense of style, be honest.
- Let him treat you if he suggests it, even if money is tight. A man likes to prove he can provide.
- Allow each other space to enjoy the things your partner is not particularly enthusiastic about. Couples who have separate interests and pursuits have a far more intriguing and stimulating relationship which usually goes the distance as opposed to couples who do everything together and only like the same things
- Encourage each other to nurture friendships. Do have friends you see outside of your relationship and have a life outside of your relationship.
- Get on with his family. You don't have to like them but try to cultivate a great relationship with them if you can and they could become your biggest ally.
- Give each other space.
- Use the 'so what?' test. If you have a row or disagreement, think about whether it really matters or if you're trying to win for arguments sake. Life is too short. Don't waste it on things that don't matter; don't sweat over the small stuff. You can often end up arguing about who said what in the argument more fiercely than the argument you started out with.
- Believe in yourself. You're a catch so act like one.
- Tell each other that you love each other, even if you have had an argument.

The power of positive thinking

Chapter Eight

How many people do you know who are 'lucky in love' and always seem to meet the wonderful people? Even if things don't work out they stay great friends. The people who have a spring in their step, a smile on their face and a great sense of fun or vibrancy. You may think they've just got lucky, but there's no so such thing. Lucky people work hard to make their own luck, and they do it through the power of positive thinking.

Psychologists and hypnotherapists have proved if we continually repeat a thought, we can condition our brains to believe it. The brain quite literally builds new neural connections according to what we are telling it to think. So if you're the sort of person who's always moaning 'there are no fanciable singles' -, then that's what you'll end up believing, and is most probably what will present itself to you. However, if you wake up each day and say, 'today looks great; this could be the day I meet a very special person', then you'll be far happier and in a much better mind-set for meeting the right person, or discovering something special in a person you already know. Your brain will be wired and alive to every possibility.

It doesn't stop there either. I firmly believe the way you think effects what you attract in your life. If you think negatively things will go wrong; you'll get ill, friends won't call as they won't want to be around you, and the types of people you want to meet will steer clear of your miserable little world. But, if you think positively you'll attract the positive: mates will call and ask you on nights out as you're a fun person to be around; you'll get better opportunities at work; you'll look better, feel better, and you will stand out for all the right reasons. People will gravitate towards you because you have your own rays of sunshine beaming out from around you.

Positive thinking has helped me through some of the toughest times in my life. I've pulled myself through the most horrendous heartache by focusing my mind on the positive aspects of my life when all around me seemed to be crumbling. It's amazing how you can lift yourself out of a deep depression by being grateful for what you have - and looking forward to what you want. Even at my very worst, I would only allow myself to wallow in upset for a single day and always vowed after a night's sleep to move onwards and upwards.

Positive thinking can help with even the smallest jobs too. I'm writing this at 6am on a Sunday morning, when it would have been all too easy to stay curled up in bed with my partner. Instead, I thought positively, got on with the job, and feel amazing for it. If I'd stayed in bed and put off the writing, I'd have felt lousy for the rest of the day.

You may have read books like *The Secret* by Ronda Byrne and Carolyn Boyes book *Cosmic Ordering in 7 Easy Steps*. If you have read these, you will already know how it's no secret that those people who look on the bright side of life do better in this world. By thinking - and being - positive you are opening yourself up to others around you and the myriad of amazing possibilities in this world. Think for a minute about your circle of friends. Isn't it clear that the positive ones cope with whatever life throws at them, and always come up smelling of roses? They have luck on their side because they've gone out of their way to make their own luck.

I am so sold on the idea of the power of positive thinking that I use it every day to create even more luck and great things in my life. I don't waste time asking the universe to help me win the lottery; instead, I allow my mind to drift to where I want to be. I keep repeating my hopes, dreams and aspirations and I almost live the feeling in my mind. I imagine I am in my mind's best-case scenario;

I imagine how I will feel and I will it to happen – and you know what, almost every time it does, and if it doesn't it usually turns out there was good reason why.

So how does this fit in with you meeting a special potential love interest? Quite simply, you can use it to draw even more romance opportunities your way. Ask yourself honestly, are you always focusing on the worst-case scenario or do you tell yourself everything will come right in the end? If you keep believing and telling your friends that all men are bastards, then I have no doubt it will manifest that way to you. However, change course and keep a picture in your mind of what you want and a strange thing will happen: slowly you'll go from 'wishing' for you could find your potential Mr/Ms Right to 'knowing' you are going to find them. You'll begin to feel the power of positive thinking. On the rare occasions you don't get all you want, it simply means that path wasn't right for you, but keeping positive will lead you down another equally bright and happy route.

Here is a very effective positive thinking visualisation exercise for you to practise. It will become one of the most powerful tools to help you find lasting love.

1. Decide on a good time of day when you can routinely start practising your positive thinking visualisation. If you are a night owl, do it before you drift off to sleep, as you'll awake more rested. Early birds should try it first thing, either sitting with a warm drink or as you stretch and exercise. You can even do it as part of your daily commute, sitting on a crowded bus or train. Whatever time you decide on, you'll find it pushes all your worries away and your little rain clouds magically evaporate.

2. Don't be embarrassed. Nobody will know what you are doing, so you don't have to be in a quiet place. Simply shut your mind off and begin to think about all the things you would like to happen, just like daydreaming.

3. I find the most effective way is to run through a ritual of 'thanks and please' is to begin by saying thank you in your mind for the health, safety and happiness of your family and friends, and if you are dating, for your partner. Then think about any negative aspects of your life right now, perhaps you're having problems with your boss or a row with your mum, then move on to ask for a resolution. This is also the point to ask for a partner if you are single. You don't have to beg; just ask in a quiet way that's right for you that a good man comes into your life soon. It doesn't have to take long; a few minutes is fine.

4. The idea behind a positive thinking visualisation is to lift away the negative thoughts seeping through your head. When you're weighed down with problems and day-to-day niggles, it's hard to see what you do have going for you. Positive visualisation will temporarily dissolve the problems and allow you to see what you want in your life. Sometimes you can come up with a solution there and then, but often answers pop into your mind later in the day.

5. Make sure you have your regular 'wishes' to go through. Say in your mind how you want things to be, and show gratitude for the way the good things have turned out. For example:

'Thank you for the health, safety and happiness of my friends and family and myself.'

Then move on to you additional dreams and wishes. For example:

'Thank you for helping me to change my approach and for finding me a wonderful partner. Thank you for bringing me my soul mate when the time is right for me.'

Whatever it is you want, ask for it and believe it is going to happen. You can ask for anything you like, but you must believe that your mantra is going to manifest and it will happen. You will find your visualisation sessions change your outlook and that you gradually feel sunnier in your everyday life. If you keep it up regularly – and daily is best – I guarantee that positive things will start happening to you.

The power of positive thinking will also ensure you can overcome daily irritations like rude people, road rage and all the nasty parts of modern life you have to put up with. If a car cuts in front of you, resist the temptation to shout, swear and beep your horn. Instead ask yourself is it's really worth it? If you won't remember it in a few weeks time, then who cares? Give out warmth and you will receive it back, and you'll feel much better for not being overcome with anger.

Try positive thinking for a month, even if you're not sure it will work for you. I'm convinced it will make a difference and you will soon see for yourself how you're flooded with optimism – and more romance opportunities start to materialise. So get going and start planning what you're going to ask for. Like I have said before, you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Chapter Nine

The Subject of sex

I couldn't really complete this book without saying a few words about sex. After all it plays a big part in relationships and the courting process. The most obvious and frequently asked question I receive about sex is when should a you start to become intimate with a new partner.

There are no hard and fast rules here, but as a guide I think you should have met with each other at least four or five times before even contemplating sex. By all means enjoy the kissing and cuddling, but try and leave it just there. A good tip is to avoid alcohol on your initial meetings. Many women have the mind-set that there is no point in stopping yourself if you both have a passion for each other. However, it could really go against you if you agree to get intimate too soon.

The point I have laboured all through this book is that every woman must pose herself a challenge in order to create the desire in a man to pursue her, and although it may feel right early on if you are patient the experience will be more satisfying and will feel more natural and less awkward. You can really mess things up for yourself if you continue the habit of 'fast forwarding' the dating and courting process. You could establish longevity in the relationship by holding out, and all the time your suitor will become more attached to you mentally and emotionally. If you feel you are a catch, then surely this has got to be the best way to go. OK, so you think you are a wild cat in the bedroom, and perhaps think that if you race ahead to the steamy stuff your date is going to fall for you even more, but this really isn't the case.

What works?

Most men who have a genuine interest in pursuing a potential relationship will prefer to savour the intimacy and prolong the actual full-blown sex because they see it all as part of the chase. A recent survey backs this up. An overwhelming 92% of men said they preferred a girl to stall the sex initially when it's a girl they are interested in potentially for a more serious romance. Interestingly, when asked how soon they would like to sleep with a girl they were only interested in casually, most men said within two days. So, if you really want to embark on a relationship with your new date, hold off with the sex. And, contrary to what you might want to think, if a guy is pushing for sex soon after meeting you, it's probably because he is only interested in you for precisely just that.

The other thing you should make note of is that when you do eventually get it together on the sexual front, your first sexual encounters together is unlikely to be the way you would make love on a regular basis. Initially it will be very exploratory so you can each discover what turns each other on.

Here are some pointers to consider when you embark on a sexual relationship with someone you potential see as a more serious romance.

- Be ready for spontaneity.

- Initially once you have embarked on a sexual relationship you will probably have a sexual encounter almost every time you get together for the first few months
- Men are just as happy when you perform oral sex on them as they are having full-blown sex
- 82% of men said they get aroused watching porn on the TV as opposed to 57% of women
- 76% of those who liked to watch porn said they prefer to do it with their partner than alone
- 31% of men said they liked to experiment and try some things that might be viewed as shocking with their partners sometimes
- 71% of men said they didn't particularly enjoy giving their partners oral sex
- 17% of men said they did not view a fling or one-night stand as being unfaithful as opposed to only 4% of women agreeing
- 13% of men said if they were in love they would consider forgiving their partner if they discovered they had been unfaithful. 32% of women agreed.
- 79% of men said they would consider ending the relationship if they didn't find the sex stimulating or if they were not getting enough of it. Only 55% of women agreed.
- Just as many women as men admitted fantasising over other people when they are in a relationship Just fewer than 30%
- 83% of men said they thought it weird if a woman didn't want to perform oral sex on them almost the same amount of women agreed 77%
- Overwhelmingly, most men and women said they preferred their girlfriends to de-hair their genitals.

Infidelity

When the topic of sex comes up in discussion, I regularly get asked for my view on infidelity. Most dating dilemma experts will scream 'leave' if your partner cheats, however, I think sometimes a moments lust shouldn't have to crush a relationship to the point of ending it, especially if there are so many positive aspects to the union.

One thing I have learned is that 'perfection' is practically non-existent when it comes to enjoying a harmonious relationship. Whereas I feel a person who constantly cheats and causes heartache would be difficult to live with, I also think that the occasional stupid mistake can be forgiven.

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It is really important, when you have established some sort of serious relationship, then sex should be high on the agenda. If that side of your relationship becomes stale and boring it could build resentment between you. It really important to instigate sex and initiate a constant change in stimulation. Making time for sex is paramount.

Appendix : Testimonials

I have put together some emails and letters I have received from clients over the years, to give you an idea of how my dating formula has helped so many people to find potentially lasting love.

'I felt a bit overwhelmed by the number of guys who seemed to pop up from nowhere after starting your plan; when it rains, it rains a lot of men! I sometimes think you have a challenging job, being in the middle of two sexes and keeping a neutral position. I think you are as genuine, honest and helpful as possible given all that. Your tips do actually work!'

Lydia, 31-year-old doctor from Herefordshire

'Yes I would love to meet her, I trust your judgment completely Lorraine, so far you have me completely sussed.'

Mike, 39-year-old trader from Richmond

'Wow! What a few months I've had. I've just looked in my diary and seen I have rarely had an empty evening, yet it's been blissful. I cannot apologise enough for how difficult I've been to get hold of since I registered with you. I promise I'm never normally as busy as I have been, but you only have your advice to thank for that!'

Sarah, 52-year-old business consultant from Central London

'Can I just say that although I was a little taken aback at your very direct comments on my evaluation report after I came to see you six months ago, you were absolutely spot on. I have been following your advice and things have changed for the better for me. I have not met my soul mate yet, but I have to say it feels like it will only be a matter of time. So a big thank you from someone I bet you least expected to hear from again.'

Petra, 48-year-old part-time charity worker from Oxford

'Hope everything's good with you. Things with Stefanie, the woman you introduced me to a couple of months ago, are fantastic. She's such a sweet lady. Last night I met her brother and wife – they were just lovely to me. So I think it is time for me to close all other options. Thank you so much for finding her; She really is great! I have completely taken your advice on board about everything, this has been a new experience which is evidently working, so thank you'

Charlotte, 48-year-old lawyer from Highgate

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'Lorraine after all the help and advice you have given to me over the past two years, and continued helping me through the early months of my relationship with Sean, we wondered if you could introduce any nice young lady's to his son who is 28 and heartbroken after his girlfriend left him for another man.'

Verity, 51-year-old accountant from Essex

'Lorraine you will be so proud of me, I have organised myself three dates this month through online dating, in addition to the one you have organised for me. I feel twenty years younger and I have followed your advice to the letter. I am not in the least bit nervous even though these are the first dates

I have been on in seven years. I am so grateful to you; I feel like a new woman.'

Roz, 52-year-old nurse from Reading

'Just wanted to drop you a note to say your seminar has really changed my attitude to dating and life in general and I am feeling so much the happier for it ... (And dating someone, but keeping a level head.)'

Annette, 37-year-old lawyer from London

'Lorraine your advice has been invaluable; Omar and I would like to invite you to our wedding next June!'

Denise, 49-year-old entrepreneur from Docklands

'You have given me so much confidence. I have started to make an effort in the mornings when I go to work and been a bit lower key down in the pub with the lads after work, and just like you said, the guys have actually started flirting with me. The one I liked emailed me today to ask if I was wanted to go out on a date!

Lucy, 29-year-old PR consultant from Putney

'Lorraine, emailing you from Canada where we are both living now since marrying just after Christmas. We thought you should be one of the first to know we are also expecting our first baby in February next year. I know I have thanked you a million times, but here is a big thank you again for the million and one time.'

Julia 39 and Blake 44

James and I are officially an item. Lorraine, thank you for pushing me to meet him even though I was adamant when you suggested him to me that he wasn't my type! Please don't ever tell him that...he, James, is different from anyone I have ever met, and that's probably why he is the longest relationship I've ever had (bar the two year relationship I had when I was 15!). We are buying a place together this year and I am hopeful I have finally met my match.'

Beverly 37 model and part time TV presenter London

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The End? Or just the beginning!

To book a free consultation with Lorraine Adams or one of the team please contact info@coffeeandcompany.com