

Confessions of a
LIFESTYLE
CONNOISSEUR
 WITH DEBRA KENNEDY

All we need is Love 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵.
 Is Love all we really need? Seems to be true in romance novels, fairy tales and The Hallmark Channel. Why do we yearn for that unrealistic portrayal of Love? I personally am in Love with romance as most women are. Yes, that sappy kind that we only see on the big screen. Basically, the untrue kind that I believe to be realistic for about 90 minutes or until the movie ends. Does it fog my mind with unrealistic expectations? You Bet!!! Yes, I would love to live a storybook life and I am sure you would too. To have the perfect marriage, perfect family, perfect friends and perfect job, etc. But I remember my first heartbreak, my struggle with the thought “who did I marry” and “why is he acting like an idiot”, my being disappointed by a friend and being crushed when my child who I totally thought idolized me, wanted to walk on the opposite side of the mall with her friends as if I were a complete stranger. Yes, I would like to be a perfect fabulous funderella all of the time!!! Spoiler Alert, Life is not always on board with my Hallmark Channel Lifestyle Wish. Honestly, all of our pain and struggles in “real life” define us and have shaped us to grow into the individuals we are today. Perhaps even humbled and molded us into pretty amazing human beings.



What about Family Love? Families are like fudge, mostly sweet with a few nuts. Our experience from infancy to adulthood should never be underestimated. We reach out to family members for guidance, reassurance and to hear a familiar voice. We would all like to think we have perfect families but truthfully, no family is perfect. Yes, there is weird Uncle Sam’s burping attack in the middle of dinner or Aunt Sally who has hearing aids but never wears them or cousin Liz that debates every single word that escapes from your lips. Should I even mention holiday time when it always starts out with hugs and kisses and by the end of the visit you can’t wait for everyone to go home. Funny how the pics posted show magical family time! True fact, there is not a normal for family relationships and perfect families are only in pictures. Can’t pick them, gotta love them and YES, we all have them!!!!
 Romantic Relationships are a different story. If only this could be like it is portrayed in the movies. The kind of love that lasts a lifetime. The kind of love that gives you butterflies each time your paths cross and the passion is off the chain ridiculous. Yes, it does exist but has an expiration date and that is when you must put in the work. Those

cute little nuances that were so adorable in the honeymoon stage are now annoying. The passion that you thought would never go away is now, “I am not in the mood” and I need a bottle of wine to get me there. The superhero that wanted to do it all now is resentful that she has to do it all. Yes, we idealize love and completely overestimate the fact that it flows easily. There are countless books that help us understand how men think differently and do they ever!!!! Do they really think we want to hear the truth? Do they really think we mean it when we say, “Oh No, Please don’t buy me anything for my birthday.” Guys, WHY do we have to ask you to help? My husband is notorious for saying, “Lets” organize the (fill in the blank here) and what he really is saying is, “You need to organize.....” Wait, did he just question my organizational skills? Where is fabulous funderella when I need her and why am I feeling more like Bon Qui Qui at this moment?

Like us, men want to be appreciated with a great desire to be needed. I have friends that have had multiple marriages and the available bachelor pickings out there are slim. I have lived through the dating experiences with several of these friends and it is not pretty. Am I saying be a pilgrim and settle? No, I am saying that staying in LOVE is a lot of work and COMMUNICATION is key. Most Men are not good at surprises, reading minds or listening but if you put in the time, it just might work out. Ain’t Love Grand?

Friendships are the treasures that can help us survive all of the above relationships. The kind of friend that understands boundaries, tells you the truth, believes in you, celebrates your lowest lows and happiest times, accepts you just the way you are and can keep your darkest secrets. Beware, not every friend is trustworthy and deserving of your friendship. There are acquaintances which

are plentiful and there are “Bestie” friendships that are like stars, you don’t always see them or talk to them daily but they are always there. I personally could not survive without my bestie club! Each and every one of my friends are valued, adored and appreciated by me daily. I know how blessed I am to have true friends. I have had to break up with a few friends over the years but now have a core group of interesting, fun-loving and authentic friends that complete my life. What is the secret? Friendship is not a one-sided relationship. Being there for each other when it may not be convenient but much needed. Reciprocating kind gestures and most importantly being a good listener (I really struggle with my listening skills and I am constantly getting better).

Relationships in general make us happier. I learned many years ago that in order to have a healthy, loving relationship with another human being, you must first learn to love yourself. I put myself out there and make the effort and take the time to balance family, husband and friends which enables me to benefit from these relationships. Does it always work? No, but I have an amazing family, Love my husband on most days and have the best friends in the world. I will take that as a WIN!

Bestie Readers, thanks for all of your e-mails and social media love! I have so enjoyed reading your comments, notes and suggestions for upcoming articles!

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