

Your Perfect Partner:



*A Strategy for finding
The Love of your Life*

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Introduction

Having someone wonderful in your life can dramatically change it for the better. Who wouldn't want a special person to share in life's journey?

But getting seriously involved with someone isn't something to take lightly. ***Life is more challenging if you choose an incompatible partner.***

Approximately half of all marriages end in divorce. This is extremely difficult for everyone involved, especially children.

The costs of an unsuccessful relationship are both emotional and financial. You also lose time, which is something you're unable to get back.

Finding your perfect partner can usually be accomplished within four to six months. But it's important to realize that it will require time and effort. Few great things happen by accident, and most require intention. Most accomplishments start with a goal, a plan, and ongoing effort.

“Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.”

- Lao Tau

Assessing Your Situation

It's important to assess your situation and ask yourself some important questions. Is this an appropriate time for you to get involved in a relationship? Are you ready for this wonderful person to come into your life?

Timing is everything in a relationship. The better your situation, the larger the potential dating pool.

If your ideal mate came into your life today, would they be attracted to you in your current condition? We all have times when our efforts might be better spent getting our own lives straightened out, rather than getting involved in a romantic relationship.

While it's nice to believe that love is blind, it might be a good time to operate under the premise of "better safe than sorry."

The good NEWS:

- ❖ ***Regardless of how difficult your life might be, there's someone out there who would be thrilled to be with you.*** But it's more challenging to make it work when you're already struggling on your own.
- ❖ Many challenges can be fixed with some time and effort. A little time and focus can change

your situation for the better. ***Take time for yourself, if you need it.***

Health

How is your health? As we get older, we all develop health issues. While some issues are unavoidable, you owe it to yourself and your partner to do your best to manage your health. A few months of eating well and exercising may open up more dating prospects.

Finances

Is your credit in good shape? Are you working? How much debt are you carrying? Are you responsible with money?

Financial issues are one of the major causes of marital issues and divorce. Why make your relationship more challenging than it needs to be?

If your financial life could be in better shape, spend time getting back on track before you start looking for love.

Career

Are you on a career path that pleases you? Are you proud of the work you do? If you're less than content with your current job situation, do you have a plan to move on to something else?

Social Life

Do you have some friends that you spend time with on a regular basis? Is your social life what you would like it to be? Others tend to be suspicious of those without any close friends.

Other Factors

It isn't as if every aspect of your life requires perfection before you can start looking for a life partner. One of the great parts of having a companion is that you can share your challenges and support one another through them. ***Your ideal mate will be someone who embraces your "flaws."***

But if you're 100 pounds overweight, have several health concerns, are jobless, and without friends, the pickings may be slim.

You owe it to yourself and your potential mate to get yourself together. A little self-improvement can go a long way.

If you're unhappy, you'll tend to repel those that are content in their lives!

Keep in mind that people are surprisingly accepting of your challenges if you're working on making things better. ***Most people are more concerned with the direction of your life***

than your current location. Everyone appreciates an honest effort.

“Love is a force more formidable than any other. It is invisible - it cannot be seen or measured, yet it is powerful enough to transform you in a moment, and offer you more joy than any material possession could.”

- Barbara de Angelis

Discovering Resources

Before making any life-changing decisions, it's important to assess your resources. You have many more options than you think! These days, it has become even easier to find your perfect mate.

Your three main dating RESOURCES:

1. Connecting through people you already know.

Many of us date and marry the friends and acquaintances of others. Think about how many people you know and interact with on a daily basis.

- ❖ **Friends:** Consider all your friends. Now ponder how many friends they have. Take it down one more level and you're easily looking at thousands of individuals.
- ❖ **Family:** The same goes for your family. Take into account all of your family members and all of the people they know.
- ❖ **Co-workers:** Few of us work completely alone. Many people have ended up dating a co-worker or someone they met through a colleague.

2. **USING internet RESOURCES.** There are numerous dating websites designed to help you find the person of your dreams. Many of them even include personality assessments that can provide a scientific process for matching people.

❖ The web can be your own personal matchmaker that works while you sleep. That's making good use of your time!

3. **Taking initiative.** Anytime you leave your house, you encounter many individuals while you're out and about. Perhaps you could talk to some of them. It might be intimidating at first, but a little nerve can go a long way. ***Be brave!***

The availability of these resources is encouraging, and your success is inevitable.

"We're born alone, we live alone, we die alone. Only through our love and friendship can we create the illusion for the moment that we're not alone."

- ***Orson Welles***

Creating a Goal

Everyone knows that setting a goal is important, yet few people do it. If you lack a goal, how will you sort through all of these potential partners? Without a goal, you're putting yourself in the position of being passive and relying on chance.

A goal also forces you to think about what you truly want. This helps to ensure you'll find a compatible life partner.

The following PROCESS WILL help you to create a VISION for your perfect partner:

- 1. Find a quiet, comfortable spot where you won't be disturbed.** You'll need some paper, a writing utensil, and some time. A computer with a word processing program works just as well.
- 2. Make a list of all the attributes your ideal partner would possess.** It's okay to be picky. Come up with your perfect person.
 - ❖ **Physical attributes:** Be specific. If your ideal woman has blonde hair and blue eyes, write it down. If your dream man is 6'3" then document it. Is he sporting a six-pack or is he stocky?

- ❖ **Personality characteristics:** Is he the funniest person you'll ever meet? Does she love to read? Are you looking for someone who loves to travel? Do you want your mate to be outgoing or shy?
 - ❖ **Other qualities:** Is she rich? Is he a fireman? Do you want someone athletic? Does he already have kids, and if not, does he want children? Does she practice a specific religion? Where does this person want to settle down?
 - ❖ What age-range are you willing to consider?
3. **Reduce your list.** Now it's time to look through your list and determine which qualities are most important to you. Be practical with your list.
- ❖ Make a separate list of the qualities your potential mate "must have." These will probably include things like plans for children, meeting a certain age range, having a minimal level of physical attractiveness, sharing the same values, and a wanting a similar future.
 - ❖ The more "must haves" on your list, the more challenging it will be to find someone who meets all of your criteria.
 - ❖ Consider each attribute and ask yourself if you would spend the rest of your life with someone who has all the other qualities, but is missing just one. Your

answer will tell you if it truly is a “must have.”

- ❖ If you're like most people, you might have some “nice to haves,” but you're probably more flexible on physical characteristics. You might insist that your man is taller than you, but he probably doesn't have to be exactly 6' 3". Blonde hair and blue eyes are ideal, but brown eyes would be fine.
 - ❖ When you're done with your lists, see how satisfied you are. If you found someone with all your “must haves” and some of your “nice to haves,” how happy would you be? Revise your list until you're thrilled!
4. **Create SOME EXAMPLES.** It's great to list your “must haves” with words, but examples and mental pictures are a better way of communicating with your subconscious. For instance, when you try to remember something, you probably use some sort of mental image.
- ❖ ***Take each of your “must haves” and try to think of a specific example from your life.***
 - ❖ Let's say you want someone with a great sense of humor. Think of someone you've met with the perfect sense of humor. Could that person be your perfect partner?
 - ❖ If you're unable to think of someone you already know, use a fictional character from a television show,

movie, or book. If you're still stuck, invent someone. It's important to have a vivid image!

- ❖ Keep in mind that it doesn't have to be someone you particularly like. It's just an individual who possesses that certain characteristic you're looking for.

5. **Create the actual goal.** So far, you have a list of what you're looking for. But you're lacking a deadline and an endpoint. In other words, how will you know you've accomplished your goal?

- ❖ Create an image of your endpoint that represents the achievement of your goal. You might imagine you and your perfect partner cooking dinner together, laughing, and talking about your day at work.
- ❖ ***Write down your relationship goal and keep it in a safe place.***
- ❖ Determine a deadline. A week is probably unrealistic. A year is probably overly pessimistic. Three to six months is probably a reasonable amount of time, but go with what feels appropriate for you.
- ❖ An example goal might be: "On or before July 1, 2014, I will be in a relationship with a person that fits my 'must have' criteria."

6. **Review your goal daily.** You've created a target, but it's important to review that goal daily. How many times have you decided to do something, but stopped pursuing that goal 10 days later? Reviewing your goal for a few minutes each day will help prevent that from happening.

- ❖ Review your list of "must haves" each day. Read each item and go over the examples.
- ❖ Visualize your successful endpoint, so you can stay on target.

Nearly everyone belittles the value of goal-setting. Your mind is inundated with your desires. One minute you want a sandwich and the next you want to take a nap. It never ends! ***How can your mind tell what's truly important to you? One way is through daily reminders of your goal.***

"I have found the paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love."

- Mother Teresa

Applying Your Resources to Find Your Perfect Partner

You've pulled your life together, reviewed your resources, and have a goal. Now it's time to put those resources to work!

Connecting Through People You Know

Let your friends and family know that you're looking for a romantic relationship. Sharing personal information with your co-workers will probably be on a case-by case basis. Be open with those you trust, but avoid jeopardizing your position at work.

- ❖ Consider sharing the list of qualities you're looking for in your perfect partner. Someone might just say, "I know the perfect person for you!"

Using Internet Resources

The web is a great place to find a potential life partner. You can also access great search tools!

The following STEPS WILL help you SET up an effective dating profile:

1. **ASSEMBLE SOME flattering PHOTOS.** We all have good and bad photos. So, pull out your photos and start sorting! Studies have shown that it's best to post between five and ten photos. Too few won't give you the opportunity to show your many facets. Too many is overwhelming.
 - ❖ Use a variety of photos. Include a picture of you dressed-up, as well as one in a more casual setting. It's also important to post one where you're doing something active.
 - ❖ Use some common sense. Steer clear of photos with your arm around your previous love interest. Including a photo with a friend that's dramatically better looking than you is something else to avoid. A picture of you holding your little dog, like it's your surrogate child, may be a turn-off. Be smart.
 - ❖ If you're in doubt, ask a friend to assist you with selecting the photos.

- ❖ Studies have shown that both men and women are strongly influenced by photographs while searching personal ads. Pictures are the determining factor for whether or not your complete profile will be read.
2. **Write a great profile.** Lying is a big no-no, but this is the time to put your best foot forward. Focus on your good qualities. Be positive, fun, and interesting.
- ❖ If you make it too brief, it looks like you're being lazy.
 - ❖ Profiles that are too long can give the image that you're high maintenance.
 - ❖ A paragraph or two about yourself and another about what you're looking for is plenty. Just give the basics. If they want to know more, they can contact you!
3. **List what you're looking for.** On most dating sites, you can list your search criteria. Go back to your list of criteria and do your best to match up the items. Be reasonable and avoid giving up on the qualities most important to you.
- ❖ You might even want to consider looking into some specialized dating sites that target certain groups of people. For example, there are sites that cater to certain religious affiliations.

- 4. Edit your profile and CONSIDER whether IT'S likely to appeal to your perfect partner.** Make any necessary changes. ***Remember, you only get one chance to make a good first impression!***

Now that you have a profile, it's important to start contacting people. There's no reason to sit back and wait for others to come to you. Be in charge of your own destiny. It's an empowering feeling when you take control of your life.

USE your time effectively when contacting OTHERS:

- 1. Develop a STANDARD introduction.** Internet dating is largely about numbers. The more people you contact, the more likely you are to find a good match.
 - ◆ Your introduction doesn't have to be long. Two paragraphs ought to do the trick. Be playful and encourage the person to check out your profile.
- 2. When directly contacting SOMEONE, add a unique SENTENCE or two.** Pick something out of their profile and mention it. This will prevent it from looking like you're sending the same message to everyone! Ask them a question about their photo or mention that you like sushi, too.

3. **Avoid getting carried away.** It's easy to get swept up in the excitement and contact 100+ people per week. But what will you do when 50 of them reply back to you? It's overwhelming to stay on top of 50 different email conversations. Consider contacting a few people each day.
4. **Stay organized.** Keep track of your correspondence. ***It might be a good idea to create a list of vital information for each potential mate.*** Something like: Brad, 11-year-old daughter, works in hospital, likes football. This can be a real lifesaver, especially if you're talking to multiple people.

Spend some time each day perusing the ads and contacting 3-5 people. Remember, it just takes one!

A few general TIPS are in order:

1. **Avoid WASTING anyone's time, including yours.** Once you've determined that you're lacking interest in the person on the other end of the computer screen, move on. Be polite, but avoid wasting anyone's time.
2. **Avoid moving THINGS along too SLOWLY or quickly.** There's a TV show dedicated to those who have had online relationships for years without ever meeting in person. These relationships rarely succeed.

- ♦ Exchange a few emails, chat on the phone, and then meet in a safe, public place for a cup of coffee.
3. **Be brave enough to STAND out.** One common misstep with online dating is trying to appeal to everyone. Remember that you only have to find one perfect person. Showing off your uniqueness may just attract the exact individual you've been looking for.
 4. **Be SAFE. Avoid giving out too much personal information until you've met in person and they've earned your trust.**

Taking Initiative

Your mom probably told you to avoid talking to strangers, but you might have to ignore mom's advice this time. Think about how many people you encounter each day. You see them at the gym, store, and library. The world is a relatively crowded place.

The easiest way to start a conversation is to say, "Hi." You can then start talking about the weather or make a comment about the setting you're in. It doesn't matter what you say, just that you start talking.

You'll quickly find that you get one of two general RESPONSES:

1. **The other PERSON ISN'T INTERESTED in talking.** This is obvious from the one-word answers and lack of effort to engage in the conversation.
2. **The other PERSON will SMILE and partake in the CONVERSATION.** It's easy to chat with someone that wants to interact with you.

If you hit it off with someone you meet around town, consider exchanging email addresses. With practice, your success rate will be around 20%. Can you talk to five attractive and interesting people each week? Of course you can.

“Time is too slow for those who wait, too swift for those who fear, too long for those who grieve, too short for those who rejoice, but for those who love, time is eternity.”

- Henry Van Dyke

Going on Dates

So you've found one or two perfect candidates, and you've emailed, chatted on Skype, or talked on the phone. Now it's time to meet in person.

Dating can be stressful, but it doesn't have to be. The key is to have reasonable expectations. Your goal isn't to impress the other person, but to determine if that individual is a good match. If you approach dating with that mindset, it becomes much easier to deal with.

An ideal FIRST date HAS SEVERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

1. **IT'S SOMETHING you both want to do.** Being accommodating is nice, but if you hate football then attending a football game isn't likely to turn out well. Dragging your date to the opera if he has zero interest isn't any better. Hopefully, you both have an idea of what the other person likes. Find some common ground.
2. **IT'S public. You want to avoid choosing a secluded place for your first meeting.** You also want to avoid going over to their house or inviting them to yours. Be safe.

3. **IT'S SMALL.** A fancy, expensive dinner might be a great third date, but it's less than fitting for a first date. You aren't even sure if you're well-matched or will enjoy each other's company yet. It's potentially a waste of time and money. Plus it's even more stressful!
 - ❖ Big dates can also bring a sense of obligation which neither of you probably want at this point.
 - ❖ Grabbing coffee, a beer, an ice cream cone, or even taking a stroll through the museum can all be good first dates.
4. **It gives you the ability to talk.** *The whole point of going on this date is to get to know each other better and to see if you're compatible.* Sitting through a movie or a concert together doesn't allow for much talking.
5. **It allows you to bail out gracefully if things aren't going well.** If you only meet for a glass of wine, it's perfectly acceptable to leave after the wine if you're uninterested. But it's also easy to extend the date if things are turning out well. On the other hand, if you take a dinner cruise and things are going poorly, there's nowhere to run or hide.

Hopefully, you've settled on the perfect date night and you're both looking forward to it.

CONSIDER THESE dating TIPS:

1. **Take the time to groom YOURSELF appropriately.** Maybe even splurge on a stylish haircut, manicure, and pedicure.
2. **DRESS for SUCCESS.** Leave the athletic shoes at home unless you're meeting for a tennis match or going jogging. Clean, appropriate, stylish clothing is preferred.
3. **Avoid being late.** Be on time and expect the same from your date. Being late is rude. It shows a lack of respect for the other person's time. Aim to be 15 minutes early. You can sit in your car for a few minutes, if necessary.
4. **Smile.** If you're nervous, smiling will help make you feel better.
5. **Steer clear of complaining and negativity.** Now isn't the time to list the challenges in your life or to complain about the waitress. ***Others are more attracted to those that are positive.***
6. **Be YOURSELF.** It can be tempting to act in a way that you believe the other person will find appealing. But you probably aren't sure what they'll be attracted to. And if you're fake, they might end up being into someone who doesn't even exist.
7. **Laugh.** A night full of laughs will probably result in a successful date.

Now that you've been on a date, you probably have a pretty good idea if you'd like to see that person again. If you're uncertain, it doesn't hurt to give it another chance.

Some people are great at surviving the first date, but struggle with making it through the next four dates. There are several blunders that many of us make, which give the impression that we'd be an undesirable partner.

Avoid these slip-ups:

1. **Getting carried away too soon.** Men and women are both guilty of this. Imagine you go on a first date and it goes well. You're interested in giving the other person another chance. But then suppose that they start calling you three times a day and telling you how much they miss you. Does that increase or decrease your feelings of attraction?

- ❖ ***You want to avoid scaring away a potential mate by being too aggressive.***
- ❖ Attempt to rank their level of interest for you on a scale of 1-100. Then compare this to your interest in them. You want to have a similar amount of interest.
- ❖ In a blossoming relationship, one person is bound to be more interested than the other. It's unlikely to be exactly even. Just keep it low key until the other person feels comparably.

2. **Being too available.** Everyone likes a little bit of a challenge. Take your time responding to emails and text messages. Be busy with other things. If you're not busy, find something to keep you busy.
3. **Dragging your feet.** At the same time, if you're still insisting on just shaking hands after the fifth date, the other person will likely lose interest. Let the relationship progress naturally. Life is short, so avoid wasting too much time. Try to gradually spend more time together and become closer.
4. **Boredom.** You can be extremely attractive to others simply by being fun and adventurous. Be willing to try new things and have a good time on your dates. Show some enthusiasm for your life.
5. **Being cryptic.** If you like the other person, be certain to show them how you feel. ***When people are unable to figure out what's going on in a relationship, they tend to lose interest.*** It's a balancing act. It's important to give enough encouragement to keep things moving forward, but avoid giving so much that you turn them off.

From time to time, reassess how things are going in the relationship. Many challenges can be easily solved with open communication. If something is bothering you, talk about it.

At the same time, when it's obvious that the other person isn't your perfect partner, it's time to end it. Letting go of that person frees up your time to look for someone more compatible and it allows the other person to do the same.

“Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone - we find it with another.”

- Thomas Merton

Conclusion

Having the perfect partner will enrich your life. However, it can be challenging and time consuming to find that special someone.

Keep THESE BASIC STEPS in mind:

1. Be clear about what you're looking for.
2. Spend some time with those that appear to meet your qualifications.
3. Move on when it's obvious the other person isn't a suitable match.
4. Keep trying until you find the perfect mate who shares your romantic feelings.

It's a simple process, but that doesn't mean it's easy to get there.

Give yourself the gift of finding the perfect person and bringing them into your life. It's one of the most valuable gifts you'll ever receive.

Follow this strategy and adapt it as you see fit. But just start doing something. Avoid getting too bogged down in planning and waiting for the perfect day to get started.

Unless you have some things to work on, the best time to get started was yesterday. But if you haven't started yet, then how about starting today?

Your love match is out there! You just have to find them.

“If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one day so I never have to live without you.”

- A. A. Milne