



How To Avoid Stupid Relationship Mistakes

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Introduction

Thank goodness you're reading this book. I certainly hope you actually bought it, but what the heck, at least you're reading it. That's a start.

Now I don't want you to take this personally, but...well, you know what? Actually I DO want you to take this personally. Very personally. I want you to know I wrote this just for you.

Because I'm the one who has to listen to all your endless hashing and rehashing of romantic problems. Not that I don't find it entertaining...because I do - but I just think you're making things waaaaaaay too difficult and complicated, or spending waaaaaaay too much time in the wrong relationship.

The way I look at it is relationships take effort, but they shouldn't be hard work. And all too often I hear you going through an awful lot of hard work for not very much in return.

So I put together this compilation of things I think you should know about relationships. What makes me an expert? Well, I've been around the block a few times, and I've heard from hundreds of people all around the globe, who amazingly suffer from the same problems you do, and quite possibly need a slap upside the head to knock some sense into them too.

I want you to have a better life. I want you to fulfill your potential. ~~A~~and be healthier and happier in your relationships. ~~A~~and have perfect hair and a twinkle in your eye and a little spring in your step and all that crap. Honestly, I do.

Now read this book, would you? So I don't have to slap you.

Dating sites are a-waste-of-time.com

When I was young(er) and searching for love, people went out to bars, pubs, dances, gyms, grocery stores and bowling alleys to meet other people. You met someone, you chatted, you sized them up a bit, and decided whether you would be interested in being with that person again – because really the primary reason people want to get into a relationship is to be with someone. There was no guarantee that person would be the right person, but at least if they were shoveling a load of BS in your direction, they did it to your face.

It's different now. Nowadays millions of people prefer to shop for potential mates like they shop for airline tickets – searching through pages and pages of online listings containing thumbnail photos and earnest (though mostly lame) attempts at amusing, intriguing or sincere descriptions. They must broadcast their most personal qualities and intimate desires in a prepackaged resume in the hopes of initiating a tentative email exchange with a like-minded lonely heart until god-knows how long before they finally bite the bullet and meet up.

I just don't get it. I absolutely do not see how this is preferable to meeting someone in the flesh. First of all, most people don't write as well as they think or speak (except for me, of course). Secondly, an email exchange is not a give and take conversation. It's a chess game. It doesn't happen in real time, and it's not the way you're going to relate to that person in a real relationship. Thirdly, being online does not make you any more desirable. Jerks, creeps, psychos, gold-diggers, control freaks and slugs are not magically transformed. They are exactly the same. Except they can lie about themselves much more easily.

I hear the ads. I see the supposed “proof.” I guess some matches have been made online. But that doesn't mean it's a great solution. Matches are made in every odd situation you can think of. People meet during catastrophes. But you don't see companies springing up, offering to drop you into the path of a train wreck with the promise of finding your true love.

Every person I know who has tried an online dating service has had exactly the same sort of experience they would have had if they'd met offline. You meet one or two nice folks, a bunch of losers, perhaps someone to date for a while, and maybe, just maybe you meet your match.

But at least the old-fashioned way, you got to go out and DO something! You got to dress up and try a restaurant or see a movie or visit an art gallery. You got out in the fresh air or under the stars and experienced life in all its three-dimensional fullness. You rolled the

dice, you made an effort, and the other person did too – or maybe they didn't, which is why you never see them again, but AT LEAST you got out and tried.

Online, no one has to try very hard. And maybe that's the appeal. You don't invest much, so you don't feel bad if you don't get much in return. You send a couple emails, big deal. You don't have to interrupt your schedule. You don't have to find a sitter, or get your hair done.

It's all just a bit of harmless diversion. Or a game. Hmm. Sounds to me just like the classic singles bar. We've simply transferred a set of behaviors from a real-life location to a virtual one. One with even less honesty, effort or initiative. I can't see how it's an improvement.

My friends, I am often asked where one should look to find the right person. The only answer I can give is, don't look. Be. Learn how to be yourself. Find out how to be happy. Go out and do the things you enjoy doing. Learn something new. Try a new activity. You will find people who enjoy doing the same things. And they'll see you. After all, there is nothing more attractive than seeing someone do something they're passionate about. But you can't see that online.

The difference between love and sex.

Here's a brain teaser for you: What's the difference between making love and having sex? Study the following examples.

When making love, you call out your partner's name. When having sex, you try to remember it.

When making love, you talk about it afterwards with your partner. When having sex, you talk about it with your best friend. Sometimes during, if it's that sort of evening.

When making love, you first have a soapy shower, then make love, then go to sleep. When having sex, you have sex, then take a shower, then leave.

When making love, you wear flannel pajamas and socks. When having sex, you wear lace and stilettos (well, the women, primarily).

When making love, the evening probably started in the living room. When having sex, it probably started in the bar.

When making love, it's unusual to be doing it in a car. When having sex, it's unusual to be doing it in a bed.

When having sex, you worry your spouse will find out. When making love, you worry the kids will.

I provide these examples because an acquaintance once took issue with my use of the term "lover" when talking about infidelity in particular. His point was a "lover" is someone you genuinely love, not just lust after. And "making love" is what you do together as an expression of your emotion in a committed relationship. Actually, I agree.

We tend to use the phrase "making love" as a euphemism because we don't like to say "sex" in polite company. But we certainly have plenty of euphemisms for sex: "doing the nasty," "the beast with two backs," "hiding the salami," or "having a shag" spring handily to mind.

However, we really should reserve "making love" for the real thing. We need to remind ourselves that sex is just an "act" – two people acting like they really care about each other, but in reality, they really only care about themselves; and their own pleasure.

The problem is, oftentimes one person is working hard at making love, while the other is simply having sex. It's tough, because good sex can be an outcome of good love, but good love generally doesn't spring from good sex. And what makes it even more complicated is our bodies don't know the difference.

I sometimes think we have two brains: upper and lower. The upper brain is responsible for judgment, responsibility and reason. The lower brain is responsible (or should I say irresponsible) for sex. It's the lower brain that gets people into trouble; and makes risky behavior seem like a really good idea. The lower brain convinces the upper brain that it really might be love, and the upper brain falls for it. Then when it isn't love, the upper brain gets really cheesed off. But does it blame the lower brain? No! It blames the other person. How stupid is that? If the brains really wanted to know the truth, they'd only need to ask the heart. We always have the right answer in our hearts. We just may not want to hear it.

So perhaps these examples will provide some clarity, and help you understand if it's love or sex. I'll leave you with one more, which is perhaps the most important. When having sex, you're secretly making comparisons. When making love, there is no comparison.