



UpDate

MATCHMAKING OVER 40



WELCOME

Thank you for letting UpDate Matchmaking be a part of your love journey!

- ✦ As you know, we are a bespoke matchmaking firm working primarily with men, but it is our incredible membership of women whom we connect our men with.

Hopefully by this point, you've done the work to shift your dating patterns, you've made your lists of what traits & values you'd like your next love match to have and you've taken a brave step forward in opening yourself up to meeting someone by joining UpDate Matchmaking's membership for women.

We love love and we want this experience to open up love possibilities that may not have been considered before.

UpDate has created this workbook for you to navigate love after 40 with clarity and confidence. You can work through the pages all in one night or take as much time as you want. Similar to love, this workbook has no rules. You will get as much out of it as you put in.





Be as honest with yourself as you are comfortable being.

NO ONE IS GOING TO READ WHAT YOU'VE
WRITTEN EXCEPT FOR YOU (AND US IF
YOU WANT US TO!).

Many people balk at having to write their responses and ask; "Can't I just think through my answers? Why do I have to write?" We've found (and the research confirms) that writing allows you to access a deeper awareness of yourself and your desires. So, ladies, get your paper and pens. Let's do this.

Getting started is the hardest part. Do your best to push through the first 200 words. Once you enter the flow state (after roughly 200 uninterrupted words) the ah-ha moments begin. And once the ah-ha moments begin, that's when the magic happens.

What we know for sure is that love doesn't make sense. Sometimes the least likely people to connect end up falling in love and the most likely to connect can't stand being around each other.



We also know that once someone has been hurt by love, they are less likely to make themselves open to the possibility of being hurt again which makes it extra challenging to find *your person*.

This workbook has been designed to help you push through conscious and unconscious love blocks, to help you create a state of being that allows love into your life and to gain clarity and confidence in your ability to love and be loved by someone new.

Let's get started!

xo





Finding your person is hard.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO SUGAR COAT THIS, FINDING YOUR PERSON THE SECOND (OR THIRD) TIME AROUND ISN'T EASY.

In fact, it's downright hard. First love is full of naïve hope, young energy and a genuine belief that love can conquer all challenges. You enter your first marriage believing you are going to be with this person forever, that your relationship is different than those you have seen fail – your relationship is invincible.

And then life happens. Personalities shape shift, children enter the mix, careers take off and/or crash and burn. The market tanks and your finances go with it, sleep has become a commodity you'd trade anything for. Household chores are endless, social media depicts happy couples trying new restaurants or cooking meals together at home, and the monotony of day to day living has you looking for signs of life *out there* that might wake you up from the bland numbed out existence you're living in.



You're desperate to feel connection, with yourself and with others. You crave what you had imagined married life would look like.

And somewhere in the mix you realize you don't like who you are in the relationship or where you foresee the relationship going.

OR.

You are blindsided because your spouse decides they don't like who they are in the relationship or where they foresee the relationship going.

In what feels like the blink of an eye; the love of your life, the love you thought would last forever - the love you imagined would and could conquer everything life had to throw at it – abruptly ends.



You do the *work*. You see counsellors and therapists, peel back the layers of your emotional onion in an effort to understand what went wrong. You take some personal responsibility for your role in the relationships demise, you assign some blame to your ex, and then declare you are never making a love mistake like that again. You focus on your career, on raising your children, and let the idea finding love again be an aspiration for another place and time.

A year or two or maybe ten pass and your friends, and maybe your children, help you to see that it's time to put yourself 'out there', so you bravely declare yourself ready to date again. You make your lists of red and green flags, lists of physical traits and lists of which holiday destinations you'll travel to together.



You've heard rumblings that dating after divorce is horrific and that online dating is a dumpster fire, but you are confident you'll meet a quality person because you've *done the work*. You tell yourself you are going to meet someone at the grocery store or at the movies but nothing happens. The dating apps are overwhelming and full of men you wouldn't want to date, men who wouldn't want to date you, or men who have no idea what they want. You hire a matchmaker in hopes that their vetting process will procure your ideal person, only to be disappointed because they aren't solving the problem you hired them for. (HINT: A matchmaker can only solve your problem of finding love if you GENUINELY want to find love – real love, not Hollywood love. Real love takes vulnerability, openness, flexibility, compromise, communication and a willingness to accept your good and bad traits as well as accepting someone else's. No one is going to check all the boxes.)

You feel like your first love failed even though you bent over backwards and became a different version of yourself in an attempt to save it. You aren't prepared to compromise or settle this time. Each first date you go on adds personality traits to your red flag list and soon your red flag list is 3 pages longer than your green flag list. You start telling your friends and family that you are happy on your own – you have a fabulous career, great kids and an active social life – you don't need a relationship. If the perfect person comes along, you're open to it, but you don't NEED them.

You don't need a relationship. And voila, you don't have a relationship.





5 Reasons you aren't finding your person

#1 YOU'RE MAKING THE WRONG LISTS

Forget red, green and yellow flag lists. People aren't traffic lights. You can't give them a ticket for running a yellow, but if you're making lists based on flag colors then running a yellow quickly becomes red flag when you start overthinking whether or not you should consider dating someone.

Humans are flawed and expecting them to be anything other than that will only lead to disappointment. Your brain is always looking for confirmation that its thoughts are correct so if you're looking for someone's yellow and red flags so you can save yourself from future disappointment, you WILL find them.

Instead of looking for someone's flaws to avoid future disappointment, let's shift to appreciating someone for their shared values.



Which leads us to the only list you really need, *The Relationship Values* list. Below is a values exercise to help you create your relationship values list – it's important, don't skip over it!

All great relationships experience disappointment. 100% of them. To expect anything less, you're fooling yourself. It's up to you whether the disappointment is worth mending and repairing or ending the relationship over. How do you decide? It is each person's individual values that they have in common with each other that allows them to decide whether the disappointment is worth communicating about and mending/repairing OR ending the relationship.

That was a mouthful, let's break it down





When your values align with the values of the person you are in a relationship with, navigating the tough times becomes worthy of your time and energy.

You know that at the end of the day you both want the same thing – you just hit a few stumbling blocks along the way. When your values don't align, managing tough times becomes a *why bother, nothing ever changes, this isn't worth it* scenario allowing disappointment to fester into resentment which rarely ends well for the success of any relationship.

What is a value? The [Science of People](#) has a list of 216 values but below are a few for you to look at to get a simple understanding of what a value is.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---|
| 1. Honesty | 21. Caring | 41. Sincerity | ◆ |
| 2. Integrity | 22. Faith | 42. Accuracy | ◆ |
| 3. Wisdom | 23. Beauty | 43. Goodness | ◆ |
| 4. Autonomy | 24. Spirituality | 44. Hope | ◆ |
| 5. Loyalty | 25. Wealth | 45. Honor | |
| 6. Abundance | 26. Equanimity | 46. Humility | |
| 7. Kindness | 27. Acceptance | 47. Insightfulness | |
| 8. Charity | 28. Humor | 48. Influence | |
| 9. Respect | 29. Intuition | 49. Decisiveness | |
| 10. Courage | 30. Prosperity | 50. Knowledge | |
| 11. Generosity | 31. Change | 51. Lawfulness | |
| 12. Gratitude | 32. Gracefulness | 52. Calmness | |
| 13. Openness | 33. Peacefulness | 53. Bliss | |
| 14. Accountability | 34. Harmony | 54. Clarity | |
| 15. Compassion | 35. Balance | 55. Cleanliness | |
| 16. Success | 36. Joy/Fun | 56. Boldness | |
| 17. Self-love | 37. Independence | 57. Optimism | |
| 18. Spirituality | 38. Efficiency | 58. Bravery | |
| 19. Justice | 39. Promise-keeping | 59. Friendliness | |
| 20. Forgiveness | 40. Fairness | 60. Selflessness | |



We recommend taking a look at the full [Science of People](#) value list and completing their exercise on figuring out your own values. BUT in the spirit of saving you time, we've included a snippet of their Values Exercise here

How to Discover your True Values

Contemplation: Go somewhere quiet such as a meditative space or a natural area where you can reflect in silence. Turn off your phone and bring a notebook so you can focus. Begin by jotting down random things that come to mind when you ask yourself, "What do I value most in life?"

Openness: On the next page, journal or reflect for a moment on the topic of authenticity. Ask yourself, "When do I feel most like myself?" Is it when you're with certain people or doing certain things? You should also reflect on when you feel unaligned with yourself. What feelings are triggered in certain situations that make you betray or act differently to fit in? Be honest with yourself and dig into the underlying motivations behind that self-betrayal. Embracing your authentic self is a strong representation of your core values.



Once you complete the exercise, grab a highlighter and circle the top 5 core values that feel most aligned with who you are. Reflect on what these values mean to you. Make a wallet card, phone wallpaper, or other reminder that you can regularly see to guide you in tough decisions.

Respect: Think about who you admire and respect most in this world. Perhaps it's a parent, an author, or a celebrity public figure. Write down the names of 3 people you highly respect. Then, jot down words next to their names that describe why you look up to them. For example, if you highly respect Denzel Washington, it may be because he gives back to his community and stays humble despite his fame. These are key clues that you value generosity and humility.

Excitement: Think about what most inspires you to take action. Are you motivated by the excitement of earning enough money to help your parents buy a house to retire in? Or do you feel more inspired by the idea of having your work affect the lives of as many people as possible? Expressing your inner drive can help you tap into what pushes you forward. Is it money, fame, security, impact, charity, or above?



Did you just skip over this? Go back and DO the values exercise. You may hate it in the moment but trust us, it will save you a ton of dating frustration moving forward. If you completed the Value Exercise then you officially have the last dating list you'll ever need.

What are your top ten personal values?

Of those top 10 personal values, what top 5 values do you want your future love match to have?

Throw away your red, green and yellow flag lists – if your values align with another person's values then you can trust that you have enough in common to help you work through life's little challenges and hurricane sized ones.



#2 YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT A RELATIONSHIP ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE IS OUT OF WHACK.

Love is not a Hollywood movie, it's not what you read in books or what you see on social media.

Lust is fun. Love is work.

Love is choosing to compromise when you really don't want to, knowing that the compromise is being reciprocated. Love is allowing each person to grow and change and experience life with a cheerleader by their side. Love is releasing control of how love should look and letting it be what it is. Love is choosing to work through miscommunications and disappointments. Love is being vulnerable and risking getting hurt. Love is realistic. Love is being on the same team. Love is acceptance, flaws and all.

When we break down what love actually is, do you still want love in your life? Or is it lust that you're after? Again. Be honest with yourself.





#3 EXCUSES ARE JUST THE MASKS YOU PUT ON TO PROTECT YOUR HEART FROM POSSIBLE HEARTBREAK.



And if you're making excuses about why you can't find love, it might be worthwhile to explore how your excuses are keeping you safe.

“But I’ve been on dates and there is never a spark!”

How were you expecting the spark to show up? Long, silent, gazing into each other's eyes? And instant gut reaction? A heart flutter? Electric currents running between you two? NTD: Should we talk about allowing a spark to develop? Refer back to Values being the ultimate spark if what we are looking for is LOVE not LUST?

OR do you have a picture in your head of what your future love mate looks like and they didn't compare to the image? OR did you sense they weren't attracted to you so you pulled the plug first to avoid possible embarrassment.

What if you allowed a spark to develop? Chemistry can be both electric and something that grows over time. As you get to know someone and you learn your values align, chemistry can bloom. Have you taken the time to explore chemistry created from overlapping values?

“But I’m not going to settle again, I did that the first time.”

How did you settle? You fell in love the first time with someone who at the time you thought was awesome. You gave 100% because you wanted to. Did you settle or did you grow and change in different directions? Did you settle or did you love in the best you could with what you were emotionally capable of at the time? Did you settle or did you just give too much of yourself away and need to cast blame on someone other than yourself?

We're not asking you to settle for just anyone. We're asking you to reflect on why you think you settled previously and how you can enter a new relationship without the fear that you will settle a second time around. If you became a shell of yourself in your first relationship, how can you prepare yourself to avoid doing that a second time? What are YOU going to do differently this time?





We did a deep dive into why this is. And by deep dive I mean we researched, read, interviewed, googled and YouTube'd at nauseum to try and figure out why height was so important to women.

Not surprisingly, after peeling back a lot of superficial layers, male height is important to women because it represents physical safety and protection.

Don't shoot the messenger!

Intellectually, we know that this doesn't make sense. But we also know that we can't think our way out of our biology. Feeling safe is a biological need we need to acknowledge and explore (and challenge).

As a single woman, are you able to physically protect yourself (or take action to ensure your physical safety etc? – why would that change if you



were to date a man who wasn't taller than you? It wouldn't.

So, with that excuse myth debunked, it's time to dig a little deeper as to why you only want to date men who are taller than you. What does a shorter man represent to you? How does his height affect his values and what he brings to the relationship? Where did you learn that men should be taller than women in relationships? If you've never dated a man who is shorter than you, how do you know you don't like it?





#4 YOUR PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS ARE OUT OF WHACK.

And we don't mean that because you have 20 extra pounds around your middle you shouldn't be attracted to someone with a 6-pack. Or that a person with a 6-pack wouldn't be attracted to you.

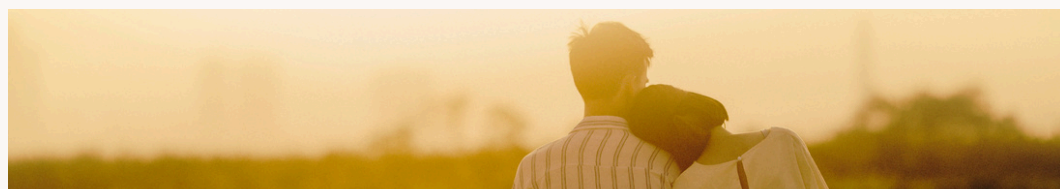
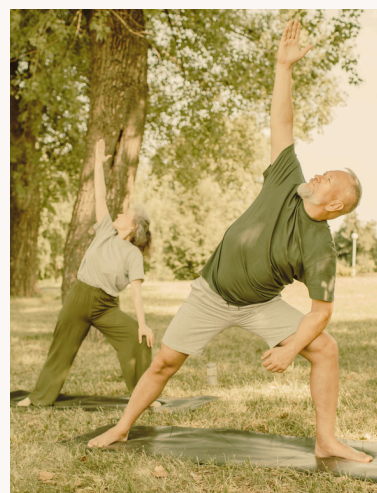
What we're proposing is that maybe you've made the image of your Greek God in your head so spectacular that finding him has become impossible. And because finding him is impossible, you've just created a great excuse for why you can't find love – your Greek god doesn't exist anywhere except in your head.

We often hear; "I'm not my type's type." And if your belief is that you're not your type's type, you're definitely never going to meet and connect with them. And if you're not your type's type, you'll be able to use that excuse to stay safe and single forever.

Who is your type? Where does he like to go out to eat? How does he dress? What are his values? When does he wake up in the morning? What is his daily routine? Who are his friends? Where does he hang out in his spare time? How often does he see his family?

If you want to attract your type, you need to become your type.

If you don't want to become your type, you need shift your expectations on who your type is.





#5 NEEDS AND WANTS DISCONNECT



We can't tell you how many times we've heard the phrase, "I'm totally good on my own, I don't need a man. It would just be a nice bonus to have one in my life." And as soon as we hear that phrase out of a woman's mouth, we know it's going to be extra challenging helping her find her person.

If you want to be in a relationship, then you have to want a relationship.

Every social media platform tells us we're good on our own, we don't need a man and it's better to be alone than lonely with someone. All true statements.

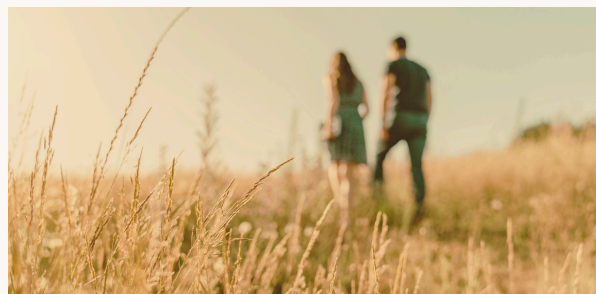
What social media isn't sharing with us is that humans are wired for connection. We live longer when we have healthy relationships (Google the Blue Zones) and we reduce stress with human touch (Google the importance of hugs and skin to skin contact for reference).



Somewhere along the way the concept of stating you wanted to be in a relationship made you feel like you were being weak and/or needy. You felt wanting to be in a relationship took away from your strong independent woman persona and reduced your self-worth.

You don't NEED a relationship, you ARE totally good on your own.

But if you actually want a relationship, you need to stop fearing what it means to want a relationship and start embracing it. Share with your friends and family that you want a relationship. Tell the universe you want a love mate, and what his values will be. Feel what it feels like to want a man to share your life with. You have to want to experience male touch and connection. You have to want to open your heart to love.





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MATCHMAKING OVER 40

Love Clarity in 3 Months

- ✦ It's time to get clear about your expectations, desires, conscious and unconscious beliefs, stories you tell yourself and what you really want from your next relationship. Grab a pen and paper and let's get to work.

For the next 13 Sundays you're going to pick a question from the below list and write 800 words on the topic. For this to have the desired outcome, you have to write your answers – you can't just think them. The first 200 words are going to feel like torture, just remember it's going to take at least 200 words to enter your flow state and after that you're brain and ego stop fighting each other and your words and clarity will *tumble* onto the paper.

You aren't looking for perfection from your writing, spelling and grammar aren't going to be graded by anyone, you just need to get your thoughts, ideas, feelings and curiosities down on paper.





Andrea's easiest time to enter the flow state is in the early morning hours. Sue enters her flow state later in the day. There is no right or wrong time to start your writing each Sunday, the only thing that matters is that you actually put in the effort to start and are consistent for the next 13 weeks.

If you genuinely want to find love, a love different than you've had before, one rooted in aligned values and goals for the future then you owe it to yourself to complete this exercise.

Give it a go and see where your love life is at 3-months from now!



Tools needed: Pen (or pencil) and paper.

Time needed: 30 minutes every Sunday for 13 weeks

IMAGINE YOU'VE MET *YOUR PERSON*, YOU'VE BEEN TOGETHER 4 YEARS AND ARE MADLY IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER....

- ◆ It's 2029, what do your living arrangements look like? Are you living with your love mate? Do you live separately? What area of Calgary do you live in? Who does the cooking? Laundry? Yardwork? Take a moment and imagine what day-to-day living looks like with your love mate and then pretend you are writing a friend a letter telling her about your man and what day to day life is like with him. Write 400 words in the present tense.





IMAGINE YOU'VE MET *YOUR PERSON*, YOU'VE BEEN TOGETHER 4 YEARS AND ARE MADLY IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER....

- ★ Imagine you are emailing a long-lost friend to tell them about the fabulous man you met 4 years ago. Describe where you met him, who introduced you, what your first impressions of him were and why he stood out from any other date you'd been on. Did he make you laugh? Did you meet him by accident? Was he your nurse in the ER where you went after tripping and breaking your toe? Be specific. We want you to get specific for a reason, the more detail you are able to provide on how you met your love mate, the more likely you are to also experience the feelings you want to feel when you *meet* that person. And say what you will about quantum physics and manifestation, believe or don't believe, but experiencing the feelings attached to the outcome you want will expedite its possibility. Feel them!!!
- ★ You and your love mate get along beautifully 75% of the time but during the other 25% of the time you knock heads and each stubbornly stick your heels in the ground. Pretend you are writing a letter to your friend telling them about your most recent stubborn disagreement. What was the topic you disagreed on? Why was it important to *win* on that specific topic? How long did it take you to resolve it? How did it get resolved? We realize this one is tricky, it's hard to resolve an unnamed problem. What we're wanting you to explore is how you historically resolved and repaired conflict and disagreements in your relationships and what you are going to do differently (and more successfully) in the future.
- ★ Looking back at the lists you made describing all your traits you wanted in your future love mate, what 5 values do you wish you'd focused on sooner? Many people make their lists and forget to put values on it, nevermind 5 of them. But studies show that if we focus on values when we're looking for love, we're more likely to meet a like-minded love mate. Does he call his mom regularly? Maybe he isn't a mamma's boy, but perhaps he values family. Does he shovel the neighbors walk when it snows? He could value community and kind gestures. Write a letter, in the present tense, to a friend describing 5 of your loveloves actions that correspond to his values.



IMAGINE YOU'VE MET *YOUR PERSON*, YOU'VE BEEN TOGETHER 4 YEARS AND ARE MADLY IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER....

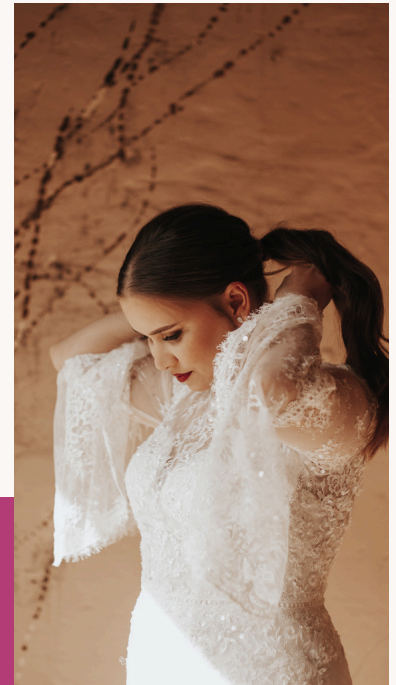
- ✦ Pretend you are writing your best friend a letter retelling the story of your first intimate experience with your lovemate. Were you nervous? Was he? How did you overcome your nerves? Where were you? How soon after you met were you intimate with each other? What made you decide when the right time was? What made the experience memorable?
- ✦ How do you celebrate holidays together? Do you alternate holidays with each other's extended families? Do you mix all the extended families together? Do you travel during holidays? Who hosts? Pretend you are writing your friend a letter describing Christmas 2029, what is it going to look like? Who will be there? What food is served?
- ✦ What does your love look like after 4 years together? Once the newness of learning all there is to learn about each other fades, what does love look like? How does love behave? Have you settled into a routine? Or is spontaneity prevalent? How do you manage the mundaneness of life while still loving each other? What are you doing differently in this relationship to keep the love strong?
- ✦ How do you and your love mate manage finances? Do you keep separate bank accounts or merge everything together? Do you split the cost of everything or divvy up who pays what based on what percentage of income each person brings into the household? Finances are a huge factor in relationships ending. Creating a mental picture of how finances could be handled in your relationship will help those conversations go smoothly when the time comes. Write 400 words on how your finances are managed between you and your lovemate.
- ✦ It's 2029 and you're reflecting back on what your life looked like in 2024 before you met your love mate. Describe how your life has changed in the past 5 years? What activities did you used to do that you don't do anymore? What are you happy that you've let go of from your past life? Do you still see the same people? How has being in a relationship with your love mate benefited your life?





★ **IMAGINE YOU ARE GETTING READY FOR YOUR FIRST DATE....**

What thoughts are going through your head? Have you preplanned what a relationship with this person might look like? Or are you going in cautiously optimistic? We all know expectations are the kiss of death but what about those unconscious expectations we don't even know we have? Describe your first date prep, how you decide what to wear, which questions to ask and whether your focus is on if *he'll like me* or *if I'll like him*? Are you hoping for fireworks? Would you be open to a friendship? Are you limiting yourself to a specific set of beliefs on how a first date should feel and unfold?



★ **KNOWING THAT LOVE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE...**

Think about a friend of yours who is in a loving relationship that doesn't make any sense on paper but totally works in real life. We know love isn't linear and it's not a mathematical equation. People who score 100% on the dating algorithms are sometimes ex-spouses! And those who score low on the dating algorithms end up madly in love with each other for life. Thinking back to that friend whose relationship works despite being opposites, what is it about the relationship that glues it together? How did they meet? What made them overlook their obvious mismatch-ness and pursue a relationship? How do they overcome obstacles? In 400 words, describe your friends love story.



★ **YOUR LOVE STORY...**

You and your love mate have just made a new set of couple friends and over dinner you are each sharing your love story – how you met, how you knew *he* was the one, how you almost broke up because of x, y and z, how you found his annoying habits charming etc. In 400 words tell your love story to a stranger.



★ **ATTRACTION...**

Take a minute and describe the physical attributes of the man you are attracting to be your love mate. Attraction and chemistry are an interesting phenomenon so we recognize that this is can be a tricky topic. Some men like tall, blue eyed brunettes who teach pre-school and some like short, curvy redheads who manage a Fortune 500 company. Some women like a tall, dark and handsome prince charming type dressed in a suit and tie each day with great smelling aftershave and some prefer a casual surfer dude persona with long wavy hair and a chill vibe. Knowing what type of men you are

attracted to allows you to place yourself in situations where you might be meet those kinds of men. But it also allows you to challenge your **why**. Why is that the kind of man you are attracted to? Are you limiting yourself by telling yourself you only like X kind of men? What if you placed yourself in situations where you might be the opposite of **your type**?

Now take a minute to put yourself in your ideal man's shoes, are you who he is describing as his future love mate? Do you have the physical, emotional, mental and financial attributes he is looking for?

If there is a disconnect between the two, how can you narrow the gap?

★ **“WHEN LIFE CHANGES, THE STORY CHANGES.” – LAURA MCGOWEN**

When you first fell in love, you found every reason to believe that the person you were falling in love with was a great person with fabulous relationship offerings. Or, you wanted that person to be your person so you overlooked their faults. Or, your family wanted you to get married so you married the person you were with at the time to please them.





Regardless of how you entered your marriage or long-term relationship, think about the story you told yourself at the time.

“We love each other, nothing can tear us apart.”



“We aren’t like other couples, we’re so in love, we can figure anything out.”

“Having kids will make us an even stronger team.”

“We have so much in common, we can finish each other’s sentences, we’ll always be this connected.”

You told yourself the story you wanted to believe, the story of what your future would look like based on the love you were experiencing in the moment.

Fast forward to today. Knowing what you know now, experiencing what you experienced, what is the story you tell yourself about why you married or entered a long term relationship with that person? Why you stayed as long as you did? Who was at fault for the relationships demise?

Has your relationship story changed from when you met them? Of course it has, life threw curve balls you couldn’t have possibly anticipated or predicted. The person you were in a relationship with changed. You changed. And together you changed in opposite directions.

How your relationship story unfolded may not be the story you wanted for your relationship, but it’s the story that happened. You can mourn what could have been, let go of the relationship story you wished had been yours, accept what happened and where you’re at right now and allow yourself a new relationship story. OR. You can continue to hold on to how life betrayed your relationship story, you can silently (or loudly) resent the relationship deck you were dealt and stay stuck in the misery of your knowing your story changed.

The only stories that never change are fairytales.

Every relationship story changes. Every. Single. One. Whether people have been married 5 years or 60 years, it changes.





No one can predict your relationship story including adultery and the absolute destruction it can leave in its wake.

No one can predict your relationship story getting sucked into the perils of addiction, whether it be alcohol, gambling, sex etc. When addiction is present in a relationship, it adds a third uninvited party to a couple. A third party who lies, cheats, steals, manipulates and left unmanaged, will eventually ruin the very core of any and all trust between the couple.

One day you feel like the best version of you and in what feels like a blink of an eye, you become a shell of yourself.

When we first fall in love we naively believe our relationship story will have a happy beginning, middle and end. With history as our witness, every great love story is strife with highs, lows and dull patches so why we believe our love story is going to live blissfully happily ever after is baffling. (Thank you Cinderella). I challenge you to look back in time (feel free to go back centuries) and find a great love story that includes nothing but calm energy and happiness all day, every day.

We're not saying you need drama in your relationship for it to be a great love story. We're simply planting a seed that almost every relationship story starts out positive, then life happens and the relationship story changes. Recognizing that a relationship story will change over time and plot twists no one saw coming will redirect relationships onto new paths will assist in helping your brain navigate changes within a relationship.

When life changes, the story changes.



When your life changed, how did your relationship story change?

Write the beginning, middle and end to your most poignant relationship love story.

Begin with how your life changed.



Where are all the goats?



We'd like to offer you this little wisdom nugget; dating after 40 is hard but it doesn't have to be as hard as it currently is. There are a lot of frogs out there but there are also a lot of goats.

No, we don't mean the Greatest Of All Time.

Goats, the animal, are strong, adaptable, playful, intelligent and curious – trust us, goats are the princes of your 40+ years. And while many have told us *goats* are the kind of men they are looking for, we suspect that deep down there might be an unconscious longing for a fairytale prince.

It's impossible not to yearn for rom com love, watching those movies sparks all the feels we don't usually feel. For 90 minutes our hearts are cracked open and we feel a sense of possibility and hope that love really can conquer all. And we think that if we experienced that kind of love, we'd feel those feels all the time. But that kind of love, the fake kind on the big screen, was written for the sole purpose of spiking your dopamine levels. And dopamine hits, like any other feel good drug (natural or not) are addictive. Who wouldn't want to feel a sense of possibility and hope all the time?

The movies never show you what the magical rom com romantic relationship looks like once they move in together, or have to visit the other persons family, or one of them experiences the loss of a job or family member.

Genuine connection starts off as curiosity.





The movies will tell you genuine connection starts off as attraction, locking eyes across the room and feeling the energy shift between your souls. And sure, that can happen, we're not saying it doesn't. But we are saying it doesn't have to. We all have that friend who met her person the rom com way. We are proposing that love can also look less flashy and still be pretty freaking fantastic.

Dating when you're 40+ brings lots of history, baggage (packed and unpacked), defensiveness, boundaries a mile high and an unwillingness to compromise the way you were when you were younger. There's a feeling of; "I compromised too much of myself in my marriage and refuse to do that again."

Add in your unconscious want/need to fall in love the rom com way and girlfriend, you've just protected your heart so completely that no one will ever catch a glimpse of its awesomeness.

A prince will sweep you off your feet, make you feel invincible and capable of reaching all of your dreams. A prince will have you thinking that with this fabulous man at my side, you can do anything. A prince will put you on a pedestal and you will feel like his princess. Your body produces dopamine hits after dopamine hits, you become addicted to feeling on top of the world and credit the prince for your feelings.

The world stopped spinning and all is right with humankind, you have found your rom com love, you are one of the lucky ones.

Until the prince needs his ego massaged and doesn't like all the attention you're getting. Maybe the prince becomes a little cutting with his words and blames you for why he isn't successful. Slowly, the prince knocks you down off your pedestal so he can be kind of the castle. You immediately blame yourself and fight to get this adoration and attention back, you'd do anything to have those dopamine hits. But the more you try, the less love you get from him. Repeat. And just like that, whether it's been a month or 15 years, the prince who once made you feel unstoppable has now made you feel like a shell of who you once were.





A goat will remind you are awesome, just the way you are. A goat will be your cheerleader from the sidelines, not needing to shift the attention to himself. A goat will self-reflect after an argument and put energy into repairing what wasn't working.

The challenge with a goat is that they don't often spike your dopamine, they may not be the life of the party charming everyone they meet (although they could be!) and they may not buy you an island a month into the relationship (love bombing anyone?).

A goat will be kind, curious, a tad quirky, maybe presents a little dull, open hearted, flexible and stable.

It's time to get brutally honest with yourself. Do you want a Prince or a Goat? And don't give yourself the socially acceptable answer. Do a little deep digging in your subconscious and explore what you are really craving when it comes to love. It's ok if you want a prince! You just need to manage your expectations when it comes to long term love if a prince is who you're wanting in your life. But if you're looking for a permanent, kind hearted, loyal and loving goat then it's time to shift how you present yourself in the dating world and alter your expectations. Do you want dopamine hits or genuine connection?

How do you find a goat? The easiest way to find a goat is to be a goat.

Be curious.

Be kind.

Be yourself.

Be in the moment.



The Four Agreements.

Written by Don Miguel Ruiz

If you can follow The Four Agreements set out by Don Miguel Ruiz and abide by their intentions, you can make dating after 40 a little bit easier on yourself. Actually, you can also make the relationship with yourself and everyone else a little lovelier too.



1) Use your words impeccably: To be impeccable with your word means that you do not go against yourself. It is the process of learning how to take responsibility for everything in your life without judging or blaming yourself for any perceived missteps. When you follow the first agreement you will shift your limiting beliefs, choose to gossip less and develop a strong sense of self-love.

“You can measure the impeccability of your word by your level of self-love.” – excerpt from The Four Agreements



2) Don't take anything personally: When we break down this rule, it's almost frightening how little in this world of life and dating is actually about us. When someone does something we don't like or we feel like the world has given us a card we didn't want, we often get upset that the outside world has not manifested what we want it to look like.

“Even the opinions you have about yourself are not necessarily true; therefore, you don't need to take whatever you hear in your own mind personally.” – excerpt from The Four Agreements





3) Don't make assumptions: Making assumptions leads to many avoidable misunderstandings. When we assume things about ourselves or others, we end up creating dramatic stories in our heads that may not even be true. The made-up stories can lead to suffering, regret, unnecessary disappointment and lost relationships.

The opposite of making assumptions is unconditional acceptance. Real, genuine connection and love is accepting people as they are without trying to change them.

“” Excerpt from The Four Agreements



4) Always do your best: When you simply show up and do your best, without expectation that you will receive anything in return, you inevitably start enjoying your life and having more fun. It is the expectation of a reward for your efforts that creates the disconnect, disillusionment and disenchantment with dating after 40.

“When you always do your best, you learn to accept yourself. You have to be aware and learn from your mistakes which means you will need to look honestly at your mistakes and their results. This takes practice. But everything you have mastered has been through practice. When in doubt, default to action.” – Excerpt from The Four Agreements



The above four little agreements have the impact, if applied to your life and practiced regularly, to course correct where you may be going sideways in your dating life. Below are some questions to ask yourself for clarity on how utilising The Four Agreements can benefit your dating and experiences.

1) When a date goes sideways, who do you blame? Yourself? The male species? Online dating? Your match-maker? How can you rework your internal dialogue from blame and shame to naming 3 positive things you learned about yourself during that date that you can take away for your next date?

2) Do you gossip with your friends about all the horrible dates you've been on? What if you took a 1-month hiatus from gossiping about your first dates? Journal if you need to process them instead of gossiping about them and see if you notice anything different about your dating experiences.

3) Are failed first dates a waste of your time? Do you feel slighted when someone doesn't ask you any questions? Did you get annoyed if they used the wrong cutlery? Or told an off-side joke? Does it feel like the world is out to get you and you are destined to be single forever? Or maybe you were engaged in a strong texting relationship and then out of nowhere they ghosted you. Do you take it personally? Do you think it was something you said or did that caused the ghosting? Do you reread your text dialogue repeatedly trying to find where things went wrong?



4) Make a list of everything (or 5 things) that you perceive haven't *gone your way*, that you've taken personally and felt hurt and/or betrayed by how you interpreted what their actions meant about you as a human. Once you have your list, ask yourself this question to each of the items on your list; "If x, y and z wasn't about me – what could it be about instead?"



5) We all know the phrase; “Never assume because it makes an ass out of u and me.” But knowing something and living by its merit are two very different things. What assumptions have you made about the people you’ve gone on first dates with? What assumptions do you make up in your head that they’ve created about you? How do you clarify your assumptions? If left unchecked, the assumptions we make about someone will – without failure – be what inevitably ends the relationship. It’s important to remember and be aware that 99% of our assumptions are unconscious. They float through our brain and back out again in a flash without us even consciously processing them.

“They drive a nice car. They must have money. If they have money, they must have the same values around money and saving that I have. We’re going to be a great match.”

“He’s tall. I bet he’s a great hugger. If he’s a great hugger, he’ll be kind and compassionate too. And I bet he’s also a great communicator. We’re going to be a great match.”

“He has so many friends, other people seem to really enjoy him. I bet he knows how to nurture his relationships and if he knows how to nurture other relationships he’ll definitely nurture ours. We’re going to be a great match.”

“He was 10 minutes late for our date. He clearly doesn’t value my time. He must think he’s better than everyone else and that his time is more important than mine. He’ll be a terrible match.”

“He didn’t hold the door open for me. And if he didn’t hold the door open for me I bet he doesn’t have any other social etiquette either. He’ll be a terrible match.”

“He was so nervous. He’s clearly not confident. And if he’s not confident then I bet he gets walked all over at work, grumbles about everyone he meets and is an all-around Eeyore to be around. He’ll be a terrible match.”





6) Make your unconscious assumptions conscious and then challenge them. How do you challenge your unconscious assumptions? At the end of each date, instead of gossiping with your friends, write a list of all the judgements you made about the person and then beside each judgement write down whether or not you clarified any of your judgements to ensure their accuracy.

7) When you go on a date, do you put your best foot forward? Do you shower and put on something other than leggings? Do you take pride in how you present yourself? Do you expect your date to do the same?

8) When you show up for a date and they are nothing like how they described, do you suffer through the hour-long date or do you still bring you're a-game? If you don't still bring you're a-game, why not?

“How you do anything is how you do everything.” T. Harv Eker

When you consistently do your best without expectation that you will receive anything in return, you'll naturally begin to **ass-u-me** less, which will spiral into not taking things personally and the end result will be real deal self-love. And once that's in place? You'll be a magnet for a relationship with someone who emits the same authentic self-love that you do.

