



THE NEW DATING RULES

A third of single men and women would date up to three people at the same time and one in ten claim they've been on three or more dates on the same day. The survey of 2,000 people also suggested women are feeling the pressure to be 'date ready' with 20 percent saying they need to be prepared all of the time.

LIFE LOVE etc

Our monthly look at the world of love, friendship and sex



WHEN CHEATING DOESN'T PAY...

A study in the *Journal of Research in Personality* investigated relationships that start when one of the partners is 'poached' from another relationship. People who started a relationship this way reported feeling less satisfied and committed than those who started dating more traditionally.

Soul SEARCHING

"His little habits annoy me"

Q My partner and I have got to the stage where we bicker a lot. I love him but find many of his little habits frustrating. Help!

A The good thing here is that you recognise that it is not your partner but the littlest habits that you are finding frustrating, so at some level, you know it isn't the habits that are really the issue. At the beginning of a relationship we can overlook a lot. Our brains are being flooded with endorphins and dreams and we only see the positive or even just the potential for the positive. Then the balance swings and we begin to notice all the things we don't like so much. The good news here is that this is the doorway to a new depth of intimacy for those who are prepared to do the work. Start by considering whether you do want



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to deepen your relationship, and then ask your partner for a time to sit and discuss things. When you tell him (or her), make sure that you focus on what you are feeling when they do a specific thing that frustrates you. Share how you interpret it, then listen to what they have to say. This can already reveal completely different perspectives. For example, years ago I told my husband that I was fed up with putting his toothbrush back in the tumbler when he could easily do it himself. It seemed a bit lazy to me and uncaring. I was going to get rid of the tumbler altogether. His response surprised me and changed everything. He interpreted me putting it back in its place as an act of love. He enjoyed it and felt cared





Inner Self | LOVE & SEX

The LOVE CLINIC

HOW CAN WE KEEP DESIRE IN A RELATIONSHIP?

To understand our sexual selves we need to understand the nature of desire. The basis of all desire is the most fundamental impulse; to seek connection. This is not only the desire for sex but also any type of desire.



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All desire is a felt sense of longing for that which is "other" than us. If we already have it, we cannot, by definition, desire it. We may enjoy it but we cannot desire it. Desire arises because of how we imagine we will feel when we meet the object or our desire, whether that is another person, an event or an experience. We might desire a glass of wine or a good meal because of how we experience our tongue or taste buds when we meet this other thing. We might long for contact with another person because of how we feel when we are with them.

It is the space between us and the other, the longing to have contact with them or it. This is the first stage of the process of desire, the experience of ourself through contrast with the other. When we merge with the otherness, as it is possible to do in profound lovemaking, we cease to experience ourselves as unique individuals and we become one with our partner. Our bodies move in rhythm, our breath synchronizes, our hearts seem to beat as one. If we are lucky enough and in tune enough to orgasm together there may be a deep sense of melting into one another. This merging with the other is the second stage of desire.

So firstly we feel ourselves through the contrast with the other and then this separation dissolves and we become one. Eating a delicious meal or drinking the wine we become one with it, making love to the other we merge with them. We long for the otherness in order to feel connection to it. This is the universal cycle – the rotation between separation and unity.

To get desire back in your relationship start with the basics – plenty of hugs and cuddling. Make sure you kiss, as reconnecting with your mouth is a very sensual way to be in contact with someone. If you're already doing those things, use sensuality as the gateway into sexuality – sensual massage that isn't going to lead to sex is a great way to awaken desire. Also, by making something taboo, like saying "no sex for a week", we want it all the more.

DID YOU KNOW?

Submission and domination fantasies are common for both genders, however half of people say they don't want them to materialise in real life.

for by this simple act. Suddenly putting the toothbrush in its pot seemed like an easy way to give a love gift and I felt very appreciated. Underneath most issues is the feeling of being unseen, unloved, scared and vulnerable, or no longer in control. Finding the core of the discontent is going to help sort this out so be as honest as you can with yourself. When we are able to share our vulnerabilities and needs, we find we enter a much deeper phase of intimacy and connection. And that of course can also be scary for some of us. Ultimately what we all want is to be loved and appreciated as we are. Learning to love someone is very much about seeing through the imperfections. No one is perfect, so try to enjoy maturing and evolving together.

"The more couples read about others' exciting lives on social media, the more likely they are to view theirs with disappointment and disdain, research suggests.

