



# DATING AND RELATING

LIFE COACH FLÉCHELLE MORIN OFFERS RELATIONSHIP ADVICE ON RETURNING TO THE DATING SCENE AND RENEWING ROMANCE

**Q.** I've been dating a man for about six months now. At first it was fantastic! We went to interesting places, had fascinating conversations and he lavished me with attention and compliments. But the bloom is off the rose and our relationship has become stale. I know things can't be fireworks every day and that romantic love eventually turns into a deeper love, but I'm afraid this is as good as it will get with this man. How can I "renew" our relationship?



**A.** Every relationship eventually shifts from "Oh! My God" to "Okay, what's next..." Kudos to you for recognizing this change and wanting to know what you can do to improve it. To find the fuel to fire up your relationship again, you need to first understand that all relationships fizzle. According to Dr. Pat Allen, founder of the WANT Institute and author of *Getting To I Do*, dating relationships have four phases: The first three months is the perfect phase where everybody looks good, smells good and acts nice. The second three months is the imperfect phase where people start to relax into showing their true selves, i.e. sparser use of breath mints, burping... and God knows what else! The third three months is the negotiation phase, the period you are now entering. During this phase, couples assess if they have enough commonalities and shared desires to stay together for the long run and negotiate what they are ready to do to make the relationship grow. I suggest you sit down with your boyfriend and tell him you would like to talk about your relationship. Be sure to ask him if



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**Q.** After a rocky 14-year relationship that ended in divorce, I am ready to date again. I've spent the last year focusing on my career, and while I am professionally very successful, I really miss sharing my life with a woman. I want to get married again and have a family, but I'm not sure where to begin. The whole dating scene has really changed since I was single, especially when it comes to internet dating. What's the proper "protocol" for these sites and are they worth the effort? Or does the "old fashioned" way of meeting women still work best?

**A.** Welcome back in the saddle! It can be a bit intimidating to start dating again after years removed from the dating scene, but rest assured, while the game may have changed, the players are still the same! As a successful man in business, you're no doubt accustomed to using whatever resources are at your disposal to accomplish a task; successful dating is no different. Think of dating sites like having a personal "mate finder." You tell them a little about

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it is a good time for him to hear you out. If he says no, ask when it would be a good time and 'make an appointment.' Then follow Dr. Allen's 'stroke and stand' approach:

**Step One:** Thank him for all he has done for you and tell him how much you appreciate him.

**Step Two:** Tell him you miss the excitement and the romance you felt when the two of you were new (name a few things you used to do together and liked) and solicit his help by asking what he thinks you could do to bring back the romance. Then let him talk! It might take him a few moments to gather his thoughts. Let him think and most importantly, DO NOT SPEAK. (Use mental duct tape!) Remember, you are the one who approached him and until you did, he probably had no clue things were troubling you.) When he does respond, listen to him without interrupting, then repeat what he said, i.e. 'I heard you say that...' and wait for his confirmation you heard him correctly. Note: If he says he doesn't know what to do, ask him if he's willing to take some time to think about it and get back to you. Men's brains usually take longer to process thoughts and feelings than women's—they have a smaller corpus callosum that connects their left/thinking side of the brain and their



right/feeling side of the brain—so please do not assume your guy is just stalling—he is actually processing.

**Step Three:** When the two of you have come up with thoughtful ways to reignite your relationship, write each other a letter stating the commitments you are ready to make (and keep) to renew your relationship.

**One final word:** Be prepared for your guy's response. He may very well think your relationship is worth the extra effort, but then again, he may not. This is the risk we take when we ask men for more. There are many relationships that end during the negotiation phase because couples are faced with the reality their relationship must go forward or end. This exercise will allow you to find out if you are the one for him (and he for you), and if all goes well, to enter the fourth and final phase of your dating relationship: commitment.

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you and what you are looking for and they 'recommend' potential partners. Your desire to take care of and provide for a family indicates to me you are a man with a 'masculine energy'—giving, protecting and cherishing. I suggest to all of my masculine energy clients to be very clear about what they want in their dating profile. Since you want to be married and have children, say so! Don't be afraid to ask for what you want. Look for a woman who is strong

and won't let you step all over her. A man needs the strength of a woman to see him through life and a strong woman knows what she wants (and doesn't want) and won't settle for less than what she needs. As for the old fashioned way of dating, it's still going strong: Look for women who signal you with their smile and then walk over and introduce yourself. And if you fall off the horse, make sure to get right back on! Good luck and let us know how you're doing. **UTS**

Fléchelle Morin, Certified Life Coach, Dating to Marriage Consultant & Motivational Speaker, is the author of the book "Kissing Or No Kissing; Whom Will You Save Your Kisses For? A Dating Guide To Creating Your Dreams." Have a question or comment for Flechelle? E-mail her at flechelle@nokissing.com or visit nokissing.com for more information about Fléchelle's book, dating philosophy or scheduling her as a speaker at your next event. Copyrighted 2009 by Fléchelle Morin