

The Top Ten Relationship Mistakes Singles Make

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You deserve a loving relationship, so don't shop in the bargain basement! Stay focused on your relationship shopping list and don't settle for less. While looking for lifelong partner, be alert to the most common relationship mistakes singles make.

The top ten relationship mistakes singles make:

1. *Being uneducated about what is healthy and what is toxic in relationships*

Be familiar relationship red flags and abusive behavior so you can recognize them early. It's much easier to leave a relationship before serious emotional investment has taken place. After you're hooked, it's more difficult to see problems.

2. *Not knowing what one wants in a relationship*

You can choose! You don't have to wait for someone to choose you. Combine the traits of a healthy relationship and what you've learned from previous partners to compose a specific relationship shopping list. Decide what your non-negotiable items are and don't compromise.

3. *Being unclear about what one can offer someone else.*

Be aware of your relationship strengths and approach relationships with confidence, knowing that you have plenty to offer. Avoid approaching relationships with the notion that you have to accept what comes your way.

4. *Having unfinished relationship business with an ex-spouse or other partners*

Say or do what is necessary to bring closure to past relationships so you aren't bringing emotional baggage into current or future relationships. Unfinished business often makes relationships difficult because it sets up unrealistic perceptions and expectations. Seek counseling if you are unable to bring closure on your own.

5. *Allowing new relationships to move too quickly*

Don't let your relationship move from friendship to serious romantic relationship before you have enough information to decide whether it's safe to be more seriously involved. A healthy, intimate relationship moves slowly and steadily. Take the time to develop emotional intimacy by talking about values, priorities and life goals.

6. *Being sexually involved early in the relationship*

If you are wanting a loving, romantic relationship so badly that you mistake sex for love, a painful outcome is inevitable. Confusing sex and love can be a problem at any point in the relationship, but it's more likely to occur with early sexual involvement. Becoming sexually involved to keep from losing someone will result in a superficial relationship

lacking true intimacy. If your partner shows lack of respect for your sexual boundaries, there are serious implications for other aspects of the relationship. A person who doesn't respect personal boundaries is primarily focused on his or her own needs, resulting in a very one-sided relationship.

7. *Not dealing with personal issues interfering with positive self-image and emotional intimacy*

Often we choose partners based on an unconscious attempt to reenact unresolved childhood issues, hoping for a different outcome. Choosing emotionally unavailable partners in order to get closeness one didn't get with an emotionally absent parent is an example of such reenactment. Childhood history and previous relationships can affect self-image and relationship choices. Take the time and effort to deal with these important issues.

8. *Being in another serious relationship too soon after divorce or termination of a long standing relationship*

There is usually residual hurt, anger and other feelings which surface when a long-term relationship ends. These feelings need to be processed and sorted out before a new one begins. This takes time. If a new relationship is getting serious quickly after the recent termination of another one, you may be using it to medicate and avoid emotional pain. These relationships are not healthy because they're based on emotional neediness rather than choice.

9. *Failure to rediscover and redefine one's individual identity separate from partner, family and career after a relationship ends*

Find out who you really are! It's impossible to establish healthy intimacy with someone if your identity is unclear or defined by others. Networking, cultivating friendships, working on your self-esteem, clarifying your strengths and pursuing your interests are ways of discovering who you are.

10. *Selecting partners based on personal need rather than healthy dynamics*

Avoid making relationship choices based on avoidance of pain or loneliness. Healthy choices are made when you feel good about yourself and want to share your life with someone special, not when you believe you need someone else to make you happy or complete.