

MAN ON TOP — BOY MEETS GIRL

Dating Rules and Attitudes

If you are interested in dating a woman and accessing her churning, undulating power, you may need to step it up in several areas. It's simple and it's true.

Thanks to the BBC's Earth series and all those Discovery animal shows, we know that the courtship ritual varies greatly from species to species. For human beings, the mating ritual often involves the male animal's posturing and peacocking to demonstrate his admirable strength, intelligence and/or affluence to the female subject to get her to accept his invitation (the date). We are such amazing, hilarious animals to watch in action. So the question is, what are you doing to maximize your game, become the molten sex pot you truly are, and make the lady of your choice so weak in the knees that she'll decide she wants you?

Some men, on the quest for lady love, develop their emotional sides. Others concentrate more on how they present themselves (fashion and grooming) to garner the elusive female attention, and still others take their health into consideration by understanding that pizza and beer do not a healthy body make. Just so you know, all of these actions can make big impressions on your potential lady friend. Women are lightning fast when it comes to deciphering all the nuances and subtleties of your connection and what you can offer her. It certainly can't hurt to have an inside track, and this is where I come in to help you (because I care about you). I can give you the scoop on what will make her swoon and what will leave her feeling sick as she recounts the story of your douchiness to her friends. Trust me, we do dish.

Dating and Courtship

The dating scene today is quite a bit different from what it once was, and, as such, more tactical strategies need to be employed. The purpose of dating for our parents was clearly a method to filter out the weeds in order to get to the ultimate goal—walking down the aisle to marriage.

In the current post-feminist, more enlightened, supposedly more balanced world, those rules are nonexistent, and sexual politics have been subverted, sublimated and turned on their head for a number of reasons. Many men and women simply do not know how to navigate dating and which conventions to follow. With everything in flux, you may ask yourself, what way is the right way to show your interest? How long do you wait to call? What are the rules on horizontal activities? Who pays for dates? Should I be gentlemanly and open doors or let her do it all herself? My head is spinning just thinking about it.

Clearly, a new approach is required. Here is a little morsel for you: Women do not want to make all the decisions. In fact, many of us love a decisive, take-charge guy who also has a strong empathic and sensitive side. We want you to be firm yet gentle, modern and gentlemanly. Can you dig it? That means when she asks you what you want to do, she does not want to hear, "Whatever you want." She wants you to make a plan without her having to micromanage it. Maybe I am just a romantic, but I like a gentleman who demonstrates he is into me by taking the lead and going out of his way, through his actions and small tokens of affection, to win my heart. Instant points achieved! I also thrive (as do many others) on a little bit of mystery. So, I suggest that we take the best of old-fashioned romance and combine it with a modern day twist to form a new approach to dating that will serve everyone.

MAN ON TOP — MEDIA VS. MANIFICATION

Deciphering the New Millennium Man

What does it mean to you to be a man? How has modern-day masculinity, with all of its “new and improved” requirements, changed the way you operate? And, more importantly, are you living up to your own ideals of masculinity to make yourself proud? Would your dad, grandfather and/or son be proud? These are some pretty big questions, but the purpose of asking them is to get you moving and grooving as the hunk-a-burning love that you are and help you redesign masculinity on your own terms.

Unlike many cultures, in which there is a clear delineation between childhood and manhood, marked by a ritual, ceremony or event, our culture just sort of assumes that men figure out manhood for themselves. For some, this begins at their first sexual experience or the landing of their first real job or the entrance into fatherhood or buying an expensive pair of shoes, while for still others it is extreme antisocial, often dangerous behavior (usually when those teenage hormones kick in) that gains them the approval of their peers and, thus, access into the man club.

The truth is, we form a great deal of our identity based on what we see around us, particularly in the media and from our peers. However, mainstream media have sold men and women a false bill of goods of what it means to be an adult. Regrettably, many media have objectified women as either the Madonna or whore (the two dominant representations of femininity throughout the ages). Media also have done a great disservice to the development of men. The traditional images of manly, rugged, strong men have decreased in favor of other, less supportive portrayals. For the most part, the portrayals of men in today’s films, television, magazines and advertisements are extremely narrow and patronizing. Media often seem to diminish men’s value as contributing members of society, engaged fathers, competent members of the workforce, creative visionaries, or even just good, mindful, honest people.

Men in Media

In the 1950s, traditional male roles were more clearly defined. This is not to say these roles were an ideal to strive for, but back in the day, at least both men and women knew their assigned places in society, and, on the surface, things worked. Men would hunt and fish, go to war, build stuff with their bare hands and generally leave all the family responsibilities to the woman of the house. Thankfully, a lot has changed. Since that repressive time, some of the less pleasant qualities like homophobia, racism and sexism have now become culturally taboo. That is a monumental step forward in the development of humankind. However, what seems to have been lost is a broadly accepted understanding of what constitutes masculinity in the modern era.

Today, portrayals of men in current films, television and commercials can largely be divided into seven primary categories: the Bumbling Dad, the Man-Child, the Metrosexual, the Suave Aloof, the Alpha-Dog, the Nerdlinger, and the Dark and Stormy. Unfortunately, none of these narrow categories helps steer men toward what is needed in today’s culture. A brief look at each of these seven character types might prove illuminating, if not infuriating, to you.

MAN ON TOP — MAN ALIVE

Your Health and Vitality

Relax and pay attention. There it is. That is all the advice you need to get on top of your health. Ah, gorgeous simplicity. Seriously though, this is your key to the most vibrant, life-affirming health. When we relax and de-stress, huge changes can happen in our health, and we all know what damage too much stress can do. When we are relaxed, it is also easier to pay attention to our bodies' needs and signals to understand what we truly need to do for our own good. Unfortunately, many of us have gotten out of practice or, worse yet, have actually forgotten how to discern our bodies' actual needs.

You do, however, know that you cannot expect to sit on the couch—fingers glistening with the remains of greasy fried food, empty ice cream containers scattered at your feet, mindless drivel on the TV—and expect to be healthy and at the top of your game. This may be an exaggeration for some, but for others it is their daily reality. If you are belching, bloating and gripping your stomach with indigestion night after night and you still believe you are going to be able to have a fulfilled and pain-free happily-ever-after, I strongly suggest you give yourself a swift kick in the pants and come back to reality. Deep down inside yourself, you know you cannot go through your life sitting on your tush, watching your waistline expand, and somehow cheat modern science and escape death and disease. Sickness happens. However, we can do a lot to mitigate it through such simple practices as diet, exercise and even meditation.

Unfortunately, there is no magic bullet, no single mystery herb. There are a thousand products out there that make you believe there is an easy solution to health and it can all be remedied for \$29.95 plus shipping and handling. (And if you call right now, they will throw in an extra longevity potion at no extra cost!) You have to know, though, that these miracle products are toying with us and our collective laziness and insecurities.

These products, potions and pills are the equivalent of the soft, white filling inside a Twinkie—tasteless, sugary foam that does nothing but give you temporary satisfaction and ultimately leaves you unsatisfied.

Health and vitality are a result of constant daily practice, and though I wish I could say it any other way, sadly it just ain't so. You need to pay attention to what you eat, how you move and what you think about in order to help lengthen your life, deepen your relationships and have lasting, pulsating health. It is a small amount of work and preparation that yields lifelong results.