



How to Find the Right Partner by Finding Yourself First

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Let me ask you what type of relationship you are in right now or what type of relationship you usually find yourself in. Are you dating? Do you have a boyfriend or girlfriend or a husband or wife? Are single by choice? Do you ask yourself why you keep finding partners who won't commit or if they do commit they don't treat you right or keep have relationships that are less than satisfying?

Do you think the other sex is the problem? Do you think there are no good partners? Do you think "all the good men are taken" or "none of the right women would want me"? Do you think everyone is a liars and a cheater?

Do you think there must be something inherently wrong with you or that you don't deserve to meet someone wonderful? Do you think the right person doesn't exist? Do you think love is nothing but pain and heartache? Do you think no one will ever love you and accept you for who you are?

Any and all of these beliefs are completely false. Why? I will tell you.

THERE ARE NO ACCIDENTS

Every person that is in your life or has come into your life is there or was there for a reason. This may seem like a silly, preposterous statement, but it is fundamentally true. The only question you should be asking yourself is WHY is/was this person here? What is it about ME that brought them into my life? What is it I need to learn and/or change?

Sometimes the lessons we need to learn are small and sometimes they are big. Sometimes we have a lot of things we need to learn about ourselves and sometimes we need to fine tune.

Here is a very personal example of what I'm talking about.

SAM (named changed to protect the not so innocent)

My life was not a bed of roses. I was sexually abused for about seven years, on a regular basis, by two different men when I was a child.

When I was around twenty-three I met a man in law school who we'll call Sam. Sam was charming and sweet and we hit it off right away. He took me on a picnic for one of our first dates. We had one of those "connections" that you can't really explain.

As time went on and we became further enmeshed (that is the only word you can use for the co-dependent, unhealthy relationship that was forming) I discovered that Sam was a sex addict and love addict (yes, they do exist). A sex addict uses sex in the way an alcoholic uses alcohol, they use it to cope. When they feel stressed or anxious they try to diminish their anxiety through sex. Each addict is different so the types and amounts differ.

What this meant with Sam was getting “massages” when he should have been at work or masturbating to excessive amounts. Because he was also a love addict, meaning he needed the emotional connection from other women to fill the hole he had in his heart he would also have “relationships” with other women. These relationships weren’t sexual, but he would become seemingly intoxicated by every woman he met that wasn’t me.

We were monumentally co-dependent. It was actually rather sick and toxic. It was the type of love that survives to feed one on the other with no independence. Everything he did or said affected me. Everything he wanted me to be I tried to be. Naturally, it was never enough.

My insecure nature unwittingly led him to be attracted to me and the control he could wield over me led me to feel more and more insecure. I was in his life for a reason and he was in mine. The question is what we would do with this information. Would either of us change or would we continue the cycle of dysfunction?

Naturally, he told me about all of his emotional and sexual “encounters” and naturally I could do nothing other than feel like I had done something wrong to cause him to make such choices. Any secure, normal functioning woman would have run. Well, actually any secure, normal functioning woman would not have been attracted to him in the first place, but that’s another story.

I asked myself why I wasn’t enough. I wondered what more I could do to make him happy? Nothing I did was enough for him. I didn’t dress right, talk right, drive right, interact with his daughter right. Nothing I did was right. Every day was a slow denigration of what little self-esteem I had.

As the pain grew and grew and I became more and more miserable, but also being unable to leave I had to ask why he was in my life and I had to come up with an answer. At the time I didn’t realize it, but I later figured out that Sam represented my abusers. I was literally and figuratively putting myself in his hands (the hands of an abuser) with the hope and intent that THIS TIME I would be protected and not be abused by a man.

I thought (subconsciously of course) that I could rewrite my past by recreating the situation in the present but this time the man would do what was best for me and this time I would be healed.

Surprise of all surprises he did not protect me and he did not do what was best for me. He did not keep me safe, nor did he care to. However, his abuse was a turning point in my life. I was no longer a child. I realized that I was now an adult and not only could I protect myself, but it was my job to learn to do so.

I saw the pattern and I knew that I had to get out and it was the beginning of my journey towards gaining self-esteem. There are no accidents.

Had I not recognized this pattern/issue I would married him (yes, I had agreed to marry this man!) and been absolutely miserable or we would have broken up and I would have found another man with similar issues and repeated the pattern all over again.

The question wasn't WHY did it happen or WHY did I choose an emotionally abusive man or end up with one. The question was WHAT WAS I GOING TO LEARN FROM THE SITUATION.

Meeting Sam had to happen. There was no way around it. Here was my universal sign and it was giving me a choice. I could remain the same and keep blaming myself or I could change the trajectory of my life. Meeting him was the only way I was going to change myself.

So, people and partners come into your life and it is up to you to determine how to use the information. Remember that you are only a victim if you choose to be one.

There are no chance encounters. I believe there are no wrong choices. I believe we do the best we can with the knowledge we have at the time and place we are in life. I did not have enough self-esteem to make any other choice at the time or to attract a better man.

The only way to the other side is through.

So, if you are unfulfilled or attracting the wrong type of partner most dating coaches will tell you to just "choose better". Yeah, okay, thanks. Don't you think I would have done that already if I could moron?

There is a reason we choose who we choose and until we find a way to love ourselves, respect ourselves, understand our values our boundaries and our expectations of ourselves and others we will KEEP choosing the wrong partner. It will happen again and again and again and you need to stop blaming the other person and start looking inside.

There is a reason your picker is off and it's okay. It is possible to learn to point it in another direction. Nothing is ever hopeless. The direction of your life is up to you. If you want to keep blaming men, then stop reading this and keep dating.

My guess is since you are reading this you do want to find the right partner, find someone who deserves you and be happy and secure in your relationship.

ASK YOURSELF WHY

If you are dating or in a relationship and you continually attract the man-child who can never show up on time, who can't hold down a job, who spends more than he makes and who never thinks of your feelings before himself, ask yourself why.

Or, if you continually attract the needy, insecure, unhappy clingy girl who won't let you go out with the guys and expects you to be the center of her world ask yourself why. Or, perhaps you attract the toxic, angry girl or the one who always puts you down.

Ask yourself: what is it about me that I keep attracting this type of man/woman?

Were you the caretaker in the family? Did you have a parent who was an alcoholic? Were you forced to be the parent at a young age? Were you the forgotten middle child? Were you raised without a father? Did your parents divorce and your mother was bitter? Were you abused sexually, emotionally or physically?

If you are dating or in a relationship and you keep attracting the toxic player, the needs to be saved person or the charming schmoozer ask yourself why. If you keep attracting the selfish ones ask yourself why. If you keep attracting the emotionally unavailable partner ask yourself why.

What messages did you receive as a child? Were you told you were not enough? Were you told you were bad or stupid or did you come to believe this for some reason? Were your grades never good enough? Did you always have to be perfect or did no one really pay any attention?

Ask yourself, what is it about me that I don't feel I deserve better? What is it I need to work on so I can be in a fulfilling, satisfying relationship? Where do these beliefs come from? Who taught them to me? What purpose did they serve?

Unless you can understand WHY you do the things you do and choose the people you choose you cannot change anything and you will keep attracting the same man partner over and over.

Remember, like attracts like so until you can identify and change yourself your relationships will not change. Also remember that the purpose those negative messages served NO LONGER EXISTS. Generally these thoughts and feelings and beliefs keep us living in fear and although unhealthy they protect us in a way when we need them to.

Often we needed our beliefs to exist and to cope when we were younger. But those thoughts and those negative beliefs are no longer serving you. You can choose differently and you can find the right person. But, before you can do this you have to find yourself.

But remember, when you ask yourself all these questions try not to beat yourself up over it. Even if you make what seems like the WRONG choice over and over, it isn't. It's your path and your journey and the only thing you can do at the time so once you can figure it out and move forward you will.

Not all of us are born to meet our perfect mate at 25 get married, have kids and live happily ever after. Everyone has a different karmic journey and the sooner you realize this, the better off you will be. But, always ask yourself why. Then, once you figure out why you can move onto the next step.

MOST IMPORTANTLY-DECIDE

The next step is to DECIDE. Decide you deserve better. This sounds very easy. Dating experts crank out advice about how to attract a man/woman and keep them and they tell you how to act and what to say. Frankly, I call bullshit. UNLESS and until you truly DECIDE AND **ACTUALLY BELIEVE YOU DESERVE BETTER** none of it will work. Period.

Maybe for some people it is easy. Maybe some of us don't really have fundamental insecurities and didn't have a fucked up childhood or life was just peachy keen and their main issue is some minor self-esteem problem. However, for a lot of us it isn't so simple. For a lot of us our insecurities run deep. We were abandoned, abused, mistreated, unloved and/or uncared for. The beliefs we have about ourselves have become ingrained and a part of the fabric of our being. It isn't as simple as saying "just pick better."

Despite this, you can weave a new blanket to wrap yourself in. There is nothing saying you have to keep believing those negative thoughts. There is nothing forcing you to stay insecure and unhappy.

I will give you another example from my life. Recently I met what I thought was a wonderful, perfect man. He was age appropriate, hard-working, ethical, attractive, kind, honest, and the sex was great. There was one tiny little problem. He was completely and utterly incapable of being emotionally open. I still wanted him.

Even if I did not feel good around him and even if he couldn't even have a conversation about getting my needs met and even if he never seem to be invested in me and what I wanted I still wanted him.

I wanted him because he represented my understanding of love, as warped as it was. No matter how much your parents loved you if you never felt nurtured or emotionally cared for you will seek out partners who are distant and emotionally unavailable. The key is to change the wiring that tells you that this is love.

This time, I knew enough to know something was wrong and it wasn't all him. I had attracted him after all. What was going on with me that this had happened again? I had chosen yet another emotionally unavailable guy. This wasn't the first or the second.

Luckily I figured something was off right away. I ended things. He moved away. But, four months later we saw one another again and spent a week together. I still wanted him. He left. Again, I cried. I never heard from him again.

I kept asking myself, "what is going on with me that I still want this man"? I kept thinking, "What is it I believe about myself that makes his behavior in any way acceptable and something I would want in my life or for myself."

At first, I really missed him. I was sad. But, fairly quickly I started to do some soul searching. I started to read books about consciously engineering your own life and about creating your own future. I began to believe I could make my life whatever I wanted it to be.

Suddenly, I believed it. I believed I deserve better. A light switch had gone on. Despite how wonderful he is he could never make me happy. He wasn't capable of it. Intellectually I knew this before, but for some reason making the decision to take control of my own life changed the way I felt inside.

I still love him, but until the time comes when he wants to do some serious emotional work on himself and move forward together in a relationship (which will likely never happen) there is no future for us.

This time, instead of being sad about this I'm excited for what the future will hold. I have decided I deserve EVERYTHING. I deserve love, respect, kindness, attention, commitment AND someone who can deal with their own emotional crap.

Why should I settle for less than I deserve? Why should you? Why do you?

BELIEFS

The reason you settle for less than you deserve is your mistaken belief that you deserve less. You're saying to yourself, "Hey, I know I deserve better". Yes, yes. I get it. I said this to myself ALL THE TIME. I believed it too. The problem was that I believed it intellectually. I did not believe it in my heart. I did not believe that I could really have whatever I wanted or that I could create a life so amazing that a wonderful man would come into it.

We all have beliefs. Some are conscious and some are unconscious. Some beliefs live in the forefront of our minds and some hide, lingering around in the background not really present but always there keeping us stuck.

One of the subconscious beliefs I had, which I really would never admit to myself was that men really only wanted to use me for what they wanted and would then discard me when they were done. It wasn't even a purely sexual belief. My subconscious belief was that my emotional needs were not important and that they never had been and never could be.

What a load of crap. This was a leftover belief and fear that kept me safe when I was little. When I was a child I had to put my own needs aside to protect my little sister from the abuse from one of the men and to "protect" my mom and dad from knowing the truth.

My belief was no longer serving me. My belief was keeping me stuck in the same cycle of unfulfilling relationships. I had to lose my belief. One day, I just decided that it was a bullshit belief and that I was done with it. It will try to creep back in now and again, but I do not allow it anywhere near me.

YOUR THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOU. That belief was not ME. Just because I believed it, it did not make it a truth. It was not a fact. A fact is that I'm 5'4 1/2". I can't be any other height, nor can I fabricate this into something it isn't. Height is a fact. What you believe about yourself is not a fact. I was making my belief a fact when it wasn't.

What was worse is that I was making that belief come true because I thought it (better known as the Law of Attraction). What if I replaced that thought with something like, "I'm the most

amazing, beautiful, wonderful woman and I deserve to find someone who accepts me and loves me for who I am”.

What if you take your negative beliefs and change them into something positive. Change them into something that creates a new life and a new you. It isn't even a new you, it's really the you that you were always meant to be. Even if no one ever told you that you are special it isn't true.

You are special. You are the only you in the world.

Whatever new beliefs you come up with may not come up overnight and you may not be ready to believe them 100%, but they will come and even 5% is better than 0% and a positive is always better than a negative.

Every time you change a negative belief to a positive belief it allows you to create a new framework for your brain, for your life and for the universe. Watch how things change.

Think about all the beliefs you have conscious and subconscious. What did your parents say to you as a child both by actions and by words? Did they tell you that you always have to be perfect? Did they tell you that in order to be loved you had to get good grades, play sports, succeed, do something or be someone? Do you have to go to college or law school? Do you have to become an accountant or marry the perfect man or believe in a certain religion?

Was the fundamental message you received that you are not enough as you are? Do you spend your time always trying to prove yourself in your relationships? Are you always trying to prove you are enough and that you can make the other person happy? What about you? Don't you deserve happiness?

What if today, right now you did something different? What if today, right now you said, "I AM ENOUGH" and "I DESERVE TO BE HAPPY"? What might change? It's kind of scary isn't it? Honestly, it's a little scary to think that you might actually find something good or get what you deserve. The fear of loss can drive us to not want those things.

But, let me ask you this. What choice do you have? Do you really want to spend your life choosing the wrong partner or being less than happy? Do you really want mediocre love that you have to fight for or do you want something special and rewarding? Think long and hard. Although the obvious choice is the second choice in reality many of us do not really want it otherwise we would have it. It sounds simple but it isn't.

Changing beliefs takes time and practice, but it all starts with that one moment and that one little belief that you deserve more. The one moment you DECIDE you want to change you will change. The choice is yours and you have total control over everything that comes into your life.

Most of us have been led to believe that life happens to us, but this is false. This is what negative, pessimistic people want you to believe. This is not what you have to believe. You can believe anything. You can believe that love is something you deserve. You can believe that you are amazing and wonderful. You can believe that you are worth more than crumbs. Not only can you believe it, from now on you are going to believe it.

TOOLS

Set some time aside for yourself. Get a journal. Start writing and asking and answering these questions. Start to understand what your core beliefs are and decide if they are serving you.

Once you have identified your negative beliefs you can start to change them. Whatever we do we cannot change others. We can only change ourselves. As we change everything around us will change. That relationship you had been holding onto may slip away or when he or she starts to see that you are taking care of yourself or they may rise to the occasion and become a better partner. Either way, you win.

Decide what relationships are serving you and which are not. There is nothing written in stone that says you have to be friends with everyone or stay the same or want nothing more than what you have today. If your friends are negative, find new ones. If your family is toxic, put up boundaries and keep some distance.

If your relationship does not make you happy ask yourself why. Is it you or is it them or is it a combination of both? Whatever you want your life and your relationship to be you can make it be. It may not be with the person you are with, but that's okay.

Try not to be scared of losing someone or losing a relationship. I know it's hard. But, until you can come from a place of self-sufficiency where you don't need external validation to be happy and feel love you will never find the right partner and you will be stuck in less than fulfilling relationships.

Relationship struggles can be heart wrenching. They can also give you amazing insight into yourself and your core beliefs. They act as a mirror. The person opposite you is usually a

reflection of what is missing in yourself or what you are seeking or what you need but fail to get.

The reason you aren't getting your needs met in a relationship is due to the fact that you haven't learned how to meet them for yourself. To find love and to find the right man you have to find yourself.

ASK YOURSELF

Sit down and list each relationship you've had. If you haven't had any serious relationships list the type of men you usually date.

Do these men have common traits? If yes, what are they? (For example if I were to list my boyfriends they would all be 1. Selfish; 2. Unable to communicate)

For every relationship that you've had what issue do you think you needed to work on that brought that person to your life? (For me, I attracted these men because 1. I needed to learn to love myself first and 2. I needed to learn to communicate my needs)

How do your relationships end? Is there a pattern? Do you end things? Do you stay too long? Do they break up with you? Do you run when you get scared?

When you look back at your past relationships or look at the one you are in now do you believe you were generally happy? Were your needs met on a consistent basis? If not, what needs were not met? Was it generally the same one(s)?

BELIEFS

Name some core negative beliefs you have about yourself when you look deep inside.

For example:

Do you believe no one will love you for who you really are? _____

Do you believe you are not worthy of love? _____

Do you believe you are a failure? _____

Do you believe men only want you for sex? _____

If you think about it, how have these beliefs affected your choices in a partner, in dating and relationships?

For each negative belief you listed, what is the opposite/positive belief you can have instead?

What can you tell yourself every day that will make you feel good about yourself? What is unique about you? Are you super kind? Funny? Warm? Intuitive? Empathetic? Smart?

IN THE END

These tools can be applied to all aspects of your life including money, career, friends and happiness. If you aren't happy in all of these aspects ask yourself why. Ask yourself what limiting beliefs you have about the issue and how you can replace those with other more positive beliefs.

Hopefully some of my advice will help you become more secure with yourself. The power of change is within you. No one else holds the key to your happiness. I'm not saying it will be easy, but I'm saying it will be worth it.

If you have any success stories after doing the work I'd love to hear from you. Feel free to email me at carrie@acinglife.com.

I wish you the best of luck on your journey. Remember that life is a journey. Try to appreciate the moment and be grateful for how far you have come and not beat yourself up because you didn't get here faster. Regret serves no purpose. Worry serves no purpose. Fear serves no purpose. Limiting beliefs serve no purpose.

This is your life and you can live it any way you want. You can find the right man, but you have to find yourself first.

Carrie L. Burns
