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Category: Abusive Relationships

Subcategory: Abusive Relationships

Tip: Teen Abusive Relationship

Teen abusive relationships include physical, sexual and verbal abuse. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2000) found that one in 11 high school students said they had been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend in the past year. Similarly, one in 11 students reported that they had been forced to have sexual intercourse. According to 2000 statistics from the Bureau of Justice, far greater numbers of teens (as high as 96 percent) report emotional and psychological abuse in their dating relationships. You may be in an abusive relationship if your boy/girl friend:

- Acts possessive or jealous
- Slaps, pushes, hits, kicks or threatens you
- Forces you to have sex
- Yells at you
- Makes you feel guilty all the time
- Calls you names or makes you feel stupid
- Forces you to do things you are not comfortable doing
- Uses drugs or alcohol or forces you to use them
- Won't let you break up with him/her

Category: Astrology, Signs, and Symbols

Subcategory: Flowers

Tip: Daisy

White daisies are a sign of innocence and pure love.

Tip: Stand Out in a Crowd

Send her a dozen roses - with a twist. Send 11 red roses and one white one. Attach a note that reads, "In every bunch, there's one who stands out - and you are that one!"

Subcategory: Fragrance & Incense

Tip: Frankincense

This ancient fragrance is one of the special gifts the wise men brought in the Bible. It is a symbol of faith.

Subcategory: Symbols in Cultures

Tip: Origami Lover's Knot

In Japan, there's a special origami which creates the lover's knot. This origami seals the message tightly within, and by writing or making a brushmark on the outside, it can always be told if anyone else tried to read it because the origami could never be folded to exactly match afterwards. Learn how to pass your own origami-notes!

Category: Balancing School, Work & Play

Subcategory: In Your Home

Tip: Remove Clutter

Many arguments in the home start over manageable situations that have gotten out of control. For example, clutter happens over time. It's hard to even remember how half the stuff ended up where it is. Sit down for a weekend and remove all the excess items from your main living areas. You'd be amazed, once your rooms are clean and organized, how much calmer you feel when you hang out in them.

Subcategory: Overall Balance

Tip: Share some hobbies

While it's good to have separate interests, try to make sure at least some of them overlap. It's easy to drift apart if you never spend time together. Take the time to teach your partner about what you love, and show interest in your partner's hobbies.

Category: Commitments

Subcategory: Milestones in Commitment

Tip: Moving In Together

Many couples skip this step and go directly from a steady relationship into marriage. I feel it is important to live with someone first, to get to know what they are like day-in and day-out, and to see if this is something you are willing to deal with. There are some who say it is better not to know, and to learn after you're married, but this is not a car that you will retire after a decade. This is a permanent joining of two people. Both people **should** know everything there is to know before dedicating their entire lifetime to this person. Many traditions about marriage were made when married life involved only 20 years or so of time, and when often the entire time was spent apart from each other in "jobs" (work or home) that took up the entire day and night. With life spans being much longer, and free time and "enjoying each other" being so much more important, it's key to be sure your partner is one you can truly enjoy for the remaining years of your life.

Subcategory: Moving In Together

Tip: Be Sure you're Ready

One of the down sides of moving in with someone is that it is now MUCH harder to break up with them. If you're not really sure that this person is for you, hold off on moving in. Wait until you really are sure that this seems like a good relationship. If you move in for other reasons, and then discover immediately that your partner simply doesn't work well with you, it's now hard to deal with the moving out, finding somewhere to live, etc.

Tip: Financial Benefits Do Count

When considering the various reasons to move in or not move in, don't discount the financial savings! One of the key reasons couples argue is finances. If you end up saving \$800 or more a month by moving in, this could really have a profound affect on your relationship. This of course should never be the ONLY reason you move in together ... but it is something to consider.

Subcategory: You're Afraid to Commit?

Tip: Searching for Perfection

Is one of the reasons that you're wary of committing that your partner isn't quite right? Is he a bit too tubby, is she a bit too plain? Does she not make enough money? Does he laugh too loudly at parties? Many people have "ideal prince/princess" templates in their heads that they compare all partners against. They feel like they're "settling" if they end up with someone who doesn't match their ideals. Be sure you're being realistic! Perfect people do not exist. Does your partner love you? Do you work well together, treat each other well, and have fun? If so, learn to truly accept those quirks that make your partner unique. You will find you might already *have* your prince or princess right in your arms.

Subcategory: Your Partner's Afraid to Commit?

Tip: Make the Time to Talk

There are many reasons people shy away from commitment. They may truly not be sure they are ready. They may be worried about friends and family reactions. They can know people who had awful relationships, and be worried that they might get into the same situation. They might be afraid of being trapped. They might be afraid of having to change in order to enter the relationship. Sit down and really talk honestly with your partner about what concrete things they fear might happen if you entered into a commitment. Make lists of the various hurdles, even the things that you think might

upset each other, and work down the list. This isn't an easy task - for example, you might have to say you really dislike your partner's mother always sticking her nose into your relationship. It's better to acknowledge it and talk about it now, though, than to go on for months or years with it remaining unsaid. When the lists are out in the open, discuss which items can be resolved, and ways in which you can resolve them. Discuss if items are fears without a basis, and find ways to help the fears go away. If you work through the list together, the act of you overcoming the hurdles as a team will be a great positive force in your relationship.

Category: Dating and Romance

Subcategory: Dating and Romance

Tip: Sexual Experiences

Is it possible to maintain a loving relationship when your partner wants to experience sex with other people? Although many people decide to separate or divorce, others create alternative arrangements. A predetermined length of separation, allowing pursuit of other interests, is chosen by some couples. Remaining together is possible for others through establishing "rules" to guide what outside sexual behavior is permissible. Less frequently, both individuals want an "open relationship" that eliminates all constraints regarding sex. If one of these options is not hurtful to you, it may be possible to continue your relationship now or later. However, you must be 100% honest about what is right for *you*. Do not let fear of losing the relationship make this decision for you. Sacrificing what you need in order to salvage a relationship won't work long-term.

Category: Faith Based Relationships

Subcategory: Faith Based Relationships

Tip: Christian Dating

Christian dating should be a positive, self-affirming experience. To make sure you're entering into a Christian dating relationship that honors you and God, be aware of these common signs displayed by those with an abusive personality. · Extreme jealousy or possessiveness · Pushes for quick and intense involvement · Seems too good to be true · Blames others for actions · Needs to be in control · Unrealistic expectations of the relationship · Easily upset or angered · Inability to respect boundaries or privacy · History of violent behavior · Acts critical, belittling or demeaning · Pressures for sex · Alcohol or drug abuse · History of childhood abuse and/or witnessing parental domestic violence · Reckless behavior · Poor self-worth · Intense fear of being left · Cruelty to children / animals · Intimidating behavior · Threatens violence

Tip: Jewish Dating Help

Whether it is support and guidance within a current relationship or you're looking to jump start your love life, online services are available to assist you with your Jewish dating needs. Online communities specializing in providing support and guidance for Jewish dating have the advantages of convenience and anonymity. The convenience aspect becomes even more important if you are a Jewish man or woman living somewhere without access to a sense of community. And, given how difficult it can be to acknowledge and discuss problems and worries, the anonymous nature of online groups is great because it diminishes embarrassment. There isn't the same hesitancy to be open about private issues, thus allowing you access to the help and support you need.

Category: Finding Compatible Singles

Subcategory: Finding Compatible Singles

Tip: Find Local Singles

When looking to find singles in your area it will save you time if you put thought into your search before you begin. The more you can identify about who you're looking for, the quicker you will succeed. Once you know what you want, take it online! Now days many sites don't stick to general singles matchmaking. Instead, you can be very specific in your search to find single men or to find single women. Examples of specialized sites include: [BBW Personals](#)[Asian Dating](#)[Black Singles](#)[Christian Singles](#)[Latin Dating](#)[Jewish Singles](#)

Tip: Looking for Singles

Finding black singles is easier than ever with the help of online dating sites. However, with something so personal and private it can feel uncomfortable to blindly choose a site. Luckily, picking one that is a good match for you does not need to be difficult. Get started on your new adventure by talking to friends and family. So many people have used online dating, it is fairly easy to find a recommendation. Just ask around and you will be surprised at how much information you discover. Next, consider a specialized site. If you know you are interested in exclusively dating black singles, you can make use of a site that matches accordingly. Explore by conducting an Internet search. Use the keywords "online dating sites" or "online personals" to research popular dating websites. Finally, try it out! Several sites will offer a free trial period or have portions of the site you can access without payment. Play around with a few and see what you like.

Tip: Singles Clubs

If you know you are interested in dating Christian singles you can use a dating site, personals, singles club, or singles event to find single men or find single women. If you are just starting to date again after a divorce, remember that feelings of hurt, anger, mistrust, and pessimism about relationships are common. It may be best to take some time to recover before jumping right back in. Taking time gives you an opportunity for growth, assessment of what went wrong, and a time to reflect about how you relate and cope within a relationship.

Tip: Singles Matchmaking Services

Singles matchmaking services are one option to find relationships. Staff people have personal contact with all members. The objectives are to create matches, introduce members and facilitate dating. The staff are meant to be knowledgeable and possess a certain level of expertise in making compatible matches. To assist with pairing members, staff collect personal data on each person as they join the matchmaking service. The information members are asked to submit pertains to their own personal characteristics and regarding what they are looking for. Depending on the service, personality testing and/or a videotaped interviews may be done as well. A database is maintained of all members. Staff make matches by searching and pairing like individuals. Some services maintain video interviews that can be previewed by members.

Category: Home Life

Subcategory: Elderly Parents

Tip: Learn their interests

Older people usually have interests that they have set aside because they did not have the time or ability to pursue them. Help them rekindle those interests, taking them to shows, buying them equipment, or helping them enroll in classes. By sharing in their interests, you help validate that they still can learn and grow, and be interesting to others.

Subcategory: Family Fun

Tip: Plant a Tree

A tree is something that lasts for hundreds of years, and that you can watch grow from a small seedling into a huge treefort-holding oak. Find a spot that will handle the growth of the tree, and make the planting a family event. You can even photograph yourself by the tree each year. For fun, plant two trees and twine them as they grow.

Subcategory: StepParent-StepChild

Tip: Get to know the friends/family

Think of it as an exam to study for. If you have to stop and ask "Who?" when your step-family talks to you, it will add distance to your relationship. If instead you know the relatives, and their friends and teachers and co-workers, it'll make a huge difference when you talk. You'll already be "in the circle" and acceptance will be much, much easier. Keep a list somewhere, and add to it every time you hear about a new person. It'll make remembering them much easier.

Tip: One-on-One time

Find special one-on-one time with each person in the stepfamily, doing something special. It's during these private times that bonds can really be formed, and lasting memories forged. It doesn't need to be something expensive or extravagant - it can just be walking in the zoo or driving to the beach.

Category: Interfaith Relationships

Subcategory: Interfaith Relationships

Tip: Interfaith Family Communication

If you have an interfaith family, there are some specific areas of difficulties to cope with. These revolve around negative responses from extended family members and friends, raising children interfaith, and handling the holidays. Along with open, honest, sensitive communication with one another, an adequate support network is helpful in getting through these issues. Local community groups that regularly meet face-to-face or online groups can help meet this need. It is useful to find others who understand the particular challenges and joys of being part of an interfaith family. In addition to making friends and having fun, this type of support provides the opportunity for you to learn, teach and share with others.

Category: Intergenerational Relationships

Subcategory: Intergenerational Relationships

Tip: Younger Men Dating Older Women

An age difference in relationships draws attention, *especially* when a younger man and

older woman are involved. However, intergenerational relationships in which younger men are with older women are increasingly common. Some couples unintentionally end up in this type of age difference relationship, while others purposefully set out to find it. The reasons some men prefer older women include: The mental stimulation of being with someone with more life experience Greater self-confidence Higher maturity level Increased self-sufficiency and independence Clarity on life goals.

Category: Long Distance Relationships

Subcategory: Long Distance Relationships

Tip: Long Distance Marriages

According to LongDistanceRelationships.com, approximately 7 million couples in the United States consider themselves long distance . These include 2.5 to 3 million long distance marriages. When distance is a part of your marriage, direct, open and timely communication becomes even more vital. Being honest about fears and expectations will help maintain trust. This is needed for a commitment to be felt and accepted by both parties in the relationship. The relationship must feel like a priority to each of you even though you are apart. Talking on the phone or online regularly as well as thinking of and talking about your spouse frequently, are necessary to maintain a feeling of connection.

Tip: Long Distance Relationship Arrangements

OK, so you know that many long distance couples find this arrangement to be the best of both worlds. You can live life without constant attention to a partner's needs, but have a person with whom you connect for romance and fun. But what happens if something comes up in your normal life that is a real crisis? How does your long distance boyfriend or girlfriend fit into this situation? Do you not tell them about it? This may be the choice for some who don't want to bring "real life" into the bubble of that long distance love. Or do you call them for support? Do you reach out as most folks would, for the comforting voice of your intimate partner? There is no correct answer here. But it can be a turning point in telling you both about where your relationship is and where it is going. How each of you handle this situation will tell you a lot. How do they handle your crisis. Or, conversely, how do you feel about them bringing their crisis to you? If you share a crisis with them, are they supportive or avoidant? If they call you, are you empathic or resentful that they're dumping this on you? A positive response can range from their staying more in touch than normal by calling or emailing regularly to get you through the crisis. Or it could involve their hopping on a plane to be with you. Or it could be anything in between. There's no correct response in this situation. It's all about what each of you needs, how well that need is conveyed, and how the response comes back. How it's handled will tell you a lot about what's possible for a real relationship down the road.

Tip: Long Distance Relationship Tips

There is a down side to long distance relationships. You may tire of the travel, of not having a partner who's there to share in the day-to-day joys and travails of a life partnership. At that point, the question facing long distance romance is similar to the question all couples face at some point: do we take it to the next level? For long distance couples, it's ideal if you can test moving to the next level before one of you uproots your life and displaces to the other's home turf. Here's a list of things to begin the process: If you haven't already, start introducing your long distance love to key people in your life. How does it go with your friends, family, workmates? Do they mesh well? Who has greater flexibility to move? And do you honestly explore what sacrifices will be involved for both parties? It may seem self-evident who should move but all options should be explored so no one feels they're making all the sacrifices. Whoever is likely to move, what opportunities exist for that person to create his or her own life, career, friends? Initially, it's normal to be somewhat dependent on the person who is based there, but the person moving will have to create a life for him or herself or resentment and suffocation can emerge from one or both parties. Above all, talk about concerns, fears, anxieties. If you can't lay this stuff on the table now, it won't get easier once you two are sharing a home and a life and your lives are intertwined.

Category: Managing Conflict In Relationships

Subcategory: Managing Conflict In Relationships

Tip: Dealing With Conflict

Conflict in relationships is exacerbated when we think we must defend ourselves. Given that most people do not intentionally harm those they love, this is illogical. In fact, the majority of things leading to hurt feelings were never meant to have that outcome. No matter how upset you are, make a leap of faith that your partner loves you and wants you to be happy. When you attribute the problem to miscommunication vs. he/she doesn't care or is trying to hurt you, it diffuses the emotional charge. Once your emotions have stopped telling you to attack or run, you have the benefit of logical thought. As you can imagine, this offers a tad more clarity to your perspective. In turn, resolution of the conflict becomes easier.

Tip: Resolving Conflicts

The key to managing conflict is always, always keep your eye on the prize. In other words, never lose sight of your goal. Too often we want a certain outcome but our behavior ensures we will get the direct opposite. To illustrate, let's look at an example: Pretend you want your partner to spend more time with you. There are several things you could do to increase the chances of this happening. Some of these include: Plan a

a nice dinner and lovingly tell him/her how much you miss having time together. Schedule a romantic weekend away as a surprise. Focus on ways to show your partner how much you appreciate him/her. However, instead of working in a logical fashion to achieve the goal, emotions tend to take over. This leads to behaviors that move you away from getting what you want. If you don't keep your goal in mind, you are more likely to: Yell, blame, demand or ridicule your partner for not spending time with you. Act annoyed but deny that anything is wrong. Decrease your own availability to make a point. Refuse to ask for more time together because it doesn't "count" if you have to tell him/her what you want. Although conflict in relationships is inevitable. Resolving conflict becomes much easier if you evaluate what you are trying to achieve. Then, compare your goal to your behavior. Are your actions helping you reach the desired outcome? If not, adjust your plan of action!

Category: Online Relationships

Subcategory: Online Relationships

Tip: Chat Room Safety

Chat rooms eliminate broken communication caused by the time delay inherent with email. A flow of "conversation" occurs between two or more people as the exchange takes place in real time. This is often more enjoyable and nourishes a sense of connection not possible through email alone. However, the anonymity also encourages a level of sharing and intimacy uncommon in beginning relationships. Therefore, paying attention to chat safety becomes important. This need not be troubling, however. Simply review the customized online safety tips particular to chat rooms posted on the dating site. And, don't forget to have fun!

Tip: Online Dating Tips - What NOT to Do

There are certain things you should never, ever do during online relationships. If you ignore all other online relationship advice, please take note of these top 10 guaranteed mistakes: 1. Discussing marriage prior to meeting your online interest 2. Claiming looks are unimportant and then rejecting the person once you see a photo 3. Using your dating profile as a creative writing project in which you create a fictional character 4. Expecting to meet your perfect match the first try (or the first several) 5. Telling your life tragedies to someone you have just "met" 6. Complaining about the last five people you had online relationships with 7. Placing all blame on your ex for what went wrong in your prior relationship 8. Rambling on about people or activities the other person has no interest in

Tip: Online Safety Tips

Internet dating safety is maximized by exercising common sense and trusting your

instincts. Just as you wouldn't give out personal or identifying information when meeting a stranger on the street, the same applies here. Although the anonymity of an online relationship can tempt you to share more at a faster rate, remember this is still a stranger. Online safety depends on you guarding your identity, going slowly and discontinuing contact with anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable. It is also important to never give in to pressure to divulge information you are uncomfortable giving or proceed to a step you are not ready for. Keep these things in mind: --Guard your identity. --Remain anonymous until you feel safe and ready to explore other options. --Don't include your real name or city of residence within your email address, dating profile or in your username. --Go slow. Take your time getting comfortable talking online. --Don't use a sexy name. It will get attention, but not the type you'd like. When you are ready, move to phone conversations providing only your first name and cell phone number. Don't let anyone rush you into meeting or giving out more information than you want to share.

Category: Relationship Techniques

Subcategory: Long Distance

Tip: A Hug goes a long way

Send your love a teddy bear or a piece of clothing of yours that they particularly enjoyed. Make sure you spritz lots and lots of your perfume/cologne on the surprise gift. That way when they receive it, they will get a familiar smell everytime they pick up the gift even though you can't be there yourself.

Tip: Phone Free

Being in a long distance relationship is hard, but it also can be expensive. A large telephone bill is just one of the added costs. But now you can talk to your sweetheart for free by using your PCs. All you have to do is go to PhoneFree.com and download their software. You must also have a headset, or speakers and a microphone. This should help you save on phone charges and talk to each other more often.

Subcategory: Marriage

Tip: Will you?

You only get one shot at asking for your love's hand in marriage {we hope}...Make it count. If your partner is outgoing, you can ask them in a big way by calling the local ballfield and asking them to put it on the jumbo-tron. If they're shy, ask in private but tuck a running video camera somewhere to capture the moment.

Category: Relationships After Divorce

Subcategory: Relationships After Divorce

Tip: Reconciliation After Divorce

Reconciliation after divorce might seem unthinkable to many who've survived an ugly divorce. But it is not an uncommon phenomenon. You were married in the first place for a reason, after all, and sometimes divorced couples realize that they acted in haste by separating and divorcing. Any number of reasons may draw them back together again from simple love and attachment to finances or children. Whatever the reasons for reconciling after divorce, this is not a process to enter into lightly. Marriage is serious business as is divorce. If you've done both already and are now rethinking the divorce and are looking at reconciliation, clearly there's some major ambivalence going on here. Flip-flopping around like this isn't only bad for you but will affect the way friends and family see you and how much they trust your relationship. Don't let their opinions stop you but understand your flip-flopping has consequences. This is especially true if children are involved who will be hugely jerked around if their parents keep splitting up (to the point of divorcing) and reconciling. Even if you desperately miss your ex-spouse, do NOT just jump back in. Take a few deep breaths and think. This would be a great time to get some counseling, both individually for each of you and eventually couples counseling. What brought you together in the first place, what caused you to divorce, and what is making you consider reconciliation? Are you returning out of fear of loneliness or abandonment or out of pressure from your ex or others? These aren't worthy reasons to recommit to a relationship that ended in divorce.

Category: Relationships and Marriage

Subcategory: Relationships and Marriage

Tip: "Win" with Compassion

Compassion When someone does something we do not like, we tend to focus on what they did wrong. We judge. We criticize. We point out what we deem to be their faults. The person in turn feels hurt or angry. Conflict or distance occur. This is not helpful to anyone. There is no need to assign blame or prove who did what. Disengage from this lose & lose pattern! Instead, focus on the other person's experience, empathize, look for how to help. Someone can not remain angry, hurt, or keep arguing when your response is one of compassion.

Category: Senior Relationships

Subcategory: Senior Relationships

Tip: Conflict in Senior Relationships

Viewing conflict in senior relationships, or any relationships, as an opportunity for growth can go against instinctive responses. When conflict arises, we often feel attacked. Our fight or flight response may be triggered. We think we must choose between passivity or defense. However, if you don't personalize the problem (i.e. make it about you) then this level of reaction becomes unneeded. Instead, you can logically look at the situation, open to the other person's input, and decide together what can be done to help make things better. The quickest way to deal with conflict is to avoid blame or judgment. Simply explain your experience to your partner. Your goal is to share your emotions and worries, not to decide who is bad. Challenge yourself to not view your partner's behavior as "wrong." While it may be displeasing to you, this does not make one person right and the other one wrong. Furthermore, he/she is not responsible for your reaction. Your feelings are important and should be communicated in this way so your partner can hear you.

Tip: Senior Dating

If you are looking to meet senior singles, you don't have to go it alone. Online dating tends to be the most economical choice. However, if you are uncomfortable with this idea, you can choose an offline senior dating service to assist you. Matchmaking services have staff people employed to have personal contact with all members. Their objectives are to create matches, introduce members and facilitate dating. To assist with pairing members, staff collect personal data on each person as they join the matchmaking service. The information members are asked to submit pertains to their own personal characteristics as well as what they are looking for in a partner. The staff are knowledgeable and possess a certain level of expertise in making compatible matches.

Tip: Senior Singles Take Charge

Tired of being alone? Are you ready to take control of your love life? If you answered yes to these questions, it is time to take matters into your own hands. Here's how: 1. Be proactive. No more sitting around feeling helpless to do anything about your loneliness. It is time to set goals. For example, set a goal to go on a certain number of dates over the next couple of months. 2. Leave your comfort zone. Most people gravitate toward routine. We do the same things, go to the same places, talk to the same people every week. While this is nice and comfy, it pretty much guarantees you will not meet anyone new. Try shaking up your life a bit and see what falls out. 3. Online dating. Don't let discomfort of this unknown world intimidate you. There are several sites for senior

singles that are simple to use. Using senior personals can be a lot of fun. With a little practice you will be navigating around your chosen site(s) with ease. 4. Be open minded. If you have a negative or critical attitude about dating, this is part of the problem - not the solution!

Tip: Senior Women

Dating does not need not be overwhelming for senior women. Take things one step at a time. Let's start with the basics. What to wear to look attractive, but not gain *too* much attention: 1. Wear flattering, shapely clothes. This doesn't mean tight or tent like attire. Fitted items can be pants or jeans. 2. Jewelry is a way to enhance your outfit and focus attention. A nice ring will draw attention to your hands. A beautiful necklace will bring the point of attention to your throat, neck or bust depending on its length. If you have a nice waistline, use an attractive belt to draw your dates attention to that feature. 3. Wear a bra and panties that both provide support and make you feel sexy. 4. Use make-up to accent your face while still looking natural. Although you may feel you need more then you did when you were younger, be careful to not go overboard. Too much make-up can age you and otherwise look unflattering.

Category: Sex and Intimacy

Subcategory: Sex and Intimacy

Tip: Don't Just Be Mommy/Daddy

Sometimes when a couple has children, they begin to think of each other as 'Mommy' and 'Daddy', and no longer as romantic partners. While the mommy/daddy part is very important, your romantic love for each other is **extremely** important as well. Be sure to remind yourselves of that pretty regularly!

Tip: Sex and the Single Adult

Just because someone is single doesn't mean he or she necessarily is hunting for that One True Love. Some of us prefer to enjoy the single life for its own sake, without the baggage of dating. Others choose busy lives and don't have time for relationships, but don't want to take vows of celibacy at the same time. Others are simply at a stage of life -- college, or just coming off a divorce, for example -- when it's healthy and normal to get to know a variety of different people rather than being tied down. If you're playing the field, play safely: -- Take responsibility for preventing pregnancy and disease. Carry condoms with you. -- Don't leave your drink, your coat, or your purse unattended. -- Go out with a buddy, and watch out for one another. Don't let a buddy leave a bar alone late at night. -- Avoid drinking to excess. -- Don't give out your home phone number or address.

Tip: Teens and Sex

Even though you may be physically capable of having sex as a teenage, you may not be mature enough to handle the strong emotions that a sexual relationship can induce. In addition, sex can expose you to unwanted consequences such as pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases if you're not careful. Until you're mature enough to handle such a relationship, avoid situations where you may be tempted to have sex. Alcohol and drugs lower your inhibitions and make you more vulnerable to saying "yes" to things you would otherwise say "no" to. You may be mature enough to have sex if you:

- Know how to differentiate between wanting love and wanting sex.
- Can set boundaries and stick to them.
- Are willing to take responsibility for protecting yourself and your partner from pregnancy and STDs.
- Can resist pressure from a partner who says things like "You would if you loved me."
- Can tell the difference between a trusting, honest relationship and a manipulative one.

Category: Soulmates/Perfect Loves

Subcategory: Finding your Soulmate

Tip: Understand your own Weaknesses

Most people have built in weaknesses when it comes to seeking partners. It might be that you're drawn to the 'wild boy' that you hope to tame, or that you're attracted to the 'flirtatious girl' that you'll be the one she finally settles down with. If your aim is to have a soulmate, don't go into a relationship trying to change your partner. You want to find someone who *is* great for you, not someone who *will* be great for you once you convince him/her to change a lot. Make a list of the qualities your soulmate will have, and make sure those are what you're paying attention to.

Category: Specialized Dating Sites

Subcategory: Specialized Dating Sites

Tip: Faith Based Dating Sites

Faith based sites and online communities are available specializing in a variety of religious affiliations. Christians can utilize one of the many specialized sites to post and review Christian personals. The benefit of these specialized dating sites is it automatically narrows your search for you. This saves you a lot of time and effort. Of course, the more important the quality or area of interest the more sense it makes to take advantage of this service. Faith is one such category that is important to a lot of

people. So, whether people are looking for friendship or love, this is a convenient and comfortable way to increase your chance of success making a match and building a network of support.

Tip: Get Specific and Find Your Match

BBW dating is one of the many options in the world of specialized dating sites. These sites and online communities are available to post and review BBW personals, chat, exchange anonymous emails and post messages on the bulletin boards. The benefit of using a site that caters to BBW dating is it automatically narrows your search for you. This saves you a lot of time and effort. Of course, the more important your interest in dating a full figured person, the more sense it makes to visit a BBW dating site. So, whether you're looking for friendship or love, this is a convenient and comfortable way to increase your chance of success making a match.

Category: Taking Online Relationships Offline

Subcategory: Taking Online Relationships Offline

Tip: Help with Relationships

Successful relationships depend on good communication to keep them strong. This is especially important when laying the ground work for a new relationship:

- Avoid blame and judgment. Explain what you thought and how you felt without assigning responsibility to the other person for your reactions.
- Do not make assumptions. You seldom truly know why someone did whatever occurred. The conclusions you make will be based on *your* past experiences throughout life vs. the other person's perspective.
- Don't let your emotions dictate your behavior. Feelings are important and should be acknowledged. However, do not react to whatever is triggered. Instead, make a purposeful decision about how to respond.
- Listen! Pay attention instead of planning your defense strategy while the other person is talking.

Category: Work and Office

Subcategory: Office Romance

Tip: Why do work relationships start?

It's almost inevitable that people at work are attracted to each other - they see each other every day, they work together on projects that they get a sense of accomplishment out of. They spend far more time with each other than real spouses or partners do. Often this can be "rewarding time" - eating a lunch together or finishing a

proposal - instead of chore time and family time. Realize these things before you consider a work relationship - that the whole environment in which you operate is much different than a normal relationship, and might make a person "seem" to be a better match than he or she actually is.