

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE DIVING INTO DATING

It's important to understand that your new beliefs don't change the realities of your hormones and biological makeup. Here are some things that can get you into trouble:

Dance of the Magical Hormones

During the early stage of dating, it's common for men and women to present themselves in the most positive light. The instinctual primitive mating dance begins, in which a couple exhibits newfound energy, performs at their peak, and struts their best attributes. They're compelled to impress each other, and therefore become more interesting, exciting, romantic, and uplifting. A strong physical attraction stimulates the release of chemicals commonly called love hormones, including adrenalin, dopamine, and endorphins, that trigger a state of euphoria in couples. This rapturous elation seems to cause each of their lives to suddenly make sense; it's exhilarating, sparking optimism about unlimited potential for their life together. Passion connects their hearts to beat as one, emanating a palpable sense of completeness. *This could be it—The One.* They naturally fall into playing roles for each other's unspoken illusion that this person is certain to make the other's life fulfilling, secure, meaningful, and joyful—forever. *I'll play the part you want and you'll play the part I want.* Their hormonal high emboldens them to delude each other with fantasies about who they *think* they are, who they *wish they were*, or perhaps who they *used to be in high school*. Unfortunately, it's often not who they *actually* are now—nor is it likely this is who they will ever be. This is a temporary, fleeting state.

Chemical Bondage



This is the magical dance of coupling that we crave and are addicted to like an illicit drug. Similar to a drug high, our judgment is severely impaired during this ecstatic and blissful state. We're seduced by the hormonal hallucinogens whirling in our heads and titillating our loins. Over time, however, as the hormones gradually stabilize and we return to our natural state, we suddenly begin to notice the conspicuous flaws in our formerly perfect mate—and we no longer desire to play our part anymore.



During intense emotional states, and particularly with orgasm, women and men release a hormone (oxytocin) that stimulates bonding and attachment to their partner. Testosterone somewhat neutralizes oxytocin in men, and women produce substantially more of the chemical, which means women form stronger attachments. Our primitive nesting instinct kicks into gear, and we become trapped in emotional addiction, blinded to a man’s blatant defects. But it’s too late:

We’re hooked. Our lover becomes our drug dealer and we become junkies willing to sacrifice our needs, dreams, friends, and even our self-respect for our next fix.

What woman hasn’t overdosed from the out-of-control spiral into chemical bondage? I know I’ve been there, done that. Symptoms show up in many forms. How many do you remember displaying? Go ahead and circle all that apply:

- Falling in love with a man’s potential instead of seeing who he really is right now.
- Putting your life on hold and his priorities ahead of yours.
- Feeling rejected and devastated when he doesn’t call.
- Competing with other women when you’re not even sure he’s right for you.
- Snooping through his email account and text messages and rifling through his pockets and drawers for clues.
- Doing drive-bys or surveillance on his house to check if he’s home.
- Sending yourself flowers “from an old boyfriend” to make him jealous.
- Disliking or being jealous of his old girlfriend for no particular reason.
- Trying to convince yourself and everyone else you know that he is The One.

If you’ve ever indulged in that sort of behavior, what have you learned from it now that you’ve changed your old patterns and beliefs about the type of relationship you want to be in? What are some warning signs that might tempt you to revert to this type of behavior?



Plead Temporary Insanity

Please know it is possible to neutralize our hormonally induced, temporary insanity. The first step is to be aware of what's causing this wacky, desperate behavior. My point is that since we know these behaviors are symptomatic of the traditional (and outdated) mating game, it's crucial to be prepared with an antidote to jolt us back into reality and remind us what truly matters for the long term. Your Dream Man story is your antidote. Think of it as your internal

speedometer that enables you to gauge how fast you're going before you speed out of control from lust and chemical bondage. Your story is your reality check, a tangible reference tool, similar to a roadmap that leads to your destiny. It guides you back to your path and helps you avoid getting sidetracked by transient hitchhikers.

SHELLY'S STORY:

Chemical Bondage and Unrequited Love Turning into Desperation

Shelly's story is a classic. She was at her wit's end, wondering if she was far more in love with her man than he was with her. She was certain he was The One, but he wasn't matching her intensity, and it was driving her bonkers. "One day I knew I had to have an answer or I was going to rip my hair out," she confided. "So I waited outside his office for him to leave work. Then I emerged from behind some bushes wearing a big sign around my neck with large red letters. It said: LOVE ME OR SHOOT ME. I wasn't kidding. Michael must have read the desperation

in my eyes, because he came towards me as if approaching a feral cat. But then he took my hand and broke off our relationship right there in the parking lot. In some ways it was a relief. At least I had my answer. I just wish I knew then what I know now.”

DEALING WITH THE PARADOX

Now for what can be the most difficult part—detaching from the outcome. You may be thinking, *How can I feel the feelings of having him and then let go of attachment to outcome?* What this means is that while you’ve identified and embraced the feelings of what you want, you don’t try to force or manipulate the outcome. Releasing inner resistance and letting go of attachment to outcome is trusting the process and *allowing* it to happen naturally. Allowing comes from a place of trust and creates an opening and space for what you want. When you try to force or manipulate a relationship, it comes from a place of fear and control and is constricting and repelling, which sends out energetic signals of desperation and doubt. Remember, choosing is not chasing. Allowing is surrendering to trust and a sense of deserving what’s right for you. Letting go of outcome is trusting that there are many available choices, an abundant farmers’ market. It’s the ultimate honoring of yourself. Every time your thoughts wander to fear or self-doubt, you must pull them back to what you deserve, then center yourself in trust and patience.

BETWEEN YOU AND ME: *What’s Right For Me*

*Even after I met my Dream Man, I had to remain in surrender and allowing. He was seeing a twenty-five-year-old woman (half his age) and was dating both of us simultaneously. While I was attracted to him, I remained in observation mode and released my attachment to the outcome. Did I have a momentary shake when I knew he was out with her? Yes, because I’m human, but it quickly passed when I would remind myself that I could only be content with a man who wanted me as much as I wanted him. I wasn’t jealous and felt no need to compete with a woman who was twenty years younger. I didn’t need to pass judgment on him for dating a younger woman. I was still observing him in different situations to see how well he matched my needs. Why would I compete to win him over? It was not a contest; it was my life and I was choosing. I would mentally refer back to my story and say to myself, **If she’s who he wants, then he’s not right for me.** I never brought her name up to him or questioned his whereabouts.*

After about two months, he ended up telling the younger woman that he was in love with me. She asked him to go with her to a one-time counseling session to help her get through their break-up. He asked me if it was okay with me to do this. I told him I understood how she must feel and that it was a good idea. They went to the session and their relationship ended. Did I do a victory dance? No, I felt empathy for her. I'd been there myself, and I observed a new facet of my Dream Man's sensitivity and integrity.

REMAIN IN OBSERVATION MODE AND AVOID DESPERATION



In my journey to attract my Dream Man, I continually reminded myself that I was choosing the man of my dreams—not waiting to be chosen by him or changing who I was to fit into his world. When I dated, I would mentally refer to my Dream Man story and notice whether my date's qualities matched my needs. I also paid attention to my feelings. Did his way of being and behavior resonate with my heart's desires? I call this practice *observation mode*. There's a distinct difference between *observation mode* and *desperation mode*, which is described below. I also noticed that when I did meet my Dream Man, everything flowed naturally. Nothing was forced,

and there was no need to fix anything about who he was inside (his essence) or how he treated me. To this day, he's the same wonderful man I was first attracted to, and he treats me with the same respect and love that he did when I met him.

One of these modes will get you what you want and the other will leave you miserable (or, at a minimum, stuck in short-lived romances). You're going to begin to attract men with a lot of the qualities in your story. Refrain from "fishing from the shallows" by immediately jumping to the conclusion that *this must be him*. Take your time and remain in *observation mode* for at least a few months, even if he seems absolutely perfect. Make sure he fits your desires and needs and that he really is who you believe him to be. As I mentioned, we're usually on our best behavior during the first two or three months of a relationship, so give it some time. You can have

fun, play in the hormonal high, feel as if you're falling in love—but frequently take breathers and check in with what you've observed about this man. What is real and lasting and what is temporary fantasy? One of my recent clients told me that she isn't latching onto any particular one of the new, wonderful men who've begun to appear—she's keeping her options open and excited about who will show up next. She knows she has choices.

OBSERVATION MODE DEFINED

This is the time to be ever-watchful of a man's behavior and patterns to see whether there is energetic compatibility or not. Contemplate the following questions:

- What questions does he ask about you? Is he interested in your work, background, friends, hobbies, things you like to do, etc?
- How well does he listen to you and to others?
- Does he allow room or give you a sense of freedom to be more of who you are?
- Is he supportive and encouraging about your aspirations? Is he even curious?
- How does he treat you and other people in different situations?
- What red flags appear? The matching qualities will be obvious, but pay attention to the qualities that don't match. What are his subtle mismatching qualities that contradict the essence of your Dream Man story?
- See how you feel with him around different groups of people, such as his family, coworkers, and friends; during activities or sports and in public; notice how he treats service people in restaurants, retail stores, or maintenance people.
- How is he in traffic or a stressful situation?
- How does he speak about his previous relationships and women he has dated?
- What are his communication habits and opinions about the world, how considerate is he of you and others?
- What's his work ethic and what are his feelings about his career and future goals?
- How jealous, possessive, or secure is he?



- How generous is he with you and his friends?
- How honest is he, and does he have integrity?
- How does he handle conflict or disagreements with you and others?



Observation mode is about staying realistic and seeing him as he really is and not thinking you can make him into someone you think he can be (his potential is *your* fantasy). Observation mode means noticing how you feel in each situation and asking yourself important questions:

- Can you live with this forever, 24/7?
- Is this what you truly want?
- Does this behavior give you energy or drain your energy?
- Would you want your sister, daughter, or friend involved in this kind of relationship? Is it what you would dream for them? Would it be empowering or disempowering; would they flourish or shrink?
- Do you feel safe, natural, and at ease with him? Or do you feel anxious, uncomfortable, or like you're trying too hard to please or impress him?
- Based on your Dream Man story, what other questions should you ask yourself to see if this is a true dream match?

Keep in mind that observation is not the same as judgment, which implies you're looking for things that are wrong with him. Observation is focusing your attention on what is right for you. It's a totally different mindset and way of being that is very empowering to you and is not negative or condescending to anyone.



In observation mode, you can lie in bed at night and feel happy and grateful for the life you're creating and trust that the right man will show up soon. You can take pride in your internal knowing that you deserve a wonderful relationship with the man of your dreams. You can let go of the outcome and know in your heart that you'll attain what you want in a man or be happy and at peace remaining single. Observation mode is living in your newly empowered belief system. Observation mode feels peaceful, trusting, and patient.

GEORGIA'S STORY:

Learning The Difference Between Intuitive Feelings And Emotional Fantasy

Georgia is a thirty-eight-year-old client who had been divorced for two years when she completed the Choose Him Process. Within two weeks, she met the man she believed was "him" and called to tell me what a perfect match he was to everything she wanted. She became so emotional about meeting this perfect man immediately after creating him that she actually burst into tears within the first fifteen minutes of their first meeting. He treated her wonderfully and did not make her feel foolish in any way. She dated him a few times and everything seemed to be going so well, until he suggested that they continue to date other people since he had only recently left a twenty-five-year marriage. Georgia was reeling from this suggestion since she felt they were a perfect match. She began to pursue him, believing that she was "choosing" him and going after what she wanted. Even though she professed to understand observation mode and the concept of not forcing romance, she insisted that she had dated many, many men and this man was perfect and absolutely had to be The One. Two weeks later, he called to let her know that he had met someone else.

She now understands why you must take your time and remain in observation and not get carried away with your emotions and fantasy-come-true patterns that slip you into desperation mode. Remember, there is more than one man out there for you who is an ideal match.

DESPERATION MODE DEFINED



In this mode, you so desperately want a partner that you try hard to see only the best in the men you meet and ignore the red flags.

- You see bad behavior or patterns that conflict with your standards and you still ignore them or pretend they aren't important.
 - You believe that if only he'd just change this or that, he'd be perfect.
 - You are so turned on by him that you think the sex could overcome anything and make the relationship last forever.
- You think that if he would just not fear intimacy that he'd realize how important you are to him; if he would only give your love a chance, he'd be so happy.
 - You psychoanalyze and believe you have the ultimate answers to all he needs, and you're sure he can find happiness with you, even though he's done nothing to consistently invest in the relationship.

Desperation mode is feeling that there are so few available men out there that you need to compromise and work hard to hang onto a negative relationship for fear of being alone. Desperation is having so little self-esteem and love for yourself that you have to convince a man to love you. It's about believing that what he thinks of you—and whether he loves you or not—is more important than what you think of yourself. It's when you're waiting for a man to come into your life before you begin to live and love your own life. It's believing the fantasy that you will begin to value and love yourself *after* the man shows up. Living in desperation mode is your own special pity party lying in bed at night and asking yourself: Is this all there is to life? Why can't I find someone to share my life who truly loves me? What's wrong with me? You find yourself asking yourself and your girlfriends: Do you think he loves me? Do you think he's just scared? Why doesn't he call? Is he seeing someone else? Will he quit drinking/flirting/cheating . . . for me? You can tell by the feeling in your body if your questions are coming from observation or desperation. Desperation mode feels like anxiety, self-doubt, and fear.

Desperation mode is your old belief system and old thought patterns in action. It tells you why you need to settle, what you can't have, what won't ever be, and why it will never work for you. A multitude of books and movies show cultural examples of desperation mode in action. Often the women who do win the guy have to play games and pretend to be confident and someone they're not. This type of deception does not lead to a lasting romance in real life. You now have a tool that gives you a genuine basis for observation—your Dream Man story. You don't have to pretend you're a woman with high standards who knows her worth and what she wants. You really are.



CASSIE'S STORY: *Patience Is a Pleasure*

"Having recently done the Choose Him Process, there have been some distinct and unanticipated results. I have noticed that I am meeting more men. In fact, I have met more interesting men in the past two months than I have in the past two years. The other thing I'm noticing is that more men take the time to notice me. I get more looks. I'm also discovering authentic flirtation. By this I mean telling the truth in a fun way without using it as a means to an end. I can tell a man that he has a gorgeous smile without trying to entice him into asking me out.

I hadn't anticipated how much more fun things could get. I'm more interested in enjoying the process and meeting more beautiful men than my old determination to seek, find, and close the deal. These are all welcome surprises. I'm physically experiencing this new compelling feeling and finding myself strolling through my life in a way that's entirely different from the way I used to rush around. I'm having more fun than ever and finding that patience is no longer a virtue, but a pleasure."
