

# be relationship-ready ... always

With life unfolding frantically, many of us feel that there aren't enough minutes in the day. Yet we all share the basic desire to be in loving relationships. So what to do if you simply don't have time to seek a partner?

Susan Semeniw, principal of Divine Intervention Inc. and matchmaker extraordinaire, says that being "relationship-ready" doesn't require a plethora of hours and energy. Rather, following a few fundamental principles can put you in a constant state of preparedness to attract that special someone, no matter how busy you are.

## Realistic expectations

"So many people have monumental expectations of dating and relationships," Semeniw says. "We've been spoiled by Hollywood films and fairy tales; it's never like that in real life."

First, let go of your demands for superficial traits. "Height, hair, car, job: we imagine what our perfect mate will look like, sound like, be like. But the fact that you like dark hair doesn't mean a brunette is going to share your thoughts on parenting."

Yes, men often want looks, and women often want security, but those don't suffice. For the package to work long-term, says Semeniw, make your list of requirements more comprehensive on many other levels. The most important components: "Sharing common values and similar beliefs is your best sign of compatibility."

## Attitude's everything

You've heard it before: "If you want to be relationship-ready, the most important thing is to have a good attitude about it. You must possess a deep-rooted belief

that there are good members of the opposite sex out there and that you will meet someone."

Bitterness, jadedness, cynicism and hopelessness are things that others will easily detect in you. Says Semeniw, "The energy you exude is powerful, and the only way to give off the impression that you're open to meeting someone is to believe so yourself."

The simplest changes in attitude can reap dividends. What's the easiest thing to do? "Smiling is huge. You have no idea how differently people will react to you when you flash them a smile. It's magic."

## Terms of engagement

One of the biggest crimes in dating, Semeniw feels, is lack of engagement. "It's not a job interview or a chore; dating should be fun," she says, adding that "it's a basic rule of business, but what people always seem to forget in dating is that every new contact you make matters. It may not turn out to be a love match, but that person may still have something to offer you."

The point: don't dismiss people on the basis of what you think you're looking for. "Every extra window you open will lead to more and more opportunities in love," Semeniw says. "So open as many windows as you possibly can."

## Get professional advice

An expert's help and advice can be invaluable. When you have the flu, you see a doctor. When you're ready to buy a house, you consult a realtor. The fact is that many of us are too busy to go on date after date continually.

Semeniw, whose clients include entrepreneurs, executives and professionals, does custom searches both within and

outside Divine Intervention's ever-growing database. She and her team pre-screen each match for compatibility. They use all resources at their disposal: personalized ads, scouts who approach people in a low-key fashion and telephone calls to contacts. Once she's confident that sparks could fly, she arranges a meeting between two persons at a convenient time and location. She also follows up, post-date.

"We're exclusive, boutique, completely discreet, private and highly confidential," she says. "We pride ourselves on doing the weeding-out for you. We use everything at our disposal to find you the right partner." **H2**

## Dating 101

The understatement of the century: Dating is difficult. To avoid complete disaster, follow these simple guidelines:

- **Appearance:** First impressions count. Choose carefully how to present yourself.
- **Location:** Make it classy. Proper lighting and audibility are necessities.
- **Alcohol:** Sure, have a couple of cocktails, but don't make a fool of yourself.
- **Punctuality:** Always be on time.
- **Courtesy:** Always be polite (of course).
- **Technology:** Turn off your cell. Hide your BlackBerry.
- **Duration:** For a first date, an hour to an hour and a half is fine.
- **Focus:** Stay present. Concentrate on getting to know your date.
- **Honesty:** Relax and be yourself.