

Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right

The Single Girl's Handbook
for the
21st Century Bride-to-be

Reverend Marcy Ann Cheek

“It's not finding the right person, it is being the right person.”
Marcy Ann

MAC MINISTRIES.
Laguna Woods, California

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This book is dedicated to my granddaughters

Liz

Jess

and

Allie

who will be 21st-century brides



Contents

Acknowledgments	i
Introduction—Ann’s Story	iii
Chapter One —Two Different Cultures, One Result	1
Chapter Two—What Do You Really Want for Your Life? .	4
Chapter Three—Love Stories	8
Chapter Four—Wedding Varieties	16
Chapter Five—Wedding Traditions	19
Chapter Six—Hopes and Dream and Color Schemes Locations, Rituals and Other Ideas	33
Chapter Seven—Waiting for Mr. Right: What To Do? ...	40
Chapter Eight—What Do You Want in a Life Partner? ..	49
Chapter Nine—Why Do You Want To Be Married?	53
Chapter Ten—Personal Autonomy	60
Chapter Eleven—Natural Laws of Attraction and Magnetism	63
Chapter Twelve—Male and Female Biology and Sex	66
Chapter Thirteen—Internet Dating	74
Chapter Fourteen—Your Battle Plan	76
Chapter Fifteen —Single With Children.....	80
Chapter Sixteen—Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right.	84
Chapter Seventeen—Let’s Summarize	104



Photo by Steve Dachman

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As an ordained minister and Wedding Officiant for the state of California, I have performed close to 2,000 weddings.

Before that time, I had been doing personal worksheets for 20 years to clarify, define, and refine my deepest desires, my fondest hopes, and my impossible dreams. Since 1986, my impossible dream has been to write this book.

I began by writing two little books, one I called the *21st Century Bride-to-be Book* and the other one I called *Before You Marry*. When it became evident that I was not going to be able to publish them right away, I created two sets of the little books and gave them to my older granddaughters, Elizabeth and Jessica, when they graduated from high school in 2000 and 2001. Then I packed the material away in a box, securely taped shut with silver duct tape.

Early in 2007, I bravely opened the box and read through the material again. I realized that I did not have two little books, but really one strong book with a message I believed was still important, and I began the arduous task of combining the two little books into a single manuscript.

Then an interesting thing happened. My brother's son through a job search came in contact with Hawthorne Publishing in Indianapolis. Its president, Nancy Niblack Baxter, recognizing his name, which was also my own maiden name, believed I might be a long-lost grade school friend. He gave her my e-mail address.

Nancy began her message to me by saying, "Here's a voice from your long-ago past!" She wanted to tell me that she felt that knowing me had been a divine connection resulting in her

influence in her life. Then I discovered that she and her husband ran a publishing company, and I timidly asked her if they might be interested in assisting in the publication of my book.

This began our new history together. Nancy provided strong editing skills and expert writing direction, which took my manuscript from a folksy, disjointed collection of stories to a capably written book that still says exactly what I want it to say. After the eighth edit, I was nearly ready to give up, but she steadfastly encouraged me to hang in there. She said, “You have something important to say, and you can do it!” And I am now realizing my impossible dream. Reconnecting with Nancy has validated our divine connection and created a lifealtering experience for me. Thank you, Nancy.

I am grateful, too, to Linda Davies for her insights and help in line editing during the last part of this book project.

Finally I want to thank my sister, Margery Byrne, who has been my confidante, always supporting me, complimenting me and encouraging me in every new adventure of my single girl’s life, whether she understood or agreed with my actions or not. Thank you, sister.

Marcy Ann Cheek, September, 2008

INTRODUCTION

Hello! In this little book I want to share with you my own personal observations about marriage learned from my experience and from talking to the hundreds of couples I counsel and have helped through the joy of a wedding. I know these people's love stories: how they met, what attracted them to each other, and what they hope for from marriage. I talk to lots of single girls who come to the weddings of their friends, and they share with me their hopes and dreams about marriage. I'll always remember waiting in the wings of the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Laguna Niguel, California for a wedding to begin. I was standing with a beautiful girl who was preparing to sing at the wedding. Although she was the bride's best friend from college and had written a special song just for the wedding, she had such a sad look on her face. I put my arm around her and asked her what was wrong. Tears she had been trying hard to hold back spilled down her cheeks, and she said, "I guess I wish I was the one getting married."

She said her name was Ann, from Seattle. I asked if she had a boyfriend. She did. "Has he come with you to this wedding?" He had. They had been a couple for over three years and were living together. I said to her, "My dear, he has everything he wants. Do you?" She said, "No, I want to be married."

I have written this book because of hundreds of stories like Ann's. She wanted marriage, not some halfway arrangement. And I believe that most single women today still want the total commitment and reliable love of a life-long, monogamous marriage with Mr. Right! If you are in this category, this book is for you. Marriage in the past has been the validation and the celebration of the woman's passage from single woman to married woman. Historically, the married woman

has been the hand that rocks the cradle of civilization, keeping the balances of virtue and justice in the world. The woman has the strength that sets the boundaries, holds the family together, and makes the rules and regulations for everyone in her household, office, and society.

The fulfillment of a good marriage is priceless, one of life's most valued treasures. The mission of *The Single Girl's Handbook* is to head women toward that satisfying goal. While we are on the way, I'll restate the old paradigms of love and marriage and compare them with the attitudes of modern-day society so we can decide if our current choices are destined to get us where we really want to go.

And I will be raising some concerns. I am seeing an alarming trend today. After "the Pill" was introduced in the 1960s and an unmarried woman didn't have to worry about getting pregnant if she had sexual relations, things changed dramatically. Many women are having casual sex with any and all partners. Young people think nothing of having sex on a first date or living with a boyfriend of the moment without being married. Celebrities promote this kind of situation in their own promiscuous private lives. And recently an Academy Award was given to a movie glorifying the pregnancy of an unmarried teenaged girl. No one seems to give a thought to the children these casual relationships produce.

It seems easy to have an abortion or put the child into daycare, a foster home or with grandparents, or toss him or her about between Mom's and Dad's houses. And, lately, as women get more desperate to force the marriage issue, I am seeing many brides becoming pregnant. In fact, on Dr. Laura Schlessinger's national radio program a short time ago, a woman called to ask the marriage expert if she should marry

a man she had known for four months. Dr. Laura asked her why

iv

she would even be considering such a thing, and the woman said, “Well, I am three months pregnant.” It is a story all too often told.

There are many good reasons to desire to be married. Marriage is a natural thing to want. Let me restate my premise for this book: I believe most single women today still want a lifelong, monogamous marriage. Remember, this is not a book on how to find Mr. Right. I am going to be asking—and answering—the question: “How should I conduct my life so I am ready when Mr. Right comes along?” We’ll talk about the idea of marriage and examine examples of good marriages. We’ll talk about the wedding itself: its history and traditions.

Then I am going to put you to work to clarify your own hopes and dreams for your wedding and marriage. You will begin doing worksheets to find out more about yourself and what you want in a life partner. We’ll look at a man’s biology and contrast it with a woman’s, and then as you begin to know yourself and understand your human physiology, we’ll create a battle plan with some rules for the process of recognizing Mr. Right.

Lastly we will be examining the 17 specific things that you as a single woman can do while you are “in process.” So, while you’ll not be writing invitations to your wedding yet, I will invite you to join me in getting ready to do just that. I have prepared this little book for YOU, my dearest, sweet single woman. I am making my affirmation of, and argument for, marriage. My intent is for it to contribute to your highest and best good, spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically, fulfilling your fondest marriage dreams.

Most Sincerely, Reverend Marcy Ann Cheek

v

Love is the foundation of our deepest dreams, the creator of our most cherished memories. Love is a promise that is always kept; a fortune that is never spent; and a seed that can flourish in the most barren of places. This mysterious power is the greatest treasure that one can have as a human on the Earth, and it is only known by those who truly love.

[author unknown]

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Chapter One

Two Different Cultures—One Result

While I was developing my wedding business, I worked part-time at the front desk of a local motel close to my home. For one year I served with a Chinese girl. Sing Lee was 28 years old and had been in this country for 18 of those 28 years. After graduating from college, she was pursuing a career in accounting and working part-time on the weekends at the motel. She was very Americanized except for cultural ideas gained from her family—traditions for finding a marriage partner. Sing Lee's parents were in the process of selecting a mate for her from Burma, investigating the man back to the fifth generation of his people. The Chinese culture is interested in hereditary traits, weaknesses in the DNA like mental illness, blindness or deafness, and criminality in the family. Parents search to see if males have had male children.

This did not bother Sing Lee. I observed that she was very relaxed, contented, and happy working at a resort sales office during the week and at the front desk on the weekends while her parents were out finding her a good mate. She did have a few of her own ideas. One day she said to me, "I want my mate to be a doctor because he will make a lot of money, and we will have a good life here in America." The current possible mate being investigated at that time was an Ob-gyn

Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right

who was 35 years old and had never been married.

At the same time, my niece from Indiana, Danielle, came to California and lived with me for six months. On a search of her own, she was going to local singles places to meet people and dating different fellows, trying to find a boyfriend. Her hard-earned RN degree got her a good job at a local hospital as a charge nurse. She was soon disgusted by most of the men she met at the hospital (married doctors looking for a quickie in the drug closet) and others she dated who only seemed interested in having sex at the moment without even knowing her last name. During the six months she stayed with me, she decided that California men did not share the same values that she had, and she decided to go back to Indiana where she believed men were more conservative and stable. She knew a man in Indiana who had lots of the qualities she respected, and she decided she would give herself the opportunity to see if she could care for him.

I watched these two girls with intense interest. Two cultures, two ways of trying to find a mate. Which process is better? Which would work?

The Chinese girl's parents decided the doctor was a good mate for their daughter and arranged a meeting with the young man's parents. Then they arranged for Sing Lee and the doctor to meet personally in Burma, sending a pretty picture of her to the young man in advance. When they met face to face, the doctor told her that he had fallen in love with her the moment he looked at her picture, a statement that gladdened her heart. They were married the next day. Then they began the long process of gaining his legal entrance into this country. He has finally come to America and is now in the process of becoming certified to practice medicine here in the United States. They do not as yet have children.

Danielle went back to Indiana and continued working as a charge nurse. She bought a home of her own with her own money and filled it with attractive furniture. She and the man who shared her values began dating and within a year's

time they were married. They now have three children: three, two, and less than a year (2008). Danielle had always told me she wanted six children. So she is halfway there, unless she decides three is enough.

So I guess you could say both processes worked. Both girls got what they wanted: a dependable, stable, intelligent man with values and strengths, a partner in life, and in Danielle's case, a good father. Sing Lee's parents did the work of finding the proper person for her. Danielle had to do the work herself. So, since we live in America and the American culture does not provide for parents' picking partners for their children, you are going to have to do the work yourself.

Let's get started! Potential brides: Get ready, get set, GO!

Chapter Two

What Do You Really Want for Your Life?

The groom and I stood on the cliffs at Corona Del Mar on a beautiful summer's day, with the cloudless blue sky and the deep blue ocean framing the picture. All the guests were also standing to watch the bride step out of the block-long white limo to begin her walk down the long sidewalk to the edge of the cliff. The groom sighed a big sigh and said, "All of this—" and I knew he meant everything they had done to have their wedding—all the plans for their clothes, choosing the attendants, the site, the limo, the flowers, the reception—everything—"all of this is for her, isn't it?" And I said, "Yes, it is." And in all the cultures of the world, even in cultures where marriages are arranged and women still experience submission and suppression, it is the bride's day, the moment she is glorious and glorified, validated and celebrated.

Let's get you started down that long sidewalk! What do you really want for your life?

"A certain someone!" is what I hear a lot. Let me tell you, however, that a "someone" is not good enough. Even finding Mr. Right is not good enough. Remember Ann, the girl in the story in my introduction? She had found a "someone" whom she believed was Mr. Right. But it wasn't enough. If you will be honest with yourself, if you are really honest about what you truly want, you will say what Ann said: "I, too, want to be married." So, first of all, you need to be very specific about your desires. Get a big sheet of paper.

I use HOT PINK PAPER for all of my lists, but any color will do. At the top of the paper, write:

I WANT TO BE MARRIED!

Have you accomplished this job I've just given you? Do you have your big piece of paper with "I want to be married" at the top of it? OK! Now that you have made a frank admission of your true desires, we can get idealistic. Why not?

All of us need to love and to be loved. This is universal—regardless of race, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Loving and being loved is all there is, really. In life, if we are in love, with another person, or with a career, or our dog or cat, we are happier, healthier, more enriched, more fulfilled. We are needed, and we have the opportunity to pour out the power of our love in creative, appealing, comforting, and joyous ways.

Socrates tells us in Plato's *The Symposium* that originally the species master of the gods created human beings as hermaphrodites, with two heads, four arms, four legs, and both sexes all in one. Then to create a source of entertainment for the gods, the species creator divided the creature in half, into male and female. Ever since, each human being, sensing it is incomplete, keeps searching for its other half, until it finally discovers the RIGHT ONE, combines with it, becoming whole at last. While I believe that we were created by a loving God originally as male and female, that sense that we are incomplete by ourselves is definitely experienced by most humans. The natural desire to mate pervades all of the kingdoms of the Earth: mineral, plant, animal, and human kingdoms.

When we finally think we have found THE ONE—the one who opens our heart to love, who makes our heart sing, who excites all the cells of our body, the one who complements

us and makes us whole—we can begin our journey together by entering into a one-on-one relationship that traditionally has culminated in marriage.

In my marriage ceremony I say: Marriage is the public and legal union of two souls who have found one another, who love one another and who have already been joined together and united as one in their hearts.

There is also a lovely metaphysical idea that we come out of the Light, that the blood that runs in our veins is actually congealed and concealed light. God said, “Let there be Light” and then everything else came out of the light—universes, galaxies, solar systems, oceans, mountains, trees, flowers, animals, and finally, man.

The metaphysical idea is that a single ray of light comes forth from the Great Central Sun to take physical embodiment, dividing and manifesting in male and female forms. The male and female rays from the original, single ray find one another and unite again. These unions are the surest and truest example of personal completeness and are known esoterically as Twin Flames. Many people do find their Twin Flame.

Many legal marriages that I witness, though, are not with the person’s Twin Flame. Although these marriages succeed at a certain level, when a man or a woman has found his or her Twin Flame, the other one as his or her mirror, their pure and sure complement, the exact pattern of completion—then an eternal union is made.

You will be with that person from then on, for ever and ever, perhaps throughout lifetimes and lifetimes, into dimensions beyond this one. These unions are of the greatest love and bring wondrous benefits to the planet Earth. These unions become the most prosperous, the most fulfilling, the

best examples of married love, and are the most desirable.

This is the

6

first idea, the very large goal I wish for you to work towards:
being united with your Twin Flame, not settling for less!

Write this down on the sheet of paper under, "I Want To Be
Married: I WANT TO BE WITH MY TWIN FLAME.

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Chapter Three

Love Stories

To begin to empower you to seek that Twin Flame, the best for yourself, let's look at a few wonderful love stories. If you desire to be married and you wish to wait for your Twin Flame, you can get help from all of the wisdom and experience of those who have walked down the path before you. I call this the wisdom of The Many.

RACHEL & JACOB: One of the most beautiful love stories in the Bible is that of Jacob and Rachel. Jacob set out on a journey. Stopping at a well to get water, he met a beautiful young woman who had come to the well to draw water for her sheep. The Bible says that Jacob instantly loved Rachel and desired to marry her. I do believe in this instantaneous recognition of one's true love, that an individual can tell in ten minutes if the other person is to be considered a partner in life, the rest of one's identity, the mother/father of one's children. Thus it seemed to be with Jacob and Rachel.

Jacob went to Rachel's father and made arrangements to marry her. He contracted to work for Rachel's father for seven years in order to gain her hand in marriage. Jacob worked these seven years "with a song in his heart" the Bible says, because he was looking forward to spending the rest of his days with Rachel, his true love. The seven years "seemed but a few days for the love he had unto her." This is one of the most precious verses in the Bible.

Finally the seven years were completed, and Jacob was ready to receive his bride in marriage. In the Old Testament story, there is no record of a wedding, only that the man took the woman into his tent in the presence of witnesses. This act sealed their marriage.

Although the Bible doesn't say so, it has long been presumed that the bride was heavily veiled because Middle-Eastern women were not to be seen in public. When Jacob took his bride into his tent and unveiled her, he discovered that it was not Rachel, but, instead, it was Leah, Rachel's older sister. Rachel's father, Laban, had tricked Jacob. In Jewish culture at that time, a second or third-born daughter could not be married until the first-born daughter had been spoken for. Even today in our society, there seems to be an unspoken stigma if an older girl's younger sister is married before she is. This idea harkens back as far as the time of Rachel and Leah. Rather than bring shame upon his first-born daughter, Laban gave Leah to Jacob first. Jewish men could have more than one wife at that time, the custom evolving because the Jewish people wished to begat as many Jews as possible to build their nation and be a strong force in the world. Jacob could eventually expect to have Rachel, but you can imagine his immediate disappointment!

Jacob was so intensely desirous of having Rachel that he made another arrangement with Rachel's father to work for him for another seven years in order to gain her hand in marriage. Their eventual marriage also resulted in the birth of their son, Joseph, who, when he was in Egypt, was to become a divine instrument to bring a miraculous deliverance to his family at the time of a terrible famine.

SUSAN & STEPHEN SCHUTZ

The most perfect example I have ever seen of the two becoming one, Twin Flames sharing one unity of purpose, is the relationship of Susan and Stephen Schutz, the co-creators of Blue Mountain Arts Greeting Cards. I worked for them for three and one-half years in the office and in their home. I participated in family events. I observed their marriage as they created the greeting cards together, I saw them go through a business crisis that threatened everything they had accomplished together, I watched them raise their three children. I believe they personify the desire of God's heart for what a man and a woman should experience in marriage. Susan's poem, "Love Can Last Forever", says it all. I give every bride I marry a Wedding Memory Book that contains the personalized, romantic wedding ceremony I have written for them. The cover is Susan's love poem, which also got Susan on the cover of *Time Magazine* as America's love poet.

I determined that the secret of their relationship was the absolute and profound respect Susan and Stephen had for one another. I never saw a moment when either of them treated the other one rudely, or abusively, or embarrassingly. I never heard them put the other person down, criticize or condemn, or speak an unkind or unflattering remark to the other. When one of them spoke, the other listened with full attention to what was being said. There was complete trust between them which had never been betrayed. Consistently, day-to-day, Susan and Stephen gave their deepest consideration to each other's needs, desires, and wants.

There was no competition between Susan and Stephen, as there was no specific male or female role either of them filled. They became, so-to-speak, both the creator and the creation, both male and female, both mother and father, both the speaker and the hearer, both the teacher and the student, both

the lover and the loved. Their love was alive daily, flexible, embracing the changes and new developments in their lives as individuals.

Susan and Stephen are a magnificent example of the pure concept of marriage where two separate and complete individuals become one living being, pouring out their love and creative energy to bless the earth. Their beautiful greeting cards have covered the whole world with words of love and romance, blessing, edification, and comfort in almost every language, and they have prospered accordingly. The wedding ceremony I use, and the clergy counsel I give today I created with Susan's and Stephen's marriage in mind.

Marcy Ann's Counsel for Prospective Brides and Grooms

A good marriage doesn't happen all by itself. You will be creating your happiness together each and every day, and all those little things you do for one another will still be the big things after you are married. So keep doing those little things for one another, not because you now feel like you have to, but because you still really want to.

Always give respect to each another. Respect is the framework of your love and will hold everything together if you are working something out. Bear with one another's weaknesses and always try to discern the original intention of any action before judging or blaming. We are just mortals who are trying to do our best. Comfort one another in any time of trouble or sorrow. Work together in harmony to supply and use your material goods, and help one another experience spiritual, emotional, mental and physical comfort.

Marriage is an act of faith, but the truth is, life is an act of faith. We do not know what the future holds for any of us. But your marriage will be long and happy if you keep your love deep and strong and maintain unbroken trust.

A Marriage Poem

From out of the darkness and
void of God's Spirit
The Heart of God cried out for Someone, Something
to receive His/Her Love.
His great desire burst out into the darkness
In flashes of Light Beams
Filled with the Holy Breath of Creative Power.
Forms of Love Objects began to manifest To
thrill the Heart of the Creator!
Universes! Galaxies! Suns! Planets!
Rivers! Oceans! Trees! Flowers! Birds! Animals!
And, Finally,
Man created in the Perfect Image of the Creator—
MAN!

Because of man's loneliness and his desperate need
For someone to love of his own kind,
Man called forth Woman
from out of the depths of his heart.
And forever, man and woman have desired
And needed one another.

For this reason,
The experience of marriage has been created
Within the human community
Where love can be expressed in holiness
To reach the highest highs possible as a human being
In order to provide a protective environment
In which to bring forth and nurture children.

Today, we are gathered together
To witness the Genesis of a
MARRIAGE

Marcy Ann Cheek

12th Century Nobleman's Poem to his beloved

True love is a sacred flame
that burns eternally

And none can dim its special glow
or change its destiny.

True love speaks in tender tones and
hears with gentle ear.

True love gives with open heart True
love conquers fear.

True love makes no harsh demands.
It neither rules nor binds.

True love holds with gentle hands
The hearts it intertwines.

Used in my marriage ceremony

Do not be passionate with each other often and not get
into patterns.

Do not continue to have fun and excitement with each
other do not be afraid to try new things.

Do not always work at love and your love relationship
with each other and not forget how important this
relationship is or what you would feel like without it.

From Susan Polis Schutz's poem "Love Can Last
Forever if You Want It To"

THIRTY YEARS OF MARRIED LOVE

I had a call one day from a young lady who said, “My parents are having their 30th wedding anniversary, and my sister and I want to give them a real wedding. They couldn’t afford to have a wedding, so they were just married in the courthouse. Because they gave both my sister and me big, beautiful weddings, we want them to have one. Would you do the Vow Renewal Ceremony?” I was delighted. It was a lovely backyard wedding with an aisle created between two sections of seating. The couple walked in together to the words of a song that said, “And through it all, you were always there, standing beside me all the time.”

They got to the altar, and we all waited while the song finished, and by the time the last verse played, everyone was in tears, including the bride and groom and me. I said to them, “This is what needs to be on the evening news—beautiful moments like this.”

What a joy to see two people who have been faithful and true to one another for 30 years still very much in love, still wanting to be together. And thankfully today there are still many marriages like this one. My oldest daughter and her husband celebrated 30 years last year because, as she says, “Mom, we really like each other.” And the caterer I work with and her husband celebrated 30 years together last year. For 17 of those years, they have been serving brides and grooms at wedding locations up and down the southern California coastline. You, too, can look forward to 30 years of love and marriage and far beyond.

11/17/10 7:29:58 AM

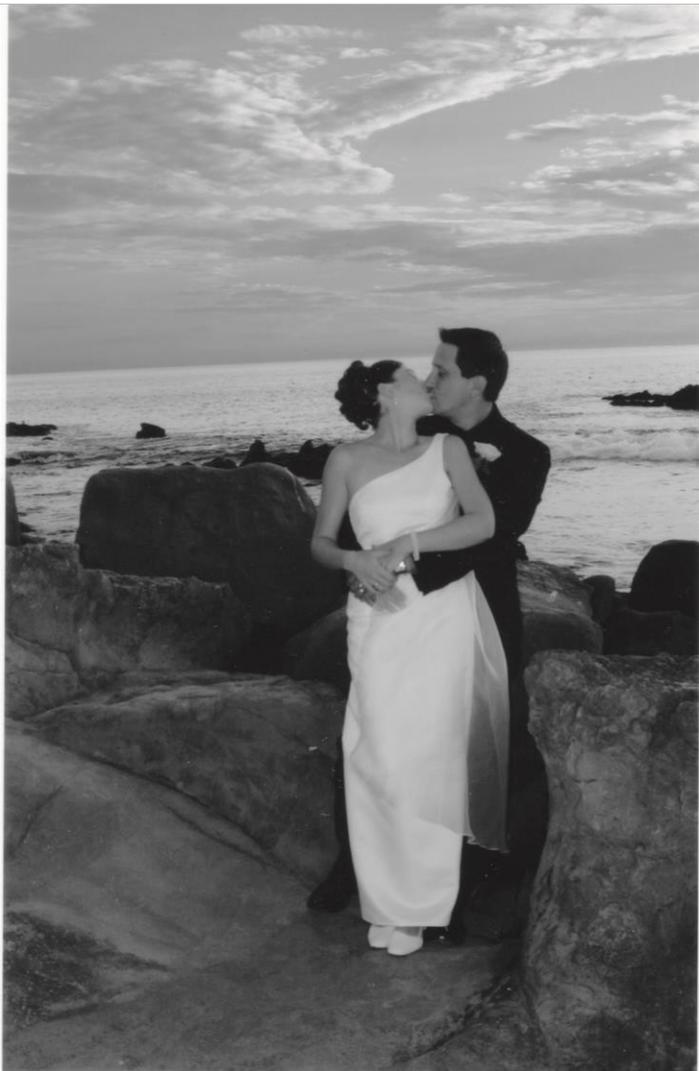


Photo by Nick Savoy

The beginning of 30 wonderful years . . . or more.
You too can have this fulfilling love.

11/17/10 7:30:11 AM

Chapter Four

Wedding Varieties

Nried love, let's talk about weddings! I always tell my ow that we looked at some fine examples of marbrides, when it comes to a wedding, there are no rules or regulations. Anything goes.

Super Bowl Sunday in 1996 I married a couple at the largest sports bar in Orange County, California during the half-time of the football game. The bar was jammed with Super Bowl fans, not all of whom were invited to the wedding, but all of whom enthusiastically took part in the festivities. This wedding caught the interest of the sports media, and CBS, NBC and FOX 11 News all came. They loaded me up with microphones under my robe and later that day all the stations ran the clip showing me declaring the couple to be husband and wife at the "goal-post altar"! The bride told me that football had brought them together and football would keep them together.

My oldest daughter came to the altar in an outdoor private garden riding in an antique wooden cart painted white and draped with flower garlands, pulled by an adorned pony that her father led down the garden path aflame with roses. The only music was the singing of the birds in the trees. I shall never forget the sound of the birds singing as she approached the altar.

At one of my weddings the best man was the groom's sister in full tuxedo regalia and the maid of honor was the bride's cat, an absolutely gorgeous, 20-pound full Persian, perfectly groomed and perfumed, appropriately dressed and very much aware of her part in the festivities. The bride's mother had met me at the door to inform me that

the cat was like her daughter's child and had to be in the ceremony. The bride and groom were entering third marriages, and they wanted only the most important "persons" to be present. For the groom, it was his sister. For the bride, it was her mother and the cat.

One of my grooms was very shy. He would not, and probably could not, be involved in a big celebration that involved a lot of people focusing on him as the center of attention. The bride loved this man intensely, and they had been living together very happily for over two years. Like Ann, she wanted to be married. She told me he was a wonderful man, stable and dependable, with a good job. In private he was communicative and kind. But he just could not go through a public ceremony, not even at the county clerk's office at the courthouse. So I married them in front of the fireplace in their home. He had just come home from work, still dressed in his work clothes, unshaven, with a beer in his hand.

During the first part of the ceremony, the groom was tense and fretful, but the bride relished every word, sweet tears spilling down her cheeks. He struggled through the vows and was embarrassed even to kiss the bride after I declared them to be husband and wife. I carry two cameras with me at all times, and I quickly pulled out my Polaroid and said, "Let's just take one picture for your scrapbook." The groom looked trapped, but surprisingly agreed. The new wife was thrilled. He then briefly shook my hand, pressing two 100-dollar bills into it, and fled to the refuge of their private quarters.

She apologized, but I told her, "Hey, it's OK! You are now a married woman," and I gave her a big hug. I could sense that there was a part of her that would have loved to have experienced the big wedding and the love and blessing of her

friends and family. However, I also knew that she now had everything she really wanted—living in a lovely home as the WIFE of the man she loved with all of her heart, who loved her in the same way.

No matter where you live, no matter what things dictate the circumstances of your wedding, you can have a wonderful love story like one of these. It can happen for you, too! Be encouraged by The Many who have gone before you.

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Chapter Five

Wedding Traditions

Speaking of weddings, have you ever wondered why we do the things we do at weddings? Why does the father of the bride give her away? Why does the bride wear a veil? Why do we exchange rings? Why do we feed each other cake? Toss the bouquet and garter? Throw rice? Where do these traditions come from? When did they start? What do they mean?

Did you know that the original word for “bride” meant “to cook”? And the word “groom” came from a word that meant “male child.”

Tradition is such an interesting aspect of our lives. We continue doing things long after we know the reason that we do them. I met with a groom who was Catholic marrying a bride who was Jewish. It was easy to choose a tradition for the Catholic boy. I prayed the “Our Father.” The Jewish girl wanted to break the wedding glass, but she said, “Neither one of my parents know why we do it. Do you know?”

Of course, I had studied Jewish history while I was getting my ordination, and I knew the real reason the Jewish people break the glass. When the Temple was destroyed in Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the Jewish nation was scattered all over the world. So they began to break the glass to remind them that even though the Temple was destroyed, no matter where they were on the Earth, they were still God’s people and “a nation” in spirit. However, I decided to do some extra personal research since I live in a retirement community which is 55 per cent

Jewish. I asked 25 Jewish people why they break the glass. Every single person gave me a different reason! So 2,000 years later, they do not know why they do it, but they love to do it, everyone shouting *Mazel Tov!*

Let's look at some other wedding traditions. 1.

Fathers Giving the Bride Away

Where did this come from? Do you still want to do this at your wedding? I have brides being married for the second and sometimes the third time still being given away by their fathers. I have to tell you, I am leading a one-woman crusade to eliminate this wedding custom. This is, however, an extremely strong tradition, and I probably won't see it eliminated in my lifetime (unless you help me).

This tradition goes back to a time in history when a woman was merely chattel to be bargained for. The woman belonged to The Community. Her purpose was to provide the man comfort and to bear children. The tribal leader gave his consent for her purchase and decreed to whom she would belong. Later, this consent passed from the tribal leader to the girl's father.

As religions developed among various cultures, the consensus of society in general was that a man and woman's sexual behavior should be regulated by marriage, with the unwritten rule that the man would not always necessarily need to be monogamous. Most cultures in the world implicitly support monogamy for women, but men can take many lovers, including other men.

It was, however, very important for any children to be born within the confines and protection of marriage, as economic and inheritance considerations were involved. In early times, long before DNA testing, the reason bed sheets with

blood on them were hung outside the wedding chamber after the first marriage night was to prove that the marriage had been consummated and that the woman was a virgin. Any child born of the co-habitation would unquestionably be the groom's child.

This agreement between the father of the groom and the father of the bride very often was to unite kingdoms, to make a clan, a tribe, or a family stronger against adversaries. Sometimes it was to gain additional lands for farming or forestry, or to serve as a buffer for safety purposes to lands already owned. Although even in primitive times, in all cultures of the world, there have been couples who "fall in love" and convince the powers-that-be to let them marry, the father of the bride still negotiated a fee for his daughter's purchase.

The verb "to husband" means to farm, to tend to the affairs of the land, to take care of. A husbandman was basically a land owner, a farmer. Since the woman went with whatever bargain had been struck between the fathers, a bargain that almost always included land, the woman was "husband maned." She went with the land, from being her father's daughter to being a husband's wife with no real identity of her own, other than having the womb to produce children and run the home.

Remember those old-fashioned vows in which a woman promises to obey? I recently had a bride who wanted to promise to obey her husband in the wedding ceremony. Why did she want to make this promise? She said her Christian church taught her that she had to obey her husband. Let me just say that the New Testament was written during the first century A.D. in the Middle East where women were not allowed to be seen in public, could not sit in church with their husbands, could not "teach a man." Many Christian churches today still teach women that they must "submit" to their husbands. I've even heard it preached from the pulpit that a woman must submit to her husband, even if he beats her or is unfaithful on her, as she is "trusting the Lord" to change things. The

scripture the pastor used to teach this was “women, submit yourselves to your husbands in the Lord.” What about those last three words: “in the Lord?” There is a need to define “in the Lord” which must indicate a “godly man.” Certainly a man who beats his wife or cheats on her is not a godly man! A woman needs to run as fast as she can to get away from this sort of potential or real husband.

Subordination of women has a long history. In doing historical research on how women were usually considered to be sub-creatures, I found an article from the *Scotland Yard News Summaries*, as late as 1954, which said, “There are only about 20 murders a year now in London, and not all are serious. Some are just husbands killing their wives.” The Koran says, “Men have authority over women because Allah has made the one superior to the other. As for those wives from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them, send them from your bed and beat them.” In China before 1980, despite new laws designed to protect women, a husband could still legally beat and torture his wife. Even Shakespeare in *The Taming of the Shrew*, in keeping with the society’s thinking, wrote, “Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper, thy head, thy sovereign.”

Spiritually, men and women are co-creators, made in the image and likeness of God and placed on Earth in equal dominion over all the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms. With clearer understanding of the true roles of male and female today, and because a woman chooses her own partner in life and is not bargained for, it seems to me that a woman who still wants to be given away by her father is inextricably tied to the past history of woman’s suppression.

Although there are many women today still looking for a husband in the sense that they want a “someone” to take care of them, could the rest of us, as 21st century brides-to-be consider a new word for “husband”? Some other words or phrases we could begin to use are: partner in life, companion, true love, Twin Flame, soul mate, fellow traveler along the road of

life. Perhaps you have another word we can use.

I offer a 21st century, non-religious, non-cultural, emancipated presentation of the bride in my wedding ceremony. Let the bride still be accompanied by some family representative, only because a woman in high heels is able to walk like a lady more easily if she is on someone's arm. I prefer to ask the bride, "Who stands with you today?" Then I ask the person who is presenting the bride, "Do you agree with and support the bride's decision to be married today?" I tell my brides that although her parents do not have anything to say about whom she marries, it is nice when the parents publicly declare their support of their daughter's decision. So we have turned the situation all the way around, from the bride's having nothing to say, to the bride's having everything to say about her choice of a life companion.

I admire the Jewish presentation of the bride and groom, and I encourage my couples to consider it. In the Jewish tradition, the mother and father of the bride and the mother and father of the groom present their children for marriage. When a couple decides to have this type of presentation, whether they are Jewish or not, I announce the groom, and his parents bring him in. Then everyone stands for the bride, and her parents bring her in. It is very dramatic and meaningful.

A tradition coming from Persia is a grand and glorious presentation of the bride and groom. The couple is walked to the wedding ceremony location by all of their relatives, and their dogs, donkeys, camels, and other animals. The relatives beat drums and play other musical instruments, sing, chant, and clap their hands. The bride's and groom's families crowd around them—this can be hundreds of people—and walk in little steps all together. I had a couple recently who wanted to do this, so the groom's friends and family walked him in while they beat drums, rang bells, used other party noisemakers, and carried flags, balloons, and banners. Then the bride was brought in by all of her friends and family in the same celebratory ritual. The guests just loved this wedding! The wedding

invitations gave suggestions for items to bring for the grand processional.

I have had brides walked in by one or several of their children, by a boss, by a sister or brother, by an uncle, by a grandfather, by a stepfather, by the father and the stepfather together, and many times, when there is no father, by the bride's mother. One of my brides said, "My mother is walking me in. My father doesn't deserve the privilege."

Many brides today walk in alone, strong in their own identity and proud of their choice of a man. One of my brides walked in alone while the guests rang bells. A little bellboy preceded the bride down the aisle, ringing his bell and saying, "The bride is coming, the bride is coming." The guests then all stood and rang their bells. It was just heavenly!

2. Wearing the Veil

The bridal veil also goes back to ages past when the bride was negotiated for and purchased, and women could not be seen in public. The bride and groom usually did not know, and had never seen, one another. The bride would be covered from head to toe in her father's home and then delivered to her husband, who would then take her into his home. Then and only then would she be uncovered in private for the groom's eyes alone. This veiling custom allowed Laban to pass off his eldest daughter Leah in the story of Jacob and Rachel. The veil denoted chastity and modesty and indicated that a woman was in submission to the particular man, that she actually was less than the man, not only weaker, but dumber. Even the word "veil" according to Webster means "concealment, to disguise, to hide, to cover, to seclude oneself, indistinct and vague." None of these meanings should even be considered in a relationship between a man and a woman who are entering into the most intimate and personal union that can be experienced in mortal existence!

These matters involve individual choices, and I do find

that some of my brides still attach a certain mysterious ro-

manticism to wearing a veil. They want their husband to lift the veil to claim them. At one of my weddings, the bride was veiled. I said to the groom, "You may go and take your bride's hand. Please unveil her and see if she is the woman you want." The guests enjoyed this moment.

In the early days of my wedding business, I also worked part-time as a teller at a local bank. One of the girls I worked with knew that I was a minister, and one day she asked to speak to me privately. She was born in the Middle-East, and she revealed to me that her marriage had been arranged by her father, and she did not know the man before the marriage. She was considered a "prize" in her country because her father was quite wealthy. Not only was a substantial fee paid for her purchase, but her father also funded a huge wedding. She said her father allowed her to look at pictures of five men he was considering as worthy to claim her. Kindly, he said she could see if she "felt" anything for any one of them. She said she picked the one man of the five who looked kind, like her father. He was not the wealthiest, although all five were men of considerable means. The couple were married and lived in Afghanistan for several years before moving to the United States.

Here, observing the cultural ways of America, where our freedom allows women to choose their own husband using the natural laws of love and attraction, she was beginning to have new ideas. She was starting to yearn for a child, but she told me she didn't know if she was in love with her husband. She wanted to have her child with a man she truly loved.

I discussed some options with her. Her aunt also lives in America, so she decided to separate from her husband and move in with her aunt in order to create a personal space for contemplation and soul-searching. She continued working at the bank part-time and going to college. During the next six months, her husband began to court her. He called and invited her to dinner, sent her flowers, took her dancing, bought her expensive presents, all the things that go with romance.

She began to realize that she really did love her husband and their time of romancing had allowed her to “fall in love” with him. And she found she wanted to have his baby! This girl was heavily veiled at her marriage, that veil representing thousands of years of the bondage of women. Now she has figuratively been unveiled at last. She is free, an American citizen, and she is so happy, getting ready for her first child with the man she truly loves.

In the 21st century, we can think of the bridal veil in terms of being only a beautiful headpiece designed to enhance the full face and beauty of the bride.

3. Not seeing one another before the wedding.

As we have discussed, in ancient times when marriages were arranged by families and were often nothing more than good business deals, the bride and groom did not know one another. The first time the couple saw one another was standing at the altar on their wedding day. It was considered bad luck for the marriage if they saw one another before the ceremony. This was tied to belief in evil spirits who might try to stop the marriage. The bride would be heavily veiled so no one saw her until she was unveiled privately for the man at a later moment, thus defeating the evil spirits. In more modern times, the veil would be lifted at the very end of the ceremony after the bride and groom confirmed their vows.

I discuss this tradition with brides and grooms, telling them the history and trying to assure the bride and groom that there is no “bad luck” associated with their seeing each other before the ceremony. After all, today many brides and grooms live together and are intimate before they are married. So it’s not as if they don’t know one another. Customs can change! Many 21st century brides and grooms, for instance, now choose to have all their wedding photos taken before the ceremony so they can start the reception immediately after the wedding ceremony and not keep their guests waiting.

I prefer the “reveal” moment—that moment when the

26

groom sees the bride for the first time in her beautiful wedding dress! I look forward to this moment, too. For me, my next bride—each and every one—is more beautiful than the last.

4. Exchanging the rings.

The ring is another tradition that has come down through the ages. Part of the payment for the bride included a dowry “in token and in pledge” of the agreement between the bride’s father and her husband-to-be. The dowry always remained the bride’s property. In tribal, classical, and medieval times, a man could put away his wife for any reason, the most common reason being that she was barren and could not produce an heir. If she was put away, she needed her dowry to be able to live on her own. The dowry agreement was the forerunner of our present-day community property laws. As we progressed in our civilization, the dowry became a valuable ring as the sign of the engagement, and a wedding ring sealed the promise on the day of the marriage. Many couples still want to say that they give each other the ring “in token and in pledge” of the agreement that has been made between the two of them represented by their promises to one another.

Originally only the woman wore a wedding ring to symbolize that the father’s authority over her had been transferred to her husband. When both the man and the woman began wearing wedding rings, the wedding ring began to simply signify the married state. And this is what I say today in my wedding ceremony: “I give you this ring as a symbol of my love promise to you and a sign to the world that you are my husband/wife.”

Some couples I marry do not want to exchange rings. Some young people today wear tattoos on the ring finger! At a second marriage where children from former marriages are involved, many couples choose to exchange rings, and then give rings or

some other type of personal jewelry to each of their children. When we give jewelry to the children, I have

27

the couple say together: “We give you this “_____” as a symbol of our love and a sign to the world that we are a family.”

5. Cutting and eating the cake.

I am grateful to Judy Lewis at www.hudsonvalleyweddings.com to be able to use her article “Enduring Wedding Traditions. Customs and Their Origins,” information on cutting and eating the wedding cake.

A wedding cake is the traditional centerpiece at the wedding reception. You might find it interesting that originally, the cake was not eaten but thrown at the bride! It developed as one of the many fertility traditions surrounding a wedding. Ancient Romans believed that wheat and barley were symbols of fertility and so wedding cakes included one or both of these ingredients.

Incidentally, wheat was among the earliest grains (predating rice) to be ceremoniously showered on the bride and groom. In its earliest origins, the unmarried young women attending the wedding were expected to scramble for the grains to ensure their own betrothals, much as they do today for the bridal bouquet. Somewhere around 100 B.C.E. Roman bakers began creating small, sweet cakes. The tradition of pelting the bride, or breaking it over her head, died hard. The Roman poet and philosopher Lucretius in “On the Nature of Things” (“De Rerum Natura”) wrote that the throwing tradition mellowed into a custom of crumbling the sweet wheat cakes over the bride’s head. As a further symbol of fertility, the couple was required to eat some of the crumbs, a custom known as “confarresto” translated into “eating together.” After all the cakes were used up, the guests were supplied with handfuls of “confetto” a sweetmeat mixture of nuts, dried fruit and honeyed almonds. The tradition of eating the crumbs of the sweetmeat

cakes spread throughout Europe. In England the tradition “broadened” to include the practice of washing down the cakes with a special ale called “bryd ealu” translated as “bride’s ale” and eventually became the word “bridal.”

In the Middle Ages when food tossing became rice tossing,

28

the once decorative sweetmeat cakes evolved into small biscuits or scones. Guests were encouraged to BYOB (bake/bring your own biscuit) with them to the ceremony. It is those very simple biscuits or scones that became the forerunner of the elaborate multi-tiered wedding cake we know today. Legend has it that through the British Isles it became customary to pile the biscuits, scones and baked goodies on top of one another in one huge heap. The taller the pile, the more it symbolized the future prosperity of the young couple who exchanged a kiss over the mound. In the 1660s during the reign of King Charles II, a French chef visited London and was appalled at the cake-piling ritual. It was his idea to transform the messy mound of bland biscuits into a beautiful work of art, an iced, multi-tiered wedding cake, which idea has endured today.

Eating the cake together in all cultures has been a symbolic act. Two become one and begin a new life together. But please, brides and grooms—do not smear it all over the face of your beloved. At one reception following a wedding I conducted, the groom tenderly and lovingly fed his beautiful bride. And when it was her turn, she jammed it into his mouth and then smeared it all over his face and down the front of his tuxedo. She ran away fast after she did it, leaving him standing there with cake all over him, totally embarrassed and shocked, being laughed at by the crowd. I was horrified and wanted to go to him and tell him I had not signed the marriage certificate yet, if he wanted to make a quick getaway! Everything that is done at the wedding should be done with dignity and holiness. Eating the cake together points to a shared life of love, respect, friendship, trust, and loyalty.

6. Tossing the bride's bouquet and the garter.

Tradition has suggested that the girl who catches the bride's bouquet or the fellow who catches the garter will be the next woman and man to get married.

It is a metaphysical or symbolic idea that the love of the bride and groom is carried in the bouquet and the garter and

the magic of love can be transferred to another person. If catching the bouquet or the garter is the “act of faith” which can allow a person to believe that he or she can now have happiness and “find” the man or woman of their dreams, let it be so! Let the energy produced by the happiness of the married couple be “thrown” and released to all. 7. Throwing Rice

Throwing rice was another fertility ritual carried over from eating the cake. Rice was to attract the fertility spirits so there would be lots of sons produced by the couple. Today, people throw ecologically friendly bird seed and, more recently, blow bubbles to envelop the couple in their good will and friendly best wishes for their future. 8. Bridesmaids all dressed alike.

Surprisingly, my original research indicates that most of our current wedding traditions and rituals are connected to ancient ideas regarding evil spirits. From the beginning, man’s human experience included accidents, sickness, and death. Man began to blame spirits for whatever he couldn’t see or control, spirits that caused unfortunate things to happen, and since they were usually “bad” happenings, they called the invisible power evil spirits. Man began to devise ways to confound and confuse these evil spirits who were accused of creating mischief and disharmony in society.

The bride carries the womb, which was historically thought of as man’s property, to bring forth sons who would carry on the family dynasty or inherit the family fortune, sons who could become wartime or civil leaders or priests. The bride could also have lowly daughters who would be instruments for the birth of sons who would become heirs, or kings, priests, and civil leaders. The tradition of the bridesmaids all dressing alike was to bring confusion to the evil spirits who would try to find the bride and hurt her or cause her to stumble and

injure herself and her womb. Bridesmaids dressed alike would encircle the bride and make it impossible for evil spirits to find her.

Really, is it still necessary to continue to confound evil spirits? Do we need to continue to “hide the bride” among bridesmaids all dressed alike? Can we have bridesmaids all dressed differently? Wearing one-of-a-kind creations that paint a beautiful color scheme or represent their relationship to the bride is my suggestion and the choice of many brides today.

Elizabeth was truly a 21st-century bride. When we met to discuss her wedding plans, she said, “I have ten best girl friends. There is no way I could possibly choose only one to be my maid-of-honor, and I do not wish for the girls to have to bear the expense of being bridesmaids. I wish to honor them individually during my wedding ceremony.”

What we decided to do was have each girl wear a different outfit, one which she chose herself. All lined up along the aisle, each of these girls would be dressed in a style that represented her relationship to the bride. One girl wore simple beach clothes, as she was Elizabeth’s best beach buddy. As the bride entered and walked down the aisle, she stood a few seconds with each girl while I gave a one-or-two sentence description of how the bride and the friend had met. I mentioned something about their relationship that contributed to the bride’s evolution and preparation for being married to the groom, such as “Ellen helped me write the term-paper that allowed me to graduate from college” or “Jane introduced me to the groom” or “I’ve known Jennifer since I was six months old!” Each girl gave the bride a long-stemmed red rose. By the time Elizabeth got to the altar, she had a beautiful bouquet of ten long-stemmed red roses. Before the marriage vows, we did a “thank you” to the mothers. We gave five of the roses to the groom’s mother and five to the bride’s mother.

9. Carrying the bride over the threshold.

The tradition of the new husband's picking up his wife and carrying her into the bridal chamber for the first night was also to vanquish the evil spirits hiding around the threshold. It was believed that those mischief-makers were lurking on the threshold to keep the couple from entering and consummating the marriage, or to cause the bride to trip and injure her womb. So the husband carried his new mate over the threshold to protect her. 10. Best man.

Today, a groom may choose either a brother or a best friend or sometimes his father to be best man. In early times, however, the best man was the "best man" with the sword. It was his duty to protect the groom in the days and weeks before his marriage. The groom might be a target of terrorists and marauders who could oppose the marriage because the union could mean a stronger, more powerful kingdom to be reckoned with. People believed that evil spirits were everywhere planning to harm or even kill the groom. The best man's job was to see that the groom was protected. Some churches in Europe and temples and mosques in the MiddleEast today still have places under the altar for the storage of spears, swords, knives, or other means of defense in case of wedding trouble.

In early times, the bride and groom were given up to a year together to produce an heir, and the best man stood guard at the doorway to protect them until the bride was pregnant. Once the bride was expecting, the new husband could then go forward to fulfill his responsibilities to the community. I think the best man is the forerunner of today's personal bodyguard and would certainly be a person the groom truly trusts.

Chapter Six

Hopes and Dreams and Color Schemes Location, Rituals and Other Ideas

So now that you are empowered by the wisdom of The

Many, now that we have discussed waiting for your Twin Flame, and with some understanding of wedding traditions have urged you to consider some new traditions for the 21st-century wedding, let's go to work to get you ready to write those invitations.

The first question I always ask every single woman I meet is: "What are your hopes and your dreams for your wedding?" One bride said, "I must have my feet in the ocean." At her wedding I ended up in the ocean, too! Another bride dreamed of being married on a boat, so we cruised around Newport Bay while we did the ceremony. Another bride wanted a 17foot train on her wedding dress. We found a local church that made its facilities available for rent, with a big pipe organ to play the wedding march as she dragged her long, long wedding train down the aisle.

One of my brides said, "I was raised Catholic in Mexico, and I have always dreamed of the moment when the priest would bind us with the ropes."

"Bind you with ropes?" I asked incredulously. She told me that in Mexico, when a man and woman are declared to be husband and wife, the priest drapes an elaborate wedding rosary around their shoulders. "But," she continued, "my boyfriend doesn't want to be a Catholic, so I can't be married in the Catholic Church. I guess I won't be able to do it."

I looked at her for a moment and then said, "If you want to be bound with ropes, I will bind you with ropes!" She remembered that her sister still had her wedding rosary, so while I repeated the Apache Indian wedding blessing, saying "You are two persons, but you now share one unity of purpose," I put the beautiful crystal rosary around their shoulders, thus symbolically binding them with the ropes. I could tell during the ceremony that the bride was waiting for that moment. She was ecstatic, the groom was "caught" and the congregation, many of whom were unfamiliar with the tradition, loved it. This was the fulfillment of a dream.

Another bride, quite a student of mythology, a delicate and tiny, very fragile woman, wanted to "tie the knot." To her, this would symbolize her need to rely upon the huge, muscle-bound groom's great strength as they entered into the marriage agreement. We used a soft satin ribbon that was covered in pearls, and I "tied the knot" when I declared them to be husband and wife. For centuries Hindus have traditionally attached the hem of the bride's skirt to the bottom of the groom's shirt, and "Tying the knot" is a standard ritual of all Celtic marriages. Friends and relatives of the bride and groom participate, each person tying a colorful ribbon around the wrist as they lead the couple in various vows and promises.

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And now you shall feel no rain, for each of you shall be shelter for the other. And now you shall feel no pain, for each of you shall be comfort for the other. And now you shall feel no cold, for each of you shall be warmth for the other. Now there is no loneliness for you. You are two persons, but you now share one unity of purpose. Enter into your days of togetherness, and may they be good and long together.

My friend, *People* photographer Jane S. Roper, and I did a wedding for a couple at the edge of the Pacific Ocean under the cliffs of Dana Point, California. One day while sailing along the coast of California, the couple had spotted this location, and they had purposed in their hearts at that moment that this impressive spot would be the site of their marriage, but only if they could find someone who would agree to marry them at such an inaccessible place. At that time, my ad in the newspaper said, “Any time, any place.” So they called me. Jane and I and the bride and groom walked nearly 30 minutes along the shore, climbing over rocks, wading through tide pools, walking along narrow ledges and under rock arches to get to the “spot” and of course, afterwards walking the 30 minutes back to civilization. The bride and groom were appropriately dressed in sturdy tennis shoes, but I was professionally dressed in my white clerical robe and dress shoes, and Jane was also dressed professionally. By the time we got back to the pier where we had started, I had big blood blisters on the bottoms of my toes and the bottoms of my feet were black and blue. Jane joked, “Marcy, you owe me a new pair of shoes!”

During that ceremony, the ocean waves crashed upon the rocks, spraying us with wisps of salt water, the sea gulls sang, the soft breeze caressed us, and the sun created millions of diamond spotlights on the ocean to herald the occasion. They

had fulfilled their dream, and all the effort on all of our parts was worth it.

Many brides see themselves gliding down the aisle in a white wedding dress. Esoterically, white contains all the colors in the color spectrum, symbolizing the fullness and completeness of the person. White has been representative of virginity in the past. And tradition said that if the bride was not a virgin, or had been married before, she should not be married in white. Let's bury this idea along with the veil! Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and when a man and a woman choose each other, they see some aspect of symbolic virginity in the other. One of my brides, a woman in her 40s with four children, wore white, and in her personal statement she told the groom that she stood before him filled with her virgin and first true love for him and only him. White had a much deeper meaning for this bride.

Historically, it is blue that has been the traditional color for purity, faith, and fidelity. Some eastern countries like to use reds and oranges for the wedding dress, denoting passion and deep love. On the early frontier it was thought wasteful for a woman to possess a wedding dress that she could not use on other occasions. So the frontier bride would choose her "best dress" regardless of the color.

One of my brides wore the garden straw hat that she had on the day she met her husband-to-be, and she carried a bouquet of the flowers she had been tending in the garden that day. My niece wore pink cowboy boots under her designer wedding gown to match the groom's pink tennis shoes, pink cummerbund, and pink bow tie. No one will ever forget those pink tennis shoes!

Another bride whose wedding I conducted was a professional horsewoman and had won many beautiful and very large (over six inches across) sterling silver belt buckles at competitions, where she and her quarter horse expertly performed. The groom was a cowhand, working on a big horse ranch in Wyoming. For the wedding the bride's attendants wore white T-shirts, black jeans, and black cowboy boots. Their white belts were adorned with the beautiful belt buckles. All the men wore black jeans, with white cowboy shirts and large black cowboy hats, black belts and the same stunning belt buckles. The groom wore the bride's most important and largest silver buckle. She wore an old-fashioned, frontierwoman dress, adorned in hand-tatted lace, much like what our foremothers wore at their weddings in the 19th century. Country western music filled the lovely backyard where they were married under an arch covered with red roses, directly in front of a waterfall cascading into a free-form pool made with huge boulders. This wedding was simple and very inexpensive, but it was a perfect expression of their love and interests.

My son and his wife, Cindy, chose black and white as their color scheme to show their mutual love of Indy 500 auto racing. Their wedding cake was black and white with a checkered flag on top heralding the winners! Cindy was all in white, but the rest of the bridal party was in black, even the girls. All of this was extremely dramatic. At the reception, my daughter-in-law's sister spoke and said, "I met Dave first, so there was initially the prospect of my being in white today and Cindy being in black!"

I think some brides feel that if they are not married in a church, they are not "really" married. However, 95 per cent of my weddings are in parks, at the beach, in gazebos, museums, restaurants, hotels, country clubs, yacht clubs, or often in the bride's parents' backyard. One of my brides had always seen herself being married in an isolated meadow in the Cleveland National Forest standing on a small bridge that spanned a delightful rushing mountain stream. The site was reached by

a 20-minute walk through the forest, to which the guests, and of course the clergy, gladly hiked. Her choice of location eliminated some guests from being able to attend the ceremony, but it was so important to the bride to be married there that she hoped everyone would understand. The elderly members of the family joined the group later at the reception.

One of my couples chose the park where they had enjoyed many hours of bicycling and hiking. Another bride and groom I helped were married at the boat marina where the groom formerly had kept his live-on boat and where he had loudly proclaimed for years to all who would hear, that he was blissfully happy and would NEVER MARRY. All those who had listened to his proclamations over the years were at the wedding!

I recently officiated at a wedding at the Long Beach Aquarium. We stood in front of the largest fish tank in the museum, and after the ceremony, the wedding guests visited the marine displays while the bride and groom posed for their formal pictures. I also did a backyard wedding in front of a fountain that the bride and her father had built together when she was eight years old.

Unless the bride is being married according to teachings of a certain religious faith or sect, there really are no rules or regulations about how to get married. If you want to come to the wedding site galloping on horses or if you want to be married up in a hot-air balloon, you can! Recently I had a call from a bride who wondered if I could marry the couple while they were scuba diving. She said she and the groom would have microphones, and I could talk to them while they were under the water. One of my couples had twin purple Kawasaki motorcycles parked right at the end of the altar. They went from the first kiss as husband and wife to the first ride on their motorcycles as a married couple. Another bride and groom I married at the beach ran into the ocean while their guests

gasped, and they had their first kiss as a big wave lifted them up for all to see.

Chapter Seven

Waiting for Mr. Right What To Do? What To Do?

We've talked about your dream wedding. Now we have to discover how to get to that all-important moment. You know, weddings aren't just about a beautiful bridal dress, cutting the cake, and the big party afterwards with all of your family and friends. A wedding is a "marriage" of the hopes, aspirations and goals of two unique people. Many times today the marriage also already includes children. How can you determine if you are emotionally and spiritually ready for a lifetime commitment of such importance? Do you think you are sufficiently developed as the "right person" yourself to attract the RIGHT PERSON? There is no doubt that we can all attract a "someone," but as we have already said, a "someone" is not good enough. I say specifically in my wedding ceremony, "A successful marriage is not *finding* the right person. It is actually *being* the right person to your partner in life."

Marriage is the one relationship on Earth that offers the highest highs and the lowest lows of human experience. The passion of the heart is our most important human power. Once that passion is released, if it is betrayed, misused, or compromised, it can erupt in explosive and destructive ways. Marriage will completely expose and define your human nature and your character. An immature person will be challenged beyond his or her limits, and divorce is the inevitable result, usually tossing the children into a maelstrom of change and

chaos. Marriage offers the conditions for the deep exploration of yourself and another person. Better to think about it now than to get caught in a lifetime commitment that lasts a couple of years.

So let's do some personal evaluation. I believe we do not know very much about ourselves. Who are we? Why are we here? What do we really want? What do we like? Certainly, we don't know the other person at all when we first meet him. We each have certain genetic backgrounds, and we come from different family, cultural, and social environments. As we begin to spend time together, we can discover more about our own needs, desires, and wants, just as we are also discovering another person's needs, desires, and wants. When we begin to settle on someone of the opposite sex, we not only start to experience situations of loving and being loved, but sometimes also times of conflict and warfare. We experience trust and betrayal, fidelity and unfaithfulness, surprises that challenge us and confuse us. The absolute intimacy between two people in marriage will expose and bring to light just about everything! It is best to have as much revealed before marriage as possible.

The quest to know oneself is not selfish. It brings great benefits. But it requires courage. It takes bravery to even ask the questions, let alone try to answer them. I want to empower you to dare to find out who you really are. Why are you here? Why did you come to this Earth? What do you really want? Asking and answering these questions honestly will start to break up old negative habit patterns and set up new purposes and goals. Be bold! All through history there have been women who have gone beyond the established ways and achieved extraordinary distinction. These brave women have dared to look within themselves, to know themselves, to learn to swim upstream, to break the boundaries, to call attention to things that need to be changed, to forge ahead of their times

and alter the course of history. I have felt the courage of these women. They have dared me to stretch my mind and reach for the impossible. And they are the crowd of witnesses around you right now who will help you to go forth and conquer by knowing yourself first.

Here is your next assignment. I am suggesting that you work on your own private, personal worksheet about yourself. I began doing this personal worksheet when I was 52 years old when I became single again and moved to California. Although I was beginning to hear that still small voice within me encouraging me to go on, I had been divorced a second time and felt as if I were personally a total failure. At this time, I went to work for Susan and Stephen Schutz at Blue Mountain Arts Greetings Cards. I witnessed the success of their marriage, and I realized that what I had always believed in my heart about love and marriage was validated every day in front of me by Susan and Stephen and their love for one another and their beautiful marriage. Encouraged by their example, I began to use the worksheet to restate and clarify my true desires, hopes and dreams. And over the years, not only have I realized all of my hopes and dreams, I have learned so much more about myself that it is amazing.

Remember, these worksheets are PRIVATE. No one else will ever see them. You can be fully honest and express yourself from the deepest part of your being. No one will read your self-analysis or judge you. You have an inner person who is the real you, and you have an outer person who has had many experiences and has been taught other people's opinions and influenced by others' ideas. The inner person and the outer person need to find each other, get to know one another, and come into agreement about the important things in life. This worksheet will help you begin to recall your true self and to find out what you really want and what you don't want in your life. In the over 20 years I have used this worksheet, I have been able to clarify and realize all of my most sincere needs and wants. The next-to-last thing I had left to accom-

plish was publishing a book. I put that impossible dream on my worksheet in 1986!

This personal, private worksheet will help you begin to invest your energy **ONLY** in fulfilling and realizing your true hopes and dreams. We all need to quit putting energy into things that are spur-of-the-moment, transitory or trendy ideas, or just plain mistakes. This misspent energy will not bring you happiness, nor will it help you find Mr. Right. Focus on true and important goals.

You, and only you, have the power to make yourself happy. No one else can make your life successful. To look to someone else to make you happy is to invite degradation, depression, and possibly abuse. Using the worksheet will help to clear your mind and begin to center your energy on yourself and will help to relieve your mind from fretting over not having a man. You may agree with me that you've spent far too much time fretting! You will also feel that you are finally taking positive steps toward getting ready to write those wedding invitations.

Let me share with you now how to do the worksheet. First of all, print it out. You will have to type it into your computer. Then print 42 copies and date each copy. Begin using the worksheet every day for the next six weeks, or 42 days. It takes six weeks to break up old negative patterns and get into the real core of your being to find the true answers. Keep the worksheets in a folder.

Now, begin. First, take a moment to clear your mind. Then reach down inside of yourself and feel the inner core of your heart. Ask your heart the questions, and then write out the answers you are hearing, no matter what they are, how impossible or unreasonable they seem to your rational mind. Your rational mind is merely a storage place for all that you have learned so far in your experiences. And some of this learning and some of what you believe is **ERROR!** I have a dear

minister friend who says that all of our “belief systems” taught to us by our parents, religious organizations, and teachers at

43

school, accepted by us without question, is the ”B.S.” in our life! It all needs to be purified and clarified so we can know only the truth. It is the truth that sets us free to be all that we can be. Let the Spirit of God reveal your personal truth.

When I began using the worksheet, I discovered that the answers to the questions changed almost daily. One day I felt one way about something, and the next day I felt differently. As long as we are mixed up about what we want or what we believe or how we feel about things, we can never find that path where Mr. Right will appear. Only when we are absolutely clear about what we want can the Universe give it to us. I also found that some answers to the questions stayed the same from the very first day.

I found that I answered some questions which could meet a more immediate need or desire, like “Lose ten pounds by Christmas” or “Pay off credit cards and start a savings account.” Then I began setting more long-term goals like “See my grandchildren every year on their birthday” (my grandchildren live all over the country) or “Swim in the warm ocean,” which meant saving some money to go to either Hawaii or Puerto Vallarta on a regular basis. My serious material expectation was to own my own home. After I bought my home, I changed my material expectation to saving enough money so I could retire and not be a burden on my children.

Once we begin to see the answers to a question remaining the same for a month, or three months, or a year, then we know that these answers are our truth about ourselves. Truth shakes us awake from fantasy dreams and allows us to move into the reality of daily achievement and happiness and gets us on that road, the one on which Mr. Right is also moving forward to meet us.

Here is the worksheet. Please take time to do your first worksheet right now.

Be sure you focus completely on this exercise and give it your full attention.

44

PRIVATE PERSONAL WORKSHEET

1. What are your impossible dreams?
2. What are your fondest hopes?
3. What are your heart's longings?
4. What is the desire for your soul's fulfillment?
5. What is your purpose in life?
6. What is your service to God?
7. What is your service to man?
8. What is your spiritual expectation of yourself?
9. What is your material expectation of yourself?
10. What do you strive for as your mark of mastery?
11. What do you wish to leave on earth as your record of victory?
12. What are your special talents and gifts? (One of my gifts is my smile).
13. What is your No. 1 priority in life right now?
14. What is your No. 2 priority in life right now?
15. Have you been loyal to yourself, your values, and your No. 1 and No. 2 priorities today?
yes ___ no ___ why not?
16. What made your life worth living today?

You may not be able to answer some of these questions at the beginning. You may think that the first three are the same thing, but there are subtle, important differences. As you begin to define and refine your answers, you will clarify your hopes and dreams and longings. Sit quietly and learn to allow your inner self to help you answer the ones you can answer right now. Write out your answers, no matter how impossible they seem. Nothing is impossible to the universe. If something can be

thought and expressed, it can be manifested. Again, I want to say this: nothing is impossible.

45

Now go through the next list and assess the percentage of success you believe you have to handle these critical areas of life. A lower percentage shows that this is an area that requires education on your part. Later on, when you have found Mr. Right, go through the list with him and allow him to assess his abilities to handle these issues using his belief in himself and his life experience.

1. Ability to handle money, to be able to discuss money issues and agree about how to spend your money _____%.
2. Ability to be a mother (or a father), to raise the children with values, ethics and strong principles _____%. Do you want to be a stay-at-home mom? ___yes ___no. ___%.
3. Ability to cooperate and to work together for the highest and best good of all concerned _____%.
4. Ability to communicate personal thoughts, hopes and dreams, feelings, ideas, and concepts to someone else _____%.
5. Ability to communicate grievances, be flexible, and to solve problems _____%
6. Ability to structure time, keep appointments, prioritize and give attention to details _____%.
7. Ability to agree about the amount of time devoted to extended families, parents, and siblings _____%.
8. Ability to compliment and encourage, nurture, and care for your mate _____%.
9. Is your marriage going to be monogamous? If so, ability to be monogamous _____%.
10. Ability to make each day be complete, solving all problems, finishing all tasks and going to bed loving and being loved _____%.

Now, write out a sentence of 25 words or less to define what you believe about the following words. Give an example of what you believe is “love” or “fairness” or “justice” etc. What you believe about these words is your “belief system.” You may

wish to change some of your ideas about some of these things as the months go along.

What is your concept of love? _____

What is your concept of fairness? _____

What is your concept of justice? _____

What is your concept of success? _____

What is your concept of work? _____

What is your concept of fun? _____

What is your concept of pleasure? _____

What is your concept of guilt? What do you feel guilty about? _____

What is your concept of parenting? _____

_____ What is
your concept of family? _____

You may not have a clear idea of what you believe about these concepts. Don't worry. Write out just a few words to help you begin to consider these things. Human life is a series of choices and decisions, and every choice and decision affects the next part of your life. You can begin to make wise choices, arriving at good decisions, because you are going to know more about what you really want.

So, I encourage you—begin to use the worksheet right this minute. It will be exciting to find out what you really think about these values and dreams, and you will feel good about yourself. You are going to begin to amaze yourself! Don't put this off. Please start now. Fill out your first worksheet for today, before you read any more of this book.

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Chapter Eight

What Do You Want in a Life Partner?

The next step is to make a list of what you want in the

person who will share your life. I officiated at the wedding of a bride who told me this story: She had been married about 30 years, raising her children and going to college to obtain a degree in design during that time. At that moment she was working at a local home improvement store as a designer, helping couples remodel their homes or redo their kitchens. Her husband was about the same couch potato she had married 30 years ago, working at his welding job during the week and on the weekends stretching out happily on the sofa with his bottle of beer watching the various sports of the season.

This woman decided for a personal project to create the “perfect partner” for herself on paper. She made a list of everything she could possibly want in a male companion, the person with whom she would share the rest of her life. She listed what kind of education he would have, what kinds of life experiences he would come from, the type of family he would have, his life’s work, his physical appearance, even to the places where he would have hair on his body: She wrote down “on the small of his back, right above his buttocks.”

She worked on this list for two years. When she finally believed she had created the perfect person who would qualify as her perfect mate, she had the list written out in fancy calligraphy and put into her safety deposit box at the

bank. Two years later, she and her husband were at a New Year's Eve party. At midnight, the clock began to strike, and everyone in the room began kissing everyone else. She kissed her husband, kissed several other people, and then—a man took her in his arms and kissed her, and everything else in the room went out of focus, all sights and sounds muffled as they looked in each other's eyes, and she knew right then that he was the man on her list! Every cell of her body was in union with every cell of his body. The inevitable happened. She divorced her husband, and I married this woman and her dream mate in the backyard of the pair who had given the New Year's Eve party. And the new mate even had hair on the small of his back, right above his buttocks.

I want to encourage you to make your list now. It is far better than getting a divorce later on when you finally find your true love. I can hear you saying—this process took her four years! Yes, that's right. It took four years for her. That's her story. Your story can be different. During that time, she was married and enjoying her grown children and grandchildren and happily working at her career as a home design consultant. It doesn't mean it will take four years for you. If you begin now, and you put your energy into defining this ideal person now, you can realize the prize sooner than you imagine. Don't think that by defining this person you are eliminating possibilities. You are actually enhancing, or even creating, the possibility of finding the perfect life partner.

MY PERFECT LIFE PARTNER

1. Appearance—height, weight, hair color, eye color, other features.
2. Education
3. Family: mother, father, sisters, brothers
4. Status: never been married? Divorced? Widower?
Has children?

Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right

5. Occupation: personal income
6. Hobbies
7. Favorite things to do
7. Sports: most enjoyed? Participates?
8. He knows how to:
9. He owns:
10. Honesty (does not lie)
11. Fidelity or faithfulness (does not cheat)
12. Responsibility (works)
13. Wants to be a father? Wants a stay-at-home mother for his child?
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Now, don't go out twice with ANYONE who does not have the characteristics on your list. Be true to yourself. You will only find this perfect person for you if you are true to yourself, your true hopes, dreams, and desires.

Keep your list with you at all times. You are going to be making additions and corrections to it for a while. Carry the list with you in your purse, handy to make a change or fill in something you haven't thought about before. If you are on a date, and if you dare, you can even bring it out. If your date asks what it is, you can say, "It's a list of what I want in a life partner." Your date might immediately get up and run straight

for the door if he is just looking for a mere one-night stand. Or it could trigger his interest in seeing if he is qualified to be the person on your list as his ego tells him immediately that he is even better than the person on your list.

Knowing what you want helps you set the standards, keeps boundaries straight, and will save you from kissing a lot of frogs!

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Chapter Nine

Why Do You Want To Be Married?

Now that you are beginning to clarify your deepest hopes and needs, we are going to look at why you want to be married. This is more important than it might seem to you right now. Your reason for marrying is crucial to being able to attract the right person for you. The verb “to marry” comes from a French word that means “agreement.” Marriage is a decision to go through life together in agreement. You and your life partner should have common values—agree about money, family, having and raising children, share long-range goals, needs and desires. You will be able to be yourself totally with the other person, to express yourself without fear, to say what you think about anything, without ridicule.

You want to be married because you love the other person with all of your heart, no doubts, and you want to spend the rest of your life with that person. The other person should please you in every way. Honesty with yourself is absolutely necessary here! There should be nothing about him that you want to change. No hidden agendas about how he could be different after you are married. What you see is what you get! If there is something you don't especially like before you get married, know that it will just get worse after you are married. As Dr. Laura says, if he gambles before you get married, don't expect him not to gamble after he is married. If his daughter is No. 1 in his life before you get married, don't think that after you are married, you will automatically be No. 1. You might be OK

with being No. 2, that's your decision. Just know that what he is and what you are is what you have together as a couple. So many brides I marry for the second time tell me, "I thought I could change my first husband." It just doesn't work.

You must trust the other person, no exceptions, and respect the other person, no exceptions. Love lives and flourishes on the pillars of trust and respect. If respect is lost, love is affected, but respect can be regained somewhat easily. But if trust is broken, love is very damaged, and trust is harder to restore. Love lives in the heart, and if love is damaged, we tend to begin to close our hearts so we won't be hurt any more. A partially closed heart can eventually become a hardened heart. So love can be lost. However, when you are with the right person, where expectations and hopes and dreams are shared, love stays alive, and even in difficult circumstances, marriage can be exciting every day for all of your days together.

We are in the 21st century now. Human life has evolved considerably, and I am encouraging today's woman not to seek to have a man in her life in order to provide for her finances, pay the rent, buy her a car, or provide food, clothing, or the other amenities of human life. I recently talked to a bride who asked me if I could marry her the next day. I said, "Yes, but why the rush?" She said, "I've called everyone I know, and I can't find anyone to loan me the money to pay my rent this month." The prospective groom was in the military and could immediately move her into base housing. Not a good rationale, is it?

Recently, in her personal statement, one of my brides said to her would-be husband, "I was looking for someone to pay my rent, and I found you." I was stunned, and I also noticed the shocked looks on the faces of her guests, particularly the groom's family. I knew she probably meant that she had found

her true love, but it certainly didn't sound like that to us.

The 21st-century woman is a strong, independent, and self-sufficient person. What do I mean by being independent and self-sufficient? I am referring to a mind-set. It is a decision in

your mind that says: *I do not need a man to take care of me. I am not looking for someone to provide my material needs. I want a life partner, my pure complement, my one true love, my Twin Flame.* You are making a decision that empowers you to stand on your own, not be dependent upon another. You are making a decision that you do not want a husband! Yes, that is what I said. Remember what the word “husband” means? A husband is a care-giver, keeper of the land. You are not part of a land deal anymore! You are a unique individual, full of hopes and dreams, special talents and gifts, who wishes to join all that you are with another to experience a life of bliss!

Women in my age group did go from being taken care of by their parents to being taken care of by a husband. Most of us did not have casual sex before marriage in those days, and the men were quick to get married. I was married when I was 19 years old, after one year of college on a scholarship. We joked that I got my Mrs. Degree.

When my husband and I got married in the 1950s, I worked for a while to help him complete law school. Then he went to work, and I stayed home and had three children and took care of my husband and our home. I lived on the amount of money he made, whatever that was. In the 50s and the 60s, the wife’s obligation was to make the home as pleasant and comfortable as she could using the amount of money that the husband earned. We lived within our means—no credit cards in those days. We either paid cash or we couldn’t afford it. This attitude is still a benefit to marriage today.

Since money is the No. 1 source of trouble in most marriages today, getting yourself independent and self-sufficient is going to align your expectations with a level of material comfort that is beneficial for your well-being and realistic for

your age. Letting your own ability provide your material sufficiency gives you a foundation for living in harmony with your partner's ability to provide material sufficiency for himself and for the marriage. You won't stress your partner to provide excessively for you, and you'll be more likely to be content to be a stay-at-home mom when the babies come.

There will always be people with more money or less money than you have. Being jealous of someone else's affluence doesn't improve a marriage. A friend of mine who is married to a doctor told me one time, "Marcy Ann, no matter how much money you have, there are ALWAYS people who have more than you do." My friend does not work outside her beautiful 6,600 sq. ft. home. She stays home, cooks, and has parties for their friends. They have two expensive cars, a boat, and their own private airplane. And they are constantly finding themselves in groups where they are the "poorest" couple in the group. None of that financial comparison—keeping up with the Joneses—helps a marriage. But simple financial stability always has been and is today important.

At the 17-year marriage point of my life, my husband went through some sort of mid-life crisis. When he was appointed Judge of the Circuit Court of a small county in Indiana and became the ruling administrator of the county's civil and criminal affairs as well as the titular head of the Republican Party, he apparently wanted to redefine all the other areas of his life. He decided to leave the children and me and pursue his public and private life as a single person.

I was not prepared to deal with being alone with three children, 13, 12 and seven years, no education, and no possibility of living on child support. I got \$160 a month for the three children and nothing for myself. I started my tragically desperate life as a single person and a single mom. The point of sharing this personal history is to encourage you. I have proven that you can become independent and self-sufficient not needing to seek to find a husband to provide your financial security. You can do it, too. If you do the worksheet every day,

you are going to discover your special talents and gifts. You will be more sure of what you really love in life. You can make your living doing what you love.

You will discover ways to earn enough money to take care of your financial needs forever. And if you should find yourself experiencing a surprise change in your life, you will be prepared and able to stand alone, in dignity and honor. I made it to the other side of desperation by doing every single thing I recommend to you in this book.

A CPA acquaintance of mine told me that he never dated a woman unless she was self-sufficient, successful in totally taking care of herself financially. I was surprised and asked him why. I knew he made plenty of money as a CPA, so it could not be a money issue. He said, “A woman who is self-sufficient thinks differently from a woman who is dependent and needs someone to take care of her. She has more character, is more capable socially, is better educated, more interesting, more assertive and decisive. She takes better care of herself personally and that makes her much more of a complement to me as a professional.”

As I considered his answer, I was moved by how true this really is. I looked back on my life after my husband left and saw my original desperation to make ends meet and take care of myself, and how I reacted to men as I looked for a “someone” who might have a regular paycheck! Then I considered how I changed my thinking about whom I wanted in a partner as I began to earn enough money to take care of myself. During this process, I also redefined what “enough” is, what is really important in life, what I really needed. I learned how society pushes us towards being extravagant and wanting what others have to keep the economy going. I developed an entirely different attitude about needs and wants. I got interested in the various things I investigated, realizing just how much I really didn’t know. I joined a variety of groups, had a lot of community

male and female fellowship, and began interacting with peers in a more confident way. My future be-

57

gan to unfold before me. Every step became an exciting new adventure! And you, too, can now begin this exciting new life. Boldly go where you have never gone before! Seek out new civilizations, new worlds, new frontiers, step out of limitation and into the endless possibilities of independence and affluent self-sufficiency!

Be assured that while you are on your path of destiny, happily fulfilling your unique purpose, living your special life, the right person will be somewhere on that path, and the magic will happen, the magic of love and marriage.

Remember, we are considering why you want to be married. When you are independent and self-sufficient as a person, you will not be desperate, grasping and needy. You will have a stable, easy-going, confident, carefree attitude towards yourself and towards others. Think of it this way: your own individual personal development radiates out into the waves of the universe to select the right person for you. It is best to wait until your own personal development can attract the one who is your Twin Flame, the one who will perfectly complement you, the one you are to create new life with.

A perfect example of a 21st-century woman is my attorney. She is an elegant, educated woman who was true to herself. She had bravely pursued her law degree and had carefully chosen her office for her practice in estate planning close to a retirement community of over 25,000 people who would need wills, living trusts, powers of attorney and health care directives. I met her when she came into the bank where I worked to open her new business account with her very first fee of \$275. While she was steadfastly pursuing her law career, dressing professionally, not needing to get a breast enhancement or go to singles bars, only proceeding on her own

true path, she met her husband. She is now happily married, and the couple is planning to start a family. She wants to be a stay-at-home mom, a goal she can easily achieve and still operate

her law business. I asked her if I could use her as an example in this book, and here is her letter to me:

I met my husband late in life (I was 35, he 42). By the time I had met him, I had already had a "first" career in Sales with Oxford University Press, had finished law school, and as you know, had opened my law practice. I think waiting to be married was one of the better decisions I've made. It takes time to know oneself and establish a life of one's own. In my opinion, having a career/life of your own sets up a dynamic of equality in your marriage. The individuality and independence you create as a young woman stays with you throughout your life and marriage. It's the best gift a woman can give to herself!

Financially speaking, I paid for law school the old-fashioned way. I took out law school loans, which are readily available to nearly all of law school/graduate school applicants. This was a plus as it taught me the value of my education and to be conscientious with money. I definitely appreciated my education more knowing I was footing the bill.

The marriage vows say *for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, for as long as we both shall live*. These are the rich principles of marriage. Couples stay together in good times and in bad times, when loving is easy and when it takes effort, forgiving one another, comforting one another, listening and providing support and encouragement, caring for one another at all the levels of spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical life. That is the deepest level of commitment, life at its best and what we are working towards in this book, and you are going to get there quicker by beginning with your own personal independence and confidence as a single woman.

Chapter Ten

Personal Autonomy

Self-sufficiency and independence will aid you in assessing situations so you can make mature decisions regarding your personal well being. Remember, you do not compromise anything just to have a relationship. You NEVER take abuse or suffer anything that is degrading or distasteful to you, just to have a man. Your opinions, wants, and desires must be listened to and given the deepest considerations by your partner. Women, it seems, are more willing to give up their autonomy in relationships, and this is one of our deepest mistakes. First of all, remember, the true submission is one to the other, not woman to man. And secondly, we never submit ourselves to anyone against our will, for any reason.

So here is your next assignment—make a new resolution for your life. Say out loud: “First, I will strive for autonomy. Then, I will never relinquish my autonomy, and I will never submit myself to anyone in any compromise of my values and integrity.”

Let’s look at this all-important word: AUTONOMY. An exhaustive understanding of the word “autonomy” through *Roget’s International Thesaurus* is:

self-determined emancipated
non-interference non-
intervention let-alone
principle independent have
one’s own way have a will of
one’s own do what one likes

do what one chooses do what
pleases one go one's own
way give one leeway let one
go at will or unchecked leave
alone foot-loose and fancy-
free unconstrained
unrestrained unrestricted
unshackled unchained
unforced not coerced
unlimited unbound
uninfluenced self-directing
self-governing privileged
sovereign

Begin to read this list to yourself every day. Too many women think of themselves as dependent and needy. And most women think of marriage as losing their autonomy. This does not need to be true. We can remain autonomous beings—before, during, and after marriage. So when you read this list to yourself every day, begin each word with,

I AM.

I AM SOVEREIGN
I AM INDEPENDENT I AM
PRIVILEGED
I AM SELF-DIRECTING I AM
UNBOUND
I AM UNRESTRAINED I AM
UNCHAINED
I AM UNENSLAVED
I AM FREE
I AM FOOT-LOOSE AND FANCY-FREE
I AM UNLIMITED

I AM SELF-GOVERNING I
AM SELF-DIRECTING I AM
PRIVILEGED
I AM INDEPENDENT I AM
SOVEREIGN
I CAN HAVE MY OWN WAY
I HAVE A WILL OF MY OWN
I CAN DO WHAT I WANT

How does this make you feel? Happy? Afraid? Do these statements make you desire to be this free? That this is what you want? Or, do these statements make you realize you aren't ready for the responsibility of sovereignty? As you continue to make the statements to yourself every day, you will begin to experience the power of this mind-set. These ideas will begin to be a part of the core of who and what you really are. You not only say them, you begin TO BE them. You ARE independent. You ARE sovereign. You ARE privileged, self-sufficient, self-determined and self-assured. Once you truly are a totally self-determining person, you will truly attract the PERFECT PERSON, THE RIGHT PERSON for you.

Chapter Eleven

Natural Laws of Attraction and Magnetism

 When you meet a man, you will enter into his personal

magnetic force field, and he will come into yours. You can trust these natural laws of attraction. You will be able to tell if you feel a pull towards someone or if you feel a push-away instinct from that person. If you are coming from a position of confidence that is based on autonomy, self control, and self-sufficiency rather than your natural female sexual attractiveness, you will be able to know the intention of any prospective mate's attentions.

If you are needy, you will be trying to force yourself upon the other person or seduce him with sexual favors, and the natural laws of attraction and selection cannot operate. If you are needy, you will attract another person who may be able to take advantage of your neediness to get his own needs met, at your expense. When you are busy fulfilling your purpose, directing your energies towards realistic and positive goals, you will be so busy with your plans and actions for each day that you won't have time to be looking for a husband. Those plans and purposes will take you here and take you there. And it is in the world of "here and there" that you will be likely to enter into the personal force field of another soul and feel magnetically drawn towards him as a potential life mate.

Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right

I married a couple who were drawn into each other's field of attraction in a very interesting way. The bride had been married a long time before and divorced. She was single, raising her 12-year-old daughter and working at a career at a bank. One weekend she and her daughter shared a hiking trip into the local Saddleback Mountains. Along the path, her daughter spotted what looked like a big bone. The mother thought it might be an authentic dinosaur bone, and she decided to take the artifact to

a local museum. After the curator of the museum gave her the telephone number of a local paleontologist, she called and made an appointment with the bone man, taking her daughter with her. The investigation he undertook necessitated several meetings, and the daughter and the bone man became fast friends. One evening after an intense session of dinosaur-age examination and discovery, the paleontologist suggested the two of them have dinner with him. At dinner, the bone man and the mother *found* one another. They discovered one another—there—at the restaurant.

I rang the bell to conduct the wedding ceremony under a sycamore tree on the paleontologist's father's ranch, a ranch that had been in the family over 400 years. When the bride's daughter opened the door and saw me, she said to her friend, "Oh, here is the minister who is going to marry us today!— Oh, I mean, marry my mother today."

The groom had predetermined that he would never marry because he had a genetic skin condition that he did not want to pass down to his heirs. The marriage provided him with his true love and a built-in family. The bride was ten years older than the groom, and although she told me she had found him quite attractive from the beginning, she never dreamed he would be interested in her. As she told me, "He was too young for me and too old for my daughter." But that is thinking in the box. There at the restaurant, they found the field of love and attraction that was big enough for all three of them.

The father of the groom was ecstatically happy at the wedding, telling me privately after the ceremony that he never

thought he would witness the happy day of his son's marriage. He also had the genetic skin disorder, and he had been despondent, feeling responsible for his son's personal isolation. Now he was filled to the brim with happiness and delight and totally in love with his new granddaughter and her mother!

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65

Chapter Twelve

Male and Female Biology and Sex

*Y*ou are becoming self-sufficient and financially independent, you are learning new things about yourself by doing the worksheet every day, and you have made your list for your perfect partner in life. You are determined to be autonomous, sovereign and self-sufficient. You have made the

decision not to try to find just a husband, but to wait for your Twin Flame. To get you ready to go out into the real world and begin to be affected by natural laws of attraction and magnetism, you need first to review some basic and important human biology teaching and, understanding that, we can develop a battle plan to insure that your goals are met.

Men and women are very different, men being very simple creatures. Actually, a man would rather just skip the whole “relationship” thing, avoiding or short-changing communication of feelings and discussing concepts, whys and wherefores. He enjoys just getting down to his basic male needs—having the woman take care of him, be loyal and supportive, and participate in regular sex.

When I meet with couples who are planning their wedding ceremony, and the bride will ask her fiancé what he thinks about different options I present, the groom ALWAYS says, “Whatever you want, honey.” Most men would like to just skip the whole wedding thing, too! But when a man is in love with a woman, he will indulge his bride and allow her to have this wonderful moment of validation and celebration with family and friends. “When a man loves a woman, he’ll do anything.”

Physically, the truth is that man is biologically set up to need sex. For good health and well-being, he should have sex two or three times a week for as long as he can. And divinely, the woman’s body is made to be a great source of comfort to him. Most men prefer the woman’s body for sex rather than other ways they can satisfy themselves. As I said earlier, in my day, we did not get involved in casual sex before marriage, so couples were quick to get married so they could have regular sex. Today, however, men don’t have to get married to have regular sex. Sex is readily available to most men in our era any time they want.

Now I can already hear you saying, “Marcy Ann, if I don’t have sex with him, he will just go to another woman who will.” And that is true. Men can have their cake and eat it, too, today. But remember Ann from Seattle? Her live-in boyfriend of three

years had everything he wanted. But Ann wanted to be married, and you want to be married.

The sexual free-for-all today is causing some women to sell themselves short. Many are involved in behavior they aren't comfortable with. Others are allowing themselves to get pregnant, educated women with careers, schoolteachers, attorneys, even women in their 40s who have been married before and have teen-age or even grown children, getting pregnant to try to force the marriage issue. Let's make the marriage issue your goal now, and have everything you do support that goal. This is why you need a battle plan, which we will discuss in the Chapter Fourteen. The battle plan should be a step-by-step process towards YOUR GOAL and not his.

Why do we need a battle plan? What is the skirmish we're going to be involved in? The "battle" is going to be between the time when he gets the sex he needs and the

time at which you have accomplished your goal. You are not going to do anything with any man that is contrary to your goal, and that includes that list you made of your perfect mate, remember? Any man you are going to be involved with has to have every single thing you have put on your list of your perfect partner in life. If he does have everything on the list, is he ready to get married? How can you find out? Let's face this situation head-on and make some decisions for you that are for your highest and best good and will ultimately bring you what you truly want.

Men do have deeper personal desires and long-term goals. Most men are programmed spiritually and emotionally to be in a marriage partnership with a woman. A man is raised by his mother, the one woman in his life he can always count on, who loves him unconditionally, even if he is bad, takes care of his every need, fixes his food, provides clean clothes, tells him what to do and how to do it and where to go and how to get there. If a man has had a good mother, he will genuinely like women, and he will usually have some manners and maybe even open the car door for you, and help you be seated in a nice restaurant. And I have learned over the years that a man who does not have a good mother, or is abandoned by his mother, is much more damaged as an adult than a woman who does not have a father or has a bad father. To have a strong woman dedicated to him as an adult makes the man more personally confident, more able to fulfill his destiny and provide courageous leadership for life's challenges.

I frequently do five, ten, 15, 25, and 50 year anniversary Vow Renewal ceremonies. I have each couple fill out a questionnaire that tells me about their marriage so I can write a personalized ceremony just for them. When the husband answers the question about his wife's greatest strength, nearly 100 per cent say they know that she is totally loyal, on his side always, loving him, supporting him. Many a man will say that his wife is his "rock." Deep down, men really want the same thing that you want, to be happily married.

Discerning a man's intentions towards you, and letting the man know that you care about his immediate and ultimate intentions, are important steps for accomplishing your goal. When you are getting a man's attentions, can you discern his intent? Because your goal has to be discovering if he just needs to have sex or if he might really be looking for his true love.

At this point, let me ask you this: what are you afraid of in trying to find out his true intentions? That he'll get away? That you might not find anyone else? That you will be alone? Dear single person, the best thing you can do for yourself is to protect your soul, your womb, and your own biology against any form of use and abuse that is degrading and depressing. Dr. Laura talked to a girl one evening who was depressed and wondered why she couldn't keep a boyfriend. She was 28 years old and had been with ten men sexually. Dr. Laura told her she was just a prostitute these men didn't have to pay.

“Just a pure convenience, my dear. Just a pure convenience.”

If you touch a man in his heart, you may awaken him to his basic spiritual and emotional needs, his better self, and he will allow himself to be seriously involved in a lifetime commitment.

We should never underestimate the biological side, though. Let's examine and understand more about this man. He is programmed biologically to reproduce his species. In the animal realm, the male was responsible for impregnating many females, so multiple partners and variety were part of animal reproduction. On a recent tour of the Anheuser-Busch Brewery in St. Louis, the guide proudly introduced us to the Anheuser-Busch Clydesdale stallion. He had an entire section of a grand and glorious barn all to himself, with several fulltime attendants. This tremendously impressive and beautiful horse was charged with impregnating a herd of 12 mares on a regular basis. No artificial insemination here! This stallion knew his job, and he

did it well all by himself. He was the best representative of his species that the Anheuser-Busch

69

management could find in the whole world. He deserved the honor of carrying on their line of championship Clydesdales.

In many animal species, the males compete with one another in order to become the dominant male who will be responsible for the reproduction of their species. Once that dominance is proclaimed among the herd, the species knows it has the best chance for survival. Then when a female comes into her season, the dominant male usually is her mate. The female in season does not accept every male who vies for her attention. She considers each one, and then chooses the proper mate with much care and concern for the highest and best good of her babies. In other words, she values herself and gives a NUMBER ONE priority to the propagation of her species.

While I am not suggesting that only certain males should be chosen to reproduce the human species—the George Clooneys or Brad Pitts—I am suggesting that the single girl has all the say-so about who is going to be her mate and the father of a possible baby. Could you make your decision to have sex be based upon these tried and true principles from the animals? This kind of sound judgment is a far cry from a one-night stand that could produce a child in order to manipulate a man to marry you! If a woman sinks into bed at the first request or allows herself to get pregnant in order to force a marriage, the union has very little chance of surviving the rigors of the marital relationship. And if a child is born, that child is the total loser in this situation.

Pregnancy should be planned. A child has the right to have the full and complete attention of its mother and its father, living together in agreement about the child's welfare, from conception to emancipation. The child should know that it was wanted and loved from the absolute moment that the sperm and egg united to produce the new little life. The birth of a child should be pre-meditated and pre-planned in every detail, with

foreknowledge of how the child will be provided for, especially allowing the mother to be at home with the child. How will the expenses of childhood be met? How will

70

the child be educated and go to college? All of this should be known and prepared for before anyone even thinks of having sex.

Because of his animal heritage, it is hard for a man to be monogamous. Women have culturally been taught monogamy in order for the man to know that any child of the union is his. Religiously, man is encouraged to be monogamous, but culturally, he has never been expected to actually be monogamous. However, if a man is truly in love with a woman, his spiritual qualities of understanding, patience, and thoughtfulness are activated, and he wants to be monogamous and in complete harmony with his woman—soul, mind, and body—which produces intoxicating happiness for him.

There are other things we can learn from the animal kingdom. Some animal species mate for life, and those which have sex for pleasure are totally monogamous, even remaining single if one mate dies. Also, in the animal kingdom the male enters the female from the rear: Her large buttocks looking much like big breasts are his total view during sex. Today, women are spending thousands of dollars on breast augmentation in order to be sexually attractive to men. A man does get sexually excited by looking at big breasts, and he probably doesn't even know why. But you need to know why, and you need to ask yourself the question: Do I want to stimulate a man sexually, or do I want to reach his soul and open his heart to love? Paramahansa Yogananda says in *The Divine Romance*: "Attraction between man and woman should come from the soul. Women who do not flaunt themselves as sex symbols have a much better chance of attracting the right kind of mate."

Now what about a woman's biology? What about your needs and desires? Most woman enjoy sex, although many women tell me after they are married and start a family,

especially if they work full-time, too, that they could really care less if they have sex or not. We enjoy buying a new dress and going out to dinner and dancing, being romantic and getting

“in the mood,” and a woman enjoys having the man’s arms around her, being kissed and feeling beautiful and attractive to her man. However, unlike a man’s biological need to have sex, a woman’s basic biological need is not primarily to have sex. A woman’s basic biological need is to have a home. It is interesting to me that in *Roget’s Thesaurus*, a synonym for the word “safe” is the word “home.” I tell my brides and grooms that a woman thinks of the walls and roof of the house around her in the same way a man thinks of the walls of the vagina around his penis. The man needs the vagina. The woman needs a home.

Also, since the woman has the vagina, she physically receives the man in sexual intercourse. We are entered. Physical intercourse is actually a very spiritual action. It is the spiritual principle of the “two becoming one.” If the man has an ejaculation and deposits his sperm into the woman, now the woman has part of the man within her. The sperm is absorbed into her body and becomes part of her cellular structure. Thus in the Bible Adam said, after he had intercourse with Eve, “She is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.” Have you ever thought about why you feel that you are now part of the man if you have sex with him? Why do you feel like he now “belongs” to you, and you belong to him?

A couple of years after my brother died, my sister-in-law met a lovely man. She told me that she was feeling like she was being disloyal to my brother by seeing this gentleman. And I told her that she was still “one flesh” with my brother in her body, but he was not here anymore, and she was totally free to pursue a new relationship. It can take seven years or more before a woman’s body no longer has any part of the man within her. As a single girl, it is so important that you protect yourself against any form of use and abuse, and when sexual intercourse is indulged in outside the boundaries of marriage, a woman can be compromised and confused in her emotions and her physiology.

So men and women are very different. Knowing the

instinctive and biological differences between a man and a woman will make you aware of the different motivations for a relationship. I recommend that you do not go to bars or singles places and “hang out” hoping to find someone. Remember, a “someone” is not good enough. You are waiting for Mr. Right. Most men who go to these places are, first of all, already married, or secondly, are just looking for sex.

So, can you now make a very important decision for yourself? Will you seriously consider that you will not have sex with a man again in the hopes that he will fall in love with you and want to marry you? This is the worst reason in the world to have sex with a man. Don't go to these places where you are putting yourself in jeopardy. I know I am asking a lot from you, but this book has 17 things for you to do to put you on a path where Mr. Right is. Perhaps you can move into this honorable estate for yourself step-by-step. Tell yourself: I am not going to have sex with a man until I am deeply in love with him, he is deeply in love with me, he is a good representative of his species, has every single thing listed as my desires for my life mate and the father of my children, I have a commitment with him, an engagement ring and a wedding date.

The real truth is that most men do not respect a woman who will go to bed with them right away. Remember, respect is one pillar of love, and the other pillar of love is trust. How can a man trust that a woman will be loyal to him when she has gone to bed with every guy she meets? From ancient times on, going back to hanging the bed sheets outside after the marriage night, a man wants his woman to be loyal to him, even if he isn't loyal to her. When you are true to yourself, a man will sense this. He will have respect for you and treat you differently. You can touch his heart, and in his heart he really wants what you want. Your path to a very strong, successful, permanent relationship will be more bright and easy to follow and lead you into the right place where Mr. Right is.

Chapter Thirteen

Internet Dating

During the last few years, some of the couples coming to me have told me they have met on the Internet. In the 21st century, technology has begun to play an important part in the ability to find the “right one.” Many Internet dating websites claim they will match you up with your perfect mate through an electronic database housing thousands or millions of entries.

I recently married Brenda and David, who are the proof that meeting Mr. or Miss Right can happen on the Net. Brenda filled out her information on an Internet site first. David’s best friend convinced him that he could find his perfect woman on the matching site, so David filled out his information a couple of days after Brenda did and asked for his match. Brenda was his No. 1 match, and they found they were totally compatible in everything, even their favorite funky rock ’n roll band. They lived within a few miles of one another, got together for a cup of coffee, and within the year, they were married. So it can work.

A word of warning is needed here, however. I have to say I’ve heard more negative outcomes with Internet dating than I have heard positive experiences. I believe Brenda and David’s story may be the exception to the rule. If you are going to engage

in Internet dating, here are my suggestions to you. E-mail for one to two weeks, and then set a time to meet personally, even if you live in different cities or on different coasts. Do not let e-mail contact go on and on.

Always meet the person in a public place, during the day, perhaps for lunch or a cup of coffee. Pay for your own meal. Tell a friend about your date, including the place and time. Take your cell phone and have it turned on. Always drive your own vehicle to the location, and go home in your own vehicle. Do not give out any personal information at the beginning—no home address, no work address, no credit card information, or social security numbers. Unfortunately, there are more people who lie about themselves on the Internet than there are those who tell the truth. Make sure you are honest in your information. Remember, you are not going to see anyone twice who does not fit every single thing you have noted on your “What I Want in a Life Partner” list, and also remember, you are going to be able to tell in ten minutes whether this person is suitable for marriage or possibly fatherhood. Be true to yourself and don’t get swallowed by the Net.

When it comes to weddings, there is one excellent use for the net. Did you know that over 50% of wedding invitations are now going out by e-mail? The new century bride isn’t tied to the past in any way these days. Invite them electronically!

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Chapter Fourteen

Your Battle Plan

Nvelop your battle plan. The battle will be between you, with all of this good work behind you, let's develop his need to have sex and your goal of heading for a lasting relationship—marriage. When you are involved with a man, and he begins to make moves on you, wanting to touch you and wanting to get close and kiss and be romantic, this is the time to bring the process away from his more immediate goal and towards your long-term goal. How to do that?

First of all, affirm for yourself that your body is your **PRIVATE PROPERTY**. Your body should not be touched or fondled or pawed by a man without your consent. And your consent must be tied to your battle plan! When you get involved with a man, believe me, the battle begins. A man understands battle. He is an expert at gaining 10 yards at a time until he gets a touchdown!

Let's assume you have moved beyond the small talk and basic "get to know you" questions and into a more serious ballpark. He wants—what? How do you take control? Begin to ask him questions like this: Are you married? (Good first question; so many married men are out there on the prowl for a little side stuff. If you think he will leave his wife for you, forget it. He's very likely to cheat on you too.) Continue your questioning. Do you believe in marriage? Do you want to be married? Do you have children? Do you want to have children? What do you do for a living? Do you have a lot of credit card debt? Is your mother alive? Do you think you had a good

mother? Do you have brothers and sisters? How do you keep fit? Have you ever had a bankruptcy? Do you own any property? Are you a Republican? Democrat? Independent? Who are you going to vote for in the presidential race? Why? What do you think about a woman president? A black president? Bring out the list of the characteristics you prefer for your perfect mate. Say, “Here is the list of what I want in a mate. What do you want in a partner?”

The purpose of the questions is to get the man’s focus out of his trousers and back into his brain. He will have to try to think to answer the questions. He may still be sexually motivated but his intents can be steered towards his deeper needs and desires as a man, beyond sex. You can say, “You know, if you are married, you can have sex any time you want! You don’t have to be going out looking for it. And you can develop a deep relationship with your wife that will be very satisfying for you, and sex will get better and better as you are loving and being loved. Your wife is always going to be in your corner, constantly giving you acknowledgment, supporting you, telling you how wonderful you are, and how much she appreciates you. A good woman is a good ally as well as a dependable bed partner.”

Down deep, men know this to be true. It is what they really want. If you continue to educate him and draw him into conversation above the waist, you have a good chance of igniting his higher self, and he may begin to look at you in a different way. You will quickly find out his true intentions. He may walk away if all he wanted was sex, but I believe that man will have been touched by his experience with you and will be a better man in the future because of it.

This type of interaction and conversation allows you to keep your power. It gives you the strength to be autonomous

and self-determined, not submitting to the other person just so you can have a “someone” for the moment. A woman longs to

have the arms of the man around her, making her feel safe and secure, needed and wanted. But I have always told myself those arms have to be attached to something more permanent than a stranger in the night. Those arms need to be the same arms, year after year, in a secure relationship within marriage.

By being “hard to get” you can also stimulate a man’s desire to possess and control. A male trait is to be the pursuer. You are able now to steer this pursuit towards what you want. If he gets on the defensive, he feels powerless. Weaknesses in his armor may appear. He will strive to stay powerful and look good to you, and that may reveal a lot. If he feels threatened as a male, his ego will cause him to begin to brag on himself. If a man brags about his sexuality, it usually means he can get an erection with no guarantee of true sensual lovemaking that is considerate of the woman’s pleasure. You want and need to know these things. But there will be a good side, too. If he’s strong and right for you, he will reveal himself in a positive light. Try to find out what else this man is proud of in his life.

More questions: What is your favorite thing to do? Do you play sports? Have you won any prizes for competitions? Have you received awards at your work? Do you have a college degree?

Another tactic if things are moving in a physical direction, and you wish to change course, is to suggest another meeting at a different time. You can set a time for a date later on. “I’d like to get to know you better,” is a considerate thing to say. Meet for breakfast before going to work. This sets time constraints on the meeting. Also, the man is more focused on his job and daytime activities. You can make arrangements to go to a local function together, perhaps to a social activity of one of the groups you are involved in, or suggest going to dinner at a nice restaurant. You can let the man know you find

him attractive. If you really like him, you can invite him over for dinner and cook for him, especially if you already have your own home. You would be showing him that you are not interested in his paycheck; instead, you really care about him as

a person. And in making your own boundary lines clear, you will be increasing his respect for you. Remember, men today meet many “easy” girls, so he may need to shift gears in his attitude when he understands your standards.

However, the focus must remain on you. You must keep the control and direct the relationship. Ask the man for his business card. Suggest calling him later in the week to set up a time to get together. If you have presented yourself as a compassionate, level-headed, self-assured, self-confident person, respecting yourself and retaining your dignity, this new man will be impressed, and he will consider you in a different way. He will look at you as a possible life partner and not a one-stop, one-night stand for sexual gratification.

Being true to your goals and yourself can set up the circumstances for a future relationship and eventually a marriage that will generate enough respect, trust, and enduring love in each person for the long haul. The first time you realize you are being true to yourself, I think you will feel a bliss inside, light-hearted, full of light. You will feel like you are filled with champagne! “I am true to myself above all!”

You deserve to know this power in your life. Whether it is a triumph in your business life or your personal life, or whether it comes when you say no to the wrong person, to the wrong time, to the wrong place, once you experience the bliss of autonomy and independence, you can never go back to having any part of that wimpy, needy, desperate victimhood of the past.

Chapter Fifteen
Single with Children

Let me just say a few things to you if you are a single girl who has already had a child or children, or if you have been married and are divorced or widowed, single again with children. Being a single mom is one of the hardest jobs in the world. I know. I was a single mom. Today, if I had it to do over, I think I would have let my children's father have custody, and I would have been that great parent on the weekends who let them do whatever they wanted to do, with plenty of money and no rules and regulations. It always took 24 hours for me to get the kids back into their routines and discipline after they had spent the weekend with their dad.

I had to be the one who said, "NO!" I, Marcy Ann, Mother, made them clean their room, do their homework, be home by 8 pm, eat their vegetables and not eat junk. I taught them spiritual principles: honesty, integrity, faithfulness, family loyalty, dedication, trust, and being true to themselves, financial responsibility and accountability, the laws of sowing and reaping, and doing unto others what they would like to have done unto them. It wasn't easy. I still remember my fears for them when they started to drive and to date, and today, in our world, mothering alone is even more scary!

I believe that if you are single and raising your child or children, you will be using your energy dealing day-to-day with their activities, school work, and emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs. Children need their moms. Kids of divorce have so much to cope with, living at Mom's and going to

Dad's, with each household having two different sets of rules and conflicting emotional dynamics. Being a single mom, working and trying to hold it all together, is just plain tough.

I am seeing an alarming trend that seems to be leading us away from traditional family values and into a disjointed, communal society. Mom has some other man living at the children's home, not married to, but sleeping with her; this man's children come for the weekend, and Mom's kids go to their dad's for the weekend. At that house Dad has a girlfriend and her kids living with him. It reminds me of the old Abbott & Costello comedy routine—"Who's on first? What's on second?" We have more latch-key kids, more babies in daycare, more kids being raised by grandparents, and more obese children today than ever before in our country's history.

So, here is my "down and dirty" advice for you. I believe a single mother should not be dating and having sex until she has raised her children. A child is the incarnation of a very special soul who has talents and gifts the world needs. That child's little soul deserves and needs to have the loving environment of a full-time mother who is dedicated to his/her welfare. In the first place mothers who have to work, and most mothers do work, have so little time left in each day to give to their children that there is just no time for anything else. Just let me tell you, after your children are gone, there is plenty of time left to have a life of your own! Really, you will have more years left after the kids are raised than you will spend raising them. Nearly twice as much time is left. Wait until then to pursue a romance and serious relationship. Or turn the custody over to the father, be an every-other-weekend parent, and go on with your own life.

If you are going to keep custody of your children and date anyway, if you do have to be with a man, do it away from the

children's home. But be truthful with yourself. Why do you want to be with this guy? Is it so you can say you have a man in

your life? Do you need help financially? You don't want to be alone? I encourage you to keep doing the worksheet and get involved in one or more of the 17 productive, life-affirming things we are going to discuss next. But if you are going to date anyway, never leave your children alone. Be sure they are either at their dad's or at a reliable relative's house, or hire a suitable babysitter. If your children are growing up, it is not wise to date a man who has children of the same age but of different sexes from yours. And if you have children and the new partner doesn't, do not have any more children until your children are raised.

I know you think this is all too strict, but you can't deny that you had these children in the first place. You are responsible for their needs. As we listen to the radio advice shows or read the advice columns in the newspaper, we can hear all the horror stories sometimes surfacing in second marriages with children involved. The groom's son had sex with the bride's daughter and the daughter is now pregnant, or the stepfather is sexually abusing the bride's daughter. These trouble-filled situations can result in runaways, even suicide, so why even go there? Just put the children FIRST before anything else until they are grown and on their own. While you are single and raising the children, doing some or all of the 17 things I am going to present in the next chapter, by the time your children are out on their own you will then be ready for Mr. Right to show up for the rest of your life!

My children were 13, 12, and five years old when my husband left us. Occasionally I dated while I was a single mom. My children would see this occasional date pick me up and bring me back by 9 pm. They watched him leave. As I have been emphasizing, it has always been true that men will date a woman in order to have sex but draw the line when love and marriage are part of the equation. This is particularly true for women who already have children. What I learned was that

while most men found me attractive and would be interested in having sex, no one wanted to take on the responsibility of three

children who were not their own. Why should they? I eventually stopped dating. I wanted to set a good example for my two daughters and my son. Your children deserve to have a home that is holy, sanctified, safe and secure.

Remember, I have done what I am asking of you. You must think only of your children right now, not yourself. You can focus on becoming independent and self-sufficient, not needing a husband, doing the worksheet every day to learn more about yourself, making your list of a perfect partner, and dreaming about the wedding you will have when your children are grown and on their own. I am so grateful that my children are successful, emotionally healthy, self-confident problem-solvers. They are assets to their partners, their jobs, their neighborhoods, and their communities. Believe me, it is more than worth the sacrifice of the few years it takes to get children launched and successful in life. And since my children have been raised, I have had years and years of exciting and adventuresome experiences, pushing myself to the limits, investigating everything I could, and learning so much about life and the world.

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Chapter Sixteen

Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right

I have promised to tell you what you can do now while waiting for Mr. Right. Are your lists complete? Are self-sufficiency and autonomy now part of your life? I'll try to be very definite about how to learn and to grow while waiting for your Twin Flame. This will be a day-to-day process from now on, beginning at this moment. Start with No. 1.

1. First of all, if you are not financially self-sufficient yet, whatever you need to do to be financially on your own with NO HELP from anyone—DO IT! Be able to pay your rent and fund your car payment, your insurance, your cell phone and utilities. You should be able to buy your clothes, eat, and have entertainment—by yourself! The less needy you are, the less desperate you will be to find a man. Do you want a home of your own? Set your goal now to buy one. Impossible? Nothing is impossible. Let me say it again, nothing is impossible! I bought my own home, and my niece Danielle, mentioned earlier, bought her own home too. We did this on what we earned and saved. I have decorated my home exactly the way I want. Everywhere my eye looks in my home, I see what is beautiful to me. I did it—for ME! You do it—for YOU. As long as you think you need to have a man to get you a home, or pay your bills, or take care of you, you will be at the mercy of every so-called “man” out there who doesn't care, or worse, rapes and

plunders and uses and abuses! You can take care of yourself. You can do it.

Let me be more specific. In order to become totally self-sufficient, I took a job as a live-in caregiver for three-and-one-half years. A caregiver receives a salary, plus room and board, so I was able to save nearly all of my pay. At the end of those work years, I had enough money to make a down payment on a house. This sort of demanding work might seem extreme to you, but it all depends upon what is most important for your life. I wanted a home of my own more than anything else. I took care of my patient, and during my time off, I was also doing some of the 16 other things I am going to discuss next. I was expanding my life, doing the worksheet, getting together with different groups, meeting interesting people, learning new things.

When I left care giving, I worked two jobs: at the bank from 9 am until 2 pm four days a week and then at the motel from 3 pm until 11 pm on the four days I worked at the bank and 7am until 3 pm when I was not at the bank. This also might seem extreme to you, but I was determined to be independent. Also, working was my social life. I made good friends with my co-workers, especially at the motel. We were like a family there. That motel was open seven days a week 24 hours a day, with two people working each shift. We instituted a revolutionary work idea in which each of us was cross-trained in everyone else's job, so we could switch around and work whatever hours or days we wanted to, as long as all shifts were covered with two people. Eventually, our manager allowed us to work it out among ourselves. She never knew who was going to show up to work! But we were responsible adults who loved the flexibility, and we made it work for that motel.

My niece Danielle worked as a caregiver while she earned her bachelor's degree in nursing. She was then immediately able to start working at \$27 per hour and eventually, as charge nurse, earn \$35 to \$40 per hour. This good job made it

easy for her to save enough money to buy a house. You could also choose to rent a room in a home very reasonably in order to have a place to live while you obtain an education or save money to become debt-free, independent, and self-sufficient. You can “batch it” with other girls or women in an inexpensive apartment and save every cent left over. The immediate sacrifice is worth the end result!

2. Next, go through everything that you own—stuff in boxes in your closet or in a storage unit—or still at your parents. Go through your personal possessions. Make a conscious decision to either keep each thing or to get rid of it, with your decision based on the goals you have set for your life now. Many times nothing new can come into our lives because our lives are so full of stuff and junk and things from the past. Just cleaning out one closet and getting rid of old stuff can create space for new things. At one time in my life I lived in a room in another person’s home. I needed to get everything I owned into that one room. I was surprised just how little we actually need to go about our daily lives. In fact, I could eventually get everything I owned in just my car. And even today, I don’t accumulate stuff. If I don’t use it, I get rid of it. People can’t believe the empty space in my closets.

Let me be more specific: Check each piece of clothing in your wardrobe. If it is of a trendy or momentary fashion, eliminate it. Consider each piece in light of your new goal—to be a respected married lady. Keep things that are classic and elegantly fashionable through the years. Retain items that go together so you can mix and match with a few things and make lots of different outfits. I finally got rid of all those wool suits, skirts, lined slacks, and polyester blouses I had brought with me from Indiana more than 20 years ago. I never wore them here in California, but they were expensive, and I thought I should keep them, just in case. In case of what? That I would move back to Indiana? I don’t think so! So I sent them to my daughter in

Omaha and told her to take them to work and let the girls there take whatever they wanted and donate the rest

to the Salvation Army.

Let me challenge you regarding designer clothing. Do you want to wear designer clothing to make yourself feel more worthy? More successful? More fashionable? My choice is that if I am going to advertise for a designer, that company has to pay me to wear that “signature” dress or carry the logo purse. I prefer to develop my own style and choose classic lines that complement my figure and a monochromic color scheme so I don't draw attention to my clothes. I'd rather have the attention myself! Let people see my eyes, enjoy my smile, hear what I have to say.

Do you have fat clothes and skinny clothes? (Most everyone does!) For now, just keep what fits, then make a conscious decision to be either fat or skinny. Choose a body style that perfectly reflects you as an individual. Don't let the pressure of the media or movie stars or societal norms dictate to you who you are or what you should look like. If you decide to be thinner, begin that program of weight loss and reward your losses with a classic new piece of clothing. More on nutrition and weight control later on. I challenged myself by entering the Mrs. Senior California Pageant. I had to lose weight to qualify for the contest. My talent was piano playing, so I took weekly lessons for three months before the pageant to prepare the challenging Bach two-part invention I performed. Practicing the piano also took my mind off food and helped the pounds to roll off. A good fitness program helps, too. I can swim outside all year here in California, and I do laps two to three times a week.

Other things we keep that we should get rid of can include items or appliances that don't work which we imagine we will eventually get fixed; sets of dishes that are missing cups or plates or bowls; old linens that are stained or worn; paperwork and receipts; guarantees for items you don't even have anymore; or old insurance policies and other paperwork that isn't relevant or has expired. You need only keep bank statements for the last three years. Here in California many

people have one box which contains their important papers, ready to go in case of fire or other emergencies.

Go through all of your pictures, pick your favorites, frame them and put them on the wall or your desk or coffee table. Put the rest of your pictures in albums with notes of the subject in the picture and the location where each shot was taken while you still remember. These notes will be valuable later on when one of your children's children calls you to ask who so-and-so is in a photo. We have a family picture that has a little girl in it with all of us and no one knows who she is. Take your albums out from time to time and enjoy them. I picked three of my favorite pictures, had them enlarged and framed, and entered them in the Orange County Fair photography section. All three of my pictures were accepted in the 400 selected for competition, and one of them won the sixth place white ribbon! Later on, I entered that photo in the Laguna Beach Senior Art Festival and won the blue! This picture now hangs in my blue-and-white main bathroom, complete with its award ribbons. I love to look at it, and friends and guests who use the bathroom always comment on it. I finally threw out a whole big drawer full of old film negatives. With today's technology, we can make another copy of anything. What about all those old records, slides, or cassette tapes? You can get them all transferred to DVDs.

If you will eliminate all the extra "stuff" in your life, things that aren't relevant to who you are today and what you now desire for your life, you will create an "expectancy" vacuum.

It is an important truth that there is a powerful spiritual law that operates impersonally, automatically, and continuously, which will activate on your behalf: *Nature abhors a vacuum*. The universe will rush in to fill the space.

Create this sacred space in life and watch what happens.

3. Look into groups that do things together. Today it is easy to find these organizations. Just hit the Net for something you are interested in and you'll find plenty of places to invest your "looking-for-a-man" energy in a more positive way. Gourmet clubs go out to eat together to experience various cultural dining delights. Sometimes they have round-robin dinner parties, each person having the group to his or her home for some part of a multi-course meal. This gives each cook a chance to show off culinary expertise and create something memorable for the group.

Interested in art? Many galleries have volunteer docent positions available. They also have fund-raisers, dances, and other social events that include the docents. Like flowers? I was a docent for the Hortense Miller Garden in Laguna Beach. Ms. Miller was recognized as the world's leading horticulturist at the time. Meeting Hortense has been a highlight of my life. We had tea with her once a month, and she taught us about flowers, herbs, bushes and trees. She believed that flowers have consciousness, that they choose their location, they are particular about propagation, and they communicate with one another. She had a rose bush which had no thorns growing over the doorway to her home. She said that once a plant knows it is loved, and that it is safe and no longer needs to create a defense system, it will only enlarge its own beauty. Stop and meditate on that! Profound!

Sports groups go walking, play tennis or golf, volley ball, ski, rock climb, hike or swim. They attend football, basketball and baseball games together, many times having great seats. I attended the America's Cup yacht race in San Diego with a racing group, and our boat was right there when Dennis Conner won for our country. Remember the bride who said, "Football brought us together, and football will keep us together."

Music groups go to concerts and operas. Or you may be interested in classic cars. This is a huge network of people who collect and restore antique cars, go to auctions and car shows

all over the country. I married a bride and groom who met through their love of antique cars, and everyone who attended the wedding came in their 1900s horseless carriages! Love of motorcycles is another big group. Remember my bride and groom who jumped on their twin Kawasakis for their first ride together as husband and wife? What about auto racing? Indy cars or stock cars? How about animals? There are millions of people who adore their pets! Dog shows, cat shows, horse shows, animal shelters, animal rescues, animal fairs. If you love animals, there is a group for you.

It's all about being constructively occupied and growing as a person. Interested in theater? I took acting classes for two semesters at our local community college. The professor of the acting class also conducted a theater group which went to many of the small theaters in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas on a regular basis. He arranged for us to meet the actors afterwards and discuss the play and acting. In addition to being great fun, it was something to look forward to all the time, and the principles I learned in these acting classes make me a great wedding minister. Actually, when I was taking the classes, I had no idea I would eventually be a wedding minister, and that is what is so wonderful about being on your path. Everything you have done is a part of everything that you are doing and everything that you will eventually do, and somewhere along the way, the man right for you will appear. I will come as close as I can to guaranteeing that!

4. Learn how to really use your computer. Study Microsoft, Word, Excel, Quicken, or other programs. Being computer-literate today is a must. I am learning web design so I can make changes on my website www.marcyann.com and not be as dependent upon a webmaster as I was when I first got my website, which saves me money, and I'm enjoying being creative and presenting an image of my company that only I can produce.

5. Learn how to knit or crochet lovely pieces, or sew something that is beautiful or useful. I find that it is very

fulfilling to see something take shape as I knit or crochet. It makes me know that I am accomplishing something worthwhile. If you want to lose weight or quit smoking, it helps to keep your hands and thoughts occupied in constructing something. Knit two, purl two. You are busy and can't be stuffing food in your face or lighting a cigarette. My granddaughter recently asked me to make her another blanket. She is 16 years old now, and the blanket I made for her when she was born is in shreds! She wants a new afghan to wrap herself in during the wintertime in Omaha as she watches TV or is on the computer.

6. Take some art classes or sculpture classes. This is still on my list-to-do. I want to take a class in Chinese brush painting. I believe I could do it.

7. Take some cooking classes. Experience creating a successful cheese soufflé or a great hollandaise sauce or try some Vietnamese cooking or mix up a wonderful Spanish flan. Discover the art of setting a beautiful table or using the color and texture of fruits and vegetables to create an elegant presentation of meals on the plate. When I was the caregiver, I cooked three meals a day for my patient. I researched recipes daily—at the library, in cookbooks, and my favorite, the *Los Angeles Times*. A local grocery had exotic and unusual foods from all over the world, and I learned how to cook them. I'd serve a meal every day that had something totally different, a meal that my patient had never eaten before, or a food fixed in a way I had never fixed it before, to constantly give him new eating experiences and perhaps brighten his life a bit. You can provide this experience for yourself and others.

8. Here's an extra job for you that will take all of your spare time: Finish up that postponed college degree. My elder daughter completed her degree in 2007 while working full-time, taking care of her husband, and also helping me with the wedding business. So it is possible to work and finish your

degree and also do other things. You can now go to college online and take classes by audio or video tape. I have

91

taken hundreds of courses by audiotape, listening to them in my car. (In California, it is wise to redeem that time in traffic. I always have a tape to listen to.) It's a lot better to be educating yourself than listening to mushy music that keeps your emotional side all stirred up and unhappy, wishing and wanting and not having. Most recently, I've enjoyed a class on values and ethics, which keeps me thinking at a higher level and being true to myself. I also just finished a course on Mesopotamia, which now is Iraq. It helps to have the historical viewpoint of areas that are in contention today. What has happened there before? I find that I cannot be seduced by politicians because I know the truth about the past and the present.

A college degree in your chosen field will allow you to get a better job in an area of personal interest, and you will make more money, becoming independent and self-sufficient sooner, besides being happy doing something you enjoy. There are certifications you could pursue: real estate broker, hairdresser, yoga instructor, Reiki master, reflexology practitioner, hypnotherapist, feng shui designer, massage therapist, expert in esthetics, or cosmetology, acupuncture, aromatherapy. You could be a nail artist or an Licensed Practical Nurse or choose one of the jobs I haven't listed. New careers are opening all the time in hospitality, health care and other service industries. Find out what you love to do and get certified in that field. Make more money and become independent, self-confident, and self-sufficient.

9. Study nutrition and find out the best things to eat for your body type and lifestyle. Get into shape! Lose weight if you need to. A funny joke that really isn't so funny is that the difference between a wife and a mistress is 45 pounds. Get as healthy as you can, and set the goal of achieving top physical condition. Remember what my accountant friend said: A woman who is self-sufficient and independent always takes

better care of herself, knowing that keeping herself in an attractive condition makes her a more suitable mate for

92

a professional man. Most women you see stepping out of a Mercedes accompanied by tall, handsome gentlemen are extremely physically fit and attractive. Many wives of successful corporate men are classically dressed and strikingly svelte.

I studied the Ayurvedic health systems as well as other mind-body philosophies. Supplement your diet with vitamins and minerals, if you need to. Join a health club and work out. My sister called recently to tell me that by her 70th birthday, she will have been exercising every day for 45 years, and that morning she had just bicycled ten miles at her health club. She is in terrific shape, the same weight she was when she married her intern husband, who has been practicing medicine for the same 45 years. Set your goal to look as good as you possibly can for your age and your body type.

10. Learn about and enjoy the Bible. Several recent polls say that more than 80 percent of the people in the United States believe in God. And the most acceptable source of information about God is the Bible. Here's an interesting project: You can learn a great deal of valuable information for your life by starting to write out the Bible word for word. I know that this sounds like an impossible task, but I did it, not once, but five times. By writing (or type) the Bible word for word, I came upon things I have never heard preached by any minister. Some of these things are:

God hates the shaking of the finger; God keeps no record of any mistakes—nothing is written down anywhere; God's judgment is the daily operation of the law of cause and effect, so what goes around comes around; men and women are created equal and the dominion over the Earth is given to the both of us; the true submission is one to another, in love. We can never be separated from the Love of God; there is no physical place called heaven or a physical place called hell; heaven and hell are

Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right

states of consciousness; angels are around us all the time; we can't recognize angels because they look just like us (I've been able to tell sometimes, though, by the twinkle in their eyes!); we are creatures with free will;

God never interferes with the free will of man; we have the full power of free choice; some choices aren't for our highest and best good but no choice is wrong; we just reap what we sow. Jesus believed in reincarnation and was a vegetarian. Jesus' birthday isn't December 25th as shepherds were abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night—this doesn't happen in December, it would be true more for August or September; we were never supposed to celebrate Jesus' birthday; we were only to remember his death. Mary wasn't a virgin; Jesus was born a natural man who thought it not robbery to be considered equal with God; his father was Joseph and his mother was Mary, and they were married; Jesus was made perfect; he came to demonstrate that everyone is a son or daughter of God, with God as his or her father, able to do all the things that he did; and we are supposed to do greater things than Jesus did. Have you walked on water yet? Raised the dead? Walked through walls? Controlled the weather? Healed the sick? Turned water into wine or lead into gold? The Bible says that the earth groans and travails awaiting the manifestation of the Sons of God; these Sons of God that the earth wants to see manifested, my friend, are you and I! Our earth is certainly groaning and travailing more now than it ever has!

To sum it up Reverend Marcy says: The Bible's true salvation is total health, total prosperity and total bliss; we aren't "saved" until we are absolutely healthy, rich and totally happy. I could write another whole book about what's in the Bible. However, you have the right to find out for yourself.

11. Get some psychological therapy. I have continued therapy of all kinds during the past 20 years since I moved to California and started my life as Marcy Ann. In 1986 I enrolled in some Scientology courses. Without becoming a member of that group, I began with their Personal Ethics and Integrity course. This started my examination of my personal values, and I set an even higher level of integrity for myself. I also studied their teachings on how to realize goals in life.

Here is a statement from Scientology: “A goal is not something that one decides upon, which then miraculously comes to fruition, just because one decided it would. The attainment of a goal necessitates that certain actions be carried out in the real world which effect some change for the better and a step closer towards its accomplishment.” Scientology teaches an action plan that includes: purposes, policies, plans, programs, projects, orders, statistics and final product. Each of these is an important step in accomplishing the action plan to meet the goal. I have been successful because I learned how to accomplish goals. Also, I did some ”auditing.” This is working with a practitioner, one-on-one, and releasing stored up emotions attached to situations in the past that trigger negative reactions to situations in the present. I did 24 hours of Scientology auditing—and did I ever clear out a lot of baggage in my life! I recommend auditing over any other type of psychological counseling. Auditing gets to the cause and core of any problem in your life and releases it.

I have enjoyed light and sound therapies. I heartily recommend toning, tuning forks, iridology, acupuncture, and other energy medicine therapies. Western Medicine only treats symptoms like pain, sickness, disease, depression, or addictions. Drugging a problem, even with prescription drugs, only covers it up. You need to get to the causes of harmful actions in your life and dig out the core seed. Jesus talked about digging out the roots of a tree. If you only cut the tree down, it will spring up again. Instead of covering up or denying that we have a problem, we need to recognize and get to the root of a problem and dig it out! Energy medicines go into the subtle energy fields and find the causes and cores of problems manifesting at the physical level.

You can do a Net search for “energy medicine” and discover tons of therapies. Some of these I have done are: Somaenergetics, Caroline Myss’s philosophy on Archetypes and Sacred Contracts, Jonathan Goldman’s *The Seven Secrets of*

Sound Healing, and Deepak Chopra's *Soul of Healing Medita-*

95

tions (I still do this one every day).

I regularly visited an RN who had been trained in reading the subtle energies of the body. She discovered that the chronic cough I had had for years was stuck in my memory body, which is part of the etheric body. You can search for “etheric body” to read more. Some of this will amaze you. The nurse practitioner and I began a series of releases of that memory, and presto chango—the cough disappeared. No drugs or invasive actions needed. Today I do not take any medications or supplements.

You can order a book of *Prayers, Meditations and Dynamic Decrees* from Summit Lighthouse by calling 1-800-245-5445. Speaking decrees out loud to yourself helps you hear the words to empower yourself to release negative patterns of behavior. One of my favorites is the Violet Flame Decree. Purple is one of the most powerful colors in the light spectrum. One line says: “Let the Light of the Violet Flame blaze throughout my entire soul and my four lower bodies (the emotional body, the intellectual body, the physical body and the etheric body) until all impurity, negative hereditary traits and harmful momentums are removed with their causes and cores.” Sometimes it takes some doing to get out the “core” of a harmful direction in our life. But it can be done.

Our four lower bodies are filled with thoughts and emotions and beliefs that aren't working for our highest and best good. Energy medicine is helpful in removing “stuff” that is collected in the cells of our body. Dr. Candace Pert writes about emotion stuck in our cells in her book, *Molecules of Emotion*. Cancer starts as an emotion that is stuck in a cell in the body. If we can get all of the negative emotions that are stored in our cells out of the cells through light-and-sound therapies, we will never have cancer.

Fear is also an emotion that is stored in our cells. You can begin to replace all of the fear in your life with love. You will

never have high blood pressure or a heart attack or stroke when all fears are released, and you are filled with love.

96

Another book I have written in conjunction with David Hulse (www.somaenergetics.com) is called *A Fork in the Road*. It discusses how sound created the Universe—(and God “SAID”), and how the original pure divine sounds have been distorted over the centuries. I only use sound now in a beneficial and therapeutic way in my life: no ugly rock music, no rappers, no sentimental country music. These sounds only stimulate and empower sadness, anger, resentment, bitterness, fear, loneliness, sexual “love,” dependent feelings, needs, and desires. You don’t require this kind of stimulation. You need to empower your true self with love, happiness, bliss, riches and health in order to realize your goals and fulfill your purpose here on Earth.

You can also learn about fasts, colon cleanses, and other natural remedies for clearing and cleansing the body of toxic waste which so drains us of our natural energies. Our body contains enough energy to provide power to light a city of more than 100,000 people. Why are we so tired all the time? You can learn how to rid your body of all harmful and lifeendangering substances and poisons and regain your natural energies, and then direct those energies towards accomplishing your goals. Learn how to utilize the unlimited energy available to us through the sun and our breath.

I think some people are embarrassed to think that they might need therapy. I say, get as much help as you can! Let others who have specialized in one field provide you with their expertise and information. It is another way to benefit from the wisdom of The Many.

12. Get into quantum physics. I can just hear you now. “What did she just say?” Quantum physics? Yes, I know this sounds strange, but studying quantum physics has done more for me than any other thing I have ever done to empower myself. I would have put this first on the list, but I didn’t want to lose

you right at the beginning! Quantum physics defines the role of the observer in our universe, and to let you in on the secret, the observer is YOU! You have all the power!

A new book recently released, *The Secret*, featured on Oprah Winfrey's TV show, instructs us all to be creators. *The Secret* shares information concerning the law of attraction and the role of intention and attention, parts of the bigger field of quantum physics. You will discover your real, scientific power as an individual.

Here are some other books to check out. All are available on Amazon.com, and many can be checked out from the library, among them *Taking the Quantum Leap* by Fred Alan Wolf; *Beyond the Quantum* and *The Holographic Universe* by Michael Talbot; *The Secret Life of Plants* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird. Be aware also of *The Keys of Enoch* by J.J. Hurtak; *The Science of the Spoken Word* and *Saint Germain on Alchemy* by Mark L. Prophet; *Conversations with God, Books 1, 2, and 3* by Neale Donald Walsch; and *The Seven Mighty Elohim Speak on the Seven Steps to Precipitation* by Thomas Printz. The writings of Caroline Myss, Alice Bailey, Madam Blavatsky and Catherine Ponder; *The Science of Mind* by Ernest Holmes and *Molecules of Emotion* by Dr. Candace Pert are helpful. *The Field* by Lynne McTaggart; *The Elegant Universe* by Brian Greene; *The Wheels of Life* by Dr. Anodea Judith; and *Healing with Form, Energy and Light* by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche are worth your while. All books by Deepak Chopra and all of the books by Paramhansa Yogananda, especially *The Divine Romance* are wonderful. And/or—sign up for David Hulse's Tape of the Month at www.somaenergetics.com. My favorite book of all is *The Magic Presence* by Godfrey Ray King. I read this one over and over, week in and week out, and I have for over 20 years.

This list must seem a bit overwhelming. It is just a partial list of the books in my library, a collection that has taken me over 20 years to study, digest, and to try to put into practice. But just pick ONE of these books—a title that attracts your inner person—and read and study it while you are waiting for Mr. Right. Begin to look into life at the sub-atomic level where nothing is set in stone, where everything is ruled by the

observer, where the divine power of everything is love, and every moment is a new field of possibilities.

Be aware of this. There is a spiritual hierarchy in place right at this very minute to bring to pass whatever we can conceive and desire for ourselves.

Nothing is impossible. We only need to put the power of our will towards our goal, focus the power of our intention and attention, clarify and purify our thoughts and desires, and then hold fast until we see the actual manifestation in the outer world of form. This project is worth every minute of spare time you can focus upon it. Begin and end each day with a positive, clear definition of your hopes, dreams and heart's longings. You will see results beyond your wildest imaginations.

13. Have regular massages, manicures and pedicures, and be natural. I buy massages in a package—pay for six, get one free. A massage is very good way to satisfy the body's need to be touched. It has been said that metaphysically we need six hugs a day. We can get them from family, friends, neighbors, or co-workers. Massages, too, can help fulfill this need. Get a manicure and pedicure on a regular basis and begin to be beautiful for yourself.

Keep your hair natural, if you dare. Allow yourself to enjoy your uniqueness as a specific creation. There are not even two drops of water alike. I learned this recently at an Alchemy Convention in Las Vegas. Even though water is always H₂O, there is an infinitesimally different combination of hydrogen and oxygen in each drop of water. God loves the infinite variety of the creation. Each of us is unlike anyone else. Don't try to look like everyone else and lose God's unique expression through you because you are doing what everyone else is doing with hair or fashion or looks. I conducted a wedding one summer on a big yacht in Newport Beach, California. One-hundred-fifty people attended the wedding, and every woman there looked like every other woman: long-haired,

thin blondes with big breasts wearing spaghetti-strap, tiny, black mini-dresses and high-heeled shoes. It reminded me of another wedding I did one weekend at a large hotel in Anaheim where there was a motorcycle convention. Every male at the convention looked like Willie Nelson, complete with a headband and railroad-engineer scarf at his neck, black leather boots, pants and jacket. Once you gain confidence in your own individuality, you can begin to set the standards and the fashion for others and become a person others copy, not the person always copying other people.

The 21st Century Will
allow
Each person's
Uniqueness
And
Purpose
To be revealed.
The harmony of our world
Will not be realized by
Uniformity through conformity,
By compressing nations
And individuals
Into
Preconceived and outdated
Molds and ideas of the past.
World Peace and Harmony
Will be entered into
By allowing
Each individual's uniqueness
As a spiritual being
With talents and special gifts
To be
Expressed,
Accepted
And
Appreciated by all.

Marcy Ann Cheek 1999

14. Keep a daily journal. I recommend keeping a journal in addition to doing the personal worksheet regularly. Write down your experiences and analyze them. Writing out your feelings helps you to process them. You don't want negative emotions hanging out in your memory cells. Dr. Candace Pert in *Molecules of Emotion* says these emotions actually have weight! Release them and stay slim. Also, writing out your experiences helps you understand some of the "whys" of your choices. Remember, no choice is "wrong," some are just not in your best interest. When you go back into these journals later on, you will see how much you have learned and how much you have changed.

15. Be involved in a "world-changing" group. This could include a prayer group, the Peace Corps, a club fighting AIDS, a political party, the Salvation Army, or another notfor-profit organization. There are thousands of these groups trying to help the world. And they send you "here and there" as you hope to meet your Twin Flame.

My favorite story here comes from my friend Loreen. A devout Catholic lady who never had children, she was devastated when she lost her husband of 40 years. For the first year after his death, she went to live with nuns in a cloistered community in Northern California, and when she was ready to rejoin real life, she decided she wanted to aid orphans.

She renewed the lease on her home and flew to La Paz, Mexico, to investigate an orphanage there. The first week she was there, she was at an ice cream store with a worker from the orphanage, and a gentleman came up and handed the worker a note. After she read it, the worker handed it to Loreen. "I would like to meet the lady you are with." The gentleman was now standing at the front of the store, just inside the door. He was tall, Caucasian, dressed like a boat captain, and young—as it turned out, about 20 years younger than Loreen. Loreen nodded to him. He came over and introduced himself and asked if he could take her to dinner that evening. She asked if she could bring the worker with her, and he said yes.

Several weeks later, I got a telephone call from her. She was full of excitement about this new man in her life. He had a boat, and she was going to give up her apartment and move onto the boat. And all I could think to say was, “But, Loreen, what about the orphans?” It’s something we’ve laughed about ever since. She and Terry did work together at the orphanage, she eventually financed a new church in the area that Terry built for the priest, and the orphans attend this church. They have been married 11 years now (2008), summering in California and wintering in Mexico. And every year, those orphans have the best Christmas that Loreen and Terry can provide. Another success story! Mr. Right was right there in La Paz.

16. As you are enriching your spiritual self while you wait for your mate, here is the most powerful idea I’m offering you. Begin going places alone. You will never know the power of this suggestion until you do it. My friend Loreen took off by herself to La Paz where Mr. Right was waiting. Start by going to a movie alone. There is always a good seat for one person. Be able to go places without someone being with you, even if it seems that there is no one else there by herself or himself, and everywhere you look, everyone is with someone. Go to the symphony or the theater. I love to go to the ballet, and I can always get a seat on the front row at the last minute. I love to see the dancers up close, hear the toe shoes hit the stage, and watch their muscles quiver. Take yourself out to a baseball game, get a hotdog and a soft drink, and stand up at the 7th inning and sing your heart out. “Take me out to the ball game, buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack.”

And now, the culmination: Make a date with yourself to go to dinner at a very expensive restaurant. Call and make a reservation. Get your hair done, have a manicure and a pedicure, buy a new dress. You can even schedule a limo to come to pick you up to take you to the restaurant, wait for you and take you home. Order the most expensive things on the menu that you like. Let the staff wait on you and treat you like royalty.

Totally experience it. Enjoy the way the chef has presented the food on the plate. Eat slowly, and savor every bite.

If you are able to do this, I promise you that you will never be the same again. You will be elevated in stature and transformed in your consciousness, just as if your fairy godmother had come and waved her magic wand over you. And your transformation won't disappear at midnight.

17. Develop the deepest level of your spirituality. I've saved this one for last. I spent more than three years studying a Buddhist practice known as Dzogchen with Jeffrey Miller known spiritually as Lama Surya Das. (www.dzogchen.org) Dzogchen teaches that everything is perfect in its natural state, such a comforting thought—and traditional Buddhism gives practical ways to eliminate suffering. I attended one retreat that was a seven-day period spent in silence, in meditation and contemplation with God. I received divine guidance at this retreat that was life-altering.

I have studied the greatest of the esoteric writers—all female: Alice Bailey (*Twenty-Four Books of Esoteric Philosophy*), Madam Helena Blavatsky (*Isis Unveiled*) and Marianne Williamson (*A Course in Miracles*)—three spiritual giants who teach metaphysical truths. I have studied *The Urantia Book*, a colossal cosmic handbook that discusses creation, God, Ascending and Descending Sons of God, and provides a revolutionary look at the Lucifer Rebellion. An exceptional book that looks at God and creation mathematically is *The Reflective Universe—The Evolution of Consciousness* by Arthur M. Young.

And of course, there are the writings of the brilliant physicist, Stephen Hawking.

Let the Holy Spirit direct you into a study of philosophy that is right for you. The truth is what sets you free—free to be everything you can be.

Seventeen Things To Do While Waiting for Mr. Right

103

Chapter Seventeen

Let's Summarize

So, now, dear one, we have looked at 17 things to do to

keep your life interesting and fun. Getting involved in just one of these 17 things to do will take the focus off “trying to find a man.” As sovereign, self-governing women, we can rearrange our priorities and free ourselves from pressures: the pressure to work harder to compete with the men on their playing field, the pressure to be skinnier, to have bigger breasts, to bare all and to bear all to obtain a companion.

Sometimes the very energy we use to try to “find a man” actually goes out into the cosmos in a negative way, pushing away the best partner and attracting leeches and sharks. Men read energy much more astutely than women realize. A man can instantly read an energy that is grasping and dependent, trying to hold him and attach to him, willing to do anything. Most men are very independent creatures, not easily “lassoed!” They want to pursue and conquer, not be pursued and conquered. That is why using your womanly sexuality is not going to get you what you really want. Remember, if a man has sex with you, this does not mean that he is in love with you nor that he wants to have a serious relationship with you and will eventually want to get married. But if you can touch his heart, and he really likes you, he might be more inclined to get married if you don't have sex with him until he does marry you. Let his pursuit lead to conquering you on your terms.

If you are living with “someone” right now whom you think is MR. RIGHT, take your stand and tell him TODAY “I want to be married.” If he doesn’t want to be married, tell him to move out, that you are moving on with your life with someone who shares your same hopes, dreams, and desires.

You are a 21st-century woman with all the power and authority to create the life you want. You desire to be married, and you can create the circumstances that will eventually produce the manifestation of this desire. The answer to your prayer is already “yes.” You just need to allow the process to work.

I used to feel insulted and hurt when a man would close a conversation with, “Well, sweetie, take care of yourself.” Now, I affirm to myself, “Yes, I do take care of myself!” Better than any man has ever taken care of me.

I urge you to get started today. Write down what you really want. Begin doing the worksheet every day for the first 42 days. Begin making your list for your perfect partner in life. Create your dream wedding. Prepare your battle plan. Rather than trying to find a man, pick one or two or possibly three of the 17 things to do and begin to concentrate your energy there. After you have found yourself and developed yourself into Ms. Right, Mr. Right will show up! I promise.

The Single Girl's Handbook
MUSICAL MEDITATIVE CDs

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and Bruce and Brian BecVar
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VOICES OF THE WIND
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WHITE SWAN RECORDS: MANTRAS
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