

Lessons in Love



***"Soul mate, two little words, one big concept. A belief that someone somewhere is holding the key to your heart and your dream house. All you have to do is find them. So where is this person? And if you had someone and it didn't work out, does that mean they weren't your soul mate?"
Carrie Bradshaw, SATC***

So does Mr. Right exist? While desperately google-ing for answers last week, I came across The Institute for the Study of Man – a website offering advice on all types of relationships including friendship, marriage, love, sex, parenting, business relationships and most importantly the relationship we have with ourselves. Founder Elizabeth Schnugh is based in Slovakia. She has chosen Ireland as her EU centre for her teachings and even closer to home, she offers courses throughout the year at Clonea Strand Hotel, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford. Elizabeth agreed to be interviewed by me via email I was intrigued!

There are approximately 700,000 single people in Ireland - what advice would you give to those searching for love?

I am a bit short on advice as I believe we are our own best teachers. Having said this, I believe we all have a picture of "THE ONE" in our minds and it is this that is tripping us up! That picture is of the purrrrr-fect mate and in reality he/she does not exist! Consequently some people continue their search for love and may never see the very person they need as a mate right under their noses. It is important to keep an open-mind!

They say the most important relationship is the one you have with yourself - how can people work on this?

Quite simply, if YOU do not love yourself, then why should anyone else?? A good place to start is to understand that you and your body are not one and the same thing. You and all those mistakes that you have made are not the real you and because of this, all our actions are nothing but folly really. It is important to have no regrets and know that memories are merely the mind's transient interpretation of what actually happened.

Do you think it is important to have a healthy relationship with yourself before entering a relationship with someone?

It sure helps! Otherwise you will attract to your self one who has the exact low self image you have. The Universal Law of Light & Reflection explains that we seek in others qualities we have within ourselves and resist those we fear we possess or dislike within ourselves. The more you know and accept about yourself before entering a relationship, the greater the chance of success.

At the beginning of a relationship, what advice would you give to people?

The guidance I give is to bear in mind that most romantic relationships start off as sexual lust and then when that honeymoon is over, the hard work starts. In fact, this IS when the actual relationship starts - we drop the pretence and the real person starts to come out! Try to be yourself from the start and keep things simple. Some people put a lot of effort into making a great impression at the beginning of a relationship and become exhausted prematurely. Beware of the charmers!! – this initial charge may be nothing more than a thrill that dies a sudden death.

What are the main signs to look out for when a relationship is not right for you?

Look at the ACTIONS of the other person and check whether they match what you want for yourself. We often fall in love with the potential of the other person and then play the blame game with them when the ensuing actions do not follow through.

Do you think Women are from Venus & Men are from Mars or are we more alike than we think?

We are equal but different in that our approach towards life is quite different. Add the two approaches together and you have the most beautiful dance of intelligent cooperation.

Top 5 tips you would offer those searching for love: -

- Love is a process and not like instant coffee – give yourself time with a person
- Do not settle for second best but be prepared to re-jig your standards as you go
- Remember you deserve great things - do not turn a blind eye to what matters
- Be patient and remember there are two 'whole' people in the relationship
- Once you jump into bed with a prospective partner, the relationship changes forever and you will no longer be objective about your choice – take your time!

***Interview with Elizabeth Schnugh
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