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Dating Tips for the Shy Woman

By Terry MacDonald

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by: **Terry MacDonald**

Dating can be an absolute nightmare for shy people. You want to meet the right person, but you're too scared to do anything about it.

Introductions—sticking out one's hand and looking another person in the eye—can be terrifying for the shy woman. The brain locks up as you scramble to think of something relevant to say. You fall apart as soon as you're asked what you do for a living. You stammer. The heat rises in your face and under your arms. You're suddenly incapable of forming a grammatical sentence. You think to yourself, "Why would anyone care about me? I'm really not that interesting!"

Fear not. Many shy people have succeeded in meeting new people and forming lasting, happy relationships. With a little practice, you can too. Here are some tips for taming your social terror.

1.Prepare a pitch. The question, "So, Sally, what do you do for a living?" is bound to come up, so have a ready answer. No need to brag about capturing the company Tidy Break room Award; just state clearly what you do for a living and don't apologize for it!

2.Ask questions. People love to talk about themselves (okay, except for people like you), so ask questions. Come up with a list before you leave the house, i.e., How did you get into that line of work? Where did you go to school? Have you seen the new Brad Pitt movie? And so on.

3.When you fumble, turn the subject to the other person. Whenever you find yourself longing to throw a blanket over your head and crawl off, try saying something like "And what about you?"

4.Listen to what the other person is saying! This is important. Instead of fretting about what you'll say next, still the wheels of your mind and listen. If a man tells you about his weekend on the golf course, and you know absolutely nothing about golf, just ask him what he likes about it, how he got into it, etc.

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5. Smile. People respond well to people who smile. No need to grin like an idiot, but a disarming smile will get `em every time. Smiling conveys friendliness and approachability. Show teeth whenever possible. Avoid looking like a figure at a wax museum by practicing in a mirror before you leave the house.

6. Breathe. Whenever you feel your heart racing, breathe deeply and slowly. If you really start to feel uncomfortable (your face has become so hot you could use it for a wok), excuse yourself and go to the restroom.

7. Compliment the other person. Sincerity is key, so find something you like and mention it. You may be freaked out by the idea of complimenting a man on his soulful eyes, so mention his watch, suit, tie, or even his shoes. No need to go overboard: "Nice shoes," will do it.

8. Stay on top of current events. You don't necessarily want to bring up your stand on Bush v. Kerry during a first meeting, but be able to discuss less controversial issues intelligently.

9. Remember the weather! Some people have the "gift of gab," the ability to make strangers feel like they've known them forever. They are fearless about talking about the weather, gas prices, whatever. Shy people worry that talking about mundane things will make them appear stupid. But seemingly dull subjects like the weather affect everybody. People relate to them.

10. Hold your head up. It's the simplest, most effective way to look confident. Good posture, coupled with that fabulous smile of yours, gives you a "winner's vibe." You're guaranteed to be a hit!

Be warned: These tips will not help you if you don't leave the house. It's just too easy to watch a Friends rerun for the umpteenth time instead of meeting people, but I promise you that Prince Charming is never going to climb through your bedroom window.

Talking to strangers can be uncomfortable, but with practice it will surely get easier. If you have a bad night, congratulate yourself for making the effort. When you have a good night, understand that you earned it. Know that countless wonderful nights are on their way to you.

Terry MacDonald is the author of *How to Attract and Marry the Man of Your Dreams (Even if You're Not Rich, Thin, or Beautiful)*. Visit her website at

Tips for Dating A Single MOm

By Teri Worten

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Tips for dating a single mom

1) Be understanding. As you may know, most single moms can't drop everything on a whim to spend

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time with the men in their lives. However, with the proper planning and rearranging, most single moms enjoy a wonderful dating and social life! So, just give her a little notice.

2) Be understanding. Most single moms are (or should be) careful with their home space. For instance, a wise single mom wouldn't consider having you exposed to her children unless she really knows and trusts you. For instance, she may not let you meet her children immediately or she may not invite you in after a dinner date. Another example is that a single mom may opt to meet you at a restaurant as opposed to allowing you to pick her up from her home. More than likely, she's protecting her home space.

3) Be sensitive. Many single moms are products from painful divorces and hurtful past relationships. With this being so, a new man in her life might need to be exceedingly sensitive and aware that some single moms are a little gun-shy or fearful of being hurt.

4) Be realistic. Lots of moms are not looking for a make-shift daddy for their families. Most women are working, educating themselves and successfully raising their children on their own without a father in the house. So, for starters, don't assume that the single mom that you're dating wants or needs you to play "daddy" or spend time with her kids (early in the relationship). Focus your time on getting acquainted with the "woman" you are dating. Forget about the other stuff. After all, she's not really a big "package". Think of it this way: you're spending time with a beautiful woman. Not the beautiful woman, plus her ex-husband, plus the children, with the dog and divorce lawyer!

5) Be patient. A single mom will more than likely move a lot slower than completely unattached women. A single mom, is less likely to "fall into bed" with a man that is expendable or temporary. This is not because she is "scared" so much as she understands that she can't afford a lot of heartache and drama in her life. She understands that her emotional state affects her children. So be patient.

6) Be honest. Don't play games with any woman, much less a single mom. If you're looking for a quick unattached situation, let her know it at the onset. Who knows, she could be looking for something casual too. However, mislead her by spending excessive time building trust and intimacy only to abandon her later. This is sophomoric, childish and cruel. Instead, be forthcoming about what you want from the relationship and be brutally honest. A simple conversation about expectations could ward off a lot of anguish later.

Teri Worten is a freelance writer and the founder of several inspirational websites for women and

single moms. One is called Gotta Be Me, Girl.Com. You can access the site by following the link: <http://www.gottabemegirl.com>. Secondly, visit the Greater Kansas City Single Mom Network at <http://www.kcsinglemomnetwork.com>.

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