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Going Solo On Valentine's Day: Advice For Singles

By Toni Coleman, LCSW

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The stores are decorated in candy hearts, flowers and bears. Every TV or radio commercial reminds you that it's time to remember your sweetheart on this special day for lovers. Your feelings range from sadness, to revulsion to anger. What's a single person to do? The following suggestions are designed to both answer that question and to help you have a good day after all, while working to make it your last solo one.

1. Celebrate the day by planning an activity that is meaningful and enjoyable to you. Choose something that provides you with a special treat. Go to a day spa for "the works", plan an intimate dinner for 3 or 4, go ice-skating or to the movies with a fun friend, or go out to dinner and a movie with a group of other singles. Focus on what you enjoy and make a conscious decision about how to mark the day. Un-Valentines Day parties are very popular and can be a lot of silly fun. You can attend one or throw one of your own.

2. Design a relationship-building plan for 2003.
Let the holiday provide you with the motivation to take risks, try new ideas and gain the knowledge that will enable you to find and create a lasting, intimate relationship.

* Sit down at the computer or with pen and paper in hand and get your plan written down.

* Begin by making a list of resources that can be used to help you meet available singles. These can include: on-line dating sites, singles groups, volunteer activities, or participation in sports or other activities that you enjoy.

* Decide when and how often you will participate in any activity you have chosen. *Make a budget for both time and available funds for this purpose.

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* Do your homework and research each resource so the information will be available when you need it.

3. Review those resolutions you made, or make some if you haven't yet. Think about what is really important to you. Remind yourself that implementing and sticking to these will help ensure that you are really ready for that special relationship. Being the kind of person you want to be with is the first step. Begin with concrete goals. For example: stick with a healthy diet, exercise three times a week, plan one organizational task per week, etc. Taking care of yourself and living well, will optimize your chances for relationship success. Start today.

4. Work to eliminate negative thinking. When a negative thought comes into your mind, take a moment to think about what is beneath it. Then, tell yourself that thinking this way is not good for you. Make a decision to drop the thought and try to think of something (anything) that is positive. It can be as simple as focusing on what a beautiful day it is outside, to feeling grateful that you survived the current wave of lay-offs in your company. Use this technique for situations as well. Ask yourself how you can view the situation differently. Try to find one positive angle or outcome that could result from an otherwise bad situation. For example, you are being laid off from your job. You have been unhappy for a long time, but could not motivate yourself to do anything about it. Now, you have the motivation to look for a new job, or perhaps change careers. Think of all the possibilities that could open up for you.

Negative thinking is a downward spiral that leads to negative behavior and possibly depression. Consciously choose to challenge these thoughts, and empower yourself with a more positive outlook and approach to life.

Hopefully these tips will assist you in having a better "solo" Valentine's Day than you might have been headed for. Enjoy the day by doing something fun. Then focus on your relationship plan and empower yourself to build the healthy, lasting relationship of your dreams.

Toni Coleman, LCSW
Helping Singles Find Lasting Love
www.consum-mate.com

Toni Coleman is a licensed therapist and relationship coach in private practice. She specializes in working with singles that want to create lasting, intimate relationships. She developed and teaches the Creating Lasting Relationships Training, a tele-workshop designed to help singles to define, implement and fulfill their relationship goals. She has also written numerous email classes for singles on all

aspects of meeting, dating and relating.

Ways to be Romantic

By Rinatta Paries

Ways to be Romantic by Rinatta Paries

Rarely does Valentine's Day pass by without your notice. Even if you are single and think the day has no significance, the day will arrive and you will want a relationship more than usual. If you are in a relationship and Valentine's Day does not get celebrated, it will leave hurt and resentment in its wake.

I invite you to think of Valentine's Day as "Focus on Love Day," as opposed to "Hurt About Lack of Love Day" or "Ignore Being Single Day."

Below you will find ways to make your "Focus on Love Day" extraordinarily romantic, whether you are in a long-term relationship, dating, or are single.

A note for people who are in a new relationships, or who are dating someone but are not in a committed relationship. At the beginning of a relationship, it is best not to have too any expectations about how Valentine's Day will be celebrated. It is also best not to get disappointed if it is not celebrated in just the way you would want. In time, as you and your partner get closer, both of you will be able to celebrate Valentine's Day and other holidays in more meaningful ways.

This Valentine's Day, create a perfect "Focus on Love Day" for yourself, regardless of what your dating partner may or may not have planned for you. Look at the suggestions for singles below.

Then, do something small, but meaningful for your dating partner. Look for suggestions for couples below, but tone the activity down a bit.

And now, 10 ways to make your "Focus on Love Day" extraordinarily romantic:

1. The Perfect Day

Couples:

See if you can start to notice what your lover dreams about, wishes for. Listen for small, attainable things that can make a big difference. Alternatively, subtly question your lover about what he/she pictures as the perfect Valentine's Day. Now take the information you have gathered and make it into a perfect day for him or her.

Singles:

If you had a partner, what would you have him or her do to create your perfect Valentine's Day? Create it for yourself – love yourself that much.

2. The Perfect Card + One Perfect Rose

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Couples:

Buy or make a lovely card and then fill it to the brim with words of love, admiration and appreciation. By "fill it to the brim," I mean leave no white space untouched. Present it with one perfect rose.

Singles:

Buy or make a lovely card for yourself, and just as above, fill it to the brim with words you want to hear from your future lover. Seal the envelope and open it on Valentine's Day. Present it to yourself with one perfect rose.

3. Valentine's Day is Not Just for Women

Couples:

Ladies, I have it on good authority that guys want to be celebrated too. So get him flowers and candy and a card, too.

Singles:

Guys, give yourself that same wonderful Valentine's Day as a relationship partner would give you. You may feel silly, but you will also feel good.

4. Say Goodbye to Obligation, Say Hello to Open Heart

Couples:

Don't give or do anything out of obligation this Valentine's Day. Give only from your heart, from love and treasuring your partner. No matter how good or bad your relationship is going, get in touch with how much you truly love and appreciate your partner. Give from that space.

Singles:

Don't beat yourself up for not having a partner. You have not failed. You are not bad. Valentine's Day can be "Focus on Love for Yourself Day" as easily as "Focus on Love for Another Day."

5. The Gift of Undivided Attention

Couples:

Give your partner the gift of undivided attention and see if she or he doesn't find that the most romantic thing going.

Singles:

Give yourself the gift of your own undivided attention. Take away all of the distractions and be with yourself the way you would want your partner to be with you.

6. Gift of Communication, I

Couples: Men, allow your woman to talk about whatever her heart desires, and listen. Ladies, let your man talk or answer your question without finishing his sentences for him, interrupting him, or moving on to the next topic. See if this doesn't make sparks fly.

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Singles:

Either find a person who will listen to you the way you need to be heard, or give yourself space and time to listen to your own thoughts and feelings or to journal.

7. Gift of Communication, II

Couples:

Ladies, give your man the gift of sitting down next to him in silence. No talking allowed. Men, give your lady the gift of talking and sharing from your heart. No closing down, walling up or running away allowed.

Singles:

Either silence or open heart, give yourself whichever one you need.

8. A Gift with Interest

Couples:

Is your partner into computers, and you don't know a mouse from a monitor? Or is she into gardening, but to you a rose is just a rose? Give your partner the gift of your interest in something that is important to him or her. Go ahead, ask your partner a question about it and see the smile light up his or her face.

Singles:

Give yourself the gift of time to pursue your important interests. Take the time to do something that nourishes you and makes you happy.

9. The Trust

Couples:

Ladies, give the man in your life the gift of trusting him to know how and when to take care of himself and you. Trust that he will do the best he can for Valentine's Day. Gentlemen, hold her trust sacred, and learn to listen for subtle requests. Then honor them. The celebration of love will feel good to both of you.

Singles:

Today, trust your process and your fate. Today, trust that you too will be loved and cherished by a partner. Today, remember all the people who already love and cherish you.

10. A Shower of Words

Couples:

Write your loved one a love letter or poem and read it to them on Valentine's Day. Here come the tears.

Singles:

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Write yourself a love letter or poem, exactly the way you would want it written by a lover. Read it to yourself out loud and have Kleenex ready.

Plan to have a happy Valentine's Day!

Your Relationship Coach,
Rinatta Paries
www.WhatItTakes.com

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With nearly a decade of relationship coaching experience, Master Certified Coach Rinatta Paries works with singles to help them attract their ideal relationship, and helps couples create more love and fulfillment in their existing relationships. Visit her web site at www.WhatItTakes.com or e-mail her at coach@WhatItTakes.com.



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