

Searching For "Mr. Right"



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To ask people "WHY do we fall in love? " is to invite a multitude of answers that are unique and diverse, as each respondent's attempts to identify something that is very personal and often extremely vague. Many years ago, a wise psychotherapist discouraged the "relentless pursuit of the WHY." The WHY we fall in love is elusive, buried deeply in a complex blend of biological, sociological and psychological experiences that shape our conscious and unconscious needs that likewise determine our "love choices."

A little easier question to address is "HOW do we fall in love? "

Unfortunately, a complete answer to this question will remain as the "Why" question remains: one of those mysteries of life. However, here are some ideas on "How" we fall in love.

Essentially, we fall in love "with our heads," "with our hearts" and "with our loins." Some people would insist that we should also add to this list, "with our spirit."

When people fall in love with their heads they THINK their way into their relationships. In other words, these people rationally determine the advantages and disadvantages of their selection and evaluate the worth of the other person. This might be the approach of a person who feels insecure or incomplete and thus looks for a mate to make up for

personal deficits. This might also be the approach of a narcissistic individual (who self-aggrandizes) and who therefore looks for a person whom he or she believes meets certain high standards. Such individuals might want to be part of a matched set! Some other people, unfortunately especially women, fall prey to "material seduction" by being more influenced by a person's "outer wealth" (such as appearance, career, power, money, prestigious life-style, etc.) than by "inner wealth" (such as being loving, loyal, honest, etc.) Unfortunately, society has traditionally dis-empowered women by teaching them to find their power and worth within the relationship instead of within themselves. When a partner is chosen only for material support, rather than emotional support, the chances are that the relationship will end up wrong! Someone once said that it is as easy to fall in love with a rich man as it is with a poor man. However, in these

kinds of "calculated" relationships, the outcome is uncertain and may be personally disastrous.

This is not to say that we should not think carefully about our relationship choices. There is a very positive side to the rational love-work we do between our ears. The most successful relationships typically involve people who have actively sought partners with similar socio-economic and educational backgrounds and compatible religious convictions. Thus, good relationships involve partners who openly share compatible values and beliefs. Also, effective verbal communication, where each partner is free to question and to openly share thoughts and feelings, is essential. Likewise, mutual respect and being very good friends are key ingredients to successful relationships.

Falling in love "with one's heart" is a bit tricky. This type of love can be deceptive. Often, people

are "blinded" by what they perceive as love. The lyrics of many songs and the lines of many poems remind us of this fact. Whirlwind romances, while exciting, may lack substance. Psychologist and author Judith Sills has written, "It is odd that people seek out a period of temporary insanity as the ideal mind-set for making a crucial life decision." Dr. Sills suggests that it would be more appropriate to say, "I can't decide to marry you or not. I'm too much in love to think clearly!" It has also been said that we probably put more "research" into choosing a car or refrigerator than choosing a mate!

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