

More Than a Great Partner

**How to Find and Keep the
Right Mate**

By

Kleber Mbenoun, MD

Chapter One

There is a Definition of a Right Mate

Ask people, like I did, what they mean by *the right mate*, and you get answers such as: someone with whom you are compatible; a person who shares your interests and social status; an individual with whom you get along and see yourself spending the rest of your life. Others may say that it is someone who attracts you, who can provide for you, or who makes you happy. While these characteristics could apply to the right mate, they equally refer to other types of partners.

The various meanings people give to the same term show, if anything else, how elusive defining the right mate can be. This is one reason for most people's mistaken choices of partners. It is hard for anyone to find what he or she does not understand. Therefore, correctly defining the right mate should be the very first step in the search for a partner. It helped my niece Carole to find hers.

As a student in a Master's program at a university, Carole felt the legitimate desire to get married and start a family, like any girl in her late twenties. In her case, she felt some emptiness in her heart because, among other issues, she was not even in a relationship. Virtually at the same period, she became acquainted with another girl, also a student, sharing the same apartment building. One day, her friend said, "My brother often visits me

here and has noticed you. The first time he saw you, you were doing your laundry at your frontage and he inquired after you. Well, the other day he said, referring to you, “That is the woman I’m going to marry, right there.””

Explaining how she responded to Vivien, her brother, Carole’s friend said, “Go find a job first, before seeking girls above your pay grade.” Vivien had freshly graduated from a university but was still an applicant.

In the meantime, other young men were interested in Carole, and some of them wanted to tie the knot. These were all guys who had jobs and better positions than Vivien, socially speaking. However, as Carole assessed them, she saw in Vivien her life mate. Later, we are going to see how. As we can see in Carole and Vivien’s case, the right mate is not necessarily the hottest bachelor.

What The Right Mate Is Not

Before exploring the definition further, let us reflect on what the right partner is *not*. He is not necessarily the tall, handsome man who proposes on a hilltop under an oak tree, in the orange glow of the setting sun. She may not be that beautiful and sophisticated woman like the characters we see in modern romance movies. The right mate is not necessarily the *first* person you feel attracted to and fall in love with. The person you are looking for may be the fifth, the ninth, or even the fifteenth in a series of likable people who randomly cross your path. He is not just *any* person who seems to fit your idea of a great mate or who seems to share your values. Having a crush on someone does not necessarily make him the *one*.

The right mate may not turn out to be the most successful of your acquaintances, that likable person with a wonderful job and a

bright future, although he may very well possess any or all of these characteristics. She is not necessarily the beautiful woman who seems to agree with you on every point and who, by her gentle nature, promises a quiet and peaceful marriage.

In fact, the right mate is *not* your passport to a trouble-free marital life. There is no such thing as the *perfect* mate. The right one will make mistakes, get mad, do unreasonable things, upset you, and, like anybody else, will have to work on his character to become better, because he is, after all, human. However, disagreements do not mean the end of the road with that person because, more than with anyone else, he is the person you will most enjoy spending the rest of your life with.

What Do We Mean By The Right One?

The many definitions of the right mate, although often confusing, have this in common: a partner who comes with the promise of a loving and fulfilling relationship that lasts a lifetime. From that perspective, the right mate can be defined as the person who can best help you fulfill your purpose in life in a *successful* relationship. He is the *best* partner you could find under your circumstances.

The right mate is the person you fall in love with and who *truly* loves you in return. Unlike other relationships with people you had feelings for in the past, he is someone who does not cheat or require that you compete with people outside your relationship to keep him interested. With him, there is no fear of failure because he is specially prepared for you, and he comes to stay.

One of the characteristics that make it easy for him to spend the rest of his life with you is that he is the *most compatible* with you. Compatibility here does not imply that your partner has to be identical to you or that he should have the same life interests as

you. In fact, he may have a completely different personality. However, although he does not agree with you point-by-point on every issue, you both share a common outlook on life, the same set of values, and have similar views on major life issues. Additionally, his temperamental differences and skills are complementary to yours. Your strengths complement his weaknesses, just as his compensate for your lack in other areas.

Coming into your life to help you reach your destiny, your match has to reckon with your circumstances and fit in. Situations such as children from a previous relationship, a loss of your job, a poor financial situation, physical infirmity, or low level of education are not barriers to a relationship with him. No fact of your circumstances prevents him from being with you. He meets you at this particular point in your life and helps you carry your load.

Some people, when asked why finding the right partner is problematic, will bring up obstacles such as those earlier mentioned. Others will link the difficulty of finding a partner to the fact that people do change, and human beings are unpredictable. They would claim they once found the right person sometime in the past, but later on, their “right” partner changed and ceased to be the “right” one. Indeed, people do change, but the right partner would only change for the better because he is the best match for your present *and* future circumstances. Hence, the term *life mate* or *mate for life*.

Of course, only someone with deep-seated values can bring and keep so many promises, and create the kind of positive environment required for a relationship to thrive. Therefore, the right mate should be able to prove his integrity in other types of relationships beyond the marriage union. First of all, he must be a loyal and reliable friend, an honest business partner, or a trustworthy colleague.

Making you fall in love should not be enough. We all have the ability to create romance and make people fall in love with us. Jerks do not always appear to be so with the people they seriously take an interest in, and their true character does not surface at the beginning of a new relationship, as they would consciously present their best self. They know how to appear charming when they engage their crush in the act of seduction, until, later on, the ugly side surfaces and destroys the relationship. The pattern someone demonstrated in previous relationships should be taken into consideration, and should serve as a reliable indication of what he will be like as a love partner. You can be sure that if he repeatedly cheated on his previous partner, or is a businessman who takes advantage of his customers, he will probably do the same in his new love relationship unless a change has occurred from the inside.

If you have not found someone who satisfies the above definition, then you simply have not found the right mate yet. Similarly, your partners probably did not find the right mate *in you* because you did not have the qualities we just described. Indeed, finding the right mate is half the journey toward a successful relationship. *You* also ought to be *someone's right mate*.

Your Role In The Mate Equation

Match a beautiful, selfish, materialistic, sophisticated woman with a wealthy man who lies and cheats, and you get a destructive relationship. Such matching does not have what it takes to create a healthy environment, and true love would certainly not be part of the deal. On the other hand, if you match the same woman with a committed, unselfish, kind, and honest man, you get an equally failed relationship, because you would simply have brought together in an intimate relationship people with different life values and characters, a wolf and a lamb. What does that tell us?

It takes *two* good partners to make a successful relationship. Marriage involving two “wolves” or a “wolf” and a “lamb” does not work. The only chance for success is when both partners are lambs in spirit and attitude. That is why you, first of all, need to work purposefully at becoming marriage material and play your part in creating an environment that produces a rich, happy, and lasting relationship.

The concept of finding the right mate is all about matching. It is a two-way sort of thing. The right partner is not that special individual who will piece together with you like a jigsaw puzzle, make you happy and help you reach your dreams, regardless of the type of person you are! You must be as special to him as he is to you. He is only as right for you as you are right for him. You are expected to offer him a quality relationship, as he does for you. As he helps you to reach your purpose in life, so you must do for him. In other words, you qualify for the right mate because you are one; there is no one for you if you are not someone's right mate. It is about fairness and efficacy.

You Are Good; They Are Bad

So far, maybe you have thought yourself as simply being unlucky in relationships. Being a kind, friendly and helpful neighbor, an honest, generous, and loyal friend, a reliable cousin, brother, or sister and above all, a faithful and loving partner have led you to see yourself as good marriage material who has been meeting the wrong partners. You may be right, but how good *are* you? Success in a relationship does not depend on subjective self-assessment, but on who you *really* are, deep down inside, and how strongly rooted your values are.

Though you may have been well-meaning in past relationships, you may not necessarily be good enough for the

mate or the relationship you dream of. Let's help you see it for yourself: get a pen and paper. Then call a close friend, your spouse if you are married, or, preferably, an ex and ask for a sincere checklist of aspects you should change about your behavior. You may be surprised by what they have to say about you.

Next, with the list in hand, take a quiet moment and think carefully about:

- How many good and lasting social relationships have you had so far?
- When is the last time a promising relationship (loving or not) failed?
- How did *you* contribute to the failure?
- Did your argumentative personality or insecurity turn your partner off?
- Were you too proud, self-justifying, easily irritable, and self-centered?
- Did you find it hard to forgive others?
- Have you ever had a clash that degenerated because you were unable or unwilling to resolve it?
- How many such unresolved conflicts do you have right now?

Give an honest account. If you sincerely and objectively answered the above questions, the chances are that you have realized how much easier it is to focus on aspects of situations where *others* let you down than to give thought to how you disappointed or hurt them. Think hard and you will probably realize that you share at least some responsibility for the failure of previous relationships.

Maybe, as is often the case, you simply need to face the fact that you have not been the kind of person it takes to make lasting relationships. Harboring within you the ingredients of failure, as small as they may appear, made it impossible for you to find and connect with the right partner. The good news is there is no need to fear. This book aims to help you honestly identify and work on your flaws while building your positive qualities, thus bringing about a change in preparation for a rich and lasting marriage.

This Is Not A Fairy Tale

Does finding a rich and lasting marriage seem too good to be true? Sound like a fairy tale? I understand that you feel that way. Circumstances such as the divorce of parents, failed relationships of relatives and friends, and your own breakups may have driven you to believe that the right mate does not exist, or that being lucky enough to find a *suitable* partner is an accomplishment in itself and the best you can hope for. Life's unfortunate events may have trapped you into believing that finding a life mate is near impossible or a matter of luck. Your mindset may have been so affected by disappointment and discouraging statistics that you venture into relationships with fear, accepting breakups as normal occurrences in life, and sometimes even subconsciously anticipating them. Experiencing or witnessing repeated failures in search for the right partner may prevent you from seeing that there is another way to do things. There is a right way.

Success in the search for a life partner does not have to be left to random events. Finding the right mate does not depend on chance, but on the principles applied. True love exists, the right mate is out there, and a loving and fulfilling marriage is an attainable goal. There are indeed people who are happily married, who find excitement each evening in going home to their families. "Lucky for them," you say? Wrong. By applying, either directly or

indirectly, the principles described in this book, I and many others have found and married the right persons. You can find yours too, and keep that person beside you for the rest of your life.

Chapter Two

Looking For Love In All The Wrong Ways

Now that we have correctly defined the right mate, let us examine some of the reasons why many of us have not found the right mate. Not only will this help us to clearly see our shortcomings, but it will also give us the opportunity to see what not to do, to correct some misguided notions about finding the right partner, and change our mindset in order us to proceed the right way.

So why do we keep missing the right mate? There are a lot of reasons why people keep missing it, from ugly attitudes, to the way we approach relationships, to the shortage of good mates, which is usually the first reason most people bring up.

Good Quality Partners Are Indeed Scarce

When I was single, I asked close friends to introduce me to girls they viewed as good potential partners. One of my female friends told me that there were so many single girls that if I were not married, it is because I was picky about my choices. She promised to introduce me to a set of girls and then went three months without being able to present any. When I inquired three months later, she told me she had in mind a girl who did not turn out to be what she thought. She was not the only one searching for me. I was actively looking too. After searching in vain around me, I decided to revisit old relationships I left behind after I moved to the United States. Some of the “good” girls I dated had moved on with their lives; others turned out to be not as good as I hoped.

People who have been looking for a life mate or simply date regularly know what I am talking about. Good partners are rare, and both men and women have quite a difficult time finding a suitable life mate. The situation seems more complicated for women, though, especially the educated ones who want to tie the knot with men matching criteria such as being without kids, but with a college degree, earning a certain income, or belonging to their race. Many of my female friends and acquaintances have complained of difficulties they face in getting a serious date. They argue that most of the guys they meet are simply not morally, socially, financially or physically attractive enough for them. Those who meet their standards show little ability and desire to stay faithful or stable with so many single women available to them. It is believed within the African American community that there is one “good” man for every ten women. A female physician told me that, in her opinion, there is one suitable man for every twenty women of her kind.

Although men, especially those who are successful, have no difficulties finding *dates*, they also have trouble finding great partners. Moreover, the situation is even trickier for them than for women. A young male physician told me that, in his opinion, one would have to date a hundred women to find a suitable one.

What is the fundamental reason great partners are rare? Human beings are all, in their natural state, liars, selfish, proud, unforgiving, impatient, shallow, materialistic, incapable of truly loving, and unequipped for intimate and lasting relationships. Those who appear good either are sophisticated enough to hide their flaws or are not as bad as some, but still carry the same measure of wickedness.

If the scarcity of good partners makes it difficult to randomly come across good ones, it becomes even more complicated to find a *compatible* one. It is not enough to bring two good partners

together. They have got to be a *match* for each other. However, the scarcity of good partners does not reduce the seeker's probability of meeting the right mate if he does it the right way. And he does not have to compete furiously for the “few” good ones because each person can find a mate.

Those Who Are Not Really Looking

Failure in the search for the right mate for many people takes root in the choices made at an early age, choices that have been influenced by a permissive social context, where the search for pleasure through casual sex and other frivolities is the norm. Young people get deceived by the shallow concept of love depicted in popular music, films, TV and radio shows. With little hesitation, they embrace the philosophy of a culture that teaches them that their sexual urges should be satisfied as soon as they arise. Comforted by the fact that they see people around them doing the same thing, they believe it is natural to start romancing whenever feelings appear. In the quest for the love and fun some lack at home, they innocently become involved in one relationship after another, unaware of the fact that a good and lasting relationship is the result of adherence to a very specific code of conduct and submission to well-defined principles.

Although they entertain a vague idea of a beautiful life with the mate of their dreams, young people in this group do not think about the concept of the right mate before starting a relationship. Led by their feelings, they falsely believe that “love” will go on for the rest of their lives. Yet, very few of them, like Sammy, end up happily in the arms of their dream love.

Sammy is a beautiful girl whose parents divorced when she was ten years old. She, her eldest brother, and her youngest sister went to live with their father, who had remarried. She was in high

school when boys started taking an interest in her. Her good looks and warm personality made her very attractive. Lacking a serious moral compass, she embarked on a licentious lifestyle: clubs, parties, alcohol; her hunger for pleasure was insatiable. She was consumed by the excesses of her social life when she met Mike, an attractive young man, and started dating him.

Not long after, at the age of nineteen, she became pregnant. Hoping to marry Mike, Sammy gave birth to their child. Then a second baby came along. However, the prospect of marriage became more and more remote as Mike became physically and verbally abusive, as well as unfaithful. He had no steady job and was not providing for his children, for whom Sammy's father had to assume responsibility. Finally, after long months of struggle, Sammy could not take it anymore. She broke up with him. Meanwhile, too busy with her social life to keep up with her studies, her grades dropped hopelessly. At twenty-two, Sammy, a single mother of two, was a high school dropout and moved back in with her father.

For the love of fun and excitement, Sammy dove into a relationship without serious preparation, and without consideration of whether Mike had any "good partner" qualities. He was already the father of her first son before she ever entertained the thought of marrying him. For her, adolescence was a time of fun and excitement. Like many people her age, she reasoned that she could deal with serious things later, ignoring that she could have the same fun within the secure setting of marriage if ever she had the patience for it. Every funny thing that a girlfriend and a boyfriend do can be done later in the protected confines of a husband and wife relationship. Married people dance, go to movies, picnics, football games and drink if they choose to.

Like many teenagers, Sammy believed that passion and romance were all she needed to build a successful relationship.

She learned by experience and, unfortunately, the hard way that the good feelings and excitement that come in the early days of a new relationship are not enough to keep together two people who have serious flaws. She did not know that the “one” is not identified by an instant sexual and emotional attraction.

The Search For Financial Security And Beauty

The modern society we live in imposes the money factor on all of us. It is taken into consideration when we make decisions. We take it into account when we pick a career, buy a house, or choose a life mate. Some take it up a notch by trying to improve their financial situations through marriage with a wealthy partner, while others simply work to maintain their living standard in marriage with partners of comparable social and professional status.

As a result of the need to ensure financial security, doctors look for other doctors or people with similar social or economic and professional status; lawyers look for other professionals and celebrities other celebrities. This is not to imply that compatibility in social or economic status is to be avoided. There are indeed cases where someone enters marriage after connecting naturally with a person of the opposite sex because of academic, social, or professional proximity. Many people marry the kind of person that they meet in everyday life.

But while it is natural and legitimate to aspire to comfort and financial security, and while it is human to be attracted to good-looking people, the search for the right mate goes beyond those aspects. It takes a lot more than wealth and beauty to be the right mate. Money, education, and fame neither equip nor prepare people for relationships. A successful relationship is not primarily a professional or financial partnership. Success in marriage is not

guaranteed when, like in Cynthia's case, social status is the deciding factor in the choice of a marriage partner.

Cynthia was in her late teens, still in high school, when she found her "Mr. Right" in Mark, a gentleman in his thirties. Mark already had a promising career as an engineer and was a well-paid employee of a semi-public company, renting a posh house in a residential neighborhood. Although she liked Mark, who assiduously courted her, he also represented the opportunity to leave her father's modest house with pride and eventually provide for her younger siblings. When Mark proposed to Cynthia, she enthusiastically accepted, and they got married.

Mark, through his social status, offered Cynthia a life of comfort as she integrated the middle-class circle of friends with pride. However, behind this beautiful image of a successful couple, Cynthia, by her account, was beginning to feel lonely and unloved. Mark, who had many extra-marital affairs, would leave the house in the morning and return home without telling her much about his day's activities. He did not take her out as much as she would have liked and, in fact, had long ago stopped being tender or affectionate. Although they still had a few things in common, the emotional bond withered, the birth of their first child notwithstanding.

As the distance widened, Cynthia's unmet need for affection in the midst of material comfort became almost unbearable. In search of love and affection, she started an affair on her own with a man much older than her husband.

Other than love, what had probably driven Cynthia into Mark's arms was the legitimate need for security, mixed with the desire for comfort. Not that she was overly materialistic, but those factors weighed so heavily in her decision that she failed to assess the true character of the man she wanted to marry. Was she even

familiar with the concept of the right mate? Like many people, she thought that if a man has a good job, attracts you, and triggers good feelings in you, he is the “one.” She focused on the wrong values and made the mistakes many of us make by hoping to get happiness from financial security. If happiness in marriage came from life with a wealthy partner, there would be no divorce in Hollywood. Of course, it does not hurt to have money, but a happy marriage depends more on factors such as humility, integrity, trust, and the ability to efficiently handle conflicts than on wealth or position. These qualities, in turn, produce peace of mind, harmony at home, joy, and the feeling of being respected and loved.

Trials And Errors

Unlike teenagers like Sammy, many adults know which ingredients comprise the fabric of a lasting relationship and the qualities of a good partner, but have no clear pathway, or efficient strategy for finding that special person.

When they come across someone who seems to have the qualities they are looking for, they do not try to make sure that such is the right one *before* getting involved. They plunge into a relationship after a period of observation and assessment, hoping that as they get to know the person better, they will find out whether he is indeed the right one. Some people even go a step further and move in with their partners as a means of getting to know their character more intimately and getting a sense of what it is like to live with them on a daily basis. She may reason, “Let’s see what it feels like to be married to this man, get a chance to experience marriage, and correct mistakes before committing myself for good.” With this in mind, such a person goes from one relationship to the next, assessing partners as they date. Experience has proven that this kind of random search for the right

mate, referred to as trial and error, but commonly known as dating, leads most of the time to error.

Dating Sets You Up For Failure In Marriage

Because dating is a practice widely accepted as a natural stage of human development, people enthusiastically embrace it early in life. It does not come without consequences. Emotional and sexual involvement create emotional and physical hooks, in the form of a strong desire for pleasures already tasted, which will keep drawing them into a life of sensuality. Such an approach to relationships can only lead one to a *series* of splits and hurts, the kind from which virgins and people who decide to be sexually inactive are spared. Virgins are spared entanglements that keep luring people who once sexually have become inactive.

Human beings are wired in a way that binds them emotionally to the persons with whom they become intimate. When the relationship ends, either because of infidelity, a lack of sustained love and communication, or through incompatibility, it leaves a wound in the soul, like a knife stab to an organ. These wounds become scars over time. Repeated emotional scars incurred by multiple splits deepen the wounds and finally damage the soul, not to mention the toll broken relationships take on the body over time, the brunt of which our spouses finally bear. Likewise, each sexual encounter with someone leaves a mark on that person, makes him lose a little of himself by diluting his inner being. There is really no such thing as an “innocent one-night-stand” or a “healthy” breakup. There is always a cost to shoulder during a random search for the love of our lives through the dating process, similar to tearing a dress, patching it several times, washing it over and over, and hoping that it will still look good on graduation day. It won't. In fact, it can get irreparably damaged when exposed to

concentrated bleach – the kind of thing some of us have done in our lives.

In relationships that involved cohabiting and plans for marriage, especially those that generated conflicts and drama, breakups come with a lot of frustration, pain, anger, and fear. Like computer crashes corrupt a hard drive, they have the potential to produce dysfunctional emotions in us, transforming gentle, tender, optimistic, and loving teenagers into confrontational, bitter, pessimistic, and even cynical adults. In addition to having their dreams shattered, “weak” partners lose their self-esteem and erroneously start doubting themselves and developing feelings of insecurity and inadequacy. In a self-protective reflex, they raise an emotional shield that ultimately prevents them from fully enjoying new relationships. This shield hardens as the number of breakups increases and unhealthy feelings accumulate, making it difficult to connect in a healthy manner with good partners who may come into their lives.

Some of these folks no longer believe in love. Worse still, they become afraid of falling in love, because in their subconscious, love relationships have become synonymous with suffering and deception. The loss of their ability to trust and love becomes detrimental in their search for a life companion.

Finally, going through multiple failed relationships has the same effect as going through one divorce after another. It destroys the mental fabric, the sense of purity, the solemnity, and the uniqueness of marriage, making it no different than any other relationship. The convoluted and complicated life of sensuality usually forces people to resort to lies and deception to get by, insidiously chipping away their integrity. It interferes with the development of commitment and sets a pattern of failure in marriage.

Reducing The Number Of Potential Partners

Maybe, besides the search for love, the reason people date is that they believe it will teach them how to handle relationships, giving them some sort of experience in the process, the kind of advantage people who start working early have over others, or those who read many books have over those who do not. Unfortunately, it does not work in the same manner in relationships. Not only does dating not teach much because each person and relationship are unique, but also the mindset they inherit from it may, in the long run, disqualify them in the eyes of good seekers. This is a little bit of what happened during my search for a wife.

I had been introduced by one of my female friends to her cousin living back home in Cameroon. Having never met nor interacted with her, except for brief email exchanges and a few phone conversations, I asked another friend of mine who was going home for vacation to meet and assess her for me.

A few weeks later, my friend returned and gave me the usual news about the social, political, and economic climate of our homeland, but did not say a word about the young girl. I deduced from his forgetfulness that she did not make a huge impression on him. When I inquired, as a passing subject, he told me that they did meet over a cup of coffee and had time to talk. He found her beautiful, but her attitude, demeanor, the center of interest and language conveyed anything but innocence. She gave him the impression that she was looking more for a man to bring her over to the United States than a partner to love.

People searching for a life mate are not looking for *experienced* partners or people who know all of the “tricks” of relationships. Most of them have a desire for new and fresh partners who still seek love above everything in relationships.

They want a little bit of innocence in their mates because it conveys a charming sense of purity that they long for and bring into play the emotional virginity that is necessary for people starting a relationship to connect on the deepest level. Intimacy is best developed in a heart that has no fear or scars.

Dating Is A Waste Of Time

The average young American girl in her twenties goes through five to ten relationships, I read. In large cities such as New York, where more options are available for dating and the social life is intense, that number is higher. Some of these relationships last only a few months while others go on for several years. Regardless of their lengths, they represent altogether several years of life invested in the dating process. The time wasted in dating can be so long that, in the long run, it makes many young adults feel anxiety and fear, fueled by the feeling of having wasted their physical assets and time.

If, at the end of these experiences, they were to come up with usable information, then dating may be worth its risks. However, it does not yield accurate nor actionable information. It only allows for momentary and very limited assessment of relationships, showing a picture of each partner in the precise context of the current interaction, and not whom the person is as a whole. Trying to know someone by living with him releases one piece of information at a time without telling what to expect down the line. That is why living with someone for five good years is not necessarily indicative of a happy ending. People divorce even after decades of marriage. The flip side of this is that you do not need to date when you seek the right mate the proper way. I decided to marry my then friend less than one month after meeting her for the first time.

The real trouble with dating is that it is actually one of the greatest obstacles to finding the right mate. This cultural concept has falsely imposed itself in people's mind as the way to go when looking for a good spouse. Those who seek a spouse through dating believe that each encounter moves them toward a goal that eventually is going to be reached if they continue to date. "If not, the current, maybe the next boyfriend or girlfriend will be the right one," they think. At best, this approach may lead to some good partners. However, by the time they find that rare pearl, they may, in addition to emotional hurt, carry the stigma of a long career in dating.

The random search for the right mate exposes seekers to numerous problems as they move from one partner to another. With each sexual relationship comes the risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV).

You probably did not need to read this far to realize that the search for the right mate is a big, complicated puzzle. You may have discovered this through your own life's experiences. The reason we keep failing in our search? We are not expected to find the best match unassisted.