

## The shopping list for love

by Dr Victoria Lukats MBBS MRCPsych MSc

**From time to time it's only natural to wonder why you're still single.**

In moments of self-doubt, you might end up asking yourself some awkward questions, such as "Is it something about me?" or "Have I maybe been too fussy?"

If a good friend were to express those doubts about themselves, the chances are that your response would be: "Of course you're not too fussy. You're fantastic and you deserve the best."

### Setting the standards

A healthy sense of self-esteem and a little discernment are real assets in the search for love, but is it a good idea to create a strict set of requirements for the perfect future partner? A checklist is all very well if you're going shopping, or packing for your holiday or buying a house, but when it comes to a relationship, it might be unrealistic to expect a man or woman to tick *all* your boxes.

Most people have an idea of the kind of partner they'd like to end up with and pretty clear thoughts on the essentials for any relationship ... It's good to have certain standards and expectations. After all, you're not desperate to find a partner at any cost.

But will compiling a list really help you remember what you're looking for in a partner? It certainly isn't going to increase the chances of this perfect person materialising. And what if someone meets, say, only 90% of the criteria? It would be a shame to dismiss them out of hand. They might even possess a few brilliant qualities that you'd left off your list.

### Something tells me ...

When it comes to falling in love, instincts inevitably come into play: you *just know* when you have met the right person. There's no need to put ticks in the boxes, even if – scientifically speaking – a subconscious checklist mechanism might well be at work.

Both consciously and unconsciously, we tend to be attracted to people whose personality is relatively similar to our own. There may just be a feeling that you're going to get on. Some kind of chemistry could just be bubbling away. You might not be able to find the words to say exactly why you love being around this person and why you have such a great time together.

**The real love checklist is ticked off automatically by our brains.** By listening to your feelings and your instincts, you can probably get a pretty good idea of whether there's potential in a relationship.

### Heart and mind

A great deal of scientific research has been conducted into what make couples truly compatible. The results show consistently that looks and money have little to do with it. You

have an idea of what you want and need in a relationship and there are certain areas where you shouldn't make compromises.

**But you can't make a completely accurate prediction of exactly what your future partner is going to be like. By sticking too strictly to your checklist you could end up by missing out on a fantastic relationship or even on finding the love of your life.**

**Do you have any questions that you would like to see discussed in future editions of the PARSHIP newsletter? Then contact Dr Lukats at [drlukats@parship.co.uk](mailto:drlukats@parship.co.uk).\***

**Dr Victoria Lukats MBBS MRCPsych MSc works as a psychiatrist.**

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**If you want to meet the love of your life, visit [www.parship.co.uk](http://www.parship.co.uk) and take PARSHIP's free compatibility profiling test.**

\*Any reader questions that appear in the PARSHIP.co.uk newsletter will do so anonymously. Unfortunately, PARSHIP.co.uk and Dr Victoria Lukats cannot enter into personal correspondence on relationship issues raised by readers.

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