

## Ready when you are

by Dr Victoria Lukats MBBS MRCPsych MSc

**We've heard it a thousand times before ... You've got to be happy in yourself before you can be happy in a relationship.**

There's something intuitive about it. It sounds like sensible advice but is it really true that you can't find a fulfilling relationship until you're 100% happy with yourself?

### Emotional pinball

**A recent survey by PARSHIP.co.uk revealed that, on the rebound from a break-up, a staggering 38% of people had gone out with someone completely unsuitable.**

If your heart's been broken you can be desperate to do something to heal the wounds. That can include jumping straight into another relationship if the opportunity presents itself. But as many of us have discovered, this can mean settling for something that just isn't right. Worse, it can lead to further heartache down the line. Is it maybe safer just to take an unsuitable fling at face value?

Well there's no simple right or wrong answer. For some people, a little fling can be just what they need to regain their self-confidence, but you still need to handle the situation with care. As long as both of you are aware that it's just casual, there's far less chance of anyone getting badly hurt. It's when deeper feelings are aroused that things can get more risky.

### In your own time

**So, if you've been single for a reasonable length of time – perhaps a few months or maybe more – how do you know when you're ready to find someone new?**

If you are looking to go into a committed relationship, you should aim to achieve a positive sense of stability in your single life. It will stand you in good stead for those inevitable moments of mixed feelings about your partner. No matter how much you love someone, after a few years together there will always be times when you find them irritating or even have doubts about the future of the relationship. It's all perfectly normal, but those moments will be easier to deal with if you can reassure yourself that you fell in love for all the right reasons – that you weren't in a state of desperation when the chance for love presented itself.

### Great expectations

This balanced attitude should also help prevent any unrealistic build-up of expectations. For example, if you already have a wide circle of friends and are managing on your own financially, then you won't feel that it's your partner's role to magically solve all the problems in your life. He or she won't be pressured to live up to some unreasonable standard, and you won't run the risk of building up resentment if those expectations are not met.

## **Over to you**

**When it comes down to it, though, only person can say when you're really ready for a new relationship – and that's you.** When it comes to matters of the heart, there is no way to be 100% sure. The best route seems to be to simply trust your feelings.

All of us have a basic desire for the warmth and emotional intimacy that a relationship can bring. It's no good waiting until you are *perfectly* happy and stable before you make the decision to look for a serious relationship, otherwise you could be waiting a lifetime.

**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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