

Beat the post-Valentine's blues

by Dr Victoria Lukats MBBS MRCPsych MSc

Valentine's day has come and gone again.

February 14th can be great if you're loved up and half of a happy couple. But if you're one of the 8 million single Brits who are looking for a relationship, you might not feel ecstatic about being alone on Valentine's night.

Some people still send anonymous Valentine's cards – you might even have received a few yourself – but sending a card or flowers to your secret crush or unrequited love seems to have gone a bit out of fashion. These days, February 14th seems to be predominantly a time for the 'smug marrieds' to celebrate their love for one another. So where does that leave you if you are single?

If you found yourself single this Valentine's Day and would like things to be different in February 2007, then you have a number of options ...

OPTION 1 You can mope. You can sit at home, wondering why you're single and why you didn't receive any Valentine's cards. But how would this help you and, more importantly, how would it make you feel – apart from very sorry for yourself?

OPTION 2 You can enjoy your freedom ... Why not spend more time with your friends and family, or socialising and making new friends? Or maybe put more effort into your career? Or simply enjoy doing what you like, when you like? By actively seeing your single status as positive and actively *doing* something positive, you can change the way you *feel* – about your life and about yourself. It's perfectly possible to acknowledge your desire to meet a partner, while at the same time enjoying being single.

OPTION 3 Ignore the fact that you are single. Perhaps you just treated Valentine's Day like a normal day. If you can just let it just wash over you and you don't give your situation a second thought, then all well and good. You probably don't need to read this anyway, so you could always forward this email to someone who'd find it useful ...

OPTION 4 Do something about finding a partner. This isn't for the faint-hearted, but it's probably the best way of avoiding staying single for long. Having a formal plan for meeting a new partner might be a bit much for some people, but you can still make some active moves. You may well have adjusted to your single status, but that doesn't mean you intend to stay that way. There really should be someone for everyone out there, but have you ever noticed how some people seem to have prospective dates queuing up for them?

Some personality types are naturally more outgoing and these are the people who probably find it easier to meet someone. If you are a bit shy or out of practice, though, there's still a lot you can do to increase your chances. A good start is to pluck up your courage and be more open, chatty and friendly to many of the people you meet on a normal day. You'll find yourself talking to and meeting a wider range of people. And when you *do* come across someone you find attractive, it's not so daunting to strike up a conversation. Perfecting the art of flirting will also help. You should taking steps to meet other single people on a regular basis: go out with friends, take up a hobby or salsa dancing – or join an internet dating service ... all these are way of actively increasing your chances of meeting Miss or Mr Right.

Before you know it you'll have a date lined up – and maybe even someone to spend Valentine's day with next year....

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.*

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If you want to meet the love of your life, visit 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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