

5 Traits of a Great Life Partner (And How to Attract Them)

4. They have humility.

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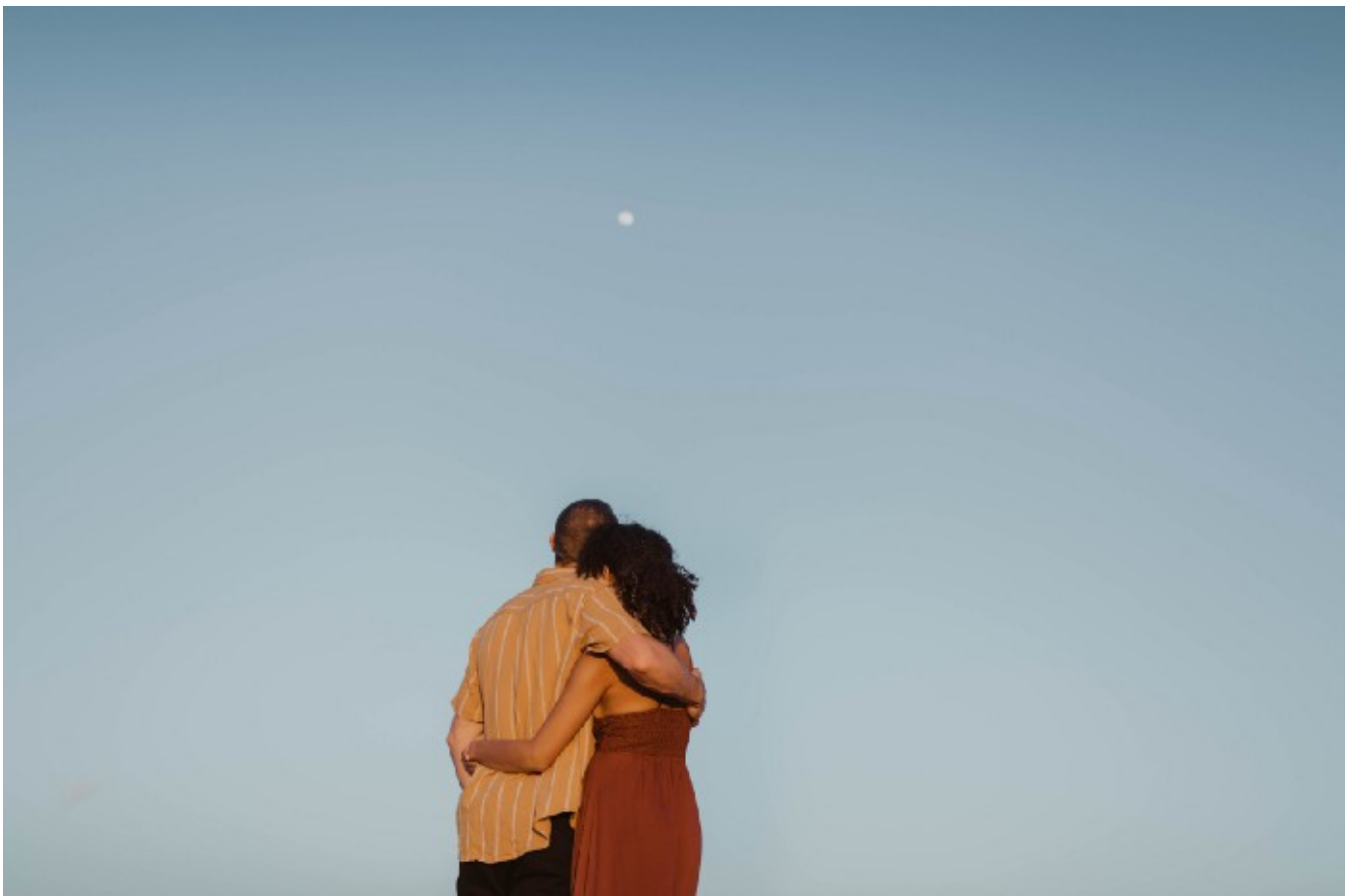


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It took me one too many years to realize that dating for fun is different than dating to find a life partner.

Don't get me wrong, there's nothing bad about casually dating and seeing where things go. But when it comes down to deciding if someone would make a great bingo partner well into retirement, I realized most of the men I dated didn't make the cut.

Why? They lacked a few important traits that made me feel happy, safe, and like we could weather anything in our relationship.

Because finding someone to Netflix and chill with or be your plus one to weddings is easy. Attracting a person into your life who would make for a great life partner? That's a whole lot harder.

But so it should be because great things don't come easy.

After dating many men who were wrong for me, I finally found someone who is very right. And what I love most about him are things I didn't realize I hated in the other men I dated.

So if you're looking for a serious relationship, one that can withstand a lifetime, it's important you look for someone with these qualities:

They have solid friendships and other relationships.

I dated a guy in college who had a rather large ego. When that ego was threatened, he became a pretty mean person.

From early on in our relationship, I knew he didn't have a good relationship with his step-dad. I didn't think anything of it at the time. Most guys don't get along with new men forced into their lives.

But then I noticed how his friend group always shifted. He talked crap about his best friend from college. He had a falling out with one of our mutual friends. Then another friendship ended in a fit of his rage.

But, again, I thought nothing of it while we were together.

When we broke up, I stayed friends with his best friend at the time. We checked in with one another now and then—grabbed drinks when I was in

his area. And on one night when I met up with him (two years after the breakup), he told me my ex blew up on him. They haven't been friends since.

This might sound like something insignificant. What's the big deal if he doesn't have friends? How does that affect the relationship?

Well, in the long-run, it will. Your friends and family won't matter to a person who doesn't value their own circle of friends. That deep connection will only be something you two share (if they're even able to deeply connect with you).

When someone has a revolving door of friends in their life, it says a lot about what they value most. And, for my ex, it also showed he had zero conflict resolution skills.

How to attract this:

By having your own solid network of relationships, you end up attracting that into your own life. Whether it be because you have mutual acquaintances, or that someone who doesn't value friendship can't be with someone who does.

Your ability to maintain strong friendships while also being in a relationship will be your best bet to attracting a partner who has the same.

The ability to express what they're feeling.

A friend once told me about how her dad cheated on her mom. I was shocked, mostly because her parents were still together. Back in the day, after her mom gave birth to her third child, she fell into a deep depression. She didn't leave her room and wasn't there for her kids. And, of course, this took a toll on her husband.

But instead of getting help with his wife or weathering the storm, he slept the neighbor down the street. It took years for her mom to build trust back up and for her dad to learn how to talk about his feelings, rather than resort to other, *unhealthy* means.

I'm not saying people who can't express their emotions will cheat. But what I am saying is, people who can't put to words what they're experiencing are more likely to channel those feelings into other actions.

And sometimes, those actions will be hurtful to their partner.

Finding a person who can talk about their feelings or work on getting better at expressing them is like striking gold. Because life is difficult. Hard times happen. And having someone who communicates those experiences will help you both grow together rather than grow apart.

How to attract this:

When you're on dates, stray away from small talk. Go ahead and get to know the basics like what they do from work and where they're from, but also ask deeper questions.

Some examples are:

"What are you passionate about in life?"

"What's one of your favorite travel memories?"

"What does an ideal day look like for you?"

These questions can help you move past talk that's surface-level. You can dive deeper into someone's mind and see how willing or able they are to talk about their emotions.

They can empathize with how you feel.

My current boyfriend and I grew up with wildly different life experiences. He comes from a solid family: two loving parents and a little brother. He hasn't experienced any hardships, aside from the loss of a family dog or two.

On the other hand, I don't have a close relationship with my family. I struggle with depression. I had two eating disorders that consumed six years of my life. I've been physically and sexually abused.

And while my boyfriend can't understand how those experiences affected me, he tries. He listens to the stories I tell him and holds me while I cry. If there's something he doesn't understand, he'll ask questions.

Sometimes I wish he could know what the pain I carry in me is like, but at the same time, I appreciate having a person who is my safe space. And my boyfriend couldn't be that for me if he didn't have empathy for my feelings.

When someone feels empathy for you, they can put themselves in your shoes and see things from your perspective. A great life partner will take your feelings into consideration and make choices based on them.

They care about your well-being as much as they care about theirs. Because in a relationship, you're a team.

How to attract this:

A big red flag that someone can't understand your experiences (or doesn't want to) is how much they ask you questions about yourself. By talking about another person's experiences, they have to understand what you went through to keep the conversation going.

Someone who only talks about themselves or quickly changes the subject when things verge on emotional probably cannot empathize well with others.

They have humility.

Not a single person alive is perfect. Bless your heart if you find someone who thinks they are; you'll have quite a difficult journey.

On top of having anger issues, my college boyfriend also refused to believe he was anything less than a god waking this planet. It probably didn't help that I was a twenty-year-old, enamored to be dating an actor/model.

When he would crew up, the blame was placed on me or someone else. He never took fault for making a mistake.

Missed an audition? I kept him up by making him help me study for my midterm.

Got a parking ticket? The stupid sign was covered by a tree, and his friend kept him at lunch too long.

Not to mention all the times he told me that he deserved to be dating someone as gorgeous as the models he dated. Not exactly a humble dude, in any sense of the word.

Humility is an admirable quality because it's a person's ability to admit they're not above other people, including you. If your partner thinks they're somehow better than you, then the relationship dynamics will be skewed in your favor. Over time, that inequality will start to wear on you.

Finding a humble partner means you both can mess up, and there will be fewer fights. You can admit that you're not flawless, and grow together throughout life as a result.

How to attract this:

Be humble yourself. Usually, someone who has a massive ego wants to be around people who are flashy, trying hard, and interested in superficial

topics.

By being genuine and exuding humility in how you talk, you'll attract people who admire that in a partner. In return, you'll most likely push away those who don't.

They show you respect.

I can't express enough that respect is the foundation of any healthy relationship.

I didn't realize how true this is until my current relationship. When my boyfriend and I get into arguments, we focus on finding a mutual understanding rather than tear each other down. When one of us annoys the other, we're patient instead of hurtful.

Mutual respect translates to so many qualities that a relationship thrives off: emotional safety, high self-esteem, trust, and intimacy. When you don't respect someone, how are you able to have any of those?

I'm not saying you need to be doting on your partner every minute of every day, but admiring one another, rather than getting stuck on imperfections, leads to a more satisfying relationship for both of you.

How to attract this:

Create boundaries from the first date. If you don't tell someone how you want to be treated, they'll never know if they're crossing your limits. Not to mention you'll never know if they're disrespectful or simply unaware of how their actions hurt you.

By creating boundaries, you tell someone, "This is how I want to be respected." If they disagree, they'll exit your life. If they disrespect you, you can exit their life.

But if they value your boundaries, they're a step closer to being a keeper.

There are plenty more qualities that make for a great life partner. Still, I've found that these five are necessary for happiness and longevity in a relationship.

Life is a long journey, with unexpected ups and downs. While chemistry, passion, and sexual attraction are great catalysts for a relationship, the above traits will end up getting you much further.

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