

**HUMOR**

**True love**

**Marc's Guide to Long-Term Relationships**

**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC**  
by Marc Acito



Sometimes I think the only reason we're still together is because we can't agree on how to break up. Here's a transcript from an actual argument, circa October 1996:

Floyd: "Why don't you just leave?"  
 Marc: "Why should I leave? You leave."  
 Floyd: "No, you leave."  
 Marc: "No, you leave."  
 If we ever resolve this one, we're done for.

**Marc's Successful Relationship Tip #2: Birds of a Feather Flock Together**

OK, I know this sounds like I'm contradicting Tip #1, but I never said relationships were easy. You see, as important as it is to not have the same blind spots, it's equally important to have enough in common to build a life together.

The best couples I've known are pretty much cut from the same cloth. In terms of background, beliefs and values, they share a common frame of reference. So when one partner says, "Stop acting like Bette Davis in *All About Eve*," the other one knows immediately to quit being a booze-guzzling bitch on toast.

Interestingly, the single largest deal-breaker I've seen in gay relationships has been mismatched intellects. If one guy is a Rhodes scholar and the other so dumb it takes him two hours to watch *60 Minutes*, then one of you is bound to start cheating intellectually. And there are plenty of gay men out there happy to screw with your mind.

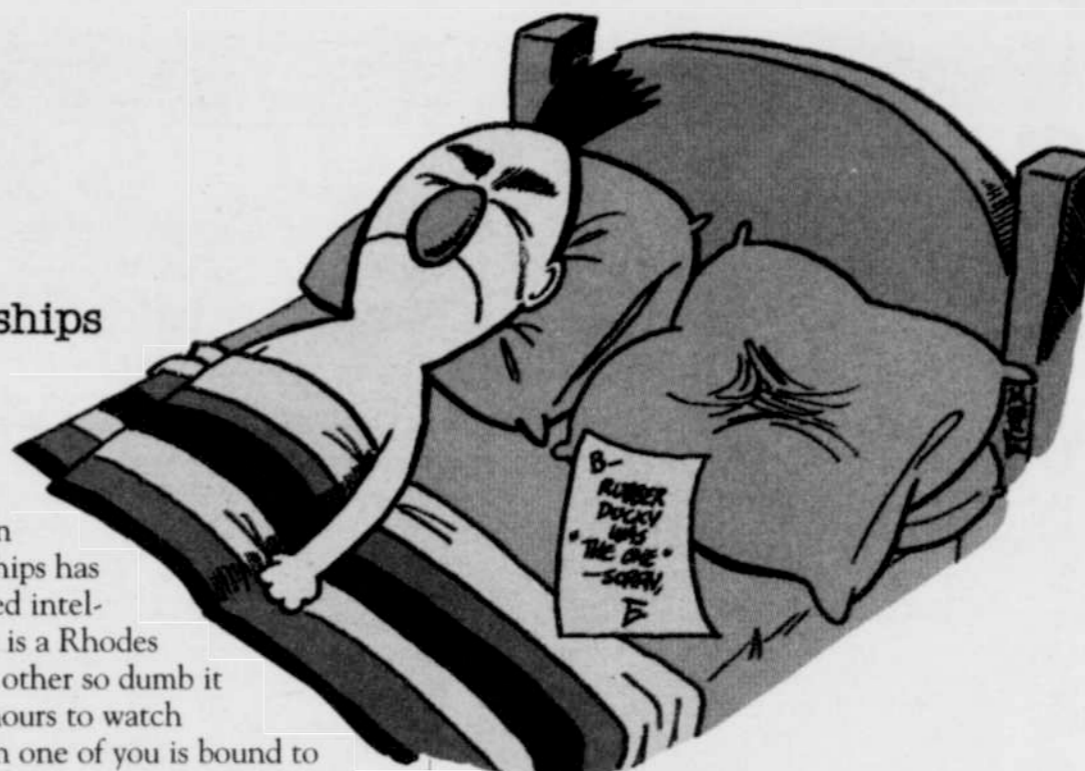
**Marc's Successful Relationship Tip #3: Let's Get Physical**

If you're truly interested in mating for life, then you best make certain you've chosen someone who makes you want to do it like monkeys in the zoo. Unfortunately, I know a number of gay men who've settled for such severe bed death you want to send them a wreath.

Here's the deal: The temperature in the bedroom will go down over time. So you want to make sure the thermometer starts all the way at the top.

**Marc's Successful Relationship Tip #4: Make 'Em Laugh**

Long-term relationships are hard work; you need someone who'll lighten the load. Trust me, this is especially helpful when you back your car into your partner's.



Lastly, if you're in doubt about a potential mate, I suggest you try the patented Smile Test, which was developed by my friend Emily as a shopping tactic. You know how when you're trying on clothes and you're standing in front of the mirror saying: "I don't know. What do you think? I like the color, but...."?

Forget it. You'll never wear the thing.

If, on the other hand, when you look at yourself your face broadens into a grin, then whip out that credit card, honey; the outfit's a keeper.

The same is true for people. If the mere mention of someone's name makes you smile like a beauty queen, that's a good sign. If you start a conversation that takes a week to finish, even better. If you fit in bed like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, then hold on tight. This one may be the keeper.

And that, my friends, is The Gospel According to Marc. ☐

MARC ACITO won't call his partner his husband until it's legal. Write him at [marcacito@attbi.com](mailto:marcacito@attbi.com).

It's inevitable. As soon as someone finds out my partner and I have been together 16 years they always say the same thing: "Wow! How do you do it?"

I hope they're expressing admiration for us instead of simply wondering how we could possibly put up with one another for so long.

Over the years I've come up with a number of pithy responses. "We go out dancing twice a week," I'll say. "I go on Fridays, Floyd on Saturdays."

Or "We have sex almost every day of the week: almost on Monday, almost on Tuesday...." I got a million of 'em.

Since I'm asked this question a lot, I've made something of a study of the mating habits of successful long-term couples—people who, after a decade or two, still seem to actually like one another.

In honor of Valentine's Day I thought I'd share these observations with you. If your longest relationship was with a trick who stayed for breakfast, then read on.

**Marc's Successful Relationship Tip #1: Opposites Attract**

In every relationship, someone's got to be Ernie and someone's got to be Bert. If you both have the same personalities, you're bound to have the same blind spots. The downside of this balancing act is that you may argue. Fortunately for gay people, we don't have to contend with all that *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* crap. With gay guys it's more like *Men Are from Mars, and You're a Loudmouth Cheating Tramp*.

Floyd and I are so well balanced in this regard we can't even make the simplest decision without major debate. It requires an act of Congress before we can decide on a new cell phone plan.

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