

FOCUS

Finding Your Soul Mate

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CONTRIBUTING WRITER



Yes! Soul Mate relationships are possible. Yet there are many myths and misconceptions around what Soul Mate Relationships are and the process of creating them. First, let's define what a Soul Mate relationship is. Soul Mate relationships are created when two individuals consciously choose to come together for the opportunity to experience joy and

to share in each other's growth. These types of relationships are passionate, harmonious and productive.

When challenging times arise, Soul Mates know its about choice, being proactive rather than reactive, and the quality of the relationship will be determined by each individual owning their own history, contribution to the situation and willingness to honor the purpose of the relationship.

In these types of healthy and well-balanced relationships, each person takes 100% responsibility for his or her own life and for the results they create for themselves and the relationship. Soul Mates acknowledge that their partner is a gift to help them see their own areas for potential growth and to increase their understanding of themselves.

One of the myths around Soul mates is "if I find my Soul Mate, all my relationship challenges will dissolve." This myth has contributed to many individuals' frustration and loss of hope in regard to relationships. Even if you have a potentially great relationship that you feel was destined to be, when we do not under-

stand the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual components that drive and create our relationship interactions, we are like ships without a rudder or an airplane without a navigator and can unwittingly self-sabotage a potentially healthy and satisfying Soul mate relationship.

There are three components that can help an individual begin the process of creating a Soul Mate Relationship. The first component is understanding **Shared Reality**. Shared Reality entails knowing and understanding a potential partner's relationship goals and dreams, and identifying up front if they are on track with where you are going in your life. Shared Reality also means both potential partners are clear about what they want for their life as individuals, and how that would be enhanced within a relationship.

The second step is to identify specifically what you want in a mate that would align with your purpose and write it down. I call this a "Create-a-Mate" list. Defining the spiritual, mental (temperament, attitude toward life, personality interaction style) and

physical (height, weight, physique) qualities desired in another person, can help individuals identify at the beginning of a relationship if their partner is compatible to their life's goals, values and dreams. This also helps individuals clarify exactly what is important to them in a relationship. This will ensure that you are living your life by Choice, not chance, and that you are spending your time wisely and in a way that draws you closer to your desires.

A third key to creating Soul Mate relationships is to understanding **Affinity**. Affinity entails discovering if you "really like the person" you are considering a relationship with. Because relationships go through phases and most people are unaware of the physical process that goes on in the Romantic period, we do not always see a person clearly at the beginning of a relationship.

During the Romantic Phase, people tend to experience strong attraction, bliss, magnetism, hope and ecstasy. This experience is created by the release of a natural endorphin called PEA or Phenal Ethamine. This attrac-

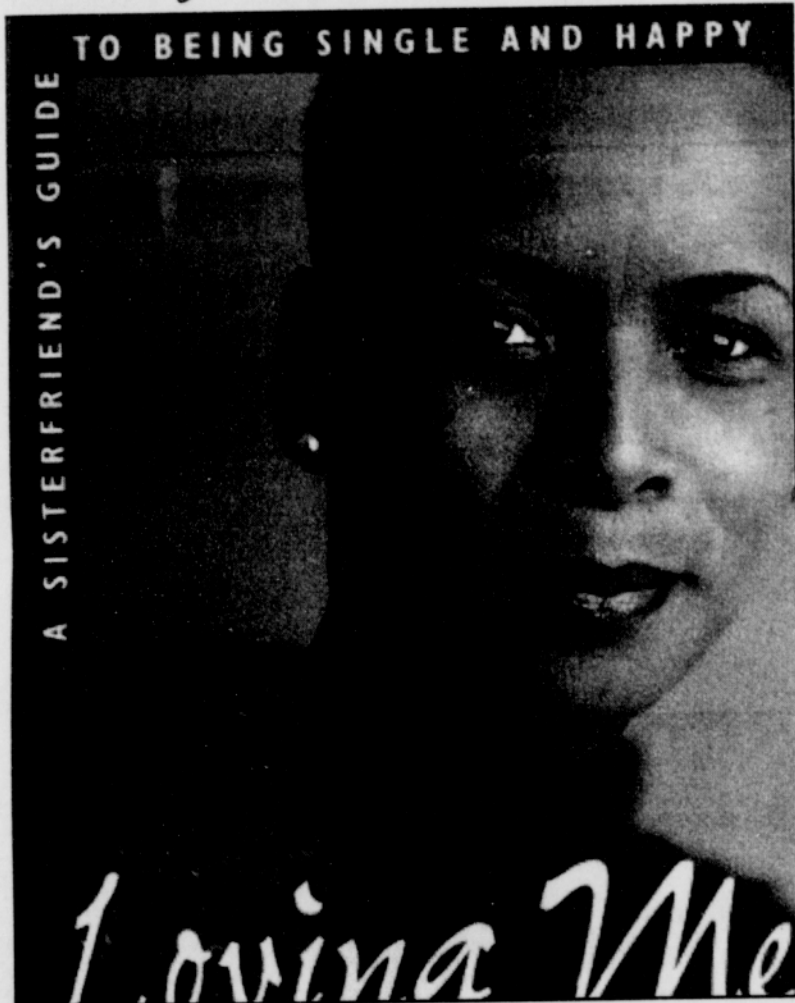
tion chemical is nature's way of bringing individuals together in relationship. It is natural to feel this sense of exhilaration at the beginning of a relationship and it is important to remember that the impact of PEA typically lasts three to eighteen months. During the PEA phase, it is easy to overlook or ignore the patterns your partner may have that will create challenges in the relationship long term.

As you move into Phase two, the Entanglement Phase, unhealthy patterns and fears from the past will begin to emerge. In the entangle-

ment phase, people tend to experience power struggles, hypersensitivity, frustration, fear and disillusionment. The ease in which you move through this phase will depend upon your willingness and your partner's willingness to communicate effectively, resolve conflict in a healthy way and an openness to acknowledging your own fears and unhealthy interactions that you bring to the relationship.

YES! Soul Mate relationships are possible. And they begin with individuals who are committed to creating the highest form of love relationships with themselves first, and others second.

Loving Me: A Sisterfriend's Guide to Being Single and Happy



For many African-American women, finding and marrying the man of their dreams is just that - a dream. In fact, according to some estimates, as many as twenty-five percent of African-American women will never marry. In **LOVING ME: A Sisterfriend's Guide to Being Single and Happy** (Owl Books/Henry Holt & Co., Jan., 1999, Trade Paperback Original; \$12.95), motivational speaker Claudette Sims shows these single sisters that life can and should be more than counting the days until they meet Mr. Right.

A smart, funny guide that mixes the practical and the inspirational, **LOVING ME** encourages solo Black women to find happiness in themselves, with or without a mate. Highlighting self-love and the ability to appreciate yourself,

Sims encourages women to focus their energy on creating a life they love rather than waiting for a good man to provide it for them. She also shows readers how important it is that they nurture themselves while sharing a generous dose of love with family, friends, and colleagues. This comforting and supportive guide reminds us all that the world is full of love - to be had and shared - and that the secret to loving others is to first love yourself.

Since Claudette Sims first self-published **LOVING ME** in 1985, she has sold over 30,000 copies to women around the country who, like her, felt that their happiness depended only on themselves. As Sims writes, "Being single is not an illness or a disease. It is not a condition. It is a state of being. Single

simply means not married or currently involved in a meaningful relationship, period... **LOVING ME** is a book for women who understand that each of us has been given a unique opportunity to create our own joy, our own moments and memories."

Compassionate and warmhearted, **LOVING ME** proves that what the world needs more than advice on

how to find a man is support for how to find yourself. Whether it's discussing things your mother never told you or giving advice on how to leave bad men behind, **LOVING ME** is an essential and necessary companion for all women who are ready to make a commitment to themselves to start enjoying their lives - with or without a man.

Black History Month Concert With Gospel Choir Extravaganza

Lewis & Clark College will celebrate Black History Month with a Gospel Choir Extravaganza, Sunday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m., Agnes Flanagan Chapel, Lewis & Clark College, 0615 S.W. Palatine Hill Road.

The program will feature the University of Oregon Gospel Choir, Young People of Zion, Portland Metropolitan Youth Mass Choir and Mount Olivet Baptist Church Youth Choir.

The concert is part of the College's Agnes Flanagan Chapel Sunday Concert Series. The series continues the second Sunday of the month through April.

Tickets are \$5 for general admission and \$1 for Lewis & Clark community. For information and tickets, call the chapel office at (503) 768-7085.

"The gospel concert is one of our most popular events of the year," says Mark Duntley, dean of the chapel. "This concert promises to raise the roof with the energetic enthusiasm of youthful voices singing contemporary and classical gospel songs."

Next in the Chapel Sunday Concert Series is solo percussionist Mark Goodenberger, March 14, at 2 p.m.

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