

How to be LOVED

Whether you're single, married, coming out of a relationship, or just want to get on with people better, this will help...

We all tend to have a wish list of the qualities we hope to find in another person - whether it's in a friend or a lover.

As a rule we want them to be kind, compassionate, empathetic, have a sense of humour, be supportive - and generally make us feel better about ourselves.

But, as relationship expert Roy Sheppard points out in his inspiring new book *How To Be The One*, before you can find yourself someone with the qualities you're after, it might be helpful to check first to see if you yourself have those important qualities.

His message is simple: make yourself the best person you can possibly be and you're more likely to meet people with positive qualities and draw

them into your life. But of course the burning question is how exactly can you do this?

Strengthen your emotional core

Roy says we need to let go of negative thinking and develop a greater sense of self-awareness and a stronger 'emotional core'.

In other words, become more emotionally stable, less needy, and quietly confident that you can cope

with whatever life throw at you. With a stronger emotional core you will see life as it is, rather than as it 'should' be - stop projecting your happiness into the future, say, for when you have more money, lose weight, have a better - or any - partner...

By accepting yourself, you also become less dependant on others, and this is the place you want to be. It is once you have reached this emotional point that you're more likely to attract the kind of partner or friends you want - people actively tend to seek you out.

Let go of hurt

Think about the people you enjoy being around. The likelihood is they make you laugh, feel better about yourself, don't put you down or trample on your dreams. It's also unlikely they'll be bitter,

'Before you can be kind to others, you must be kind to yourself'

Roy Sheppard

aggressive or argumentative. The trick is to try to be more like them. This is not to say that you should fake yourself a whole new personality or erase your past, but it can help to think about how you might be coming across to other people.

Do you tend to wallow in your hurts and concentrate on the bad over the good? We've all had our share of trauma and tragedy but endlessly talking about it probably doesn't make you the most fantastic company. Or yourself any happier.

Learn from those hurts and understand them for what they were. If you don't move on, you're unlikely to feel good about yourself, or find yourself in fulfilling relationships. (If you can't let go or you have been psychologically or physically abused, you might benefit from professional support.) The transformation isn't going to happen overnight - you do need

'Anybody is not better than nobody. Please repeat this as often as you need to for it to sink in'

Roy Sheppard

These could stop you meeting people...

Shyness... Roy says: 'All shyness is linked to low self-esteem and over-analysis of a situation. In simple terms, extreme shyness is being so wrapped up in yourself, you're convinced that everyone else cares as much about what you feel as you do. They don't.'

There is a simple technique you can use to eliminate nervousness: take the initiative to help others feel more comfortable and at ease. 'This is so powerful. By helping

someone else and shifting your focus to the needs of another, you simply forget to be nervous.'

Depression... Depressed people find it very difficult to be loving, either to themselves or others. It is a bad idea for a single person suffering from depression to seek to start a meaningful relationship. If you suffer from depression, I urge you to seek professional help before you enter a new relationship.'



How to be more likeable

Stop telling others what's wrong with your life, or how tired and exhausted you feel. Half won't care. The other half could be pleased.

Think of people you know who have a bad attitude. What do they do? Ensure you don't do any of the same.

Stop criticising, blaming, judging, or giving unwanted or unasked for feedback.

Devote at least some time every day helping to make other people feel good about themselves.

Stop taking people for granted.

Make a point of being pleasant to more people. And do it every day.

It's your choice: good mood or bad mood.

Stop trying to change anyone else. Start with yourself.

Be able to move on. Don't cling to what could have been. What was, was. What is, is.



Relationship Q&A



Relationships can be tricky. With this in mind, we asked Roy...

How can you get on better with 'toxic' people?
The first step is to become more aware of the people you come into contact with who consistently seem to make you feel bad or worse about yourself. The next step is to make sure you never give one of these people the opportunity or 'permission' to stick the knife in.

Recognise that what they do is about their own stuff - anger, frustration, bitterness and even hatred. It's almost certainly nothing to do with you. Develop a sense of compassion for them. Tell them quietly and calmly that, because of their behaviour, you have decided not to see them so much. This puts the responsibility on that person to change their behaviour.

Can you protect yourself from emotional hurt?
Being emotionally hurt is part of life but in my view when you improve your emotional fitness (see 'Strengthening your emotional core') you become a much stronger person.

But also a lot of emotional pain is caused by refusing to accept the reality of a situation, instead comparing it with a better version in your head. When you feel hurt and upset, think

back to other times you felt the same way and recall the fact that you did cope. This makes you stronger. The best tip I can offer is not to fight these feelings. Accepting them can be very calming.

How can you forgive someone who has hurt you many times?
If someone keeps hurting you, and is doing so knowingly, get out of the relationship. What stops people doing this is fear of loneliness. If we've been hurt in the past, we tend to hold on to those feelings. This just keeps them alive and kicking.

Devote some time to forgiving yourself. Forgive yourself for holding on to the hurt, forgive yourself for past behaviour in stressful situations... Once you've done this you are best prepared to forgive others.

Forgiveness can be so hard and we can think why the hell should they 'get away with it' anyway? But forgiveness isn't about them. Forgiveness is about being kind to yourself.

How To Be The One by Roy Sheppard (Centre Publishing, £2.99) is out this week.

