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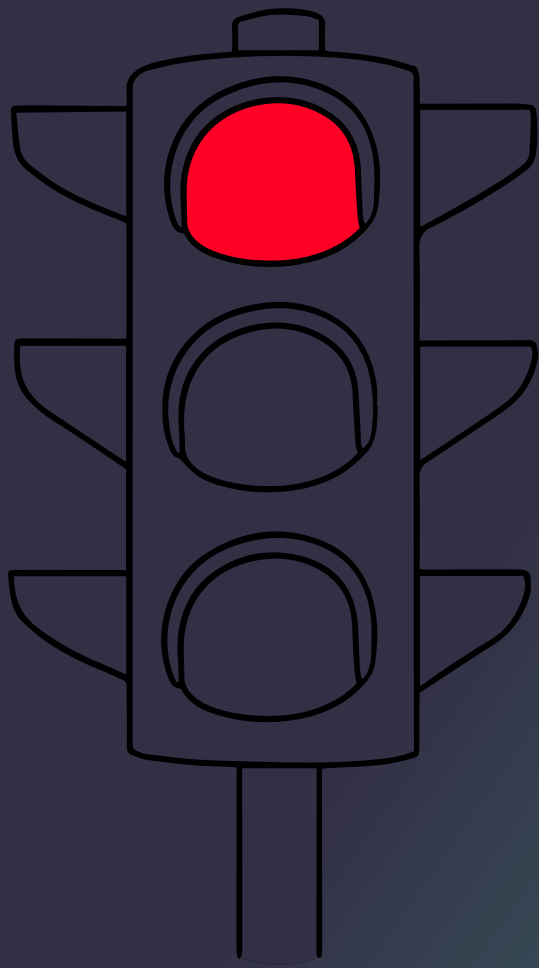
Tips from the **Divorce Support Club**

Valentine's Day: Dating
Dos and Don'ts

Walker
Family Law


1 Don't date before you're ready

How do you know when you're ready? The answer will be different for everyone. It's important to be honest about your intentions.



Are you:

Dating to get over your ex?

Dating to punish your ex and make them jealous?

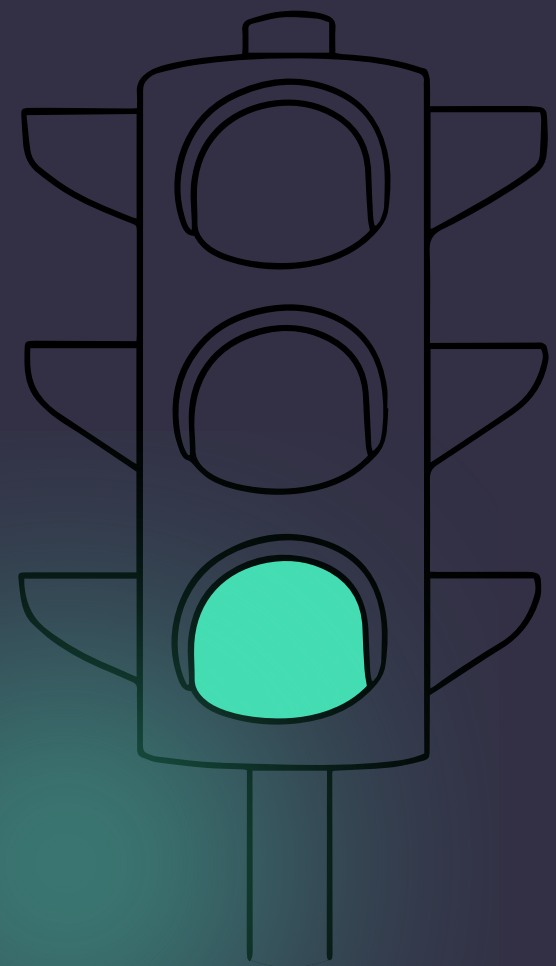
Dating to avoid being lonely?

Dating because you want to start a new, committed relationship?

Dating just for fun?

Ask yourself these questions to help you work out whether you are **ready**

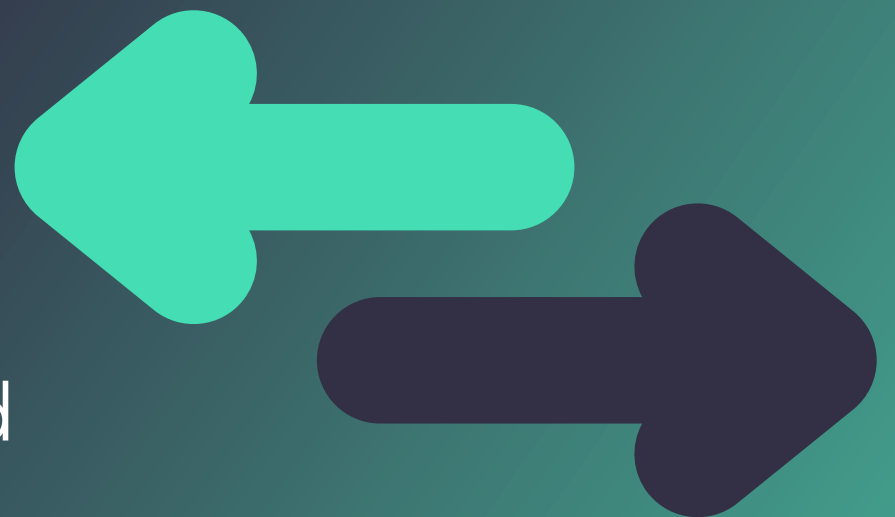
- How do I show up in relationships?
- What could I do differently?
- Where did I make compromises that became sacrifices?
- What am I willing to accept?
- What won't I accept?



2 Don't automatically go for the exact opposite of your **ex**

Going through a divorce is a very vulnerable experience. Perhaps by going for the opposite of your ex you are trying to avoid making the same mistakes again.

However, there will probably be aspects of your ex-partner that you did like, and that were good and right for you.



3 Don't over invest

Over-investing is easy to do when you get back on the dating scene....

- > You may be talking to someone on a dating app. It can be easy to start imagining a life with them, introducing them to friends and family, or even marrying them without truly knowing that person.
- > Over-investing can lead to you dropping the boundaries you have set for yourself.

4 Don't take your eye off the ball in your divorce



Getting into a new relationship with someone, and letting that carry you away may have an adverse effect on you and your divorce.

- You may find yourself relying too much on the person you are in a new relationship with.
- Don't sacrifice your financial independence on the promise of a potential new partner.
- You have one shot at negotiating your divorce settlement, so keep your eye on the ball.

5 Don't ignore red flags

There are certain things to look for in someone when determining whether you want to be in a relationship with them...

Look out for lovebombing

Someone who showers you with gifts or expensive dates may be going too far too fast.

It is easy to get carried away.

Ask yourself whether you are comfortable with their level of affection.

How do they treat other people?

Are they kind and polite when dealing with others, for example the waitress or the taxi driver?

How do they talk about their ex?

Look out for people who only have bad things to say about their ex. It may mean that they don't want to take any responsibility for the breakdown of that relationship.

6 Know who **you** are

Now onto the dating tips. It is so important to remember the things that make you, you. The things that make you come alive, they will help you decide not only whether you are ready to date again, but also who you want to date. These could include:

- Your values
- Your goals
- Your hobbies
- Your vulnerabilities
- Your dreams



7 Know what you're **looking** for

It is good to have a clear idea of what you are looking for in a potential partner before you get back on the dating scene. Try creating an "ideal partner":

- What values do you want that person to have?
- What goals do you want them to have?
- What qualities do you want them to have?
- How do you want them to treat other people?
- What are the deal breakers?

8 Be **open** to opportunities

You never know what is going to happen, or what is around the corner. Some ideas of how to do this include:

Enjoy the process of meeting new people, be curious and ask them questions.

Avoid staring at your phone while walking, **be present** in the moment.

Know what you enjoy, and **go and do it!** You may not meet a new partner but you might meet new friends.

Say hello to people you meet: in a shop, on your dog walk. **Open yourself up** to the opportunities around you.

9 Be clear with your boundaries

It is good and health to create boundaries for yourself when you date. Ask yourself these questions before you start dating someone:

- What are you prepared to do?
- How far are you prepared to go to meet somebody?
- Would you be willing to see that person over a friend?
- How often in the week are you prepared to see somebody?



10 Know how to end it respectfully

Not all your dates will work out (and that's okay!). In these situations it's good to know how to end things in a respectful way.

Keep it:

- > Simple.
- > To the point - so the person knows where they stand.
- > Be kind, be firm, be polite.

"I really enjoyed meeting you, thank you for your time, but I just don't feel the spark between us and so I don't think this is for me. I wish you really well on your search."