

Date Like a Grownup 6-Step Find Hope and Find Him System
Step 3: Who is He? Getting Past My List.

Exercise: Who Is He...NOT?

The vision in our head of our ideal mate and relationship is informed by past experience – both positive and negative. There is a lot you can learn by taking a focused look at those experiences.

Walking down memory lane to review your significant past relationships helps you by:

- Reinforcing positive experiences and feelings you want to preserve
- Identifying negative experiences and feelings that you do *not* want to repeat in your next relationship
- Revealing patterns

Here's what I want you to do:

1. List past relationships that have impacted your life. Generally these would be adult experiences, but not necessarily. (My experience with my first “love” at 14 impacted my sense of self and beliefs about relationships for a very long time.) It could also be experiences with men in your life with whom your relationship was not romantic, such as a father or brother.
2. In the left column, list the attributes or experiences with these men that were negative or harmful. This could be anything from he had bad manners, he never cared about my feelings to he cheated on me.
3. Take each item that you *don't want* and translate it to what you *do want*. So, as the example shows, I changed “cheating” to “100% fidelity.”
4. For items that you will absolutely not tolerate from another man or in another relationship, check off the Deal Breaker column. (You will live by these.)

This exercise will help you further envision and describe what you need from a man to be happy and fulfilled.

When you complete your list, spend additional time looking for your dating and relationship patterns. The items in the “Don't Want” column can be a Big Red Flag if they have been repeated throughout multiple relationships.

These are the things you need to work on, learn about and pay very special attention to. We tend to repeat these things without conscious knowledge and it often takes the help of an expert to break you from your long-held patterns. (I know that’s how it was for me!)

My Past Relationships		
What I Don't Want	What I Want	Deal Breaker
<i>Bob Smith</i>		
Cheating	100% Fidelity	X
<i>John Doe</i>		
Avoidance of important problems	Man who handles life’s challenges head-on, intellectually, as an equal member of a team.	X
Didn't share feelings	Man who can express to me how he feels.	X

