Especially4u

*Dating agency*

**Why so many people fail to find their soul mate**

**There’s little chance that on a first date you’ll be relaxed enough to dazzle each other with your charisma. Why? However easy-going you might be, a first date is an exam. You’re both assessing each other minutely; the stress levels are going to be high.**

**If even only one of you is feeling stressed, the dynamic is not conducive to this meeting moving on to a second date, even if it’s a match made in heaven. The reason: if you’re not fairly relaxed then it’s difficult to be genuinely flirtatious.**

**Not relaxed = no flirting No flirting = no chemistry**

**This is why so very many singles go from date to date saying they simply can’t find ‘The One’.**

**If you’re not giving out flirtatious signals, even on just a friendly flirting level, then your date is unlikely to want to flirt with you. Then you’ll feel they’re unattractive and there’s no chemistry. And even if you quite like the person you may feel it’s unfair to lead them on by suggesting another meeting. You’re a busy, time-scarce individual who should move on quickly to another first date in order to continue your ever more urgent love search, aren’t you?**

**There’s an easy, fun and very workable alternative. It’s the conscious or unconscious strategy used by many singles who are successful in finding their soul mate. I’ve watched it happen again.**

 **My Domino Dating mantra for singles going on a first date goes like this: as long as your date is a ‘maybe’, at least ‘friendship material’, similar cultural background and values, reasonably attractive, you’ve had a few laughs, as long as they are a ‘maybe’, see them again.**

**Build up a circle of ‘maybes’ and spend time meeting them on very short dates to get to know them better. Be clear with each one that for the moment you are seeing lots of singles on a ‘friends-only’ basis, so no one feels you are cheating on them.**

**Don’t worry whether you fancy each other sexually or not; just ask yourself, ‘are they a fun human being and would I enjoy another hour of their company chatting about this and that?’ This is the difficult bit for many people to take on board because you don’t want to waste your time, or indeed your date’s time, if it’s not going anywhere.**

**This strategy is so counterintuitive that it’s difficult for people to believe it works. Many of you will reckon this is rubbish. You think you know that you can spot ‘chemistry’ within the first ten seconds, don’t you? You can always tell straight off whether or not you could really find them hot. Or not.**

**Following a strict first date protocol with Domino Dating may sound artificial and contrived but paradoxically, it’s this very structure that allows, indeed even encourages, natural and spontaneous gestures or friendship, romance and love to blossom. The soul mate you end up with is certain to defy most of your pre-conceptions.**

**I know Domino Dating works, my team at Drawing Down the Moon Dating Agency also know it works.**

**So, go for the ‘slow burn’.**

**We’ve seen thousands of singles go on second dates with people they thought were just ‘friendship material – absolutely no sexual attraction – something I can always spot immediately…’ Six months later they’ve moved in together and are passionately in love.**

**But, and this is a very big ‘but’, the Domino Dating Strategy will only work if you are sure to manage it in a very boundary-like manner. You need to follow my strict protocol, which ensures its success. And also to be sure you don’t leave a trail of broken hearts on the way.**

**With Domino Dating you don’t get intimate. Especially if you fancy your date like mad and you think you’ve found ‘The One’. OK, some of you will have done one-night stands at some point. Many will also have been seduced into sex on a first date. Who am I to stand in judgment? But I promise you, if you’re looking for a long-term and very special relationship, go for the slow burn. Always finish a date when there’s lots more to discover about each other.**

**My Domino Dating Strategy has been confirmed as well as founded by research on ‘just friends’ couples in the US. Interestingly, the point at which ‘just friends’ became lovers and then started a long-term relationship was when they were together, very relaxed and engaged in an activity which was new and different for both of them; also, something adventurous or with a touch of sensuality. I’m not suggesting you take up paragliding or wine tasting, but try and remember this when you are on a date with one of your ‘maybes’. Win-win dates for you**

**When it comes to a date, two people who are on paper an ideal match may meet up and get absolutely nowhere. Alternatively, if they handle the situation differently, the same couple may well fall for each other.**

 **There are good and bad ways of setting the scene – and it’s taken me many years of listening to feedback and doing informal research amongst my members to learn what they are. Mostly, they’re a matter of common sense, but you’d be surprised at how few people really do themselves justice when they first meet an interesting person. As a result, instead of taking off the date is just a damp squib.**

**So, I’ve divided the Domino Dating Strategy into two sections:**

**• first, making practical arrangements and setting the scene,**

**and**

**• second, the actual date itself, where you need to forget about everything except enjoying yourself, but within the Domino Dating boundaries.**

**How to set the scene for your first date:**

**For how long should you meet?**

**Be clear beforehand that you can’t meet for long. A first date should last a maximum of 90 minutes. Then, if you’re panting to get away, there’s no embarrassment because your date already knows that you won’t be staying long. ‘I promised to drop by and see my sister’ or ‘I’ve got to email the copy to my magazine by 11pm’ should do the trick.**

**If you don’t fix the duration before you meet then it will be difficult to cut it short (without being rude), if your date proves to be of absolutely no interest. Even if everything is going well, it is a wise move not to meet for long. That way, you’ll still have some easy conversation left for next time.**

**Long first dates are open to all sorts of pitfalls. Although you might be made for each other, you may still find you’ve moved rather too fast into exploring deep, personal matters. Why you broke up with your ex, for example, or what you are looking for in a future partner are the kind of topics that can press the button marked ‘panic’ in either of you.**

**Where to meet?**

**Think carefully about where to meet before you first talk, and be ready to suggest several venues that you feel comfortable about. There’s nothing worse than fumbling uselessly with your iPhone for the address of that bar somewhere near the art gallery and then, for lack of planning, you end up agreeing to meet miles away from where you live. Believe me, you’ll feel distinctly resentful if you have to make three changes of train or undertake a two-hour drive. Your ideal dating venues**

**Think of some venues you like that would make a good backdrop to your seductive powers. It’s worth doing some research on this key ingredient for a successful first date. Remember, for you both to feel relaxed enough to be flirty and ignite a romantic spark, you need the right kind of setting.**

**• Is the venue easy for you both to get to and from? Nearby tube, bus, taxis? • Is the ambience conducive to being at ease?**

**• What signals does the venue give out about you – your taste, values, lifestyle? • Is there loud music which will make conversation difficult? • Are the tables sufficiently apart for you to have a private conversation? • Are the waiters nice? • Are you likely to bump into people you know at this venue? • Can you just have a drink or are you expected to eat? • Can you reserve a table?**

**Avoid dinner dates and movies**

**For a first date, dinner is too long. First dates should be kept short. Stick to the 90-minute Golden Rule, even if you’ve booked the babysitter and travelled hundreds of miles.**

**If you’re meeting for a drink, perhaps after work, make sure it’s at a place where you can also have a snack in case you’re famished. A bar or brasserie is ideal. Pubs can be crowded and noisy and it’s difficult to find a corner where you can talk without being overheard. If it’s your style (and it’s not everyone’s), a hotel or restaurant bar can be perfect: there tends to be more space and quiet, and you won’t have eavesdroppers all agog at the next table.**

**Some people swear by a weekend brunch or lunch date because it’s more fun and relaxed. If the weather is good, then a walk in the park, with afternoon tea at a café alfresco, might set the scene well.**

**An activity, such as a visit to an art exhibition, is excellent and provides stimulus for animated conversation – even if you don’t know your Picasso from your Pissarro.**

**Meeting at a party is definitely not recommended.**

**Avoid, too, going to a film, play or concert. You’ll be sitting in silence, with an alien being sitting beside you, totally distracted from the performance as you speculate about how the two of you will get on once the show is over. Personal safety checklist**

**This bit’s mainly, but not exclusively, for women. For a woman who is meeting up with a man she doesn’t know, there are certain common-sense safety precautions to observe. And the more personal the introduction, the safer it’s likely to be. If it was made through a personal introduction agency, for example, they will hold detailed records of all members and this is a powerful deterrent against bad behaviour. However, if your date comes to you via the Internet you will have much less control and so you need to be more vigilant. Although I’ve never experienced anyone having problems on the personal-safety front, it is always a theoretical possibility.**

**When you are meeting up with someone you don’t know well, take care of yourself in the following ways: • Tell a friend where you are going and what time you are expected back. • Always meet in a public place. • Don’t meet in each other’s homes until you feel you really know and trust them. • Always have your own transport or enough money for a cab/public transport and don’t accept a lift. • If you find yourself concerned about your forthcoming meeting, have a friend call you on your mobile phone during the course of the date (apologise profusely as, of course, it’s bad manners not to switch your phone off). You can then indicate discreetly if everything is OK.**

 **• Don’t give your address, place of work or similar personal details to your date until you feel you can really trust them. If they’re even half-way decent, they’ll understand and respect your wishes. • Also, don’t send them a Facebook, LinkedIn or other social networking request at this stage. • Don’t give out a terrestrial phone number to begin with. Your address can be traced from it.**

**Meeting in the street?**

**One word: don’t! Never agree to meet in the street – outside a station, for example. For some odd reason that I’ve never quite understood, couples who do this, despite our advice, frequently don’t recognise each other and both parties then ring us at the office, furiously complaining that they’ve been stood up! However, as I write this, I still have to hand a card from a member relating how she met the man she is now married to – in front of a public lavatory – his choice. However, it was a smart, award-winning, state-ofthe-art creation in Notting Hill. Text or phone?**

**However you’ve been introduced, through a personal dating agency, swiping right on Tinder, a friend or just a regular Internet dating site, first date arrangements need to be sorted.**

**If you have the choice, go for texting to set up a date. It neatly sidesteps the many perils of being accidentally drawn into having your first date on the phone rather than face to face.**

**Smart phone tactics**

**If you have to fix a date on the phone do be aware of the effect of your voice and your phone manner because vocal impressions can lead to snap judgments of the wrong kind – just as first visual impressions often do. A detailed treatise on the voicemail follows because this little box of tricks is the top saboteur of first dates.**

**Voicemail dangers**

**Let me tell you about June and Sam\*. June was a friend to whom I’d given free dating membership of Drawing Down the Moon. She was a PR officer for a charity and Sam ran his own software publishing business. I suggested a date but when Sam rang June, he got through to her voicemail and heard what he thought was a rather flat, bored message – so he hung up. He had decided that she was not for him and formed a mental image of someone who worked in a tax office or funeral parlour. There was no fun, no warmth or energy there, he said. Alas, there was nothing I could do to persuade him to the contrary. June was attractive, great fun and had a good sense of humour, and I was sure they’d get on. He, however, insisted that he could always tell what someone was like by their voice.**

**Being the interfering person I am, I managed to arrange for the two to bump into each other the following month at one of our social evenings. At first neither of them realised who the other was – and, yes, they got on like the proverbial house on fire. An hour later, I could see them still chatting and laughing together at a table in the corner. By this time Sam had twigged what was going on, but June never knew she’d been rejected at the outset because she sounded flat and boring. In person, her voice was warm and interesting; unfortunately, she hadn’t bothered to ensure that her answerphone message reflected this. Sam and June went on to date regularly and have now been married for several years.**

**Your voicemail message – friend or foe?**

**How, then, do you make sure your voicemail message scores winners, not own goals? The sound of someone’s voice is a very potent force; yet, when people record their greeting message, they are often in a hurry or disorientated by unfamiliar technology. Put your message to the test now. Evaluate it critically. Do you sound pleased the caller has rung? Do you sound friendly and interested, or are you too businesslike, moody or bored? Perhaps you’ve opted out with an electronic message (a real no-no) instead?**

**This may seem like a lot of fuss over a small detail, but do bear in mind that the smallest clues about you will be pounced on. All sorts of fantasies – both negative and positive – will be projected onto them and will influence the caller’s response.**

**Always choose a relaxed moment to record your message. Centre yourself. Don’t bend over. Stand or sit up straight, take a deep breath and smile – yes, smile before you start recording. That way you will come across as open and friendly. Now, I know some of you use your phone for work and that you can’t, therefore, sound too informal; however, there’s nothing wrong with sounding friendly and positive, even when wearing your professional hat.**

**You’re calling a potential date to fix a meeting – should you leave a message?**

**Why not? Keep it short and sweet. Always say you’ll phone again because otherwise you may be waiting weeks for a call that never comes. Many, many people don’t check their voicemail very often. What do you say on the phone?**

**First, make sure you pick a moment when you’re feeling good about life! Are you relaxed and rested? Never phone a potential date for the first time after a stressful day at the office unless you’ve given yourself plenty of time to wind down.**

**As soon as they pick up, smile into space (to ensure your voice is warm), say who you are and immediately check if it’s a good moment for them to talk. Your future squeeze may be rushing off, late for an appointment, or have the lodger or children within earshot. All of this can make for a very abrupt and onesided conversation, leaving you certain that they’re not interested.**

**When you get talking keep it short and light. Don’t try to get to know one another over the phone – instead save your valuable small talk to break the ice on the date itself. With plenty of topics left to talk about, you’ll be more spontaneous.**

**Whenever I hear that a couple’s first phone conversation lasted half the night (and this does happen), my heart sinks. The enthusiasm and euphoria of having encountered a kindred spirit builds up such huge expectations that the physical meeting is invariably a let down.**

**L♥vebyte ‘Dating is a social engagement with the threat of sex at its conclusion.’**

**PJ O’Rourke**

**On the date itself:**

**Overcoming first date nerves**

**Even though you’re socially skilled and could, without batting an eyelid, chair a conference for captains of industry or heads of state, meeting someone for a first date may turn your knees to jelly. An effective way of dispelling nerves is to admit to them! Own up straightaway, ‘I felt a bit scared on my way here to meet you!’ and your date will thankfully admit, ‘So did I!’ You’ll both laugh and any tension will be defused. It works – try it.**

**The art of seductive conversation**

**To fascinate your date, you don’t have to be the greatest wit that ever walked the face of the earth. You can have them hanging on your every word if you learn to engage in proactive listening. Proactive listening is the technique of ‘reflecting back’ what your companion says or feels – for instance, ‘Obviously you really enjoy cycling, Mozart, or whatever’. This sort of response shows you can relate to their feelings. If you also want them to feel you’ve understood them properly, try ‘checking out’ what they’re saying by paraphrasing the essence of it back.**

**L♥vebyte ‘Of flirting: Attention without intention.’ Anon Be mischievous, flirty – and say what you think**

**The main thing to remember is that a date should be fun, upbeat and light-hearted – no matter what your date’s like. Jokey, teasing, mischievous, original and outrageous are all great! The art of flirting lies in being playful, curious and making you and your date feel just wonderful. However, don’t be too eager, so they still feel there’s some thrill in the chase. Crude, dirty or sleazy is out – and if your date doesn’t realise this, tell them.**

**L♥vebyte**

**‘I wasn’t being fresh with my hands. I was trying to guess her weight.’ WC Fields**

**Can’t think of what to say?**

**Well, what do you talk about? It’s easy to chat about the simple things that make up your everyday life: job, family, lifestyle, music, films, TV, sport, culture and so on – small talk rather than serious talk.**

**If you’ve had the opportunity, check out your date beforehand on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or Google. This can be very helpful. See who they’re following, and who’s following them. This can yield much helpful first date chit-chat. The interests and likes that you have in common, or that are complementary to each other, can keep you communicating right the way through the first date.**

**A well-timed compliment can work wonders, even if it’s just ‘You look as if you’re enjoying yourself’ or ‘Great trainers!’**

**You may also want to get some indication about what makes your date tick on a more serious level: their values and beliefs, for example, or whether politics, current affairs or religion are important or totally**

**unimportant concerns. What do they think about some of the more pressing issues of today, whether it’s the Middle East conflict or the rainforests? Some dates wouldn’t be seen for dust if these topics arose.**

**Before going on a date, always scan the news to be sure you know something interesting about what’s going on in the world. Acquaint yourself with at least one political story and throw in something quirky, too. Be up to speed on celebrity gossip. You can do a last-minute catch-up en route to the date via your smartphone or tablet. Conversation with feeling**

**It’s not so much what you talk about as how. Back up your sound bytes with lots of eye contact, that’s always a stunner. To make a real connection, make sure you say their name from time to time. There’s a beguiling resonance in the sound of one’s name being uttered by a relative stranger in an intimate context.**

**Furthermore, keep up the proactive listening: keep on reflecting back their words – at least until you’re got into the swing of things. Once you’ve relaxed, you’ll have no problem speaking your mind on anything that arises.**

**L♥vebyte ‘I require only three things in a man. He must be handsome, ruthless and stupid.’ Dorothy Parker**

**Subjects to avoid**

**A first date is much too soon to start talking about either your life goals or your emotional history. Be warned: you tackle such emotionally sensitive issues this early on at your peril! Even a couple of months down the line might be too soon.**

**I do realise that it may be very tempting to bring up matters that are critically important to you at the outset, and thus avoid wasting your time on someone who might run a mile when you ‘announce’ them later. However, you do need to be sure that the other person is ready to share these issues with you before you bring them up.**

**I remember Gerald\*, who’d had a highly acrimonious divorce and as a result had only limited access to his children. He’d thought that at last he was ready to accept the situation and start dating again. On his very first date with Kerry\*, she asked him why he’d joined up. It seemed only natural to respond with a brief account of his divorce. Before two sentences were out of his mouth, the friendly smile was wiped off his face and he launched into the lengthy tale of his fight to achieve better access to his two young sons. The smile also fell from Kerry’s face at this response to her innocent question, and a chill descended upon the evening. What was to have been a light-hearted and perhaps flirtatious chat had turned into a lengthy and heavy diatribe against Gerald’s ex-wife. The date fizzled out and no mention was made by either party of the evening being enjoyable, nor any suggestion of a further meeting.**

**Here’s another example, and this one happens all the time (women with bio-clocks running out, please note). On their first date, Rashida\* told Jerry\* that she wanted children before she was 40 (only 18 months off). Jerry told me that, in spite of wanting children himself, he started to sweat profusely and simply couldn’t keep the conversation going. They didn’t see each other again.**

**Small talk before ‘big talk’**

**The lesson from these unsuccessful first dates is that you can’t take shortcuts in the process of getting to know someone. Talking about anything emotionally intimate, such as why you broke up with your ex, is**

**fatal. Any un-addressed resentment or unfinished business will be obvious to your date. Remember, too, that men and women often have different timetables for dealing with intense or painful matters.**

**It is important in any relationship to understand how your companion is coming to terms with past situations. On a date, you can get a lot of clues from their body language – for example, for outward signs of reticence or defensiveness. There is a section on body language in my Smart Dating book, which you should find helpful and intriguing.**

**If your date is the one who talks about why they broke up with their ex, tell them that you read somewhere that couples who discuss such matters on early dates usually don’t see each other again. Say ‘Tell me, instead, how you feel about…’ and mention another topic you can both discuss safely. Focus on questions that are likely to elicit a positive rather than a negative response. The more you can encourage your date to get into ‘Yes’ mode, the more likely he/she is to feel good about you and to want to see you again.**

**A smart answer to a tricky first-date question**

**What if your date starts to interrogate you about lots of personal details that you don’t feel ready to discuss? Try responding with ‘I’ll pass on that one’ or ‘Ask me in a few weeks’. Providing you say this firmly and with good humour, they should get the message.**

**Talking time**

**People often talk too much when they’re nervous and may take over the conversation, thus giving the impression that they’re egotistical, arrogant and boring. Observe the conversational flow and note whether one of you is doing more talking than the other. It could be you, but guess what? It’s usually the man who monopolises the airwaves and the woman who colludes with him by listening begrudgingly and passively. . L♥vebyte**

**‘When it comes to making love, a girl can always listen so much faster than a man can talk.’ Helen Rowland**

**There is well-documented research that shows that men do tend to talk far more than they realise. They are more likely to do this in stressful situations – such as on a first date – and it may not be truly characteristic of the normal run of their life. If you’re ever in this predicament, whether you are a man or a woman on a date and your companion is rabbiting on endlessly about their job at the bank or their passion for fly fishing, try and snap them out of it with something like, ‘Hey, half time! – I’d like to tell you about me now’. Or ‘Hey, I need to be leaving in 20 minutes – let me fill you in on where I’m coming from’. Back it up with a smile, a friendly touch on the arm and a bit of direct eye contact and they’ll be all ears. You can rehearse this one at work or in any social setting where you are not getting your share of the stage. Remember that a person who talks too much can’t do so unless he or she has a colluding audience. And now who pays?**

**At the agency, we always recommend that both parties offer to share the bill. However, I think that if the man really wants to pay, the woman should let him. It’s a bit of old-fashioned courtesy and should never be treated as if it were a put-down. If you know there’s going to be another meeting, you can always say, ‘My turn next time’. Finishing a date when you want to see them again**

 **You’ve enjoyed yourself… a couple of drinks… some small talk to break the ice… and then chatting in a relaxed way about each other. So, is there a bit of a spark? Yes, but you don’t know yet if there’s any real chemistry. Being a Domino Dater, you decide you should see more of a potentially special person. In which case, it’s time to part while you still have lots more to discover about one another. In the old days, the man would say at the end of such a date, ‘That was great, most enjoyable. I’ll give you a ring sometime.’ Then, he might or might not have got back to you. Even nowadays, if he doesn’t keep his promise and you’d really like to see him again, you may still feel that you are supposed to be waiting for him to take the initiative and be reluctant to call him yourself.**

**The problem lies in a striking and basic difference between men and women – and one already mentioned in relation to voicemail messages. For a woman, it’s the most natural and easy thing in the world to pick up a phone and call someone. For many men, it’s neither easy nor natural. The fact that he said he’d call you, but didn’t do it promptly, makes him feel guilty and compounds his inaction, even though he might really like to see you again. Smart endings to promising first dates**

**At Drawing Down the Moon we suggest rounding off a promising first date in one of the following ways:**

**You finish the date sooner than expected**

**The date’s going well. You’d like to see him or her again. Keep them on their toes by getting in first and saying something like, ‘I enjoyed that, but I’ve got to go now. Maybe we could give each other a call in a week or two?’ This implies that any further initiative is evenly shared, and thus neither of you will feel pressured.**

**Many women do feel hesitant about phoning a man. However, our feedback from men is that they love to be rung and invited out by a woman unless it had been arranged that man would do the phoning – in which case he feels pressured if the woman calls first. This is why, at the end of a date, it’s so important to ensure that either one of you might call the other.**

**The whole issue of who rings whom is a tricky one. This is because, on the one hand, you want to play just a teensy bit ‘hard to get’ to ‘keep ’em keen’, while, on the other hand, you’re secretly dying for your date to chase you. It helps to be not too predictable about your phone calls or availability and also, as I’ve said above, to drop clues about seeing lots of people at the moment, ‘just as friends’, of course – so they don’t think you’re sleeping around. Manipulative? Maybe, but opt out of this strategic dating completely and you’ll be the loser. But if you become too strategic, as the best-selling dating book The Rules advocates for women, you’ll be pretending to be someone you’re not. And the guy will then fall in love with a false personality, not yours.**

**However, what about those brilliant dates where it’s obvious you should see each other again and it would be churlish just to say you’ll ring each other rather than fix something on the spot? Which of these two invitations is more likely to elicit a second date?**

**‘I really enjoyed meeting you. Shall we meet up again sometime?’**

**Or**

**‘I really enjoyed meeting you. Are you free, by any chance, to meet for another drink, say next Wednesday or Friday?’**

 **Obvious, isn’t it? Be specific, but give alternative dates to choose from. Of course, he/she can always refuse, pleading another engagement, but at least you are in with more of a chance than if you’d been vague and non-specific about the invitation. Too forward? It depends on how you do it. Providing it’s a low-key date, suggested in a humorous, no-big-deal manner, they’ll be delighted. However, only try this approach if you are confident of a positive response.**

**You don’t want to see them again – so you’re kind but clear**

**If you have the certain feeling that you don’t want a second date then thank them for taking the trouble to meet you, and say you’ve enjoyed talking but you don’t feel you want to take it any further for the moment as you’re seeing lots of people. You can always add that, if it’s alright, you’d like to keep their number in case you have a friend who’d like to meet them. Drawing Down the Moon members say they much prefer this more honest approach because they know where they stand. However, this has to be done with unpatronising sensitivity.**

**Always leave the door open…**

**If you’re not sure whether you want to see your date again, even on a ‘just friends’ basis, keep your options open. In our experience at Drawing Down the Moon, at least half the couples who do form a relationship were uncertain, after the first date, about whether there had been or could be any chemistry.**

**The best way to judge the success of the date is not by trying to guess whether you could spend the rest of your life in the arms of this person, or even to try and determine whether you might have an affair. Remember, you’re a Domino Dater. Just consider whether they’d be fun to meet and talk with again. Play the field, go for volume and go on for as long as possible. When you meet the right one, you’ll be in good practice for giving out positive signals and more likely to judge the situation accurately. If previously you’ve been on only a few dates, you’ll be much less able to judge the potential.**

**Providing, on every date, you make it clear that you’re seeing other singles, it’s fine to explore multiple friendships. The more time you take to get to know one another before the chemistry ignites (and not just the sexual tinder), the more powerful and enduring all that follows will be.**

**If in any doubt, leave the possibility of a further meeting on the back burner. You can simply use the old standby: ‘Maybe one of us can give the other a ring in a week or two’. It does, in fact, take the pressure off to know that you’re not expecting anything too dramatic at this early stage.**

**By now you are probably better equipped than anyone you know to turn a first date into a second date**