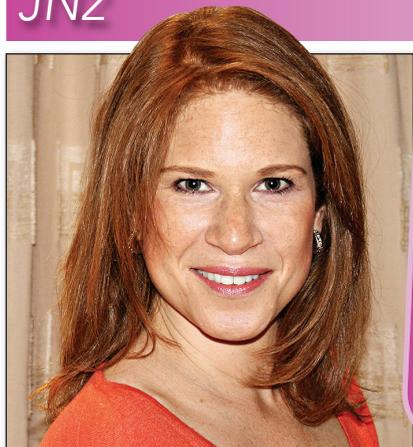


JN2



The Date Doctor

Here to soothe your romantic blues!

Our life coach Jo Barnett shares the secrets to successful relationships...

GET YOURSELF AN MOT AND PASS THE TEST!

Dear Jo

I am a normal-to-average-looking guy with a good traditional upbringing and a close set of friends. I'm in my early 30s and have not had a girlfriend since I was in my early 20s!

I'm beginning to feel there is something wrong with me as every girl I ask out ends up rejecting me. I manage to get through the first three dates, then something just fizzles out. I've put myself on dating websites, asked girls out at parties and done all the 'right' things. I'm wondering what else I can do as I really can't take much more rejection and feel like I might just give up. Please help!

Josh

Dear Josh

You seem stuck in a rut of feeling you are always getting rejected. When you go looking for a new car you may test drive a few, but how many do you actually buy? How do you think all the other cars feel when you reject them?

I hope this makes you smile and see that it is par for the course of dating that you will not always get selected and that each 'owner' is looking for something very special to suit her needs. Please note this is not about you all the time!

However, if you are worried about a recurring pattern, I would ask you to look at your unique selling qualities and see how you can update your model with some new features that will sell.

Getting yourself an MOT, ready to pass an average date, may include working on the following: general appearance, sense of humour, topics of conversation, charm and manners, creative ideas for dates, listening skills and, most importantly, empathy. To brush up on all of the above, come to my website for tips. You will be a new top model in no time!

MONEY MATTERS, BUT SORT OUT THE PRIORITIES

Dear Jo

I am 26 and have been dating my boyfriend for three years. We met at university and are so in love and can't wait to spend the rest of our lives together. But the thing we clash over is our finances.

Since the crash in the economy we have both been earning less and do not have much spare cash to save for a place to live. I get pressure from family and friends regarding my boyfriend's ability to 'look after me'.

This does make me sad and question whether or not we will be able to make a future together and be able to afford the kind

of life that I had and would want to give my kids. I love him to bits, but just don't know if I should marry him. What do you suggest?

Lucy

Dear Lucy

Thank you for bringing this up. I hear that you are both in love and in fear at the same time. First, may I applaud you by addressing this issue now, while you can both discuss it openly.

For sure, money matters. But it is also important how you both feel about money and how you prioritise your finances. When I work with coaching clients, I help them understand their own values and what they need for their lives truly to work for them. Write down exactly what you need to have in your financial future, what it means to you and what it provides you with.

Be honest with yourself and very specific with your list. Explain to your boyfriend why you want to do this exercise together, and get him to do the same. Notice if you have the same goals and values, and discuss what you want to prioritise with your finances. As long as it feels right for the two of you, then don't worry about outside pressures. Also note that any decision based on fear is ultimately the wrong decision! Best of luck.

If you have a dating query, Jo is here to help! Email her your question to askthedatedoctor@thejngroup.com

I'M JUST NOT APPRECIATED

Dear Jo

I have been married for 10 years and have a couple of young kids. I work very hard to provide for my family and I feel I have bent over backwards to try to make my wife happy. The problem is that I feel that I never get anything back in return. There is no appreciation for what I do and how hard I work. I have never asked her to work and she has plenty of help in the house; however, she still moans that I don't pull my weight when I am at home and I can see she is unhappy. How can I help?

Paul

Dear Paul

It sounds like you are trying to take responsibility for everything and your marriage all alone! What's difficult here is when couples do not sit down and talk through their expectations before marriage. Now you are in it, you have no choice but to voice what you are experiencing. As a relationship coach, I recommend you step back and take a look at your wife's typical day and the connections she has around her.

It sounds like she feels alone and unfulfilled in more ways than one. It may be that she would be more fulfilled with a career or taking up a new course. Relying on one person to make you happy is not the answer.

However, it is your duty to notice her emotions and support her to become her best.

When you can see her experience, gently talk about how you can both move towards giving each other more love and support.



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More on Jo's dating website - www.datingcoach.me.uk