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A GUIDE FOR NAVIGATING THE 5 STAGES  
OF DATING TO CREATE A LOVING  
AND LASTING RELATIONSHIP

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**A Guide for Navigating the 5 Stages of Dating to Create a  
Loving and Lasting Relationship**

**JOHN GRAY, P.H.D.**

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*This book is dedicated with deepest love and affection to my soul mate and wife, Bonnie Gray. Her radiant love continues to bring out the best in me.*

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## Acknowledgments

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## Introduction

In past generations, the challenge of dating was different. Men and woman wanted a partner who could fulfill their basic needs for security and survival. Women looked for a strong man who would be a good provider; men searched for a nurturing woman to make a home. This courting dynamic, which has been in place for thousands of years, has suddenly changed.

The new challenge of dating is to find a partner who not only will be supportive of our physical needs for survival and security but will support our emotional, mental, and spiritual needs as well. Today we want more from our relationships. Millions of men and women around the world are searching for a soul mate to experience lasting love, happiness, and romance.

It is no longer enough to just find someone who is willing to marry us, we want partners who will love us more as they get to know us: we want to live happily ever after. To find and recognize partners who can fulfill our new needs for increased intimacy, good communication, and a great love life, we need to update our dating skills.

Even if by good fortune you find a soul mate, without the right dating skills, you may not recognize him or her and get married. Eighteen years ago I was lucky enough to meet my soul mate but not skilled enough to make the relationship work. Bonnie and I dated for about a year and half. Although we loved each other very much, we didn't get married.

We broke up and went our separate ways. Four years later, we got back together. This time, because we dated differently, we eventually got married and have lived happily ever after. By creating the right conditions for love

to grow, our hearts opened, and we experienced a “soul love,” which “loves no matter what.” Discovering this *unconditional* love was the result of first creating the right *conditions* for love to grow.

The first time we dated, we eventually knew we loved each other, but not enough to get married. We hadn't yet felt the inner knowing that comes when the right conditions are satisfied. Without an updated approach to dating and relationships, we mistakenly concluded that we were not right for each other.

The second time we dated, with a new understanding of how men and women are different, we were able to make our relationship work. As we grew together in love, our hearts opened. It was then that we were able to experience unconditional love for each other. We were soul mates. With this confidence I proposed marriage and she was able to accept.

As a relationship counselor, I began sharing these new insights in counseling sessions and in my seminars. The results were dramatic and immediate. With this new understanding of how men and women think and feel differently, couples were able to improve communication and start getting what they wanted in their relationships. With renewed hope, they were able to find a deeper love in their hearts, heal and release the old resentments that may have closed their hearts, and rekindle the fires of romance and passion.

Encouraged by these practical benefits in my own marriage and in the lives of my clients and seminar participants, I went on to write *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, which has now sold more than ten million copies worldwide. A bestseller in more than forty languages, it has helped men and women around the world.

My office continues to receive more than three hundred calls and letters a day from people who have greatly benefited from the book and workshops. Besides the seminars that I personally teach each month, hundreds more Mars/Venus workshops are being given around the world by trained Mars/Venus facilitators. While this simple message has been helpful to so many couples, something was still missing for singles.