

Lifestyles of the Broken Hearted



The most well-known relationship junkie in the Bible is the woman who met Jesus at the well. Although she lived over two thousand years ago, the feelings she faced were no different than the emotions women deal with today. We don't know anything about her background or her age, but the woman at the well could just as easily have been one of the following girls.

See if you recognize yourself in any of the following women. Maybe one of these women pegs you perfectly or maybe you're a combination of two or more. As we take turns reading the profiles, place a check mark by the characteristics that you identify with. Identification of our weaknesses is the first step to birthing change. We can't heal what we ignore. Correction and change is always preceded by clarity and understanding.

None of these women or their relationship issues are beyond hope. Maybe you've done things the same way all your life, but until now, you've never realized that some of your romantic responses are responsible for your relationship issues. It's a good thing when we can see where we've veered off course because recognition of our issues is the first step to correcting them. Only after we notice our unhealthy responses can we replace them with effective responses.

The Compromiser

- Jennifer wants a strong Christian leader for a husband but lacks the resolve to wait. She settles for much less in relationships, convinced that what she desires is too hard to find.
- Denise has a habit of feeling sorry for the men she dates. She picks men she wants to fix.

The Fantasizer

- Diane isn't even in a relationship, but Dennis, a successful married man at the office, is all she thinks about. She often writes flirtatious messages on his Facebook wall and even bought him a gift card from a local restaurant for his office birthday party, suggesting that they "do lunch." Before Dennis, there was a string of other unavailable men with whom she was obsessed.
- Amanda has had relationship issues ever since her obsession with romance began in college. Filled with unrealistic expectations about romance, she imagined that falling in love would happen instantly and passionately, like it did in *The Titanic*.
- Courtney's parents won't allow her to date yet, but she is involved with Dillon, a twenty-year-old college student that she met online. A few months into their relationship, she started "sexting" Dillon. (Sexting is an alarming trend among teenagers that involves sending nude or semi-nude photos from cell phone to cell phone.) Now Courtney is convinced that Dillon is in love with her, even though they have never met.

The Frequent Flyer

- Michelle got sucked into addictive relationships in junior high. In order to fit in with the popular crowd, she had to have a boyfriend. Later in life, having a relationship became as essential as a drivers license; it was merely the vehicle that took her places.
- Amy is addicted to the rush of romance. She gets easily bored after the chemistry in a relationship fades. In the past five years, she's been engaged three times and has been in over twelve serious relationships.
- Samantha made a negative vow after seeing her parents break up that she would never give her heart to a man. Instead she hops from relationship to relationship.

The Minimizer

- Ashley insists David is in love with her, even though he has told her he wants break up. In her desperation for love, she tells herself that he is afraid in order to console herself and minimize his rejection.
- Cynthia's husband has been distant and rude, frequently canceling dinner plans. Lately he has scheduled business out of town on weekends. She discovered that he purchased two airline tickets to Cozumel. Instead of confronting him, she excuses his behavior as stress.

The Replacer

- Suzanne was devastated after her fiancé, Chad, broke off their engagement. Two weeks later, she moved in with Matthew, a guy she met at Starbucks. She and Chad are still hooking up. Matthew doesn't know.
- Dominique started having an affair after her husband refused to work on their relationship. When she ran into an old boyfriend and found out he was divorced, they caught up over dinner. Soon she found herself caught up in adultery. She wants to stop but doesn't know how.

The Rerouter

- Carol has been unhappy in her marriage for years but afraid that a divorce will bankrupt her lifestyle. Driven by a lack of attention, she keeps her Day-Timer filled with appointments—personal trainers, tennis lessons and massages...all handsome young men.
- Paula didn't realize how relationship addiction had its grip on her until after her husband filed for divorce. For years, Paula ignored the discontentment with her marriage by pouring herself into her children, her career and her community pursuits. She didn't realize how much her identity was tied to her title. Now, instead of Mrs., she's Miserable.

The Tolerator

- Like I often did, Emily rushes into relationships. She frequently settles for less than what she wants. She'd rather be miserable in a relationship than be alone.
- Linda tolerates unacceptable behavior in relationships. Her low self-esteem keeps her trapped in a relationship with a man who cheats on her because she doesn't think she deserves any better.

- Sandra doesn't want to be alone. After her marriage of twenty-nine years ended in divorce, she met Frank playing Bingo. Frank isn't her type but they spend almost every day together. Sandra's settled for a casual companion instead of a significant other.

The Trustor

- Debbie's is fascinated with online dating sites. She assumed that Jim was safe because he said he was a Christian and attended church. She went out on several dates with Jim before she found out he was married.
- Tiffany is confused about relationships because she has never seen a healthy one modeled. She already has three children with three different fathers. Now she is pregnant again with the child of another man.
- Heather is a bad judge of character. When she and Dan first started dating, Heather believed everything Dan told her about his financial success. When she discovered that he owed \$60,000 in credit card debt, she was furious and broke up with him. When he accused her of being selfish and materialistic, she felt guilty about breaking it off and went back to him. In the two years that they have been dating, Dan has been fired from three jobs and is now unemployed. Heather sees no future with Dan but feels compelled by her commitment and Dan's manipulative accusations to stay in the relationship.