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ARE YOU SINGLE? 2018 IS YOUR NEW BEGINNING!

Well, here we are again, it's a new year. While most are joyfully anticipating a new beginning, you might be thinking, will this be the year I find love or will it be more of the same?

Lets face it, it being single and facing a new year alone, can magnify your single status. During the holidays we are bombarded with images of happy loving couples kissing under the mistletoe, building snowmen together during the first snowfall or attending family gatherings happily engaging in the festivities. These images can really play with your emotions, adding more stress to an already stressful time of year. Only to be topped off with one of the most overrated traditions of kissing the love of your life at the strike of midnight.

Working with singles over the past 13 years, I have seen patterns or themes emerge that almost all singles deal with once the holidays roll in. I've seen both men and women grapple with lost loves,

terminal loneliness, and family scrutiny at the onset of the holiday season. One's inner critic can rear its ugly head leaving you feeling less than and sad.

This year, if you are like other singles, and not necessarily looking forward to the new year, I would like to encourage you to be kind to yourself and take time to look at things through a different lens. Just like anything else in life there are specific actions we can take that will either help us manage the stress of being single or be become overwhelmed by it.

Here are some tips I share with my clients to help them start the new year off right. I am sure they will help you manage 2018 with a little more grace and ease.

Be kind to yourself. It might sound simple or obvious, but taking time to be kind to yourself can alleviate your stress this year. Give yourself permission to indulge in a little pampering and

caretaking. It will be the best gift you can give yourself this year.

Be thankful for the love. Be sure to acknowledge all the love and goodness you have in your life. Before working with me, many of my clients found it easier to focus on the "have not's" and were quick to overlook the "have's" in their life. Remember you are loved and worthy of being loved.

Connect with friends, new and old. There is nothing more joyful than connecting with friends old and new. Seek out the company of those who love, support and get you. Getting out and connecting with others is a positive way embrace this New Year filled with wonderful possibilities!

If you are single and struggling, I'd love you to look at 2018 as your new beginning! Be positive, kind to yourself and be thankful. And of course take action so you don't find yourself in the

Julianne Cantarella, MSW, LSW, is a licensed social worker with a deep passion for people. Her personalized approach to matchmaking and date coaching has earned her the title of New Jersey's TOP Relationship Expert. A professional matchmaker and dating coach since 2005, Julianne has the skills to successfully match her clients with their perfect partner or coach them into a loving committed relationship. Julianne is the owner, principle matchmaker and dating coach at New Jersey's Matchmaker, located in northern New Jersey www.newjerseymatchmaker.com.