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IT'S COMPLICATED BECAUSE YOU MAKE IT SO

Just because I am a hopeless romantic doesn't mean I have some illusion that relationships don't take work. And because I am a relationship expert I know they can be complicated, have their ups and downs, and be a lot of work.

Working with singles daily through matchmaking and date coaching I have seen the many ways singles can make their relationships more complicated than they have to be. Below are the most common reasons a relationship could be classified as "complicated." Do you recognize any of them?

You tell yourself lies.

Or as I say, "reframe to fit what you want." The vast majority of singles I work with are quick to admit, "I saw the red flags, but I chose to ignore them." So see, you're

not alone. That said, it doesn't mean it is right. Be honest with yourself and do not try to reframe it or make the relationship something it's not. The only person you are hurting is you.

You continue to accept/excuse their inappropriate behavior.

There are many definitions of inappropriate behavior. A common theme is one's inability to put you first or make you a priority. Or there could be other inappropriate behavior, like undermining your confidence and make you feel "less than". Do you really want to live the rest of your life with someone who makes you feel "less than"? You deserve to be loved, cherished and appreciated for the wonderful person you are.

You just can't commit because they don't fit all your criteria.

It's all about realistic expectations. If you are looking for that one person to fit your long list of criteria, you might be looking for a long time. Take a second look at the person sitting in front of you. If he or she matches most of what you are looking for on a fundamental level, then you might want to reassess your list. Don't pass up someone wonderful because of your unrealistic expectations.

Any relationship can have its complexities. The task of meshing two different personalities can be a true balancing act. But understanding and extinguishing your dating obstacles can bring you closer to the love of your life.

If you recognize any of the examples above, then maybe it's time to reassess your approach and make necessary changes.

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