

For Immediate Release

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Keys to Relationship Happiness: *Divorce Magazine* CEO offers Tips to Ensure that Love is Lovelier the Second Time Around

TORONTO, ON (February 13, 2014) — The inspiration for launching of *Divorce Magazine* and DivorceMagazine.com 18 years ago was the end of Dan Couvrette's first marriage. He worried about how he could continue to be a great dad to his kids if he didn't see them every day, and he wondered if he'd ever find love again. The magazine and website started as a self-help project, and grew into an international business.



Dan married Martha Chan in 1997 – one year after launching *Divorce Magazine*. His partner in life and in business, they both live and work together – which can put a strain on some relationships. How do they make it work? As well as being a magazine publisher, Dan is a former stand-up comic – which explains some of his relationship “advice”. Here are some of his best tips – and some tongue-in-cheek advice – just in time for Valentine's Day.

Dan Couvrette's Keys to Relationship Happiness

Meet or exceed expectations

Surprises are great, but giving somebody *exactly* they want is a much better idea. I realize it might take a little bit of the mystery out of a Valentine's gift to ask your beloved what he or she would like to get, but receiving what he/she actually wants – rather than what you think he/she wants – dramatically increases the chances of making your sweetheart happy. You may think that flowers and chocolate are the way to go – but she's allergic to both and would prefer a foot-rub. (Note: a vacuum cleaner (or any other household appliance, for that matter) is never a good Valentine's Day gift for a woman – but most men really love to receive power tools or gadgets. This is one of Life's Great Mysteries.)

On the lighter side, if you find out that the person really wants is to be surprised – and that person is a woman – you should probably narrow down the range of what would be a great surprise to these three gift ideas:

1. Expensive shoes that can be exchanged.
2. Expensive jewelry that can be exchanged.
3. An expensive holiday for two that may or may not include you – her choice.

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Learn how to listen without offering advice

Men are notorious for being “fixers”. Any time a woman starts sharing her thoughts, we figure it’s our job to offer solutions and our opinions, whether requested or not. It is well-documented that women are often just looking to let off a little steam when they complain about their day at work or with the kids, so my advice is to just sit back and listen. Given that listening is not most men’s strong suit, here are a few suggestions for what men can be doing while they’re “listening”; this will keep them in the game while they’re developing the ability to listen (or the “fake it until you make it” approach to listening). *Note to reader: most men are not very good at doing two things at once (as opposed to women who can juggle up to 35 things at one time), so pretending to listen while thinking about other things will take time to master.*

1. Sports. This is no surprise, but to challenge yourself try to remember a particular sporting event, the date of the event, where you were at the time of the event, the type of beer you were drinking, and the middle initials of all the guys you were with at the time. This will make you look thoughtful while you’re “listening”.

2. Challenge yourself to remember some details about your sweetheart’s life. Women like to reflect on “moments” in relationships that men have no recollection of, so I recommend that men work at improving their memories. Every man can remember the time some poor guy at high school was picked up by his underwear and hung on a fence by his two (three or four) “best” friends, but no matter how they try, they just can’t remember any important dates or moments such as:

A. The date, place, or any other details about their first date

B. His significant other’s birthday, last name, middle name (even though they talked and laughed about it for 15 minutes on their first date), the names of her parents, her girlfriends’ names (unless one of them is really hot, which will come back to bite him at some point during an argument).

If necessary, make yourself a “cheat-sheet” you can review before important events (Valentine’s Day, your anniversary, her birthday, your children’s birthdays, etc.) – and program reminders into your phone/computer so you’ll know when one of these dates is looming.

3. Think about why you married her in the first place. Remembering all the things you love about her will give you the patience and compassion to keep listening, even when the “solution” is blindingly obvious and the need to say it aloud is almost choking you.

4. Try actually listening to what she’s saying. A great trick for this is called “active listening” or “mirroring”: basically, repeat back what she said in different words and then check-in to see if you understood. For instance: “So little Jimmy flushed a pair of socks down the toilet, the washing machine is making an ominous noise, and the dog threw up in your shoes. Is that correct?” If she confirms that you got it, you can then make sympathetic noises: “That sounds like a rough day – I’m so sorry that all this happened to you.” This will make her a lot happier than if you respond the way you want to, which might be something like: “Don’t let Jimmy wear socks in the house, buy a new washing machine, and get rid of the dog. Is there any beer in the fridge?” Trust me on this one.

To read more advice about how to make a marriage – or remarriage – work, visit the “Relationships” area of DivorceMagazine.com – for instance, “Divorce Prevention Tips” (www.divorcemag.com/articles/Relationships/divorcevalentine.html) and “A Great Marriage is a Lifelong Courtship” (www.divorcemag.com/articles/Relationships/marriage_is_lifelong_courtship.html) both offer some great tips.

Divorce Magazine and www.DivorceMagazine.com have been providing individuals and families who are going through the transition of separation and divorce with information, support, and guidance since 1996. *Divorce Magazine* is published by the Divorce Marketing Group (DMG); other DMG products include *Family Lawyer Magazine* and www.FamilyLawyerMagazine.com, print and web-based *Divorce Guides*, divorce eNewsletters, www.MarriageAndSeparation.com, www.BlogsOnDivorce.com, and www.GuideToDivorce.com.

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