

---

## Finding Mr. Right or Ms. Right

© Al Turtle 2007

"I am single and am looking for a partner. I know I have defects. How do I attract the right partner, one I can work with? How do I go about it?"

This is a great question! I am aware that most of what I know about relationships, and about making them work, has to do with looking back on relationships that are already formed. This is because most people I see are in the [Power Struggle](#) and trying to avoid divorce. From their points of view, the things that "attract" people to each other seem a distant memory and pretty unimportant. However, I do have thoughts about how to go about finding Mr. Right or Ms. Right.

---

What makes for a wonderful relationship has mostly to do with a) selecting the right partner and b) using the right skills to evolve the relationship to the point of reliable joy – [Vintage Love](#). That first step, selecting the right partner, seems to be done almost completely by each person's unconscious mind. This activity, and its logic, is for the most part out of our sight, in the "[Unknown Layer](#)" of the "[Iceberg](#)." The Imago is the name [Harville Hendrix \(Getting the Love You Want\)](#) used for "that durable image of the 'right partner,' formed in early childhood, primarily before age 7 or so, which is used in partner selection." For me, this is the durable picture of a person that feels deeply familiar to the survival part of our brains – [our Lizards](#).

Because this involves the unconscious, finding the right partner, like finding the right career, seems to be one of those things measured by your "unconsciously driven," [emotional or feeling](#) reaction. In [partner selection](#), we commonly call this "falling in love," or the [Romantic Phase](#), and it is accompanied by lots of [PEA](#) and other such delicious chemicals in our bodies and brains. Put more simply, if you fall in love, and it lasts for more than a month, let us say 48 hours of together-time, you are probably with an Imago matching person. You are probably with one of the people close enough for your needs in order to work toward creating Vintage Love.

However, finding a [right person](#) does not seem to be amenable to manipulation - makeup, phony masks, etc. People's unconscious seems to be able to look right through that marketing behavior! I personally believe there are thousands of factors involved in the selection of an Imago match. Part of the complexity comes from the notion that the most important factors are negative ones or more accurately, negative factors that are currently masked. I have become used to the idea that if I list the factors in a person's Imago, most of those factors, and particularly most of the "important" ones, will be unpleasant factors.

Examples: [Avoiders](#) are interested in people who will "respect their needs for space." However they will be more attracted to [Clingers](#) who are temporarily acting like "space-giving people, than to genuine "space-giving people." Or gullible people will fall for a person who pretends, who is disingenuous, while at the same time hating people who pretend, like the people they were raised by. They may fall for a phony who is pretending to be honest. This does not seem to me to be "fooling the Lizard," but an example of the Lizard being on track.

The [Power Struggle](#), which will always appear eventually in the form of distress or fighting, is a sign that you both need to learn some new skills and do some different behaviors. I think the kind of distress usually points directly at the skills you need to learn in order to address those "negative factors". I hope that if you learn some of those skills earlier, it will make moving beyond the Power Struggle easier and quicker.

[Three selection criteria](#) seem similar in all couples: equal native IQ, [equal levels of dysfunction in childhood](#), equal desire for [Vintage Love](#). I am used to seeing in my practice these baseline conditions, even in couples where these conditions don't seem to appear – at first.

---

So, whatcha gonna do? Paint your eyelashes blue? Pump up the muscle? Seems so silly!

**Here is my suggestion:**

My best guess about how to go about locating Mr. Right or Ms. Right or your "soul mate" is to make yourself available to the selection process built into your own psyche, and to that of others. Plan on "checking out" about 100 people who are all reasonable Imago candidates. (By the way, you can play a lot while doing this. I think being playful is a wonderful skill, that is natural in childhood, and not to be forgotten in adulthood.)

Think of where the kinds of people, you want to be with, are. Right now, where are they? Where do they gather? Where do they hang out? If you do not like the bar scene, stay way. If you like the outdoors, where are outdoor lovers. If you like the temperament of religious people, consider going there. If you love science, where are those who love science. If you love watching TV, notice what you really like on TV, and think of where people who like the same things will be when they leave their TVs and go out. It is true you only need one person, but you have to get involved with the selection process in order to pick and be picked by that one.

Now, build a cheap and repeatable selection scheme. What I mean is that I think you need about 4 hours in the presence of a person to let your selection process kick off. Sure, the romantic "look across the room" does happen, but is followed up with a 4 hour or so time needed together. Most looks across the room do not survive the 4-hour test. So I believe you need to set up a simple, repeatable testing process at least 4 hours long.

During those four hours of your selection scheme, be with each other, alone. Do not go to a movie, play, opera, as that will distract you from each other too much. Walk in a park, by the bay, in the forest, on the beach, by the lake, have a nice coffee visit, go to a training seminar, etc. Make it seem very safe to your guest. It is probably a good thing to be alone, where others can see you from a distance. Experience each other and see whether both want to go further with time together. My rule is "Have enough distractions to make things easy, but not too many."

I suggest you use the same scheme on each possible Imago candidate. 'Tis cheaper and simpler. Remember, things have to "click" with both people for things to go much further. Your partner may be your Imago match, while you are not theirs. Live with it! I suggest you do not spend months with one person, if magic is not happening. Move on to the next Imago candidate.

This seems a tragic mistake with young people, spending months and years with someone for whom they did not feel any spark at all, and thus not going out and looking. Oh, and it is important to separate those we have had no spark with, from those who we are now in the power struggle with.

Kind of perversely, I believe a Power Struggle partner, was/is an Imago Match, and should be treated as a "keeper." I suggest you divorce or split from "the relationship" you are having with this person. Leave that "relationship" behind by converting that Power Struggle into the [University of Life](#) and building a new relationship, [Vintage Love](#), with them.

Remember, with the right person, magic ([PEA](#)) will emerge, followed by a "nice period of time" (days, weeks, months), followed by the [Power Struggle](#). The fighting time is when you need to start working and learning all those things and skills that you have not learned yet to be able to stay with that partner.

I took all my Imago candidates to a wildlife refuge for a walk in the wild. It cost me drive time, which was a good connection time. It cost me arranging food for lunch, which was a good connecting activity. It cost me time. That was it. I kept at it through almost 16 women. The last is my wife, and she brought little bottles of Lancers wine with her in her purse to lunch! She was/is a "keeper."

Here is one last suggestion, and it may seem crazy. There are many Imago candidates out there. Let us play

some numbers. If you hate the bar scene, I think one out of every 10,000 people in bars may be a match for you. If you like religious thoughts, then I think one out of 200 people in the single's group at your church may be a match. If you like museums, I think one out of 150 people, of more or less your age, who are walking through a museum with you may be a match. If you are a caretaker, I think one out of 200 people of your age in volunteer organizations may be your match. I think, maybe one out of every 500 people your age and relative social group may be an Imago match. Looking at all I know, I think there are many Imago matches out there for everyone. You just have to find one and get to work. (People asked me, where did I get those numbers? I made them up. I learned the skill of guessing from a wild red-haired physics teacher. The numbers seem about right to me.)

Finding a right one (yes, I said "A right one") may seem like trying to find a needle in a haystack. However, there is a place that you may not have thought to look. And this might seem "nuts." The last Imago match, the last person you fell in love with, and whom you broke up with in a power struggle, is probably a perfectly good Imago candidate – no matter how silly you both acted when you split. All your past lovers, of any depth, are possible matches. You could have dropped them while in a Power Struggle with them, because you did not know how to convert that distressing situation into the University of Life. You might be better able to make that conversion now. Check them out! Heck, right now they might be rejecting their current Power Struggle partner! I told you this might seem crazy! I have met lots of people who are splitting from a current partner to go back and date their childhood sweetheart. (Of course if you are currently married, how about transforming that power struggle with your current partner into Vintage Love? It's quicker!)

I say, go for it!