

finding love after 50



## introduction

It's never too late to start a trip down the Romance Highway. The beauty of this particular road is that it allows you to take the dating journey *you* are seeking. Whether you are looking for companionship, a life partner, or something yet to be discovered, you can define your goals and move at the pace that is comfortable for you. There are many ways to get to where you want to be.

*Finding Love After 50* will be your ultimate guide on this journey. Using my nearly three decades of experience in the dating industry and real-life examples of people just like you who have already traveled down this road, I will give you all the tools you need to find a partner who will add to your already rich life.

Dating can feel overwhelming at any age, but when you haven't done it for a while, even the question of where to start can stop you in your tracks. This book is designed to help you get rolling, map out a route, understand and navigate obstacles, and get to your destination in the shortest amount of time. Most

importantly, *Finding Love After 50* puts this journey completely in your hands, rather than in the hands of an expensive matchmaker.

The matchmaking industry works well for many people. Matchmaking companies take on “attractive, educated, successful, nonsmoking” clients who pay anywhere from \$10,000 to \$200,000 for the service. A matchmaker works with the client, sending them matches they feel are suitable on a quota system (the company agrees to make a certain number of matches in a certain time period). In general, matchmakers send matches without including photos, and give the client feedback forms to evaluate how dates went. Women often sign up for matchmaking services feeling secure that they will be introduced to like-minded men who share a similar financial status and have the same commitment to finding a partner, based on the fact that the men also paid an equivalent sum of money to join the service.

Women under fifty often find success with this method. The reality for women over fifty, however, is very different. Most men in that age range who are dating simply do not sign up for matchmaking

services, and the pool of available males should really be called a puddle. What’s more, only around 10 to 15 percent of the men in the database in that demographic have actually paid for the service; the rest have been asked to join by matchmakers trying to even out the gender discrepancy in sign-ups, which sets up an uneven relationship between the women and men from the beginning. Of course, most services will not tell you that, leading you to believe that they have plenty of available and interested men in your demographic. I was in the matchmaking industry for many years before switching my focus to dating strategies for women and men over fifty, and I have seen firsthand how the matchmaking industry fails women in that age group. The good news is that you can do much more for yourself than the industry would do for you, at almost no cost and with a much greater rate of success. I have been doing it for clients for many years now, and I am going to show you how.

What about online dating? That probably was not around the last time you were looking for a life companion. Online dating can feel scary, too public,

or just for the younger generation. It's not. Done properly, it opens up a world of people and possibilities that exponentially increase your chance of finding the person you want to be with at any age, for fun and adventure, for life, or for both. I believe that online dating is the best thing to come along for any age group, but especially for women over fifty. There is a ridiculously large pool of people to draw from, you get to be proactive and choose the profiles you are interested in, and the whole process is transparent, unlike with traditional matchmaking. Online dating has significantly improved the chances for women over fifty to find partners, and is easy to learn to use.

In 2008, after working in traditional matchmaking for almost two decades, I started looking at online dating sites, and what I found over two years of research was astounding. There were plenty of quality men over fifty on those sites. I realized that I could provide great options—and many of them—for clients, keeping my personal connection to them while helping them navigate online dating. My focus shifted from just matchmaking to coaching clients in

dating strategies and helping them through the process. The online dating world and social networking sites have exponentially increased the number of people available to my clients, and I have become an expert at reading and understanding profiles (digital body language) and helping my clients find matches.

I have seen the evolution of the matchmaking industry and also witnessed the rise of online dating. As a result, I can confidently say that women over fifty have a terrific chance of finding the level of love or companionship they are seeking, simply by using the tools and ideas in this book.

Skeptical about finding love on your computer or phone? Author and relationship expert Dr. Christie Hartman says that online dating is the No. 1 way people fifty and over meet other singles.<sup>1</sup> My experience has borne that out, as well. Keep reading to find out how to navigate the online dating world to maximize your chances of meeting the right person for you, at a pace and in a way that is comfortable.

Finding a partner is not always easy or quick. As you no doubt remember, dating can be frustrating

and discouraging at times. The reasons are universal: it seems like there are no good candidates out there, it takes too much energy, it feels like a waste of time, bad dates are no fun, life is too busy, and dating doesn't easily fit into your schedule. All of these reasons can feel real at any given time, but none of them is a reason to stop trying. As with anything worthwhile in life, there are setbacks to endure and learning to absorb. But the rewards in the end will outweigh the challenges.

This book is written for women in their fifties, sixties, and beyond. This is a rich stage in life. You know yourself better than you ever have. You have established a career, or raised a family, or traveled the world, or become an expert at something, or all of the above. Perhaps you have experienced great love and lost it. Perhaps you have not found love yet. Whatever the circumstance, you have had time to learn what works for you and what doesn't, what fulfills your life and what drains it, what sort of people you love to be around, and what sort you avoid. You have most likely spent time learning about yourself, recognizing strengths and weaknesses, and

improving the things that don't work. In short, you have cut out many of the problems people in their twenties and thirties face when they are dating, simply by living your life. You are starting your next journey on the Romance Highway from a good place.

I come to this topic with a tremendous passion for working with women over fifty, a passion formed by my own history. In 1990 I was diagnosed with advanced cancer, an experience that helped me to learn firsthand the value of companionship and how basic and important the desire for human connection is. I was in college at the time and did not know that my career would take me where it has, but the reality of people's need for other people was cemented in my psyche. I experienced loss and a lack of control over life's circumstances at a very young age, giving me compassion for others who find themselves in situations of loss, such as divorce or widowhood.

My early career was spent working for a dating service when the matchmaking industry as it exists today had not yet started. I immediately was drawn to and felt tremendous respect for clients in their forties, fifties, and sixties who were struggling with

loss, trying to figure out where they were in their lives and where they wanted to be, and who were eager to meet someone. Even though I had not yet lived their years, I had, in a different way, lived their experiences of loss and desire for companionship.

During almost twenty years in the industry, I saw again and again the pattern of women over fifty signing up for matchmaking services while men in the same demographic did not. I felt these women's frustration acutely, and felt powerless when the database was empty for them. That was when I started researching online dating. This book represents all that I've learned about finding love in the 21st century, online and off, since 2008.

I use the metaphor of the Romance Highway to emphasize that dating is not like a tunnel, with only one way through and no detours. Highways offer multiple routes, different speeds, off ramps, frontage roads, and rest stops. Your journey will be based on your life as it is today, and will not be exactly like anyone else's. My goal is to help you see who *you* are and what brings you joy, an awareness that will increase your confidence and magnetism. This

book will start you on a journey of discovery, an exciting evolutionary process that brings a new level of self-knowledge, clarity, and ultimately, relationship success.

Excited? Great! Buckle up, pack appropriately, and let your trip down the Romance Highway begin.

---

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Christie Hartman, "Some Interesting Online Dating Statistics," blog on her website, <http://christiehartman.com/some-interesting-statistics-on-online-dating/>.