



Have a healthy day!

Kathryn Borg

♥ How healthy is Valentine's Day for you? If you consider this question you may realise that it can be on a par with Christmas – stressful, eating food you don't usually eat and emotional.

In looking at the stressful side of Valentine's Day it has become clear that for those who take it seriously, the stress could be quite painful. It will all, of course, depend on your love life at the moment.

- If you are 'in between' partners (I will use that term to cover both sexes), the chances are you may not receive a card, present or an invitation to go out. 'Thank goodness', I hear you say, 'at least I haven't got to buy anything, I will stay in, order a take-away, and watch a DVD' (avoid the romantic ones!). After all, who wants to be at a restaurant on Valentine's Day as a singleton? Do restaurateurs give out tables for one? From a health point of view this could prompt comfort eating, over-indulgence in alcohol or anything else to soothe the emotions. Not healthy – go to the gym and work off your aggression!

- If your partner is newly acquired, the stress factor could be caused by: what do I buy, where do we go, how romantic should the card be, given that I don't actually 'love' him/her yet? In other words, 'what is expected of me?'. Stressful, emotional, difficult!

- If your partner has 'been around a while' you should know, by now, what is expected of you. In fact, Valentine's Day may mean nothing at all, so you just treat it as any normal day. That's fine if your partner feels the same. However, if she/he doesn't, then you could be in for some aggression and emotional scenes, all resulting in stress. Why not do something different and surprise him/her, look at the suggestions below.

When we consider the food eaten on Valentine's Day the first issue has got to be the chocolates. I don't know the statistics, and quite honestly I don't care to know, however, there must be an upsurge in sales of chocolate on this date, just like there is an upsurge in roses (extreme prices).

Given that most people are more weight-conscious these days I would think that avoiding chocolates

would be the best move. Let's face it, the chocolates from Christmas have just finished, and with Easter being early this year, Easter eggs are already in our faces.

If you want to go with something different why not commission a beautiful basket of fruit to be made up, tied with red ribbons and hearts? It would have to be special fruit, not just apples and oranges. In addition, the alternative gifts, such as massage treatments, are always a healthy option, even more romantic if they are for two. The main issue is to avoid the chocolates.

Eating out could be a further problem on Valentine's Day. This could be stressful, if you haven't booked the table, or if the restaurant is not to your partner's liking, or if the food is bad, the service is bad, etc. More importantly to me is that you are probably eating rich, heavy food you would not normally eat, and drinking alcohol to excess.

After Christmas, most people are in the middle of a 'get fit and healthy' programme. Valentine's comes right in the middle of this, and could set you back weeks. Consider this, before you say 'what can one day matter?'

Eat out, by all means, but make sure it is a healthy, light meal, in the spirit it is meant to be. Even better, why not take a long, romantic walk after the meal? Spend time together and at the same time, walk off the food, which will undoubtedly be a late meal and therefore difficult for the body to digest. At the same time, a long, romantic walk will dissipate stress and help the body relax.

This Valentine's Day consider your emotional and physical health and that of your partner before getting involved in what everyone else is doing. If they really care for you, your partner will appreciate the thought.

The best possible ideas for having a healthy day are to eat light and healthy, find a way to exercise (that doesn't take a lot of thought, but there is always walking), and most importantly – laugh.

If you get to the end of Valentine's Day and you can safely say you have laughed until your stomach ached then you have really had a good day. Remember laughter relieves stress.

Happy Valentine's Day! ♥

A word from the executive editor...

Love works in strange ways and proof of this lies in the fact that there are all sorts of couples with different stories and backgrounds, from tough relationships where love is swelled to uncomplicated love stories full of nonchalance in which love, sadly, is meaningless and frail.

Love is unfathomable and I suggest you don't try to understand it. You very often don't know that it hit you, and if you do know then it's love at first sight (not quite sure whether I still believe this!) and you would do anything to fall in the arms of your knight in shining armour, even if he's the ugliest man on earth.

It's just that little something in him – not necessarily physical, could be personality, could be charm, could be the way he moves, talks or acts – that makes you the happiest woman when you're in his presence or by his side.

Look at French President Nicolas Sarkozy and his new wife Carla Bruni. Sarkozy asked for the former model's hand in marriage only after three months of dating her! Isn't that wickedly romantic? And what a pair! She towers above him, yet within his small frame he possesses that little something that probably mesmerised her and swept her off her feet. Well, the fact that she is well known for switching lovers in a flash does help too.

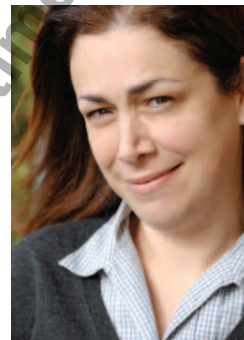
And former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his wife Cherie. Such a fantastic pair. He is full of schoolboyish gallantry. She is the high-flying barrister who put her career on the back burner to support him. Love has also worked in strange ways for this couple, whose youngest son Leo was born when Cherie was 45. Still in love and, who knows, with all the time in the world on his hands now, what Tony will be up to.

Strangely enough, we are attracted to people for the strangest of reasons. Some of us like glamour, others go for simple things that mean the world. At the end of the day, we are all in search of happiness. Whatever form this may come in, it certainly opens up horizons. If you're happy within, you will most probably lead a good life.

You don't need to be a Valentine to have a smile on your face. Loving life in all its fullness is essential to your happiness.

Be a happy person whatever you do and in whatever situation. Try to be optimistic and solve your problems without losing that positive outlook.

If you're single, make Thursday your day. Relax, take it easy and don't fret. Let no-one and nothing ruin this me-to-me aura. Go to a spa and have a body massage, go to the beach and read a good book, invite some



friends over to your house and cook a challenging dish, catch up with the jobs you've been wanting to do and never had the time for, indulge in chocolates in front of the television and cry your eyes out watching a romantic classic like *Ghost*... after all, it's a day like any other day of the year... but for the sake of it, you can make it feel a little different.

If you are part of a couple, nothing changes. You can still give your best performance on the day. Let your creativity run wild and surprise your partner or anyone else who means a lot to you with an original thought or gesture.

Don't buy the run-of-the-mill gift... this is disgustingly commercial and your partner will simply open it, like it but forget about it instantly. Create it yourself, give it a personalised touch and let it emit those initial special vibes in the relationship. A little fresh flower on a pillow or putting a little chocolate in his/her jacket before going out in the morning are sweet and innocent thoughts.

I now leave you to the supplement, which I hope you'll enjoy reading. And just to prove how much love is a strange phenomenon... go to the centre pages.

One last thing, if you're staying in and wondering what film to watch. On the lines of love and relationships, get hold of *The Painted Veil*, a love story set in the 1920s about a tale of a young English couple, featuring Edward Norton and Naomi Watts, and you'll realise that love is truly unpredictable!

Simonne

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