

## TOP TIPS FOR BLACK LOVE

### Ideas for Building and Maintaining Black-on-Black Love

#### Introduction

This paper is designed to provide practical tips and advice for Afrikan (Black) people seeking to build a new relationship or maintain and strengthen an existing relationship. It is the author's belief that the current widespread disillusionment, frustration and sense of resignation that so many Black people express in relation to the current state of Black male/female relations (both sexual and non-sexual) is simply a sad symptom of how many of us feel about the 'state of the Race'.

If you keep on doing the same thing you will always get the same result, therefore since most of us; whatever our perspective, would agree that too many of our relationships are not working, we can at least agree as a starting point that Black men and women are going to need to change their values, attitudes and behaviours if we are to heal this growing divide. Family is the basis of community and male/female relations are the basis of family, therefore if we do not repair our relationships everything else we seek to address e.g. education, economics etc. will end in failure.

#### TOP TIPS

- **If you keep on doing the same thing....** – Most people subconsciously are drawn to a particular type of person. We have the tendency to repeat cycles of behaviour, which is fine for productive behaviours but not so good for dysfunctional behaviours. Assess your past partners, what they were like and why you got involved with them. If it hasn't been working, do and choose something different.
- **'The List'** – Everyone has heard of sisters' list. Well, brothers have a list as well. It is a trueism that men focus on looks and women on money/status, but like most trueisms there is some truth to it, only now the sisters want the looks and the wealth! Sisters, reduce the list by half, then burn it! Brothers, get mental as well as physical!
- **'Birds of a feather....'** – Your (prospective) partner's friends will tell you a lot about who they really are. Check them out before you get too deeply involved.
- **Be careful what you ask for, you just might get it** - It is another trueism that we often know more about what we want than what we really need and the two are often some distance apart.
- **What is your relationship model** – How did you come to your ideas of what a good relationship is? Are there good Black relationships that you have experience of that you are seeking to emulate?
- **Respect** – You can have Respect without Love but not Love without Respect. If s/he routinely disrespects you; get outta there.
- **Physical Violence** – Once is once too many. They get help or they get out.
- **Power** – Brothers, you don't need to have 'power over' your woman. Sisters, you don't need to 'outman' your man. We both need Black Power!
- **Sex** - Sisters, don't give up the tings too quick! Almost invariably it is the woman who decides when sex first takes place in a relationship. Don't

make him wait for the sake of it, make him wait so that you can get to know each other emotionally, psychologically, intellectually ... and then physically.

- **Infidelity** – infidelity usually ends up destroying relationships because it destroys trust.
- **Money** - It may be the root of all evil however it is also the cause of many broken relationships (more than are due to sexual issues). Get financially literate, set joint financial objectives and discuss your finances regularly with your partner.
- **Marriage** – Brothers, if you seriously love her and she loves you, then get married. Marriage is good. It doesn't have to be big, fancy and expensive, just a public declaration of Black on Black Love.
- **Extended Family** – Relationships are a buy one get several (dozen) relatives for free. Check them out early on since you can choose your friends but not your partner's relatives!
- **Religion/Spirituality** – One can be religious without being spiritual, spiritual without being religious and religious and spiritual. In general; people committed to a religion, particularly a proselytising religion (e.g. Christianity and Islam), are best off with someone from the same religion.
- **Children** - 'Children are the gift of Life...'. Both of you need to be in the same ballpark when it comes to having children i.e. how many and when. Get this issue sorted out before you commit or it will return to haunt you.
- **Some People Change and some don't** – Often Men think that their woman won't change and Women think that they can change their man.
- **Progressive Compromise** – The writer Haki Madhubuti coined this term. It is about growing together and being able to differentiate between negotiable and non-negotiable issues. If you both share the same values you will find that most issues are negotiable.
- **Taking your partner for granted** – Bad habits are easily formed and hard to break. Taking your partner for granted is one of the worst relationship habits. Always remember how you treated each other in the early days.
- **Seeking Help** – An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. Don't be afraid to seek help from people you both respect and trust.

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