

11 Reasons Why You Should Never Give Up on Love

Even if life experience has made you lose hope, experts—and real women!—say there are plenty of reasons to hang in there.



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Julie Coraccio spent 20 years in relationship that ultimately was not right for her. "It was like I was stuck in molasses and couldn't move forward," she recalls. It hit her hard one day that she had to let it go. Alone in her office, she fell to the floor in tears, grieving and feeling the sting of fear. "I will never find someone else," she remembers sobbing. "I will be alone the rest of my life." But she found the courage to get up, change her life, and do things that gave her confidence and joy. "I did the things I loved, like bowling—and that's where I met my husband." She was 43, and they married eleven months later.

Julie's story of a second chance at love is not as rare as you may think. Even if your life experiences have made you lose hope, and finding love again does not seem like it will ever be a real possibility, many experts and women who found true love later in life say there are plenty of reasons to hang in there:

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1

You are wired for love.



Although you may feel skittish about romance after disappointments, it is human nature to seek companionship and comfort in the arms of another. "People are wired for love, that's why they keep coming back, despite heartbreaks and losses," says [Dr. Pepper Schwartz, PhD](#), Professor of Sociology at the University of Washington, and love and sex expert for AARP. "Our drive for union is part of our species, as it is for almost all mammals. Our survival is more likely when we bond to another and face the world as a team. We are drawn, irresistibly, to one another."

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You never know what's around the corner.



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It may take some work to open yourself up again to love, but romance can show up in places you never imagined, and feelings can develop unexpectedly. "The one thing that comes up again and again are love stories in which the people involved found love unexpectedly," says Schwartz. "Many people who had given up on love surprised themselves and found they could fall in love again. The human heart, however damaged, still can start beating again under the right circumstances."

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You can move on from a bad romance.

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- Just start with your relationship to yourself. "When I learned to love myself, I could let go of a relationship that wasn't right for me," says Coraccio, a [life coach](#) who now helps people declutter and reorganize. "I think many people stay in relationships out of fear." Small steps that inspire confidence in one area of your life can spill over to your love life, too. Coraccio says starting a business started her down a new path.

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You can survive the bumps and bruises of starting over.

Losing love through death or divorce is devastating. Kelly Green, a single mother of four young children, threw herself into the dating scene, but repeated disappointments made her realize she needed time to get to know herself. "Each bump along the way gave me greater insight to what is important to me," says Green, author of *Back in the Game: My Year of Dating Dangerously*. "Each person taught me something about myself. The key is being centered and not placing too much emphasis on the *need* for love." Living your fullest life, while looking for love, can reduce the urgency and neediness that sometimes comes along when we want so badly to find the right person.

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You can lighten emotional baggage.

An awareness of relationship patterns is helpful because old behaviors can be triggered by new relationships. "It is our job to learn from our experiences so we are wiser in love going forward and to try to forgive where possible so we do not carry old baggage into our next relationship," says Dr. Paulette Kouffman Sherman, psychologist and author of *Dating from the Inside Out*. "Often, how the unconscious works, is that when you haven't worked something through you project those old fears onto your future mate and this can create problems and old dynamics you don't want." When you learn from the past and can let it go, it is easier to attract what you *do* want instead, she says.

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You can suspend fears.

It is natural to want to protect yourself with emotional armor but ultimately you also have to be willing to risk being vulnerable with another. "When we are in fear we become defensive, shut down and can unintentionally push people away," says Kouffman Sherman. "It is very important to be open to love."

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You can reach beyond negative thoughts.

[Arielle Ford](#), who met her true love at 44 and was a first-time bride at 45, now writes and teaches about soulmates. "People can find 'big love' at any age," she says, "if they're willing to let go of limiting beliefs such as, 'I'm too old, I'm too fat, I'm too damaged, or all the good ones are taken.'" Ford, author of *Turn You Mate into Your Soulmate*, says "I literally tell people to say, 'Cancel, cancel, cancel.'" Halting the language that defeats relationship goals helps in attaining them.

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You can choose to nurture a new point of view.



- We can take steps to rewire our minds in a way that will support a healthy love life. "No one escapes life without being dealt the hands of heartbreak and loss," says [Allison Cohen](#), MA, MFT. "We actually alter our brain chemistry every day through our belief system. Practicing faith and hope increases our endorphins which lead to an elevated mood and ultimately escalates positive behaviors which lead to finding love." This may mean accepting invitations to events, being open to blind dates, and radiating a positivity that boosts feelings of attractiveness, she says.

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You can find love while waiting for romance.



Former CNN anchor Daryn Kagan lost her job, a relationship, and found herself in midlife without a mate or children. Although this led to a few "pity parties" it also moved her to launch a [hopeful news site](#) and reconstruct her life. At the urging of a friend, she enrolled in the Big Sister and Big Brother Program. "I was matched with a super smart 8-year-old girl who became my focus of love and adventure," says Kagan, who penned the book *Hope Possible* to share her stories of midlife dating, marriage, and family. "I truly believe taking that step to love, to give, to not focus on 'poor me'—to experience what that felt like—opened my heart to meet the man who became my husband." They met almost a year to the day she was matched with her Little Sister, and he happened to be a widower with a daughter. All four of them, together, built a unique family.

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You can ask friends to hold hope for you.



If you have lost all faith, perhaps a friend can help. "Sometimes you just can't hope for yourself, but you can for someone else," says Kagan. "One of the best gifts I've ever received came from a friend after I'd had a particularly bad breakup. She told me, 'I know you can't believe right now, but I know someone special is on his way to you.' And you know that friend was in the front row at our wedding," she says.

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