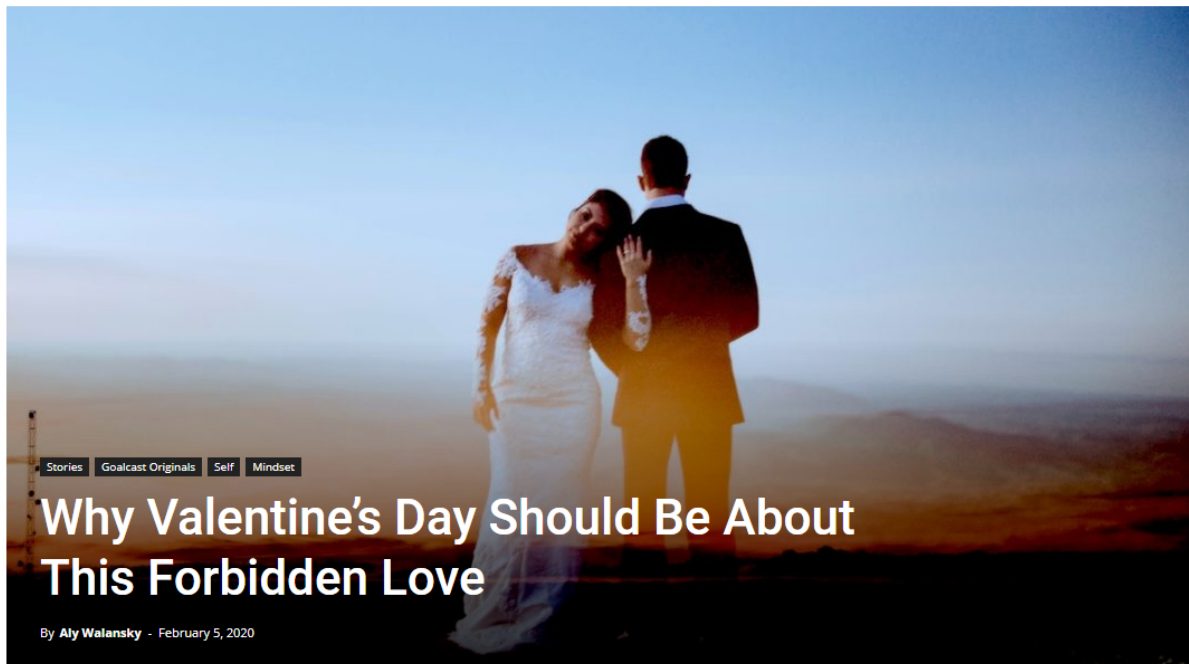


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Why Valentine's Day Should Be About This Forbidden Love

By Aly Walansky - February 5, 2020

As Valentine's Day approaches, those of us who are single may tend to feel down or 'less than' because we do not have a special someone to spend that day with. No one to send us flowers or candy, to go to a fancy restaurant with.

To be sure, there is a kind of societal pressure associated with seeing others celebrating their love and the culture surrounding Valentine's Day. We might just feel on the outskirts of life, as we see all our friends who have found their "person" celebrate on the 14th, while we spend the whole day looking forward to the discount chocolate we'll be able to get our hands on the next day.

It is no wonder that some of us might feel different or less than, for daring not to have a significant other to spend their time with.

Where does Valentine's Day come from anyway?

"One of the legends of St. Valentine, a Catholic priest, claims that he secretly performed marriages to soldiers who were forbidden to be married during their service," said intimacy and relationship expert [Coltrane Lord](#).

Another story reports that St. Valentine was imprisoned for helping soldiers escape, and spent his time sending love letters to a young woman.

Although Valentine's Day has this romantic connotation, today it has become a stressful commercial and cliché experience for many couples. But what about single people? They deserve to celebrate love too.

Since the original expression of Valentine's Day was a rebellion for a love forbidden, we can take back the authenticity by turning Valentine's Day into Self-Love day since most people forbid themselves from Self-Love.

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Coltrane Lord

Self-love does not come naturally to everyone. In a society that thrives off making us feel like we are always missing something, like we are not beautiful enough or worthy enough, it is a challenge to appreciate ourselves.

Besides, I would argue that the relationship with the self is primordial. It should precede any other relationship. As Lord explains, "most experts know that you can't experience an authentic expression of romantic love without a good dose of self-love, so we might as well start there first."

The culture that brought us to this point

The first thing to note is that we need to re-evaluate how we got to this point. Why is it that we are made to feel like there is nothing worse than being single on Valentine's Day?

Yes, deep inside we may know it is not a big deal but there is still that part that wonders, that questions, that feels inadequate or like there is something that must be inherently weird within us.

"We have a culture that blindly tells us that being in a relationship, any relationship at all, is better than being single," said Lane Moore, author of *How To Be Alone: If You Want To And Even If You Don't*.

“

It seemingly doesn't matter if the relationship is shallow, or abusive, or neglectful, or if you're settling, just as long as you're coupled — which is unhealthy nonsense! The pressure is ten-fold for women, who are so often told that their value lies specifically in 'being chosen' by a man, any man.

Lane Moore

Why you need to look at it this way

Alright, so we might have already been aware of this cultural pressure, this almost universal celebration of being in a romantic relationship. There have been enough discussions and criticism surrounding the dating culture. However, few of us actually take the time to contemplate what it really means to be single, against the pressure.

Because there is so much value in being single on Valentine's Day.

It likely means you didn't choose something toxic, or shitty, or less than what you truly want, instead you chose yourself.

Lane Moore

Yes, that's right. We tend to think that we are not single "by choice" but if we take some time to reflect and delve into it, it's possible to recognize that maybe we made voluntary choices that truly benefitted us.

We did not settle for someone who was not a good fit. We might have prioritized other things, like our career, studies or personal growth over having a relationship. We don't immediately see it that way, but these are all instances where we chose ourselves first.

I am single, and I'm spending Valentine's Day going out for dinner with some great friends, enjoying good food and great wine. And I won't even have to get a bikini wax or obsess about finding the perfect gift!

That being said, there have been other years where I've been single on Valentine's Day and I have felt weirdly ashamed of it, as if I failed at finding that person. It is only later that I realized the other benefits to being single, once we let ourselves see them.





Being single on Valentine's Day promotes self-love

It's possible that friends seem to judge you for being single. You may feel like a fifth wheel at group nights out for being the only without a date. You might encounter some friends teasing you about being single. Or worse, you might be pitying yourself.

However, that's how life works, and you are not the only single person on Cupid's day. "If it's possible for them to be happy despite not being in a relationship, you can and you will," said Celia Schwyer, dating expert at [Dating Relationships Advice](#).

Being single on Valentine's Day is pocket-friendly

Being in a relationship and celebrating Valentine's Day can result in shell out hard-earned cash on Valentine's Day. Dinner reservations, outfits, gifts, flowers, chocolates, etc. These all add up.

"Critics go as far as to claim that the most romantic day of the year is nothing more but a consumerist stunt," said Schwyer. Chances are bills, mortgage, and any other monetary obligations already swamp you. And we all know that for regular (hardworking!) office workers, money doesn't come easy.

"If you are one half of a couple on Valentine's, you're probably trying to fit in extra expenses such as food, flowers, and the likes. The more you look at it, being single on the 14th is a blessing in disguise for your bank account—no more parting with cash!" said Schwyer.

Being single doesn't mean you're sad and alone

Sure, it's a day to celebrate romantic love and all, but doesn't love have many forms?

"Whether you have a significant other or not, Valentine's Day is a celebration of love, and it has so many forms that it's not exclusive to couples," said Schwyer.

Visit your parents on this day, prepare a meal, and keep them company. You can also go out and celebrate with your friends—volunteer together in a shelter and spread the love to more people. If you'd like, go out of town with them. If you prefer the quiet, enjoy the solitude by yourself in the countryside or somewhere you can relax.

At the end of the day, love comes in many forms – I love my dogs more than most people! – so just because you don't have a mate in the classic sense, it's not a flaw in your life. It actually gives you all sorts of options and a whole lot less pressure!

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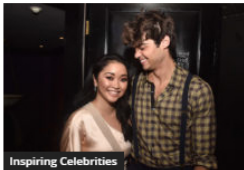
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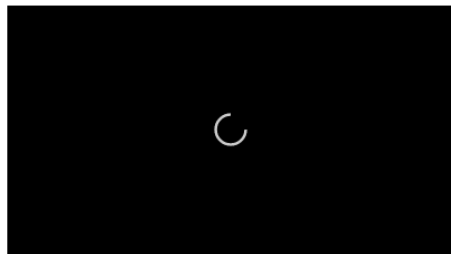
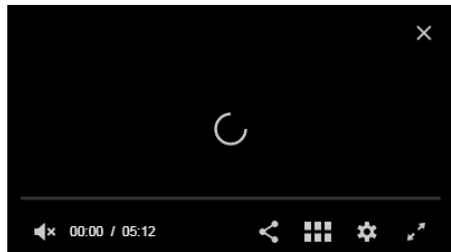
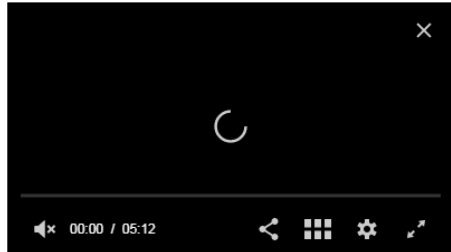
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