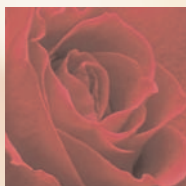


BRING
FOOD.
ARRIVE

Naked.

A GUIDE TO RADICAL ROMANCE
and
THE PURSUIT OF LIFE-LONG LOVE



Gregory J.P. Godek

Author of *1001 Ways To Be Romantic*,
the bestselling book of all time on the topic

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BRING FOOD. ARRIVE *Naked*. is a romantic manifesto. It boldly claims that romance—*real* romance—is the answer to most relationship problems. Forget therapy. Forget “communicating.” Forget the so-called Battle of the Sexes.

Just be romantic.

What’s new is Greg’s updating of old-fashioned romance into “Radical Romance”—love expressed with a creative edge—couplehood lived with deep passion—the artful fusion of the youthful and the mature—all handled with a sense of humor and grace.

Table of Contents

Most Relationships Suck. This Is <i>Not</i> an Acceptable Excuse for <i>Yours</i> to Suck Too.	1
The Speed of Love is 1.7 Miles Per Hour.	3
Valentine's Day Revisited.	4
Bring Food. Arrive Naked.	5
Bring Food. Arrive Naked. (Part 2)	6
But Is Romance <i>Cool</i> ?	7
Betsy + Dave.	8
To Be Human Is to Be Romantic.	10
The Pootie-Pie Effect.	12
Be a Fool for Love. But Don't Be a Flaming Idiot for Love.	13
God Wants You to Be Romantic.	14
Hopeless and Incurable.	16
Grow Up.	17
Godek's Index.	18
Never Give Flowers.* (*Like a Normal Person.)	20
Every Man Is Moe.	21
Cooties are Real.	22
There's Love, Money and Power. Choose <i>One</i>	23
Be Reckless With Your Heart.	25
Romance Survives.	26
Lock the Damn Door!	28

Leave Something to the Imagination. 29

Two Thumbs Up. 30

Do You Have Twenty Years of Experience—Or *One*
 Year of Experience Repeated *Twenty* Times? 31

Real Men Ask for Directions. 32

Stop Using the Word Romance. 33

All You Need Is Love. (And Money.)* 34

Human Nature Will Trump Theory Every Time. 35

Creating a Loving Long-Term Relationship Is the
 Most Difficult, Time-Consuming and Complicated
 Challenge You Will Face in Your Entire Life. 36

Musings. 37

Love Takes “Work” But It’s Not *Work*.
 Love Is “Playful” But It’s Not *Play*. 38

The Power of a Single Word. 40

Romance Resides at the Intersection of
 Love, Sex and Fun. 41

Stories. 42

More Stories. 43

Touch Me. 44

Q&A. 45

You Are the Author of Your Life. 46

The Ring. 48

Don’t Grow Up. 49

Vargas Girl. 50

Put the Seat *and* the Lid Down. 51

Be Romantic for Your Kids’ Sake. 52

Romantics Versus Scientists	53
Love Is Like a Jig-Saw Puzzle.	54
The Cynics Are Right.	56
Through the Eyes of a Child.	57
Shake Up the Status Quo.	58
If	60
Forty-Five Ways to Communicate Poorly.	51
Little Things Mean Most Everything.	64
Before and After.	65
Unromantics Explained.	66
Rants.	67
Create Romantic Moments.	68
Relationship Experiment #1: Give Without Taking.	69
Relationship Experiment #2: Judge Not.	70
Relationship Experiment #3: Fake It 'Til You Make It.	71
Relationship Experiment #4: Shoot Your TV.	72
Romance Went Down With the Titanic.	73
Slow Dancing.	74
Sweat the Small Stuff.	75
Don't Be Romeo.	76
<i>What</i> Is More Important Than <i>Why</i>	77
The Passion Is More Important Than the Happy Ending.	79
(A few titles of chapters to come)	80



Most Relationships Suck. This is *Not* an Acceptable Excuse for *Yours* to Suck Too.

Don't look at *me* that way. We all *know* that most relationships suck. Just because it's not politically correct to *say* so doesn't make it less true. Look around—at your family and friends and culture—and ask this question: “Whose relationship would I like to emulate?” When I ask this question in seminars of a thousand people, an uneasy silence settles over the room.

Look around—most couples' relationships are average/status quo/*boring*. (You might say many things about us romantics—we're idealistic, starry-eyed, a little crazy—but at least we're not *boring*.) Boring is the *last* thing you want to be. Being stuck in a boring relationship is a prison sentence. Some people would say, “Tsk, tsk, what a *shame*. That's *so* sad.” Let's get real: It's not “sad”—it's not a “shame”—it *sucks*. The fact is *most* relationships suck. You might feel that this is bad/disheartening news. I would suggest that it is *irrelevant* news. What does this have to do with you? *Nothing!* You want your relationship to be at the far end of the Bell Curve—where the few high achievers are—where the successful, happy, *romantic* couples are.

The cynics latch onto the fact that there are so *few* great/romantic relationships and they conclude that it's impossible for the average person—for *you*—to have one. And further, that it's foolish to even *attempt* the feat. Cynicism is the rationalization of jealous underachievers. Don't let the cult of mediocrity cheat you out of the relationship you deserve.



Bring Food. Arrive Naked.

There may be a man who would *not* be gaga if his lover appeared at the door in this manner, but in twenty years of teaching Romance Seminars, I've never met one.

And while this advice will certainly work for singles, it is really intended for marrieds. I understand from watching *Friends* and *Sex and the City* that this kind of behavior is commonplace in the singles world. It's here among the veteran marrieds that these kinds of antics are lacking/desired/needed/fantasized about.

Food Note: Anything fancier than a pizza is unnecessary.

Garment Note: High heels are allowed.



Bring Food. Arrive Naked. (Part 2)

I try. I really do. I *try* to find romantic ideas that are specifically for *one* gender and not the *other*. You know, Mars/Venus and all that crap. But ninety-nine percent of all romantic gestures work equally well, regardless of which gender is giving or receiving.

I'd long thought that *this* idea was really a *guy* thing. Because when I suggest it in seminars, the guys hoot and holler and stamp their feet. But then *after* the seminar, women would take me by the elbow and confide: "It would drive me *wild* if my guy did this for me! Give me a man in a trench coat with a plate of Godiva chocolates, over a guy in a tuxedo with flowers *any* day!"

Go figure.



But Is Romance *Cool*?

The male of the species is driven primarily by the desire to be cool. What about money, power and sex? They're merely alternate routes to being cool.


The question of the day is, of course: "Is romance *cool*?"

- Romance is *not* cool if you define it as fawning, beseeching, insecure and obligatory.
- Romance *is* cool if you define it as genuine, heartfelt, passionate, rule-breaking, risk-taking, confident-to-the-point-of-cockiness, outrageous, and creative.



Be a Fool for Love. But Don't Be a Flaming Idiot for Love.

There *is* a difference. A fool for love walks two inches above the ground. A flaming idiot for love walks over the edge of the cliff. A fool for love sits in a dark room and listens to sad songs when a love affair goes sour. A flaming idiot for love vows revenge in a jealous rage. A fool for love sings silly love songs. A flaming idiot for love crosses the line that separates passion from obsession, swooning from stupidity, and pursuit from stalking. Romantic pursuit is depicted in the classic film *The Graduate*. Obsessive stalking is depicted in the dramatic thriller *Fatal Attraction*. See the difference?



Hopeless and Incurable.

Why are romantics dismissed as depressed and diseased? It is, I suspect, the attempt of a dysfunctional society to help its unhappy majority feel better about themselves by denigrating the happy lovebirds among us. It's like when school kids tease the smartest kid in class. "Dweeb!" "Nerd!"

If love were money, Bill Gates would be Fred Astaire.



Grow Up.

Can I talk to the *adult* part of your personality? The part that doesn't giggle when **sex** is mentioned; the part that takes responsibility for your actions. Okay, here's the deal: It's time for you to take over. Enough of the childish crying over the fact that no one reads your mind and fulfills your every need; enough of the adolescent yearning for that perfect partner; enough of allowing your semi-suppressed unconscious fantasies to dictate your expectations.

Notice that I did *not* say that I wanted you to *banish* the childish, adolescent and unconscious parts of your personality. I said I wanted your adult self to “take over.” You *need* the child, adolescent and unconscious parts of yourself. They contain your creativity, curiosity, joy and wonder. It's great to let those parts of your personality come out and play, exercise themselves, and express themselves. But at the end of the day *someone's* got to take responsibility.

Does this sound, somehow, “unromantic”? Well, too bad. You want real love? Then grow up. When people leave romance in the hands of their immature selves, is it any wonder that so many relationships are car wrecks? This is *exactly* the problem with “old-fashioned” romance—it's immature. What do you expect when Cupid (a cute, little, naked, angel-baby-cherub) is in charge?



Never Give Flowers.*

After you give her that first bunch of roses, that first bouquet of mixed flowers, that first single red rose, you should never again give flowers like a normal person. If you don't give it a twist—if you're not *creative* about it, if it's not personalized somehow—you're making a Big Mistake.


- Give a dozen roses—*one-rose-at-a-time*. She wakes up in the morning to discover a single red rose on her bedstand; she finds a rose in the sink; and another in a coffee cup; one on her car seat; one on her office desk, etc.
- Remove the thorns from one red rose. Attach a note: “All the love. None of the pain.”
- Give him one daisy. Here's the note: “She loves me. She loves me not...” [Make certain there are an *odd* number of petals on the daisy.]



* *Like a Normal Person*

Cooties are Real.

There is an undeniable “feminine energy” around women, and a definite “masculine energy” around men. Boys and girls, being brighter than we *adults* are, have a word for it: Cooties. Watch children between the ages of five and eight playing together and you’ll see the boys and girls act out the essence and the particulars of all male-female relationships: The Chase; the Delight/Fear; the Attraction/Flight; the Flirting/Coyness; the Thrill of the Game. Do you remember when you were a kid? Sure, it was a more *innocent* game back then. It was a simple matter of not letting a member of the opposite sex touch you. Very concrete. As we grow up the game doesn’t really change. The rules just get more subtle—and more confusing. And while physical touching remains an important aspect of the game (!) the real challenge/*fear*/excitement is around being touched emotionally. And don’t tell me that you’ve never run away from emotional intimacy as if he or she had Cooties.



Be Reckless With Your Heart.

Hearts don't break. Your heart has nothing to do with love. It's a pump. A squishy, two-pound muscle that pumps blood. (*Yeech.*)

Emotions are *not* located in the heart. It's a metaphor. A way to help you envision/embody your emotions. So what's the harm? The harm is in taking it *too literally* and allowing it to affect your actions. The heart/love metaphor restricts you, makes you smaller, more conservative—which is the exact *opposite* of what love is *supposed* to do: Expand you, strengthen you, deepen you.

If you believe that hearts break—if they're marvelous but fragile, like Waterford Crystal—then it *makes sense* that you would treat yours with kid gloves . . . and keep it locked away in a cabinet most of the time. But hearts—or rather, *emotions*—*don't* break. Never.

Be reckless with your heart. Don't hold back. Go for it. Fall in love. Fall out of love. Fall in love again. Yes, it hurts. It hurts a lot. But nothing *breaks*. As a matter of fact, falling in and out of love *strengthens you*. It is precisely the process by which one acquires experience which leads to maturity. And done properly, this “love thing” can even lead to *wisdom*. Imagine that.

Historical note: The ancient Greeks believed that love resided in the *liver*, not the heart. Just imagine the kind of Valentine cards *that* would lead to! (*Yeech.*)

