

## Love and Libido Ep7 Dr. Campbell Part 2

Really think about the things you gave up, perhaps, in that marriage that you want to resurrect that are really core parts of you and spend some time even like making a list, you know, preferred, you know, and then deal breakers, you know, I will not have somebody who smokes cigarettes or very much alcohol even, but you have a right to have your own list, your own boundaries, your own needs.

Are you one of the millions who feels like you're blindly navigating the dating world? Whether you're swiping through profiles on an app or scanning the room at a bar, there are some tried and true dating principles that can help. Today's guest, Dr. Susan Campbell has written several books on this topic and has personal experience as someone whose stepped back into the dating world a few times throughout her life.

Today, she's going to explain how her get real approach to dating can help you stay confident and more easily connect with potential partners. I had her on the show before to chat about the five relationship stages and loved our conversation so much that I had to invite her back on. Psychologist, Susan Campbell has worked as a corporate trainer and relationship coach for 55 years, a former professor at the university of Massachusetts and frequent guest lecturer at Harvard Stanford and UCLA.

She is the author of 12 books on the topic of relationships and human communication. Her work has been featured in a variety of national media outlets. Susan trains coaches and therapists throughout the United States and Europe.

Let's get started. Susan, thank you so much for joining me back.

I'm glad to be here. And now this is one of my favorite topics. Dating.

Yeah. Yeah. Oh my gosh. It's like something people, I think on the one hand, love, on the other hand, dread, there is just so much that goes into dating and dating... the landscape of dating has just changed drastically.

I think in the past decade or so with all of the online dating and the apps, but you know, as I was preparing for this interview and reading some of your material, I thought, you know, whether this, whether you were dating 20 years ago, or you're getting back out into the dating scene today, I think a lot of these principles apply. So I want to start by talking a little bit about first dates because that is kind of the deal maker or the deal killer for people. I think a lot of people go into first dates with a big mask on even actually these days, I have to say before there's a first date, a lot of times there's like an outdated picture on an app, a profile on a dating app or something like that.

And you are such a proponent of authentic dating and honest dating. So can you talk a little bit about what that means to be honest and real on a first date? Okay. So I also did

some research.

I had talked with you about my research with couples for my book, *The Couple's Journey*. I also did some research interviewing a lot of singles about their dating life and came out with a book called *Truth in Dating: Finding Love by Getting Real*. So I'm an advocate of a fairly radical approach to dating, whether you're doing it on Tinder or whether you're meeting somebody at a friend's house at a dinner party.

However, a dating relationship, the first date is not about making sure you get a second date. This is where everybody falls down. They have too much performance energy coming into dating, being liked and not realizing that you're choosing somebody, you're making a decision.

How do we fit? Do I like this person? Are we compatible? Do I even want to spend more time with this person? That should be your attitude coming into a first date. Of course, to have fun and be a little light. I don't mean to be heavy about a first date, but to not have such a high expectation of success versus failure.

Do not feel like you're a failure if the dating relationship ends after the first date. Okay. So that attitude, isn't that radical? I mean, I mean, I have a hard time selling that I'll tell you.

I'm surprised you have a hard time selling that. Cause I mean, people are listening to this. You can't see me, but I breathed a huge sigh of relief when you said that.

I wish someone had told me that when I was dating 10 years ago, because how nice to go into a first date thinking the goal is not necessarily to have a second date and to not care as much about being liked. I think that would have changed my whole dating journey, but I think that sounds very freeing and wonderful, to be honest.

Yeah. So the attitude would be, who are we together? And what, and why are we even dating? Cause we can't make the assumption that everybody wants a long-term monogamous relationship, not in this day and age, at least. So that would be a good thing to check out on the first day, you don't need to ask your whole checklist the first time, but you know, are we, are you, you know, is this, is this about sex for you? Is this about fun? Is this about long-term intimacy? Do you see yourself having kids? If I want kids, you know, I want to get that out of the way right away. If, if one person wants kids and one person doesn't, don't try, don't try to fight that battle. Yeah, seriously. And then the another one about monogamy, you know, if one person's poly and the other person's monogamous, don't try to fight that battle. That's going to cause heartache.

Those are the big two that, you know, you probably ought to find that out right away. Yeah. So you encourage people to ask those questions on a first date.

Yeah. Just those two. Yeah.

Yeah. That's a pretty important question. Well, more like starting with what's this dating thing about? Like I, I, you know, I've done a lot of online dating, you know, so you meet a lot of different people and I'm, I'm, I'm very good at it. I have a partner now.

Yes.

We met online. And by the way, he was a very good dater too. You know, we almost hated to leave the dating thing.

Yeah.

Fun. Because just getting to know people and be curious about them, you know, and not worry about the outcome, that enables me to just really have a good time.

So what made you a good dater? What do you mean by that? Cause I'm sure it ties into what we're talking about today.

What are some good dating skills? Well, part of it does have to do with being willing to face rejection and that sort of thing. And not everybody's good at that. Yeah.

And also being able to say, no, I don't want a second date in a kind way. I've learned that because, you know, I'm old and I've been single a lot... and I've also been married. A lot all over the place.

You are an expert really.

That's my jam. You know, relationships. So having some life experience under your belt and some emotional healing that allows you to hear, no, no, I don't really want to see you in that way, but maybe we could be friends. To actually be able to hear that without completely falling apart for two weeks and, you know, not wanting to get online again or get on your, your dating app again, that sort of thing. And then the other, the other thing is being able to say no kindly. Um, that's a very hard one.

So that's why there's so much fear in the dating world. Cause I, you kind of alluded to that in your intro, cause I give singles workshops and that's what they tell me, the fears. There's a lot of fear in the dating world.

And the first fear is being rejected. And the second fear is... the second biggest fear is having to reject somebody. So in a way dating itself can be a personal development practice, a spiritual awareness practice where you get to know yourself and you, you heal some of your fears of conflict or fears of hurting other people.

That does not mean that you don't care about the other person. So I'll give you an example of a way that I told somebody, I, I, I didn't want to have a second date.

Okay.

Cause I knew he liked me. And, so he said, you know, I want to see you again. And I remember where we were and everything. And I, I said, you know, what I'm going to say may, you know, may not be easy to hear, but I respect you so much just in this time we've spent together that I, I want to be honest with you.

So, so here you can tell I'm kind of gently moving him to realize what's coming from my caring heart. You know, I, I'm not so afraid of hurting him that I have to be cold and harsh. That's... you can develop.

You know, well, the truth is I really don't want to see you again. And then I paused, looked at him and then I said, and now I want to hear how that's landing for you. No, I, I think that's pretty good.

Yeah. I think that's awesome. It's say what you mean, but don't say it mean, you know, it really, of course, look, nobody likes the feeling of rejection and it's hard to reject others too.

I mean, I think we all want to be liked and we don't want to hurt people's feelings. We want to be perceived as kind, nice people, but what ends up happening is we ghost, which that's not usually good for anybody. Um, and can be very disrespectful and hurtful. And it really, I think if you practice saying that a couple of times, you'll realize saying something along those lines really isn't that big of a deal, you know, to just say, look, I really value the time we had together today.

I want to thank you for sharing that with me, but I don't think we're really compatible. And I wish you the best of luck in your dating journey.

Yeah.

I mean, come on, that's not that hard.

He said, he said he took, he took it in and I could tell, you know, affected him. And then he said, that's the best rejection I've ever had.

We laughed and then we saw each other at, at other singles events after that.

Right.

We have a special bond after going something together. So I want to encourage our listeners. Yeah. It hurts for a little while sometimes, sometimes the truth, but you can bear it.

You know, we're... the world that I'm trying to help people manifest is a world where we're not afraid of inconvenient truths. Totally. And I can imagine, you know, if someone had said something along those lines to me, that it would have made me feel clearer and really more empowered to get back out there and hopefully find someone who maybe

was a better match for me.

I think when people tiptoe around it, it's that tiptoeing that leads people to feel kind of insecure and unsure and, and anxious ultimately in the dating game.

Yeah. So I, I think I helped him realize that he can tolerate rejection and not fall apart.

Totally.

Totally. Helping each other, you know, the dating adventure, it's not just about truth telling. It's also about, we feel our kinship for our fellow human, but that kind of goes away in dating. We lose that kinship for the fellow human attitude.

Right. It's kind of a dog eat dog world. Yeah.

It's like, you know, I'm measuring you or I think you're measuring me. And so I'm encouraging people to own up to the fact that maybe it is a little awkward. Yeah.

And I am such a proponent of that too. Like so many people ask me, how do I do this or that without it being awkward? And I'm like, you don't, you face the awkwardness and you get through it. That's, what's going to make you feel more confident and ultimately make it not feel as awkward, you know? So yeah, what I'm hearing is part of being a good dater is being a good rejector because that is part of it ultimately.

What would you say are some of the most common mistakes that people make on the first date? Well, one is getting too far ahead of themselves, such as needing to know where this is going. I mean, usually it's not the first date, but some people do, you know? Yeah. Real soon there's certain personality types that just kind of want to know where it's headed.

Yes. You do want to know, are we on the same page as to why we're dating? You know, are we trying to find a life mate or not? That question, but is this, this person lives in a town, you know, two hours away from me? Oh, it'll never work because they live two hours away. You know, you're making up a rule that it's not going to work because of something.

And you don't know, I mean, lots of things can change if you fall in love. Yeah, totally.

So it's that's one. So that's one mistake is getting too far ahead of yourself. Well, another, another that I alluded to before was hiding what you're really feeling in order to make a good impression, like saying, oh yeah, I'm open to poly when you pretty well know you're not. And after the date, you might realize, hmm, I shouldn't have said that. I would actually advise people, have a do-over. Sometimes you do say things... whether it's the first date or after 10 years of marriage, you know, give yourself permission to say, wait, you know, we had that conversation about poly. I want to come clean.

I realized later that was not my truth. And say, I realized later that was not my truth about a lot of things. So that's a life skill, but often in dating, you can use that.

Totally. Totally. No, that's really helpful advice.

What advice would you give to people who are finding themselves back in the dating world after, you know, maybe being in a relationship for a long period of time? Cause I think that can feel so daunting for people. So what advice do you give to that group of folks? Go slow. Be interested in what you can learn about yourself now, cause you haven't been in the dating world for a long time. And you're going to be challenged in some ways, like your insecurities, because if let's say you were married, even though it might've been rocky, you know, you had this partnership and it was more or less slow, just going on day in day out.

For many of us, sometimes it's, you're always threatening divorce, but you know, a lot of times it's like, you're used to having somebody around. And so you don't really know the moves of saying, well, here's what I like. Yeah.

Like just so be patient with yourself. Let the other person know that this is new for you. Some people aren't shy when they get back into the dating world, but I'm not going to talk to those people.

They're fine. I know, but you're old, shy, or maybe you're older and your body's not looking the way it did when you were dating your former partner, let's say you've been married to for 20 years. So you may need to talk about those things.

Not always on the very first date, cause you don't know, don't the lay of the land yet, if that's even going to be relevant, if you're ever going to want to take your clothes off with this person.

Yeah.

But be willing to share vulnerability and fears. I think so much of it is about your mindset and viewing dating as an opportunity for self-growth and expansion and rediscovery after coming out of a relationship, because, you know, so many people for better or worse, but really for worse, I would say they'll lose themselves in relationships, especially ones that ultimately end up being unhealthy.

And so what I always advise people is to take a little bit of time. You don't want to jump right back into the dating world immediately. I mean, maybe some people need that rebound, but when, when you get to the place where you're really considering it seriously to reevaluate what some of your goals are, and I have people even make a list of parts of themselves that maybe they let go or lost in their previous relationship that they are hoping to rediscover or find again, and to be very clear about what their values are so that they can go into a first date with eyes wide open as you're describing when

we first started talking.

Yeah. I love that about really think about the things you gave up, perhaps in that marriage that you want to resurrect that are really core parts of you. Yeah.

So get clear what you really want and spend some time, even like making a list, you know, preferred, you know, and then deal breakers, you know, I will not have somebody who smokes cigarettes. I mean, that's one of my deal breakers.

Fair enough.

Or very much alcohol even, you know, just me, but you have a right to have your own list, your own boundaries, your own needs. Today's episode is sponsored by BetterHelp.

My inbox is flooded with DMS on a daily basis with people just like you who want help with their sex and relationship issues. I wish I had time to answer all your questions, but luckily other resources are available. Look without healthy relationships and a calm mind being truly happy and at peace is hard.

The good news is help is available. You deserve to be happy. And now you don't have to worry about finding an in-person therapist near you.

BetterHelp is customized online therapy that offers video, phone, and even live chat sessions with your therapist. So you don't have to see anyone on camera if you don't want to, it's much more affordable than in-person therapy.

And you can start communicating with your therapist in under 48 hours. Join the millions of people who are seeing what online therapy is really about. And as a special offer to Love and Libido listeners, you can get 10% off your first month of professional therapy at [betterhelp.com/dremily](https://betterhelp.com/dremily). That's [betterhelp.com/dremily](https://betterhelp.com/dremily).

Thanks again to BetterHelp for sponsoring this episode.

I want to take a moment to tell you about an incredible app called MJOY. MJOY is an app for women who want to learn how to have consistent orgasms, boost their libido, experience body acceptance and high self-esteem and improve their relationships.

Join the hundreds of thousands of women who have already benefited from all that MJOY has to offer. Click the link in the show notes to claim your 14 day free trial. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Let's talk about flirting for a minute. Cause you write about that in your book a little bit too. You know, some, I've had a lot of questions come through recently from listeners, people struggling with A, how to flirt.

And then from men in particular, feeling scared to flirt because they're afraid that they're

going to come off as aggressive, you know, especially, you know, through the me too movement, people are so conscious of that. And while I think it's good that there's such an emphasis on open, honest communication, there is, in my opinion, a little bit of an art to dating. And part of that is in how we flirt with one another.

So what advice would you give to people who might be struggling with that? Yeah. And when I'm listening to you, I'm thinking two different people who are like seeing each other at the post office line or something, but you're thinking you might want to flirt. Any two people have kind of a difference around what degree of closeness they're comfortable with, what degree of self-disclosure they're comfortable with.

Of course, some people aren't at all comfortable with flirting or playfulness, but what I'm really speaking to is the issue of boundaries. And it's very hard to know somebody's boundaries without a longer term interaction. But here's, here's my advice in terms of flirting is two things, be willing to say less and make more eye contact and non-verbal.

Like I'm in the post office line and there's this, you know, guy in the back of me and, and just go, if I want to flirt, I might go, Hey, I didn't see you back there. Hi.

Right.

Just be right where you are. And then let's say you're at a cocktail party and you talk, you know, that kind of, that kind of flirting, because that's another avenue, you know, meet people out in the street. Now flirting on text, you know, maybe I'm not an expert on that because there's no, you don't have that non-verbal energy.

It's not the same.

So I'm not going to, I'm not going to pretend to be an expert on that one.

Okay. But I think face to face and where there's some energetic presence that you can share, what I, what I like to recommend is whatever's coming up for me right now. I share. You don't have to have a script.

It's like right now I'm noticing your smile, or right now I'm noticing that little spot on your cheek. I mean, sometimes you don't, you know, you want to be careful about what you're noticing.

Sure. Make sure it's not something that might offend them. Right. I realized that as soon as I said it, but I actually thought it through because some people will do that just to test the person's boundaries and where they are. It's not wrong.

Yeah.

Once again, you know, as long as it's not cruel or anything. If the other person's self-conscious about their spot on their cheek. Maybe that gives them a chance to say



something kind of vulnerable. Yeah.

It's okay. We're not here just to make each other comfortable, but I'm not talking about being shocking either.

Right. Right. And I think what you said too, about not being an expert about flirting over texts, that's fine. You know, in my opinion, because flirting is energetic, you know, so much of it is kind of an energy that's sort of hard to define, but what I'm hearing in the examples you gave is it's about making eye contact.

It's about being open about what it is about that person that drew you to them. I think that's ultimately what it's about. You know, I would say even, um, an appropriate touch, whether it's a hand on the back of their shoulder or something that kind of makes you feel whether or not there's potentially a chemistry with that person could be flirtatious.

But I think really what you want to do when you're flirting is to communicate openly and honestly, but also a little seductively and ultimately make sure what you're doing is making the person feel comfortable because that's, what's going to then make them drawn to you as if you're someone who makes them feel comfortable and at ease.

And I like what you said about, you know, maybe just a little touch on the arm or something, let's say, but that, that also is, that brings up the boundaries issue that I mentioned. And for some people that'll make them feel, Oh, he likes me or something.

Right. Yeah. Like the guy behind you in line at the post office, excuse me, can I reach behind you and grab those stamps over there as you gently, but totally appropriately touch the back of their arm? Like that, in my opinion would be flirtatious.

And I think it's still probably pretty acceptable this day and age, but people are so scared of that. Well, I want you, I want to caution us in this way, notice the person's response when you do. So don't assume that everybody wants it.

I personally, and it sounds like you do too. I'm very comfortable with that, with that kind, kind of touch between strangers, other people are not. So if you get a little feedback, nonverbal or verbal that says they're not comfortable say, Oh, I think you had... maybe if it's nonverbal, cause you have to ask them. I think maybe that wasn't so welcome. Is that right? And check it out. And again, you can redo because in, when we're talking about flirting, we're talking a lot of the time about while you're getting to know somebody.

I mean, I think we should be flirting, you know, with our longterm intimate partner. Yes, totally. Totally.

Don't, don't give this up, but you're wanting the other person to feel comfortable, desired, but at the same time, maybe taking a few risks, like the touch might be a little

bit of a risk.

Right. But then it goes onto what you're saying about being attuned to their body language. And I think that that's something people frankly, aren't as skilled at these days because everything is not only spelled out in black and white, but we have all these emojis and things to like confirm or deny how we might be feeling.

And I think it's a skill that a lot of people need to pay attention to. Like an exercise I give to people sometimes is to go sit at a busy place, like a train station or a restaurant and just observe, you know, some of the nonverbal body language that you notice in the people around you. If you see a couple at a table, what are you noticing in their body language? Are they mirroring each other? You know, does that kind of thing I think can indicate a lot and then pay... you know, develop the skillset to then pay attention to some of the nonverbal cues for people who you might be interacting with.

And that'll give you a lot of information about whether A, something is welcome or unwelcome or B, whether you maybe have a chance when you're flirting with this person versus maybe time to leave the post Yeah, that's good. And you mentioned mirroring, which for our listeners, one meaning of that is kind of like mimicking the other person's body movements. You know, if, if they lean forward, you know, maybe you can lean a little bit forward to, it's like a dance.

It is. Yeah. It's very subconscious too.

And, and you'll notice that like, if you're out at a restaurant and you're watching a couple, you'll notice, you know, when she brushes a piece of hair back from her face that he might then scratch his head or something like that. And we do that all the time. And a lot of times that is very telling of a couple's energy and where they might be.

So Susan, you've been so open through this conversation. Would you be willing to share one of the worst and, or one of the best dates that you've been on?

Well, let me think to one of the best pickup lines I've ever gotten. And then that resulted in a date and a marriage.

And, and this was the same, the same man who was the spender. So he comes to a party at my house, brought by a friend. And he comes over to me and he just says, how is it in there? I mean, I mean, this was long time ago.

This was in the seventies, but I just, I just found that, you know, so confident and bold. Like I'd never heard that before. It had me get present. Yeah. Like, like, Oh.

And he was, and it also, I think communicates that he was genuinely interested in your opinion about something right off the bat. Yeah. It was sort of, it's sort of like the question, what's it like to be you right now?

Yeah. Yeah. I like that. Yeah.

But your actual question was a best or worst date. Yeah. Oh, probably the worst, worst date was when I was in high school cause I wasn't honest and I felt so ashamed of myself. I don't know if this will be relevant to anybody, but it's what's coming up for me. So I'll just close it. In our high school... this is now we're in the fifties. The boys used to... Prom. He was my prom date.

They would buy corsages, but this guy didn't have very much money and he brought me some sort of plastic flowers. Yeah. And I just, I really didn't know what to do with that, you know, 17 years old.

If I had a to do over, I would be more honest and maybe I could say what that would be, but what I, what I did do, I mean, I put it on and I went to the dance, but then I told him, I told him a lie that it fell down the toilet and I just couldn't speak the truth, which is, you know, I want to protect you and I want to protect me from comments from our peer group about this. And I just don't know how to deal with this. If I was being honest, I'd say, just, I just don't, don't know how to deal with this without hurting your feelings.

Yeah. So that's, that's rough.

I mean, maybe that's why I got into telling the truth. I'm never going to make that mistake again.

I felt terrible about myself. Well, and I think it just goes to show how hurtful it can be when we're not honest. Again, I think there is a way to say what you feel with, while still being kind and considerate to the other person's feelings. I think a lot of people think it's an either or, but it's not.

Yeah. And there's always a way to tell the truth, but it isn't always comfortable. Yeah.

At least you won't regret it until, until you're in your old age, like me. Right. Right.

Well, I love what you shared about that pickup line and you have so much advice to give about dating and relationships these days. So if people wanted to learn more about where to find you and your books and information on your dating advice, where would that be? My website is [susancampbell.com](http://susancampbell.com). And if you go to that, that website, I have a newsletter where I offer a free coaching call every first Tuesday of the month. You can just dial into this zoom number and I speak with people and give them free dating advice or free advice about their relationships.

So I want to offer that to your, to your listeners. Oh, that's so cool. What a great service.

You have to subscribe to the newsletter. And then I announced the zoom link in the newsletter once a month. So, and then of course, all my books are there.

I've written lots of books on relationships and I have like 50 YouTube videos on some of this stuff too. Awesome. And I'll be sure to link everything in the show notes.

So thank you again, Susan, for joining me again today. You are so knowledgeable and it's so easy talking to you. So thanks for being on the show. Thanks for inviting me, Emily.

Thanks again for listening to Love and Libido with me, your host, Dr. Emily Jamea. If you enjoyed today's episode, be sure to subscribe and drop me a five-star review. Share with a friend who might find it interesting.

As much as we can learn from experts, nothing makes us feel more connected than hearing from each other. If you have a story that relates to today's episode or just a general question about sex or your relationship, visit [loveandlibido.com](http://loveandlibido.com) and I'll share it on an upcoming episode. Be sure to visit my website, [emilyjamea.com](http://emilyjamea.com) to see my latest blogs and to check out my online workshop.

Subscribers to my podcast can use code half off. Finally, you can follow me across all the social media channels for daily sex and relationship tips at Dr. Emily Jamea. Thank you so much for tuning in.