

# A Match Made in Heaven



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London, 2010: What happens when the match made in heaven becomes the match made in hell? According to figures released by the Centre for Social Justice, family breakdowns cost the country an estimated £24billion per year. More than the impact on your wallet, bad relationships take a huge emotional toll on you, your family and your friends, as well.



Choosing the right person for a long-term relationship is one of life's major decisions. "Long term happiness within your relationship is based on many criteria some of which vary by individuals. Others, such as sharing values and personality traits, are universal", says Dr Gian Gonzaga eHarmony.co.uk relationship expert and Director of Research and Development at eHarmony Labs. However, "many people continue to fall into the same traps when making relationship decisions", he adds. eHarmony offers some key advice for what to look for and what to avoid when picking a relationship partner.

## Before It Gets Too Serious...

When you begin dating someone, you may be drawn in to their quirks, fun-loving nature, adventurous spirit, and maybe even their nonchalance about being together. But as dating turns into something more serious, are these traits something you will want in your relationship in five years' time? "Often people find themselves looking for the things that are fun at the beginning, but these same things can cause conflict over the long haul and ultimately end up being a large part of why your relationship falters", Dr Gian Gonzaga reveals. Before you become too serious, be sure you know what you will want the relationship to be like in the future. Make a list of the qualities your

partner should definitely have, and the things that are an absolute deal breaker for you. If your personal beliefs and values are in line, then you are on the right path to a successful relationship. If you have to compromise, seriously ask yourself if they're the right person for you.

### **False Expectations**

Being able to spend your life with someone in good times and bad is very appealing for many people. However, false expectations about what a marriage is supposed to be like can lead to marriages ending. It's important to remember that all marriages - even the healthiest ones - have their own unique challenges. Be realistic and acknowledge that there will be some difficulties that will come up.

### **Marrying to Please Someone Else**

Marrying someone to please your mother, father - or even your partner - is usually a sure-fire recipe for marital discord. If you're not ready for the level of commitment marriage requires, give yourself more time. Entering into a marriage prematurely can result in both partners having different levels of passion and commitment for the marriage itself. In a healthy relationship, however, the levels of passion and commitment are similar; both people should be excited and enthusiastic about taking the big step from **dating in Bristol** - or any city in the UK - to tying the knot.

eHarmony.co.uk provides effective **online dating** opportunities for UK singles. eHarmony was launched in the UK in 2008, following extensive research into love and relationships conducted by eHarmony Labs and the University of Oxford's Internet Institute. Dr. Gian Gonzaga is the senior director of research and development at eHarmony Labs, a California-based institute that pioneers relationship research beyond the US and into international markets.

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